in security and defence becomes so intense that it amounts, *de facto*, to *integration*. Integration, of course, is the notion favoured by neo-functionalists because it does, precisely, lead to a new supranational structure. Hanna Ojanen (2006) has recently presented the outline of a case for concluding that coordination might well lead to integration (providing, according to her analysis, NATO does not first succeed in re-absorbing and fusing with ESDP, thereby snatching it back into an Atlantic context). The overlap between coordination and integration has been, to some extent, theorized by neo-functionalists; but the precise distinctions, and above all the dividing line at which point the process shifts from one to the other have not. It might be helpful for the discussion if a new term were to be coined which highlights the complex and symbiotic forces at play: *coordigration*. My view is that ESDP demonstrates a great deal of coordigration. But, as we shall see below, it also has a very long way to go . . .

Chapter 2

Disputed Origins: True and False Drivers behind ESDP

The Saint Malo revolution

Around three o'clock in the morning on Friday 4 December 1998, officials of the French and British governments slipped under the bedroom doors of President Jacques Chirac and Prime Minister Tony Blair, both fast asleep in the French seaside town of Saint Malo, a document which was to revolutionize both the theory and the practice of European security and defence (Whitman, 1999; Shearer, 2000; Author's interviews London and Paris, 2000). The document had been written from scratch during the late afternoon and evening of 3 December by the Political Directors of the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the French *Quai d'Orsay*, respectively Emyr Jones Parry and Gérard Erreira. The *Saint Malo Declaration* (Box 2.1), as the text was to be known, initiated a new political process and a substantial new policy area for the European Union. This new venture was soon to be called the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). The key sentences from the Saint Malo Declaration are the following:

1   The European Union needs to be in a position to play its full role on the international stage . . .
2   To this end, the Union must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them, and a readiness to do so, in order to respond to international crises.
    . . . In strengthening the solidarity between the member states of the European Union, in order that Europe can make its voice heard in world affairs, while acting in conformity with our respective obligations in NATO, we are contributing to the vitality of a modernized Atlantic Alliance which is the foundation of the collective defence of its members.

**Box 2.1   The British-French Summit, Saint Malo,
            3–4 December 1998**

JOINT DECLARATION

The Heads of State and Government of France and the United
Kingdom are agreed that:

1   The European Union needs to be in a position to play its full
    role on the international stage. This means making a reality of
    the Treaty of Amsterdam, which will provide the essential
    basis for action by the Union. It will be important to achieve
    full and rapid implementation of the Amsterdam provisions
    on CFSP. This includes the responsibility of the European
    Council to decide on the progressive framing of a common
    defence policy in the framework of CFSP. The Council must
    be able to take decisions on an intergovernmental basis,
    covering the whole range of activity set out in Title V of the
    Treaty of European Union.

2   To this end, the Union must have the capacity for autonomous
    action, backed up by credible military forces, the means to
    decide to use them, and a readiness to do so, in order to
    respond to international crises.

    In pursuing our objective, the collective defence commit-
    ments to which member states subscribe (set out in Article 5
    of the Washington Treaty, Article V of the Brussels Treaty)
    must be maintained. In strengthening the solidarity between
    the member states of the European Union, in order that
    Europe can make its voice heard in world affairs, while acting
    in conformity with our respective obligations in NATO, we

    →

    are contributing to the vitality of a modernized Atlantic
    Alliance which is the foundation of the collective defence of
    its members.

    Europeans will operate within the institutional framework
    of the European Union (European Council, General Affairs
    Council, and meetings of Defence Ministers).

    The reinforcement of European solidarity must take into
    account the various positions of European states.

    The different situations of countries in relation to NATO
    must be respected.

3   In order for the European Union to take decisions and approve
    military action where the Alliance as a whole is not engaged,
    the Union must be given appropriate structures and a capacity
    for analysis of situations, sources of intelligence, and a capabil-
    ity for relevant strategic planning, without unnecessary dupli-
    cation, taking account of the existing assets of the WEU and the
    evolution of its relations with the EU. In this regard, the
    European Union will also need to have recourse to suitable
    military means (European capabilities pre-designated within
    NATO's European pillar or national or multinational
    European means outside the NATO framework).

4   Europe needs strengthened armed forces that can react
    rapidly to the new risks, and which are supported by a strong
    and competitive European defence industry and technology.

5   We are determined to unite in our efforts to enable the
    European Union to give concrete expression to these objectives.

Source: Reproduced from Rutten (2001: 8–9), and on http://www.iss-
eu.org/chaillot/chai47e.pdf.

How can we understand the historical origins of ESDP? In one of
the earliest published studies of ESDP, I noted that 'the story of
European integration began with defence' (Howorth, 2000: 1).
This story punctuates the European Union's constantly frustrated
attempts to forge a coordinated defence capacity back from the
negotiation of the Treaty of Dunkirk (1947), through the Brussels
Treaty (1948), the European Defence Community (EDC 1950–54),
the Fouchet Plan (1962), the process of European Political
Cooperation (EPC 1970s), the re-launch of the Western European
Union (WEU 1980s) to the first glimmerings of the Common
Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) in the 1990s (Howorth and
Menon, 1997: 10–22; Duke, 2000; Andréani *et al.*, 2001; Cogan,
2001; Quinlan, 2001; Duke, 2002; Hunter, 2002; Salmon and
Shepherd, 2003; Bonnen, 2003; Dumoulin *et al.*, 2003).

That Europe should have sought to maximize its own security and defence capacity seems logical enough and, as indicated above, several attempts were made. Why did they all fail? At this point, suffice it to say that the most significant factor which stymied earlier efforts, particularly during the Cold War, was the contradiction between the respective positions of France and the UK. For 50 years (1947–97), Britain and France effectively stalemated any prospect of serious European cooperation on security issues by their contradictory interpretations of the likely impact in Washington of the advent of serious European military muscle. I have called this the *Euro-Atlantic Security Dilemma* (Howorth, 2005b). London tended to fear that if Europe demonstrated genuine ability to take care of itself militarily, the USA would revert to isolationism. The British fears were exacerbated by a feeling in London that the Europeans on their own would never be able to forge a credible autonomous defence. Paris, on the other hand, expressed confidence that the USA would take even more seriously allies who took themselves seriously. Both approaches were based on speculation and on normative aspirations rather than on hard strategic analysis. Prior to the Saint Malo summit of December 1998, a robust *European* Security and Defence Policy simply could not exist. As long as France and Britain, Europe's only two serious military powers, remained at loggerheads over the resolution of the *Euro-Atlantic Security Dilemma*, impasse reigned.

