

## Arrogance of power - arrogance of impotence: the Iraq conflict, US "Weltpolitik", and transatlantic relations

Krell, Gert

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Gert Krell

# **Arrogance of Power – Arrogance of Impotence**

**The Iraq Conflict, US “Weltpolitik”,  
and Transatlantic Relations**

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in memoriam Dieter S. Lutz

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Correspondence to:  
Prof. Dr. Gert Krell  
Institut für Vergleichende Politikwissenschaft und Internationale Beziehungen  
Fachbereich Gesellschaftswissenschaften  
Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität Frankfurt  
Robert-Mayer-Str. 5, 60054 Frankfurt am Main  
Telephone: +49(69) 798-22059 (S)  
Email: krell@soz.uni-frankfurt.de

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## Summary

On the occasion of the annual meeting of the “Foreign Policy Association” in New York on 7 May 2003, US Secretary of State Colin Powell said in a both humorous and serious address that the transatlantic alliance had left the differences of opinion over the Iraq War behind, and now it was time to ensure together a place in the world for the Iraqi people as a free, stable and self-governing country. None of the members should think that they could handle the major global challenges alone. The easing of the tension sworn to by Colin Powell may have been helped by the fact that neither the optimistic supporters nor the pessimistic critics were right on the course or outcome of the Iraq War. While one might speak of a kind of freeing of the Iraqis, the ambivalence in the Iraqi people towards this freedom by war and occupation has been underestimated by the “liberators”. Peace is still a long way off. This applies not only to the difficult material and political reconstruction in Iraq. Popularity ratings for the USA have waned since 1992, in the Muslim world they are ultimately “in the basement”. Here, support for the western fight against terrorism has also waned. To date, there has been no evidence of the given reasons for the war, the lack of credibility, perhaps even open manipulation of their own as well as the global public by the leading western power and her coalition partners may lead to further immense strain. If the project to stabilise Iraq in human terms fails, not only those directly affected but, due to the global implications, many other countries will also suffer irrespective of whether they were for or against the war. In this respect, Colin Powell is doubtless right: even those among the USA’s allies who were against the war have no choice but to accept the task of supporting post-war Iraq; not least because the historical balance of US policy of democratization through intervention is negative overall.

The appeal to common values and the requirement of a partnership of convenience of course cannot hide longer-lasting ill feelings: “USA bashing” is popular in Europe, and “Europe bashing” is popular in the USA. Anti-Americanism is nothing new in Europe, it is as old as the founding of the “New World”. American reservations towards Europe extend on their part to the time of the physical and political separation from the “Old (European) World”, in this respect too, such reservations have time and again assumed different forms in the historical process. These frequently ritualised, habitual anti-attitudes are full of projections and can easily be refuted empirically. More interesting than the simple fact of animosity is the question of how deep it runs and whether it impacts the substance of the transatlantic relationship.

The controversy over the dealings with Saddam Hussein and his disarmament obligations are part of a larger picture in which the USA’s foreign policy goals and strategies play a part or are put up for discussion. More important than anti-American sentiment which has always been present in Germany and Europe as a whole, is the fact that a lot of basically pro-American politicians, journalists and intellectuals in Europe are increasingly concerned about a long-term trend of US global policy which has reached new heights with the Bush government: militant nationalism and unilateralism combined with militarised power politics. The following are particularly striking examples of this trend: the rejection of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, originally an accepted return service for

the unlimited extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 1995; the strong reactions by the USA to the Statute of the International Criminal Court and the associated pressure on countries who signed up to this statute; the refusal to ratify the Kyoto Protocol on the reduction of worldwide CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, combined with an energy policy promoting a drastic increase in the use of fossil fuels; and – in retrospect particularly piquant in the light of the war waged by the USA on Saddam Hussein for assumed non-compliance with the conditions concerning the destruction of his weapons of mass destruction – the relaxation of the inspections contrary to agreement, which the radical conservative Republicans demanded from the Clinton Administration for the ratification of the Chemical Weapons Convention and by which they have undermined the effectiveness of this exemplary convention in terms of world order politics. The question is, therefore, whether the transatlantic “ill feeling” in connection with the Iraq crisis is in fact part of a larger crisis in European-American relations. In addition to the central dimensions of relations between Europe and the USA, this report therefore gives special attention to the foreign and security policy “grand strategy” of the United States.

There is (as yet) no question of irreparable harm done to European-American relations. The general public on both sides of the Atlantic are still a lot closer than the differences on the diplomatic level would suggest. Although the mutual popularity ratings of the USA and Europe have dropped compared to 2002, they have somewhat recovered from their lowest point shortly before the Iraq War. The reservations of critics of the USA are based less on the American people than on the politics of the Bush Administration. Majorities in several European NATO countries are calling for more independence from the USA, yet more important is the finding that public opinion in the USA is no less multilaterally disposed than in Europe; on the other hand, Europeans do not vote as anti-militarily as many hardliners in the USA think. However, American citizens feel (in a very much similar order) altogether more threatened by perceived problematic international developments than Europeans. This difference was already visible before 11 September 2001, but it has intensified since the attacks. And Europeans want to cooperate with the USA equally on the security policy level, but are far more critical of military expenditures than Americans. There are furthermore some differences in long-term attitudes: Americans are clearly more nationalistic than most Europeans, and for them religion plays a much stronger role, privately and in the political arena.

Economic relations between the USA and Europe house a series of systematic problems and current conflicts, in no way untypical of partners who are also competitors. Nonetheless, the majority of experts do not expect that this will result in a comparable addition of divisions as in security policy or international law. The US and EU economies are deeply integrated and intermeshed, and this intermeshing has clearly increased in recent years. Transatlantic economic relations form the most closely-knit trade and investment system in the world. Economic policy integration does trail behind the development of material processes of exchange, but these are more heavily regulated than ever, in particular owing to the dispute settlement mechanism, which was substantively improved with the foundation of the WTO. In addition to the mode of power, the mode of compromise characterises transatlantic economic relations. This balance could of course be put under pressure, if poor global economic trends and structural economic problems on

both sides of the Atlantic were to further diminish the readiness to compromise and adapt in favour of global agreements (for example in the agricultural sector or in the area of regulating international financial markets).

However, decisive changes now characterise relations between the USA and her allies on the level of the “grand strategy” in foreign policy, primarily in security policy and international law. The USA has gradually revoked the liberal-institutionalist basis of its hegemonial global order policy, which dominated the period after the Second World War. The conservative revolution and the Republican majority in Congress introduced this U-turn in the mid-1990s, and it is now being continued on the neoconservative line with support from large parts of the Bush jr. Administration. The majority of relevant decision-makers among the Republicans in Congress and in the administration comprise three groups: old hardliners from the Cold War period, who are oriented towards categories of power, especially military power, Christian fundamentalists, and neoconservatives. In the fight against terror and rogue states, the three groups have found their mission around which they are redefining themselves. The new “grand strategy” has neoimperial traits: The USA will do everything she can to maintain her military advantage; no other power or group of powers should be given the opportunity to catch up with her. The new global strategy includes a dramatisation of new threats, which can no longer be suppressed with deterrence; potential threats ought to or must be fought anticipatively i.e. preventively. International rules, treaties and alliances are experiencing a clear debasement in the face of the primacy of freedom of action. The result of these ideological shifts in the USA is a long list of acts in the international arena, in which the United States reject, sabotage or do not support joint solutions in ways equal to her importance and economic capacity.

How can we explain the differences in basic global ideas and their legal and specific political shaping between large parts of the ruling political elites in the USA and Europe? The “personae” in the transatlantic drama are not important for structural realism, they just act out roles prescribed by the division of power. The USA is a leading super power and she behaves accordingly. It was only under the protective shield of the USA, that Europe could unite at all, and today places the accent on the “soft” methods of power policy. The USA cannot and ought not to adopt the policy of “be nice to and get along with each other”, since, in an overwhelmingly anarchically structured global polity in which violent provocations can be expected all the time, she has the task of safeguarding the security of the West. This “division of labor”, which is reflected - if only to a certain extent - in opinion surveys, and the fact that economic relations are less asymmetric and therefore less controversial, appears to support the “realist” position. But by itself it cannot explain the differences between the main participants; the division of power still leaves a lot of room for the shaping of specific policy, as the considerable differences between individual US administrations demonstrate.

Social constructivism therefore stresses the importance of political culture, differences in the experience and world views of large collectives. “Exceptionalism”, the specifically American variant of nationalism, also fundamentalist traits, which are now clear up to President Bush, can be traced back to the beginnings of the “New World”. Likewise, pronounced individualism, which shows itself in foreign policy terms to be greatly sensitive

to curtailments of sovereignty. In this context, the paradox of strength and vulnerability must also be mentioned, which again showed itself very clearly just after the attacks, which dramatically questioned the supposed security of the USA based on the highly asymmetrical division of power in the world. Finally – the flipside of the paradox – the different experience of war between the USA and Europe. For the USA the Second World War was itself primarily a “foreign affair”, quite different to the associations the Germans (and Europeans) have of the Second World War or of war in general. Certain trends and tendencies in the USA, which are difficult to understand in Europe, can be clarified with these references to ideas and ideals, but they do not explain why the multilateral dimension obvious in opinion surveys and in the history of US foreign policy can these days scarcely maintain its hold.

To understand this, we need to look at the processes of preference formation in the United States, which is the major concern of liberal international relations theory. There are a series of mechanisms which cause the orientations of the ruling bodies in the USA to clash with the preferences of the majority in many cases, even though they were democratically elected. The weakness of the American party system must be mentioned here, which opens up particular opportunities of influence to highly motivated and well-organised ideological groupings – in particular conservative-fundamentalist trends. The governing technique of the Bush jr. Administration plays a large part in that the deficits of its domestic competence (large parts of its policy programme are not in accordance with the wishes of the majority) are successfully compensated in the area of security policy. Many prominent Democrats were not convinced by the arguments of a new threat from Iraq and suspected political staging, but they were defeated in the autumn 2002 elections – with or without opposition. To date, the manipulation of fear, and patriotically-oriented and non-critical media have also helped, has functioned such that large elements of the American public were convinced of the threat by Saddam Hussein including his involvement in the attacks on 11 September.

Neomarxist analyses would carve out more strongly the crisis tendencies of American capitalism, which is in no way as stable as it appears. Spectacular deficits in regulation have led to massive fixing of the balance sheets and other deceits, many small investors have been ruined and confidence in the American economy as a whole has been seriously affected. In addition to that there is the “fossilistic” energy policy which can no longer form the basis of a lasting economic model; furthermore, old problems such as private wealth and public poverty (deficits in the infrastructure, financial crises in the cities, worsening budget deficits) or the chronically negative trade figures. These crisis tendencies are underpinned by a dramatically increasing inequality in the distribution of income and wealth, which, in the opinion of critics, endangers democracy as well as economic stability. Instead of a structurally-reformist response to these crisis phenomena, the Bush Administration has given a particularist one which – internally as well as externally – favours oil interests, the Christian-fundamentalist clientele, the rich and the super-rich, a response which it protects with a “populist façade” and the fight against “evil”.

Many of the described tendencies run together in the US policy against Iraq. The neo-conservatives saw in Iraq, which up until the Second Gulf War in 1991 was one of the

United States' stability partners against the Islamic revolution in Iran, a threat to the geostrategic and energy interests of the United States and a potential support for terrorism. With the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, the USA is combining hope for political change in the region, which will not only benefit her interests, but also a settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. She won the war, in fact faster and with less serious loss of lives than the majority of critics feared, but at the price of further major damage to the United Nations and international law, further splits in the state community and increased reservations towards US global policy. And she has not yet won the peace. The positive effects of the removal of Saddam Hussein are extremely hard to assess not just because of the politically, legally and ethically questionable attendant circumstances. And the Iraq War does not stand alone, it is part of a changed global strategy of the USA.

To face the major global challenges, including security policy challenges, the United States depend on the goodwill and cooperation of not only the international community of states, but also on international society. This the Bush Administration does admit occasionally, while at the same time it defiantly declares that they can and will go it alone, when others do not want to cooperate on the USA's terms. Her manic view of the world (if you're not for us, you're against us) with its decontextualisation and depoliticisation of terrorism, which she stylises counter-fundamentally as "evil" per se, makes her blind to her own mistakes and prevents a prudent answer, which must be differentiated between the hard and incorrigible ideologically fanatical core of Islamic terrorists, on the one hand, and the however justified or unjustified resentment against the USA in the Arabic and Islamic world, on the other. The reservations against the USA, especially US foreign policy, have increased and not just among Muslims. The world sees the United States no way near as benevolent as the Americans see themselves. That should give a prudent world power something to think about.

A prudent hegemon will, in order to extend its power, offer to limit its own autonomy and freedom of action. It will give smaller powers the feeling that it is taking them seriously, it will pick up on their matters of concern. It creates and preserves institutions finalising arrangements and agreements which last beyond the peak of its power. The biggest temptation for a hegemon is to go it alone, dictation instead of consultation, a preacher and imposer of its values. Many of the USA's best friends and many intellectuals in the USA themselves fear that the current US administration is tempted by this "arrogance of power".

In the search for an antidote to the "arrogance of power", advice could be taken from the founding fathers of the USA and their debates on the best constitution of the new community: "checks and balances". It is completely possible that in the USA itself effective counterweights are already being formed against the course of the current administration. The discernible deficits in economic development and the exacerbation of social problems in the broadest sense are pointing in this direction. A lot will depend on whether there will be more big attacks giving new impetus to the siege mentality and the focus on the foreign enemy. Europe's task must be to accept its part in the "balancing". It is not a question of classic geopolitical counterweight politics, since, for various systematic, historical and political reasons, only a form of "cooperative balancing", i.e. the for-



mation of international and transnational coalitions in the global political consensus formation processes is worth considering. The “old Europe” has a lot to offer these consensus formation processes, in which the use of “soft power” takes priority. Basic principles such as a system of law between nation-states, coordination via common organisations and common rules specific to political fields, non-aggression, consideration of the interests of partners and consideration also of the demands from weaker members represent expertise and experience which make the EU attractive to all states, elites and populations who are at least tentatively interested in the growing regulation and legalisation of international relations.

Of course, the EU trails in many respects behind its demands and opportunities for world order. These shortcomings are more often than not hidden behind criticism of the USA’s unilateralism, even if this is justified. Or Europe herself practises an arrogance of power, as in France’s attitude towards new members who dared to speak out in favour of the American position on Iraq; or as in the German government’s attitude, which, through its unconditional ‘no’ to any form of internationally sanctioned policy of deterring a serious breach of international law by Saddam Hussein, itself incurred accusations of unilateralism and contributed to the sad fact that the Europeans could not manage to put together a common counter-position to the hardliners in the USA. The irony of such European arrogance of power is that, in view of the real power relationship, it produces only variants of an arrogance of impotence. In principle, the Europeans possess the right counterweight to the “assertive unilateralism” of the radical conservatives in the USA, they just need to position it better jointly in the scales. In addition to this, a stronger integration of their armed forces and a more efficient confederal division of labor in procurement policy is needed. Cooperative balancing as part of a multilateral, institutionalist and participative “global governance” in fact does not require a military counterweight to the USA. Instead, it requires effective military means as part of a concept of long-term peace-keeping. As long as the Europeans refuse to take their global order tasks seriously, their criticism of American global power policy will remain inadequate and unconvincing.

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## **1. Introduction: the Iraq conflict, US “Weltpolitik”, and transatlantic relations**

### **1.1. The Iraq crisis and the “contamination”/“decontamination” of transatlantic relations**

German-American relations have been considered contaminated since the “hot autumn” in 2002, the time of the German parliamentary election battle, in which the Red-Greens only barely claimed a majority, not least because the Chancellor declared an unconditional ‘no’ – under any conceivable circumstances – to the question of German participation in a military intervention in Iraq. In partly genuine, partly put-on indignation, the USA punished Germany in a fatherly-imperial gesture by a withdrawal of affection. When the “biggest boy in Europe” pitches itself against the USA, there is always a risk of terminating the allegiance.<sup>1</sup> The “biggest boy” immediately developed a guilty conscience and waited eagerly for signs that the USA cared. Did Secretary Rumsfeld look at or look through Minister Struck? Who welcomed Foreign Minister Fischer to Washington? Was the meeting between President Bush and Chancellor Schröder in Prague in November 2002 really cordial, did they speak to each other and for how long did they shake hands?

