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Anglo-American Strategic Defence Relations Revisited

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Conference Report

Anglo-American Strategic Defence Relations Revisited

Friday 20 February

Council Chamber, Singleton Abbey, Swansea University

By Ashley DeCarli

Event Summary

On 20 February 2009, experts from the United States and Great Britain gathered at Swansea University in Wales, United Kingdom for a workshop entitled “Anglo-American Strategic Defense Relations Revisited.” The event was hosted by the Callaghan Centre for the Study of Conflict, School of Humanities at Swansea University. The purpose of the meeting was to assess the current state of the Anglo-American special relationship and how it will be affected the new administration in Washington. The conference also was held in honor of Professor John Baylis, a leading scholar in the field of security studies.

Summary

The conference was scheduled into four panels with a moderator, two professionals on the theme, and a question and answer section to follow.

Panel 1: NATO

Dr. Bob Pauly (University of Southern Mississippi): NATO enlargement

Sir Emyr Jones-Parry: NATO and the challenge of Afghanistan

Panel 2: Terrorism

Dr. Len Scott (Aberystwyth): Intelligence cooperation

Dr John Gearson (Kings College London) Waging the “War” on terrorism

Panel 3: Nuclear Deterrence

David Hamon (Defense Threat Reduction Agency): Nuclear Weapon States Code of Conduct as a CBM to circumvent disarmament discussions

Dr Jeremy Stocker (Royal United Services Institute): Anglo-American views on Ballistic Missile Defense

Panel 4: Countering Nuclear Proliferation

Dr John Simpson (Southampton) Anglo- American defense cooperation and WMD

Dr James Wirtz (Naval Postgraduate School): Nuclear marginalization

Paper Presentations and Discussion

Net Assessment of NATO

Dr. Bob Pauly, of the University of Southern Mississippi, presented his paper on NATO Enlargement by discussing the history and initial development of enlargement. He used the metaphor of having a bridge, on one end the United Kingdom the other end the United States. The bridge represents the help the two actors give each other.

In the 1950s, the U.S. objective in Europe was to establish a defense community and to re-arm Germany. The next few years was full of objections, re-appraisals, and limited involvement, but in 1955 West Germany became part of NATO. After the Cold War, the United Kingdom and the United States wanted to reduce defense spending, but the United Kingdom remained concerned that Russia was still a threat. Despite concerns about antagonizing the Russians, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia became members of NATO in 2004.

Where do we go now? It is hard to say with the change of presidency, but one thing is for certain. The United Kingdom and the United States continue to work together to insure the success of NATO.

Sir Emyr Jones-Parry presented his paper on NATO and the challenge of Afghanistan. In the early 1990s, when Russia left Afghanistan, the international community had turned their backs on Afghanistan. The backlash developed and culminated on 9/11. The reality was that if we do not go to Afghanistan, Afghanistan would come to us. During 2002-2003, the fight to stabilize Afghanistan began with three objectives; creating a secure country through a military and police presence, develop political institutions, and encourage economic development and reconstruction. The initial debate in NATO had focused on what was needed and who could provide it – the conclusion was that NATO members were the only candidates to deliver what was needed. As a result, NATO adapted to an out of area Role. NATO was therefore confronting terrorism, insurgency and the international drug traffic.

Q & A discussion points:

NATO:

- Human Rights: Is there is too much emphasis on Afghanistan bettering its human rights record? Should NATO focus on first securing economic and political security? Women have few rights. Is there a moral imperative to help them?
- NATO cannot afford to lose support from its main members.
- There are many obligations that each actor must support. Example of concern: If Georgia had been a member of NATO what would have happened? Would we have become involved?
- NATO may be damaged, but it will not disappear.
- NATO enlargement may or may not stop, but there will be a limit.
 - Turkey: Europe is not ready for Turkey to enter the EU.
 - Africa: Security of states and restructure of military forces is becoming a new avenue for NATO to act among African states.

