

*The Thyssen German American Dialogue Seminar Series presents:*

**ONE YEAR AFTER 9/11:  
A CRITICAL APPRAISAL OF GERMAN-AMERICAN RELATIONS**  
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After 9/11/02, nothing has been left the same. As seen from America, the world has changed, while viewed from Europe it is America that has been transformed. While signs of empathy abounded in Germany last September and Chancellor Gerhard Schröder promised “unlimited support” to President George W. Bush, over the year this promise gave way to vocal criticism and suspicion. Today, after a bitter election campaign marked by Schröder’s electoral tactic of opposing a U.S.-led military action against Iraq and the Bush administration’s angered response and cold-shouldered rebuke of the re-elected chancellor, there can be no doubt that we are facing an increasingly deeper transatlantic divide.

**THE ORIGINS OF THE TRANSATLANTIC DIVIDE**

Robert Kagan, a very knowledgeable American observer, explains these cleavages with the fundamentally different ideals and ideas both countries have on international affairs, above all on the appraisal of power.

It is time to stop pretending that Europeans and Americans share a common view of the world, or even that they occupy the same world. On the all-important question of power – the efficacy of power, the morality of power, the desirability of power – American and European perspectives are diverging. Europe is turning away from power, or to put it a little differently, it is moving beyond power into a self-contained world of laws and rules and transnational negotiation and cooperation. It is entering a post-historical paradise of peace and relative prosperity, the realization of Kant’s Perpetual Peace ... The United States, meanwhile, remains mired in history, exercising power in the anarchic Hobbesian world where international laws and rules are unreliable and where true security and the defense and promotion of a liberal order still depend on the possession and use of military might. That is why on major strategic and international questions today, Americans are from Mars and Europeans are from Venus: They agree on little and understand one another less and less.<sup>1</sup>

I agree with his counsel that the transatlantic divide is deep, long in development, and likely to endure. When it comes to setting national priorities, determining threats, defining challenges, and shaping and implementing foreign and defense policies, the United States and Europe have parted ways. The terror attacks of 9/11 were not the cause, but, rather, the catalyst that brought this division to the fore.

As Kagan explains, the most serious division concerns the assessment of threats and the appraisal of power. While the United States sees military force as a legitimate and effective instrument of foreign policy, the Europeans prefer diplomatic negotiations and

trade incentives. This difference in strategic culture does not spring naturally from the national character of Americans and Europeans. What Europeans now consider their more peaceful strategic culture, is, historically speaking, quite new. Until World War II, the Europeans believed in *Machtpolitik*, while the Americans, as children of the Enlightenment, extolled the virtues of commerce and appealed to international law over brute force. When the United States was weak, it practiced strategies of indirection, the strategies of weakness; now that the United States is powerful, it behaves as powerful nations do. When the European great powers were strong, they believed in strength and martial glory. Now they see the world through the eyes of weaker powers. These very different points of view, weak versus strong, naturally produce different strategic judgments, different assessments of threats and different judgments on the proper means of addressing them.

After World War II, the Europeans lost their role as world powers and – contrary to the United States – were no longer able to project power worldwide. Initially, they retained some strategic relevance because of their location at the center of the East-West conflict. Europe was the political and military battleground of the conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union. Protected by an umbrella of American military power and politically endorsed by Washington, a process of economic and political integration unfolded in Western Europe, leading to the formation of the European Union (EU) and the establishment of a European Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). During the cold war, the Europeans could, by and large, abstain from international conflicts. When in the early (1990s) violent conflict broke out in the Balkans, they tried to cope by using the tested instruments of the EU, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and the United Nations (UN). When this didn't work, they relied on the United States diplomatically (Dayton) and militarily (Kosovo).

The Maastricht agreements of the European Union and their role in stabilizing the Balkans strengthened Europe's self-confidence. In spite of their many disagreements, the Europeans now see themselves growing into an autonomous actor in international affairs. Only passingly do they realize that, for the United States, Europe has lost its central importance. Instead, they resented America's role in the Kosovo campaign, when Washington dominated the military operations and consulted them only marginally even though it had been a joint NATO mission. The lesson the Europeans learned from this experience – or should have learned – was to improve their military capabilities in order to be taken more seriously. This was the purpose of the “Headline Goals” that the European Council passed in Helsinki in December 1999. These postulate the establishment of a European crisis reaction force, numbering 60,000 men and being independently deployable by 2003. This force should not serve as a basis for acting as a global player – which many in Washington advocate but are, at the same time, concerned about – rather, it should be Europe's currency to be taken seriously. However, no European government was at that time – nor is now – ready to increase defense spending to a degree necessary for an independent global power projection. None of the European democracies sees themselves threatened militarily; rather, they feel challenged by numerous economic, societal, and ecological risks that require both their attention and their resources.

