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Dissuasion and Allies

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by [David Yost](#)

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Dissuasion is the most obscure of the four defense goals set forth by the Bush Administration in the 2001 *Quadrennial Defense Review* (QDR),^[1] and the administration has said little about the potential roles of allies with respect to dissuasion. With the administration's second term at hand, however, the topic deserves attention on various grounds. These include the administration's troubled relations with some U.S. allies during its first term, notably over the intervention in Iraq, and America's need for substantial assistance from its allies to meet international security challenges. As noted in a rarely-cited passage in the 2002 *National Security Strategy*, "There is little of lasting consequence that the United States can accomplish in the world without the sustained cooperation of its allies and friends in Canada and Europe."^[2]

This brief essay discusses the concept of dissuasion before examining some of the questions it raises for alliance relations. As expounded by the administration, dissuasion strategies—like combat and deterrence strategies—apply to adversaries. Allies may be partners in pursuing shared strategies against adversaries and/or beneficiaries of U.S. assurance policies. However, if one looks beyond official declaratory policy and considers a broad definition of "dissuasion," allies—including the United States—may be the objects of deliberate dissuasion strategies. Furthermore, the complex relations among allies may lead to unintended and inadvertent dissuasion-like effects.

Dissuasion as a Strategic Concept

In testimony before Congress in June 2001 Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld listed the four defense policy goals that would formally appear in the September 2001 QDR: (1) to assure allies and security partners as to the effectiveness of U.S. capabilities and the reliability of U.S. commitments; (2) to "dissuade potential adversaries from developing threatening capabilities by developing and deploying capabilities that reduce their incentives to compete;" (3) to deter aggression and coercion; and (4) to defeat adversaries, "should deterrence and dissuasion fail." Rumsfeld indicated that the dissuasion goal could be achieved by developing "a portfolio of U.S. military capabilities, capabilities that could not only help us prevail against current threats, but because we possess them, hopefully dissuade potential adversaries from developing dangerous new capabilities themselves." In other words, the superior U.S. ability to prevail was expected to lead at least some possible contenders to make a cost-benefit analysis and thereby conclude that it would be wiser not to compete in the acquisition of certain military capabilities. In Rumsfeld's

words, “investing for the future and developing capabilities to deal with emerging threats... in some cases can dissuade them from even developing those capabilities, because it becomes clear to them that they’d be throwing good money after bad.”[3]

The 2001 QDR’s definition of “dissuasion” highlighted the importance of U.S. military-technical superiority in convincing potential adversaries not to compete:

Through its strategy and actions, the United States influences the nature of future military competitions, channels threats in certain directions, and complicates military planning for potential adversaries in the future. Well targeted strategy and policy can therefore dissuade other countries from initiating future military competitions. The United States can exert such influence through the conduct of its research, development, test, and demonstration programs. It can do so by maintaining or enhancing advantages in key areas of military capability. Given the availability of advanced technology and systems to potential adversaries, dissuasion will also require the United States to experiment with revolutionary operational concepts, capabilities, and organizational arrangements and to encourage the development of a culture within the military that embraces innovation and risk-taking. To have a dissuasive effect, this combination of technical, experimental, and operational activity has to have a clear strategic focus.[4]

In short, according to official definitions, “dissuasion” means to persuade other powers to refrain from initiating an “arms race” or competition in military capabilities. Official strategy documents suggest that dissuasion is to be achieved by convincing the adversary of the futility of competition with the United States, either on a general basis or in a particular category of military power, which could be nuclear weapons, fighter aircraft, attack submarines, etc. The goal is to make the adversary understand that it would be pointless to compete in the acquisition of such capabilities. If that goal cannot be achieved, the 2001 QDR suggested, U.S. investments and activities may nonetheless “channel” an adversary’s behavior and “complicate” its planning and thereby shape the competition. Dissuasion in the 2001 QDR means persuading others not to acquire specific military capabilities or otherwise influencing their force development choices, whereas deterrence means convincing others not to employ capabilities they already possess.

