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FROM: P F Ricketts  
Political Director

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cc: PUS

Mr Fraser

*PFR*  
*MFR*  
I agree with this.  
we may need to  
factor in the NATO bids  
and some other into  
our thinking.

## IRAQ: IMPLICATIONS FOR MULTILATERAL ORGANISATIONS *ff.*

1. I know that you are working on a note for the PUS on this. I was also thinking about it over the weekend but never got as far as putting pen to paper. Here are some quick thoughts as input to your work.

### UN

2. As we discussed, there is already real damage to the institution of the Security Council from the open split in the P5. The spectacle of the French actively lobbying against the US and UK in Africa is bound to leave bruises. This has meant that the Security Council cannot play its role as crisis manager. I assume that the immediate outcome this week will either be nine votes plus one or more vetoes, or falling short of nine votes.

3. This will certainly affect the way the United States deals with the UN for the rest of this Presidency. The severity of the damage will be affected a bit by the way in which the UN role in the reconstruction phase in Iraq plays out. If (despite a bust-up on the second resolution) others in the Security Council are willing to allow fairly early passage of a resolution authorising a major UN role in the reconstruction phase, and the UN agencies get stuck in, then some of the damage will be repaired. If the French/Russians are truculent about such a resolution and leave the US/UK to pick up the pieces in Iraq for a while, then the damage will be further enhanced.

4. Looking beyond the Iraq crisis, I do not see another issue which has such a unique place in Bush Presidency demonology. I am convinced it is the hardest case. I think their approach to DPRK shows that they are capable of a much more multilateral response to other WMD-related crises. So I do not see Iraq as presaging similarly aggressive action. The US will be more impatient of the constraints of international law and the non-proliferation régimes than will be comfortable for us; but I do not think there is another Iraq out there waiting to happen.

5. Our priority after the immediate Iraq crisis should therefore be to rebuild a degree of P5 common approach to the tough issues of WMD and terrorism. Without that, the Security Council instrument will continue to be blocked.

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EU and G8

6. The approach I have been pursuing and advocating to the Foreign Secretary is containment: we need to keep the damage from Iraq in a box as far as possible, and preserve the capacity to deal with other issues (ESDP/Balkans, MEPP, Afghanistan, etc). The same goes for issues like India/Pakistan where we will need diplomacy in the G8 and elsewhere.
7. The signs I get from my French and German opposite numbers are that they agree with this. And it has been encouraging to see that the Americans, despite the temptations, have not tried to take ESDP/Macedonia hostage in revenge for French behaviour on Iraq. So I would favour spotting issues where we can do useful business, particularly with the French and Germans, outside the Iraq crisis; in practice, it is not likely to be possible to do much at Foreign Minister level while the crisis is at its present intensity.
8. Both my French and German opposite numbers have taken the initiative to say that, as soon as the immediate crisis is over, we should get together quickly to look for areas where we can get back to joint work. They seem to include in this cooperation in post-conflict Iraq, which I find encouraging.
9. Looking further down the road in the EU, this crisis must lead to a more realistic analysis of the prospects for CFSP in the coming years. I hope it will show the complete irrelevance of proposals for QMV in CFSP. I think it should also knock on the head the idea of a "European Foreign Minister": that is a pretension too far at a time when the EU manifestly does not have a common policy across the piece. If it prompts other member states to a more realistic assessment of what is possible in the short term, that will be good. Equally, it should not lead us or others to despair of ever achieving anything through CFSP. The start of the first ESDP military operations in the Balkans will be helpful in that.

NATO

10. The problem here will be two-fold: the risk of a continuing French/US stand-off contaminating other business, and a general US loss of interest in NATO as a place to do operational crisis management work. Again, we should seek to contain. We should work for the fullest possible NATO role in Afghanistan (as a way of demonstrating usefulness) and be prepared to look at similar NATO support for post-conflict peacekeeping in Iraq (short of NATO flags painted on the tanks). This will validate the Prague concept of flexible, deployable NATO capabilities relevant to present day threats.



Peter Ricketts