

## Two Clashes Of Cultures

Today President Bush enraged President Chirac and many other denizens of Old Europe by strongly **endorsing the entry of Turkey into the European Union.**

President Bush said on Tuesday that Turkey belongs in the European Union and that Europe is "not the exclusive club of a single religion" in what amounted to a rejection of French President Jacques Chirac.

[...]

Bush held up Turkey as an example of a Muslim democracy and said its entry to the EU would be "a crucial advance in relations between the Muslim world and the West, because you are part of both."

"Including Turkey in the EU would prove that Europe is not the exclusive club of a single religion, and it would expose the 'clash of civilizations' as a passing myth of history," Bush said.

Mr Chirac, as is his custom, responded not by addressing what was said but by complaining about who was saying it:

Chirac said on Monday that Bush should not comment on Turkey's EU entry hopes as EU affairs were none of his business.

[...]

"It is like me trying to tell the United States how it should manage its relations with Mexico," he added.

Indeed. Or with Iraq?

Anyway, this clash between the two Presidents nicely encapsulates the difference between two rival conceptions of the European Union. In one conception, it is a glorified Customs Union, in which the members solemnly promise not to prevent the free exchange of goods and services, or the free movement of workers or tourists, from one member state to another. It could also regulate such things as the colours of electrical wiring, so that goods manufactured in one member state do not cause unnecessary shocks in another. This conception has largely been realized, and is

on balance a good thing. In the other conception, the EU is a new European nation, complete with armed forces and a unified foreign policy and taxation system, outranking all its members' existing institutions and becoming a 'counterweight' (i.e. an enemy) to the United States in world politics.

The latter vision is insane as well as thoroughly bad in every detail. Nevertheless, it is widely held in Europe, and the conflict between that and the sane conception of the EU, which is also widely held, is the real 'clash of civilisations', or cultures, that is relevant to this issue. This is the reason for President Chirac's visceral rejection of EU membership for Turkey. For in his conception of what 'EU membership' would mean, not only would unlimited numbers of Turkish people be able to trade freely, travel and work in France, to the benefit of all, they would be able to vote there.

By the way, as long as that other clash of civilizations remains unresolved – between Islamofascism and the rest of the world including in particular the secular half of Turkish political culture – we should regard Turkish membership of even the first type of EU with some suspicion. But if carefully implemented, it could help the right side to prevail in both clashes.

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## Trading EU seats for support

Why didn't Bush invited Turkey into unified US of A & T?

If you don't like EU economy or politics then why would you advise your friend to go into it? How can Bush possibly promise Turkey to assist with EU membership?

Many questions like this can be raised. Not all of them are irrational.

by a reader on Thu, 07/01/2004 - 09:04 | [reply](#)

## Turkey and the EU

As surprising as it might seem, even though the EU is a festering pool of economically illiterate surrender monkeys with delusions of grandeur, there are worse people, like the group to whom they want to surrender.

by [Alan Forrester](#) on Sat, 11/20/2004 - 02:10 | [reply](#)

## Turkey and bush

its just not right to do things like that even if you are President

by kristie on Wed, 11/24/2004 - 02:18 | [reply](#)

## you are so right

you are so right

by kristie Leigh on Wed, 11/24/2004 - 02:20 | [reply](#)

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