It must nonetheless be recognized that the concept of dissuasion remains vague, with multiple interpretations in circulation. Analysts are still exploring possible meanings and mechanisms of dissuasion. Some observers have compared the current state of understanding of dissuasion to the initial conceptions of deterrence in the 1940s and 1950s. It required several years for U.S. and allied experts to agree on the significance of basic distinctions, such as those involving central and extended deterrence and types of deterrence threats.

As an example of the potentially fruitful imprecision of current policy statements, one might note that, while most official Department of Defense definitions of dissuasion have emphasized discouraging adversaries from seeking or acquiring capabilities, the November 2003 Joint Operations Concepts document referred to “Dissuading adversaries from developing threatening forces or ambitions.”[5] The allusion to “ambitions” suggests possible distinctions between (a) convincing foreign powers not to compete at all, (b) inducing them to abandon efforts to gain certain assets, and (c) actively blocking or complicating their continuing attempts to acquire specific capabilities. In principle, the pursuit of all three objectives could be undertaken more effectively with allied support, for instance through agreements not to transfer arms or technologies to potential adversaries.

Allies as Partners in Dissuasion Efforts

The roles of allies in formulating and pursuing strategies of dissuasion have yet to be elucidated. However, given the historical record, it appears that, even when allies agree on dissuasion

objectives, they may not agree on how to achieve them. The difficulties stand out in a comparison of dissuasion plans with the demands of combat and deterrence strategies.

Allies have often disagreed on grand strategies for winning a war. Stalin's demand that Churchill and Roosevelt promptly open a second front in Europe is a famous example. Allies have also disagreed on deterrence strategies. The French rejection of the U.S. strategy of "flexible response" contributed to de Gaulle's 1966 decision to withdraw France from NATO's integrated military structure and to articulate a distinct national deterrence policy.

Allies have also disagreed on strategies concerning what could be called "dissuasion" in the language of the 2001 QDR. Indeed, they have disagreed on whether the fundamental idea of shaping or channeling an arms competition and thereby influencing an adversary's behavior makes sense. Even if they have accepted the idea, they have disagreed about how to define and pursue the goal. For example, in the late 1980s, when the U.S. Department of Defense articulated the "competitive strategies" approach to defense investments as a means to bound Soviet choices and affect Soviet force development decision-making,^[6] an ancestor of the 2001 QDR's "dissuasion" goal, this approach did not attract much attention in NATO Europe. However, the attention it received was primarily critical, because it was regarded as oriented toward continuing the Cold War competition with the Soviet Union. Hans-Dietrich Genscher, the West German Foreign Minister, and various other NATO European leaders were at this time calling for NATO and the Warsaw Pact to seize the opportunities presented by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's "new thinking" and to establish "mutual collective security" structures.^[7] The predominant concept in West Germany and much of NATO Europe during these years was not to make military investments that would impose costs on the Soviet Union and thereby divert Moscow's force development in certain directions; it was to end the East-West competition entirely. In other words, at the end of the Cold War the preferred concept in NATO Europe for relations with the Soviet bloc, one ultimately accepted by the United States, called for terminating the arms competition by overcoming the underlying political antagonism.

In recent years, Washington has placed the agreed NATO work on missile defense within the framework of U.S. dissuasion strategy. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and other U.S. officials have suggested that the NATO allies have a role in dissuasion via missile defense:

[W]e must develop new assets, the mere possession of which discourages adversaries from competing. For example, deployment of effective missile defenses may dissuade others from spending to obtain ballistic missiles, because missiles will not provide them what they want: the power to hold U.S. and allied cities hostage to nuclear blackmail.^[8]

By this logic, the allied role in dissuading potential adversaries from seeking ballistic missiles will grow to the extent that allies and the Alliance as a whole develop and deploy missile defenses. Allied observers who have commented on the American theory of dissuasion have generally expressed scepticism, however, as to whether the theory has been proven or is even provable.^[9] One of the objections is that regional powers have motives for seeking missiles—for instance, competing with their neighbors—that are distinct from being able to threaten NATO countries.

