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TOWARDS A EUROPEAN INTELLIGENCE POLICY

Klaus Becher, Bernard Molard,
Frédéric Oberson and Alessandro Politi
Edited by Alessandro Politi

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PREFACE

Decision-making is the essence of any authority, in terms not only of operational effectiveness but also, fundamentally, of political credibility. The task has become more daunting since, with the restoration of shared rules of cohabitation in Europe and hopefully world-wide, the number of actors in national and international relations, as well as of objective factors that transcend national boundaries, has increased exponentially.

Consequently, good governance, rather than the protection of abstract state prerogatives, is the goal of the cooperative security environment that the international community is once more attempting to establish. This puts an ever greater burden on the collection and analysis of intelligence, at both the national and international level. It is no accident that the advance that CFSP made with the Amsterdam Treaty has concentrated on a Policy Planning and Early Warning Unit to support the functions of a 'Mr CFSP'.

The contributors to this *Chaillot Paper* have looked at this imperative from different perspectives. Their analyses were subjected to wider scrutiny during a seminar held at the Institute in March 1997 and subsequently refined accordingly. The result is now made public for the consideration of both specialized circles and the public in general, both of which stand to benefit if intelligence in the security field does not lag too far behind the revolutionary advances made in communications world-wide.

Guido Lenzi
Paris, October 1997

SUMMARY

In the first of the four essays that make up this *Chaillot Paper*, and which include both pragmatic and idealistic views of future cooperation on intelligence in Europe, Alessandro Politi starts from the premise that EU and WEU member countries will have to break away from their narrow concept of national sovereignty if they are to become influential international actors. He puts forward professional, economic and political reasons why both political leaders and intelligence operatives in Europe should engage in more systematic cooperation. He suggests that the creation of an informal intelligence policy could lead to a more cohesive intelligence community with capabilities comparable to those of the United States, adding that greater European cooperation should not be seen as a problem for bilateral or multilateral transatlantic relationships. The author's prudent proposals concern joint training and cooperation in the fight against the 'new risks', while his more ambitious suggestions include high-level consensus on intelligence requirements, a transatlantic division of labour and joint assessment mechanisms within WEU.

Frédéric Oberson describes the operation of WEU's existing intelligence and open-source exploitation organs - the Brussels-based Intelligence Section and Situation Centre, respectively - and suggests how they might be made more effective. He deals in some detail with the relationship between the two and discusses the development of cooperation between them and WEU's Satellite Centre. His recommendations concern the tasking and manning of the Intelligence Section, its contacts with national intelligence agencies, exchanges with NATO and the systematic exploitation of open-source information.

In the third chapter, Bernard Molard, the Director of the WEU Satellite Centre, traces the history of the Centre since its creation in 1991 and indicates its possible evolution. He points out that, in terms of both its technical capability and human capital, the Centre is a unique asset. It produces intelligence that is available to WEU member states, providing a balanced interpretation of multisource (both commercial and classified) satellite imagery that can be used for both military and civilian purposes ranging from peacekeeping to disaster prevention and humanitarian aid. Following the Centre's speedy provision of satellite imagery of Albania earlier this year, it has been tasked with extending its surveillance beyond the areas of potential crisis officially monitored by the WEU Council, and the author suggests improvements that would further enhance the Centre's usefulness.

Finally, Klaus Becher sets out the rationale for a significantly higher level of European cooperation, mainly regarding strategic intelligence, among national governments, who need to show the visible results of a successful foreign and security policy, and gain public acceptance of defence expenditure and intelligence agencies. The failure to recognize in a timely manner the nature of the crisis in Yugoslavia in 1991-92, for instance, shows that there is a need for agreed, shared intelligence assessments if the Europeans are to act effectively and avoid paralysis due to diverging perceptions of difficult strategic situations. As a first step in the setting up of an EU intelligence network, the author advocates the creation of an independent advisory commission tasked with drafting a report on European intelligence policy.

The final objective would be an intergovernmental body of high-level intelligence officials - a European intelligence assessment board.

INTRODUCTION

Alessandro Politi

Intelligence has acquired considerably more importance than it had during the Cold War. Whereas before it was needed to maintain the balance of terror, prevent a war in Europe and spot sources of possible politico-military confrontation in the Third World, its tasks now are much wider and more varied, since it helps politicians to steer their national course towards a new world order, new power constellations and economic developments, while avoiding new and old risks.

Now that the 'information revolution' concept has gained wide acceptance, intelligence has the critical task of providing an authoritative contribution to the debate on information and knowledge management by stressing the fundamentals of good intelligence work and providing some new answers in sorting useful information from an increasing level of background noise.

In this context it appears necessary to re-think the role of national intelligence agencies in the EU/WEU context and the possibility of enhancing multilateral intelligence cooperation. EU's creation of a Policy Planning and Early Warning Unit is another illustration of the political developments that underline this need. Whereas most of the European security debate concentrates on the progress of the institutional framework and possible ways of deepening and widening it, intelligence, with the notable exception of multilateral satellite programmes, seems to be largely confined to the national dimension. Yet each crisis faced by the countries of EU and WEU demonstrates not only that effective intelligence is a pre-requisite for devising and implementing appropriate solutions, but that, when intelligence efforts have been uncoordinated, these countries have often faced the prospect of utter impotence. Far from helping to revive old reflexes, the Russian financial and political crisis of August-September 1998 has merely provided further proof that European intelligence agencies cannot, on a purely national basis, manage an ever increasing workload of crises that erupt both on their doorstep and in far-flung places.

This paper seeks: to challenge long-standing assumptions that stand in the way of increased European cooperation on intelligence; to offer some realistic proposals, while analysing the necessary political and military requirements, and preventing satellite procurement programmes from becoming the only focus of the debate; to present new insight into existing mechanisms for intelligence cooperation within WEU.

WHY IS EUROPEAN INTELLIGENCE POLICY NECESSARY?

Alessandro Politi

What form might a European intelligence policy take?

In peacetime, in any given country, half of the problems of intelligence collection plans start with the definition of a policy agreed by the government. Meetings are of course held, and documents drafted and discussed, but the final result may be somewhat disappointing. Typically, a number of very general goals in a no less generic strategic framework will be set for the coming year, without necessarily setting any real priorities. The rest is left to the ingenuity of the intelligence agencies and the dictates of the next crisis. More concretely, the directors of the different agencies, the related committees and the political decision-makers directly responsible produce intelligence policy whenever they have the will and time to follow the issue. Prime ministers who eagerly consult the results of intelligence work and stimulate it tend to be a rarity.

If these are the premises at the national level, giving some thought to the issue in the European context might be seen as an entirely academic exercise, especially since EU's CFSP (in whose implementation European intelligence would assist) did not benefit greatly from the Amsterdam Treaty of October 1997. Yet an intelligence policy at European level is necessary because the political debate on it has already started and there is a risk that it could focus on very narrow issues. Moreover, an uninformed debate typically risks developing erratically and eventually arriving at unhelpful conclusions. The debate on a European satellite programme, in particular the reports drafted by the WEU Assembly's Defence Committee, has been useful in putting the issue on the agenda by starting from an aspect where the need for collaboration is less controversial. However, without a comprehensive approach to intelligence-sharing by information producers and users, the product of satellites will be of limited impact.

Since intelligence objectives and methods are not determined by some abstract political requirement but are driven by an individual intelligence service that is trying to anticipate and satisfy the needs of its political masters,[(1)] a European intelligence policy need not be a highly formalized and institutionalized affair. It should be perceived and practised rather as an alternative culture which may shape the collective behaviour of the services concerned. However, the word 'policy' implies more than simply a different *modus vivendi et operandi*, because a choice in the sharing of information is linked to specific security and strategic assessments. Some experts would prefer to refer to the 'intelligence community' to stress the informal character of such an exercise. It must be stressed that this policy or community cannot be the total sum of existing bilateral or multilateral links among agencies. Some bilateral relationships might be stronger, but the overall links among the European intelligence services should cover more issues than they do today.

This policy is defined as European because, in a new transatlantic relationship, it is a primary responsibility of European countries to increase their capabilities and thus their contribution to common security. NATO will not be considered sufficiently relevant by the US Congress if fourteen of its member nations do not show that they have something to offer worldwide to their North American partners. The European institutions, both political and security, will not be credible enough if they do not measure up to this yardstick. The starting consideration for a European policy could be recognition that 'The problem is not US, the problem is *us*'. This means that its objective is not to create useless competition or antagonism, but on the contrary to contribute more effectively to shared security.

This chapter will first review the main obstacles to cooperation, then the professional, budgetary and political advantages that make a European intelligence policy desirable. Finally, some potential areas for cooperation will be mentioned.

What obstacles are there to cooperation?

Starting from this point will not make the argument in favour of a European intelligence policy any easier, but it will help to put the difficulties that have to be overcome and the realistic limits of expected advantages in a better perspective.

The first obstacle is security. Trust and security are needed to protect sensitive information and the methods used to collect it, especially the sources, from untimely and inappropriate disclosure. This is a problem that each agency has often faced in its dealings with the outside world, and there is no ready-made, universal recipe for constantly tight security. It appears reasonable to suppose that, with the multiplication of exchanges of information, potential risks will tend to increase, which will produce a reluctance to continue those exchanges. The only answer is probably to recognize that, however few the partners are, security failures do happen. However, even the most disastrous ones (even in the ambit of strong and qualified partnerships) do not seem either to have an effect that spreads like wildfire or to affect the quality of the relationship in the longer run. It must also be taken into account that a multiplicity of cooperating agencies entails also a multiplication of security checks.

The protection of sources, particularly human ones, will rightly remain a top priority, even where cooperation is very close.[(2)] Appreciation of the importance of the security of methods, on the other hand, is subject to change. At low levels of trust and cooperation it is considered quite important, whereas when the relationship is deeper, shared methods can multiply overall effectiveness. The security of information cannot be an end in itself: it is a function of its appropriate distribution. Sometimes, those who really need to have access to a particular piece of information do not have the right clearance to be privy to it. The Gulf War drove this point home strongly. Increasingly, the distribution of intelligence is dictated by a real need to know rather than the rank of the recipient, either military or civilian. One should honestly acknowledge that the security clearance system during the Cold War was greatly simplified by the relatively restricted nature of the targets and, conversely, by the use of ideological and political screening. Today, determining the right of access to information is very much a case-by-case business in a world of shifting and transforming loyalties.

Another potent obstacle to cooperation is the fear of spoiling privileged relationships with significant partners as a result of increased European exchanges. A typical example is UK-US intelligence cooperation. On the one hand, the British stress that this relationship has never been exclusive in one way or another. On the other, the US agencies themselves have felt a sort of ambivalence *vis-à-vis* the relationship that the UK services have had with their European counterparts. Much depends on the specific arrangements of a relationship, but, if the weight of the two parties is vastly unequal, one should look more at the opportunities available than at traditional shortcomings. Becoming hostage to some technological advance in the field of satellite data relay systems, as the British could find themselves, appears not to be a sensible option. Some British specialists, conversely, feel that this special relationship might be an obstacle to wider European cooperation. Nevertheless, as long as decision-makers accept that the main problem is to analyse what European agencies could achieve better with their own means, the issue appears not to be a serious impediment.(3) Rather, a European intelligence policy could even extend the life of a bilateral partnership through an overall more significant intelligence contribution by the junior party and by the improved profile that a bigger joint endeavour offers. It would be a situation in which all parties would have something to gain.

The concern mirroring that of special relationships is that of the 'Trojan horse': the risk that one or more of the agencies involved in a European intelligence policy might disclose sensitive information to bigger allies or act under their influence. Although on both sides of the Iron Curtain this scenario was not unusual during the Cold War, it is interesting to see in hindsight the extent to which national and regional interests were capable of surviving despite East-West polarization. Since then the strategic environment has changed markedly and, although security breaches and intelligence targeting by allies still occur, the 'Trojan horse' scenario appears less credible.

The inclusion of allied countries between whom there is a long-standing antagonism, e.g. Greece and Turkey, poses slightly different problems. If a European intelligence policy implies a more systematic exchange of information, they will both suppose that reciprocal exposure may increase, and will probably oppose it. Despite being an unfortunate circumstance, its effects could be fairly limited for several reasons. First, sensitive information concerning national security would in any case not be disseminated. Second, areas for cooperation exist that are greater than those considered taboo. Third, the agencies concerned would quickly discover that self-imposed limitations cost more than variable-geometry cooperation. Fourth, the respective leaderships know that the problems they have to manage go beyond the dimension of a regional quarrel, and that undeclared 'transparency' and back-door channels might have their own advantages.