“At the photo shoot, George Bush stands in front of Gerhard Schröder and while the cameras are rolling, Bush suddenly turns round, takes Schröder’s hand and shakes, shakes, shakes it and brings the German level with him. They exchange words, draw closer together, laugh – and the world finally sees the redeeming gesture.”<sup>2</sup>

The gesture, however, wasn’t quite so redeeming, since later the fact, number and duration of meetings between German and American politicians were still watched nervously. In addition to Germany and the United States, the crisis has affected relations between the USA and France, who during the Iraq war found themselves in a historical low-point.

You could comfort yourself (if you need comforting) in the fact that there have always been differences, serious ones too, in transatlantic relations, even in the period of the East-West conflict. For example, in the sixties, the Federal Republic not only provoked her opponents in the Eastern Bloc, especially the GDR leadership, but also annoyed her western allies by insisting on the German question and thus blockading the policy of détente by her claim to sole representation. When the FRG then fell in with the policy of détente,

I am grateful to a number of colleagues for their criticism, suggestions and encouragement, including Kinka Gerke-Unger, Gunther Hellmann, Jochen Hils, Bernd W. Kubbig, Harald Müller, Katja Rüß, Hans-Joachim Schmidt and Simone Wisotzki, but especially Matthias Dembinski and Bruno Schoch, who gave their time to countercheck the revised version.

- 1 Allegedly said by a State Department official, quoted from Peter Rudolf, *Deutsch-amerikanische Beziehungen nach dem 11. September*, paper for the annual conference of the German Association for American Studies of November 16, 2002, p. 9.
- 2 Christoph Schwennicke, *Waiting for the redeeming gesture*, in: *Süddeutsche Zeitung* dated 22.11.2002, p. 3. (translated)

the USA was worried that Germany was too hasty in pushing forward her east policy and would be putting her national interests above those of the alliance in another way.<sup>3</sup> There have repeatedly been major conflicts between the USA and France over nuclear policy, over alliance policy and the role of NATO (just think in particular of the departure by France from military integration 1966) and over Third World policy.

Once again you can take comfort in the fact that the alliance has survived the present crisis as well, or at least its critical phase, now that the war has been waged and won. In the words of Colin Powell on the occasion of the annual conference of the "Foreign Policy Association" in New York on 7 May 2003, to which he was invited as an honorary guest with Javier Solana, in a both humorous and serious address, the transatlantic alliance had left the differences of opinion over the Iraq War behind, and now it was time to ensure together a place in the world for the Iraqi people as a free, stable and self-governing country. Making reference to Winston Churchill, he characterised differences in an alliance as unpleasant, but normal and inevitable. In democracies consensus is not just made by itself, it has to be acquired in open discussion. Finally, the alliance has always been held together and further developed by common values. None of the members ought to believe that it could handle the major global challenges tasks such as the fight against terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the fight against AIDS, the greatest weapon of mass destruction on the face of the earth today, or the initiative towards sustainable development and good governance by itself.<sup>4</sup>

The easing of the tension sworn to by Colin Powell may have been helped by the fact that neither its optimistic supporters nor its pessimistic critics were justified by the course or outcome of the Iraq War. You can certainly speak of a kind of liberation of the Iraqis, and - with the exception of the Moroccans, Jordanians, Pakistanis, Indonesians and the Palestinians - even large majorities of opponents to the war support the opinion that things will be better for the Iraqis without Saddam Hussein; but the ambivalence in the Iraqi people themselves in the face of such liberation as a result of war and occupation has been underestimated by the "liberators":

"What makes the picture doubly uneasy is the Iraqis' own conflicting feelings. It is hardly possible for them to like America when they consider Washington's record of first supporting Saddam, then punishing his people with sanctions, then bombing the place to get rid of him. Yet neither do they have much liking for anyone else – none of the neighbors, and certainly not fellow Arabs who defended Saddam in the name of Arab honor. The Americans are an obvious affront to national pride, and perhaps even more acutely to religious pride. But they are also the only guarantee of security just now, and of the return to normality that is inherent in the promise to rejoin the wider world.

3 See also the example of GLCM and Pershing deployment in the 1980s. At first the FRG felt neglected in her security and encouraged the US to deploy medium-range missiles. But then there was a storm of resentment suggesting the USA wanted to burden Germany with an increased risk of nuclear war. Cf. Gert Krell/Hans-Joachim Schmidt, *Der Rüstungswettlauf in Europa: Mittelstreckensysteme, konventionelle Waffen, Rüstungskontrolle*, Frankfurt/M. (Campus) 1982.

4 <http://usinfo.state.gov/cgi-bin/washfile/dsplay.pl?p=/products/washfile/topic/i.../newsitem.shtm> 09.05.2003

The ambivalence cuts across ethnic divisions. Kurds regard the two Bushes as national heroes, yet they fear that America may again betray them as it has several times in living memory. Christians yearn for Western protection, yet worry that the end of Baathist secularism may have uncorked the wicked genie of political Islam. The Shiite clergy, despite schisms over their proper role in politics, deliver a surprisingly uniform message. America has served its only purpose by getting rid of Saddam. Its army is here at our sufferance, and sooner or later we will make them leave. [...]

By and large, Iraqis still do not really understand why America sent its army halfway around the world to “save” them. The claims about chemical weapons never convinced them. Many shared American dislike of Saddam, but they are far more acutely aware of America’s past backing for the Baath Party, and of its catastrophic abandonment of the 1991 uprising.”<sup>5</sup>

In fact, the war was quicker and less bloody in the end than even many of the supporters had hoped, it didn’t come to using weapons of mass destruction, to great fire storms or “scorched earth”; but peace is still a long way off. That applies not only to the difficult material and political reconstruction of Iraq, but also to the relationship between “the West” and the Arabic and Islamic cultures. Certainly, the unrest in these countries remained within narrow limits, but as shown by the renewed global survey in the “Pew Global Attitudes Project” of April/May 2003, popularity ratings for the USA have dropped further compared to 2002; in the Muslim world, the USA has ended up “in the basement”. There, support for the western fight against terrorism has also waned, clear majorities of those questioned in the Palestinian territories, Jordan and Indonesia and around half of those in Morocco and Pakistan are pinning their hopes on Bin Laden.<sup>6</sup>

To date, there has been no evidence of the main reason given for the war, the pressure on Bush and Blair for legitimization is growing. Yet, even more serious for the future of the Middle East and Gulf region is the development in Iraq itself. Should the project for at least moderately democratic stabilisation fail, not only those directly affected but, due to the global implications, many other countries will also suffer irrespective of whether they were for or against the war. In this respect, Colin Powell is doubtless right: even those among the USA’s allies who were against the war have no choice but to accept the task of supporting post-war Iraq; not least because the historical balance of US policy of democratization through intervention is negative overall. Only in 4 out of 16 cases, has the country in which the United States intervened with intentions of democratisation (still) been democratic 10 years after the USA pulled out.<sup>7</sup>

5 Max Rodenbeck, *Bohemia in Baghdad*, in: *The New York Review of Books* of 3. July 2003, pp. 20-23, quotes from pp. 22-23.

6 The Pew Research Center For The People and The Press, *Views of a Changing World* June 2003, Washington, D.C., Juni 2003 ([www.people-press.org](http://www.people-press.org)), pp. 3, 19, 21, 25, 28. The positive replies to bin Laden represent more precisely “at least some confidence that Osama bin Laden will do the right thing regarding world affairs” (p. 3).

7 Cf. Minxin Pei/Sara Kasper, *Lessons from the Past: The American Record in Nation-Building*, Washington, D.C. (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace) 2003. [www.ceip.org/files/print/2003-04-11-peipolicybrief.htm](http://www.ceip.org/files/print/2003-04-11-peipolicybrief.htm)

## 1.2. Superficial backgrounds

The first reactions in the USA and in Germany to the German election battle and the unconditional “no” by the Schröder government talked of a new German special way (*Sonderweg*) or a new German anti-Americanism.<sup>8</sup> In the campaign, the chancellor himself mentioned a “German way”, which I’ll make a critical comment on at the end of this report, but the “German special way” intimates a historical tradition of German politics, which in my opinion does not apply here. The “German special way” referred in the imperial and Weimar Republic periods to the politically-ideological distance to western democracy and the purported contrast between the (mere) civilisation (of the west) and the (superior) culture (of Germany). In terms of foreign policy, the keeping open of alliance options with the east and west was linked with the “special way”. The politically-ideological alignment with the west is obvious in Germany today and, in foreign policy, Germany is and remains firmly integrated in western institutions.

We may, however, have to deal with a new, nationalistically-rooted anti-Americanism? In Germany, this includes on the dwindled national Right the barely concealed pleasure of the German National Democratic Party about the attacks of 11 September 2001, and it is currently virulent among the Left. In East Germany, there are still anti-western, particularly anti-American sentiments left over from the time of the East-West Conflict, in which the old GDR nationalism was mixed with a superficial anti-imperialism. In France, anti-Americanism has traditionally had a broad basis. A book in which the attacks of 11 September are denied, is currently a bestseller. There is no doubt that “USA bashing” is popular in Europe; in the same way that “Euro bashing” is in the USA. There, conservative intellectuals enjoy in sexist virilism, in which the Europeans are portrayed as “weeny, weedy, weaky” (a play on Caesar’s *veni, vidi, vici*). Anti-Americanism is nothing new in Europe, it’s as old as the founding of the “New World”; among the European Left as well as the European Right there have always been pro- and anti-American tendencies. American reservations towards Europe extend on their part to the time of the physical and political separation from the “Old (European) World”, and these reservations also have assumed different forms in the historical process. We’ve known of the arrogance towards “weakly” France who could not win her colonial war in Indochina (!) in the 1950s.

These frequently ritualised, habitual anti-attitudes are full of projections and can easily be refuted empirically. You need only three examples: (1) For many of the European Left, the genocide of the Indians is a basic argument against the USA. Not only is the genocide history of Europe forgotten, but also the fact that the killing of the Indians was not any specific American invention, but the result of European immigration and colonisation. (2) At the start of the Second World War, when the USA still maintained “proper” relations with Hitler’s Germany, France already had more casualties than the USA in the Korean War and the Vietnam War together. (3) The “new Europe” mentioned by Defence

8 Cf. Gunther Hellmann, A New Role in Europe and in the World at Large, in: *International Herald Tribune* dated 20.9.2002.

Minister Rumsfeld was – apart from its leading politicians – more against the Iraq war, feels more distant to the USA and clearly spends less money on arms than the “old Europe”.<sup>9</sup> More interesting than the simple fact of animosity is the question of how deep it runs and whether it impacts the substance of the transatlantic relationship. This requires a structural analysis of public opinion and economic and political relations as a whole, which reaches beyond the latest Iraq controversy.

### **1.3. The context of transatlantic “ill-feeling”**

The first weakening of the theory of the importance of European anti-Americanism and anti-Europeanism in the USA as an explanation for the crisis in transatlantic relations comes when one includes the rest of the world. In a major global survey conducted in the summer of 2002 (almost 40,000 interviews in 44 countries) by the Pew Research Center For The People and The Press on the subject of “Global Attitudes”, published at the start of December, in 35 out of 42 countries there was still a majority with a positive feeling towards the USA, but approval of the United States had dropped in almost all countries, and pretty dramatically in Germany: “Images of the U.S. have been tarnished in all types of nations: among longtime NATO allies, in developing countries, in Eastern Europe and, most dramatically, in Muslim countries.”<sup>10</sup> In more recent, less extensive surveys by the Pew Research Center, the mood towards the USA has become worse, and only slightly improved in a few European countries compared to a low-point in March 2003.<sup>11</sup>

9 Cf. on the whole complex Tony Judt, “The Way We Live Now” and “Anti-Americans Abroad”, in: *The New York Review of Books* of 27 March 2003, pp. 6-10 and 1 May 2003, pp. 24-27. On the hate-love relationship in current German anti-Americanism, cf. also the excellent contribution by Bruno Schoch, *Der 11. September als Quittung? Nicht das Sündenregister der USA, die versäumte Demokratisierung ist die Ursache des Terrorismus*, PRIF report, No. 6, 2001, Frankfurt/M. (HSFK) 2001. Projective functions of anti-Americanism can also be clearly found in the French criticism of the US penal system (the situation in French prisons is catastrophic). Anti-Americanism is also a popular instrument of control, most conspicuous at the moment in Iran. Last but not least, Iranian students are today a lot more outspoken about their pro-American attitude compared to their fellow students in many other Islamic countries owing to the anti-Americanism of the reactionary Mullahs.

10 The Pew Research Center for The People and The Press, *What the World Thinks in 2002: How Global Publics View their Lives, their Countries, the World, America*, [www.people-press.org](http://www.people-press.org) (11.12.2002), p. 1.

11 Pew Research Center, loc.cit. (Note 6), p. 19.



Table 1

**The US Image****Do you have a positive feeling towards the USA? (percentage figures)**

	1999/2000	Summer 2002	March 2003	May 2003
Israel	—	—	—	79
Great Britain	83	75	48	70
Kuwait	—	—	—	63
Canada	71	72	—	63
Nigeria	46	77	—	61
Australia	—	—	—	60
South Korea	58	53	—	46
Germany	78	61	25	45
France	62	63	31	43
Spain	50	—	14	38
Russia	37	61	28	36
Brasilia	56	52	—	34
Morocco	77	—	—	27
Lebanon	—	35	—	27
Indonesia	75	61	—	15
Turkey	52	30	12	15
Pakistan	23	10	—	13
Jordan	—	25	—	1
Palestinian Territories	14	—	—	1

Source: Pew Research Center, *loc. cit.* (Note 6), p. 19.

In addition to projective or instrumentally-manipulative anti-Americanism, substantiated concern for specific political or social developments obviously lies behind these figures, and so I find the fact that many politicians, journalists or academics who can be classed as traditionally pro-American and who, to date, have held in high regard the progressive origins and traditions of the USA, are worried, in fact even in despair over the path American foreign policy has taken in recent years, a concern which they share with many intellectuals in the USA, more important than the discussion on old and new German or European anti-Americanism.<sup>12</sup> I offer just four particularly striking examples of what

12 Cf. for example Ernst-Otto Czempiel, *Weltpolitik im Umbruch: Die Pax Americana, der Terrorismus und die Zukunft der internationalen Beziehungen*, Munich (Beck) 2002, Ekkehart Krippendorff, *Die Vereinigten Staaten und Israel: Projektionsflächen für Hoffnung und Hass*, in: *Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik*, Vol. 47, No. 8, 2002, pp. 943-953 or Harald Müller, *Amerika schlägt zurück: Die Weltordnung nach dem 11. September*, Frankfurt am Main (Fischer) 2003. For the US version, cf. the

many pro-American experts in Europe (myself included) regard as a trend towards arrogant unilateralism which is harming the world and also ultimately the USA herself. (US unilateralism is generally mourned by the majority in almost all the countries surveyed in the “Global Attitudes” project.)<sup>13</sup>

The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), which failed to win even a simple majority, let alone the required two-thirds majority in the Senate, was part of an arrangement between the “Haves” (the official nuclear weapon states) and the “Have-Nots” at the conference on the unlimited extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1995. The “Have-Nots” agreed with the unlimited extension, but they expected services in return; one of them being the CTBT. Great Britain, France and Russia have ratified the CTBT and therefore kept their promise; the USA (and with reference to the USA’s example, the People’s Republic of China, too) didn’t, if you disregard the fact that they have not yet carried out any further nuclear tests.<sup>14</sup> All the then Chairman of the Senate Committee of Foreign Relations, Jesse Helms, had to say in reply to a letter from Blair, Chirac and Schröder, who were firmly in favour of ratification of the CTBT, was: “(...) three overseas people who don’t know anything about our country”.<sup>15</sup>

In Europe, the strong resistance in the USA to the International Criminal Court (ICC) is scarcely comprehensible, since this institution can be traced back to American ideas and traditions in many respects. An important reason why the ICC Statute came about are the tireless activities of an American NGO. The USA is a democracy and has a functioning legal system, so it has very little to fear from the ICC. Since the basis of international law is the principle of equality before the law, which of course does not mean equality of power, we are forced to understand the US resistance to the ICC as the United States wants to place herself outside or preferably above international law, she is no longer interested even in the appearance of legal equality. The enormous pressure on the UNO and member states of the ICC Statute has only reinforced this impression.<sup>16</sup>

contribution from Stanley Hoffmann, *America Goes Backward*, in: *The New York Review of Books* of 12 June 2003, pp. 74-79.

