

**Understanding American Dissent to the European  
Security and Defense Policy:  
Structural Realist and Constructivist Arguments**

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## **Abstract**

The American position on the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) ranges from bemused indifference to outright hostility— depending on the policy makers one listens to. While there is general agreement on both sides of the Atlantic alliance that the strategic capabilities gap between Europe and America is untenable, US policy makers do not wish to see the EU develop an independent military capability outside the auspices of NATO. This thesis explores the nature of American dissent to an independent EU military identity through the lens of two major theories of international relations: Structural Realism and Constructivism. Case studies analyzing Congressional discourse on ESDP are incorporated to test which theory can provide the best explanation for American dissent to ESDP.



## Introduction

The EU Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) was established to facilitate more joint action and common positions on foreign and security matters than previously practiced by EU Member States. Though the concept may sound innocuous, there has been much disaffection expressed toward CFSP by Europe's American ally; in particular over the military manifestation of CFSP, the European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI). Consolidated today into the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP), this policy has begun to generate no small amount of heat between the United States and its European allies. The US has a longstanding, working dialogue with the EU, its member states and its institutions; but ESDP has been increasingly viewed within the US (and specifically within Congress) with suspicion.

The emergence of ESDP is relatively recent, and owes its evolution to a series of external 'shocks'. As Adrian Treacher argues in his article "From Civilian Power to Military Actor: The EU's Resistible Transformation," the process of ESDP has developed in the context of a certain set of circumstances; namely a series of violent crisis in the Middle East, sub-Saharan Africa and particularly in southeast Europe that "would prove the learning ground out of which the Member States would ultimately and unanimously consent to bestowing their Union with military attributes."<sup>1</sup> The military attributes that currently compose ESDP—the Rapid Reaction 'battle groups' (1500 EU soldiers deployable to 'hot-spots' for up to 30 days), and the Petersburg Tasks that were taken on by ESDP from the 1997 Amsterdam Treaty (humanitarian relief, conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacemaking)—are in their infancy right now.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Adrian Treacher, "From Civilian Power to Military Actor: The EU's Resistible Transformation," in *European Foreign Affairs Review*, ( 9): 55

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, page 49

The capabilities that ESDP can boast of are currently not even remotely comparable to those of the US. That having been said, the American position on the European Security and Defense Policy ranges from bemused indifference to outright hostility— depending on the policy makers one listens to. Congressman Doug Bereuter (the former chairman of the Subcommittee on Europe of the House International Relations Committee) has commented that “the Bush administration and congressional leaders have come to support ESDP conditionally” (i.e. when it works in conjunction with NATO).<sup>3</sup> Others seek to downplay Europe’s proposition to create its own security structure by pointing out that all of Europe combined pays less towards the development of new defense technology than the United States; a sure indicator that it cannot hope to be seen as a viable alternative or competitor.<sup>4</sup> Still others believe that the EU is attempting to distance itself from the longstanding defense relationship that it has had with the US, which many Europeans now find unnecessary or contrary to their ‘European’ values.<sup>5</sup>

What remains constant across all American political affiliations and successive American administrations is the desire to maintain European defense within the framework of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. American policy makers (and some European ones) seek to maintain this arrangement claiming that a separate European defense capability would divert precious resources from NATO, create duplications of structures already established within NATO and weaken the transatlantic alliance. America’s trepidation with the issue of ESDP was brought to light in the wake of the St. Malo declaration issued on 4 December 1998. The story of the St. Malo declaration and American cognizance of it is not an entirely clear one—

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<sup>3</sup> Doug Bereuter and John Lis, “Broadening the Transatlantic Relationship,” *The Washington Quarterly*, 27:1, Winter 2004-04: 159

<sup>4</sup> See Robert Hunter’s RAND sponsored report for charts on defense spending in all EU countries and their comparison to US trends in defense spending. Robert Hunter, *The European Security and Defense Policy: NATO’s Companion or Competitor?* (Santa Monica: RAND, MR- 1463-NDRI/RE, 2002):42-43

<sup>5</sup> See Ivo H. Dahler’s “The End of Atlanticism” in *Beyond Power and Paradise: Europe, America and the Future of a Troubled Partnership*, ed. by Tod Lindberg (New York and London: Routledge, 2005), and Felix Berenskoetter, “Mapping the Mind Gap: A Comparison of US and European Security Strategies,” *Security Dialogue*, 36:1

there are conflicting accounts as to whether or not the US Congress was aware that Britain was about to join the call of other European states in a push for a separate European defense capability. Robert Hunter's RAND sponsored publication, *The European Security and Defense Policy: NATO's Companion or Competitor?*, states that:

on the morrow of St. Malo, one of the [British negotiators present at St. Malo] said to the TPN<sup>6</sup> meeting in London, with its clutch of U.S. members of Congress, that Britain would never countenance any interpretation of St. Malo that could weaken NATO's primacy.<sup>7</sup>

The same report later goes on to say that:

British officials argue that they did appraise the United States in advance of what was going to be agreed upon at St. Malo; but certainly it was not well known, and particularly not among those Americans—especially in Congress—who proved to be most concerned about what was agreed upon.<sup>8</sup>

Were American law-makers aware that Britain was about to support the European Security and Defense Initiative? If they were notified ahead of time, why did Congress then have such a surprised reaction to British plans to join the EU in pushing for military integration? Perhaps the reason can be established two years prior to the St. Malo declaration, back in June 1996 at the Berlin Council. At this summit, NATO members agreed that in military scenarios not involving the United States the EU (or, as it was called then, the Western European Union, or WEU) could use the Alliance's Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTF) mechanism.<sup>9</sup> This way, it appeared to many onlookers that ESDP (and therefore the WEU) was being grafted more firmly to NATO.

Two years on, then, there seems to have been genuine surprise in Washington over the British '*volte face*'. Bereuter and NATO policy advisor John Lis said that when the EU

<sup>6</sup> The TPN is the Transatlantic Partnership Network, one of several organizations established between high ranking members of the US government (in this case, senators and congressional representatives) and members of the European Union.

<sup>7</sup> Robert Hunter, *The European Security and Defense Policy: NATO's Companion or Competitor?*; (Santa Monica: RAND, MR-1463-NDRI/RE: 2002): 29

<sup>8</sup> Hunter, page 32

<sup>9</sup> Adrian Treacher, 2004: "From Civilian Power to Military Actor: the EU's Resistible Transformation, in: *European Foreign Affairs Review*, 58

nations decided to “create the long-sought European defense pillar within the EU instead of NATO, Washington was surprised.”<sup>10</sup> Hostility on Capital Hill to the new arrangement led Secretary Albright to give her now famous ‘3 D’s’ speech to NATO foreign ministers (that a separate EU military initiative would result in duplication, divorce and discrimination) at the semiannual NATO meeting in Brussels on 8 December 1998.<sup>11</sup> Though European ministers tried to play down the friction that ESDP had created within the NATO Alliance, ESDP was gaining greater currency in Washington as a political issue that would (rightly or wrongly) be a source of contention in future matters between the US and EU.

