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WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION:
STROBE TALBOTT, PRESIDENT, THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION
PHILIP GORDON, SENIOR FELLOW AND DIRECTOR,
CENTER ON THE UNITED STATES AND FRANCE

PANEL ONE: "FRANCE AND AMERICA IN EACH OTHER'S EYES"
CHAIR: E.J. DIONNE
PHILIPPE ROGER, AUTHOR, L'ENNEMI AMÉRICAIN: GÉNÉALOGIE DE L'ANTIAMÉRICANISME FRANCAIS
WALTER RUSSELL MEAD, COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
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THIS IS AN UNCORRECTED TRANSCRIPT.

STROBE TALBOTT: (In progress) – everybody, including the panelists, would be good enough to take a seat. Thank you. I'm Strobe Talbott, the president of the Brookings Institution, and I want to welcome all of you here this morning – welcome you to this, the fourth annual conference of the Brookings Center on the United States and France. I've only been here a little over 10 months – good reason to be very proud of being associated with an institution that would have this particular enterprise associated with it.

There are, as I count them, three and a half reasons why all of us should be glad that the Brookings Center for the United States and France exists. One is a reason of history, and that is that the United States and France share so much by way of historical legacy and values. The second is because the United States and France share a great many common interests to advance in Europe, in the transatlantic relationship and around the world. The third reason is because, as you may be dimly aware, there are several difficulties besetting the relationship these days, and the Center, I think, gives us a venue, it gives us auspices under which we can have the kind of candid, civil, intelligent discussion of those difficulties that is required.

And that brings me to the half of the three and a half reasons why I'm glad the center exists, and that's a question of menu. If we were serving you breakfast this morning we would have French toast on the menu and we would call it that. (Laughter.) And if we weren't so cardiovascularly correct we would serve French fries for lunch, for those of you who stick around. Which is to say that there has been a lot of trashing and bashing of the relationship and of the two parties to the relationship on both sides of the Atlantic, and I for one am kind of sick and tired of it, and I suspect many of you are as well. In my eight years in the State Department, I worked a lot with French counterparts, particularly Gerard Ererra, known to many of you here, and of course Ambassador Bujon, and I have rarely known people who did a better job of defending and advancing not only their own country's interest but who believed deeply in the importance of the bilateral relationship between the United States and France. And I do think that everything that the discussion which is going to take place today stands for is, among other things, a good anecdote to a lot of the nonsense that is in the air on this relationship right now.

And I'm particularly confident of that, not only because of the quality of the panels that we have, including this one that E.J. is going to be kicking off here in a moment, but also because of the quality of participation represented around this room. There are lots of people – I will not attempt to acknowledge everybody who deserves acknowledgement, but Justice Bruguière, we're particularly pleased that you would be with us here for this session. I know it's going to be a good one and I hope that my own duties elsewhere in the building and around the city during the course of the day permit me to drop in and out from time to time, including for lunch, whether or not there are French fries on the menu, Phil.

So, congratulations to you for presiding over this terrific center, and E.J., thank you so much for getting us off to a good start with the first panel this morning. So, over to you.

PHILIP GORDON: Thanks, Strobe. Let me just add a few words of welcome and then about the conference itself. Strobe told you already why we have the center and what we try to do here. Let me just say a word about the conference itself and what we try to use that for.

At the Center we do research and have lots of small meetings, but we think it's important, at least once a year, in this forum, to open up these important discussions to a wider audience. And the annual conference – as Strobe said, this is the fourth one – we always try to cover a range of things, but there always seems to be one theme that's sort of natural to have at the heart of these discussions. We started this off -- our first annual conference was not long after French Foreign Minister Hubert Védrine coined the term hyper-power, or hyper-puissance, and it was natural that our first conference was largely devoted to that issue. We had people like Bob Kagan and Jean-Marie Guéhenno discussing the issue of American power in the world.

The second year was when this issue of globalization was dominant in France. Remember the farmer, José Bové, had ransacked a McDonald's, Vivendi had bought Universal Studios, the French were obsessed with this idea of globalization, and we spent a lot of time talking of that, quite naturally, at the second annual conference.

The third one, last year, took place after the two rounds of the French presidential election. And again, we always try to cover a range of issues, but it was sort of obvious that when the sitting prime minister was kicked out of office, didn't make the second round, and then you had a run off between a far-right candidate and the current president, that was the issue that dominated our discussions. And here we are again at the fourth annual conference, and it seems quite natural what we are going to spend some time talking about. The Iraq crisis has deeply divided these two countries, and we see serious bilateral tensions over, not only the Middle East but the way the world is run, and we have some superb speakers and panelists to address that issue.

Let me just, by way of introduction, say a couple of things about what I hope we will talk about during these panels. I say that fully conscious of the fact that when somebody kicks off a conference by doing so, it has very little correlation to what actually gets discussed. But just three points that I think really should be at the heart of what we're talking about and what we tried to do with the panels that we've organized.