Among the major obstacles one cannot ignore the perception that an agency belonging to a smaller country runs the risk of being infiltrated, influenced, controlled and ultimately swallowed by bigger partners. The history of European cooperation is full of such perceptions, even in sectors that are much more open to public scrutiny and competition. This fear, however, does not take into account the basic fact that in Europe no single national intelligence agency (indeed no single nation-state) is in a position to aspire to, much less claim, a dominant position. At the global level the European intelligence scene appears as a collection of entities of varying size whose cold comfort in present circumstances can be that they are in a similar position to that

of many other bodies. European agencies should consider whether they want to become collectively more relevant through pragmatic synergies, or whether they accept being constantly dwarfed world-wide.

The final obstacle is probably the *esprit de corps* that leads each intelligence organization to have absolute faith and confidence only in its own work. Serious researchers, who share this reflex (irrespective of whether they use open or covert sources), will quickly have to come to terms with the limitations of their own resources. Of these, time is the most critical, and the very fast pace of international politics cannot be adequately kept up with by using only national human or technical resources, which should be concentrated on sectors where they really matter, whereas elsewhere some confidence must be placed in the work of others. Probably, it will take time for bigger agencies to accept this fact. On the other hand, one should bear in mind that in the present information barter system (the *donnant-donnant* - give and take - system, as the French describe it) the different agencies are quietly accepting *de facto* a sort of interdependence between bigger and smaller partners. Apparently the system is not tied to a rigid exchange of one piece of information for another: broader political considerations tend to dictate a certain leeway in the way exchanges are managed.

Advantages of a European intelligence policy

Professional advantages

The arguments in favour of a European intelligence policy are set out in a bottom-up order. The aim is to avoid giving the impression that everything derives from some overriding political assumption. Only at the end of the chapter will an attempt be made to stimulate reflection at a more political level.

The main contention is that there is simply more classified and unclassified material available to be collected, analysed and evaluated than can be handled by any single agency or bilateral agreement in Western Europe.

The following is a list of possible demands on a foreign intelligence service:

- defence intelligence, including arms and hi-tech trade and proliferation (of missiles and weapons of mass destruction);
- intelligence on terrorism;
- defence intelligence on foreign countries and likely insurgencies, including intelligence to support conflict prevention. peacekeeping and verification;
- intelligence on foreign states' domestic and foreign policies, and internal and international economic policies;
- intelligence in support of diplomatic activities both in the political and economic sectors (economic intelligence could be considered a particular domain along with the previous intelligence on foreign states);
- counter-espionage, intelligence and penetration of hostile intelligence agencies; support in the fight against organized crime and drug trafficking; information on man-made ecological disasters.

To this already impressive workload some agencies would add covert action and information warfare. At a more general level, there is international political consensus that there is no well defined threat but that instead, multiple, unforeseeable risks are emerging. For intelligence agencies this means a multiplication of collection requirements and targets. Even worse, the importance of certain targets can be as fleeting as the interest that politicians and public opinion focus on them.

As Robert (Bob) Steele repeatedly states: 'We have passed from a "just-in-case" intelligence collection, to a "just-in-time" one'.[4] Whereas in the past a relatively stable threat, generated by a secretive Soviet regime, required that every bit of evidence available should be collected so as to have the right piece of the puzzle available when required, the new, more diffuse risks, often originating from secretive state or non-state actors, pop up unexpectedly on the political screen and demand a fast response. On the one hand, therefore, intelligence must make a systematic and protracted collection and analysis effort in order to break secrets, yet on the other it cannot always wait for the fruits of its covert tradecraft.

This leads to a paradoxical situation: national agencies are confronted with the contradictory pressure to maintain their core capabilities and yet to respond in new ways to different requests for information. This is felt particularly within agencies whose main responsibility is the clandestine collection of information. Open-source intelligence (OSINT) is a useful tool and adjunct, especially if managed by some other body that feeds them valuable information. It does not fill gaps in knowledge of secret information but can assist in the making of a preliminary political decision.

The function of OSINT should additionally be seen as the provision of a reasonably interesting area for cooperation, and further increasing mutual trust. The role of OSINT could be crucial, not necessarily because of its intrinsic possibilities, but for its value in quality control training and on occasion its use as an effective channel of information within governmental and other political machinery.

A coordinated approach to OSINT at European level would not prejudice the tailoring of information, but it would help to save precious time and money. The consequences of such a policy for the related aspects of information warfare and netwarfare cannot be underestimated. It should be stressed again that many intelligence agencies will continue to be exclusively or predominantly involved in the acquisition and development of covert sources. Nevertheless it is in their interest to ensure that, as it develops, OSINT follows high quality standards and is effectively blended into the intelligence and decision-making cycles.

A common exchange of views on the even more controversial subject of *economic intelligence* could be equally important for a European intelligence policy. Each country has its own ways of addressing the problem. These include:

- support to governmental negotiations;
- economic counter-espionage;
- the disruption of unfair competition (referred to in the United States as 'levelling the playing field');
- passive, semi-active or active intelligence support to specific corporate policies considered of national interest;

- a refusal to address economic intelligence, but the creation of semi-governmental subsidiaries;
- the monitoring of economic penetration and influence;
- a combination of counter-espionage and the provision of open governmental information dissemination to all commercial enterprises.

The important point is that, notwithstanding national interests, European collective interests are in most cases clearly identifiable and should receive appropriate attention. The first step by agencies should be to avoid contradictory concepts and methods. The implications of Economic and Monetary Union in Europe are far-reaching, so preparing for it is not simply a businessmen's affair: it concerns everybody involved in the machinery of government.

Budgetary advantages

The start and the bottom lines are very clear: there is no more money. Budgets have been cut, in some cases they continue to be reduced and for the foreseeable future there is no indication that the trend will be reversed.

In the history of intelligence, such economic circumstances are not unknown. The usual pattern has been: reduction to bare bone capabilities, decline in recruitment quality, lower policy-making relevance, still lower budgets, decay of the agency, sudden political or military emergency followed by sudden resurrection in a chaotic surge, or more frequently intelligence disaster, and creation of a new structure.

Unfortunately the present situation is much more complex than it was when national governments had greater leeway to decide, and the capability to implement policies. The comparison might seem far-fetched, but what is happening in the European defence industry (there are no funds to sustain a national defence industrial and technological base, and without a common policy unique capabilities will be lost) could soon happen in intelligence. The environment is such that, even if the importance of having a particular capability is recognized, it is likely to come up against a wall of indifference.

The point can be developed further if one compares the needs that our US counterparts have to satisfy with those observable in Europe. Now that Europe is so integrated, the effects of ill-informed decisions are felt approximately by the same number of people in both cases. In Europe the need to know is the same, if not greater. Indeed, smaller governments need to know more, better and faster if they are to protect their own interests effectively. Yet in both absolute terms and as a percentage of GDP budgets are vastly different on either side of the Atlantic.(5) Some duplication might be needed, but the imperative to spend better cannot be met at national level alone. The most obvious level at which results can be obtained is the European, to the benefit of European governments and the transatlantic relationship.

Of course it is in the area of means for technical collection that it would seem easier to advocate common policies. This is shown by the history of the aborted British *Zircon* SIGINT satellite, the successful French-Italian-Spanish *Helios* PHOTINT satellite, and the aborted Franco-German *Helios* II and *Horus* programmes. Ten years after the end of *Zircon*, some useful lessons could be drawn on the value of joint

rather than national satellite programmes. But satellites are only the sophisticated and not necessarily the all-decisive part of a palette of intelligence capabilities. Common or shared satellites presuppose an underlying culture, involving the whole national and European intelligence community.

Another field where lack of money is sadly felt is all-source evaluation. Evaluation *per se* does not entail the huge sums of money that technical collection involves, but it often receives only residual funding, after all the more expensive items and activities have been paid for. Bureaucratic practice puts more weight behind the collection of intelligence, because it is more easily quantifiable, than behind the much more difficult and ambiguous business of evaluation. All-source evaluation is nevertheless the ideal goal towards which all single-source collection and evaluation tends to converge.

A further complicating factor is that until now most evaluation has been done within governmental structures, whereas in future better use could be made of non-governmental human resources. Outsourcing some or more segments of the all-source evaluation process could be one solution, provided that funding is sufficient. Again, a common European policy could help in the benchmarking of external service providers and in carefully allocating resources within and outside government.

Political advantages

The relationship between national/international politics and intelligence services is far from simple and easy to describe. Ideally, intelligence services may limit themselves to doing their job irrespective of which democratic government is in power or, more realistically, they may be more or less deeply involved in politics. Not even the nationality divide is sufficient to define clearly the boundaries of intelligence activity. Services know what political push, back-door politics, schools of thought, camarillas, transnational factions, strong international connections and the like mean.

Sometimes, like Lewis Carroll's Alice or the protagonist of the Spanish philosopher Baltasar Gracian's *Mirror of True Virtue*, intelligence officials have unique opportunities to see the world from the other side of the mirror. Loyalty remains unaffected, as it ought to be, but political stereotypes lose credibility in the process. It is precisely at moments of major political upheaval that hindsight, foresight and instinct are needed by an intelligence service to offer the best possible information. Elected parliaments and governments will take their decisions, but the chances are that, if they are better informed, these will be easier to take. What is today called 'instability', is in fact a movement towards a new world order that is still hard to define, but whose features it is vital to detect and understand as early as possible.

The first reaction to this transitional environment is precisely the pressure to share information in multinational endeavours and environments. But multinational partners are often former enemies or, worse, new entities whose reliability is untested. The instinctive solution is to bowdlerize intelligence to acceptable levels, i.e. to the limit of its uselessness. Another more creative answer is to sign security agreements with new potential allies (as WEU is doing now, in advance of any further enlargement) or, in a less formal way, to set up intelligence 'clubs' among like-minded agencies.

Another contradictory reaction can be the intelligence targeting of countries hitherto considered friendly, because traditional collective loyalties are giving way under new political and economic pressures. One should not overestimate this phenomenon, but nor should one underestimate the erosive effect it has on mutual confidence. All of this is happening to the services of the Old Continent, where political trends towards international cooperation and deeper European integration sometimes reinforce each other, but are also at times strongly opposed. Against this background a European intelligence policy is not just necessary, but indispensable.

If intelligence services are the last representation and embodiment of the *raison d'état*, nowadays in Western Europe this statement begs the fundamental questions: which state, whose *raison d'état*? On the eve of the advent of the Euro, the nation-state in Western Europe is surely not the same all-powerful entity that was a feature of the continent's landscape at the beginning of the century. Two World Wars, one Cold War, an economic miracle, the 1968 revolt, three big recessions, the process of European integration and the globalization of economies have transformed this political reality literally beyond recognition. Nation-states came about because they guaranteed external security, internal order, national prosperity and cultural identity. Today the guarantee they offer in these respects is very limited at best, and everybody recognizes more or less openly that it is only through the European dimension (whatever form it takes) that national interests can be furthered and protected. Political stereotypes still wave the idea of national sovereignty as a rallying flag, but all they can offer is a very limited type of sovereignty. This is the predicament in which all members of EU and WEU find themselves today.

Democratically elected and accountable governments and parliaments are the source of legitimacy of the *raison d'état*, but this does not imply either that there is only one *raison d'état* for each national government, or that a powerless legitimacy is a valuable national instrument. If it is true that we are living through the information revolution, after the agricultural and industrial ones, then intelligence services must surely become key actors. They have a wealth of experience in the management of sources, speculative analysis, solid research and the use of working hypotheses, and they can sometimes still command the resources to acquire advanced technical information fusion systems. A healthy, mutually useful relationship with other information-based professions is an essential step towards the creation of 'smart' nations moving towards a 'smart' Europe.(6)

A frequent political objection is that a European intelligence policy might be a disruptive factor in an already evolving transatlantic relationship. It cannot be denied that intelligence has a strategic value and potent political symbolism, but the Alliance has evolved since the days of the Cold War. A relationship prospers if both sides see the mutual benefit in it. With only an estimated twenty per cent of intelligence contribution to allied security assessments, European countries do not constitute a very valuable partner. One could argue that, of this figure, individual national contributions are difficult to quantify and qualify. One could also argue that in some sectors, especially human intelligence (HUMINT), European countries as a whole are much less dependent on the United States, but the fact remains that European countries that are members of either EU or NATO continue to acquire much less information than they should, compared with the United States.

