

## THE ATLANTIC COMMUNITY UNRAVELING? STATES, PROTEST MOVEMENTS, AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF U.S.-EUROPEAN RELATIONS, 1969–1983

Conference at Vanderbilt University, September 17–19, 2004. Co-sponsored by the GHI and Vanderbilt University. Conveners: Bernd Schaefer (GHI), Matthias Schulz (Vanderbilt University), Thomas A. Schwartz (Vanderbilt University). Supported by a grant from the DAAD New York.

Participants: Michael Bess (Vanderbilt University), David C. Geyer (U.S. Department of State), Greg Donaghy (Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs, Ottawa), Ronald J. Granieri (University of Pennsylvania), William Gray (Purdue University), Mary N. Hampton (Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell, AL), Donald Hancock (Vanderbilt University), Claudia Hiepel (University of Essen), Fabian Hilfrich (Institut für Zeitgeschichte im Auswärtigen Amt, Berlin), Imtiaz Hussain (Universidad Iberoamericana, Mexico City), Werner Lippert (Vanderbilt University), Daniel Möckli (Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule, Zürich), Gottfried Niedhart (University of Mannheim), Alastair Noble (British Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London), William Odom (Hudson Institute, Washington, DC), Rowena Olegario (Vanderbilt University), Raj Roy (Slaughter and May, London), Paul Rubinson (University of Texas, Austin), Joachim Scholtyseck (University of Bonn), Sarah B. Snyder (Georgetown University), Daniel Usner (Vanderbilt University), Robert Wampler (National Security Archive, Washington, DC), Hubert Zimmermann (Cornell University).

The question of whether transatlantic political and military relations were truly based on shared values has always been merely rhetorical. As past and present events demonstrate, alliances might be in jeopardy even if their foundation on common values can be taken for granted. What really matters is the international framework and its different perception in terms of assessing crises and threats. The Cold War with the Soviet Union and its allies, together with a geographical dividing line right through the heart of Europe, had a lasting effect on discipline within the Western alliance. Despite all fissures, frictions, and divergent interests, which existed to a much larger extent than realized at the time, at the end of the day, overarching quests for cohesion prevailed on both sides of the Atlantic until well into the 1990s.

Scholars from Vanderbilt University and the GHI recently convened a conference to examine these postwar efforts to keep the transatlantic alliance intact. After a reception hosted by the Robert Penn Warren Center for the Humanities on the Nashville campus the night before, Richard McCarty, dean of Vanderbilt's College of Arts and Sciences, welcomed all participants to his sprawling university in Tennessee's state capital. He expressed particular satisfaction that scholars with transatlantic backgrounds had decided to hold such a conference away from traditional venues along the U.S. coasts. Greetings by the three conveners were followed by the first session, opened with Gottfried Niedhart's remarks on parallels and frictions between American *détente* and German *Ostpolitik*. He described West Germany since 1969 as both a latecomer to and a pioneer in the process of *détente* in East-West relations. The Federal Republic's desire for more independence in international affairs resulted in Henry Kissinger's telling quip that he liked *Ostpolitik*, but wished it had been undertaken by a different country. Only when Bonn's strategy played into superpower interests after 1970 did the United States realize how American *détente* and German *Ostpolitik* could become complementary and mutually beneficial.