First, I wonder – and I think our first panel will say something about this – whether this is just the latest round in the French-American dispute that we've all followed for decades, or whether it's really something fundamentally different. The Suez crisis was deep; I mean, Suez compared to now. A lot of Americans are angry at France that they tried to block the Americans from undertaking military action. At Suez, we actually succeeded in blocking a military action when their troops were already on the

ground; that was pretty severe. Nineteen-sixty-six, France leaving NATO Integrated Military Command; 1986, resentment over Libya over-flights. There have been lots of crises, but I ask the panel and the group, is there something different about this one? And if so, what, if anything, can we do about it?

Secondly, why are the narratives so different about what's going on in the world between these two countries? It really is striking. I mean, here are two open democracies with access to all sorts of information, and yet you get a very different picture about what was necessary to do in Iraq, in the Middle East, and in the world as a whole. I was in Paris the week before last and was struck by the difference in which the war itself was perceived and the future is perceived. Everyone here is familiar with this sense in the United States of betrayal. An ally wasn't willing to stand with us in an important military action, and Paris is out to counter American power. Well, go to Paris and you just hear a very different debate. You hear people talking to each other and saying, what did we do wrong? It's a democracy; 80 percent off our public was against this war, most of the world was against this war. What exactly did we do wrong?

It's very different – and it's also quite a different perception, it seems to me, on the outcome of the war. Americans seem quite convinced now, even if they had questions before it, that it was the right thing to do and that terrorism – it was a big step forward in the war on terrorism. And if you go to Paris, it seems to me – and our French guests will tell us if this is right – there are still a lot of questions; they're no yet persuaded that this has turned out to be the right thing to do and that it will help us in the war on terrorism. I think the media has a lot to do with that, too, and maybe that is another thing that will come up, but the perception, the way this war and crisis has been described on the two sides, is really strikingly different.

Last point just to point on the agenda for our panelists and the group today is whether our classic analysis of the relationship between these two countries still holds; that is to say, the Stanley Hoffmann, "The Clash of Universalisms." The classic analysis of France and the United States is that these are two countries, both of which have a vision of the world and want to see that vision implemented, and they feel quite self-confident in putting forward that vision and leading, and I wonder if that applies to what we have just seen here. It sure seems to. It seems to even to a degree beyond which the actors themselves are aware. I mean, especially in this country, again we sense this great sense of betrayal, for example, that France, at the Security Council, would go out of its way to lobby other members of the Security Council to its position, without really seeming conscious of the fact that we were doing obviously exactly the same thing.

When Secretary of State Powell was complaining about Foreign Minister Villepin going around and lobbying other members, he said he was on the phone trying to lobby them at the very same time. Now, you might argue – and we'll see what the panelists have to say – that that's because the U.S. is the leader and France isn't the leader. But that comes out in these perceptions as well. I mean, think about how resentful Americans are about the comments made by President Chirac about the Eastern Europeans when he berated them for not following their leader. And then, yet, at the same time, a lot of the

American attitude is precisely the same. We're an alliance and your job as an ally is to support the leader of that alliance. So it looks like – and, again, I just put it out as a question – that these two clashing universalist ideas, two countries that see themselves with a leadership role, still exist.

Those are some of the things that struck me as important, and in organizing this conference is seemed to us that the best way to try to answer these impossible-to-answer questions was to find a really good group of experts on all of these subjects. We have our first panel on the way the two countries perceive each other – some of the things I was just talking about – and then a panel on the strategic relationships, and then Judge Bruguière will address the specific issue of terrorism. So it's something I'm very much looking forward to. I thank you all for coming. I thank the panel and I turn it over to E.J. to moderate the first one.

E.J. DIONNE: Bonjour. Good morning, everybody. I am here I think for three reasons. One is I am a big fan of everything that Philip does. The second is that I worked in Paris for the New York Times for a number of years, and it's great to see a lot of old friends from those days here. The third is that my people hail from Quebec, and I realized how deep the problem in this relationship is when I got a call from a friend in the Midwest a couple of weeks back after the House of Representatives changed its menu. And as you know, we are often called French-Canadians, and my friend called me and said, "From now on, are you referring to yourself as a Freedom-Canadian?" (Laughter.) So something is going on.

I recently suggested that we needed to set up a Franco-American anti-defamation league, and I got an email from a very hawkish friend – not Bill Kristol, who will be on the panel this afternoon – who said, you know, we warmongers had a meeting and decided that we were exempting you French-Canadians from attack. And he said, you don't have to thank me; I know how grateful you already are. (Laughter.) So that's where we are on this.

Also, when I saw the title of this panel, "France and America in Each Other's Eyes," I figured that the follow-up panel is, France and America at each other's throats. So we'll start softly and we'll move forward.

Just one other point before I introduce this distinguished panel. Justin Vaisse wrote a wonderful piece on this. I was at a conference on this very similar subject last week out in Seattle, and my friend, Professor John Keeler noted that you could argue that the United States itself was created by something called the Treaty of Paris, which is what ended the Revolutionary War, and I'm wondering if at some point soon we'll figure out a way to rename the Treaty of Paris.

This is a fantastic panel, and I will just not get in their way. I will introduce them. They'll be coming up to the mike. And then I want to remind our panelists, for the sake of our friends at C-SPAN, that when you sit down, if you could mike yourself up

carefully at your seat after you've spoken from here, just to make sure everyone hears you, and we welcome our C-SPAN audience.

