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The spectre of Anti-Americanism – or the competition between Americanism and multilateral universalism

Discourse and rule: The world is, what we speak

A spectre haunts Europe and the world - the spectre of Anti-Americanism. It seems as if it has become nearly the chief enemy of civilization since 11 September 2001. However, in the first line it is not more - and not less either - than the a word of an intellectual dispute. This type of disputes is won and lost on the basis of the ability or inability of occupying terms and abolishing the ability for critical analysis by means of using such key words.¹

Disputes over terms do matter. They are used for establishing a symbolic, an ideological rule. In these disputes actors try to implement visions of the reality which are accepted as the official versions by the majority of the population. These versions of reality are ideologies. They define (1) the situation (hopes and dangers), (2) aims of action, (3) adequate means, (4) allies and (5) enemies. Precondition for this is that especially the political, economic and cultural elites have accepted these official versions. Those groups will rule if they are able to impose the following rule: "The world is what *we* speak." A condition of this is that alternative speakers are excluded.

Such an official version of interpretation and vision on world affairs was established after 11 September 2001 in Germany. It was established by rejecting any "Anti-Americanism". The authoritarian use of the term of Anti-Americanism tried to establish a symbolic classification which gives Anti-Americanism a negative connotation and this implicitly leads to giving Americanism a positive connotation - usually without defining it in more detail. Legitimate (American) interpretations were distinguished from illegitimate (Anti-American) interpretations. This type of classifications represents political actions in its narrowest sense.² The essence was to rule what may be said - and thus it is to rule what may be thought legitimately. Whoever rules language and thinking has made dissident action that criticises the rulers impossible because this action is considered to be impossible.

The American ruling elites and the Bush White House tried to use the situation after September 11 not only for taking measures which where in their own understanding the core interests of self-defence and dealing with an foreign attack on their homeland (the last one happened during the war in 1812 against the British). They also used this situation strongly for imposing their own vision of these events on the American society and the world. This vision is fundamentally shaped by the ideology of American exceptionalism (xx) and - more - hegemony. It is shaped by *Americanism*. Blaming any criticism of the American government

¹ "Denn eben, wo Begriffe fehlen, /Da stellt ein Wort zur rechten Zeit sich ein." (Where terms are missing / a word will appear in good time), Johann Wolfgang Goethe: Faust. Part I.

² "Ziel politischen Handelns ist es, Repräsentationen der sozialen Welt (mental, verbal, graphisch, dramatisch) zu schaffen und durchzusetzen, mit denen die Vorstellungen der sozialen Akteure und damit die soziale Welt selbst beeinflusst werden können." (It is the purpose of political action to create and to implement representations of the social world (mentally, verbally, graphically, in drama) which serve for influencing the ideas of the social actors and thus the social world itself.) Pierre Bourdieu: Was heißt sprechen? Die Ökonomie des sprachlichen Tausches, Vienna 1990, p. 104.

as *Anti-Americanism* was the most effective means of establishing an own hegemonic ideology.

Situations have to be explained and interpreted. Interests have to be defined. Aims have to be declared. Means, allies and enemies have to be found, actions have to be justified.. Actors have to legitimate themselves by means of shared values. Their ability to realize their aims depends largely upon their ability of imposing their own vision on others. This is why ideology does matter.

First: The act of legitimating Americanism by means of designing Anti-Americanism was firstly achieved by means of adding the syllable of "Anti" which distracts attention from what one would have to explain for being able to define Anti-Americanism - that is *Americanism*. Second the word Americanism functions as a camouflage itself because it summarises two things in one word: "America" stands as abbreviation for the USA and for something which is raised to become an "Ism". Below I will therefore make a clear difference between a hostility against the USA as a state and people on the one hand and Anti-Americanism as rejection of the ideology of Americanism on the other hand. I establish the following thesis: Accusing the forces which take a critical stand towards the policies of the current US-government of being hostile against the USA is a means of establishing Americanism and imposing the subjection to the interests of the ruling elites of the USA. In Germany such an insinuation is the only way of identifying in an evil way the left-wing criticism of the policy of the USA with the right-wing German nationalist hostility against the USA and thus putting left and right on an equal footing.

The terrorist attack of September 11 was by itself much more an ideological action than an action of real destruction. The real destruction and killing of people was an instrument for destroying the ideological core of the American power. By destroying symbols of the Western and American power the organizers of this mass attack meant to challenge the self-understanding and the self-confidence of the USA. They attacked both the special symbols of American global economic and military hegemony *and* of universal freedom by using airplanes and killing thousands of ordinary people. The ideological answer of the American president and its administration was to launch an ideological counterattack by identifying US-hegemony with the universal values of humanity. It answered to the attack with an Mechanistic (?) interpretation and vision of the world, where one has to decide "to be with us or against us" (Bush), to be partisan of the "war" against terrorism according to the rule of the U.S. or to be in the camp of the terrorists. An ideology was created which divides the world into the empire of the Good and the devil. It applied the ideological schemes of the Cold War against Communism to a new situation. It is an ideology of unilateral rule of the U.S. as the safeguard of human civilization. The ruling elites of the U.S. tried to exploit the situation in their own interests by attempting to monopolize the representation of the interests of humanity.

Nobody should overlook the fundamental difference between the ideological foundation of new terrorism and US-hegemony: The ideology of new terrorism is in total and absolute contradiction to any kind of human interests. The hegemonist ideology of the ruling elite of the U.S. are - as we will see further on - a complicated mixture of concurrence, difference and contradiction to the interests of an peaceful, sustainable, and just global order. They do not deny the importance of these interests, but "merely" state that an absolute rule of the USA in the global affairs was in the best interests of the global society.

The claim that US-Hegemony is the only possible humane answer to new terrorism, the suppression of any dissidence to this by defining it as Anti-American position is a way of fighting against a rising humane alternative against US-Hegemony and this is multilateral

universalism. There is not one, these forces try to suggest too often, but there are two alternative answers to new terrorism.

