Program for the Study of Germany and Europe
Working Paper No. 04.1
The "New World Order":
From Unilateralism to Cosmopolitanism
by

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ABSTRACT

On January 26, 2004, the topic of the CES-Berlin Dialogues was "The 'New World Order': From Unilateralism to Cosmopolitanism." It was the second in a series of four meetings organized in Berlin under the heading "Redefining Justice." The session was intended to examine successful and failed arenas of cooperation between the US and Europe; political misunderstandings and conscious manipulation; and models for future transatlantic relations. The presenters were Jeffrey Herf, Professor of History, University of Maryland, and Prof. Dr. Jürgen Neyer, Professor of International Political Economy, Ludwig-Maximilians-University of Munich, and Heisenberg Fellow of the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft at the Department of Political and Social Sciences of the Freie Universität Berlin. Jeffrey Herf was asked to speak on the basic tenets of U.S. foreign policy in the administration of President George W. Bush, and Jürgen Neyer focused on the European view of international relations and conduct in the period since the invasion of Iraq.
For further information on the CES-Berlin Dialogues, please check our website www.fas.harvard.edu/~ces-ber/

Jeffrey Herf

It is a pleasure again to contribute to an event sponsored by the Center for European Studies, where I spent so many fine times in the 1980s at Harvard. Thanks are due to Abby Collins for this invitation and to Stanley Hoffmann, whose example for so many years in Cambridge inspired many of us to do our best to think both clearly and passionately about public affairs. I approach this evening's subject both as a historian and as a citizen with views about American-European relations since September 11, 2001, and the war in Iraq. I have two key points to make. First, it been a disappointment that, after a half century of a vital and important, if often unpopular, tradition of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, a left-of-center German government refused to participate in – even if supported by the United Nations – a war against Saddam Hussein's Iraq, the most dangerous regime rooted in the aftereffects of European fascism and anti-Semitism to appear on the world stage since 1945. Second, however, this same tradition may offer a foundation for German contributions to the democratization of post-Baath Iraq and to a coming to terms with the Baath past in that country.

In the spirit of Harvard's Center for European Studies, I want to shed more light than heat and foster civil discussion and debate about important and difficult issues. I am not here to make the case for the Bush administration in general. I am what has been called a "liberal hawk," that is, someone who supports the Bush administration's foreign policy since September 11 but takes sharp issue with its economic, social and cultural policies. I realize that these views, expressed regularly in *The Washington Post* and *The New Republic*, are minority views among activist Democrats but it is important that you know that we exist and that there is an American counterpart to the general "third way" views eloquently expressed by Tony Blair but not, unfortunately, by Gerhard Schröder.

As a historian of the public memory of the Nazi period in Europe and in Germany after 1945, I was not surprised that France and Russia opposed a possible war in Iraq.[1] In both of these countries, the traditions of facing, respectively, the Vichy era, and the Gulag and Stalin eras were late in coming and weak in comparison to Germany's public reflections on the Nazi era. So it was not surprising that few French politicians, journalists and intellectuals wrote about the contribution of French fascist ideology to the foundation of the Baath Party in Iraq or that few in Russia probed the links between the nature of the Stalin regime and Saddam's prisons and secret police apparatus. Yet I had thought that the political and intellectual establishment in Germany would act as Tony Blair has and subordinate differences of substance and style with the Bush administration when the issue was the threat posed now and in the future by a regime which so clearly advocated ideas with deep roots in the era of European totalitarianism of the 1930s and 1940s (and for Stalin up to the 1950s). The problem with the German response was not that it was, as Habermas and Derrida suggested this year, cosmopolitan in comparison to the unilateralism of the Bush administration. Rather, Germany and much of Europe suffered from a deficiency, rather than an excess, of cosmopolitanism. Cosmopolitans are not fools. They do not equate understanding other cultures with necessarily liking or admiring them. Cosmopolitanism is perfectly compatible with perceptions of threats as well as of opportunities. With some important exceptions in the press and politics, the bulk of the German political establishment refused to acknowledge that, by the late 1990s, we were living in the second great era of totalitarian politics in modern history. This totalitarian wave was no longer rooted in Europe but in Europe's aftereffects combined with indigenous currents coming from both secular Arab radicalism of the Baath, and Islamic religious fundamentalism. Understanding that wave would have been much advanced by more sober cosmopolitanism and knowledge of Arabic and Islamic cultures, phenom-

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[1]Jeffrey Herf, *Divided Memory: The Nazi Past in the Two Germanys* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1997).

ena which were in too short supply in the United States and even more so in Europe. So if Germany, France and Russia had been more cosmopolitan in this sense, if they had paid close attention to what leaders of Al Qaeda, and of the Baath regime had said in Arabic over the past several decades, I think the chances they would have joined the United States and Britain (but also Spain, Italy and Poland) in Iraq would have been more rather than less.

