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The Obama-Cameron-Clegg Triangle

Reassessing the Special Relationship



GROTIUS E-KÖNYVTÁR

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Introduction

> *"I am hard-headed and realistic about U.S.-U.K. relations. I understand that we are the junior partner - just as we were in the 1940s and, indeed, in the 1980s. But we are a strong, self-confident country clear in our views and values, and we should behave that way."*
>
> (David Cameron)

The relationship between the United Kingdom and the United States has long been a source of anxiety. Both US President Barack Obama and British Prime Minister David Cameron seem to be less enthusiastic about the so-called Special Relationship between their countries than what we have seen from their predecessors. It is a concept in which most British politicians passionately believe in even if the two countries interpret the term differently.

Both the UK and the US enjoy the benefits of close relations on many levels, but it would be more appropriate to call the relationship, what the UK considers 'special', 'unique' instead. Britons have been living in the illusion that their partnership with the US is closer, stronger and, most of all, more important than the ones the US has with other nations. The United States on the other hand not only uses the term Special Relationship for its relations with many other countries but also has the aim to maintain and strengthen these other partnerships. Britain has been scrutinising every move and word of the US in the hope that the States will confirm Britain's wish to stay America's most 'favourite'. David Cameron is the first Prime Minister who actually tries to break away from the idealistic concept of the Special Relationship and free the country from this strong emotional dependence that has been characterising British foreign policy over the past 60 years. The Coalition Government has a completely new approach towards the UK's relations with the United States. It tries to emphasize how their cooperation is no longer based on sentimental theories and personal sympathy but strictly on the UK's national interests. Cameron has realised that just like the US has done so already, the UK should open up and look for other partners in the world as these relationships could be just as beneficial as the one with the US. The Coalition has come to admit that Britain is the 'junior partner' in the relationship and that the potential to influence Washington has become less significant.

This sudden change in attitudes on both sides raised the following questions in me:

Is there a Special Relationship between the two countries at all? If there is, what is its cornerstone that keeps it alive? How does the new world order of the 21st century affect the cooperation? On what levels, in which areas of policies can the relationship be called 'special', if can be called so at all? What are the attitudes of the Coalition

Government and the Obama Administration towards the challenges and key issues the international system faces today? Does the partnership still serve the best interests of both countries?

In order to be able to answer these questions I have gathered information from several official documents, press releases, speeches and online publications.

First of all, it is important to stress that I have approached this topic under the assumption that a Special Relationship does exist although has gone through major changes in its nature. However there is a chance that my findings will make me come to realise that the relationship is becoming less and less 'special' if it still exists at all.

In the first two chapters I introduce the short history of British-American relations which I think is important to better understand how the nature of the relationship has been shifting over time. I give a more detailed summary of how the end of the Cold War led to a change in world order therefore to a significant change in international relations and politics which had a major effect on the bilateral cooperation. In the second chapter there is an emphasis on how Tony Blair's, Gordon Brown's and George Bush's concept of the Special Relationship changed and also on the political approaches they had. I am not going into details about any of the politicians mentioned above, and my aim is only to show the shape of the future orientation of the partnership. In these two chapters my main sources were Crowson's book on *Britain and Europe* (Crowson, 2011), *Blair's War* by Kampfner (Kampfner, 2004) and Riddel: *The Blair Effect* (Riddel, 2001) which were very useful to get a basic knowledge about the relationship during the end of the 1990s and the first decade of the 21st century.

In chapter 3, I demonstrate the attitudes of both the Conservative Party and the Liberal Democrats towards foreign policy, global security and Europe. This is essential if one is to understand the difficulties, as a result of their theoretical differences, both parties had to face when negotiating after the General Elections in May 2010. *The Conservative Party Manifesto* (TCM, 2010) as well as the *Liberal Democrat Manifesto* (LDM, 2010) were the main sources of my findings, as these are the official declarations of the Parties.

Also in chapter 3, I give an overview of the Coalition's programme, its aims and goals. I come up with several examples where compromises had to be made by either, or both of the Parties. *The Coalition Agreement* (The Coalition, 2010) was the key basis of my research as it is the official programme of the current British government. Also, when demonstrating how the junior coalition partner was able to have a major influence on its senior partner, I found *Power and Influence in Foreign Policy Decision Making* by Kaarbo (Kaarbo, 2001) very useful. The third chapter is very important in order to understand the Cameron-Clegg side of the triangle.

Chapter 4 describes the new strategic approach of Barack Obama and the current US Administration. This chapter is to introduce the other side of the triangle. Dr. Niblett's work, *Ready to Lead? Rethinking America's Role in a Changed World* (Niblett, 2009) proved to be a fundamental reading to improve my knowledge on the topic.

I would like to emphasize the importance of the Report by the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee on *Global Security: UK-US Relations* (HCFAC, 2010) as it is one of the bases of the structure that is carried out in chapter 5, where I present the

most recent disagreements between the two countries, the key areas of cooperation and also the challenges and threats they face together which, therefore, have the potential to strengthen their relationship. It is also in this chapter, where I question the specialness of the relationship. I give examples pro and contra and I also put a great emphasis on how British politicians should reconsider their alliances in order to best serve national interests. If one is to get a clear picture of the current status of the relationship, this chapter is indispensable. To be able to give a complete insight to the topic, I used *The National Security Strategy* of the UK (NSS, 2010) as well as the *Strategic Defence and Security Review* (SDSR, 2010) as my key sources.

In the final chapter I try to predict the future of the relationship based on several speeches and remarks, interviews and transcripts of press conferences. However, *Between Faith and Reason: UK Policy towards the US and the EU* by Menon, (Menon, 2010) served as one of the most essential literatures for this chapter.

Attitudes and cooperation regarding the ongoing conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa are not discussed in this paper, as these were not yet unfolded during my research period.

1. The basis and the nature of the UK-US relationship

Ever since the 17th century, there has been a bilateral relationship between the UK and the US, and it has had both high and low points over the years. It was during the 20th century when the relationship evolved into something like its present form. On 5 March 1946, in his 'Iron Curtain' speech, Winston Churchill urged the Americans to return to protect Western Europe from the rising external and internal threats of Soviet-led communism. This was the speech where Churchill, for the first time, used the phrase 'Special Relationship' and conjured up the concept of Anglo-American partnership to lead the free world.

> *"The crux of what I have travelled here to say is that neither the sure prevention of war, nor the continuous rise of world organization will be gained without what I have called the fraternal association of the English-speaking peoples. This means a special relationship between the British Commonwealth and Empire and the United States […] Fraternal association requires not only the growing friendship and mutual understanding between our two vast but kindred systems of society, but the continuance of the intimate relationship between our military advisers […] It should carry with it the continuance of the present facilities for mutual security by the joint use of all naval and air force bases in the possession of either country all over the world"* (Churchill, 1946).

According to Dr. Niblett of Chatham House, there have been three main drivers of the relationship in the post-war period. (Niblett, 2010) Firstly, successive British governments realised that they no longer had the capacity to protect British interests around the world, while the United States would take its place as the world's dominant power. Secondly, the most direct threat to British and European security - the Soviet military aggression and political turn over - could only be confronted if the United States were tightly involved in a transatlantic alliance whose principal focus was the defence of Europe and the whole Atlantic community in a wider sense. The third driver of the special relationship has been the mutual suspicion in Washington and London about a deepening European political integration that could come at the expense of US influence and engagement within the Atlantic community.

Throughout the Cold War Britain was one of the most dedicated ally of the United States and also the one best-placed to support the US within and outside the Atlantic area. This led to the building and the sustainment of an infrastructure of bilateral co-operation in the areas of nuclear co-operation, joint military engagement and intelligence sharing that allowed both sides to define the relationship as 'special' rather than just close.

There are also important cultural and historical connections between the UK and the United States. There are some values that are broadly shared by both countries, principally a commitment to supporting democracy, individual rights and open markets around the world. There are, however, some issues towards which the attitudes of the two nations are far more divergent than a 'special relationship' might suggest. During the second half of the 20th century, the relationship between the US and the UK was one of the most influential partnerships in the world.

1.1. With the end of the Cold War…

With the end of the Cold War, the nature of the Special Relationship changed in some aspects. The key element of the co-operation, namely the threat of the Soviet Union, no longer existed therefore a redefinition of the relationship became inevitable. The election of the new British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, in 1997 brought an opportunity to refresh the 'unique partnership' between the two nations. When the two leaders first met, President Clinton said: *"Over the last fifty years our unbreakable alliance has helped to bring unparalleled peace and prosperity and security. It's an alliance based on shared values and common aspirations"*. (Clinton, 1997 in Kampfner, 2004, 12) Their personal relationship was seen as being especially close because they found a common ground over their domestic agendas. The 'Third-Way', a moderate social-democratic position introduced by New Labour, was partly influenced by the American New Democratic thinking. (Riddell, 2001)

1.1.1. Attitudes towards a stronger European political integration

Despite holding the presidency of the EU during the first half of 1998, Britain's non-participation in the euro emphasised her isolation. The actual introduction of the single currency became a tactual and symbolic reminder of Europe's close union. Apart from the euro Tony Blair still appeared willing to be a good European and to take other steps to show his commitment to the Union. Bilateralism characterised Labour's approach to Europe in 1998. When Blair questioned the British association with NATO and the American alliance at St. Malo in 1998[1], the impression that he was seeking a positive bilateralism was conveyed within the EU. The Prime Minister suggested, for the first time, that Europe should have a credible and reliable security and defence policy that was comparable or maybe even more important than the NATO alliance. Blair's intention was to make Britain become the central element of co-operation within a strong European Union therefore to land the country in a leading position in the community. However, the tendency that countries showed less and less willingness to support the common foreign and security policy by serious financial and physical contributions disappointed the Blair Government and also raised scepticism among British citizens towards the EU. However the lack of American and NATO commitment in the Kosovo War made the UK realise how necessary a European rapid reaction force would be in order to gain trust and credibility for the European foreign policy. Therefore the British government was trying to emphasize the importance of bilateral

[1] There was an Anglo-French summit in 1998 at St. Malo which led to an agreement regarding European defence policy.

relationships between Europe and the USA as it was trying to escape from having to decide which one of them Britain would maintain and strengthen its bilateral relations with.

