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# The Transatlantic Dimension of Persian Gulf Security

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Steve A. Yetiv

**S**TRATEGIC AND POLITICAL changes in Europe and the Persian Gulf bode well for the future security of both regions. However, while the unification of Europe into one political-security system may not be an unreasonable long-term ambition, it faces significant short-term problems.<sup>1</sup> Hence, it is not a realistic current-term option for the assurance of European security. With respect to the Persian Gulf, while the U.S.-led military victory over Iraq has created some opportunities for regional peace, threats to Western interests could arise again. Therefore, the need remains to develop a long-term security framework for Europe and the Gulf which accounts for the inter-connected security concerns of, and changes in, both regions. This article considers the costs and benefits of one such option which heretofore has received little attention.

## The Present Option: A Transatlantic Quid Pro Quo

To date, the United States has been heavily involved in the protection of Western Europe; and European states have participated in the protection of Gulf security. But major global and regional changes necessitate a rethinking of ways to protect transatlantic interests, particularly at this time when the allies are deciding how to remodel their force structures. The present option is based on the notion that for future purposes, overall Nato (transatlantic or Western) interests would be best served by a transatlantic quid pro quo of the following type: Washington would plan for Gulf contingencies, thereby decreasing the need for the European allies to deploy forces there. In exchange, the allies would relieve the United States of certain duties related to European security, and

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would contribute more financially than militarily to any future conflicts in the Gulf. In this sense, the allies would cooperate on how best to plan independent national efforts within the alliance to meet evolving Western objectives.

To be sure, compensatory efforts of the general type described above are not without precedent. European compensation for American intervention in the Gulf was considered in early 1980,<sup>2</sup> and during the Iran-Iraq war West Germany increased its naval presence in the Mediterranean to cover for U.S. deployments to the Gulf.<sup>3</sup> Some observers even asserted that Nato had accepted in principle the notion of compensation for U.S. efforts in the Gulf.<sup>4</sup> However, the present option is sweeping enough to represent a break with past practices.<sup>5</sup>

To be clear—the purpose here is not necessarily to advance the option described above, but to introduce it as an alternative to conventional wisdom. Indeed, even as we look to the future, the European states, including possibly Germany,<sup>5</sup> are considering a more active out-of-area role. They have given serious thought to the creation of a European rapid deployment force on the model of the French *Force d'action Rapide*.<sup>6</sup> For his part, Nato chief General John Gavin suggested that Nato review its treaty to enable it to respond to out-of-area conflicts or, in other words, conflicts that occur outside the purview of the Nato charter.<sup>7</sup> And the signing of the Transatlantic Declaration in November 1990 by European Community and U.S. officials laid the groundwork for a common security policy.<sup>8</sup> But would a more active out-of-area European role benefit Western interests?

The analysis here is based on Western military involvement in the Gulf from 1987–1991, with a particular emphasis on transatlantic naval deployments to this region.<sup>9</sup> However, it considers issues central to the development of any workable post-cold war security-political framework for in- and out-of-area strategic planning.

### Background: The European Dimension of Gulf Security

Nato's members have been forced to wrestle with the out-of-area issue probably more in the last ten years than at any other time in the past. And in no region has this been more the case than in the Persian Gulf where the allies share the interest of ensuring the flow of oil at reasonable prices.

The threat to Western interests in this region increased significantly in 1979 when the Shah of Iran was overthrown and the Soviets invaded Afghanistan. The United States tried to meet these challenges with numerous defense efforts, one of which was an unsuccessful attempt to forge a common allied defense strategy toward the Gulf.<sup>10</sup> Washington again requested European assistance in Gulf security in 1981,<sup>11</sup> but attempts to coordinate independent national efforts toward the goal of overall Nato security failed “for lack of implementation” despite the endorsement in 1981 of the Nato Council.<sup>12</sup> Little progress on this

issue was made until the Iran–Iraq war pushed the allies into taking some action in 1987.

As is well known, the United States agreed to reflag eleven Kuwaiti tankers in June 1987. In doing so, it wished to improve its credibility with Arab Gulf states, to deny Moscow a more extensive protective role,<sup>13</sup> and to ensure Gulf stability.

However, once in the Gulf, U.S. naval forces found themselves deficient in minesweeping capability, and subsequently requested minesweeping support from Britain, France, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and West Germany. The American request was handily rejected.<sup>14</sup> Although this was an embarrassment to Washington, it was not entirely unexpected. The allies wanted to avoid the escalatory potential and the costs of naval deployment to the Gulf,<sup>15</sup> and they were reluctant to confront Iran. By 15 September 1987, however, the allies, except for West Germany, had reversed their decisions and agreed to support U.S. minesweeping efforts. Thereafter, the European naval presence in the Gulf increased to approximately 30 ships.<sup>16</sup>

Iraq's brutal August 1990 invasion of Kuwait set the stage for the second major international deployment to the Persian Gulf. This time the allies had more reason to cooperate closely. Indeed, whereas they had taken an officially neutral stance during the Iran–Iraq war, Iraq's invasion of Kuwait gave them an unambiguous adversary against which to align.