The Saint Malo summit was therefore revolutionary in two ways. First, it removed the blockage which, for decades, had prevented the European Union from embracing security and defence as a policy area and therefore from evolving and maturing as a global political actor. For several leading member states of the EU, like the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Portugal, European security and defence had long been the *exclusive* prerogative of NATO – end of discussion. This had been the case since the late 1940s and nothing much had changed since then. At most, 'Atlanticist' countries might have been prepared to allow for greater coordination of EU security planning through the Western European Union (WEU; see Box 1.1), but for these countries there could be no thought, well into the 1990s, of the EU itself adopting security and defence as a policy area. For these states, the EU was seen as an entirely separate actor from NATO and one that should not challenge the

Alliance's monopoly of security and defence policy. Saint Malo put an end to all that, and in the pages that follow we shall seek to understand what drove its architects to head off in this new historical direction.

However, the second revolutionary consequence of Saint Malo was the widespread debate it unleashed. The relatively dramatic – and certainly unprecedented – prospect of the Union emerging as a military actor in its own right gave rise immediately to major controversies. What did this imply for the Union's deeply-etched ethos as a civilian actor relying on normative and transformative power (rather than on hard power) to achieve its objectives both internally and externally? What were the implications for European integration of the prospect of pooling resources in this first and last bastion of state sovereignty? How would such a decision impact on NATO, on the Alliance and on the United States? Could the Franco-British couple, so central to the launch of ESDP, remain united despite their very real differences over its deeper significance? Above all, where would it all lead? What was the *finalité* behind ESDP? The debates on all these issues were immediately engaged. They are still ongoing and will remain ongoing for years to come. The simple truth is that there are no definitive, or even obvious, answers to any of the questions just posed. But these questions about 'what?' and 'how?', important though they are, and to which we shall endeavour to respond in the following Chapters, have clouded our understanding of the key question: 'why?' Chou En Lai famously quipped in 1956, in answer to a question about the historical consequences of the French Revolution, 'it's too soon to say'. Less than a decade after Saint Malo, it is far too soon to speculate about its long-term consequences. But it is not impossible to understand where ESDP came from, to evaluate its fundamental drivers.

Misleading allegations

The question remains, therefore: Where *is* ESDP coming from? In order to begin to answer that question it is first necessary to dispel a number of major misunderstandings about motivations and to make it quite clear where ESDP *is not coming from*. Many of ESDP's critics have succeeded in confusing its true sources and

motivations by attributing to it false origins or intentions. Four basic charges have been levelled, all of which are fundamentally misguided. ESDP is not a *mistake* and it is far from being *irrelevant*; it is not an attempt to create a *European army*; it is not designed to undermine or *weaken NATO*; and it is not intended to *rival the USA* or to engage in 'balancing' against USA power. The following sections will address these red herrings sequentially.

Neither a mistake nor irrelevant

One puzzle which many have pondered is: why did Tony Blair sign off on the Saint Malo Declaration and apparently jettison 50 years of consistent UK policy rejecting any regional security role for the EU? Many political opponents who have sought reasons to denounce ESDP have suggested that the whole project was a *mistake*, entered into for the wrong reasons by a naïve and inexperienced Prime Minister who did not realize what he was doing. This type of argument is often voiced in British or other European Eurosceptic circles by those who deplore the implicit departure from a long history of Anglo-Atlantic security priorities. A former UK Conservative Defence and Foreign Affairs 'shadow' minister argued that it was 'very clear' to him that ESDP was designed 'to get the government some good European coverage for not joining the single currency a month later. *And that was what it was all about* [my emphasis]' (New Europe, 2001: 65). The idea that ESDP arose from a Blair quest to secure a European role for the UK is widely encountered in the mainstream literature on the topic (Hunter, 2002: 29). This is a misleading notion. To argue that it is misleading is not to rule out the rather different proposition that Britain in general and Tony Blair in particular were, in the early days of the New Labour government, casting around for some sort of European role – which is undoubtedly true. But it is to reject the simplistic notion, usually advanced in Eurosceptic circles, that this was *the fundamental driver* behind the project – and that the prime minister did not understand the consequences of what he was doing. Blair's European aspirations undoubtedly *facilitated* a development which, as we shall see shortly, arose from the movement of history's tectonic plates. But they did not *generate* that development. It cannot, deep down, be attributed to Blair's search for a

European role. This is a very important distinction. Another allegation which is even further from reality comes from those not infrequent US commentators who, in one way or another, have dismissed the project as irrelevant , usually on the grounds that it is simply never going to 'work' – 'working' often being defined in terms of US military criteria (Hamilton, 2004: 150). For years, Washington officials tended to deride ESDP as hardly worthy of their attention: 'an exercise in photocopying machines' as one US official called it (Giegerich, 2005: 75). At a seminar on Europe's CFSP in Washington DC in September 2003, the author was astonished to hear a senior US official introduce the discussion with the injunction: 'And please, let's not waste time talking about ESDP! It used to be interesting. Then it became irritating. Today we see it as irrelevant'. Another example of this attitude is provided by Washington analyst de Jonge Oudraat who, in a concluding remark to a section of her study on ESDP headed (forthrightly) 'An Irrelevant Irritant' states: 'The lack of strong support from the major European powers for ESDP points to its irrelevance. European governments should . . . remove a prominent irritant in US–European security relations' (de Jonge Oudraat, 2004: 23). Quite apart from the inconvenient detail that the 'major European powers' have in fact all been extremely supportive of ESDP, these sorts of critics have unfortunately missed the point altogether. ESDP may well irritate its critics, but to dismiss it as 'irrelevant' is to fail even to begin to understand its origins.

Not a 'European Army'

The second red-herring stems from the widely-hawked suggestion that the real motivation was the desire to create a 'European army' – usually referred to in the popular press as the 'Euro-Army' (Echikson, 1999; Evans-Pritchard and Jones, 2002). This is both the easiest and the hardest criticism to refute. It is the easiest in the sense that there has never been any question that national military assets would be detached from national command and permanently re-assigned to a European command. There has never been any question of creating a 'standing European army', nor is there any question of forging common European ownership of weapons systems or other assets, nor (to date) any serious thought of developing a

European defence budget. Europe does not have a single unified political executive. Therefore a 'European army' in the strict sense of the term is logically inconceivable and it is unwise to use the expression lightly (Salmon and Shepherd, 2003). Each military or civilian mission mounted by ESDP has had (and any future mission will have) its own terms of reference, its own volunteers from a range of EU member states (and indeed from a range of non-EU member states as well), its own logistics and command arrangements and its own lifetime. When the mission is terminated, the resources, both human and material, initially assigned to it, revert to their national owners. Some critics of the 'Euro-army' assume that the project in some way amounts to the transposition, to the European level, of the role and function of traditional national armies with their responsibilities for national, *territorial* defence – in other words that the project is geared to 'defending' the EU space against an existential external threat (Casey, 2001; Cumming, 2004). For this reason, it is often alleged, it will not work because no Italian, or Spaniard, or Slovene or Pole will be prepared to 'die for Europe' (Assinder, 2000). The absence of European *identity*, in this view, is the Achilles heel of ESDP. Only *national armies* work.