The collapse of the Soviet Union made the United States the world's only superpower. It now is, in the words of Sam Huntington, “a lonely superpower in a uni-multipolar system”<sup>2</sup> not checked or balanced by a powerful competitor. China is a

potential but not an actual challenge to American power. America can now act like “a benign hegemon,” though, in the eyes of many other countries, it behaves like a “rogue superpower.” The United States, however, sees itself as “a lonely sheriff,” safeguarding law and order wherever its global interests are affected. If necessary, it is prepared to use military force to enforce these interests. Its strategy was successful in the 1991 Gulf war against Iraq – the largest military campaign since the Vietnam War – and a few years later in Kosovo. Although the East-West conflict is over, the United States needs large military forces for exactly these kinds of emergencies, for projecting power globally, and for safeguarding against the risks emanating from rogue states, especially if they possess weapons of mass destruction.

With the cold war over, the Europeans wanted to reap the peace dividend and cut down their military forces significantly. Today, the discrepancies in power between Europe and the United States are tremendous. As the Gulf and the Balkan wars demonstrated, only the United States is able to fight a massive land war or a decisive air battle. The Europeans have neither the essential intelligence nor the logistics, nor do their forces have the deployability and survivability indispensable for a successful campaign. Nevertheless, and in American eyes unjustified, they demand to be consulted like equal partners.

For Washington, the lesson from the Gulf and Kosovo wars was that the United States could act much more swiftly and more effectively without relying on its NATO partners, allies who constrain its room of maneuver without contributing militarily in a significant way. This judgment has determined U.S. behavior after 9/11.

### **THE IMPACT OF 9/11: FROM EMPHATIC SOLIDARITY TO CRITICAL COOPERATION**

On September 11, for the first time in history, the American homeland was attacked when the WTC and the Pentagon, the foremost symbols of its economic and military power, were hit. After an initial period of shock and with a strong dose of patriotism, the Bush Administration acted with care and decisiveness. It saw its anti-terror campaign as an act of homeland defense, as a war against terrorism. Since this was above all a national contingency, the United States called on the United Nations only to legitimize its use of force in self-defense. It was NATO Secretary General Robertson, not the United States, who invoked the assistance clause of Article 5 of the NATO treaty. He wanted the NATO members to have a say in the American anti-terror campaign. Initially, the Bush Administration had asked for the sharing of intelligence information and for limited over-fly and basing rights. Additionally, NATO naval units were deployed to the Mediterranean and AWACS to the U.S. airspace to free U.S. forces for other tasks. But Washington declined to accept any further military assistance from its allies. Much to their annoyance it advised them: “Don’t call us, we’ll call if we need you.”<sup>3</sup> It called on them later for peacekeeping in Kabul after the fighting had been done, for small German and British Special Forces to fight in eastern Afghanistan, and for anti-ABC units to be deployed in Kuwait. Instead of relying on its allies, the United States formed a “floating coalition” (Donald Rumsfeld) of those states whose assistance it needed most: Russia, whose political support was essential; Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan, from which the U.S. requested over-fly and temporary basing rights, and, above all, Pakistan, which served as a crucial staging area. This strange coalition was created without regard to previous concerns, such as respect of

human rights by the government of these states. It was formed exclusively to meet military needs. The mission determined the coalition, not a coalition (such as NATO) the mission.<sup>4</sup>

The initial European reaction to September 11 was one of empathy and solidarity. Chancellor Schröder assured President Bush that Germany supported the United States in its war against terrorism without exception, and offered its military support. In a statement before the *Bundestag*, Schröder announced a new foreign policy. He said that a “mature Germany” had the responsibility to participate in military missions outside the NATO perimeters. Against heavy opposition from members of the chancellor’s own coalition, the *Bundestag* in November 2001 approved the deployment of *Bundeswehr* units in operation “Enduring Freedom.” To get a broad majority, Schröder linked this decision to a vote of confidence. However, he made the German offer for military support contingent on satisfactory consultations. He asked for a role that President George H. Bush had suggested to his predecessor: being a partner in leadership. For domestic consumption, Schröder afterwards highlighted Germany’s role as an equal partner to the United States – which it was not – and emphasized the *Bundeswehr*’s peacekeeping mission in Kabul while putting the special forces’ fighting mission behind a veil of secrecy.