The present option is considered with reference to the Iran–Iraq war and the Kuwait invasion cases. The option's political, strategic and economic advantages, and its drawbacks, are discussed in this study in that order.

### Political Advantages

What political advantages might the present option have over a multilateral strategy involving European and American forces for Gulf contingencies?

A brief review of the Iran–Iraq war and Kuwait invasion cases suggests that in some respects the coordination of multilateral forces for future purposes would be no easy task. In response to the Iran–Iraq war crisis, discussions among five European states for the formation of a joint European force<sup>17</sup> failed to produce agreement.<sup>18</sup> European forces did engage in some bilateral and multilateral naval cooperation during the Iran–Iraq war. For instance, Dutch and Belgian minesweepers received tactical support from British warships on a bilateral basis.<sup>19</sup> And efforts were made to coordinate a joint European naval force for the Gulf within the framework of the nine-nation Western European Union (WEU).<sup>20</sup> However, other than an agreement in early 1988 among Britain, the Netherlands, and Belgium for some mutual cooperation, European forces were generally uncoordinated.<sup>21</sup>

European naval participation during the Kuwait Gulf crisis was considerably more coordinated. Indeed, unlike during the Iran-Iraq war crisis, the WEU ministers agreed formally to coordinate their respective areas of operation in the Persian Gulf, and to exchange intelligence and engage in mutual protection of forces. They also provided mutual logistic and operational support.<sup>22</sup>

It is of course possible that the WEU can build on this positive experience. However, one must wonder whether the Kuwait case was an anomaly. That is, should strategy planning be based on a case involving an unambiguous and serious threat to all Western interests? One might argue that future crises will not present so obvious a threat to allied interests and, therefore, will be more difficult to deal with multilaterally.

Another consideration is that the decreased Soviet threat and changes in the European political landscape will contribute to a divergence of political-security perspectives within the alliance. Thus, for future purposes, the possibility of achieving a unified and effective transatlantic approach to the Gulf would be reduced by the increasing diversity of domestic political imperatives and foreign policy outlooks within the alliance. Public<sup>23</sup> and governmental opposition in Europe would pose additional stumbling blocks to out-of-area involvement. And, in Germany's case, such involvement would still face constitutional prohibitions.<sup>24</sup>

To be sure, some Americans would also be opposed to plans for foreign intervention, particularly given recent changes in East-West relations. But their opposition, on the whole, would be less severe because they tend to view the American role in the world more in global than in regional terms, whereas post-colonial Europeans tend to view their role in opposite terms.

Furthermore, the United States, unlike most of its European counterparts, has been less reluctant to use its muscle in the Middle East to realize its objectives.<sup>25</sup> To Europeans, Gulf security has been less a defense matter than a social, political, and economic one; unlike Americans, they have tended to ignore or play down challenges to Western interests.<sup>26</sup> This became evident during the first few months of the Kuwait crisis. Indeed, Germany and France appeared quite willing to strike a deal with Iraq's Saddam Hussein, even if it meant making certain political concessions to him.

To some extent, however, the transatlantic allies did achieve a higher level of political cooperation during the Kuwait crisis than one might have imagined. But, once again, this might have been because Hussein made it easy for them to do so. Had he been more crafty, and perhaps withdrawn from Kuwait fully or partially, differences in the American and British position on the one hand, and that of other European states on the other, would have probably become more clear.

Indeed, even as it went, some differences in viewpoint in the Western alliance became quite apparent. At the outset, transatlantic strategic planning was

adversely affected by national differences.<sup>27</sup> Had the allies not had six months to prepare for the crisis, these differences might have had more serious consequences, not only in terms of protecting Gulf security, but also in terms of transatlantic relations.

