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Executive Summary

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WHAT BERLIN MUST DO TO REPAIR THE U.S.–GERMAN ALLIANCE

NILE GARDINER, PH.D., AND HELLE DALE

The reelection of Gerhard Schröder as Chancellor of Germany in September symbolized the end of an era in close post-war relations between Washington and Berlin. The Chancellor held on to power after his Social Democratic Party (SPD) ran a fiercely anti-American election campaign based on German opposition to U.S. policy with regard to Iraq and other issues. The result has been immense harm to the U.S.–German alliance, which had been carefully nurtured over the past half century. In the words of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, the SPD's election strategy has had the effect of “poisoning” relations between Germany and the United States.

One of the new German administration's first priorities must be to repair the damage done to the U.S.–German alliance, once held up as a model of transatlantic friendship. President George Bush should make it clear that the onus is now on the leaders of Germany to demonstrate that they are serious about healing the rift they caused. Berlin will need to offer more than empty platitudes to demonstrate that it is serious about rebuilding relations with the United States. What is needed is a concerted effort on the part of Germany's government to show that it wishes to be taken seriously as a leading partner in the fight against global terror-

ism and state sponsors of terrorism. Berlin must show that the Chancellor's talk of “unlimited solidarity” with the United States is more than just window dressing.

Specifically, the Bush Administration should:

- **Continue to call on Germany to join the international coalition to confront Saddam Hussein.** Though the Allies do not expect German military participation in operations against Iraq, it is still not too late for Berlin to provide diplomatic backing for an international coalition to force Baghdad to abide by the numerous U.N. resolutions passed since 1991 and to remove Saddam Hussein from power. Germany could also have an important role to play in the rebuilding of a post-war Iraq.

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- **Request that Berlin grant the Allies complete access to German airspace and allow the United States and Britain full use of their bases there for operations against Iraq.** Leading left-wing members of Germany's ruling SPD–Green coalition have called on the government to prevent the United States from using its own airbases in Germany to launch strikes against Iraq. The Bush Administration should make it clear that such a policy in the event of war would seriously compromise future U.S.–German military cooperation and could strengthen the calls by prominent U.S. legislators to scale back America's commitments to European defense.
- **Ask Germany to cooperate fully with the United States in the war against terrorism.** Germany needs to do more with regard to the extradition of terrorist suspects to the United States and the release of crucial evidence that could be used to help convict terrorists. Berlin's refusal to hand over evidence against September 11 suspect Zacarias Moussaoui to U.S. investigators is seriously hampering the progress of U.S. efforts to destroy the al-Qaeda network.
- **Call on Germany to increase defense spending.** German defense spending has fallen to extremely low levels in recent years. At just 1.5 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), Germany's expenditure is the lowest in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), alongside that of Luxembourg. Germany's bloated conscript army is also in dire need of further reform if it is to become an effective ally in the war on terrorism. Under current conditions, the

Bundeswehr would be incapable of making an effective large-scale contribution to military operations against Iraq, even if it wanted to.

- **Urge Berlin to increase security at U.S. bases in Germany.** Berlin must strengthen security for American servicemen and their families at U.S. bases in Germany in the face of increasing threats from al-Qaeda and other terrorist organizations operating in Europe.

If the German government chooses to actively hinder U.S. policy towards Iraq on the international stage, Washington may conclude that Germany is not taking its treaty obligations seriously, which could impact U.S.–German cooperation on military technology, training of German forces in the United States, and the sharing of intelligence. The United States may also examine its position on Germany's candidacy for a permanent seat on the U.N. Security Council.

Conclusion. Germany's political leadership faces a stark choice in the weeks ahead. Berlin can either remain in splendid isolation within Europe and on the international stage by opposing action against Baghdad, or it can join in what may be one of the biggest international coalitions ever assembled to remove a rogue dictatorship from power. If Berlin refuses to stand by its allies in confronting the threat posed by the Iraqi regime, it will be seen as increasingly irrelevant in the global fight against international terrorism.

