

Working Paper PRI-2

*The Worried Friend, or:
Hegemony vs. Globalization*

by

Claus Leggewie

November 8, 2002

Abstract

How real is American hegemony, given that only a few years ago talk about the decline of American power dominated discussion? How do allied states deal with a superpower that is no longer so benign? Does the United States still provide security for Western Europe and the rest of the world at all? And is a transnational world in need of *Pax Americana*, or what should, from a European and transatlantic perspective, take its place?

Claus Leggewie, Professor of Political Science, Giessen University

THE WORRIED FRIEND, OR: HEGEMONY VS. GLOBALIZATION?

By Claus Leggewie (Professor of Political Science, Giessen University)

When German foreign minister Joschka Fischer recently traveled to the United States for the first time since this fall's German elections, it was neither the much anticipated journey to Canossa,¹ nor business as usual. The current problems and fundamental differences are out in the open and must now be addressed. We hear a litany of worries in transatlantic circles in these days – but what are we actually worried about? I will be rather critical with the foreign policy of Chancellor Schröder and Minister Fischer, not because they have gone to far but because, in my mind, they were not going far enough. They made a strong statement of dissent with U.S. foreign policy which not only reflects public opinion and the wide majority of the electorate in Germany as well as in wide parts of Europe, “this increasingly pacifist continent” (Thomas L. Friedman, NYT 6.11.2002), yet it may also reflect a lot of concern in the United States itself. The author of the letter to the editor of the New York Times, addressing a “Laurel to Schroeder”, is probably not alone.

Several questions arise here: How real is American hegemony, given that only a few years ago talk about the decline of American power dominated discussion? How do allied states deal with a superpower that is no longer so benign? Does the United States still provide security for Western Europe and the rest of the world at all? And is a transnational world in need of *Pax Americana*, or what should, from a European and transatlantic perspective, take its place?

1 THE UNITED STATES: HEGEMONIAL, IMPERIAL - OR WEAK?

Hegemony is traditionally defined as an international interaction and a leadership relationship whose existence and maintenance are dependent, on the one hand, on the

¹ Canossa is a castle in northern Italy, made famous by the encounter of longtime enemies Pope Gregory VII and Emperor Henry IV. The narrative of Canossa is as follows: In 1072, the emperor usurped the church's authority by appointing a relative as archbishop. The pope's swift response was to excommunicate the emperor and install another man in the archbishop's position. Five years passed. At last, having lost his following, Henry crossed the Alps in midwinter and presented himself to the pope barefoot and in penitent's garb. The emperor had spent three days suffering in the inclement weather, after which he was pardoned by the pope and restored to his throne. In other words, the emperor was forgiven because he was judged to be sincerely repentant by having displayed remorse and being humiliated and exposed to the elements.

power resources, the will and the strategic competence of a leading state (the hegemon), and on the other hand, on the voluntary acquiescence of a homogenous – in terms of organization of power – group of states. It is the ability of a single powerful state to coerce other states to follow their bidding and construct a world order according to its wishes, as long as no combination of other actors can prevent it. Neither China, nor Russia, nor the powers of the EU, or the latter as a unified whole, will be capable of closing the gap in the near future – not on their own and not by “ganging up,” which would, from a realistic perspective, be the automatic reaction to the rise of a hegemon. A unilateral move by China, for example, would infuriate the entire region, in this case Japan and Russia; and all supranational organizations, such as the EU, are weakening themselves by the stubborn insistence for national sovereignty by their member states. One indicator for this assessment is the decline in military budgets for nearly all of America’s would-be rivals and the surprisingly smooth inclusion of leading former communist states in common security arrangements.

Until the 1990’s America’s supremacy was widely accepted because of the hegemon’s deliverance of “public goods” that widely benefit all concerned. Today, American power seems to transform itself into imperial, potentially imperialistic power. In fact, no historical superpower has been as hegemonic as the United States today. It is irrelevant which indicator is consulted, the attraction of shareholder capitalism appears as irresistible as the appeal of American popular culture, the dynamic of information and biotechnologies as well as the free-rider protection through U.S. military power. In the next year, the U.S. budget will appropriate more funding (but still only three percent of U.S. GDP) for its armed forces than the fifteen to twenty next-largest armed forces combined. This is not only a quantitative lead: the goal of the United States is the ownership of military equipment with an unmatched strike capability and destructive power in space as well as below ground that will ensure America’s permanent superiority.

