

CONFERENCES, SYMPOSIA, SEMINARS

COMING TO TERMS WITH THE PAST IN WEST GERMANY: THE 1960s

Conference at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, April 19–21, 2001. Conveners: Philipp Gassert (University of Heidelberg) and Alan E. Steinweis (University of Nebraska). Co-sponsored by: Fritz Thyssen Foundation, Cologne; The University of Nebraska at Lincoln. Participants: Pertti Ahonen (University of Sheffield), Lloyd Ambrosius (University of Nebraska), Bernhard Brunner (University of Freiburg), David Cahan (University of Nebraska), Detlev Claussen (University of Hannover), Belinda Davis (Rutgers University), Geoff Eley (University of Michigan), Carole Fink (Ohio State University), Norbert Frei (Ruhr University, Bochum), Elizabeth Heineman (University of Iowa), Jeffrey Herf (University of Maryland), Dagmar Herzog (Michigan State University), Michael Hochgeschwender (University of Tübingen), Konrad H. Jarausch (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; and Center for Contemporary History, Potsdam), Detlef Junker (University of Heidelberg), Habbo Knoch (University of Göttingen), Jürgen Lillteicher (University of Freiburg), Harold Marcuse (University of California at Santa Barbara), Marc von Miquel (Ruhr University, Bochum), Dirk Moses (University of Sydney), Elizabeth Peifer (Troy State University), Axel Schildt (Contemporary History Research Center, Hamburg), Michael Schmidtke (University of Bielefeld), Karen Schönwälder (University of Giessen), Joachim Scholtyseck (University of Bonn), Susanna Schrafstetter (University of Glamorgan), Detlef Siegfried (University of Copenhagen), Sigrid Stöckel (Hannover Medical University), Jeremy Varon (Drew University), Klaus Weinhauer (University of Hamburg), Jonathan Wiesen (Southern Illinois University), Lora Wildenthal (Texas A&M University).

Since the end of World War II each generation of Germans has been confronted by the challenge of working through the implications of the Nazi regime and the Holocaust. Germany's problematic history from 1933 to 1945 had consequences not only for the political system and the international relations of the two postwar German republics but also for national identity, religious faith, education, legal practice, social policy,

gender roles, cultural diversity, and many dimensions of daily life. As West and East Germans created new polities and set out to transform their societies, and as they sought domestic and international legitimacy, their common recent past always informed, and often dominated, debates on the present. Heretofore, serious scholarly attention to the postwar legacy of this past has focused on the 1950s, the decade in which the two German states were established and consolidated. The next frontier in the field is the “tumultuous 1960s,” a period usually considered a crucial turning point in postwar history. West German youth rebelled against a culture that many believed had become excessively materialistic. They criticized the politics of West German realignment toward the West and looked critically at their own nation’s past and present, pointing to the many continuities that persisted from the Nazi era. These included authoritarianism (not least in the institutions of higher education, in the police forces, and in the legal system), xenophobia, technocracy, and patriarchy. Purging society of these legacies became an urgent priority of the West German New Left.

In recent years the once widespread consensus that the leftist impetus of the late 1960s instigated a sea change in how Germans dealt with the Nazi past has come under scrutiny. Many historians now argue that the public debate took off during the late 1950s and accelerated during the first half of the 1960s. The pivotal events are well known: the anti-Semitic graffiti that appeared on synagogue walls in Cologne and other West German cities around the turn of the year 1959–60, the Eichmann trial in Jerusalem, the Fischer and Jaspers controversies, the Auschwitz trial in Frankfurt, the parliamentary debates about the extension of the statute of limitations, the emergency laws, scandals involving disclosures of Nazi-era activities of high-ranking politicians, the rise of a large-scale extraparliamentary opposition, the resurgence of a neo-Nazi party, and the Six-Day War of 1967. Picking up on some of the contemporary debates of the 1960s, historians are assessing the ambiguities of the transformation that took place during that tumultuous decade. The “’68ers” radicalized the discourse about the Nazi past, but in the process their emphasis on a generic “fascism” also tended to universalize and dehistoricize that past. They may have raised public consciousness about continuities from the Nazi era to the Federal Republic, but their often strident rhetoric and drastic methods may well have been counterproductive inasmuch as they alienated significant segments of the West German population. Moreover, quite apart from the ‘68ers there were other factors at work that forced West Germans to confront the past; the rise of the neofascist National Democratic Party (NPD), for example, deeply affected the outcome of the debates inside and outside the Federal Parliament (Bundestag). As the Nebraska conference clearly brought out, the chang-

