

TRANSATLANTIC
TRENDS 2003

POWER, WAR AND PUBLIC OPINION:

Thoughts on the Nature and Structure of the Trans-Atlantic Divide

Ronald Asmus (*GMF*),
Philip P. Everts (*Leiden University*) and
Pierangelo Isernia (*University of Siena*)

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the trans-Atlantic relationship has witnessed some of the greatest debates and differences recorded in U.S.-European relations, most recently on the war in Iraq. Not surprisingly, this turbulence has also generated a growing debate over the nature and causes of such differences. A number of different views have been put forward. One explanation suggests that such differences are largely attributable to the policies of the Bush Administration. Another argues that the advent of the Bush Administration is not a major factor and that the two sides have become increasingly incompatible as a result of the growing asymmetry in power across the Atlantic. Yet another argues that current differences are essentially rooted in widely differing threat perceptions in the U.S. and Europe after 9/11.

It is perhaps inevitable that proponents of each of these views will look for — and sometimes find — public opinion research results that tend to confirm their own differing hypotheses. At the same time, the core issue of where and why American and European publics differ on questions of war and peace has not yet been adequately addressed. Against this backdrop, this essay attempts to supplement the analysis of this year's

survey results by digging a bit deeper into the nature and structure of the trans-Atlantic divide. It is designed as an analytical companion piece to and should be read together with the Transatlantic Trends 2003 study.

If one steps back and asks what we have learned from the Transatlantic Trends result from the last two years, one can draw several conclusions:

- Fears about American or European isolationism are misplaced. The American public is more willing to play an active role in world affairs than at any time in recent memory. Similarly, there is clear support in principle across Europe for the EU to take on global responsibility — but that support is tempered by a limited willingness to spend resources.
- Americans and Europeans still basically like each other, although such warmth has slipped this past year in the wake of the Iraq war. This drop, however, takes place from a historically very high level. While the Iraq war has led to a backlash, it is also noteworthy that this backlash has thus far remained modest. To some degree it appears largely focused on the Bush Administration as opposed to the U.S. more generally.¹ Anti-American and anti-European

¹ The question was not addressed directly in the 2003 TT survey although, as we shall argue, it does contain some clues in a more indirect fashion. Other recent polls provide at least partial answers. Data from the PEW survey, held at about the same time as the TT survey (May 2003), showed in this connection that people who demonstrated unfavorable attitudes on the U.S. by and large did so because of what they felt about President Bush and not because of their views on America in general. This was true for 74% of those who had negative feelings in general in France and Germany, while figures for other European countries showed a similar effect (Italy: 67%, Great Britain: 59%, Spain 50%) (Poll for the Global Attitudes Project, The Pew Research Center for The People and The Press, May 2003). Likewise, in another survey, majorities in thirty-eight countries out of forty-three, agreed that the war against Iraq had had a negative effect on their opinion concerning the U.S (Gallup International, April-May 2003).

sentiments may exist but they are not dominant views. Americans and Europeans continue to have clear and shared views of who are their friends and who are not — and they clearly still see each other as friends. All of this testifies to the ongoing durability of traditional trans-Atlantic ties.

- Americans and Europeans continue to see each other as potential partners. While European support for America's global role under President Bush has fallen, such slippage also takes place at a high level. Americans are strongly supportive of the EU becoming a more equal partner and both sides of the Atlantic continue to see their relations as cooperative and not competitive.
- Nor do the problems across the Atlantic appear rooted in radically different threat perceptions in the wake of September 11th. On the contrary, the results of Transatlantic Trends suggest that when Americans and Europeans look out at the world, they by and large assess the threats they face in similar terms. Americans and Europeans do not live on different planets when it comes to viewing the threats around them.
- However, both sides of the Atlantic clearly do have different impulses when it comes to how to respond to such threats, the efficacy of military vs. economic power and, finally, how one defines legit-

imacy and views the role of the United Nations. Yet even here it is not entirely clear to what degree trans-Atlantic differences on the use of force reflect deeply held convictions and matters of principle, are contingent upon specific scenarios or are also being shaped by an overall skepticism vis-à-vis policies publicly associated with the Bush Administration.

So what is going on? If Americans and Europeans both want to be engaged in the world, still basically like one another, would like to work together as partners and also see the threats facing both sides of the Atlantic in similar ways, how and why did we end up with such a dramatic divergence in debate and public opinion on the war in Iraq? Why did President Bush end up with a clear majority supporting going to war in Iraq — with little domestic political need to seek authorization from the United Nations Security Council? Why was Tony Blair so keen on getting such a resolution — and obtaining it really so crucial in terms of convincing British public opinion that this war was just? And why was public opinion in some continental European countries so strongly opposed to war — and seemingly so different from the United States? Why did some leaders in the Alliance seem to have considerable leeway when it came to their public opinion, yet others faced very real and formidable constraints?

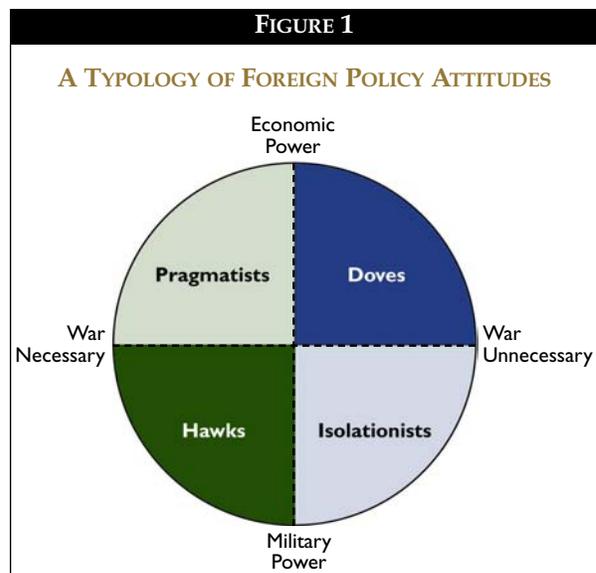
2. UNDERSTANDING THE STRUCTURE OF PUBLIC OPINION ON BOTH SIDES OF THE ATLANTIC: A FOREIGN POLICY TYPOLOGY

