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The Future of U.S. Foreign Policy

RAPPORTEUR'S REPORT
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Conference Overview	2
Session I: "Bound to Lead" or Homeward Bound?	3
Session II: The "War" on Terrorism and U.S. Foreign Policy	9
Session III: U.S. Defense Policy and Global Military Presence	13
Dinner Presentation	18
Session IV: Thinking Outside the Box	20

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Conference Overview²

Even before the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, there were hints that U.S. foreign policy was beginning to change course. President George W. Bush and his administration were showing a more skeptical attitude toward multilateral cooperation, and an increasing willingness for shirking international institutions and treaties and acting unilaterally on the environment, arms control, and peacekeeping missions. The September 11 attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon triggered even more dramatic shifts in U.S. foreign policy priorities. The campaign against terrorism has had a major impact on U.S. policy in Central Asia and in the Middle East, and it is likely to have lasting effects on U.S. relations with Russia and with traditional allies in Europe and in Asia. To the Bush administration, the attacks ushered in a new era in international relations. America found it necessary to reorder the world and reshape its relationships in the global order. At the time of the attacks, no state was quicker to respond with support than Russia, which accepted the deployment of American troops in former Soviet republics. Conversely, few states were more anxious about the transpiring events than members of the EU. President Bush soon made explicit what had been evident since the end of the cold war: the transatlantic partnership was no longer at the center of America's worldview.

The 2002 Talloires seminar offered an opportunity to chart the present direction and future course of U.S. foreign policy. The events of the past year rekindled a debate on the competing core principles of U.S. and European foreign policy, and the nature of their global commitments. Over the course of three days, the conference panels generated discussion on the following questions: How have U.S. foreign policy priorities changed, and how will this change affect U.S. relations with other countries? Will the United States continue to exercise the global leadership that it has over the past half century? How will other states view America's role? And perhaps most important, does the United States need to change the way it manages and conducts its foreign policy in order to minimize global resentment and maximize its ability to protect vital U.S. interests?

² This report is not a transcript. Rather, it represents the rapporteur's interpretation of the discussion and records the main points that were expressed at the conference. It has been edited for style and consistency.

“The Future of U.S. Foreign Policy” was the topic for the June 2002 conference held in Talloires, France. The participants, pictured here, considered the present direction and future course of U.S. foreign policy in the context of the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.



Friday, June 14

Session I: “Bound to Lead” or Homeward Bound? Differing Views on U.S. Grand Strategy

During this session the panelists were asked to consider if and how U.S. foreign policy should change in the next decade. Should the United States continue its policy of “deep engagement” in several key areas, or should it revert to its former position as an “offshore balancer?”

After Center Director Jorge I. Domínguez welcomed the participants to the fifteenth annual WCFIA Conference in Talloires, France, Stephen Walt, conference chair, highlighted the agenda for the weekend. Walt commented that in putting the panels together, in particular the first one, he was struck by how much wider the range of debate had become on American foreign policy. Since the end of the cold war, the range of accepted foreign policy perspectives embraces a much broader spectrum of ideas, from isolationist, to expansionist, neo-imperialist, and hegemonic. Given this new range of debate, Walt added that they were very fortunate to have William Kristol, John Mearsheimer, and Karl Kaiser as panelists for Session I.

William Kristol, Editor, Weekly Standard

William Kristol began his presentation by referring to the title of this session: “Is the U.S. bound to lead, or homeward bound?” Kristol remarked that his position in the political spectrum, shared by Robert Kagan³, has been referred to as “active global leadership,” or “benevolent hegemony.” The growing rift between Europe and America does not alarm Kristol, although he acknowledged that perhaps he should be more concerned. The growing rift does, however, change the “specialness” of the relationship between these two allies. In contrast to the cold war existence of “the West,” the current U.S. approach to its European allies more resembles “a wheel with a hub and spokes.”

Kristol contended that one of the defining results of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon on September 11 is that the U.S. is now at war. More specifically, the U.S. is now engaged in three struggles: the fight against terrorism and al Qaeda; elimination of weapons of mass destruction (in the wrong hands); and concern about radical Islam.

³The article “Power and Weakness” by Robert Kagan (<http://www.policyreview.org/JUN02/kagan.html>) appeared in the June issue of *Policy Review*. Kagan’s provocative article described the growing rift between U.S. and Europe as the result of the fundamental difference in how the two communities view the world—as potentially anarchic and Hobbesian, or as diplomatically pliable and Kantian. Possibly the most disturbing aspect of the divide between Europe and America is the perception that basic values and interests are diverging: “It is time to stop pretending that Europeans and Americans share a common view of the world, or even that they occupy the same world,” writes Kagan.

⁴ President George W. Bush’s influential speech in June 2002 at West Point (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/06/20020601-3.html>) contained remarks that classical deterrence was insufficient in combating the war against terrorism, thereby opening the door to preemptive military action.

Turning first to the fight against al Qaeda, Kristol noted that Afghanistan was the first major regime change that the U.S. fostered. In the immediate aftermath of September 11, Bush expanded the scope to include other regimes and states that harbor terrorists. And then in early June, President Bush repeated the case against those nations that harbor terrorists, but implicated too those nations that oppose terror but tolerate the hatred that leads to terror (implicating Saudi Arabia and its support for and export of Wahhabi Islam). The West Point speech² represented the most comprehensive outline of the Bush doctrine to date, and Kristol argued that it will reshape the U.S. agenda on oil, and its relationships with Russia, to name but two consequences.

Regarding weapons of mass destruction, Kristol believes that the war on terror has greater implications than originally thought. He referred again to Bush's striking comments made during the West Point speech, in which the president stated "We cannot count on containment and deterrence any longer. We must be prepared for preemptive action." The policies of containment and deterrence had long been at the heart of Western foreign policy. Kristol reiterated the significance of this shift, which to his recollection was the first time an American president had announced a doctrine of willingness to use preemptive force against suspected harborers of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Kristol added that the suspected presence of WMD in Iraq is a direct consequence of the failure to remove Saddam Hussein from power during the Gulf War, and demonstrated the need for preemptive action and, if necessary, regime change. Kristol predicted that regime change would not be limited to Afghanistan, but that the Bush administration will seek to remove Saddam Hussein as well.

As for the fight against radical Islamic groups, Kristol stated it was unfortunate that U.S. military engagement in support of Muslim communities in Kuwait, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Afghanistan, has not been better disseminated and highlighted. It is likewise critical that the U.S. continue its support of those states that embrace moderate Islam. Radical Islam, on the other hand, is for Kristol "a seething cauldron of extremism, anti-Americanism, and terrorism," and must be reshaped. Moreover, Kristol believes that the peoples of these Islamic nations will embrace such change.

In conclusion, Kristol argued that these three struggles make the world a very different place than that of two years ago. If the U.S. continues to pursue this approach to combating terrorism, it is a strikingly different view than held by Europe, which is "post-nationalistic, post-religious, and post-world wars." As mentioned in Kagan's article, the soul of the EU is marked by multilateralism and integration, whereas America remains strongly sovereign and focused on military power. Kristol ended his presentation by predicting that Iraq will be the testing point that will determine future relations between Europe and America.

John J. Mearsheimer, R. Wendell Harrison Professor of Political Science, University of Chicago

Mearsheimer approached the subject of determining what is the best foreign policy for the U.S. in the years ahead by first describing what he considers to be the template that has historically underpinned U.S. foreign policy. Since 1776, proposed Mearsheimer, the U.S. has sought to establish regional hegemony in the western hemisphere. The founding fathers, and their successors, pursued two policies—at first, manifest destiny, in which the U.S. expanded territorially (and removed by force those in the way), and then in 1823 the Monroe Doctrine, "which in the name of national security put the European powers on notice that they were not welcome in the western hemisphere." In his opinion, the history of U.S. foreign policy has always been focused on protecting American security, and has never been concerned with peacekeeping elsewhere, or necessitating regime change overseas.