Moreover, without using the term "dissuasion," Allied observers would generally place more emphasis on instruments for discouraging arms competitions other than unchallengeable U.S. or NATO military superiority: for instance, promoting regional political stabilization, peace, and security through nation-building and state-building, notably to support democratization in post-conflict situations. Some allied observers contend (a) that improving defensive and intervention capabilities may in some cases incite regional powers to intensify their efforts to acquire weapons of mass destruction and other military capabilities and (b) that more can and should be done to shape the security environment by upholding export controls, legal norms, and nonproliferation regimes. In short, dissuasion strategies may be difficult to pursue in an alliance setting because,

even more than combat or deterrence strategies, they may involve speculative judgements about the effects of policies in shaping the choices and behavior of specific adversaries.

The United States has been engaged in all of the prescribed activities, which have been pursued mainly for reasons other than dissuasion. While nonproliferation regimes, development assistance, and other cooperative activities have not been highlighted in some U.S. strategy documents, they figure significantly in the *National Security Strategy*. Moreover, the United States is increasingly disposed to accept an expanded definition of how to achieve dissuasion, despite the emphasis on military superiority in some Department of Defense documents.^[10] The clearest signs of this include the interest in reconstruction and stabilization in Afghanistan and Iraq. Some American analysts have placed reconstruction and stabilization efforts in these countries and elsewhere, including Africa and the Balkans, under the heading of dissuasion and “shaping the security environment” on the grounds that democratic market-economy states may be expected to become the security partners of the United States and its allies instead of engaging in arms competitions with their neighbors.^[11] The assumption is that authoritarian regimes tend to focus on rivalry and that “failed states” may serve as training grounds for terrorism, while democratic market-economy states concentrate on pursuing prosperity. The United States has a growing interest in gaining increased allied support and participation in reconstruction and stabilization efforts, although they will probably not be officially placed under the heading of dissuasion.

Allies as Objects of Dissuasion Strategies?

If dissuasion is defined broadly, as efforts undertaken to persuade a foreign power not to seek specific military capabilities and/or to shape its military investment choices, it is clear that dissuasion has for decades been a fact of life in intra-alliance relations. Indeed, with this broad definition, NATO's collective defense planning process can be seen as in some ways an exercise in dissuasion. Allies routinely try to influence each other's procurement choices so that their fellow allies meet agreed goals instead of pursuing national objectives at variance with alliance plans.^[12]

It is also plain that the United States has at times been the object of the dissuasion strategies of some or all of its NATO allies. Aside from regular consultations, arms control treaties have constituted one of the instruments available to allies to influence U.S. force development decisions.

One of the most obvious recent examples of allied efforts to shape U.S. capability development concerns missile defense and the 1972 ABM Treaty. In this case, dissuasion by allies was long facilitated by the U.S. government's own inclinations. The NATO allies strongly supported the ABM Treaty, owing in part to a conviction that it promoted strategic stability and helped to prevent an offense-defense “arms race.” Support for the ABM Treaty meant limiting U.S. missile defenses to treaty-permitted levels. In the late 1990s, as U.S. investments in missile defense research and development increased, Clinton Administration officials said that the United States was prepared, if necessary, to withdraw from the ABM Treaty in order to deploy missile defenses, but would prefer to retain the treaty, with adjustments, owing in part to allied support for the treaty. After taking office in January 2001, the Bush administration confirmed its intention to withdraw from the treaty, and some NATO European governments openly objected. In June 2001 the French government continued to hold, in President Jacques Chirac's words, that pursuing strategic missile defenses outside ABM Treaty constraints “would open the way to new uncontrolled competitions.”^[13] The Bush Administration nonetheless announced its decision to withdraw from the treaty in December 2001, with effect in June 2002.

Persuading allies not to pursue certain military capabilities has sometimes been an explicit part of national policy, notably with respect to U.S. extended deterrence commitments and the nuclear nonproliferation commitments of U.S. allies. For example, in adhering to the Non-Proliferation

Treaty, Bonn stipulated that “The Federal Government understands that... the security of the Federal Republic of Germany and its allies shall continue to be ensured by NATO or an equivalent security system.”^[14] Similarly, as Duygu Bazoglu Sezer, a prominent Turkish scholar, pointed out in 1995, “The Turkish commitment to non-nuclear weapons status is coupled with several strong qualifiers.” The caveats associated with U.S. nuclear commitments are perhaps the most significant: “the strategic balance between the United States and NATO and the Russian Federation must not be allowed to erode, by the former’s unilateral moves to the disadvantage of NATO, until Russia gives sustained evidence that it has devalued the role of nuclear weapons in its overall foreign policy, including its policy toward the near abroad and their neighbors rather than merely in its Western policy... In other words, the extended deterrence of the United States must remain convincing and credible to Turks as well as to *de facto* and *de jure* nuclear weapons states and potential proliferators.”^[15]

