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An Enhanced European Role in Iraq?

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Summary

Bush Administration officials have said that they wish to see NATO countries contribute forces to bring stability to Iraq, possibly as part of a U.S.-led NATO or U.N. force. Key European allies such as France and Germany would first like to see a new U.N. mandate that would include objectives, such as a timetable for turnover of authority to Iraqis and a transparent process for improving Iraq's petroleum industry, that the Administration now opposes. Some European allies do not wish to serve under a U.S. command in Iraq; other European allies already have troops in Iraq.

Administration officials are concerned that greater international involvement in governing Iraq could deflect the United States from achieving some of its stated goals for that country's future. Such goals include establishing a democracy there that would influence other Middle Eastern governments to follow a similar course, and easing of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Some Europeans argue that these goals are unattainable in the framework established by the U.S.-led occupation. At the same time, involvement of European forces, if a common outlook could be worked out, could free some U.S. forces for other missions, dampen international criticism of U.S. management of Iraq, and spread costs for reconstructing Iraq to other countries and the private sector.

See also CRS Report RL31339, *Iraq: U.S. Regime Change Efforts and Post-War Governance*, CRS Report RL31701, *Iraq: U.S. Military Operations*, and CRS Report RL31843, *Iraq: Foreign Contributions to Operation Iraqi Freedom, Peacekeeping Operations, and Reconstruction*.

This report will be periodically updated.

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An Enhanced European Role in Iraq?

Introduction

The United States now has approximately 130,000 troops in Iraq and another 30,000 support troops in Kuwait, a force that some senior U.S. military officials believe stretches the country's combat capabilities, especially in the event of a major crisis in Korea or elsewhere. The Bush Administration wishes NATO countries to send forces to Iraq to reduce the demands on U.S. forces, and to spread the costs of stabilization and reconstruction. Key allies acknowledge the possibility of a NATO role, but first wish to see a new U.N. mandate and greater sharing of decision-making with both the U.N. and the allies. Some other allies appear to reject involvement in a U.S.-led force, as a NATO force would be, and prefer a force with a substantial U.N. role.

In a broader context, unresolved issues from earlier disputes among the allies also intrude in the debate over possible NATO involvement. These issues include the causes of the war in Iraq, the role of the U.N. in NATO out-of-area operations, the military capabilities of the allies, and the effects of Iraq's evolution on the Middle East as a whole. In addition, vestiges of a dispute over allied assistance to Turkey in February 2003 before the war with Iraq remain a cause for friction between the United States and several allies.

A Role for European Forces?

This section will first briefly review the debate in NATO over the last two years about allied missions outside Europe. It will then discuss several related issues, primarily those generated by allied disagreement over the reasons for war with Iraq, that affect any possible decision by European governments to contribute forces to stabilize Iraq. There follows a discussion of the evolution of the Administration's position on its objectives for post-war Iraq and the necessary force levels to achieve those objectives. The section closes with an examination of how many European forces might be available for Iraq, and the relation of force levels to costs.

The NATO Debate over 'Out-of-Area' Operations

NATO members agreed in principle in 2002 that allied forces might be sent beyond Europe to combat threats to member states' security. In May 2002, the allies agreed that "to carry out the full range of its missions, NATO must be able to field forces that can move quickly to wherever they are needed, sustain operations over distance and time, and achieve their objectives." Several months earlier, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, when asked what NATO's area of operations should be, responded, "The only way to deal with the terrorist network that's global is to go

after it where it is.” On July 9, 2003, he told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the Administration would “certainly want assistance from NATO and from NATO countries” in stabilizing Iraq.¹ Those who favor a NATO role in Iraq cite the recent precedent of the allied force in Afghanistan. The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan has 4,800 troops, including a small U.S. contingent, that came under NATO command on August 11, 2003. Its commander on the ground is a German general. Its objective is to bring stability to Kabul. (An additional 9,000 U.S. forces, not under NATO command, continue combat operations outside Kabul.) In early October 2003, NATO agreed in principle to extend the NATO force to the town of Kunduz.