Accordingly, Mearsheimer asserted, the other major tenet of U.S. foreign policy has been to insure that it does not have a “peer competitor.” For example, the twentieth century witnessed the growth of four hegemon: Imperial Japan, Imperial Germany, Nazi Germany, and the post-1945 Soviet Union. The U.S. played a key role in relegating all four of these potential hegemon to the “scrap heap of history.” In short, Mearsheimer argued that the U.S. has never tolerated peer competitors. To achieve this goal, the U.S. has historically behaved as an “offshore balancer” in which it closely monitors the development of potential hegemon. Although Americans and Europeans might like to think otherwise, Mearsheimer contended that the only reason Americans go to war is to respond to a threat from a peer competitor. An honest review of U.S. foreign policy demonstrates that it is unwilling to intervene in areas that do not represent peer competition, including pressing human rights issues. Referring to the 1995 genocide in Rwanda as an example, Mearsheimer claimed the U.S. hesitates to commit its troops to peacekeeping missions because “Americans don’t like to spend lots of money on certain types of defense, but they really don’t like dying.”

Mearsheimer pointed out that the powerful impulse toward unilateralism in the U.S. is due to two circumstances: its role as an offshore balancer and the relative freedom to “come in and go out as you please;” the U.S. is powerful, and can, arguably, do what it wants, without much assistance. Mearsheimer believes that due to these two circumstances, “the U.S. can be perfidious in its dealings with allies.” Mearsheimer predicted that some form of “messy divorce” with Europe is on the horizon, due to the differing views on such significant foreign policy issues as China’s role in global politics, and differing opinions on how to wage the war on terrorism.

Commenting next on the U.S. war on terrorism, Mearsheimer noted that he does not believe the U.S. will find it in its national interest to build an empire in the Islamic world. The U.S. will continue to pursue al Qaeda but will not employ its military prowess in an expansive way to foster a regime change in Iraq (or elsewhere in the Islamic world). Mearsheimer acknowledged that Bush “talks hawkish,” but he does not think Bush will go so far as to invade Iraq. Social engineering with military forces is a very tricky business, Mearsheimer contended. Iraq is likewise a poor target in this respect, because invading Iraq will not win many friends in the Islamic world. Instead of a military proposal, Mearsheimer strongly advised that the U.S. focus on “winning the hearts and minds” of the Iraqi people. Furthermore, even if the current administration leaned toward invading Iraq, Mearsheimer does not believe that the U.S. population will support this initiative. History has proven that the U.S. has little appetite for fighting wars—and the potentially endless war against Islam will be considered too costly.

Karl Kaiser, Director, Research Institute of the German Council on Foreign Relations

Karl Kaiser concurred with the general sentiment that there has been a fundamental change in U.S. foreign policy and the international system, and that this change has been accelerated by the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001. From the European perspective, something rather unexpected occurred immediately following the events of September 11. At the outset, the Bush administration seemed willing to develop a patient, long term strategy to counter the terrorist attacks, and it likewise sought to shore up its alliances—both new and old. To the pleasant surprise of the Europeans, Kaiser continued, the U.S. indulged in multilateralism. In a way, Kaiser thought it appeared that the U.S. was rediscovering the role of statehood and diplomacy, and that the “Europeanization” of the U.S. was taking root.

In addition to changes in foreign policy, the terrorist attacks on September 11 revealed a fundamental change in the nature of global security. Kaiser pointed out that deterrence is still effective when focused on

inter-state relations, but not when used to persuade non-state actors to behave in a certain way. Classical deterrence fails in a world where markets are open, where access to these markets is expanding, where suicide terrorists can more readily access these public spaces, and can more readily access weapons of mass destruction. There is an important consequence to the failure of classical deterrence, Kaiser argued, and it is that intervention might be warranted. This necessity might then lead to preemption. Reflected in Bush's speech at West Point is the point that absolute proof of the potential and willingness to cause harm is no longer adequate to determine military action. Kaiser noted that although Lord Robertson countered Bush's speech by reiterating that NATO is a defensive alliance and "does not go outside looking for problems," NATO is in fact changing its position as well. It, too, has replaced its classical defensive orientation with a more interventionist outlook.

Kaiser then reviewed his key concerns raised by this dramatic change in foreign policy. He first questioned where policies of intervention and preemption would lead. Before one can discuss intervention, one must first consider defense. "If a state strikes first militarily to prevent an imminent threat, and thereby justifies its intervention by claiming self defense, at what point is defensive action warranted? Where does this leave us with regard to the principles that have governed international politics?" Article 51 makes the use of force legitimate in the case of defense. In Article II, the prohibition of the threat of the use of force is also linked to this question. What criteria should be used to deviate from what has been a central rule of the post-war international system? Kaiser noted that forces intervened in Kosovo without a mandate from the United Nations. However, in that case, there was clear reference to other violence in whose name intervention took place. If all that is necessary to intervene in the affairs of another state is a perception of a threat, then there will be major global ramifications. Kaiser was doubtful that the U.S. would fairly play the role of sole global arbiter of perceived threats. What are the restrictions to preemption? Who will police the police? These are the fundamental questions raised in response to the Bush doctrine.

Kaiser elaborated on the strategic cultures of both the U.S. and of Europe by providing his review of the influential article "Power and Weakness" by Robert Kagan, in which the author wrote that Europeans and Americans no longer share a common view of the world, are rarely in agreement, and understand each other less and less. Kaiser suggested this thesis is incomplete. In Kagan's analysis, the U.S. believes in the moral legitimacy of power, whereas the Europeans' relative military weakness produces its aversion to the use of force in favor of a world protected by rules. Although it may appear true that post-war Europe mirrors Kant's Perpetual Peace, and indeed the U.S. acts as if it exists in an anarchic Hobbesian world, Kaiser believes that this is a fundamentally mistaken view. First, Kaiser argued that strengths and weaknesses should not be limited to a military definition. The European political model has its strengths. Second, as a provider of development aid, Europe is the world leader, not America. Also, Europe is the global leader on critical issues facing the environment, and in fighting poverty and establishing international justice.

In conclusion, Kaiser pointed out that the problem with the U.S. tendency toward unilateralism is that it undermines a system of rules and institutions and underestimates the importance of non-military intervention. Without rules, there is no system in place to prevent others from following such a path. Second, unilateralism has an inherent logic that requires the unilateralist state to take care of everything. Quite simply, it is not in the interest of the world, nor the U.S., for it to act alone. This is particularly true with regard to the war against terrorism. Anti-terrorism requires dealing with the societies themselves, and it requires developing long-term strategies of engaging with these different cultures.

Discussion⁵

The discussion opened with a reflection by one European participant, who questioned which speaker's opinion he should fear more: an arrogant America, or a withdrawn America. He concluded that a withdrawn America is more dangerous. In response, Kristol quipped that a little arrogance is the price Europe has to pay if it wants the U.S. to be multilateralist. Referring to Mearsheimer's presentation, Kristol commented "no one is less realistic about global politics than a theorist of realism." He rebutted Mearsheimer's account of American history, claiming it was inaccurate to suggest that Americans are averse to military intervention. Kristol differed strongly with Mearsheimer on this point—it's a myth that Americans are unwilling to die in military engagements because the U.S. has suffered hundreds of thousands of casualties in modern world history. Kristol wondered aloud whether there was any other country that had intervened more often and more massively (when unprovoked) than the U.S. Furthermore, Kristol mentioned that if the U.S. disengaged from the world, as Mearsheimer suggested, "the outcome will not be a Clintonian version of multilateralism that is to Europe's liking." Instead, it could be closer to the effect that U.S. losses in Somalia had on the genocide in Rwanda. Although Mearsheimer professed that he was not an isolationist but was an "offshore balancer," Kristol countered that the effectual truth of offshore balancing is, in fact, isolationism, which is "the nightmare scenario for the world."

Mearsheimer countered Kristol's suggestion that the U.S. is often willing to intervene and risk casualties. Citing the example of Rwanda, Mearsheimer reiterated his point that Americans are unwilling to incur casualties in cases that are not of U.S. national interest. The repeated occurrence of genocide in this century does not support Americans' self-conception of its willingness to fight and die for human rights. He contended that most of the wars in which the U.S. has committed troops in the twentieth century were to prevent the development of peer competitors. The fact that the U.S. has repeatedly stood by during episodes of genocide is explored in Samantha Power's recent book, *The Quiet Americans*. The U.S. is concerned about power, and making sure the power gap is huge, Mearsheimer concluded.