2. The World has changed – 11 September attacks

2.1 New political approach – George W. Bush

After 9/11 Britain repositioned herself in the American camp, opposing a period when it appeared that Britain's foreign policy was mainly being conducted within the EU. (Crowson, 2011) As much as Blair's first term in office could be seen as pro-Europe, the second one was definitely pro-America.

The personal diplomacy of Tony Blair and the new US President, George W. Bush was to highlight the importance of the Special Relationship. On non-strategic matters, they had of course political differences, but they had a common understanding regarding their shared beliefs and responses to the international situation.

Both Blair and Bush were convinced that it has become, once again, crucial to move against the perceived threat to world peace and international order.

Al-Qaeda's attacks on the United States have had a significant effect on international relations and on the UK's foreign policy priorities as well. Bush declared 'war on terror'. The shocked and stricken world fell in line behind the President and even some of the 'anti-USA' states felt empathy for the American nation. War on terror slowly became a war on Islam, which gave the basis of some major conflicts within the UK mostly between its Muslim population and the Government.

Since 9/11, however, the British Government describes the UK as the US's *"most important bilateral ally"* (HCFAC, 2010a).

Immediately after the attacks on the Twin Towers, Blair flew to Washington to affirm British solidarity with the US. Nine days after, in a speech to the Congress, Bush declared that *"America has no truer friend than Great Britain"* (Bush, 2001).

Blair had a leadership role in the war in Iraq which helped him sustain a strong relationship with Bush through the end of his time as prime minister. However, his policy was unpopular within his own party and also evoked disapproval within public opinion. It also alienated some of his European partners, including France and Germany.

There were, of course, some issues towards which the two politicians had diverging ideas and plans. Although the Lebanon War in 2006 exposed some differences in attitudes over the Middle East, both Blair and Bush offered strong support to Israel which was not fully appreciated and welcomed by the British cabinet or the public.

In November 2006, Kendall Myers (an analyst of the US State Department) dismissed the special relationship as a "*myth" with "no sense of reciprocity*" (Myers, 2006 in Harris, 2006) He was immediately disowned by the State Department.

2.2. UK's role in a changed world

Regarding security policy in particular, the Atlanticist preference was punctuated by an occasional attempt and willingness to challenge American wishes. (Menon, 2010) Tony Blair for example provoked intense revulsion in the US, when he expressed his support for the development of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP)[2].

On the other hand, Blair as well as his successors, stressed his Atlanticist leanings through a continued commitment to NATO even if it overshadowed the efforts for a strong ESDP. Blair's attention was distracted from Europe when he was concentrating on managing relations with Washington during the preparations and the actual prosecution of the war in Iraq. (Wallace, 2005) In the meantime Labour Government backed out from its initial intention to use ESDP to enhance European military capabilities.

2.2.1 Redefinition of the Special Relationship – Brown and Obama

In 2007 when new Prime Minister Gordon Brown took office, he stated his support for the US by saying: *"I will continue to work, as Tony Blair did, very closely with the American administration*" (BBC news, 2007). Brown was at least as much of an Atlanticist as his predecessor, and maybe instinctively more cautious of Europe.

Several ministers appointed to the Foreign Office had been, however, critical of some aspects of the relationship. It was believed that the relationship was going to be more businesslike with less emphasis on personal relationship between Prime Minister and President. But the UK still wished to remain the 'closest friend' of the United States. Barack Obama, prior to his election as President in 2008, declared that *"We have a chance to recalibrate the relationship and for the United Kingdom to work with America as a full partner*" (Borger, 2008), suggesting that Britain had been let down by the US under the Bush administration.

In early February 2009, after the first ministerial-level talks between new US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and British Foreign Secretary David Miliband, Clinton said that: *"It's often said that the United States and Great Britain have long enjoyed a special relationship. It is certainly special in my mind, and one that has proven very productive. Whoever is in the White House, whichever party in our country, this relationship really stands the test of time"* (Clinton, H., 2009) Miliband spoke of a commitment *"to renew and refresh the special relationship"* (Miliband, 2009).

When President Obama and Gordon Brown met for the first time in March 2009, Obama emphasized that*:"Great Britain is one of our closest and strongest allies and there is a link and bond there that will not break [...] This notion that somehow there is*

[2] ESDP was renamed by the Lisbon Treaty and now it is called Common Security and Defency Policy (CSDP)

any lessening of that special relationship is misguided [...] The relationship is not only special and strong but will only get stronger as time goes on" (BBC news, 2009).

3. The UK's Political Approach to UK-US relations

CONSERVATIVES	LIBERAL DEMOCRATS	
Strongly SUPPORT	are NEUTRAL	keeping British troops in Afghanistan as part of NATO force
OPPOSE	SUPPORT	a timeline by which British troops would leave Afghanistan
Strongly SUPPORT	OPPOSE	the continuation of Britain's nuclear weapons capability
SUPPORT	are NEUTRAL	the renewal of the UK Trident programme over the next 10 years
Strongly OPPOSE	SUPPORT	a reduction in the deficit budget
Strongly SUPPORT	Are NEUTRAL	The continued commitment to the maintenance of a 'special relationship' with the United States

Source: (Glassbooth, 2011)

3.1 The Conservative Party

> *"A stronger Britain in a safer world:*
> *A Conservative government will defend our national security and support our brave Armed Forces in everything they do. We will promote our national interest with an active foreign policy. We will work constructively with the EU, but we will not hand over any more areas of power and we will never join the Euro. We will honour our aid commitments and make sure this money works for the poorest nations"* (TCM, 2010, 103).

Since the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, the Conservative party has supported the coalition military action in Afghanistan and it believes that success in Afghanistan is

defined in terms of the Afghans achieving the capability to maintain their own internal and external security. (Fox, 2009)

3.1.1. Regarding strategic security and defence

The Party believes that strategic security and defence are interlinked in the 21st century. This is why the new Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) was carried out more comprehensively than the previous, traditional Strategic Defence Reviews. (The previous one was conducted in 1998 by the Labour government)

The UK's relation with the European Union has been the most dividing subject within the Conservative Party in recent history. Though both Winston Churchill and Harold Macmillan favoured some form of a European Union (in the 1960s and 1970s the Conservatives were more pro-Europe than the Labour Party), the bulk of contemporary Conservative opinion is opposed to closer political union with the EU. The Party has become more and more Eurosceptic (as well as most of the British population) as the Labour Government found itself unwilling to make further steps to strengthen the integration alluding to the lack of commitment of other member states.

The Conservative Party aims to build increased bilateral defence relations with key European partners like France and Germany and believes that it is in Britain's national interest to cooperate fully with all its European neighbours. (Although it seems that these intentions remain on theoretical basis as the UK still positions itself closely alongside the US and NATO regarding military questions and because of the negative public opinion about relations with the EU the British Government is in a difficult situation regarding this matter). They have pledged to ensure that any EU military capability must supplement British national defence and NATO, and that it is not in the British interest to hand over security to any supranational body. To encourage all members of the EU to do more in terms of a commitment to European security at home and abroad is said to be a priority for the Party.

However, according to Dr. Liam Fox, current Secretary of State for Defence, Conservative Party upholds the view that NATO should remain the most important security alliance for United Kingdom. (Fox, 2011) When asked whether the EU or the NATO alliance was more important when considering British national interests, he said:

> *"To double or even triple hatting the same forces do not produce any increased capability and may ultimately create competition for the same resources. Any EU military capability must supplement and not supplant our national defence and NATO. NATO members who are already falling well below expectations in their military budgets must not be allowed to divert scarce resources away from NATO towards EU capabilities. And we must not allow European NATO members to believe that there is a soft security option of peacekeeping with the EU rather than war fighting with NATO. If you want to be peacekeeper you have to have peace in the first place. That peace, history tells us, requires the willingness to fight and sometimes die for it"* (Fox, 2011).

The Conservative Party believed that the Lisbon Treaty would give away too much sovereignty to Brussels therefore in 2009, it campaigned against the ratification.

Then shadow Foreign Secretary William Hague (now Foreign Secretary) stated that, should the Treaty be in force by the time of an incoming Conservative

government (elections May 2010), he would *"not let matters rest there"* (Mardell, 2008)**.** However, on 14 June 2009 then shadow Business Secretary Kenneth Clarke gave an interview to the BBC where he said that the Conservative party *"would not reopen negotiations on the Lisbon Treaty if the Irish backed it in a new referendum"* (Clarke, 2009) which they did on 2 October 2009. This shows some kind of de'tente in the UK's attitude towards the EU.

In aspects of the European Union the Conservative Party Manifesto (2010) promised that Britain would be a positive member of the Union but also stressed that there should be no further extension of the EU's power over the UK without the British people's consent. The report also emphasized that Britain would not hand over areas of power to the EU or join the Euro without a referendum.