What is clear from the above mentioned information is that US political leaders feel a real sense of challenge to American military prowess through ESDP—and this concern is voiced strenuously and visibly by American policy makers. The American position on ESDP is also somewhat contradictory: American politicians berate European leaders for not taking greater strides in being able to defend themselves and their immediate region, but there is also a push by successive US administrations to expand or open new military bases in Europe and its periphery. Both of these actions create a kind of push-pull effect on the EU—pushing it to upgrade its military competency, but also pulling it along within NATO and under the observing eye of American military installments in EU countries. Senator Gordon Smith echoed this policy in a 2000 speech before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee when he said that he was “confident that the EU’s ESDP project has the potential to strengthen the transatlantic partnership” and that “if our European partners will truly improve their military capabilities, it will lead to a more powerful alliance with more balanced burden-sharing... yield(ing) a more influential European voice in the transatlantic security issues.”<sup>12</sup> Though

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<sup>10</sup> Doug Bereuter and John Lis, “Broadening the Transatlantic Relationship,”; *The Washington Quarterly*, 27:1, Winter 2003-04; 158

<sup>11</sup> Albright as cited in Hunter, page 33

<sup>12</sup> Senator Gordon Smith, hearing before the Subcommittee on European Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Relations United States Senate, One Hundred and Sixth Congress. “NATO and the EU’s European Security and Defense Policy”. <http://www.access.gpo.gov/congress/senate>, last accessed on 16 May 2007



Smith said that such a consideration could be considered a ‘win-win’, he also added “this is not a foregone conclusion. Success will require a genuine effort by the Europeans to strengthen their defense forces and careful management of the nascent relationship between NATO and the EU.”<sup>13</sup>

The US position towards ESDP deserves closer scrutiny than it is currently receiving in any of the above mentioned texts or others like them. There is a striking puzzle that presents itself if one considers why it is that the world’s sole superpower takes such umbrage to the notion of EU—composed of established, independent states with a combined gross GDP higher than that of the US—desires to possess an active, self-reliant defense capability. As we have seen above, other authors make reference to a host of reasons that readily explain the US’s dissent to an independent European military capability. But American dissent to ESDP still seems unclear: why does the US oppose an independent EU military capability? In this thesis, I consider two hypotheses to this question suggested by two of the most prominent theories of international relations: the first hypothesis would hold that the US opposes the European Security and Defense Policy because it challenges US predominance in global defense affairs; the second hypothesis would claim that the US opposes ESDP because it challenges something fundamental in the character of America and, therefore, elicits a particular sense of ire from US policy-makers.

In order to establish an answer to the question posed in this thesis both hypotheses need to be rigorously tested. In order to perform this task, each hypothesis must be properly situated in its theoretical framework. The first hypothesis, which claims that the US opposes the ESDP because it challenges US predominance in global defense affairs, is a Structural Realist (SR) argument. SR theorists would claim that the EU, responding to concentrated US military power are now building their own power, “regardless of their ideological affinity with the

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

[US] and regardless of any strong consensus about the threat that this power poses.”<sup>14</sup> The US (according to SR theory) is concerned for what this means for its global power projection, and realizes that if the EU utilizes ESDP as a independent defense mechanism, it could led to the weakening of NATO—and perhaps lead other American alliance formations to lose their saliency (as a security divorce from the EU countries may alter the status of the US in the eyes of other allies).

The second hypothesis, that the US opposes ESDP because it challenges something fundamental in the character of America and, therefore, elicits a particular sense of ire from US policy makers, is a Constructivist argument. Constructivists look at “the issue of identity- and interest- formation” as a process; therefore, we must focus on the challenge that ESDP presents to the identity of America and the way that it may affect American interests.<sup>15</sup> The Constructivist camp believes that “actors acquire identities—relatively stable, role-specific understandings and expectations about self,” and that these identities are inherently relational.<sup>16</sup> Therefore, if policy makers are reacting negatively toward ESDP, it may be because the US as been traditionally seen as both a ‘European power’ and the ‘defender of Europe’, and these titles have a powerful resonance today with how Americans view themselves and the image that they try to project globally. ESDP can thus be seen by US policy makers as Europe’s ungrateful response to years of US/ European cooperation since the end of the Second World War, a challenge to fundamental American values and as a Europe’s attempt to compete with the US globally.

This paper will be broken down into three chapters. Chapter one gives the theoretical framework of SR theory, and considers the way it can interpret the US’s military preoccupation with Europe. Through its focus on the subjects of the American military-

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<sup>14</sup> Barry R. Posen, “European Security and Defense Policy: Response to Unipolarity?” *Security Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 2. April-June 2006

<sup>15</sup> Alexander Wendt, “Anarchy is what states make of it: the social construction of power politics,” in *International Organization*, 46 (2): 394-395

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, page 397

industrial complex, global security interests, and the importance of military alliances SR theory will help us to understand American dissent to ESDP, supporting the first hypothesis. The second chapter gives the theoretical framework for Constructivism, and argues that Europe and European military dependency play key roles in American identity. Here, American dissent to ESDP can best be understood as an attempt to protect America's identity, which is tied to being a 'European power' and the promoter of democratic values worldwide. Both the first and the second chapters will look at the current literature surrounding ESDP, and will utilize interviews that I have had with those directly involved with the policy. The third chapter contains empirical research and is comprised of discourse analysis in American policy-making institutions, primarily Congress, regarding ESDP since the St. Malo declaration. There, two case studies of Congressional response to ESDP (one post-St.Malo, the other after the 20003 Iraq Invasion) will be analyzed and empirical evidence will be drawn to bolster both hypotheses. In the conclusion, after considering the evidence presented in this body of work, it will be possible to judge which hypothesis is most appropriate to explain American dissent to ESDP.

## Chapter 1: The Structural Realist Argument

The first hypothesis which attempts to answer my research question holds that the US views the European Security and Defense Policy as a challenge to US predominance in defense affairs. This hypothesis rests upon three assumptions: 1) that ESDP attempts to undermine the military-industrial complex that has allowed the US to rise to global military superiority by creating a competing, European structure; 2) that ESDP seeks to supplant US global security interests with European ones; and 3) ESDP will weaken NATO by making it only a political organization or prevent it from getting forcefully engaged overseas interventions. This would also likely weaken US status and influence globally, as an independent EU military capability would embolden European countries, making it more likely that they would find NATO membership unnecessary and seek to leave the alliance. This last assumption could prove particularly disastrous, as a US/EU security divorce could weaken the US's image globally, and possibly effect America's other strategic alliances.

These assumptions can be understood through the lens of Structural Realism (SR). SR theory is a branch of the realist tradition in international relations theory that is most often associated with Neorealism, though with some notable differences. As part of the realist tradition, SR theory finds itself in alignment with realism on three assumptions:

1) anarchy in the political structure of the international sphere is necessary, not contingent; 2) the state is the most important unit in the international system; and 3) the acceptance of a framework for international structure that is generated by the interaction of units (i.e. states).<sup>17</sup>

The three key differences between SR theory and realist theory in general (and Neorealism in particular) are that: 1) it has a much more comprehensive and open definition of structure

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<sup>17</sup> Barry Buzan, Charles Jones, and Richard Little, *The Logic of Anarchy: Neorealism to Structural Realism*; ed. by Helen Milner and John Gerard Ruggie (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993): 10-11

which can be used beyond the political sector; 2) there are other systemic-level factors in play other than structure (i.e. other elements may radically alter the development of structure); and 3) it uses a linguistic approach to analogize power politics rather than relying on microeconomics (as Waltz did in his preeminent work on Neorealism: *Theory of International Politics*).<sup>18</sup>

Anarchy is maintained in the international system through the maintenance of the balance of power (BoP—the distribution of power capabilities amongst political units in the international system).<sup>19</sup> SR theory

depicts the world as an anarchy—a domain without a sovereign. In that domain, states must look to themselves to survive. Because no sovereign can prevent states from doing what they are able in international politics, war is possible. The key to survival in war is military power—generated either internally or through alliances, and usually both.<sup>20</sup>

For SR theorists, power positions fluctuate due to another power's domestic or foreign successes. Allies can also see benefit to their power position from the success of the success of one of their military partners, as Europe did with the collapse of the Soviet Union. But this type of success is asymmetrical in its division of relative power capabilities, as the US power position improved even more than the European. As Barry Posen argues, “when another power increases its capacities through either internal or external efforts, others have incentives to look at their own position.”<sup>21</sup> Thus, the EU, in a bid to improve its own power position, has incentive to find its own allies and mobilize its own capabilities, including military and diplomatic practices.

Under such logic as this, CFSP (and its ESDP auxiliary), present themselves as logical competitors to a system that is largely kept in place by European complicity in American dominance. By operating as such a monolith on the world scene, the US has attempted to ally

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid, page 11-12

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, page 86

<sup>20</sup> Barry R. Posen, “European Union Security and Defense Policy: Response to Unipolarity?” in *Security Studies*, (15): 2, April-June 2006: 153

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, page 153

as many countries to it as possible, making it difficult for other countries to balance against it. Authors like Posen believe that if the EU is to stay on its present course with ESDP, it “will within a decade be reasonably prepared to go it alone. This will have importance implications for transatlantic relations, as allies who are prepared to look after themselves, and know it, will prove less docile than they have already.”<sup>22</sup> The EU may find itself able to assert itself against regional categorization into a truly global power should ESDP prove capable, a maneuver that would greatly diminish the US’s ability to maintain regional superiority not only in Europe but other strategic areas as well. Such a proposition may be welcomed by Europeans who wish to see the EU assert their autonomy over the US, but the implications for America are much less appealing.