One participant expressed his dissatisfaction with the fact that both speakers offered a very reductionist vision of what global leadership means. In effect, U.S. leadership is no longer relevant in regards to the real issues of the day: development aid, sustainable development, the environment, and international justice. Another participant asked Kristol and Mearsheimer to elaborate on their respective theories and provide specific guidance on the Middle East. To what extent will there be a reduction of global anti-Americanism if we follow Kristol's view? If the U.S. pulls out of the Middle East, as Mearsheimer would have it, what happens to Israel? Mearsheimer answered that in his opinion Israel would "prefer to fight the war it wants to fight." He reiterated his stance that using force in the Islamic world would not be successful. The U.S. needs to back off Iraq and Iran. Kristol in turn argued that liberating the people of Iraq would be well received and the single best thing the U.S. can do in the short term. When probed further as to what will be the new norms for the use of force? —Is a declaration of war necessary for an invasion of war against Iraq, or is a Tonkin Gulf-type resolution sufficient? —Kristol predicted that Congress would grant Bush a declaration of war against Iraq.

⁵ The policy of this report is to identify by name only those speakers who have made formal presentations.

Returning to the first question posed during this discussion, Mearsheimer admitted that he was not surprised that Europeans would choose Kristol's analysis over his. Mearsheimer suggested that the European perspective of a Kantian world is enabled due to the fact that it is, in fact, a Hobbesian world. The only reason the world can be perceived as peaceful is because the U.S. dominates world politics and provides global security. In short, if the American pacifier is removed, Europe will soon learn that it is a Hobbesian world.

Saturday, June 15

Session II: The “War” on Terrorism and U.S. Foreign Policy

How will the “war” on terrorism affect U.S. relations with other major powers? Does it herald a long-term shift in U.S. strategic priorities, and will it hasten the reconfiguration of world politics that began with the collapse of the Soviet Union? How is U.S. policy changing, and how will Russia, Europe, and the Middle East/Persian Gulf likely respond to these shifts?

Domínguez introduced the panel with his observation that the events to be discussed were indeed very current. He reflected that the U.S. president forty years ago declared that the defense of Berlin was crucial and was shared by non-Berliners, just as states declared their solidarity with the U.S. following the attacks of September 11. Although NATO invoked its war clause, Domínguez suggested that somehow many Americans feel alone in their struggle against terrorism.

François Heisbourg, Director, Foundation pour la Recherche Stratégique

In retrospect, Heisbourg viewed the events of September 11 as having two phases: first, the crystallizing affect it had on existing trends in international security. These diplomatic changes do not represent a rupture, like the fall of the Berlin Wall, but do help explain why a number of forecasts made outside the U.S.— that America would embrace the virtues of multilateralism—proved inaccurate. Second, many analysts thought the U.S. would drop its agenda of ballistic missile defense. This, too, has proven untrue.

The events of September 11 have changed the U.S., and its people now view the world through the prism of these attacks. Indeed, commented Heisbourg, one of America’s founding myths is that it is a place apart, “protected by oceans of great distances.” This makes Americans profoundly different from Europeans who, for the most part live with a recent past of invading armies in their homeland.

What are the consequences of this outlook? First, Heisbourg proposed that permanent military alliances are slowly being replaced by coalitions of the willing. Heisbourg’s second point was that the pursuit of policies that favored national interest were given higher priority than policies guided by values alone. Using the analogy offered by Kagan, Bush’s policies are Hobbesian, not Wilsonian. It is critical to note that terrorists are waging a value-based war, and Heisbourg predicted very negative consequences if the U.S. responds to terrorism and Islam without recognizing this fact. Thirdly, Heisbourg theorized that these events have helped to accentuate the already strong U.S. tradition of emphasizing the use of force to exert political power. The combination of unrivaled military strength and a sense of moral justification contribute to the growing continental drift between Europe and the U.S. Heisbourg argued this drift has two sources: differing threat assessments, and diverging tendencies toward multilateral or unilateral action. Finally, the U.S. tends to disregard the limits of power, and to disregard the need for selectivity in the fight against terrorism. Instead, the U.S. applies blanket solutions, “which is a perverse consequence of having a luxury of resources.”

In the long term, Heisbourg concluded that the war against terrorism would become too unpredictable and too widespread for the U.S. to effectively safeguard its interests without help from the outside. To describe the potential impotence of the U.S. war against terrorism, Heisbourg likened this possibility to an elephant attempting to combat a virus. He predicted that the U.S. would soon discover it is ineffective in

the fight against non-state terrorists and will require assistance, especially in the realm of intelligence. In conclusion, Heisbourg suggested that the U.S. must learn to view itself as an imperial power, and accept the burdens that accompany that position. The U.S. needs to carefully consider its relationships with its allies, and to recall its history of creating permanent military alliances, instead of relying on “mission-related posses.”

Jessica Stern, Lecturer in Public Policy, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University

Stern began with the unequivocal statement, “The U.S. is at war.” Because of this new reality, Stern continued, the U.S. needs to redirect its attention to improving law enforcement and homeland security, stopping the flow of money to terrorists, and learning how to strengthen its immune system (a reference to Heisbourg’s analogy about terrorists behaving like viruses). The U.S. is not strong enough to singularly wage a war against global terrorism, she argued.

Stern proceeded with her assessment of some potentially serious problems on the horizon between the U.S., Europe, and the Persian Gulf. First, with regard to the terrorist organizations affiliated with al Qaeda, it is crucial that the U.S. stop the flow of money to these groups. Her extensive interviews with terrorists revealed that the Gulf States are a major source of funding for terrorist groups. In Afghanistan, during its war against the Soviet Union, NGOs were among the major contributors to the current *jihād*. These terrorist groups operate with a tremendous amount of cooperation and function as international corporations, with franchises throughout the world, in areas such as the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Pakistan. As a result of these findings, the U.S. produced a watch list that included hundreds of such organizations—including Hamas and Hezbollah—to monitor, and if necessary, stop their cash flows. The EU, however, does not want to include Hamas and Hezbollah on this list, because it believes that would worsen the situation in the Middle East. “The U.S. myopia on the war against terrorism has become an irritant to our European allies,” Stern stated. Another major stumbling block for the U.S. has been Europe’s refusal to extradite suspects due to the U.S. insistence on reserving the right to use the death penalty against defendants.

Shahram Chubin, Director of Research, Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP)

Chubin declared at the outset that disengagement, or in Mearsheimer’s words “offshore balancing,” is not an effective option for international relations in the current global climate. Moreover, he remained pessimistic that social engineering was a realistic goal.

Using the Middle East/Persian Gulf as a case study, Chubin summarized the history of U.S. entanglement in the region in order to illustrate the present impasse with the Islamic world. At the outset, the current Bush administration sought to limit its engagement in the Arab-Israeli conflict. In fact, it neglected the conflict altogether, Chubin asserted. At the same time, however, Bush decided that more serious action was warranted against Iraq. To aid this effort, the administration explored a renewed, positive engagement with Iran. However, everything changed following the events of September 11: instituting regime change in Iraq became a greater likelihood; the U.S. slowly expanded its terrorist agenda to include not only al Qaeda, but rogue states that had weapons of mass destruction; the gestures of rapprochement to Iran were revoked when Iran announced its support for the intifadah.

Chubin then discussed whether the new doctrine of preemption was an inevitable burden of being an empire, or whether it was a continuation of America’s “thoughtless entanglement in the region.” For Chubin, the answer depended on whether one thinks there has been too much or too little engagement in

this part of the world. The world is now witnessing a foreign policy “simplification,” in which the U.S. is aligned with Israel and defines any opposition to the Middle East peace process as terrorism, Chubin asserted. September 11 has in effect allowed the Bush administration to simplify its outlook toward the Middle East/Persian Gulf, and group terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, and Islamic radicalism into one coalesced issue.

