

Germany - the reluctant ally: German domestic politics, the U.S and the war against Saddam Hussein¹

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2005-9

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This working paper is one of several outcomes of the Ridgway Working Group on Challenges to U.S. Foreign and Military Policy chaired by Davis B. Bobrow.

1. Introduction

Nearly four years ago, on 11 September 2001, the German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder promised “unlimited solidarity” to the USA in the fight against terrorism. Only one year later the most severe crisis in both American-European and American-German relations broke out. Germany not only refused to support the U.S. policy but also declared that it would not support even UN military action against Iraq. Germany’s strict opposition to U.S. policy towards Iraq differs strongly from the country’s active role in the war against the Taliban in Afghanistan. For the first time in post-war German history, the German government deployed a few hundred elite ground troops to take part in the fight against the Taliban.

The conflict between the U.S. and the German and other European governments over Iraq reached unprecedented levels both in substance and in style. The conflict over Iraq and the subsequent occupation of Iraq caused a major shift in public perception of the US. The share of Germans saying that the U.S. is Germany’s “closest friend” dropped dramatically from 50% in 1995 to only 11% in March 2003.

This chapter follows the research questions posed in the introduction of this project (see Dave Bobrow’s paper). It will therefore examine the “who, what, when, why and how” of the German resistance to American policy. The questions to be discussed are:

1. Which political objectives did the German government pursue during the Iraq crisis?
2. What were the main motives and reasons behind Germany’s opposition to the U.S.?
3. Which strategies and foreign policy instruments were used to resist the U.S.?
4. How did the U.S. react to the German reluctance to support the U.S. policy on Iraq?
5. How successful was Schroeder’s strategy in the domestic and international realm?
6. How did the relationship evolve after the German elections and after the Iraq war?

Special emphasis will be put on the discussion about the reasons for Germany’s resistance and the strategies² pursued by the German government to resist or even challenge the U.S.

In the aftermath of the transatlantic crisis, a number of articles and books have been published on this question. Whereas Gordon/Shapiro’s (2004) study covers the relationship between the U.S. and Europe as a whole, Szabo’s (2004) more recent book focuses exclusively on the German-American relationship. With the notable exception of Dalgaard-Nielsen (2003) most of the articles are policy oriented, usually adding to their analysis some recommendations for a rapprochement in American-German or European relations. Other

analyses give a comprehensive overview but are more journalistic or descriptive (Winkler 2004). There is a broad consensus among German and American scholars and journalists that domestic considerations of Chancellor Schroeder played an important role in Germany's categorical "nein." From this perspective, Schroeder successfully instrumentalized the Iraq war for his party's victory at the polls. Surprisingly, the international dimension of Germany's resistance against the war on Iraq has been neglected so far. Therefore, the question of whether Germany pursued a "strategy of resistance" has not yet been an issue of debate in Germany or in the U.S.

The focus of this paper will lie on the empirical analysis of the behavior of leading political actors during the crisis, the motives and reasons behind this behavior, and the interaction between the German and the U.S. government. The empirical analysis is guided by Robert Putnam's (1988) two level game approach³. Putnam's basic assumption holds that there exists an entanglement of international and domestic politics (1988: 436) and not a simple causal relationship in the way that domestic politics determine international politics or vice versa. Politicians in the context of international negotiations are regarded as players sitting both at an international and a domestic "table." They negotiate – or in Putnam's diction they play games--simultaneously on two tables or levels: The international level (Level I game) and the domestic level (Level II game). Putnam identified the following factors which might be helpful in analyzing the dynamics and behavior of German politicians:

- The secrecy of negotiations hampering the politicization of issues and increasing the likelihood of success.
- "Domestic division may improve the prospects for international cooperation." (1988: 445).
- "The greater the autonomy of central decision-makers from their Level II constituents, the larger the win-set and thus the greater the likelihood of achieving international agreement." (1988: 449).
- The level of information is of crucial importance. In general Putnam observes high levels of ignorance and uncertainty (1988: 408): "biased interpretations, ideologically generated misunderstandings, and conflicting models of how the world worked were all important in explaining failed agreements" (1988: 409).
- Direct address of Level II constituents by foreign negotiators is possible, messages can change minds (1988: 455).
- Individual psychology and political skills of the statesman (often the chief negotiator) play an important role (Moravcsik 1993: 16).

- It is useful to distinguish between moderates and radicals (“hawks and doves”) on Level I and II.

Putnam’s findings can be understood as a broad and heuristic analytical tool for the analysis.

2. German-U.S.-relations in historical perspective

In general, it is difficult, if not impossible, to understand Germany’s foreign and security policy without knowing the historical developments and its foreign policy identity. The total military and moral defeat in 1945, the devastation, the partition of the country and millions of refugees are deeply engrained in the country’s collective memory. The holocaust and the war crimes committed by German military, in particular in Eastern Europe, are part of the country’s consciousness. Germans still feel responsible for the past and this memory is kept alive. “Never again Auschwitz” (“Nie wieder Auschwitz”) became a leitmotif of the *raison d’état* of the Federal Republic. The collective memory, the status as an occupied and later semi-sovereign state, and the context of the Cold War which made the country a front state and an importer of security provided by the U.S. mainly through NATO.

The post-war situation which limited the political leverage of Germany and collective experiences and memories shared by elites from all political camps and the majority of the population, created a certain type of foreign policy which had been described as “civilian power”.⁴ According to Hanns Maull (1990; 2005) Germany’s – and to a certain extent also Japan’s -- foreign policy as a civilian power is characterized by:

- Strong preference for principled multilateralism instead of unilateralism;
- Support for international organizations and regimes, in particular concerning human rights and trade;
- A foreign policy culture of restraint avoiding the image of leadership; a consensus-oriented, often “quiet” diplomacy;
- A focus on economic and trade interests;
- A preference for economic and diplomatic instruments such as sanctions and conference diplomacy instead of military force;
- Emphasis on democratic values and human rights.

These combined principles formed the role of a civilian power and explain to a considerable degree the course of German foreign policy: Germany acted as a loyal partner within the NATO and EU framework. Between the 1970s and the mid 1990s Germany was one of the driving forces of European integration. Due to its economic power and diplomatic weight, it was able to hammer out political compromise for further deepening (Maastricht Treaty, 1992)

and widening the EU (Eastern enlargement). Although the country benefitted from the common market completed in 1991, commentators defamed the country's role as the paymaster of European integration. In the transatlantic relationship between Europe and the U.S., Germany defined its role as a broker or mediator between France and the U.S. During the Cold War, Germany shifted from an uncompromising policy toward Eastern Europe to a special form of détente, the Ostpolitik. The country not only developed into a major supporter of the CSCE-process, but the Ostpolitik of the SPD/FDP government (1969-1983) went far beyond détente by establishing a close knit fabric of economic, cultural, and political relations between the country and its eastern neighbors. Besides the aim of increasing its international reputation, Germany viewed the UN as the most important institution to secure peace and development. Therefore, it became the third largest contributor to the UN and funded UN-peacekeeping operations. In addition, the country supported the development of international law and heavily supported the International Criminal Court (ICC). These aims were shared more or less by all political camps and made German foreign policy highly predictable. One of the cornerstones of the consensus was that the German army (the Bundeswehr was established in 1955 – after heated debates and strong opposition) was solely created to protect the country or to defend NATO territory.