There are three major flaws in this line of argument. It fails, on the one hand, to address the reality that, today, virtually no individual nation-state in Europe could 'defend' itself alone against a major external existential threat were one to arise. This has been the case since the dawn of the atomic era. So much for the national 'sovereignty' of 'defence'! Secondly, it also fails to understand that, in the absence of such an existential threat, but in the presence of regional crises, such as the wars in the Balkans, which require management, ESDP amounts not to a traditional army based on citizen conscripts but to a professional fire-fighting force acting in the interests of the Union or even of the 'international community'. No 'citizen' is being asked to 'die for Europe'. Professional soldiers – volunteers one and all – are being asked to do a necessary and sometimes dangerous job. These are very different phenomena. The third flaw in this argument is that there is just not one shred of evidence to support it. Every official EU statement about European defence (including a consistent line from France) stresses that the territorial defence of the European landmass (to the extent to which it faces an existential threat) remains the responsibility of NATO. Nobody in a

> **Box 2.2   Laughter at the 'Euro-Army's' expense**
>
> We are the Euro-army
> The fighting force of today
> We work together, take orders in English
> That is, except les Français
>
> We'll fight alongside the Germans
> If we ever go to war
> And if the image seems kind of familiar
> Well, we've fought 'with' 'em one or two times before
>
> We're working out rules of engagement
> Addressing all our members' fears
> And soon we'll be ready for battle
> In only nine or ten years
>
> So join in the Euro-army
> From no conflict will we baulk
> So come on you Spanish, Italians and Belgians
> Ready!
> Aim!
> Talk!
>
> *Source:*   Phil Alexander, the author of the parody, who authorizes its reproduction here. From http://www.amiright.com/parody/60s/tomlehrer7.shtml.

position of authority in Europe has ever suggested that the EU should assume responsibility for the territorial defence of the Union. From this perspective, the 'Euro Army' argument is almost always overwhelmingly emotive and designed to evoke strong visceral reactions (Marsden, 2000). A website in the UK – www.euro-army.co.uk – allows readers to sample and judge for themselves some of the whackiest nonsense about the project.

However, there can be no denying that what is being created is a European armed force, for use on behalf of the European Union, under a European commander, flying the European flag, and using exclusively European military assets. At the time of writing, the EU, under ESDP, had mounted some five or six military missions. It is also true that, through the deliberations of a variety of 'top-down' agencies such as the European Defence Agency (EDA), the Council of Defence Ministers (CDM), the

office of the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (HR-CFSP), and the Political and Security Committee (COPS), which we shall examine in Chapter 3, an ever greater degree of coordination and even integration of policy planning and force planning has been taking shape. In time, this could well lead to a more *integrated* set of arrangements and mechanisms for the more efficient delivery of foreign and security policy objectives. Does this amount to *coordigration* (see above, Introduction, p. 31)? Perhaps, but given that the EU has now embarked on ESDP, surely it is logical that it implement the policy as efficiently and as cost-effectively as possible? The price of failure could be extremely high for the entire EU project. And there is no political risk in success. The ESDP process is destined to remain strictly voluntary, consensual and intergovernmental for as long as the Union remains a body which falls short of fully fledged federalism. All talk of a 'Euro-Army' is little more than politically motivated chatter.

Not designed to undermine NATO

The third major charge which has been levelled at ESDP is that it is in some devious way designed to undermine or weaken NATO (Weston, 2000; Menon, 2003; Cimbalo, 2004). This theme, which consistently points the finger at France, has run continuously since 1998. It has never been satisfactorily refuted and has never really gone away. For hard-line Atlanticists in every country, the emergence of ESDP has always been assumed to be necessarily prejudicial to NATO. The idea was forcefully articulated by Strobe Talbott in his premonitory speech on the new developments at Chatham House in October 1999:

> We would not want to see an ESDI that comes into being first within NATO but then grows out of NATO and finally grows away from NATO, since that would lead to an ESDI that initially duplicates NATO but that could eventually compete with NATO. (Talbott, 1999)

Talbott uses ESDI because at the time he spoke the acronym ESDP had not yet entered the scene. But what he is talking about is clearly ESDP and *not* ESDI. Prime Minister Blair has devoted himself tirelessly to countering this allegation. Virtually his every

utterance on ESDP contains (at some point) the defensive and reassuring mantra that the project remains entirely consistent with NATO (Box 2.3). Much of this 'undermining of NATO' criticism revolves around the argument that the original NATO arrangements involving ESDI ('separable but not separate')

Box 2.3 Tony Blair's speeches on ESDP

'Committed to Europe, reforming Europe' – Ghent City Hall, Belgium, 23 February 2000

'In 1998, Britain and France took the initiative to strengthen Europe's common defences in a way that also strengthens NATO. EU Member States are now looking at ways of enhancing their military capabilities against headline goals. NATO will always remain the cornerstone of European defence. Both of our countries know only too well the importance of the transatlantic alliance for maintaining peace in Europe. But Europe needs to take on more responsibility and share more of the burden within NATO. And Europe needs to be able to act when the Alliance as a whole is not engaged.' (Blair, 2000)

'A clear course for Europe', London, 28 November 2002

'the orientation of Europe toward the United States is absolutely at the core of whether Europe can become effective in foreign and security policy. We need to be clear about where we stand. I know some European colleagues think I am being unnecessarily difficult over European defence and its relations with NATO. But believe me, unless it is clear from the outset it is complementary to NATO, working with it, adding to our defence capabilities, not substituting Europe for NATO, then it will never work or fulfil its potential.' (Blair, 2002)

Prime Minister's speech on Europe in Warsaw, 30 May 2003

'Thirdly, we want a Europe capable of sharing the burden of defending our way of life and freedom but doing so in a way fully consistent with our membership of NATO. NATO will continue to be the bedrock of our defence, in Britain as in Poland. That is why together we have been putting forward plans to reform it so that it can do the different tasks asked of it today. But we need a vastly improved European defence capability so that we can play our part better in NATO and also where NATO chooses not to be engaged, to undertake actions in our own right.' (Blair, 2003)

constituted a better formula than ESDP for European security. ESDI, it is argued, accommodated both 'the desire to increase Europe's defence contribution' and the ability for 'Europeans to carry out missions not considered "primary" by the US' (Sangiovanni, 2003: 195). What these critics fail to recognize is that ESDI was transcended and replaced by ESDP *because ESDI did not work*. Not only was it dependent for political direction on a body – the WEU – which lacked political clout, political legitimacy and political credibility, but it also relied for military capacity on borrowing, from the USA, assets which were either jealously guarded by the Joint Chiefs of Staff or (especially after 9/11) simply not available because they were urgently needed by the US military itself. Moreover, ESDI had no real answers to the requirements of EU-only missions. ESDI was, furthermore, predicated on a far-reaching reorganization of NATO's command chain which the USA was simply not prepared to accept. In short, the inadequacies of ESDI were themselves a major driver behind the emergence of ESDP (Howorth and Keeler, 2003).