Chubin shifted his presentation to a discussion of radical Islam. He conceded that the roots of radical Islam are complex, but one reason for its growth is the incompatibility between Islam and modernization. Some analysts have argued that every Islamic regime is a failure (politically, socially and economically). Chubin acknowledged that there is some validity to this thesis, primarily because “areas of political space in most of these countries are restricted to the mosque, and for Palestinians, the street.” Chubin asserted that the case of Iran offered an interesting study in radical Islam, and demonstrated his belief that forcing regime change in these areas is mistaken. Iran became an Islamic republic over twenty years ago, and in this time has managed to impoverish the country, invite wars, become isolated, and “generally make a mess of things.” The positive outcome is that by no conceivable argument can Iran hold others responsible for its present circumstances, Chubin concluded.

*Fen Osler Hampson, Professor, The Norman Paterson School of International Affairs,
Carleton University*

Hampson presented his thoughts on the following two questions: How will the war on terrorism affect U.S. relations with other major powers? Will it hasten the reconsideration of world politics that began with the collapse of the Soviet Union?

According to Hampson, the so-called war on terrorism has passed through its first phase, which was the military campaign against the Taliban and al Qaeda network in Afghanistan. Hampson admitted that it was not yet clear to him what the second phase of the war would entail. At one time it did seem as though the war would be extended to Iraq and other states that are purported to harbor terrorists. To the extent that the U.S. is still engaged in a war on terrorism, Hampson commented it now appeared to be more of a bureaucratic war within the U.S. administration. The future trajectory of the war will be affected by the likelihood and frequency of future terrorist attacks on U.S. assets at home and abroad. It is ironic, Hampson noted, that if the U.S. succeeds in preventing attacks, it will be hard to prove that the risk is growing.

One of the major outcomes of the effect that the war on terrorism has had on U.S. relations with its allies is that these relationships have been redefined. What began as a common front in the aftermath of September 11 has somewhat disintegrated. Part of the problem lies with Bush’s assessment that the war against terrorism cannot be won on the defensive, as outlined in the West Point speech. The doctrines of containment and deterrence did not allow for much ambiguity. In stark contrast, the doctrine of preemption is cloaked in ambiguity because, Hampson argued, “its success depends on its secrecy.” Although every nation has the right to self-defense as articulated in Article 51 of the UN Charter, that right is not without limitations. How far can the definition of self-defense be stretched? Who is the arbiter of whether the threat is real, or imagined? Where is the line drawn between preemptive action against an imminent threat, and preventive retaliation to head off a more distant threat?

“Terrorism is a complex beast that requires complex, multifaceted responses.” The world is still learning about its root causes—failed states, social grievances, and poverty—to name a few. Terror is a psychologi-

cal weapon used to undermine the self-confidence of the strong, argued Hampson. It is therefore vital that the psychological element of terrorism be understood. In order to effectively combat terrorism, the U.S. must coordinate its efforts in order to forge a strategy of prevention that has depth and structure. In this sense, Hampson concurred with Mearsheimer, who previously argued that the real battle is for the “hearts and minds” of those who fear and hate the U.S.

In spite of all the talk about U.S. unilateralism, or what Hampson referred to as “strategic self-referentialism,” the political landscape is more complex. Even now there are elements of cooperation between the U.S. and its allies, in spite of their profound philosophical differences about the use of force in dealing with terrorist threats. As noted during the preceding panel, Hampson reiterated the fact that the “European allergy” to American political behavior is a long-standing one.

Turning his focus to the second question of whether the war on terrorism heralds a long-term shift in U.S. strategic priorities, Hampson rephrased the question to consider whether current U.S. fixations on the war will continue to crowd out other foreign policy concerns. If so, he predicted very serious repercussions. “To the extent that President Bush’s own agenda is consumed by the war, it is difficult to engage the U.S. in dialogue about other vital matters of global interest.” Comments in the previous day’s discussion reveal this all too familiar criticism — where is U.S. leadership in areas of non-military concern, on matters of trade, steel, agriculture, the environment, and international justice? The longer these problems are left to fester from inattention, they will have broader ramifications for the transatlantic relationship.

As Kaiser remarked during the first session, the wider aspects of the war will not be easily fought without allies and appropriate rules of engagement. However, Hampson also recognized that the U.S. has become impatient with the high transaction costs of “multilateralising” its terrorism agenda when a) it doesn’t really need its allies, and b) when it does consult with other states, it receives negative feedback and condemnation. Although America might have the resources at present, it is doubtful that the U.S. can sustain this current effort, especially as deficits rise and budgets shrink. If the war against terrorism is to be as long and sustained an effort as President Bush has indicated, others must share the costs and responsibility for this complex, transnational phenomenon. Hampson predicted that the day would come when the U.S. will need to rely on its allies, high transaction costs and all. In the meantime, if establishing coalitions of the willing can lower the transactions costs, the U.S. will realize that these coalitions are not always the most capable. Furthermore, startup costs associated with forging a coalition for each issue faced are very high.

Report to Plenary

The conference broke into three smaller groups to discuss further the ideas raised in the panels. The members of Group A concluded that the conference discussion had focused too heavily on the uni- vs. multilateralism debate, and the degree of multilateral action by the U.S. had been underestimated. Group B sought to underline the importance of the redefined relationship between Russia and the U.S., specifically the increased importance of Russia as a potential energy supplier. The group also advanced the point that there are limits to the usefulness of multilateralism. For example, barriers to sharing and gathering intelligence do exist. Group B also pointed out that September 11 had pushed aside a broader dialogue about long term causes and consequences of terrorism. Much of the discussion in Group C focused on the general theme outlined in Kagan’s article on the growing drift between the U.S. and Europe. The group concurred that the two powers are in agreement when it comes to strategic analysis, but they differ with regard to the instruments used in response. Thus, the drift can be seen as the result of a stark contrast in policy choices, rather than the identification of a threat.

Session III: U.S. Defense Policy and Global Military Presence

The Bush administration has committed itself to fundamental reforms in U.S. defense policy and appears to favor a long-term shift in strategic focus. What choices will the United States have to make in the future, and how will these choices affect its global military posture? How will the war on terrorism shape this debate, and how are other states likely to react to a different global military presence?

Paarlberg introduced the panel by highlighting certain developments in the last eighteen months of the Bush administration that have produced an interesting sequence of changes. Even before September 11, U.S. Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld was determined to transform the U.S. military establishment and doctrine, most notably by abandoning the ABM treaty in favor of advancing the national missile defense agenda. After September 11 came the campaign in Afghanistan, and last winter the new nuclear posture review linked a two-thirds reduction in nuclear weapons deployment to the development of more new weapons. Also following in the footsteps of September 11 was the Pentagon budget request for a \$48 billion increase to the defense budget. Then on June 1 during his speech at West Point, Bush downplayed the utility of deterrence in favor of preemption. These changes set the stage for a lively exchange of ideas during Session III.

Cindy Williams, Senior Fellow, Security Studies Program, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Williams began her presentation by admitting that eighteen months into the administration, she cannot claim to have a good sense of where the Bush administration is headed. When predicting the behavior of an administration, Williams considers three variables—what does it say, what does it do, and how does it allocate its finances—with which she then builds a picture of the overall path the administration is likely to follow. In the case of the Bush administration, those three variables come together very well in one instance: national missile defense. Bush signaled from the outset that this would be a key priority of his administration. Furthermore, missile defense spending was quickly allocated to the 2002-03 budget. Finally, the policies have been lined up with the rhetoric, most notably when the administration pulled out of the ABM treaty and immediately began testing missile defenses. Together, these events offered positive proof that this was the course on which the administration was embarked.

That said, Williams reported that it has been very difficult to pull the entire picture together, in part because the administration has yet to be forced to make hard choices in its spending, but and also because it is not able to pursue some of the items on its agenda. For example, prior to taking office Bush talked about a de-emphasis of peacekeeping initiatives in Bosnia and Kosovo. However, once in office he left the troops in place. In this instance the policies differed from the rhetoric. Furthermore, Williams suggested that budgets expose the hidden priorities of an administration in a way that rhetoric cannot.