2.1 From abstention to a leading role in Afghanistan

From the establishment of the Bundeswehr to 1990 there was a broad consensus that no German troops should be deployed overseas for other than humanitarian reasons, e.g. in cases of natural disasters. After the sea change in international relations caused by the fall of communism, a controversial discussion started in Germany when a U.S.-led coalition invaded Kuwait to end the Iraqi occupation (Operation Desert Storm) in 1990. Mass demonstrations, among them many by young students, took place under the motto “no blood for oil” and curtailed the government's political leverage in the crisis. Despite criticism from its allies, Germany was unable and unwilling to participate in the operation although it was legitimized by a UN Security Council Resolution. Instead, the country contributed to a large extent by bearing the costs of war (“checkbook diplomacy”). The controversial and emotional debate about the use of the Bundeswehr for peacekeeping missions (“out-of-area”) ended in July 1994 when the Constitutional Court ruled that the Bundeswehr could not participate in missions outside the NATO area, in so-called out-of-area operations.⁵ The Balkan wars brought about a fundamental change in thinking about the role of the military. The atrocities in the Balkans, especially in Bosnia, left Germany (and other European nations) helpless since

neither diplomatic initiatives nor economic sanctions could stop the massacres. When in 1995 the Serbs overran the UN “safe haven,” the protected zone around the town of Srebrenica, even the pacifist left had to consider that the “civilian” policy approach had failed. After visiting the “killing fields” in Srebrenica, where Serb militias killed around 8,000 Bosnians, the Green party’s view changed dramatically (Daalgaard-Nielsen 2003: 103-104).⁶ From the mid-1990s on, Germany contributed substantially to peacekeeping and enforcement operations in the Balkans with troops. It deployed several thousand soldiers in the international peacekeeping force in Bosnia and additional troops in Kosovo and in Macedonia. The newly elected SPD/Green government in September 1998 not only continued with the massive engagement but extended the German engagement (Wagener 2004 see for details). This was surprising since the SPD, especially the Green Party, was traditionally the home of pacifism of the generation of 68 (student revolt in Germany). The air strikes carried out by the German Luftwaffe against Serbia in the course of the Kosovo conflict could be regarded as the end of the historical taboo to use the military as a foreign policy instrument. This sea change in German foreign and security policy was only possible as a project of the political left, the generation of 68. Their anti-militaristic, pacifist thinking gave them the moral credibility which made the use of the military acceptable not only for the political left but also for the center. In 2002, up to 10,000 German soldiers were on duty for peacekeeping and post-conflict peace-building missions. Compared to the more than four decades from 1949, Germany came a long way in a relatively short time span from a country which has – due to historical experiences – a pacifist orientation to a country that forms one of the pillars of international peacekeeping. But still, large portions of the German populace have reservations about the active involvement of German soldiers and military solutions in general. Germany became the driving force behind a large-scale and complex plan designed to stabilize and move the Balkan states closer to the EU. The plan reflected a carrot-and-stick strategy: the main elements of the stabilization plan were civilian in nature and comprised of conditioned economic aid as well as a stabilization force that was maintained to prevent renewed fighting between the different political and ethnic groups. The specific mix of military and civilian instruments developed into the main characteristics of EU post-conflict management aimed at reconstructing war-ravaged countries. This combined civil-military strategy was reaffirmed in the EU security strategy published by the EU’s High Representative for Foreign Policy, Xavier Solana in 2003.

Although there was considerable sympathy for the U.S. after the shock of 9-11 from all political parties, the question of whether Germany should assist the U.S.’ military

campaign against the Taliban in Afghanistan developed into a clash between the pacifist left and the party leadership. Vociferous resistance came also from the PDS and their charismatic leader Gregor Gysi, a darling of the media, and the various civil society groups, “remnants of the German peace movement,” (Daalgaard-Nielsen 2003: 108) which had been influential during the 1980s. During the conflict it became clear that although the coalition obtained the clear majority in the Bundestag, the necessary support of the absolute majority of votes could not be guaranteed. Twenty-eight MPs from the coalition parties declared not to support the intervention. In this situation the Chancellor decided to link the question of Germany’s contribution to Operation Enduring Freedom to a vote of confidence. A vote of confidence asked for by the Chancellor is the ultimate instrument to provide party discipline. Although Schroeder received the necessary majority in a vote in November 2001, this “coercion” caused frustration and anger among the SPD and the Greens. The vote in the Bundestag led to massive support from Germany for Operation Enduring Freedom: The country pledged 3,900 troops, mostly for logistics and medical units and a 100 elite soldiers strong combat unit (Daalgaard-Nielsen 2003: 107-109). In addition, 1,800 marine soldiers were deployed on ships at the Horn of Africa to prevent the Taliban from entering Somalia. A small contingent of German soldiers was also deployed in Kuwait. These special forces were part of the Immediate Response Force and were armed with special tanks for the detection of WMD.

After the Taliban were defeated, Germany played a major role in the reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan. In December 2001, the Bundestag decided that Germany would deploy nearly 1,800 soldiers to support the then interim government of Hamid Karzai (Wagener 2004: 96-97). The troops made up nearly a third of the 5,500 soldiers of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). Up to June 2003, Germany increased the number of troops to 2,500, and in July 2005, Defense Minister Struck announced that an additional 800 soldiers would be sent to Afghanistan.⁷ The country also became a prime target for German development aid and civilian conflict management.⁸ In addition to the bilateral massive engagement in reconstruction, Germany took the political lead and organized a donor conference in Petersberg, outside of the former capital of Bonn, to coordinate the reconstruction of the devastated country. Again, the German contributions to the reconstruction of Afghanistans were to a large extent civilian in nature including policing. The military component was systematically downplayed by the government. The focus on civilian means and additional UN-mandates increased domestic acceptance, since many Germans were still reluctant about or even opposed to military means.

3. The German position on Iraq

In general, Germany supported the U.S.-led fight against terrorism. A broad political majority of all political parties - except the PDS and parts of the Greens and left-wing Social Democrats - backed logistical support and even military engagement in Afghanistan.

President Bush's State of the Nation Address of 29 January 2002 emotionalizing an "axis of evil" and the idea of "pre-emptive strikes," brought up by Deputy Secretary of Defense at a security conference in Munich a few weeks later raised fears of a militarization and unilateralism of U.S. policy. The position of the German government during the pre-war period consisted of the following elements.