13 Cf. Table 8 on p. 41.

14 How the radical Conservatives manoeuvred the Senate to rejection, can be read in Daryl Kimball, *What Went Wrong: Repairing the Damage to the CTBT*, in: *Arms Control Today*, Vol. 29, No. 10, December 1999, pp. 3-9 and Terry L. Deibel, *The Death of a Treaty*, in: *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 81, No. 5, September/October 2002, pp. 142-161.

15 Quoted from Thomas Graham/Damien J. LaVera, *Nuclear Weapons. The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and National Missile Defense*, in: Stewart Patrick/Shepard Forman (Eds.), *Multilateralism and U.S. Foreign Policy*, Boulder, Col.-London (Lynne Rienner) 2002, pp. 225-245, here p. 225.

16 Cf. Pierre Hassner, *The United States: The Empire of Force or the Force of Empire?*, *Chaillot Papers* No. 54, September 2002, Paris (Institute for Security Studies) 2002, p. 46: “[...] the United States currently claims to make sovereign judgements on what is right and what is wrong, particularly in respect of the use of force, and to exempt itself with an absolutely clear conscience from all the rules that it proclaims and applies to others. One illustration of this is that an allegedly criminal head of state like Slobodan Milosevic is being treated as such and Serbia has been obliged by the United States to hand him over to the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague or face the cancelling of its

My third case is the Kyoto Protocol. There's a lot to object to in this very inadequate attempt at a reduction in global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, but it rests on a broadly consensual compromise. More unsettling than this further example of American unilateralism is however the link with the new government's energy policy, which is based on a major increase in the use of fossil fuels.<sup>17</sup> The leading economy in the world sees her future in energy sources which will almost certainly lead to destructive changes in the global climate.

Particularly piquant in connection with the discussions on Saddam Hussein's behaviour towards the United Nation's conditions concerning his weapons of mass destruction is the USA's attitude towards the Chemical Weapons Convention, by its original design possibly the most significant international convention on arms control of all, because it is multilateral (almost global) and egalitarian and provides for a total ban or comprehensive disarmament of a complete form of weapon through intensive international controls, and therefore could have established a new definition and practice of common security for the community of states. Although the exemplary inspection regime was based on proposals from the USA, the conservative opponents of arms control in the Republican Party implemented several substantial restrictions on the inspections during the ratification process, which weakened the convention considerably, because other signatory states will make their own special rules with reference to the US policy towards the convention. Added to that is the extremely uncooperative, virtually hostile behaviour by the American authorities and relevant military bodies towards the international inspectors, at least in the initial stages. All that despite the fact that the traditional supporters of the Republican Party, i.e. industry (in this case the chemical industry), the intelligence services and the Pentagon, declared themselves in favour of this treaty in its original form during the Clinton Administration.<sup>18</sup>

#### 1.4. What and whose crisis?

Apart from the election battle skirmish and old emotional reserves, there are obviously serious differences between the USA and Europe/Germany. Would it be right to talk of a structural crisis in transatlantic relations? Whose crisis is it anyway and what are the causes? Above all: what is its substantial rationality, against what measure do we call it a "crisis"? This measure cannot be agreement based on the maxim, whoever is not for us, is against us. That contradicts not only fundamental democratic principles, which as a model requires the fair formation of compromise between rationally based positions and

financial assistance, whereas the same United States deems it inconceivable for an American to be judged by any international court." The criticism from numerous international lawyers in the USA is not much different from that in Europe, cf. Sarah B. Sewall/Carl Kaysen (Hg.), *The United States and the International Criminal Court*, Lanham-Boulder-New York (Roman and Littlefield) 2000.

17 Cf. Bill McKibben, *Some Like It Hot*, in: *The New York Review of Books* of 5 July 2001, pp. 35-38.

18 The end result, i.e. ratification, but with considerable limitations, reflects the struggle for power at that time in the Republican Party between its moderate and radical wings. For the full picture, cf. Amy E. Smithson, *The Chemical Weapons Convention*, in: Patrick/Forman, loc.cit. (Note. 15), pp. 247-265.

legitimate interests. This formation of compromise must also set itself ethically-moral demands for the rational contents of global governance politics in the sense of support for basic human rights, development, and participation.<sup>19</sup> As a result, the substance of the various conceptions of world order must also be tested, in addition to embedding the controversy over the Iraq War in transatlantic relations. I will put the accent more on the US side, but also discuss the problems of the German and European position. In so doing, I aim to show that the title of this report is more significant than a linguistic play on words and to show the direction in which the tension in it could be released.<sup>20</sup> The real political problems behind the (psycho-)symbols of transatlantic relations have not been eradicated despite “redeeming gestures”, the swearing of common values and the requirements of partnerships of convenience.

## **2. The state of transatlantic relations**

### **2.1. The public: closer to each other than the political elites despite current frustrations**

The percentage of those questioned with a positive attitude towards the USA has slightly improved – as shown – in Germany, France, Great Britain and Spain compared to an historical low-point in March 2003 before the outbreak of the Iraq War, although it still lies below the values of 1999/2000 and 2002. Also popularity in the USA for the Germans and the French has fallen sharply in comparison to February 2002, from 83 to 44% and 79 to 29% of those asked (for Great Britain from 90 to 82, for Canada from 83 to 65). In western Europe, only between 4 and 12% of those asked (in Pakistan, Turkey, Jordan and the Palestinian Territories between 30 and 40%), took personal steps as a result of the change in support for the USA, e.g. stopped buying American products; in the USA, the respective figure was 14%. Political consequences can be seen in the fact that in Europe, there is a greater wish for more independence from the USA in foreign and security policy: in France this was 75%, in Turkey and Spain 62, in Italy 61, in Germany 57, in Great Britain 45 and in Canada 43. In the USA 39% want more independence from the Europeans, although a majority want relations to be kept as close as they are, just as in Canada or Great Britain.

19 I can only briefly mention this theme which also guides the PRIF research programme; I have explained my opinion in a little more detail in another context. Cf. Gert Krell, *Die Intellektuellen und die Macht*, in: Thomas Greven/Oliver Jarasch (Eds.), *Für eine lebendige Wissenschaft des Politischen*, Frankfurt/M. (Suhrkamp) 1999, pp. 107-117.

20 “Arrogance of power” is a popular phrase, which I take from a book title by William Fulbright, the former Chairman of the US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations in the 1960s. “Arrogance of impotence” was a spontaneous inspiration, but I didn’t invent this term. Hassner, loc.cit. (Note 16), p. 48, also uses the term which he attributes to the British political scientist Hedley Bull.

How stable or how marked by particular events or circumstances, for example the influence of the Iraq crisis, these attitudes are, cannot be determined from this data alone. There were big differences in almost all the states surveyed by the Pew Research Center in May 2003, when those with a favourable view of the USA differentiate between the administration and the USA in general. Apart from a few countries such as South Korea, Israel or the Palestinian territories, the vast majority in this group attributed the problem to President Bush and not America. These results are supported by data relating to the image of the Americans (as opposed to the USA) in the world. Here, the losses in sympathy are far smaller (except for Jordan). The number of sympathisers is between 10 and 20 percentage points higher than the points for the country (i.e. its politics): Great Britain 80:70 (percentage with "Favorable View of Americans" versus "of U.S." in May 2003), Canada 77:63, Italy 77:60, Germany 67:45, France 58:43, Spain 47:38, Turkey 32:15.<sup>21</sup>

This differentiated overview is confirmed by the most thorough study conducted to date on political attitudes in the western alliance, published at the end of 2002 by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations in partnership with the German Marshall Fund based on surveys conducted in the summer.<sup>22</sup> This study reveals a few important differences, but the main results show that the general public on both sides of the Atlantic are a lot closer together in their basic political opinion than the contrasts in macro policy would suggest. On the sympathy scale the USA comes off well with Europe, and such sympathy is reciprocated. In Great Britain, Poland, Italy and Germany, the majority of people harbour even more positive feelings for the USA compared to all European countries included in the survey.<sup>23</sup> Americans and Europeans have a similar hierarchy for assessing global risks and dangers, but, and that is an important difference: in the USA, the public feels more threatened by almost all the given dangers than in Europe.<sup>24</sup>

21 All data according to the Pew Research Center, loc.cit. (Note 6), pp. 19-22.

22 Chicago Council on Foreign Relations/German Marshall Fund, *Worldviews 2002: American and European Public Opinion and Foreign Policy*, [www.worldviews.org/detailreports/compreport.pdf](http://www.worldviews.org/detailreports/compreport.pdf) (18.12.2002).

23 Loc.cit., p. 8f.

24 Loc. cit., p. 9. A few critical US values such as threat from international terrorism or from "unfriendly countries becoming nuclear" (1999) and "Iraq developing nuclear weapons" (2002) continued to increase in 2002 compared to 1999, but even by 1999 were clearly above the European values of 2002. (Terrorism: USA 1999 84% and 2002 91%, Europe 2002 64%; "unfriendly countries becoming nuclear" and "Iraq developing nuclear weapons": USA 1999 75%, 2002 86%, Europe 2002 57%). Loc.cit. and John E. Rielly (Publ.), *American Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy 1999*, Chicago (Chicago Council on Foreign Relations) 1999, Figure 2-7, [www.ccf.org/publications/opinion/Am\\_PuOp99.pdf](http://www.ccf.org/publications/opinion/Am_PuOp99.pdf) (18.12.2002).

Table 2

**Perceptions of threat in the USA and Europe**

Percentage of people who feel the following given threats constitute an “extremely important” (or “extremely critical” in the USA) threat to the vital interests of their country

	USA	Europe
International terrorism	91	46
<i>Iraq developing weapons of mass destruction</i>	86	57
Greenhouse effect	46	49
<i>Islamic fundamentalism</i>	61	47
Military conflict between Israel and its Arab neighbours	67	42
<i>Large numbers of immigrants and refugees</i>	60	37
Tensions between India and Pakistan	54	30
<i>Globalisation (?)</i>	29	20
China as a world power	56	18
<i>Economic competition from the USA (in Europe)</i>		
<i>and from Europe (in the USA)</i>	13	18
Political turmoil in Russia	27	14

Source: Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, loc. cit. (Note 22) p. 9.

Particularly pertinent to me is the fact that Americans are no less multilaterally predisposed than the European public. Three-quarters of US citizens would be happy to see the UNO strengthened, the same as in Europe. If it were up to the American public, the striking examples I mentioned above would not be the subject of internal western controversy or cause for frustration among pro-American Europeans: 81% of US citizens expressed support for the ratification of the CTBT, even more for the Chemical Weapons Convention; 71% are for the International Criminal Court and 64% for the Kyoto Protocol.<sup>25</sup>

Another important result I can see is that the Europeans are in no way as antimilitary as many hardliners in the USA would criticize: where the support for use of military force is concerned, the USA and Europe are not that far apart; however, the Germans are always

25 Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, loc.cit. (Note 22), p. 11. The last statement must be differentiated in two ways: When asked whether the ICC should also have the authority to start court proceedings against soldiers from one's own country, the majority in the USA (and in Russia!) said no, whereas the majority in France, Germany and Great Britain said yes. (France and Russia are the furthest apart). In answer to the question whether international organisations should have power of decision in environmental matters, majorities in France and the USA said no, while majorities in Russia, Great Britain and Germany said yes. (France and Germany are the furthest apart.) The data (from Pew Research Center, Views of a Changing World, S. 101) show that it may not always be a good idea to compare the USA and Europe.

around 10 percentage points below the European average.<sup>26</sup> Where the fight against terrorism is concerned, the survey figures show that Europeans prefer “softer”, i.e. political means whereas Americans prefer “tougher”, i.e. military means, but both sides show comparable resolution. (In Europe the figures in support of military means were below the average among Germans and Italians, and above the average among the British, French, Dutch and Poles.) Opinion of the Bush Administration’s foreign policy appears more positive in the USA as a whole than in Europe, something else you would hardly expect; yet even Americans are split in their opinion.<sup>27</sup>

In terms of the policy against Iraq, only 26% of Europeans surveyed were opposed to an attack on Iraq in principle and under any circumstance (i.e. the Schröder position) and only 20% of Americans were for an attack by the USA even without allies or without a UN mandate. 60% of Europeans and 65% of Americans required the consent of the United Nations and the cooperation of the Allies. In all scenarios covered, there was a scarce majority of 51-56% among Europeans for participation provided a UNO mandate was in place. Only the Germans were altogether opposed to military intervention.<sup>28</sup>

In addition to the many commonalities, there are two more obvious differences apart from the generally higher perception of threat by Americans. Europeans are more critical of military expenditure than their US counterparts. The majority of Europeans would like to see the EU as the second super power, not in order to compete with the USA, but to cooperate with her on equal terms, but they are not prepared to spend more on defence; they prefer to leave it at the current division of labor, which the Americans are not at all keen on now. Where the problems in the Middle East are concerned, the Europeans are more critical of Israel and support a Palestinian state more than the Americans; however, a clear majority of Americans also wish their government would treat both parties to the conflict fairly.<sup>29</sup>

Other factors come into play as significant, longer-term differences in politically-relevant opinion between the USA and Europe: in matters of religion, in their patriotism and their feelings towards personal success and the welfare state, the Americans fall right out of the usual OECD profile.<sup>30</sup> The USA is the only country out of all the prosperous nations where its citizens value personal freedom higher than state provision for a social safety net. Only in the US (and in Canada) a two-thirds majority believe that success in life is down to personal initiative. In all other countries surveyed by the Pew Research Center,

26 The specifically German reserve compared to other European countries has to do with the different history: Germany was the aggressor in the Second World War, the other Europeans had to defend themselves; for them, therefore, the military has a more positive significance historically.

27 Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, loc.cit. (Note 22), pp. 13 and 16.

28 Loc. cit., p. 22.

29 For elaboration, see also Craig Kennedy/Marshall M. Bouton, *The Real Trans-Atlantic Gap*, in: *Foreign Policy*, November/December 2002, pp. 66-74, with a slightly more sceptical interpretation of the data.

30 Unless otherwise stated, the following data is from the Pew Research Center, loc.cit. (Note 6), pp. 39 and 105-107.

only minorities shared this view. Almost 60% of the American population believe religion plays a very important role in their lives, in west and east Europe the figures lie just between 11 (France, Czech Republic) and 33% (Poland). Only 55% of US citizens hold the view that religion is a private matter and has no business with politics. This percentage is even below those of many Islamic countries, and clearly below those in west Europe. 58:40% of Americans think you must believe in God in order to be moral; in the major European countries, the ratio is reverse: 33:60 in Germany, 27:70 in Italy, 25:73 in Great Britain and 13:86 in France. On the patriotism front, too, the USA is closer to the profile of the developing countries, out of all the western democracies Americans show the greatest national pride. Not only that, they are convinced that the spread of American ideas and customs would benefit all other people. In the "World Values Survey" of 1999/2000, over 70% of the US citizens questioned said they were "very proud" to be American. In west Europe, the figures were around 20 or more percentage points lower in general: Great Britain 49%, Denmark 48, France 40, Italy 39, Holland 20%; only in Ireland it was 74 and in Poland 71%.<sup>31</sup>

## **2.2. Economic relations: Competition with risks in an environment of intensive symmetrical interweaving**

The transatlantic economic relations form the most closely-knit trade and investment system worldwide, the "the most tightly interwoven economic region on earth".<sup>32</sup> Their goods markets are to a great extent homogenous, the bilateral flow of trade consists largely of intra-industrial trade, the transatlantic trade in services is highly developed; a major part of the trade between Europe and the USA consists meanwhile of exchanges within multinational companies. With 18.5% and 15.4% (2001) the EU and the USA head the list of the most important exporters of goods in the world; in terms of imports, the USA lies ahead of the EU with 23.5% and 18.2% respectively (excluding intra-EU trade).<sup>33</sup> The trade sensitivity of the USA and the EU is roughly the same: in the USA, the foreign trade quota for 2001 was 9.3% (2000: 10.2%) and in the EU for 2001, 11.4%.<sup>34</sup> The EU

31 Cf. Minxin Pei, The Paradoxes of American Nationalism, in: Foreign Policy, May/June 2003, pp. 31-37, here p. 32. In a study into nationalism in 23 countries conducted in 1998, the USA took 1<sup>st</sup> place, cf. Tom W. Smith/Lars Jarkko: National Pride. A Cross-National Analysis, Chicago 1998.