To begin answering such questions one needs to go beyond our initial analyses of this year's data and seek to identify those more fundamental beliefs that drive and shape public opinion. The question we want to address thus relates not only to differences across the Atlantic but also to differences *within* both the United States and European countries on these issues as reflected in specific schools of thought. To accomplish this, we developed a typology of foreign policy attitudes centered on different attitudes on different kinds of power (e.g. economic vs. military power), the efficacy of their use as well as their legitimacy, in short 'soft' and 'hard' power. These were chosen because they are among the central issues at the core of the alleged trans-Atlantic divide. Combining different attitudes toward both economic and military power and the acceptability of military force we distinguish four distinct groups:

- **Hawks:** Members of this school believe that war is sometimes necessary to obtain justice, and that military power is more important than economic power. They also tend to be wary of international institutions, especially the United Nations. They are not interested in strengthening the UN and are willing to bypass it when using force.
- **Pragmatists:** Members of this school also believe that war is sometimes necessary to obtain justice but that economic power is becoming more important than military power. They tend to recognize the important role of international institutions, including the United Nations and the need to strengthen them. They prefer to act with multilateral legitimacy but are also prepared to act without it to defend their national interests if need be.
- **Doves:** Members of this school disagree that war is sometimes necessary and believe that economic power is becoming more important than military power. Like Pragmatists, they want to strengthen institutions like the UN. Unlike Pragmatists, they are very reluctant to use force absent international legitimacy.

- **Isolationists:** Members of this group neither believe that war is sometimes necessary nor that economic power is becoming more important in world affairs.

The point of departure for operationalizing this typology is formed by the answers to two key questions. Respondents were asked to agree or disagree with the following statements: 1) 'Under some conditions war is necessary to obtain justice' and 2) 'Economic power is becoming more important in the world than military power'. Combining and cross-tabulating the answers to these two questions and excluding the missing cases produces the figures for the size of the four distinct groups mentioned below (Figure 1):



How sturdy is this typology? Does it really capture the underlying differences between and within the U.S. and Europe? There are two different tests one can apply to check the resilience of this breakdown. The first one is what is called *face validity*. The key question here is whether the typology makes intuitive sense and gives us the confidence to argue that different attitudes on just war or the role of economic power reflect deeper convictions that carry over to other issues. It does given the prominent place of considerations about the use of power in thinking about international affairs.

The second and more important test is what is referred to as construct validity. Does our index help to predict other foreign policy attitudes? And do these predictions follow the direction our theory would suggest? The first question is relevant but the second is actually more important. To test the validity of the typology we cross-tabulated it across a wider set of foreign policy attitudes and we found that it did indeed function well as a predictor of certain key attitudes. We provide some examples.

- *Attitudes on the war with Iraq*: Hawks are more likely to support the Iraq war and to judge it was worth the costs than any other group, followed closely by Pragmatists and only at a distance by Isolationists and Doves. 55% of the Hawks and 48% of the Pragmatists “think the war in Iraq was worth the loss of life and other costs,” while only 12% of the Doves and 15% of the Isolationists think so.
- *United Nations*: Hawks are also less likely to want to strengthen the United Nations and more likely to agree that one is justified to bypass the United Nations when vital interests are involved. Pragmatists and Doves both want to strengthen the UN but Pragmatists are still willing to bypass it if necessary to defend vital interests.
- *Military expenditures*: Hawks are likely to say we are spending “too little” or “the right amount” on defense whereas Doves are likely to think that we are spending “too much.” Among Hawks, 30% think we are spending “too little” and 47% think we are spend-

ing “the right amount,” while among Doves, 40% think we are spending “too much.”

- *Economic aid*: Doves are likely to say that we are spending “too little” and Hawks are likely to say we are spending “too much” on economic aid. 48% of the Hawks think we are spending “too much” on economic aid, while 36% of the Doves think so.
- *Attitudes toward the use of force*: Hawks are more likely to support the use of military force than Doves in all the scenarios tested in our survey (e.g., scenarios involving the acquisition by North Korea and Iran of nuclear weapons) irrespective of the kind of mandate that does or does not exist. They are also more likely to prefer military action to economic sanctions across different scenarios. 58% of the Hawks are willing to impose economic sanctions in a hypothetical international crisis, while 71% are willing to do so among the Pragmatists and 79% among the Doves.
- *Attitudes toward internationalism*: Both in Europe and U.S. there is an element or undercurrent of isolationism among the Doves. This relationship is apparent in the U.S. where Doves are often less internationalist. In Europe, this relationship holds in some countries, e.g., Germany, the Netherlands, Poland and U.K. In France and Italy, however, Doves are also more internationalist.

