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TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS A DIALECTIC ACCOUNT

Introduction

With the end of the Second World War, the United States emerged as the decisive factor in the destiny of Europe. The precarious situation of Western Europe and the growing 'red threat' from the USSR led Washington to adopt a policy of protecting or 'taking responsibility' for the economic reconstruction and political revitalisation of Europe during the first years of the Cold War. In the face of changed post-War international system, West Europe and the USA had subscribed to the similar threat perceptions and objectives. This commonality of perspectives blended with their (West Europe and the US) mutual interests led them to evolve a security arrangement of their own which was designed to serve, inter alia, the policy of 'containment' of the communist advance to the West. Since then the transatlantic relations (relations between West Europe and the USA) have traversed a long way that can be characterised as one of successes and crises, re-realisation and re-adjustment etc.

The world keeps changing and today it is far different from what it was soon after the War. "Tight bipolarity" has loosened and differing points of view now find easy expression within the nations on either side of the North Atlantic. The rigid bipolarity has given way to a less rigid order. In the emerging pattern the polar powers still dominate but only in the final analysis. Their sway does not appear any more to be all encompassing. Other countries with considerable military potential and demonstrated economic

power have appeared on the scene.¹ Henry A. Kissinger defined the present system as one with a military bipolarity but showing a political multipolarity.² The transatlantic nations have always been looked upon as a community of nations sharing common values and basic political objectives which had lent the community its cohesion. But with the change of time, this commonality of values and objectives seems to have weakened. With the post-War reconstruction and subsequent economic growth in Western Europe this region became increasingly independent of the US. National interests are being restated and the very notion of security in the West has changed. International economic questions seem to have been elevated permanently to the level of high politics. The instability of the Third World has generated an additional source of damaging debates within the transatlantic nations. Thus the world in which the Atlantic community must now function has changed remarkably from the immediate post-war world that prompted its creation. The changes embraced almost all aspects of transatlantic relationship—strategic, political, economic and social. The purpose of this paper in this context is to focus on the development of Euro-American relationship with the emphasis on the factors affecting the interests and attitudes of the transatlantic actors, and to highlight the prospect of their relationship.

Strategic Aspect of Transatlantic relations

The history of transatlantic relations since the late 1940s has not been even and easy. There have been periods of cooperation and conflict—periods of Cold War, De Gaulle's Europe, *ostpolitik* and Detente. During the Cold War period the transatlantic relations were based more or less on almost similar perceptions and interests. Then came the period of nationalist De Gaulle and European

1. Mizanur Rahman Shelly, *Emergence of a New Nation in a Multiplar World: Bangladesh*, University Press Limited, Dhaka, Bangladesh 1979, p. 13
2. Henry A. Kissinger, 'The End of Bipolarity', in Kermit Gordon (ed.), *Agenda for the Nation* (The Brookings Institute, Washington, D.C., 1968).

economic self-assertion and Brandt's *ostpolitik* and Vietnam era. All these contributed and ultimately led to the policy of Detente. Since late 1970s the World has been witnessing an erosion of Detente and the present international scenario is defined by many as a period of post-Detente or of 'Hot Peace'. These different eras reveal not similar pattern of behaviour and relationship between the two sides of the North Atlantic.

From the world war II, the United States emerged as the uncontested leader of the West. The foundation which the American omnipotence was based upon was a military hegemony dependent on an absolute monopoly of atomic weapons and an unrivalled economic supremacy. The US-sponsored Western Alliance had a primary concern: the Soviet threat on the Western perception of the world structure, including any possible spread of the leftist ideology that could potentially strike at the roots of American pre-eminence. The bi-polar world was marked by the Cold War psychosis and was characterised by intense East-West psychological warfare, mutual suspicions and intense propaganda.³ During this period the common perceptions and objectives were serving the mutual interests of either side of the Atlantic. The West Europeans needed an American nuclear umbrella, inter alia, to shield their programme for reviving and restructuring their war-ravaged economic system, while the Americans had a profound interest in the maintenance of a prosperous, free-market economic system as well as a launching ground in Europe against the East.