The ideology of Americanism

Two ideological answers are fighting to gain the hegemony in responding to terrorism, two ideologies, which on the one hand are sharing some most important common features - their reliance on universal human rights, on the dignity of every human being, on democracy and religious tolerance -, and on the other hand are contrary in some other important features - the role of international law, multilateral agreements, the role of military or peaceful means, the importance of fighting poverty, misery and global polarization of wealth and power³. The future of the first half of the 21 century will largely depend on who will gain hegemony on this battleground of ideas - hegemonist US-Globalism or multilateral universalism.

From the point of view of multilateral universalism one cannot be hostile against individual countries because they claim a humanist universality which grants everyone, every group, every ethnic group, every country the right to free development - under the precondition that this development does not take place at the cost of others but on the basis of making a contribution in solidarity to the development of all others. From such a point of view hostility against the USA is as futile as an Anti-European or Anti-Chinese or Anti-Afghan position would be. This humanist universality cannot be directed against the USA for one more reason which is that one of its most important sources is the anti-colonial struggle of the USA at the end of the 18th century and especially the first declaration of human rights, i.e. Bill of Rights which became part of the US-constitution and thus applicable law. Part of this tradition is that freedoms are not granted but taken and power has to be divided and balanced to ensure freedom and democracy.⁴

Considering the fact that in Germany obviously the Parliament can occasionally "improve the constitution to the better or worse" by means of reversing freedoms which have been gained since the end of World War II and considering that the Constitutional Court has become a patron of the "Fundamental Law" one should go back to reading Article 3 of the Bill of Rights of the State of Virginia of 1776: "... of all the various modes and forms of government, that is best which is capable of producing the greatest degree of happiness and safety and is most

³ This position was stressed by UN-Secretary General Kofi Anan at the opening of the UN-session in September 2002: I stand before you today as a multilateralist — by precedent, by principle, by Charter and by duty. I also believe that every government that is committed to the rule of law at home, must be committed also to the rule of law abroad. And all States have a clear interest, as well as clear responsibility, to uphold international law and maintain international order. Our founding fathers, the statesmen of 1945, had learnt that lesson from the bitter experience of two world wars and a great depression. They recognized that international security is not a zero-sum game. Peace, security and freedom are not finite commodities — like land, oil or gold — which one State can acquire at another's expense. On the contrary, the more peace, security and freedom any one State has, the more its neighbours are likely to have. And they recognized that, by agreeing to exercise sovereignty together, they could gain a hold over problems that would defeat any one of them acting separately. If those lessons were clear in 1945, should they not be much more so today, in the age of globalization? On almost no item on our agenda does anyone seriously contend that each nation can fend for itself. Even the most powerful countries know that they need to work with others, in multilateral institutions, to achieve their aims. Only by multilateral action can we ensure that open markets offer benefits and opportunities to all. Only by multilateral action can we give people in the least developed countries the chance to escape the ugly misery of poverty, ignorance and disease. Only by multilateral action can we protect ourselves from acid rain, or global warming; from the spread of HIV/AIDS, the illicit trade in drugs, or the odious traffic in human beings. That applies even more to the prevention of terrorism." Press Release SG/SM/8378 GA/10045.

⁴ Howard Zinn: Some Truths Are Not Self-Evident, in: Bertell Ollmann, Jonathan Birnbaum (Hg.): The United States Constitution. 200 Years of Anti/Federalist, Abolitionist, Feminist, Muckraking, Progressive and Especially Socialist Criticism, New York and London 1990, p. 262.

effectually secured against the danger of misadministration; and that when any government shall be found inadequate or contrary to these purposes, a majority of the community has an indubitable, inalienable and indefeasible right to reform, alter, or abolish it, in such manner as shall be judged most conducive to the public wealth."⁵ The criterion for making the decision are the "innate rights" of the people according to the authors of the charter of fundamental rights.

However, the USA are not a simple state among the many states of this planet. In our present world they represent a particular power: they have become the only world power. Thus, nilly willy the relationship to the USA has become a relationship to the USA as such a particular world power. The denunciation of any criticism of the USA as Anti-American, as hostility against the USA is made for legitimating ruling Americanism by means of distracting, silencing and immunising against any criticism of its ruling ideology.

I claim that by means of construing an ideology of hostility against the USA among the supporters of multilateral universalism serves in the present discussion primarily for establishing an ideology of Americanism without having to mention this process itself. And just like any other ideology this one is aimed at producing subjects⁶ which share certain interpretations and accept certain practices as socially legitimate. Just as in a distorting mirror they construe a hostility against the USA for the purpose of hiding their own Americanism from analysis.

I claim that Americanism is primarily an ideology which tries to legitimate the role of the USA as unilateral world power as universal interest of human kind.⁷ Samuel P. Huntington describes this position in a nutshell when writing: "Without the domination of the USA the world would have more violence and disorder and less democracy and economic growth than it is the case under the dominating influence of the United States on the design of international policy. The lasting existence of the American domination is of central significance both for the well-being and the security of the Americans and for the future of freedom, democracy, free market economy and international order in the world."⁸

In discussions by Germans the issue of Americanism is very often discarded in a banal way. Henryk M. Broder writes for instance: "In contrast to Anti-Communism which has become obsolete with the collapse of the Soviet Union Anti-Americanism has continued developing. Its greatest advantage is that it can be used at random. In case the Americans interfere into Non-American affairs they are being blamed for imposing their will on others. If they do not interfere they are being blamed for not being up to their responsibility as world power."⁹ This generalisation leaves out of consideration the scale that could be used for realistically measuring which role the USA should play internationally in the interest of all people, which rules they should obey in doing so, which means they might apply legitimately and which not. Especially because the USA dispose of extraordinary resources these questions are of

⁵ Virginia. Bill of Rights of 12 June 1776, in: Hermann Klenner: *Marxismus und Menschenrechte. Studien zur Rechtsphilosophie*, Berlin 1982, p. 219 f.

