Global Society and its Enemies: 9/11 and the Future of Atlantic Civilisation

LUDGER KÜHNHARDT

The challenge of international terrorism is not only a security problem with far-reaching dimensions. It is moreover rooted in ideological movements and has thorough intellectual implications as a challenge to the emerging global society. As much as the open society was threatened by its totalitarian enemies during the twentieth century, totalitarian terrorism is threatening the global society of the twenty-first century. To deal with the root causes of this new wave of totalitarian thought which has generated acts and strategies of terror will be one of the most crucial challenges for the pursuit of a successful globalisation.

Threat Perceptions after the End of the State Monopoly on the Legitimate Use of Force

The terrible terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 have the potential of transforming the world order in a way no other event or process has been able to do since the end of the Cold War. In retrospect, the period of 1989–2001 might be seen as a ‘late summer’ before the return of rough winds in world politics. At the core of the matter, the post-9/11 transformation of world power is not only about power equations between states. It is about the character of power as such. If 9/11 stands symbolically for anything deep and fundamental it symbolises the failure of state-centred definitions of deterrence. It symbolises the end of the state monopoly on the legitimate use of force (Gewaltmonopol des Staates), one of the key elements of state sovereignty in the modern world.

Whatever the military or policing measures in the fight against terrorism are, and no matter how necessary they are, they cannot transcend the most important consequence of 9/11, which is the privatisation of warfare. 9/11 was not only an attack against the symbols of power that the most powerful country in the world stands for. It introduced an unparalleled asymmetry into global relations, namely the asymmetry between state-channelled means of protection

Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions, Vol.4, No.2 (Autumn 2003), pp.157–172 PUBLISHED BY FRANK CASS, LONDON
and society-based means of terror. The intuitive reaction of citizens all around the world to the terror attacks of 9/11 was towards their nation-state in search of protection with means of policing and military. It was understandable, and yet it was insufficient as far as the new dimensions of global threat are concerned.

Regarding the transatlantic reaction to the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, the core of the issue is not whether NATO could any longer remain confined to ‘in area’ reactions, or whether it will be bound to act increasingly ‘out of area’ in order to fight threats to the alliance partners. The assumption that the new dimension of threat means the privatisation of warfare, the deliberate use of civilians as targets of violence, and the deliberate use of ‘surprise’ as a means to launch attacks, challenges the fundamental patterns of proven state reactions and international relations. Unpredictability has become an element of unique intensity in the evolution of world politics. The new dimensions of threats after 9/11 do imply ‘in state’ or ‘in government’ components, as much as ‘out of state’ or ‘out of government’ components. Worst of all, the threat is very much inside the Atlantic world itself, as the existence of ‘terrorist sleeper cells’ suggests, whether or not they are linked to strategic operations of al-Qaeda or other terrorist networks, or even to potential terrorist activities of aggressive governments in ‘rogue states’. It might be debatable whether there can be ‘private terrorism’ without some sort of organised and comprehensive state sponsorship. In light of the multifarious dimensions of possible modern terrorism, this is a rather academic question. The use of terrorist means to attack another country or society clearly introduces asymmetric notions of warfare into the traditional strategic and military interpretation of conflicts. Asymmetric warfare, whether state-driven or based on ‘privatised’ terrorism, might unfold in many ways:

- Terrorists and states can manufacture and use lethal biological weapons and other weapons of mass destruction;
- Increases in information technology and the integration of world trading and financial systems are steadily increasing the danger of cyber warfare and terrorism;
- Global transportation systems are increasingly exposed to dangers of a terrorist nature.

The set of new threats requires a new assessment of the notion of
security and new dimensions of security strategies on local, national and international levels. The transatlantic community has been challenged by 9/11 to rethink its specific strategic reaction.1

Globalisation, whatever the term implies, is defined by a unique combination of technological means and practical expressions of unprecedented interdependence around the globe. Technology no longer knows any borders; nor does it know limits, laws and equivalent modes of responding to its effects. Technology is neither good nor bad, and it would miss the point if the recognition of the transforming character of technology is simply used for anti-technological responses. It requires, however, penetrating analysis to understand the nature of the threat symbolised in 9/11. It is a threat which no longer knows borders or taboos; it is a threat which no longer meets equivalent and complementary measures of a monopoly of state power. 9/11 means an end to the state monopoly on the legitimate use of force.