- Strict multilateralism: The German government insisted that actions against Iraq would require a UN Security Council resolution.
- Only convincing evidence of Saddam's possession of WMD and Iraqi links to international terrorism, especially to Al Qaeda, would justify a military intervention.
- Although the German government was fully aware of the massive human rights violations by Saddam's dictatorship, the overthrow of Saddam's regime was regarded as violating international law.
- A military intervention was regarded as a potentially dangerous "adventure," because the German government feared that a new war would destabilize the region and hamper a necessary regional peace agreement for the Israeli-Palestine conflict.⁹
- Against the European experience in the Balkans, Germany expressed doubts about the absence of a post-war strategy.

A more defensive argument by the government pointed to the costs of two billion € annually paid by Germany for international peacekeeping and emphasized the danger of a military overstretched because of a lack of well-trained and special troops.¹⁰ The government remained undecided on the question about pre-emptive strikes. The new doctrine was, on the one hand, criticized by politicians from various political parties as violating international law. On the other hand, German Foreign Minister Joseph Fischer declared in an interview on 15 August 2002 that if connections to Al Qaeda could be proved, the situation would be totally different and Germany would support a military action even without a UN-resolution.

In contrast to the government, parts of the German public were opposed to the use of force in principle, not only against Iraq. The dominant view can be described as "without us." A minority even went so far as to regard the coming war against Iraq as an unjustified and aggressive act of U.S. imperialism. Ignoring the realities of international terrorism the idea

that the U.S. had to “pay the price” for their one-sided support for Israel was popular in some left-wing circles.

4. Explanations for Germany’s resistance

4.1 Structural explanations: living in different worlds?

An alternative hypothesis would claim that the crisis over Iraq was the consequence of an increasing long-term alienation between the U.S. and Europe. There are different explanations which can be termed structural because they reflect long-term developments. At the heart of this explanation is the idea that due to a variety of reasons – e.g. historical experiences, and generational shifts among policy-makers – two different political cultures emerged. The historical and cultural differences between the U.S. and Europe were recently emphasized by Robert Kagan (2002). Kagan formulated two main hypotheses to explain that a different, even contradictory, strategic security culture had emerged: Firstly, the enormous gap in military capabilities – the omnipotent US and a weak Europe – determines the conduct (unilateral versus multilateral) and the instruments of foreign policy (power and diplomacy), “Europeans oppose unilateralism in part because they have no capacity for unilateralism” (Kagan 2002: 5). Secondly, history, and in particular European history, is responsible for the differences in strategic culture. The traumatic experience of two world wars in the last century and the successful European integration which solved the “German question” of a country with hegemonic aspirations, not only pacified Europe but led to an idealistic Europe rejecting *Machtpolitik*. To put it simply, Kagan’s arguments state that the US lives in a Hobbesian world of war and conflict whereas the Europeans believe in a Kantian peaceful world of universal norms and the rule of (international) law. Although the transatlantic rift was looming under the second Clinton administration, it came to the surface after George W. Bush was elected. American plans about a National Missile Defense (NMD), the withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, the refusal to sign the Kyoto-Protocol, and the ongoing opposition and sabotage of the ICC revealed an increasing antagonism between the Cold War allies. What distinguishes these controversies from the former well-known and notorious crises about security and economic issues is that the massive conflicts over Kyoto and the ICC affected the idea of a transatlantic value community (C.W. Deutsch) and undermined the basic consensus of the transatlantic alliance. The catastrophe of 9-11 and the resulting new American security doctrine of September 2002, for the first time formulated in Bush’s State of the Union Address, estranged Europeans and Americans even more.

Unacceptable for Europeans, and in particular Germans, is the new doctrine of “preemptive strikes” which Germans regard as breaking international law. In a wider context, Germans view the U.S. as one of the major obstacles to global governance (Hippler 2003). At the heart of the conflict between Europeans and Americans are – from a structural perspective – not only historically antagonistic experiences but also different perceptions of threats and security matters between the U.S. and Europe. The Iraq crisis can be regarded firstly as the peak of growing differences in various policy domains. It worked as a catalyst to bring long-standing differences to the fore. Secondly, from this point of view the Iraq crisis marks the beginning of a parting of ways between long-standing allies. This would not have a negative effect on the U.S. since, as Kagan concludes, with hardly hidden arrogance “the United States can shoulder the burden of maintaining global security without much help from Europe” (Kagan 2002:13). Kagan concludes his essay by arguing that there is no longer a common strategic culture and therefore a parting of ways would be very likely. His provocative and pessimistic hypotheses have initiated a controversial discussion among German intellectuals¹¹ and between Germans and Americans.

Other contributions to the debate stress changes in domestic U.S. policy as important to explain the shift in American foreign policy and the rift in transatlantic relations. Harald Müller (2004), one of the most respected specialists on transatlantic relations, views the rise of the religious right and its political alignment with neo-conservatives as the impetus for the radical changes in US foreign policy.

4.1.1 Who are we? Foreign policy identity discourses in Germany

Both German and American authors tend to neglect recent developments and discourses in Germany. Since the onset of the 1990s, a debate, with different intensity, about Germany’s future role in world affairs has been going on. The disappearance of the parameters of Germany’s foreign policy of the last four decades – the Cold War and Germany’s partition – and the sovereignty reached in the 2+4 agreement – raised the question about continuity and change and the future direction of German foreign policy. As Gunther Hellmann (2002:1) observed, the necessity to rethink the future course of Germany’s foreign policy was for some time hidden by a political rhetoric emphasizing continuity. The academic and public debate in newspapers and journals was fueled by remarks of Chancellor Schroeder. Unlike his predecessor, the CDU Chancellor Helmut Kohl, the Schroeder government changed the style of foreign policy. A new self-confidence and the re-orientation of German foreign policy under the core terms “normalization” and “German way” (“Deutscher Weg”)

characterizes a more self-confident, sometimes even aggressive style. These and other similar statements by leading politicians marked a remarkable departure from the past, when even the term “national interests” had a negative connotation for the majority of intellectuals and foreign policymakers alike and this explains why there was a reluctance to use the term in public. In a more historical context this metaphor reactivates different alarming memories such as the German “Sonderweg,” which means a Germany anchored neither in the East nor in the West (“Third Way”), and trying to become the hegemonial power in Europe in WW I and WW II. But in marked contrast to the debate in the early and mid-1990s the debate is much less about a re-militarization which was equated with normalization especially by the left. In a more recent, highly controversial essay, Hellmann (2004) explains this with the character of the Afghanistan mission: to overcome the fanatic, fundamentalist and cruel version of Islamic rule of the Taliban and efforts to rebuild the country and to defeat women’s rights for education etc. The Afghanistan intervention is therefore highly compatible with the role as a civilian power: the use of force was legitimized by the collective security system, the UN, and aimed at securing basic human rights. The academic and intellectual debate has intensified in the aftermath of the transatlantic rift over Iraq since it was obvious that German foreign policy changed its direction. In addition, the permanent crisis leading to an agony of the Schroeder/Fischer government after the loss of important regional elections also initiated a debate about the achievements and weaknesses of the foreign policy. The academic and journalistic debates reveal a clear critical tendency: many authors criticize a shapeless foreign policy without ideas and visions (Mauil 2003; Hellmann 2004). And many would support Janning’s assessment that one of the most important weaknesses of German foreign policy is the incapacity of building strategic coalitions on the basis of a defined policy agenda (Janning 2002: 15). To support this line of argument empirically, the lack of any major German initiatives in the EU framework, the deteriorating relationship with France, and the irritating policy agenda with respect to President Putin’s Russia and China are discussed. The lack of a strategic vision - in an era of confusing complexity, one has to admit – makes Germany a difficult partner.