Philippe Roger is probably perfectly – is certainly perfectly qualified for this discussion today. He is not only the author of a book called "L'Ennemi Américain," but he also wrote a book on Sade, so he can sort of combine a lot of elements here today. (Laughter.) He is currently the program director at the French National Center for Scientific Research. Since 1995 he has been a professor at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales. In addition, he is the executive editor of a periodical called *Critique*. I think at one point in our lives, all of us have wanted to work for a periodical called *Critique*. From 1981 to 1985 he was an associate professor in the French Department at NYU. He has served as special bicentennial visiting professor at UCLA, and as a Bacon Associate at Harvard University in 2001.

I don't think I have to do much to introduce Walter Mead. He is one of the most creative thinkers on both American history and foreign policy in our nation. He is, I think singularly responsible for a revival in the view of Andrew Jackson in intellectual circles in the United States. I certainly hope at some point today he mentions Andrew Jackson. I have a feeling it just might come up. He is a senior fellow for U.S. foreign policy at the Council on Foreign Relations. He is the author of "Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How it Changed the World." "Special Providence" received the Lionel Gelber Award for the best book in English on international relations in 2002. He writes regularly on international affairs for the LA Times. He has appeared in just about every newspaper you've ever heard of, with commentary on foreign policy, including the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, the International Herald Tribune, the Washington Post and the Financial Times. His chief intellectual interests revolve around the question of the rise and development of a liberal capitalist world order, based on economic, social and military power of the United States.

And finally, Justin Vaisse, whom I hope will call upon that wonderful op-ed piece he wrote in the Washington Post, which is one of the few moments where people actually laughed about the problems between France and the United States, and then they went back to screaming. But it was a wonderful, wonderful piece. He is a visiting fellow at the Center on the United States and France here at the Brookings Institution. He's focusing on U.S. foreign policy, transatlantic relations, French and European foreign policy, and Islam and France. He was a lecturer at the Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris from 1999 to 2002. He was an external consultant at the Quai d'Orsay from September 1998 to July 1999. He was a speechwriter for Defense Minister Alain Richard. And from 1996 to 1997 he was a visiting fellow and teaching assistant at Harvard University.

I welcome all three of you. I will go in the order listed on the program. Philippe will start, followed by Walter, followed by Justin. Thank you all very much for coming.

Philippe.

PHILIPPE ROGER: Thank you very much for your presentation. I'm very happy to be in this prestigious place for the first time. I hope the jetlag will not impair my English too much. I apologize in advance if it's the case.

I'm also glad to come as a kind of particular character on this panel since I'm a cultural historian; I'm not a political scientist. And cultural historians, as you know, are always inclined to predict the past but are much more reluctant and uneasy when asked about the future.

French historian Marc Bloch, a very famous historian – one of the renovators of French history -- of the Annales school, once wrote, "Ignoring the past is the surest way to misinterpret the present." But although most historians would agree with this saying, they usually shy from the hot job to interpret the present and content themselves with providing strict data for others to use, and maybe reasonably so. I'll try, nevertheless, to address some of the questions that have been proposed by Philip Gordon in his introductive remarks. In my remarks I would like to put some aspects of the present into perspective while trying not to duck entirely the central issue of today and maybe tomorrow, French-American relationship, which we could roughly summarize this way: how bad and for how long.

The past is made of real events, but also made of woven representations and misrepresentations. And the past is a crucial element, I think, for grasping the state of affairs today between France and the U.S., to evaluate damages, so to speak, in this relation. To measure the depth of the wound, immaterial elements must be taken into account, along with more practical considerations. Even though the most pragmatic aspect of the crisis – the word "pragmatic" as you know, is very fashionable in Paris these days. Even the most pragmatic elements of the crisis have to be integrated into this elusive, mostly rational context, which I have tried to describe in the aforementioned book, "The American Enemy."

This factor is the long-term, typically French anti-Americanism, which is part of the French tradition, and in some way a French identity, in my eyes. It has found its counterpart, this anti-Americanism, here in this country under the guise of what could be called galloping gallophobia in the past weeks or months. Rift, cleavage, fracture – whatever name you choose to give it, the situation has been, in the past month, and still is, basically a war of words. After all, we don't have a trade war, even though there are some hints to boycotts or economic fallouts, and not real war. As you may know, France has not been invaded yet, although it was announced in a mock version of Le Monde that you find on the Internet announcing the invasion of France by a coalition of America, Great Britain and the Principauté de Monaco -- (laughter) – a coalition determined to teach a lesson to the leading country of the, quote, "axis of incorrection."

However, such a war of words is not only a game of names, bad names at that, it has its own casualties: truth, confidence and opportunities. It doesn't kill soldiers but it cripples the future itself, and all the more so if it reopens the wounds of the past. Hence, I believe the importance of exploring those wounds and the importance of being candid

and cruel, maybe sadistic, about the past century and a half of the French-American relationship. I think it's very important at this point to be lucid about our shared mythology of eternal friendship: Washington – (speaks in French) – used to remind us, calling it, bizarrely, "Hollywood in concept," which is rather a strange declaration by – (unintelligible) – in the 1960s. But of course Hollywood didn't produce that myth, nor did Hollywood invent what I would call this pasteurized past, that France and American regularly put on the table—camembert, of sorts, clean but not very tasty. (Laughter.)