It could be maintained that an unbalanced relationship can be equally profitable, provided that the stronger party is prepared to shoulder the greater burden and the cost of leadership. In the field of intelligence this might still be true, but in the overall political picture the opposite appears to happen. The United States is in practice ready to accept some of the disadvantages of a more balanced relationship in exchange for greater worldwide support of common interests.(7)

What might be done

Proposals on what a European intelligence policy's field of activity might include range from cautious to ambitious ones and concern different areas of intelligence *vis-à-vis* decision-making.

The more prudent proposals include: the creation of *ad hoc* task forces to study medium-term problems; a joint centre for training strategic analysts; increased cooperation in non-traditional fields like the 'new risks' (e.g. organized crime, drug trafficking, money laundering) and the setting up of a Europol-like cooperative mechanism.

More ambitious schemes include: the creation and management of a Europe-wide network of experts to be used in crisis situations, possibly supported in future by a corresponding European intranet; a high level group to consider intelligence requirements at the European level; the harnessing of some OSINT areas by WEU, possibly by a common OSINT exploitation centre; an overarching grouping covering clubs with differing memberships in sectors like HUMINT, IMINT, SIGINT, etc.;(8) various joint intelligence assessment schemes, mostly in WEU, since within NATO the idea has not made progress; and finally, a grand division of labour between the United States and the Europeans, roughly in line with their areas of expertise. Each of these proposals reflects a real concern that is shared by European countries, but what is needed is a concept in which it is clear who does what, and when.

As stated initially, a European intelligence policy or community need not be complex or highly formalized. Informal cooperation among the intelligence agencies themselves can first be increased. Contacts between the chiefs of these services are very frequent, so it should not be too difficult to find the occasion to start a discussion on common basic intelligence requirements, agreements and assessments. The themes discussed should be sufficiently technical that they can be handled without prior constraining political mandates. It could also be the ideal framework in which more confidence among bigger and smaller services, and older and newer allies can be built up. Joint intelligence assessments, although complex to draft, have come to be recognized by European intelligence services as an essential requirement.

In the process of trying to produce common assessments, the networks of external experts known to each service could gradually be drawn in, first indirectly and then, when necessary, directly. This would make it possible, first *de facto* and *ad hoc*, then more flexibly and systematically, to create a built-in European network of experts. This network should be supported by the development of high quality databases in order to build up mutual trust and adequate information that is usable for prediction purposes.(9)

In most cases intelligence services cannot (and will not) have enough resources to tackle directly the whole spectrum of OSINT, but they could help by concentrating resources on joint initiatives to exploit open sources from languages that are more difficult to translate. The other function they could have would be to stimulate a wider open source awareness, expertise and exploitation in the business and academic sectors. A useful contribution would be the adoption of common approaches and benchmarks by commercial information brokers and collectors. The cooperative model developed in the Netherlands is particularly useful. It entails:

- an outer ring, where an annual European symposium can be held on neutral ground, open to professionals both in government and in the commercial sector;
- an inner ring, based on a platform of heads of open sources departments from the different intelligence agencies, tasking and supervising various working groups;
- an innermost ring formed by working groups on specific projects.(10)

While this bottom-up approach gradually makes headway, a simultaneous top-down one could be envisaged. The actors would be parliamentary bodies, both national and international, and governments. National parliaments could expand their current debates from national intelligence reforms and performances towards the wider issue of information management and national competitiveness. International parliamentary assemblies could follow the example set by the WEU Assembly by continuing to develop the theme of Internet, computer science industrial policy and information infrastructure or, where appropriate, joint intelligence.(11) Governments will predictably move at a slower pace, but they can use at least three existing opportunities to widen cooperation: the WEU Situation Centre together with the WEU Planning Cell, the WEU Satellite Centre and future joint military satellite programmes. As already indicated, joint assessment are a real need, whereas information warfare could provide a field of cooperation yet to be explored. In due time, if the European countries prove capable of making progress, the United States could put forward some constructive proposal for improved and more balanced transatlantic cooperation.

In conclusion, the setting up of a European intelligence policy can be described as necessary, compatible with other policies and feasible. It is *necessary* because, from a professional point of view, no single European agency can by itself face the global information explosion and the implications of OSINT and economic intelligence, which pile up a formidable list of collection requirements. Another reason is that budgets are declining. At the national level intelligence resources are utterly insufficient to fund new technical collection programmes and a significant all-source evaluation capability internal and external to the intelligence services, and sometimes even to retain existing special capabilities. Finally, such a policy seems necessary because it is politically sound, recognizing the limits of European nation-states, irrespective of the way in which European integration may develop. The information that decision-makers would obtain as a result of European-wide synergy would be of better quality and more objective than that which their limited budgets can buy.

Such a policy would be *compatible* with existing loyalties and alliances because it would draw on the consequences of present-day developments and political decisions

taken at a higher level. It would not only allow the persistence of special relationships, but might even revive them. It would not jeopardize specific security interests, but allow cooperation whenever possible and desirable. It is *feasible* because it would be measured against expected practical advantages, and because it would offer a clear framework for a joint effort to address new as well as old common problems: satellites, OSINT, economic intelligence, information warfare, netwarfare, joint training and employment of analysts, joint all-source intelligence assessment. These and the new security risks are all potential areas for cooperation in a more flexible, informal, but clearly designed European intelligence policy.

INTELLIGENCE COOPERATION IN EUROPE: THE WEU INTELLIGENCE SECTION AND SITUATION CENTRE

Frédéric Oberson[(12)]

When one has to take a decision that may be a matter of life and death, it is essential to be well informed, that is to say to inquire, to spy if necessary. Thus, whoever the person empowered to take decisions, logic demands that a competent intelligence service should help in the decision-making. Since its creation a half century ago, WEU has hardly distinguished itself by its ability to take decisions rapidly, and the European countries have still not come to an agreement on foreign policy issues. Leaving aside that debate, this chapter will limit itself to a presentation of the working methods of the intelligence professionals who have recently begun to contribute to European missions in new, specialized organs that have begun to show their worth.

The creation of these European intelligence services is a first. NATO, the European Union and OSCE do not yet have any cooperative structure in this domain. Until recently, the Ministerial Council of WEU, which is in theory authorized to decide to dispatch forces for peacekeeping or crisis management, had no intelligence service at its disposal. It has of course to be recognized that, since it did not have any soldiers either, that shortcoming was of little consequence.

A body that is unique in the world saw the light of day in June 1996: the WEU Satellite Centre, located at Torrejon in Spain, where nationals of WEU countries work together in what has become the first European intelligence centre.[(13)] Satellite intelligence is the latest member of the wider espionage family. Of course satellites can only provide part of overall intelligence, and sometimes no intelligence at all. Their usefulness is as a complement to the exploitation of open sources and the covert collection of classified material.

When the Torrejon Satellite Centre became operational, the WEU Council decided to create two complementary organs: an Intelligence Section and a Situation Centre, which are located in Brussels at the organization's Secretariat. This fledgling European structure is not intended to compete with member states' secret services; on the contrary, the expectation is that it will enhance cooperation with them. There is thus for the first time a permanent location where Europeans can cooperate on intelligence. Only cooperation between allies during two World Wars or between countries of the Warsaw Pact had previously resulted in a European intelligence structure; in NATO intelligence has always been sectoral, and dominated by the United States.

It remains to be seen what WEU states wish to do with their new structure, which, with the exception of Torrejon, whose usefulness has already been recognized, could remain a dead letter. In theory, the new Brussels-based organs meet the need for a different type of cooperation, the traditional mechanisms rightly being considered inadequate. Officially, the Intelligence Section and the Situation Centre may draw the Council's attention to current or potential conflicts. In theory, therefore, the Council

can compare information supplied by states (and the national interpretation that it conveys) with 'European' intelligence, synthesizing the often contradictory viewpoints of nation-states. This European initiative could thus become a benchmark for national intelligence.

The creation of an original system for intelligence cooperation

When, at the end of a long period of gestation, member states decided to strengthen WEU's operational capabilities, it was clearly important that the Council should have a range of specialized organs. The first attempts to give the organization a permanent intelligence service stemmed from the declaration by the WEU Council of Ministers meeting in Petersberg on 19 June 1992.(14) That decision, whose main aim was to reassert the organization's operational role, led to the creation of a Planning Cell responsible for preparing plans for the possible use of forces. The terminology used does not give a clear idea of the true functions of the Cell. It in fact constitutes a small combined headquarters that has all the traditional functions of such a body, including intelligence. It is at present composed of around fifty officers, divided among six sections that are responsible for communications, coordination, intelligence, logistics, operations and plans.(15) Staff officers(16) are from countries that are members of both WEU and NATO, which can contribute to enhanced relations between the two organizations.

Two years later, the Permanent Council set up a fact-finding mission into a possible WEU intelligence structure. A working group was also established, composed of representatives of the organization's ten full Member States. The fact-finding mission was held in parallel with the first Exercise CRISEX,(17) whose aim was to test the organization's operational mechanisms with a view to declaring it operational for crisis management. From that perspective, a study on the organization's intelligence requirements proved essential.

The fact-finding mission and the working group were headed by two intelligence specialists. The report proposed the creation of two separate organs, one within the Planning Cell and the other within the Secretariat. The first would be responsible for classified intelligence received from states, the other for open-source material. It would have been preferable to bring them together in the same structure, but this separation was justified by the necessity to reserve classified intelligence for states participating in the organization's military structure, with unclassified intelligence being distributed to all twenty-eight states. *De facto*, two clubs with dissimilar internal rules were created.

The first officers were posted to them in September 1995. In parallel with this, the capabilities of the Torrejon Satellite Centre were reinforced. An intelligence triangle emerged based on a logical division of labour between the use of technical means (satellite-based) for the collection of information and the multi-source assessment of situations.

The structure and functioning of the Intelligence Section

The Intelligence Section operates with few means and very limited human resources. That is not in itself an obstacle to high-quality work (history shows that a team does

not necessarily have to be large to be effective), but its six posts are insufficient. The ten full Member States of WEU may put forward candidates for these posts for periods of two or three years. Because of this turnover, a larger variety of nationals experience this institutionalized European cooperation, and this advantage may outweigh any temporary loss of efficiency.

The Section is divided into two cells. The first of these deals with current intelligence on regions of interest and the second basic intelligence on all actual or potential crises world-wide. In all cases its research is based on a requirement clearly identified by the Permanent Council, which tasks the Section with producing analyses of a limited number of regions.(18) However, the Director of the Planning Cell can always draw the Council's attention to questions on which the Intelligence Section has not been specifically tasked.

Unlike the Satellite Centre, which has a substantial budget that allows it to purchase the images it needs for its analysis, the documents at the Intelligence Section's disposal are those passed to it by Member States that have an interest in so doing.(19) These concern for the most part intelligence that is of a politico-strategic type rather than tactical, which does not come within the remit of the Section. When the Council gives a mission to the Planning Cell, the Intelligence Section makes contact with those states that it considers best placed to obtain useful information on the region of interest, and for certain missions it may rely largely on information from the state considered to have the best knowledge of the region.

Unlike national intelligence services, the Intelligence Section works exclusively with finished product. Its role is to receive, file, evaluate and analyse intelligence, and pass it to the Council, other competent WEU bodies and to the ten full Member States and three Associate Members (which are also members of NATO but not of EU). It never forwards raw intelligence but only its summary and interpretation, in the form of a weekly summary (INTSUM)(20) on regions of interest. Other items added in a section at the end of the report include any additional unsolicited information received by the Section.

The structure and functioning of the Situation Centre

The Situation Centre was set up as a structure working exclusively on open-source intelligence. It is located in the same building as the Intelligence Section. It has a powerful computer system that allows it to prepare and disseminate its work rapidly at the request of the Council. Its 'situation reports' are composed, inter alia, of press agency briefs. The Centre also produces documentary files in emergencies as required.

Situation reports are not assessments, unlike the Intelligence Section's product. The Centre limits itself to summarising intelligence from open sources that it collates from the press, a basic task that all services must carry out. Unlike the classified output from the Intelligence Section, the Situation Centre's work is distributed to the eighteen or twenty-eight states attending the meetings of the Permanent Council.(21) In addition, the Intelligence Section transmits its assessments to the Situation Centre so that it can verify the open sources it has consulted.