Making such a statement is certainly unfashionable at the moment, faced as we are with the failure of American (but also European) intelligence agencies to correctly ascertain the current status of Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction programs and weapons on hand. Beyond saying that I still believe that, at the time, there was sufficient grounds to justify a war, I am not this evening going to engage the increasingly lively debate about prewar American intelligence. Rather I want to return to the question of why opposition to this war was so pronounced in Germany, a country which has reflected so much on fascism and Nazism. In 1984, I published book whose title became among scholars who examine such things, a famous phrase. "Reactionary Modernism" referred to the coincidence in Germany of an ideological embrace of modern technology combined with a rejection of liberal democracy.[2] Ralf Dahrendorf hinted at the issue when he called Germany's mix of technological modernity and political illiberalism "the first new nation" pointing to a future of dictatorship outside Europe. In the 1960s and 1970s, Karl Bracher, with Nasser's Egypt in mind, noted that the blend of nationalism and socialism found new expressions in the developing world. I wrote *Reactionary Modernism* as the Ayatollah Khomeini used tape cassettes from Paris to urge Iranians to return to the Middle Ages. From this historical perspective, then, of reactionary modernism in Europe's and Germany's past, subsequent mixtures of technological modernity and antimodernity which emerged outside Europe in the past century could constitute the greatest threat to international security in the late twentieth and then the twenty-first centuries. It is through these lenses that I have viewed the emergence of Al Qaeda and the regime of Saddam's Iraq. While the Bush administration did not use the phrase "reactionary modernism" in its strategy paper of fall 2002, it did draw attention to the dangerous mix of the spread of technology for weapons of mass destruction combined with fundamentalism as the primary global security threat of this period. Although Dahrendorf and Bracher gave all the hints needed for German historians to pick up the point, it was disappointing that so few did so.

As there is broad transatlantic agreement regarding the terrorist threat posed by Al Qaeda and related Islamic fundamentalist groups, I won't dwell on this issue. Suffice it to say that Paul Berman, in *Terror and Liberalism*, has made a compelling case linking the legacies of European fascism, Nazism and Stalinism to the ideological currents of the Moslem Brotherhood and then Al Qaeda.[3] In deed and word, the radical Islamists have declared war on the United States, Israel and modernity in general. Given their distinctive attitude toward their own death, there has been no alternative but for the United States to go on the offensive and fight a war against terrorists inspired by Islamic fundamentalism. Their anti-Semitic conspiracy theories and attitude toward death and suicide reveal a greater affinity to the fascist and Nazi than to the Communist variant of totalitarianism. While the stand-off with Soviet Communism could end with its peaceful implosion, the only way the threat of terrorism inspired by radical Islam can end is, as was the case with fascism and Nazism, through its military defeat, and with the democratic transformation of the part of the world from which it comes.

There are voices in Germany, for example Mathias Küntzel in his fine essay, *Djihad und Judenhaß*, who are aware that we are living in a period in which the legacy of Nazi anti-Semitism has diffused

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[2]Jeffrey Herf, *Reactionary Modernism: Technology, Culture and Politics in Weimar and the Third Reich* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1984).

[3] Paul Berman, *Terror and Liberalism* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2003).

into the Islamic world and into the mood of too much discourse in Europe.[4] Neither the Islamists, nor the Al Aqsa Martyr Brigades, as the campaign of suicide terrorism against the Israelis *following* Ehud Barak's offer of a negotiated two-state settlement made abundantly clear, made any distinction between criticism of Israel and anti-Semitism. They killed Jews as Jews. Their attacks on the "Zionist-Crusader alliance" in word and deed rest on a paranoid conspiracy theory, one which found its way into respectable European opinion in attacks on the presumed Jewish inspiration of the Iraq war. As Berman has recently pointed out, the Islamists made quite clear that an apocalyptic war was both inevitable and desirable. A police state dictatorship based either on the reign of Shariah or Koranic law (the Islamists) or the reign of brotherly Arab love (the Baath) was necessary to launch such a war. In the course of such a war with the decadent and degenerate West, a martyr's death for thousands of people would strengthen the cause and offer to the fortunate deceased a step on the path to heavenly paradise. Europe, Germany included, assumed that because totalitarianism had come to an end after 1989 it had ended globally as well. This provincial view failed to acknowledge that totalitarianism had revived in Baathist and Moslem forms. It spoke new languages, marched in different uniforms, and operated in different parts of the world with, however, a remarkably similar list of enemies: modernity, liberal democracy, capitalism, equality for women and, yes, again, the Jews.

Because the radical Islamists represent a radicalization of attitudes towards death and foster a cult of martyrdom, it became quickly apparent that containment and deterrence were no longer sufficient. Though the Communists fostered a cult of martyrdom, they did not make a virtue of death itself. Soviet leaders believed that they had more to lose than to gain by unleashing a nuclear war with the United States. Hence it was possible for the West to arrive at a nuclear stalemate with Moscow for half a century. During the Cold War, the leaders of the western alliance assumed that the Soviet leaders placed a very high value on survival and that, as a result, an actual nuclear war was always highly unlikely. The fundamental strategic message of September 11, 2001, was that no amount of deterrence and containment could defend the United States against terrorists inspired by Islamic fundamentalism.