But since then things have profoundly changed. In the 1960s, the immediacy of the perceived Soviet threat had already receded and the primacy of military security was bound to be reduced. It was reduced, as Gregory Flynn puts it, in two ways: first, in favour of means of securing the relationship with the East; and second, in favour of devoting greater attention to other "threats" to national

3. Muhammad Shahiduzzaman, *The Western Alliance: Reckoning with Flexible Crises-Perception*, *BIISS Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1980, pp. 170-171.

well-being. As domestic and foreign policy objectives became less easily reconcilable with one another in the short run, domestic considerations gradually emerged as a factor of substantial influence upon government policy on issues that affected the relationship among the allies and the capacity of the Alliance to provide the

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military security.⁴ The conservative upsurge in the USA (as the post-Vietnam and post-Watergate retrenchment was almost over) in the late 1970s, the NATO decision of deployment of Euro-missiles in West Europe and the Soviet military presence in Afghanistan put Detente in jeopardy. The issues in their details led to a considerable degree of discord among the allies involving the meaning and implication of Detente. Furthermore, the nuclear parity between the super-powers soon rendered the Western nuclear strategy of 'flexible response' obsolete because it was adopted on the conception of 'Triad' with an emphasis on the nuclear superiority of the NATO Alliance. In view of this situation, there has been a tendency in the United States toward a policy of Counter-force which might lead her act preemptively⁵, making West Europe a potential target of Soviet retaliation. The prospect of any such development in Western strategy that might accentuate the vulnerability of Western Europe to Soviet offensive has been a bone of contention between the two sides of the Atlantic.

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4. Gregory Flynn, *The Internal Fabric of Western Security*, Allanheld, Osmun Publishers. Croom Helm London, pp. 178-179.

5. *Adelphi Papers* Number 183, Defence and Consensus: The Domestic Aspects of Western Security, Part II, p. 9.

'crisis' are, probably, to be found in two factors: the relative decline of US power vis-a-vis the Soviet Union and the gradual emergence of Western Europe as a new pole of power in world politics. It has brought about a change in West European perspectives on their reliance on the US and on the nuclear threat from the East. "Western Europe no longer feels threatened in an immediate sense by the Soviet Union... At the same time, the countries of Western Europe do in fact feel "threatened" by the dramatic (and usually unwarranted) oscillation of American policy and the lack of consultation"⁶. Some Europeans saw President Reagan's decision to assemble the 'enhanced radiation' weapon (the so-called neutron bomb) for possible use against massed formations of Soviet tanks, less as a counter to Soviet conventional predominance than as a weapon increasing the likelihood of nuclear war on German soil.⁷ In terms of the strategic nuclear balance the Russians have acquired a sufficient degree of parity to make many Americans talk about a 'window' of opportunity or vulnerability through which for a few years they believe the USSR could launch a pre-emptive nuclear war and probably win it. The American debate since 1978 over this 'window' of opportunity (for the Russians) or 'window' of vulnerability (for the Americans) reduced the credibility of Mutual Assured Destruction as the ultimate deterrent against Soviet attack in Europe, and (in people's minds) 'de-coupled' nuclear war in Europe from a Strategic (US-USSR) nuclear confrontation. When President Reagan incautiously stated that a nuclear war could be confined to Europe, and when Secretary (former) of State Haig referred to the possibility of firing off a nuclear missile as a warning to the Russians, all the latent West European apprehensions surfaced angrily leading to massive anti-nuclear demonstrations in European capitals.⁸

6. Gregory Flynn, *The Internal Fabric of Western Security*, *op. cit.*, p. 206.

7. T.B. Millar, *The State of the Western Alliance*, The Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Canberra, Australia, Working Paper No. 60, August 1982, p. 3.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4

The Americans, too, have lost a degree of confidence in their European allies. Many Americans believe that the Europeans are unwilling to recognize the seriousness of the global Soviet challenge and the implications for their own security. And there is the traditional conviction that the European allies are unwilling to assume responsibilities commensurate with their economic might and weight in the international system. As one columnist has correctly pointed out, Jimmy Carter would never have sent his famous letter to Helmut Schmidt before the latter's visit to Moscow in June 1980 had he felt fully confident of West Germany's motives.⁹ Europeans, unwilling to increase their conventional forces substantially to meet a growing Soviet conventional threat, have sought ever greater protection under the US strategic nuclear deterrent, while remaining less sanguine about European-based US theater nuclear forces. It did not, obviously, make the Americans feel complacent. Henry Kissinger represented one body of American thought in suggesting that "..... Our European allies should not keep asking us to multiply strategic assurances that we can not possibly mean or if we do mean, we should not want to execute because if we execute, we risk destruction of civilization."¹⁰ Other Americans, given recent cutbacks in social welfare spendings, may soon begin to suggest that it is unreasonable to expect working class American to pay for and take risks for the security of the European middle classes.¹¹ Thus one of the traits of transatlantic relations is the dramatic loss of confidence in each other by the two sides of the Atlantic.¹²