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WHAT BERLIN MUST DO TO REPAIR THE U.S.–GERMAN ALLIANCE

NILE GARDINER, PH.D., AND HELLE DALE

The reelection of Gerhard Schröder as Chancellor of Germany in September has symbolized the end of an era in close post-war relations between Washington and Berlin. The Chancellor held on to power after his Social Democratic Party (SPD) ran a fiercely anti-American campaign based upon opposition to U.S. policy with regard to Iraq. The result has been immense harm to the U.S.–German alliance, carefully nurtured over the past half century. One of the first priorities of the new German administration must be to repair the damage done to German–U.S. relations. President George W. Bush must make clear that the onus is now upon the leaders of Germany to demonstrate that they are serious about healing the rift between the two nations.

During the final weeks of the campaign, Chancellor Schröder and key members of his cabinet stoked the fires of anti-U.S. sentiment in Germany that exist over a wide range of foreign policy issues. In a number of instances, the heated rhetoric deteriorated into personal attacks on President Bush. In a cynical attempt to deflect public attention away from the dismal state of the German economy, the election was effectively turned into a referendum on U.S. foreign policy. A mediocre, lackluster government—with little to offer the German electorate in terms of economic reform—was reelected by the narrowest of margins by sacrificing one of the

strongest alliances of modern history on the altar of political expediency. Schröder's election tactics were greeted with a sense of astonishment, anger, and eventually betrayal in Washington and by much of the U.S. media.

Despite this assault on the United States, there is a widely held view in the upper echelons of the German foreign policy establishment, particularly within the diplomatic corps, that German–U.S. relations after this temporary “spat” will be repaired swiftly. Indeed, Berlin is hoping that several months of subtle diplomacy and a few carefully placed soothing words will bridge the divide. Wolfgang Ischinger, Germany's Ambassador to Washington, claims that “this relationship is at core a very healthy relationship. I cannot believe that our two governments on the basis of shared interests and shared values cannot find a way together again to move forward.”¹ His statement is in accord with the views of his Chancellor, who said that “the basis of the relation-

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ship between Germany and the United States is so secure that the fears that were played up during the election campaign are unfounded.”²

There is every indication that German politicians and diplomats greatly underestimate the depth of disquiet that exists in Washington over Schröder’s vitriolic election campaign. In the words of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, the SPD’s election strategy had the effect of “poisoning the relationship” between Germany and the United States.³ The U.S. government made its displeasure clear to the German Chancellor through Daniel Coats, Washington’s Ambassador to Berlin, who wrote in a letter that Schröder’s stance risked “isolating Germany from the main course of thinking in the European Union.” Germany’s condemnation of U.S. policy on Iraq, he continued, had cast “a certain doubt about the closeness of the relationship.”⁴ The position of the White House following Schröder’s election victory was expressed bluntly by the President’s spokesman Ari Fleischer, who warned that “words and actions have consequences. They don’t go away after the election.”⁵

Berlin will need to offer more than empty platitudes in order to demonstrate that it is serious about rebuilding the U.S.–German relationship. What is needed is a concerted effort on the part of Germany’s policymakers to show that Germany wishes to be taken seriously as a leading partner in the fight against global terrorism and its state sponsors. Berlin’s willingness to assume joint command of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan, together with the Netherlands, is a welcome step in that direction.⁶ A real test of Schröder’s leadership will be to confront the pacifists in Germany’s SPD and Green Party and to demonstrate his seriousness about Germany playing a full role in the war on terrorism. Berlin must show that the Chancellor’s message of “unlimited

solidarity” with the United States, which he sent to President Bush after September 11, is more than just window dressing.⁷

The Bush Administration should call on Germany to: (1) join the international coalition to confront Iraq, with diplomatic backing for the effort to remove Saddam Hussein from power; (2) grant the Allies complete access to German airspace and allow the United States and Britain full use of their bases on German soil for operations against Iraq; (3) cooperate fully with Washington in the war against terrorism, especially with regard to the extradition of terrorist suspects and the release of crucial evidence that could be used to help convict them; (4) increase defense spending, which has fallen to just 1.5 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP); and, (5) increase security at U.S. bases in Germany. If the German government chooses to continue actively hindering U.S. policy toward Iraq on the international stage, Washington may conclude that Germany is reneging on its treaty obligations, which would have serious consequences.