Before the conflict in Iraq, some Administration officials made a case for NATO involvement in post-war Iraq. They contended that only NATO had the capability for force generation, intelligence, and planning for a peace operation. NATO has had experience in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Afghanistan in leading stabilization forces. The bombing of U.N. headquarters in Baghdad on August 19 may signal a continuation of violent resistance to any outside entity, whether military or civilian, be it NATO or the U.N.²

Recent Issues Affecting the Debate in NATO over Iraq

NATO’s agreement in principle to send forces outside Europe and the precedent of ISAF mask a range of issues that must be resolved before the European allies might send troops to Iraq. Some allied governments believe that the Bush Administration should have involved NATO more closely in the conflict in Afghanistan in late 2001 to build an international political base for using military force against terrorism. A more narrow range of allied governments believes that the Administration overrode their preference for allowing U.N. WMD inspections to run their course in Iraq in late 2002 and 2003, that the Administration pushed aside the U.N. as a centerpiece for building an international coalition against the government of Saddam Hussein, and that the Administration went to war precipitately, without establishing firm evidence of WMD in or Al Qaeda links to Iraq.

In February 2003, several allies resisted a U.S. effort to send NATO forces to defend Turkey in the event of an attack by Iraq. They opposed such a move because they viewed it as an Administration maneuver to imply NATO endorsement of the impending conflict with Iraq. These experiences have led the allies to demand a greater share of decision-making and more authority for the U.N. in Iraq before committing military forces to that country, issues that will be discussed in a later section of this report.³

¹NATO Communiqué, Paragraph 5, Reykjavik Ministerial meeting, May 14, 2002; Rumsfeld press conference, Brussels, Dec. 18, 2001, Dept. of Defense transcript; Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing, July 9, 2003.

²Interviews, February-March 2003; “U.N. staff’s immunity from terror ends,” *Washington Post* (henceforth *WP*), Aug. 20, 2003.

³See, for example, “Germany willing to send forces to Iraq, says Fischer,” *Financial Times* (continued...)

Objectives and Necessary Force Levels

Both President Bush and Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld have previously said that U.S. forces in Iraq are adequate to stabilize the country and to accomplish Administration objectives there. In June 2003, President Bush said that the United States has in Iraq “the force necessary to deal with the security situation.” On August 20, Secretary Rumsfeld said, “At the moment, the conclusion of the responsible military officials is that the force levels are where they should be.”⁴

Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz testified to Congress that the purpose of the U.S. occupation is to build “a free, democratic, peaceful Iraq” that will not threaten friends of the United States with “illegal weapons. A free Iraq that will not be a training ground for terrorists...[and] will not destabilize the Middle East. A free Iraq can set a hopeful example to the entire region and lead other nations to choose freedom.” He added that by bringing in military forces from other countries, U.S. forces could be drawn down.⁵ On September 23, 2003, in a speech at the U.N., President Bush said that “Iraq as a democracy will have great power to inspire the Middle East. The advance of democratic institutions in Iraq is setting an example that others, including the Palestinian people, would be wise to follow.”⁶

There are views, some within the United States government, that contend that the force levels in Iraq cannot be maintained without severe stress on U.S. forces. The United States Army has 33 active-duty combat brigades, of which only three are available today for new missions. Twenty-one are overseas, including 16 in Iraq. A CBO study released September 3 found that the U.S. Army could not maintain 170,000-180,000 forces in Iraq and Kuwait past March 2004 without activating more National Guard and Reserve units, or calling upon foreign forces. General John Abizaid, CENTCOM commander, placed the figure at a lower level. He said that the United States could not sustain the current level of 130,000 troops without rotating active duty, reserve, and National Guard forces into Iraq by spring 2004, absent international forces to replace them.⁷

Other estimates put the level of forces needed in Iraq at a higher figure than that given by the Administration. A Rand Corporation official has given an estimate of 300,000-500,000 troops. Former Army Chief of Staff General Eric Shinseki said that

³(...continued)

(henceforth *FT*), July 17, 2003; William Pfaff, “Bush policy risks terminal strain in NATO,” *International Herald Tribune* (henceforth *IHT*), July 21, 2003; “The Future of Transatlantic Security: New Challenges,” American Council on Germany occasional paper, based on a conference of U.S., UK, French, and German officials, Dec. 5-7, 2002.