As time passed, Britain became disenchanted by Europe's weak support of the coalition in the Gulf and tended back toward the United States as a world partner. A senior British minister even went so far as to say that the Europeans were at best "reluctant partners" against the Iraq challenge and at worst "next to useless."<sup>28</sup> Germany appeared to view the war as an unfortunate distraction, despite the interests it had at stake.<sup>29</sup> Belgium refused Britain's request for ammunition for the Gulf. And, at first, France sought to pursue its own independent policy toward the crisis; only when this failed did it join the United States more earnestly.<sup>30</sup>

For its part, the United States decided to double its military presence in the region in November 1990 without consulting the European allies. This created some resentment in Europe.<sup>31</sup> In partial response to America's ambitious approach, Germany and France joined to block an American call for a Nato resolution of support for the war effort.<sup>32</sup>

In the final analysis, while transatlantic cooperation proceeded better than one might have expected, enough differences arose between the allies to cast doubt on whether such cooperation could be achieved should potentially more difficult circumstances arise in the future. Indeed, during the Iran-Iraq war, a case in which there was no accepted unambiguous threat, European states were wary of associating with American out-of-area defense efforts. To be sure, there were some notable forms of transatlantic cooperation. For instance, France and the United States did to some extent replace and change screening and stationing commitments.<sup>33</sup> By and large, however, transatlantic cooperation was wanting.

Both Italy and France, and to a lesser extent Britain, deployed their naval vessels to the Gulf less in response to American requests for support than to attacks on their own vessels.<sup>34</sup> Once in the Gulf, Britain stressed that its minesweepers would not accompany U.S. protected ships.<sup>35</sup> French and West German officials endorsed the U.S. attack on Iranian oil platforms but, like Britain,<sup>36</sup> the French took care to keep their regional presence distinct from that of the United States.<sup>37</sup> And a British naval captain even emphasized the separateness of British and American operations.<sup>38</sup> As will be discussed later in this study, the allies also adopted divergent rules of engagement.

This ad hoc arrangement of Western forces did seem to work in helping restore regional stability. This might be because any state's naval deployments, even if uncoordinated with the other allies, tended to benefit all allies involved, and because the strategic threat was not as great as anticipated.<sup>39</sup> But the Iran-Iraq war case also raises questions about the limits of transatlantic cooperation under more difficult political and strategic circumstances. And the ad hoc arrangement,

which will be discussed later in this study, also proved less than economical. In planning strategy, one might want to consider these points even if one accepts the recent Kuwait case as more suggestive of the potential for future transatlantic cooperation than the Iran-Iraq war case.

### Strategic Advantages

The political side of any security framework is obviously tied to its strategic side. From a standpoint of strategic coordination, the present option offers the advantage of simplicity. While U.S. forces would have to coordinate security operations among themselves, they would not have to do so to any great measure with the forces of other nations. Strategic coordination in an option involving European states in future Gulf security operations would require that the allies have closely shared objectives, a similar approach, and also an effective level of military coordination. These three factors would be particularly important in the Gulf where environmental pressures are more intense, constant, and potentially divisive than they have been in Europe. Each of these three factors is discussed below.

First, the allies shared the view that the U.S.S.R. posed the primary military threat to Western Europe. By contrast, threats to their interests in the Gulf have been multi-dimensional and remain ill-defined—the Kuwait case notwithstanding.

Second, strategic coordination would benefit from a shared security approach, at least in terms of rules of engagement. The Kuwait case is promising on this score. But the Iran-Iraq war case teaches a possibly different lesson. Indeed, France demonstrated the broadest engagement by pledging to fire in defense of all merchant vessels,<sup>40</sup> but also was wary of sending its minesweepers into Gulf waters.<sup>41</sup> By contrast, Britain restricted itself to an escort of British and commonwealth-flagged merchants.<sup>42</sup> And Washington broadened its commitment from its initially circumscribed role of protecting reflagged Kuwaiti tankers, to assistance for Nato warships which came under attack, and finally to potential support for all neutral shipping.<sup>43</sup> Each country defined and altered its commitment according to its domestic imperatives, military capabilities and specific regional interests.

Third, an effective strategy involving U.S. and European forces would also require military coordination. This poses some potential command and control problems, but, as will be addressed later in this paper, it also faces likely future difficulties of the interoperability of transatlantic forces.

The present option also presents some advantages from the standpoint of deterrence. Like the Gulf, Europe is protected by both conventional and nuclear deterrence. But in Europe, deterrence has worked. In the Gulf it has failed, and military forces have been called upon. The potential for conflict in the Gulf

makes it more important to plan a strategy that would operate effectively under tense conditions. In this respect, the present option has advantages over the multilateral option. Should deterrence fail in the Gulf, American forces could coordinate with less difficulty than multilateral forces.

The option which could best deter conflict in the first place, however, also should obviously be favored. If deterrence requires that the threat of retaliation be credible, then how does one define and apply the notion of credibility? For these purposes, credibility will be defined as based on the adversary's perceptions of the deterrer's military capability and the will to exercise that capability. It is recognized, however, that challenges can occur, even against nations whose capability and will is undoubted. Having said this, which option would best meet the requirements of capability and will?