The suspicion that France, ever the 'reluctant ally', is somehow the *éminence grise* behind this 'anti-NATO' project has fuelled the notion that ESDP is a scheme designed in Paris to weaken the Alliance. The problem with this argument is reality. The reality is that, while France has never sought to *weaken* the Alliance (even at the height of Gaullism – Vaisse, 1996), in the early 1990s in particular Paris was extremely keen to re-integrate NATO's structures (Grant, 1996). Moreover, President Chirac and other French leaders have consistently stated that France considers NATO a vitally important ally (Villepin, 2003a: 345–6). Of course, a sceptic would scoff at France's protestations of NATO 'purity': 'They would say that, wouldn't they?' While pretending to take NATO seriously, the suspicion lurks, France is all the while secretly planning to undermine it. What this reasoning fails to appreciate is the totally changed circumstances of France's relationship with NATO in the interventionist climate of the post-Cold War world. This became self-evident in Bosnia and has remained true ever since. Intervention in Bosnia meant that membership of NATO's alliance oversight committees, especially the Military Committee, far from being a constraint on French action (as had been considered to be the case during the inactivity of the Cold War) had become a strategic and political necessity (Brenner and Parmentier, 2002: 42). Increasingly,

French soldiers were finding themselves, *de facto*, under NATO command. In these circumstances, as Defence Minister Pierre Joxe made clear, France's absence from NATO decision-shaping structures had become a serious liability. Joxe once jokingly remarked, in the context of NATO's increasing embrace of its former Warsaw Pact adversaries, that he would soon be the only defence minister in the whole of Europe not to take part in NATO meetings. He was rebuked by Mitterrand for his un-Gaullist sense of humour (Brenner and Parmentier, 2002: 133 f/n 21). The reality is that France has played a key role in all NATO's military operations since the end of the Cold War. It was Jacques Chirac who persuaded Bill Clinton to use NATO in a serious way to end the Bosnian conflict (Holbrooke 1998: 67, 330). It was France which provided the lion's share of NATO's *European* military assets during the Kosovo conflict in 1999. France has, for the last ten years, provided at any given moment either the largest or the second largest contingent of NATO peace-keeping forces. A French general has assumed the command of both of NATO's key missions: in Kosovo and in Afghanistan. It was France which took the leading role in instrumentalizing the *NATO Response Force*. What further proof could sceptics require that France actually takes NATO seriously?

France may have multiple motives for wishing to cosy up to NATO. The ability to experience combat alongside US troops is not absent from the calculation. Nor is France's long-standing quest for prestige. But the bottom line is that, for the foreseeable future, it is in France's national interests to make her practical contributions to regional (and even global) security as effective as possible. That means accepting NATO as a force which is both 'strong and effective' (Interview with General Patrice de Rousiers, Paris July 2006). This is not seen in Paris as incompatible with the parallel development of ESDP. On the contrary, the two are seen as mutually reinforcing.

Not 'balancing' against the USA

The final allegation which needs to be laid to rest is also the most serious and potentially the most explosive. 'The Euro Army stands on the threshold of becoming the greatest combat force of modern times. The EU has every intention of being the economic and military rival of the United States', argued one polemicist

(Cumming, 2004). Had such motivations been alleged only by the wackier web-sites, the charge could be dismissed as unworthy of comment. However, both US officials and US academics have feared something similar. Concern lay at the heart of the first official US reaction to the Franco-British initiative. In an article in *The Financial Times* three days after Saint Malo, US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright enunciated what became known as the 'three-Ds':

> As Europeans look at the best way to organize their foreign and security policy cooperation, the key is to make sure that any institutional change is consistent with basic principles that have served the Atlantic partnership well for 50 years. This means avoiding what I would call the Three Ds: decoupling, duplication, and discrimination.
>
> First, we want to avoid decoupling: Nato is the expression of the indispensable transatlantic link. It should remain an organization of sovereign allies, where European decision-making is not unhooked from broader alliance decision-making.
>
> Second, we want to avoid duplication: defence resources are too scarce for allies to conduct force planning, operate command structures, and make procurement decisions twice – once at Nato and once more at the EU. And third, we want to avoid any discrimination against Nato members who are not EU members. (Albright, 1998)

This initial reaction reflected concern in Washington (where there had been no prior warning that the Saint Malo initiative was imminent) that ESDP might aim to rival the USA in various ways. Robert Hunter notes that the 'risk' of the EU coming to rival the USA 'should have appeared to be minimal. But as a political matter, it gained greater currency in Washington and, rightly or wrongly, has been a source of concern ever since' (Hunter, 2002: 35). Albright's article amounted to a pre-emptive strike both to avoid ESDP's assuming its own distinct profile and to maintain US hegemony over European security developments (see Chapter 5, pp. 143–5). Ironically, where Washington feared ESDP *moving away* from US norms, the 'normative power Europe' theorists feared it being *sucked into* them. One (largely untested) assumption here seems to be that once the EU sets off

down the military road, there is nothing to prevent it from 'degenerating' into a full-blown military power *à la* USA (Smith, 2002; Manners, 2004). In the USA, however, fears of genuine rivalry rapidly oscillated towards the opposite fear: that ESDP could prove to be an 'empty institutional distraction' leading to 'impotence and recrimination' (Gordon, 2000).