⁴President Bush cited in “Attack shows the limits of U.S. control,” *WP*, Aug. 20, 2003; and Rumsfeld in “U.S. renews bid to involve more nations in Iraq,” *WP*, Aug. 21, 2003.

⁵“Iraq Reconstruction,” Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing, July 29, 2003.

⁶“Excerpts from the President’s U.N. address,” *WP*, Sept. 24, 2003.

⁷“Pentagon grapples with troop shortage,” *New York Times* (henceforth *NYT*), July 21, 2003; *An Analysis of the U.S. Military’s Ability to Sustain an Occupation of Iraq*, CBO, Sept. 3, 2003; “Commander doesn’t expect more foreign troops in Iraq,” *NYT*, Sept. 26, 2003.

several hundred thousand troops would be needed. Some of these estimates do not cite democracy and influence on regional governments to develop representative institutions as goals of the occupation; rather, they generally cite “stability” as the key objective.⁸ One defense analyst provides a more sobering perspective, noting that the U.S. political as well as military strategy is deficient to bring stability to Iraq. In his view, the United States lacks properly trained forces, such as peacekeepers and military police, for the job; the essence of Iraq’s need is for civilian training for administrators and establishment of civil institutions, but Iraq is now being administered by the Department of Defense, which is not prepared for such a mission, according to this view.⁹

NATO is providing a measure of assistance in Iraq to Poland, which has formed a multinational force that became operational in part of its originally assigned sector September 3. NATO’s North Atlantic Council decided on May 21, 2003, to provide Poland allied assets for force planning, communications, logistics, and establishment of a headquarters. The operation is not technically a NATO operation. Poland leads a contingent of 9,000 troops from a variety of countries, some of which are not NATO members, from north of Basra into the central part of the country. The bombing of a major mosque in Najaf, which took the life of an important Shi’ite cleric, led the U.S. government to delay Poland’s takeover of that city, which is in the Polish sector, for at least several weeks. Some observers, while crediting Warsaw with a willingness to undertake a dangerous mission, believe that some of the forces are not trained to NATO standards.¹⁰ The United States will pay Poland \$250 million to cover primarily logistics and communication costs for its force.

On August 26, 2003, NATO SACEUR (Supreme Allied Commander Europe) General James Jones floated the idea that the Polish-led force might eventually be expanded and transformed into a NATO-led force, a step that would require the approval of all allies.¹¹

How Many European Forces Are available?

Several factors could limit the availability of forces from NATO countries. Several allies — such as France, Italy, Britain, and Germany — are already contributing to stability operations in Bosnia, Kosovo, the Ivory Coast, and Afghanistan. NATO Secretary General George Robertson, who favors a NATO force for Iraq, has said that a maximum of 80,000 troops from European NATO countries might be available. A more realistic figure might be in the range of 40,000-50,000, he said, given NATO governments’ obligations in current operations.

⁸“U.S. will ask U.N. for move to widen the force in Iraq,” *NYT*, Aug. 21, 2003.

⁹Anthony Cordesman, “Iraq and Conflict Termination: The Road to Guerrilla War?” Center for Strategic and International Studies, July 28, 2003, p. 11-15.

¹⁰“New allies struggle to fill role,” *Wall Street Journal* (henceforth *WSJ*), July 28, 2003; interviews with officials in allied governments. Non-NATO countries, such as Fiji, Honduras, and Ukraine are supplying contingents to the force.