This mega defense spending is certainly due to the humiliation of September 11; but even prior to that day, America’s strength was rebuilt on other ruins than Ground Zero — namely the broken pieces of the Berlin wall. As early as 1989 came the end of bipolarity, and all those who predicted an era of multipolarity had to come to terms with the realities of American power and influence. Today, the U.S. does not have many

necessities but enjoys many possibilities; the reverse is true for both its friends and foes. In this respect, no other state in the world qualifies for equal treatment and co-operation with the U.S.

In this grandiose perspective, multipolarity and consequently multilateral security policies, which seemed the obvious choice in the immediate aftermath of the East-West conflict, have long lost their hold on American decision-makers, advisers and strategists; at the same time, traditional American tendencies toward isolationism have given way to a renewed internationalism based partly on *Realpolitik* and partly on idealism. Cheney and Rumsfeld would ally themselves even with the devil, Wolfowitz would give up and confront even Saudi-Arabia if there *is* the devil. Bush's position is somewhere in between, as was documented most prominently in the *National Security Strategy Paper* of September 2002, a thirty-three-page statement of principles, since declared to be "of far reaching, potentially epic importance" by an obviously impressed German newspaper. In any case, the "reluctant sheriff" definitely has dropped his reservations.

This does not automatically presuppose a unilateral strategy, though, since, as amply demonstrated by September 11, the characteristics of a conventional war – limited interstate wars and local partisan skirmishes – are a thing of the past. A globally effective terrorism has taken their place, a force whose creeping, "molecular" approach can threaten even the U.S. In addition, to quote a recent paper by neo-conservative strategists Brooks and Wohlfarth: "Washington cannot ignore the level of disapproval that an aggressive, unilateral course is sure to raise among its most important allies. Not power, but influence is what matters in the end. The more one moves away from the short time agenda and goals of U.S. policy, the clearer it becomes that many problems – the environment, epidemics, mass migration, the stability of the global economy, to name only a few – cannot be solved in a unilateral manner. Such issues necessitate repeated interaction with many different partners over many years. To allow relations to sour now would severely poison political interaction in the future."

The so called "Bush-doctrine" clearly pronounces the end of deterrence and its related alliances. The new focus of the United States is pre-emptive and preventive self-defense, and the United States chooses its partners as it sees fit – *form follows function*. The events of September 11 have only fastened the change in strategy, not caused it; some

critics in the United States and Europe go as far as claiming that the terrorist attacks were used as an excuse by the “hawks” in the administration to push through this long planned change of policy. This harks back to the neo-conservative critique of détente, and the Star Wars-program of the Reagan White House. A possible reason might be just a *change among the elite*, exemplified by the total control of the “hawks” of such institutions as the Defense Policy Board; however, there are potentially deeper reason that lie in an actual *systemic change*, a conservative revolution that will drastically alter the role of its European allies.

2. THE AMERICAN FRIEND: THE USUAL SCHISM OR A NEW PARTNERSHIP?

Germany in particular has lost its relevance for American foreign policy in the aftermath of Russia’s domestication and integration; in the new international format the formerly elected “partner in leadership” (George H. Bush in 1991) has not kept many functions. Instead, the “eternal” divergences and differences that had characterized the German-American relationship during the first half of the twentieth century und continued below the ground as an “alliance of mistrust” (Brandstätter) in the aftermath of 1945 rose to the forefront again. Since Germany is no longer part of the higher order international framework as currently defined by the United States, and is potentially seen as a burden, even the possibility arises that the German American friendship will remain a unique feature, maybe just an extensive footnote of the cold war period.

Looking back, the German American relationship is seen as a story of perfect convergence. But let us stress the schisms and rivalries for a moment: Imperial Germany and the Third Reich were the main challengers to U.S. domination in the twentieth century; both Woodrow Wilson and Franklin D. Roosevelt saw in Germany “the evil empire” whose containment post-1945 through integration was the main foreign policy goal. This policy of integration has succeeded; Germany, even after unification, is thoroughly “westernized” and lacking in imperial ambitions. This has enabled the United States to eventually rise to an undoubted leadership position in the West, eventually becoming the only remaining superpower. The “German question” forced the United States out of isolation and into a definition of its mission to make the world safe for democracy. Berlin remained the symbol and security deposit of U.S. involvement in the

world, the containment of the Soviet Union allowed it to retain control of Germany and Western Europe. This “double containment” (Wolfram Hanrieder) built the ground of the security deal between Germany and the United States, whereby the costs (and risks) of the arms race of the 1980s, through global economic mechanisms, were carried primarily by Europe and Japan.