Burden sharing has been another bone of contention which has, historically, caused hardest of feelings among the allies and

9. See Willan Pfaff, "Time for the Allies to Face Differences," *International Herald Tribune*, June 26, 1980.

10. Kenneth A. Myers, ed., *NATO: The Next Thirty Years* (Boulder: Westview Press, Inc., 1980), p. 8.

11. William J. Taylor, Jr. "The Future of Conflict, US Interests," *The Washington Papers*, 94, Volume X 1983, p. 23.

12. Fritz Stern, "Germany in a Semi-Gaullist Europe," *Foreign Affairs*, Spring 1980.

which is likely to dominate the Alliance relationship during the present decade. In this respect, the underlying trend is the increased emphasis on the conventional component of the Western deterrent, a tendency reinforced in the wake of Afghanistan. It gave rise to a notion of 'Europeanisation' of NATO, which makes West Europe vulnerable to Soviet attack.¹³ A connection may be made in this respect, with the NATO Summit decision in May 1978 in accordance with which each of the Alliance members was to make an increase of 3 percent in its annual defence budget. But with the recession on with all its component miseries West Europe has failed to comply with the Alliance commitment. It angers the Americans leading to plaguing of transatlantic relations. The problem is further compounded by the debates preceding and following the deployment of American Pershing-II and Cruise missiles in Western Europe.

Under the circumstances, it can be safely asserted that the task of maintaining a relatively uniform perception of defence needs on either side of the Atlantic will, by no means, be an easy one. From strategic point of view, even if the allies share some common security interests, their ways and means to implement them seem to be differing and complex than ever before.

Political Aspect

The very creation of NATO which was preceded by Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan, was a testimony to the fact that there was unity of purpose and the relations were harmonious among its members. From the outset there were those who advocated a considerably more far-reaching kind of unity among members than was actually provided for in the treaty (NATO). The Atlantic Union movement, identified for so many years with Clarence Streit sought a federation of the Western democracies, arguing that conventional alliances have always failed in history and that NATO could scarcely hope to escape a similar fate.¹⁴ "Streit's was not such a lone voice

13. *The Bangladesh Observer*, Dhaka, March 01, 1984,

14. Clarence Streit, *Freedom and Union* (February, 1964) pp. 4-5, quoted in *NATO The Next Thirty Years*, *op cit.*, p. 419.

crying in the wilderness as one might suppose today. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, such personalities as Sir Anthony Eden (Lord Avon), Nelson Rockefeller, Konrad Adenauer and Franz Josef Strauss all supported the Atlantic Union ideal in one form or another.¹⁵ But it was clear that the realities of American politics and the drift of events in Europe made its realization a remote possibility. As McGeorge Bundy, President Kennedy's adviser for National Security Affairs, put it in a speech in Chicago on December 6, 1961, "A full-blown Atlantic Union.... is still constitutionally and psychologically out of range for the people of the United States."¹⁶

The relationship of the aspirations toward an Atlantic Union and the more potent movement toward European integration during the same pre-De Gaulle era was quite evident in Europe. The advocates were associated with the great drive toward supranational integration which reflected the idealism and energy of the first generation of post-War European leaders. On the American side, from the beginning there were essentially two approaches to European unity. A majority supported it more or less enthusiastically as being in the US national interest. On the other hand a strong minority saw European Unity as a rival to the Atlantic community and ultimately a disruptive factor within NATO. The idea of transatlantic partnership survived even during the Kennedy and Nixon Administration. It is evident from the Kissinger proposed "Atlantic Charter" in 1973 and the "Declaration on Atlantic Relations" (Ottawa Declaration) in 1974.¹⁷ But in the history of transatlantic relationship, there have been real crises—the crisis over the rearmament of West Germany and the European Defence Community (EDC) that failed to be formed in the 1950s. Then commenced the Suez crisis in 1956 when the Anglo-French forces

15. Martin J. Hillenbrand, "Structural and Organizational Problems of NATO: Some Solutions", in Kenneth A. Myers : (ed) *NATO: The Next Thirty Years*, *op. cit.* p. 419.