As a consequence of the spread of weapons of mass destruction around the globe, combined with the emergence of Islamic fundamentalism, a policy of preemption needed to be added as a potential element of American (and I believe also European) security policy. The less controversial aspect of preemption, evident in the war in Afghanistan, concerns the need to take the offensive in the war against terrorists inspired by Islamic fundamentalism. Were Al Qaeda to possess weapons of mass destruction it could not be deterred by the prospect of nuclear retaliation. In *Surprise, Security and the American Experience*, John Lewis Gaddis, the leading American historian of deterrence and containment, makes the case for adding this component to our security policy. He argues that September 11, 2001, was as historically significant in the history of American foreign relations as the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941.[5] Both were followed by a burst of American military power that enemies had underestimated. Both led to a new policy adequate to new threats. Just as the attack on Pearl Harbor wrought the Roosevelt revolution in American foreign relations that introduced sixty years of containment and deterrence, so September 11, 2001, made preemption one necessary component of American security policy. Those who denounce these changes as challenges to international law or as a plan for empire fail to acknowledge that, after September 11, they are indispensable components of a policy of American – and, I would argue, European – national defense.

The deeper source of transatlantic disagreement concerns the war in Iraq. By its very nature, every preemptive war will be controversial, as it must rest on a set of political judgments and intelligence

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[4]Matthias Küntzel, *Djihad und Judenhaß: Über die neuen antijüdischen Krieg* (Freiburg: ca ira, 2003).
[5]John Lewis Gaddis, *Surprise, Security and the American Experience*, forthcoming (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).

assessments, almost always about dictatorial regimes whose expertise lies in deception and terror. I am not an expert on intelligence assessments. There remain literally thousands of documents in Iraq to examine. The Iraqi regime had a great deal of time to destroy evidence of its weapons programs. The argument for a preemptive war against Iraq rested on the best intelligence at the time, on Saddam's continued refusal to display what his government had been doing, and also on the nature of the Iraqi regime, its past policies and misjudgments, but also on the potentially enormous financial resources at its disposal due to its possession of the world's second largest reserves of oil. In my view, the nature of the regime received far too little attention from opponents of the war. The most important book and the most important author to influence liberal opinion in the United States about these issues was the 1989 work, *The Republic of Fear: Saddam Hussein's Iraq*, by Kanan Makiya, then writing under the pseudonym Samir Al-Khalil.[6] Unfortunately it has not been published in German translation. *The Republic of Fear* did for liberal understanding of tyranny in the Middle East what Hannah Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism* did for the liberal understanding of Nazism and Communism after World War Two. Just as Arendt drew out the intersection of terror and ideology,. Makiya [al-Khalil] examined the melange of ideology and terror, French fascism, Stalinism and anti-Semitism that defined Baathist Iraq. He discussed both the human rights catastrophe which Saddam's torturers were inflicting on their fellow Iraqis as well as the disaster of the Iran-Iraq war, and revealed the horror of this regime even before it attacked Kuwait. Lost in the focus on UN arms inspectors was the obvious point that over time a regime of this nature, in possession of vast oil reserves, would eventually, without repeating the blunders of invading Iran or Kuwait, use the money from the sale of oil to build weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons. Iraq could then confront the world with a *fait accompli*, at which point any thought of a preemptive war would be precluded by the prospect of Iraqi nuclear retaliation.

The essential dilemma of a policy of preemption is that it must rest on a set of political judgments made in conditions of uncertainty, defined by intelligence estimates about tyrannical governments and murderous terrorist organizations who specialize in deception and secrecy. It cannot rest, as the Gulf War of 1990 did, on a response to aggression already undertaken. To judge by the howls of protest coming from many in Germany, one might think that debates about preemption did not play a role in thinking about German history. It seems that, indeed, they have played a much too small a role. Though Saddam Hussein was not a carbon copy of Hitler, the dilemmas of preemption in the late 1930s remain relevant for the recent decision to go to war in spring 2003. Unfortunately, neither Winston Churchill's *The Gathering Storm* nor, more recently in the scholarly literature, Williamson Murray's *The Change in the European Balance of Power, 1938-1939: The Path to Ruin*, appear to have made an impact on the German debate over Iraq. Everyone remembers that Churchill was a critic of appeasement but fewer recall that he labeled World War Two "the unnecessary war." He meant that if the democracies and/or the democracies in alliance with the Soviet Union had made a credible threat of force in the late 1930s, Hitler might have been overthrown by a military coup in 1938 and would have been deprived of the opportunity to launch a war at the time and place of his choosing. Williamson Murray, in his important but not widely read work, made a powerful case that a preemptive war by Britain and France in 1938 or 1939 at a time and place of their own choosing would have caught Nazi Germany at a vulnerable moment well before it had the resources necessary to defeat them. Murray offered abundant evidence that Nazi Germany, before the aggressions and expansion of 1940, was in a precarious economic position, lacked access to natural resources vital for armament in depth, and was thus vulnerable to a preventive war. But, he continues, Britain and France consistently made the wrong strategic choices, minimized the reality of the Nazi threat, and exaggerated German military capabilities. The clear implication of Murray's detailed and far-too-neglected analysis is that Britain and France could have defeated Nazi Germany with a preemptive war that