Yet the worries about motivations concerning competition and rivalry never completely disappeared. They resurfaced with a vengeance at the time of the Quadripartite summit between France, Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg on 29 April 2003 at the height of the Iraq War (Sands, 2003; Black, 2003; *Le Monde*, 2003). This event marked the nadir of ESDP in that the United Kingdom did not attend, and the EU-4 appeared to make very ambitious noises (Chapter 4, pp. 111–12). Many analysts at the time feared that the four intended to forge ahead with the project for a vastly ambitious European defence capacity – in the absence of any British restraining influence. Some critics indulged in straw-man tactics, ridiculing the alleged European 'pipe-dream' of 'rivalling the United States' (Moravcsik, 2003), but others saw it as a genuine threat to American strategic interests (Bremner, 2003; Geyde and Evans Pritchard, 2003). Such fears are quite unfounded – for two reasons. First, because, once again, nowhere in any official document issuing from the EU or even from a member state in the context of ESDP has there been expressed any intention of developing more than *peace support capacities* for the purpose of regional crisis management via the 'Petersberg tasks' – so designated at a WEU meeting near Bonn in June 1992, and covering 'humanitarian and rescue tasks; peace-keeping tasks; tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking'. Some have seen the third of these Petersberg tasks as representing a step too far in the direction of militarization (Manners, 2004: 20). The American political scientist Robert Art equates 'peacemaking' with 'waging war' (Art, 2006: 182). However, when questioned on this very point, the British Chief of the General Staff, General Sir Mike Jackson explained that in order to carry out the first two Petersberg tasks efficiently, troops need to be trained to deal with the third: 'It is very easy to come down from a war-fighting posture to something below that. . . but if you settle for a 'Peace Support Army' and then you want to go into war-fighting, forget it! You will have the wrong equipment, the wrong training. You will have the

wrong mindset' (Interview, London, June 2004). This does not mean that, in normative terms, the most robust capacity determines the very ethos of the whole. On the contrary, in order to have a *different* normative footprint, from a purely empirical perspective it is essential to have capacity which goes somewhat beyond that footprint.

Secondly, such an allegation misses the point that the EU long ago turned its back on military conquest or overseas adventures. To the extent to which a discernible EU *strategic culture* will eventually emerge, there is no question but that this culture will be restricted to the 'Petersberg tasks', will be heavily influenced by 'civilian–military' synergies, and will explicitly eschew any prospect of a return to great power military posturing (Chapter 6). Even in the most 'muscular' of the various theoretical scenarios for the future use of ESDP (EU-ISS, 2004; Venusberg, 2004; Everts *et al.*, 2004) there is no suggestion of the EU developing military capacity which could remotely aspire to rival or compete with the US military. The debate in terms of European capabilities is about what the EU will need to do in order to turn itself into an *effective* regional crisis management force (Everts *et al.*, 2004; Biscop, 2005a). The real challenge for the EU is not to close the gap with the USA but to close the gap between, on the one hand, Europe's own security environment, its requirements and its objectives, and on the other hand its current capabilities.

While US officials and journalists worried about empirical military rivalry, US scholars and academics worried about 'balancing'. Balance of power theory is a central pillar of structural realism – the dominant school in the American IR community (Waltz, 1979; Mearsheimer, 2001). Throughout history, it is argued, whenever a great power rises significantly above its rivals, second-tier states will try to 'balance' against it, either by developing their internal resources or by forming balancing coalitions. Stephen Walt has outlined the central puzzle – for structural realists – of the contemporary period: that 'power in the international system is about as unbalanced as it has ever been, yet balancing tendencies have been comparatively mild' (Walt, 2005: 123). Since the end of the Cold War, under the administrations of Presidents George H.W. Bush (1988–92) and then Bill Clinton (1992–2000), the USA – the world's only 'hyperpower' – appeared to have been exempt from balancing efforts on the part

of second tier powers. This posed a real theoretical dilemma for structural realism. However, under the Presidency of George W. Bush, theorists from this school began detecting various forms of balancing, one of which was ESDP. Since it was difficult to portray this as classical 'hard' balancing (preparation for a potentially warlike show-down between the EU and the USA), the notion of 'soft balancing' was devised to categorize 'looser' types of resistance to the hegemonic power.

The primary exponent of the balancing thesis, Barry Posen, argues that ESDP is, to a considerable extent, driven by European concern over 'the hegemonic position of the US' and concludes that 'viewed in this light, ESDP is a form of balance of power behaviour, albeit a weak form' (Posen, 2004: 17). He is careful to distinguish between traditional 'hard' balancing against a perceived military threat and (although he does not use the term) a 'softer' type of balancing:

> The EU is balancing against US power, regardless of the relatively low European perception of an actual direct threat emanating from the US . . . US strategists and citizens should thus follow carefully the EU's efforts to get into the defense and security business. The Europeans are useful to the US, but if present trends continue, they will have the wherewithal to decamp, and they could even conceivably cause some mischief. (Posen, 2004a: 2–7)

Robert Art, in similar vein, sees ESDP as a form of soft balancing:

> ESDP represents the institutional mechanism to achieve the following aims: a degree of autonomy in defense matters; a hedge against either an American military departure from Europe or an American unwillingness to solve all of Europe's security problems if it remains in Europe; a mechanism to keep the United States in Europe and to have more influence over what America does there by showing that Europe will bear more of the defense burden; and ultimately a vehicle to help further progress . . . in the European Union project. (Art, 2004: 4)

Stephen Walt agrees with the assessment that ESDP is a case of 'soft' balancing:

Although the original motivation for this policy was not anti-American, Europe's ability to chart its own course in world politics – and to take positions at odds with US preferences – will be enhanced if it becomes less dependent on US protection and able to defend its own interests on its own. A more unified European defense force would also increase Europe's bargaining power within existing transatlantic institutions, which is why US officials have always been ambivalent about European efforts to build autonomous capabilities. (Walt, 2005: 129)

Let us now assess these propositions by measuring them against the definitions of 'soft-balancing' put forward by its proponents. The first definition – and in some ways the narrowest – is that of Pape ('it aims to have a real, if indirect, effect on the military prospects of a superior state' Pape, 2005: 36). In the case of ESDP, this would imply an effort to constrain or diminish US military power. However, all the official statements about ESDP have explicitly argued the opposite. The Saint Malo Declaration stated that its objective was to contribute to 'the vitality of a modernised Atlantic Alliance, which is the foundation of the collective defence of its members' (Rutten, 2001: 8). The landmark European Union-NATO Declaration on ESDP of December 2002 states that the two organizations 'reaffirm that a stronger European role will help contribute to the vitality of the Alliance' and adds that 'the crisis management activities of the two organizations are mutually reinforcing' (Haine, 2003: 178). The seminal European Security Strategy document of December 2003 goes even further in stating that:

> The transatlantic relationship is irreplaceable. Acting together, the European Union and the United States can be a formidable force for good in the world. Our aim should be an effective and balanced partnership with the USA. This is an additional reason for the EU to build up further its capabilities and increase its coherence.