16. *NATO: The Next Thirty Years*, *op. cit.*, p. 419.

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 420-421.

along with the Israelis had to yield to pressure from the USA and the USSR as a result of which the West Europeans had to change the role with the US in dominating the Middle East. Then followed the French independent standpoint and resistance against integration and De Gaulle's challenge to the existing arrangements, which ultimately led to France's withdrawal in 1966 from the integrated military organisation of the Atlantic Alliance. France under De Gaulle wanted to increase national prestige by following policies independent of the interests and desires of the United States. De Gaulle's visits to Eastern Europe and Latin American countries in 1964 bear a testimony to the above statement.¹⁸ During the Yom Kippur War West Europe differed with the US when the latter wanted to use staging facilities in the former for reinforcement to Israel, for fear of running a risk of Arab retaliation. It is known that in the 1970s the emergence of the so-called Eurocommunist phenomenon led to American indignation. During the period, the Eurocommunists were treated as a factor of change in the Western half of the European security equation, having bearing on US interests in Europe. The same, probably, can be said about the Socialist regimes in contemporary Europe. Today West Europe accuses the US of overreaction while the latter holds the former responsible for underreaction concerning Afghanistan. Washington's allies in West Europe who were preparing for the deployment of American Euro-missiles were disturbed at the US invasion of Grenada.¹⁹ The transatlantic relations have been further gloomy over the deployment of Euromissiles with the beginning of the year causing uncertainty around the START, INF and MBFR talks after their abandonment by the Soviet Union. All this means that the Europeans have some interests not in similarity with those of the US. That's peaks of a distinctive European way of looking at the world today.

18. Edy Kaufman, *The Superpowers and Their Spheres of Influence*, Croom Helm London, 1976, p. 49.

19. *Asian Defence*, January 1984, p. 156.

The Harmel report (to assure defence and to pursue Detente) and Brandt's *ostpolitik* were a formal indication of the policy of Detente. Detente meant for the West Europeans not only the relaxation of East-West tension, it meant a new source of raw materials and a market for technology in the East. So, economically speaking, Detente was more vital to Western Europe. The image of the United States during this time was being hampered,

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due to Vietnam war and other activities elsewhere in the world, not only inside the country but throughout the whole world particularly in Western Europe. The whole international system underwent a quantitative and qualitative change. So it was only historical reason on the part of the United States to go for accommodation with the East. But West Europe coaxed much more substantially from Detente than the US adding strength to its economic might and self-assertion and thereby increasing political leverage against the United States. In the United States, with the post-Vietnam, post-Watergate era almost over, the Americans wanted to see a firm and persistent US foreign policy which eventually brought a conservative, rigid, firm and militant Reagan to power in the 1980 election. It is evident from a recent declaration by Reagan that the era of self-doubt following the Vietnam war was over.²⁰ But West Europe does not obviously like to sacrifice the benefits achieved during Detente in exchange of a return to the days of Cold War with the East headed by a real global superpower like the Soviet Union.

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20. *The Bangladesh Observer*, February 7, 1984.

the most. The Soviet Union—a superpower with global interests happens to be in Europe. Hence the Europeans seem more to be willing to coexist with the giant adversary than only dance to the wishes of the United States directed against the Soviet Union. The Europeans will continue to insist on Detente also out of economic necessity, and the United States will resist Detente until she finds a language of easy accommodation with the Soviet Union in the backdrop of the present day world scenario. The paths of the United States and Western Europe will continue to diverge until the challenge of finding an acceptable level of competition and cooperation between East and West is effectively met.

Economic Issue

During the period of the creation and development of the Atlantic Alliance and NATO, there was a determined will to rebuild the war-torn nations within the framework of a united effort. This constituted the basis of the Marshall Plan, which provided the means to reconstruct a new Europe. This was followed by the economic considerations which were included in the NATO treaty itself. These economic considerations account for Europe's capability of digging itself out of economic ruins and the attainment of healthy economic foundation. The US economic prosperity as well is deeply affected by the inter-penetration of the American and European economies. Of all US investment abroad nearly half (or about \$ 90 billion in 1980) is in Western Europe (double the American investment in Canada and four times that in Latin America). European investment in the US (about \$ 40 billion) now amounts to more than 70% of all overseas investment. It serves US interests. These interests include the maintenance of a free-trade system, collaboration in the orderly management of the world economy, encouragement of free-market system in the Third World.²¹ But with the passage of time as West Europe began to put on economic muscle, its burdensharing