Williams then examined the quadrennial defense review (QDR) and 2003 budget, which are required by Congress every four years. The purpose of the QDR is to link an administration's rhetoric about defense policy and strategy to its procurement programs, and to support the linkage with a proposed budget for the coming decade. In the review that was owed to Congress on October 1, 2001, the Department of Defense was relieved of the responsibility due to the proximity to September 11. At the time, it looked like Rumsfeld was on track to realize his vision of defense transformation by reshaping U.S. conventional forces and eliminating two or more army divisions—but September 11 saved him from having to roll out this plan. Not only did he ignore the calls to provide a budget, he added \$48 billion to defense department spending in 2003 over and above the 2002 levels. Thus, it is hard to predict what choices will have to be

made in the long term. However, Williams asserted that it would be a mistake to think these choices can be postponed indefinitely. The budget will not remain large enough to cover the expenditures that are required if the U.S. continues to outfit the current military forces as planned. By 2008, if the U.S. keeps all the current programs and forces, it will vastly outspend the annual \$400 billion budget. It seems inevitable that taxes will have to be raised to offset this growth, considering that there have been very few budget cuts. The other two constraints to the future state of U.S. military affairs is the exhaustive supply of human capital available to fight multiple wars, and administrative focus. "An administration can only manage so many hot issues on any one day." Williams concluded that it is mistaken to think that the U.S. can continue to postpone these significant defense choices.

With the understanding that choices will have to be made in the near future, Williams presented some of the options to support military missions. On the one hand, Bush initially hoped to preserve the military for large wars and avoid nation building. Statements of regime change indicate that nation building is now on the agenda, which means that the Department of Defense will be forced to decrease the military's capacity to engage in larger wars. On the other hand are considerations for the defense of the homeland. To what extent will this involve the military? Williams concluded her presentation by posing a few questions for consideration: Which wars should the U.S. prepare itself to fight? Is the budget intended to support today's military, or, instead, to prepare for the military of the future? Should the U.S. reduce weapon complexity, or stick with a few "silver bullets"?

Thérèse Delpech, French Atomic Energy Institute

Delpech concurred with the assessment that the U.S. is the only global military with the means, the will, and the commitments abroad, to engage military in areas with permanent tensions and high risks. September 11 and the subsequent war against terrorism gave a significant boost to this reality. In the context of international relations, military power is more relevant than ever before. This is due in part to the "privatization of violence" and because of the appearance of asymmetric warfare. To this is added the new and potentially very disruptive reality of Americans feeling vulnerable at home. U.S. political life has never been more parochial, argued Delpech. For these reasons, she believes that the reference to imperial America is misleading. It has always acquired power by default. Furthermore, "its soul is one of a trade power, much more than a military power." And finally, America does not have the institutional wherewithal to be an empire, nor the desire to carry the burden.

Adding her opinion to the ongoing debate about the rift between America and Europe, Delpech considered the psychological and geostrategic factors that hinder positive interactions between the two powers. First, America is discovering its vulnerability to terrorist attacks at a time when Europe is investing all its political energy and thought into European enlargement. "America insists on the importance of sovereignty, whereas Europe's very existence is about how to abandon sovereignty in favor of voluntary interdependence." That said, there is no question that Europe, too, is vulnerable to terrorist attacks, nor is there debate about Europe's good cooperation with the U.S. on non-military aspects of the war on terrorism (not to mention its military cooperation). The problem, as she sees it, is that there has been limited public debate on the subject, and therefore public opinion does not reflect the notion that the war against terrorism is also a European war. Europe is quick to point out that its political agenda is unimportant to the U.S., although it has yet to articulate its own sense of global responsibility. Unilateralism looms large, Delpech concluded, because Europe has not offered a sufficient counterweight.

Helga Haftendorn, Professor, Free University of Berlin

Haftendorn began her presentation with an assessment of Bush's West Point speech, in particular its reference to the possibility of preemptive action. Haftendorn suggested that the position reflected by U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell—who has warned of the perils of preemptive strikes because of the fallibility of intelligence and its ability to predict potential threats—to some extent describes the German position. Powell's emphasis on exhausting diplomatic measures prior to military engagement is likewise appealing to Germany, because this outlook reflects a greater respect for the rules of international law and its supporting institutions, claimed Haftendorn.

Haftendorn also commented on the status of German military reform. September 11 occurred at a time when Germany was in the midst of implementing its military reforms, which have been handicapped by a severe budget squeeze that resulted from the transfer of approximately 80 billion to the Soviet Union to remove its troops by 1994, and from the significant debt in East Germany. Haftendorn noted that there are several positive changes to the Bundeswehr. First, the internal budget has been rearranged. Second, the German Federal Armed Forces are in the process of modernizing and streamlining its operations. Despite the limitations to its ability to act, Germany did authorize the use of its troops for Operation Enduring Freedom in Kabul, Haftendorn noted. As for Germany's role in the future, Haftendorn admitted that Germany still needed to make some major decisions about its governance and future role in international relations. Should Germany have a volunteer or conscript army? Should it focus its efforts on strengthening the European security apparatus, or on determining the future of NATO?

Barry Posen, Professor of Political Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

"The organization of American military power since the end of the cold war reflects its goal of maintaining a general level of U.S. military superiority," Posen began. More specifically, the last two administrations maintained that the U.S. should preserve war-winning capability against two states simultaneously. Previously referred to as two major theatre war, the Bush administration defines the capability as 4-2-1—military capacity to deter in four places simultaneously, defend and launch counter-offensives in two places, and/or enforce a regime change in one location. To this agenda is added the special capability of dealing with small groups of terrorists in unusual circumstances, highlighted by the war against terrorism.

Posen then presented his concept on the strength of the U.S. military and its "zones of domination," or, in other words, its command of the sea, space, and air. This "command of the global commons" allows the U.S. to conduct its affairs worldwide with considerable strength and in relative safety, and to be informed about activities taking place across the globe. Likewise, it enables America to launch attacks into these areas with considerable effectiveness. This unrivaled military dominance is in great part due to technological prowess. No other government can produce, purchase and acquire large quantities of high-tech weapons at a rate competitive with the U.S. It is also due to the political legacy of the cold war in that the U.S. maintains a huge network of military bases around the world. Moreover, not only did the U.S. inherit its own bases, it inherited military bases in many former communist satellite states.

Posen argued that U.S. military dominance is not a natural occurrence, but it must be safeguarded. The implications of this global dominance are not entirely understood, Posen admitted, but the reality is that it allows the U.S. to weigh its options carefully, delay its response if necessary, to engage with great strength, and it allows the U.S. to cut off reinforcements to its opponents. In short, this military dominance affords America a terrific amount of leverage.

Posen continued his presentation by highlighting the weaknesses in the current U.S. military, or “zones of contestation.” This is where the “Clausewitzian fog of war persists.” The U.S. has attempted to bring technology to bear in these gray areas, but many of these problems are resistant to technological advances. It is clear from the wars that Americans have fought, Posen argued, that human and geographical interference do not operate in a predictable manner. “Problems exist in mountains, cities, within miles of the shoreline, and within human will.” One of Posen’s concerns is the emergence of adversaries who are technically competent, highly motivated, resource-rich, and are willing to die for their cause. The task for American military strategists in the future will be to successfully leverage the strengths of the U.S. military and work with allies to shore-up its weaknesses.

Plenary Discussion

The discussion opened with a question directed at Delpech, for her opinion on whether increasing European defense capabilities would reduce some of the foreign policy disagreements between the U.S. and Europe? Delpech responded that she was an advocate of enlarging both European territory, and its strategic vision. Europe’s main problem is, in her opinion, that its strategic vision is at this time limited to the Mediterranean, the Balkans, and Russia. This outlook should be expanded to include Asia, which in her opinion will shape the political landscape in this century. As for its military power, Europe should increase its defense spending and capabilities because it is the only way it will gain America’s attention, and it will allow Europe to better determine its own future. However, the gap between the U.S. and Europe will only be minimized if the U.S. does less militarily, because it does not appear that Europe is on course to do more. Kaiser interjected that even if Europe decided to increase its military spending and capabilities, it will take six to eight years to materialize. “What do we do in the meantime? Why isn’t there a European intervention force, rather than separate British, French and German forces?” Delpech responded that there should be a European intervention force, but there is no movement towards making this a reality, which she agreed is a disappointment.