### 1.1 The EU as a Pillar in the American Military-Industrial Complex

The term ‘military-industrial complex’ originates from the 1961 farewell speech of Dwight D. Eisenhower, who was referring back to the bleak analysis of C. Wright Mills *The Power Elite*, ( which called attention to the interlocking interests of the leaders of the military, corporate, and political elements of society).<sup>23</sup> Mills argues that since World War II

the [military] in a truly decisive way. Given the nature of modern warfare, they had to do so whether they wanted to or not, just as they had to invite men of economic power into the military. For unless the military sat in on corporate decisions, they could not be sure that their programs would be carried out; and unless the corporate chieftains knew something of the war plans, they could not plan war production...

[This is how] the merger of the corporate economy and the military bureaucracy came into its present day significance. The very *scale* of the ‘services of supply’ could not be but economically decisive...<sup>24</sup>

Both Mills and Chalmers Johnson agree that the economic/military dimension of production did not end with WWII. Johnson states that at no point from 1955-2002 did

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<sup>22</sup> Posen, page 153

<sup>23</sup> Nelson Lichtenstein, “Market Triumphalism and the Wishful Liberals” in *Cold War Triumphalism: The Misuse of History After the Fall of Communism*, ed. by Ellen Schrecker ( New York and London: The New Press, 2004): 118

<sup>24</sup> C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956): 212

defense spending fall to pre-WWII levels, and that the “institutionalization of huge defense expenditures [has] fundamentally altered the political economy of the United States.”<sup>25</sup>

Traditional realist theory only accepts the primacy of the state system and concerns itself only with the political sector; it would reject assertions that political economy can be privileged in the expression of power. But SR theory (in its first assertion of what separates it from traditional realist and neorealist schools) supports the utilization of a comprehensive and open definition of structure which can be used beyond the political sector—which means that other sectors (military, social and the economic one utilized here) can shape both the units and the structure of the international arena. Capabilities (as with power) are very unevenly distributed, “with a few immense units controlling a very substantial percentage of total resources and skills.”<sup>26</sup> States that seek to increase their power position may chose to utilize their economies to compete in specific markets, and then seek to reduce competition in order to consolidate their influence.

The United States is far and away the greatest exporter of weapons in the world (sales volume exceeds the next fourteen countries combined). Military sales equate to about 18 percent of the Federal budget, which means that the American government cannot reduce arms sales because of the consequent fall in GDP.<sup>27</sup> At present the US has seven of the world’s ten largest weapons manufacturers, currently selling arms from Saudi Arabia to Georgia to the Philippines. Until now the EU has not been able to produce the kind of scale necessary to compete with the US in this lucrative business (the UK’s BAE Systems and the joint EADS German-French company are notable exceptions).

ESDP has the potential to challenge US dominance in defense production. As noted by F. Stephen Larrabee in his article, “The United States and the European Security and Defense

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<sup>25</sup> Chalmers Johnson, *The Sorrows of Empire: Militarism, Secrecy, and the End of the Republic* (London and New York: Verso, 2004): 56

<sup>26</sup> Buzan, page 224

<sup>27</sup> Wikipedia, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arms\\_trade#World\\_arms\\_sales](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arms_trade#World_arms_sales). Last accessed on 24 May 2007

Policy: Old Fears and New Approaches,” there is “little chance that defense spending in Europe will rise in the near future. Raising taxes of cutting social expenditures in order to increase defense outlays would not find support among European publics.”<sup>28</sup> Thus, the EU has only one option to be able to meet the kind of production necessary for achieving a serious military capability. Larrabee explains:

The only way to find the necessary resources for defense improvements, many Europeans argue, is for the European members not to organize their defense nationally but to strive to create a more efficient European defense. European defense integration, in their view, will help Europe rationalize its defense procurement policies and overcome its inefficient defense spending.<sup>29</sup>

SR theory, which views EU integration as “the socializing pressure of anarchy” (i.e. European states, finding themselves to be too small to function as major powers, seek to copy the power and security eminence of semi-continental states) would share Larrabee’s assumption that the EU countries must pool their financial resources so as to make ESDP a functioning military capability. This would pose a problem of competition for the US. Presently, America is far and away the greatest exporter of weapons in the world (sales volume exceeds the next fourteen countries combined), with military sales equate to about 18 percent of the Federal budget. This means that the American government cannot reduce arms sales because of the consequent fall in GDP.<sup>30</sup> The US has seven of the world’s ten largest weapons manufacturers, currently selling arms from Saudi Arabia to Georgia to the Philippines. Until the advent of ESDP, the EU has not been able or had the desire to produce the kind of scale necessary to compete with the US in this lucrative business (the UK’s BAE Systems and the joint EADS German-French company are notable exceptions).

## 1.2 American vs. European Strategic Interests: Balancing

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<sup>28</sup> Larrabee, page 178

<sup>29</sup> Larrabee, page 178

<sup>30</sup> Wikipedia, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arms\\_trade#World\\_arms\\_sales](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arms_trade#World_arms_sales), last accessed on 24 May 2007



Comparison of the US and EU Security Strategies say much about the two security courses that the allies are charting. The 2002 *National Security Strategy of the United States* (NSS) announced a shift in American foreign policy from deterrence to active preemption.<sup>31</sup> The European response to this was the *European Security Strategy* (ESS), which was a response to what Europeans perceived to be the American preference for unilateral action. The ESS was the EU's declaration that it would inevitably play the role of a "global actor... [and] it should be ready to share in the responsibility for global security."<sup>32</sup> Barry Posen takes such assertions to signal that the EU is ready to attempt to balance "US power, regardless of the relatively low European perception of an actual or direct and imminent threat emanating from the United States."<sup>33</sup>

Posen says that SR theory predicts the balancing of US power because states "try to grow their power when they believe they can do so without much risk."<sup>34</sup> He asserts that America knows that its allies have no where else to go (because there is no other great power to oppose it), and therefore has grown complacent and capricious. By finding their own allies, mobilizing their own capabilities and emulating the successful practices of other states, the EU is practicing "balancing behavior in the structural realist variant of balance of power theory."<sup>35</sup> SR theorists take issue with the fact that Neorealist, Waltzian BoP is designed to show that no single political actor can achieve global dominance.<sup>36</sup> SR theorists reject this assertion because they believe (as opposed to Neorealists) that there have been systemic transformations over the course of history which have led to the ascendance of dominant actors.

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<sup>31</sup> Francis Fukuyama, "Does the 'West' Still Exist?" in *Beyond Paradise and Power: Europe, America and the Future of a Troubled Partnership*, ed. by Tod Lindberg (New York and London: Routledge, 2005): 139

<sup>32</sup> Kalypso Nicolaidis, "The Power of the Superpowerless" in *Beyond Paradise and Power: Europe, America and the Future of a Troubled Partnership*, ed. by Tod Lindberg (New York and London: Routledge, 2005): 113

<sup>33</sup> Posen, page 151

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, page 153

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, page 154

<sup>36</sup> Buzan *et. al*, page 87

Stephen Walt asserts that ideology is actually less powerful than balancing in terms as a motive for alignment.<sup>37</sup> Shared ideology can actually become extremely divisive, and states that share similar ideology are more likely to compete than participate in alliances (such as China and the Soviet Union). This is what Kalypso Nicoladis refers to in his article on EU/US relations “The Power of the Superpowerless” when he discusses the notion of ‘exceptionalism’ that both sides entertain. He goes on to say that it is the

commonalities and the profound differences between the European and American exceptionalism, their respective sense of being in a unique position to guide humanity toward a better future [that makes them competitive]...Indeed, historians like to point out how the most intense transatlantic rivalry, that between France and the United States, is rooted in their similar sense of mission, of being the upholders of political and philosophical models for the world through the avowedly universal reach of their respective eighteenth-century revolutions.<sup>38</sup>

The US/ European alliance was forged through the perception that of a common threat, but was upheld by the conviction that there were common interests between the allies that they were ready to defend. NATO, though first and foremost a military institution, is also a reflection of those common interests which underpin its mission of collective security. But allying with a dominant power such as the US means placing one’s trust in its continued benevolence, leaving the EU open to its whims. ESDP is therefore logical on the premise that it both pushes for greater autonomy from the US (a safeguard against possible US non-involvement) and asserts EU interests (which include checking US dominance in global affairs).