¹¹“NATO could take Iraq role,” *Reuters*, Aug. 26, 2003. General Jones is a U.S. officer, who also heads the U.S. European Command (EUCOM).

Another key factor that could affect contributions from NATO governments is the limited deployability and sustainability of most of their forces. Only Britain and France have a developed capability for deploying and sustaining forces. Some allies, such as Germany, have large numbers of conscripts that serve short periods in the armed forces. Such troops are not suitable for serving in a stabilization force.¹²

Forces, Stability, and Costs

Cost is also a major factor in the effort both to stabilize Iraq and to involve allied governments there. If forces sent to Iraq could stabilize the country and allow the Iraqis to rebuild their economy, then an Iraqi government could eventually assume more of the expense of reconstruction over the long term. Current operational costs for U.S. forces in Iraq are approximately \$4 billion per month. Reconstruction costs would be in addition to this figure. For FY2004, the Administration has asked Congress for \$20.3 billion for Iraq's reconstruction, and another for \$51 billion for military operations there.¹³

Before the war, some Administration officials had predicted Iraq would stabilize quickly after the conflict, and have sufficient revenues to pay for its own rebuilding. On March 27, 2003, Deputy Defense Secretary Wolfowitz told Congress that "we are dealing with a country that can really finance its own reconstruction, and relatively soon."¹⁴ Such a situation might have produced an environment where a functioning Iraqi government could have borne more costs, sold industrial assets to private investors in and outside Iraq, and contracted to pay private companies to rebuild the country over time. The World Bank estimated in early October 2003 that Iraq would need \$36 billion through 2007, in addition to the \$20.3 billion requested by the Administration, to rebuild. Iraqi oil revenues may reach an annual estimated figure of \$14 billion in that period.¹⁵ A donors' conference will be held in Madrid on October 23-24, where an estimated \$2 billion will be pledged.

European companies appear reluctant to enter Iraq until stability returns, and until a government viewed as "legitimate" is put into place. International oil executives, for example, are openly doubtful of investing the \$30-40 billion estimated to be necessary to rebuild Iraq's petroleum industry unless there is a legitimate, popularly backed, government in Baghdad with which they can negotiate contracts in a transparent process.¹⁶

¹²"Only 80,000 NATO troops available for Iraq," *FT*, July 25, 2003; *An Analysis of U.S. Military's Ability...*, CBO, op.cit., p. 5.

¹³"Pentagon's request for Iraq," *NYT*, October 5, 2003; and "Congress gets a hot potato..." *NYT*, Oct. 5, 2003.

¹⁴"Iraq," hearing before the House Appropriations Committee, 108th Congress, 2nd sess., March 27, 2003, unpaginated transcript.

¹⁵"Report offered bleak outlook for Iraq oil," *NYT*, Oct. 5, 2003.

¹⁶"Oil groups snub U.S. over Iraq investment," *FT*, July 25, 2003; interviews with oil company officials, July 2003.

A Range of European Views

There is a gulf between Administration views and those of most allied governments on sending European forces to Iraq. There is also a range of views among allied governments. Key European governments, such as France and Germany, want a strong U.N. role in Iraq, and a new U.N. resolution to outline that role. Several important allies, including France, Germany, and Turkey, opposed the U.S. decision to use force against Iraq, and instead favored continuing the U.N. WMD inspections there. Some NATO governments do not want their forces to serve under U.S. command, especially under U.N. Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1483, which gives the United States and Britain power as an “occupying” authority. Moreover, most European governments have objectives that differ from those of the Administration. In general, they do not believe that, in the current context, building democratic institutions in Iraq and making Iraq a model for peaceful, representative government that will inspire peace in the region, including settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, are attainable objectives. They also place strong emphasis on multilateralism, and wish to see the general stature of the United Nations enhanced. On the other hand, some allies, particularly countries that joined NATO recently, support Administration policy, and wish to forge a long-term strategic partnership with the United States.