Working relationships between the different information and intelligence organs

The already close working relationships between the Intelligence Section, Situation Centre and Satellite Centre are gradually becoming stronger, but the role of the Intelligence Section should be clarified. It should be a privileged tool for summarizing material from all available sources: reports from the Satellite Centre, situation reports distributed by the Situation Centre and documents received from states. In this way, two complementary activities could usefully be combined: the exploitation of classified sources and the assessment of situations on the basis of multi-source documentation.(22) Although before every meeting of the WEU Council the heads of the Intelligence Section and Situation Centre discuss the reports to be submitted, it would be desirable for the Centre to pass its situation reports as rapidly as possible to the Intelligence Section so that it can take them into account in its reports. This would avoid redundancy, especially during crises when, because of the urgency of the situation, each tends to work in an even more isolated way.(23)

In 1996 the WEU Assembly made a recommendation on a European intelligence policy in which it suggested that the Council should 'strengthen the links between WEU and NATO with a view to sharing the intelligence required for operational planning and activities of European armed forces.'(24)

The same year, a security agreement signed by WEU and NATO in particular made it possible for WEU to draw up procedures governing the classification of documents and their methods of dissemination with a view to adopting the Atlantic Alliance's standards for future military operations carried out by WEU. Moreover, a decision was taken to give all Planning Cell officers clearance to NATO SECRET level, and the first exchange of documents was officially agreed in September 1996. It is now possible for the Section to send messages to all headquarters of European countries linked into the NATO communications system. Everything will now depend on the quality of information exchanged on a case-by-case basis.

Proposals for the gradual development of an intelligence community

Today, European intelligence services work together on a case-by-case basis. But the reduction of defence budgets encourages systematic attempts to cooperate, in which WEU has become instrumental.

The means to accompany this trend are numerous, and imply various degrees of involvement and cost for states:

- widening of the Planning Cell's mandate with respect to the work of the Intelligence Section;
- systematic evaluation of the product of the Intelligence Section and Situation Centre;
- standardization of working languages;
- increase in the strength of the Section;
- establishment of regular contacts between the Section and national intelligence services;
- more detailed exploitation of open-source intelligence;
- reinforcement of the mechanisms for exchanging intelligence with NATO.

Enlargement of the Planning Cell's mandate could be a matter for the Council to decide. Only a flexible instrument of information and early warning can meet its needs when faced with unforeseen crises, whereas the present system restricts the Section's main activity to certain crisis zones.

Three WEU Assembly reports state the requirement to make the Intelligence Section's mission more flexible so that it can provide analyses of potential conflicts without having to wait for an explicit mandate from the Council.(25) The ministerial meeting held in Madrid in 1995 mentioned the risks that the twenty-seven WEU countries could face.(26) In Paris, in 1997, ministers decided to widen the remit of the Satellite Centre, which can now study regions not included in the list of zones monitored by WEU, so that it is able to observe the first signs of crises and give early warning. It would be entirely logical to widen the range of the Intelligence Section's missions as well.

Furthermore, a systematic assessment of the Intelligence Section and Situation Centre's product should bring intelligence suppliers and consumers closer together, with the head of each body receiving informal feedback. At appropriate meetings military delegates could be briefed on the functioning of these mechanisms.

The standardization of working languages also plays a major role, especially when resources are very limited. Documents sent by nations to the Intelligence Section are written in many languages, so either the strength of the Section should be increased in order to deal with the languages in question or it should be decided that documents sent to the Section are to be in one of WEU's two official working languages.

The question of enlarging the Section is far from being simply one of bureaucratic increase. It was the national services' concerns over document security that obliged NATO to abandon any idea of creating an integrated intelligence body within the Alliance.(27) If the permanent strengthening of the Section is not advisable,(28) an *ad hoc* reinforcement of national experts on a voluntary basis in a crisis, might be a possibility.(29) The aim is to make the necessary information available to the Council without the Cell becoming inundated with a flood of information.

The establishment of regular contacts between the Section and national intelligence services would presuppose a strong political will to cooperate on the part of Member States. Ideally, a representative of each national service would be in permanent contact with the Intelligence Section. In 1996 the WEU Assembly made a recommendation along these lines.(30) The Council not having replied to this proposal, the Defence Committee of the Assembly emphasized that 'If the Council really takes the view that there is no prospect of implementing the proposal . . . it may consider a suggestion which was made at a seminar organised by the WEU Institute for Security Studies in March 1997.'(31) This proposed that the permanent representations at WEU could designate points of contact between national intelligence services (which have representatives in Brussels) and the Intelligence Section, which would ensure a permanent link. Being responsible for the quality of communications between their national service and the Intelligence Section, these points of contact would be able to suggest ways of rationalizing the existing communications systems. They could in particular be made responsible for passing documents to the Intelligence Section and communicating questions from the latter to their national services, and vice versa.

They should in addition endeavour to reduce delays in transmitting intelligence, monitor the quality and speed of response to questions posed and ensure an adequate level of confidence.(32)

Another solution would be to give the Intelligence Section a few additional posts in order to allow its personnel to visit intelligence services in capitals regularly and receive information directly. They could act as ambassadors and answer states' questions on European working methods, and thereby help allay any suspicions.

The more detailed exploitation of open-source intelligence would make it possible to broaden the base of information available to WEU. It would in the first instance be a matter of deciding on possible approaches, taking account of budgetary limitations, for example by subscribing to commercial databases, which the Intelligence Section could exploit at reasonable cost. It would be able to form an opinion on the most cost-effective service available and define new acquisition strategies. Incidentally, in order to reply to questions from the council, member countries or any other official source, the Satellite Centre can use any satellite imagery that is available on the market. Lastly, work with private centres of analysis could not be considered unless the decision were taken to increase the budget of the Intelligence Section and Situation Centre. It would also seem appropriate to develop, in time, the basis of a European policy of collection, assessment and analysis of intelligence from all open sources.

Reinforcing the mechanisms for exchanging intelligence with NATO is a growing priority, given that in future the two security organizations will run exercises in common, in particular to validate various aspects of the CJTF concept. Links between their intelligence services will therefore have to improve rapidly. There are at present no dedicated data links between WEU and NATO, whose headquarters are separated by only a few kilometres, although this is a need that has been identified in studies (the WEU Planning Cell is working on establishing such a system).(33) The signing of an agreement between WEU and NATO in 1996 has led to increased contacts. Visits to WEU headquarters are regularly organized for US intelligence officials, who have recognized the quality of WEU's protective measures.(34)

In the short tem, however, careful study is needed of possible complementarity between information available within WEU and NATO. The latter has flexibility in operational intelligence, while WEU has some experience in support for decision-making in impending crises.(35) This path is all the more promising since the European Union's future Policy Planning and Early Warning Unit that was recommended in the Amsterdam Treaty is to include an agent from WEU, which is a further way of developing WEU's role of linchpin of European security.

HOW THE WEU SATELLITE CENTRE COULD HELP IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A EUROPEAN INTELLIGENCE POLICY

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In May 1991 the international coalition had just successfully concluded Operation DESERT STORM. At the same moment, WEU ministers meeting in Vianden, Luxembourg, were deciding to set up the Torrejon Satellite Centre. In so doing, they were demonstrating their intent to give the organization an independent ability to assess the international situation. The ministerial decision sanctioned one of the lessons newly drawn from that conflict which heralded new types of risk: the use of space is now inescapable in crisis management. The decision took into account the WEU Assembly's recommendations on the strategic value of space-based observation, as well as the results of the *ad hoc* working group that had, at the Council's request, been set up to study this question.

Four years after its inauguration, at the ministerial meeting held in Paris in 1997, the Torrejon Satellite Centre, which had by then reached maturity, was declared operational. Today it regularly, and very rapidly, produces reports for the WEU Council, using means that are high-performance albeit restricted, in response to political directives that could be more ambitious. The Centre is a unique asset and has great potential for the organization's future. The idea that WEU could be a crucible from which an intelligence policy would emerge, capable of reconciling the various European requirements, is often expressed in bodies dealing with security and defence issues.

This chapter considers a practical, flexible process that could lead to this, and reflects on the role that the Centre could be called upon to play in the development of a European intelligence policy. In particular it asks:

- How can existing advantages be better exploited and the organization given a mastery of information in line with the missions it has set itself in order to develop a European Security and Defence Identity? Several types of improvement are considered, both technical and functional.
- How can the Satellite Centre's present constraint of not having access to the direct programming of a space-based observation system be eased? How can WEU ministers be persuaded to show as much determination as they did in 1991, when the Centre was created, by deciding to participate in a developing space-based observation system?

Set up in a very short time, without any model on which to base it and with a limited budget, the Satellite Centre exists and is operationally functional. The success of this enterprise shows that an international organization like WEU is capable of taking on major challenges. The human factor lies at the heart of the preoccupations of all who lead centres of high technology, and Torrejon is such a centre. Its missions are complex and varied, its personnel are young and multinational, and the richness of

this cultural mosaic makes it an out-of-the-ordinary establishment of which WEU can be proud.

The Torrejon Centre: an avant-garde tool

In any organization, any member who has an exclusive source of specific information will be in a privileged position to give his vision of a situation. In the domain of space-based observation, the United States has such a technological lead that the views it puts forward in NATO carry decisive weight. In the case of the Satellite Centre, the ten full member countries of WEU have equal status and access. They can put forward candidates for the posts of image analyst. The results of analyses are thus known and shared by all. Of either civil or military origin and of different cultures and professional backgrounds, these analysts make up a rich, complex mosaic. Their training has to be coordinated, methods standardized and procedures harmonized, while taking care to preserve the benefits of this wealth of knowledge and expertise. The reports produced by the Centre therefore have a unique value and considerable political importance: they give a collective view of a given situation and complement information from capitals. It is for precisely these reasons that the Torrejon Centre is said to have a function that is unique in the world. Thanks to it, many countries have access to sources of information previously reserved for countries cooperating in the *Helios* programme or having defence alliances with the space powers.

In February 1986 the French SPOT (systême probatoire d'observation de la terre) satellite began sending data to earth, opening the way to the marketing of satellite imagery. On 25 April 1986, the shock of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power station hit Europe and SPOT 1, with its known technical capability, was immediately programmed to cover the region in order to observe the consequences of the catastrophe and analyse the situation. In 1988, the WEU Assembly drafted two reports showing the need to observe the planet for security reasons and the importance of WEU's acquiring adequate instruments.(38) A very high resolution space observation capability was at that time the prerogative of the two superpowers, who kept the results for strictly national use or distributed them among a circle of privileged allies. France therefore decided to create the *Helios* system, in collaboration with Italy and Spain.

At the geopolitical level, following the fundamental and spectacular changes that took place in Europe (the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Warsaw Pact), the traditional threat gave way to new forms of security challenge, and European capitals decided to adapt their military instruments to the new risks. Later, the Gulf war faced European countries with unforeseen responsibilities and required them to consider involvement in regional crisis management.

It was against that background that in 1991 ministers of WEU countries decided to create a centre for the analysis of satellite imagery. The cost of this venture was high (ecu38 million for the first, three-year experimental phase), but the decision was bold in that it meant mounting a unique international project. It was the human dimension of the challenge that proved the most demanding in terms of energy and sustained attention. That is still true today, since the three-year contracts given to the Centre's personnel result in a rapid turnover of the team: greater efficiency would be achieved if open-ended contracts could be awarded.

In 1991 the use of digital imagery from space for defence purposes had been mastered by only a few countries, and no multinational experience had been acquired. Creating a centre comprising experts from different countries tasked with extracting information from satellite imagery, on subjects that were often confidential, was a first. Today NATO, to which intelligence is supplied by capitals, still has no such facility.

Considering the many unknowns in this venture, ministers had announced the creation of the Satellite Centre for a trial period of three years, from 1993 to 1995, during which both hardware and software teething problems were resolved. The challenge was taken up again at the Lisbon ministerial meeting of 1995 when ministers, in the light of results obtained and with regard to the conclusions of a European team's technical and operational evaluation, declared the Torrejon Satellite Centre to be a permanent organ of WEU. Since then it has been able to concentrate on long-term projects, in particular the development of a policy of quality assurance and professionalization of methods and procedures.

At the beginning of 1996, France, Italy and Spain, the countries cooperating in the *Helios* programme, made the first images available to the Centre in accordance with a memorandum of understanding concluded with WEU. Having access to this source of very high resolution imagery, the Centre is now able to respond to the Council's requests with a degree of detail never before achieved in Europe. *Helios* complements imagery bought on a commercial basis, for instance from SPOT, ERS, LANDSAT, RADARSAT and IRS satellites. At the end of 1996, use was made of this wide variety of sensors during the Great Lakes crisis when, in an extremely short time, reports were passed to the Council. The Centre also participated in Exercise CRISEX 95/96, providing information on very realistic situations to the Planning Cell throughout the exercise. From the beginning of 1997, the crisis in Albania was an occasion to demonstrate to the Council the professionalism that Torrejon had acquired: satellite imagery covering all of the area was obtained in two days.

