

ECPA Briefing: Agendas for Change

Dear Colleagues

This year's Annual Conference takes place under the shadow of the continuing argument about the regulation of lobbying in the European Union. We will be discussing this in the context of our debate on the findings from this year's State of Public Affairs Questionnaire. We will however continue to be true to our mission to "record, analyse and improve the conduct of public affairs" by examining how we may improve the effectiveness of public affairs practice by the integration of public affairs both horizontally and vertically. We have two new studies of how to influence global political processes. For those of you unable to attend the Conference, we will be posting all the speakers' presentations on our eventblog at EurActiv (<http://ecpa.blogactiv.eu>).

Early returns from the Questionnaire show overwhelming support for the ECPA/SEAP/EPACA initiative calling for a simple, transparent "one stop shop" approach to regulation. They also reveal the amount of time spent by public affairs practitioners other than in direct meetings with the European Commission or the European Parliament. Not surprisingly a great deal of time is spent in the Comitology process and in interacting with EU Agencies. Time is clearly also spent with the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of Regions. The truth of course is that a lot of public affairs effort rationally goes into lobbying the Member States, both in Brussels and in national capitals. It is here that the limitations of the current Brussels focused debate become most apparent. Surely the correct focus should be European public affairs not Brussels public affairs? It may come as a surprise to those who live in the European Quarter, but there are more ways of contacting decision makers than appearing in their Brussels offices. This debate should be about more than who gets a pretty badge! Everyone agrees that the Council is not transparent, but they also agree that it is the most important of the institutions in terms of legislative outcomes and policy formation. We need some serious thought in the coming weeks about how to overcome the reluctance of member states to meet the standards of transparency expected of the Commission and Parliament. For those who have not yet completed the Questionnaire, it can still be accessed via the ECPA website at <http://www.publicaffairs.ac>.

The conduct of lobbying in the EU is not currently a major matter of public concern. This however was not the case in the United States in the mid-term elections in 2006. On that occasion a large percentage of voters indicated that their choices had been determined by the public affairs scandals around Abramoff and a general sense of sleaze in Washington. On a recent visit to DC, I touched base with Doug Pinkham, the President of our sister organisation, the Public Affairs Council. He reports a dramatic drop in those listing the conduct of public affairs as a major determinant of voting. While it is true that Congress has enacted the new legislation in this area, I do not believe that the issue has vanished from the public mind. Indeed I think it is one of the underlying factors leading to the likely choice of McCain and Obama as the standard bearers of their parties in the November elections. Both of them have been campaigners for openness in the US system, not that this will protect either of them from journalists determined to prove that they have shady public affairs links.

I visited five states during my trip and was in California for Super Tuesday. The polling station that I visited was alive with first time voters, keen to cast their vote. Everywhere I went I found a profound distaste for George W Bush and the current Administration, even among the Republican stalwarts. Surprisingly, for an electorate that is often immune to international attitudes, I found a genuine questioning of where America has gone wrong in the last seven years. There is a fundamental re-assessment of what it means to be an American going on. It was refreshing to find that this was led by real people voting rather than by the pundits and the traditional deployers of big bucks. Of course every Presidential Primary is a soap opera, but this year's campaign has been something else. There is something about the personal drama of this race. The extraordinarily complex interaction of

colour, race and gender has come down to decisions about how Obama and McCain make individual Americans feel. Obama in particular has found the language to make Americans feel good and clean about themselves. Barack Obama is of course the ultimate politician's politician. He combines the eloquence and presence that we all yearn for, with a quiet sense of certainty that politics is about changing lives rather than just a game.

I have long believed that it is this sense of involvement with personalities which is missing from the European system. I do not believe that the EU is ready for a directly elected president. However I do think that we could cheer up the European Parliament elections by getting the European Political Parties to run primary elections to select their candidate for President of the European Commission. The result could be determined by the winner of the largest number of votes in the European elections. Think of the joys of a primary season starting in the five smallest states in January 2009, with four further rounds every two weeks. This would be a much better way of involving voters in Europe than by confronting them with fully fleshed out treaties in Referenda.

We still have some places available on Inside Brussels X: Public Affairs in the New Europe programme which we are teaching on 15th & 16th April. Register on line at <http://www.publicaffairs.ac>

See below a lecture I gave to the European Center of Excellence at the University of Pittsburgh on "US and EU Approaches to Climate Change: Time for a Foreign Policy Rendezvous?"