With regard to Delpech’s discussion of the psychological factors affecting Europe, Mearsheimer commented that American preoccupation with sovereignty and freedom of action is juxtaposed against a Europe preoccupied with abandoning sovereignty in favor of interdependence. What concerned Mearsheimer about the transatlantic drift “is not what games we get to play” but that the dominant European view about the kind of world we should prefer differs from the dominant American view. Europe finds the institutional-heavy world of laws and regulations to be desirable, whereas the U.S. prefers the opposite. That is the most important issue that undergirds the transatlantic drift, Mearsheimer concluded.

One participant asked Posen and Williams to clarify their respective stances on transforming the U.S. military. Williams answered that “transformation is the Republican word for the Democratic concept of RMA (revolution in military affairs),” and she disliked these terms because their definitions are subjective. Williams defines transformation in two ways: changing the concepts of fighting, and solving specific military problems. In her opinion, it is important for the military to transform because, at present, it remains wedded to concepts and equipment inherited from the cold war. Williams added that she’d like the administration to “ask the hard questions” about the military budget: do the old cold war norms still apply? Posen, in turn, responded that military transformation was important not just because it established policies, but it also served an ideological function. Hegemony deters attacks on the U.S. and deters adversaries from even considering becoming a peer competitor.

Following Posen's response, a lively debate about the distinction between preventive and preemptive war transpired. In response to Haftendorn's sentiment that the U.S. emphasis on preemptive war was unjustified, Mearsheimer commented that there's a distinction between preemptive war and preventive war. The former is a situation in which an attack is imminent, and thus a preemptive attack is justified. Political analysts such as Michael Walzer defend just war theory, even though they, like Haftendorn, are almost universally against war. Mearsheimer proposed that the Bush administration was really presenting ideas about preventive war, in which intelligence dictates that a state will likely become a problem in the future. Haftendorn retorted that this distinction was semantic. Stern added that there is a clear distinction between preventive and preemptive action, but it is an operative distinction only when reliable military intelligence exists to inform the decision-makers. The real problem is that it is unlikely there will be any warning in regards to terrorist attacks. Mearsheimer again weighed in, stating that a preemptive strike assumed the adversary has both the capability and the intention to attack, whereas a preventive war assumes capability alone. Citing the 1981 Israeli attack on the nuclear site in Iraq, "that was not considered a preemptive strike because the Iraqis were not poised to attack Israel. It was a preventive attack. The 1967 war is widely considered to be a justified preemptive attack, because there was evidence that the Egyptians and Syrians were planning to attack. In contrast, the 1956 war in the Suez was preventive because the Israelis were fearful that the balance of power was shifting against them due to the Czech arms deal with the Egyptians." Posen added that he was in full agreement with Mearsheimer: since the U.S. cannot be certain that Saddam will attack, its proposed war against Iraq would be a preventive war. Stern ended the debate by commenting that she was less concerned with the distinction between preventive and preemptive, because "the more critical issue is that the rules for just and unjust wars be rewritten for counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency."

Keeping with the theme of military expenditures, a participant asked if the war on terrorism justified an increase in U.S. defense spending, to which both Williams and Posen responded unequivocally: it doesn't. Kristol registered his disagreement, stating that in 1996 he had called for a \$60-100 billion increase in the defense budget, precisely because he thought if the U.S. was serious about hegemony, it could not maintain that status by spending 3% GDP on defense. Williams recognized the appeal in using the measure of what share of GDP a country spends on defense, and admitted it's a useful measure for comparative analysis among states. "In this case, the question is not one of GDP percentages, but what is the burden on Americans for an increase in defense spending?" On the question of how much the U.S. should spend in the future, Williams commented that as a military analyst, she preferred a tight military budget because it forces decisions to be made, clarified, and justified. In an ideal world, Williams would like U.S. taxpayers to pay for the wars as they are fought, because this would help Americans understand the cost of the policies. For example, the U.S. is poised to increase defense spending, and increase spending for homeland security, yet there has been absolutely no public discussion about undoing the tax break that was granted last year.

One participant asked Posen to clarify his statement that there were a plethora of bases around the Gulf area that were readily available to the U.S. Access denial seemed to be more frequent than was implied in his presentation. Posen responded that it is difficult to measure imperial reach, but as an example, the U.S. did not have plans to engage militarily in Afghanistan prior to September 11. Yet, one month later the U.S. operated out of bases in formerly Soviet Central Asia. In short, Posen believes that the U.S. has more global imperial military reach than any power has ever had in history.

Dinner Presentation

Stephen Walt, Robert and Renee Belfer Professor of International Affairs, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University

“Why do some states fear, hate, or resent the United States, and why do virtually all states worry about American power? What can the rest of the world do about it? How can the rest of the world deal with the ‘800-pound American gorilla?’” Walt offered his thoughts on these two questions, followed by his suggestions about what this means for U.S. foreign policy.

“Why do they hate, fear, resent, and worry about us?” Americans tend to see themselves as a benevolent force in world affairs. According to Walt’s colleague at Harvard University, Samuel Huntington, “American primacy is central to the future of freedom, democracy, open economies, and international order.” According to President Clinton, the United States is indispensable for the forging of stable political relations around the world. Certainly a similar statement has been made by the current administration, proposed Walt. However, it is clear there is quite a discrepancy between the view that Americans and the rest of the world hold with regard to the role that the U.S. occupies in the global arena. Foreign media are filled with various criticisms about American policy. According to a recent survey by the Pew Center, a majority of Americans polled reported the U.S. is popular “because we do a lot of good in the world.” Only 21% of foreign respondents agreed with that statement. 18% of Americans think U.S. foreign policy was partly responsible for what happened on September 11, compared to 58% of foreigners. 70% of Americans favor some kind of military action against Iraq, while fewer than 30% of the Europeans polled support such action.

Walt identified three reasons why the world is concerned about the American hegemony. The first is what America represents in terms of its global reach. The U.S. is the most powerful country in the world, and “unchecked power always makes other countries nervous.” Those who object to this reasoning might argue that the U.S. is a peace-loving democracy that does not abuse its power but rather uses its resources to the benefit of the greater good. Walt believes there are three problems with that argument: First, the U.S. has historically used its power in ways that have threatened other states and given them cause to worry about American power. Moreover, no country can be certain that it will not “end up in America’s crosshairs at some point.” And, finally, other states register concern that the U.S. will exercise its power in ways that will inadvertently affect their interests. A war against Iraq could drive up oil prices around the world, thereby affecting the global economy. An attack on North Korea could cause serious problems for South Korea, even though that is not the direct or deliberate intent. Walt summarized his first point with a reference to Pierre Trudeau’s famous line, “living with the United States is like sleeping with an elephant. No matter how well-intentioned the beast is, you are effected by every twitch and grunt.”

Second, people hate, fear, and resent the U.S. because of how it operates. As mentioned previously, the U.S. has used its power in ways that have harmed others in the past, and it still uses it in ways that others find objectionable. Many countries have historic grievances with the U.S. In his opinion, America’s international conduct has been comparatively benevolent by the standards of great powers, just not as benevolent as Americans think. If the U.S. is to remain an active player in the global scene, it must recognize the costs associated with its actions.

Many states fear, hate, and resent America for a third reason, because it upholds different standards for its own conduct, and for what it expects from others. The U.S. emphasizes the rule of law when convenient, but it is quick to condemn other countries when they violate international agreements. America endorses free trade, “but not when it affects influential steel manufacturers in key electoral states.” The U.S. condemns Palestinian terrorism and suicide bombings, “but describes the Prime Minister of Israel as a man of peace.” The U.S. does not have a monopoly on hypocrisy, Walt continued, but its application of double standards casts doubt on its moral legitimacy because the rest of the world already resents American power, wealth, and influence. This kind of moral inconsistency also raises questions about America’s future conduct, and it conveys a strong sense of contempt for the opinion of others.