3.1.2. Foreign policy

Conservative Party took a mainly Atlanticist stance in relations with the United States over the past century. There were strong ties between the Conservative Party, the US and other aligned nations such as Canada or Australia. Also, they have generally favoured a diverse range of international alliances for example NATO and the Commonwealth of Nations.

Ever since the Second World War, close British-American relations have been a key element of Conservative foreign policy. Churchill built up a strong relationship with the Eisenhower Administration and Harold Macmillan did the same with the Democratic Administration of John F. Kennedy. Despite traditional links between the UK Conservatives and US Republicans, and between Labour and the Democrats, the Conservative Party endorsed Obama in the 2008 presidential election.

Beyond relations with the Commonwealth, the European Union and the United States, within the mainstream of international affairs, the Conservative Party has generally supported a pro free-trade foreign policy. But personal relations between a US President and the British Prime Minister often determined the degree to which Conservative Governments have supported interventionist or non-interventionist Presidents in the US.

William Hague said, in his speech at the Royal United Services Institute in March 2010, that *"a Conservative government's approach to foreign affairs will be based on liberal Conservative principles. Liberal, because Britain must be open and engaged with the world, supporting human rights and championing the cause of democracy and the rule of law at every opportunity. Conservative, because our policy must be hard-headed and practical, dealing with the world as it is and not as we wish it were"* (TCM, 2010, 109).

Hague outlined five key tenets of a future (now active) Conservative foreign policy:

The reform and development of international institutions, the upholding of Britain's values, the strengthening of relationships with the UK's old allies and the elevation of links with the new ones, a major reform of decision-making in foreign policy and a renewed commitment to the transatlantic alliance. (Hague, 2010a)

3.1.3. Global security and reform of the international system

On the nature of 21st-century power and threats:

> *"We no longer inhabit a world in which foreign and defence issues can be separated from domestically-generated threats. Instead, we live in a world in which dangers, events and actions abroad are inter-dependent with threats to our security at home. We must meet the threats we face with a concerted response from the state. That response cannot just come from how we conduct our foreign affairs, or organise our defence and internal security – it must cut across energy, education, community cohesion, health, technology, international development and the environment too"* (TCM, 2010, 103).

The Manifesto proposals are, among many others, a commitment to NATO as the ultimate guarantor of Europe's security, to be in favour of permanent seats on the United Nations Security Council of Japan, India, Germany, Brazil and African representation and to be in favour of a two-state solution between Israel and Palestine. (TCM, 2010)

3.2 Liberal Democrats

> *"Your world:*
>
> *Britain must work together with our partners abroad if we are to have the best hope of meeting the challenges the world faces. We believe in freedom, justice, prosperity and human rights for all and will do all we can to work towards a world where these hopes become reality. Above all, climate change is the greatest challenge facing this generation"* (LDM, 2010, 56).

The Liberal Democrats support and promote social liberalism, constitutional and electoral reforms, progressive taxation and civil liberties. They support multilateral foreign policy and opposed British participation in the War in Iraq. (Tempest, 2006)

The Liberal Democrats are the most pro-European Union of the three main parties in the UK.

3.2.1.Europe

> *"Liberal Democrats believe that European co-operation is the best way for Britain to be strong, safe and influential in the future. We will ensure that Britain maximises its influence through a strong and positive commitment"* (LDM, 2010, 66).

Liberal Democrats believe that working through the EU is the best means of managing the impacts of globalization and they are wary of the implications of a *"subservient relationship with the United States"* (LDM, 2010, 63). Nick Clegg suggested in a speech at Chatham House in March 2010, that Britain needs self-confidence and a rebalanced partnership with the US. He also said that the country should practice a foreign policy which is in British interests alone, articulated through a strong, united and forceful EU. (Clegg, 2010) The manifesto proposals are, among many others, to be committed to an in/out referendum the next time a British government signs up for a fundamental

change in the relationship between the UK and the EU (which is basically the same to what the Conservatives say), to urge a referendum on membership of the euro, to support a reform of the EU budget and to position itself in favour of continuous UK participation in policing and justice cooperation. (LDM, 2010)

3.2.2. Foreign Policy and Global Security

The Party has an ethical approach to foreign policy, based on principles, which is fit to the 21st century, based on values of fairness and the rule of law. (LDM, 2010, 67)

Liberal Democrats, among many other issues, support efforts to create an International Arms Trade Treaty and committed to the two-state solution for Israel and Palestine. According to the Manifesto this solution would be best carried out through the EU by putting pressure on Israel and Egypt to end the blockade of Gaza. (LDM, 2010, 67-68)

3.3. The Coalition Agreement

In the general election held on 6 May 2010, Liberal Democrats' representation went down by 5 seats in the House of Commons, giving them 57 seats all together, despite increasing their share of vote to 23%. (BBC news, 2010c) Nevertheless, the election resulted in a hung parliament with no party having an absolute majority. Negotiations between the Lib Dems and the two main parties took place over the following days. The Conservatives have agreed to form a coalition government (for the first time in 70 years) with the Liberal Democrats. This is the first time these two parties have ever agreed to a power sharing deal at a national level. David Cameron became Prime Minister on the 11th of May, after Gordon Brown's resignation, and Nick Clegg became the Deputy Prime Minister.

3.3.1. The Cabinet

In mid-2010, after the formation of the coalition, several backbench committees were created to effectively shadow government departments, in order for the party to keep a distinct and separate set of polices to that of the Conservatives. These committees work together with ministers in order to keep joined up policy and democratic policy making decisions. There must be one co-chair for each of the committees from each House.

Currently there are five Liberal Democrat members of the Cabinet. Nick Clegg as Deputy Prime Minister, Vince Cable as Business Secretary, Chris Huhne responsible for Energy and Climate Change, Michael Moore as Scottish Secretary and Danny Alexander as Treasury Secretary.

3.3.2. Power-sharing within the Coalition

The initial agreement between the two parties of the coalition set out eleven key areas on which it would focus. (The Coalition, 2010)

Nick Clegg was made more powerful and won formal influence over policies, Government reshuffles, public appointments and budgets. It is a lot more than it could have been expected. The Deputy Prime Minister is, from now on, to chair an all-powerful Cabinet committee on domestic affairs, which makes him be in overall charge of formulation reforms of health, education and policing. Moreover, all Budget decisions made by Chancellor George Osborne will require consultation with his Lib Dem Treasure Chief Secretary David Laws. (The Coalition, 2010)

According to the document (Coalition Agreement 2010) Mr Osborne is not to consult the Prime Minister over a Budget measure without also speaking to Nick Clegg. There are concerns within the right-wing Tory MPs about the scale of influence the Deputy Prime Minister was given as they fear that Cameron has provided too much ground to Lib Dems when persuading them to form a Coalition with the Conservatives instead of the Labour Party. Cameron told the Daily Mail that he *"will rule as a Conservative Prime Minister-even though some policies have had to be discarded by both parties in the coalition"* (Chapman, 2010a).

Nick Clegg now enjoys a formal entitlement to know about everything going on in the Government and to be contacted in the event of disputes. The Prime Minister has agreed to have regular consultations with him on most decisions and no Lib Dem minister or whip can be removed by Cameron without full consultation with the Deputy Prime Minister.

The future make-up of the Government front bench must remain approximately in proportion to the size of the two parliamentary-parties. According to the document it is (and it was) Cameron's job as Prime Minister to select new ministers, but only after consulting Clegg. The agreement adds: *"On the issue of public appointments, the Prime Minister will consult with and have regard to the views of the Deputy Prime Minister"* (The Coalition, 2010).

Nick Clegg has also been allowed to serve, or nominate other members of the Government to serve, on every Cabinet committee and sub-committee.

Clegg and Energy Secretary Chris Huhne, who have previously opposed nuclear weapons, both sit on the Nuclear Deterrence and Security Committee, which deals with the nation's most sensitive defence secrets, therefore provides more insight to key security aspects. The agreement makes Clegg by far the most powerful deputy prime minister of modern times.

It has been agreed that the Liberal Democrat MPs will be allowed to abstain in a vote in the House of Commons on certain issues where they disagree with the Conservatives. Areas like nuclear power and university tuition fees. Should the Lib Dems end up voting against the coalition on a key issue, that could bring an end to the deal. (BBC news, 2010b)

> *"Close consultation between the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister, other ministers and members of the Conservative and Liberal Democrat Parties will be the foundation of the coalition's success"* (The Coalition, 2010, 8) the agreement says.

3.4. Clegg and the Liberal Democrat influence - the roles of the junior partner

Every parliamentary system has the feature of the collective responsibility to the cabinet which has a great impact on how foreign policy decisions are made. Coalition cabinets have to divide power and the responsibility of decision making among political parties which means if the two parties forming the coalition cannot agree or resolve their differences they may as well risk the dissolution of the cabinet. Juliet Kaarbo (2001) argues that junior partners in general are *"minority voices in foreign policy"* and they can only have limited and disproportional influence in foreign policy but can also be an important source of stability and change within the coalition. (Kaarbo, 2001) The coalition parties share the power to govern and all those parties forming the coalition must negotiate policy conflicts in order to stay stable. As a result, coalition cabinets are less durable and because of conflicts over policies and unsolved divergence in attitudes they tend to dissolve more often. Therefore it is essential for leading political parties to make sacrifices and compromises if they are to form a durable, sustainable coalition. The junior partner enjoys some form of advantage in a situation like we saw in Britain in May 2010. Liberal Democrats were in a position to choose the senior party for themselves to form the coalition with. Because of this, it was easier for their ideas and principles to get through. The Conservative Party was willing to make sacrifices in order to make Clegg's Party choose them over the Labours. This resulted in a more tangible Liberal Democrat influence.