21. See for details *Adelphi Papers* No. 174, "America's Security in the 1980s" Part II, pp. 20-21.

in defence budget did not commensurate with it when compared to that of the United States. It helped West Europe to economically flourish further. The creation of EEC in 1957 and its subsequent development is an evidence in hand. The policy of detente helped West Europe immensely. Economic sector was the area where the West Europeans, gained the most. East Europe, including the USSR served as the source of many raw materials and a market for western technology, Europe's foreign-policy pronouncements have grown ever more pronounced in recent years, often pitting them against Washington. The two wings of the Alliance remain economic competitors in this period of deep recession which is fraught with the dangers of conflict as is evident from the words of Morse, "While interdependence can instill cooperative relations in periods of growth, it is a breeding ground of economic nationalism in periods of recession.²² The persisting economic problems contribute in large measure to a weakening of the political will of the peoples of the Atlantic Alliance nations. The prominent economic areas where the Euro-American nations conspicuously diverge are agricultural and industrial policy, monetary policy and the relations with the East. While the United States bitterly deplores the EEC for its policy of

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subsidy which allows European farmers to compete with American farmers in foreign market, the West Europeans reproach the US since she sells wheat to Egypt and other countries at a price well below that obtainable in the world market without considering the interests of the allies. New duties on steel imports into the USA

22. Edward L. Morse, "The New Economic Nationalism and the Coordination of Economic Policies," in Werner Link and Werner J. Fields, eds., *The New Nationalism: Implications for Transatlantic Relations* (New York: Pergamon Press 1979), p. 70.

was an unwelcome protectionist measure by the United States against her allies across the Atlantic. There is a growing protectionism in some other industrial sectors like cars, textiles and shoes. The illustrious gas pipeline case demonstrated signs of independent economic interests of the West Europeans with the Soviets where a rigid Reagan had to yield to European pressure. Western Europe showed considerable reluctance in economic sanctions against Poland and the USSR imposed by the USA after imposition of Martial Law in Poland.

Characteristic tensions are around the monetary relationship between Europe and the US. The "European Monetary System" (EMS) evolved in 1979 was designed to remedy the instability of the dollar-standard and erratic fluctuations it imposed upon European currencies. Today, four years later, Western countries are still in search of an orderly monetary system in which the key currency—the US dollar—will recover a relative degree of stability. Despite some encouraging signs in Thatcher's Britain and Kohl's West Germany, European growth rates generally remained flat or very low in 1983, with unemployment rising. And the Europeans blame their woes on the persistent strength of the dollar, high American interest rates and huge budget deficits in Reagan's United States. The thorny trade issues that have been plaguing transatlantic relations for years came to a head in 1983, with rumblings of protectionism sounding on both sides.²³ That the economic competition that goes on between the two sides of the Atlantic is fierce is evident from the words of French President Francois Mitterrand who said, "It would be extraordinary to think that Europe, the world's first economic power, could lose the game to the Far East or the United States, and be left for nothing in history's accounts."²⁴ This fierce competition within transatlantic community should be tempered so as to serve best their common as well as individual interests. The Atlantic

23. See *Newsweek*, January 2, 1984, p. 34.

Newsweek, January 9, 1984, p. 4.

24. *Newsweek*, December 12, 1983, pp. 33-34.

partners will have to solve their differences in the light of present achievements both domestic and foreign. Further, the transatlantic nations will have to address seriously the question of what is the appropriate economic relationship between Eastern and Western economies.

Social Factor

There can be little doubt that since the late 1940s changes have occurred, both objective and subjective: changes in the military balance between the United States and the Soviet Union, and changes in the relationship between Western Europe and the United States. The important point about the change in political generations is that it occurs everywhere, although not with the same impact. The one consequence that does seem universal is that the old generation of European-oriented US elites and of Atlanticist-centrist European leaders, whose informal understanding provided the basis for postwar cooperation, has gone for good.²⁵ This orientation is being replaced by more domestically oriented leaders. The Atlantic Alliance had always been looked upon as a community of nations sharing common values and basic political objectives. Overriding all national differences within the Atlantic Community, they had in the past successfully served as pillars on which the basic common interests rest. More recently, however, this community of values and objectives seems to have weakened.²⁶ The social dimension of the transatlantic tension is much broader today than it was years before. It now deserves the utmost attention because for the lack of social cohesion the relations within the Atlantic Community are bound to further damage the already eroding consensus on strategic, political, economic issues as well as threat perception generating from outside the formal Alliance area.