GERMAN–U.S. RELATIONS SINCE WORLD WAR II

Extensive measures will be needed to restore the German–U.S. alliance, a relationship that had been long held up as a model of post-war transatlantic friendship. For over half a century, the United States has invested huge military and financial resources in Germany. After World War II, President Harry Truman committed the United States to assist in the rebuilding of Germany. Subsequently, America—one of the original occupation powers along with Britain, France, and the Soviet Union—became Germany’s ally. The millions of U.S. troops stationed there after World War II and throughout the duration of the Cold War created a close bond between the two countries.

1. Ambassador Wolfgang Ischinger, Interview with *The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer*, September 23, 2002.

2. Quoted by the *Financial Times*, September 24, 2002.

3. “Schroder Faces More US Anger,” *BBC News Online*, September 23, 2002.

4. “Schröder’s Hostility to Iraq Attack Wins Voters,” *Financial Times*, September 5, 2002.

5. “White House Keeps its Bristles Up,” *The Guardian*, September 25, 2002.

6. “Germans Offer to Co-Lead Afghan Force,” *BBC News Online*, September 24, 2002. Turkey’s command of the force expires on December 20, 2002.

7. “Germany Goes Onto High Alert After US Attacks,” Agence France-Presse, September 11, 2001.

More specifically, in 1947, the U.S. Congress approved the \$12.5 billion Marshall Plan for the reconstruction of Europe—the bulk of which went to Germany, which had been decimated during the war by Allied airpower. Named after Truman’s Secretary of State, George C. Marshall, it was a display of unprecedented generosity by a victor towards a defeated power. The first tranche, \$6.8 billion, represented 18 percent of the U.S. federal budget in 1949.⁸

On June 24, 1948, the Soviet Union began its blockade of Berlin, hoping to coerce the West into withdrawing from the German capital, which was then located in the Soviet sector of the occupied country. Access by road or rail was blocked by Soviet troops, and the beleaguered city could only be reached by air. Without land links, starvation was a very real possibility for Berlin’s population. Under U.S. Commander General Lucius Clay, the United States and Great Britain supplied the city from the air for an entire year with food and essential supplies. The 1948 Berlin Airlift, an unprecedented show of airpower and a demonstration of America’s commitment to protecting the freedom of the West German people, was a seminal event in the development of relations between Germans and Americans.⁹

With the creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in April 1949, the United States and Germany formally became military allies. It was a turning point for both. For the first time, the United States had signed on to a permanent alliance that linked it to Europe’s defense; and for Germany, as for Italy, membership in NATO signaled a new acceptance abroad, an important political legitimacy. It was an alliance relationship that remained solid throughout the turbulent years of the Cold War, as a succession of German leaders, from Konrad Adenauer to Helmut Kohl, remained determinedly pro-American in their outlook.

When the Iron Curtain finally came down in the fall of 1989, the reunification of Germany became a real possibility. In a famous speech in front of the Brandenburg Gate only two years earlier, President Ronald Reagan had demanded, “Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!” When the Berlin Wall actually fell, the United States was Germany’s leading supporter in the drive for reunification. While European countries such as Britain, France, Italy, and Poland considered a unified Germany a potential threat, the United States, under the administration of President George H.W. Bush (who considered a united Germany to be an anchor for post-Cold War Europe), was the sole original World War II victor to actively support its unification.¹⁰

It is this historically close relationship that Chancellor Schröder, for short-sighted political gain, has placed in jeopardy.

GERMANY’S POSITION ON IRAQ

Chancellor Gerhard Schröder has stated unequivocally that Germany will not participate in U.S.-led military action to remove Saddam Hussein from power. During his successful election campaign, he declared that “this country under my leadership is not available for adventure.” In reference to Germany’s \$9 billion contribution to funding the first Gulf War,¹¹ Schröder warned that “the time of cheque book diplomacy is over once and for all.”¹²

In contrast to nearly all other leaders of the European Union (EU), the Chancellor has ruled out German participation in an Iraq war even if it is approved by the U.N. Security Council.¹³ Schröder cast doubt on the reliability of evidence regarding Iraq’s development of weapons of mass destruction, and observed that the threat posed by Iraq “may be overestimated” by President Bush’s senior advisers.¹⁴

8. David Fromkin, *In the Times of the Americans: FDR, Truman, Eisenhower, Marshall, MacArthur—The Generation That Changed the World* (New York: Random House, 1992), p. 645.