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[6]Samir al-Khalil [Kanan Makiya], *The Republic of Fear: The Inside Story of Saddam's Iraq* (Los Angeles and Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989; New York: Pantheon Books, 1990).

would have been far shorter than World War Two. Had they done so, there would have been no Holocaust, as Nazi Germany had not yet occupied the rest of Europe along with its mineral and agricultural resources and did not have control over those areas of the continent, especially Eastern Europe, where the great majority of Europe's Jews lived.[7]

The uncertainties and imponderables surrounding such a war would have been considerable. There would have been no construction blueprints of gas chambers for victors to discover, as these had not been drawn by 1939. There would have been few, if any, planning documents for Operation Barbarossa, such as the *"Kommisarbefehl."* The enormous paper trail of meetings and decisions by Hitler, Himmler and Heydrich of summer and fall 1941, minutes of the Wannsee Conference of January 20, 1942, and speeches by Goebbels informing the world in 1941 that Hitler's prophecies about exterminating the Jews were "now" being realized would not have existed yet for the victors to demonstrate what it was they had prevented. Indeed, if the British and French had attacked before January 30, 1939, Hitler's infamous "prophecy" about the extermination of the Jewish race in Europe would not have been publicly uttered at all. In the aftermath of a successful preemptive war, there would have been legions of German nationalists and unreconstructed Nazis insisting that Hitler had been a man of peace who was merely the latest the latest in a long line of victims of British and French imperialism, and/or of Soviet Communism. In short, such a preemptive war, which could have spared Europe the Second World War and prevented the Holocaust, would have been extremely controversial, resting as it would have done on a set of political judgments about what Hitler would do in the future if given the opportunity. The only things Churchill could point to were a set of political judgments, hunches, assessments, informed opinions based on a determination to assume that Hitler meant what he said and wrote, and a prescient close reading of *Mein Kampf* combined with a worst-case assessment of the relationship between Hitler's intentions and German armament programs in the 1930s.

I do not raise this hypothetical situation to assert an identity between the threat of Hitler and of Saddam, though there are more such similarities than the war's opponents have been willing to acknowledge. Rather, I do so to point out that, even faced with the Nazi regime, a preemptive war, which would have been the right thing to do, would have rested on political judgments and intelligence assessments subject to great uncertainties. The grim option of a smaller war now rather than a larger and more terrible war later was, unfortunately, not taken in 1938 or 1939, but fortunately was taken in the spring of 2003.

There is another comparison to the 1930s that concerns international organizations. The League of Nations lost credibility in no small degree because it failed to use force to check the rise of the fascist dictatorships. The term "United Nations" emerged during World War II as the name given to those coun-

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[7]Williamson Murray, *The Change in the European Balance of Power, 1938-1939: The Path to Ruin* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984). Murray, in countering the view that the Wehrmacht enjoyed massive superiority over its opponents, in light of the stunning victories of 1940, writes: "The real weakness in the Reich's strategic position lay in the economic sphere. The great western offensive was a one-shot affair: success, and Germany would acquire the economic base to fight a long war; failure and the war would be over. Historians have for the most part interested themselves in the tactical and operational factors that led to the catastrophe. Unfortunately, they have failed to ask the crucial question in terms of grand strategy; how and why were the Germans allowed to husband their strength for the great throw of the dice?

...Germany's strategic and economic base was most narrow for the grandiose dreams of European conquest toward which her leader drove. Given the nature of those dreams it was inevitable that a European war would occur. Nevertheless, the timing as to when and in what fashion the other powers would take up that challenged was beyond Hitler's control. As he announced to his cohorts shortly after taking power, if France had any statesmen, she would wage a preventive war immediately. The Polish statesman, Marshal Pilsudski, apparently did think in such terms. But there was no one in France, and certainly no one in England, with the ruthlessness to "'wage a war now to prevent one in the future,'" pp. 361-362.

tries united in alliance against Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan. Had the UN failed to see its resolutions enforced in Iraq, it too would have been deeply weakened. It would have been only a matter of time before France and Russia gutted sanctions completely and Saddam or his sons could resume armament programs with oil flowing without interruption. Had Saddam, with help from France, Russia and, yes, Germany, successfully faced down the United States and the UN Security Council, he would have been even more lionized both by secular Arab nationalists as well as Islamic fundamentalists. The radicalization of the region would have been enhanced. Sooner or later he would have built an military arsenal capable of credibly blackmailing other oil-producing states. The prospect of a nuclear-armed Iraq would put Israel's security at risk, thus adding tension to the region and increasing pressures for other Arab states to acquire weapons of mass destruction, this in a region with more political fanatics per capita facing less stable regimes than anywhere else on the planet.