Nuclear issues:

- Every challenge is unique and there is no cookie cutter answer. It comes in small steps and it takes time.
- Nuclear disarmament will not occur. It is possible, however, that the United States and Russia to sit down and limit what they have

United States

- The U.S. military has surpassed British Military in terms of COIN.
- The United States is technologically ahead of everyone.
- How long can the United States sustain its status is in question.
- The world needs U.S. leadership

United Kingdom

- The United Kingdom is not focusing in areas in which it should be. They need to ask the question, what do we need from the United States?
- Old Europe VS. New Europe.
- The United Kingdom needs to spend more on defense to create better capabilities to conduct operations in distant theaters.
- The United Kingdom needs to work with the United States to better its ability to conduct combined military operations.

Net assessment of Terrorism

Dr. Len Scott (Aberystwyth) delivered his paper on Intelligence co-operation and the U.S.-U.K. special relationship and how it has dated from the Second World War. Many people argue that the intelligence relationship is at the heart of special relationship and both the United Kingdom and United States can attest to its importance. The intelligence special relationship is characterized by sharing sources, exchanging assessments, exchanging personnel, and even joint operations. An example that Dr. Scott referred to was on the Soviet bomber and missile capabilities in the 1950s. The arrival of satellite technology dismissed the missile gap and it is believed that the British updated their estimates of Soviet military capabilities based on the United States satellite intelligence.

Intelligence liaison makes a crucial contribution to responding to the challenges facing the international community, especially when it comes to combating international terrorism. The history of the U.K.-U.S. special relationship affords some insights into the challenges of cooperation and liaison. The international failure of intelligence assessment on Iraqi weapons of mass destruction is a reminder of the potential problems that are involved in sharing impaired analysis and propagating faulty information across intelligence agencies. Nevertheless, there are benefits in pursuing cooperation involving common interests, common values and mutual trust. Differences in experience and judgment can actually strengthen analysis.

The conflicts in Afghanistan and Pakistan are not going to disappear soon. Terrorist violence is a best thought of as a battle of ideals and ideologies. In the past, the special intelligence relationship between United Kingdom and United States has been kept in the background, but since the emergence of the threat posed by al-Qaeda, their intelligence co-operation has become more visible.

The latest example of intelligence operations that helped facilitate a positive international outcome involves Libya's verified abandonment of its program to build Weapons of Mass Destruction. This reflected Libya's changing relationship with the west, that was facilitated by British and American intelligence collaboration. This is a perfect illustration of how intelligence co-operation can achieve dramatic outcomes without the drama.

Dr John Gearson (Kings College London) used the title of "Waging the 'War' on terrorism" for his presentation to the conference. He suggested that there was much tension in the 1990s because many U.S. observers believed that Britain was being soft by allowing certain Muslim groups to operate openly and to raise money freely. Some suggested that as long as they did not attack Britain's, the government was content to allow them to remain. The al-Qaeda attacks on 9/11 eliminated any sense of complacency. The Britain's and the Americans were supporting different war lords in Afghanistan until the CIA changed their minds post 9/11. Cooperation between the United States and the United Kingdom is now the norm in Afghanistan.

Tony Blair believed in bringing the values of democracy and freedom to all people; the starving, the ignored, and the ignorant. Blair became a supporter of the United States battle of terrorism and declared the United Kingdom and United States would stand united together. Blair had a clear idea of

where the war would go while America was still in shock in the immediate aftermath of 9/11. When the George W. Bush administration finally devised a strategy, the United Kingdom was ready to support it.

Blair sent out a memorandum on 12 September including:

1. A dossier be produced on Bin Laden's guilt
2. That any response to 9/11 had to be measured
3. That the Taliban be given an ultimatum to give up Bin Laden
4. That relations with Iran and Pakistan were essential
5. That the middle east peace process needed to be restarted
6. The campaign would not end with Afghanistan, but that it was global

Q & A discussion points:

(SLIDE during Dr John Gearson's presentation)

Tony Blair Labour party

"So I believe this is a fight for freedom. And I want to make it a fight for justice too. Justice not only to punish the guilty. But justice to bring those same values of democracy and freedom to people around the world. And I mean: freedom, not only in the narrow sense of personal liberty but in the broader sense of each individual having the economic and social freedom to develop their potential to the full. That is what community means, founded on the equal worth of all. The starving, the wretched, the disposed, the ignorant, those living in want and squalor from the deserts of northern Africa to the slums of Gaza, to the mountain ranges of Afghanistan: they too are our cause"

- Bush should have said this – in fact he actually believed it but failed to articulate this message
- The White House approved this comment. In January of 2002, the Bush administration actually presented these same ideas.
- This also was the opinion of Secretary of State Colin Powell

America's National Anthem:

- This showed the special relationship between the United Kingdom and the United States. It was a great political element and the act alone was the most important thing that Great Britain could have done at that moment in time
- NSC advisor Condoleezza Rice remarked and not God Bless America, after 9/11.