A mix of American and European naval forces could exercise military capability, but could they muster the necessary support to present a deterrent as credible as that of a unified American force? Both American and European forces would have necessary U.S. backup support capabilities such as U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM),<sup>44</sup> but one could imagine scenarios in which the United States might be reluctant to use its backup forces to support European actions, and European states would be reluctant to accept such support.

Arguably, an American force would present the adversary with a less ambiguous challenge and with more certain retaliation backed up by definite and sufficient firepower and support forces than would a multilateral one. Consequently, the adversary would probably risk more for its adventurism in challenging this force than in challenging a multilateral one.

The second requirement of credibility is the will to exercise military capability. In terms of will, the multilateral option presents one primary advantage: A joint allied effort in the Gulf could create the impression of unity and resolve. The mere fact that the allies could agree on a common approach to a region such as the Gulf would add credibility to their efforts. By contrast, the present option could be interpreted to reflect a high degree of division within transatlantic ranks.

On the cost side, a multilateral strategy would increase the number of diverse targets that an adversary could hit, and probably decrease the likelihood that any one nation would feel it necessary to retaliate. By contrast, unified U.S. forces would symbolize the resolve of one nation, and they would probably be perceived as more willing to use their military capabilities than would be European forces. The Iran-Iraq war is perhaps suggestive of this point.

In the words of a senior American diplomat, the Europeans saw a real risk in "actually having to confront the Iranians,"<sup>45</sup> and they were reluctant to do so during the war.<sup>46</sup> This was not surprising, given their general aversion to out-of-area involvement and, in certain cases, their substantial yearly trade with Iran of an overall \$4.8 billion compared to \$59 million for the United States.<sup>47</sup>



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Though Iran was less than daunted, at times, by U.S. forces, at other times the opposite seemed to hold true. For example, by the end of 1987, U.S. forces escorted twenty-three convoys without attack from either Iran or Iraq.<sup>48</sup> The U.S. helicopter attack which crippled an Iranian minelaying ship in September 1987 also seemed to deter Iran for several months.<sup>49</sup>

While the Europeans by and large have been reluctant to exercise their muscle in the Gulf, they have also been apprehensive about the possibility that an unchecked American presence would simply exacerbate tensions.<sup>50</sup> Though this is not an unreasonable concern, one must also note that future European deployments to the Gulf would not necessarily reduce tensions. An uncoordinated presence could even worsen them. Meanwhile, the present option, backed up by a European sanction, could deter conflict or impose disincentives to its escalation.

### Economic Advantages

Though economics is concerned primarily with profit-maximization, and whereas military strategy is concerned more with security maximization, both require that resources be allocated effectively among competing objectives and that comparative advantage be utilized. Given this, a case can be made that the Europeans are best able to protect European security, particularly given the decreased threat from the U.S.S.R., whereas Washington is best suited to protect Gulf security.

First, since 1979 the United States has gone to great lengths to improve its defense posture in the Persian Gulf. U.S. rapid deployment forces have been developed and improved, U.S. intelligence and communication capabilities have been enhanced, military access arrangements with local regimes have been made, and a regional military infrastructure for U.S. forces has been built.<sup>51</sup> Thus, U.S. naval forces could be supported by broad political-military security arrangements. Though the Europeans could complement U.S. efforts, this might not yield significant enough strategic benefits to justify the cost. Meanwhile, European deployments would draw resources away from European security efforts where they could yield more security per dollar.<sup>52</sup>

To be sure, European minesweeping support for U.S. forces and European assistance in enforcing the embargo against Iraq was quite valuable during the Iran-Iraq war and Kuwait invasion crises respectively. However, it should also be noted that the mine threat during the Iran-Iraq war proved to be less significant than expected.<sup>53</sup> And, for future purposes, one might wonder whether major European participation in Gulf security will be so needed. Indeed, America is more able now than it was before the Iran-Iraq war and Kuwait crises to handle future mine warfare<sup>54</sup> and other threats to Western interests. Moreover, Arab Gulf states, whose stake in Gulf security is at least as

high as that of the West, also could increase their role in ensuring unimpeded Gulf shipping.<sup>55</sup>

Second, the force structures of most European states are set up more to protect Europe than the Gulf. They would have to shift their resources and develop their force projection capabilities to prepare effectively for operations in the Gulf.