Given this very positive state of affairs, ministers of WEU countries meeting in Paris in May 1997 expressed their satisfaction with the operational level reached by the Satellite Centre and, as a mark of confidence in its capabilities, tasked it with carrying out general surveillance, which will give the Council and Planning Cell a truly strategic perspective of space-based observation. This was fully simulated during Exercise CRISEX 98.

WEU and space-based observation

This analysis of the Satellite Centre's increasing effectiveness needs, however, to be qualified. Its strategic capability, which is real and permanently at the disposal of the Council, is still not sufficiently well known, since it has not been completely integrated into the decision-making process. The following is an attempt to analyse the reasons for this and suggest some remedial action.

Despite all the rhetoric, space is an environment that has still to be conquered. Observation of the earth from space remains the reserve of a few experts. The true advantages of space-based observation and its wide field of application are still

relatively unknown. All satellites have certain advantages in common: for example, they can be continuously accessed; they can cover any point of the globe without infringing international law or posing any risk to persons; observations can be repeated; several hundred square kilometers can be covered at once; and the image has a virtually constant geometry. Of course, there are constraints that must also be mentioned, such as: a still limited ability to detect detail; the waiting time to access on-board recorded information; and the cost or even impossibility of carrying out in-flight maintenance. This comparison, which is doubtless incomplete, illustrates the complementarity between satellite observation and aerial reconnaissance:

- space offers permanence and the possibility of repeating observations; it is the eye of the look-out that can cover wide areas and draw attention to anomalies and sound the alarm;
- aircraft (manned or unmanned) have the advantages of speed, agility and the detailed information they can provide on a precise locality.

When, in this area, the complementarity in use of the spacecraft and the aircraft is recognized, concepts of operation for defence will develop naturally towards an ideal operational symbiosis: space covers the strategic dimension and the aircraft provides the tactical support of reconnaissance. The ability of satellites to cover different crisis areas at the same time is not sufficiently exploited and yet, at a time when defence budgets are suffering cuts everywhere, space-based observation allows better use to be made of available military resources. To those who have mastered its use it represents a force multiplier (in military or humanitarian operations) through the optimization of force deployment and the skilful use of satellite data in digital terrain modelling, simulation of the environment, analysis of soil and coast types, terminal guidance of aircraft and the virtual reality representation of intervention areas.

It is not uncommon for one satellite image to have several applications. During the Great Lakes crisis, images of the Mugunga camp were used in the preparation of many different tasks: evaluation of the number of refugees, study of the water situation, planning of a possible airdrop of food and the simulation of a deployment of humanitarian assistance on the spot. Some users, incorrectly informed or perhaps having a distorted view resulting from too specific professional habits, have not fully realized that satellite observation has such varied applications. Others, probably fearing competition with their own national sources of information, take little interest in the work undertaken by the Centre. Very often the image analysts from Torrejon take on a teaching role and have to explain or demonstrate that, while satellite imagery is sometimes of inferior quality than aerial imagery, it has the advantage that it covers areas where regular aerial reconnaissance would risk lives or be politically unacceptable. It has to be demonstrated to some that the Centre's reports are not in any respect in competition with the work of individual nations but rather that they add a complementary view. To others it has to be pointed out that use of the Centre's resources is already covered by the states that finance it, and that the information it provides is freely available.

In the Centre's pilgrim's progress there are possibly requirements still to be explored. Many of these potential needs have not yet been expressed. For example, how many decision-makers are aware that it is possible to view a three-dimensional picture of a region in which an intervention is being considered? Who thinks of using satellite

imagery to choose the best location for a field surgical team in the event of a natural disaster, or for a realistic simulation of the ground to help plan a humanitarian convoy or an airdrop of food? The regular surveillance of nuclear power stations or petrochemical facilities, the analysis of industrial complexes or port areas and the study of areas prone to flooding or earthquakes are all fields in which space observation can serve a multidimensional security policy.

Soon, the availability of very high quality images (having a resolution of about one metre) from the United States will make it possible to improve the Centre's performance considerably. The principle of European independence in the acquisition of images will suffer as a result, but such products will demonstrate the effectiveness of space observation. They will make more widely available very high value data, which will necessitate a review of the policy of commercial distribution of images that have military potential. The questions that the international community will quickly have to address will be:

- what policy of control of the purchase of such images should be adopted?
- what special arrangements will need to be agreed between WEU and the supplier?
- how, in the interests of the twenty-eight WEU countries, should this source of satellite imagery be exploited for peaceful purposes while avoiding its dangerous or reprehensible use?

Aware of what satellite observation can offer today in its many fields of application, and what is expected in the coming months, the defence and foreign ministers of WEU countries have decided to give the Satellite Centre a mission of general surveillance. This new mission is likely to stimulate operational requirements and give new momentum to the organization's use of the Centre.

Prior to the 1997 Paris ministerial meeting, the Satellite Centre could only be used to provide information on areas recognized by the Council as being in a state of crisis. This limitation, to which capitals were not subject, had two negative consequences for the organization. The first was that it wrongly gave the impression that the Satellite Centre was capable, with its current resources, of carrying out a tactical crisis-management mission in real time. That is obviously impossible as long as the Centre is not able to orientate the source of information, in other words as long as WEU is not able to programme satellites. The second was to do with the fact that this limitation did not permit the full exploitation of satellite observation to detect indicators of crises before they break out. To be effective in this, space sensors must be programmed and steered by information from intelligence specialists as part of a precise information acquisition plan.

The general surveillance mission, recently included in a policy of a more general search for information, will now make it possible for the Satellite Centre to receive directly from the Council requests related to persistently unstable and potentially worrying regions or areas where there is already a crisis well before they are closely followed by WEU. The Council can now ask the Satellite Centre to analyse a precisely defined geographic area for a given period and regarding a particular subject. The Satellite Centre therefore now operates at three levels:

- the evaluation of risks before they constitute threats;
- the provision to decision-makers of a warning period that they can use to prepare, initiate and control diplomatic and military measures;
- more effective management of crises and military operations.

In its present configuration, which corresponds to the technological choices of the early 1990s, the Centre only partially meets the expectations of certain users since, without dedicated means (satellites or fixed or mobile reception antennas), the time to access information represents a limitation that is incompatible with tactical demands or the need for secrecy. There exist today technical solutions, of varying technological or financial magnitude, that could be adopted, specifically for the Satellite Centre or in view of an independent observation system.

A better equipped Satellite Centre

At the beginning of 1998, at the request of WEU's Space Group, a European consortium carried out a study of the means necessary to deliver images directly by data link, with the aim of guaranteeing delivery in shorter times. Of several possible options, that chosen was the transmission of images via high data-rate links, and technical tests are in hand.

To take advantage of the latest technological advances, the study of a mobile station for the reception and exploitation of satellite images for WEU has also been proposed. The idea is for the organization to acquire a vehicle-mounted digital image exploitation station capable of receiving data from selected satellites. During Exercise CRISEX 98, France demonstrated in a practical way its interest in such a tool by offering an operational demonstration of the mobile *Helios* station that it has developed. In the WEU case, the study concerns the feasibility of a 'projectable' Satellite Centre in which WEU analysts would interpret images using the same tools and sources. This mobile station could be transported to a theatre of operations to be used by the local commander and be in communication with the Council, Military Staff and Satellite Centre. Using such equipment, satellite observation, which has previously been used for strategic purposes, will have a more tactical application, particularly in WEU's type of mission.

These various proposals do not require very costly development, as they are already available off the shelf. The mobile station concept, however, requires further functional analysis to evaluate the advantage of using it for WEU missions. Such a study is in hand, but on the technical level the solution is a viable one, as it has been put into operational practice by the US Air Force under the Eagle Vision programme that has been designed and produced by a European company. This American order placed as part of the Foreign Comparative Program is one of the consequences of the Gulf War, during which the US Air Force became a very important client for SPOT imagery, and remains so today. A significant extension of such Euro-American cooperation has occurred through the order of a series of even more advanced stations that can receive images from several types of observation satellite. And yet the United States has satellites that are much more accurate than SPOT, which is a purely commercial system.

This demonstrates, on the one hand, the complementarity between images that have high resolution but a narrow field of view and very wide angle images that give an overall picture of a situation, and that the need to receive images in the shortest possible time implies resorting to in-theatre instruments (high-resolution imagery that has to be filtered by intelligence agencies before arriving in the area of operations often arrives too late, so that up-to-date imagery, even of medium resolution, may be welcome). On the other hand, satellite observation is a prime area for economies resulting from dual civil-military use. Seeking to find an opposition between civil and military satellites is a mistake. Any observation satellite can have both civil and defence applications. The fact that commercial SPOT images are used in the preparation of military operations shows how relative the distinction is. In preparing a decision on an independent satellite observation capability, this point has to be appreciated, because such systems become governmental instruments that can be used by more than one ministry.

Towards a complete system

In 1992-93, at the request of the Council, an overall study of the feasibility of giving WEU a complete satellite observation system was carried out. Based on an operational requirement stated in broad terms by national representatives, the study demonstrated the need for a set of five observation satellites (two optical and three radar) and two data transmission satellites. The financial implications were considerable, and the study was not followed up.

At the WEU ministerial meeting in Erfurt on 18 November 1997, the permanent Council was invited to follow up this work in the light of the Satellite Centre's operational experience and on the basis of a more exhaustive functional analysis. A first interim report was submitted to the Rhodes ministerial meeting, and a full report presented in Rome in November 1998. Today the preferred approach is participation in a multilateral collaborative programme. There are several European projects, at various stages of development, which propose very similar technical options. It is not certain that the *Helios* 2 programme, in which at present only Spain is associated with France, would be really appropriate, for reasons of timing and cost. Other projects based on small satellites give very respectable performances and can be ready by 2003. The Rome report also indicates that a system of small satellites could be obtained for a tenth of the price of that quoted in 1994.

If one compares the relevant costs with the European countries' defence budgets, it becomes obvious that only lack of political will hampers acquisition of such a system. For example, the *Helios* 1 programme (two satellites, two launches and a ground segment) cost around FF10 billion. At the European level, such a system would correspond to under 0.1 per cent of the total of the 1996 defence budgets of the thirteen countries involved in WEU's Space Group, and the solution based on small satellites would cost a tenth of that sum.

WEU countries, attracted by salesmanship and generous offers from across the Atlantic, are often reluctant to choose European solutions even though these are capable of meeting their requirements. Europe gives the impression that it lacks self-confidence and finds it hard to accept that, with a population of 400 million, it represents a world power with the industrial and financial capacity to compete with

the largest powers. A decision to pursue the path suggested at Erfurt would send a strong signal that it was determined to acquire independent capabilities that would complement rather than compete with those of the United States. It would also be an opportunity for European industry as a whole to demonstrate that it can be technologically self-sufficient at a time of fierce economic competition. Conversely, continued indecision would be an admission of political passivity and a step back from the forward-looking decision taken in 1991, the industrial and economic consequences of which could be very serious.

WEU intelligence policy

To comprehend what follows, it is first necessary to clarify subtleties of language that can lead to misunderstandings. In various European capitals there are difference of meaning between 'military intelligence' and 'defence intelligence': the purists prefer to speak of 'intelligence of military interest' and 'security intelligence'. The first of these terms refers to information necessary for the preparation of military plans, the execution of armed forces' missions and the conduct of operations. The second has a more political, interministerial dimension, and covers all questions related to security and defence policy, that is those having to do with the diplomatic, economic, industrial or even environment fields.

At the Satellite Centre, image analysts from the armed forces, specialists from government intelligence agencies and remote-sensing engineers each contribute a different viewpoint on an image of a given geographic area. None is better or more qualified than the others, but there is a complementarity of views between the different professional cultures, and the diverse talents are skilfully combined. There is also a 'civil-military' duality at the technical level, since the Centre analyses images from both commercial and defence satellites. For the most complex work, data from the civilian SPOT or ERS satellites, for example, combined with that from defence satellites such as *Helios*, produces better quality.