ing atmosphere and the evolving discourse on the Nazi past did not automatically prompt a radical transformation with regard to the politics of the past (*Vergangenheitspolitik*). The 1960s may have witnessed a remarkable change in how the legacies of National Socialism were publicly addressed, but the “crucial decade” was still marked by a remarkable degree of continuity in many areas of *Vergangenheitspolitik*, including, for example, the compensation for stolen (“Aryanized”) property and the continuing failures of the legal system to bring some of the worst perpetrators to justice.

Now that the 1960s are on the agenda of historians, the Nebraska conference aimed at providing a first collective overview of research on the *Vergangenheitspolitik* of that era. The presentations focused on achieving a better understanding of the political, social, and cultural forces that shaped the politics of, as well as the discourse about, the Nazi past. As Konrad Jarausch observed in his keynote lecture, such an understanding requires us to set the “critical decade” of the 1960s in the long-term context of postwar German history. Whereas Nazi crimes have been at the center of German discussions about the past for several decades, the legacies of a second dictatorship, that of communist East Germany, have complicated the picture since the early 1990s. Furthermore, the recent political skirmishes over the “youthful radicalism” of German politicians of the ‘68 or post-‘68 generation, most notably Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, have added a third contested layer of history to an already complex discussion. Because of the overwhelming presence of the Nazi era in German debates about the past, it is no accident that the question of how ‘68ers confronted Nazism is one of the central issues of current controversy about “1968.” Did the ‘68ers contribute to the liberalization and democratization of the Federal Republic by initiating “a freer discussion of the Nazi past,” as the protagonists themselves claim? Or did they introduce “new myths through a shallow combination of neo-Marxism and pop-psychology,” as their critics argue? Answering these questions requires a better understanding of the general character of the “controversial 1960s.” As Jarausch observed, it also requires an assessment of what exactly was remembered and what was forgotten during the immediate postwar years.

The conference’s opening panel, chaired by Dagmar Herzog, addressed the issue of how members of German elite groups coped with their own complicity in the crimes of the regime. In his paper Jonathan Wiesen analyzed the strategies of government and business circles in responding to accusations of corporate criminality during National Socialism. Because West German identity had come to depend so heavily on the country’s economic prowess (the so-called *Wirtschaftswunder*) during the 1950s, the German economy, once a locus of Nazi crimes, became a

means for securing a new, democratic Germany. During the 1960s, as discussions shifted from abstract totalitarianism to a focus on specific crimes, including those of German industry, memory started to play a more complex role. For one thing, it became more difficult to fend off memories of the Holocaust abroad by mobilizing the anticommunist fears of American politicians. What this rapidly changing environment of the 1960s meant to West German conservatives has received surprisingly little scholarly attention, as Joachim Scholtyseck argued in his paper on "Conservative Intellectuals and the Debate About National Socialism and the Annihilation of Jewry." According to Scholtyseck, conservative thinkers were much more deeply involved in discussions about the meaning of Nazism for Germany's past and present than has been assumed by their critics. The leitmotifs of the conservative view included the "demonism" of Hitler, the dynamics of "mass and power," and the role of secularization and de-Christianization. According to Scholtyseck, many conservatives had become convinced that the Federal Republic was immune to the dangers of extreme nationalism and Nazism, and therefore felt helpless when they were confronted with a changing discourse about the Nazi past during the 1960s.