This does not mean that reactions according to the traditional logic of the state monopoly on the legitimate use of force have become completely wrong or useless. The state remains the guarantor of the security of its citizens to the best of its ability. The debate on whether policing measures taken after 9/11 might infringe upon people’s rights is, therefore, both artificial and overdue. It shows that the state monopoly on the legitimate use of force, so long contested in the name of civil liberties, has become an instrument to guarantee civil liberties – at least in Western democracies. The unwavering confidence in this perception of the modern state has been deeply shaken by 9/11 and its implications. Wherever dictatorship prevails, the state also remains potentially the biggest agent of aggression against other states and other societies. This is why the question of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is extremely crucial in the context of countries working on such weapons. The borders between a state-led use of aggression, state-sponsored aggression or privatised aggression, which either holds a state hostage, or operates independently from any state, have become permeable.

If violence, even in its maximal form without any taboo or limit, becomes an act of private decision, the state monopoly in countering violence through a monopoly of military and policing measures becomes clumsy, permeable and questionable. This notion of state-centred decisionism was heavily shattered on 9/11.
The realisation that terrorist groups can even hijack states, as in the case of Afghanistan, makes the new challenge even more uncomfortable. Suicide bombers in the Middle East add to the new challenge of asymmetric warfare. It has become questionable whether or not the Western sovereign state, still firmly holding to the notion of the state monopoly on the legitimate use of force as the central guarantor of civil liberties, can truly act coherently and with sustainable success in the face of the new dimension of privatised warfare. While 9/11 is felt as a threat to everybody, it is a particular blow to the legitimacy of the modern state.

This situation can be seen both as a hopeless tragedy and as an opportunity. Whether either the United States or Europe will be capable of living up to the intellectual challenge 9/11 has generated, in terms of the threat perception for the twenty-first century, remains to be seen. So far, the reactions on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean have been rather intuitive and hence limited. Confronted with an exceptional threat, America is inclined to act unidimensionally, thus hoping to counterbalance the power of evil which it faces. Confronted with an exceptional threat, Europe is inclined to invoke multidimensional categories of assessment of the situation, and solutions to reach both its root causes and all possible ramifications. Neither approach might suffice to come to terms with the secular implications of 9/11.

Without any doubt, state power remains necessary in fighting terrorism. The more that aggressive and wicked terrorists act, the more likely it is that they do not do so on their own. They need an infrastructure which has to be tracked down. They might use shelter and cover, financial and logistical support which has to be targeted and destroyed. They use means of communication and conspiracy which cannot remain hidden if properly investigated. Hard state power remains inevitable in fighting the war against terrorism. It will always become somewhat contradictory when the enemy is wrapped in a multilayered combination of state authority (such as Iraq and Taliban Afghanistan), state-sponsored actions (such as Hamas, Hezbollah and al-Qaeda) and extremely privatised targeting through personalised tools (such as suicide terrorism against innocent civilians). It might also mean that hard power infrastructures, like military institutions, become more of a target than remaining an instrument in a successful fight against terrorism.

The notion of a state monopoly on the legitimate use of force as a necessary means in protecting citizens against terror attacks has
become shattered, not on grounds of theoretical opposition, but on grounds of practical state capacities to do so. Terrorists, as 9/11 has proven, are no longer ‘out there’, but are among us; they can be everywhere and in fact they have proven to be everywhere. 9/11 is equivalent to the ‘Middle Easternisation of the West’, to terrorism which on purpose looks for civilian targets and victims. Whatever else there is to fear in the future, since many ‘sleeper cells’ linked to the al-Qaeda network already exist in Western (and non-Western) societies, one must recognise how difficult it will be ‘to bring terrorism to its places of origin’ (as US Defense Secretary Rumsfeld put it) in the Middle East and the Arab world. Terrorism is already among us, and past experiences with terrorism in Europe (such as the IRA, ETA, Red Brigades or Baader-Meinhof) are incomparable with the new global dimension with which the world is confronted.

After 9/11, many Americans wondered if Europe and the US would share the same notion of the threat perception the Western world is facing. There seemed to be consensus that terrorism was posing a threat to Western civilisation, Western-type liberties and a peaceful living together of people with different ethnic or religious backgrounds. There seemed to be consensus that terrorism required global countermeasures. As much as no country should or could react on its own, America should not be left alone and Europe needed strongly to support America. The degree of consultation on strategy, tactics and actions, as well as the degree of consensual co-operation versus a unilateral urge in the US, was as much a focus of the debate as it could possibly be in transatlantic relations. The open question was whether the degree of diverging perceptions and conflicting opinions was higher than usual. Surely, the sensitivities were higher than ever before. Hardly anybody raised the question of whether or not any military and policing reaction could be up to the new challenge at all.