Restricting the Council's requests to military intelligence would be simplistic and would result in the underemployment of the Centre, whereas the Council needs to consider the whole spectrum of security intelligence. The seldom mentioned document 'European security: a common concept of the 27 WEU countries' clearly sets out the organization's approach on security issues. Declaring their common interests and values, in this document the WEU countries decided to examine together their security situation in the new context following the period of global confrontation. In it, they established their commitment to work together on the politico-military problems of arms control and disarmament, non-proliferation, terrorism and crime, as well as the protection of the environment, in addition to the Petersberg missions.(39)

At Torrejon, the human capacity to respond to such a wide range of requests exists in practice, both in the number of image analysts in the Exploitation Division and in their knowledge and professional experience. The Centre is therefore frequently tasked to consider a wide range of security and defence questions. For issues that are military in nature WEU's Military Staff can seek information in the course of their generic and contingency planning; questions involving general surveillance can also be raised by WEU's Politico-Military Group.

The Satellite Centre executes its mission by coordinating the competences of specialists, many of whom have a military or security intelligence background. Reports are submitted to the Secretary-General and the Planning Cell. The Intelligence Section, which has a complement of five officers, endeavours to collate information from national and other sources to which it has access. The French parliamentarian Jacques Baumel, when he was Chairman of the Defence Committee of the WEU Assembly, in a report entitled 'A European intelligence policy',[40] reported the inadequate manning of the section, whose information can play a crucial part in the Council's decision-making. In national centres working on similar questions there are at least as many people exploiting data as there are collecting information. In the case of WEU, a strength of twenty specialists in the Intelligence Section to analyse the product of the Satellite Centre's team of image analysts would not be excessive. In the current climate it would certainly be difficult to increase the strength of the section but improved electronic links could ease the problem. The distance between Torrejon and Brussels aggravates this difficulty and is a second handicap: the detachment of an officer from the Intelligence Section to Torrejon in times of crisis could help overcome this problem.

The Centre's reports contain, in NATO terminology, raw 'information', although these documents are enhanced by aerial imagery and collateral data available from open sources. Studies of natural hazards (such as flooding, drought and volcanic activity) or major industrial risks (such as those associated with nuclear power stations, chemical facilities or industrial complexes) are based on the detailed analysis of imagery and make use of additional reliable information that is accessible more or less systematically.

The end of the century brings with it a plethora of data that is transmitted by numerous media, classified by subject and available to the public in an increasingly user-friendly form. The advent of Internet is the most obvious example. The use of this unclassified information (open-source intelligence - OSINT) by intelligence agencies for defence purposes is likely to grow, and the Centre already makes extensive use of it. In a matter of weeks, when metric-definition commercial images become available on the market, the Torrejon Centre will be capable of not only detecting or recognizing moving objects but also of identifying them.[41] When combined with open sources, this detailed, unclassified information will be of great value and there is no doubt that the WEU Council will welcome it. If WEU wished, the Satellite Centre could justifiably be renamed a 'Space Intelligence Centre', which would make it more recognizable as a body of essentially political significance that is helping to establish a WEU security and defence intelligence policy.

Out of WEU's apparently complex collection of operational organs, a simple, homogeneous concept of employment is emerging in three complementary areas: assessment, decision-making and action. The WEU Council, together with its Military Staff, lies at the heart of this arrangement and is responsible for decision-making. The triad Satellite Centre-Planning Cell-Situation Centre is tasked with making assessments. Forces Answerable to WEU (FAWEU) execute decisions.

WEU needs to sustain this triad with the guaranteed provision of information suited to its specific needs. This data must be capable of being merged with national data and

updated as events occur. The upward movement of information between the centres of assessment and decision-making occurs automatically. The downward transmission of data from the decision-makers to those responsible for taking action is more complex, since WEU's objective is the management of crises, and it is important that any forces it deploys have the benefit of the operational intelligence they need. The WEU Council must therefore establish an intelligence policy that is complementary to NATO's, suited to its demands and capable of channelling the appropriate flow of information. It must underscore the technical requirements and information collection needs, and define the level of independence required in relation to its aims and the financial resources of the capitals concerned.

The best use must be made of what exists and benefit gained from the investment already made. All elements of the organization's decision-making chain are in place, but no major operation has yet been carried out under WEU's authority. In the case of Albania, it is a matter for some satisfaction that the police operation (MAPE) that WEU decided to undertake was its first practical action 'at 28'. It can be asked, however, why there was no consensus for Operation ALBA, even though it was carried out by countries belonging to the organization. In this practical example there are certainly numerous interesting elements to analyse, but what is still lacking is a European definition of political objectives in the area of security and defence. As long as WEU does not demonstrate, in a real situation, its ability to make a decision, become involved in a crisis and mount a military operation, one will have to accept that there will continue to be a certain scepticism in Europe as to its real operational capability.

So far, the Satellite Centre has concentrated most of its technical and human resources on Albania and Kosovo. Nearly a hundred reports have been sent to Brussels, many of them compiled with the help of *Helios* images. It has therefore been proved that the Centre, as a political instrument, is suited to crisis-management missions. There are, however, ways of increasing its output and reducing reaction times further.

An improved definition of the Council's real needs is a major objective. What information does it need, on which geographical areas and in pursuance of what policies? NATO seems more able to answer these questions and decide rapidly whether it is concerned about a crisis or not, and the driving force of the United States, with its powerful intelligence capabilities, is not unrelated to that. By acquiring its own intelligence policy, WEU would consolidate its achievements and could continue on the path to an independent European capacity to analyse the international situation. It would also demonstrate that it was preparing to assume more responsibilities as a complement to NATO.

Of course intelligence engaged in by international institutions impinges on principles that national political authorities consider that affect their sovereignty. It is therefore up to capitals to define the content of a WEU intelligence policy, as dispassionately as possible, following a pragmatic approach that could combine the needs of all and take into account national sensitivities.

Intelligence in an evolutionary institution

Gradually developing a WEU intelligence policy now seems inescapable and appears to be the key to WEU's operational expansion. It is true that at present it is not easy to deal with a situation in which member countries of WEU have a complex variety of statuses. For instance, 13 countries are involved in the Planning Cell, 10 in the Satellite Centre (although 13 fund it), 18 in the Situation Centre and either 18 or 28 in the Council.

However, in the past WEU has overcome other similar difficulties, and this difference must instead be seen as a clear sign of openness and adaptation to the present, and as a political advantage that gives cause for satisfaction. The organization refuses to remain set in one particular form: being open to newcomers, it can offer them the opportunity to take part in exchanges of view on security and defence issues.

On space matters, the fact that participation in the Satellite Centre and Planning Cell is identical (comprising 13 countries) facilitates the flow of information. The signature of security agreements with the five Observer states would result in a simple relationship with the Situation Centre. An identical 18-country membership of all organs concerned with assessment would then be possible and would be a guarantee of efficiency and consistency.

The Satellite Centre is a permanent subsidiary organ created by the member states of WEU that are signatories to the modified Brussels Treaty. Therefore until now only the ten full Member countries have been able to put forward candidates for posts at the Satellite Centre. However, since 1995 Associate Members have contributed to its budget and consequently may make use of it and submit requests for information. To widen the interest in space observation and give a larger number of countries access to the Centre's view of the international situation, a physical presence from Associate Member and/or Observer countries in Torrejon's activities, under certain conditions, should not be ruled out.

The Planning Cell-Situation Centre-Satellite Centre triad operates under the political control of WEU's Politico-Military Group. The recent creation of a Military Committee indicates the Council's wish to consolidate links with subsidiary organs and raise the level at which information is fused. This has to be seen as an important change that could result in a modification of procedures and relations between the Satellite Centre and the Council. One can imagine that, with the creation of a Military Committee, there could be the beginning of intelligence planning for the Council and consequently greater involvement at the politico-military level in the formulation of requests put to the Centre. For example, requests connected with the mission of general surveillance could be made by the Committee in conjunction with the Politico-Military Group.

WEU's complementarity with NATO and EU

The complementarity between WEU, NATO and EU has been described by the Secretary-General of WEU as follows: 'The European Union is the main expression of European political will. NATO is the cornerstone of European defence. Bridging both, WEU provides a necessary tool for the development of the European Security and

Defence Identity.'[42] The present situation shows clearly the complementarity between these three organizations, which nevertheless still lead parallel lives.

WEU has recently celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the Brussels Treaty, and among its achievements the rapid development of its space-based observation capability is probably the one that stands out. In its conviction that it should explore this new sector, WEU has shown a creative spirit and a determination that have given it exceptional advantages. In the field of intelligence, WEU can now assert a clear specificity compared with NATO. A group of experts from the Alliance visiting Torrejon recognized the non-negligible value to NATO of the Satellite Centre's reports. Those resulting from the combining of data from several satellites, and those based on commercial, high-resolution imagery, can be used in interesting ways to complement NATO's existing wealth of sources. Reports submitted to the WEU Council may, on request and under certain conditions, be made available to NATO. This could open the way to cooperation in the exchange of information, to the mutual benefit of both organizations. In exchange, WEU could request access to NATO databases by the Planning Cell and Satellite Centre.

WEU's *rapprochement* with EU is also happening, as is reflected in the Satellite Centre's mandate. In November 1998 EU sought the Centre's assistance for the benefit of OSCE observers in Kosovo. The inclusion of Petersberg missions in the Treaty on European Union and the declaration attached to the Final Act of the Intergovernmental Conference concerning the establishment of a Policy Planning and Early Warning Unit within EU offer new opportunities for the exchange of information between the two organizations. All of this can be put into practice once the Amsterdam Treaty has been ratified.

The setting up of the Satellite Centre represents the first step towards independent risk-assessment. The Centre carries out this task together with bodies designated by the Council, using the technical means it was given six years ago. Organizational improvements are possible, and recent progress made in high technology will allow the work it has begun to be taken forward at reasonable cost.

WEU can take the lead by showing sustained interest in giving its Satellite Centre the ability to receive satellite imagery faster and greater autonomy in the programming and acquisition of these images. For an investment that is minimal compared with the total of national defence budgets, WEU could acquire an appropriate satellite observation system that it could orientate and programme in accordance with its strategic requirements. It is today the only European organization empowered to conduct military operations. If it had an intelligence policy suited to its needs it could tomorrow, using the organs it has created, become the only European organization capable of assessing the international situation quite independently and taking decisions to act in the best interests of European security and defence.

EUROPEAN INTELLIGENCE POLICY: POLITICAL AND MILITARY REQUIREMENTS

Klaus Becher[43]

When asked about the prospects of European intelligence cooperation, or even a common intelligence policy within WEU and EU, most experts will express their conviction that not much is going to happen in this field anyway. So why should one think about it? This paper, while sharing the position that intelligence essentially pertains, and will continue to pertain, to the national level of responsibilities, sets out to describe a line of reasoning which is likely to lead national governments, and increasingly also intelligence agencies themselves, towards a significantly higher level of European integration, at least in certain aspects of intelligence.

Future developments in intelligence in Europe are going to be shaped, not by internally generated 'requirements' of intelligence itself, as in the Cold War, but by externally imposed political expectations. In return for continued funding, European governments will demand that intelligence supports them efficiently in their effort to master today's complicated political agenda in a continent that is both widening and deepening its economic and political integration, and having to face up to broader responsibilities in a social and economic environment of rapid change on a global scale.

It should be noted that this paper focuses almost exclusively on the provision of strategic intelligence, i.e. information on the international situation produced for the top level of national leadership as a contribution to policy-making. It covers, by implication, most aspects of military intelligence, as the latter may only differ from strategic intelligence in its scope, detail, and level of application.

This limitation, however, excludes a range of tasks that may be assigned to intelligence agencies, such as intrusive covert collection by non-technical means,[44] covert operations, counter-intelligence, internal intelligence and security, law enforcement and judiciary roles. At the European level, the latter group of tasks may assume importance in the further development of EU's growing 'third pillar' (justice and internal affairs), whereas other tasks on this list appear unlikely ever to reach that level.

What are the factors driving integration?

The history of European integration since 1945 provides an impressive range of policy areas that have become subject to intergovernmental or even supranational integration although they had traditionally been national in nature. It is this remarkable fact that sometimes makes European integration so hard for outside observers, the United States for instance, to understand. As successful moves towards a common currency are once more demonstrating, this process is likely to continue, at its own pace, even in the absence of the external pressure that the Cold War exerted.

In foreign, security and defence policy, the actual degree of integration reached within EU and WEU is nevertheless still quite limited. However, it should not be overlooked that defence integration in NATO, although it is a transatlantic alliance, has created a degree of multinational integration among Europeans that none of the countries involved would wish to lose. The CFSP is still very much a project under construction, and its applications still appear to be mainly symbolic. It remains to be seen if EU, as the single voice of its member states, will at some point really become a relevant actor in international security affairs. CFSP's and WEU's current structures - with their bureaucratic limitations, lack of assets and funds, and a deficit of democratically legitimized power - cannot conduct foreign and security policy in the real sense of the word, spanning the continuum from strategic planning to timely, sustained action. In spite of the fact that the 1997 Amsterdam Treaty, when ratified, will place WEU's Petersberg tasks in EU's CFSP framework, most aspects of defence policy, above all armed forces and defence proper, will remain outside that framework. Thus the potential role of WEU will be narrowed down to that of an institution implementing external security policies decided by EU, with or without NATO support, i.e. some important US assets, through the CJTF concept.