9. See Peter Duignan and L.H. Gann, *The Rebirth of the West* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), pp. 319–320.

10. Angela E. Stent, *Russia and Germany Reborn: Unification, the Soviet Collapse, and the New Europe* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999), pp. 115–116.

11. Figure cited by the *Financial Times*, September 19, 2002. The total cost of the Gulf War for the Allies was \$61 billion.

12. Quoted in “German Leader Says No to Iraq War,” *The Guardian*, August 6, 2002.

13. Interview with Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, *The New York Times*, September 5, 2002.

Schröder is a firm supporter of a more robust, independent German foreign policy. For the first time since World War II, Germany's leaders are advocating a unilateral course. The general secretary of the Social Democratic Party, Franz Muentefering, summarized this position clearly:

Independently of what the UN decides, there must be a German way, that we must decide for ourselves what is to be done. That decision for us means no involvement in any...conflict or war in Iraq.¹⁵

National pacificism, however, does not excise national socialism.

German criticism of U.S. plans for Iraq frequently descended into crude anti-American polemic. The Chancellor himself mocked the American President in election rallies, telling crowds that he would not “click his heels” and say “yes” automatically to U.S. foreign policy initiatives.¹⁶ Ludwig Stiegler, the Social Democrats' parliamentary leader during the election, accused President Bush of acting like a Roman dictator, “as if he were Caesar Augustus and Germany were his province Germania.”¹⁷ Stiegler also compared the U.S. Ambassador to Berlin to Pyotr Abrassimow, the unpopular Soviet Ambassador to East Germany prior to the fall of the Berlin Wall.¹⁸

Schröder's former Justice Minister Herta Daeubler-Gmelin compared the Bush Administration's policy towards Iraq with that of Hitler's strategy

before World War II. She was quoted by the German regional newspaper *Schwabisches Tagblatt* as stating: “Bush wants to divert attention from his domestic problems. It's a classic tactic. It's one that Hitler also used.”¹⁹ Daeubler-Gmelin also remarked that the United States “has a lousy legal system” and that “Bush would be sitting in prison today” if new insider trading laws had applied when the President had worked as an oil executive.²⁰ U.S. National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice condemned the remarks as “way beyond the pale,”²¹ and according to the White House the President was “very angered” by the comments.²²

Disturbingly, the specter of anti-Semitism has also entered the Iraq debate in Germany. Former Defense Minister Rudolf Scharping, still a leading figure in the SPD, accused President Bush of wishing to remove Saddam Hussein in order to placate “a powerful—perhaps overly powerful—Jewish lobby.”²³

GERMAN OPPOSITION TO U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

Unfortunately, there is little sign at present that Berlin is willing to compromise over the Iraq question. Immediately after his reelection, Chancellor Schröder declared that “we have nothing to change in what we said before the election and we will change nothing,”²⁴ a view backed by Green Party Secretary-General Reinhard Buetikofer.²⁵ To achieve a shift in German policy, the Bush Adminis-

14. *Ibid.*

15. Quoted in “German Leader Says No to Iraq War.”

16. See “Foreign Policy Works for Schröder,” *BBC News Online*, September 17, 2002.

17. Quoted by *The Independent*, September 9, 2002.

18. See Christopher Caldwell, “The Angry Adolescent of Europe: Irresponsibility as the German Way,” *The Weekly Standard*, October 7, 2002.

19. See “Bush-Hitler Remark Shows U.S. As Issue In German Election,” *The New York Times*, September 20, 2002.

20. “German Official Compares Bush on Iraq to Hitler,” *The Washington Post*, September 20, 2002.

21. Condoleezza Rice, interview with the *Financial Times*, September 21, 2002.

22. “Schröder Apologizes for Hitler Row,” *BBC News Online*, September 21, 2002. Significantly, it was only after the election that Schröder asked both Daeubler-Gmelin and Stiegler to step down from their posts.