For a less idealized and more provocative reading of the French-American riddle, we would have to turn to the entire story of – (unintelligible) – presentation, which is clearly not what I'm going to do in this few minutes, in lieu of which I would like to quote a statesman who was regarded in his own times a one of the closest friends of the U.S., to the point of being denounced by adversaries as "manservant of the Yankees." This man is André Tardieu, and this is what he wrote in 1934: "In history, France and America have only shared short-lived alliances, immediately followed by periods of deep crisis. Those moments of alliances were based on shared interests, but neither friendship nor sentimental sympathy could prevent the two countries from drifting apart as soon as the shared interest ceased to exist," end quote – a sobering vision, to say the least. That vision came to Tardieu before the Second World War.

What Tardieu was suggesting in 1934 I think is two-fold. On the one hand, as a political realist, he's inviting us to go to the material core of the relationship – interest -- but also, as a constant pro-American in his actions, desperately fighting against the prevailing anti-Americanism of the French political and intellectual milieu of the 1930s. He is a perfect illustration – well, nearly – of the difficulty to fight back against this anti-Americanism with the weapons of reason alone, and to roll back, so to speak, the dark images produced by Americanophobia, with the sole consideration of France's well understood interests.

I'm quoting Tardieu as a reminder and maybe a clue for the present situation, when we should forget neither aspect of the problem. It's perfectly sound and potentially efficient to try and determine what are the shared converging interests of the two nations at this moment, if any. But it would be a great mistake to limit the inquiry to that sphere of the reality and ignore that negative representations have always played, and still play, a crucial role in French-American relationships.

Anti-Americanism, as I see it – and I've tried to document it – is a long-term affair. It's a sedimentation of various negative discourses. Layer after layer, the French anti-American narrative has become a stumbling block. It's sitting in the way of the best-intentioned moves towards clarification and renewed cooperation. It's all the more important not to underestimate the weight of those negative representations, that they have deep root in the French political and moral psyche.

I think I should make myself very clear here. I am not defending the opinion that every French-American crisis is a sheer repetition of the previous ones. History cannot repeat itself, even when trying to. What I'm saying is even less palatable in some way.

I'm saying that every major crisis, whatever the rationality or even legitimacy of its origins, irresistibly and automatically enters the preexisting frame of French anti-American narratives. There is a cumulative effect of the anti-American tradition, and this cumulative effect is a major reason for the aggravation of the present crisis.

In this war of words, the same words come back over and again, but they come back each time more loaded with negative effects, hostile connotations, accumulated resentment. They don't only come from the past, they come bringing back the past to the present, the non-pasteurized past.

We might have found many illustrations of that negative alchemy of the words. Time allowing I would have liked to dwell on the notion of arrogance, but I will be very brief. I think arrogance has been a key word on both sides of the Atlantic in the present crisis – arrogance, which is also called, more diplomatically, unilateralism, as we know it. When the last common discourse on both sides of the Atlantic is a mutual accusation of hubris, there are indeed reasons to worry.

Philip Gordon, on the phone, when we talked about a week ago, provided me with a wonderful quote by Henry Kissinger. I can't resist reading it to you and sharing it with you. "The interaction of the American leadership's personal humility and historical arrogance, and De Gaulle's personal arrogance and historical humility define the psychological gulf between Europe and America." This is Henry Kissinger's quote.

We would probably have to update that quote and adjust the analysis to the new protagonist, but the notion of personal arrogance or arrogance incarnated is very strong in the American political representation of France. I've read a piece by William Safire, I think 10 days ago, speaking in a very personal way of France' hubris and Mr. Chirac's hubris, and there are a few cartoons that I have, of course, no time to possibly show to you, unfortunately, where France is depicted as an arrogant, stupid hen covered with decorations and saying, in a very French accent, "My support for this war is wilting. I may withdraw my plane." (Laughter.)

But crossing, again, the Atlantic and taking refuge in my field of expertise, I would suggest that arrogance in the French-American discourse plays at a deeper level, and drew some very powerful preordained conceptions of America, and more generally of politics and the order of the world. On one hand, arrogance is the French heir to hubris, to the Greek word, "hubris." I recommend a close reading of Mr. de Villepin's lecture, delivered on March 27 at the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London. It's a very interesting piece, and I can't do justice to Mr. de Villepin's very elegant French if I translate bits of it, but it reads like, "A plan to balance équilibre, the balance necessary to any international action, legality, power and justice," end quote.

This équilibre, according to Mr. de Villepin, was kept even after the collapse of the USSR. Why? "Because," I quote him, "the U.S. proved able to make a moderate, sober use of their strength," end quote. And I think this is pure Hesiod, this is pure Theogony, direct from one of the most ancient Greek texts, political texts. It's both

political and moral. The political and moral tale is Hesiod, I remind you, started with the fable of the hawk and the nightingale, which is very apt for the situation, the hawk being on one side of the Atlantic, the nightingale I suppose singing on the other side, where Hesiod praised justice – decay in Greece against hubris, the lack of moderation, also translated occasionally by arrogance.