While European nations are clearly willing to enhance their ability to act together in security and defence, the role of EU and WEU as organizations in this endeavour is likely to remain a limited one, with the risk that they become irrelevant in critical situations. As organizations, they will most likely not be directly included in the primary chain of information and decision-making. In the end, leadership in defence, and by implication therefore also intelligence, will remain national, as is also implied by political accountability in democratic nations.

Intelligence, as a profession that is concerned with the unknown, the surprising and the unwelcome, does not seem to lend itself easily either to the current pace of CFSP or to its diplomatic nature, where all action must wait for a high-level intergovernmental decision and must never go beyond the scope of its language. In addition, a substantial gap of security cultures exists between the intelligence community and EU.

All of this should not be seen as cause for pessimism; it points, rather, to the appropriate path for successful European integration in security and defence. National structures and responsibilities will not be abolished, but will accomplish their tasks by pooling resources across borders where necessary. In this sense, integration will happen if and when it offers functional advantages to the nations involved, as seen by their elected leadership, especially in a situation where existing national approaches appear unsustainable. In the end, integration is often less a matter of political choice but of necessity. The governments and agencies involved will cope best with such integration, as far as it is bound to happen, if they anticipate it in time. Positive and negative experiences in the 1990s, shrinking defence budgets and vanishing support for defence expenditure have led to a remarkable defence interdependence among European nations. At the same time, EU nations are building their international orientation on an increasingly similar set of priorities. This should also, in spite of remaining differences, lead to an increased overlap of the tasks given to national intelligence communities.

It is well known that intelligence cooperation with allies forms an essential element of the value of intelligence establishments in the context of foreign and security policies: 'States guide each other towards common perceptions through intelligence exchanges and dialogues . . . Mutual education also promotes common action, just as having a common base of intelligence knowledge promotes agreed decisions.'[45] The case can be made convincingly that a common European approach to foreign, security and defence policy cannot possibly work to the satisfaction of the governments promoting it without an adequate degree of intelligence integration in Europe. Especially in France, this insight was expressed early in the process of reviving WEU as an instrument of European security and defence.[46]

Nevertheless, it must be asked whether in some EU countries the intelligence sector is actually in tune with an approach towards functional security and defence integration that is based on overlapping national interests. Obviously, intelligence (as a set of subordinate bodies and activities within the state) is expected to perform in conformity with government policy. As in many technical élites that are not directly involved in the procedures of democratic pluralism, however, old images of international relations as a zero-sum competition between nations seem to have survived disproportionally in some quarters. If this surmise is true, a dialogue with and amongst intelligence communities about underlying political guidelines of security and defence policies in Europe is overdue.

The political and military leadership's requirements

For those involved in European institution-building in Brussels and elsewhere, it may be tempting to expect intelligence integration to follow the perceived needs of institutions. For instance, WEU's Satellite Centre would need to be embedded in a wider, multi-source framework; the CFSP staff would need to be able to draw upon all required intelligence through WEU's Planning Cell, in order to prepare EU initiatives, etc. However, intergovernmental functional integration does not follow the logic of institutions. Rather, governments' willingness to commit time and money to such integration will depend mainly on their perception of advantages for themselves. To be more precise, it is most likely not national administrations that will detect and pursue such potential advantages, but the high-level leadership in national governments and majority parties.

It is therefore helpful to understand the actual needs of leading politicians with respect to security and defence policy, areas that are not regularly at the core of their own political agenda or their constituencies' concerns. They nevertheless command attention because of their disruptive potential in times of crisis and their inherent level of complexity that invites errors and mistakes of major consequence. Generally, elected politicians' needs in this field can be summed up in two points. First, to underpin their chances of staying in power, they need to produce visible results of a successful foreign, security and defence policy. Second, they need to maintain the tools of power that enable them to do so, implying the need to ensure the legitimacy and public acceptance of expenditure on security and defence. In several regards, in Europe today it would seem that, increasingly, these needs can no longer be satisfied without substantial adaptations in the intelligence sector, and this could give decisive impetus to European intelligence integration.

For Europeans, one of the lessons learned in former Yugoslavia was that their political and military leaders were too often inadequately informed about the situation on the ground. Politically, this became especially obvious during the contentious debate in 1991-92 on recognition of the independence of former Yugoslav republics. The initial lack of a timely shared assessment of the situation among EU countries led to the widespread perception of deeply diverging interests and policies. This perception was later proven wrong when the US leadership provided an operational framework for cooperation, but did lasting damage to the image of Europe as a responsible actor.

Rational leadership, usually the key to success and international respect, must necessarily rest on a well-informed understanding of the issues. Intelligence, as a traditional component of statecraft, is meant to provide exactly this critical informational groundwork for strategic decision-making, although probably most current political leaders in Europe would find the products that are actually offered to them deficient in this sense. While successful leadership does not necessarily require optimized use of intelligence, intelligence that is clearly disorganized makes success highly unlikely. EU nations' desired ability to act in a timely and effective manner in security affairs would certainly profit from previously agreed analysis. More essentially, steps are needed to avoid paralysis of decision-making at the European level and the inability of EU countries to act, whether jointly or alone, as a consequence of hidden, unchecked clashes of perception due to a failure to integrate available intelligence.

This applies even more dramatically in the case of military operations. For example, it would be most unhelpful to the notion of ESDI if soldiers of one EU country were to become casualties because information available to another EU country's intelligence had not been passed on. In this regard, NATO procedures can provide a basis for cross-linking national establishments. Coherent intelligence support for possible future European-led operations is an urgent requirement. Among other things, it would be irritating and in many ways potentially misleading if the channels of intelligence dissemination in allied command structures and national chains of command were not coordinated.

Another important dimension of intelligence from the viewpoint of national political leaders and their prospect for success is the key role intelligence has acquired in fields such as global and regional arms control and confidence-building, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, ballistic missiles and related technologies, combating international terrorism and organized crime, conflict management or the monitoring of cease-fires. Mastery of first-rate intelligence is the entrance ticket to the club of countries that shape multinational policies in these fields. Most European nations can only hope to be included, make meaningful contributions and assert their own viewpoints and interests if they manage to add value to their own intelligence capacities by cross-linking them with those of partner countries.

Finally, in their desire to keep their intelligence tools up to date, national leaders are increasingly likely to seek needed improvements on a multilateral, mostly European level instead of attempting this nationally. This could apply to institutional restructuring as well as, above all, to the costly procurement of technology needed for efficient and timely intelligence support for a multifaceted international security

agenda of increasingly global reach. It is only by sharing such costs among several countries and by jointly operating the resulting hardware, that European nations can acquire a minimum capacity of policy-enabling intelligence technology of their own, e.g. for space-based and airborne photographic and electronic intelligence, missile launch detection, and high-capacity secure broadband communications networks. France's willingness to share its *Helios* observation satellites provided an important milestone since it opened, in principle, the traditional preserve of secret information gathering by accepting a certain degree of irreversible mutual dependence on European cooperation partners. It must be noted, however, that Germany has so far not translated its top-level political commitment to the *Helios*-2 and *Horus* programmes into tangible measures and budget allocations, mainly due to a pronounced preference of German defence and intelligence institutions for working with the United States.

Adapting to a changing Atlantic Alliance

Given the strong reservations in some European countries and the United States regarding the idea of enhanced European intelligence cooperation, and also the generally weak support for an active security and defence policy as such throughout Europe, any decisive step forward would probably be easier if, at the same time, it helped to ensure access to US capabilities and maintain a viable transatlantic alliance. European efforts should not be wasted on initiatives based on anachronistic ideas of European defence outside NATO, but always geared towards the overriding goal of strengthening the European contribution to common efforts within NATO. WEU being the European pillar and identity of NATO, NATO should be regarded not only as a European institution, but in fact as EU's own defence alliance.

Throughout NATO's history, intelligence, unlike other aspects of defence, has not been organized in truly integrated structures within the Alliance. NATO's limited intelligence elements have produced harmonized assessments of the military risks to the treaty area, supported by formal gateways to, as well as informal input by, the intelligence communities of member states. These arrangements within NATO are widely perceived as rather too cumbersome and inflexible to serve as a strategic intelligence network adapted to current and future requirements of international security policy.

The planned reform of NATO's intelligence architecture in Europe, however,[(47)] is taking a much broader approach to intelligence and is also designed to accommodate the CJTF framework. European intelligence efforts should therefore be regarded as an integral component of, or at least be kept compatible with, this approach. As US capabilities remain indispensable to European nations, and a modicum of US political support for European defence integration is highly desirable, it would be counterproductive to define European efforts in terms of transatlantic rivalry. Most international security challenges affect both European and North American allies. Thus, efforts to meet them should be seen as contributions to international security cooperation that can be pooled and shared fairly. The goal would then be to make the most, for European purposes, of any future NATO intelligence analysis centres by attracting as much valuable US input with as little distortion as a result of US structural dominance as possible. This outcome would certainly be easier to attain if WEU members took a coordinated approach to intelligence. Most fundamentally,

though, it requires that they have capabilities of their own to bring into the equation of a more balanced, durable transatlantic security partnership and defence alliance. Europe's terms of access to US-controlled intelligence pools on global security issues will also depend on the practical value of European assets to US intelligence.

Disputes between the United States and its allies at the border between economic and security issues, an increasingly central feature of today's international system, sometimes also affect issues related to intelligence, e.g. encryption technology or high-resolution commercial imagery from space. Defining and defending European interests in such intelligence-related fields would likely become easier if a cooperative regime with elements of true mutual dependence, built on a durable political framework, were established across the Atlantic.

Most importantly, it seems increasingly likely that the long-term cohesion of the Atlantic Alliance may depend essentially on Europe's ability to keep its own defence efforts compatible with the ongoing US 'revolution in military affairs' (RMA). One of its main features is the deep, 'real-time' integration of intelligence into the conduct of military operations. Allies whose forces were neither equipped nor trained for this vision of future defence would lose much of their value, and not just from a US perspective.

It therefore seems a sensible idea for Europe to cope with the effects of the information revolution on intelligence and defence together, not only among themselves, but also with the United States as the most experienced and by far most capable ally in this field. Important decisions on European forces' C4I equipment for the future should be prepared by European nations together, and kept compatible with US approaches. This would not only assure Europe's ability to remain a respected ally of the United States, but above all provide European nations with an ability to act in a transformed international security framework.

Reinventing European intelligence agencies

Integration in intelligence will presumably not take the form of a supranational 'European intelligence agency'. Structures, capacities and funding will generally remain national, as will efforts to move ahead in cooperation and integration. Existing national intelligence cultures and their ability to adapt to new requirements will circumscribe the perspectives of EU nations for building an integrated intelligence base for their foreign, security, and defence policies.

European intelligence will have to be synthesized through a system of intergovernmental and inter-administrative networking that does not yet exist even in rudimentary form. The relationships between intelligence agencies in EU countries are in part marked by distance and mistrust. Their cooperation has been limited and uneasy, as it was even in the face of the common threat during the Cold War. In addition, national services have been set up in different historical and organizational situations and still reflect their specific origins. Some national services are more involved in their government's strategic decision-making than others.

There is nevertheless a common denominator that provides sufficient compatibility for increased cooperation and networking. Throughout EU, intelligence activities are

subject to permanent control by democratic governments, in most cases supplemented by parliamentary supervision. Intelligence is kept separate from police and judicial functions, and, as far as possible, also from the protection of internal security. Intelligence serves political decision-making, and cannot replace it. Major differences exist today, however, with regard to the protection of personal data in the context of intelligence activities. A more harmonized approach to this problem would help to deflect possible political opposition to European intelligence integration in some EU member states.

European intelligence agencies currently face a number of severe challenges, including substantial budget cuts. The heart of the problem, however, appears to be a multiple crisis of identity, although this may affect some countries' services more than others. It is not just the shift in geographical and methodological priorities that came with the end of the East-West confrontation. As risks and threats are increasingly understood to be of a global or transnational nature, while the traditional government-to-government pattern of international threats has virtually vanished in Europe, existing structures appear inadequate. Above all, intelligence agencies have to face the unfolding global information revolution, epitomized by the universal, free knowledge available through the Internet. The information literacy required by this development cannot easily be reconciled with the compartmentalization that has characterized intelligence agencies.