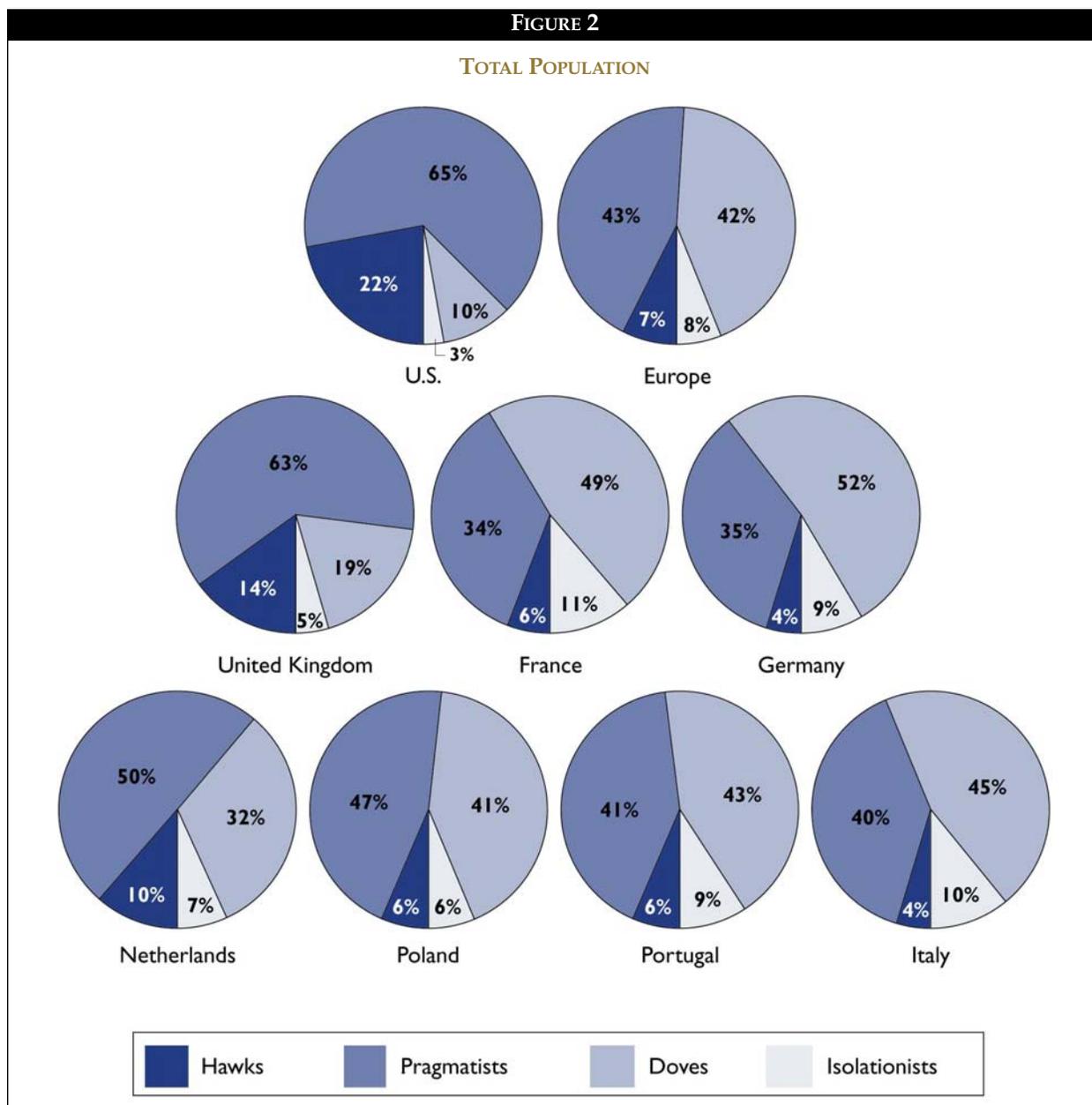
On many of these issues, Pragmatists tend to adopt a middle position between the Hawks and the Doves.

3. WHAT DOES THIS TYPOLOGY TELL US?

This typology reveals some interesting differences in terms of the structure of American and European public opinion. In the United States, Hawks constitute more than one-in five Americans or 22% (and 33% of Republicans). They are three times as numerous as in Europe. They are, in turn, complemented by Pragmatists who constitute nearly a two-thirds majority at 65%. In contrast, Doves are a small minority at 10% and Isolationists are 3%.

When it comes to the structure of public opinion in Europe, in most of the countries in which we surveyed, the two dominant groups are the Pragmatists and Doves. Moreover, these two groups basically balance each other at 43% and 42% respectively. Both the Hawks and Isolationist groups are small minorities as 7% and 8% when one aggregates the European countries surveyed.

FIGURE 2



At the same time, these overall European numbers mask some noteworthy differences among the countries. In the case of the United Kingdom, for example, the structure of public opinion is similar to that of the United States. At the other end of the spectrum, it is quite different in a country like Germany. The latter has the smallest percentage of both Hawks and Pragmatists as well as the largest number of Doves. Whereas in the United Kingdom, Hawks and Pragmatists combine for a total of 77%, in Germany they amount to less than half of that at 39%. Apart from the United Kingdom, the other European countries where the Pragmatists are more strongly represented are the Netherlands and Poland. In both of these countries, the combination of Hawks and Pragmatists adds up to a potential slim majority. At the other end of the European spectrum are Germany and France where Doves are the dominant school.

What does this suggest? In the United States, an American President — irrespective of his political persuasion — has considerable leeway in terms of building public support when it comes to the use of force. One can imagine differing coalitions forming depending on the issue and who is in power at any given time. One would be a coalition between Hawks and Pragmatists; a second might be a narrower foundation based solely on the Pragmatists; and a third could be an alliance between Pragmatists and Doves.

In Europe, the dynamics are likely to be quite different. In many if not all of the countries surveyed, the key to building stable and broad public support is dependent on a coalition between the two dominant groups — the Pragmatists and Doves. The former is concentrated on the center-right and the latter on the center-left. Given the dominant size of these two schools in Europe

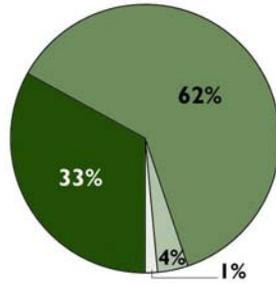
and the way in which they are reflected in the party landscape, the nature of the public debate and the constraints on the ability of a government to use force is inevitably different from the United States. The Hawks are too small to be a major or relevant force in Europe — with only the United Kingdom being a possible exception. Nowhere on the continent is it large enough to be a major pillar of major public support. There may be cases — such as the Netherlands or Poland — where a slim public majority between the Hawks and the Pragmatists could be formed. But it is likely to be narrow and not a viable basis for long-term policy.

What can one deduce from this? Obviously, there are important differences in the structure of public opinion across the Atlantic — as well as within Europe — when it comes to attitudes on the use of force. Perhaps the most noteworthy one is the dominant size of the Pragmatists and the greater size of the Hawks in the United States. The potential pool of public support in the United States is much larger than in most European countries. The greater size of these groups clearly impacts the options a U.S. President has when it comes to building public support for going to war.

Does this gap mean that the U.S. and Europe are somehow incompatible or incapable of acting together on such questions? Clearly, if one were to sit an American Hawk across the table from a German Dove, they will not necessarily have much in common. They might even conclude that one comes from Mars and the other from Venus. The same might be true in the United States, however, if one paired a Bush Republican Hawk with a Howard Dean Democrat. If one were to pair an American Pragmatist with a European Pragmatist, on the other hand, they would in all likelihood have few problems in devising a common agenda.