If the rest of the world resents the U.S., does it really matter? Walt continued his speech with a description of two strategies that states can adopt for their relations with America: cooperation, or resistance. Within these two options are several approaches.

The first strategy of cooperation is to “bandwagon.” Walt noted that a good example is Great Britain’s Prime Minister Tony Blair, who openly supports U.S. policy in almost all circumstances. The second approach is opportunism. The Russian response to September 11 was opportunistic, and helped to advance its own national interests. This strategy works quite well when the U.S. takes on a huge project, such as fighting global terrorism, added Walt. The third way to register cooperation with the U.S. is to support its domestic politics. The U.S. is quite vulnerable to this approach because its political system is so permeable. Classic examples of this strategy include Taiwan, Korea, Israel, and even the Kosovo Liberation Army.

Regarding strategies of resistance, Walt commented that remarkably few states have attempted to join forces in order to create a balance of power. This is due in part to the fact that the U.S. is geographically isolated, and does not have territorial ambitions. The second strategy of resistance is to respond asymmetrically to U.S. policies. It is the strategy used by al Qaeda, and it is what motivates weaker states to secure weapons of mass destruction. Weak actors cannot successfully engage in a direct test of strength against the U.S., but they can conduct operations against points of U.S. vulnerability. The third approach is simple: blackmail. Present an intractable situation — such as Pakistan and India over Kashmir — and urge the U.S. to get involved “lest it unduly complicate life in the U.S.” Both allies and adversaries use this tactic. The fourth strategy is passive resistance: “Politely refuse to comply with U.S. policies, or ignore the rules.” Saudi Arabia takes this approach one step further and pretends to comply by cracking down on Muslim radicals while enforcing this policy at an absolute minimum. And finally, there is ideological deviation. American hegemony is durable only if people think its actions are benevolent, thus states can impose a political cost by proving otherwise.

Walt concluded his presentation by offering his prescription for what the U.S. should do to ameliorate a potentially divisive global situation. First, it is critical that the U.S. adopt a more restrained, subtle foreign policy: “Instead of announcing preemption, start quoting Wilson.” Second, the U.S. ought to be more generous, especially in its support of international development aid. Finally, America needs to understand where its actions might have produced hostility. Although it is likely possible that the U.S. can accomplish a majority of its foreign policy agenda in a unilateral fashion, it is unwise, particularly in the long term. The U.S. cannot effectively pursue sanctions without outside assistance, nor can it control loose nukes on its own. The U.S. needs intelligence assistance in order to combat further the war against terrorism. In conclusion, America needs to better convince the world that the agenda it seeks to advance is good for the global community.

Sunday, June 16

Session IV: Thinking Outside the Box: Reforming U.S. Foreign Policy

The purpose of the concluding panel, Domínguez began, was to widen the lens and consider how U.S. foreign policy should evolve in the future. The participants were therefore encouraged to consider more radical or far-reaching revisions in the way that the U.S. engages with the rest of the world.

Jeffrey Frankel, James W. Harpel Professor of Capital Formation and Growth, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University

Frankel focused his talk on the cost to the U.S. for its continued engagement in international affairs. He offered an analogy between the events of September 11 and Edgar Allen Poe's mythical tale "Mask of the Red Death," in which the threat of plague leads the aristocracy to retreat to the countryside and wait in hiding for the plague to pass. During one evening of revelry, an outsider joined the costume ball in progress. The aristocracy soon discovered that the commoner was not wearing a red mask; rather his face had broken out in the red welts, characteristic of one infected with the plague. This analogy, albeit chilling, is one from which the U.S. can draw some lessons: "America cannot expect to retreat behind walls, live in prosperity, and remain immune from the side effects of disengagement."

That said, Frankel does not believe that poverty alone leads directly to terrorism, or to Russian loose nukes, contagious diseases, or global environmental problems. The U.S. needs to remain engaged in global politics because regional problems that at first glance appear to have no direct affect on the U.S. can become larger problems if allowed to fester. Furthermore, although there are analysts who suggest otherwise, Frankel argued that the U.S. is concerned about human rights violations and the prevention of genocide. Finally, the U.S. needs to remain engaged in the world for economic reasons—it is dependent on other states for oil and other resources. It is therefore critical that the U.S. economy remain robust through fiscal responsibility, free trade, and free markets. In the case of energy policy reform, Frankel proposed a tax on energy consumption, instead of the Bush administration's proposal to "drain the country of its domestic oil supply in the name of national security."

Turning his thoughts to U.S. foreign policy reform, Frankel offered three suggestions: use soft power selectively; maintain humility; and clarify objectives for military intervention.

First, regarding soft power, Frankel noted that the best example the U.S. can offer is its own: the U.S. economy works well. America won the cold war because capitalism works better as a social and economic system than does communism. Second, the U.S. needs to conduct its affairs with greater humility. Simply put, Europe resents the U.S. "because it is stingy on international aid and UN dues, it is gratuitously insulting at times with regard to its unilateral agenda, it is hypocritical in regards to free trade when it implements steel tariffs, and vetoes every single multilateral arrangement. It's particularly embarrassing when the U.S. writes a treaty, only to later fall short of ratification." Finally, with regard to military intervention, the U.S. often fails to think a step ahead. Before the U.S. intervenes militarily in an area it needs to send a clear signal of intent. In some cases the U.S. has intervened without notice (Korea), or has threatened to intervene but has not followed through (Lebanon). An example with mixed results would include the current war against terrorism. Frankel believes that President Bush's "axis of evil" speech was a huge blunder, in that the U.S. targeted three states (Iran, Iraq, and North Korea) for intervention, and it is unlikely that it will follow-through on all three fronts.

Andrei Kortunov, Executive Director, Open Society Institute, Moscow

Kortunov provided the most sober assessment of the future of America's hegemony, suggesting that it has reached its zenith. The following factors will contribute to this development: demography, economics, and interdependence. In terms of demographics, the ethnic composition of the U.S. is becoming less European, and more Asian and Latin American. As a result of this demographic shift, Kortunov suggested that minority groups would articulate their special interests with greater influence, which will in turn make it more difficult to sustain common biases in U.S. foreign policy (Israel; Turkey/Greece, India/Pakistan, etc.). As for the economic outlook, Kortunov acknowledged that the U.S. would remain the most powerful economy in the world for years to come. In relative terms, however, it will become weaker because there are huge centers of economic power emerging in the world. Europe will present a formidable challenge to the U.S. when it overcomes the complexities of enlargement, develops further its common markets, and the euro becomes a standard currency.

Kortunov concluded that there are a number of "dangers" on the horizon for the U.S. There looms the danger of imperial overreach—at some point the U.S. will fail to meet the global commitments that it has accumulated. Also, the U.S. role as a global police force does not represent the American psyche, since "military service has never been a choice occupation among its citizens." The last factor that will contribute to the dismantling of American hegemony is that the U.S. will not be able to sustain a unilateral agenda in the long term.

Laurens Jan Brinkhorst, Minister of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries, Netherlands

Brinkhorst discussed at first the differing concepts of sovereignty in Europe and in the U.S. Europe's attempt to share sovereignty was originally thought to be economic, but the backbone of its basic conception is political. Over the last fifty years Europe has been engaged in a process over the last fifty years that is in reaction to the unlimited exercise of sovereignty, which led to two world wars. The development of the EU is, for Brinkhorst, a world model that should inspire other parts of the world. It is born out of experience and an unfortunate nationalistic history. Enlargement will take time, but it will result in stability if central and eastern Europe join, Brinkhorst predicted.

Turning to the subject of the stalled relations between Europe and the U.S., Brinkhorst cited a number of problems: friction over trade and agriculture; the Kyoto agreement; business ethics; the death penalty; the International Criminal Court; and foreign policy issues in the Middle East, Iran and Iraq. While Brinkhorst concurred with Michael Palliser, who earlier acknowledged that the two parties had a long tradition of disagreement, Brinkhorst contended that the situation at present is a bit more serious, for the following reasons: the number of problems has increased; the end of the cold war signaled an end to the alliance of "The West"; there is increased competition of economic and social systems; and the aftermath of September 11, for which the methods and goals for a military response to the terrorist attacks differed dramatically. Thus, Brinkhorst argued that the U.S. and Europe must be realistic about the current state of affairs, and must acknowledge, "the roadmap of the past will no longer suffice."