The lack of strategy has not yet been realized by the public. One reason for this is the preoccupation of the majority with domestic politics, e.g. the unemployment problem and cuts in the social security system. Another reason might be the communication skills of the Chancellor and especially his Foreign Minister, Joschka Fischer, who is a great communicator with the public and the media. Fischer’s sometimes hectic diplomatic activities hide the lack of policy concepts and vision.

Therefore, it is not surprising that Schroeder's metaphors such as Germany has "grown up," that the country has "learned its historical lessons" are supported by a stable majority. In addition, Schroeder's announcement during the campaign that the previous "check-book diplomacy would be replaced by real policy"¹² was widely accepted. His foreign policy is popular and the majority of Germans praise the Chancellor for his "without us" policy which kept the country out of the Iraq quagmire.

The discussion about German interests went hand in hand with differences over international politics and contributed from this perspective to the conflict (Harnisch 2004). The style of the Bush administration and the reaction of German officials would be regarded as mainly epiphenomena from this structural perspective. The timing of the crisis in the German elections was coincidental in helping Schroeder win the elections. In this scenario, Germany would have pursued a strategy of conflict aiming at a new security arrangement largely without the U.S. but in favor of a European solution. This will have serious consequences for future American and German security and the prospects of the trans-Atlantic security architecture. Parts of the new generation are less concerned with the importance of transatlantic relations and worry about expanded restrictions on civil liberties in the U.S.

4.2 The significance of the war for the elections

Many authors do not deny the relevance of a gradual estrangement, but instead tend to view the German federal elections as one of the main factors explaining Germany's uncooperative behavior during the crisis (e.g. Winkler 2004). Gordon and Shapiro (2004:10) write for instance, "Schroeder chose to campaign shamelessly and relentlessly against the United States and a possible war in Iraq." This moralist and often even emotional undertone is characteristic of many observers. Politicians, journalists, and academics with decades-long close relations to German-American relations regard the style and tone of conflict as a broken taboo and advocate a renewal of the transatlantic alliance.

In the spring of 2002, opinion polls signaled a defeat of the coalition government in the upcoming September 2002 elections. The main reason for the declining popularity of the Schroeder and Fischer government was its failure to overcome the deep structural economic and social crisis (Tenscher 2005). Rising unemployment figures and an overall depressive mood increased dissatisfaction with the government. The opposition parties, which had by no means a convincing reform concept, benefitted from the political climate and the CDU/CSU

had reason to expect to become the strongest party in the elections and head a coalition with the Liberals (FDP) or the Greens.

A catastrophic flood in the Eastern part of Germany in July 2002 and the threat of war in Iraq both offered Schroeder the chance to show determination and energetic political will to deal with the crises. Schroeder, who has a talent for communicating with the public and the media, recognized the chance immediately. The flood of the Oder River gave him the chance to present himself as a “hands on” leader when TV cameras showed pictures of Schroeder – equipped with rubber boots - helping the German army build dams against the rising water. Roughly 70% of the respondents of an opinion poll conducted in August 2002 believed the Schroeder government did a “good job” (Niedermayer 2003:47).

But from the perspective of Schroeder’s campaign managers, the flood was beyond its peak at the end of July and therefore other issues had to be found. The Iraq crisis provided the SPD/Greens campaign with an excellent opportunity for Schroeder to play the role of the peace-loving statesman (Tenscher 2005: 19) who could keep Germany not only out of war but also fight for German interests by challenging the sole superpower. Immediately after the situation in the regions hard-hit by the flood had improved slowly, Schroeder declared via TV that Germany would not participate in a possible “adventure” in Iraq, even in the case of a UN-Security Resolution. The party leadership of the SPD decided formally on 5 August to include the Iraq issue in the campaign (Harnisch 2004:182).

The Iraq issue served as a multi-purpose tool for Schroeder: Firstly, as a precondition for a victory at the polls, the unity of the party and stability of the coalition had to be secured. The support for Schroeder by his own party and the coalition partner was doubtful since the Afghanistan debate in the German Parliament had revealed considerable opposition among Parliamentarians of both the SPD and the Greens. Only by connecting the vote in the Bundestag with the vote of confidence did the Chancellor receive the necessary absolute majority in November 2001.¹³ The out-of-area debate and Germany’s expanding military engagement triggered an internal party crisis for the Green party. In June 1999, Foreign Minister Fischer was even personally attacked with a paint bomb during a debate about Kosovo at a party conference. During increasing U.S. threats against Iraq, an aggressive rhetoric against “rogue states,” about an “axis of the evil,” and the public debate about pre-emptive strikes was unacceptable for the left wing of the SPD and the Greens who had agreed to the Kosovo and Afghanistan operations only because of massive political pressure. “Enough is enough” was the feeling of the political left. Therefore, it seemed very likely that support for the U.S.-Iraq policy, including the deployment of soldiers, would have led to a

split of the coalition. Tough opposition to the U.S. policy was therefore a chance to close the ranks between moderates and radicals and improve the stability of the coalition just in time before the election. Secondly, a campaign focusing on the question of “war and peace” was seen as a chance to mobilize voters with this emotional question and counter widespread apathy of voters, especially in the SPD camp.

Thirdly, in addition to Schroeder’s strategic considerations with respect to his own party, the Iraq question also provided an opportunity to weaken the Party of the Democratic Socialism (PDS), the successor party of the former socialist GDR state party. In regional elections the PDS had been very successful in the East and was the strongest party in several regional coalition governments. In the last federal elections, the party passed the 5% threshold for representation in the Bundestag. One of the reasons for the continuing popularity of the PDS had been the party’s pacifist and anti-war politics. The PDS was the only party that consistently opposed the use of force by Germany and voted against the participation of the Bundeswehr in all peacekeeping and peace enforcement actions. The PDS enjoyed high credibility among left-wing voters especially in the East where anti-Americanism was, for historic reasons, widespread. It was one of Schroeder’s aims to convince voters to shift from the PDS and to vote for the SPD, the “true” pacifist and antimilitaristic party.

Schroeder’s strategy proved to be successful as the SPD and Greens’ coalition won the elections on 22 September with a marginal plurality of only 600,000 votes, the closest race in the history of the Federal Republic of Germany. It is interesting to note that the result of the CDU/CSU was much better in the Western parts than in the Eastern parts of Germany. The conservative parties lost the election in the East of Germany and the PDS received only 4.1% of the total vote.