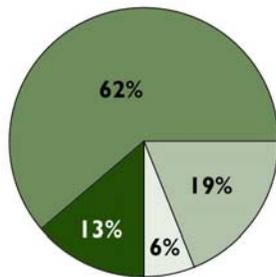
FIGURE 3

RULING COALITIONS

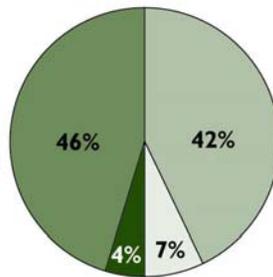


U.S. Republicans

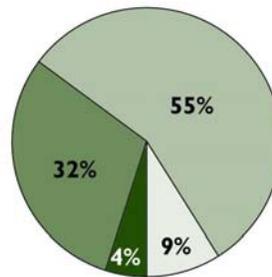
Europe:



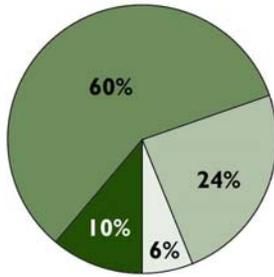
United Kingdom



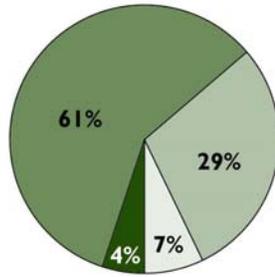
France



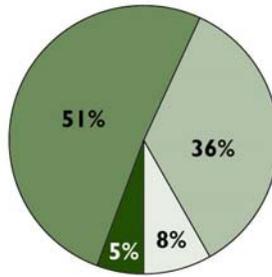
Germany



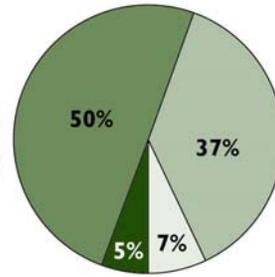
Netherlands



Italy



Portugal



Poland

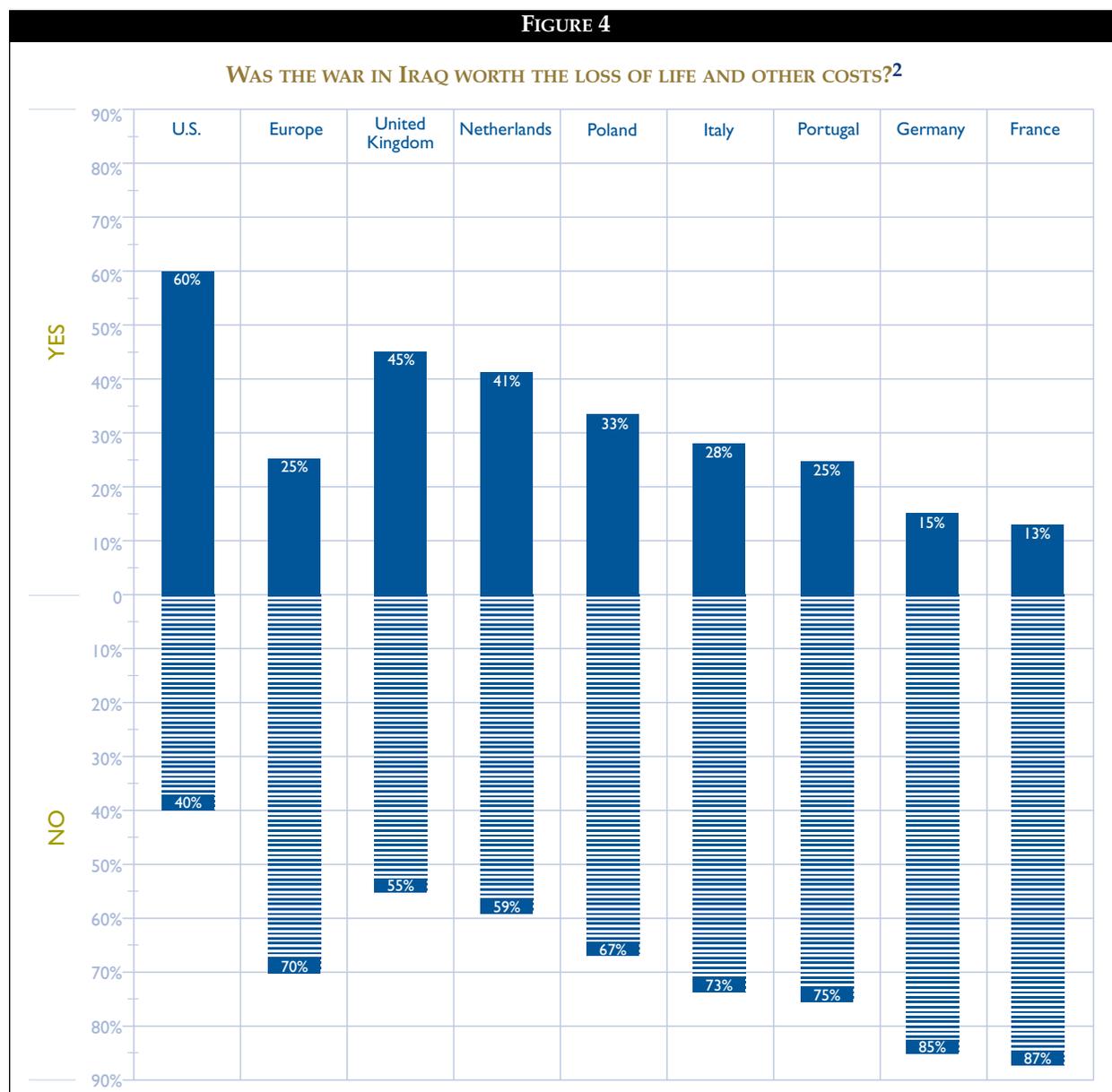


4. EXPLAINING IRAQ

This typology can help us understand what happened on both sides of the Atlantic in the debate over war in Iraq. This typology captures existing predispositions and openness within these groups to differing arguments either in favor of or opposed to the potential use of force. The ability of a government to mobilize or capture that potential on a real world issue is, of course, a different matter. Figure 4 shows the results of a question posed in this year's Transatlantic Trends regarding whether the war in Iraq was worth

the loss of life and other costs associated with the operation. Figure 4 presents the aggregate numbers for the countries surveyed.