There is little room for ambiguity in these statements: the objective of ESDP is to relieve the US army from regional crisis management responsibilities in Europe in order to allow Washington to make better use of its military elsewhere in the

world. *Partnership* is the keyword. This may be a partnership which the USA is unsure it *welcomes* but that is another matter. If a conceptual term from IR were to be applied to this approach, it would be bandwagoning, which 'takes place when weaker powers decide not to challenge the dominant power through balancing, but, on the contrary, to join forces with it as junior partners' (Walt, 2005: 183–7).

Another flaw in the balancing argument advanced by the structural realists quoted above is connected with *intentionality*. Robert Art argues that '[i]ncreases in a state's power relative to other states have consequences for the balance of power among them *irrespective of the state's intentions* [my emphasis]. In a balance of power system, the consequences of behavior ultimately override the intentions behind the behavior' (Art, 2005/6: 180). The problem with the 'intentionality argument' is that it simply cannot provide any convincing evidence that balancing US power was a major and explicit political driver behind ESDP. The problem with the 'outcome argument' is that it redefines balancing in an all-embracing way. If *any* action by *any* state which increases that state's relative power *vis-à-vis* another one is to be defined as 'balancing', then, as Brooks and Wohlforth (2006) and others have argued, it essentially strips the term of any conceptual or analytical usefulness.

Those US scholars who detect in the recent policies of the EU, and particularly in the ESDP project, evidence of balancing have, as we saw, lined up a series of hypotheses concerning the eventual effect of those policies: that the EU may acquire greater influence in Washington (Art), that Europeans may be in a better situation to influence the agenda in NATO, and eventually take positions at odds with US preferences (Walt), that they might even 'decamp' or 'cause some mischief' (Posen). Some or even all of these predictions may in fact prove – over time – to be correct. However, in terms of understanding what ESDP is and where it comes from, it must be stressed that all such considerations are outcomes – and only *potential outcomes* – of the project, rather than drivers. They are hypothetical consequences rather than motivating forces or intentions. They are not what the project *is about*. The EU, as an actor, has no experience of and no capacity for the sorts of considerations of power politics which are inherent to structural realist logic and which lie at the very heart of 'balancing'. Strategies of bandwagoning, buckpassing or

balancing are not prominent (assuming they even exist) in European planners' minds. The EU is not a nation-state and does not behave like one. The guiding principles of ESDP are pragmatic, institutional, multilateral, multi-level, international, diplomatic, rules-based and transformative rather than strategic, coercive, narrowly self-interested, parochial or military. ESDP has been overwhelmingly a process of *reacting to* historical events, events which, since 1989, have tended to race ahead in 'fast forward' mode. It is simply not the case that ESDP has been driven by considerations of how to deal with overwhelming American power. Such considerations have not been absent, but they have not been primary. So where does ESDP come from? What *are* the underlying drivers?

The underlying drivers behind ESDP

There are four fundamental reasons why the European Union became a security actor. First, ESDP is the logical offspring of exogenous forces deriving from the end of the Cold War – most notably the lessening strategic importance of Europe for the USA and, as a consequence, the diminishing political and military significance attached by Washington to European security. The most salient consequence of that shift was eventual US military disengagement from the old continent. As long as the Cold War persisted, Europe was, *de facto*, at the heart of global geo-strategic reality. European security was the stakes in the global confrontation between 'East' and 'West'. All Europeans were concerned to ensure ongoing US commitment to that security. But US commitment inevitably implied US leadership. And although the West Europeans shared much more of the burden than the USA was prepared to recognize (Sharp, 1990), it was US leadership which defined the relationship. Hegemony mirrored by dependence. This was an unnatural – even aberrant – situation. There is nothing *automatic* about European-American harmony. For much of the period between the founding of the US Republic in 1776 and the end of the Second World War in 1945, the picture was one of regular wars between the USA and all the major European powers – Britain, Spain, Germany, Italy, Russia. Niall Ferguson has argued that the founding fathers of the USA clearly perceived the new state as a rising empire which would

challenge Europe's empires for world markets, resources and power (Ferguson, 2004: 34–5). From 1945 until 1989, hot wars were replaced by a cold war with another major European power: the USSR. It is true that the main reasons for these conflicts – European imperialism, the US drive for 'open-door' trade policies, and the rise of potential hegemons within Europe – have all now disappeared. Moreover, the level of economic and investment interdependence between the USA and the EU is unprecedented in the history of the world (Quinlan, 2003).

Nevertheless, at the turn of the century, Euro-American harmony – while intuitively 'natural' – cannot simply be taken for granted. Witness the Iraq war of 2003. The quest for European security 'autonomy' is an entirely logical consequence of the end of the Cold War. Moreover, the USA had long been urging some form of it upon the Europeans. Persistently throughout the Cold War, and intensively thereafter, the USA admonished the Europeans to take greater responsibility for their own regional security (Sloan, 2003). Why should the US taxpayer continue to underwrite the security of a political entity with a greater population than that of the USA and a comparable GDP – particularly since there was no longer any apparent 'threat'? While the French had long been urging greater autonomy on their European partners, it required Tony Blair to cross a Rubicon for this to happen. His crossing was assisted by two major factors. The first was that, by late 1997, the new UK government was beginning to receive a very clear message from Washington. Far from a European security capacity being perceived in DC as prejudicial to the Alliance (as London had believed for 50 years), it was now being openly touted as the very salvation of the Alliance: unless Europe got its security act together, NATO was dead in the water. This was an idea that galvanised British security cultural thinking. The author was told by a senior FCO official in 2000 that, had the UK not been convinced that the Alliance was in serious trouble, 'we would not have touched Saint Malo with a bargepole' (Howorth, 2004: 220–2). The second factor urging Blair to embrace ESDP was the rising storm-cloud in Kosovo (see below). The fact that the EU collectively embraced the entirely logical need to look to its own regional security was a quasi-inevitable consequence of the end of the Cold War. A vacuum was forming which had to be filled. This was not strategic calculation; it was historical necessity. In

2004, the US *Global Posture Review* exercise completed the logic of this process by drastically reducing the US military presence in Europe ([IISS] 2004). One of the secondary consequences of these developments has been a series of question marks hanging over both NATO itself and its relationship with ESDP. This we will deal with in detail in Chapter 5.