This asymmetric burden-sharing hints to another area of conflict, in which U.S. hegemony now raises the greatest doubts: the *form* of market economy and the architecture of the global trade- and financial system. Today capitalist prosperity is no longer an automatic by-product of the self-evident superiority in the competition among the political-ideological systems; legitimacy now has to be derived from within a capitalist economy, and the so-called “shareholder value” certainly does not present a model virtue to Europeans.

This doubt lay at the heart of Chancellor Schröder’s casual outlining of a “German way,” a term justifiably criticized for its ambiguity. He could not have meant the German national *Sonderweg*, or a fall back to the national neutrality of the Schumacher SPD, it is, rather, a self-defense of the European way of life. Since Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan, the welfare state has constantly been denigrated, and since 1990 it has become the bogeyman for libertarian ideologists. No longer socialism or capitalism, but rather the specific design of the capitalist economy has become a point of contention in the transatlantic relationship and is accompanied by “trade wars”, in which both sides violate free trade regulations with agricultural subsidies and steel tariffs.

Many crises in the German American relationship post-1948 were acted out as trade or currency conflicts; what we see now is the growth of a fundamental divergence on the issue of United States’ actions against transnational decision-making agencies and its attempts to manipulate them for its own purposes. I quote a paper by Charles Kupchan which reflects a lot of so called anti-American stands in Germany and Europe: “The Bush administration, like the Clinton administration before it, has been none too pleased about Europe’s growing assertiveness, but Washington’s dismissive attitude toward the EU up to now has only strengthened Europe’s resolve. Bush’s penchant for unilateralism, in particular, has provoked European pique. As Bush backs away from the Kyoto Protocol on global warming, withdraws from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, and distances the

United States from an host of multilateral institutions, Europe grows ever more convinced that it must both challenge America and chart its own course". If this were only true, then one also could support the conclusion: "Europe will inevitably rise up as America's principal competitor. Should Washington and Brussels begin to recognize the dangers of the growing gulf between them, they may be able to contain their budding rivalry. Should they fail, however, to prepare for life after Pax Americana, they will ensure that the coming clash of civilizations will be not between the West and the rest but within a West divided against itself."

There is a serious divide between Germany and America, too. Chancellor Schröder had believably expressed "unlimited solidarity" – in the war against terror, neither with other geopolitical goals nor with the United States assuming the sole authority to define what does and what does not constitute terrorism and how to combat it. Even beyond the federal election campaign of 2002, the German federal government clearly distances itself from a preventive strike against Iraq, and it was noticeable that the opposition happened to criticize Schröder's style, such as the lack of coordination with Germany's European allies. Some suggestions went as far as threatening the termination of the treaties guaranteeing U.S. bases in Germany and the refusal to grant U.S. airplanes flyover and landing privileges. These examples indicate the seriousness of the rift in German American relations.

Such concerns are often labeled anti-Americanism; a tendency that has influenced both the German right and the German left. Certainly, there is still a kind of anti-Americanism that criticizes "the Americans" for what they are, but it should not be confused with the political criticism of what some Americans do; i.e. criticism leveled against concrete security-political measures or a grand design. Here, one does not need to spend a lot of time reproaching anti-American sentiments since they are echoed in the American press and public as well.

Thus, serious analysis of the many risks associated with a war stance cannot be prohibited: What are the costs associated with going to war against Iraq? Could a military action start a chain reaction with regard to the stability of Iraq's Arab neighbors? What are the medium and long-term consequences for the region – will Iraq have to be permanently occupied, and by whom? What is the potential collateral damage for the Middle East in

general and Afghanistan in particular? Could military action against Iraq provide further support for Islamist terrorists and thus hinder efforts to eradicate terrorism? Surely one has to consider, what would be the consequences of allowing Saddam Hussein to remain in power and continue to defy international law. Walter Laqueur and Christopher Hitchens for example were pro-interventionist American sources published in European newspapers, whereas the American press continues simply to ignore German critics or make fun of them.