As Makiya revealed in 1989, the regime of Saddam Hussein was a torture chamber. While weapons of mass destruction have not yet been found, graves of over 300,000 people have been, many machined-gunned to death in ways reminiscent of the *Einsatzgruppen* on the Eastern Front in World War II. Can there be any real doubt that, if such a regime could do such things to its own citizens, it would comprise a grave threat to the world could it have acquired the arsenal Saddam was seeking?

What is clearly beyond dispute is that Saddam's dictatorship is over. No longer will the vast oil reserves under the ground in Iraq be available to the Baath Party and its vision of dominating the region, threatening Israel, blackmailing the world economy through influence over oil supplies, and possibly attacking the United States – either alone or in association with radical Islamists. The possibility now exists for the first time of establishing a liberal democracy in the Middle East and thus of overcoming its backwardness, not only in relation to Europe and the United States but to democracies in Asia and Latin America. The successful democratization of Iraq is a goal which I hope Europeans share with the United States. German journalists, lawyers, scholars and policymakers could draw on Germany's experience in dealing with the Nazi past after 1945 and the Communist regime after 1989 to help the Iraqis tell the truth about the Baath era. Kanan Mikaya is now in Iraq and directs the Iraqi Memory Foundation. (internet address is: www.iraqmemory.org) While disagreements about the Iraq war will continue, I hope people in Germany will draw on its experience with *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* of the two German dictatorships to foster a liberal democratic government in Bagdad, restoration of the rule of law, emergence of a vital civil society in Iraq, and public revelation in trials, oral histories, journalism and historical scholarship of the truth about the past regime's crimes.

Jürgen Neyer

Few topics in political science are more complex to talk about than the one given by the organizers of this evening, "The New World Order: From Unilateralism to Cosmopoitanism." The topic is by definition of a global nature and it does neither exclude security policy nor economics. It cannot be restricted to transatlantic relations or North-South relations and it covers the whole variety of global stake holders, be they of a governmental or non-governmental quality. Finally, it is a matter not only for empirical analysis or normative reflection. Talking about global ordering principles like cosmopolitanism and unilateralism implies to both understand where we are and where we want to go.

I have divided my talk in three parts. In the first part I will present a brief analysis of my reading of current trends in the international order as they have emerged after September, 11. In part two I will discuss dominant strategies of trying to re-establish security and criticize them for their lack of insight into basic historical lessons. In the third part of my talk, I will analyse terrorism as violent political action in an emerging world society, and speculate about appropriate strategies of how to transform the global polity towards more justice, fairness and security.

1. The Three Pillars of the New International Order

Following a broad strand of the debate on how to counter terrorism, we are today in a very unfortunate situation. It is argued that not only the U.S. but Western culture in general has come under siege by an aggressive new form of totalitarianism emerging from the Islamic countries. Because this new form of totalitarianism is violent and – due to its fanatically religious background – by and large irrational, it is said that we have little chance for constructive discourse but must fight and defend ourselves. Furthermore, because these people strive for access to nuclear weapons and other means of mass destruction, we must be realistic enough not to rule out any instrument which might help to increase the impact of our counter-measures. Correspondingly, the recipe proposed for countering terrorism is a high cost recipe. It rests on three main pillars.

1. The first pillar is domestic politics. Justified by the need to confront terrorism, John Ashcroft, Otto Schily and their colleagues tell us that civil rights can no longer be maintained on the traditional level. In order to equip the state with the powers it needs to confront terrorism effectively, the line shielding privacy from state interference must be redrawn in favor of legitimate state intervention. Although any such redrawing is more than unwelcome, it might not even be the most pressing problem. That line has always been in flux, and hardly anyone would argue that democracy as such is endangered by the announced expansion of state competencies. The problem lays at a deeper level of justification.

In modern democracies it is a basic principle that the delegation of authority is never unconditional. We always expect those who are in power to explain and justify why they are doing what they are doing – and reserve the right to withdraw power if the explanations are unconvincing to us. In confronting terrorism, however, we are told today that all of the important information we would need in order to individually assess the seriousness of the terrorist threat is top secret. I do not want to argue that we are told lies. I personally think that both Ridge and Schily behave with integrity. My problem is that I cannot be sure.

Listening to governmental rhetoric I sometimes feel reminded of the big war in George Orwell's 1984. None of the involved governments in that novel had an interest in ending the war because it so beautifully served as an instrument for disciplining citizens and limiting their rights. Again, I do not want to argue that governments today are using the war on terrorism for the same purpose. But it can hardly be

overlooked that governmental rhetoric often shows striking similarities: there is a big monster out there and we will only survive if we empower the state by handing over some of our civil liberties. Just as in the novel, we must trust the state that the information which is provided to us is complete and non-biased. Remembering the public relations efforts of the British and U.S. governments last spring, it is sometimes difficult to realize that trust. We were told that the Iraqi government possessed weapons of mass production and it was even insinuated that the Iraqi regime might have masterminded Sept. 11. All this was simply nonsense.