A second and rather more normative driver behind ESDP also followed from the fall of the Berlin Wall. The 'new world order' called into being by President George H.W. Bush in 1990 was one in which some of the old rules of the Westphalian system (see Box 1.3) came to be questioned. The 'international community', which a reinvigorated United Nations appeared to conjure into existence, began to think in terms of intervention in the internal affairs of sovereign states in order to safeguard human rights and right humanitarian wrongs (Wheeler, 2000). This was to happen regularly throughout the 1990s – in Kurdistan (1991), Bosnia (1992), Somalia (1993), Sierra Leone (1997), Kosovo (1999), East Timor (1999). In Chicago, in April 1999, at the height of the Kosovo crisis of that spring, Tony Blair attempted for the first time to lay down guidelines for what he called 'the doctrine of international community':

> We are witnessing the beginnings of a new doctrine of international community. By this I mean the explicit recognition that today more than ever before we are mutually dependent, that national interest is to a significant extent governed by international collaboration and that we need a clear and coherent debate as to the direction this doctrine takes us in each field of international endeavour. (Blair, 1999)

This amounted, in effect, to re-drafting, for the twenty-first century, some of the oldest precepts of Thomas Aquinas's 'just war' theory (Walzer, 2000). The main thrust was to generate a politico-intellectual rationalization for transcending the state sovereignty which underlay the Westphalian system. The concept of 'crisis management' entered the IR lexicon (Lindborg 2002). This consideration meshed easily with the multilateral internationalism which typified most aspects of the EU's activities. After 40 years of institutional bargaining, the EU had become genetically incapable of not thinking in such terms. The desire to write the new normative rules of the game – especially

the international legal, institutional, regulatory, interventionist and ethical – rules came naturally to Europeans who believed that they had finally put their own unruly house in order. Moreover, the European Union, as an integral part of the 'international community', was destined to need well-trained intervention forces in order to stabilize not only its own periphery and near-abroad but also, potentially, regions further afield.

The third fundamental driver behind the birth of ESDP was, of course, the reappearance of military conflict on the continent of Europe. In June 1991, Serbia and Slovenia fought a brief war, followed by a much longer war between Serbia and Croatia. In 1992, a conflict broke out in Bosnia Herzegovina which was to engulf the region for the next three years. When, in response to these events, the Luxembourg Foreign Minister Jacques Poos, temporarily chairing the EU's Council of Ministers, famously declared, 'It is the hour of Europe, not of America', few Europeans suspected the extent to which those words would acquire an aura of historical ridicule. Most assumed that the nations of Western Europe, which collectively were then spending almost $230 billion on 'defence', would rapidly put an end to this little local crisis. The fact that they did not – and *could not* – goes directly to the heart of Europe's security dilemma. In posturing in traditional Cold War military-power terms, the EU found itself both confronting an absent adversary and incapable of dealing with a very present and destabilising security environment. It would require a major shift in security thinking, military procurement and normative approaches for the EU to be able to take on the challenge which actually presented itself. The crises in the Balkans, which dominated the entire decade of the 1990s, were to create a powerful exogenous stimulus behind ESDP. I say exogenous, but it should not be overlooked that the geographical space occupied by former Yugoslavia is situated *inside* today's European Union – with Greece to the south, Italy to the west, Austria and Hungary to the north, and Bulgaria and Romania to the east. Sooner or later, the Western Balkans will become an integral part of the Union. While United States officials could declare with reason that their country did not 'have a dog in this fight' (Holbrooke, 1998: 27), this was, of necessity, very much the European Union's business. Reflections on the wars in former Yugoslavia have had a major impact on the development of ESDP. Appropriately, the Balkans proved, from 2003 onwards,

to be the theatre of the EU's first incursions into military operations under an EU flag.

At the same time, these three developments, all responses to exogenous factors, meshed neatly with the endogenous dynamics of the European Union itself as it ceased to be 'just' a market and aspired to emerge as a political actor on the world stage (McCormick, 2006). This is the fourth underlying factor behind ESDP. Some have argued that the EU can never be a fully-fledged international actor unless and until it acquires credible military capacity (Cooper, 2003; Freedman, 2004; Salmon, 2005). This is a significant claim which we shall examine in more detail in Chapter 4. It is not immediately clear how or why the acquisition of military 'teeth' enhances the EU's credibility or viability as an international actor whose influence had previously derived from softer, transformative methods of exerting influence – such as its own attractiveness as a model – particularly for potential members (Vachudova, 2005) – or its use of financial and commercial levers (Youngs, 2004; Leonard, 2005). But the correlation between *political* unity and strength and the development of military instruments seems, on the surface, logical enough – particularly in the context of a revival of turbulence on the European continent. The development of a modicum of military capacity was probably an inevitable concomitant of that political ambition and that historical context. The rest – the details – were stimulated by 'events': the lessons of the Balkans; the inherent evolution of both the EU and NATO; the rise of new 'threats' and non-state actors; 9/11 and the new world disorder; US-led 'pre-emptive' wars and their repercussions for European security.

One final (indirect) stimulus came from another indigenous source: the European defence industry. Throughout the Cold War, many European nation-states had retained a number of defence-related companies producing everything from rifles to fighter aircraft. In most cases, these companies depended for their very existence on orders from 'their' national government which often sought to bring down unit costs to an affordable level through an aggressive export policy. France had developed this approach into an art form (Kolodziej, 1987). However, as the Cold War ended and defence spending around the world plummeted, this demand-led approach became doomed. The United States proceeded rapidly in the late 1980s and early 1990s to the restructuring and rationalization of its many

defence industries. By the mid-1990s, there were only a handful of major players left (Susman and O'Keefe, 1998). The EU, if it was to retain anything approaching a cutting industrial edge, if it was to avoid being relegated to the status of sub-contractor to US companies, and if it was to safeguard hundreds of thousands of jobs, had little alternative but to rationalize as well (Schmitt, 2000). The Saint-Malo Declaration speaks explicitly of the need to forge 'a strong and competitive European defence industry and technology' (Rutten, 2001: 9). From 1996 to 2003, the EU reduced its own defence industrial base to four major players capable of competing on reasonably level terms with their US counterparts. The forging of a trans-national European defence industry has also – albeit painfully slowly – had a major impact on the course of ESDP (Schmitt, 2003, 2003a).