But this is only one side of the coin of the word arrogance, and you don't find the word arrogance spelled out in diplomatic circles. On the other end, you find "arrogance" everywhere in the French media, in the press, and even in every corner bistro you care to go in Paris these days. It's not only a psychological description, I think – and I would just say a few words about that before concluding. I can't dwell on the history of this representation of America as arrogant, but I'd like to give an idea of the three steps, because they are very interesting, and after all, as an historian, that's why I'm here I guess. So, a short history of the French representation as arrogant would start with step one: step one, the arrogant American at home.

Step one starts as early as the beginning of the 19th century. There is a quote by Talleyrand – it's supposed to have been told by Talleyrand to Napoleon, asking Talleyrand, well, you went to America; I know you were not very happy there, rather miserable in fact, but what do you think of the Americans? And Talleyrand answers – it's very difficult to translate – "Ce sont de fiers cochons, et des cochons fiers"– (laughter) – the Americans are real pigs, but proud pigs – or, and proud pigs. This is very interesting because this quote was enormously famous, not only in France but even in Great Britain when Mrs.Trollope (ph) quotes Tallyrand with great satisfaction. (Unintelligible) – found it the best joke in the world. Well, that's rather surprising.

Anyway, this is an interesting indication, and Tocqueville, in a more sober tone of voice, has an interesting analysis of the same phenomenon. I'm quoting Tocqueville now. "Because the American takes part in everything which is done is his country, he believes it to be his duty to defend his country against any criticism." And Tocqueville goes on saying, "It is no more his country now that he is defending but himself, so that in America national pride is ready to use all possible tricks and to abase itself to the level of childish personal conceit," end quote. That's Tocqueville, a friend of America, as everyone keeps repeating.

In this crisis, step two of this representation of arrogance would obviously have to do with the development of the empire. This notion of imperialism of power, or superpower, soon developed in France. And I don't want to dwell on this, but arrogance is linked from the beginning with the notion of an imperial strength of America, which emerged as early as the years 1880s and finds a kind of confirmation in the Cuban war – the war over Cuba and the Philippines against Spain, which is, I think, a crystallizing event for the French of the time.

Let me go very quickly to step three. As early as the 1920s, the theme of the arrogant invader finding new confirmation in real events -- after all, France has not been invaded yet, in the 1920s -- was metaphorized in France in a more general and

compressing vision of America as the absolute invader, cultural and otherwise. Arrogance could take a more general shape and another meaning, claiming – after all, this is the very meaning of arrogance – claiming for one self what you don't deserve to claim is what the Americans, in the French anti-American discourse, are doing constantly. And I think that America doesn't have necessarily to claim territories. More outrageously for the French, it started claiming the symbolic, moral, cultural leadership of the world, based on its newly conquered financial and economic diminution of the planet after the First World War.

Arrogance on behalf of the Americans betrays, for the French, the notion of usurpation. This usurpation, as another name -- which was coined, by the way, by no other than Charles Baudelaire -- it is the word "Americanization." So Baudelaire was the one to coin the word Americanization in the French language.

This is the short story of the link between arrogance and hegemony, hyper-power, super-power, a phrase which has been credited to Mr. Vedrine, but also because – (unintelligible) – to President Mitterrand himself, according to Mr. – (unintelligible) – it shouldn't be – further than that, one of the first to use the prefix "hyper" to describe everything American was a French philosopher, Jean Baudrillard, who more recently wrote a rather unfortunate, to say the least, article about 9/11 being like the preordained suicide of American society.

This is in this context that we may – and I'll skip here a few quotes that I would liked to make, including a quote by communist leader Jacques Duclos in 1951, describing "the insolent dictatorship that the Americans want to impose upon our country, a dictatorship of ignorant despots who despise everything they don't know and are absolutely certain of the superiority of the dollar," end quote. But I could quote certain others in the same period saying about the same thing.

I will stop here, and just for a few propositions for the debate, this crisis, although different from any previous crisis, feeds itself on the powerful fertilizer of the past. And repetition here means aggravation. That would be my first point. Second, the present crisis is different in several aspects – in important aspects. One is certainly the personality of the political leaders involved, but I will leave that point to people in this room more competent than I am.

The other difference I see is at the same time factual and symbolic. France didn't only – and that's something that Philip Gordon underlined previously – France didn't only defend its own vision of the Iraqi crisis, and didn't only refuse the American vision; France took the lead of a coalition at the U.N. and in the world to some extent, using public opinion support, citing public opinion support from foreign countries, and organized the "resistance," quote, unquote, to the American will. This is, I think, one of the important points, and probably one of the points which has been created most recently in this country.

An element of differentiation is the unprecedented media campaign of French bashing, at first contained in predictable circles, political and journalistic, in this country. (Unintelligible) – spread among the American public – and this is another question I'll leave open – has been massively publicized in France, and it has triggered a new, wide wave of anti-Americanism, even among many who were not typical customers of this discourse, while, at the same time, of course, most anti-American elements were comforted in their adamant rejection of American arrogance.

So the only good news on this front, which had been the opening of a very large and interesting debate about French anti-Americanism, that was the first time in a century that the question of anti-Americanism in France was debated openly. That was in the fore of last year. I'm afraid that the radicalization and polarization of discourse created by the new situation at the beginning of this year has already destroyed most of the benefits of that much-needed French introspection. I started quoting Tardieu back in the '30s. If I were obliged to draw any parallel, I would say that the present crisis, in terms of depth and bitterness, has probably no equivalent in French-American previous divorces, except maybe for the one which occurred after 1932 when France' unilateral decision decided not to repay its war debts to America.