Figure 5, in turn, shows the breakdown for this support and opposition to the Iraq war based on the typology we have developed. It allows us to see how much public support for the war existed within each of these groups and how they contributed to the total support for or opposition to the war. It also helps explain the very different political debates that took place in the



² The numbers in this figure differ slightly from those used in Transatlantic Trends 2003 because the data for "don't knows" and "refuse to answer" have been excluded.

United States, the United Kingdom and in continental Europe on the question of war in Iraq and the freedom or constraints that public opinion provided or imposed on ruling governments. The figure illustrates the comfortable position of some governments and leaders and the awkward situation of others. Let us look at some of the individual countries.

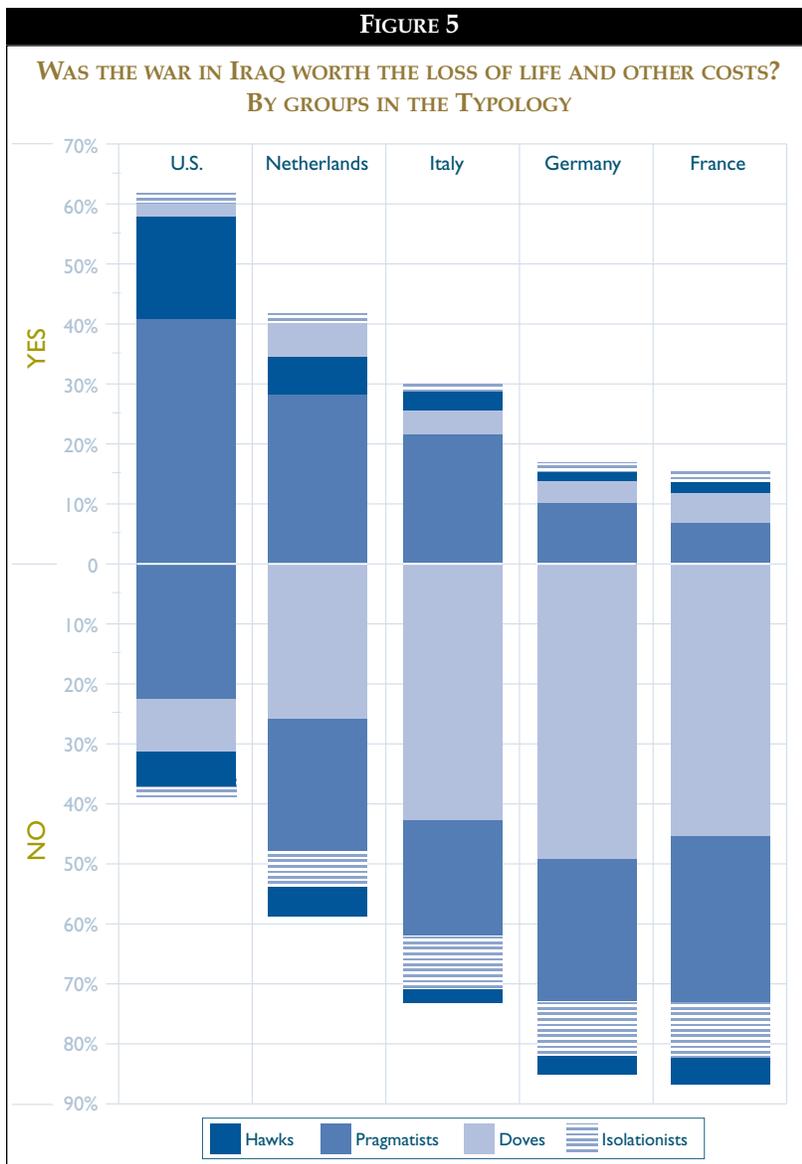
The United States

In the case of the United States, President Bush’s point of departure was the much larger pool of potential supporters based on the size of both the Pragmatists and the Hawks. The 60% majority of Americans who believe that the war in Iraq was worth the costs comes over-

whelmingly from these two groups. Nearly three-in-four Hawks (74%) as well as two-in-three pragmatists believe that the war was worth the costs. Such support was overwhelming among Republicans but also reached into the ranks of Democrats. It was not dependent upon obtaining further international legitimacy via the United Nations or a clearer demonstration that force was unavoidable. Due to the absence of such steps, however, the Iraq war was overwhelmingly opposed by American Doves.

The United Kingdom

Although the structure of British public opinion is quite similar to the United States, Prime Minister Tony Blair



faced a very different political line-up, especially within his own Labour Party. Majority support for going to war in Iraq was potentially within reach for Blair, but the dynamics of how to get there were quite different. In contrast to Bush, Blair could not rely on a coalition of Hawks and Pragmatists within his own party. Indeed, the Labour straddles the Pragmatists vs. Dove fault line so typical in European countries. In order to bring his own party behind him, Blair needed a rationale that appealed to both Pragmatists and Doves. Blair’s lower level of support on Iraq reflects the lower level of support he enjoyed on the right – only slightly more than half of British Hawks (55%) and Pragmatists (53%) – as well as the fact that only slightly more than one quarter of British Doves (28%) believe that the war was worth the costs. The Prime Minister’s effort to secure a second UNSC resolution made good domestic sense as an attempt, albeit ultimately an unsuccessful one, to gain the kind of international legitimacy that could have given him greater support within this constituency.

Germany

The point of departure for the German debate, as well as the result, was significantly different than in the United States or the United Kingdom. First, the potential pool of support for military action in Iraq in Germany was much smaller. Whereas Hawks and Pragmatists amount to over 80% of the American and British publics, together they are less than half of that in Germany (39%). If one looks at the supporters of Chancellor Schroeder and the current Social Democratic-Green coalition, they are even less. But what is striking in Germany is how few Hawks and Pragmatists also opposed the war. At the end of the day, the fact that over 85% of Germans do not believe the war in Iraq was worth the costs reflects not only the dominance of Doves in Germany and their overwhelming rejection of war, but the Bush Administration's inability to gain anything but the most tepid support among German Hawks and Pragmatists as well.