One of the most pressing dangers to me therefore is that the price we must pay for empowering the state to confront terrorism includes the limitation not only of civil rights but – more crucially – of our right to demand and get public justification for governmental policies. It is the danger that we ourselves might feel compelled to damage our societies more than any terrorist attack could ever achieve. Even if empowering the state might help to overcome the sickness of terrorism (and I will explain in a minute why I do not even believe that this is the case) – the threat is that democracy as we know and cherish it will not survive the operation.

2. The second pillar of the counter-terrorism recipe is international politics. If public justification has been a crucial feature of democracy, so has multilateralism been essential to postwar international relations. Multilateralism is based on the idea that global public goods such as security or an open world economy can only be produced if the conduct of foreign policy is guided by international norms and a spirit of cooperation. That, however, seems to be no longer the case. Condoleezza Rice (2000) has made that point sharply clear: in an article on "Promoting the National Interest" in February 2000, she argued that the Bush II administration will reevaluate all international obligations of the U.S. in terms of America's "national interest." "There is nothing wrong with doing something that benefits all humanity," she explains, "but that is, in a sense, a second-order effect."[8]

And indeed, in the last couple of years the U.S. has repeatedly asserted its right to pursue its policies unilaterally, even if that sharply contradicts the preferences of its allies. The refusal to sign the Kyoto-Protocol, the opposition to the idea of an International Criminal Court, and the objection to the Treaty banning antipersonnel land mines have made clear that European and U.S. perceptions of cherished international public goods are no longer identical. One may object and point out that they never have been: there always was some volatility in the degree to which European and U.S. preferences were overlapping. Just think about the war in Vietnam. However, while such differences were in earlier decades a deviation from the norm, they today seem to constitute the norm. September 11 has given additional momentum to the already latently existing readiness of the U.S. administration to rely on "coalitions of the willing," i.e. to chose first the task and then the partners. Its programmatic explication, the National Security Strategy of September 2002, reflects more than just a reduced overlap in preferences. It gives expression to the perception of the U.S. that European interests in international affairs and the European vision of the world are simply different. It is an approach to understanding international politics that has little sympathy for the notion of international norms and international public goods. It focuses on national interests and private goods. As such it is indeed a farewell to multilateralism and a paradigmatic shift in transatlantic relations.

It must be questioned, however, whether the price that the U.S. might pay for its insistence on the right to go it alone is not too high. It is clear that any successful approach to fighting terrorism must include cross-border intelligence sharing, cross-border police work, and tracing international financial flows. The U.S. can not unilaterally provide for any of these tasks. What they require is multilateral cooperation, which in turn can only be achieved by a cooperative attitude and constant consultations. Even

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[8]Condoleeza Rice, "Promoting the National Interest," *Foreign Affairs*. 79, 1 (2000): 47.

Realists are well aware of this fact. Henry Kissinger has put it in the following words: "America's special responsibility, as the most powerful nation in the world, is to work toward an international system that rests on more than military power – indeed, that strives to translate power into cooperation. Any other attitude will gradually isolate and exhaust us"[9] Following this lead, Robert Kagan agrees in an article in the *New York Times* that "[t]he struggle to define and obtain international legitimacy in this new era may prove to be among the critical contests of our times, in some ways as significant in determining the future of the international system and America's place in it as any purely material measure of power and influence."

3. The third pillar of the ongoing battle against terrorism is a reassessment of the normative dignity of international law. Listening to the Bush administration, it is hard to escape the impression that international law is increasingly viewed as a burden to the U.S. Just to remind you: the traditional approach to international law holds that it is an instrument which is beneficial to all states. By fixing rights and obligations, international law reduces uncertainty and contributes to a procedurally disciplined conduct of international relations. In doing so, it is beneficial to weak states which have at least some additional leverage to transform their preferences into international policy outcomes. And, as scientific realism tells us, it is likewise beneficial to powerful states – because discipline serves to stabilize the system and is a prerequisite for a smooth functioning of the international order. Even for a powerful and self-interested state, therefore, compliance with the limitations of international law is rational because the stability of the system is hard to achieve otherwise.

The problem with the U.S. administration's approach to international law today is that the evaluation of the benefits of an orderly system seems to have changed fundamentally. Whereas postwar politics was build on the assumption that U.S. interests are best served if the international system is in good order, the current administration seems no longer to share that view. The claim of the U.S. to have a unilateral right of preemptive strikes stands in sharp contrast to accepting the guiding role of international law. It is again a fundamental reorientation of foreign policy, away from international law and global stability and towards unilaterally justified principles.