32 Cf. also Jens van Scherpenberg, Konkurrenten und Partner: Die Außenwirtschaftbeziehungen zwischen USA und EU, in: Peter Rudolf/Jürgen Wilzewski (Eds.), Weltmacht ohne Gegner. Amerikanische Außenpolitik zu Beginn des 21. Jahrhunderts, Baden-Baden (Nomos) 2000, pp. 87-108, quotation on p. 91. For a number of ideas on accessing the topic, I thank Kinka Gerke-Unger, Transatlantische Wirtschaftsbeziehungen, a lecture held as part of the USA study programme by the Centre for North-American Research at the Goethe University in Frankfurt/M., November 2001.

33 My own calculations based on the WTO Annual Report 2002, Geneva (WTO) 2002, Tables A4 and A5.

34 Again without the trade within the EU. Source: My own calculations (exports plus imports divided by two related to gross domestic product) based on USA Statistics in Brief, www.census.gov (8.1.2003) and Eurostat, Statistics in brief, economy and finance, topic 2-53/2002 (the gross domestic product for



and the USA head the list of major partners in their trade statistics, with the US export market becoming even more important for the EU in the 1990s, while the relative importance of the EU for the USA has slipped slightly.

Table 3

**Distribution of the EU and USA goods trade, major countries, 2001**

(excluding trade between the EU countries; percentage figures)

EU				USA			
Exports		Imports		Exports		Imports	
USA	24.1	USA	18.8	Canada	22.4	EU	19.2
Switz.	7.6	China	7.4	EU	21.8	Canada	18.7
Japan	4.5	Japan	7.4	Mexico	13.9	Mexico	11.3
Poland	3.6	Switzerland	6.0	Japan	7.9	Japan	11.0
China	3.0	Russ. Fed.	3.7	Rep. of Korea	3.0	China	9.3

Source: My own calculations based on the WTO Annual Report 2002, tables III.17 and III.39.

Investment relations are particularly close between the USA and EU, they are the decisive feature of the growing transatlantic economic interweaving and they constitute a clear main focus in the globally increasing interweaving of direct investment. Investment between the EU and the USA between 1995-1999 made up 27% of the global investment flow (including flow between EU countries), stocks at the end of 1998 constituted 22%. On average, between 1995-1999, 31.2% of the flow in direct investment from the EU went to the USA, 24.3% of the inflow to the EU came from the USA. When one excludes investment flows within the EU the percentage values have even increased to 57 and 62%. From the US perspective, a similarly intensive picture results. On average, between 1995 and 1999, 45.2% of the capital invested abroad (direct investment only) went to the EU, and 72.4% of the inflow came from the EU. The dynamics of the trend are also interesting, which accelerated considerably in 1998 and 1999 compared to 1995-1997, i.e. the percentages for 1998 and 1999 are clearly above the given average percentages.<sup>35</sup>

2001), T 2 and Eurostat, external and internal trade in the European Union, Luxembourg (European Communities) 2002, p. 15.

35 Data according to Eurostat, Statistik kurz gefasst, Wirtschaft und Finanzen, Thema 2-30/2001 (Anteil der EU an den weltweiten Direktinvestitionen der Jahre 1995-1999), pp. 1-3 and my own calculations based on figures on p. 7.

Table 4

**Distribution of EU and USA direct investment, major countries and regions****DI flow, average from 1995-1999** (incl. investment between EU countries)

(percentage figures)

EU				USA			
Outflow		Inflow		Outflow		Inflow	
EU	43.8	EU	43.8	EU	45.2	EU	72.4
USA	31.2	USA	24.3	Canada	9.8	Canada	7.2
South America	5.9	EFTA	6.0	Asia*	9.7	Japan	6.0
EFTA	3.5	Central Am.	2.5	South Am.	7.4	EFTA	4.1
Member states	2.9	Japan	1.5	Central Am.	4.8	Central Am.	1.7

\*excluding Japan (shown separately)

Source: My own calculations based on figures in Eurostat, Statistik kurz gefasst, Wirtschaft und Finanzen, Thema 2-30/2001, p. 7.

Table 5

**Distribution of EU and USA direct investment, major countries and regions****Global DI stocks at the end of 1998** (incl. investment between EU countries)

(percentage figures)

EU				USA			
Outflow		Inflow		Outflow		Inflow	
EU	45.3	EU	59.9	EU	43.2	EU	58.0
USA	24.5	USA	29.2	Canada	10.1	Japan	15.2
EFTA	5.0	EFTA	10.4	Asia*	9.8	Canada	9.5
South Am.	4.3	Japan	3.2	South Am.	7.6	EFTA	6.5
Asia*	3.8	Central Am.	2.3	EFTA	4.8	Central Am.	2.2

\*excluding Japan (shown separately)

Source: My own calculations based on figures in Eurostat, Statistik kurz gefasst, Wirtschaft und Finanzen, Thema 2-30/2001, p. 7.

Although the overall flow of DI clearly dropped off in 2001, the USA was still the EU's most important partner, almost half the DI capital flowing from the EU to third countries, i.e. not into the EU itself, went to the USA, and 55% of the DI inflow from third countries to the EU originated in the United States.<sup>36</sup>

Coordination of foreign economic policy and hence political integration remain behind these impressive transactions, however, so far the high expectations occasionally associated with the project for a transatlantic economic partnership have not been met; during the 1990s, the conflicts between the USA and EU have even increased.<sup>37</sup> The disputes and conflicts in and outside the WTO refer to six different levels: current major conflicts such as the duty on steel imports (deescalated by compromise) and export inducements through tax benefits (temporarily solved); lasting conflicts such as subsidies for wide-bodied aircraft or the use of hormones in cattle farming; conflicts resulting from new technologies and different consumer habits (genetically modified food is the latest and possible the most explosive of these new major conflicts); differences in the cartel laws relevant in the case of mergers; extraterritorial sanctions (through which the US Congress aims to force third countries into endorsing its boycott policy against Cuba, Libya and Iran) and finally differences over the global economic order, for example the notorious agricultural policy, on which the current world trade talks have stalled again.<sup>38</sup>

The USA and EU spare each other nothing in these conflicts, they are often bitterly fought out. Many of the cases brought before the WTO by either side since 1995 are of fundamental importance, which is why the borderlines of conflict settlement are pushed by both sides. But this mechanism also holds a centrally positive element in the trade conflicts of the past eight years:

“Conflicts are no longer resolved by escalating unilateral trade measures, the transatlantic show of strength in trade disputes has shifted instead to the WTO, as a legal dispute and the interpretation of WTO provisions. This dispute is not fought out bilaterally by the participants, but decided by the relevant bodies in the WTO dispute settlement mechanism.”<sup>39</sup>

The table of plaintiffs and defendants shows a double equilibrium for the USA and EU: altogether, both bring cases just as often as they are the subject of cases, although the USA is the subject of cases more often, especially cases from the OECD area outside Europe. The mutual ratio of cases between the EU and the USA is also balanced.

36 Eurostat, Statistik kurz gefasst, Wirtschaft und Finanzen, Thema 2-30/2002, p. 2.

37 Cf. van Scherpenberg, loc. cit. (Note 32), pp. 93ff.

38 Cf. also Raymond J. Ahearn: U.S.-European Union Trade Relations. Issues and Policy Challenges, Issue Brief for Congress, Updated December 16, 2002, Washington, D.C. (Congressional Research Service) 2002.

39 van Scherpenberg, loc.cit. (Note 32), p. 103.

Table 6

**Plaintiffs and defendants before the WTO, 1995-2002**

	Defendant:	USA	EU*	Rest of Europe	Rest of OECD	DC**	Total
Plaintiff:							
USA		–	27	3	19	23	72
EU		25	–	0	13	21	59
Rest of Europe		2	0	6	1	6	12
Rest of OECD		24	8	1	6	9	48
DC**		25	21	2	4	39	91
Total		76	55	13	43	95	

\*EU or individual members

\*\* Developing countries

Source: My own calculations<sup>40</sup> based on WTO, *Dispute Settlement – Status In Brief of the Disputes*, [www.wto.org/english/tradtop\\_e/disput\\_e/dispu\\_status\\_e.htm](http://www.wto.org/english/tradtop_e/disput_e/dispu_status_e.htm)

Two developments are particularly important in this respect. Firstly, the USA, whose clear vote at the end of 1994 in favour of the ratification of the WTO – majorities in both parties in both houses – was in danger of being diluted by a major reservation in favour of US sovereignty, has clearly accepted the dispute settlement process in the meantime, although it provides fewer benefits than she had originally hoped.<sup>41</sup> Nothing has come of the “WTO Dispute Settlement Review Commission” originally planned by Senator Robert Dole, the task of which was to examine the “fairness” of arbitration by the WTO to the USA and, if necessary, recommend the USA’s withdrawal from the World Trade Organisation. (Possibly these plans were put forward for tactical reasons to pull the sceptics onto the side of agreement with the WTO. It is also true to say that no other WTO member would ever come up with such an idea.) In addition, the condition of renewing membership every five years, negotiated by Congressman Newt Gingrich, has so far been without problem. Secondly, both sides have attempted to observe limits, which, if crossed, could blow open the established system altogether, and which prevents, for example, full implementation of their opinions where the extremely explosive extraterritorial secondary sanctions are

40 I have counted multiple cases (several plaintiffs or defendants) which cross over country groups several times which is why the column and row totals are not the same.

41 Cf. also John Odell/Barry Eichengreen, *The United States, the ITO, and the WTO: Exit Options*, Agent Slack, and *Presidential Leadership*, in: Anne O. Krueger (Eds.), *The WTO as an International Organization*, Chicago-London (University of Chicago Press) 2000, pp. 181-209, here p. 205. In 1949/50 the ratification of the ITO, the actual predecessor of the WTO, did not come about due to strong opposition in Congress. A short, but interesting assessment of the general current status of the legal and political problems of the dispute settlement procedure and possible improvements is given by Susan Esserman/Robert Howse, *The WTO on Trial*, in: *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 82, No.1, January/February 2003, pp. 130-140.

concerned.<sup>42</sup> The US administrations have refrained from using sanctions against third countries and the EU has submitted the case to the WTO but not yet followed it up. In the event of a judgment, the USA would in all probability assert the national security exception rule in Art. 21, even though it is extremely questionable in this case, and thus seriously damage the dispute settlement mechanism and therefore also the WTO.<sup>43</sup>

In the latest dispute, too, regarding illegal (from the point of the WTO) steel tariffs introduced by President Bush as an election tactic, which are very much aimed at the EU, both sides were at pains to limit the damage. The EU answered with – possible also non-WTO-conforming – countermeasures and brought the case before the World Trade Organisation, but also negotiated exceptions with the USA, which affected more than 50% of the imports concerned. In terms of trade policy, the EU has by no means a “clean slate” on the steel issue. Her production is considerably more efficient than the out-of-date and fragmented American steel industry, but, in the 1980s, she protected her own restructuring process heavily with “voluntary” restraint agreements and import quotas.<sup>44</sup>

The dispute over the steel tariffs is also important for other reasons, it points to a fundamental problem in US world order policy in the area of economic relations. It is known that the USA founded and formed the global economic order in the post-war period to a great extent.<sup>45</sup> In the interest of liberalising world trade and for security reasons, she put aside short-term economic benefits time and again and in so doing, for a long time, took on the role of the “benign hegemon” at least within the OECD world and vis-à-vis a few preferred developing countries, effectively and credibly. Protectionist demands from Congress could generally be blocked or cushioned. Since the 1970s, however, the dominance of multilateralism in external economic policy has been replaced by a mix of multilateralism, regionalism, bilateralism and unilateralism; protectionist interests have clearly found an ear. There are a number of crucial reasons for this development. Firstly, the USA has lost its dominant position in the global economy, she is no longer the obvi-

42 This means sanctions which the USA may impose on third parties, if they do not conform to the American sanction legislation against Cuba, Iran or Libya. For this particularly striking case of US unilateralism, cf. Kinka Gerke, *Die unilaterale Versuchung. Die Sanktionen der USA gegen die Handelspartner Kubas, Irans und Libyens und ihre Auswirkungen auf das Welthandelsregime*, PRIF Report 2/1997, Frankfurt am Main (PRIF) 1997.

43 van Scherpenberg, loc.cit. (Note 32), p. 101.

44 Cf. also Andreas Falke, “New Thinking”? Außenhandelspolitik der USA im Licht der neuen Bedrohung, paper at the annual conference of the German Association for American Studies in Lambrecht/Pfalz, 15-17 Nov. 2002, p. 25; to be published in: Werner Kremp/Jürgen Wilzewski (Eds.), *Weltmacht vor neuer Bedrohung. Die Bush-Administration und die amerikanische Außenpolitik nach dem Angriff auf Amerika*, Baden-Baden (Nomos) 2003 (in print).

45 On the development of US external economic policy as a whole, cf. Kinka Gerke/Monika Medick-Krakau, *Wandel in der amerikanischen Außenwirtschaftspolitik*, in: Monika Medick-Krakau (Eds.), *Außenpolitischer Wandel in theoretischer und vergleichender Perspektive: Die USA und die Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Baden-Baden (Nomos) 1999, pp. 227-253 and Stefan A. Schirm, *Reziprozität und Marktöffnung: Multilaterale, bilaterale und regionale Strategien der Außenhandelspolitik*, in: Rudolf/Wilzewski, loc.cit. (Note 32), pp. 247-268.

ous hegemon. Secondly, thanks to the successful reductions in tariffs, the competition in trade has moved to areas which are harder to regulate and which are more firmly fastened in the structures and practices of the participating economies. Thirdly, Congress has become more democratic internally as well as more willing to challenge the President, which means greater permeability for protectionist demands. Finally, since the end of the East-West Conflict, there has been a lack of the former security bond, able to subdue competitive economic interests.

All analyses agree that the USA no longer plays the role of benevolent hegemon in the world economy universally, but only selectively. Her contribution to the global economic order faces a structural dilemma.<sup>46</sup> Either the administration behaves consistently in an antiprotectionist way (such as Clinton did in the steel matter), in which case Congress does not give the administration the freedom it needs to broker further global trade talks successfully. The efforts to instigate such new talks failed in December 1999 in Seattle for a number of reasons, among them the position of the United States. The Clinton Administration had taken in too many demands from its political clientele which could not be negotiated internationally. Or the administration takes the opposite route, just as Bush jr. has done. Bush made protectionist concessions in the steel matter, in order to win a majority for "Trade Promotion Authority" in Congress and therefore obtain the authority to negotiate a new multilateral trade agreement, linked to the promise, by Congress, not to renegotiate over the details of such an agreement later. The TPA hung in a few republican politicians from steel-producing states in the mid-West and Bush's calculation came off, albeit only just. In fact, the USA appeared in Doha in November 2001 as the "honest broker" and contributed in this way to the start of new international negotiations.<sup>47</sup>

There are a number of problems and conflicts stemming from economic relations between the USA and Europe. They are an expression of economic rivalry, different forms of regulation, which are becoming the subject of controversy and the need for agreement due in part to the increasing intertwining of their economies, as well as different conceptions of the way in which the global economy should be organised. Nevertheless, most experts do not reckon that this will lead to a comparable increase in fractures as in other areas of the world order, for example security policy or international law as a whole. An important reason for this can be seen in the fact that economic relations between the USA and Europe are symmetrical. The economies of the USA and EU are highly integrated and networked, and the networking is expanding. Transatlantic economic relations constitute the most closely-knit trade and investment system in the world, the US and EU economies have become even more tightly linked through investments than trade. Economic policy integration, however, is still to catch up with the actual exchange processes, albeit these are heavily regulated and the regulation mechanism has been accepted in principle by both sides even though the details remain the subject of controversy. Both, the mode of

46 Cf. Falke, loc.cit. (Note 44), p. 28.

47 Loc. cit., p. 17.

power, and the mode of compromise distinguish transatlantic economic relations. Symmetrical networking and regulations have partly replaced the reduced hegemonial competence of the USA. The global economic order needs initiatives and support from other economic powers and groups. The EU has not (yet) been able to establish herself sufficiently as an effective and credible alternative.