As we know, even the election of another administration of a new president, of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, even that political change of great magnitude, combined with French eagerness to reestablish the transatlantic link in front of the Nazi menace, all these elements were not quite able to reverse, at least in time, the catastrophic course of events.

(Applause.)

MR. DIONNE: Thank you very much. I just want to note that the Tallyrand's insight gives a whole new meaning to the American phrase, bring home the bacon. (Scattered laughter.)

I want to give you Walter Mead. He is never a stale camembert; he is more like a sharp and tasty Monterey Jack or a Vermont and Wisconsin cheddar. Walter Mead – thank you very much.

WALTER MEAD: Well, E.J., I've never been introduced in quite those terms before. (Laughter.)

MR. DIONNE: You probably wish you never will be again.

MR. MEAD: I'll take it as a compliment and move on.

I would agree with Philippe Roger's basic assessment that what we see now in French-American relations is much more than the usual sort of Sturm und Drang that has characterized this relationship, really since the 18th century. And while gallophobia is not as well implanted in the United States as anti-Americanism is in France, for historical reasons, I think you would – looking back in American history for an analogous period, I

think you would see the Civil War era and the immediate years after the Civil War, when Napoleon III openly was pushing for European intervention on the side of the South, and used the opportunity of American weakness to install a Hapsburg regime in Mexico, the unfortunate Emperor Maximilian, and that this sort of period in U.S.-French relations culminated, from a French perspective I suppose, when Ulysses S. Grant sent a telegram of congratulations to Kaiser Wilhelm I for his victory in the Franco-Prussian war.

And we are probably in that general emotional tenor of relations at this time. Why is that? I think we have a somewhat complicated explanation with a number of factors. When you get a perfect storm, it takes more than one or two factors to create them, and I think it's a confluence of forces that have gotten us where we are, and it's worth looking at what they are. And sort of the first set of them have to do with not simply French-American bilateral relations, but the European-American relation because, obviously, the crisis or the situation that we're now in goes further than the boundaries of France and Europe, and you can't understand the Franco-American problems without understanding the EU or European-American problems.

I think we have two differences in perception between Europeans and at least some Americans over where we stand, that have led to really a violent kind of – a very emotional conflict here. Europe, generally speaking, thinks that it is on the ascent in world affairs, that it has defined its fundamental problem of weakness as one of division, and that the European Union, as a grand project will restore Europe to what Europeans instinctively feel is its rightful place as more or less the equal, though perhaps not in every dimension of power in exactly the same way as the United States; sort of, Europe will be the mom of the global power couple, as I've written, and America will be the dad, perhaps. And mom specializes in softer power; dad specializes in harder power, but mom and dad are roughly equivalent to one another and generally are in a sort of alliance vis-à-vis the children, i.e. the non-Euro-American parts of the world.

And from the American perspective – again, not the entire American perspective but certainly one strongly represented in this administration – what we've got is a little bit different. The view is that Europe is failing demographically, economically, militarily, the sort of civilian culture, in terms even of cultural imagination. There's sense – this is a very old sense in America by the way of Europe as the failed Old World with no future, in contrast to the rising star here – Columbia's rising star. And so there's this American tendency, I think, to see European consolidation as less the emergence of a new, great power, but rather people on a sinking ship, huddling closer and closer together. And so, as people move from the lower parts of the sinking ship to the higher parts of the sinking ship, on an individual basis they may be getting further from the water, but the ship is going down.

And for this perception of Europe to change, probably at least with a lot of Americans, you would have to see a massive wave of Thatcherite economic reforms, you know, far beyond anything that is on any realistic European political agenda today. You'd have to see substantial, prolonged increases in military spending, you know, sort of at or around 3 percent of GDP for the foreseeable future, and probably the admission

of Turkey into the EU. These things, taken together, would probably make Americans take Europe seriously as a power, but probably none of them are going to happen, any time soon certainly.

So, at the same time, Europe is feeling, now is the time where we should be treated more equally by the United States, the United States is in a mood of, now is the time we pay less and less attention to them because they are mattering less and less. And you will certainly hear in some American circles, had Europe gone with us in Iraq, the war would not have ended one day sooner. There would not have been one fewer American fighting person dead, perhaps more because with more of these interoperable forces working with us there might have been more friendly fire, and furthermore, Al Jezeera wouldn't have been anymore sympathetic to the war project, that the Islamic world would have seen all the crusaders, all the imperialists united. So, in that sense, why pay a high price for European participation when the payoff is seen as low?

And I think Europe – in general, there is a very different estimation in the European sense of what it does provide – the value of what it does provide to the United States. That is, you know, help with reconstruction and peacekeeping. These are very nice, but I think if Europe were to suddenly say, okay, fine, we're not going to help you with peacekeeping anymore, the Americans would sort of work with India, I don't know, work with some other countries and develop peacekeeping forces that would be able to do this. And in terms of the reconstruction contracts and reconstruction funding, there's a cynical American view that when EU countries provide money for reconstruction it's generally so that their own companies get more contracts, and perhaps, you know, we can manage without their assistance.