Therefore the position of the Red-Green federal government needs to be laid out again: A War against Iraq is not in our national interest, even under a UN mandate. German officials support a return of UN weapons inspectors to Iraq with a clearer and enlarged mandate in order to stop the production of weapons of mass destruction on a permanent basis; but they are not accepting the necessity of preventive military action and a forced regime change. German priorities lie elsewhere: namely in the eradication of Al-Qaeda and other networks of terror, the rebuilding of Afghanistan, and the creation of regional stability in Central Asia, whereby geo-economic interests, for example the presence of oil in the region, are of a lesser concern than to the current administration which seems to be obsessed by oil interests.

Dissension arises not only over the advertised goals, but also over the means of attaining these goals. Germany wants to protect international law against the damage caused by preventative military action, which is clearly prohibited by the UN Charter. Germany, once a state based on injustice and power, as we are reminded almost every day, does not want power to replace law as the *raison d'état* of the international system. Germany fears an uncontrollable chain reaction: What kind of argument could be used to prevent India from using a similar logic against Pakistan, and Russia from engaging in an analogous action in the Caucasus? Why act arbitrarily against Iraq but not against North Korea – and why not against China? And those trading with China must allow others to trade with Iran or Libya. What it all comes down to: American unilateral action may negatively affect current and future international relations, which will not make the world safer for peace, free trade, and democracy. Germany, as a worried friend, articulates its vital interests in the strengthening of the United Nations and the continuation of NATO, which many in the United States would like to put on the scrapheap of history.

Another avenue of criticism concerns the lack of cooperation and mutual respect, which is of vital importance in international relations and transnational regimes. Chancellor Schröder justifiably emphasized that Washington's demands are more in tune with "submission than friendship" and declared that, "consultation cannot mean that I will receive a phone call two hours prior to any action and be told that we are going in." (That already concerns the Clinton administration, in particular the flagrant non-information of the allies during the Kosovo war.) To put it succinctly, the United States "is not our guardian," and it is noticeable that in this regard the German government has lost its previous neuroses, especially the foreign minister, who now feels it no longer necessary to follow a kind of compensatory "anti-anti-Americanism." The White House feels still insulted through loose comparisons during the German election campaign. But the way the president of the only remaining superpower takes them personal, seems ridiculous to any impartial observer. And to present the reelected government through press organs (I am talking about the FAZ) with a "secret message" in the form of a list of tasks, the fulfillment of which would constitute a "second chance," is not conducive to a fast improvement of transatlantic relations either.

One can be sure that Schröder is dead serious with his growing distance toward the United States, particularly in regards to the rejection of the American economic "model", and one can also be sure that this position finds a lot of support in Germany. There are many supporters for a confident and equal dialogue with a powerful friend "auf Augenhöhe" (at eyelevel). For example, recent remarks by the German ambassador to the United States at an American University, comments made by former Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, and essays by the historian Heinrich August Winkler (highly regarded by the Chancellor himself) indicate support for this viewpoint, as well as the contributions of most German security and foreign policy think tanks. A different German government, as evidently wished for by the White House, would in my view not have followed a different Iraq policy.

Is the German approach effective, or does it lead into self-isolation? One can only speculate whether the cautious and restrained strategy of German foreign policy in this regard might still win the day, given that the United States has sought a compromise in the UN Security Council and has scaled back and modified its demands regarding regime

change in Iraq. Although these changes were desired by the German government, the situation clearly highlights the weaknesses of the German position: There was no unified European position, despite close German French relations. Tony Blair, who had to deal with formidable opposition within his own party and within the larger British public – a clear indication that German doubters were not alone – follows a different political strategy: To retain any influence on America, one has to be loyal and win the support of the U.S. government. This mixture of British loyalty and French obstinacy made a stronger case for UN involvement in the policies concerning Iraq and forced a two-step program – first the weapons inspectors’ return to Baghdad, then, if necessary, a precisely conditioned military action follows.

If Schröder’s stubbornness and isolationism was meant to make Germany stronger and more influential on the international floor, then it was certainly not a very smart move. Germany can only hope that its “soft power” will still be useful, even for America, whenever non-military means are wanted in conflict prevention and resolution in the future. One can also speculate whether German foreign policy-makers will row back and search compromises, as soon as Germany takes a seat as a non-permanent member in the UN Security Council, but I would wish that they would not give up too soon.