⁶ »Indem Ideologien Individuen und Gruppen zu Subjekten machen, ermöglichen sie ihre Orientierung und ihre Handlungsfähigkeit im sozialen Kontext.« (By means of turning individuals and groups into subjects ideologies facilitate their orientation and ability to act in the social context) Peter V. Zima: *Ideologie und Theorie. Eine Diskurskritik*, Tübingen 1989, p. 178.

⁷ This means that Americanism is not understood as particular mode of production and accumulation of capitalism (see Antonio Gramsci in his 22nd Cuaderno del carcere on "Americanism and Fordism") and neither as general cultural phenomenon but in the narrower sense as ideology.

⁸ Samuel P. Huntington: *Why International Primary Matters*, in: *International Security* (Spring 1993), p. 83.

⁹ Henryk M. Broder: *Die Arroganz der Demut (The arrogance of humility)*, in: *Der Spiegel* 2001, 47, p. 42.

particular interest for all other peoples and states, too. To the extent to which the USA play and have to play a central role they can do so in a legitimate way only if they allow themselves to be measured at the scale of general interests.

Americanism creates for the USA the role of a unique actor whose interests essentially coincide with the interest of humankind in peace, freedom from violence, democracy and economic well-being. 160 years ago Marx invented the historical mission of proletariat whereas today the ideology of the world historical mission of the USA is being proliferated. While Marx believed to have found in working class a social actor who would abolish "all inhumane living conditions of today's society"¹⁰ by its own liberation Americanism sees the USA as a global actor who would contribute to liberating all others from the worst evils of the world by means of his rule. Instead of the push for justice from below (Ernst Bloch) and from cooperation of equals under one international law its supporters expect the implementation of justice from the top and unilaterally. Everyone should react on this with as much mistrust as on the suggestive slogan of the historical mission of working class.

One part of the rational core of Americanism is the universalist claim raised again and again by the USA and another part is the particular concentration of power which has occurred in the USA. The difference between the USA and other world powers which existed before it is that internally they have accepted central political fundamental rights, that they are a political democracy which relies on the division of powers, that they have a strong tradition of broad civil movements, that they represent a global economic order which is not based upon immediate colonial exploitation. This universal claim which is based upon the history and the constitution of the USA characterises their policy and limits - at least on a long-term basis - the means which the USA may use in their external policy without turning into an authoritarian state internally.¹¹

Another feature of the rational core of Americanism is that at present the USA are in fact the only global world power. Due to their exceptional power the USA do no doubt occupy a particular position and they use this position for further expanding their power. As Zbigniew Brzezinski showed clearly it is the interaction of four factors which make "America the only global superpower in a comprehensive sense"¹² - i.e. their worldwide military presence, their share in the gross national product of approximately thirty percent during the past fifty years, their lead in dominating the most advanced technologies as well as their cultural attraction and dominance.

The ideological character of Americanism consists in its filling the gap of legitimation which exists between the fact that the USA actually do control a significant and even majority part of the global economic political, cultural and military resources on the one hand and the claim of the USA for imperial power on the other hand. Imperial Power here means the will and ability to "control exceptional events" and - in case it becomes necessary "to intervene in cases when the system collapses"¹³. As Carl Schmitt, the right-wing German specialist on constitutional right and authoritarian rule was very aware the one who controls exceptional states of affairs also controls the normal state.

¹⁰ Friedrich Engels, Karl Marx: Die heilige Familie (The holy family), in: Marx Engels Werke, vol. 2, p. 38.

¹¹ But one has to keep in mind that with regard to the double problem of the American revolution (fighting the British *and* creating an own democratic state) the US-constitution gave the president nearly unlimited power in the external affairs and restricts him by various others powers in the internal matters.

¹² Zbigniew Brzezinski: Die einzige Weltmacht. Amerikas Strategie der Vorherrschaft, (The only world power. America's strategy of domination) Frankfurt a. M. 1999, p. 41.

¹³ Michael Hardt, Antonio Negri: Empire. Cambridge and London 2000, p. 39.

The particular issue for every rule is how to legitimate the use of violence, the believe in the right to use it on good grounds and demand obedience and achieve it if necessary by means of using violence.¹⁴ A ruling power "that ... is lacking ... the heart to use violence and the strength for using it ...is ... sentenced to doom"¹⁵. For this reason you always need a policy for supplying the means for violence on the one hand and on the other hand the ideology which legitimates its use once the normal state of rule threatens to get out of control.

Each civilisation needs a monopoly for violence and produces rules which legitimate the use of violence. Civilisation is a cooperation whose rules are exercised by an institutionalised monopoly of violence. Present humankind is united in a single civilisation. At the end of the 20th century we experienced the victory of a capitalist globalisation whose character is chiefly determined by the USA. The monopoly in violence which was established by the USA corresponds with this type of globalisation. It is this civilisation in which the USA and its western allies have "condemned themselves to rule" (Karl-Otto Hondrich). The unilateral monopoly in violence held by the USA is only the expression and main reason of this globalism.

After 1990 and not by accident but by an active strategy and with the assistance of many other international actors the USA acquired the position of a ruler holding a global unilateral monopoly in the use of violence. The war against Iraq in 1990/91 was the first and extremely efficient expression of this monopoly. This monopoly was expanded by means of pushing back UNO (up to the war against former Yugoslavia in violation of international law), the far reaching undermining of OSCE, expanding NATO and developing unique military strategic abilities.¹⁶

According to the NATO-strategy adopted in 1999 its military capacities may be used also in cases which are not cases of defence and when no mandate of the UN-security council exists, either¹⁷. These are privileges the USA have been using themselves for a long time already. Already before 11 September 2001 the president of the USA wrote in connection with publishing a new military revolution that the point was "to preserve peace by means of defining war at our conditions"¹⁸. The aim is to achieve the domination of the USA in any possible conflict, to control the entire range of risks.¹⁹ This strategy includes preventive nuclear and non-nuclear strikes.

For the sake of showing the differences between Americanism and other positions let me refer briefly to the issue of Unilateralism and Multilateralism in the internal relations. As Charles Krauthammer stated as early as 1991: "The world after the end of the cold war is not multipolar. It is unipolar. The centre of world power is the undisputed superpower, the United

¹⁴ see Max Weber: *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft. Grundriß der verstehenden Soziologie. Fünfte, revidierte Auflage, (Economy and society; basics of understanding sociology; fifth, revised edition)* Tübingen 1976, p. 122 f.