The Netherlands and Italy

Support for the Iraq war in the Netherlands (41%) was

more than double that in Germany (15%) and three times higher than in France (13%). That higher level of support also reflects differences in the structure of Dutch public opinion discussed in the previous section – in particular the higher number of Pragmatists. Some six-in-ten (61%) of this group supported the war. What is interesting in the case of Italy is that whereas overall support for the war in Iraq is low (28%), Berlusconi did enjoy the support of more than half (52%) of Italian Pragmatists who, arguably, are an important part of his party's constituency even though they are fewer in numbers than Doves for the country as a whole. In the case of France, Poland and Portugal there is very little public space for supporting the Bush Administration's approach on Iraq among the groups supporting the ruling coalitions. These results show that if one goes beyond an aggregate analysis of the overall public, to a more detailed analysis of the voters supporting the ruling coalition, it can help explain why different leaders in Europe were able or forced to pursue very different policies.

5. LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE?

The Transatlantic Trends 2003 survey also included a series of questions addressing public attitudes toward the use of force to prevent either North Korea or Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. Respondents were asked whether they would support the use of force across a spectrum that included unilateral U.S. action, a US-led coalition of the willing, a NATO operation or, finally, action sanctioned by the UN Security Council. As noted in this year's Transatlantic Trends survey, these were experimental questions. Moreover, with respect to the levels of support for the use of force,

the answers may also be conditioned by the specific scenarios used.³ One therefore needs to be cautious about drawing broad conclusions from this data. With those caveats in mind, applying the typology developed above nevertheless allows us to examine how support for the use of force varies among the four groups in our typology in both the U.S. and Europe.

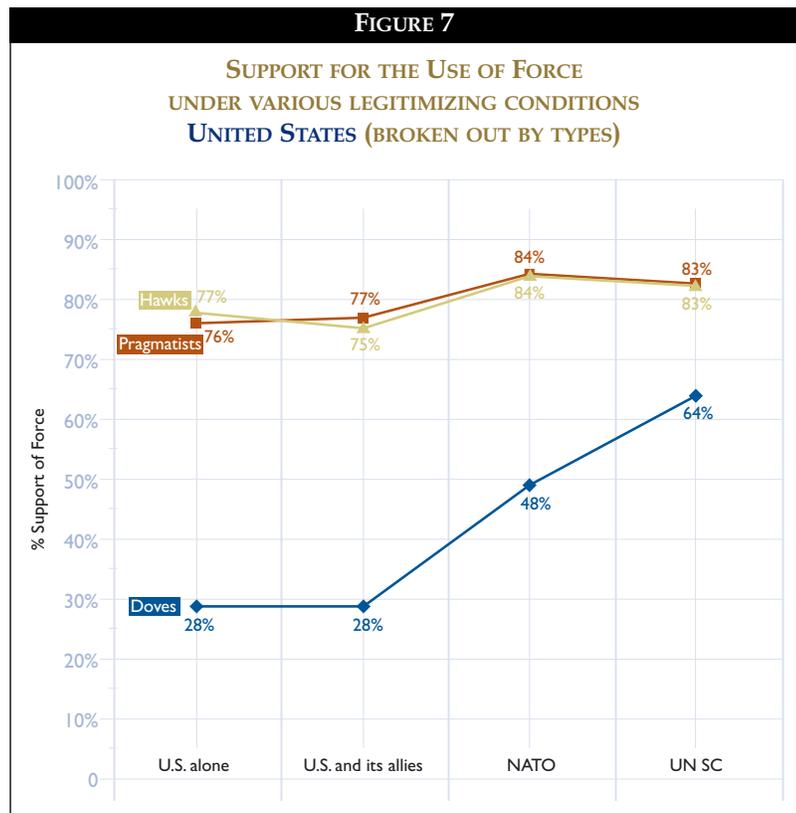
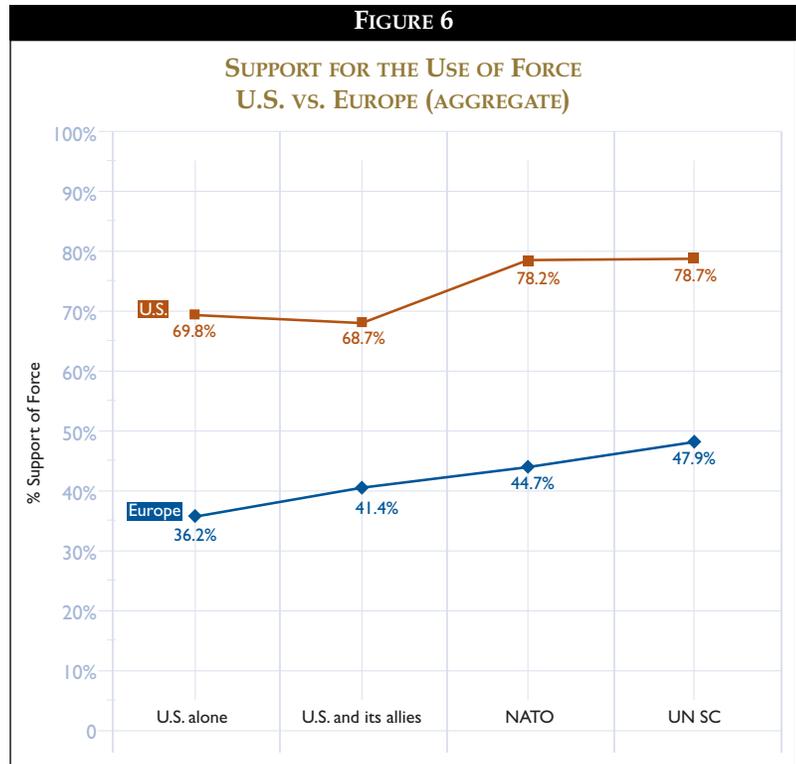
Figure 6 shows the aggregate responses to these questions for the U.S. and the European countries surveyed. It shows that there is a clear gap between the US and European publics surveyed of over 30%.

³ One should not forget, however, that the lower figures for support of the use of force for Europe are probably contaminated by the fact that the cases concerned, Iran and North Korea, are seen by large numbers of people as part of 'the Bush agenda', and hence for many elicit an immediate refusal to go along with military action. The figures should not be taken as absolute indicators of a (lower) level of support for the use of force in general. This is an issue where respondents are (extremely) sensitive to setting and question wording. Thus, for example, more complicated questions with more answer categories or with alternative policy options mentioned tend to reduce the support for the use of force among American respondents while increasing it among Europeans.