In her examination of NATO's responses to the Soviet call for a European Security Conference, Sarah Snyder outlined America's efforts to balance its commitment to Western Europe with its bilateral *détente* interests toward Moscow. Particularly during the final phase of negotiations in Geneva between 1973 and 1975, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger played a mediating role between Moscow and Western Europe, obfuscating the extent of American commitment to Western interests. American-Soviet diplomacy during the negotiation of the Helsinki Final Act indeed reached a state of collusion that, fortunately for the cohesion of the Western alliance, remained mostly secret at the time. "Odd man out" in Western Europe's euphoric Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) process were the West German opposition parties CDU and CSU. Ronald Granieri followed their trajectory between Atlanticism and neo-nationalism in the 1970s, in particular how the more extreme anti-*détente* views of the Bavarian CSU and its leader Franz Josef Strauss tended to shape their policy. Ironically, only the double-track decision on intermediate nuclear forces, initiated by SPD chancellor Helmut Schmidt, allowed the CDU/CSU to regain its lost influence as a result of the fragmentation of West Germany's center-left coalition. David Geyer looked at the early years of Richard Nixon's administration and its fresh start with the presidential trip to Europe in early 1969. Transatlantic relations improved temporarily, especially vis-à-vis France. With de Gaulle out of power in Paris and Brandt coming into office in Bonn, however, currents shifted. After all, like his predecessor, Nixon had to

realize how the war in Indochina determined U.S. priorities and tended to overshadow other aspects of American foreign policy. In addition, on the European end other developments were neglected by the United States at its own peril. Claudia Hiepel talked about the 1969 European Community (EC) enlargement summit in The Hague and the subsequent implementation of its agreements. Britain's entry and the foreign policy framework European Political Cooperation (EPC), following the Davignon Report, set the stage for a "new" Atlantic partnership in the years to come.

Four presentations examined the U.S.-proclaimed "Year of Europe" (YoE) and its repercussions on transatlantic relations in 1973–1974. Based on extensive scrutiny of American records, Robert Wampler, in a paper jointly conceived with William Burr, credited Henry Kissinger for his attempt to establish an "agreed framework" between the United States and the EC. Domestically, this strategy targeted American tendencies toward protectionism and calls for troop withdrawals from Western Europe. However, Kissinger's subordination of economic issues under grand strategic-political schemes, conducted in his usual secretive style, clearly preordained limits of the YoE endeavor. Subsequently, the United States preferred multilateral summits of major economic Western powers. Analyzing British, French, and German records, Daniel Möckli showed how Nixon and Kissinger's YoE initiative initially strengthened EPC and a common EC foreign policy. When the European front began to crumble in the wake of the oil crisis, however, Washington as well as Paris wanted to force the EC to choose between American or French concepts. In the end, only a face-saving declaration on Atlantic relations in June 1974 could defuse the tensions.

Fabian Hilfrich portrayed YoE as a recurrent crisis in transatlantic relations triggered by American posturing and policy, thereby exposing deep and insoluble conflicts between the United States and Europe. Washington's initiative, according to Hilfrich, ended up seriously dividing the transatlantic community, and accentuated problems and differences in a way comparable to current transatlantic discontents surrounding the Iraq war. Scrutinizing British documents, Alastair Noble was able to outline Britain's uncomfortable position when torn between Washington's misguided expectations of London as a Trojan horse in the EC and France's almost paranoid opposition to anything remotely resembling European subordination to the United States. Eventually, the most pro-European British government in history fell, and gave way to a long line of Euroskeptic and Washington-leaning prime ministers in London.

Four papers took a closer look at transatlantic and European dynamics of business and financial markets during the early 1970s. In his case study of the "Politics of Planes and Engines," Raj Roy pointed out how

the special Anglo-American business relationship was scrupulously preserved during the Rolls Royce-Lockheed crisis of 1970–1971, despite the pro-European inclinations of Prime Minister Edward Heath’s government. Werner Lippert interpreted the West German-Soviet natural gas pipeline deal of February 1970 as a unilateral and lopsided sellout of Western technology to a regime in Moscow opting for détente because of its own economic weakness. Considering *Osthandel* as complementary to *Ostpolitik*, Lippert repeated arguments of contemporary opponents, and defined the 1970 gas pipeline treaty as Bonn’s alleged “starting point in a foreign policy paradigm shift” toward the Soviet Union.