While some observers have promoted such a policy,<sup>56</sup> they have done so against some trends in European strategy. Of Nato's non-American members, only France, Britain and Turkey have notable deployment capabilities.<sup>57</sup> However, Britain has been restructuring its forces in a way which conflicts with an out-of-area role.<sup>58</sup> Turkey is averse to involvement in Gulf contingencies, and France has traditionally approached such matters independently, although it is true that the French are in the process of upgrading their rapid intervention forces.<sup>59</sup>

Beyond this, European power projection capabilities for Gulf contingencies, the case of France being a possible exception, have decreased in the last two decades.<sup>60</sup> And as retired Admiral Sir Peter Stanford of the Royal Navy has aptly put it, "the evolution of command, control, and communications systems at different rates and in different directions could speedily weaken the closest allies' already tenuous interoperability with the U.S. Navy."<sup>61</sup> That the allies will probably have difficulty keeping up technologically with the U.S. Navy might suggest a less ambitious out-of-area role for their forces.

In brief, one might argue that it would be economically impractical for the Europeans to plan for the defense of the Gulf, particularly if America is doing so as well. The planning itself, regardless of actual deployment, would divert resources from European security and political concerns.

Third, in terms of economies of scale, the present option seems most efficient since one strategic infrastructure (America's) could be specifically designed to undergird all strategic operations. A multilateral approach, by contrast, would involve several infrastructures working on smaller scales of operation, which would probably create rising costs. For their part, the Dutch, who played a key coordinating role during the Iran-Iraq war, tried to persuade the British and the Belgians that a smaller, better organized naval force could do the job as well as a loosely organized one.<sup>62</sup> The Dutch estimated that less than half the mine countermeasures and support vessels would have been needed were it not for political inhibitions among the European allies.<sup>63</sup>

Another aspect of the economic issue to consider is opportunity cost. European force deployments to the Gulf, as in France's case, would require U.S. strategic lift support. This would entail the opportunity costs of preventing the United States from deploying some of its forces, which are more effective than are France's.<sup>64</sup> In addition, if European vessels were operating in the Gulf, they obviously could not perform duties elsewhere. Such a drain on Nato forces, as noted, could reduce European efforts to ensure certain security interests in

Europe.<sup>65</sup> For instance, twenty percent of the Royal Navy's total destroyer-frigate force was involved in Gulf security in 1987.<sup>66</sup> To be sure, an argument could be made that U.S. deployments to the Gulf would also divert resources away from security interests in Europe. However, while Washington would be heavily involved in Gulf security even if the Europeans were present there, the opposite would be less true.

### Drawbacks Considered

The present option also has some drawbacks which should be considered. First, some Europeans might view it as providing America *carte blanche* to play with their interests in the Gulf. The Europeans might want to circumvent this obstacle by endeavoring independently to protect their vital interests in the Persian Gulf. This would certainly hold for France which has the ability and interest to play a significant regional role.

The present option, however, also would offer some European states benefits which may lessen their opposition to it. The allies could accommodate longstanding domestic opposition to out-of-area involvement. They would also avoid some of the high costs of planning for, and possibly engaging in, long distance deployments and the potential of future military escalation with important and well-armed trading partners.

Second, in the United States, the present option could be viewed as another extension of U.S. responsibilities in the Gulf with little in exchange from the allies. This would be particularly problematic given recent changes at the global level which might enforce the isolationist impulse in some quarters in America. In addition, the American public might be reluctant to support U.S. intervention in the Gulf in future conflicts without some European military involvement. Indeed, the participation of European forces in the Iran-Iraq case helped the Reagan administration obtain congressional approval for its policies.<sup>67</sup>

However, just as Europe could gain from this strategy, so could Washington. A valid *quid pro quo* would decrease U.S. responsibilities in areas where European nations have comparative advantage. Hence, Washington might save some monies and placate domestic pressures for a decreased U.S. presence in Europe, pressures that will probably only worsen with time. In addition, by decreasing their financial expenditures on the political-security infrastructure required to send forces to the Gulf, and by avoiding such deployments, the European states would have greater financial means to support U.S. military efforts there in the event of future regional conflicts.

Third, if the American profile in the Gulf increased visibly, the U.S.S.R., Iran, China, and even American regional allies might see it as an American attempt to secure the Gulf for a future when dwindling oil supplies heighten its importance as a critical strategic chokepoint. This, then, could push them to

take measures they might otherwise not take to position themselves better for long-term influence in the region. The fact that states in international relations tend to have difficulty distinguishing offensive from defensive intentions would only increase the potential for such a development.

