

Instead, what had emerged was a reconfirmation of prior signs that America would practice, at best, a very selective "multilateralism," one in which the utility of international institutions would be assessed according to their usefulness for securing American objectives. As a result, "although we are convinced the Americans need us to preserve a stable international system, we are increasingly worried that the Americans do not realize this." What this implied, in turn, was nothing other than a reversal of the conventional manner in which transatlantic relations had been conceived. In the past, the challenge had been to maintain America's commitment to Europe; today, "the challenge is to ensure that we remain engaged with the United States, and retain a capacity to influence its actions."

More than ever, preserving a healthy transatlantic relationship presupposes that the Allies demonstrate an equal concern for American security. Ambassador April noted that Canada had for many decades played an integral part in America's "homeland security," even if no one actually employed that rubric until very recently. There could not be any question of Canada's choosing to be seen by the US as anything other than a reliable partner. All the same, Canada remained as concerned as any European ally about US unilateralism. As a result, he continued, a "redefined bridging role" was emerging for Canada, one in which the country's efforts would be bent to the task of showing Washington that Europe could make a worthwhile contribution to American security. "Rather than being the other 'outsider' encouraging them to commit to Europe, we will be the other 'insider' encouraging them to engage with Europe on issues of global security." And whoever said "global security" was often as not heard in the US to be saying "American security."

What had to be done, said Ambassador April, was for the Allies to begin to make progress in shrinking the capabilities gap, and in this respect there was a danger that an overconcentration on ESDP would absorb energies that was needed for the urgent task of once again "reinventing" NATO. Here the Dutch could play a very important role, by "keeping NATO high on the European agenda." NATO remained needed, but it also was necessary for it to be reformed, so as to become equipped to respond to the emergence of new and unconventional threats. Although he did not specifically mention Iraq, the Ambassador clearly had that country in mind when he cautioned that the Allies would have to develop a coherent policy to govern their response to the challenge of WMD programs in countries viewed with suspicion.

Another area in which they need to make progress concerned ESDP, not only in terms of endowing it with the capability to assume its self-assigned (yet ill-defined) "Petersburg" tasks, but also to move beyond those responsibilities, and in doing so continue to enable Canada to play a meaningful role in European security. Here the Ambassador was frank in expressing his (and Canada's) dismay at what could appear to be