There is a broad consensus among observers that the Iraq crisis played a considerable role in the outcome of the election (Winkler 2004; Harnisch 2004). The opinion polls revealed that the Iraq and terrorism issues received more and more attention by the electorate before Election Day. During the last weeks of the campaigns, it became the second most important topic up from the fifth position before. The large number of opinion polls undertaken by various institutes revealed a growing support for the coalition as the war of words escalated. The coalition clearly benefitted from the conflict with the U.S. The media coverage of the conflict was one of Schroeder’s most important allies in winning the debate over Iraq and subsequently the elections.¹⁴

Although U.S. government officials, like Ambassador Coats, realized that the Schroeder government acted under extreme pressure because of the upcoming elections, U.S.

government officials were not able or willing to moderate and thereby deescalate the war of words between the countries. In retrospect, the speech given by Vice-President Dick Cheney on 27 August 2002 in Nashville, Tennessee can be regarded as a turning point. To the surprise of the German government, Cheney declared the overthrow of Saddam's regime as the aim of the U.S., regardless of whether Iraq would be willing to accept UN weapon inspectors (Winkler 2004: 21). German officials, especially Peter Struck, Minister of Defense who came into office in July, regarded Cheney's remarks as a "mistake." The remarks increased and somehow radicalized the verbal opposition from German politicians. It seemed that the U.S. was not paying attention to the political development of one of their formal allies. If the U.S. government was interested in the views of their allies at all, it misunderstood or underestimated the complexity of German politics during election times and the extent of a deeply-rooted pacifism as a result of German political history. One of the hypotheses of this article is that the confrontational style of members of the U.S. government, in particular that of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, made it easy to play the anti-American card – "the arrogant and aggressive superpower" for the German Chancellor. Resistance was therefore widely viewed as legitimate and from a moral standpoint even necessary to prevent the world from the "evil of war."

The SPD/Greens coalition benefitted also from the weakness of the conservative parties, including the liberal FDP, with respect to the Iraq conflict. Their campaign centered on socio-economic issues such as unemployment and reforms. These were topics which could never have raised the emotions of a war-and-peace question. In contrast to domestic politics, the institutional checks and balances are much weaker in foreign affairs in the German system. In the German parliamentary system of government, the checks come in most cases from the opposition in parliament, but this has often no impact since the majority supports the chancellor. And unlike in domestic affairs, there was no opposition from the Bundesrat (the institution representing the German Länder) even though the CDU/CSU parties obtained the majority in the second chamber at the time. German constitutional law clearly states that foreign policy is a domain of the central government and the Bundesrat usually cannot, with the notable exception of the EU, interfere in foreign policy.¹⁵ Beside the structural weaknesses of the CDU/CSU, which are historically the political home of Atlanticism and the bearer of transatlantic partnership as opposed to the German left, were unable to "sell" their much more differentiated argumentation during the campaign. The CDU/CSU leadership warned correctly of an international isolation of Germany and favored a common European policy (which proved to be unrealistic, see below). Furthermore the harsh rhetoric from the

American side made it more and more difficult even to have a fair discussion since the political climate became overtly anti-American. For a long time the party shied away from a clear position because it was unprepared for the debate and internally divided about how to react to the Iraq question. The rank and file, and according to opinion polls the (potential) voters, criticized the party leadership for being too soft on the Bush administration.

5. Efforts to prevent the Iraq war – five “strategies” of resistance

It is possible to identify at least five different “strategies” or – in a more adequate term - modes of resistance of the German government against the U.S. Iraq policy:

5.1 Threat to withdraw military support

In contrast to Germany’s large contribution to the Kosovo peacekeeping force and to the operation in Afghanistan, the military support of Germany was rather limited in the Middle East region. In context of the operation “Enduring Freedom,” Germany deployed special tanks with facilities to detect chemical, biological or nuclear weapons in Kuwait. Although the German government never threatened to withdraw the tanks, the public debate took up the issue, especially in the pre-election month. There are hints that the German government never seriously thought about the withdrawal of the tanks. Harnisch (2004:180) quotes a confidential statement by Chancellor Schroeder. He said that in case of a withdrawal, “it would be impossible for a German chancellor to fly to Washington for the next 50 years.” In November 2002, nearly two months after the elections, the German Bundestag prolonged the deployment of the tanks. But the German government faced strong internal opposition from the Green party. When Defense Minister Peter Struck announced in January 2003 that the tanks would stay in Kuwait to protect American forces even in case of a war, which would not be supported by Germany, members of the Green faction denied this. A similar confusing situation can be identified with respect to the German debate about the U.S. and NATO using military facilities for flying over Germany in case of war. After a controversial debate in Germany, the Bundestag reaffirmed these rights in November 2002 but again the Green party announced to vote against such a decision in the Bundestag (Harnisch 2004:187). Since the government obtained only a small majority this would have meant its defeat in the Bundestag. The domestic division within the government camp led to a zigzag course of German foreign policy which confused Germany’s allies. It seemed that even on questions of minor importance, the government was tied by domestic politics leaving only very limited autonomy

in decision-making. With respect to the analysis of resistance strategies, as in the case of Germany's Iraq policy, it is much more appropriate to differentiate between the resistance strategy of the government and the parties in the coalition, especially the parliamentary factions. During the conflict both the Chancellor and Foreign Minister Fischer obtained a middle or centrist position within their respective parties and political institutions. "Hawks" could be found within the Green Party and on the SPD-left. "Doves" could be found within the SPD and the professional bureaucracies of the ministries, in particular in the foreign ministry.

5.2 Coalition of the unwilling

Unlike France, which declared in August 2002 that a military operation would require a UN mandate, Germany refused to accept even a military intervention on the basis of a UN resolution. Consequently, Germany was politically isolated, even in the camp of the anti-war states. Realizing his isolation, the Chancellor first tried to expand its political leverage by a more conciliatory policy toward the U.S. But he underestimated the domestic resistance and the strong pacifist tendency he had so successfully activated during the electoral campaign. Secondly, the German government modified its policy by challenging and trying to influence the U.S. Iraq policy within international organizations (see below). Thirdly, and most important, the German government started searching for diplomatic support from the EU partners. But the search for allies started too late and the European allies remained passive, since their perception of security threats proved to be in line with the U.S. Therefore, Germany started to intensify its long standing contacts with France. The 40th anniversary of the German-French Elysée treaty was used to demonstrate agreement between both countries in the Iraq crisis: Both opted, on the one hand for an authorization of a military intervention by the UN, and, on the other hand, for more time for the arms inspectors in Iraq. The U.S. reacted with outrage: at a press briefing in the Pentagon on that very same day (22 January 2003) Rumsfeld termed both countries as part of the "old Europe." A few days later he compared Germany with Libya and Cuba: "There are three or four countries that have said they won't do anything; I believe Libya, Cuba and Germany are the ones that have indicated they won't help in any respect." (Quoted in Gordon/Shapiro: 2004:28). The confrontation between Germany and the U.S. had reached its peak, four months after the elections. German public opinion was even more strongly opposed to the U.S. The course of the Iraq debate and the American reactions led to a more general aversion against the U.S. An opinion poll of spring 2003 asked the following question: "Should Germany and Europe support or halt U.S.

hegemony with respect to establishing a new world order?” Nearly half of the respondents opted for halting or “containing” the U.S., only 14% were in favor of support, and 33% preferred abstention.