If we abolish nuclear weapons we may be making the world safe for World War Three to occur. Iran wants to be among the owners of nuclear weapons, but no one else wants them to have control over such a device. In the future, there is a need for President Obama to push for ratification of Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), which is intended to prohibit all nuclear weapon test explosions, as well the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT).

Net assessment of Nuclear Deterrence

David Hamon (Defense Threat Reduction Agency) delivered a paper on a Nuclear Weapon States Code of Conduct as a confidence building measure (CBM). He noted that the P-5 (United States, Russia, United Kingdom, France, and China) have made agreements with each other to take actions to strengthen the Treaty on Non Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as well as to prevent terrorist access to weapons of mass destruction. Soon the P-5 will meet to examine the issues with verifying the legal abolition of nuclear weapons. A Code of Conduct would address both of these objectives

Today, there is not much dialogue between the P-5 states, but that will soon change given the political-military dimensions of the nuclear weapons and disarmament issues. These discussions will require leadership as well constructive engagement with nuclear security. Mr. Hamon stated that by the P-5 needs to undertake additional dialogue concerning these issues. In so doing, it can make significant progress to reduce risks and uncertainties. Disarmament dialogues within the P-5 help to create a common vision of a nuclear future.

This common vision needs to address anxieties about the spread of nuclear capabilities to states and non-state actors as well the goal of abolishing nuclear weapons.

Potential Payoffs of the P-5 dialogue:

- 1) Threat reduction
- 2) Major power cooperation
- 3) Nuclear disarmament
- 4) Risk reduction
 - a. Greater predictability
 - b. Reduced uncertainties
 - c. Stronger cooperation
- 5) Building habits of cooperation on strategic issues
- 6) Enhance security management of each state's nuclear enterprise

Dr Jeremy Stocker (Royal United Services Institute) presented a paper on Anglo-American views on Ballistic Missile Defense. Dr. Stocker's first example was of the 1944 attack by German V-2 missiles against Britain. The early plans of a defense made by the British were not practical, as a greater weight of anti-aircraft shells would have landed back on British soil than the V-2's own warhead. The UK tried again with active defenses in the 1950s, but gave up on the attempt on cost and technical grounds.

In the 1960s, the biggest issue was threats of nuclear-tipped ballistic missiles and the use of these missiles to replace manned aircraft, a measure that made obsolete existing air defenses. Nuclear-tipped missiles required a new level of defense, which could not be achieved in practice. This led to a situation of mutual deterrence between the Americans and the Soviets. British interest in missile defense therefore switched to the potential strategic implications of US and Soviet defense programs. Missile defenses were unlikely to challenge the huge offensive arsenals of the superpowers, but could pose a real problem for the UK's own modest Polaris force.

In the 1980s the UK was the first allied country to join the US Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), largely in order to assess its technical potential and strategic consequences.

Outside the superpower rivalry, ballistic missiles have been used in the Iran-Iraq War in the 1980s and the Afghan and Yemeni civil wars in the 1990s. This brought about a renewed interest in missile defense and a growing awareness in the UK that active defense may have a role to play. The UK has allowed the United States to use facilities in Britain as part of its missile defense architecture, but has yet to make any substantive commitment to BMD itself.

Q & A discussion points:

If we abolish nuclear weapons we are making it safe for a World War three to occur. Iran wants to be among the owners of nuclear weapons, but no one else wants them to have control over such a device. In the future, there is a need for President Obama to push for ratification of Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), which is intended to prohibit all nuclear weapon test explosions, as well the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT).