The US was torn, not for the first time, between superpower instincts and an inclination to build a fortress America, much in line with the call for isolationism of its first President, George Washington: ‘there can be no greater error than to expect or calculate, upon real favors from Nation to Nation’. Europe was torn, also not surprisingly, between commitment to transatlantic solidarity based on either values or shared interests, and the assumption that only if Europe stood shoulder to shoulder with the US could it prevent the US from conducting exaggerated and disproportional measures. Solidarity of values and solidarity of mistrust converged,
while other Europeans questioned whether the US would either understand the root causes of 9/11 or be willing to reflect on the reason for ‘anti-Americanism’ in many parts of the world, or whether the ‘war on terrorism’ would really be fought for the same purpose and with the same objectives.  

Diverging perceptions of the threat and its nature remain the crux of the matter in transatlantic relations. While Americans emphasise the need for military options in the war against terrorism, no matter which new fronts might have to be opened, Europeans are divided on the question of whether a wartime situation actually exists. ‘Mutual recriminations’, as Jackson Janes and Jeffrey Anderson put it about six months after 9/11, are ‘becoming more frequent and openly public’. Most of this debate is confined to the traditional patterns, reflexes and impulses of transatlantic relations. As asymmetric as the new series of threats in the world may be, transatlantic reactions will remain asymmetric as long as the US and the EU do not see eye-to-eye as equal partners in the management of a world bereft of a state monopoly on the legitimate use of force. Even such a chaotic new world will require political leadership and a wise application of multilateralism. The US might be attracted by unilateralism, which is the flip-side of isolationism, and Europe might remain torn between problems of governance and providing appropriate capabilities to impress the US, be accepted as a partner in leadership, and tie the US to multilateral approaches to the extent Europe would like to see.

In light of the changing nature of power, the new array of terrorist threats from biological warfare to suicide bombs to spectacular attacks on symbols of Western civilisation, and the limited role of the traditional state monopoly on the legitimate use of force to cope with the new dimensions of threats to peace and stability in the world, the EU and the US are forced to narrow their perception of the nature of the threats both transatlantic partners are facing. This includes not only political consultations, which exist as intensive as ever, but it also requires more than an increase of the networks of the civil societies (academia, media) which were so successful and vivid during the decades of the Cold War.

First and foremost, it requires consensus about a new global agenda with which Atlantic civilisation is confronted, and will have to deal in consent, or at least on the basis of complementary division of labour, if it will succeed as it did during the second half of the twentieth century. In order to achieve this, a new ‘grand
strategy’ is needed which can truly replace the one which served as the underlying foundation for the transatlantic alliance during the Cold War. 9/11 has made evident the need for a new ‘grand strategy’ which can provide for a mental construct to cope conceptually and practically with the new dimensions of threat to Atlantic civilisation.

The Long-Term Test-Case for Atlantic Civilisation: Unfinished Globalisation and its Contradictions

Atlantic civilisation could not overlook the enormous breadth and depth of new challenges it was facing. In the wake of 9/11, it was unclear whether or not the diverging tendencies between the US and Europe were a consequence of ideological divides with increasing links between the policy debates on both sides of the Atlantic, which would have to take into account different policy preferences between a Republican administration in Washington and a majority of left-of-centre governments in the member states of the European Union. A more general problem of transatlantic governance was that of dealing with increasingly disparate views on policy matters, stemming from diverging notions of the role of power, the role of state sovereignty, the notion of multilateralism and the importance of international cooperation while American unilateralism and ‘Euro-Gaullism’ were evolving simultaneously.

Depending on which starting point one takes, the implications for a strategic assessment of the new paradigm the world order started to generate are different:

- a return to ideological politics within the Western world, not the least between Americans and Europeans;
- a forward-looking understanding of power politics and its meaning in the new century;
- a multidimensional approach which would be able to strengthen the Atlantic civilisation rather than defining it by its ability to limit agreement between its key partners.