Administration officials had previously said that UNSC 1483 was sufficient for introducing a NATO or broader multinational force into Iraq. They continue to oppose any resolution that would dilute the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), established by UNSC 1483 as the “occupying” power, or weaken U.S. military authority. Deputy Secretary of Defense Wolfowitz has said that a new U.N. resolution would be acceptable “provided it doesn’t put limitations on what Ambassador Bremer [the U.S. official who heads the CPA] and our people can do in Iraq that are crucial for speeding up transition to normalcy and allow us to hand over power to Iraqis...”¹⁷ The Administration has drafted a new resolution that is now before the UNSC. The draft resolution reportedly calls for a U.S.-led U.N. stabilization force, and for Iraq’s U.S.-appointed Governing Council, working with Ambassador Bremer, to submit a timetable for writing a constitution and holding elections. Secretary Powell said that under the draft resolution, Bremer would continue to play “a dominant political role.”¹⁸ Secretary Powell has also said that the Governing Council could oversee drafting of a constitution by spring 2004, with elections by the end of 2004.

The U.N. Security Council, which includes France, Russia, and Britain as permanent members with veto powers, has endorsed the current Iraqi Governing Council as a step towards providing the Iraqi people real power. Germany is now on the Security Council as a rotating member, having a vote but not a veto. The CPA chose the members of the Governing Council. Three governments — France, Germany, and Russia — issued a joint statement on May 21, 2003, in which they praised UNSC 1483 because it gave the U.N. a measure of involvement; placed the

¹⁷“Iraq Reconstruction,” Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing, July 29, 2003.

¹⁸“U.S. seeks UN backing for speedy handover of power to Iraqi people,” *FT*, Sept. 4, 2003.

action of the CPA under international law and limited the CPA's actions; and allowed the U.N. to monitor Iraqi oil revenues. At the same time, they described the resolution as only a first step, asked that the U.N. be given an increased role, and that a "calendar" be established for putting in place "a legitimate and internationally recognized administration in Iraq." In addition, they asked that contracts for the reconstruction of Iraq be opened to competitive bidding.¹⁹

The British government's perspective on governing Iraq is in evolution. British forces were actively engaged in Iraq during the conflict. Britain commands a force of approximately 11,000 troops in the southern part of the country, and is an "occupying power" under UNSC 1483. At the same time, Britain has reportedly been more open to a greater U.N. role in Iraq than the Administration, and a more rapid turnover of power to the Iraqis. London has a keen interest in ending European divisions over policy towards Iraq. Britain has reportedly proposed that some members of the Governing Council should quickly form a provisional government, then form a committee to draft a constitution, and prepare for national elections. British Prime Minister Tony Blair is under political pressure for his possible role in creating a dossier that appears to have provided misleading information to the House of Commons about weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, although Blair insists that this was not intentional. Public support for Blair and for Britain's involvement in Iraq has plunged since the end of the conflict.²⁰

Among the allies, France has the most explicit requirements for supporting a new U.N. resolution, although French officials say that they will not veto a new U.S. resolution. Among France's conditions for supporting a new resolution are:

- The U.N. should play the "primary role" in "supplying humanitarian aid, supporting the reconstruction of Iraq, and assisting in the creation of an interim Iraqi authority." Secretary General Annan should replace Ambassador Bremer as the principal outside political authority for Iraq.
- Iraq must have "a precise calendar" for a process of securing a legitimate government, with no involvement of an outside government or entity in an "arbitrary choice of leaders." Such a government must be "legitimate" and "pluralist," with a new constitution written under U.N. auspices. The Governing Council and the cabinet that it has chosen could represent "sovereignty"; within a month, the Governing Council and the cabinet could name a provisional government.
- A personal representative of Secretary General Annan would report regularly to the Security Council on conditions in Iraq, and would advise the provisional government on a phased transfer of authority to it. A constitution could be

¹⁹"French Foreign Minister's Press Briefing with Ivanov and Fischer," French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, May 21, 2003; "U.S. cool to new U.N. vote," *WP*, Aug. 2, 2003.