In his presentation on the “Deutsche Mark between European and Atlantic Priorities,” William Gray noted a revival of Gaullist and Atlanticist debates in the realm of West German monetary policy since 1969. Despite suspicions about French Gaullism and dirigiste impulses, Gray argued, the Federal Republic grudgingly accommodated French economic views for the sake of European identity. From a different angle, Hubert Zimmermann showed in his paper “Challenging the Dollar: Monetary Crises and European Integration” how the European monetary order eventually replaced transatlantic cooperation. Such a development was triggered by the Nixon administration’s unilateral dismantling of the Bretton Woods system pegging the dollar to gold in favor of floating exchange rates. Though this benefited the American economy and American trade, it also eased global access to dollars by “people with a decidedly unfriendly attitude towards the U.S.”

A public keynote lecture at Vanderbilt University by William Odom, former military assistant to National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski during the Carter administration and director of the National Security Agency in Ronald Reagan’s second term, concluded the first day of the conference. Introduced by Gordon Gee, chancellor of Vanderbilt University, and moderated by Daniel Usner, chairman of the history department, Odom, who had served several terms with the U.S. Army in Germany, talked vividly about “German-American Relations in Historical Perspective” and beyond. He recalled lasting German influences on the United States like migration and the post-1945 trajectory from occupation to friendship and close alliance. For Odom, American-German military cooperation constituted the heart of the transatlantic alliance during the Cold War in Europe. Working closely with the Atlantic Alliance would still be the best current American option to manage stability and contain or fight common threats. Unsurprisingly in this context, Odom chided the second Bush administration for pursuing a policy of degrading this alliance, as well as thwarting U.S. global interests and security by a needless and strategically ill-advised military intervention in Iraq.

In the next day's session, Matthias Schulz portrayed West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt as oscillating between Europeanism and Atlanticism during his tenure in office, preferring to bind the United States in multilateral frameworks and coordinate European strategies and responses independently. According to Schulz, Schmidt was a reluctant European and centered on Franco-German coordination only when the United States had not reacted to his initiatives according to his expectations. Joachim Scholtyseck's study of NATO's double-track decision, from its origins in 1977 through the resolution in 1979 and implementation in 1983, told a story with many details still murky due to lagging declassification. Effects of the vast European peace movement, both in the short and long run, also still warrant further research and interpretation beyond mere facts of mass protests and eventual deployment.

Based on extensive interviews and recently declassified documents, Greg Donaghy presented a fascinating case study of such effects. His paper on "Canada's Peacenik Prime Minister," Pierre Trudeau, related the efforts by Ottawa's prime politician in 1983-1984 to convince NATO, India, China, and the Soviet Union to embark on nuclear disarmament. With the world seemingly plunging ever deeper into the Cold War, it was the peace movement that actually convinced Trudeau that it was time to act. Though the increasingly frustrated prime minister could hardly win over his own foreign policy apparatus to the idea and was loathed in foreign capitals for his unconventional diplomacy, the Canadian public loved him for the sincerity of his commitment. Paul Rubinson examined the transnational, trans-bloc disarmament movement of nuclear scientists called "Pugwash," named after the Canadian location of the initial 1957 gathering, mostly focusing on its heyday in the early 1960s. Increased hostility from both the American and the Soviet government, dwindling public interest in disarmament, and increased emphasis on local at the expense of global concerns led to the movement's later loss of focus. Grassroots activism in the late 1970s and beyond provided Pugwash with a second life.

In a presentation on potential origins of current "terrorism" issues, Mary Hampton addressed allegedly different American and European definitions of, and responses to, "militancy" and "terrorism" during the decade of the 1970s. Imtiaz Hussain narrated U.S.-Muslim clashes and convergences (Israel, OPEC, Iran, Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Gulf Wars), and noted contrasts between confrontational American and moderating European styles in interpreting and challenging Islam. Discussing such issues demonstrates the historic uniqueness and the extraordinary nature of the transatlantic Cold War consensus, something the current U.S.-proclaimed global war on terror is unlikely to achieve.

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