25. See Rebert M. Bowie, "The Bases for Postwar Cooperation," in Karl Kaiser and Hans Peter Schwartz, eds., *America and Western Europe* (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1977), pp. 47-62.
26. *Adelphi Papers* Number 182, *Defence and Consensus: The Domestic Aspects of Western Security*, Part I, p. 7.

Today's unrest in the social fabric of the transatlantic relationship is not a bolt from the blue. Suffice it to say that SPD (Social Democratic Party) opposition to Chancellor Konrad Adenauer's policy of integrating the Federal Republic into the West and subsequent left-leaning student movement have ultimately resulted in the emergence of the Greens in the present day West Germany.²⁷ But today the transatlantic tension is much deeper and graver than ever before. Public opinions vary on either side of the Atlantic concerning the Soviet threat and detente. Many Europeans consider the Soviet Union to be on the defensive, it only reacts to the moves undertaken by the United States. Having shaken off the fever bred in the aftermath of Vietnam War and Watergate scandal, many Americans wanted to see the Administration firm against the Soviet Union and check the latter's 'dishonest' harvests during the period of Detente. It caused a right wing upsurge in American society which probably brought Ronald Reagan to power. To many, Detente was perceived as a life insurance premium for peace in Europe. Although there are Thatcher, Kohl and Mitterrand in the European helm of affairs, it will be very difficult for them to change the nature of welfare states which

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they strengthened and enriched during Detente. They run a fatal risk of finding an alternative to Detente. Although the American Euromissiles have started being deployed in Britain and West Germany, peace movements, which started much earlier than the deployment, are far from dying down. In Europe, mass demonstrations have been taking place surrounding the 'Euro-missile' issue. These include not only young protestors, ecologists, some trade unions and

27. See for details Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr. *The Greens of West Germany: Origins, Strategies and Transatlantic Implication*, Special Report, August 1983 Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis Inc, pp. 19-46.

other cause-adopters, many middle-aged, middle-class, conservative Europeans have also joined. Especially among the Protestant churches, leaders have condemned in ethical and religious terms the development and possession of nuclear weapons, nuclear deployments, nuclear strategy and nuclear deterrence.²⁸ This turmoil obviously finds some transatlantic sympathisers. The role of German church groups, however, deserves special attention. Increasingly, anti-nuclear sentiment can be seen within the evangelical church and among catholic youth. This trend, no doubt, reflects latent feelings long present within Germany, but at the same time, it derives sustenance from similar groups abroad. Both the Anglican Bishops and the Mormon Church in the United States have taken positions which, in effect, oppose further deployment of nuclear weapons on moral grounds.²⁹ At the same time, there are Americans who raise the question as to why they should bear the burden of taxes for the security of the people (Europeans) who are reluctant to safeguard their own security. On the other side of the Atlantic the Northern Europeans are calling for a "Nordic zone of Peace", while the Southerners are demanding a "Mediterranean Zone of Peace" about which discussions will be held in the Conference on Disarmament in Europe (CDE) started in Stockholm on January 17, 1984.

On each side of the Atlantic, there are growing frustrations with the state of the relations but no one can think of serious alternatives. European pacifism and American unilateralism are both symptoms of the resurgence of new nationalist trends in the transatlantic relations.

Third World Factor

The World has profoundly changed since the end of the Great War. The political, economic and military dimensions of international affairs have been utterly transformed. The World has become

28. See for details *Adelphi Papers*, Number 183, Defence and Consensus: The Domestic Aspects of Western Security, Part II. p. 19.