The harsh U.S. rhetoric and reaction to the reluctant ally and Germany’s isolation brought Germany into the arms of France. Henceforth, Germany became the junior partner of French diplomacy which started to challenge the U.S. more and more openly. The German-Franco common stance against the U.S. policy was also perceived by both senior French and German politicians as a chance to reanimate the Franco-German axis in the context of the European Defense and Security Policy (EDSP) (Gordon/Shapiro 2004:11). Historically, the Franco-German cooperation had worked as a “motor” of European integration, but had not run smoothly during the last two years. The Franco-German cooperation challenged the U.S. policy also within the UN context (see below). The U.S. faced fierce opposition by France in the Security Council¹⁶ and a more moderate tone by Germany which became a temporary member of the Security Council and obtained the presidency in the Council on 1 February 2003.

One of the grave unintended consequences of the German-French cooperation was that it brought longstanding divisions within the EU to the surface: on 30 January 2003, eight European leaders expressed their solidarity with the U.S. in an open letter although public opinion in most of these countries was critical of the U.S. policy.¹⁷ It left Europe deeply divided and the EU was therefore unable to act politically.

In spring 2003, Germany, France, and Russia even signed a memorandum¹⁸ about the situation in Iraq. All three countries regarded the Security Council of the UN as the core institution for handling the situation. From their perspective, a war against Iraq was not justified because of a lack of evidence that Iraq possessed WMD. They opted for a more robust inspection regime by the UN in line with UN-Resolution 1441: it was hoped that an improved inspection regime, more time, and tighter controls would increase pressure on the Iraqi government if this would be combined with credible military threats. For the American side this was nothing new and they accused this coalition of the unwilling as buying time by delaying the process. The informal coalition between Russia, France, and Germany continued even after the war. After the second meeting took place in April 2003 on the same day when Baghdad was occupied, the two heads of state and the Chancellor met at the end of August 2004 in Sochi at the Black Sea to define a common line. They reaffirmed their commitment for a leading role of the UN in post-war Iraq. The meetings between the three states cannot be interpreted from a neo-realist perspective as an effort to “balance” the United States.

Recently, Charles Glaser (2003:405) has pointed out that the Europeans perceive the U.S. as a “benign, security-seeking state” which “does not pose a threat.” The meetings must rather be regarded as an exchange of opinions and views without much substance.

5.3 Opposition within the UN

After intense negotiations a UN-resolution (1441) was accepted by a 15:0 vote in the Security Council. The resolution was a political compromise defining vaguely that Saddam would face serious consequences if he would not cooperate with the UN weapons inspection team. It can be regarded as a success of mainly French diplomacy since it did not foresee the automatic use of force in case Saddam would not comply with UN conditions.(Joffe 2003:159; Gordon/Shapiro 2004:112). At that time the French strategy to entangle Gulliver (Joffe 2003:159), assisted by Russia and China, seemed to work. But the unity the Allies reached in November 2002 with Resolution 1441 was an illusion, since the U.S. was dissatisfied with the report from Iraq to the weapons inspectors. U.S. diplomacy started to lobby for a second UN resolution which would in case of an attack legitimize military action. Together with France, Russia, and China, Germany opposed the U.S.’ attempt to receive this UN-resolution (Gordon/Shapiro 2004: 149). During the crucial months of February and March the UN ambassadors met several times to coordinate their position. In February 2003, both the US-British alliance and the anti-war coalition lobbied the then six non-permanent UN Security Council members: Cameroon, Angola, Guinea, Chile, Mexico, and Pakistan. Germany acted as France’s junior partner: the real opposition came from France. The American efforts for another UN resolution failed when French President Chirac declared in an interview that France would block a new UN resolution “whatever the circumstance” (Gordon/Shapiro 2004:152). The German resistance was fueled by President Bush’s disregard for the U.N. since the President made it clear that the U.S. would turn to action even if no resolution could be reached. Although Germany as a temporary member was not one of the main players challenging the U.S., it stood firm on the side of the – from the American perspective – unruly allies.

5.4 Opposition within NATO

A second “coalition of the unwilling” emerged within NATO. NATO, the guarantor of security during the Cold War was undergoing a legitimacy crisis, which came to the fore after

9-11 when the U.S. did not accept NATO General Secretary Robinson's offer to support the war against terror although Article 5 of the NATO Treaty was activated. The U.S. never intended to start its war under NATO's auspices and weakened the organization. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's statement that the mission defines the coalition was violating NATO's *raison d'être* from a European perspective (Gordon/Shapiro 2004:61) and introducing the demise of NATO (Joffe 2003:157). Again, Germany was one of the leading countries opposing U.S. efforts to gain support from NATO. There was strong criticism in Germany, especially from the more conservative side which historically provided stronger support for NATO (Schwarz 2004), against the U.S. for ignoring the security organization. Unlike in the case of Afghanistan, the U.S. wanted NATO to play a more prominent, although largely symbolic role before, during or after the war. The U.S. administration insisted on the basis of Article 4 that Turkey should receive NATO support for its possible defense. But Germany, France, Belgium, and Luxemburg brought NATO preparations to a halt. The four countries argued that assistance for Turkey would signal that war was inevitable. Furious reactions and massive pressure from the U.S. in combination with diplomatic tricks - the U.S. handed the question over to the Defense Planning Committee (DPC) of NATO where France is not a member – finally made Germany and Belgium agree to a compromise providing Turkey with some bilateral instead of NATO assistance.

The German government prevented NATO from taking the role of an earnest broker. Both the Chancellor and Defense Minister Struck turned NATO General Secretary Lord Robertson's mediation offer down.(Der Spiegel 2002:112)

5.5 Influence on U.S. public opinion

To complete the picture, it is also necessary to have a closer look at the communication between the public and politicians. Did politicians from both sides of the Atlantic try to influence public opinion? During the crisis German senior government officials visited the U.S. and tried to explain Germany's position. In only a few cases German politicians tried to address the American public or segments of the public directly. One example is Chancellor Schroeder's interview with the New York Times. But in general, German and American officials did not try to influence public opinion as a way to convince them of their viewpoints. The few speeches given by American politicians, directed at the broader German public, were criticizing Germany's lack of support and threatened the country with possible consequences.