The third choice would clearly be the most promising, although not necessarily the easiest. It would require a contextualising of 9/11 while putting it into the perspective of its larger relevance for the future evolution of world politics. This would be equivalent to the
re-making of the world at the end of the Second World War. Before a grand strategy was designed at that time, which shaped the course of the Cold War and all the ups and downs of transatlantic relations during its decades, a proper analysis of the situation took place. This was the work of a few ‘wise men’ on the side of the United States, and it was the work of enlightened statesman in post-war Europe. While the war against terrorism prevails, it remains difficult to conceptualise it as the starting point for a new global paradigm. But nothing less is needed if 9/11 is to be transformed from a ‘defining moment’ in history into the formative experience of a new era, and as the ‘zero hour’ for the shaping of a new global paradigm.

This requires analysts to broaden the perspective from 9/11 as an act of war, to an assessment of the root causes underlying this brutal act. The key notion of the Cold War was encapsulated in the title of Karl Popper’s magnificent study, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*. More than any other intellectual contribution, this book grasped the scientific root causes of the era, which was defined by the divide between democracy and dictatorship, by the components of political totalitarianism and its seductive messages, and by the combination of ideological, political, military and cultural struggles. The enemies of the open society were representatives of the same cultural background. The battle over the ‘open society’ was a battle within the Western world, among thinkers, agitators and actors in the world between Vancouver and Vladivostok. The enemies of the open society were by and large part of the same intellectual tradition and cultural background. Only after the Cold War had completely unfolded was a dividing line drawn between the ‘West’ and the ‘East’. This recognised the geographical splits which had taken place right through Central Europe after 1945. It facilitated political, military and ideological categorisations, and became something of an abbreviation for the description of a larger and more complex conflict. It came as no surprise that with the end of the Cold War, most Central European countries claimed their ‘return to the West’, while Russia embarked on a Western-oriented strategy even if it would remain a case *sui generis*, no longer adversarial to the West, but also distinct from Western and Central European societies.

The formative mental construction of the new world post-9/11 might be labelled ‘global society and its enemies’. The attack on the
World Trade Center was a symbolic attack on economic and cultural globalisation. It brought about a form of terrorism which gave expression to the darkest possible side of globalisation. Its effects were felt globally, and its context was truly global. If the paradigm of the twenty-first century is to be ‘globalisation’, its enemies are definitely manifold and they are so for different reasons:

- inside and outside Atlantic civilisation, some argue against the dominance of cultural globalisation, which they see as an attack on heterogeneous identities;
- inside and outside Atlantic civilisation, some argue against the economic power of globalisation, which they see as leading to the exclusion of many members of the human family;
- inside and outside Atlantic civilisation, some criticise globalisation as becoming equivalent with ‘Americanisation’;
- inside and outside Atlantic civilisation, some criticise technological globalisation as a contribution to dehumanising human life and human relations;
- inside and outside Atlantic civilisation, some understand globalisation as intrinsically driven by human self-idolisation, thus undermining the values and norms of any religion, humility among them.

The amount of grievances in the world is no less strong in the early twenty-first century than it was at other times. Notions of recognition of justice are as strong and complex as ever. While the ‘global society’ is neither complete nor perfect nor morally superior, its critics are as broad in their outlooks, priorities and orientations as could be. But what is binding them together is critique and rejection of the emerging global society. The expressions of this opposition are as diverse as human behaviour can be. Endless shortcomings and limits of globalisation are supporting one aspect of the critique or another. But all in all, no opposition to the emerging global society is as forceful and violent as the terrorism symbolised in its most gruesome brutality by the events of 9/11. Terrorism has become the darkest side of globalisation.

Its aggression is of a fanaticism comparable only to the great and wicked totalitarian movements of the twentieth century. As much as proponents of Nazi or communist totalitarianism in the twentieth century, historian Jeffrey Herf wrote,
today's Islamic fundamentalist fanatics are convinced that they possess absolute truth which is immune from refutation or criticism; they despise Western modernity yet borrow its technological accomplishments in an effort to destroy it. They believe that force and terror are necessary to establish a utopia in place of the current decadent and corrupt world; and they explain history on the basis of conspiratorial construct in which the United States, more than 'international Jewry' or global capitalism, plays the central role...

