

At Munich Wehrkunde Meeting, U.S. Speaks Loudly About Carrying Big Stick

by Rainer Apel

Many essays have already been published on the new American doctrine of war, and President George W. Bush's State of the Union address with its new enemy image of the "axis of evil." But more than that, the personal appearance of some main propagators of that doctrine, at the famous Munich "Wehrkunde" (International Conference on Security Policy) on Feb. 1-3, illustrated for Europeans the dangerous flight-forward tendency in present U.S. strategic thinking.

At this 38th annual Wehrkunde meeting, presentations by the American delegation delivered a shock—even stronger than President Bush's Jan. 29 State of the Union address—to attendees both from Europe, as well as from Russia, China, and India. Never in the 25 years that *EIR* has been covering this annual Munich event, has such a deep split been exposed between the United States and its European NATO allies. Whereas the Americans focussed on the "new American internationalism," the Europeans voiced opposition and posed concerned questions as to the future of the United States-European alliance within NATO.

From the American side, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, who delivered the main keynote address on Feb. 2, made it clear: The United States can and will wage the "war on terrorism" alone, if necessary, predominantly based on its own resources, and it does not need either NATO, or the United Nations.

There "will not be a single coalition" any more, with fixed alliance partners, such as NATO has been, Wolfowitz asserted, quoting his boss, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, "but rather different coalitions for different missions—flexible coalitions. Some will join us publicly, others will choose quiet and discreet forms of cooperation." Moreover, Wolfowitz added, a "key concept" of future warfare will "not rule out anything"; it will involve everything from combat on horseback to space-based high-tech weapons systems.

Coalition With IMF and Turkey?

In a later contribution to the conference, Wolfowitz emphasized, again, that "the U.S. can do it alone, because we have a degree of overwhelming support in Congress, today, that we did not have back in 1991," during the anti-Iraq war. Among the other NATO allies, Wolfowitz named only Turkey as an outstanding, preferential ally, because, as he put it, it was "a model" within the Muslim world.

The latter point was stressed even more strongly, in Sen. John McCain's (R-Ariz.) conference speech on the "new American internationalism": "Turkey is a frontline state in the war on terrorism, as Germany was a frontline state during the Cold War." Only days later, on Feb. 5, the "reward" proffered to Turkey for such a role was announced: another \$9 billion loan to from the International Monetary Fund, bringing up to \$40 billion the total credit that the IMF has now extended—in sharp contrast to Argentina, for example.

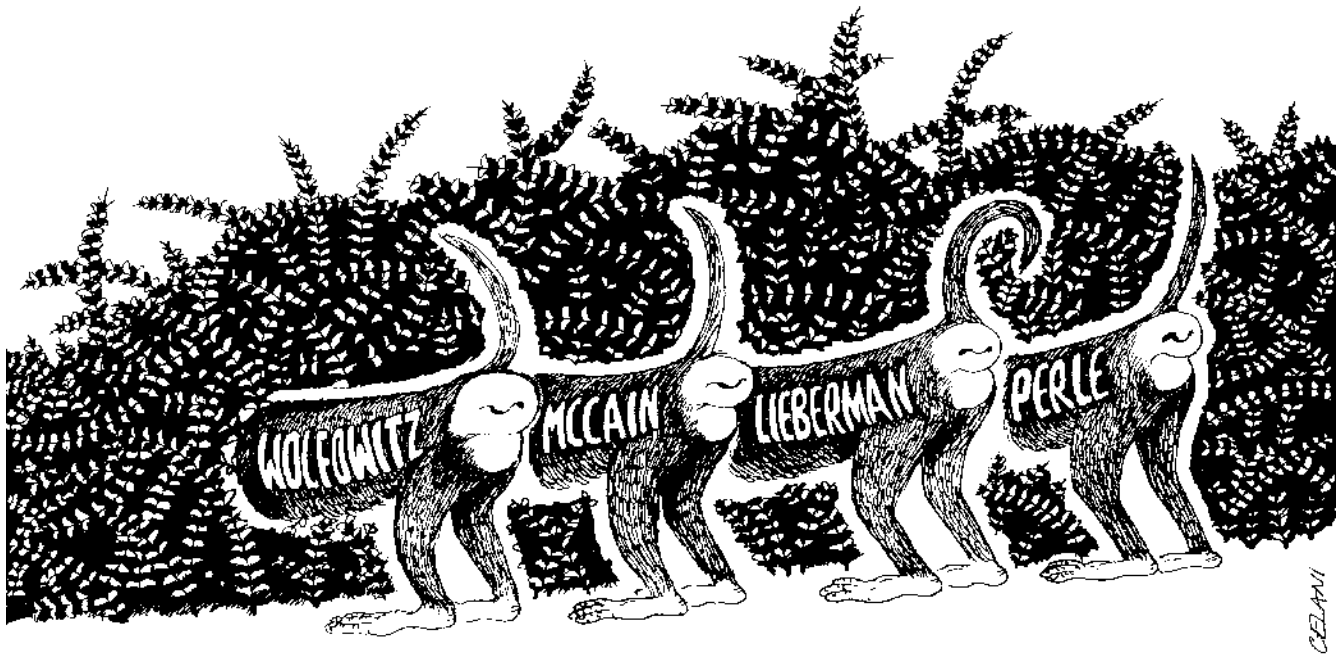
The American message at the Munich conference sounded as though NATO would be of use to the United States in the future if at all, only if it were reshaped according to the "requirements of responding to the new kinds of threats."