3. THE NAKED EMPEROR:

DOES THE UNITED STATES DELIVER GLOBAL SECURITY?

To control one’s own alliance is only part of hegemonic or imperial power; the other part, closely connected to the first, is whether the leader of a political military alliance is capable of credibly deterring common enemies. The United States has constructed a gigantic theater of war to prove their credibility. Deterrence is directed against so-called “rogue states,” even if terrorism has shed any resemblance to a state unit, and continues to invade the United States like a virus invades a body, through the filters of security and surveillance. Immediately after the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the Anthrax scare, which remains unsolved, demonstrated this inversion of terrorism. A year later, a sniper terrorized the capital of the world’s only superpower. Both cases only continued what began with 9/11: the random killings of innocent Americans to paralyze the rest of America in fear and to break its “spirit,” the optimism and courage of the West. Those separate individuals, who threaten American politicians, civil servants,

and citizens, are freelancing on fertile ground, with every ordinary maniac and serial killer contributing to the already existing terror.

Al-Qaeda constitutes a new dimension of warfare. Whether the United States can wage and win these new kinds of war remains in doubt. American intelligence services failed to pay heed to concrete warnings prior to September 11; a year later, CIA head George Tenet had to admit to Congress, that *first*, the threat environment remains unchanged, *secondly*, despite an immense effort, homeland security remains unable to prevent future attacks, and *thirdly*, an extension of U.S. involvement to regions and goals outside the North American continent remains likely and necessary, as already demonstrated by recent attacks in Djerba, Bali, and the Philippines.

Al-Qaeda has not been destroyed, and we continue to understand only very little about terrorism's origins and motivations, even though the bombastic slogan "war against terrorism" suggests otherwise. Europe has been accused of underestimating the terrorist threat, even though Europeans are much more familiar with its inner workings and effects. All European states have had experiences with terrorist activity – with ETA and the IRA, with the Red Brigades, and the Red Army Factions, with right wing individual perpetrators and pogroms, with the state sponsored terrorism of Muammar Ghaddafi, with the activities of Palestinian groups, and with the Islamic terror of the Algerian *Groupe Islamique Armée* that operates in Paris. Europe has not always fought against these dangers resolutely or with success, yet from their experiences, European states have drawn the conclusion that retaliatory action and preventative war against state sponsors of terrorism are less effective than targeted police action. That demands a global network of special task forces and intelligence units, and would mean more transparency and co-operation of the side of U.S. agencies. But even here America tends to go it alone.

The United States concentrates on the worst-case scenario—that a terrorist group might acquire weapons of mass destruction; American attention remains focused on states, not on the "societal conditions"(s. Czempiel's *Gesellschaftswelt*) that made the attacks possible. It is reasonable to characterize Al-Qaeda as a transnational non-governmental organization (NGO) and terrorism as a form of private warfare. The so-called "failed states" are hotbeds for such dangers; places where state control and authority as such no longer exist. Nevertheless, American attention remains focused on authoritarian states

such as Iraq, Iran, and North Korea, which are exaggerated ideologically in order to draw a similar image of the enemy as during the fight against Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. Here I agree with Michael Lind who recently reproached the Bush team as neglecting the greater danger of the use of WMD by individuals and terrorist groups, and hold that stopping them would require more emphasis on homeland defense and law enforcement, not foreign wars. Let me just add that homeland defense, too, has now a global, multilateral issue and by all means needs a maximum of transparency and respect of the state of law.

The Pax Americana may have a fatal flaw: Even if the United States could wage a multi-front war simultaneously against several states, America remains as vulnerable to new terrorist attacks from below as it was prior to September 11. And such a fixation on military revenge action disqualifies other approaches to other global problems, for example, underdevelopment and poverty, and it prohibits a debate about the indirect connection of such issues to terrorism. It also leaves little room for a possible contribution by European states. It is worth remembering that German peacekeeping troops are currently deployed in seven different regions, a feat for which the Red-Green coalition government deserves some credit, as this government pushed through the deployments despite large political risks. And it must also be recognized that these troops and their civil support agencies (like Technisches Hilfswerk) are doing a great job in reconstruction in the Balkans or in Afghanistan.