Osama Bin Laden and al-Qaeda emerge in a global political culture in which elements of leftist anti-globalisation discourse and re-runs of fascist and Nazi visions of Jewish conspiracies merge with religious passion.5

Herf, whose analysis of Nazi ideology as 'reactionary modernism' gained attention 20 years ago, concluded that 9/11 was 'a terribly clear act of reactionary modernist rage ... Islamic fundamentalism borrows the West's technology in order to destroy it'.6

Terrorism has always been linked to totalitarian movements in the past. It should be no surprise that the enemies of global society have begun to organise and to express themselves in a similar manner as their Nazi or communist predecessors. The age of ideological seduction has found a new expression in Islamic terrorism. 'To the fanatic', Elie Wiesel wrote, 'everything is black or white, curse or blessing, friend or foe – and nothing in between. He is immune to doubt and hesitation. He perceives tolerance as weakness'. The terror attacks of 9/11 are the most evident expression of this fanaticism. However, the terrorism of 9/11 is nothing but the bloody peak of a much deeper set of problems. These problems are linked, inter alia, to the character and evolution of Islamic societies confronted with modernisation and Western democracy. They are, likewise, linked with the growing formation of dislike against the promise of globalisation and its inevitable weaknesses inside and outside the Western world. 9/11 shed a flashlight on the many threads of contempt for the emerging civilisation of globalisation, but the shades of the problems which they are representing are not only lit in the sharp light of 9/11. Many of the root causes of 9/11 are rather grey, and not just black and white. Thus, both the analysis, and the consequences stemming from it, must be multidimensional and recognise the interlocking nature of the underlying root causes of the
new terrorist threat to civilisation.

It will require lasting intellectual efforts to link the proper analysis of the forces which represent enmity to the global society, with the search for a comprehensive grand strategy of Atlantic civilisation in order to fight them appropriately and successfully. Nothing less is the consequence which the United States and Europe have to draw from 9/11 as the ‘zero hour’ of a new epoch.

Elements of a New Grand Strategy for Atlantic Civilisation: Containment and Inclusion

The Vulnerability of Complex Modern Societies

There will never be absolute security as long as freedom prevails. Consolation can only be found in religious notions of the value and ultimate purpose of life and afterlife, and in the recognition of the relative and limited success of all human endeavour. The more we appreciate human life and human dignity, the more we have to accept its limits. If necessary, this must be learned anew the more perfectionist our societies seem to become.

The Benefit of Containment

Strategies of containment are necessary in order to prevent the consequences of vulnerability from spreading in uncontrolled ways and escalating beyond acceptable means. Containing the violent enemies of global society demands strong military and policing measures, multilateral political coalitions and a resolve of applying all options necessary in order to deter forces which willingly spread destruction, fear and hate.

The Hope of Inclusion and Recognition

So far, a global society is emerging only in rudimentary forms with limited scope both in terms of coherent ‘content’ and universal territorial outreach. Whatever possible has to be done to increase the sustainable inclusion of individuals, societies, cultures and states into the emerging global society. Incentives must be provided to make it worthwhile to recognise the benefits of the global society by being recognised in one’s own individuality and identity by the global society itself.
The Advantage of Honesty

To engage each and every line of thinking into some sort of a dialogue has become an incarnate expression of Western tolerance. Instead of a dialogue among cultures, often a culture of dialogue has developed. To transform it into a viable contribution to a sincere dialogue of cultures, honesty and clarity about one's own position and goals are necessary. As paradoxical as it might sound: it is necessary to overcome relativism of standpoint if fanaticism of action is to be prevented.

The Need for Universal Recognition of Human Dignity

No killing is justified in the name of any God or human ideology. Only recognition of the inherent dignity of all other members of the human family can make the vulnerable global society a human experience for any individual. Fundamental human rights must be universally recognised to allow any moral dialogue among cultures and people and to strengthen the legitimacy of any political system throughout the world.

From these basic assumptions follows a simple and yet fundamental consequence. Any viable and far-sighted political strategy accepting the premises described above will have to resort to two complex tasks: containment and inclusion. Neither of these tasks will be simple and unidimensional. Both require inherently multilateral approaches. If 'containment and inclusion' are to serve as the summarising and forming notions of the new paradigm necessary to focus Atlantic civilisation in its strife for the future world order, their implications will have to be spelled out in breadth and in depth. They will require a global view on both sides of the Atlantic. Neither American unilateralism nor European insularism will be helpful for either partner to cope with the world ahead. Global coalitions will be needed, in many cases reaching beyond the Atlantic world. There will be and there must be room for the pursuit of the specific interests of either the US or the EU, for complementarity of both partners wherever possible and for a joint outreach towards solutions as often as is feasible. None of this is easy, nor does it come naturally. As the twenty-first century unfolds, the stakes are as high as the controversies looming ahead for both the US and the EU.
Five priorities arise in order to translate the notion of ‘containment and inclusion’ from abstract strategy to concrete policies supporting the emergence of a global society managed by the US and the EU:

1. The US and the EU must recognise their common role in forging a new world order. This includes the need to respect and enhance global governance through the promotion of multilateral institutions, multilateral regulatory mechanisms and the effects of international law. Diverging positions on these matters might be the single most dangerous gulf in the current evolution of political understanding on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. Contradictions between the proud claim of representing the values of law and justice, and disrespect for the binding nature of multilateral mechanisms of governance and regulation, will increasingly undermine the credibility of the US in world affairs, while the EU must overcome its capability gap in terms of military and policy operations ‘out of area’.