Though some Americans, like former National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft—now chairman of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board—voiced concern that an overconfident Bush Administration would widen the gap with Europe too much and too rapidly, and break NATO apart, the new doctrine was not really challenged, even by those American critics. Their proposal was rather, that Europe do more in defense spending, to narrow that gap to the United States.

As for the "war on terrorism" itself, its scope and particular "rogue" targets, Wolfowitz said the "terrorists" were hiding "not merely in the mountains of Afghanistan, but in the towns of cities of Europe and the United States."

Sen. Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.) spoke of a "New Iron Curtain," or "New Wall" that was stretching "from the terrorist camps in the hills and valleys of Central Asia, to the sands of Somalia, Sudan, and Saudi Arabia, to cells in Singapore, Indonesia, the Philippines, and many other places including Europe and America." McCain thundered that the rest of the world should "dispel any notion that America's commitment to the defeat of our enemies is mere rhetoric. Just ask the Taliban. The successful military campaign we and our allies waged against the government that harbored our enemies, sends what I hope is a clear signal to leaders in Tehran, Damascus, Khartoum, and elsewhere, that sponsoring terrorism places national survival at risk."

The recent change of regime in Afghanistan and—next on the list—Iraq, McCain said, "would likely compel several other state sponsors of terror to change their ways or go out of business." He included Syria and Sudan on his list of states



The Four Baboons present the new Bush Doctrine.

that either “make the right choice or face the consequences.” Wolfowitz, again: “Those countries that choose to tolerate terrorism and refuse to take action—or worse, those that continue to support it—will face consequences.” Wolfowitz added another target, when he said of Palestine Authority President Yasser Arafat, that “unfortunately, our main interlocutor on the other side is involved deeply in terrorism.”

There was, finally, the ubiquitous “Prince of Darkness,” Defense Policy Board head Richard Perle, who said that now is the time to attack Iraq’s military, and that the Iranian government would fall soon. “There is no time for diplomacy,” Perle said.

Protests From Eurasia

This American posture met open protest at the Munich event: most outspokenly, from Russia, China and India, but also from Europe; and, notably, even from the usually over-cautious Germans. Russia’s Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov, Deputy Foreign Minister of China Wang Yi, and Braheesh Mishra, chief national security adviser to Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee, repudiated the U.S. talk about an “axis of evil.”

Ivanov said of Iraq, Iran, and North Korea, “I don’t have any evidence whatsoever that the governments of these three nations support terrorism.” He said that Russia had “its own list of rogue states,” including such traditional U.S. allies as Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and Dubai, whose support for Islamic terrorism was well-documented—in stark contrast to the U.S. charges which haven’t been, to this day. The Chinese diplomat warned against any “arbitrary widening of the war,” in-

sisting that every such action against terrorism proceed strictly “on the basis of international law” and “under the UN Charter.” India, insisted Mishra, vehemently opposed “any compartmentalized national approaches,” precisely the new direction advertised by Wolfowitz.

Also the Europeans voiced their protest; for example, Karl Lamers, chief foreign policy spokesman of the German Christian Democrats: “It cannot be that you decide, and we follow. . . . Ever since Sept. 11, NATO has not existed.” Former deputy defense minister of Germany, Lothar Rühl, addressed “genuine differences between the U.S. and its allies,” specifying that in addition to NATO member Turkey, other Islamic countries, such as “Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Syria are opposed to an intervention against Iraq.” German Defense Minister Rudolf Scharping also spoke to the Iraq issue, saying that “military planning should not start from the wrong end.”

The fact that German conference participants came out so openly, underlines how deep the gulf has grown between Europe and the United States, since German opposition to American military policies is rarely stated. Clashes over crucial issues of strategic policy and defense were even more fierce behind the scenes at Munich, *EIR* learned from the conference’s sidelines.

If NATO as we have known it ceased to exist after Sept. 11, it has not been revitalized since, and it won’t be, should the present tendency of U.S. strategic policy continue. How Russia, China, and India will react, is less of a mystery, as relations among these three states have grown very intense, over the recent period. How the Europeans, especially those on the continent, will react, is an open question, however.