Germany is a member of nearly all existing supranational institutions; in contrast, the United States, while formally remaining a member, continues to recede from international coordination and treat international conventions such as the one against biological weapons or land mines in an opportunistic manner. One may say that these agendas are not important for the U.S. (while serious polls indicate that this is only true for the political elites, not for the general public) but the U.S. government has to acknowledge that issues of social justice, sustainable development and multilateral transnational governance are of utmost importance to Europeans.

4. PAX AMERICANA:

OBSTACLE OR PRE-CONDITION FOR GLOBALIZATION?

The proponents of a renewed transatlantic dialogue have recently received slaps

in the face, from a number of influential authors. Robert Kagan in a very influential paper denied that Europe and the United States still share a common worldview: “Americans are from Mars and Europeans are from Venus.”² In an allusion to the beginnings of the international system, Kaplan argues that while Europe lives in a Kantian utopia of permanent peace, the United States is asked to create order on a global scale within a Hobbesian state of anarchy. Hobbes wins over Kant: this drastic comparison is no longer understood in Europe, though the two sides have merely switched roles. Only a century ago heavily armed European states ruled the world and defended their national interests unilaterally while the United States, upon its entry into world affairs, was guided by anti-colonial ideas and an idealistic internationalism. The same militant nation-states, that by 1945 had run themselves into the ground bounded together into a supranational, multilateral union without significant military might. It is a union that emphasizes international agreements and alliances, while the previously exemplary transnational and imperial republic of the United States, in particular in the aftermath of September 11, 2001, has reconstituted itself as a strong traditional nation-state intent on trusting only its own power and determined to build nation-states around the world – a historical irony par excellence.

Despite Robert Kagan’s claim for a Hobbesian world order, there are of course a number of supporters of a more Kantian vision in this country, too; those that do not support the creation of a global Leviathan and are committed to multilateral integration in the best American tradition. These individuals and groups form a potential avenue of contact for a new broadened transatlantic dialogue, if not with the German federal government, then between civil society and non-governmental organizations. The United States is home to the strongest environmental and developmental NGO’s in the world, as well as the most powerful critics of globalization. Also important for us is the peace movement, which, for the first anniversary of the beginning of the bombing campaign in Afghanistan, organized a huge demonstration in New York’s Central Park and several other cities around the United States, protesting “external wars and internal repression.” More than 15,000 signed a multi-lingual petition against the war in Iraq, called “Not in

² See Robert Kagan “Power and Weakness” in *Policy Review*, 113/ 2002, German version in: *Blätter* 11/2002

Our Name.” And against the symbolic overkill of the New York firefighters, a group of fifty relatives of victims of nine-eleven formed a group called the “Peaceful Tomorrows,” a group that is against a preemptive strike against Iraq. The “usual suspects” of intellectual provocation have also weighed in: Gore Vidal, Noam Chomsky, magazines such as *The Nation*, the more moderate contributions of Michael Walzer or Richard Ford, and many, many others. Their criticism remains ignored not only by the American mainstream, but also among the “transatlantic community,” the *old boys’ networks* of the Deutsch-Amerikanische Freundschaft where they have long garnered the reputation of being eccentrics or loonies.

Troublesome is the ignorance of TV stations and even liberal newspapers and magazines toward a growing anti-war- (at least: anti-Bush) movement; even ten times the number of demonstrators in Central Park would not have merited coverage. This highly selective media coverage combines with a de-politicization of the general population, nevertheless at the beginning of October only half of those polled supported an invasion, and even more importantly, only a third believed America should act alone. The Roman-Catholic Bishops use a similar argument, which brings us to the next level of a renewed transatlantic dialogue: the American elites. The Democrats seem to remain rather unimpressed by protests and doubt expressed in public and private. Apparently the party has fallen into a patriotism trap and avoided any mentioning of these issues in its campaign, without any reward in midterm-elections as we can see now.