2. The need to contain state-based, state-sponsored or privatised forms of aggression against the integrity and innocence of individual human life, and of the emerging global society remains crucial in order to uphold the peaceful and prosperous development of global society. The US and the EU must provide all necessary military, policing, political, economic and cultural means and the underlying budgets, but they also must organise the decision-making processes in a way compatible with respect for the Atlantic partnership as an end in itself and with recognition of the stakes involved in it. All necessary measures to cope with the evil of terrorism must be applied in the name of maintaining security and safety as an important individual and social right.

3. The goal to include as many individuals, societies, states and cultures into the emerging global society requires multidimensional, multilayered and multilateral approaches with particular emphasis on recognising ‘development as freedom’; focus on good governance, the rule of law and political accountability; empowerment of people through education and civil society participation; recognition of human rights and basic criteria of the democratic process, particularly in the Arab world. Development policies and the promotion of good governance will
be refocused in light of the experiences post-9/11. They must contribute to inclusion both on the cultural as well as on the political and economic level. They must target people as their goal and wherever necessary they must not shy away from tainting regimes as their obstacle.

4. If necessary, most daunting international conflicts, such as the Middle East conflict, have to be resolved by joint means of imposing peace on failed states, accepting Western responsibility for enduring nation- and state-building, and supporting means of rehabilitation which can empower states and societies to achieve sustainable development and rule of law. This requires the Atlantic partners to provide necessary ‘venture capital’, and necessary structural reforms, such as liberalising trade and limiting subsidies to uncompetitive sectors of their economy. It will also have implications for mechanisms and institutions of peacekeeping and nation-building. A division of labour will not work according to which the US is defining a grand strategy and the EU will be invited to pay for the follow-up costs.

5. Global migration has to be organised in a way which balances the interests of Western societies for human labour with integration measures capable of maintaining respect for the dignity of migrants; forces migrants to recognise the political and legal rules of their host country while preventing xenophobic movements derailing moderate political processes in Western societies; encourages increasing knowledge and understanding of Islam as a religion within the Western world, while fighting against Islamic fundamentalism inside and outside the Western world. Both the US and the EU have to embark on multidimensional approaches in order to come to terms with integration challenges arising from Muslim migrants, while the countries of origin of Muslim migrants to the West have to be encouraged, if not forced, to deal more capably with the internal root causes of frustration and grievance due to a lack of openness and recognition of demands of participation enshrined in universal notions of human rights.

None of these priorities will easily translate into common policies of the EU and the US. It will require leadership and persistence hardly comparable with anything seen since the formative years of the Atlantic alliance between 1945 and the early 1950s. The strategy and its goals have to be designed in ways unprecedented in transatlantic
governance. They have to be communicated to the people on both sides of the Atlantic in truly memorable speeches by political leaders, comparable to Winston Churchill’s speech in 1946 in Fulton, Missouri, in which he outlined that an ‘iron curtain’ had gone down in Europe forcing the Western world to stand together; comparable also to George C. Marshall’s Commencement Speech at Harvard University in 1947, in which he designed America’s commitment to the recovery of Europe and to a democratic and united Europe based on America’s enlightened self-interest.

9/11 has begun a period of soul-searching and of hard choices in the Western world. Its consequences will go far beyond the war on terrorism. 9/11 has become the rather unpleasant ‘opportunity’ for Atlantic civilisation to redefine its cause in contributing to world order in the twenty-first century. This is no easy task, and it will increasingly engage the current generation of acting politicians on both sides of the Atlantic. The foundation stones of this new grand strategy for the management of the evolving global society have to be laid out sooner rather than later. It is a daunting yet noble challenge for the societies living on both shores of the Atlantic. 9/11 has called on Atlantic civilisation for nothing less than working together in enlightened self-interest for world order in the twenty-first century. Thus 9/11 defines much more than the need to win the war against terrorism, although this aspect of building the world order is important.

NOTES


6. Ibid., p.29.