According to the Alliance’s 1999 Strategic Concept, “The supreme guarantee of the security of the Allies is provided by the strategic nuclear forces of the Alliance, particularly those of the United States; the independent nuclear forces of the United Kingdom and France, which have a deterrent role of their own, contribute to the overall deterrence and security of the Allies.”^[16] The 1999 Strategic Concept also highlights the importance of “coupling” to the U.S. strategic nuclear posture via U.S. non-strategic nuclear forces in Europe: “Nonetheless, NATO will maintain, at the minimum level consistent with the prevailing security environment, adequate sub-strategic forces based in Europe which will provide an essential link with strategic nuclear forces, reinforcing the transatlantic link.”^[17]

This statement usefully recalls the principle that in the “dissuasion” of allies (that is, persuading them to exercise restraint in the acquisition of specific types of military capabilities) another concept articulated in the 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review is important—assurance. Allies assured of the consistency of U.S. foreign policies, the genuineness of U.S. security commitments, and the adequacy of U.S. capabilities to honor those commitments may be less likely to augment their own capabilities.

This generalization must, however, be qualified on a case-by-case basis. Allies differ in their ambitions and capacity to compete. Some allies, like most small powers in history, rely heavily on alliance arrangements for their security, rather than on their own military capabilities. Other allies (for instance, France and the United Kingdom) have long traditions of national autonomy as great powers, and remain correspondingly less willing to accept dependence on others. From this perspective, it is not surprising that Britain and France are both nuclear weapons states and have the greatest expeditionary and power-projection capabilities among the NATO European allies.

If one can regard the constraints imposed on a defeated power as a form of dissuasion, some NATO European allies have dissuaded a fellow ally from seeking certain types of military capabilities. In accordance with the London and Paris agreements of 1954, the 1948 Brussels Treaty furnished the basis upon which West Germany and Italy were admitted to the Western European Union (WEU), together with the original Brussels Treaty signatories—France, Britain, and the Benelux countries. West Germany at this time renounced the production of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons on its territory, and accepted numerous restrictions on its conventional armaments—all within the WEU framework. The WEU established an Agency for the Control of Armaments to conduct inspections and supervise West Germany’s compliance with these restrictions. The WEU restrictions on the Federal Republic of Germany’s conventional armaments—types and sizes of ships, ranges of missiles, etc.—were relaxed over a period of three decades, but not completely lifted until 1 January 1986.^[18]

In addition to the formal restrictions on the armaments of the Bundeswehr, intra-European political inhibitions also helped to dissuade the Federal Republic of Germany from increasing its military capabilities beyond a certain level during the Cold War. In 1975, for example, Defense

Minister Georg Leber gave the following reply when asked about reports that the United States favored expanding the Bundeswehr to 600,000 troops:

There are many arguments against that. It is not as if the Federal Republic of Germany led a charmed life—not from an economic perspective either—and could afford everything. But more importantly, if the Germans were to increase their army while the others were to reduce theirs, inner-European problems would arise with certainty, because of the excessive weight that such a German army would then have in the circle of the West European military powers. And I must preserve Europe from that.[\[19\]](#)

The critical distinction between persuasion in relations with allies and dissuasion vis à vis adversaries reflects the fact that allies have recognized their interdependence and shared security interests with formal mutual defense pledges. The incentives in alliance relations differ from those involving adversaries in that allies rely on a presumption of continuing cooperation to meet shared objectives. Elements of distrust, competition, and antagonism tend to be explicit rather than latent in adversarial relations.