²⁰"Blair testifies to accuracy of dossier on Iraq," *WP*, Aug. 29, 2003; "After the Baghdad bomb: Kofi Annan and member states seek to redefine the UN's role in reconstructing Iraq," *FT*, Aug. 28, 2003; "Britain urges speedup in Iraq," *WP*, Oct. 9, 2003.

drafted by the end of 2003, under U.N. auspices, and elections could be held in spring 2004.

- The United States could continue to head an international military force, under U.N. auspices, to bring stability to Iraq.
- There should be international supervision within international law of Iraqi oil production, “with a transparent mechanism that assures the Iraqi people that they will not be dispossessed of their riches.”²¹

While the French government has not explicitly opposed a NATO operation, it is clear that France prefers a force mandated by the U.N. with a clear mission. French President Chirac and German Chancellor Schroeder contend that the U.S. draft resolution gives insufficient authority to the U.N. and to the Iraqi people. France has offered to train the Iraqi military and police, but has indicated that it will not send forces to Iraq, nor make a contribution to the donors’ conference until a transparent international mechanism for accepting donors’ funds is established.

A range of views is evident in other countries. The German government has said that it might send troops to Iraq, but that they would not serve under UNSC 1483 because the resolution embodies the idea of an “occupying power.” Some German officials say, however, that Berlin is more likely to seek involvement in civilian reconstruction rather than to supply forces; such projects as assisting in institution-building, including a court system, or developing infrastructure such as water and oil pipelines, might be attractive to Germany. Norway has a strong tradition of sending peacekeeping forces, but its government does not want to be associated with the occupying force outlined in UNSC 1483.²²

On October 7, 2003, Turkey agreed in principle to send forces to Iraq. The Bush Administration has reportedly asked Ankara for 10,000 troops. However, the Governing Council opposes a Turkish contingent on the grounds that no neighboring country should send forces, and because the Ottoman Empire’s control of Iraq until 1919 left a bitter legacy. U.S.-Turkish relations have been strained since March 2003, when the Turkish parliament refused to allow U.S. forces to deploy to Iraq from Turkish territory. Some Bush Administration officials, including Deputy Defense Secretary Wolfowitz, sharply criticized Turkey as a result.²³

²¹Interviews; “Il faut une administration irakienne légitimée par l’ONU,” *Le Monde* (henceforth *LM*), May 13, 2003, p. 2 [interview with foreign minister de Villepin]; “U.N.-Iraq statement by France’s permanent representative to the UNSC,” French Foreign Ministry, July 22, 2003; Irak-ONU: Paris et Berlin proposent leurs amendements au text américain,” *LM*, (Sept. 12, 2003), p. 5; Dominique de Villepin, “Irak: les chemins de la reconstruction,” *LM*, Sept. 13, 2003), p. 1. All quotations are either from the French foreign minister or the French representative to the U.N.

²²Interviews, July-October, 2003; “Germany willing to send troops to Iraq, says Fischer,” *FT*, July 17, 2003.

²³See CRS Report RL31794, *Iraq: Turkey, the Deployment of U.S. Forces, and Related Issues*; “Turkey backs peacekeeping deployment; Iraqis object,” *WP*, Oct. 8, 2003.