Net assessment of Countering Nuclear Proliferation

Dr John Simpson (Southampton) spoke about Anglo- American defense cooperation and WMD. The Anglo-American security relationship has gone from deterrence and non-proliferation to counter proliferation, but the real question is: Are nuclear weapons a solution to U.S.-U.K. security threats or are they part of the problem? The United Kingdom has sought a minimum deterrent capability as a guarantor of its security, but this has been dependent on the United States technical assistance. Until 2008, the United States was not serious with the idea of nuclear disarmament, but now both the United States and the United Kingdom see counter proliferation as central for their strategies.

Dr. Simpson sectioned off his lecture into phases of the United Kingdom and the United States activities.

Phase 1:1945-1958

- 1) Baruch plan
- 2) 1946 energy act and UK independent program
- 3) Eisenhower and atoms for peace
- 4) UNDC subcommittee CTBT/FMCT
- 5) 1958 MDA in exchange for US weapons data/assistance common purpose and interdependence

Phase 2: 1958-1970

- 1) Project E and NATO/ did the UK need an independent nuclear capability? East of Suez?
- 2) Testing moratorium CTBT negotiations Macmillan/ testing at Christmas island/ Nevada
- 3) GCD& 1963 PTBT (clean air act)
- 4) Economic constraints 1962/3 Skybolt Nassau and PSA
- 5) 1964- FMCT suspended in favor of unilateral statements on closures of facilities
- 6) 1965 UK testing and warhead development stopped-only 2 new UK designs MDA stagnates
- 7) MLF, INF, and NPT negotiations, 1965-7 nuclear sharing and articles 1 and 2
- 8) 1967 UK review of nuclear weapon program-Aldermaston facilities needed for a minimum deterrent-withdrawal from East of Suez
- 9) Soviet BM Defenses and need to enhance Polaris penetration capabilities -warhead program restarts at Aldermaston -MDA starts to revive
- 10) 1967 Glassboro summit meeting

Phase 3: 1971-1981

- 1) NPT,IAEA Safeguards and London club export control guidelines
- 2) UK nuclear weapons to NATO roles (We177a/c)
- 3) Technical credibility of Polaris questioned, Chevaline and the revival of the MDA
- 4) US Russia bilateral arms control-UK concern over precedent of ABM non-transfer clauses
- 5) The US 1978 Nuclear non -proliferation act, war on plutonium and the West- west disagreements
- 6) The CTBT Negotiations, 1978-81

Phase 4: 1981-1991

- 1) GLCMs, Pershing 2 and the freezing of the US Ussr arms control dialogue (except on non-proliferation)
- 2) The Trident purchase by the u UK
- 3) Able Archer and INF
- 4) SDI and the Reykjavik summit
- 5) The non- proliferation regime as a non- declaration Treaty- what constitutes proliferation?

- 6) MTCR
- 7) The collapse of the USSR

Phase 5: 1992-2001

- 1) Belarus, Kazakhstan and the Ukraine
- 2) Unilateral reductions
- 3) Iraq, UNSCOM, IAEA safeguards and NSG
- 4) US led indefinite extension of the NPT-CTBT
- 5) Arms control/ disarmament as an integral part of UK defense Policy
- 6) Disarmament, the pentagon and counter proliferation and the demise of ACDA
- 7) The re emergence of missile defenses
- 8) The 1998 India/ Pakistan tests
- 9) The 13 steps of 2000

Dr James Wirtz (Naval Postgraduate School) delivered a presentation on nuclear marginalization. He suggested that we need to determine what exactly nuclear marginalization is for the future. There is an urge to abandon nuclear weapons because they seem useless and many believe that they would best be forgotten. There is not a deliberate policy or a commitment to abolish nuclear weapons and there is no mea culpa for the nuclear arms race or codification of marginalization in treaties. The ultimate impact of marginalization is the gradual reduction of role playing by nuclear weapons in national policy for structure, destruction of "living art," manufacturing, and operating.

Q & A discussion points:

Research suggests that there is a fourth generation weapon being created, but there is not much evidence of this available to the public. The capability to manufacture nuclear weapons will never go away, but there may be a change in style or substance. There is a line between capability and reality, policy makers and the military think there is more capability than there actually is. We are living with this situation in NATO: future attack aircraft do not have a nuclear delivery capability. The United Kingdom does not seem interested in deploying a future aircraft capable of delivering a nuclear weapon, but the last seven countries to join NATO do not want to see the nuclear aspect of the NATO alliance vanish.