Furthermore, although I am a supporter of an *offensive* use of the human rights agenda in international politics, I am deeply concerned about its instrumental use. Once it became apparent that Iraq did not have any weapons of mass destruction or any systematic links to Al Qaeda, the Bush government began defending the invasion by pointing to the human rights record of the Baathist regime. I agree that serious violations of human rights could provide a reason even for military intervention. However, what I do not agree with is the highly opportunistic use of the human rights discourse. It is used when it helps a case of state interests and it is equally easily forgotten if it does not. If the human rights arguments are meant seriously, why didn't the U.S. intervene, for example, in Rwanda to stop the genocide? Would the U.S. do so if something similar happened tomorrow in some other distant country? And it is even harder to agree if the very country using the human rights discourse is holding hundreds of prisoners in Guantanamo Bay at the same time, denying them the rights of status as prisoners of wars. The intrinsic danger of the recent proliferation of human rights arguments in international politics is that it will become the new cheap talk of diplomats and that recourse to them – even if honest in intention – will lose all of its credibility.

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[9]Robert Kagan, "A Tougher War for the U.S. Is One of Legitimacy," *New York Times*, January 24, 2004.

2. Wrong Strategies

What is the alternative? Giving in to the terrorist threat by withdrawing all troops from Afghanistan and Iraq, and ending support for Israel? This, of course, is not worth a single second of reflection. To start with, I share with Jeffrey Herf the insight that deterrence and containment are insufficient means for responding to terrorism. And – I would like to add – they always have been. I do not think, however, that military interventions by the West in Islamic countries or any other kind of unreflected aggressive attitude towards these countries would do better. All experience in countering terrorism underlines that it is extremely hard to win a war against terrorism, even if the counter forces are in control of the territory from which terrorists operate. Did Israel win its war against the Hamas, Islamic Jihad or the Al Aqsa brigades? Did Russia win its war against Chechnyan rebels? Sri Lanka its war against the Tamil Tigers? The UK its war against the IRA? The answer is, of course, four times no.

The ongoing intensity of terrorism in all four cases is a direct result of the degree to which the parties involved were ready to enter constructive discourse and to take the grievances of the parties involved seriously. The longer the war on terrorism continues, the clearer it becomes that bombs do not convince and are inadequate for pacifying zones of turmoil and even more so for the global polity.

To make the argument more systematic: the ongoing wars against terrorism in Chechnya, in Palestine or against Al Qaeda rest on the myth that military strength translates into a good chance for winning intra-state wars. That view, I think, is deeply wrong. When it comes to transnational relations and intra-state war, power is widely dispersed among state and non-state actors. Aircraft carriers and tanks can not establish order in failed states. Nor can they cope with terrorist cells in Hamburg or London. The U.S. may be an international giant in terms of its capacity to wage war against other states; but it is only one among other dwarfs when it comes to its capacity to provide political stability in zones of turmoil. Relying on a strategy of war for fighting against terrorism is therefore a high-risk strategy. It not only has little chance for success but also means escalating the conflict and increasing the chances that weapons of mass destruction will indeed one day be used on American or European soil.

I am also highly sceptical as to whether the high hopes for a new variant of the domino theory (the neo-con interpretation of Kantian thinking) will have any chance of realization in the Middle East. All we know about democracy tells us that the establishment of democratic governance includes much more than just getting rid of a dictatorial regime. Democracy entails – among other things – the sharing of a set of normative values among the majority of the people (such as tolerance, respect, human rights), a mutual sense of trust among the citizenry and – last but not least – the secularization of political thinking. These are prerequisites for any democratization process, and they cannot be taken for granted in Iraq or in any of its neighboring Islamic countries. This is not to say that one should refrain from promoting the agenda of democratic reforms wherever it is possible. But one must bear in mind that the establishment of democracy can only be the product of a long-term learning process. And that it is highly unlikely that it will happen simply by contagion or by top-down-implementation on the part of an occupying power.

3. Politics in an Emerging World Society

For a more promising starting point to develop a counter-terrorist strategy, it is helpful to step back for a moment and to reflect about the nature of the threat: what is terrorism and why did it grow to such relevance? First of all, terrorists are people who are convinced of the rightness of their cause. Although terrorism is a crime beyond any doubt, one must not forget that it is motivated by politics and a desire for a better world. Terrorism is not irrationality but an instrument for effecting politics. Thus one should be careful not to treat terrorists as irrational people or simple criminals. Although it is true that terrorism is a terrible crime that cannot be justified by any means, we have to bear in mind that its

motives stem from political grievances. Terrorism – even suicidal-terrorism – is neither solely religiously motivated nor is it an irrational act. It is political action motivated by the perception that there is no other promising avenue for expressing grievances and addressing an opponent at hand.

And, let's be clear, hardly anyone would argue that there aren't some serious grievances which are worth being addressed. If we take the normative yardstick of Christian ethics and/or of our national constitutions, we have every good reason not to be proud of our involvement in global politics.

• What, for example, did the Western countries do to fight global poverty and starvation? What about the thirty-year-old goal of spending 0.7 per cent of GNP for development aid?
• Did we always refrain from supporting dictatorships? Who supported Saddam Hussein against Iran? Who is selling weapons to the dictators in Saudi Arabia and who is making profits from war all over the world?