### 1.3 The Logic of Alliances

SR gives a strong account for the prevalence of military alliances in global affairs, and also provides insight as to why the US has allowed these alliances to so deeply permeate its foreign policy since the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. Alliances are the foremost means of structuring and

<sup>37</sup> Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1987: 5

<sup>38</sup> Kalypso Nicoladis, “The Power of the Superpowerless,” in *Beyond Paradise and Power: Europe, America, and the Future of a Troubled Partnership*, ed. by Tod Lindberg (New York and London: Routledge, 2005):102

restructuring the international arena; they form to establish a balance when there is disequilibrium of power in the international system.<sup>39</sup> At the end of World War II, the US actively balanced against the Soviet Union and its allies in a classic BoP formation that did not end until late into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. But the end of the Cold War did not result in an end to American alliances.

Today, America's military alliances run the full gamut of affiliations. As John Hillen described in his article, "Superpowers Don't Do Windows":

Currently, America's military alliances take many different forms... Formal alliances are usually based on treaties and can range from highly institutionalized multilateral arrangements like NATO to dormant multilateral arrangements such as the Rio Treaty, to active bilateral defense alliances such as those with Korea and Japan, to latent bilateral agreements such as that with the Philippines, to de facto bilateral agreements like that of Australia and the United States, to moribund multilateral agreements like the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization... Lastly, the United States participates in some de facto military alliances in cases where the U.S. national interest is so obvious that a commitment to defense of an ally is implicit, even absent a formal defense agreement. That is the case with countries such as Israel and Taiwan.<sup>40</sup>

The US has also been at the forefront of the push for more allies through the mechanism of NATO expansion into the former communist bloc countries of Eastern, Central and Southeastern Europe. It has even sought to aggressively court Central Asian strongmen into friendlier relations so that US military operations can be launched from their territory.<sup>41</sup>

ESDP threatens to compromise NATO's primacy with its members, and also other alliances that the US has with other global actors, by engaging in operations outside the

<sup>39</sup> George Liska, *Expanding Realism: The Historical Dimension of World Politics* (Lanham and Oxford: Rowan and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998) : 58

<sup>40</sup> John Hillen, "Superpowers Don't Do Windows," in *America the Vulnerable: Our Military Problems and How to Fix Them*, ed. by John F. Lehman and Harvey Sicherman (Philadelphia: Foreign 'policy Research Institute, 1999): 28-29

<sup>41</sup> For a concise account of the US position on NATO expansion post-9/11, refer to Undersecretary for political Affairs Marc Grossman's testimony before the Senate Armed Forces Committee on 28 February 2002 at: <http://www.state.gov/p/us/rm/8568.htm>. Also, for a description of strategic US interests in Central Asia see Nicholas Schmidle's article "In Central Asia, New Players, Same Game" in *The Washington Post*, 29 January 2006:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wpdyn/content/article/2006/01/28/AR2006012800059.html>. To see how the US Senate reconciles courting Central Asia with promoting democratic values see the Senate Foreign Relations Committee testimony, "Balancing Military Assistance and Support for Human Rights in Central Asia"; 27 June 2002

[http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=107\\_senate\\_hearings&docid=f:82602.wais](http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=107_senate_hearings&docid=f:82602.wais), last accessed on 16 May, 2007

NATO alliance. Posen's argues that "if European were to propose a NATO mission that they thought was important but that the United States thought was unimportant on its own terms," and therefore would choose not to participate; a success on the part of Europeans would equal a prestige loss for the US.<sup>42</sup> Thus, the EU would increase its power position (perhaps only incrementally at first) in relation to the US, and could now present itself as a reliable alliance partner to other actors.

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<sup>42</sup> Posen, page 185

## Chapter 2: The Constructivist Argument

The second hypothesis, which says that the US opposes ESDP because it challenges something fundamental in the character of America and, therefore, elicits a particular sense of ire from US policy makers, is a Constructivist argument.

Constructivists would read American dissent to ESDP as a socially constructed reaction; a defensive maneuver on the part of the US to safeguard its identities as a ‘European power,’ and ‘the defender of Europe’. Constructivists, such as Alexander Wendt, believe that “people act toward objects, including other actors, on the basis of the meaning that the object has for them.”<sup>43</sup> Therefore, before we can identify the problem that the US has with a militarily independent EU, we must first understand what meaning the transatlantic alliance holds for the US and its identity. Then, based on this explanation, we can understand why ESDP creates friction in the US/EU relationship.

Constructivists believe that power politics do not follow logically or causally from anarchy, and that there is no

‘Logic’ of anarchy apart from the practices that create or instantiate one structure of identities and interests rather than another; structure has no existence or causal powers apart from process. Self-help and power politics are institutions, not essential features of anarchy. *Anarchy is what states make of it.*<sup>44</sup>

Constructivism makes assumptions about the structure of identities and interests in the international system to help predict the dynamics of anarchy. Wendt argues that the structure of identity and interests do not logically spring from anarchy, noting that states react toward other states as people do—on the basis of what their relationship means to them. Thus, “states act differently toward enemies than they do toward friends because enemies are

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<sup>43</sup> Wendt, page 397

<sup>44</sup> Wendt page 395

threatening and friends are not.”<sup>45</sup> State actions are affected by the distribution of power in the international system, but there are also considerations made for the ‘distribution of knowledge’ which make up conceptions of ones self and others. Wendt argues that it is “collective meanings that constitute the structures which organize our actions.”<sup>46</sup> When actors participate in these collective meanings they acquire identities (each actor has many identities, each related to an institutional role, i.e. mother, sister, etc.) that are inherently relational: “Identity, with its appropriate attachments of psychological reality, is always identified within a specific, socially constructed world.”<sup>47</sup>

There is no clear consensus on what constitutes an ‘identity’. Therefore, we must content ourselves with the options available to us, in our limited capacity as human beings, to decipher a workable definition by which we can attempt to understand this amorphous concept. Baruch A. Brody describes two philosophical camps in *Identity and Essence*, which attempt to define what ‘identity’ consists of. The first holds that it is something that should be analyzed only in terms of the relevant bodies that constitute it; the other, that identity consists in terms of continuity of memory and character.<sup>48</sup> There are others who would claim that there is no way to truly assess what constitutes the identity of any entity. For the purpose of analysis here, identity will be discussed as a concept that evolves from the memory (e.g. history and experiences) and character of an entity.

What an entity is, or becomes, is bound up in what kind of ‘control’ we find in its environment.<sup>49</sup> As argued by Harrison White, an identity is limited (and therefore defined) by its ‘spread’ (i.e. control mechanisms within an identity that allow it some degree of balance with other identities). ‘Spread’ gives identities room, but also limits, for development. As

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid, page 397

<sup>46</sup> Ibid, page 397

<sup>47</sup> Peter Berger as cited in Wendt

<sup>48</sup> Baruch A. Brady, *Identity and Essence*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980): 3

<sup>49</sup> Harrison C. White, *Identity and Control: A Structural Theory of Structural Action*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992): 5

Wendt described in the above, multiple identities can exist side by side (due to the organizing affect of spread controls), it is possible for one to focus on and isolate a singular identity so as to effectively explore its origins, decipher what has nurtured its development, and locate what keeps a particular identity intact in the face of shifting trends.

Identities are contingent—they are produced by the responses an organism has to events that occur around it or in response to it. These responses, if consistent over time, begin to constitute a behavior that can become self-regulating. This self-regulation leads to both efficiency and conformity in actions. Identities are not biological, they are only established when they become something “perceived by others as having an unproblematic continuity.”<sup>50</sup> Usually we find that they are precluded by other structures and processes which existed before them. In order to understand the origins of any particular identity, one must first look at the preexisting conditions that were at play before it was established.