So I think Europe and the United States place very different valuations on Europe's contributions to the American agenda around the world, and we are now seeing in a sense Europe has gone on strike by refusing to provide these. America is now holding a lockout, at least against France, and we will see how this industrial relations dispute works out as both parties, you know, sort of probably come to some kind of – something closer to a joint and more realistic vision of how much each party is worth to the other.

It is also true that the United States is much less amenable to this idea of Europe and the United States as the global power couple. The U.S., looking ahead into the 21st century, is probably moving away from the sort of monogamous pair bond that Europe would like to see with North America, with the United States, into something more, I don't know, Islamic, I could say, where the United States might have several wives and treat them all equally, and that, for the future of the United States, China, India and some of these other – it's not so much that the United States wants to divorce Europe and get a new trophy wife, but it is that it would like to have, you know, in perhaps a more gallic fashion, several relationships. (Laughter.)

So, in this very strategic way, the United States sees Europe, over the course of the 21st century, being much less the center of American interest, concern, and so on, than

in the past. And, again, this is at a time when Europe, feeling its oats – united, powerful, the Euro – is finding that the United States, which to some degree remains the global ratifier of power and significance, is not treating Europe with the respect Europe thought it was going to get, and thinks it deserves.

Well, so now we move from the troubled sphere of U.S.-European relations to the even more troubled sphere of U.S.-French relations. And I think what we've got to understand here is that certainly – I am rather sure not by design or even malign intention – the French policy of the last few months could not have been designed better to drive a deep and lasting wedge between U.S. and French governments and peoples. One can perhaps also make arguments that U.S. policy had its own shortcomings, but I'm responsible here on this platform to talk about an American view and let others provide the other points of view here.

And I think what you've got is that the French relationship with the United States has been difficult since World War II because France has wanted a very unique understanding of what an alliance with America means. In other words, France wants – it's almost impossible to avoid yet another marital metaphor here, and we seem to be wallowing in them today. You know, France wants to live in the beautiful house of a rich husband, but it wants its own private life, and no questions asked about how many tennis lessons it's taking. (Laughter.) And, you know, a very handsome young tennis pro, but, honey, in the end, I'm always with you; my heart belongs to daddy. And France will be with the United States, and its true loyalty is to the United States. Nevertheless, it leads an independent life.

Well, this kind of concept of alliance is not necessarily unrealistic or inappropriate or anything else, the triangulation approach, but it does demand a certain degree of fidelity and trust on the part of daddy. That is to say, he really does have to believe that she's not cheating on him on the side or that when the chips are down, she can be relied on. And unfortunately, the result in American opinion of what's happened in the last few months, is that it's now much more plausible in the United States to think of France as a cunning enemy rather than as a difficult friend. That is to say, France only wants to get close enough to you so it can stab you in the back more effectively, and that probably is – I'm not speaking personally, but that probably is the predominant American popular view of France now, and the support in the United States for the privileged position France has in the past asserted in the Atlantic Alliance, has largely disappeared, and it will not be restored anytime soon. I think that has happened. It is a fact.

And beneath all of the sort of very humorous comments that you hear in magazines and the usual sort of radio talk shows and lines from "The Simpsons," and so on, this reality – people of the United States do not think of France as an ally and friend at this point, and have moved on. And you will hear – and I think in the elite, at least the part of the elite best represented in this administration, doesn't see a significant cost to proceeding on that basis. So you hear phrases emanating from high circles in Washington like, you know, make up with Russia, ignore the problems with Germany, punish France. And France is seen as the weakest and also the most annoying member of

what was called here, "the axis of weasels," is obviously the target for punishment, and the anger that one is too prudent to employ against Russia or Germany can be safely discharged on France. That, I think, is certainly in the public view. That's one of the reasons France has been such a target, rather than Germany or Russia, for the American popular reaction.

And again, very unfortunately, the French decisions on the second resolution of the United Nations had the effect of being a tax on the Powell policy, the element of American policy that was multilaterlist and seeking to place a high value on relations with Europe and European partners, and was really prepared to pay what I think was a quite reasonable price for French support on the United Nations. And unfortunately, and tragically, what happened was that France gave an illustration which, again, among the American political class, will long be remembered: don't trust them because you can't count on them. Secretary Powell went out on a tremendous limb to work with France. He got nothing, is the view.

Again, I don't pretend to be here presenting American views and opinions as an objective fact that the recording angels will read as the official summary of events on the day of judgment, but in terms of evaluating the future of Franco-American relations, it must be understood that the party most deeply injured and affronted by what happened – (audio break, tape change) – that is most disposed; the element in American politics most disposed to cooperate and collaborate.

So it is not that Rumsfeld was angry. Probably, you know, the sort of hard-line side of the administration was pleased because it gave them an opportunity to demonstrate that a president of the United States doesn't need Security Council validation to carry the American people with him into a war, even a war under somewhat, you know, questionable justifications in terms of traditional American justifications for intervening in another country. You see a lot of polls saying, you know, 70 percent of Americans would only like the U.S. to go to war overseas with Security Council blessing, but what Rumsfeld seems to have understood, and others in this administration, is if you flip that question and ask, should France, Russia and China, either jointly or severally, individually be able to veto an important American initiative, you'd be very lucky to get 15 percent of the American people agreeing with that proposition.