Another interesting aspect is the direct contacts between German and American intellectuals established during the crisis. The correspondence between two groups of intellectuals took place in the more left-wing oriented German journal “Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik” from May to October 2002. The American group consisting of 60 influential intellectuals and academics, including Amitai Etzioni, Francis Fukuyama, Samuel Huntington, Michael Walzer, Daniel Patrick Moynihan sent an open letter titled “What we are fighting for” to the journal. The article mainly defended American policy towards Iraq. Over 100 German well-known intellectuals responded in a letter “A world of justice and peace looks different.” Although the correspondence was an exchange of arguments and the moderate tone of the letters was much different from the communication between politicians, it revealed the vast differences in threat perceptions and strategic thinking about how to handle the Iraq problem. Therefore, the dialogue between German and American intellectuals did not lead to common action.

Parallel to the governmental relations between the U.S. and Germany, a dense network of various organizations such as the Fulbright Program and the Atlantic Bridge, which aim to strengthen the transatlantic societal relations developed. Further research is necessary on why the strong networks did or could not influence the course of events during the crisis.¹⁹ Only after the crisis lost its momentum did the traditional transatlantic networks issue proposals to “repair” the relations with new transatlantic agendas.²⁰

“Strategies“of resistance or short-term calculations?

One of the underlying questions of this research is the question about the different ways to challenge or even resist American policy and dominance. It is difficult and probably misleading to subsume the political behavior of the German government under the headline strategy. A strategy can be defined as a plan designed to achieve a long-term goal. It consists of interim goals and a sequence of actions combined with the use of specific instruments. In the case of Germany’s strict *No* to U.S.-Iraq policy, this can hardly be termed a strategy. It must be regarded as a more ad hoc, short term, and ill-planned policy born out of domestic political constraints to improve the chances of re-election in the upcoming federal elections. The lack of autonomy from domestic politics reduced the win-set in international bargaining within the UN and NATO. But the instrumentalization of the Iraq War for the elections cannot explain the ever increasing resistance after the victory of the Red/Green coalition at the polls in September 2002. The short term electoral calculations met with a continuous

process of estrangement between Germany (and parts of Europe) and the U.S. caused by different perceptions of threat and international relations in general. The Iraq crisis can be viewed as a catalyst of deep-lying processes on both sides of the Atlantic. To come back to the question of strategy, it would be more precise to call it calculations or short term objectives of Chancellor Schroeder and the SPD. The strategy or the calculations of Schroeder were successful on Level II in Putnam's diction - the domestic realm. The victory of the SPD and Greens at the polls can be attributed partly to the mobilizing effects of the Iraq issue and the weakness of the CDU/CSU regarding this question.²¹ But the German government failed on Level I, the international sphere, because the U.S. invaded Iraq despite the resistance of Germany, France, and – not surprisingly – China and Russia. Furthermore, the U.S. managed to receive military support from several non-European and European states leaving the EU's Common European Foreign Policy (CEFP) in pieces. The only "success" of Germany, in line with France and some smaller states, was delaying the war to a certain extent and delegitimizing the war (Daalgard-Nielsen 2003:99), since no UN resolution authorized the U.S. policy. But the negative, non-intended effect of this policy was the exclusion of the UN from the whole process.

6. Summary of the main findings

This chapter has presented evidence for both the structural (estrangement) and the situative (elections) hypotheses and explained that the ongoing German discussion about the future direction of the country's foreign policy explained to a certain extent the confusing conduct of German foreign policy. Fundamentally different perceptions played a key role: whereas the U.S. perceived or at least pretended to perceive that the overthrow of Saddam was part of the war against terror, Germany viewed both issues as independent from each other. This explains the totally different reactions from Germany on Afghanistan and Iraq.

In comparison to these more general explanations, procedural aspects have been neglected. Among these the media and personalities are most prominent. On both sides of the Atlantic the style of communication was marked by unprecedented rhetoric, emotion, and aggression. The escalation of the conflict was also the result of the personalities of the politicians involved. In particular, it was Donald Rumsfeld's infamous response given to reporters' questions about the old and the new Europe, which fueled the conflict and increased German public sentiment against the U.S. In Germany, both members of parliament and government adopted hostile rhetoric, culminating in a "war of words" which further escalated

the crisis. The “diplomatic” style of the Bush II administration made it easy for Schroeder to translate deeply-rooted anti-U.S. sentiment into votes securing his party the plurality again. Surprisingly enough, once the crisis broke out, there was no crisis management. In addition to the absence of crisis management, both sides pursued their policies in an uncompromising, thoughtless way without any consideration of the future: “Neither the Americans nor their European critics seemed to take into account the potential impact of their policies on the Atlantic alliance; some even seemed to want to undermine it.” (Gordon/Shapiro 2004:156).

Another characteristic of the interaction between the U.S., Germany, and other institutions and states is that the communication between the U.S. and Germany took place publicly via media (newspapers and TV). The absence of a minimum of secrecy had a negative impact on the course of the conflict.

Miscalculations and misunderstandings caused by biased interpretations of reality prevailed on both sides of the Atlantic: The US believed that Europeans would follow sooner or later and underestimated the resistance, especially in the case of Germany which always had been a reliable ally. The American side believed in its own military superiority and thought that victory was inevitable and that “victory will obviate (...) and the Europeans will jump on the bandwagon” (Gordon/Shapiro 2004:65).

Though the experience of forty years of transatlantic cooperation should have taught them otherwise, the Europeans believed that they could influence US policy makers.

7. Perspectives

In formal terms, the conflict ended at a personal meeting between Bush and Schroeder in September 2003 (Szabo 2004:41). Still, the implications of the conflict for the transatlantic relations in general and the German-American relations in particular remain unclear. Did the conflict really mark the parting of ways between the long-standing allies? It is much more obvious what the effects on NATO are. In the course of this conflict, the overall post-war security architecture was endangered because the anchor of transatlantic security, NATO, was damaged. NATO was paralyzed by different, uncompromising views of the allies during the conflict and the EU split. The CSFE and the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) were two other prominent victims of the war. Both suffered a major set-back in the course of the war and both have not fully recovered yet because the crisis over the constitution for Europe and the absence of another major crisis has not yet brought EU’s political paralysis to the surface.

What are the perspectives for bilateral relations?