Whether this altogether moderately optimistic finding will endure is not assured; it also depends on the future development of the global economy. The American economy is in no way as stable as it occasionally appears.<sup>48</sup> The European countries are faced partly with similar, structural problems in their economic development which could also interfere with the readiness to compromise on foreign economic issues on this side of the Atlantic. The debate over the agricultural policy in the Doha global trade talks, in which the USA and Europe pass the buck onto each other, whereas they both highly subsidise their big industrial farmers to the cost of the developing nations, is a current indication of the lack of commitment to the global economic order in the two biggest global economies, who seriously neglect “the important task of structuring globalization and who instead (have) become involved in short-term and dangerous competitive battles”.<sup>49</sup>

### 2.3. The “political superstructure”: largely alienated

#### 2.3.1. *From liberal hegemony to neoimperialism: the change of paradigms in US “Grand Strategy”*

The differences in the “political superstructure” as a whole, the “Grand Strategy” of security and alliance policy and general foreign policy are striking. Experts in American foreign policy not only in Germany such as Ernst-Otto Czempiel or Harald Müller,<sup>50</sup> but also US political scientists such as G. John Ikenberry, who wrote an important book on US global policy in the 20<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>51</sup> believe they can detect fundamental changes in American global strategy in the global order ideas of the Bush Administration: “(...) actions are afoot to dramatically alter the political order that the United States has built with its partners since the 1940s.”<sup>52</sup> The design of American world order policy for the period after the Second World War was based on liberal-institutionalist ideas. Free world trade, democracy/democratisation and multilateral institutions were to create a world order which

48 Cf. also Chapter 3.4.

49 Cf. also Heribert Dieter: Abschied vom Multilateralismus? Der neue Regionalismus in der Handels- und Finanzpolitik, SWP Study S 4, Berlin 2003, pp. 6 and 27, quotation from p. 27. The same also applies to deficiencies in international financial cooperation.

50 Cf. Czempiel, loc.cit. (Note 12), Müller, loc.cit. (Note 12).

51 G. John Ikenberry, *After Victory. Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order After Major Wars*, Princeton, N.J.-Oxford (Princeton University Press) 2001.

52 G. John Ikenberry, *America’s Imperial Ambition*, in: *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 81, No. 5, September/October 2002, pp. 44-60, quotation from p. 44.

would prevent a new global economic crisis and a new world war. This order was to serve American interests, but at the same time it was an offer to all other countries, socialist countries included. As the “prudent hegemon”<sup>53</sup>, the USA was prepared to turn its military and economic superiority (raw power) into a legitimate order based on institutions (legitimate authority). Through “bonding”, “binding” and “voice opportunities”, i.e. through the creation of commonalities, through rules to cover everyone and thus the self-binding of the hegemon, and through rights to have a say for the less powerful states, the leading superpower was prepared to give up short-term power gains, for a long-term stable and economical leading role. This hegemonial order drafted by the USA was soon eclipsed by the East-West Conflict, in which deterrence and containment dominated, but it did not disappear, it just had to be limited to the “western” part of the world:

“In effect, the United States built an institutionalized coalition of partners and reinforced the stability of these mutually beneficial relations by making itself more ‘user-friendly’ – that is, by playing by the rules and creating ongoing political processes that facilitated consultation and joint decision-making.”<sup>54</sup>

It was only logical that at the end of the East-West Conflict, the USA under George Bush sr. and then under Bill Clinton returned to the liberal-institutionalist design of US world policy. The change in US world policy now set by the Bush Administration was first intimated with the “conservative revolution” and the strong position of conservative Republicans in Congress. The new “Grand Strategy” establishes a new paradigm presented as the answer to terrorism, but it has deeper roots. As a result of the neoimperial paradigm, the USA feels less obliged to cooperate with her allies and less bound to international rules. She would rather use her new military superpower to fashion the world to her own ideas.<sup>55</sup>

The new “Grand Strategy” is based, on the one hand, on lasting military superiority combined with a greater readiness to use military force (realist anti-appeasement). The USA will do anything to maintain her military advantage. No other power or group of powers should be allowed the opportunity to catch up with her in power terms; she wishes to be so superior than the others would not even dare to try and match her.

The new global strategy contains a dramatisation and integration of new threats (threat inflation and conflation) which cannot be dealt with by deterrence alone. Potential threats may or must be fought anticipatorily, i.e. preventively. In so doing, the sovereignty

53 In modern political science terminology, as well in moderate realism as in liberal institutionalism or in Gramscian neomarxism, hegemony does not just mean dominance. A hegemonial order exists when a state has managed to create and maintain a world order with a credible universal claim, but not an order in which a state directly and undisguised exploits other states. It must be an order which is so attractive to others that they voluntarily integrate with it. Cf. on this subject also the literature overview and the summarising analysis of American hegemony differentiated according to context by Bernd Kubbig, in: *ibid.* (Guest Editor), *Toward a New American Century? The US Hegemon in Motion*, *Amerikastudien*, Vol. 46, No. 4, 2001, pp. 495-524 (Introduction) and 661-686 (Conclusions).

54 Ikenberry, *loc.cit.* (Note 52), p. 48f.

55 I’ve summarised Ikenberry’s seven elements and integrated the contribution from David Hastings Dunn, *Myths, Motivations and “Misunderestimations”*. *The Bush Administration and Iraq*, in: *International Affairs*, Vol. 79, No. 2 (March 2003), pp. 279-297.



of other states is enhanced and at the same time limited: they must accept responsibility for what happens on their territory and, if necessary, called to account, i.e. lose their sovereignty. The right to decide whether such a case has arisen, is asserted when in doubt by the USA.

International rules, agreements and alliances undergo a clear devaluation in the face of the primacy of freedom of action (assertive unilateralism). The USA wants to operate in the world on her own terms, “(she) should not get entangled in the corrupting and constraining world of multilateral rules and institutions”<sup>56</sup>, because she is facing a new and dramatic international challenge which she wants to and has to fight with all her might. “Apocalyptic violence is at our doorstep, so efforts at strengthening the rules and institutions of the international community are of little practical value”.<sup>57</sup> The new strategy also stresses the global mission of the USA (American exceptionalism).

The new paradigm holds serious risks for the USA, too. It has its own internal contradictions and it is met with resistance, even in the Bush Administration itself. However, it is supported by central players in the government and by large parts of the Republican Party in Congress.

### 3.3.2. *The protagonists of the new strategy*

Traditional hardliners from the period of the Cold War and militant neoconservatives take up quite a bit of space in the Bush Administration in purely quantitative terms.<sup>58</sup> Although they were still in their minority under Bush sr. with the then defence secretary Cheney, under Bush jr. they now constitute a majority of the decision-makers. A lot of them are signatories to a “Statement of Principles” in the “Project for the New American Century” of 3 June 1997 which referred positively to the presidency of President Reagan:

“We need to increase defense spending significantly if we are to carry out our global responsibilities today and modernize our armed forces for the future;

We need to strengthen our ties to democratic allies and to challenge regimes hostile to our interests and values;

We need to promote the cause of political and economic freedom abroad;

We need to accept responsibility for America’s unique role in preserving and extending an international order friendly to our security, our prosperity, and our principles.”<sup>59</sup>

Leaving aside the rhetorical bow to the allied or befriended democracies, these demands suggest a new explosive mix of political militancy, nationalism, liberalism and internationalism, eschewing conventional classifications of American foreign policy; it comes

56 Ikenberry, loc.cit. (Note 52), p. 53.

57 Loc.cit., p. 55.

58 The lines of separation are fluid. The security element dominates the “hardliners”, and the ideological programme the “neo-conservatives”.

59 [www.newamericancentury.org/statementofprinciples.htm](http://www.newamericancentury.org/statementofprinciples.htm) (9.12.2002), my emphasis.

somewhere between liberal, or multilateral internationalism in the tradition of President Woodrow Wilson, on the one hand, and strong “realistic”, rationally calculating power politics, archetypical of Henry Kissinger, on the other. The neoconservatives are not simply conservatives, since they want to change the world, linking central elements of realism (autonomy, freedom of action) and idealism (the perspective of “Global Society”, a kind of free and market economy world society).<sup>60</sup> “[...]within the Republican political élite the group of neo-conservatives and ‘Reagan democrats’ have called upon America to assume the mantle of a benevolent empire that reaffirms its authority and rediscovers the warrior virtues of ancient Rome.”<sup>61</sup> Moderate republican internationalism is of course still represented in the current US administration by Colin Powell, but he has a difficult time against a coalition of “realistic”, i.e. power policy-oriented hardliners and highly-ideologically-motivated neoconservatives. The result of this constellation is a tendency towards “unilateralist internationalism” with fundamentalist leanings.

Vice-President Cheney, when he was Secretary of Defence under George Bush sr. back in 1989, declared the Gorbachov reforms as purely cosmetic and pushed for the pressure to be maintained on the USSR to accelerate its collapse.<sup>62</sup> Back in 1992 in a draft of the defence plan, Paul Wolfowitz, former department head in the Pentagon and currently Deputy Secretary of Defence, held the position that the USA should expand her military might to such an extent that she need no longer fear any major power rivals. The draft, parts of which the press managed to get hold of, had to be withdrawn. Together with Douglas Feith, now Assistant Secretary for Policy in the Pentagon, Richard Perle, also a well-known “hardliner” from the time of the East-West Conflict, at times Chairman of the Defense Policy Board and as before an important advisor in the Bush jr. Administration, wrote in 1996 a paper for the Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu in which they advised him to withdraw from the Oslo Peace Process and give prominence to Israel’s claim over the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. When Netanyahu did not follow this advice, Feith wrote an article in which he challenged Israel to reoccupy the areas under control of the Palestinian Authority: “The price in blood would be high”, wrote Feith, but it was a necessary form of “decontamination”, suggesting the Oslo process had been the poison.<sup>63</sup> John D. Crouch, a department head in the Pentagon for International Affairs, has spoken out in his time against the Chemical Weapons Convention and in 1995 supported military attacks on North Korea’s nuclear power stations. Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld tried to keep the Ford government on a strict course of military build-up. His threat analyses were always extreme; for decades he has been in favour of building

60 Cf. also Hassner, loc.cit. (Note 16), pp. 39 and 47; or the work by Thomas Risse, *Beyond Iraq: Challenges to the Transatlantic Security Community*, Paper Presented at the American Institute for Contemporary German Studies, 24 January 2003, pp. 15-17. The same mix can be found in the “National Security Strategy of the United States of America” of September 2002, [www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.html) (6.1.2003).

61 Hassner, loc.cit. (Note 16), p. 39.

62 Cf. for the following Frances FitzGerald, *George Bush and the World*, in: *The New York Review of Books* of 26 September 2002, pp. 80-86.

63 Quoted loc. cit., p. 84.

a national missile defence. In 1998, he warned of a new “Pearl Harbor”, if the USA did not station defensive weapons around the world. Lately he has been talking of threats known to the USA, and also threats which the USA knew that she did not know about. On top of that there were also threats which the USA did not yet know that she didn’t know them.<sup>64</sup>

The State Department still holds stronger multilaterally-oriented internationalists, but Secretary of State Colin Powell, at the behest of Cheney, had to accept John Bolton as Assistant Secretary for Arms Control and International Relations, a protégé of Jesse Helms, the arch-conservative and ultranationalist Chairman of the Foreign Committee in the Senate for many years, who won himself a lot of credit for preventing arms control agreements. Mostly to John Boltons credit the latest arms control treaty has turned out extremely generous, in that it affords the USA a high degree of flexibility and reserve for its strategic nuclear weapons arsenal<sup>65</sup>.

The worldview held by this group of leading world politicians in the USA comprises a mix of triumph and pessimism. Triumph over the strength of the USA and her victory in the Cold War, pessimism over the rest of the world. In his election campaign, Bush jr. rued the fact that at the end of the East-West Conflict it was no longer clear who the enemy was: “When I was coming up with what was a dangerous world, we knew exactly who they were. It was us versus them, and it was clear who they were. Today we’re not so sure who they are, but we know they’re there.”<sup>66</sup> With the attacks of September 2001, he found, in his words, his “mission”. In a fairly similar way, Vice-President Cheney summarised the change in threat before the Council on Foreign Relations:

“When America’s great enemy suddenly disappeared, many wondered what new direction our foreign policy would take. We spoke, as always, of long-term problems and regional crises throughout the world, but there was no single, immediate, global threat that any roomful of experts could agree upon. [...] All of that changed five months ago. The threat is known and our role is clear now.”<sup>67</sup>

You sense in these statements almost a sigh of relief that the categories of the security state are back in place, that the USA can redefine herself with this fight. The feeling of a diffuse and vague threat situation combined with the consciousness of an exceptional power position found a focus in the shape of a new enemy, personified by Osama bin Laden (or Saddam Hussein), but omnipresent, an enemy which has to be and can be extinguished.<sup>68</sup> The fight against terrorism offers just as an extensive goal as did the containment of

64 Cf. Ikenberry, loc. cit. (Note 52), p. 50.

65 Cf. also Jack Mendelsohn, Make-Believe Arms Control, in: *Current History*, Vol. 101, No. 657, October 2002, pp. 325-329.

66 C.f. FitzGerald, loc. cit. (Note 62), p. 84.

67 Loc. cit.

68 According to Hassner, loc.cit. (Note 16), p. 38; on the rational heart of the American “war against terrorism” and on the risk of “total strategy”, *ibid.*, pp. 40-45.

communism and it fits in nicely with the political instincts of the president<sup>69</sup> and the ideas of some of his most influential advisors.

### *3.3.3. World power versus world order*

Even as a benevolent hegemon, the USA made serious mistakes in the period from 1945 to the end of the East-West conflict. But it has also brought about a number of productive world order achievements during this time, at least for the OECD area, starting with the Marshall Plan for the reconstruction of Europe. She has contributed a good deal to the regulation and legalisation of international relations. However, she has increasingly moved away from this tradition in recent years. In an article for the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, P. J. Simmons compiled a list of failings in US world order policy much larger than the four examples which I mentioned at the beginning.<sup>70</sup> The nationalistic “hardliners” and neo-conservatives in the Republican Party are not solely responsible for these failings, but they are to a large degree.

These cases can be classified formally into four categories and they concern for the most part security policy and international law in general, as well as international economic, development and environmental policy: cases in which the USA prevents effective international action (not only in climate policy, but also in arms control or women’s rights, these indeed in an awkward alliance with the Vatican and conservative Islamic states); cases in which the USA becomes involved to a lesser extent than matches her power and economic strength (e.g. in development assistance<sup>71</sup> or in contributions to the United Nations); cases in which the USA insists on her own rules or imposes rules which she herself does not observe (e.g. the International Criminal Court, the secondary sanctions or – like Japan, Canada and the EU – in trade with the Third World); cases in which the USA becomes deeply involved at the time, but then pulls out later (not just the Test Ban Treaty, but also the Biological Weapons Convention, and in part the Chemical Weapons Convention, for example).

69 Loc. cit., pp. 38-39: “[...] the frontier spirit and the idea of an all-out fight for survival in which adversaries have to be eliminated without paying too much attention to rules or niceties comes naturally to a Texan by adoption [...]”

70 P. J. Simmons, *Global Challenges: Beating the Odds*, Policy Brief No. 17, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington, D.C., August 2002, [www.ceip.org](http://www.ceip.org) (18.12.2002), p. 6f.

71 When it comes to having regard for the interests of poor countries, the USA together with Japan occupy the bottom two places among the 21 richest nations. Cf. Center for Global Development and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *Ranking the Rich*, in: *Foreign Policy*, May/June 2003, pp. 56-66.

Table 7  
A List of US Unilateralist Sins

*When the United States has done nothing and/or hindered effective action:*

- Climate change: It renounced the Kyoto Protocol 2001 and failed to take serious domestic action, though its 5 percent of the world's population accounts for 25 percent of global carbon dioxide omissions.
- Small arms trafficking: It blocked or weakened key provisions of a draft U.N. agreement (2001) to curb illicit trade in small arms.
- Tobacco: It blocked or weakened key provisions of a draft Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (2001-2002).
- Population and women's reproductive health: A "gag rule" (1984-1992; 2001-present) cuts off U.S. assistance to foreign NGOs if they provide (even with non-U.S. funds) legal abortion services, counselling, or referrals.

*When the United States has done less than its fair share:*

- Development assistance: in gross terms, the United States is the largest development assistance funder; but it ranks last among all rich countries in contributions – giving less than a third of what Europe donates. (The United States gives 0.10 percent of GDP versus Europe's 0.33 percent, soon to become 0.13 percent. President Bush's pledge made at the recent U.N. aid conference in Monterrey would, if implemented, increase U.S. spending to 0.13 percent of GDP.)
- United Nations and international dues: As the largest U.N. debtor (owing \$ 1.35 billion in back dues), the United States precipitated several U.N. financial crises in the 1990s. The U.S. share of the U.N. core budget (22 percent) is less than the European Union's (37 percent); its share of U.N. funds and special program costs (17 percent) is substantially less than the European Union's (50 percent). U.S. contributions have declined as American wealth has risen (to \$ 283 million in 2002 from \$ 298 million in 1999).