¹⁵ Vilfredo Pareto: *Allgemeine Form der Gesellschaft. Excerpt from Vilfredo Pareto's system of general sociology*, in: Wilfried Röhrich (editor): »Demokratische« Elitenherrschaft. Traditionsbestände eines sozialwissenschaftlichen Problems, Darmstadt 1975, p. 126.

¹⁶ The American President pointed out at a speech at West Point on June 1 2002: „America has, and intends to keep, military strength beyond challenge“.

¹⁷ see Johannes Varwick, Wichard Woyke: *NATO 2000. Transatlantische Sicherheit im Wandel*, in: *Analysen. Politik – Gesellschaft – Wirtschaft*, vol. 68, Opladen 1999, p. 88.

¹⁸ Quoted in: Klaus-Dieter Schwarz: *Bush's »Revolution in Military Affairs«*. Konturen einer neuen amerikanischen Militärstrategie. SWP-Studie 26. Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, September 2001, p. 5.

¹⁹ *ibid.*, p. 17.

States of America accompanied by its western allies."²⁰ In the situation after 11 September the USA pursued a "Multilateralism à la carte". The coalition against terror is "defined by the mission" and not the other way round according to the Secretary of Defence of the USA. As Jeffrey Gedmin, head of the Aspen Institute at Berlin writes the USA would not allow even their partners in the coalition to hamper them. At least in this respect he is a clear representative of Americanism. He writes: "In case this would lead to difficulties within the alliance the American worry would only be one as you can imagine: "We have got to do something and our closest partners indulge in their obsession with 'points of order' and 'modalities of cooperation'"²¹. In the specific case the Americans would not allow international alliances "to tie their hands"²².

In a "realistic" manner the Multilateralism which is spread in Europe is related to the particular interests of the European Union. As Jeffrey Gedmin writes: " Finally, it is the best means for a medium power to bring themselves up to the bigger brother". For the EU Multilateralism was "a means for strengthening its own weight and weakening the domination of the superpower USA."²³

However, if it is clear that the states of the EU are rather representatives of Multilateralism since this coincides with their interest in strengthening their own position this means in the same line of argument that the USA will as a matter of principle always tend to representing a Unilateralism and accept Multilateralism only as the smaller evil if unilateral means are insufficient or they will promote an instrumental Multilateralism of mere special purpose alliances. The question is only which is better for a lasting global peace, global justice, development, and freedom.

Global goods and US-unilateralism: concurrence, difference and contradiction

Providing global common goods like peace, security, opportunity for development, framework conditions for a just world economic order, etc. does not occur automatically. There is always the risk that the actors violate general interests for protecting their own interests and that they thus cause damage for themselves on medium term.²⁴ The unequal ability to cause damage to each other very often hampers cooperative strategies: one of the actors is able to impose his intentions unilaterally causing thus damage to other actors without having to suffer damage himself. The policy of the USA was very much based on the idea of being inviolable as it existed until 11 September 2001. In future they want to preserve this inviolability by "missile screens" among others.

In the history of the USA the idea became central that especially the balance of political powers within the state would best guaranty for the freedom and security of the citizens. As James Madison wrote when propagating the draft constitution: "The interest of man must be connected with the constitutional rights of the place. It may be a reflection on human nature, that such devices should be necessary to control the abuses of government. But what is government itself but the greatest of all reflection on human nature? If man were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal

²⁰ Charles Krauthammer: The Unipolar Moment, in: Foreign Affairs 1991, 1, p. 23.

²¹ Jeffrey Gedmin: Multilateralismus als Obsession, in: Die Welt, 15 October 2001.

²² *ibid.*

²³ *ibid.*

²⁴ In literature of social sciences this has been described frequently as the "prisoners' dilemma".

controls on government would be necessary ... This policy of supplying by opposite and rival interests, the defect of better motives, might be traced through the whole system of human affairs, private as well as public. We see it particularly displayed in all the subordinated distributions of power; where the constant aim is to divide and arrange the several offices in such a manner as that each may be a check on the other; that the private interests of every individual may be a sentinel over the public rights. These inventions of prudence cannot be less requisite in the distribution of the supreme powers of the state."²⁵

The monopoly of power as it has been established by the USA in the global affairs and the far reaching domination of the USA with respect to the regulation of global economic and political processes represents a "hierarchy without 'countervailing power'"²⁶, i.e. a dominating power without strong contrasting powers which is in direct contradiction to the US-American understanding of a good government. With Madison we might ask now if the elites of the USA are able at least in the international context to rule all the other normal people like angels who are acting exclusively in the public interest of everyone even without external and internal control of their power. Should we really regard the US-government as a benevolent despot better able to rule us than we can do in collective and cooperative way?! However, if citizens of the USA themselves do not trust their government to have such an angelic character the question arises why should the people of other nations do so?!"²⁷

If one is fair and does not assign the US-American elites god-like or angelic features in their acting on the international level - something their own people would never do with respect to their internal affairs - then there is only one way in which the claim of the USA for imperial domination could be rationally justified. Especially critiques of Americanism should carefully consider this justification. As I touched upon earlier this only way would be to assume that the interests of the USA would simultaneously be the fundamental interests of all other nations, the common best. What is good for the USA would also be good for the world. This is the argument which legitimates every absolutist rule ("I am the state, I represent the common well-being!"). This argument should at least be considered. In case it is true we would still have the issue of how to control those who are charged with pursuing the interests of the USA but the question for counterweights to the USA itself would no longer prevail.

Collective goods are goods which may be used by all once they came into existence. They are inclusive which means that nobody can be excluded from using them. Their value is not decreased by everyone using them but it usually increases due to this. These goods include on the global level peace, security, just development, etc. Notwithstanding their collective nature it is not necessary that all are providing these goods together. This would be difficult, anyway, because coordinating many involved parties requires an enormous additional effort, because many prefer "dodging the fare" and leaving the provision of such type of goods to others without sharing the necessary expenses, etc.