23. Quoted by *The Wall Street Journal Europe*, September 20, 2002.

24. Quoted by *The Wall Street Journal Europe*, September 24, 2002.

25. In an interview with the BBC, Buetikofer stated: “I'm quite convinced that the policy...is not going to change after the election. I mean, that was the purpose of all of it—to make clear to the German people which policy these two parties would be standing for.” *BBC News Online*, September 24, 2002.

tration will need to increase the level of pressure greatly in this area.

Opposition to war against Iraq forms part of a wider German foreign policy strategy—actively pursued by Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer—of opposing key elements of Bush Administration thinking. While Fischer, leader of the Green Party, has been touted by some U.S. commentators as being the most pro-American figure in the German Cabinet, his record of opposition to U.S. policies suggests otherwise. Like Schröder, his roots lie in radical left-wing politics. A self-professed Marxist activist in the late 1960s and early 1970s with a record of violent street protest,²⁶ Fischer leads a party that stands on the extreme left of the political spectrum and that is shunned as a respectable political force in much of Europe. The Green Party is fundamentally opposed to the U.S. missile defense system and highly critical of America's position on the Kyoto Protocol. With a wafer-thin majority of just 11 seats in the 601-seat German parliament, the Green Party holds the balance of power and with it a huge amount of influence in the governing Red-Green coalition.

Fischer was also outspoken in his criticism of President Bush's State of the Union address, which called for action to be taken against the emerging threat posed by rogue states. He served warning to the White House that the fight against terrorism was not "a blank check in and of itself to invade some country—especially not single handedly."²⁷ In an interview with *Die Welt*, he criticized what he perceived to be U.S. unilateralism over a possible war with Iraq:

Without compelling evidence, it will not be a good idea to launch something that will mean going it alone. The international coalition against terror does not provide a basis for doing just anything against

anybody—and certainly not by going it alone. This is the view of every European foreign minister. For this reason, talk of the "axis of evil" does not get us any further. Lumping Iran, North Korea and Iraq all together, what is the point of this?... [F]or all the differences in size and weight, alliance partnerships between free democracies cannot be reduced to obedience; alliance partners are not satellites.²⁸

Like Chris Patten, the EU's Commissioner for External Relations, Fischer is fiercely critical of America's policy of using military power to deal with the threat of global terrorism.²⁹ The solution, according to his view, lies in the reduction of global inequalities between rich and poor:

Chaos, poverty and social instability form the breeding ground on which fundamentalism, hatred and terror thrive. To tackle the new challenges, we need more than police and military missions. We need a long-term political and economic strategy which deals especially with the forgotten conflicts, the failed states, the black holes of lawlessness on our planet.³⁰

Fischer has opposed the vast majority of U.S. foreign policy initiatives under the Bush Administration (with the notable exception of the war against the Taliban in Afghanistan). In defiance of President Bush's "axis of evil" speech, Fischer openly courted close ties with such dictatorships as those in Iran and North Korea, and has been a keen supporter of the EU's policy of "constructive engagement" with rogue regimes.³¹ At the same time, he is a staunch defender of the International Criminal Court (ICC)³² and has fiercely opposed the concept of

26. In a 2001 interview with *Stern* magazine, Fischer admitted "going in against the police" after photographs were published clearly showing him attacking a policeman during a 1973 riot. See "Fischer Row Over Brawl With Police," *The Daily Telegraph*, October 8, 2002.

27. In an interview with *Der Spiegel*, quoted by *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, February 17, 2002.

28. "We Are Not Satellites," *Die Welt*, February 12, 2002. (Translation by BBC Monitoring.)

29. Patten argues that "we have to tackle the root causes of terrorism and violence" in order to eradicate the scourge of international terror. He believes that economic and social solutions, not military ones, are required for long-term victory. See Chris Patten, interview with *The Guardian*, February 9, 2002.

30. Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, speech at the Third Conference of the Heads of German Missions, May 27, 2002.

individual EU member states signing bilateral immunity agreements with the United States.³³ Environmental concerns have also been elevated by Fischer to the top of the Schröder government's international agenda, and the Foreign Minister declared that President Bush was making a "fatal error" by refusing to sign the Kyoto Protocol on global warming.³⁴

GERMANY'S MILITARY WEAKNESS

Germany's lack of investment in its military has raised serious doubts about its ability to participate in the out-of-area engagements that are likely to be key to NATO's future missions.³⁵ Even if Germany wanted to contribute to military action in Iraq, for instance, it is doubtful that it would be feasible. As Germany has only recently approved out-of-area missions, strategic lift has been desperately underfunded. Humiliatingly, Germany was forced to send its initial contingent of 1,200 troops to Afghanistan in October last year by rail.