*When the United States has played by its own rules and/or imposed its own rules (or rules it will not follow) on others:*

- Trade: it has criticized developing countries' closed trading practices, but it has imposed steep tariffs on agriculture and textile products from poor countries (as have Canada, the European Union, and Japan). It defied WTO rules by increasing protectionist tariffs on steel (2002). It increased subsidies to U.S. farmers by 80 percent (2002).
- Chemical Weapons Convention: it ratified the convention only after asserting special rights (1997) including the right to refuse challenge inspections and prevent collected samples from leaving U.S. territory.
- Nuclear weapons policy and proliferation: It withdrew from the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty to proceed with a U.S. national missile defense system (2002). It asserted its right to develop a new generation of nuclear weapons.

- War crimes: It “un-signed” the Rome Treaty establishing the international Criminal Court (2002) and announced that the court should not expect U.S. cooperation.
- Extraterritorial jurisdiction: It has imposed unilateral, secondary sanctions that penalize foreign actors doing business with states that it wants to punish – for example, the Helms-Burton Cuba Sanctions Act (1996) and the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act (1996).
- Landmines: It rejected a 1997 convention banning antipersonnel landmines, claiming the need for mines in the demilitarized zone between North and South Korea. It has, however, spent more than \$ 500 million since 1993 to support mine removal and no longer exports antipersonnel landmines.

*When the United States has shaped popular agreements, and then abandoned them:*

- Biological Weapons Convention Protocol: After six years of negotiation, it blocked a proposed monitoring and verification system for the 1972 treaty banning germ warfare, leading 90 participating countries to postpone further action until November 2003.
- Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty: After 40 years of negotiations and a U.S. push to complete a test ban treaty, the United States signed this treaty in 1996 – but the Senate rejected it in 1999.
- Biodiversity Convention: It helped shape and then signed the convention (1993), but the Senate still has not joined 168 countries in ratifying it.
- U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea: After achieving hard-won negotiating victories over decades, it signed the convention (1994) but still has not joined 133 countries in ratifying it.
- Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change: It obtained numerous negotiating concessions, including parties’ rights to use market-oriented mechanisms (such as emissions trading), but it then opposed the treaty in 2001 (in a 178-1 vote) without proposing a viable alternative.

Source: Simmons, loc. cit. (Note 70), p. 6f.

### 3. Attempts at explanation

To date, there have only been a few attempts to explain the described developments in the USA or the differences in transatlantic relations,<sup>72</sup> but there are a number of explicit or implicit proposals on which theory can build. I will discuss four.

#### 3.1. Mars, Venus and the imbalance of power (structural realism)

In a much-cited article, Robert Kagan, a member of the wider circle of conservative theoreticians – he first caught the eye back in President Reagan’s day –, quite rationally and largely unpolemically, and to an extent agreeably, attributes the differences in basic political opinion between the USA and Europe to the asymmetry of their (military) power potential.<sup>73</sup> In so doing, he puts himself in the tradition of structural realism, which regards the division of power as the major theme in international relations. According to Kagan, Americans and Europeans live on two different planets, on Mars and on Venus; this means the USA embodies the element of security, which must support itself by military means in the anarchy of the world of states, and Europe the element of diplomacy and peaceful cooperation. The “personae” involved in the transatlantic drama have no significance, they just have roles allocated to them by the “distribution of capabilities”. This is emphasised by the author with an historical comparison, according to which these roles were distributed completely the other way round in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. At that time, the USA was the weaker party and therefore stressed diplomacy, dispute resolution and international understanding in its foreign policy, whereas the Europeans would rather pursue militarily-backed power and security policy:

“When the United States was weak, it practiced the strategies of indirection, the strategies of weakness; now that the United States is powerful, it behaves as powerful nations do. When European great powers were strong, they believed in strength and martial greatness. Now, they see the world through the eyes of weaker powers. These very divergent points of view, weak versus strong, have naturally produced differing strategies and judgments, differing assessments of threats and of the proper means of addressing threats, and even differing calculations of interest.”<sup>74</sup>

You cannot accuse the Europeans of not meeting the threats stemming from the international system today effectively. An “appeasement” strategy is forced on those who do not have sufficient means of resistance. Kagan introduces an interesting constructivist argument here. In the course of their unification process, the Europeans have become used to live in another world, in a Kantian peace, which they practice with one another and which

72 One of the few exceptions is found in Peter Mayer/Volker Rittberger/Fariborz Zelli, *Risse im Westen? Betrachtungen zum transatlantischen Verhältnis heute*, in: *Leviathan*, Vol. 31, No. 1, pp. 32-52. Cf. particularly Risse, loc.cit. (Note 60).

73 Robert Kagan, *Power and Weakness*, Policy Review Online, [www.policyreview.org/JUN02/kagan.html](http://www.policyreview.org/JUN02/kagan.html) (10.12.2002).

74 Loc. cit., p. 3 of 22.

they – this is their analytical and political weakness – project onto the rest of the world. He immediately ties this argument back in with realism, since the Europeans' Kantian world of peace could only emerge under the equally Hobbesian protection of the USA. Without the military power of the United States and her guarantees of security externally and internally, the Europeans would not have been able to conclude their alliance of peace. Even today, for the internal and external stability of this alliance, they continue to rely on the division of labor with the USA, which guarantees their security in a world which – apart from post-modern Europe – is still one of pre-modern and modern states:

“Europe's evolution to the present state occurred under the mantle of the U.S. security guarantee and could not have occurred without it. (...) it has become dependent on America's willingness to use its military might to deter or defeat those around the world who still believe in power politics.”<sup>75</sup>

This arrangement, this division of labor means that the USA is not only subjectively, but also objectively more threatened than Europe. She is the nation who resists the state and sub-state opponents of the West, she is the nation who is challenged, when someone directs something against it.

It is quite fitting with such a set-up, which does not sink to the depths of an excited exchange of reproaches, when Kagan in conclusion concedes that the USA, in spite as or rather because of the power asymmetry, could be more generous with multilateralism and international law, even if it were only out of tactical reasons, in order to acquire a stock of benevolence for those cases when unilateralism is unavoidable. Basically, it remains that the USA cannot follow the European Venus path of global “be nice to and get along with each other”, in fact she ought not to. It is the USA's responsibility to take the freedom of action she needs for her power politics as the foundation for the preservation of international security.

The fact that the USA practices more unilateralism in security policy and international law than in foreign economic policy, could be an indication of the validity of the structural-realist argument, since in the economic dimension, the world is a lot less dramatically hierarchied than in military potential, at least, in this case, the top is multipolar rather than unipolar. However, the difference assumed by Kagan in the choice of foreign policy means is empirically in no way so distinct, as the author supposes. For example, during the Kosovo intervention, the British and French were more prepared to deploy troops than the USA was. This also applies to the roles of British and French troops in Africa, whereas the USA very quickly pulled out of Somalia, for example. In the case of Rwanda, one of the biggest genocides in post-war history, the USA has done everything to

75 Loc. cit., pp. 16 and 17 of 22.



avoid the use of American troops.<sup>76</sup> And in the 19th century, US foreign policy was in no way as pacifist as Kagan claims, quite the opposite.<sup>77</sup>

In addition to the questionable perception of reality in a “realist” article which has caused political furore, the fundamental difficulty of realism in explaining opportunities afforded by the distribution of capabilities is shown here. There is neither “the” USA nor “the” Europeans. Kagan helps himself by claiming that even the Democrats in the USA are closer to American Republicans than to German Social Democrats. That is only true to a certain extent, and the significant differences even within Republican “Grand Strategies”, for example between the first and second Reagan administrations or between the administrations of Bush sr. and Bush jr., cannot be explained by a theory based only on the structure of power. Finally, Kagan’s excursion into constructivism which he integrates into his realist theory, can also be turned against him. John Gerard Ruggie justified the predilection of the USA for liberal-institutionalist or multilateralist world order politics in the second half of the 20th century with the multicultural experiences in American immigrant society.<sup>78</sup>

### **3.2. Collective experiences: from “don’t fence me in” up to 11 September (social constructivism)**

Social constructivist approaches which I have already mentioned are based more on the importance of political culture, on shared experiences and world views among great collectives, and on the relevance of ideas, values and identities for social and political action. This is how the USA’s unilateralism is time and again tied in with exceptionalism, the specifically American variant of nationalism. Even for the first immigrants, the “New World” was really a new and above all better world. The logical result was not that the old world, too, had to be restructured on the US model. The consequence of shutting off and creating an independent model of a new “shining city upon the hill” was also just as possible.<sup>79</sup> However, if the USA needed to turn to the world on a political or ideological level – there have always been external economic relations – that was mostly connected with universalistic claims.<sup>80</sup> Americans tend to identify the interests of the rest of the world with

76 Cf. Francois Heisbourg, *How the West Could Be Won*, in: *Survival*, Vol. 44, No. 4, Winter 2002-03, pp. 145-155, here p. 154.

77 Cf. e.g. Walter Russel Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World*, New York-London (Routledge) 2002, Chapter 1.

78 John G. Ruggie, *The Past as Prologue? Interests, Identity, and American Foreign Policy*, in: *International Security*, Vol. 21, No. 4, spring 1997, pp. 89-125.

79 Cf. also Tami R. Davis/Sean M. Lynn-Jones, “City Upon A Hill”, in: *Foreign Policy*, No. 66, spring 1987, pp. 20-38.

80 Walter A. McDougall describes and analyses this dualism very nicely – he even talks about the “Old” and “New Testament” – and its effects on foreign policy in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries: *Promised Land, Crusader State. The American Encounter with the World since 1776*, Boston-New York (Houghton

their own, they find it difficult to accept that the “USA model” is in no way compulsory for all others:

“The engine of America’s involvement in the world was ultimately the nationalism of a nation founded [...] on principles that the founders believed, and that Americans in general still believe, to be universal. [...] The combination of power, commerce and ideology that drove Americans to expand their influence in the world led them to believe that American principles and national interest were the same thing, that the advancement of American power and influence was not only good for America, but also good for the world. [...] Because Americans know they are right, they do not understand why peoples around the world do not simply agree with them and do not accept as the natural course of events the evolution towards American principles.”<sup>81</sup>

This exceptionalism, which is also frequently expressed as nationalism and unilateralism, is supported by a distinct individualism in US political culture, which shies away from generally binding rules or restricts them to the necessary minimum. This libertarian and, according to American understanding, very democratic tradition is frequently expressed in the USA as a major mistrust of “Washington” and its supposedly escalating bureaucracy; in foreign policy, it is one of the roots of “sovereignism”, which since the end of the East-West Conflict has put up so much stubborn resistance not only to cooperation with the United Nations, but also to the horizontal regulation and legalisation of relations between the USA and the rest of the world.<sup>82</sup>

Finally, in this context, the importance of religion – the USA is the only major country that falls outside the “law” of the relation between economic development and the growth of affluence, on the one hand, and the weakening of religious affiliation, on the other –<sup>83</sup> and religious fundamentalism must be mentioned, which also belongs to the political

Mifflin) 1997. McDougall sees himself more of a moderate realist, cf. p. 209: “Global Meliorism is the least effective and in some ways the most arrogant of all our diplomatic traditions.”

81 Robert Kagan, Strategic Dissonance, in: *Survival*, Vol. 44, No. 4, Winter 2002-03, pp. 135-139, here p. 136. Kagan argues in a more social constructivist way here than in the above referenced article.

82 A particularly prominent representative of this tradition was the above-mentioned long-standing Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee in the Senate, Jesse Helms, cf. also his article “Saving the U.N. A Challenge to the Next Secretary-General”, in: *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 75, No. 5, September-October 1996, pp. 2-7. Cf. also for more detail the excellent study by Matthias Dembinski, *Unilateralismus versus Multilateralismus: Die USA und das spannungsreiche Verhältnis zwischen Demokratie und Internationaler Organisation*, PRIF Report 4/2002, Frankfurt/M. (PRIF) 2002 and the book by Edward C. Luck, *Mixed Messages: American Politics and International Organization 1919-1999*, Washington (The Brookings Institution) 1999, e.g. p. 41: “As the last chapter emphasized, Americans do see themselves and their country as special. They are not shy about claiming that the United States is *the* indispensable nation, whose power and principles are essential to successful international cooperation. Yet, as this chapter details, a second and parallel theme has been that despite its unsurpassed national power, U.S. national sovereignty is a precious and fragile commodity that must be jealously guarded at all times within and from international organizations.” Or loc. cit., p. 16: “[...] international law and organization have been expected to express, embody, and extend the American dream, not to challenge or modify it.”

83 Cf. The Pew Research Center for The People and The Press, The Pew Global Attitudes Project, *Among Wealthy Nations (...) U.S. Stand Alone in Its Embrace of Religion*, Washington D.C., 19 December 2002 [www.people-press.org](http://www.people-press.org) (12.6.2003).

culture of the USA in the broadest sense, from the very beginning. Even the term “fundamentalism” comes from the USA, it refers to the self-characterisation of evangelical groups at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, who opposed modern Bible critique and liberal theology.<sup>84</sup> To date, in the USA, “the evil” has not simply been a religious category, but most definitely a political one, and it was by no means chance that it was used repeatedly by presidents such as Ronald Reagan and George Bush jr.. In so doing, they also aim or aimed at a certain section of their clientele, but this vocabulary is or was used by them not just tactically. Linked to this fundamentalist trait, which can be traced back to early Puritanism, is a Manichean world view with a tendency to super-elevate the self – called “angelization” by American writer, Saul Bellow<sup>85</sup> – and to exaggerate risks and threats from the outside, and which is particularly prone to projections. When “the evil” is not permitted in the self or one’s own camp (or becomes too powerful), it must be sought out externally and fought all the more resolutely:

“Political messianism in America has had a variety of expressions: some liberal and cosmopolitan, some conservative and intolerant. Even today the fundamentalist belief in a mission is just the credo of a right majority. However, there is an influential minority, to which the President of the United States belongs. Therefore, it’s not an exaggeration to say: Fundamentalist messianism is not only close to power, it is currently in power. [...] Good against evil: That is the basic pattern of apocalyptic thinking. Combined with this thinking is to believe that the crisis of the moment is the final crisis which needs to be overcome successfully in order to enter an age of lasting peace, prosperity and freedom.”<sup>86</sup>

In this context, the connection between strength and vulnerability also needs to be discussed. At the beginning of her history, the newly formed United States was in no way secure, the USA experiment could equally fail in the consciousness of her founders. However, after the civil war, the “second founding” of the USA and the gradual rise to a great global power extensively stabilized the country externally and internally. And yet, the USA has always reacted sensitively to threats, especially when there appeared to be connections between an external and internal threat: “Red Scare” and the deportation of American anarchists after the Russian Revolution, McCarthyism and the witch hunt for communists and communist suspects in the early fifties. Since it only rarely came to a real physical threat to territory – apart from the British-American War of 1812-14, there is “only” Pearl Harbour in the 19th and 20th centuries; since nuclear deterrence was mutual, the nuclear threat remained abstract –, the attacks of 11 September 2001 had a traumatic effect on the American population, beyond all political instrumentalisation; not only in the real, but also in the symbolic meaning of the attacks, which placed a dramatic question mark over

84 Cf. The Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. 5, 15. Ed., Chicago (Encyclopedia Britannica) 1997, see fundamentalism.

85 According to Martin Amis, Wir befinden uns noch im ersten Kreis, in: Tuesday 11 September 2001, Reinbek (Rowohlt) 2001, pp. 49-55, here p. 54.

86 Heinrich August Winkler, Die Welt vom Bösen zu erlösen, in: Süddeutsche Zeitung of 2/3 October 2002, p. 19. Cf. also the psychoanalytical hermeneutic reconstruction of one of Reagan’s speeches to the general public by Heinz-Dieter König, in: Siegfried Zepf (Ed.), Diskrete Botschaften des Rationalen. Psychoanalyse jenseits des Common Sense, Göttingen-Zürich (Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht) 1995, pp. 262-284.

the supposed security coming with the highly asymmetrical division of power in favour of the USA.<sup>87</sup>

The reverse side of this paradox of omnipotence and vulnerability is formed by the different experiences of war of the USA and Europe. Not only the immense superiority of the American war machinery caused the public in the USA to react differently to the real prospect of a new Gulf War, that would be the “realist” argument. Whereas the weak anti-war party drew parallels to the Vietnam War, the warring party preferred to connect the war against Saddam Hussein with the Second World War, the “greatest campaign in defence of freedom, that she (the USA, G.K.) had ever undertaken and which, of course, ended with the victory of the American cause”.<sup>89</sup> The Second World War, despite the many casualties experienced by the USA, was, like all American wars for almost 150 years, not an internal American matter, but a more or less foreign affair. The associations which Germans (and Europeans) link with the Second World War are quite different.<sup>90</sup>

### **3.3. Elections, interests and the inside of foreign policy (liberalism)**

Liberalism is established on the basic assumption that the main driving forces for international relations come from within individual societies, and moreover from their internal preferences. These social preferences must, insofar as they are to be conveyed via state representation to the international environment, be aggregated for foreign policy. In these processes of aggregation, majorities or the most powerful interest groups win through influence, negotiation and compromise formation. The results of these social preference formation processes then come up against each other in international politics which can lead to agreements, differences or even conflicts.