²⁵ The Federalist No. 50: Hamilton, 5 February 1780, in: Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, John Jay: The Federalist Papers. New York 1982, p. 262 f.

²⁶ Norman Paech, Gerhard Stuby: Völkerrecht und Machtpolitik, Hamburg 2001, p. 304.

²⁷ From an interview of the journal "Die Woche" of the peace researcher Johan Galtung: "Die Woche": Does the democratic legitimation in foreign policy no longer play a role? Galtung: "I really do not make a difference between Kissinger and Bin Laden. As in most democracies the foreign policy of the USA is not subject to democratic debate. Kissinger had dictatorial powers. And precisely this debate we should wage at the International Penal Court. However, the USA boycott it persistently." Die Woche: "Because the Americans are so much convinced of the uniqueness of their country." Galtung: "The Americans believe they were at the top of the world order, quite close to god. They are a nation that is intoxicated by god and their elite pursues a foreign policy in line with this." Die Woche: "You talk like an Anti-Americanist." Galtung: "But I am not. I am against fundamentalism on both sides." Die Woche, 12 October 2001.

However, there are other ways, too, for providing such type of collective goods. It can be done in an not entirely unusual way if two preconditions are fulfilled: (1) one single privileged actor has the resources which are necessary for providing these goods unilaterally. He does not necessarily depend upon the support of others in doing so. (2) Simultaneously he has a sufficiently strong interest in these goods himself. The benefit he can draw himself just from providing these collective goods is greater than the efforts to be made by him for providing them himself alone (the benefit is greater than the expense).²⁸ In the ideal case this would mean that the interests of the privileged actor are identical with the interests of all others in the collective good.²⁹ He would accept the fact that all are using the good as inevitable or even welcome by-product of egotistic acting.

This means that the claim of the USA for global domination would be justified by the situation with respect to the general interests (although not necessarily the by the way in which they execute this domination) if it could be proven that their particular interests coincide with the interests of the entire community of states and nations to provide these mentioned global common goods and if the USA would be able to do so largely unilaterally thanks to their resources. Then we would have the lucky case that a single privileged actor represents the interests of all in acting for his own benefit. Delegating power and responsibility to the USA would then actually be in the own interest of all other world political actors. One may not like such a delegation but in accepting it one would save a lot of own effort and worry.

Do the USA serve the benefit of the world if they are allowed to freely pursue their own benefit and if so in which respects? Did the cleverness of world history really promote reason by means of facilitating the lucky coincidence that in the hands of the USA egotism and common well-being are united? Should we really exercise unlimited solidarity with a policy in which the "Americans determine which symphony is played" and we can only discuss "how it should be interpreted"³⁰? These are the assumptions at least of the Americanism of the elite of the USA and of many of its allies. I will investigate these questions at least briefly with respect to economy, participation in international decision making, international security and international law.

(1) Economy

The USA have a share in the world population of approximately 5 per cent and they produce nearly constantly a share of thirty per cent of the gross national product of the world. They represent in an outstanding manner the upper fifth of the world's population which holds about 80 per cent of the global wealth. As a result of this the USA are very much interested in preserving the fundamental conditions of global economy and in particular those parts of them which provide the basis of their exceptional position. This refers especially to the world financial markets (the USA are the biggest international debtor), world trade (with its lack of equilibrium between North and South) and the access to cheap raw materials. The latter has an immediate military-strategic component, too. As David Trucker, a leading representative of the US-department of defence said in 1998: "For the USA there is only one region for which it is worth while fighting. It is the region from the Persian Gulf north up to the Caspian

²⁸ see Mancur Olson: Die Logik des kollektiven Handelns. Kollektivgüter und die Theorie der Gruppen, Tübingen 1992.

²⁹ This is the theoretical basis of Thomas Hobbes "Leviathan": the delegation of all political power to an absolutist ruler is justified because he is the only one having both the interest and the ability of preserving internal peace and thus the inviolability of every person and the property of every individual.

³⁰ Michael Thränert in: Berliner Zeitung, 8 November 2001.

Sea and east up to central Asia. Here are 75 % of the world's crude oil deposits and 33 % of the natural gas deposits."³¹

While the USA will be willing to make considerable own efforts for preserving the present world economic order irrespective of the contributions of other world political actors their interest is small or even non-existent with respect to implementing a socially more just world economic order, a real participation of the countries of the South in the essential decision making processes, a change of the relations in the consumption of resources in favour of the developing countries etc., because this would mean a relative disempowerment of the ruling elites of the USA.

(2) Participation in international decision making

After 1990 under the immediate influence of the USA started a marginalisation of those institutions in which the developing countries were particularly represented while a "strengthening of the international economic institutions which were dominated by the North"³² occurred. During the Cold War this trend was still counteracted by the fact that the two super powers struggled for the support of the third world. When this interest disappeared the USA developed a selective Multilateralism which consolidated on the one hand the domination of the USA and aimed at the other hand at integrating in particular those in international decision making bodies which shared the fundamental interests of the USA. However, simultaneously the countries of the South were driven out or the significance of the institutions where they were represented with more or less equality was reduced. The imbalance of power between the USA and their western allies on the one hand and the majority of the states on the other hand is nowadays the "central reason for the staggering process of the development of international law within the framework of the various 'New International Orders'"³³.

recent past even the allies of the US were left alone with regard to the Kyoto protocol or the International Criminal Court. The US are unilaterally able to summon more or less any other state into any coalition which seems to fit their own and the international interests but no other state and not even the whole international community is strong enough to do the same with the USA. Internationally binding decisions can be made and will be accepted by more or less all states with the exception of the US-government.