After forming the Coalition Government, Prime Minister David Cameron said the new government's priorities would be *"safeguarding national security, supporting our troops abroad, tackling the debt crisis, repairing our broken political system and building a stronger society"* (BBC news, 2010d). Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg said it would be a *"bold, reforming government that puts fairness back into Britain"* (BBC news, 2010d). In order to achieve these aims and objectives, both parties had to make compromises.

The Liberal Democrats have agreed to back the Tories plan for £6bn in public spending cuts this year and support the scrapping of part of next year's 1% National Insurance tax rise. (Sparrow, 2010) They have agreed to drop plans for a "mansion tax" on properties costing more than £2m and will support a cap on non-EU immigration. (The Coalition, 2010) They have dropped their opposition to renewal of the Trident nuclear deterrent but there was an agreement to carefully scrutinise the cost of the project. The Conservatives have agreed to put back plans to raise the inheritance tax thresholds and to spend more money to cut class sizes for disadvantaged pupils. They have also said they would hold a referendum on the voting system and the introduction of fixed-term Parliaments, which they previously opposed.

Compromises in regard of foreign and security policy:

Foreign Affairs:

One of the aims of the Coalition Agreement regarding foreign policy was to seek special relationship with India and to closer engagement with China, while standing firm over human rights. There was also, of course, the maintenance of a strong, close and frank relationship with the US (It is interesting to see how the Coalition Agreement did not use the term 'special' when talking about relations with the US). The Coalition

is to support permanent seats for Japan, India, Brazil - along with African representation - on UN Security Council.

Europe:

The coalition agreed that the UK was not to join or prepare to join the euro during this parliament and that there would be no further transfer of sovereignty over the next parliament. Any future treaty transferring powers must be subject to UK referendum. They agreed to look at creating (and have done so since) the UK Sovereignty Bill. They also agreed that they would press for European Parliament to meet only in Brussels (this was a request by Lib Dems as they believe it would save millions of euros). And Britain would back further EU enlargement especially the Turkish membership.

Defence:

The Coalition agreed to maintain nuclear deterrent, but also to re-examine the renewal of Trident and replace the Conservative conception with a 'value for money' study.

(Conservatives want a like-for-like replacement of Trident, but actual measures of such renewal were delayed because of Lib Dem opposition. In September 2010 it was widely spread among British media that the delay of the final decision on a like-for-like replacement of Trident was an example of Lib Dem influence on the coalition.) (BBC news, 2010e) The Lib Dems oppose an identical replacement of the costly system which they say was designed for the Cold War. Lib Dem Home Office Minister Lynne Featherstone said: *"I think it is a measure that it is now on the table. It is not an absolute, it is no longer a certainty. I think that is a consequence of the Liberal Democrats' influence in government and I think that is a good thing"* (Featherstone, 2010).

The coalition also agreed to cut Ministry of Defence costs by at least a quarter, which was indeed introduced 6 months after the general elections. (O'Donnell, 2011)

The Defence Secretary's agreement to keep the UK in the EDA (European Defence Agency) for 2 years (considered as a trial period) is to be seen as a significant Conservative concession to the junior Coalition partner. Also, the Government agreed to support Catherine Ashton (the new High Representative of the EU) and all CSDP missions which are in the UK's interest and do not clash with NATO operations (even though the UK has no intention to increase its civilian or military contributions to CSDP missions). (O'Donnel, 2011) This can be considered as a major Lib Dem influence on the Conservative Party's conceptions of future British security policy.

4. Obama and the new strategic approach

Barack Obama, as the new President of the United States, unveiled a national security strategy in May 2009 which calls for using America's still 'unmatched' power less overtly. Obama replaced George W. Bush's 'war on terror' doctrine with a completely different approach. (The White House, 2010) He said it was no longer a war on terror but much more a war on Al-Qaeda. (However there haven't been major differences between the previous and the current US Administration in the way they carry out their foreign policy regarding terrorism) The President put new constraints on the former president's concept of pre-emptive war and cited national security implications of economic meltdowns, global warming, nuclear proliferation and ethnic conflicts. The strategy turns the page on the dreams of remaking the global order with American might (the dreams of the Bush-era). It also recognises the increasing global engagement of Russia and the emergence of rising powers like India and China. *"To succeed, we must face the world, as it is"* (The White House, 2010). US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton told experts at Brookings Institution that *"we are no less powerful, but the United States is shifting from mostly direct exercise and application of power to a more sophisticated and difficult mix of indirect power and influence"* (Clinton, H., 2011). She also said that the US would harness its comparative advantage to *"convene and connect broader coalitions of actors"* (Clinton, H., 2011).

The strategy also preserves the US right to launch unilateral military action, but in a way that is more restrictive than those used by the former US Government. As the US foreign policy became dominated by Bush's doctrine after the 11 September attacks (which led to the war in Afghanistan and Iraq) the new document also seeks to widen the scope of US foreign policy. It also sets out a platform for strong engagement, as well as the maintenance of the US military edge and wide social diplomacy. The strategy lists a set of comprehensive threats facing the US, for example the threat of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons.

Principles of the future US leadership according to a Chatham House Report (Niblett, 2009):

To talk it down – The United States' aim is to be able to deliver meaningful solutions to key international challenges otherwise the risk of international disappointment will be intense.

To recognise the new constraints on US influence on bilateral relations

The US economic model has lost some of its appeal and US influence in most regions has declined in recent years. Therefore the US administration will do its best to

concentrate on promoting the conditions within which specific countries can develop their own routes to positive change for their citizens.

To understand opponents better, support allies more

The United States will try to maintain a better relationship with countries that may not share the same interests but can be considered as rivals. The US will hear out the opinion of other countries on issues that may cause change in global order or threaten global security. The US will do its best, while bearing the country's interest in mind, to sustain beneficial relationships with its allies.

To focus more on governance and processes – less on leaders and parties

The United States will support the creation of institutions and processes that have the potential to promote good governance in order to establish a durable framework for positive change. It will try to ensure that the diplomacy of the administration does not rely on personal relationships and interdepartmental competition. (At this point we can see the similarity in the Prime Minister's and the President's opinions about the importance of personal relationships)

To strengthen multilateral cooperation

If the Obama administration is willing to share leadership and serve as one among equals then the US will be able to strengthen multilateral cooperation. The decision whether or not the current US administration is willing to make this adjustment will determine the future of the transatlantic relationship. If it is, the relationship and the cooperation will be effective enough to tackle global challenges.

To lead by example

The United States will remain the world's most powerful nation, even if it has lost the potential to influence the world in such extent that it has done in the past. Without the US, international problems and conflicts will be impossible to solve.

Renewing transatlantic alliance

The United States wants to engage other nations in order to be sufficient enough to deal with new global challenges, no matter how much Europe wants it to remain the leader of the transatlantic alliance.

5. The Coalition and Obama, the Special Relationship today

Special Relationship has gone through several ups and downs over the past couple of years. There have been arguments about the relationship not being so special anymore. In March 2010, The House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee (HCFAC) said it was wrong to speak of Special Relationship with the United States as it was fostering other alliances especially with France and Germany but they all agreed that the link between the countries was valuable. (BBC news, 2010a) The committee suggested that the term 'Special Relationship' should be avoided as it raises unrealistic expectations about the benefits the relationship can deliver to the UK. For an average British citizen the Special Relationship became the synonym of the support given to President Bush over the war in Iraq which provoked revulsion in the majority of public opinion.

On 18 March 2010 the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee revealed its Sixth Report of Session 2009-2010 with the title Global Security: UK-US Relations in which the Committee gave its opinion and suggestions on the topic. The key elements, the basis and the nature of the UK-US relationship according to the Report are the following:

The underlying bilateral relationship cannot be threatened by minor disagreements between the two countries, but if the strength of the relationship is to survive in the long term, there is a need for better understanding between the two governments.

Also it is important to see that the personal relationship between the Prime Minister and the President is only one aspect of the transatlantic relationship, but not the most determining one, therefore it should be focusing on a strong cooperation based on shared interests not on personal sympathy. The Report stressed that the degree of alignment with the UK on number of key policy areas are significantly greater under the Obama Administration but the UK has to work more effectively with other countries (European partners) in order to implement its wishes in the most satisfactory way.

It argued that the UK has an extremely close and valuable relationship with the US in specific areas of co-operation. (intelligence and security, cultural links, commitment to freedom and democracy and the rule of law). (HCFAC, 2010a)

Regarding the UK-US military and defence co-operation (among many others), the Report suggested that it should be a primary objective for the international community to outlast the insurgency and to remain in Afghanistan until local authorities are able to take control over their own security. It was also mentioned that the level of military

commitment in support of the US will probably have to be reduced because of the current financial crisis (in England and all over Europe) which is likely to diminish the extent of political influence that the UK has had on the US decision-making.

According to the document, the UK should continue to do all it can to assist the US in areas where it is also the UK's security interests to do so, mostly in relation to Afghanistan and in respect of the reform of NATO and the Government's foreign and security policy needs to be driven by its security obligations towards NATO commitments and its security partnership with the US. (HCFAC, 2010a)

The Committee found the fact that some US officers find British military capabilities unsatisfactory and that these perceptions appear to exist concerning especially after all the effort and sacrifices made by British armed forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Government argued in response, that the defence cooperation between the two countries remains strong and also continues to develop because of the new threats both countries face in today's world. (HCFAC, 2010b)

5.1. Recent Disagreements

As Dr. Niblett remarked, British and US perceptions of the appropriate policy solutions and of the nature of certain international risks may show divergence every once in a while. (Niblett, 2010)

Since 2001 several issues occurred where asymmetry in UK-US attitudes could be identified. These include issues like arms control, the Kyoto Protocol and the International Criminal Court.