Even though Constructivists believe that identities are socially constructed, and that the power politics of states is a function of that construction, they do not say that these identities are malleable, for two reasons. Firstly, once constituted, the system that these actors participate in becomes an objective social fact that will reinforce certain behaviors while discouraging others.<sup>51</sup> There is a possibility of change, but this depends on whether there is room for actions that deviate from what has already been established in the prescribed script of the actors. If there is no room for deviation, then the existing structure will carry on, without the deviant actor.

The second reason why actors resist changes to the system deals with their interests in maintaining retaining relatively stable role identities. Wendt argues that these interests are located in the actors need to minimize uncertainty and anxiety, but also to

avoid the expected costs of breaking commitments made to others—notably domestic constituencies and foreign allies in the case of states—as part of past practices. The level of resistance that these

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid, page 6

<sup>51</sup> Wendt, page 411

commitments induce will depend in part on the ‘salience’ of particular role identity to the actor. The United States, for example, is more likely to resist threats to its identity as ‘leader of anticommunist crusades’ than to its identity as ‘promoter of human rights’. But for almost any role identity, practices and information that challenge it are likely to create cognitive dissonance and even perceptions of threat, and these may cause resistance to the transformation of the self...<sup>52</sup>

Thus, if we consider American dissent to ESDP as a reaction to a perceived identity change on the part of the EU, one which breaks with past practices involving the US, we can understand US policy makers negative response towards it.

## 2.1 The Limits of the US as a ‘European Power’

From the name of John Peterson’s article, “US and EU in the Balkans: ‘America Fights the Wars, Europe Does the Dishes?’” we can garner an impression of the kind of roles that America and the EU have developed in relation to one another. His article provides useful insights on the identities of both actors, and why ESDP provides a particular challenge to their relationship. The Constructivist hypothesis put forward in this chapter says that the US opposes ESDP because it challenges something fundamental in the character of America; it is necessary to locate what this ‘something’ might possibly be, and why US policy makers find ESDP to be so particularly disruptive to it.

Peterson’s article, through its interpretation of Western intervention in the Balkans in the 1990’s, gives us an evaluation of the relationship between the United States and Europe up to the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Peterson provides a notable fact at the beginning of his article when he mentions that there was a particularly important change in US foreign policy toward Europe in the early 1990’s. The US “shifted fundamentally to embrace a regular, institutionalised dialogue with the EU, as opposed to its Member States or its European

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid, page 411



counterparts within the EU”.<sup>53</sup> Constructivists would look at this shift, and the remarkable lack of attention that it received from US policy makers, as an indicator that the US did not view greater European cooperation as a challenge to its relationship with Europe. As Wolfgang Ischinger noted, “the European Union is the only power in history that has not caused fears among other nations or the formation of counter alliances.”<sup>54</sup> Far from feeling threatened by the supranational institution, the US embraced deeper European integration and viewed the EU as an ‘anchor’ of geopolitical stability in the rapidly changing climate of the post-Cold War world.

This high level of trust on the part of the US has certain assumptions underpinning it; namely, that the US would maintain its characteristic role as a ‘European power’. The US attained this role through “extending its postwar ‘empire’ through negotiation and support for European integration, and envisaging a collectively powerful Europe as fundamental to the health of its most important security alliance [i.e. NATO].”<sup>55</sup> It is within its capacity as a European power that the US is able to project other identities—such as the ‘leader of the free world’ and ‘the defender of Europe’—which help it to expand its power globally. As Peterson notes in his assessment of US priorities in European affairs: “one of the main priorities of US diplomacy in nearly anything to do with European security is the ability to pressure, cajole or maneuver its European allies in the direction of unity, and in a way that chimes with US foreign policy.”<sup>56</sup> But the 1990’s held a change on the part of EU foreign policy as well, as it began to consider “what kind of European power the US [would] be in the future.”<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> James Peterson, “US and Europe in the Balkans: ‘America Fights the Wars, Europe Does the Dishes?’ ”, *EUI Working Papers*: 5

<sup>54</sup> Wolfgang Ischinger, “Pax Americana and Pax Europea,” in *Beyond Paradise and Power: Europe, America, and the Future of a Troubled Partnership*, ed. by Tod Lindberg (New York and London: Routledge, 2005):87

<sup>55</sup> John Peterson (2004) “America as a European power: the end of empire by integration?” *International Affairs* 80 (4), 613–629. <http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1468-2346.2004.00407.x?cookieSet=1&journalCode=inta>. Last accessed on 27 May 2007.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid*, page 20

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid*, page 21

The US's perception of its role as a European power, a role that has fundamentally defined the US's relationship with Europe, is one that has been embraced by American policy makers since the end of World War II. At this time the US began its psychological adjustment to its new position as the preeminent military and economic power, one that Europe was anxious to see involved on their continent to prevent it from sliding back into isolationism (leaving them open to communist threats from the East and ruined, post-war economies)<sup>58</sup>. The American presence in Europe was essential for the European to focus on reconstruction of the continent rather than the rearmament of individual European states.

The role that the US plays as a European power was in great part designed and instigated by the Europeans themselves, though the US would later grow into the role and no longer need encouragement from the Europeans to maintain it. Ronald Steel argues that during the critical years of 1947-48

European leaders launched a major campaign to involve the United States formally in a transatlantic security system. They sought to seal any pact with a promise by the United States to keep a sizeable number of troops on the Continent. These 'hostages' would, they believed, fortify deterrence by automatically involving the US in any conflict. The Europeans pledged that as their economies grew stronger, they would build a European 'pillar' of military strength to compliment the American one.<sup>59</sup>

American policy makers such as George Kennan regarded European anxieties as 'a little silly', but the strategy that the Europeans employed to keep the US involved on the continent was serious enough to create the image of America as a European power; a position that is extended to the US by the nature of its military role in Europe. The matching European 'pillar' of military strength, of course, never materialized—until the advent of what is now being proposed through ESDP. In the course of the more than fifty years since the end of WWII America has had an invitation to act in Western Europe as if it had a direct share in its security—which it undoubtedly did.

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<sup>58</sup> Ronald Steel, "Europe: The Phantom Pillar," *The American Century in Europe*, ed. by R. Lawrence Moore and Maurizio Vaudagna (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2003) :66

<sup>59</sup> Steel, page 67

Because European security has been at the heart of US/EU relations since the start of the transatlantic alliance, US policy makers do not accept that the EU should conceive of creating an independent military capability; this would fundamentally alter the nature of their alliance. Furthermore, they assert that the peace and safety of the entire European experiment has grown within and is guaranteed by American military power, and the idea that the EU would create an independent military capability is an insult to American sacrifice.<sup>60</sup>

While encouraging the EU to upgrade its military capabilities, the US also hopes to manage this growth within the framework of NATO (and thereby retain its influence within the organization and within on the European continent). This type of assumption is not without precedent; America has always been a managing force in European integration. The US, to quote Dean Acheson, was “present at the creation’ of the European project, and has attended it ever since [and]... [t]his condition is thus a central part of the integration process itself.”<sup>61</sup> Thus, when the US acknowledged the EU’s need to increase its military competency, it reasonably expected to play its traditional role as an ‘attendant’ in the development of the policy. The US’s role as a European power is one has paid a high price to establish: “the Marshall Plan, the establishment of the European Recovery Program and the Organization for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC), and the initiation of the European Project through the Schumann Plan”; all of these peacetime mechanisms that the US employed were to create tighter bonds between the themselves and their European allies in their plight against the Soviet Union.<sup>62</sup>

The US has thus constructed for itself the idea of Europe as an ally that it has sacrificed much for, and with whom it shares common interests and common values. As President George W. Bush mentioned in a speech at the Prague NATO summit in 2002: “The

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<sup>60</sup> Francis Fukuyama, “Does ‘the West’ Still Exist?” in ,” in *Beyond Paradise and Power: Europe, America, and the Future of a Troubled Partnership*, ed. by Tod Lindberg (New York and London: Routledge, 2005):87

<sup>61</sup> Michael Smith, “Taming the Elephant? The European Union and the Management of American Power,” *Perspectives on European Politics and Society*, 6(1): 134

<sup>62</sup> Smith, page 134

commitment of my nation to Europe is found in the carefully tended graves of young Americans who died for this continent's freedom."<sup>63</sup> American policy makers can reasonably assert, as I have argued above, that if the US military has cradled European growth and stability, that it has no reason to seek a military capability outside of NATO.