All too soon, the honeymoon in German-American relations was over. Not only did Germany and the United States differ in their evaluations of the terrorist threat and how best to combat it, but some of the old conflicts that had been swept under the rug when the towers of the WTC collapsed returned to the forefront. Berlin neither shared Bush’s abhorrence of the “axis of terror” nor his designation of Iraq and others as rogue states. While it wanted to see the Al Qaida terrorists rounded up and tried by international courts, it felt that a strategy of engagement was better suited to bringing countries such as Libya or Iran back into the community of civilized nations and not one of demarcation and bedeviling. Further, such an indirect strategy best served Germany’s economic interests.

The Europeans, particularly the Germans, still have problems overcoming the mentality of the cold war and coming to terms with their role in a post-East-West conflict world. Under the umbrella of superpower rivalry they could, in the past, concentrate on the problems in Europe and leave the rest of the world to the United States. They have been slow to realize that in an interdependent world, challenges in other regions affect them as they do the United States. While the Germans are well aware of the interconnectedness that exists in the economic sphere, they prefer not to deal with global security challenges. With the Soviet threat gone and German unification accomplished, they believe in an “end of history,”<sup>5</sup> at least as military conflicts on their own frontiers are concerned. The report of the Weizsäcker Commission on Common Security and the Future of the *Bundeswehr* states that, “For the first time in its history, Germany is surrounded on all sides solely by allies and integration partners and faces no threat to its territory from neighbors. This new basis of German security is not of a transitory nature, but will remain valid for the foreseeable future.”<sup>6</sup> The Germans thus have difficulty understanding the dimensions of the terrorist threat or other global challenges. Weary of the experiences of two world wars and a trying cold war, they, more than any other western state, long for the eternal peace envisioned by Kant.

Though cooperating with Washington closely in practical matters such as intelligence collaboration, and exhibiting a strong rhetoric on solidarity, Germany resented the American unilateral approach to the war on terrorism. Besides bilateral consultations that were considered adequate, Germany would have preferred a more active role for NATO. It was concerned that the functions of the alliance would be watered down and its cohesion weakened if NATO were used only as a service organization and a reservoir – or “toolbox” – of forces and equipment, and not as a center of strategic and operational planning. Berlin accepted Washington’s criticism that European military capabilities were no match for the United States but asked for understanding of the fact that Germany was in the process of dealing with pressing reforms of its social systems (health, social security, education, and ecology) and that it considered these tasks as important as fighting terrorism. The victim of previous terrorist attacks – the “Black September” killings at the Munich Olympics 1972 and the RAF (Red Army Fraction) attacks in the mid-seventies – though spared a major terrorist attack, Berlin felt that there were no complete immunity to terrorism. However, stringent new national and European anti-terrorist measures were agreed upon.

Another difference is Germany’s attitude towards the Arab-Israeli conflict. Like Washington, Berlin supports the establishment of an independent Palestinian state while upholding the integrity and security of Israel. To improve the effectiveness of the Palestinian Authority, the EU had financially assisted Yassir Arafat’s provisional government. Unlike the United States, however, the EU continued to treat him as an elected president as long as he had the Palestinians’ support. However, the Europeans did not refrain from criticism of his inability or unwillingness to control the terror inflicted on Israeli citizens by Arab suicide bombers. The German government further supported EU peace initiatives. Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer also tried his hand at a peace agreement, though without much success. In German eyes, it was a prime American responsibility to put strong pressure on both sides to come to terms with each other. Berlin regretted the U.S. government’s position that was seen as too supportive of the Israeli government, but it understood U.S. domestic constraints. It violently rejected, however, the insinuation of Washington officials that the German position was colored by anti-Semitism. Only slowly have the Americans come to realize that suicide attacks cannot be prevented by an Israeli occupation of the West Bank, the internment of Arafat, or the deliberate killing of Arabs suspected of being terrorist leaders.<sup>7</sup> However, it seems that a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict does not figure prominently on Washington’s agenda, compared to the situation in Iraq.