In Figures 7-9 we break down that support in the United States, the United Kingdom and Europe according to our typology. Several interesting conclusions stand out. First, the results confirm that the United States stands in a league of its own. The use of force is supported by nearly 80% of the Hawks and of the Pragmatists and hardly fluctuates as one moves across our spectrum from a unilateral U.S. action to one sanctioned by the UN Security Council. Moreover, these two groups dominate the American landscape. In the case of American Doves, however, support is very low for a unilateral action or one involving a coalition of the willing but climbs considerably if there is a move to a NATO or UN action. The latter drives support for military action among Doves from around 30% to over 60%. Clearly, in the United States there is a reservoir of potential public support for the use of force to prevent Iran and North Korea from acquiring nuclear weapons.

In the case of the United Kingdom, we again find a structure that has much in common with the United States, but with some important differences. There is majority support for the use of force across the spectrum among Hawks and Pragmatists, albeit at a slightly lower level than in the United States. Like their American brethren, support for military action among British Doves is also heavily contingent upon the level of international legitimacy. That support climbs nearly 30 points percentage as one moves from a theoretical unilateral US action to one sanctioned by the United Nations. While the overall level of support among British Doves remains lower than in the U.S. it is higher than in any other European country.

For Europe as a whole, one again sees that the lower level of support is rooted in the same key factors discussed earlier. Support for military action is very weak among Doves who are a key if not dominant force in most countries. In contrast to the United States and the United Kingdom, such support does not increase significantly as one moves across our spectrum — at least not for the scenarios involving Iran and North Korea.



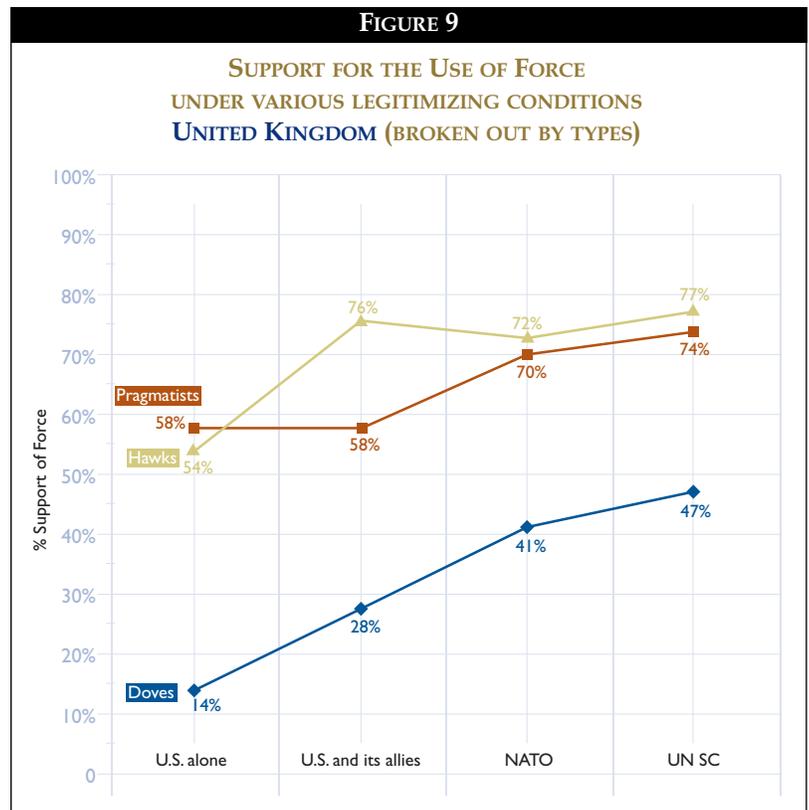
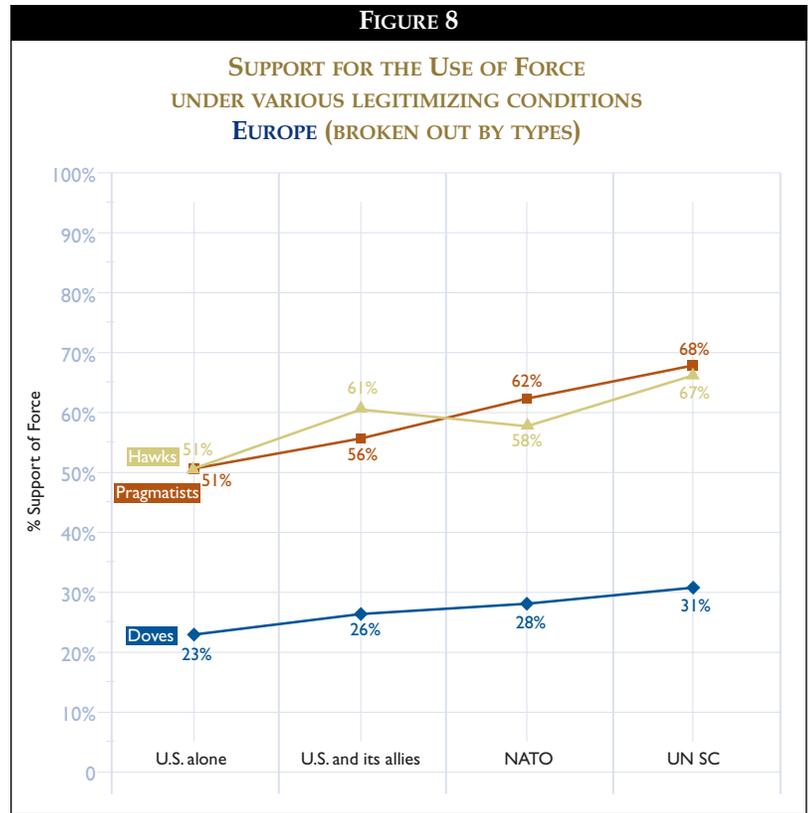
Although there is potential support among European Pragmatists and Hawks, there are too few in numbers to bring the overall European levels of potential support close to that of the United States.