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<sup>63</sup> Christopher Lane, "America as a European Hegemon," *The National Interest* 72: 26

## Chapter 3: Empirical Evidence—Testing the Hypotheses

This thesis has put forward two contending hypotheses to answer the question of why the US dissents to ESDP. The first hypothesis is that of the Structural Realists, which says that American dissent to ESDP can be located in the challenge it presents to US predominance in defense affairs (through undermining the US military- industrial complex, supplanting US global security interests with European ones, and weakening NATO). The second argument, that of the Constructivists, says that American dissent can be located in the fundamental challenge it presents to the character of America (i.e. its role as a European power and the connotation that this identity holds for the US).

In order to test these hypotheses and discover which one is best suited to answer my research question, it is necessary to go to the locus of where American dissent on this issue emanates—the US Congress. Congressional discourse is key in forming American attitudes toward ESDP, as Congress has both the ability to pass bills that will come to affect America's foreign policy toward external actors (i.e. the EU and its Member States), and controls the funding that makes sure that policy abides by their wishes (such as the funds that it authorizes for NATO). Also, the US's experiences with ESDP are few, due to the fact that it is a program still in the development phase. It is my hope that taking small sections of Congressional discourse we can garner an interpretation of how the US will receive ESDP when it reaches maximum operation capacity.

Each hypothesis will be tested using discourse analysis of Congressional responses to ESDP in two cases. First, each case will be described in its context with the aid of Congressional testimony, particularly from the Senate and House Foreign Relations Committees. Then, at the end of each case, one of the hypotheses will be utilized to see how it can explain Congressional discourse on ESDP. The first case study will look at

Congressional response to ESDP shortly after the St. Malo declaration and will test the first hypothesis (Structural Realist argument). The other case study will look at a situation immediately following the Iraq Invasion, when the US reacted to the desire of certain EU member states to lift the Chinese Arms embargo and sell weapons to Beijing, and will test the second hypothesis (Constructivist argument).

### 3.1 Case Study One: Early Congressional Responses to ESDP

The 1998 Anglo-French joint declaration at St. Malo that established ESDP was the indication that the EU now had the political will to play a more comprehensive role on the world stage. The declaration made the claim that “decisions about the use of an ESDI [European Security and Defense Initiative] would be made by the European Union”; a statement that elicited an unfavorable response from Washington.<sup>64</sup> Detailed information on ESDP was formally approved in the December 2000 EU Inter-Governmental Conference in Nice. Official US response to the targets that the ESDP set—a 60,000 person force (deployable in 60 days and sustainable for 18 months), marked expansion in airlift and sealift to make the force deployable, and mechanisms for the direction of military operations and conducting diplomacy—was favorable, but tinged with skepticism.

Prior to the Inter-Governmental Conference, the US Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on European Affairs held a meeting in March 2000 entitled “NATO and the EU’s European Security and Defense Policy”. The premise of the meeting, laid out by the Subcommittee Chairman, Senator Gordon Smith, was to discuss the emerging ESDP and how it would possibly affect the NATO alliance. While he emphasized that the ESDP project had the potential to strengthen the transatlantic partnership, Smith also asserted that this was not

a foregone conclusion. Success will require a genuine effort by the Europeans to strengthen their

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<sup>64</sup> Robert Hunter, page 30

defense forces and careful management of the nascent relationship between NATO and the EU. There is no question that our European allies need to upgrade their military capabilities... [T]he fact that the current arrangement, where the United States bears a disproportionate share of the burden in the alliance, is unsustainable, and I am pleased that many Europeans understand that they must take concrete steps to address this problem.<sup>65</sup>

The senator went on to lay out his concerns regarding ESDP and the possibility that the defense project might create dangerous circumstances for NATO: firstly, because NATO's ability to respond to crisis would be undermined if the EU did not create a meaningful defense capability; secondly, because the EU could give the false impression that it is capable of conducting a military capability without the US, thus creating a security vacuum that would need to be filled. He believed that in "the EU's rush to create new security institutions" it might not dedicate the necessary resources necessary to make sure that these security institutions functioned properly.<sup>66</sup>

The issue of the how the EU might best be able to provide the appropriate amount of resources to ESDP for its success was addressed through an agreement that both Washington and Brussels had come to in April of 1999: the Defense Capabilities Initiative (DCI). The process had been initiated to upgrade and modernize NATO members' military capabilities (which, as noted before, were considered to be lagging behind the US since the Balkan Wars). At the same meeting of the subcommittee Marc Grossman, Under Secretary of State for European Affairs, asserted that the Europeans had agreed to enhance their military capabilities through DCI. The Under Secretary made it clear that it was this, and only this, was what the US supported in terms of building capacity for ESDP.<sup>67</sup> DCI was the tool through which the US was attempting to formalize ESDP's relationship with the transatlantic

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<sup>65</sup> Senator Gordon Smith, hearing before the Subcommittee on European Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Relations United States Senate 106<sup>th</sup> Congress, Second Session, "NATO and the EU's European Security and Defense Policy", 9 March 2000. <http://www.access.gpo.gov/congress/senate>. Last accessed on 16 May 2007

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Marc Grossman in *ibid*.

organization; to allow the US to shape the evolution of the EU's new security institutions as well as to fund them. Informal ties were not sufficient.<sup>68</sup>

Stephen Larrabee, attending the session on behalf of the RAND Corporation, was able to give an opinion on ESDP that considered the issue from another angle. While addressing the committee, he explained that the ‘fundamentals’ had been agreed on in reference to the general need for the EU to increase its military abilities—but he also noted that there were important questions that the US should now be asking about the process, and that the US should “communicate more carefully with [its] European friends.”<sup>69</sup>

Larrabee’s comments were focused on something that had not yet been well explored in this session (he noted that the Congress was focusing itself quite exclusively on the merits of European capabilities). This was the character of ESDP which, he believes, is a sensitive issue for the alliance, for two reasons. The first reason was generational, the Cold War was over and “West Europeans broadly feel less dependent on the United States than they did before, and that there is institutional changes taking place as well.”<sup>70</sup> Here, he notes that the EU is not a transatlantic organization, and that Europeans have been enthusiastically building European institutions with minimal American influence and participation so as to promote European aspirations and ambitions. Larrabee did not suggest that there was anything wrong with such aspirations, but his second point held a warning for the US. He addressed the subcommittee:

The second point I wanted to mention which I think gives a broader context in which we should discuss ESDP, European Security and Defense Policy, is the long list of European grievances that is piling up over the last 8 years vis-à-vis the United States. I do not in making this quick list for you, Mr. Chairman, argue that all these grievances are legitimate. Some are, in my view some are not. But they all fit under one rubric. That is, America has too much power, America is a hegemon that behaves clumsily and often without proper reference to our interests.

You know this list as well as I. It is European grievances over sanctions and secondary boycotts, the Senate rejection of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, accusations that U.S. diplomacy sidelined the West Europeans in Dayton, that the United States dominated the Kosovo operation not only militarily but also politically... Even recently the debate and discussion over the new head of the International

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Stephen Larrabee in *ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.



Monetary Fund, where the Europeans see or believe that America is rejecting a European, in this case a German, candidate Mr. Koch-Weser, because American dominance will always prevail and European and allied interests will always come second.<sup>71</sup>

Here, Larrabee was warning Congressional members that Europe was giving indications of displeasure from America's unequal share of power in the transatlantic alliance, and that the issue of ESDP should be read in that context. He noted that the EU has taken on, at times, 'anti-hegemonic impulses' and 'outright anti-Americanism'. In line with Senator Smith, he concurred that now, at the early stages of ESDP, was the US's opportunity to shape the program; a sentiment that was shared by the incoming US President, George W. Bush.