Historically, with the exception of nuclear forces, the United States has not been preoccupied with convincing its NATO allies not to acquire capabilities but with persuading them to do more. Indeed, no deliberate effort to dissuade allies from becoming competitors has been worth considering when allies have been reluctant to spend on military forces and have preferred to rely on U.S. protection. During the Cold War, the Alliance's burden-sharing debate consisted of U.S. efforts to convince the Allies to spend more on military capabilities, particularly conventional forces, while most of the Allies preferred to rely on U.S. nuclear commitments for their security. In 1981 Josef Joffe concluded that, "In the last analysis, the Bundeswehr is not a tool of policy but the price of America's continued security guarantee."[\[20\]](#) In the same year Horst Mendershausen wrote that West Germans "regard burden sharing not so much as a matter of division of military responsibilities as a kind of price to be paid for American protection."[\[21\]](#) Michael Howard, then Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford University, offered a similar generalization about NATO Europe in 1982:

[T]he peoples of Western Europe effectively abandoned responsibility for their own defense. Their own armed forces, forces which have always had the social role of embodying national self-consciousness and will to independent existence, became almost peripheral, part of a mechanism of nuclear deterrence the ultimate control of which lay elsewhere.[\[22\]](#)

In other words, there has long been a tension between (a) U.S. extended deterrence protection and the U.S. supply of security services that have the effect of making Allies into dependents, at least to some degree, and (b) U.S. demands for more balanced burden-sharing and for narrowing the U.S.-European capabilities gap, with a view to lessening Allied dependence on U.S. military capabilities.[\[23\]](#)

It would be inconsistent on the part of the United States to demand that its allies contribute more to the Alliance's deterrence and defense posture and also refrain from pursuing capabilities that could enable them to do so, lest they become better equipped to turn into America's "strategic competitors." Some Americans might prefer that the NATO Allies (and other allies, such as Japan and South Korea) improve their abilities to perform certain military tasks, such as peacekeeping and conventional combat operations, but avoid acquiring capabilities on a par with those of the United States in areas such as information operations and global space-based C4ISR (command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance). Restricting allies to certain capabilities has not, however, been the main thrust of U.S. policy in NATO since the late 1990s. It has been largely at the initiative of the United States that the Alliance has taken steps such as establishing Allied Command Transformation and the NATO Response Force. The U.S. goal has been to encourage allies to invest more in advanced military assets and thereby to

prevent a widening of the trans-Atlantic “capabilities gap” and to ensure, to the maximum extent possible, continued interoperability and effective communications connectivity.

Moreover, as some European analysts have observed, some of the Bush administration’s first term policy statements can be seen as paradoxically a form of “counter-dissuasion” in alliance relations—that is, motivating the NATO allies to improve their capabilities. In January 2002, for example, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld said that “The mission must determine the coalition, and the coalition must not determine the mission. If it does, the mission will be dumbed down to the lowest common denominator, and we can’t afford that.”[\[24\]](#) Some Allied observers have jumped to the conclusion that the United States intends to favor ad hoc coalitions of the willing over the standing Alliance, and have argued on the basis of this assumption that their governments must invest more in capabilities designed (a) to reduce their dependence on Washington, (b) to operate autonomously outside the NATO framework, and (c) to increase interoperability with the United States and other allies.

Unanswered Questions

In 1992, in an incisive analysis, Andrew Krepinevich raised a number of questions about the implications of what was then called “the military-technical revolution,” notably with regard to alliance relations:

Do we wish to develop the next generation military capabilities jointly with our allies, or do we hope to maintain some margin of advantage over all other countries? Do we envision coalition warfare in which our friends are as capable as ourselves? Or in which we provide certain kinds of military services or functions that our friends lack? Do we attempt to discourage first-rate military technical competitors by sharing capabilities and winning trust, ‘lending’ capabilities and building dependence, or maintaining superior capabilities and building entry barriers? Will ‘natural,’ economic limitations on what our allies can do make these issues moot (by making some advanced capabilities unaffordable to them) or make these issues more delicate (by making their capabilities more clearly dependent on our willingness to share)? Should our policies in these matters differ across different warfare missions?[\[25\]](#)