• And did we do as much as we could have done to stop 1,000 persons dying every day from HIV? Did we provide these countries with free medicine?

I don't want to bore you by extending the list. But the message should be clear: A world sharply divided between zones of peace and prosperity on the one hand and war and starvation on the other can hardly be expected to be a peaceful world. It is the sharp inequalities in terms of wealth and power that have always been the crucial ingredients of civil war. How can we expect that those lacking power and wealth in the South to respect the lives and wealth in the North, if the North does not respect the lives and well-being of the people in the South?

This of course is not the whole story. We know that terrorism is often financed by rich elites in oil-exporting states. And we also know that fundamentalism exists for a great number of domestic reasons, such as the search for a cultural identity which provides reliable orientation in times of rapid social, economic and political changes. But the huge gap between our own normative standards on the one hand and our conduct of international politics on the other, has made us an easy target. That the name Osama has become the favorite name for baby boys in large parts of the Arab world provides evidence that the West has lost much of the attraction it once had. That should give us pause for thought.

Addressing terrorism therefore must not stop at equating it with fascism and totalitarianism. Addressing terrorism should rather ask about its underlying reasons and include a critical self-reflection of our conduct of foreign policy. A new world order, if it deserves the term at all, must be established on those principles that have made democracy the best mode of governance that history has seen so far: justice, fairness and solidarity. By implication, countering terrorism is ultimately about extending the application of these norms to the rest of the world and thus about winning the hearts and minds of the people. Joseph Nye has made that point clear: in a world of complex transnational interdependencies, terrorism can only be countered by "soft power"; that is, by convincing the people who today name their baby boys Osama that democracy means more than imperialism and self-minded consumerism, and that it includes an important promise for their future.

Paradoxically, the increasing resistance to the West's influence in the world stems not from a deterioration of the normative standards of Western foreign policies in the last ten years or so. Compared to the nineteenth and most of the twentieth century, they have become even more sensitive to respecting human rights and international legal principles, not less. For understanding the intensity of violent protest today, one must take seriously the change in the social context in which foreign policies are conducted. The new world we live in is one of global information exchange and complex interdependence. It is an emerging world society in which the rules of international power play are no longer accepted, but an addi-

tional emphasis on justice and fairness is demanded. And finally, it is a world in which power is chaotically organized, widely dispersed, and in which military power no longer translates into a guarantee of security.

Thus, what we need is a new awareness of the interdependence between our foreign policies and our domestic civil liberties. Civil liberties as we know them will only survive in an emerging world society if we are ready to transform national foreign policies into elements of a global domestic policy, i.e. a policy that addresses the concerns of those who suffer and which helps to reduce their grievances.

Of course, using the notion of an emerging world society in international politics is a touchy issue. One must be cautious not to overlook the high degree of cultural, ethical and political heterogeneity. If one uses it cautiously, however, as referring to a situation of complex interdependence among societal and governmental actors in different states, it becomes a useful heuristic tool. It makes us sensitive, for example, to the fact that collective goods such as global security can only be produced by communicative interaction among various governmental and non-governmental actors. It furthermore opens an analytical space for addressing the issue of transnational and intercultural dialogue. But, one may ask, is the idea of a global transnational discourse not again overly idealistic? Can we indeed expect a meaningful discourse that not only highlights differences but also carries the potential to identify means for overcoming them? Some skepticism might indeed be adequate.

However, this does not mean that the endeavor is doomed to failure from the beginning. With a good mixture of pragmatism and some American-style optimism one might find new institutional tools for facilitating the difficulties. What for example about exchange programs for Islamic school kids and students? For the price of a single B1 bomber one could invite more than 50,000 students to stay in Europe or America for a year. Wouldn't such an offer make a big impression among students in Islamic countries? For one and a half B1 bombers, it would also be possible to double the income of the 1.2 billion people living on incomes of less than $1 a day. Or: by cutting off 10 percent of the $379 billion budget of the Pentagon, one could triple the U.S.'s Official Development Assistance. And start, for example, to fulfil the financial promises given to the people of Afghanistan. That might help to prevent a lot of people from turning to Islamists in order to find some support. I could also think of an opening up of the European market for agriculture. That would not only allow for a new WTO round on international trade but create €35 billion of additional income for less developed countries. A more radical plan would be to reduce the $300 billion of global agricultural subsidies by fifty percent and use the resources for quadrupling the $50 billion of global official development assistance.

To conclude: coping with new problems demands creativity and adaptation. Simply dropping more bombs on more terrorists or making the European states join the American war will not suffice. In an emerging world society, the only convincing response to the growing intensity of political violence is to rely on a double strategy of reducing grievances and of providing institutions in which they can effectively be addressed. And – last but not least – it demands a new understanding of foreign policy as an instrument for conducting global domestic politics. That is still far from a truly cosmopolitan order. But it would nevertheless be a big step towards a more just, fair and safe world.