Flowing from their contrasting attitudes toward military force, the United States and Germany differ in their approach to international law and organizations. Berlin believes in international contracts to contain a multitude of post-cold war risks, be they ecological degradation, ethnic conflict, organized crime, or arms proliferation. It supports the existing body of agreements on the environment and on arms control, and it was very concerned when the Bush administration cancelled the ABM treaty and declared that it would neither submit to Congress for ratification the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) nor the verification agreement on biological weapons. Washington’s condemnation of the Kyoto protocol establishing limits on the output of carbon dioxide and retracting its signature from the Rome treaty on the establishment of an International Criminal Court (ICC) were severely criticized. The latter led to a serious crisis in transatlantic relations when Washington set up a linkage between the prolongation of the UN mandate for Bosnia and immunity for U.S. troops from

prosecution by the ICC. It was difficult to reach a compromise between the U.S. position that its nationals should not be subject to ICC indictment and the European stand that ICC's rules should apply to all nationals without exception. The one-year exception granted – with more or less automatic renewal – creates two classes of international subjects: persons who, as citizens of a member state, can be tried before the ICC for war crimes, and those that are immune as their countries do not subscribe to the Court's statutes.

Many transatlantic trade conflicts also stem from Washington's tendency to legislate unilateral restrictions contrary to its commitment to a liberal international trading system. The Europeans resented especially a Senate decision ("Super 301") of the 1990s (still in force) embargoing all states trading with Cuba, Libya or Iran. The EU members believe that with the creation of the World Trade Organization (WTO), unilateral trade restrictions are something of the past. New U.S. import taxes on steel and additional farm subsidies have also caused strong negative European reactions.

I do not think President Bush's appeal to the United Nations indicates a fundamental change in this administration's skeptical attitude toward the U.N.;<sup>8</sup> it was, rather, a tactical move to win broader acceptance for its strategy on Iraq both at home and abroad. With their skepticism, if not outright hostility to multilateral arrangements, the United States puts into question the system of international order carefully crafted during the twentieth century. As Kagan has pointed out, only a global superpower can afford doing so as only it is in a position to enforce its interests at any time and everywhere on the globe. But is the United States ignoring the danger that the world could tumble into a state of global anarchy if other states followed its example – or that it will have to intervene even more frequently in other parts of the world to create stable conditions conducive to its interests? Today, in many regions, such as in Europe, stability is maintained by Lockean treaty systems. In the long term, a Hobbesian global system would severely limit America's room of maneuver. I therefore share Sir Michael Howard's advice that the United States "must cease to think of itself as a heroic lone protagonist in a cosmic war against "evil," and reconcile itself to a less spectacular and more humdrum role" that it has played so well over the last fifty years: "that of the leading participant in a flawed but still indispensable system of cooperative global governance."<sup>9</sup>

## **CONCERN ABOUT THE FUTURE OF NATO**

In the past, the strongest link between North America and Europe has been the North Atlantic Treaty Alliance (NATO). Since the end of the East-West conflict and the collapse of the Warsaw Pact, NATO has undergone tremendous changes. It has gone from being an alliance of the collective defense of Europe, to being transformed into an organization for collective security in Europe, safeguarding peace by projecting stability and communicating its capability for crisis management. This new orientation required additional NATO capacities and an adaptation of its strategic concept. In 1999, NATO members launched a Defense Capability Initiative (DCI) (which is far from implemented), committing themselves to modernizing their forces and strengthening their mobility and sustainability. In the 1999 strategic concept, attention was called to the risks of terrorism, but no pertinent counter-terrorist measures were subsequently initiated.

The Bush administration insisted that for the United States, the war on terrorism was an act of homeland defense. Because of negative experiences with allied consultations during the Kosovo campaign, it wanted to go it alone. Washington did not call on allies early on since it hated to fight another “war by committee.”<sup>10</sup> Further, NATO was badly equipped to fight an anti-terror war outside the confines of the NATO area. During the East-West confrontation, two heavily armed military blocs had checked each other in Central Europe by the threat of mutual annihilation; now the challenge flows from non-governmental terrorist groups whose weapons are psychological and not military in nature. Islamic fundamentalists are driven by a religious ideology, and they thrive in the fertile soil of the Third World’s failing states. Under these conditions, the United States cannot use its superior military power for containment. It is ineffective against terrorists who are convinced of their mission and are prepared to risk their own lives.