Only a superficial look will come to the conclusion that the bilateral relations have recovered. It is true that the atmosphere between the U.S. and Germany has improved, e.g. Schroeder congratulated President Bush on the successful elections in Iraq in January 2005 and several visits of high ranking politicians, such as Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, revealed a new respect. To expect a new era of harmony - and according to some scholars even friendship (which is certainly not a category of international relations) between the two states, is misleading. A recent study conducted by Matthias Dembinski (2003), senior researcher from a well-respected think tank in Frankfurt, stated that the conflict would soon be viewed as a tempest in a teapot. This is misleading or belongs more to the category of wishful thinking. Certainly, the strong economic ties were not affected by the conflict and both sides will realize that cooperation is much more promising than ongoing conflict. But the conflict has structural reasons too and Germany is undergoing a difficult process of re-defining its foreign policy in general. As Karsten Voigt, Co-coordinator for German-American Relations, put it, "Germany is no longer a country which automatically says 'yes'" (FAZ 6.2.2005). Therefore, it would be naïve to conclude a return to a pre-crisis business as usual is possible. Both German and American authors (Müller 2004; Szabo 2004) argue that the relationship has fundamentally changed and harmony is very unlikely to occur. In addition, new conflicts are looming on the horizon, e.g. how to handle Iran. And the categorical "no" from Washington in July 2005 to any reform of the UN-Security Council, which dashed Germany's hopes for U.S. support for a permanent seat for the country in the UN-SC, which has become one of the most important and ambitious aims of German diplomacy, will deepen the antipathy.

There is also supporting empirical evidence for the hypothesis of the continuation of the transatlantic rift: opinion polls carried out by the German Marshall Fund (German Marshall Fund 2005) indicate that Europeans and Americans differ widely about core questions of international politics including Iraq, Iran, and the Israel-Palestine conflict. There is also a weak approval of George Bush's foreign policy among Germans and French respondents. The percentage of respondents who were against Bush's "strong role" in international relations has decreased only by 8% in France and 3% in Germany, remaining at a high level of around 60%. On the American side, an increasing tendency to win the support of the European allies can be found. A plurality of American respondents is willing to improve the relations with Europe to win allies. These figures reveal that bridging the gap on security and foreign policy between the U.S. and two of the most important European countries will take a long time. Currently, there are no clear signs that the alliance partners

will develop a common security agenda. Remarkable are the different views between a more cooperative population and a largely uncompromising political leadership in the U.S.

The surprise announcement by Chancellor Schroeder to call for new elections on 18 September 2005 after the SPD had lost the regional election in the densely populated and former SPD-stronghold, the Bundesland of Nordrhein-Westfalia (20 million inhabitants) in June,²² led to the current standstill in German-American relations. The U.S., as former Undersecretary of State Richard Perle stated in an interview,²³ waits for a change in government which is currently very likely. It is expected that a new government led by the Christian Democratic Party's candidate, Angela Merkel, will be much more "cooperative" than the SPD/Greens coalition. In the party platform the CDU/CSU has announced to "reinvigorate" the relations with the U.S. In an interview in July 2005, Angela Merkel, the challenger to Gerhard Schroeder has declared that the Iraq policy of keeping German troops out of Iraq will continue. Under a CDU/CSU government, Berlin will probably increase its training programs for the Iraqi police (bases are in Kuwait) and increase the support for the reconstruction of the country. Since the war and its aftermath are extremely unpopular, Germany and Schroeder are systematically campaigning with the Iraq issue.²⁴ Merkel tries to avoid the topic and has announced not to visit Washington before the elections.

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¹ I am greatly indebted to Dave Bobrow and my PhD candidates Cornelia Beyer and Marcus Menzel for their comments and assistance in general.

² The general question whether the German government used a specifically elaborated strategy will be discussed in this chapter.

³ Putnam describes his approach modestly only as a metaphor, but Moravcsik (1993:23) has argued that it can also be interpreted as a theory of international bargaining.

⁴ The term civilian power originated from François Duchêne who used the metaphor to describe the European Community in the 1970ies.

⁵ The Constitutional Court defined two conditions for out-of-area operations: Approval by the Bundestag with absolute majority and only if operations are legitimized by a system of collective security such as the UN or OSCE, or even NATO which from a political scientist cannot be regarded as a system of collective security at that time.

⁶ How deep and emotional the impact of the experience of Srebrenica still is, could be witnessed in July 2005, exactly ten years after the massacre: Official commemorations, attended by heads of states and leading politicians took place in Germany and in many other European countries.

⁷ This is the largest contingent of the 7,000 European soldiers deployed in Afghanistan.

⁸ E.g. the German Development Service (DED) in cooperation with NGOs started a range of local peace initiatives carried out by a special branch named Civil Peace Service (see <http://www.ziviler-friedensdienst.org/english/main.html>).

⁹ See for example “Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung,” 8 August 2002, p. 1.

¹⁰ Before the invasion started in March 2003, the U.S. government never asked officially for German troops in case of a war.

¹¹ See “Gulliver vs. Liliput” Robert Kagans “Macht und Schwäche” in der Debatte, in: Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik 11/2002, pp 1345-1358. The title, taking up the metaphor Gulliver in the Liliput land reveals the extent to which Kagan’s arguments are accepted in general; nonetheless many authors accuse Kagan of oversimplification.

¹² Quoted in: “Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung” 5 August 2002, p. 1.

¹³ A few days before the vote 28 members of the SPD caucus declared publicly to vote against the government. In general, a vote of no confidence is only used in case of important political decisions when the chancellor is not sure about his majority. Therefore, it is a sign of political weakness. Putting MPs under strong pressure to vote in line with the chancellor can become dangerous, in the long run, since it increases discontent among MPs against the party leadership.

¹⁴ It is impossible to find clear evidence that the Iraq war was decisive for the electoral outcome, but there is a general consensus among analysts (Tenscher 2005: 9; Niedermayer 2003:57) that it played among other factors such as the campaign strategy itself, the flood etc. a very important role.

¹⁵ In EU politics and in cross-border issues the Lander have gained substantial influence and therefore are from time to time accused of practicing a parallel foreign policy by the federal government.

16 According to Gordon and Shapiro (2004:171) the American reaction was even harsher if not absurd
toward France: in the cafeteria of the House of Representatives French fries were changed to freedom
fries.

17 London saw an anti-war demonstration with approx. 1,000,000 participants, the largest demonstration in
British history.

18 Memorandum von Deutschland, Frankreich und der Russischen Föderation zur Lage im Irak, download:
www.bundestkanzler.de/Neues-vom-Kanzler-.7698.469107/a.htm (downloaded 08.28.2004).

19 One explanation might be that the various groups and individuals representing the Bush coalition do not
have strong ties with the traditional transatlantic establishment.

20 See for instance Konrad Adenauer Foundation Washington: German American Partnership:
Overcoming the crisis, Memorandum of the Transatlantic Experts Group July 16, 2003 (www.kas.de).

21 In a presentation at the University of Landau, Dieter Roth, former director of one of the most respected
institutes carrying out surveys (Forschungsgruppe Wahlen, Mannheim) explained that the Iraq war
increased Schroeder popularity to such an extent that even the lead of the SPD could not be overcome
by the opposition.

22 Since there is no procedure for the self-dissolution of the German parliament, it is still questionable
whether elections will take place in September. Meanwhile the State President has accepted the vote of
no confidence procedure and dissolved the Bundestag but it is questionable whether the Constitutional
Court will accept the procedure.

23 Handelsblatt, 27 May, 2005.

24 He often states that in case of a victory of the CDU/CSU in 2002 German soldiers would now be in
Baghdad.