The panel's third paper, presented by Klaus Weinhauer, dealt with "The Nazi Past and the Modernization of West German Police." Weinhauer placed his paper in the context of historical questions about the continuity of personnel between the Third Reich and the Federal Republic, especially among civil servants. As Weinhauer showed, investigations of policemen who had committed crimes during National Socialism were often blocked or impeded by the culture of camaraderie among police officers. Although politicians and police union functionaries were beginning, in the early 1960s, to question the role of the police during the Third Reich, many policemen saw themselves as victims, having been exploited by an overwhelming regime. Efforts to address their complicity were countered by the heroification and mythologization of the Weimar police. Furthermore, authoritarian leadership ideas among the police were only gradually abandoned during the late 1950s and early 1960s, when technical innovations forced police officers to act more independently. Only the delayed generational change of the mid-1970s resulted in a deep caesura in the personnel structure of the police. In his commentary Norbert Frei underscored the important role that was played by East Germany in breaking down some of the myths of the 1950s, such as the supposed "coercion" of German industry into cooperating with Hitler and the distancing of the "clean" Wehrmacht from the crimes of the SS. During the 1960s the situation of many conservatives became increasingly untenable as continuities between the Third Reich and the Federal Republic became the subject of intensified scrutiny.

The second panel, chaired by David Cahan, examined judicial efforts to deal with crimes committed during the Nazi era. Bernhard Brunner presented a paper on the "Frankreichkomplex," a large-scale criminal investigation by German authorities into Nazi crimes committed in France during World War II. Of the 199 high-ranking perpetrators Brunner identified, 119 theoretically could have been prosecuted after the war (the rest had died or disappeared). Yet after twenty years of investigations only nine were brought to trial, three of whom were punished in the 1980s. This result, Brunner argued, cannot be attributed exclusively to a lack of interest on the part of the West German justice system. A fuller explanation also requires us to consider the legal and political contexts of the prosecution. One major obstacle was posed by the treaties between the three Western Allies and the Federal Republic, the intention of which had been to insulate immediate postwar Allied war crimes prosecutions from the German justice system. Until the 1970s legal interpretations of these treaties impeded investigations of perpetrators who had already been convicted in absentia in France. Brunner observed that the 1960s witnessed a more intensive legal prosecution of Nazi crimes on the one hand, but a more restrictive development with regard to the legal and political framework on the other.

This point was reinforced by Marc von Miquel's paper on the "Debates About the Prosecution of Nazi Crimes." For Miquel "conflict" was the central characteristic of the 1960s. The initiation of large-scale court cases brought the annihilation of European Jewry to the forefront of public debates. This led to a decreasing willingness to permit former perpetrators to integrate into West German society without bringing them to trial. At the same time, however, the 1960s witnessed the high-point of the so-called *Schlußstrich* mentality: Public opinion polls showed that a majority of the West German population was in favor of letting bygones be bygones and of closing the door on further prosecutions. In Miquel's view many Germans were simply unwilling to accept the conclusion that could be drawn from the trials: that the genocidal politics of the Third Reich had not been the actions of a few outsiders but had come from the mainstream of German society. Although a larger amnesty scheme did fail in the Bundestag, the clandestine (and often forgotten) invocation of a minor article in the penal code intended to decriminalize traffic violations led to the termination of pretrial proceedings against former members of the Reichssicherheitshauptamt. In many ways the "normal" legal framework was not suited to the requirements of prosecuting crimes against humanity.