These questions may make the choices appear simpler and starker than they have been for policy-makers caught up in day-to-day decisions. It is likely that no comprehensive responses have been formulated because of the inherent complexity of these issues, the urgency of immediate operations and deterrence objectives, and bureaucratic compartmentalization, among other factors. Technology transfer restrictions, for example, have been piecemeal and subject to frequent redefinition, owing (among other factors) to reassessments of publicly available technologies and of the importance and sensitivity of specific capabilities. At any rate, it would be damaging for alliance cohesion for the United States to articulate a policy on the dissuasion of its allies. A sign of the controversy that could be associated with an explicit policy in this regard came in March 1992, when some excerpts from the February 1992 classified draft Defense Planning Guidance for the Fiscal Years 1994-1999 were made public. Some critics wondered if the draft goal of “precluding the emergence of any potential future global competitor” could apply to America’s current allies in Europe and Asia.[\[26\]](#)

The alliance relations aspect of dissuasion strategy nonetheless merits more attention. It has become more complicated since the end of the Cold War, because some allies have manifested a greater interest than in the past in pursuing capabilities collectively in multilateral frameworks (e.g., the European Union or smaller groupings) distinct from the Atlantic Alliance. In December 1998 U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright deplored “duplication” in the armaments efforts of the NATO Allies that are also members of the European Union.[\[27\]](#) Albright’s intervention, the initial U.S. response to the British-French St.-Malo proposal to give the European Union greater security and defense responsibilities, gained greater visibility than a series of U.S. expressions of

anxiety about European defense initiatives outside NATO since the early 1990s, including concerns about the European Corps first proposed by France and Germany in 1991. Albright's strictures against duplication could be interpreted as a vaguely formulated U.S. attempt at dissuasion. Her strictures raised questions that have yet to be definitively answered. Which forms of duplication in Allied capabilities should be considered constructive—for example, transport aircraft and aerial refueling tankers? Which forms of duplication could be deemed divisive and wasteful—for instance, European Union military communications networks separate from those acquired under NATO auspices? To what extent is the European Union prepared to reduce its reliance on U.S. and NATO assets and capabilities?

Whether and how the “dissuasion of allies” has been achieved historically—and whether and to what extent it has been a deliberate U.S. policy in certain capability domains—constitute important but unexplored questions. The United States may have achieved unplanned and unintended dissuasive effects on the defense efforts of allies that have chosen to rely on U.S. protection and to scale back their own military investments. Without intending to achieve this outcome, in other words, the United States may have had dissuasion-like effects on allied decision-making, at least with respect to certain types of capabilities. The United States has probably had dissuasive effects on the choices of some allies for various reasons, including the following: some allies may have been pleased to have Washington provide capabilities that they did not have to pay for; some may have chosen to buy American-made items of equipment because U.S. financial, technological, and/or industrial advantages have led to an American ability to produce some types of military equipment more cheaply than European suppliers; some may have been indirectly influenced by U.S. industrial policies such as “Buy America” legislation that have limited the market for European manufacturers and that have thereby increased the price of their products; and some may have found their options circumscribed by U.S. restrictions on technology transfers.

As this observation suggests, some allies may be rivals not only in the acquisition of new capabilities for their own armed forces but also in the production and sale of new capabilities in world markets. In other words, alliance relations illustrate a further tension in U.S. preferences: support for improved Allied military capabilities, to lessen dependence on the United States and to gain stronger partners in meeting security challenges, versus concern about the diffusion of technologies and capabilities to current or potential competitors. U.S. technology transfer restrictions, “black box” arrangements, and interoperability priorities, among other matters, raise an array of questions concerning dissuasion and alliance relations that have yet to be satisfactorily answered. Cases in which allies may have at times influenced and exerted dissuasion-like effects on U.S. force development choices in Alliance deliberations about strategy and procurement and in other international forums—notably multilateral negotiations about nuclear testing and various types of capabilities—also deserve more analysis and further study.

In sum, the implications of the concept of dissuasion for America's relations with its allies have yet to be fully explored. These implications are bound to be complex because allies can be partners in implementing dissuasion strategies against adversaries while trying simultaneously to influence each other's force development and other decisions. The United States has itself been the object of allied influence attempts; and Washington has intermittently revealed a certain tension—what some European experts have called “schizophrenia”—in its reactions to European defense efforts. That is, the United States has since the early 1950s called upon its European allies to spend more on military capabilities but has, especially since the early 1990s, often expressed concern about European efforts pursued in frameworks outside NATO. The United States will have to be more attentive to this tension in the coming years, because the European Union is unlikely to abandon its efforts to develop a European Security and Defense Policy and corresponding capabilities. This means that structuring NATO-EU relations will remain a key issue in alliance policy. The United States may have to choose between trying to encourage or “dissuade” specific EU efforts, in full awareness that attempts to discourage these efforts could backfire and have a “counter-dissuasion” effect.