Following the return of the then newly elected US President George Bush's from his first European tour in June 2001, Senator Joseph Biden, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, held a committee meeting entitled "US Security Interests in Europe". There, US Secretary of State, Colin Powell, was addressed the committee on President Bush's attempts to both shape and fund the European defense program by reducing the barriers of transatlantic defense industry cooperation. He noted that President Bush welcomed the enhanced role of the EU in providing for European security, and indicated the US's willingness to assist in its efforts, as long as it did so within the framework of NATO.<sup>72</sup>

The president's remarks, made through the Secretary of State, then dominated sentiment on the issue throughout the rest of the session. Dr. Larrabee's comments (addressing many of the same senators less than one year ago) on the perceptions of Europe towards the dominance of US power were not detected throughout the rest of this session. Essentially, there was no deviation from the original stance of the US from when ESDP was first announced at St. Malo three years earlier.

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Colin Powell testifying in a hearing before the Committee on Foreign Relations United States Senate 107<sup>th</sup> Congress, First Session, "US Security Interests in Europe", 20 June 2001. <http://www.access.gpo.gov/congress/senate>. Last accessed on 16 May 2007.

### 3.2 Hypothesis Testing One: Structural Realism

The above case study would lend its support to the Structural Realist hypothesis, that ESDP threatens US dominance in global security affairs, due to the focus that Congress maintains on ESDP's perceived disruption of the NATO alliance. There are two strong indicators that present themselves in the above Congressional discourse: that of ESDP's potential to weaken alliance capabilities (due to the argument that it is untested and underfunded), and that ESDP will draw strategic resources away from NATO (as Europeans chooses to funnel resources to ESDP over meeting their obligations to the transatlantic alliance).

The Congressional debate that took place in March 2000 is of particular interest because this session on ESDP took place before the EU Inter-Governmental Conference later on in December (the EU's European Council had not even met yet to finalize the project). Through the DCI process Congressional leaders were already aware of how the council meeting should consider going about the launch of ESDP. Nonetheless, we can see US policy makers did not easily lend support to project; Senator Smith's comments to the effect that Europe needed to upgrade its military capabilities was contingent on the basis that it intended to do so to better serve the transatlantic alliance. His assertion that, should ESDP encourage the EU to attempt an operation without the US, and prove itself incapable, would undermine the integrity of the NATO alliance was an opinion widely shared.

Indeed, this sentiment was so strongly supported by other high US officials that Secretary of Defense William Cohen, who attended the his final NATO meetings only days before the Nice summit, stressed to NATO defense ministers that if ESDP was not able to meet the capability needs of the alliance, "NATO could become a relic of the past."<sup>73</sup> This opinion correlates with assumption three of the SR hypothesis, which claims that 'ESDP will weaken

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<sup>73</sup> William Cohen in Hunter, page 106

NATO by making it only a political organization or prevent it from getting forcefully engaged overseas interventions.’ If the organizational structure that corresponds to ESDP operations slows down NATO response toward a crisis, or if the EU were to use it in one of the operations laid down in the Petersburg tasks and be unable to complete its mission, in both cases the US could possibly suffer a loss to its power position. In the first instance the US would lose time in coordinating a response to a crisis situation, thereby allowing the situation to escalate and lessening the likelihood of success. In the second case, should a failed ESDP mission then require NATO involvement with the assistance of US military might, America would find itself involved in an operation where it had no strategic interest, and involves the potential risk of an unnecessary loss.

Stephen Larrabee’s comments are also of note because they consider an aspect of ESDP that Congressional members on occasion seem to overlook—that the EU has its own interests and ambitions to serve as it continues to build and grow its own institutions. SR theory, as argued by both Buzan *et al* and Posen, predict this type of behavior. By emulating the successful practices of the US the EU seeks to bolster its own power position through ESDP. Larrabee’s words of caution that the US has amassed too much power supports also supports the assertion that, even when states share a similar ideology or values, there is still more inducement to compete than to maintain alliances. Thus, Larrabee’s statement would seem to bolster my second assumption under SR theory, that ESDP will help the EU push its own security interests to the detriment of the US, and that part of the EU’s security interests involve balancing US power.

The final assumption that I have posited here under SR theory, is that ESDP seeks to weaken the American power position by drawing European resources away from the American military-industrial complex, is well illustrated by President George W. Bush’s comment, repeated to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee through Secretary of State

Colin Powell. Bush's offer, to reconcile Europe's need to acquire weapons technology through the US, is clearly an attempt to maintain European patronage to the American defense establishment. By offering greater 'transatlantic defense industry cooperation' America would retain the benefits of remaining the world's dominant arms trader and leader in weapons technology while gaining a very lucrative partner in the EU. As Ronald Steel explained in his article, "Europe: The Phantom Pillar": "NATO's military standardization ensures important markets for American weapons manufacturers."<sup>74</sup> The offer is actually two-pronged in its benefit to the US—first its economy benefits from the arms purchases of the EU, and secondly, if ESDP is kept within the framework of NATO, then the US is essentially strengthening the alliance in a way that will benefit it in future operations.

The action is also preemptory on the part of the US—as maintaining weapons technology transfers to the EU can also help to control the pace of development for ESDP. SR theory would say the logical behavior is for the EU is to begin to pool its Member States' resources in order to integrate defense capabilities. On this issue, only time will tell if ESDP can help the EU overcome its collective action problem and begin to challenge the US dominance in arms manufacturing.

### 3.3 Case Study Two: Lifting the Chinese Arms Embargo

In a speech in November 1999, French President Jacques Chirac discussed his vision of a multipolar world where "the [EU] itself becomes a major pole of international equilibrium," which could help to balance the United States.<sup>75</sup> Comments like this led such members Congress (notably in 2003, the chairman of the Subcommittee on Europe of the House International Relations Committee, Doug Bereuter) to wonder, "if a unified Europe would

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<sup>74</sup> Steel, page 70

<sup>75</sup> Jacques Chirac, speech to the Institut Français des Relations Internationales, Paris, November 4, 1999

define itself largely in opposition to the United States, why should the United States encourage European unity?”<sup>76</sup> Even those Congressmen who regarded France as a long established ally began to question the motives of the French leader’s statements. Such questions would become commonplace on Capital Hill in the build up to the Iraqi War.

On the heels of the Euro-American fallout over the Invasion of Iraq, the United States felt that certain EU countries (specifically France and Germany) were trying to build ESDP to the detriment of US foreign policy objectives. The new objective that the some Member States (spearheaded by France and Germany) were advocating was the lifting of arms sanctions against China (an embargo that both the United States and European countries had agreed to since the 1989 Tiananmen Square Massacre). Rather than some of the more juvenile tit-for-tat exchanges that had emerged between U. S. and EU leaders over the Iraq crisis (such as the now famous renaming of French Fries in the House of Representatives Canteen to ‘Freedom Fries’) this issue exploded within the halls of Congress in early 2005. For many members of Congress who still considered Europe to be an ally even after the row on Iraq, this seemed to suggest that the EU was now actively working against U.S. policy, with potentially disastrous consequences for other US allies (namely Taiwan and Japan). Both the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations and the House Committee on Foreign Affairs launched an immediate debate on the issue within their respective Houses. Their commentary on the issue, reviewed below, is a telling assessment of how ESDP (and CFSP in general) has grown in the consciousness of Congress in the relatively short amount of time since St. Malo.

In his statement before a joint session of the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee of International Relations, Henry Hyde, Chairman of the House Committee on International Relations, said that the actions of the EU on this issue were:

the latest manifestation of a misguided European security defense policy championed not by all Europeans, but only by a few vocal governments who believe that it is Europe’s destiny to balance

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<sup>76</sup> Bereuter 147-162

the interests of the United States around the world...<sup>77</sup>

But even more scathing were the comments given after Hyde by his colleague, Representative Tom Lantos, whose comments attacked Europe for what many American's saw as its duplicity. His opinion is worth quoting in full:

The United States liberated the countries of Europe during World War II, including France and Germany, at an enormous cost of American lives.

The leaders who now advocate lifting the arms embargo to China should go down to the Normandy beaches, where they will see endless marble crosses and Stars of David representing the lives lost by young Americans to give Europe its freedom.