Conclusion

In its brief career, ESDP has had to cope with a large number of false accusations, misunderstandings, straw-men and crossed-wires. The truth is that ESDP as an embryonic actor disturbs and offends as many people as it satisfies or reassures. It disturbs those (mainly but not exclusively in the USA) who believe that American hegemony is both an entitlement and a necessary underpinning of lasting stability, and who feel that the proper place for any EU military capacity is as an adjunct to US capacity and leadership rather than as an autonomous actor. It also offends many (predominantly in Europe) who are basically opposed to the entire project for European integration and who see the military dimension of it as particularly alarming. Those who are uncomfortable with the integrationist dynamics of the European Union also fear that the 'pooling' of that first and last bastion of national sovereignty (security and defence) will, *ipso facto*, lead to ever more intensive federalism within the EU. There are others who worry that the ESDP narrative will close a chapter on their own vested interests – as professional officials of *national* foreign and defence ministries or other security structures with vast corporatist interests. Many of these critics have claimed the 'impossibility' of reaching political and strategic consensus among 15 and later 25 sovereign nation-states. Finally, the ESDP project worries numbers of 'ordinary' citizens

across the Union who perceive in it an ill-thought-out scheme, dreamed up by elites with no consultation and no – or inadequate – popular explanation.

It is hardly surprising that national leaders and statesmen, elected by their national constituencies to defend and promote the national interest, should find it hard to construct a discourse which explains to those same citizens why cooperation in the field of *European* security should be in everybody's interest. For this is tantamount to recognizing limitations on their own power and influence. It amounts to a recognition that nation-states are no longer the only actors in the international system and that the rules of the game have changed. Most national leaders, on the contrary, have a vested interest in pretending that the rules of the game remain the same (Schmidt, 2006). This constitutes a problem for ESDP, which has been presented to different national publics in the various member states in very different ways. In France, it has been put across as enhancing and 'multiplying' French power and influence. In the UK, it has been presented as a limited measure only to be implemented in urgent cases where the United States does not wish to be involved. In Germany, it has increasingly been put across as corresponding to the new normative security culture which has epitomized the country since 1945: non-aggressive, legalistic and humanitarian. In some of the Central and Eastern European countries, it is cast in the light of a necessary step towards membership of the Union. Other countries have their own somewhat different takes (Giegerich, 2005; Meyer, 2006). Newspaper proprietors with global reach might be thought to be opposed to the EU project precisely because, being global in their operations, they do not wish to be constrained by regional entities. The reality is that they believe scare-mongering articles about the 'Euro-army' are good for sales. Once the evidence points uncontrovertibly towards the emergence of a European public which accepts ESDP on its merits, one might expect the negative editorializing to cease.

The surprising factor is that European publics, in every country, have little difficulty in accepting that 'security and defence' is a policy area which logically should be handled at European level. Figure 2.1 shows that the *average* level of support for ESDP among the different member states of the EU is extremely high. Although there are significant differences in the level of support among the EU member states, even in 'sceptical' countries like

Figure 2.1   Support for a common defence and security policy among the European Union member states
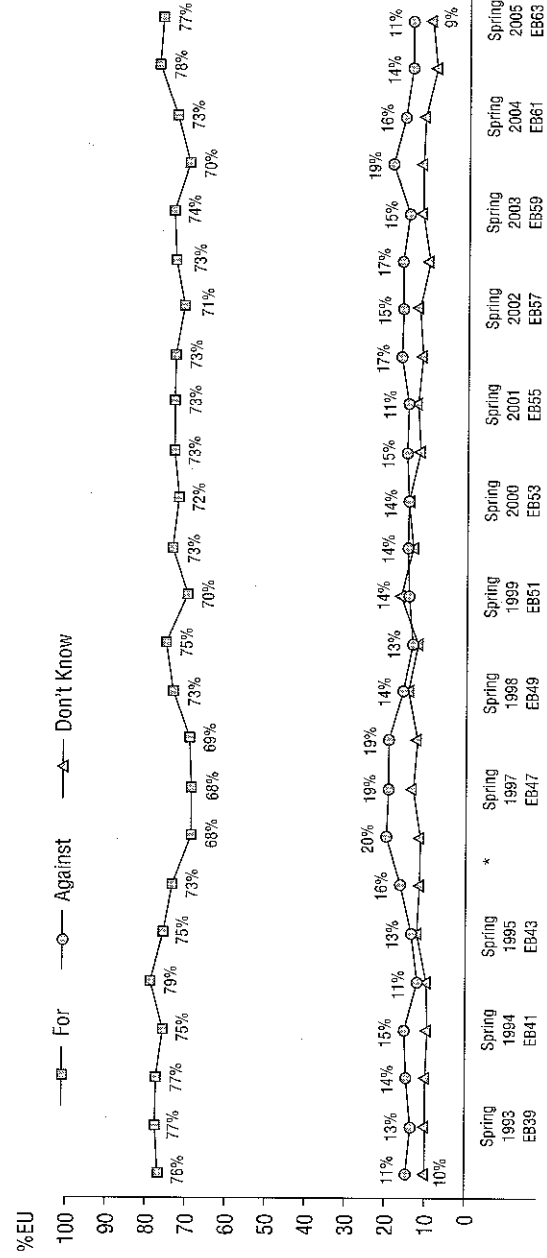
Notes: Spring 2005 support figure breaks down as EU-15 75%; 2005 accession states 85%. * No reading for spring 1996.
Source: Eurobarometer (report number as indicated).

the UK, a majority sees the wisdom of developing a European capacity for crisis management.

The controversies over the origins of ESDP will no doubt continue to rumble on, fed by concerns not solely about its source but also about its direction. I have tried in this chapter to present the fundamental motivational sources of the project. We must now turn to the question of how it works. In the following two chapters we shall analyse the two main mechanisms which were called for at Saint Malo: 'appropriate structures' (institutions) and 'suitable military means'.

Chapter 3

Decision-Making: The Political and Institutional Framework

Institutions and wiring diagrams

Under the 'Westphalian system' following the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 (Box 1.2), only two types of actors have engaged in security and defence policy: nation-states and military alliances. There is no precedent for a grouping of sovereign nation-states such as the European Union taking upon itself responsibility for a security and defence policy. At the time of Saint Malo, the Union, as we saw in Chapter 2, had been striving to discover a way of engaging in this policy area from within the NATO alliance by engineering an institutional arrangement known as ESDI via the WEU. The decision – implicit in Saint Malo – to phase out the WEU and to give the EU direct responsibility for this highly sensitive policy area posed two immediate institutional challenges. The first was to devise a new framework which would allow for rapid and efficient collective decision-making. The second was to see whether such an arrangement could actually be made to work. The latter problem will be addressed in Chapter 7. It is the former problem which constitutes the central inquiry of this chapter.

The Saint Malo Declaration in December 1998 stated that:

> In order for the European Union to take decisions and approve military action where the Alliance as a whole is not engaged, the Union must be given the appropriate structures and a capacity for analysis of situations, sources of intelligence, and a capability for relevant strategic planning.

Over the following 18 months, beginning at the European Council in Cologne in June 1999, a series of brand new institutions was developed to respond to this prompting. Yet the business of institution-building itself was not without an element of