Exploring the alliance relations aspects of dissuasion and other strategic concepts could offer an opportunity for the United States during the second Bush administration. The successful pursuit of the Alliance's operations and force development initiatives will not be possible without an improved understanding of (a) their underlying strategic rationales, (b) the national policies of the NATO allies, and (c) allied efforts outside the NATO framework, notably in the European Union. While U.S. public information efforts concerning the conceptual framework underpinning the QDR and associated policies have been inadequate and ineffective,[28] a more profound problem resides in the scarcity of informed in-depth debate about strategy in the Alliance. Despite the ponderous nature of NATO decision-making (a protracted process of consensus-formation), it would be advantageous to promote a far-reaching discussion in the alliance about the strategic concepts favored by the United States and other allies. Postponing discussion would only ensure that divergent perspectives on concepts such as dissuasion, deterrence, and preemption remain poorly understood in the United States and allied nations; and this would leave the field to half-truths and misunderstandings. Promoting discussion would enhance the prospects for effective alliance cooperation in formulating and pursuing strategies of dissuasion, deterrence, and (if necessary) combat.

Note: The views expressed are the author's alone and do not represent those of the Department of the Navy or any U.S. government agency. Special thanks are owed to Cees Coops, Kurt Guthe, Martin Neill, Joseph Pilat, and Michael Rühle for their comments on earlier drafts of this paper. An earlier version of this paper was presented on September 22, 2004 at the workshop on "Dissuasion in U.S. Defense Strategy" organized by the Center for Contemporary Conflict, Naval Postgraduate School, and sponsored by Defense Threat Reduction Agency's Advanced Systems and Concepts Office. Most of the papers presented at this workshop are available in the October 2004 edition of Strategic Insights, the Center for Contemporary Conflict's e-journal.

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1. These four goals are the assurance of allies, and the dissuasion, deterrence, and (if necessary) defeat of adversaries. See the [Quadrennial Defense Review Report](#) (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, September 30, 2001), p. 11.
2. [The National Security Strategy of the United States of America](#) (Washington, DC: The White House, September 2002), p. 25.
3. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, [Testimony Before the Senate Armed Services Committee](#), June 21, 2001.
4. [Quadrennial Defense Review Report](#) (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, September 30, 2001), p. 12.
5. Department of Defense, [Joint Operations Concepts](#), November 2003, p. 7.
6. For background on "competitive strategies," see, among other sources, Caspar W. Weinberger, Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report to the Congress for FY 1987* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1986), pp. 86-87; Caspar W. Weinberger, Secretary of Defense,

Annual Report to the Congress for FY 1988 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1987), pp. 65-69; Frank C. Carlucci, Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report to the Congress for FY 1989* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1988), pp. 115-118; Frank C. Carlucci, Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report to the Congress for FY 1990* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1989), p. 47; and Dick Cheney, Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report to the President and the Congress* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, January 1990), p. 1.

7. Among other statements, see Hans-Dietrich Genscher, *Speech at Western European Union Meeting*, March 23, 1990, text furnished by the German Information Center, New York, pp. 3-4.

8. Donald H. Rumsfeld, "[Transforming the Military](#)," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 81 (May/June 2002), p. 27.

9. Scepticism also persists in Allied expert circles as to whether U.S. cost-imposing strategies were decisively successful vis à vis the Soviet Union during the Cold War.

10. It is noteworthy in this regard that in July 2004 the Joint Chiefs of Staff approved a doctrinal statement highlighting the importance of nonproliferation efforts in dissuasion: "Nonproliferation efforts to dissuade the state actor from developing a nuclear weapons program may include surveillance and tracking of WMD development, enforcement of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, conducting information operations, and providing security assistance to the state actor." Joint Chiefs of Staff, [Joint Doctrine for Combating Weapons of Mass Destruction](#), Joint Publication 3-40, July 8, 2004, p. I-5.