The United States, however, continues to believe in military power and has embarked on a gigantic program to equip its forces with modern weapons, information technology, and advanced command systems. The United States is rightly concerned about the decline of European defense expenditures. It criticizes the Europeans for having missed the revolution in military affairs and not being prepared to invest in their armed forces properly. With an eye on Germany, they denounce the discrepancy between Berlin’s demand to be treated as an equal and the military capabilities it has deployed. A big problem is thus the widening qualitative gap between U.S. and allied forces. Another problem concerns strategic disparities. To be able to carry out a disarming strike on any attacker, especially if it possesses nuclear, biological or chemical weapons of mass destruction, the new American National Security Strategy entails preemptive strikes for defensive purposes. For its implementation, Washington builds modern conventional and nuclear weapons to prevent any further blow at America or American interests. A national preemptive intervention option, in contrast to one legitimized by the United Nations, contradicts European convictions that military force should be used primarily for self-defense or for purposes of multilateral peace enforcement, and nuclear weapons only as weapons of last resort. It is therefore highly doubtful whether the NATO allies will accept similar modifications in alliance strategy. They are also concerned about Washington’s request to reorganize the NATO command structure. While the United States argues for adapting this structure to the new challenges of terrorism, the Europeans are concerned that prestige symbols dear to them will be infringed. They rightly criticize, though, that the U.S. recall of General Kernan as SACLANT preempted future joint decisions and violated NATO’s consensus principle.

These disagreements strain the cohesion and credibility of the Atlantic alliance. The Bush administration continues to emphasize the importance of NATO, but only rarely views it as an instrument of collective defense. For Washington, the value of the Alliance lies first in the political stabilization of Europe, not only through its contribution to peacekeeping in the Balkans but also as a framework for integrating the Central European states. Accordingly, Washington supports a large round of NATO expansion taking in not only the lead candidate Slovenia, but also the Baltic states and Slovakia, Bulgaria, and Romania. Simultaneously, the U.S. is restructuring its relations with Russia. In future, issues of common interest will be discussed in a new “Permanent Joint Council,” comprised of all NATO members and Russia, that has replaced the old NATO-Russia Council. These trends will lead to an even stronger Europeanization of the Alliance and to an increased emphasis on its political functions.

Today the United States can easily do without NATO because it no longer depends on the European territory or potential as it did during the cold war. In contrast, the Europeans continue to need NATO. They need the transatlantic umbilical cord, both as an institution for collective defense and for policy coordination across the Atlantic. The role of the United States as a “European pacifier”<sup>11</sup> remains crucial: through its involvement in Europe, the United States provides a counter-weight to the worries and suspicions that Germany, with its increased political potential after unification, or a revitalized and aggressive Russia, might upset the balance of power in Europe. The Europeans are therefore not at all interested in breaking away from the United States – nor are they attracted to the role of junior partner that the U.S. envisions for them. This asymmetry makes for future conflicts. How can they be solved?

The present clash of countervailing expectations, if allowed to prevail, will further poison transatlantic relations. Senator Lugar<sup>12</sup> has identified three schools of thought on how to correct this situation. The first accepts the status quo and supports the Europeanization of the alliance; it promotes the process in the hope that the United States can one day pull out of Europe militarily. The announcement that the United States will refrain from new engagements in the Balkans points in this direction. The Europeans with ESDP and their rapid reaction force now being formed should be asked to assume the responsibility for stabilizing the region. The “NATO first” variant of this model favors increased European efforts in security and defense policy but upholds the primacy of NATO. It further expects the alliance to develop procedures for crisis management in areas outside Europe. This approach is based on the principle of equal risk sharing (i.e., no division of labor between NATO and EU), along with an integration of the ESDP into alliance structures and processes. A third school envisions a future for the alliance only if the Europeans are willing to undertake greater efforts to acquire improved defense capabilities. NATO needs balanced, flexible, well-armed forces that can be deployed at short notice so it can conduct sustained operations across a range of military options. Only then would it be an effective military instrument for the transatlantic community that is up to the new challenges of combating international terrorism and preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Lugar has therefore urged NATO to decide soon “whether it wants to be relevant in addressing major security challenges of our day,”<sup>13</sup> or whether it will risk falling into oblivion.