In 2001, Germany spent just 1.5 percent of its national budget (24.1 billion euros, or U.S. \$23 billion) on defense. Spending fell to 23.7 billion euros in 2002. By comparison, the NATO Membership Action Plan for aspiring NATO countries sets the bar for defense spending at 2 percent of the national budget. According to an agreement reached between the governing coalition partners (the Social Democrats and the Greens), this figure is to remain the same in nominal terms until 2006, which amounts to an effective decline in real terms.³⁶

As Germany takes on more international missions, this funding problem will become more pro-

nounced. Germany recently proposed taking over leadership of the peacekeeping mission in Afghanistan from Turkey. (Schröder made the proposal immediately after the German election in a gesture to the U.S. government.) But the 1,200 German troops already there represent a huge drain on the German defense budget's meager 300 million euros earmarked for anti-terrorism activities. The German army has another 10,000 troops committed in the Balkans, and the addition of ISAF command to its responsibilities would place it under severe strain even though Germany maintains an oversized standing force of 233,000 soldiers that includes 172,000 conscripts.³⁷

Ambitious structural reforms to raise the quality of the German armed forces were announced in 2000. However, in the absence of a serious government commitment to a significant increase in defense spending, Germany will not be able to participate in future missions with more militarily advanced NATO partners.

HOW THE U.S. SHOULD RESPOND TO GERMANY

The immense harm to the U.S.–German alliance caused by the Chancellor's reelection campaign, which was based on strong anti-U.S. rhetoric, will not be easily remedied. One of the first priorities of the new German government must be to repair the damage. President Bush must make it clear that the onus is now on Germany's leaders to demonstrate that they are serious about healing the rift between the two nations. And Germany must take major steps to show that it wishes to be taken seriously as

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31. Relations with Tehran, a major state sponsor of international terrorism, have been particularly close. Iran's foreign minister, Kamal Kharrazi, visited Germany in February 2002, where he held talks with Fischer. See "Iran's Foreign Minister Starts Two-Day Visit to Germany," *Dow Jones International News*, February 26, 2002.
 32. Fischer described the ICC as "a key milestone in the history of peoples' rights," and has stated that U.S. calls for immunity would "undermine the authority of the UN." See "Germany Steps Up Criticism of U.S. Over International Court," *Agence France-Presse*, July 7, 2002.
 33. "Despite EU Accord, Germany Won't Exempt U.S. From ICC," *The Wall Street Journal Europe*, October 1, 2002. Britain, Spain, and Italy will likely go against the wishes of Germany by signing agreements with Washington.
 34. "German Foreign Minister Calls U.S. Policy on Global Warming a 'Fatal Mistake'," *Associated Press*, April 4, 2001.
 35. Germany is already struggling to fulfill its commitments to operations closer to home, particularly in the Balkans.
 36. Study Group on Alternate Security Policy, *German Defense Spending: Insufficient Adjustment*, Berlin, February 2002, at <http://www.comw.org/pda0202gerdef.html>.
 37. *The World Defense Almanac 2000–2001*, p. 111.

a leading partner in the fight against global terrorism.

Specifically, the Bush Administration should:

- **Continue to call on Germany to join the international coalition to confront Iraq.** The Bush Administration should continue to press for German support over the Iraq issue and make clear that it believes Berlin's stance is seriously harming long-term U.S.–German relations. German opposition to the possibility of military action and questioning of the evidence regarding Iraq's development of weapons of mass destruction plays directly into Baghdad's hands, particularly at the United Nations. Instead of acting as an ally in forcing Iraq to meet its obligations under various U.N. resolutions, Berlin is actively hampering U.S. efforts to deal with the threat posed by rogue states. It is disconcerting that Iraq has publicly expressed its gratitude to Germany for its opposition to regime change. Saddam Hussein's son Uday even lauded the German Chancellor's position as "more honorable than that of the Arab countries."³⁸
- **Request that Berlin grant the Allies complete access to German airspace and allow the United States and Britain full use of their bases on German soil for an operation against Iraq.** Washington must emphasize that a refusal by Berlin to grant access to German airspace or to allow the United States and Britain full use of their military bases in Germany in the event of an Iraq conflict would greatly strengthen calls from leading legislators in the United States for the partial or complete withdrawal of Allied forces from Germany,³⁹ with grave consequences for future U.S.–German military cooperation.⁴⁰
- **Ask Germany to cooperate fully with the United States in the war against terrorism.** It should be made clear to the German Justice Department that its refusal to hand over crucial evidence against terrorist suspect Zacarias Moussaoui is greatly frustrating U.S. efforts to destroy the al-Qaeda network. Washington should press Berlin into taking stronger action against Islamic extremist organizations operating in Hamburg, Frankfurt, and other major German cities. And Washington should call on the German government to take action against German businesses that have assisted the Iraqi regime in arming its arsenal of chemical and biological weapons. German companies supplied the Iraqi regime, for example, with the necessary components for the production of poison gas at the Samara plant and equipment used to produce anthrax at the Salman Pak facility.⁴¹
- **Call on Germany to increase defense spending.** German defense spending has fallen to extremely low levels in recent years. At just 1.5 percent of GDP, Germany's defense expenditure is the lowest of NATO members, alongside that of Luxembourg. Germany's bloated conscript army is also in dire need of further reform if it is to become an effective ally in the war on terrorism. Even if it wanted to, the Bundeswehr, under current conditions, would be incapable of making an effective large-scale contribution to military operations against Iraq.
- **Urge Berlin to increase security at U.S. bases in Germany.** Berlin must strengthen its security for American servicemen and their families at U.S. bases in Germany in the face of increasing threats from al-Qaeda and other terrorist organizations operating in Europe.

If the German government chooses to hinder U.S. policy towards Iraq on the international stage, Washington may conclude that Germany is not taking its treaty obligations seriously, which could

38. Quoted by *The Times*, September 21, 2002. The comments were made in the Iraqi weekly *al-Iqtisadi*.

39. For example, Senator Jesse Helms (R–NC), the senior Republican on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, has warned that "if Germany does not join the other more responsible leaders in Europe in a constructive dialogue on how best to confront the threat posed by Saddam Hussein, then the U.S. Congress must seriously consider moving U.S. forces out of Germany." Quoted by Agence France-Presse, September 19, 2002.

40. There are 120,000 U.S. troops in Europe, including 70,000 in Germany.

41. See "Schröder's Iraq Rhetoric Alarms Western Allies," *The Daily Telegraph*, October 8, 2002.

impact U.S.–German cooperation on military technology, training of German forces in the United States, and the sharing of intelligence. The United States may also examine its position on Germany's candidacy for a permanent seat on the U.N. Security Council.

CONCLUSION

Germany's political leadership faces a serious choice in the weeks ahead. Berlin can either stand in stark isolation within Europe and on the international stage by opposing action against the rogue regime in Baghdad, or it can join in what may be one of the biggest international coalitions ever assembled to remove a menacing dictatorship from power. If Berlin refuses to stand by its allies in confronting the threat posed by the Iraqi regime, it will be seen as increasingly irrelevant in the global fight against international terrorism. It would confirm the view of critics on both sides of the Atlantic that Germany, a nation in seemingly irreversible economic decline, is unwilling and incapable of adapting to the new post–September 11 world. By refusing to countenance military action against Iraq

even if it is mandated by the United Nations, Germany has greatly harmed its chances of gaining a future permanent seat on the U.N. Security Council.

There is also the danger that a new generation of Germans will be tarnished with the brush of appeasement and accused of failing to identify and confront totalitarianism. The charge of moral cowardice has been laid at Germany's door, and it is up to the new Schröder administration to demonstrate that Western Europe's biggest nation has the courage to show what Chancellor Schröder termed "unlimited solidarity" with its international partners. As the United States and its allies face major new threats to their security from rogue regimes developing weapons of mass destruction, Germany—at the heart of Europe—has an important role to play in the defense of the free world.

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