First of all, there has been a disagreement between the two countries over the release (on 21 August 2009) of the Lockerbie bomber, Abdelbaset Ali al-Megrahi as this caused considerable anger within the US. Since then though, as David Cameron has said: *"Lockerbie, let me be absolutely clear there's no daylight between us. I have the deepest sympathies for the families of those killed in the bombing. Abdel Baset al-Megrahi was found guilty of murdering 270 people. They weren't allowed to go home and die in their own bed with their relatives around them. I never saw the case for releasing him, and I think it was a very bad decision"* (Cameron, 2010a)

The relationship was also rumoured to have become 'less special' after a senior US State Department official criticised a British decision to hold negotiations with the political wing of Hezbollah, complaining that Washington had not been properly informed about it. (Spillius, 2009)

In June 2009 the special relationship was reported to have "taken another hit" after the British government was said to be "angry" (Joscelyn, 2009) over the failure of the US to seek Britain's approval before negotiating with Bermuda about the resettlement of four ex-Guantanamo-Bay inmates to the British Overseas Territories. It was widely expected within British politicians to be consulted about something with such importance. This step of the US Government was seen in British media and public as *"the latest example of American governments ignoring Britain when it comes to US interests in British territories abroad"* (Reid, 2009).

Also when a High Court judgment alleged that a British resident held in Guantanamo Bay had been tortured and kept in unacceptable circumstances, the US threatened to withdraw intelligence co-operation if more details were to be released. Nick Clegg commented: *"This judgement demolishes Gordon Brown's recent claim that he would build a special relationship with the US 'so strong, no power on earth can ever drive us apart"* (Clegg, 2009).

In September 2009, Michael Heseltine, who was Defence Secretary under Margaret Thatcher and also a supporter of closer European integration, described the British-American Special Relationship as *"the most naïve delusion fostered on this side of the Atlantic, and hardly ever referred to on the other side of the Atlantic"* (Heseltine, 2009)

The American attitude towards the situation on the Falkland Islands also led to a dissent between the two countries. In March 2010, Hillary Clinton during a visit to Argentina stated that the US would be willing to mediate negotiations between the UK and Argentina. However the longstanding position of the British Government was that: *"The Government have made it clear that we have no doubt about the United Kingdom's sovereignty over the Falkland Islands. The principle of self-determination underlies that. There can be no negotiations on the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands unless and until such a time as the Falkland islanders so wish it. They have made it clear that they have no such wish"* (Miliband, 2010).

Relations were further strained when Obama and Cameron argued over the BP oil crisis in the Gulf of Mexico. Obama publicly put the blame on the British firm and in response Cameron made a robust defence of the oil company.

In July 2010 it caused a bit of a shock in the US when Cameron said he wanted all British troops out of Afghanistan by the end of 2015. He said: *"We can't be there for another five years, having been there for nine years already,"* (Cameron 2010, in Lee, 2010) This was a clear sign of domestic political pressure, as the war in Afghanistan has become increasingly unpopular in British public opinion.

5.2. Foreign Policy Alignment

According to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) (HCFAC, 2010a) it is important that the UK attaches to its relationships with the United States because the UK's ability to achieve its international objectives will be greater if these objectives are shared with the US. President Obama told reporters in the White House on 3 March 2009 that *"The relationship is not only special and strong but will only get stronger as time goes on"* (Obama, 2009a).

In most areas US and UK foreign policies have been compatible to an extent the US finds no other major European country. The US still looks to the UK as its 'first partner' in security terms, despite the improvement of Franco- American relations. (although the US now looks more to Germany as a leading economic partner within the European Union and recent publications have shown that this attitude has somewhat changed since 2009).

5.3. Challenges of the 21st century and the areas of cooperation

The National Security Strategy (NSS) of the Coalition Government, published in October 2010 says *"the security of our country"* should be the first duty of the Government. (NSS, 2010)

According to the document the United Kingdom is, in a way, more secure than it was in the past as there is no direct threat of an attack against UK territories, but on the other hand it is vulnerable because of the risks of the networked world and the UK's open society. It emphasises the need to use the UK's alliances and relationships more effectively, especially with the United States, but also with the EU and NATO. It outlines the international context in which the UK can best pursue its interests.

The document draws several challenges that determine British security policy today. These are challenges such as the threat of international terrorism, Al Qaeda in particular, nuclear proliferation in the Middle East and traditional espionage. These challenges can only be defeated by a strong cooperation, and as it is the United States' interest as well to extinguish such 'problems' a sustainable and tight cooperation between the two countries are to be maintained. These can be considered as the 'engines' of the Special Relationship today, as these are the common threats both countries have to face and they have a better chance to 'win' if they fight together.

Although if the UK is to have an effective foreign policy, according to the National Security Strategy, *"the most urgent task is to return our nation's finances to a sustainable footing"* (NSS, 2010, 14) as it is *"the largest single challenge facing the Government"* (NSS, 2010, 14.) which affects national security as well as other areas of public policy. The UK is to remain close with the US as it is still the largest economy in the world but it will also secure its relationships with NATO and the European Union so that it can effectively prevent any possible harm or conflict that may arise. Globalisation, the disadvantages of the world being more 'connected' than ever before, multiculturalism, climate change are also very important challenges of our world today which require joint measures.

Military and defence cooperation as well as intelligence sharing have been the key underpinning factors of the British-American alliance.

Since the end of the Cold War Britain has provided the biggest military contingents for the US in three major conflicts, the two Iraq wars and the war in Afghanistan. Probably the withdrawal of UK military forces would have had a significant impact on how the US could have performed in both Afghanistan and Iraq. There has been a very intense cooperation between the two countries' military forces and between the intelligence agencies (MI6 and CIA) and political institutions (Ministry of Defence and the Pentagon) as well. The UK's current military capabilities are now *"primarily designed to be used as contributions to collective operations, rather than in defence of uniquely national interests"* (HCFAC, 2010a)

Regarding nuclear weapon development, the UK and the US conducted subcritical nuclear experiments (in 2002 and 2006) to see how effective the existing stocks were. (Bruce, 2006). The two countries have also agreed to make efforts to prevent nuclear proliferation in the Middle East.

Intelligence collecting and sharing is the cornerstone of the British-American Special Relationship. This goes back to the Second World War when the two countries shared their code breaking knowledge which led the BRUSA Agreement in 1943. The UK-USA Security Agreement in 1948 aimed to monitor and counter the threat of communism that threatened the international order at the time. There are also numerous American bases and facilities in the United Kingdom which have been used to support various offensive as well as peacekeeping operations in the past.

These include *"two major air bases at RAF Lakenheath and RAF Mildenhall in East Anglia, a forward operating base at RAF Fairford in Glouscestershire, a US intercept and intelligence analysis station at RAF Menwith Hill in North Yorkshire, an intelligence analysis centre at RAF Molesworth in Cambridgeshire, and eight other small bases"* (HCFAC, 2010a, 30) According to Professor William Wallace and Christopher Phillips, *"the United States benefits very considerably from the provision of these bases", while "Britain benefits from this power projection to the extent that it shares US objectives"* (Wallace and Phillips, 2009, 271)

Intelligence sharing, however can be a breaking point in UK-US relations as most of the activities of intelligence sharing agencies are focused on preventing terrorist attacks committed by Islamic people, therefore both the US and the UK are now more and more suspicious and tend to implement such monitoring systems and security measures that may offence some of the fundamental human rights. This, especially in Britain (because of the huge number of Muslim population) can result in major dissatisfaction and anger within the public.

Even so, the UK's intention remains to reinforce the defence and security relationship with the US. The Coalition is to strengthen counter-terrorism relationships and in order to do so, it is willing to share access to key capabilities which would enable border and transport security. The British Government wants to enhance cooperation on cyber security by developing a new Cyber Operations Memorandum of Understanding which *"will develop, promote and support a shared vision of cyber space and prioritise our work together"* (SDSR, 2010, 59) According to the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) the UK is to maintain nuclear relationship and military capabilities to provide mutual benefits, and supports President Obama's goal to globally lock-down vulnerable nuclear materials. (SDSR, 2010)

5.4. Still Special?

Official Government statements from both the UK and the US maintain that the 'Special Relationship' is in good health. The term has been used by senior politicians on both sides. However many American politicians think that the *"survival and success of the partnership depends on the usefulness of Britain to the United States as an efficient ally"* (Lord Hurd, 2010).

Therefore it would be more appropriate to use the phrase 'Special Relationship' in relation to specific areas of UK-US co-operation than to the totality of UK-US relations. (cooperation in areas that are discussed more detailed in Chapter 5.3.)

This kind of redefinition of the term seems to be quite reasonable when we come to think about how many 'drivers' that gave a rise to the alliance no longer exist. Since

the end of the Cold War, especially since the beginning of the Clinton Administration, tactical co-operation on defence and intelligence has remained strong, but at a strategic level the Obama Administration has been conducting its diplomatic relations on multiple levels, and some of these levels do not contain the UK as the US's key and most important partner. (Niblett, 2009)

It is still an advantage to literally speak the same language because it makes it easier to converse but the UK no longer has the particular advantage that Britain still prefers to believe it has. Instead, the US views its relationship with the UK as one of a growing number of 'special' relationships. The phrase does not have the same resonance with the American public as it does with the UK which causes an asymmetry in mutual awareness between the US and UK. Also, it is important to see that the relationship cannot have the uniqueness that many in the UK expect it to have. Dr. Niblett said: *"We wish it was unique; it is not unique, it is special. But where it is special-and it is likely to be a very important area for the next 10 to 20 years-where we can help each other, is on counter-terrorism and that complex aspect of security that requires a sharing of information and intelligence. [...] That is in both our national interests"* (Allin, 2009).