Political systems do not simply represent average values e.g. in public opinion, they represent only part of the political spectrum even in a democracy. If you consider that the public and the party system in the USA and in Germany are split into two almost equally strong camps and that over the last two years marginal differences in election decisions have brought one or the other camp to power (in the USA this applies to the President and to Congress), than part of the political alienation can be explained. If Al Gore had

87 In this context, Jack Snyder speaks of the “paradox of omnipotence and vulnerability”, see his: *Myths of Empire, Then and Now*, [www.ciaonet.org/special\\_section/iraq/papers/snj01/snj01.html](http://www.ciaonet.org/special_section/iraq/papers/snj01/snj01.html) (18.12.2002), p. 1 of 8.

89 Heinrich Wefing, *Zweierlei Angst: Warum Amerika sich für einen anderen Krieg wappnet als Europa*, in: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* of 7 Jan. 2003, p. 38. Bruno Schoch brought my attention to this article.

90 On the mood in the USA, again Hassner, loc.cit. (Note 16), pp. 10-11: “Being at once an innocent victim, misunderstood and threatened, and an irresistible power if it decides to eliminate its adversaries, is the cocktail that, for the moment and perhaps only for a limited time, appears to make Americans so united and so impervious to outside objections, including and perhaps above all those of their allies, and those of their liberal intellectuals, who almost seem like émigrés within their own land.”

won the election and there was a democratic majority in the Senate or the whole of Congress or, the other way round, if the Conservatives had won in Germany, the political contrasts would not be as great as they currently are. The polarisation between the centre left government under Schröder and the conservative government under Bush exaggerates the differences which might result from the inequalities of power or generally different political traditions and ways of thinking in the two countries.

But this does not explain the dramatic divergence between the findings on public opinion, on the one hand, or the “political superstructure”, on the other. The mismatch between the public and politics in the USA is too conspicuous. Peculiarities of the political system must be included to understand this; for example, the condition set out in the constitution that the Senate may agree to international treaties with just a two-thirds majority. This condition, which was originally designed to underline the federal character of the United States (and which in this respect also brings it close to the European Union), has changed its function historically, such that it affords a veto opportunity to a political minority which values the sovereignty of the USA in particular, i.e. the unilateralists, which they would not normally have in standard majority decisions. In the list of sins of unilateralism quoted in section 2.3.3 there are a number of positions which can be explained in this way, for example the Biodiversity Convention, which failed on the veto of 35 senators, i.e. a good third.<sup>91</sup>

Another reason for the lack of representation in American democracy can be found in the weakness of the parties. Senators, politicians and presidential candidates are political entrepreneurs who must win elections for the most part on their own and who therefore need lots of money. Politically active and materially well off groups therefore have a particularly strong influence on the selection and chances of candidates. In the Republican Party, neoconservative and fundamentalist candidates have gained a lot of weight because the fundamentalist-conservative right is very active and well-organised and therefore determines the development of personnel in the primaries overproportionately compared to the number of its members.<sup>92</sup> Foreign policy in the USA also tends not to be placed as high as domestic policy. A vote for or against the CTBT, for example, does not win or lose an election.<sup>93</sup> Since the demands on foreign policy tend to be general and diffuse (national security, protection from terrorism), lobby groups with specific material or ideological interest can exert overproportional influence here.

Another important aspect can be seen in the current Bush Administration. The interests of the arms industry, the energy industry (oil), the Christian-fundamentalist Right

91 Cf. Tanja Brühl, *Verweigerung statt Führung: Die internationale Umweltpolitik der USA*, in: Rudolf/Wilzowski, loc cit. (Note 32), p. 380.

92 Cf. Harald Müller, *Amerikanischer Unilateralismus: Ein Weltordnungsproblem*, in: Ratsch et al. (Publ.), *Friedensgutachten 2000, Münster (Lit) 2000*, pp. 43-52, here pp. 47-51; these groups have also considerably improved the striking power of the Republicans as a party.

93 Cf. James M. Lindsay, *The New Apathy: How an Uninterested Public Is Reshaping Foreign Policy*, in: *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 79, No. 5, September/October 2000, pp. 2-8.

and, in social terms, the rich and superrich are especially well-represented in this administration. But this coalition is not a solid basis for a lasting majority. It seems reasonable to assume that this administration tries to compensate its deficit in legitimacy via its security policy – traditionally the Republicans are allocated a higher competence here. Bush's general consent rate rose dramatically after 11 September, it is currently (June 2003) still way above the figures before the attacks. Trust in the domestic competence of the administration was just 40:60 in January 2000; its competence in matters of national security and terrorism was estimated to be much higher at 70:30, however.<sup>94</sup> The administration based its strategy for the mid-term elections on this difference, and was successful. Many prominent democrats were not convinced by the arguments of a new threat from Iraq and sensed a political staging which they finally gave in to or succumbed to despite resistance. All the same, 23 Democrats in the Senate voted against the Congressional mandate for a war against Iraq (even without UN mandate), in the House of representatives, the majority of Democrats were against the resolution.<sup>95</sup> Altogether, the government's "fear manipulation" in Iraq matters has worked so far, the mainly patriotic and uncritical mass media have cooperated in the process and helped considerably in solidifying several largely false images (for example regarding the Iraq regime's participation in the attacks).

This mechanism in the political arsenal of rulers is well known in political theory, including liberalism. The lack of domestic legitimacy of a government is compensated for or a particular representation of interest concealed by the mobilisation of the security argument and the threat from outside. Even the German chancellor and the SPD have tried to balance out deficits in their perceived economic competence via foreign policy, something I will return to in my conclusion. However, in this case, it was not via the mobilisation of feelings of a threat, but via the appeal to the population's desire for peace to which the USA seemed to be a major obstacle.

### **3.4. Reform blockade or the veiling of the class war (neomarxism)**

A Marxist argument would take up the diversion theory, strengthen it with a class analysis and tie it in with an analysis of the economy and its contradictory development.<sup>96</sup> It would assume that American capitalism is no way near as stable as it frequently appears. Striking

94 The precise survey results of January 2002: "Trust in Government" (national security): almost always 22%, mostly 47%, sometimes 28%, never 2%; "Trust in Government" (economy, health care, social security, education): almost always 6%, mostly 32%, sometimes 56%, never 5%. I have combined and rounded off the figures for "almost always" and "mostly" as well as "sometimes" and "never". The survey data is taken from the archive at the American Enterprise Institute, [www.aei.org/ps/psbowman5.pdf](http://www.aei.org/ps/psbowman5.pdf) (18.12.2002).

95 Cf. Elizabeth Drew, War Games in the Senate, in: *The New York Review of Books* of 5 December 2002, pp. 66-68.

96 With just one exception, my model argument is supported not by current neomarxist analyses and includes, as is usual in not just an American context, analyses and assessments of (radical) liberal provenance.

deficiencies of regulation in the finance sector and in the shares market, among large companies too, have led to massive fixing of the balance sheets and other deceits, many small investors have been ruined and confidence in the American economy as a whole has been seriously affected. No less than the well-known economics professor Paul Krugman sees a more important break in the history of America in this crisis phenomenon than in the attacks of 11 September!<sup>97</sup>

Another basic issue regarding the perspectives of the US economy concerns the crisis of “fossilistic Fordism”. Is an economy – expressly supported by the interests of the conservative part of the oil industry so very well represented in government (in return for co-financing George Bush jr.’s election campaign) – which not only aims to continue to base itself principally on fossil energy sources, but also aims to increase its consumption of these considerably, at all futureproof, or will it not destroy itself in the long term?<sup>98</sup>

Another of the fundamental, yet unsolved problems is the traditionally too low rate of saving in the USA – Americans live chronically above their means. The foreign trade deficits have been dramatic for years, the United States remains reliant on foreign investors. The budget deficits which were cut back during the long boom of the 1990s are beginning to rise again; many cities, not just New York, are on the edge of bankruptcy. On top of that, there are serious deficiencies in the material infrastructure (roads, bridges, sluices, dams, sewers) of the country<sup>99</sup> and in the social area, for example in the health care system. Meanwhile, it is not just the poor who lack health insurance, but part of the middle class, too, are struggling to afford the expensive insurance – especially in view of the declining job security faced by all.<sup>100</sup> In the major global survey conducted by the Pew Research Center, 15% of US citizens stated that at times in the past year they did not have enough to eat, which is three times the percentage figure in Germany.<sup>101</sup> The inequality in the distribution of wealth in the USA has risen sharply in the past 10 years.<sup>102</sup>

The Bush Administration gives a highly particularist rather than a structural-reformist response to this crisis phenomena. Its economic policy comprises a mixture of arms Keynesianism and random tax cuts, which almost exclusively favour the rich and super-rich and which are part of an ongoing battle against the welfare state. This type of politics

97 Paul Krugman, *The Enron Scandal Is a Turning Point for America*, in: *International Herald Tribune* of 30 January 2002, p. 8.

98 Cf. Andreas Missbach, *Internationale Klimapolitik: Weltinnenpolitik oder Innenpolitik der USA*, in: Wolfgang Hein/Peter Fuchs (Publ.), *Globalisierung und ökologische Krise*, Hamburg (German Overseas Institute) 1999, pp. 195-230.

99 Cf. Jeremy Rifkin, *Die H2-Revolution. Mit neuer Energie für eine gerechte Weltwirtschaft*, Frankfurt (Campus) 2002, pp. 60f., who supports his opinion on the annual report of the American Society of Civil Engineers. I am grateful to Alexandra Homolar-Riechmann for the Rifkin reference.

100 Cf. <http://nytimes.com/2002/11/25/national/25INSU.html> (16.12.2002).

101 Pew Research Center, loc.cit. (Note 10), p. 11. In England and Italy it is 11%, in France 8%.

102 Cf. Kevin Phillips, *Wealth and Democracy: A Political History of the American Rich*, New York (Broadway Books) 2002. Phillips’ central theory is that the USA is on her way to a plutocracy and is jeopardising her democracy (and her economy!) in the process.

is “inherently unpopular”, which is why it needs a populist front. Patriotism and conservative value orientations serve the Christian-fundamentalist clientele, ensure the conservative revolution, and veil the class war from above:

“The recent spate of articles about administration dishonesty mainly reflects the campaign to sell war with Iraq. But the habit itself goes all the way back to the 2000 campaign, and is manifest on a wide range of issues. [...] The Bush administration is an extremely elitist clique trying to maintain a populist façade. Its domestic policies are designed to benefit a very small number of people – basically those who earn at least \$300,000 a year and really don’t care about either the environment or their less fortunate compatriots. True, this base is augmented by some powerful special-interest groups, notably the Christian right and the gun lobby. But while this coalition can raise vast sums, and can mobilize operatives to stage bourgeois riots when needed, the policies themselves are inherently unpopular. [...] Right now the administration is playing the war card, inventing facts as necessary, and trying to use the remnants of Bush’s post-Sept. 11 popularity to gain control of all three branches of government. But then what? There is, after all, no indication that Bush ever intends to move to the center.”<sup>103</sup>

Worries about the survival of American capitalism tend not to come from Marxists in the USA, there are too few. They come – as cited – from critical sympathisers such as Felix Rohatyn, who, among other things, was Governor of the New York Stock Exchange, Chairman of the New York Municipal Authority and US Ambassador in France. Market capitalism is the best economic system ever invented for creating wealth, but it must be fair, regulated and ethical, writes Rohatyn, and he adds: “The excesses of the last few years show how the system has failed in all three respects”.<sup>104</sup>

## **4. Summary and Outlook**

### **4.1. “Arrogance of power”: the American strategy and its contradictions**

Based on the presented material, I can now give by way of summary a more systematic answer to the question as to whether German-American or transatlantic relations are in a crisis and, if so, what type of crisis. Where the economic basis of the relations is concerned, we cannot talk of a crisis (yet?). Here – apart from the usual, but almost routine conflicts which result as it happens from economic competition – nothing much has changed. The American and European economies are highly integrated and networked; the coordination of economic policy is not optimal, but is better institutionalised than ever before. If current weaknesses in the business cycle continue, reluctance by both sides to find the necessary solutions in terms of world order policy through compromise and adaptation reforms could prove problematic, however.

103 Paul Krugman, *The Bush Style. Inventing Facts as Necessary*, in: *International Herald Tribune* of 28 October 2002, p. 8.

104 Felix Rohatyn, *From New York to Baghdad*, in: *The New York Review of Books* of 24 October 2002, pp. 4-6, quotation on p. 4.



Despite the rise in anti-American moods in Europe and anti-European reservation in the USA, mutual sympathy and similar political attitudes among the populations in essential dimensions are giving additional support to transatlantic relations. On both sides of the Atlantic, the public are interested in cooperation and in people-oriented world order politics supported by global institutions. Nevertheless, the dispute about what to do about Saddam Hussein's regime and the Iraq War have left their mark. In the analysis of the USA's popularity rating which has dropped worldwide, we need to distinguish between (1) western values in general, which as before meet with major approval, (2) the USA as a whole, especially the American people and (3) USA policies which since the mid-90s have become more aggressively-nationalistic and unilateralist. Support for the politics of the United States has waned much more obviously than support for its people, the majority of Europeans wish more independence from the USA in foreign and defense policy. Differences between the public in the USA and in Europe can also be found in the intensity of the feeling of being threatened and in the readiness to spend money on the military. This is where the international division of labor has its effect, which assigns the USA a stronger military role and which is, at least in this aspect, accepted by the majority of Europeans. 11 September also plays a part in the intensity of the feeling of being under threat. In connection with long-term differences in political culture (nationalism and religious fundamentalism in the USA), these differences of position may intensify into irritation or even animosity.

Major changes in relations between the USA and her allies have resulted on the level of the "Grand Strategy" in foreign policy, more so in the area of security policy and international law, and less so in foreign economic policy. Over the past 20 years, the USA has gradually revoked the liberal-institutionalist basis of its hegemonial global order policy, which dominated the period after the Second World War and was only partially eclipsed by the East-West Conflict. The first sign of militarised global politics appeared at the start of the 1980s under President Reagan, but at that time American society and Congress forced him to take a U-turn to a cooperative security policy.<sup>105</sup> The continuous change in the Republican Party, whose moderate-internationalist wing has been pushed back further and further in favour of nationalist-unilateralist and fundamentalist-conservative groups and moods, then, with the conservative revolution and the takeover of power in Congress in the mid-90s, introduced the final renunciation of the liberal-institutionalist design of American foreign policy, which now with the falling-in of large parts of the Bush jr. Administration can be continued on the radical conservative/neoconservative line in the executive and will perhaps also find continuance in the next few years in the third power, the judiciary.

The majority of relevant decision-makers in the Republican Party in Congress and in the Administration are made up of two groups: old hardliners from the Cold War period, who are oriented towards categories of power, especially military power, and militant

105 Cf. also Jürgen Wilzewski, *Triumph der Legislative: Zum Wandel der amerikanischen Sicherheitspolitik 1981-1991*, Frankfurt am Main-New York (Campus) 1999.

neoconservatives. In the fight against terror and rogue states, both groups have found their mission around which they are redefining themselves. These decision-makers do not represent the majority opinion of the American public either in their militant foreign policy unilateralism or in their radical conservative economic and social policy. The social basis of the Bush Administration and its domestic policy is slim to exclusive. By mobilising “national security” she has succeeded for a long time in concealing the negative developments in her own country and the class war “from above” and forced the Democratic opposition onto the defensive and defeat.