Ankara already has 5,000 troops deployed in northern Iraq to act against Turkish Kurdish elements that have committed acts of terrorism against Turkish interests. These forces are under Turkish, and not U.S., command. There has been tension between Turkish and U.S. forces in northern Iraq. Foreign Minister Gül has said that there must be “a separate sector under Turkish command and a separate chain of command” if more Turkish forces are sent to Iraq.²⁴

The Spanish government strongly supported the Bush Administration’s decision to go to war against Iraq and is now contributing peacekeeping forces. At the same time, Spain has been implicitly critical of current Administration policy in Iraq, particularly the Governing Council chosen by U.S. officials. Foreign Minister Palacio has urged immediate efforts to begin a constitutional process in Iraq. “The process cannot be sequestered by the local interests of a small number of Iraqis, nor can it be imposed from without. Iraqis must be the main protagonists throughout.... An impartial third party, preferably with the intervention of the United Nations, should identify these stakeholders.”²⁵

A number of NATO members have already sent or will send forces to Iraq. The Italian government will send 3,000 troops to create security zones, serve as military police, and search for weapons of mass destruction.²⁶

Several European allies, and virtually all the NATO candidate states, place strategic relations with the United States above considerations for a stronger U.N. role. While these governments may desire a new U.N. resolution that encourages a broader role for multilateral institutions in Iraq, they believe that their own future security lies with close relations with the United States. As already noted, Poland may eventually lead a force of approximately 22 countries, some of which are sending small contingents. Polish officials would welcome a general NATO force in Iraq. Hungary and the Czech Republic, among current NATO members, also place great importance on an enhanced strategic partnership with the United States, and have committed to sending small numbers of troops.

Congressional Views

On July 10, 2003, the Senate passed an amendment, offered by Sen. Biden, to the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, S. 925, urging the President to request that NATO “raise a force for deployment in post-war Iraq similar to what it has done in

²⁴“Turkey may send troops to Iraq,” *IHT*, Aug. 23-24, 2003; “Turkish official ties Iraq aid to economic pledges,” *WP*, Aug. 24, 2003.

²⁵Ana Palacio, “Iraq needs a European convention,” *FT*, July 7, 2003. The Bush Administration, in contrast, believes that the Governing Council has sufficient authority to decide on steps to write a constitution.

²⁶“Commando Operativo di vertice Interforze,” July 22, 2003; document supplied by Italian Ministry of Defense. The Czech Republic, Denmark, Hungary, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, all NATO members, have sent or will soon send forces, but, for now at least, not as part of a NATO operation.

Afghanistan, Bosnia and Kosovo....” It also calls upon the U.N. to provide military and police forces “to promote security and stability in Iraq and resources to help rebuild and administer Iraq.” The bill is pending in the Senate. In the House, Mr. Bereuter, Mr. Wexler, and Mr. Lantos proposed an amendment identical to the Biden amendment to H.R. 1950. It was adopted, and the bill was passed on July 16. Members in both houses and both parties have called upon the Administration to send more U.S. troops to Iraq as well. Senator Lugar said on July 29 that “overall the United States mission in Iraq continues to hang in the balance,” and added that “coalition efforts in Iraq must undergo further internationalization to be successful and affordable.”²⁷

Assessment

The debate between the United States and some of its European allies over an enhanced European role in Iraq poses a range of problems with important implications. The Administration desires international troop contributions, but on terms that do not dilute U.S. political and military control over Iraq. Administration officials wish to preserve pre-war political objectives: the democratization of Iraq; elimination of weapons of mass destruction and terrorist operations; and a residual moderating effect upon the rest of the Middle East, including possible settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Key European allies, to some extent including Britain, seek an international force with a strong U.N. voice. Some of these allies doubt, and even disparage as unrealistic, the Administration’s goals of a democratic Iraq and a consequent moderation of Middle Eastern politics by these means. They have openly doubted the existence of an active Iraqi WMD program and any significant connection between the Hussein regime and terrorists. In a broader perspective, virtually all European allies wish to see international problems solved in a multilateral framework, and believe that the Administration damaged this goal when it cut short U.N. inspections in Iraq and went to war. These governments wish to restore a measure of credibility to the use of multilateral institutions in international affairs.²⁸ For these reasons, some NATO governments are hesitant to send their troops to operate under U.S. leadership in Iraq. The conflicting positions of the Bush Administration and these allies on these points raises the question whether the Administration would alter its position as a compromise to obtain the 45,000-80,000 European troops that might be available.