On July 20, Cameron met Obama during his first visit to the United States as Prime Minister. The two expressed unity in a wide range of issues, including the War in Afghanistan. During the meeting, Obama stated: *"We can never say it enough. The United States and the United Kingdom enjoy a truly special relationship [...] we celebrate a common heritage. We cherish common values. [...] (and) above all, our alliance thrives because it advances our common interests"* (CNN, 2010.). Cameron stressed in an interview during the trip that he wanted to build a strong relationship with the United States, as it is Britain's *"oldest and best ally"* and also stated that, *"from the times I've met Barack Obama before, we do have very, very close allegiances and very close positions on all the key issues, whether that is Afghanistan or Middle East peace process or Iran. Our interests are aligned and we've got to make this partnership work"* (Cameron, 2010b). The Prime Minister tried to downplay the idealism of the special relationship and called for an end to the British fixation on the status of the relationship, stating that it's a natural and mutually beneficial relationship.

He said, *"[...] I am unapologetically pro-America. But I am not some idealistic dreamer about the special relationship. I care about the depth of our partnership, not the length of our phone calls. I hope that in the coming years we can focus on the substance, not endlessly fret about the form"* (Cameron, 2010a)

5.4.1. Multiculturalism affecting Special Relationship

As mentioned above, the 9/11 attacks brought a new era to international relations. A war was unleashed between radical Islamic terrorists and the Western World. Tension between the Muslim communities and others arose. After the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq these tensions increased rapidly.

Multiculturalism is tangibly present in British society and should therefore have an impact on the country's attitudes towards foreign and security policy. The key problem is that successive governments tend to care less and less about the effects that come

from the neglect of British minorities that are now represent themselves in fast growing numbers. Disapproval arose within the British Muslim communities because of the country's level of commitment to share the US attitude towards the fight against international terrorism, more specifically (since Obama) against Al-Qaeda, especially because the Western World tends to identify terrorism with the Islam. The Government has introduced several measures, alluding national security that offend the Muslim religion and identity. British foreign policy excludes minorities from decision making processes regarding foreign policy therefore they don't have the forum where they could express their opinions. Ways should be found to ensure that minority groups can have their voice heard if they have concerns about foreign policy because the common view now is that there is no proper sensitivity to domestic opinion when making foreign policy decisions. This leads to frustration and creates the feeling of anger among Muslims which may lead to terrorist attacks within and outside the country and that would be exactly the opposite of what the Government aims to achieve. For example, after the July 2005 bombings in London, 62% of 450 Muslim students said that *"British foreign policy had played a 'major' or 'complete' part in leading to the attacks"* and more than 25% of them said that *"they felt a conflict between their loyalty to the UK and their loyalty to the umma"* (Hill, 2007)[3] The lack of government response to protests makes minorities feel justified in turning to violence.

If the United Kingdom is to maintain a stable country where there is peace among minorities and if it is to avoid major conflicts and further terrorist attacks committed by its own citizens, it should reconsider its attitudes towards foreign policy, namely that falling in line behind the United States regarding the war in Afghanistan (and against Islam) while completely leaving Muslim minorities out of decision making processes might not be the perfect solution in order to be able to keep up to the Government's promise to prevent further attacks and to secure stability and safety in the country.

[3] More questions and poll results can be found in the Appendices

6. The future of the Special Relationship

The United States has a more pragmatic approach towards the UK that it had before, but it is to be regarded not as a threat but more like an opportunity to reassess the UK's own approach towards the United States. Therefore both countries can reconsider the challenges they face together as allies. There has to be a great emphasis on the effects of globalisation, structural changes in geopolitical power as these are all key factors which will (if haven't already) change the UK-US relations. The United States has been pursuing relationships with other partners who can provide support that the UK cannot.

Because of this, the UK has, apart from ensuring that it has an appropriate foreign policy strategy that recognises both the opportunities and challenges created by this situation, limited options to influence the structural changes that have occurred.

Therefore it is highly unlikely that, in the longer-term, the UK will be able to influence the US to the extent it has in the past, however in the short term the UK must capitalise upon the opportunities for influence that have arisen as a result of the alignment between the two countries.

From Britain's aspect, the country's relationship should be driven by the UK's national interests and it needs to be characterised by a strong political approach to the relationship and a good sense of the UK's limits. It is essential that the United Kingdom recognises the many mutual benefits which it can gain from close operation in particular areas but also *"the UK needs to be less deferential and more willing to say no to the US on those issues where the two countries' interests and values diverge."* (HCFAC, 2010a, 7)

The basis of the relationship in the future will be confined to intelligence sharing, military co-operations and nuclear deterrence as these are the areas where co-operation still serves US interests. However European security is not at the centre of US security priorities anymore and the American administration no longer fears that the EU will become a powerful concurrence of the transatlantic alliance, namely the NATO. The Obama administration is trying to build intensive diplomatic relations with other countries as well, like China and India, in order to best serve US interests, and on some levels of these diplomatic relations, the UK is no longer the key partner. This decline in 'specialness' reduces the scope for British influence on US decision-making regarding its international relations.

British politicians believe that the United States is the only possible partner to make Britain be in a leading position of global order and international relations. The United Kingdom seemed to be unable to accept the concept of the changing world

where more and more countries become inevitable components of world politics. Prime Minister David Cameron asserted in 2008 that *"Atlanticism is in my DNA and in the DNA of the Conservative Party"* (Cameron, 2008, 4). The British obsession with the term 'special' is clearly obvious from Foreign Secretary William Hague's speech on 1 July 2010, when he referred to the *"unbreakable alliance with the United States which is our most important relationship and will remain so"* (Hague, 2010b) and from Defence Secretary Liam Fox's statement at Chatham House that *"there is such a large overlap between UK interests and United States interests that it makes sense for that to remain, and perhaps even to be strengthen, as the premier strategic relationship for this country"* (Fox, 2010). The coalition government has expressed its desire to stand *"shoulder to shoulder"* (Hague, 2010b) with the United States, but also has adopted a far more positive tone towards the EU than the ideology of the Conservative Party would suggest. However, only time will tell how this positive tone will result in actual measures, particularly on security policy, mainly because of the Conservative scepticism over the topic.

London's willingness to pay 'blood price' in order to sustain the relationship between the two countries has been a crucial element of British policy however the lack of complete success in the attempt to solve the conflicts in both Afghanistan and Iraq reinforced a sense of decreasing British power. (Menon, 2010) Because of the lack of direct military threat, Europe as a whole is now less of a priority for the current US administration which has shifted its focus to other areas of the world especially to countries that might have the potential to satisfy American interests. President Obama observed that the *"relationship between China and the United States will shape the 21st century"* (Obama, 2009b) This is a clear sign of the fact that the United States *"is more interested in choosing partners on the basis of their potential to add value in specific cases rather than because of any sentimental attachment to long-lasting alliances"* (Stelzenmüller, 2010, 7). Current US administration is unequivocally less interested in Europe than its predecessors. President Obama has referred to himself as America's *"first Pacific President"* (Obama, 2009) While British leaders tend to care less about short-term interests in order to maintain transatlantic solidarity, the US administration is not determined to sacrifice national interest only to keep some sentimental so called tradition. The US will *"pursue their own interests rather than those of allies, however close they may be"* (Menon, A., 2010, 8) The British political elite uses the close relationship with Washington as a justification to its political decisions, whatever they do in order to keep the 'specialness' alive is considered to be the best decision (without even thinking of other possible solutions) even if it does not necessarily serve British interests. As Hew Strachan once said when talking about the Afghan conflict, *"a preference in favour of alliance obligations did not relieve London of the need to think through the best strategy to serve its own national interests, but was treated as though it did"* (Strachan, 2009, 52). Clearly it seems that leaning close to the United States has rarely provided that level of influence for British administrations in Washington that it was claimed. The British American relationship is basically institutionalised within NATO which, according to the 2010 Green Paper, remains *"the critical underpinning of our security"* (MoD, 2010, 8). What is striking is that while NATO is still key to ensuring the territorial defence of the United Kingdom against military threats, it proves to be less able to ensuring the many new dimensions of UK security that comes from the nature of the 21st century and the globalised world. It is interesting to see how the conception of national security of the Conservative Party for

example, could be better served by the European Union than by NATO even if successive governments fail to admit it or simply don't want to do so. As it has been mentioned before, British politicians have been giving a higher priority to transatlantic security than to relations with other European Union member states, more specifically the UK's European partners. The UK has enjoyed arguably more success in shaping the actions of the European Union than in influencing key decisions in Washington. (Menon, 2010) While official statements quite often recognise the need for a more co-ordinated and effective engagement with the UK's European partners, actual measures in order to rebalance its foreign policy towards the EU has remained a thought at best. The House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee has argued in its report on global security that UK attempts to exert leadership within the EU are to be welcomed because these would be *"of value to the US"*, while, ultimately, the *"UK must continue to position itself closely alongside the US in the future"* (HCFAC, 2010a, 76-77).