The forthcoming summit in Prague in November will be a critical test of the resolve of NATO members. The meeting has already been hailed as a “transformation summit.” Besides issuing an invitation to up to seven Central and Eastern European countries to join the alliance, NATO has to decide whether it is content with the predominantly political functions it now has, in which the Americans “make the dinner” (do the fighting), and the Europeans “do the dishes” (work at peacekeeping).<sup>14</sup> Or will NATO, as former chairman of the NATO Military Committee Klaus Naumann argues for, declare that it joins the United States in its war against terrorism and decide on a sweeping modernization of its forces that would enable it to do so effectively?<sup>15</sup>

If the Europeans want to be taken seriously by the United States, they must show robust political determination and develop the necessary military capabilities. The question is whether the European governments are truly prepared to make the necessary efforts, given the meager budgetary resources they allot to this task. Will America in return afford the Europeans a larger measure of influence? These will be the decisive questions for the future of the Alliance.



A strong European pillar formed by the European Union with an effective ESDP allowing for swift action could strengthen NATO if it operated in close concert with the United States and Canada. Representatives of the EU, such as the High Representative for CFSP, Xavier Solana, and Commissioner for External Relations, Chris Patten, should participate in NATO council meetings to ensure timely coordination between NATO and the EU. Both organizations should also have joint planning capabilities and should increase the interoperability of their forces. A prerequisite is, of course, that EU members actually meet their "Headline Goal" capabilities agreed on in 1999 and manage to establish a credible European Crisis Reaction Force by 2003. The events of 9/11 and the desire of most European states to demonstrate their solidarity with the United States with bilateral acts, have, however, slowed down this process. It is further handicapped by the bottom-up approach in which individual members offer forces but find that there are neither joint planning goals nor common criteria to be met. Thus, the Europeans still have to go a long way before this force is deployable, both according to an autonomous European decision and in a NATO combined joint task force.

Due to the growing estrangement between America and Europe, the Atlantic alliance is currently at serious risk of losing its credibility.<sup>16</sup> To deny these dangers as some NATO aficionados do<sup>17</sup> will not help the situation. Both sides are well advised to take notice of these trends and respond with forceful initiatives. I hope that the alliance in Prague will commit itself to a sweeping modernization program and follow through with it. The result could be a new NATO. "NATO I," created in 1949 with the signing of the Washington Treaty, was a loose, defensive alliance. The much more robust "NATO II" that replaced it in the early 1950s, as an organ of collective defense, guaranteed European security through the roughest days of the East-West conflict. Only an equally strong but different "NATO III" would be capable of ending the present period of doubt and dissatisfaction, and be ready to meet twenty-first century challenges.

### **FOR A REVITALIZED TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONSHIP**

I believe that Germany has a special responsibility for revitalizing the transatlantic relationship. Germany owes much to the United States: after World War II, the United States brought the outlaw back into the community of nations; during the East-West conflict it protected the Federal Republic from military aggression; and during German reunification, the first Bush administration effectively assisted this process. However, because dependencies create aversions, there have always been bouts of Anti-Americanism. They are strongest with left-wing intellectuals. As after the NATO two-track decision on missile deployment in 1979, German pacifists in the current debate on intervention in Iraq are concerned that the United States might use its military force precipitously and unwisely. They take to the moral high ground, condemning any use of force except for a narrow self-defense.<sup>18</sup> Many resent the display of American capitalism, which they blame for the negative effects of globalization and against which they take to the streets. German anti-Americanism is also a manifestation of the weak against the strong, especially if it comes from a German chancellor. Schröder's argument for a "*Deutscher Weg*,"<sup>19</sup> a special German way of acting in international affairs, was a sign of weakness in the election campaign and served to improve his popular standing. His promise of unconditional support of the United States thus gave way to criticism and suspicion. Foreign Minister Fischer (Greens), for his part, has avoided a strong anti-American bias, emphasizing the multilateral nature of German

foreign policy. When Washington stepped up its campaign against Iraq, the issue of military intervention became a prime election issue. Opposition contender Edmund Stoiber (CSU) was caught between his own strong conviction that Germany's part was at the side of its European and American partners and the strong anti-war mood among the voters to which he bowed in order not to impair his chances at the polls. Stoiber emphasized that Berlin should join its allies in an effort to bring the UN inspectors back into Iraq. But he was careful to avoid any clear-cut statement on this issue – thus risking his foreign policy credibility.