11. These efforts clearly involve organizations in addition to the Department of Defense, such as the Department of State and the Agency for International Development.

12. Every year the NATO allies participating in the collective defense planning process under the Defense Planning Committee (at present, all the allies except France) submit detailed responses to questionnaires about their forces and plans, engaging in systematic and extensive information exchanges that would have been unthinkable in earlier periods of European history. The allies work together to define planning targets, looking six or more years forward, for their armed forces on the basis of the Alliance's Strategic Concept and ministerial guidance; and the allies monitor each other's performance.

13. Jacques Chirac, speech at the Institut des Hautes Études de Défense Nationale, June 8, 2001.

14. Statement by the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, November 28, 1969, an appendix in Joseph F. Pilat and Robert E. Pendley, eds., *Beyond 1995: The Future of the NPT Regime* (New York and London: Plenum Press, 1990), p. 193.

15. Duygu Bazoglu Sezer, "Turkey 's New Security Environment, Nuclear Weapons and Proliferation," *Comparative Strategy*, vol. 14 (April-June 1995), pp. 167-168.

16. North Atlantic Council, *Strategic Concept*, April 24, 1999, paragraph 62. This statement repeated an identical statement in the Alliance's Strategic Concept of 7 November 1991 (paragraph 55).

17. North Atlantic Council, *Strategic Concept*, April 24, 1999, paragraph 64. France is excluded by the "Allies concerned" formula at the beginning of the paragraph, not reproduced here.

18. *Thirty-First Annual Report of the Council to the Assembly of Western European Union on the Council's Activities for the Period 1st January to 31st December 1985*, Document 1061 (Paris: Assembly of Western European Union, 20 May 1986), p. 10.
19. Georg Leber quoted in Walter F. Hahn, *Between Westpolitik and Ostpolitik: Changing West German Security Views*, Foreign Policy Paper no. 1 (Beverly Hills and London: Sage Publications for the Foreign Policy Research Institute, 1975), p. 70.
20. Josef Joffe, "German Defense Policy: Novel Solutions and Enduring Dilemmas," in Gregory Flynn, ed., *The Internal Fabric of Western Security* (Totowa, New Jersey: Allanheld, Osmun and Co., 1981), p. 89.
21. Horst Mendershausen, *The Defense of Germany and the German Defense Contribution*, P-6688 (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, September 1981), p. 2.
22. Michael Howard, "[Reassurance and Deterrence: Western Defense in the 1980s](#)," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 61, no. 2 (Winter 1982/1983), pp. 312-313.
23. David S. Yost, "The NATO Capabilities Gap and the European Union," *Survival*, vol. 42 (Winter 2000-2001), pp. 97-128.
24. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, [Remarks at National Defense University](#), Washington, DC, January 31, 2002.
25. Andrew F. Krepinevich, Jr., *The Military-Technical Revolution: A Preliminary Assessment* (Washington, DC : Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, September 2002), p. 54. This study was prepared for the Office of Net Assessment, Department of Defense, in July 1992 and published in September 2002.
26. For background, see "[Excerpts From Pentagon's Plan: 'Prevent the Re-Emergence of a New Rival'](#)," *The New York Times*, March 8, 1992; Patrick E. Tyler, "[U.S. Strategy Plan Calls for Insuring No Rivals Develop](#)," *The New York Times*, March 8, 1992; Barton Gellman, "[Keeping the U.S. First: Pentagon Would Preclude a Rival Superpower](#)," *Washington Post*, March 11, 1992; and [Patrick E. Tyler, "Pentagon Drops Goal of Blocking New Superpowers,"](#) *New York Times*, May 23, 1992.
27. Madeleine K. Albright, "The Right Balance Will Secure NATO's Future," *Financial Times*, December 7, 1998, in Maartje Rutten, ed., *From St-Malo to Nice: European Defence: Core Documents*, Chaillot Paper no. 47 (Paris: Western European Union Institute for Security Studies, May 2001), pp. 10-12.
28. Significant misconceptions persist, for example, regarding current U.S. nuclear weapons policies. For background, see David S. Yost, "[The U.S. Nuclear Posture Review and the NATO Allies](#)," *International Affairs*, vol. 80 (July 2004), pp. 705-729.