William Hague emphasized the need for the UK to have a *"clear, focused and effective"* foreign policy (Hague, 2010a). To achieve this, the country needs to go through the so called three-step process which was identified by Professor Christopher Layne (1997). The three steps are, according to the professor, *"determining the country's vital interests, identifying threats to these and deciding how best to deploy national resources in order to protect them"* (Layne, 1997).

A realistic, interest-based approach would reduce what is now an insupportable range of commitments especially knowing that American policy is not devised and carried out with UK interests in mind. The US agenda for example for NATO enlargement has been driven by domestic strategic considerations and it does not necessarily take into account the implications for European partners. The United States, judging by its political measures taken recently, has proven to be a state which has its countries interests on the top of the list of priorities while the United Kingdom seems to be paying more attention to the maintenance of a relationship that does not serve the country's best interests anymore. British policy, too, should focus on narrower consideration of the UK's interests. All those disagreements between the two countries, as a result of differing perceived national interests should be realised as such, and not as a proof of a good relationship.

It is unavoidable though, that the partnership has also been beneficial for the UK in some aspects. But the emphasis here should be on 'some', which means the US is no longer the one and only country that the UK should look up to, and which it should seek a relationship as close as possible in all areas of the political life.

It is to be admitted that the United States has a crucial role as a guarantor of last resort of UK and European security. (Menon, 2010) The US still remains the *"indispensible nation, one whose engagement is necessary in order that international challenges be successfully confronted"* (Clinton, W., 1997). The UK is the largest foreign supplier to the US military and also the largest foreign investor in the US defence industry. (HCFAC, 2010a) The UK purchases of US nuclear technology help financially support research and development of the US nuclear programme and the access provided to Washington to British military bases around the world are probably the most important to be mentioned of the some reasons why the relationship is still beneficial to the US as well, at some point. Despite all this, the UK policy makers should recognise (as Cameron has done recently) both the limits of excessive dependence on the US and the differences of interests when they arise. When it is

more appropriate, they should be willing to work with other partners as well. This should mean a re-engagement with European partners especially in areas such as enlargement, energy and foreign policy, the UK's ability to deal with external challenges rooted in the nature of the 21st century will depend on its active participation in effective EU policies. (CHCE, 2008)

There is one thing British politicians should realise. Effective engagement does not imply the abandonment of national interests and the tightening of links with the EU should not be seen as a cause of the weakening ties between the UK and Washington. Moreover, because of the 'value added' approach adopted by the Obama administration, *"anything, that can be done to strengthen Europe's ability to intervene effectively in major international issues would serve merely to strengthen the transatlantic partnership"* (Menon, 2010). In order to make NATO more effective (which the UK wants so desperately), European countries must be able to do more themselves, and for a number of them, especially for some among the recently joint countries, this could probably best be ensured through the Common Security and Defence Policy of the European Union.

Conclusion

In conclusion we can say that the question whether the Special Relationship has weakened or become stronger could be answered by saying it has transformed. We may as well suggest that such term no longer contains too much value therefore it shouldn't be used in the future. The global challenges of the 21st century put the relationship in a whole new position which made the redefinition inevitable. The world is now more complex, new partnerships, coalitions and alignments are born and have become stronger, economies, policies are interconnected. To face and defeat issues which threat the whole world need global cooperation. The importance of bilateral relations has become less significant or at least they are now confined to some areas of politics. This is why, in this aspect the relationship has become weaker as it no longer covers cooperation in all areas in life but rather focuses to only some of them.

This can be noticed in the shaping of UK-US relations. The basis of the relationship has always been the military and defence cooperation, but since the end of the Cold War this tendency became even more observable. The United States, since the 1990s has been trying to reposition itself, to maintain its status as one of the world's most powerful and influential nation. Therefore building good partnerships with other potential superpowers that can bring something to the table for the US serves the Government's best interests. Multilateralism characterises US foreign policy today. Obama's new approach to engage with countries from all over the world is definitely a sign of weakening relations with the UK. The European Union, unless proving to be able to become a strong, reliable partner to the US regarding security and defence matters, will lose its current position on the United States' priority list. But in order to do so, EU member states should be willing to commit themselves to the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the EU and also to the CSDP. This means the UK, as one of the most important and most influential nation in the Union should become an example for other states to follow and should make more effort to engage with the EU. This cannot be achieved until British politicians themselves are sceptical about such engagement. Successive British governments have proven to be more Atlanticists than pro-Europeans which has become the determining characteristic of their foreign policies. As long as politicians and political parties are doubtful about the Union, the EU will not be seen as a desirable form of cooperation within the British population. However, Britain should realise that if it is to remain close with the US, it has to be a cooperative member of the EU as well. The Coalition Government, mostly because of its Liberal Democrat component seems to be more open towards the Union and also seems to see the US-UK relations in a more realistic way. Both countries stress how important their relationship remains, because it really does in some aspects, but both Obama and Cameron know that what they have today is not the same anymore as it

used to be. The British Prime Minister shows a more realistic attitude towards the relationship and because of this, (and also of the Lib Dem influence), the UK has finally started 'waking up' from the Sleeping Beauty's dreams and now shows a much more down to earth mentality regarding UK-US relations.

For the Obama administration, it is important to make Britons feel they are still a key partner of the US as this serves America's interests the most. (because of the British military presence in both Iraq and Afghanistan and the high level of intelligence cooperation which makes it easier for the US to 'keep an eye' on Muslims in Europe.)

For the UK however, the Special Relationship has been used as a cover to 'run away' from difficulties and issues that may need more consideration. A strong cooperation with the United States is important indeed, but should only be the first priority while it serves British interests. If, as a result, conflicts arise within the Coalition (differing attitudes towards the CSDP), within the population (the intense disappointment and disapproval of British foreign policy among Muslim population) and between the UK and the EU (as British separation makes EU efforts less credible), British interests get harmed and the 'special' relationship needs to be reconsidered.

> "I have never understood the British anxiety about whether the special relationship will survive. The US-UK relationship is strong, because it delivers for both of us. The alliance is not sustained by historical ties or blind loyalty. This is a partnership of choice that serves our national interests today." (David Cameron)

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Appendices

Table 1, Source: IPSOS MORI (2003)

Q3 Did you support or oppose Britain joining the American-led military action against Iraq once British troops were there?	
Base: All British adults 18+ (982), 2003	%
Support	60
Oppose	34
Don't know / no opinion	6
Net support(+ / -)	+26

Q4 Do you believe now it was right or wrong for British troops to invade Iraq and take part in deposing the Saddam Hussein Government?	
Base: All British adults 18+ (982)	%
Believe it was right	50
Believe it was wrong	41
Don't know / no opinion	9
Net right(+ / -)	+9

Table 2, Source: IPSOS MORI (2007)

Q: Do you approve or disapprove of the way the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, is handling the current situation with Iraq?

Base: c. 600-1,000 GB adults aged 18+	**24-25 Sep 2002**	**11-13 Oct 2002**	**17-20 Jan 2003**	**28 Feb-2 Mar 2003**	**14-16 Mar 2003**	**25-27 Jul 2003**	**17-21 Feb 2005**	**11-13 May 2007**
	%	**%**	**%**	**%**	**%**	**%**	**%**	**%**
Approve	40	35	26	36	30	32	28	17
Disapprove	49	47	62	53	54	55	63	77
Don't know	11	18	13	12	16	13	9	6
Net approve	-9	-12	-36	-17	-24	-23	-35	-60

Q5 Do you agree or disagree that British troops should remain in Iraq until a stable democratic Iraqi Government is ready to take over control of the country?	
Base: All British adults 18+ (982)	%
Strongly agree	36
Tend to agree	33
Neither agree or disagree	4
Tend to disagree	8
Strongly disagree	15
Don't know	4
Agree	69
Disagree	23
Net agree (+ / -)	+46

Table 3, Source: IPSOS MORI (2009)

Q: Do you support or oppose Britain's continuing military campaign in Afghanistan?	July 09
Base: 1,012 British adults, 18+ , 2009	%
Support	41
Oppose	52
Don't Know	7

Q: For how long do you think Britain should remain involved in the current Afghanistan conflict?	**July 09**
Base: 1000+ British Adults, 2009	
Stop immediately	31
Up to a week	1
One to two weeks	1
Over 2-4 weeks	2
Over 1 month to 3 months	6
Over 3 months to 6 months	8
Over 6 months	15
Until it ends	31
Don't know	5

Table 4, Source

Q: Do you approve or disapprove of the way Tony Blair is handling the response to the terrorist attacks in London on 7thJuly (2005)?

	%
Approve	56
Disapprove	24
Don't know	30

Q: On this card are some statements about the recent bombings in London. Please tell me which one comes closest to your personal view?

	%
The war in Iraq is the main reason why London was bombed	53
The bombings in London would have happened even if Britain was not involved in Iraq	10
The war in Iraq had nothing to do with why London was bombed	14
None of them	3
Don't know	20
Refused	-

Q: There are differing views about the balance between guaranteeing civil liberties and the need to protect the country against terrorism. For each of the following, would you say it is acceptable or unacceptable for British authorities to do this in the fight against terrorism?

	Acceptable	Unacceptable	Don't know
	%	%	%
Detain suspected terrorists without trial	21	67	12
Place suspected terrorists under house	43	39	18

arrest			
Allow evidence obtained abroad by the use of torture to be used in British courts	15	71	14

Q: Do you think that the recent bombings in London have made other non-Muslim communities view Muslims more or less favourably in your area, or do you think their view has not changed as a result?