With best wishes

Yours ever

Tom

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Inside Brussels X: Public Affairs in the New Europe

08:30 Programme registration & coffee

09:00 PUBLIC AFFAIRS CHALLENGES
ERIK JONNAERT, Procter & Gamble
Chairman, ECPA Management Board

09:10 THE STATE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
ECPA/EPAD 2008 SURVEY: The Results
ANDREW HAWKINS,
Chief Executive, ComRes

Questions and Debate

PROF JUSTIN FISHER, Brunel University
Advisor to the House of Commons on lobbying
MARTIN BECK, European PA Directory

10:00 JOINED UP PUBLIC AFFAIRS?
Participants will spend one hour in each working group in turn

“Integrating Public Affairs Internally”

Chairman: *RUTH RAWLING*, Cargill Europe,
Deputy Chairman, ECPA Management Board
Rapporteur: *LIZ SPENCER*,
Associate Fellow, ECPA

Speakers:

PER UTTERBACK, “PA & Corporate Comms”
The European Connection, Stockholm

PROF PHIL HARRIS, “PA & CSR”
Editor Journal of Public Affairs,
International Research Director, ECPA

NATALIE TODD, “PA & PR”
Managing Director, Ogilvy PR Worldwide, Brussels

“Integrating National & European PA”

Chairman: *MICHAEL BURRELL*,
European Chairman Public Affairs, Edelman

Rapporteur: *ERIC VAES*,
ECPA Associate Fellow
Managing Director, Best Practice Corporate Affairs

Speakers:

PETER KÖPPL, ALPAC

NICOLAS BOUVIER, AFCL

PAOLO RAFFONE, The CIPI Foundation

“Integrating European & Global PA”

Chairman: *ROLAND VERSTAPPEN*,
VP, Int Affairs & Sustainable Development,
Arcelor Mittal

Rapporteur: *ANDREW NAPIER*,
ECPA Associate Fellow
Director, Prosequence

Speakers:

TRUUS HUISMAN, Unilever

MAJA WESSELS, Formerly Honeywell Europe

PETRA LAUX, Novartis

13:00 Lunch – Sponsored by

The Journal of Public Affairs

14:30 ECPA QUIZ: THE LISBON TREATY

Sponsored by Public Affairs News

Quiz Master:

RICHARD CORBETT, MEP (PSE)

For the Institutions

BILL NEWTON DUNN, MEP (ALDE)

JEREMY RAND, Council Secretariat

GARETH STEEL, European Commission, tbc

For the Lobbyists

DAVID BOWE, G Plus Consultants

LAURENT CHOKOUALÉ DATOU, APCO, tbc

TEEMU LEHTINEN, Communication EFFECT

15:00 INTEGRATING EVERYTHING?

Chairman: *PROF RINUS VAN SCHENDELEN,*

Erasmus University, Vice Chairman, ECPA

Is there a need for public affairs integration? What are the costs & benefits of such integration? What does such integration imply for the development of the PA function in terms of training & research? What is the role of the ECPA in this area?

Rapporteurs report back from Working Group

Debate

15:45 Coffee Pause

16:00 EUROPE IN THE WORLD

Case studies in the PA of Global Institutions

Chairman: *TOM SPENCER,*

Executive Director, ECPA

“Influencing the UN Process on Climate Change”

Speaker: *ROLAND-JAN MEIJER*

Vice President Environmental Affairs, Holcim

“Influencing Globalisation: the Case of Medicines for the Poor”

Speaker: *DAVID EARNSHAW,*

Burston Marsteller, Brussels.

Formerly of GSK and Oxfam

16:55 Close of Conference

ERIK JONNAERT, Procter & Gamble

Vice-President External Relations

17:00 ECPA Reception



**US & EU APPROACHES TO CLIMATE CHANGE:
TIME FOR A FOREIGN POLICY RENDEZVOUS?**

Lecture delivered to the European Union Center of Excellence, University of Pittsburgh
By Tom Spencer, Vice Chairman, Institute for Environmental Security 11th February 2008

I believe that Climate Change, Energy Security and the challenges of operating in a multi-polar world are central to the evolution of foreign policy in the coming years in all major capitals. For historical reasons we should have a particular interest in the development of US & EU policy. In this Atlantic context Climate Change has been a continued source of conflict, superimposed on more fundamental differences. It need not be a continuing source of disruption, indeed it could be an important trigger for a new and more positive foreign policy rendezvous.