The question at issue is what the West should do about Iraq. There is no doubt that the Iraqi regime has violated numerous UN resolutions and is building weapons of mass destruction. But seen through German eyes, there is, by and large, no clear and imminent danger that the Iraq will use them soon. Should the West give priority to getting the inspectors back in by putting pressure on Saddam Hussein, or should it plan for regime change whatever Hussein does? Will a military attack on Iraq solve the problem? Israel could be the first target of Iraqi retaliation. Who will take over after Saddam Hussein is eliminated? Contrary to Afghanistan, the West cannot rely on a unified opposition against the current regime. A power vacuum in Baghdad could necessitate a long U.S. or UN presence. Also, Iraq might break up into separate states not necessarily at peace with each other and their neighbors. Turkey is especially determined not to see this happen, since such a development could exacerbate its Kurdish minority problem. A war on Iraq is likely to also intensify other conflicts such as those in Afghanistan, Kashmir, and the Arab-Israeli conflict. It might also contribute to regime change in the Saudi kingdom. A military intervention could thus bring more turmoil to the Islamic world rather than settling an already highly unstable region.

Chancellor Schröder vigorously criticized what he saw as a significant change in American strategy on Iraq, with calls for disarmament giving way to regime change. In appealing to the pacifist and anti-capitalist feelings of his electorate, Schröder categorically ruled out any German participation in military action against Iraq. In the past Berlin had indicated it would join its partners, though reluctantly, provided there was no alternative and that the mission was legitimized by a clear UN mandate. Now most German politicians, from government and opposition alike (except CDU foreign policy expert Wolfgang Schäuble), argue that the political costs are too high and the *Bundeswehr* forces stretched too thin to participate in a military campaign. It will be interesting to see whether or how Schröder and his Red-Green coalition would back-off from this commitment, which runs counter to the German interest to be considered as a responsible and equal partner. Given Germany's European orientation, it would most likely align with France in trying to stave off a military intervention. How the Iraq issue is resolved will have a deep effect on the future transatlantic relationship.

President Bush used his spring trip to Europe to acquaint the Europeans with his view of the world and to invite them to join in the U.S. global strategy. In Berlin, Bush was very understanding of German concerns and called on the country to cooperate closely with the United States in building the house of freedom and meeting the challenges of a larger world. He also warned of a "new totalitarian threat" coming from regimes that sponsor terror and develop weapons of mass destruction. "No hint of conscience would prevent their use." And he counseled: "Wishful thinking might bring comfort, but not security. Call this a strategic challenge; call it, as I do, axis of evil; call it by any name you choose, but let us speak the truth. If we ignore this threat, we invite certain blackmail, and place millions of our citizens in grave danger."<sup>20</sup>

The Bush visit certainly improved the climate of transatlantic relations, but it neither solved the underlying problems nor changed the German government's view of the situation. Besides different views of the world – which will not change any time soon – the major problem continues to be the huge discrepancy in political and military power that makes for different policy priorities on both sides of the Atlantic. Germany is well advised to work at strengthening the European pillar in this equation, enabling Europe to speak with one voice. This task is urgent, not in order for Europe to build a counterweight against the United States, but in order to be taken seriously. In spite of its noble intentions, Europe, in most instances, still acts like a conglomeration of nation states that follow their (often parochial) national interests. The German voice will only be heeded if it is heard in unison with that of its partners.

Besides better political coordination, the Europeans in general and the Germans in particular should improve their military forces. Although they are correct in emphasizing that states also need non-military capabilities for crisis management, they will gain credibility if they can dispose over convincing military capabilities. The reform of the *Bundeswehr* continues at a snail's pace, given the budgetary restrictions that are likely to increase due to the enormous flood damage of this summer. A full implementation of the Weizsäcker Commission's proposals would be a significant achievement. Its main message was to cut down on manpower and outsource services in order to invest in hardware research and development. The biggest problem is how to attract high-quality personnel without significantly increasing pay and perks. Once the dust of the campaign has settled, there might be a new approach to reform – but not very likely any additional funds for a heavily under-financed *Bundeswehr*.

In the foreseeable future, there will be no power equilibrium between the United States and Europe, nor does there need to be one. To reduce tensions, both sides will be well advised to agree on a new division of labor. During the East-West conflict the United States guaranteed western Europe's security and well-being with its superior military power, while the Europeans provided the territory and financial resources. This also gave the United States a say in European affairs. In a new burden-sharing, the United States would project power globally, while the Europeans should assume larger responsibilities for European stability and use their CFSP to assist the United States in selected regions outside the European continent. However, a more unified Europe, relying on its own military capabilities, will not always share U.S. assessments of international risks and fall into step with U.S. global strategy without a word of criticism. But such a Europe could make its voice be heard better and could expect to be treated with respect, not condescension.