	%
More favourably	1
Less favourably	51
Not changed	43
Don't know	5

Table 5, Source: Glassbooth (2011)

BARACK OBAMA	
SUPPORTS	the use of military force unilaterally
STRONGLY SUPPORTS	opening diplomatic relations with rouge countries like Iran and North Korea
STRONGLY SUPPORTS	The United States' current relationship with Israel
STONGLY SUPPORTS	an increase in foreign aid to combat poverty and disease
STRONGLY SUPPORTS	the United Nations to deal with international issues
SUPPORTS	reducing the number of nuclear weapons in the US
SUPPORTS	setting a withdrawal timetable for US troops to leave Iraq
IS NEUTRAL	on the increase in US troop levels in Iraq which had been ongoing throughout 2007
OPPOSES	the US having a long-term presence in Iraq
OPPOSES	using public funds to hire private military contactors to provide security in Iraq
STRONGLY OPPOSES	increasing US troop levels in Afghanistan

Abstract

Az Obama-Cameron-Clegg című dolgozatomban a brit-amerikai „különleges kapcsolat” vizsgálatával foglalkozom. A dolgozatom kérdése, hogy a két ország közti együttműködés milyen mértékbe erősödött vagy gyengült az elmúlt évek során, sőt azt a lehetőséget sem zárom ki, hogy az agyonhasznált kifejezés értékét vesztette, ezáltal már nem is igazán van értelme használni. A téma kifejtése során azzal a feltételezéssel élek, hogy a különleges kapcsolat létezik ugyan, de jellegét tekintve teljesen átalakult.

Az első két fejezetben a két ország közti kapcsolat történetét mutatom be röviden, áttekintő jelleggel. Felvázolom, hogy a hidegháború vége milyen hatással volt az együttműködésre, majd kitérek a szeptember 11.-i terrortámadások hatásaira is mind a brit és amerikai külpolitika mind a globális rendszer átalakulása szempontjából.

A harmadik fejezetben a jelenlegi brit kormánykoalíciót alkotó két párt programjának részletezésének szentelem, amely azt a célt szolgálja, hogy kellő betekintést nyújtson a jelenlegi brit politikai élet nehézségeibe. A két párt eltérő nézetei jól láthatóan kiütköznek, elképzeléseik Nagy-Britannia kül- és biztonságpolitikai jövőjével kapcsolatban különböznek. A fejezet második részében a koalíció megalakulásának feltételeként kialakított kompromisszumokat mutatom be, a kormány jelenlegi összetételéről teszek rövid említést és a koalíciós kormány egységes programjának részleteire is kitérek. Röviden vázolom, hogy hogyan hat a liberál-demokrata befolyás a konzervatív politikai elgondolásokra, milyen engedmények és egyezmények születtek a működőképes kormányzat megalakítása érdekében.

A negyedik fejezetben kitérek az Obama adminisztráció teljesen új politikai álláspontjára, az új külpolitikai irányozódására és a britekkel való együttműködéshez való viszonyára.

Az ötödik fejezetben bemutatom a brit-amerikai kapcsolatokban nemrégiben felmerülő konfliktusokat s ezek hatásait, majd a „különlegességet” biztosító együttműködési területeket említem meg. Ez az a rész, ahol megkérdőjelezem a kapcsolat különlegességének mértékét és mivoltát. Egy alfejezetet szentelek a multikulturalizmus szerepére, pontosabban ennek hiányára a brit külpolitika alakításában és ennek esetleges hatásaira mind a brit mind a nemzetközi biztonságra nézve.

A hatodik egybe utolsó fejezet azt a kérdést veti fel, hogy milyen jövő is áll a két ország közti kapcsolat előtt. Mennyiben szolgálja mind az amerikai mind a brit érdekeket a további szoros együttműködés, milyen téren érdemes illetve nem érdemes a kapcsolat fontosságának „erőltetése”.

Munkámban nem térek ki részletesen a jelenleg zajló közel-keleti és észak-afrikai konfliktusok menetére és az ezekhez viszonyuló brit és amerikai álláspontra, sem az

együttműködésük kérdésére, mivel a dolgozatom kutatási fázisában ezek az események még nem bontakoztak ki kellő mértékben.

Dolgozatom során arra a következtetésre jutottam, hogy a brit-amerikai különleges kapcsolat bizonyos vonatkozásaiban gyengült, bizonyos értelemben erősödött, de a leginkább az mondható el, hogy teljes mértékben átalakult. A 21. század kihívásai más megközelítésbe helyezték a globális kapcsolatrendszereket. A világ többpólusúvá válásnak köszönhetően, egy, az élet minden területére kiterjedő bilaterális kapcsolat már nem állja meg a helyét. Ebből adódóan minden államnak, egyben Nagy Britanniának és az USA-nak is egyre több szálon mozgó szoros együttműködések hálózatára van szüksége annak érdekében, hogy erős, stabil államok maradjanak a világpolitikai és világgazdasági porondon egyaránt.

A brit-amerikai kapcsolat fennállása óta elsősorban katonai és biztonságpolitikai együttműködésen alapul, ami a hidegháború végével majd a szeptember 11-i támadások okozta nemzetközi változásokkal még inkább megerősödött. Az amerikai érdekeket, a világvezető nagyhatalmi státuszának megőrzése érdekében az szolgálja a legjobban, ha minél több államra terjeszthetí ki befolyását valamilyen formában. Ez viszont azt jelenti, hogy a britekkel meglévő szoros kapcsolat már közel sem az egyetlen szoros kapcsolat, amit az amerikai adminisztráció ápol. Azt a következtetést vonhatjuk le azonban, hogy az amerikai kormány számára a britekkel való szoros együttműködés ugyan fontos, (mivel ezáltal kellően biztosítva vannak afelől, hogy bármilyen lépést is tesznek mind politikailag mind katonailag, a Nagy-Britannia mögöttük fog állni) de közel sem olyan kardinális kérdés, mint az, az angol politikusok körében megfigyelhető. Óriási szükség van a kapcsolat megreformálására, átgondolására. Mind az USA mind a britek egyre kevésbé tudják befolyásolni a világban történő eseményeket, de a brit politikai elitnek is rá kellene jönnie, hogy azáltal, hogy szorosan Amerikához köti magát, minden mást figyelmen kívül hagyva, nem biztos, hogy a kívánt sikereket fogja elérni, sem Washingtonban sem a brit közvélemény köreiben.

Ha a britek nem vállalnak nagyobb szerepet az EU-ban, akkor egyre kevesebb lehetőségük lesz arra, hogy alakítsák az EU-n belüli változások menetét, nem is beszélve arról, hogy a „rossz" példát látva a többi állam is elveszti hajlandóságát a szorosabb együttműködés kialakítására, ami nagyban meggátolja a hatékony európai fellépést. Ez viszont azt eredményezné, hogy az EU, erő és hitelesség hiányában kevésbé jelentős partnerévé válna az USA-nak, az európai - amerikai együttműködés csökkenéséhez vezetne, ami viszont pont az ellenkezője a Brit vágyaknak.

A brit kormány EU hoz való viszonyának alakulását nehéz megjósolni, mivel a koalícióban a legeruoszkeptikusabb és a leg-pro-Európa párt került össze. S habár a koalíció egy viszonylag pozitív hangvételt ütött meg az EU-val kapcsolatban (főként a liberáldemokraták hatására), még így is kérdéses, hogy ez az irányvonal mennyire tudja majd megállni a helyét.

A különleges kapcsolat eddig mindig jó alibinek bizonyult, amikor komoly döntések elé nézett Nagy-Britannia vezetése. Legyen szó Irakról vagy Afganisztánról, a kérdés eldöntése mindig egyszerűnek bizonyult, mivel a különleges kapcsolatra hivatkozva úgy hozták a döntéseket, ahogy azt az Amerikaiak elvárták (s ezáltal a amerikai érdekeket a legjobban szolgálták). Ezek a döntések azonban nem mindig tükrözték a brit érdekeket és nem mindig váltották be a hozzájuk fűzött reményeket.

David Cameron az első brit miniszterelnök, aki rájött, hogy fel kell hagyni a brit-amerikai kapcsolatok túlértékelésével és a fogalom „ajnározásával". Egy új irányvonalat indított el a brit külpolitika területén, mely azt bizonyítja, hogy az ország, legalábbis annak jelenlegi vezetése ráébredt arra, hogy a stabil, biztonságot nyújtó, nagyhatalmi státuszt biztosító erőt nem feltétlen csak és kizárólag az amerikaiakkal való szoros kapcsolat tudja megteremteni és garantálni.

Cameron egy sokkal realisztikusabb hozzáállást tanúsít az együttműködés irányában, mint elődei, és ez számtalan kinyilatkoztatásában megnyilvánul.

Összességében elmondhatjuk, hogy a koalíciós brit kormány és a jelenlegi amerikai adminisztráció közti kapcsolat egy átértékelődési folyamaton megy keresztül, amit a két vezető politikus realisztikus, a 21. század újszerű világrendjéhez alkalmazkodó, nemzeti érdekeket szem előtt tartott értékrendje eredményez.

Hogy a jövő mit hoz magával, az kérdéses, de a jelenlegi tendenciákat figyelembe véve elmondhatjuk, hogy a két ország közti kapcsolatok megmaradnak a legfontosabb együttműködési területeken, melyek mindkét ország érdekeit szolgálják, de ezekkel párhuzamosan mindkét állam új és új partnereket keres, hogy bebiztosítsa helyét a nemzetközi politikai viszonyok bonyolult, összetett rendszerében.