Fourth, the Arab states of the Gulf have generally preferred a more limited U.S. presence in the region. Indeed, during the Iran-Iraq "Tanker War," these states welcomed proposals for the creation of an international naval force to protect civilian shipping in the Gulf.<sup>68</sup> A larger than needed U.S. profile, particularly in times of less instability, could pose more political costs than strategic benefits. Arab Gulf states, however, have been supportive of a low-key, "over-the-horizon" American presence in the region and they would probably want a strong U.S. presence in the area should any regional power again become a major threat. This has only been reinforced by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

Sixth, to the extent that a state's economic-political influence is related to perceptions of its military capability, some elements in European states might be reluctant to reduce their leverage in the Gulf by diminishing their security role. It is no coincidence that the states that participated in Kuwait's liberation are also benefiting economically in the rebuilding of Kuwait and in improved associations with oil-rich Arab states. Based on the same logic, a U.S. force structure shift away from Europe could potentially reduce Washington's economic-political influence there at a time of European transformation.<sup>69</sup>

Seventh, one might argue that the United States will be dependent on European naval support in the future, and ground and air support as well. Indeed, during the Kuwait crisis, the United States asked the European states to provide cargo ships to move Arab troops and weapons to the area. According to one estimate, foreign ships provided forty-seven percent of the sealift for the U.S.-led effort.<sup>70</sup> And the Europeans also helped enforce the embargo against Iraq and guard against mines. Indeed, Britain's role in mine countermeasure operations was crucial. While this study suggests that the United States and Arab states could potentially handle future threats themselves, this point clearly needs more intense study.

Eighth, while interoperability of allied forces is quite difficult, it might be plausible with respect to certain force missions between particularly suited states. For instance, one observer has argued that France and the United States might benefit from joint naval operations between potentially interoperable battle groups.<sup>71</sup>

## Conclusion

Strategy planning for Europe and the Persian Gulf in a period of global and regional change will be both quite difficult and necessary. This study has presented the costs and benefits of one option which is worth considering in an

effort to devise an optimal strategy for the protection of transatlantic interests in the future. As things now stand, it appears that the European allies will assume a greater role in the protection of Gulf security. But at a minimum this study suggests that the allies should give this strategy more thought in terms of its potential political, strategic, and economic shortcomings.

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## Notes

1. See Michael Howard, "The Remaking of Europe," *Survival*, March/April, 1990, pp. 99-106.
2. "Defence Planning Committee Final Communique," *NATO Review*, 1980, pp. 31-32.
3. *James Defence Weekly*, "W. Germany Steps in to Support US Naval Duties," 15 August 1987, p. 270.
4. See James R. Blaker, "The Out-of-Area Question and NATO Burden Sharing," in Linda P. Brady and Joyce P. Kaufman, eds., *NATO in the 1980s* (New York: Praeger, 1985), p. 46.
5. In a historic move, Germany decided in the aftermath of the U.S.-led war against Iraq to send its troops in noncombat roles to build refugee camps for the Kurds near the Iranian border area. See Marc Fisher, "Germany to Send Troops to Iran to Aid Refugees," *The Washington Post*, 24 April 1991, p. A23. In an equally unprecedented move, Japan recently decided to send a force of six ships to the Gulf for mine-clearing operations. See Steven R. Weisman, "Breaking Tradition, Japan Sends Flotilla to Gulf," *The New York Times*, 25 April 1991, p. A11.
6. See WEU (Western European Union) Secretary General, William Van Eekelen, "WEU and the Gulf Crisis," *Survival*, November-December 1990, pp. 529-530.
7. David White, "Commander Foresees New Role for Nato," *Financial Times*, 10 September 1990, p. 14. For his part, U.S. Secretary of State James Baker also suggested to a Congressional committee that America should create a new regional security structure similar to Nato for the Persian Gulf. On the regional response to this idea, see George D. Moffett III, "Gulf Officials Edgy over Ideas of Permanent U.S. Military Presence," *Christian Science Monitor*, 10 September 1990, p. A1.
8. On the increasing importance of security issues in U.S.-European relations, see Amy Kaslow, "U.S.-Europe Relations Shift from Trade to Security Issues," *Christian Science Monitor*, 20 March 1991, p. 1.
9. For a security framework which deals more with the ground and air aspects of strategic planning for the Gulf, see S.A. Yetiv, "U.S. Security in the Persian Gulf: Planning for the Future," *Strategic Review*, Fall 1990, pp. 30-38.
10. David Ransom, Lawrence J. McDonald, and W. Nathaniel Howell, *Atlantic Cooperation for Persian Gulf Security*, (Washington: National Defense Univ. Press, 1986), p. 81.
11. "Weinberger to Ask Help of Nato in Gulf Area," *The New York Times*, 11 May 1981, p. A10.
12. See Lawrence S. Kaplan, "The United States, NATO, and the Third World: Security Issues in Historical Perspective," in Robert W. Clawson, ed., *East-West Rivalry in the Third World*, (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, Inc., 1986), pp. 17-18.
13. Kuwait requested reflagging protection from both the Soviets and Americans. This left Washington with the choice of reflagging Kuwaiti tankers or potentially allowing the Soviets a more extensive protective role.
14. At first Washington wanted active European tactical support for the U.S. Navy's operations in the Gulf, but the cautious European response led the United States to play this down. *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, December 1987, p. 35597.
15. Although the British were already active in the Gulf, and had been since 1980 with the two-*frigate Armilla Patrol*, and France also had an Indian Ocean naval presence.
16. For a full lineup of the Western naval presence, see *June's Defence Weekly*, 26 September 1987, p. 671.
17. See Elaine Sciolino, "Shultz Says European Allies Are Weighing Aid on Mines," *The New York Times*, 7 August 1987, p. A3.
18. *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, December 1987, p. 35598.
19. *The Economist*, "Iraq's Round," 12 September 1987, p. 48.
20. James M. Markham, "European Policy in the Gulf: A Striking Reversal," *The New York Times*, 16 September 1987, p. A14. The WEU is composed of Belgium, France, West Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. Spain and Portugal joined the WEU in March 1990.
21. Michael Chichester, "Allied Navies and the Gulf War: Strategic Implications," *Navy International*, June 1988, p. 320.
22. For an authoritative account of the WEU'S role in European and Persian Gulf security, see William Van Eekelen, "Building a New European Security Order: WEU'S Contribution," *NATO Review*, August