(3) International security

Like any other state the USA have an outstanding interest in protecting their own sovereignty and simultaneously they are facing the problem of being the decisive global guarantor of capitalist globalisation and securing the normal functioning of this order with their global monopoly of violence by means of assuming the mandate to do so themselves in an imperialist way. As Claus Koch writes the Americans granted their state a "function as international police" as "guarantor, supreme patron for the just order and the unhampered acting of capitalism ... which by nature is American. Any attack against capitalism, no matter where it takes place, they perceive as an attack against America"³⁴. The global monopoly of

³¹ Quoted in taz, 16 October 2001

³² Ulrich Brand, Achim Brunnengräber, Lutz Schrader, Christian Stock, Peter Wahl: Global Governance. Alternative zur neoliberalen Globalisierung, Münster 2000, p. 100.

³³ Norman Paech, Gerhard Stuby: Völkerrecht und Machtpolitik, loc. cit., p. 862.

³⁴ Claus Koch: Europa – nur gegen das amerikanische Imperium (Europe - only against the American empire), in: Merkur 2000, 9/10, p. 981 f.

violence of the USA is used primarily in the sense of a pax americana on the basis of their interests.

This pax americana leads to threatening with the preemptive use of violence if it is in the interest of the United States. This was extremely frequently the case in Latin-America during the past one hundred years. However, also during the Cold War Period hot wars were staged if this seemed to offer opportunities for causing damage to the Soviet Union. In 1979, for instance, a covered military action of the CIA was used for launching a civil war in Afghanistan although there was a great probability that this would lead to a direct intervention of the Soviet Union.³⁵ Simultaneously the USA approved of occupations like that of East-Timor by Indonesia for preventing that left-wing governments took power³⁶ The USA encouraged and supported the army in Chile to abolish a freely elected government by means of brutal violence.³⁷

We see that military power is used under a pax americana even if it violates international law and close interests of the USA are at stake while on the other hand the international monopoly of violence is used not at all or very late although it would be urgently necessary. The best known international example is Rwanda. Many other wars are possible because they are allowed since the USA have no immediate interest in an intervention and alternative security structures were either intentionally not created or their creation was blocked.

Due to their unique military power and in the interest of their domination the USA are interested in keeping up the weight of the military factor in international politics in comparison to the factors of political negotiation and economic power. Up to a certain point (the point where major military conflicts threaten the functioning of the most important global institutions) applies: the stronger the military character of international politics the greater the weight of the USA in world politics. As a result of their interests the USA have a preference for using military force. They are the main driving force in a new round of armament which lead to worldwide growing arms expenses since 1999. As part of their way of implementing US-hegemony the international climate was changed "from a trend of calming towards an aggravation of the security dilemma, towards more armament"³⁸.

The historically unknown inequality of military forces and the ability of one state (the USA) to face any other state with a fatal threat to without being in the same way threatened is creating a strong trend of increasing military spending and creating always new weapons of

³⁵ See also the "disclosures" by Brzezinski in January 1998. He did not only disclose that US-president Carter "signed already on 3 July 1979 the first directive for supporting the opposition against the pro-Soviet regime in Kabul" knowing that this would result in an intervention by the USSR. He himself called this a trap for "giving the USSR their Vietnam war". On the question of the *Le Nouvel Observateur* "Don't you feel sorry that you promoted Islamic fundamentalism, that you armed and consulted future terrorists". Brzezinski answered: "What is more important with respect to world history? The Taliban or the collapse of the Soviet empire? A few hotheaded people or the liberation of central Europe and the end of the Cold War?" *Le Nouvel Observateur* n° 1732, 15 till 21 January 1998.

³⁶ In East-Timor still under Portuguese rule the left-wing movement became the winner of the democratic elections in late 1975. They proclaimed on 28 November 1975 the Democratic Republic of East-Timor. Suharto (dictator in Indonesia from 1965 till 1998; in 1965 responsible for the murder of approximately 1 million communists) was promised support for the occupation of East-Timor upon the visit of president Ford and Henry Kissinger but the occupation was to start only after their departure. The explanation was that a second Cuba should be avoided. During this conquest and the years to follow were murdered one third of the approximately 700,000 inhabitants.

³⁷ Kissinger, former security advisor of the US-American president with respect to this: "We need not accept that a country turns Marxist because of the irresponsibility of its population." quoted according to Christopher Hitchens: *Die Akte Kissinger*, Stuttgart – München 2001, p. 93.

³⁸ Ernst-Otto Czempel in: *Berliner Zeitung*, 21 March 2000.

mass destruction. The Chinese government will try to counterbalance the US-efforts for being inviolable by building up a huge own arsenal of nuclear weapons. The Indian government will respond to the Chinese efforts to counterbalance them and others will feel they should join in the interests of their own sovereignty. Weaker states will look for cheaper forms of weapons of mass destruction, weapons which are even more difficult to control. Since too many players are interacting it will be very difficult to impose any restrictions on this new round of arms race and militarization of thinking.

(4) International law

Inevitably the *pax americana* leads to an ongoing subordination of the order of international law to interests - this means a policy of power in a space that is "liberated" from law. One of the main issues consists in the interest-based despotism in such an international order: "The problem of the so-called civilised world is ... its double standard. Unequal treatment and bigotry are a breeding ground for terrorism."³⁹ This was shown when the USA and their allies launched the military intervention against Yugoslavia in violation of international law with regard to human rights but were reluctant to intervene in other, far worse cases of civil war in countries out of their areas of interest.

In the discussion on whether the military intervention of NATO against Yugoslavia in 1999 had been legitimate it is being mentioned again and again that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the UNO provides for the right and the obligation for "humanitarian intervention" in case the human rights of major groups of the population are systematically restricted or threatened immediately by the state in which these people are living. This discussion is nearly entirely neglecting the fact that these human rights are not natural properties of individuals but rights - or more precisely: legal relationships. Human rights are simultaneously more *and* less than the moral claim of one group for "good" living and the obligations of others to act "good" by means of supporting them. And they are not the authoritarian claim of one group to tell the others what they should do or not do and the obligation of those others either to accept this or to suffer from violence.

In addition to the subjective rights, the legal standards and the sanctions that are related to their violation include constitutively a neutral body which tests the behaviour from the point of view whether the legal standards were violated or not and decides whether sanctions should be used or not - this is the court. We can accept this to the extent of the definition provided by the legal expert O. W. Holmes (1920) who stated that law is only what the courts do.