Conservative think tanks have succeeded in pushing liberal institutions into the background. Yet this level of contacts and discussion nevertheless remains active, attacking the hegemony of the American right openly and publicly. Their points of views match those of European government officials, political advisors, and scientists and they should play a stronger role in the transatlantic dialogue, here one could quote the stands of George Ikenberry, Michael Mandelbaum and lots of other distinguished writers, particularly from the Council of Foreign Relations. Fareed Zakaria reminds us that the zenith of American power was reached when it was still capable of creating inter- and transnational organizations of political and economic nature. Nowadays the United States is incapable of stabilizing the countryside only fifty miles outside Kabul, and even then its needs the support of the ISAF troops, which are heavily recruited from European

countries. Nicholas Lehman has quoted a whole phalanx of political scientists who functioned as advisors for the previous administration but have been shut out by the Bush administration. Joseph Nye Jr. and Tony Judt, for example, have analyzed the risks and potential failure of imperialist policy, and they have argued that for a militarily powerful country to remain strong, it urgently needs to work with and through transnational regimes and non-governmental organizations. America's use of soft power in the past has given it influence, credibility, and reputation, the case of Germany can serve as the best example. But the United States has since been surpassed in this regard by states such as Sweden or Canada, and the future role of Germany can only be a support of soft power.

There are still hopes for a renewed partnership that would deserve this name, and it must be based on civil society exchanges and cooperation in transnational agencies. A New Transatlantic Project has been proposed by Ronald Asmus and Kenneth Pollack, and Benjamin Barber even urges for a timely, neo-Kantian "declaration of interdependence." All these appeals are in my view directed against a thoroughly un-American tradition, which is tied to the apostrophized change of roles as mentioned by Kagan. Unlike contemporary Europeans, Americans are capable of identifying an enemy to their freedom on the basis of a religious reasoning, which they then personify in "Osama" or "Saddam" and raise to the status of "enemy of all of humankind" (*hostis communis*). Yet this kind of friend-foe philosophy is closely tied to a political theology anchored in the experiences of religious civil wars, something Europe would like to avoid. In 1933, Carl Schmitt wrote about the "total state" that it "prohibited any kind of subversive, hindering or secessionist forces in its domestic sector. A total state does not deliver its means of power into the hands of its own enemies and destroyers, and it will not allow its power to be undermined by ideas, Liberalism, state under the rule of law or whatever may be called. Such a state can distinguish between friend and enemy." Compare this with e.g. John Ashcroft's speech in front of the *National Religious Broadcasters Convention* in Nashville, Tennessee in February 2002, loaded with religious references and biblical quotations, and you will find striking similarities.

It is an irony of history that the always transnational America, a country that continues to see itself as a "society without a state," upon transforming into a truly global society and under the pressure of the internalized threat, finally entered into a form of state

building that creates external and internal enemies en masse. A globalization that deserves its name would demand nothing less than the end of American exceptionalism and the retreat from a mission that remains tied to one source of power alone. Globalization does not allow for an arrogant hegemon, and the United States should better recognize the worth of the international community for which the current administration has only contempt and from which it has willingly parted.

5. OUTLOOK

Transatlantic dialogues tend to end well: differences are never as serious as thought, the happy end will come. Those who are not part of this illustrious circle and do not win the majority of their experiences in the great wide world of transatlantic panels, cannot be quite as casual about the relationship between Germany or Europe and the United States. The United States is likely going to follow through with its unilateral action, which will have far-reaching consequences for friends and allies. Europe will certainly not be able to deter the United States from this course of action. The European Union is weak, factionalized, and helpless against post-modern terrorist attacks, which are without doubt being prepared at this very moment. The European dilemma consists of the EU having only two available suicide methods. Either it can decide to stand by the United States as its junior partner and take the adventurous path into the unknown; or it could decide to engage in massive armament programs, in direct opposition to the imperial power of the United States. The latter action, without doubt, would mean the final blow to the European social welfare system that has so thoroughly shaped the collective identity of the old world. The United States is not a social welfare state and can, at least for the moment, afford to arm itself in a rather obscene way; Europe, on the other hand, cannot even afford self-defense if it intends to remain a social welfare region.

Finally, the outlook on the war against terror would look more hopeful if the war against Saddam Hussein and potentially against sixty other sponsors of terrorism (according to U.S. counts) was based on an idea of what was to follow afterwards. Unlike in the war against Hitler, the United States has not offered any ammunition in the war of ideas, there is no vision for a new world order; rather, the American way of life as we knew it must be defended. This is not how one formulates an alternative to religious fanaticism and despair—without not even a touch of self-criticism. This is not meant to

suggest that the American people do not want transformation and change. This criticism is leveled against a government further to the right than any European government, with the possible exception of Italy. Ironically, the United States had warned Europe against just such a regime, for example in the case of an Austrian government under the hidden leadership of Jörg Haider. An intrusion into domestic politics? There are no longer any purely “internal issues” left.