1990, pp. 18-23. Also, on the WEU's contribution during the Kuwait crisis, see Van Eekelen, "WEU and the Gulf Crisis," p. 522.

23. Although one might note that in one poll seventy percent of those surveyed in Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Spain supported the use of force to free Kuwait if necessary.

24. During the Kuwait crisis, fifty-three percent of the Germans were against changing the constitution to allow German soldiers to participate outside the Nato treaty area. David Goodhart, "Bonn Declines Military Payments," *Financial Times*, 7 September 1990, p. A2. As already noted here, however, Germany has decided to send troops to the Gulf in noncombat roles.

25. This became clear during the 1986 U.S. raid on Libya. Only Britain, against considerable domestic opposition, supported the U.S. action. On why the Europeans did not support the United States, see Frederick Zilian, "The U.S. Raid on Libya—and Nato," *Orbis*, Fall 1986, pp. 514-520.

26. Ransom et al., *Atlantic Cooperation for Persian Gulf Security*, p. 83.

27. See Howard LaFranchi, "Gulf Crisis Tests Political Cooperation among EC Members," *Christian Science Monitor*, 16 August 1990, p. A5.

28. See editorial, "... London," *Christian Science Monitor*, 29 January 1991, p. 3.

29. Jim Hoagland, "Germany: Timidity in Time of Crisis," *The Washington Post*, 29 January 1991, p. A19.

30. On the problems in European relations created by the Kuwait crisis, see Craig R. Whitney, "Gulf Fighting Shatters Europeans' Fragile Unity," *The New York Times*, 25 January 1991, p. A11.

31. *The Economist*, "Pygmy Roars," 22 December 1990, p. 48.

32. Hoagland, "Germany: Timidity in Time of Crisis," p. A19.

33. William M. Despain, "The French Navy: Friend or Rival?" *Naval War College Review*, Winter 1991, p. 71, citing interview with Commander Conway Zeigler.

34. Italy's deployments followed an apparent grenade attack on an Italian merchant ship. Markham, "European Policy in the Gulf: A Striking Reversal," p. A14. France sent a carrier group into the Gulf of Oman primarily because of an attack on the container ship *Ville d'Anvers*. Alexandra Schwartzbrod, *Armed Forces Journal International*, November 1988, p. 40. And Britain deployed to protect only British shipping. Francis X. Clines, "British, in Switch Add Minesweepers for Gulf Patrols," *The New York Times*, 12 August 1987, p. A1.

35. Clines, "British, in Switch Add Minesweepers for Gulf Patrols," p. A1.

36. Prime Minister Thatcher sided with Foreign Office specialists who wanted to keep the British presence distinct from the American one. James M. Markham, "Europeans Spurn U.S. on Gulf Plan," *The New York Times*, 5 August 1987, p. A1.

37. Edward Cody, "London, Paris, Bonn Back U.S. Response; Europeans Keep Ships Separate," *The Washington Post*, 20 October 1987, p. A26.

38. *Macleans*, 21 September 1987, p. 32.