A "humanitarian intervention" which waives the involvement of a neutral instance in the name of human rights may point at good reasons of meaning well and point at the ethical content of the human rights declaration, however, what it implements are not legal relationships but those of domination. Again, one can prefer with good reasons the enlightened domination of one sovereign that is above any jurisdiction and imposes sanctions without its authority to the actions or atrocities of one who seems to be less enlightened and in many actual cases this will be done. However, this does not provide the domination with the

³⁹ Dieter S. Lutz: Das Fenster der Verwundbarkeit, in: Freitag, 21 September 2001. If the former foreign secretary of the USA, Albright believes that the death of half a million Iraqi children as a consequence of the international embargo is not too high a price for the aims achieved by this means then Arundhati Roy can answer with good reason: "Precisely this is what it is all about: the random differentiation between civilisation and barbarity, between 'murder of innocent people' or 'war of cultures' and 'collateral damage'. The sophistry and random algebra of unlimited justice: How many dead Iraqis are necessary to get a better world? How many dead Afghans for every dead American? How many dead women and children for one dead man? How many dead Mujaheddin for one dead investment banker?" Arundhati Roy: Wut ist der Schlüssel, in: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 28 September 2001.

dignity and content of law but only with the bad choice of the a better alternative among worse ones.

The implementation of the "good" by a *hyper-power* is related to the arbitrariness or interest of the dominator to interfere or not interfere in each individual case. It remains always selective and particular. Simultaneously it gives rise to the potential threat that the dominator interferes in cases which are not based on "good" intentions but merely his own interests. Providence demands to protect oneself against his case. The monopoly of violence of the dominator is undermined. The proliferation of means of mass destruction is the long-term consequence of this policy and reduces security in the world.

Since the interference of the dominator is explained particularly with his interest in "law and order" the implementation of good by means of domination is always connected with the danger of militancy in contrasts to that by jurisdiction. Everyone who believes that his claims were endangered would not go to court but call upon the global dominator and perhaps even try to attract his attention by means of own attempts at implementing these rights by means of violence. A civil war is launched (Kosovo, Macedonia). Those who are the targets of this violence will try to protect themselves by means of own violence and react with a maximum of repression as early as possible.

With the military interference of NATO in Yugoslavia its member states and in particular the USA - their hegemonial power - decided to implement human rights by means of domination and exactly due to this deprived it of its legal character. If this example was followed by others in future we can say now already that the following trends would be inevitable: (a) All regional powers will arm themselves to a degree that would make it impossible to attack them. This would necessarily include the possession of nuclear weapons. The superpower USA would try to counteract this by means of high-tech armament. (b) Internal conflicts will acquire the character of civil wars even more often than now. Social groups will try to show that their claims have been violated by using violence and turn it into an international security risk for successfully attracting external interventions. Their enemies will use massive violence to prevent this or in response to it for stopping this at its onset. The form of domination is simultaneously the militant, militarising one and not the civil form of raising and implementing claims. (c) As a consequence to this the actual implementation of human rights will rather be hindered than promoted since only rarely an international dominator really has the interest and the ability of actually implementing the subjective claims and alternative neutral bodies which would be obliged to carry out a legal intervention in harmony with the situation were not created or even abolished. In specific cases this type of commitment will rather hinder the general implementation than promote it. This means a withdrawal from the obligation to achieve a general implementation by considering it an obligation to impose them in specific cases by means of bombings.

The restricted and self-interested supply of Global Goods by the USA and the perspective of multilateral universalism

Thus the interest of the USA necessarily consists in monopolising the representation of general interests on the one hand and shaping them in a very specific way on the other hand. Consequently, stability interests in world economy and interests in an unequal economic order are created; forms of participation in global decision making process are created and representatives of the South are excluded from them; a global monopoly of violence is being implemented and used extremely selectively; a customary right of the stronger to intervention is created and international law is being abolished and all this happens simultaneously.

Inevitably, the USA can provide only few global collective goods unilaterally and they do it only selectively on the basis of their interests. This leads to the fact that other collective goods are not provided at all or their provision by others is prevented. What is good for the USA is in many cases by no means good for the world. Where global collective goods require multilateral action but the USA are not able or not sufficiently interested in providing them unilaterally the USA will therefore have very little will to negotiate and act together since they fear that this Multilateralism might spread and lead to restrictions in instances when the USA want to act unilaterally. The case of the Kyoto-protocol is a clear example for this.

The result is a kind of "over-supply" with collective goods which the USA want to provide unilaterally (in particular in the field of armament). On the other hand the result is a lack of supply or hindrance to supply much needed global goods where multilateral actions would be required.⁴⁰ The question is whether an imperial domination of the USA serves the best interest of human kind and thus is beneficial for the majority of the world's population as claimed by Americanism or whether it rather causes damage to this majority. If this balance was drawn it would certainly be very mixed at least. In important cases the USA with their policy did definitely not contribute to providing collective goods but rather to increasing a "collective disadvantage" for all. Americanism is an ideology which wants to cover up this difference between the interests of the ruling elites of the USA and the interests of humankind by means of a political control of speech and suppressing deviating positions. It is an ideology which prefers the implementation of interests of power to social and political balance, the despotism of the stronger to international law, military to civil action. It is an ideology which creates an utterly unjust world as basis for the monopolist exercise of violence, a violence which still prevents the outbreak of a global civil war as result of this injustice. This Americanism does not result from ill will but from the ideological formation of the own interests of the ruling elites in the USA.

One of the main pillars of Americanism consists in the fact that third world terrorism was raised to the position of being the most important threat to humankind in the 21st century and that it is placed on the same level with the threat created by fascism. Antiterrorism which was made a sub-ideology of its own is meant to legitimate the leading role of the USA in an international policy which is much more than before based upon the global monopoly of violence held by the USA.