Some allies, such as Poland and Norway, and most of the seven candidate states for NATO membership, support key elements of Administration policy in Iraq in part because they wish to forge an enduring strategic partnership with the United States. They do not believe that either the European Union or the U.N. can provide for their own security, although EU membership is a vital interest for them. Poland, for

²⁷“Iraq Reconstruction,” Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing, op. cit.

²⁸Interviews, April - September 2003; François Heisbourg, “Irak: l’Europe dans l’après-guerre,” *LM*, July 26, 2003.

example, had bad experiences with French (and British) security guarantees before World War II, and the Warsaw Treaty Organization was an alliance imposed upon central Europe that was solely for the benefit of its leader, the Soviet Union. With such recent history fresh in their minds, many central European leaders wish to tie themselves closely to the United States, although they still wish to see a measure of U.N. involvement in Iraq that will supply international legitimacy to their tasks there.

France, most vocally, and Germany are in the forefront of countries calling for a strong U.N. presence and guidance in Iraq. The current French government has aspirations to lead an EU that eventually develops a military capability suitable at least to provide a measure of defense for European countries. President Chirac advocates a “multipolar” world, with the European Union acting as a pole to balance U.S. power. Few, if any, European governments have expressed enthusiasm about such French leadership and ideas, and many have sharply opposed them. Beyond aspirations for such leadership, France, joined by Germany, has a strong belief that tying themselves to U.S. leadership in Iraq augurs ill for their relations with a future sovereign Iraqi government,²⁹ and risks alienating a broad range of Arab states hostile to the U.S. occupation. France’s call for a “pluralistic” government in Iraq is at least a step removed from the U.S. objective of a “democratic” government. France’s position on this point is shared in most European capitals, and is likely more acceptable to Arab governments as well.

At the same time, in France, Germany, and other allied states, there are influential voices that do not wish to see the United States fail to bring stability and at least a measure of representative government to Iraq. Several possible gains for European governments are apparent should a moderate Iraq, close to the United States, emerge: a chastened Iran, more hesitant in the pursuit of weapons of mass destruction and promotion of Islamic radicalism; an intimidated Syria, more cautious in its interference in regional affairs and support for terrorism; and a peace process free of an Iraqi government adamantly opposed to a settlement of Arab-Israeli differences. Failure of the U.S. effort in Iraq has potentially great negative consequences: further disaffection with U.S. leadership of NATO; a renewal of radical Islam in the Middle East, with regimes hostile to western governments; and exacerbation of tensions in the Arab-Israeli peace process. For these reasons, these observers believe that European governments criticizing the United States should seek an accommodation over Iraq with the Bush Administration.³⁰

A wide range of European officials appears to be seeking a compromise. Several options have been suggested. Such a compromise might provide the United States with overall leadership of a U.N.-approved administration and military force in Iraq, but with individual allies in command of different geographic sectors, as is the case, for example, in Bosnia and Kosovo. It might contain elements of the French position, particularly a timetable for elections and establishment of an Iraqi government chosen by the Iraqi people or representatives of various groups in Iraq. In addition, the compromise might include a transparent economic development

²⁹Heisbourg, *op. cit.*

³⁰Some of these points are evident in Heisbourg, *op. cit.*; and Jean-Claude Casanova, “De Charles de Gaulle à Jacques Chirac,” *LM*, July 25, 2003.

regime that provides companies from a range of countries access to contracts for reconstruction. Such a compromise could free U.S. forces for availability elsewhere; provide European (and other) governments with a voice in Iraq's future, and legitimacy through a U.N. imprimatur; and shift part of the financial burden for reconstruction from the U.S. government to other governments and to the international private sector. A key disadvantage for the Bush Administration might be the surrender of some of its political objectives in Iraq, such as the quest for a democratic government, that would be a model for the region.