A similar argument was advanced by Jürgen Lillteicher in his presentation about "Compensation for 'Aryanized' Property in West Germany." Any effort to compensate for the loss of property during the Nazi

regime was destined to raise highly complicated legal and political issues. The central paradox was that although after 1945 West Germany became a society that adhered to the rule of law, many of its members had benefited from illegal acts, including the plundering of Jewish and other property before 1945. Although outside (and to a certain degree internal) political pressure led to gradual improvements in the laws governing the return and compensation of lost property, the process was hampered by the extremely legalistic approach taken by bureaucrats and judges. Furthermore, an observable lack of goodwill on the part of the institutions involved in compensation amplified the shortcomings of the civil law code for dealing with the consequences of the war. Lillteicher illustrated his findings with the vivid example of several Holocaust survivors who were required by the courts to demonstrate that their belongings, which had been taken from them at the ramp in Auschwitz, had been brought into the part of Germany that was now the territory of the Federal Republic. Lacking such evidence, the West German courts refused jurisdiction over the cases. Thus, an overtaxed legal system met with the unwillingness of the courts to handle the issues of restitution in a generous way.

The commentator, Jeffrey Herf, reminded the audience that the study of twentieth-century German history has become an international affair and that many of the conclusions drawn from the reign of National Socialism and its aftermath are relevant to other nations. Taking up the general question posed during Jarausch's keynote lecture, Herf characterized the attempt to put the past on trial as one of the most dangerous and difficult tasks for a young democracy. Nation building, rather than justice, was the prevailing value, and the attainment of real justice might well have required a prolongation of the Allied occupation and a postponement of German sovereignty and democracy.

The third panel, devoted to "The Public Sphere," was chaired by Detlef Siegfried. Belinda Davis, in her paper on "New Leftists and West Germany: Violence, Fascism, and the Public Sphere, 1967-1974," began with the observation that between 1965 and 1977 Germans from all political camps regularly "instrumentalized" the past. For New Leftists, state-authorized violence in reaction to demonstrations was interpreted as proof of the continuation of "fascism" in the Federal Republic. From their point of view the silencing of the New Leftist critique of West German society, and the alleged failure to address the issue of fascism, resulted in a large-scale corruption of the public sphere. The second paper, on "Photographs of Nazi Crimes and the West German Public in the 1960s," was presented by Habbo Knoch. Using photographs, Knoch addressed a central question of the politics of memory during the 1960s: How did Germans deal with the contradiction between their self-perception as victims of World War II and Germany's apparent departure

from the norms of Western civilization? According to Knoch, the increasingly frequent display of images of Nazi crimes created visual impressions that did not conform to the prevalent individual and collective memory of Germans as a "community of victims." This "crisis of interpretation" intersected with the breakdown of intergenerational consensus, given that the younger generation did not share painful personal experiences of wartime. The extraparliamentary opposition of the 1960s responded to this cleavage by explaining "Auschwitz" in terms of a fascist, imperialist, and capitalist power structure, of which the students considered themselves to be victims. This interpretation of the past created a "second silence" because it focused on iconic sites such as Auschwitz and on industrialized mass murder rather than on the more typical experiences of the older generation under Nazism. As Knoch argued, the universalization of Nazi crimes may have undercut the self-stylization of Germans as victims, yet it also absolved the older generation of direct, personal responsibility for Nazism.

The third paper, by Elizabeth Peifer, dealt with "The Public Demonstration of the 1960s: Participatory Democracy or Leftist Fascism?" The debates about public demonstrations, Peifer argued, can be used to help understand how the Nazi past was addressed during the 1960s because many critics saw street demonstrations as a rerun of the mass rallies of a totalitarian past. Emphasizing the ambiguous legacy of the 1960s, Peifer maintained that the public demonstrations contributed to a broadening of democratic practices in Germany. The commentary by Geoff Eley placed the critique of the '68ers in the broader context of postwar liberalization efforts as presented by Jürgen Habermas in his work on the "public sphere" (or "publicness," which Eley suggested as a better translation of *Öffentlichkeit*). As Eley argued, the confrontations of the 1960s may have highlighted some of the weaknesses of the Habermasian project of political reform, yet the liberal project showed a continued vitality even after 1969 when the SPD-led coalition government embarked on a new round of reform.