29. *The Future of European Alliance Systems: NATO and the Warsaw Pact* edited by Arlene Idol Broadhurst, Westview Press, Colorado, 1982, p. 118.

increasingly interdependent. The interests of the transatlantic nations are no longer being served from within the legal boundaries of the Atlantic Alliance. It greatly depends on the Third World countries for import of various raw materials and personnel and for export of industrial goods and capital. So this peripheral aspect has become very vital to the economic health of the countries of the West. But due to lack of formal arrangement, the behaviours of the transatlantic nations concerning their interests in the developing world vary. Different economic interests of the Alliance partners are dictating varying political behaviour and approaches in different parts of the world. The prominence of this issue is the consequence of a number of convergent developments: the emergence of the Soviet Union as a truly global power, the growth of instability in the Third World, the decline of the West's ability to control its relations with the developing countries.³⁰ "There can be no doubt that Western security is still perceived to be intimately related to stability in regions like the Middle East.....The problem is not only that the members of the Atlantic Alliance import over 60% of their petroleum requirements, but that roughly 70 percent of all proven oil reserves in the non-communist world are concentrated in one small geographic region, the Middle East".³¹ At least until energy source and consumption patterns in the industrial world are dramatically diversified or altered, the security of the West will depend on the availability of a predictable supply of oil from this region at a reasonable price.

It is not untrue to observe that NATO allies are often under considerable pressure from Washington to see events as Americans see. It impairs the alliance cohesion. The Presidential Directive No. 59 (PD-59) of former President Carter declaring the US vital interest in the Persian Gulf and its readiness to safeguard it from

30. Gregory Flynn, *The Internal Fabric of Western Security*, op. cit., p. 23.

31. See David A. Duse, "Energy, Economics, politics, and Security," *International Security*, Winter 1979-80, pp. 140-53.

any (Soviet) threat, did not generate any enthusiasm among its partners across the Atlantic. The Suez crisis reminds us how Britain and France had to yield to US pressure and influence and paved the way for American predominance in the region. Even

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today the West Europeans do not share the US policy in the Middle East. The United States is unwilling to recognise the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, to press Israel hard enough to bring about a settlement of the Palestinian problem (core of the Middle East tangle) which is acceptable to all Arabs. The Europeans have a different approach which is evident from the Venice Declaration of EEC countries in 1980 where support and recognition has been extended to PLO. Although Italian, British and French contingent had joined the US troops in the Multinational Forces (and which have been forced to withdraw by now) in Lebanon, these countries do not subscribe to overall US policy in the region. As mentioned above, concerning Afghanistan the United States alleges West Europe for lack of adequate reaction while the latter accuses the former of overreaction. The transatlantic partners also held differing views on some issues in Africa. While the Reagan Administration has alienated much of Black Africa by moving closer to the Republic of South Africa, European policy seeks to develop a special relationship with Black Africa, solemnised in the Lome II Agreement between the EEC and African, Pacific and Caribbean countries.³²

32. *The Future of European Alliance Systems: NATO and the Warsaw Pact op. cit.*, p. 14.

Conclusion

It is seen from the above that the present-day world is quite different from the one which had prevailed and led to the post-War arrangement of the World. In the changed international system with its ever more competitive sub-systems, transatlantic relations have undergone dialectic changes in all dimensions—strategic, political, economic, social etc. These changes have affected the Euro-American relations throwing them into a state of confusion, suspicions, uncertainty and unpredictability in the 1980s. The game the Europeans are playing is that they take the US as the natural guarantor for the achievement of common objectives and interests of the West without commensurate contribution to it in terms of defence expenditures and at the same time, competing with the US itself by having learned to differently define their own interests and devising the means to accomplish and safeguard them. But the West European governments lack the political will to go for a European Defence Cooperation. The Americans on the other hand, seem to firmly want that the Europeans shoulder the burdens in every respect, and seem reluctant to let loose the reign of dominance over the Europeans. It tremendously sours the relations between them.

To remedy this, there has to be a substantial readjustment in their pattern of relationship. Although the transatlantic nations in the final analysis, do not seem to question the Atlantic Alliance, the grave frictions and disharmony among them at present are not without the danger of fatal cracks unless a formal pattern of behaviour is evolved and a coherent policy is truly attuned to the changes that took place in the past years and are still continuing to embitter the transatlantic relations. Possible or not, if the Euro-American relationship is to be kept going smoothly, there have to be a consensus on the priorities of policies towards the East and the Third world, the reciprocity in behaviour and adopting of confidence-building measures involving contacts and consultations, debates and persuasion on either side of the North Atlantic with a view to evolving a pattern of equal partnership in real terms.

33. See *Asiaweek*, Nov. 11, 1983, p. 11.