Important elements of this ideology are the identification of the struggle against terrorism with the struggle against German fascism and - with some differentiation - against the Soviet Union. Thus, the struggle against terrorism acquires a primarily military dimension. It appears as struggle against the absolute evil ("Totalitarianism"). An "Either-Or" is established which is meant to impose on everyone a unilateral dependency from the USA. It is treated separately from all other issues of international order. By making 11 September 2001 the most important event of the beginning new century the military fight against terrorism moves into the centre of international policy. This consolidates the leadership by the USA and the agenda of the world order which is determined by the ideologies of Americanism and Anti-Terrorism.⁴¹

⁴⁰ This difference is covered by the following formulation used by the former US-president for describing the principle guideline of his foreign policy: "Unilateral, if our immediate national interests are most concerned; in alliance and partnership if our interests are shared by others and multilateral if our interests are of general nature and the issues are best approached by the international community." Quotation in: Norman Paech, Gerhard Stuby: *Völkerrecht und Machtpolitik*, a. a. O., S. 309.

⁴¹ A simple comparison of the speech of George W. Bush on the occasion of the 60th Anniversary of the attack against Pearl Harbor with the speech held by Johannes Rau after the terrorist attack shows how much interpretations of Americanism differ from those which place the decisive question for humankind in the foreground especially for abolishing the roots of terrorism on the long run. The message on which the US-

Such a policy goes hand in hand with the instrumentalisation of the terrorist attack of 11 September 2001 for denouncing and suppressing all criticism of capitalist globalisation. As it always happens in these cases the measures adopted by police and secret services for fighting terrorism have the tendency of quickly spreading to other fields. Moreover, they were already available in desk drawers or they were partially practised before. Stephan Kaufmann came to the following conclusion: "With the terrorist attacks on 11 September the worldwide mood changed. The expression by US-president George W. Bush: 'Those who are not for us are against us' leaves no space for critiques of the world market ... Public protest has become risky for its participants. The fact that police shot at demonstrators in Gothenburg and Genoa made many critiques of globalisation lose interest in joining further campaigns."⁴²

As I have shown the domination of the USA can legitimate itself only to a limited extent by providing the most important collective goods of a globalised humankind. The ideology of Americanism - hidden behind the phantom fight against Anti-Americanism - has the task of closing the gap in legitimation which exists between the interests of the vast majority of the world population and those of the US-American elites. The ideology of the global war against terrorism is the most recent expression of the ideology of Americanism.

Criticising the ideology of Americanism does not mean to support a blind rejection of all interests of the USA as being hostile to global well-being (this would be actual USA-hostility). As I also showed this is not the case. However, it is an invitation to analyse precisely the concrete constellation of interests, to establish counterweights (and thus develop a strategy of Multilateralism), of implementing procedures which are binding even in situations when the interests of the strongest global actor are at stake (for what other reason would we need rules instead of mere violence).

The USA is at this moment the only super power and plays an exceptional role in all international affairs. But the relation of forces will change in the coming decades. Other powers like the EU, China and India or Latin America may counterbalance the economic might of the USA. Some of them may create forms of social, ecological and democratic regulation even superior to the USA. The current unilateral US-Hegemony tends to be a temporary phenomenon and the strategic actions taken by the most important powers should be in accordance to this. It is not the worst form of despotism, as far as it is based on the values of universalism, but it can become the most dangerous hindrance toward solving the

American president focused was the following: "We've seen their kind before. The terrorists are the heirs to fascism. They have the same will to power, the same disdain for the individual, the same mad global ambitions. And they will be dealt with in just the same way. Like all fascists, the terrorists cannot be appeased: they must be defeated. This struggle will not end in a truce or treaty. It will end in victory for the United States, our friends and the cause of freedom ... We must have a military organized for decisive and total victory. And to you, the men and women of our military, I make this pledge: you will have every resource, every weapon, every tool you need to win the long battle that lies ahead." In contrast to this Johannes Rau started with fundamentally condemning terrorism and stressing the need for prosecuting it and focused then on the issue of international justice: "We must fight terrorism and will overcome it. For this we need stamina. If you really want to abolish terrorism you must make sure by political action that the prophets of violence lose their basis. Poverty and exploitation, misery and injustice make people despair. When religious feelings and cultural traditions are not respected people are deprived of their hope and dignity. This seduces some to use violence and terror. It sows hatred already in the hearts of children. All people have a right to respect and dignity. Those who experience respect and love their life will not be tempted to throw it away. Those who live in dignity and confidence will hardly turn suicide-attackers. Resolute action is what we need now. Since we are aware of this and since we do not allow any doubt in it we also say: the best protection against terror, violence and war is a just international order. The fruit of justice will be peace. This is hard to achieve. It will take a long time and it will cost more than time. However, a peaceful, a secure world must be worthwhile this effort. For us and the children of our world."

⁴² Stephan Kaufmann: Schlechte Zeiten für Kritik, in: Berliner Zeitung, 8 January 2002..

world problems.

US-dominance is a reality which should be taken into account and cooperation with the USA is crucial for stabilizing the situation and creating a sound international environment. The fate of the world in the 21 century depends to a high degree on the ability of all state and non-state actors to find a universalist answer for terrorism and other threats, not to answer unilateral US-hegemony with own unilateral action, militarization und neglect of international law, and last not least for the commitment of the USA to the ideology of Americanism or to multilateral universalism, and their ability to move gradually from unilateralism to multilateralism, from a kind of more or less benevolent despotism in international affairs to submitting themselves to the rule of international law, from egotism and instrumental cooperation to institutionalised solidarity.

In Europe and on the global level the forces supporting universal multilateralism should oppose the hostility against the USA by a long-term strategy of developing a coalition of a non-imperial (and thus non-American) universalism. A precondition for this will be to be free from the ideology of Americanism and act for a true universalism which serves the entirety of human rights and which is carried by a community of states and nations on the basis of international law. This rests on the ability to engage in a long-term conflict with the USA where their domination threatens the interests of large proportions of the world's population. This would be a strategy which re-distributes power to those who want and can implement those interests which are really vital for humankind. For achieving this we must unmask the spectre of Anti-Americanism as what it really is: the fog-screen hiding ruling Americanism.