The conference's second day opened with the fourth panel, which covered "The International Dimension" and which was chaired by Lloyd Ambrosius. In her paper Carole Fink analyzed the complicated relationship between the two states most closely connected with the legacies of the Holocaust, Israel and West Germany. Placing the "special relationship" between Israel and the Federal Republic in the international context, Fink interpreted the Six-Day War as a major turning point in German-Israeli relations. Out of necessity West Germany and Israel had formed a reluctant "special relationship" before 1967. In 1965 the two states had established formal diplomatic relations, and the advent of the Grand Coalition government in fall 1966 had signaled a "more self-

assured, less penitent West Germany." Despite the overwhelming support of the German population during the Six-Day War, especially among the middle generation of thirty-five to fifty-year-olds, the gradual opening of West German foreign policy toward the East and the breakdown of the Cold War consensus transformed the relationship. Automatic support was no longer given to Israel's policy because West German governments tried to "normalize" the country's relationship to the survivor state despite the often expressed "special moral obligation emanating from our past" (Willi Brandt).

Pertti Ahonen's paper, on "The Taming of West German Territorial Revisionism During the 1960s" addressed another legacy of National Socialism that severely limited West Germany's room to maneuver. A new approach vis-à-vis the countries to Germany's east met the fierce resistance of the expellee organizations representing Germans who had fled their homelands after World War II. Although none of the mainstream political parties in the Bundestag supported open territorial revisionism, the Christian Democrats, who enjoyed close links to the expellee lobby, were faced with a serious political problem. Especially in the southern German states the Christian Democrats depended on the votes of Germans who had origins in the former eastern territories of the German Reich. Because of the electoral successes of the neo-Nazi NPD during the second half of the 1960s Christian-Democrat politicians treaded carefully with regard to Eastern policy issues. Therefore, as Ahonen argued, "on tactical and opportunistic grounds" the Christian Democrats gave a new Eastern policy a lower priority than did their Social Democratic and Free Democratic rivals.

The third paper, by Susanna Schrafstetter, focused on nuclear weapons, the central security issue of the Cold War. The renunciation of the development of nuclear weapons by Adenauer in 1954 had been a precondition of West Germany's entry into NATO. This step, however, could also be seen as the last Allied wartime restriction on defeated Germany. Therefore, questions of nuclear strategy were always inextricably linked to the German past. This became clear during the heated debate over the Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1967-8. Supporters of the treaty pointed out that Germany had to accept the legacy of defeat, whereas its foes, including many high-ranking Christian-Democrat politicians, saw the treaty as yet another instance in a series of unfair, vindictive measures, such as the Treaty of Versailles and the Morgenthau Plan, that other states sought to impose on Germany. The commentary by Detlef Junker focused on specific issues brought forward by the papers. He emphasized that history was not just an argument thinly veiling other political or strategic purposes. The Munich analogy and other references to the past highlighted the very real limitations and geopolitical challenges politicians

faced during the 1960s. The success of Brandt's *Ostpolitik* during the early 1970s was its grounding in a realistic assessment of West Germany's international environment, something to which German political elites had been oblivious throughout most of the twentieth century.

The fifth panel, chaired by Dirk Moses, focused on what many commentators and historians have considered to be the hallmark of the 1960s: the role of the student movement and the New Left. In recent years historians and political commentators have strongly disagreed about the impact of the student movement on West German discourse on the Nazi past. Whereas some have seen "1968" as a symbolic new founding of the Federal Republic against fascism, others have criticized the protest movement for instrumentalizing and dehistoricizing the Nazi past through fascist theory. In his paper on "The Student Movement and National Socialism" Michael Schmidtke addressed these issues by analyzing the contemporary discourse about fascism and by looking at the use of the past in political education and during the protests against the so-called emergency laws. Schmidtke argued that the original contribution of the student movement lay not so much in initiating public debate over the Nazi past but rather in promoting political and social change through political acts that demanded civil courage, as well as in pedagogical experiments like the *Kinderladen* movement. "Coming to terms" thus was primarily aimed at the overthrow of the "authoritarian character."