The neoimperial approach of US world policy, which places world power over world order, does not however have to result from the new international division of power, it is not a necessary consequence of the “unipolar moment”, in which the world currently finds itself. The analyses and the political strategies of the radical conservatives in the USA are highly dubious and are most probably harmful to the well understood interests of the USA herself not only in the longer term, but also in the short term. Power and influence, this is what institutionalist Joseph Nye again insisted on in his new book, no longer are a simple reflex of military potential any more in today’s world.<sup>106</sup> The long-term success of all great power policies depends at least comparatively on “soft power”, i.e. on the economic capacity and “cultural capital” of a society. In the societal world, as Ernst-Otto Czempiel calls it, simply the number of rockets which a country can use “in the field” against other states no longer counts alone; the credibility of the social model and the political and social values which are propagated and lived by also count to at least an equal extent or even more.<sup>107</sup>

To face the major global challenges, including security policy challenges, even the hyper-power USA depends on the goodwill and cooperation of not only the international state system, but also the international societal system. This is even intimated by the Bush Administration on occasion, while at the same time defiantly declaring that they can and will go it alone, when others do not want to cooperate. In so doing, she is risking their good will and its own credibility and therefore the United States’ long-term most valuable power potential. Her manic view of the world (if you’re not for us, you’re against us) with decontextualisation and depolitisation of terrorism, which she stylises counter-fundamentally as “evil” per se, makes her blind to her own mistakes and prevents a prudent answer, which ought to differentiate between the hard and incorrigibly ideological fanatical core of Islamic terrorists, on the one hand, and the more or less justified resentment against the USA in the Arabic and Islamic world, on the other.<sup>108</sup> The reservations against the USA, especially US world order policies, have increased, and not just

106 Joseph Nye, *The Paradox of American Power: Why the World’s Only Superpower Can’t Go It Alone*, London-New York (Oxford University Press) 2002; cf. also the excellent review by Tony Judt, *It’s Own Worst Enemy*, in: *The New York Review of Books* of 15 August 2002, pp. 12-17.

107 Cf. also Ernst-Otto Czempiel, *Kluge Macht. Außenpolitik für das 21. Jahrhundert.*, Munich (Beck) 1999.

108 Hassner differentiates insistently on the risks of the American understanding of the “war against terrorism”, loc.cit. (Note 16), pp. 40-45.

among Muslims. The world sees the USA no way near as benevolent as the Americans see themselves. That should give a prudent world power something to think about.

Table 8

**How the public in the USA sees the role of the United States in the world and how the USA is perceived by other nations (percentage figures)**

The USA considers the interests of others			
	For the most part/ to a reasonable extent	Not very much/ not at all	Don't know/ no answer
USA	75	20	5
Mexico	42	52	6
<i>Brazil</i>	37	55	8
Canada	25	73	2
<i>Germany</i>	53	45	2
Great Britain	44	52	3
<i>Italy</i>	36	58	5
France	21	76	2
<i>Russia</i>	21	70	9
Indonesia	41	49	10
<i>India</i>	38	31	31
South Korea	23	73	4
<i>Japan</i>	36	59	5
Egypt	17	66	17
<i>Turkey</i>	16	74	10

Source: Pew Research Center, *loc. cit.* (Note. 10), p. 70.

The USA (and Great Britain) won the war in Iraq, and without the major negative side-effects or results which critics – myself included – feared or at least accepted as possible or even probable.<sup>109</sup> Yet peace is still not assured. The personal credibility of President Bush and Prime Minister Blair depends on whether in fact weapons of mass destruction will be found in Iraq. The future of the region and therefore also the perspective of whether Is-

109 In the first version of this report on pages 39-43, I summarised the military, political, financial and humanitarian risks as discussed by experts in Europe and in the USA. Many of these experts held the opinion that Saddam Hussein could have been contained without war. These discussions are now pointless.

lamic terrorism is stemmed or spreads depends on whether sustainable stabilisation and democratisation is achieved in Iraq.<sup>110</sup>

With the fixation on the Iraq crisis and the Iraq War - understandable in view of the surrounding drama - the full context of the USA's militant unilateralism is frequently overlooked, of which the Iraq policy of the Bush Administration vis-à-vis the community of states and the United Nations is just one of many striking examples. A prudent hegemon will, in order to prolong its power, offer to limit its own autonomy and freedom of action. It will give smaller powers the feeling that it is taking them seriously, it will pick up on their matters of concern. It creates and preserves institutions which finalise arrangements and agreements which last beyond the peak of its power. The biggest temptation for a hegemon is to go it alone, to dictate instead of consult, to preach and impose its values, says Michael Mastanduno, a moderate American "Realist".<sup>111</sup> Many of the USA's best friends and many intellectuals in the USA themselves fear that the United States has in the meantime become tempted by the "arrogance of power", which would be a "disastrous regression", in the recent words of the well-known US political scientist, Stanley Hoffmann.<sup>112</sup>

#### 4.2. An alternative strategy

Nobody would demand from the USA to stop protecting her interests. But would not a stronger accord of her role with the global community also be in her long-term well-understood interest? Would it not be better for her, too, if she, as Pierre Bourdieu put it, understood herself as a nation among others, as a "prima inter pares"? She would then still be entitled to claim accountability, but she would also be obliged to provide accountability herself: "I do not suggest as others have done that the Americans share their power. [...] It is enough to realise that the logic of royal despot, the *quia nominor leo* [because I am the lion], no longer applies in this world [...]"<sup>113</sup> In her own interest, the USA must improve the credibility of her foreign policy. In so doing, she will not convince the hard core of terrorists, that is impossible, but she can lessen its attraction. Specifically, what type of policy could be promoted that would take on the perspective of peace in and be-

110 Cf. also Thomas Friedman, Until Iraq is rebuilt, the war isn't over, International Herald Tribune of 5. June 2003, p. 7.

111 Michael Mastanduno, A Realist View: Three Images of the Coming International Order, in: John A. Hall/T. V. Paul (Publ.), International Order and the Future of World Politics, Cambridge (Cambridge University Press) 1999, pp. 19-40, here p. 35. In Hassner, loc.cit. (Note 16), p. 46, I found a very insistent quotation on this subject by Edmund Burke, the forefather of conservatism: "I must fairly say, I dread our own power and our own ambition; I dread our being too much dreaded [...] We may say that we shall not abuse this astonishing and hitherto unheard of power. But every other nation will think we shall abuse it. It is impossible but that, sooner or later, this state of things must produce a combination against us which may end in our ruin."

112 Hoffmann, loc.cit. (Note 12), p. 75.

113 Sprechende Turbane. Pierre Bourdieu über Islam und kollektive Intellektuelle, in: Süddeutsche Zeitung of 21 Nov. 2001, p. 17.

tween the West and the old/new “East”? As suggested by Bahman Nirumand the West must try to win over the Muslims who are not terrorists; this includes recognising its own share of historical blame in these relations<sup>114</sup> – including the Middle East conflict. Its origins lie in European nationalism, antisemitism and colonialism, and it will only gain a lasting chance of regulation, if and when Israel finally ends the Zionist colonisation project (meanwhile supported by religious fundamentalism) and satisfies herself with an assured sovereignty basically within the 1967 borders.<sup>115</sup> The fact that the last major north-south colonial conflict also lies on the culturally-ideological conflict axis between “the West” and “the” Arabic-Islamic “East”, is explosive in global political terms. The USA must finally understand, something which Zbigniew Brzezinski, security advisor under President Jimmy Carter, recently reiterated, that the nature of the US involvement in the Middle East is a major reason for the hate felt by the Arabic countries towards the USA:

“There is no escaping the fact that Arab political emotions have been shaped by the region’s encounter with French and British colonialism, by the defeat of the Arab effort to prevent the existence of Israel and by the subsequent American support for Israel and its treatment of the Palestinians, as well as by the direct injection of American power into the region.”<sup>116</sup>

Otherwise, it depends on the USA “getting her house into order”, i.e. doing what she has to do anyway in the interest of the survival and successful cohabitation of humans on this planet. The following is a short list which could freely be extended:

- The consistent pursuit of illegal and cessation of legal business with international markets of violence, in which terrorists operate (something has already been done here, but the true credibility test is still to come)
- The announcement of support for the project of the International Criminal Court project (the opposite is currently the case)
- The announcement of negotiations on extended security guarantees for the state of Israel within the 1967 borders and a Palestinian state in Gaza and on the West Bank (only with rose-tinted glasses can the Bush Administration be considered to be going in this direction; whether she in view of the annexationist positions in her own ranks and in view of the affinity of a large section of her fundamentalist voters towards annexionism finds the courage to induce Israel to far-reaching concessions in the settlement issue, is doubtful)
- The resubmission of the extensive Test Ban Treaty to the Senate with the perspective of a quick ratification (hopeless; instead, new nuclear weapons are being developed)
- Further urgent negotiations of a protocol for the Biochemical Weapons Convention (currently not in sight)

114 Bahman Nirumand, In welcher Welt wir leben, in: Tuesday, 21 September 2001, loc.cit. (Note 85), pp. 113-121, here p. 121.

115 Cf. also the insistent article by Amos Elon, Israelis and Palestinians: What Went Wrong?, in: The New York Review of Books of 19 December 2002, pp. 81-88.

116 Zbigniew Brzezinski, Terrorism. Focus on the Political Roots of Sept. 11, in: International Herald Tribune of 4 September 2002, p. 6.

- Start-up of serious negotiations on international restrictions in the trade of small arms (highly unlikely)
- The announcement (together with the EU) of the dismantling of protectionist measures against exports from third-world countries in the current trade talks (not impossible, but not likely at the moment)
- The announcement of talks within the G7 framework on the taxation of speculation profits from exchange dealings and on measures to steady investments (unlikely)
- The announcement of her readiness to ratify the Kyoto Protocol in connection with a review of the energy policy: emphasis on energy saving, energy efficiency and promotion of renewable energies (although the Bush Administration appears slowly to be beginning to understand that fossilism cannot continue in the long term, no U-turn is currently in sight, quite the opposite; the problem has been put off and therefore it keeps growing)

#### **4.3. “Arrogance of Impotence”: The European dilemma**

A less conservative US administration and a less conservative Congress would at least partly take on my list, although at present this is obviously utopian. One of the questions this poses is what can Europe do? Europe cannot seek out her main allies, she relies politically and economically on the USA, not only on account of her interests, but also on account of her values. Possible alternatives are not attractive, neither in terms of power nor ideologically. A policy based on “global governance” in the sense of the programme of the United Nations and on a participative strategy of global human development, is impossible without the cooperation of the USA, she is “indispensable” in this respect. In search of an antidote to the “arrogance of power”, advice can be sought from the founding fathers of the USA and their debates on the constitution of the new polity: “checks and balances”. It is entirely possible that in the USA itself effective counterweights are already being formed against the current course of the Bush jr. Administration. The discernible deficiencies in economic development and the exacerbation of social problems in the broadest sense are pointing in this direction. A lot will depend on whether there will be more big attacks which will give new impetus to the siege mentality and the focus on the foreign enemy.

Europe’s task must be to accept its part in the “balancing”. It’s not a question of classical geopolitical counterweight politics, since, for various systematic, historical and political reasons, only a form of “cooperative balancing”, i.e. the formation of international and transnational coalitions in the global political consensus formation processes is worth considering:<sup>117</sup> globalisation makes traditional balance of power politics obsolete, in the

117 On the theoretical and historical embedding cf. Werner Link, *Die Neuordnung der Weltpolitik: Grundprobleme globaler Politik an der Schwelle zum 21. Jahrhundert*, 3. Ed., Munich 2001; with a different background, Volker Rittberger/Fariborz Zelli, *Europa in der Weltpolitik: Juniorpartner der USA oder antihegemoniale Alternative?*, Tübinger Arbeitspapiere zur internationalen Politik und Friedensfor-

project of humane global governance the world cannot do without the USA, the ideological affinity to the USA is, as before, greater than to other potential world powers, and Europe's own power resources are limited. The "old Europe" has a lot to offer in these consensus formation processes, in which the use of "soft power" takes priority, in its social organisation and in its global order preferences it currently appears more agreeable than the "US model". Basic principles such as formation of a system of law between nation-states, coordination via common organisations and common rules specific to political fields, renunciation of violence, consideration of the interests of partners and consideration also of the demands from weaker members represent expertise and experience which make the EU attractive to many states, elites and populations with an at least tentative interest in the growing regulation and legalisation of international relations.<sup>118</sup>

Of course, the EU trails in many respects behind its own demands for cooperation and world order. These shortcomings (e.g. in the area of energy policy: Europe herself will have trouble achieving the truly modest CO<sub>2</sub> reduction targets of Kyoto; or in the area of agricultural or textile protectionism against the Third World) are often hidden behind criticism of US unilateralism, even if this is justified. Or Europe herself practises an arrogance of power, as in France's attitude towards new members who dared to speak out in favour of the American position in the Iraq question; or as in the German government's attitude, which, through its unconditional 'no' to any form of internationally sanctioned military policy against Saddam Hussein, itself incurred accusations of unilateralism and decisively helped along the fact that the Europeans could not manage to put together a common counter-position to the hardliners in the USA. This reproach also applies if you concede that the USA's changing basis for her Iraq strategy provoked such a reaction. The substantial weakness of the German position existed not only in the fact that she ran the risk of self-isolation with this position, but that she was without an alternative were the state community within the framework of the United Nations to agree to lend political and military weight to the UNO resolutions on the disarming of Saddam Hussein.

Not only that, the discussion on Iraq policy was caught up in an election battle, in which the SPD struck a national chord with cheap anti-Americanism. Just take the formulation of the "German way", which, by the way, Foreign Minister Fischer never used, a formulation with which Schröder wanted to distance his general policies from the social cold of the American way of exploitation and bankruptcy. This was not only terminologically extremely questionable but also tasteless, in view of the comparable structural problems in Germany. In leading SPD circles it was said that Germany was not a vassal of the United States, or Bush was compared with the Roman emperor Augustus who launched

schung, No. 41, Tübingen 2003. Rittberger and Zelli establish the necessity of a "third way": the transnational strengthening of Europe's civil power instead of antihegemonial policy of equilibrium on the one hand, or junior partners of the USA, on the other. My ideas of a "cooperative balancing" follow very much the same direction.

118 Cf. Harald Müller, *Kooperative oder konfrontative Weltordnung?*, in: Hauswedell et al. (Eds.), *Friedensgutachten 2003*, Münster (Lit) 2003, pp. 30-40, here p. 37.

some (failed) campaigns against the Germans. Finally, there was the embarrassing statement or Freudian slip of the Minister for Justice, who although she did not compare Bush directly with Hitler, at least put him close to him grammatically. The Chancellor regretted this incidence in a letter to the American president, but did not apologise and moreover made reference to the fact that what had been insinuated was not what the Minister for Justice had said, although it was quite apparent in the German newspapers that she had most definitely made the alleged remark.<sup>119</sup> In other words, he added insult to injury. Just about all commentators, including those who basically support the red-green foreign policy and stand up for it against American pressure and criticisms, are agreed that the staging of the German Iraq policy was arrogant and amateurish, could not deny dependence on the US (which was visible in the craving for forgiveness and in the actual support or non-prevention of US military efforts from German soil or airspace) and had diminished Germany's chances of exerting any influence.

The irony of such European arrogance of power lies in the fact that, in view of the real correlations of power, she thus produces only variants of an arrogance of impotence. In principle, the Europeans possess the right counterweight to the "assertive unilateralism" of the radical conservatives in the United States, they just need to position it better jointly in the scales. In addition to this, a stronger integration of their armed forces and a more efficient confederal division of labor is needed in procurement policy. Cooperative balancing as part of a multilateral, institutionalist and participative "global governance" in fact does not require a geopolitical counterweight to the USA. Instead, it requires effective military means as part of a concept of long-term peace-keeping.<sup>121</sup> As long as the Europeans refuse to take their own part in world order policy more seriously, their criticism of American world power politics will remain inadequate and lack credibility.

119 Cf. the articles by Christian Hacke, *Die Außenpolitik der Regierung Schröder/Fischer: Zwischenbilanz und Perspektiven*, and Lisette Andreae, *Deutschland als Motor einer europäischen Politik in den Vereinten Nationen*, in: *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, No. 48, 2 December 2002, pp. 7-15, here pp. 13f. and 32-39, here p. 37.

121 Again Hassner, loc.cit. (Note 16), p. 49: "If, at present, the United States is tempted to overestimate what can be achieved by force, Europe is tempted to undervalue it. Certainly, Europe's prime responsibility, compared with other periods or other regions, is to show the way to societies seeking peace and prosperity, freedom and justice, rather than domination and glory. Yet while the sword is no longer (...) the axis of the world, neither has the Common Agricultural Policy turned it into a ploughshare. Europe cannot escape the tragic reality that, in order to preserve and promote good, it is necessary to resist evil and sometimes inflict harm."