Anyone examining the history of the last seven years might conclude that US & EU approaches to Climate Change are fundamentally different. I regard this as the product of considering too short a timescale. It is true that the fossil fuel lobby has had a greater impact in Washington than in Brussels, but as the American debate emerges from such dominance it is worth reviewing positions adopted during the last seventeen years. The first President Bush signed onto the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change that emerged from the Rio Conference (UNCED June 1992). I was fortunate enough to be involved in the politics of Climate Change even before Rio. Shortly before I was appointed European Parliament Rapporteur on the CO² Energy Tax in 1990, I was approached by a lobbyist from the Global Climate Coalition. He was kind enough to explain to me the fossil fuel lobby's tactics. He announced that the Coalition had an "arm lock" on the US Congress and that he could assure me that no legislation related to Climate Change would successfully emerge from Washington. He defined their strategy as being "to associate any development in this area as a tax and to deny the climate science then emerging from the IPCC". He maintained that these two tactics would "buy fifteen years of profitable time for the fossil fuel industry" and that thereafter all that would remain would be "adaptation". Although the global climate coalition is no more, the success of the fossil fuel lobby in delaying international agreement on Climate Change is without doubt the single most successful campaign in the history of public affairs.

During this period an entirely different approach was being discussed by environmental politicians in the context of Global Legislators Organisation for a Balanced Environment (GLOBE) International, which was chaired by Al Gore before he became Vice President. In addition to Al, John Kerry, Bill Richardson and others were involved in the discussion of the need to involve India and China in any deal to limit greenhouse gas emissions. Their attention was drawn to the 'Contraction and Convergence' analysis of the Global Commons Institute (GCI). C&C, then as now, offers a rational, elegant and equitable way of dividing permissible emissions between the developed and developing world. (www.gci.org.uk) Interest in this continued up to the Kyoto Conference in December 1997.

Popular memory suggests that the 95 to 0 vote in the US Senate on the Byrd-Hagel Resolution was a definitive rejection of the Kyoto Protocol. In fact of course the Resolution was voted on 25th July 1997, well in advance of the Kyoto Conference of the Parties. Its main point was that the US should not be a signatory to any protocol or agreement coming out of Kyoto which would "*mandate new commitments to limit or reduce greenhouse gas emissions for the Annex I Parties, unless the protocol or other agreement also mandates new specific scheduled commitments to limit or reduce greenhouse gas emissions for Developing Country Parties within the same compliance period*". Only subsequently did it refer to rejection on the grounds of "*serious harm to the economy of the United States*". It is clear therefore that the reason for the overwhelming vote in favour was a reflection of a desire to see a genuinely global commitment. Such a commitment is now beginning to appear ten years later in Bali.

The European Union has always favoured "targets and treaties" because that is in line with the traditions of the successful integration of Europe. At Kyoto it was initially resistant to the American suggestion of Emissions Trading. Not the least of the ironies of the situation is that the EU then proceeded to implement the system internally and lay the foundations for a global structure, only to find that the US opposed its own suggestion and claimed to prefer a series of 'technical fixes'. There followed the mammoth struggle over the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol, which finally came into

effect on 16th February 2005. This was rightly seen as a major setback for US foreign policy. Since that date we have witnessed the broad acceptance of the scientific truth of Climate Change as espoused by the IPCC. The Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change was published on 30th October 2006 and has successfully made the economic case for early action. US initiatives at state and municipal level have kept alive interest in Cap and Trade, enabling us to reach the situation after Bali where the three front runners in the US Presidential Election are all committed to a radical shift in US policy under the next Administration.

In March of 2007 I delivered a lecture here entitled “EU Identity, Confidence and Foreign Policy in a Multi-Polar World”. I argued then that public support for foreign policy change depended on the emergence of a clear shared identity. I reviewed the evolution of the European Union’s self identity during the Bush Administration. I argued that the underlying metaprogramme of Europeans was shifting from an internal story about “peace and reunification in Europe” to an externally focused story of “Europe in the World”. I further argued that in order to capitalise on this new metaprogramme the EU would need to overcome both its leadership crisis and the log jam in which it found itself after the rejection of the Constitutional Treaty by France and The Netherlands. I finally argued that the emergence of a multi-polar world was forcing both the EU and the US to review their foreign policies. I suggested that the content of new Atlanticism would be determined by the kind of multi-polar world that emerged. One year on I want to argue that there has been substantial evolution in all these trends. I intend to offer a short review of developments in the EU and of parallel shifts in the US, and then to take a quick look at developments in China and India.

Action on Climate Change dominated the agenda of the European Union in 2007 with political commitments at the highest level undertaken at the March EU Summit and a surprising level of excitement maintained throughout the year at the G8 Summit and in the run up to the Bali Conference. In addition to talk, the EU has offered specific commitments and appears to be facing up to the budgetary implications of its words. Of course there have been mistakes, most notably the rushed adoption of biofuels policy without thinking through the energy versus food trade off. Given the current structural restrictions on EU foreign policy, there has been a successful attempt to shape a strategy built around Climate Change and Energy Security. Perhaps most encouragingly the Union has begun to take seriously the relationship between Climate Change and Security. The June Summit asked for a specific paper on this which is to be debated at the March 2008 Summit. The Institute for Environmental Security has made its own contribution to these discussions. We have been pleased to see the hugely increased attention to the foreign policy implications of environmental issues. We would point in particular to the publication of “The Geopolitics of Climate Change” by Peter Halden of the Swedish Defence Research Agency, which may reasonably be described as the first of a new generation of work combining rigorous analysis and cautious policy recommendation.