At the level of governments and parliaments, political judgments on the future relevance of official intelligence agencies will increasingly depend on the users' expectation of short-reaction, on-demand intelligence product related to rapidly changing perceived challenges and crises, including non-familiar issues outside the regional and topical priorities set by national intelligence services. Thus, external expertise available in academic, administrative, commercial and other non-governmental fields must be exploited systematically by intelligence agencies. At the same time, they must stress their own special competitive advantages over other information providers like the public media as well as commercial information services and consultancies whose products often seem satisfactory, at an attractive price, to traditional intelligence 'customers'.

The first three items on the list of unique capabilities that only good intelligence agencies can provide are (a) secret sources that can, among other things, provide documented refutation of wrong assumptions, (b) technical data collection means that are not available to non-governmental players, and (c) a strict dedication to filtering 'dirty' from 'clean' data in a rapidly deteriorating situation of overwhelming information overkill.

Essentially, intelligence can distinguish itself, and serve its political and military customers, by resisting the common temptation to accept news as fact. Instead, in some critical areas such as the fight against proliferation, hearsay and rumours[(48)] are increasingly presented as evidence, sometimes for political expediency. This would defy a century of methodological refinement in the social sciences as well as common sense. If it is to be of use to decision-makers, intelligence (as well as its users) must respect the rules of reasonable discourse, e.g. acknowledge possible flaws in data and make assumptions explicit. This often requires a feeling for the origin of a particular piece of information. If secret information is exchanged between nations, the origin of

intelligence products, in general terms, should therefore not be concealed from the user.

From the user's viewpoint, a plurality of national agencies providing different perspectives, based on different sets of sources and methods but forming part of a network that distributes intelligence results to EU governments would be a substantial asset. For example, complex assessments like those regarding internal developments in countries such as China, Iran, or Algeria would probably benefit from this plurality of contributions.

It should therefore be the desire of EU governments to remove existing political, legal, bureaucratic, and technological obstacles to such networking. In particular, ongoing national restructuring efforts should include a European element with a view to establishing a value-added European service network among W/EU nations. For example, although national differences in intelligence cultures will not vanish, young intelligence officers should be given the chance to familiarize themselves with these different approaches and learn to understand them as parts of a whole by being exposed to common training and professional exchanges.

Preparing the stage for a European intelligence policy

Progress towards European integration in the field of intelligence is very much a theme of the future. The political will to promote concrete steps in such a direction would first have to emerge. In fact, at present there is not even a political debate on the issue. Hesitancy is to be expected also for fear of possible negative effects, notably duplication, lack of political control and the burdening of European integration as a whole by procedural disputes and bureaucratic blockage in a field that is perceived by many as marginal in importance.

On the other hand, the possible benefits of intelligence integration merit attention. It is the mission of intelligence to provide an information advantage to those who formulate and execute policy. The goal, shared by EU nations, of improving the foreign, security and defence policy conducted in the name of Europe both nationally and in common, implies a need to provide a proper information base for decisions, including the use of intelligence services. In addition, the general need to pool scarce resources while keeping governments up to date argues for a European approach towards the restructuring of intelligence.

Total political consensus is not a precondition for defining the agenda and identifying possible ways of proceeding. The steps and requirements on the long road to integrated European intelligence should be spelled out in the course of a multilateral debate. This would in the end provide those countries who may already wish to implement the first concrete measures with a framework of reference. One good way of doing this would be through the creation of an independent *ad hoc* advisory commission, whose members would be selected by W/EU governments, ideally with a broad representation of expertise in international security affairs and come from outside the government and administration. This commission's report would then form the basis of public debate and provide guidance to governmental decisions. In many regards, this approach could build on the experience of the 'Brown Commission', jointly created by the US President and Congress, and its March 1996 report.[(49)]

Potentially, such an approach could also point the way towards future institution-building for a European intelligence policy. For example, a panel of high-level personalities from outside government and national politics of W/EU countries - a European permanent foreign intelligence advisory board - might provide helpful support in the context of national and community efforts to develop more integrated approaches to intelligence in Europe.

At the end of the road, in addition to practical inter-agency networking, an intergovernmental body of high-level intelligence officials might be created - a European intelligence assessment board - assisted by working-level drafting staff. This would provide a regular common framework for evaluating basic and current intelligence on specific topics of present or prospective importance, such as today e.g. the situation in Kosovo. Its main task would be to prevent common European policies from being undermined by non-consolidated intelligence. Above all, it would have to clarify in as timely a manner as possible, in each particular case, the extent to which divergences between EU capitals: are rooted in different interpretations of available evidence; reflect information not yet taken into account by others; and persist in spite of a common assessment of the situation. It is probably only once such a clearing mechanism exists that European foreign, security and defence policy will be truly able to sustain the claim that it expresses a common view.

1. See Michael Herman, *Intelligence Power in Peace and War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for the RIIA, 1996), pp. 293-5.

2. See Markus Wolf, with Anne McElvoy, *Memoirs of a Spymaster* (London: Pimlico, 1998), pp. 47, 110-11.

3. Indeed, the Franco-British summit - Joint declaration on European defence, Saint-Malo, 4 December 1998, mentions increased intelligence cooperation within EU.

4. Robert Steele is a former USMC Intelligence and CIA official, and one of the main initiators of the open-source intelligence (OSINT) revolution in the United States.

5. Whereas EU countries' defence spending amounts to roughly two-thirds of US expenditure, it is doubtful that combined EU outlay on intelligence is comparable to that of the United States ($US17.8 billion), and their output is significantly lower. See 'Cost of Intelligence', *IHT*, 5-6 December 1998.

6. 'Smart' nations are those that invest heavily in the culture of their citizens, in the value of a knowledge-based society and in an information infrastructure, allowing the quick and meaningful exchange of information.

7 Just looking at the example of Israel, another close ally of the United States, it is interesting to see that while the *Lavi* fighter programme has foundered due to lack of US funds, the *Ofeq* (Horizon) satellite has not. What the US-Israeli intelligence arrangements are concerning the product of these satellites is not known, but the important detail is that Israel has its own satellite, and that at the political level it has not bought into other parties' capabilities.

8. Clubs have a solid tradition in the intelligence community and sometimes, as in the case of the Club of Berne, they can include some twenty countries in their membership.

9. What is less openly acknowledged is that experts are most useful, not when they explain what has just happened, but when they can predict, which is a difficult and risky business.

10. See Frans de Ridder, 'Open Source Intelligence as opportunity: strengths, limits and cooperation potential', WEU-ISS seminar 'Developing a European intelligence policy', 13-14 March 1997.

11. WEU Document 1621 makes interesting proposals on: the need for a coordinated European intelligence plan; the necessity to increase the WEU Intelligence Section's data fusion and OSINT processing capabilities and unmanned aerial vehicles for strategic IMINT and SIGINT. See 'A command and control system for WEU', Report submitted on behalf of the Technological and Aerospace Committee by Mr Cunliffe, Rapporteur, 5 November 1998.

12. Frédéric Oberson is a parliamentary assistant at the French National Assembly. He was a visiting fellow at the Institute for Security Studies in 1994.

13. Here, 'intelligence' is used in its widest sense, which includes political intelligence and multi-source analysis.

14. Ministerial meetings are attended by foreign and defence ministers.

15. The officers of these complementary sections meet regularly in *ad hoc* working groups.

16. Most are officers from the three services. However, the Planning Cell also includes a few civilians and a Chief Superintendent in charge of police matters. Currently, the Director of the Planning Cell is a Dutch officer, and the Chief of the Intelligence Section a Greek officer.

17. The exercise had three phases and ended in December 1996.

18. These regions are currently Albania, former Yugoslavia and the Great Lakes region of Africa. See also Graham Messervy-Whiting, 'WEU's Operational Development', *Joint Forces Quarterly*, Spring 1997, p. 72.

19. The Intelligence Section thus receives, more or less frequently (almost daily from certain states, for example France, Germany and Italy, but much less frequently from others) documents that states are willing to send it. In actual fact only half of the ten full Member States regularly supply useful intelligence.

20. These of course refer to the national sources on which the assessment is based, following the procedure adopted by most intelligence services.

21. Situation reports are audio-visual presentations given in the Permanent Council's meeting room, as ordered by the Council on its agenda, and a paper version is also distributed.

22. On this characteristic of effective intelligence, see Michael Herman, *Intelligence Power in Peace and War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for the RIIA, 1996), p. 56.

23. All the more so since intelligence from open sources today for most of the time covers the majority of what it is important to know on a particular subject.

24. WEU Assembly Recommendation 597, para. 1.

25. WEU Assembly Documents 1517, 1518 and 1567, entitled, respectively, 'A European intelligence policy', 'The operational organization of WEU' and 'WEU's operational role'.

26. See 'European security: a common concept of the 27 WEU countries', WEU Council of Ministers, Madrid, 14 November 1995. It should be remembered that that study was reconfirmed at the Paris ministerial meeting of 1997.

27. Michael Herman, 'Intelligence After the Cold War: Contributions to International Security', Conflict Studies Research Centre, Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, November 1995, p. 4.

28. The idea of developing the Section into a much larger Intelligence Centre is not realistic for the time being.

29. It is already possible for the Planning Cell to be reinforced by national experts for specific (for example logistic) tasks.

30. It recommended that the Council 'Ask each WEU member state to second a correspondent from its national intelligence system to the Planning Cell in order to improve its capabilities in making up-to-date assessments and analyses of the situation in potential task-theatres of operation.' WEU Assembly Document 1517, 'A European intelligence policy', Report submitted on behalf of the Defence Committee by Mr Baumel, Rapporteur, 13 May 1996, recommendation 2.

31. WEU Assembly Document 1567, para. 74.

32. This could involve holding meetings at more or less regular intervals between these points of contact and the Intelligence Section.

33. The WEUNET system could meet this requirement. WEU's access to the NATO countries' intelligence data transmission system could one day be agreed, since the European contribution to this area has been very large.

34. The Americans are clearly increasingly interested in WEU. The American periodical *Joint Forces Quarterly* devoted several pages to its work, in the Spring 1997 edition, pp. 70-4. The article in question was written by the Deputy Director of the WEU Planning Cell, Brigadier Graham Messervy-Whiting. This was the first time that a US armed forces publication had published such an article.

35. The ultimate objective could be to arrive at a common assessment of intelligence as in the British model, represented since 1939 by the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC).

37. Bernard Molard has been Director of the WEU Satellite Centre, located in Torrejon, Spain, since January 1996 and leaves the post on 31 December 1998.

38. WEU Document 1159, 'Verification: a future European satellite agency', Report submitted on behalf of the Defence Committee by Mr Fourré, Rapporteur, 3 November 1988; WEU Document 1160, 'Scientific and technical aspects of arms control verification by satellite', Report submitted on behalf of the Technological and Aerospace Committee by Mr Malfatti, Rapporteur, 7 November 1988.

39. 'Humanitarian and rescue tasks; peacekeeping tasks; tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking.'

40. WEU Assembly Document 1500, 'A European intelligence policy', Report submitted on behalf of the Defence Committee by Mr Baumel, Rapporteur, 4 December 1995.

41. According to NATO definitions (AAP-6), in summary: detection is the discovery of a person, object or phenomenon (e.g. a vehicle); recognition is determination of the nature of the thing detected (e.g. a tank); and identification is discrimination between objects within a particular class (e.g. a *Leopard* 2).

42. *WEU Today* (Brussels: Secretariat-General of WEU, 1997), Foreword.

43. Klaus Becher is a senior research fellow at Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, Ebenhausen.

44. i.e. HUMINT (human intelligence).

45. Michael Herman, *Intelligence Power in Peace and War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for the RIIA, 1996), p. 217.

46. See the speech by Prime Minister Michel Rocard at the Institut des Hautes Etudes de Défense Nationale on 22 October 1990. In this light, intelligence would even appear as an essential functional driving force of European integration in the present international constellation.

47. For an overview, see Peter van Rensen, 'Informationsbedarf der Gemeinsamen Aussen- und Sicherheitspolitik der Europäischen Union' (SWP Ebenhausen paper IP 3046, 1997), pp. 27-9 and 44.

48. i.e. claims of the existence of unrevealed secrets.

49. Commission on the Roles and Capabilities of the United States Intelligence Community, Preparing for the 21st Century: an Appraisal of United States Intelligence (available on the Internet at
http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/dpos/epubs/int/report.ht ml).