For this generation of European leaders to turn their backs on America's national security interests and to consider opening the floodgates of weapon sales to the People's Republic of China shows that they have truly lost their moral compass and all historic memory.<sup>78</sup>

Before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Peter Brookes (Senior Fellow for Security Affairs and Director of Asian Studies Center at the Heritage Foundation) highlighted four concerns over the EU lifting arms sanctions against China, namely that: 1) China refused to renounce the use of force against Taiwan, 2) the lifting of the arms embargo would exacerbate the shift of power across the Taiwan straight, 3) China would be emboldened to succeed the U.S. as the preeminent power in the Pacific, and 4) China's human rights record did not merit reward.<sup>79</sup>

There were various reasons given by Europeans as for why they suddenly felt that now was the appropriate time to lift the arms embargo against China (for example: to integrate China as a responsible member in the 'multipolar' global community, and to help China build capacity in good governance).<sup>80</sup> There were also many possible motivations given within both the House and Senate Foreign Relations

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<sup>77</sup> H.N.S.C. No. 109-35, "Arms Exports to the People's Republic of China by Member States of the European Union", Joint Hearing before the House Committee on Armed Services meeting jointly with the House Committee on International Relations, (Serial No. 109-80), Hearing held April 14, 2005.

<sup>78</sup> Rep. Tom Lantos in *ibid*.

<sup>79</sup> Peter T.R. Brookes, "The Lifting of the EU Arms Embargo on China," Testimony for the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, March 16, 2005

<sup>80</sup> Bates Gill, "Lifting the SU Arms Embargo on China," Testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, March 16, 2005: 3

Committees for the change in European policy.<sup>81</sup> While listing some of these possible motivations, Dr. Brookes admitted that:

on the most cynical end of the scale, some believe that the EU, especially France, is attempting to balance American global power through the development of a “multipolar” world. In such a political construct, other power centers such as China, Russia, Japan, India, and the EU could counterbalance American power. Thus, making China more powerful would help Europe challenge the United States’ global pre-eminence.<sup>82</sup>

There was no denying that the U.S. doubted the loyalty of some of its European allies. Extremely poor feelings emerged in both the House and Senate as Congressmen felt that Europeans were embarking upon a path that would negatively alter the security situation in the Pacific, where Europeans themselves were said to have “no responsibility for stability or security.”<sup>83</sup> Though the matter would later resolve itself (at least temporarily) when China’s “pointed reassertion, this time in the form of legislation, of its threat to invade Taiwan caused Europe to back away from a step that from an American perspective could only be regarded as unhelpful.”<sup>84</sup>

### 3.4 Hypothesis Testing Two: Constructivism

Though unquestionably the timing of the Chinese embargo helped to conflate the issue (i.e. on the heels of the US/EU fallout over the Iraq war) this case presents us with fertile testing ground for the Constructivist hypothesis. Worth mentioning first is that, in his description of ESDP as representing ‘a misguided European security and defense policy’ Representative Hyde fails to note that ending the arms embargo with China is not a part of the ESDP platform, but rather the an initiative of certain EU member states (predominately

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<sup>81</sup> These can be found in the statement of the Hon. R. Nicolas Burns, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, in his testimony before above listed joint session of the House Committee on Armed Services and International Relations.

<sup>82</sup> Brookes, page 6

<sup>83</sup> Brookes, page 8

<sup>84</sup> James Dobbins, “Friends Again?” in *Friends Again: EU-US Relations after the Crisis*; (Paris: European Institute for Security Studies, 2006): 180

Germany and France). However, by linking ESDP as a whole to this issue Hyde (whether knowingly or not) reveals what American policy makers believe ESDP will manifest itself as—an opportunity for the EU to oppose US policy abroad. The issue of the arms embargo is one that America approaches from its role as a European power; Europe has not consulted with the US—its ‘liberator’ from the era of World War II, and ally/protector in the Cold War— in its pursuance of an irresponsible project, ESDP.

The US response is to feel both betrayed and undermined. Congressman Doug Bereuter’s response to Chirac’s comment on balancing the US — that America should not support European integration if defying America is the outcome—contradicts the image the US has constructed of the European project since it began in the 1950’s. After all, as noted earlier in the chapter of Constructivism, EU integration has never appeared to the US to be of any threatening consequence. It has in fact bolstered the US’s presence on the European continent, and the US has been active (i.e. ‘present at the creation’) in the promotion of expanding the Union.

For those members of the US Congress who still saw Europe as a historic American ally after the Iraq crisis, the Chinese arms issue was particularly disconcerting. After all, the US and European powers have had conflicts in the past (the Suez Canal in 1956, for one) but still maintained their historically close ties. In the case of the arms embargo it was not only a matter of dissenting opinions, but of action that had perceived consequences for other US strategic interests abroad (i.e. Taiwan). The anger that came in response to European actions here was justified in the sense that policy makers felt that “Europeans have achieved peace under the umbrella of the US security guarantee in the past half century, and the end of the Cold War has given Europe a peace dividend in contrast to the continued military buildup for the United States.”<sup>85</sup> When Hyde was commenting on the misguided policy of the EU in this



matter, his comment suggests that the EU is unaware of its own interests vis-à-vis China, and cannot rightly know the meaning of its actions. Michael Brenner explains why American policy leaders find it easy to assume that they know not only what is best not only for themselves, but also as its European allies:

America's unique moral authority, in the minds of Americans, has legitimized and confirmed its leadership of the West as much as its military might and economic strength have. The political construct of the West that guides American policy has the overarching transatlantic community as its essential element.<sup>86</sup>

It is in its role as a European power that America asserts the right to know what is best for both its own and European interests. Dr. Brooks' testimony before Congress that it is only the most 'cynical' of opinions that hold that it some European powers might wish to assist China in order to help Europe balance the United States shows an apparent willingness to believe that most 'reasonable' Europeans would not wish this to be so.

Constructivists would look at the historical processes that have led up to this incident in the EU/US relationship and suggest that the decades of cooperation between the two actors (which created the notion of a 'transatlantic alliance') has delineated clear identities for both members in relation to one another. The US is a dominant, European power which derives its moral authority from the sense of sacrifice that it has in relation to Europe. The Europeans are in a subordinate status; militarily dependent on their neighbor across the Atlantic. Even though these identities are not mechanical in their nature, they do have a continuity associated with them that is now institutionalized in the body of NATO. ESDP challenges these identities in a way that the US cannot yet conceive of in a way that is beneficial to them, and as such views it as a fundamental challenge to its relationship with Europe.

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<sup>86</sup> Kalypso Nicolaidis, page 94

## Conclusion

The research question posed in this thesis asked why the US opposes an independent EU military capability. Two hypotheses were then established which could explain this phenomenon: one on the premise of the Structural Realist school of thought, the other of the Constructivist. The first hypothesis posited that American dissent to ESDP can be linked to claims that ESDP challenges US predominance in defense affairs. The second hypothesis posited that the US opposes ESDP because it challenges something fundamental in the character of America and, therefore, elicits a particular sense of ire from US policy makers. Each of the theoretical camps was then described in terms of what they assert, and each hypothesis was situated in the context of how that theory would interpret US dissent to ESDP. Then, in the final chapter each hypothesis was tested in a case study that allowed an evaluation of how each theory could possibly explain US dissent to ESDP.

In terms of evaluating which theory best explains ESDP and the dissent that the US exhibits toward it, both theories seem to offer reasonable explanations. It would also be possible to switch the theories with the case studies and see similar traits in Congressional discourse. For example, in the case of the Chinese arms embargo, SR theorists would have seen attempts to sell arms to China as a move by the Europeans to attempt a balancing maneuver against US power, as Dr. Brookes alluded to in his testimony. SR theorists would also maintain that by breaking the arms embargo with China Europeans were attempting to challenge US predominance in the area defense weapons supply, a strike at the heart of the military-industrial complex that sustained both the US economy and military superiority.

On the other hand, Constructivists would likely consider early Congressional discourse on ESDP in the same light as the Chinese arms embargo—as an attempt on the part of the Americans to maintain their role as a European power, and reduce the chance that American influence would be usurped by European military independence. As ESDP is still as young

project that is still developing its capabilities and defining its mission, it is clear that there will need to be future analysis needed to see if either of these theories can clearly explain the reactions of American policy makers.

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