39. Van Eekelen also pointed out to this author that the allies' use of certain Nato procedures facilitated cooperation.

40. Youssef M. Ibrahim, "French Navy Aids a Foreign Tanker," *The New York Times*, 21 January 1988, p. A7.

41. Clines, "British, in Switch Add Minesweepers for Gulf Patrols," p. A2.

42. Peter Young, "Peace in the Gulf: Illusion or Reality; Part I," *Asian Defense Journal*, May 1988, p. 38.

43. Robert Pear, "U.S. Will Increase Its Gulf Defense of Merchant Ships," *The New York Times*, 23 April 1988, p. A1.

44. U.S. CENTCOM is an outgrowth of the U.S. Rapid Deployment Force. On CENTCOM's support role for U.S. forces in the Gulf, see George B. Crist, "Bone, Sinew and Muscle for Regional Defense," *Defense/87*, November-December 1988, p. 38.

45. See Markham, "Europeans Spurn U.S. on Gulf Plan," p. A12.

46. *Jane's NATO Handbook*, "Naval Co-operation in the Gulf War," 1988-1989, p. 200.

47. "The West Gets Tough with Iran—Sort Of," *Newsweek*, 6 March 1989, p. 33.

48. *Jane's NATO Handbook*, p. 198.

49. "Six Mercifully Dull Months," *The Economist*, 20 January 1988, p. 32.

50. It was in part because of this that the Europeans opposed a unilateral U.S. role during the Iran-Iraq war tanker crisis.

51. See S.A. Yetiv, "How the Soviet Military Intervention in Afghanistan Improved the U.S. Strategic Position in the Persian Gulf," *Asian Affairs: An American Review*, Summer 1990, pp. 62-81.

52. A special report of the North Atlantic Assembly underscored the importance of task specialization as a means of avoiding overlap of military efforts. See Stanley Sloan, *NATO in the 1990s* (Oxford: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1989), p. 23.

53. Young, "Peace in the Gulf: Illusion or Reality; Part I," p. 38.

54. Indeed, the United States is improving considerably its mine-hunting capabilities. See Edward J. Walsh, "Navy Struggles to Manage Mine Warfare Shipbuilding," *Armed Forces Journal International*, March

1981, p. 48. The Senate Appropriations Committee has taken steps to improve U.S. sealift capability. See John G. Roos, "While DoD Sorts Out Sealift Shortfall, Army Planners 'Packaging' the Force," *Armed Forces Journal International*, November 1990.

55. The Saudis have already begun substantially enhancing their mine-hunting capabilities. See Michael Vlahos, "Middle Eastern, North African, and South Asian Navies," U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings*, March 1990, p. 140. Also, on proposed financing by Arab states of Western naval forces, see James D. Hessman, "Mine Warfare: The Lessons Not Learned," *Sea Power*, No. 31, 1988, p. 37. The Arab states did play a naval role during the Kuwait crisis: Lionel Barber, "Allied Warships Ready for Showdown," *Financial Times*, 12 September 1990, p. 2.

56. See Chichester, "Allied navies and the Gulf War: Strategic Implications," p. 321.

57. For a discussion of these capabilities, see Anthony Cordesman, *The Gulf and the West: Strategic Relations and Military Realities* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1988), p. 11.

58. On Britain's diminished out-of-area capabilities, see Bruce George and Simon Davis. "Rapid Deployment and Reorganization: The Prospects for British Military Operations 'Out of Area,'" *The Atlantic Community Quarterly*, Fall 1987, pp. 315-325. Also, on the British maritime decline, see Norman Friedman, U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings*, "West European and NATO Navies," March 1990, pp. 117-118.

59. See Friedman, pp. 119-120.

60. See Cordesman, *The Gulf and the West: Strategic Relations and Military Realities*, p. 2.

61. Admiral Sir Peter Stanford, "NATO Must Go," U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings*, March 1991, pp. 36-40.

62. "Six Mercifully Dull Months," *The Economist*, 30 January 1988, p. 32.

63. See Eric Grove, *Maritime Strategy and European Security* (London: Brassey's Ltd., 1990), p. 65.

64. Cordesman, *The Gulf and the West: Strategic Relations and Military Realities*, p. 11.

65. See *Time*, "Troubled Waters," 1 June 1987, p. 22.

66. Chichester, "Allied Navies and the Gulf War: Strategic Implications," p. 319.

67. Van Eekelen, "WEU and the Gulf Crisis," p. 522.

68. Indeed, Van Eekelen stressed to this author his not uncommon belief that America wants not only to play a role in Europe but to remain a European power.

69. Michael Ross, "Arab States in Gulf Urge Sanctions against Iran," *The Washington Post*, 30 December 1987, p. A18.

70. George C. Wilson, "Operation Highlights Weaknesses of U.S. Forces," *The Washington Post*, 10 February 1991, pp. A3, 30.

71. For this argument, see Despain, "The French Navy: Friend or Rival?" pp. 62-75, particularly 70-72.

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A man ought to read just as inclination leads him; for what he reads as a task will do him little good.

Dr. Samuel Johnson