In the next paper Jeremy Varon explored the relationship between terrorism and the Nazi past. The Red Army Faction (RAF), in Varon's view, took its cause to such extremes because it wished to compensate for the perceived absence of meaningful resistance to National Socialism between 1933 and 1945. The RAF's armed struggle highlights some of the paradoxes of the New Left in general. RAF members attempted to "purify the nation" and relieve themselves of the burden of the past by refusing to be "good Germans." They would overcome the past by armed resistance. At the same time the RAF also took up the guise of the victims of Nazism. The Stammheim maximum-security prison near Stuttgart, where many of the terrorists were held, was thus equated with Auschwitz. Varon concluded with the observation that by taking up such guises the RAF and other radical groups "risked mirroring qualities they opposed not only in the present but also in the past."

The third paper, by Michael Hochgeschwender, focused on a segment of the "other side" of German society that was deeply affected by "1968" but that is often left out of the story: Catholic student fraternities. While the social and cultural forces that manifested themselves during the 1960s transformed the Catholic milieu in a very profound manner over the long term, the immediate impact of the '68ers was rather limited. Their lifestyle, revolutionary rhetoric, neo-Marxist language, and whole-

sale condemnation of the role of the Catholic Church during the Third Reich led Catholic fraternities to distance themselves from the protest movement. Because the Catholic milieu had some powerful historical myths of its own, such as its resistance against Hitler, the radicalism of the '68ers proved largely counterproductive. Furthermore, Catholics, for decades a minority in the German Reich, did not show any inclination to respond to the New-Left critique of what they finally considered to be "their" state. The commentary by Detlev Claussen drew on Claussen's own scholarly findings as well as on his recollections as a former protagonist of the West German student movement. Placing the protests in the larger framework of German history Claussen attempted to identify both the direct and indirect consequences of "1968." He pointed to the inflated use of the term *fascism* to connote evil. Considered in its long-term context, this reductionism, which, he conceded, tended to obscure the specific character of National Socialism, was neither a surprising nor particularly unfortunate development because it prompted a more thorough examination of the Nazi past in the years that followed.

The sixth panel, chaired by Harold Marcuse, dealt with several aspects of social policy (*Sozialpolitik*). Karen Schönwälder presented a paper on "West German Society and Foreigners in the 1960s." She argued that the presence of the past was an important factor in the 1960s response to foreigners in Germany. Analyzing the efforts of the West German Federation of Employer's Associations, Schönwälder asserted that the recruitment of foreign labor during the 1960s was consciously placed in a historical perspective. Employers urged their German employees to develop positive attitudes toward foreign workers and to convey a tolerant image of Germany. Potential negative perceptions abroad therefore were a major determining factor in West German policy toward foreigners. In contrast, efforts to exclude "Afro-Asians" from recruitment as "guest laborers" highlighted the continuity of racist thinking among officials and demonstrated the limits of the shift toward a more self-critical reflection of Germany's past.

In the next paper Sigrid Stöckel argued that in the health care system the primary confrontation with the past did not occur in the 1960s but in the late 1940s and 1950s. Stöckel emphasized the existence of several pasts, not only the Nazi one. Because of the experiences of Weimar and the Third Reich, public health officers in the Federal Republic came under pressure from "free" doctors. Because social medicine was associated with the "state" medicine of the Third Reich, West German developments were retarded in comparison to other countries. Lora Wildenthal's commentary centered on the specific issues brought up by the two papers. As Wildenthal remarked, it remains an important task for historians to dis-

entangle “the cynical from the political” in their efforts to understand how people confronted the past during the 1960s.