Throughout the year there has been a mutually supporting relationship between “Europe in the World” theme and the ratification of the Treaty of Lisbon. The Treaty of course does much more than marginally strengthen the foreign policy apparatus of the Union. However an awareness of shared global threats and the possibility of shared action to counter them has underpinned the case for the new Treaty and reinforced the sense that Europe has turned a page, reasserting the audacity of its hope. The interaction of new leadership from Chancellor Merkel and President Sarkozy has combined positively with the new atmosphere of threat from Russia. While far too many of the choices on energy matters still reflect the strength of relative lobbies, there has emerged a new willingness to look for alternatives which make geopolitical sense. In this context we should note the Commission’s new interest in North Africa and its potential for Concentrated Solar Power.

The landscape for US foreign policy remained grim throughout 2007. The mess in Iraq and the persistence of high levels of suspicion of American foreign policy intentions, combined with the collapse of the credibility of the incumbent Administration, has made it a period of continued hangover from the early rhetorical excesses of President George W Bush. The year was also notable for the increased expression of interest in Climate Change and Security issues by the American military. The sub-prime mortgage crisis and the approaching recession has further darkened the picture. The re-birth of Al Gore and the American acceptance of the UN as the inevitable arena for the discussion of Climate Change completes the picture.

To an outsider the most striking feature of the Presidential Primary campaign is the reawakening of debate on issues other than the “culture wars”. Again there is a feeling that America has turned a page

on recent history and wants to once again feel comfortable with itself and with the world. In its turn the world is keen to discover what policies this revived America will espouse. Any of the three remaining serious Presidential hopefuls would, by several orders of magnitude, be preferable to the current Administration. Senator McCain is seen as sound on climate change policy and unlikely to end up in the pocket of the fossil fuel lobby. He has been helped by developments in all three wings of the Conservative Movement. Creation Care has grown amongst Evangelicals. The United States Climate Action Partnership (USCAP) has clearly demonstrated the determination of much of American big business to take climate change seriously. There has been a growing awareness in the Realist foreign policy community that climate change has serious implications for US security. California looms large in Europe's awareness of American actions on climate change with the high profile activities of Governor Schwarzenegger and the increased investment in alternative energy. However the issue of Energy Security has not been integrated into the wider debate on climate change and foreign policy during the campaign. 'Energy Independence' is not a satisfactory solution if it means greater dependence on domestic coal and Canadian tar sands. As in Europe, the food versus energy debate over biofuels has been improperly subverted by the power of agricultural lobbies. An incoming President will need to integrate these policy perspectives. Senator Obama holds out at least the possibility of a radical evolution of US foreign policy that might achieve a dramatic reversal of the decline of America's reputation in the eyes of the world.

Relations with China and India are clearly central to any meaningful deal at Copenhagen. The year has seen continuing Chinese success in economic terms, but also a greater awareness in Beijing of the importance of environment issues, both in their own right and their potential for domestic political instability. The Chinese position at Bali was distinctly positive, however any US-China deal remains freighted with military and geopolitical overtones and enmeshed in a series of mutual dependencies such as food and finance. India has continued both its economic growth and its willingness to exercise great power status, but it remains trapped in previous rhetoric and is strangely naïve on the implications of climate change for its own future. No deal in Copenhagen is possible without recognition of the geopolitics of the relationship between the four largest economies.

The two year period of negotiation leading from Bali to Poznan and on to Copenhagen may reasonably be regarded as humanity's last, best chance to regain control of the climate change situation. The Presidential Election means that the US will be incapable of decisive action in 2008. Unfortunately the European Union is likely to be distracted in 2009 by the election of a new Parliament, the appointment of a new Commission and the arrival of a new Treaty including the appointment of a new President of the Council. The Poznan meeting in December 2008 falls between the US Election result and the inauguration of a new President. Previous precedents for such a situation are not encouraging. The outcome of Bali "left a space" for the new Administration, but it will still require a considerable effort of will for the Americans to re-enter complex negotiations in the first twelve months of the new Presidency. No new Administration is likely to meekly renounce its policy positions of the previous eight years and quietly go along with the rest of the world. As the "biggest guy on the block" the US will want to arrive with distinctive policies of its own. It is my belief that the question of Climate Change and Security provides the best issue for Washington to bring to the world's attention. As such it could provide a rapid rendezvous with EU policy and form the necessary geopolitical underpinning for a deal with China, India and the developing world.