The degree to which these scenarios are indicative of overall views on the use of force is not clear. One wonders whether European support might be higher when it comes to, for example, a scenario in the Balkans along the lines of Bosnia or Kosovo. Nevertheless, these numbers do suggest that building public support for the use of force in a scenario involving Iran or North Korea will be an uphill struggle given the structure of European public opinion. While one can imagine support coming from the Hawk school, moving beyond that core and generating additional support from the Dove school would require considerable work given their proclivity against the use of force and their strong belief in the need for international legitimacy.

Irrespective of the specific scenario, in Europe there is clearly a greater need to obtain international support to create legitimacy for military action. Our analysis shows that it makes a significant difference whether a potential military action involves a unilateral U.S. move or one supported by NATO or the UN. While our typology is a strong predictor of differences across the Atlantic as well as between EU countries, the issue of whether the action is unilateral or multi-lateral is also a critical variable.

Support for the use of force increases if the operation is conducted under a multilateral aegis, such as NATO and UN. In Europe support increases under the various modalities from 36% for the U.S. acting alone to 48% for an action under a U.N. mandate. For the U.S. these percentages are 70 and 79% respectively. In short, while the US and European patterns are similar, our results show that for the scenarios we surveyed there is a clear gap of some 30% across the Atlantic when it comes to willingness to use force.

This does not mean that our typology is any



less valid. While the unilateral/multilateral nature of the action clearly makes a difference in terms of support for the use of force, our typology is still a very important predictor of attitudes (Figures 7-9). Across the entire spectrum of possible military operations – with the U.S. alone, U.S. with its allies, NATO or UN – both Pragmatists and Hawks are systematically more willing to support the use of force than Doves and Isolationist. Figures 7 and 8 show also that in U.S. the multilateral nature of the action might have a greater role to play compared to Europe. In Europe, the nature of the action (unilateral/multilateral) and our typology proceed in parallel, producing independent effects, while an interaction effect is present among the Doves in U.S. Doves are more sensitive than other groups in our typology to the nature of the action. However, until this group is needed, the Bush administration can ignore all appeals to a multilateralization if it sees fit.

In this connection, the British case is again quite

interesting as it seems to combine elements of both the American and European political landscapes. (Figure 9). One can easily see the dilemma that Prime Minister Blair could face if he were to contemplate joining the U.S. in such military action. First, in the United Kingdom the degree of multilateral support is crucial for obtaining support among the Pragmatists. In contrast to President Bush, this is the key constituency to which Blair must appeal and upon which he must rely for public support given the fact that there only a small number of Hawks in the UK (and even fewer in the Labour Party). To obtain anything more than a slim national majority and achieve broader public support, Blair must also be able to reach into the Doves whose potential support is extremely sensitive to the nature of the action (unilateral vs. multilateral), as shown in Figure 9. This group, therefore, can be mobilized to opposing the war on the issue of the lack of multilateral support.

6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

This brief essay has shown that going beyond looking solely at aggregate survey results can reveal additional insights into structural differences in public attitudes on both sides of the Atlantic. For the reasons listed at the outset, we have focused on public attitudes towards the potential the use of force given the key role that this issue appears to play in recent trans-Atlantic frictions. This essay has shown that on this and other key issues it is important to understand the building blocks that underlie public attitudes in the U.S. and Europe. A better understanding of basic attitudes on the use of force and other forms of power, as well as on the tension between the demands of peace and justice, enables us to build a viable typology of attitudes that, in turn, helps explain how attitudes on international affairs cluster into recognizable patterns and are translated into political schools of thought.

The typology introduced here suggests that the issue is less one of a “gap” between America and

Europe per se, but the effects of the differing structure of attitudes on the use of force or other forms of power that exist and the relative size and weight of differing groupings in different countries in the Alliance. Clearly, these differing structures are critical in shaping domestic debates and in framing the different strategies political leaders can pursue in generating support when it comes to questions of war and peace.

Just how important such decisions are is clearly shown by the example of Iraq. In this case President Bush chose a specific strategy and rationale for making the case to go to war. It was a strategy that was politically viable in the United States, and especially within his own party, in terms of generating public support given the structure of U.S. public opinion. However, it was a strategy and rationale that was unlikely to work in many European countries given the different structure of attitudes that exists there, especially on the continent. Whether an alternative strategy and rationale

might also have worked in the United States, or would have been more effective in Europe, is one of those interesting questions that future historians may ponder.

What is clear is that in order to get domestic support for particular foreign policies, including the use of military force, leaders on either side of the Atlantic must be sensitive to both their own and their allies' structure of public opinion if they hope to forge coalitions to act together in the future. One of the key gaps or divergences that needs to be managed if such cooperation is to be viable is between the instincts and preferences of the what we have labeled Hawks and Doves when it comes to issues of just war, the use of force and international legitimacy. In the absence of such efforts, even modest differences in the structure of public attitudes can have far-reaching consequences in public debates. The natural coalitions that can emerge on both sides of the Atlantic may continue to cluster at opposite ends of the political spectrum, and hence aggravate a relationship already under tension in spite of broad agreement on the nature and urgency of common threats.

In practical terms, an American President can indeed seek to form a working majority for using force absent a UN mandate built on a coalition between Hawks and Pragmatists — and enjoy majority public support as was the case on Iraq. No European leader

can attempt to pursue such a strategy and hope to gain majority public support — with the possible exception of the United Kingdom. This does not mean that European leaders cannot mobilize public support for going to war or using force. It means that a different rationale and basis of legitimacy is likely to be required if public support is to be gained. In most European countries, that majority would have to consist of a coalition between Pragmatists and Doves. This is what Tony Blair sought to do in the United Kingdom in the case of war in Iraq.

This suggests that the approach the United States uses to build support for its policies in Europe matters a lot. An American President who pursues a unilateral and hawkish foreign policy course may be able to bank on potential public support in the United States — but thus he is going to have a hard time gaining public support in Europe given the structure of public attitudes, and irrespective of who is in power on the other side of the Atlantic. If Washington is interested in restoring a viable consensus across the Atlantic when it comes to the use of force, it must recognize the need to develop a rationale for such action that takes the structures and requirements of European public opinion into account — especially if those structures are different from those in the United States. ♦