What attitudes should both powers develop to ameliorate this situation? In Brinkhorst's view, the worst attitude that Europeans can take is to bemoan the supremacy of American power. Instead, Europe needs to exercise more global leadership, "especially in those areas where the America vision of the world order is misguided or too narrow," such as the environment and poverty. European leadership is a positive influence on the global scene, and its presence will help stabilize international politics. Moreover, if Europe

engages in meaningful dialog with the U.S. on these contentious policy areas, it will help reduce America's unilateral tendencies. This will require patience, but it is necessary in order to avoid a "messy divorce."

William Drozdiak, Executive Director, Transatlantic Center, German Marshall Fund of the U.S.

Drozdiak, for his presentation, focused on possible reforms to U.S. foreign policy. Echoing some of the themes raised during Walt's dinner speech, Drozdiak began by identifying the key reasons why much of the world hates America: fear, envy, and resentment. People fear that the U.S. is too big and too powerful for its own good and that of the rest of the world; they are envious of U.S. democracy and prosperity; and they are resentful of U.S. hypocrisy in its application of double standards.

Drozdiak made reference to a recent conference he attended at the Transatlantic Center in Brussels concerning American perspectives on Europe's constitutional convention, and its parallels to the Philadelphia convention. During a discussion of the Federalist Papers and the struggle between big and small states over proportional representation of democracy, the crucial phrase by one of the American founding fathers was highlighted: "American foreign policy shall be based on the decent respect for the opinions of mankind." Drozdiak proposed that this statement neatly sums up where U.S. foreign policy has gone astray. Simply put, "if the hammer is the only tool you have in the toolbox, then everything begins to look like a nail."

To illustrate this point, Drozdiak referred to the Iranian revolution in 1979 in which the American diplomatic community was so removed from what was taking place in Iranian society that it found itself in a hostage-taking situation. In his opinion, a tragedy of similar proportions may be unfolding in the world in terms of American diplomacy. We have yet to seriously examine the egregious intelligence shortcomings in the U.S., and learn how to make American classical diplomacy more effective. Furthermore, Drozdiak argued that public diplomacy has been in decline since the Reagan era, and thus "the U.S. public media is inept at handling its own image to the world."

Plenary Discussion

Domínguez made a few comments intended to cover the subject matter by the foreign minister of Mexico, who has been a significant reformer of Mexican foreign policy and who, at the last moment, was unable to attend the conference. The most noteworthy feature of U.S. foreign policy toward Mexico is the "nearly trivial" role the U.S. Department of State plays in fashioning U.S. policy. With regard to matters of security, Mexico made a strategic decision in 1942 to "surrender forever" by disarming. If Mexico ever encountered threats from other states, the U.S. would provide its defense. Domínguez contended that Mexico is the only country of its size that has made those three military decisions. An additional aspect of security—law enforcement—has been affected by the events of September 11. As for prosperity, the importance of Mexico to the U.S. has risen dramatically. Indeed, the value of trade with Mexico is more important than with many other countries, including Japan, Germany, France, and the United Kingdom. Domínguez noted another significant element of foreign policy in recent history as the beginning of industrial policy coordination. Steel tariffs are a key example, for which Bush exempted Canada and Mexico, thereby creating the first North American industrial steel policy.

In response to a question about NAFTA's role in this change in foreign policy, Domínguez admitted that NAFTA has been a great success in facilitating the growth of trade, but in 1985 Mexico had already begun to dismantle its high tariffs prior to the agreement coming into effect. Three things were left out of

NAFTA: law enforcement, energy, and people. What has changed after September 11 is the fairly aggressive Mexican policy of surrendering the sovereignty of its people to the U.S., by allowing the issuance of identity cards to Mexicans who are not citizens but who regularly enter the U.S.

Frankel clarified his previous statement about the relative low cost of U.S. military engagement to taxpayers occurs when there is intelligent engagement. "If you take \$100 billion and dump it in the ocean, which is the cost of missile defense, then engagement becomes much more expensive."

Kaiser questioned how the U.S. would bring about the revolution in policy and thinking to which Kristol referred, namely to focus on the non-military aspect of a long term strategy in dealing with terrorism. What changes will occur in development policy, and in intelligence? How will the U.S. bring about an information strategy to "deal with the hearts and minds" of people in Islamic communities, as Mearsheimer mentioned? Most of the countries that have linkages to terrorist groups are authoritarian, and highly impenetrable. What about Radio Free Islam, or satellite and intelligence-exchange programs? Kortunov cautioned that instituting a pro-West and pro-democracy information policy, "is a double-edge sword because when you sell western values and lifestyles, you inflate expectations. When these expectations are not met, the net result is dissatisfaction." Kaiser then asked his fellow Europeans to consider the following: Let us assume that it is proven that Saddam Hussein has chemical and biological weapons. What would you advocate? Brinkhorst responded that he was not against the use of force, but he would first advocate creating a coalition and would simultaneously consult with the states surrounding Iraq.

Paarlberg raised the issue of soft power. The creation of international standards for trade and labeling of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) offers one case in which the EU has exercised considerably more soft power than the U.S. "It is a contentious case because \$4 billion in U.S. agricultural exports are at stake." The European standard of precautionary principle, rather than the U.S. standard of requiring scientific evidence of harm, is being internationalized. There are several kinds of soft power at work that will put the EU in an advantageous position: First, European market power. It is the world's biggest food-importing region. Second, EU-based environmental NGOs such as Greenpeace are more than a match for U.S.-based companies such as Monsanto in the public relations battles over GMOs. Third, European diplomatic influence is considerable within the inter-governmental organizations that develop the protocols. Finally, the EU has dedicated more resources to development aid, thereby affecting policies of bio-safety in these poor developing countries. Is this GMO case an exception? "Globalization does not always mean Americanization. In a number of important cases, it seems to imply 'Europeanization'."

One participant questioned what the real attitude of the Bush administration was with regard to free trade and economic values. With regard to steel policies, Frankel admitted that the Clinton administration received numerous complaints from the steel industry. The surge in steel imports that occurred in the late 1990s was temporary as a result of the East Asian crisis, and they did not meet the criteria for safeguards. Frankel at the time argued the "extreme free trade position." Steel imports have in fact been declining since that peak, so it does not warrant safeguard protection. In actuality, protection of interests is based on constituencies, and it is very difficult to manage excessive government protection and regulation. "Every sector, every interest group, and every individual want government intervention on their behalf." Thus the process of reducing government intervention is very tricky political process, Frankel concluded.

One participant asked about an energy tax, noting the curious absence of a plan to finance the war on terrorism. What about the medium-term energy supply outlook around the world and its potential to serve as a source of conflict in the future? Frankel responded "It's scandalous how low the U.S. gas tax is."

A major gasoline tax would affect seven targets, four being conventional externalities—pollution, global climate change, traffic congestion, and traffic accidents. A gas tax would help the U.S. budget and trade deficits, as well as improving national security by reducing dependence on oil.

One participant noted that the conference had thus far overlooked the critical issues of poverty, health, AIDS, education, and the environment. With regard to the distinction between U.S. and European foreign policy, former Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan once stated that the biggest problem with his job is the “ignorance of my electorate.” Who is educating the Americans that there is life beyond its borders?

Closing Remarks

Because Stephen Walt was asked to give one of the dinner presentations, he limited his concluding remarks to a few comments. Walt reiterated his observation made at the beginning of the conference: the range of choice that the U.S. faces in its foreign policy is broader, and has a greater impact, than ever before. Walt acknowledged that the conference’s dialogue did not address many critical issues such as regional political issues, domestic politics in shaping U.S. foreign policy, poverty, and human rights, to name a few. Can the U.S. really act alone, even in the military realm? Walt believes that this question remains unresolved. Finally, with regard to the issue of public diplomacy, “How much can the U.S. accomplish with public diplomacy if the product it is trying to sell is faulty?”