Two concluding commentaries by Elizabeth Heineman and Axel Schildt opened the conference’s final discussion. Heineman reminded the audience that the 1960s challenge us to continue asking new questions. For example, the impact of gender on everyday life and religion, and the reconfiguration of class and capital remains an important agenda to be studied in the context of West German “coming to terms.” Referring to Konrad Jarausch’s keynote lecture, Heineman also underscored that our understanding of the 1960s is inevitably based on how we see the 1950s. Finally, developments during the late 1980s make it necessary to place West Germany in comparative perspective with East Germany. Axel Schildt then summarized some of the Nebraska conference’s findings. First, new empirical results have come to the fore. Historical inquiry has moved into a critical phase where we can expect to deepen and broaden our knowledge of the 1960s. Second, the conference showed that many open questions remain, especially with respect to *Vergangenheitspolitik* and the impact of the antifascist campaigns of the 1960s on the establishment. Third, we have to look behind the myths that were created by the student movement. Following up on earlier remarks by Detlev Claussen, Schildt argued that it has become increasingly clear that the Nazi past was probably not the main issue of “1968.” Fourth, the broadening of the public sphere that took place during the 1960s was a critical feature of the decade. We therefore need more empirical studies on the media, school education, and a host of related fields. Fifth, if “coming to terms” was a main locus of West German history in the 1960s, it has to be related to the social and economic transformation that took place during that same period. The discussion should therefore take place within the larger framework of the “Westernization” of the Federal Republic. Sixth, the 1960s were characterized by a special atmosphere that can be observed in pivotal events, such as the *Spiegel* crisis, and that was present in the theatrical, witty, and sometimes irresponsible slogans of “1968.” Last, Schildt identified some issues that were missing and that should be treated in a more systematic fashion; the generational conflict was of particular importance.

The ensuing discussion reiterated many of the issues that had been on the agenda for the preceding two days. The question of periodization: When did the 1960s begin and when did they end? How important is “1968” as a caesura and as an event? How are the various German pasts and chronologies connected? Where do the 1960s stand with respect to long-term developments in German history, not only with respect to the Third Reich but also going back to the Weimar Republic and earlier? Furthermore, what do we learn from the multiple presences (and

disguises) the Nazi past took during the 1960s in both Germanies, and how do we cope with the “triple burden of history” (National Socialism, communism, and “1968”) that seems to be at the core of our own historiographical concerns? How did generational conflict and natural generational transitions influence 1960s discourses as well as *Vergangenheitspolitik*? Finally, how honest and how accurate was the “coming to terms” during the 1960s? We will have to wait a few more years for more conclusive answers to many of the issues that were discussed in Lincoln. Although participants may have raised many more questions than they could probably answer, the Nebraska conference, the first international meeting of its kind that was exclusively devoted to the issue of the Nazi past during the 1960s, turned out to be a stimulating event.

Philipp Gassert
Alan E. Steinweis

ANTI-AMERICANISM IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Conference at the GHI, July 6–7, 2001. Co-sponsored by the American Institute for Contemporary German Studies (AICGS). Conveners: Patrice G. Poutrus (GHI/AICGS and Zentrum für Zeithistorische Forschung, Potsdam) and Ingrid Creppel (George Washington University). Participants: Jan C. Behrends (University of Bielefeld), James W. Caeser (University of Virginia), Arpad von Klimó (Humboldt University, Berlin), Peter Krause, (Europa University, Frankfurt/Oder), Richard Kuisel (State University of New York, Stony Brook, and Georgetown University), Alan Levine (American University), Robert McGeehan (University of London), Gabor Rittersporn (Centre Marc Bloch, Paris/Berlin), Bernd Schäfer (GHI), Christoph Strupp (GHI).

After September 11, it is difficult to write a report about the subject of anti-Americanism in the twentieth century. The horrible pictures of the airplanes hitting the Twin Towers and the subsequent catastrophes have not left my mind. I also believe, however, that if we do not want to be dominated by terrorism we have to remain open to and willing to engage in intellectual controversy. Such is the task of intellectuals in open societies. To avoid any potential misunderstanding, I would like to begin by explaining why I chose anti-Americanism as the subject for this conference.

Although the history of ideas and transatlantic relations are not my own field of research, thinking about communist dictatorship and the mentality of post-communist societies led me directly to it. After the close