To avoid a growing alienation between Europe and the United States, both need to consult regularly and candidly. American unilateralism will continue to be a big problem, as will European parochialism. However, the more both regions are enmeshed in complex interdependencies, the less they can risk being estranged. They will realize that they need each other, in spite of different values, priorities, and difficulties understanding each other. The Europeans in general and the Germans in particular should see the United States as their greatest ally, and the United States should recognize that even a superpower “can't go it alone,”<sup>21</sup> but needs to have partners to fulfill its mission of safeguarding peace and freedom in the world. The United States will then recognize that the European Union, in spite of its deficiencies, is its best possible partner.

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#### ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Robert Kagan, "Power and Weakness." *Policy Review*, June/July 2002, p. 3.
- <sup>2</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, "The Lonely Superpower." *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 78, No. 2 (March/April 1999), pp. 39, 42 & 49. See also John Ikenberry, "America's Imperial Ambition." *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 81, No. 5 (September/October 2002), pp. 45-60.
- <sup>3</sup> John Vinocur, "America's 'We'll Call If We Need You' War." *The International Herald Tribune*, 10/03/01.
- <sup>4</sup> Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul D. Wolfowitz at a conference in Brussels, February 2, 2002. Presse- und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung (Ed.), *Stichworte zur Sicherheitspolitik*, Special Edition, February 2002, p. 6.
- <sup>5</sup> Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History?" *The National Interest*, Summer 1989, reprinted in *Dialogue*, No. 89 (3/1990), p. 8-13.
- <sup>6</sup> *Gemeinsame Sicherheit und Zukunft der Bundeswehr*. Bericht der Kommission an die Bundesregierung, 05/23/00, English Summary, p. 12.
- <sup>7</sup> See "Bush Statement On Mideast Reflects Tension in GOP." *The Washington Post*, 04/07/02.
- <sup>8</sup> See "President Bush Addresses U.N. September 12." <http://usinfo.state.gov/topical/pol/usandun/bushun9123.htm>.
- <sup>9</sup> Sir Michael Howard, "Smoke on the horizon." *Financial Times Weekend*, 9/7-8/02, pp. 1 & 3.
- <sup>10</sup> Wesley K. Clark, *Waging Modern War: Bosnia, Kosovo, and the Future of Combat* (New York: Public Affairs 2001).
- <sup>11</sup> Josef Joffe, "Europe's American Pacifier." *Foreign Policy*, No. 54 (Spring 1984), pp. 64-82.
- <sup>12</sup> Address by Senator Richard Lugar on NATO's Role in the War on Terrorism, Brussels, February 18, 2002 (<http://pdg.state.gov/scipts>).
- <sup>13</sup> Richard G. Lugar, "Redefining NATO's Mission: Preventing WMD Terrorism." *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (Summer 2002), pp. 7-13.
- <sup>14</sup> Kagan, "Power and Weakness," p. 8.
- <sup>15</sup> General Klaus Naumann, "Crunch time for the Alliance." *NATO Review*, Summer 2002 ([http://www.nato.int/review/2002/issue2/english/art3\\_pr.html](http://www.nato.int/review/2002/issue2/english/art3_pr.html)).
- <sup>16</sup> See Ivo H. Daalder, "Are the United States and Europe heading for divorce?" *International Affairs*, Vol. 77 (2001), No. 3, pp. 553-567 (p. 554).
- <sup>17</sup> See NATO Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs Guenther Altenburg, "Plus ça change." ([http://www.nato.int/review/2002/issue2/english/art1\\_pr.html](http://www.nato.int/review/2002/issue2/english/art1_pr.html)).
- <sup>18</sup> See an exchange of letters between American and German intellectuals: "What we are fighting for." 02/12/02, reprinted as „Nächstenliebe verlangt Gewalt“, *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), 02/12/02; „Eine Welt der Gerechtigkeit und des Friedens“, *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 05/02/02; and „Von der Idee des Gerechten Krieges“, *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), 08/09/02.
- <sup>19</sup> Chancellor Gerhard Schröder on August 5, 2002, at an SPD rally in Hannover. See „Die SPD im Wahlkampf auf einem ‚deutschen Weg““. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 08/08/02.
- <sup>20</sup> President Bush Thanks Germany for Support Against Terror. Remarks by the President to a

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Special Session of the German Bundestag, May 23, 2002 (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/05/2002523-2.html>).

<sup>21</sup> Joseph S. Nye, The Paradox of American Power. Why the World's Only Superpower Can't Go It Alone. (Oxford University Press 2002).

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