So the French action had the effect of unmasking the Security Council. People got a look into the sausage factory, so to speak, and de-legitimated the Security Council in American politics to an extraordinary extent. And again, what this means is that liberal internationalists in the United States are going to feel that France is, at best, a dangerous partner.

Well, where do we go from here? I'm not sure, actually, what we do now. The trouble is that what was done was done after a long process of deliberation, was done at a moment of crisis, was done very publicly, and the United States does hold grudges. It really does hold grudges. Those of you familiar with my book know about Jacksonian America and how Jacksonians can hold grudges for a very long time. You still find, with

countries like Vietnam, countries like North Korea, certainly countries like Cuba, an attempt to conduct pragmatic policy by the United States runs up against enormous political inertia, hostility, suspicion, because of these grudges. Now, France has not placed itself on the level of North Korea, but it has placed itself on the same side of the ledger in the American mind, if not as far over on the scale, on the Jacksonian mind. And one would need a change, a perception – I think it's hard to imagine, anytime soon, an American thaw without a first step coming from the French side, and the step would need to be rather dramatic and clear.

Again, I don't say any of this arguing that the American view is the only view of the crisis, and certainly one can look back and see that there are things that the U.S. could have done better or perhaps should not have done at all. But for much time, American gallophobia has been a minor element in American politics. It's not something that policy elites have either felt much themselves or been much obliged to pay heed to. That has probably changed, and generally speaking, it is difficult for another country to make a powerful impression on the massive Americans, most of whom do not pay that close attention all the time to everything going on out there in the world. But for the same reason, once a powerful impression has been made, it is very, very difficult to efface.

And because France has always seen the alliance as one where France needs to an unusual degree of freedom, which therefore does require an unusual degree of trust from the other partner in the alliance, we have a lot of rethinking to do about how and if the United States and France go forward in the future. Again, personally, I think both of us, both countries benefit from finding a way over these difficulties, but with Philippe Roger, I believe we'll do ourselves no favor at all if we underestimate the serious difficulties that exist or bring anything less than a clear and frank discussion and attitude to the table.

Thank you very much for your patience and interest.

(Applause.)

MR. DIONNE: One of the many joys of reading or listening to Walter is his use of metaphor. I counted nautical metaphors, collective bargaining metaphors, sexual metaphors, and I had this vision of Walter, Ruth or John L. Lewis as the captain of a sinking ship, grounded on the way to Las Vegas. (Scattered laughter.) So to rescue –

MR. : (Off mike.)

MR. DIONNE: Justin is going to rescue this ship, and I think Walter – I hope someone in the course of this answers the question that Walter implicitly put on the table, which is this breakdown, that critical moment, the breakdown between Powell and France is so important to this entire mess that we are in now, and I hope that people can shed some light on that.

Justin, welcome, and thank you.

JUSTIN VAISSE: Thanks. So I'm Justin Vaisse, and I'm working here at the Center on the U.S. and "Freedom." (Laughter.) Let me begin by reading three excerpts from the New York Times. The first one is, "By all appearances, France is becoming increasingly irritated by what it sees as the unwarranted anti-French campaign being waged by Americans to punish the country for having rejected cooperation with the United States. The French furor over what Le Point has labeled 'francophobia' has been growing. Some commentators concede that Americans have cancelled summer vacations, partly because of the declining value of the dollar, but most see the vacation moves as politically inspired, a campaign likely to hurt the French economy."

The second excerpt is the following: "Talk of an American boycott of French goods and the possibility of a dramatic decline in American tourists to France, are making French businessmen nervous. 'Until such time as you again become aware of what England and the United States have done for your country, we can no longer do business with you', said Mr. Metius , the American owner of a printing business."

The third excerpt is the following: "Representative Samuel Stratton, Democrat of upstate New York, charged today that France was trying to undermine the United States, and urged Americans to stop visiting France and buying French wines."

As I'm sure you've guessed, the first excerpt is from 1986, the second one is from 1967, and the third one is from 1966. So is my conclusion, contrary to Walter and Philippe, "Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose"? Unfortunately, no, I don't think it's the case. I think that the crisis of 2003 has new characteristics that set it apart from other waves of francophobia here and France bashing, and that will be the subject of my talk here. And I'm going to try to concentrate, in this short presentation, on the elements that distinguish this wave from the previous one.

I think that the first new element is the spread, as Walter pointed out, in the general American population of a negative image of France. Traditionally, a mostly positive image of France, linked to its reputation for good food, high fashion or sophisticated tourism, coexisted with a somewhat negative image in some elite circles. After all, francophobia has always existed in America since the early days of the republic. But the most single important element was definitely indifference, even during the diplomatic crisis of the '60s and the '80s. Now, it seems to me that the general public has a somewhat more ingrained image of France, and this image is clearly negative.

The second new element in this crisis that we've witnessed is the strong identification of francophobia with Republican and conservative circles. Indeed, France bashing has become part of right-wing popular culture. Bashing France has become a way to express one's patriotism, some would say jingoism. Signs like "Iraq is French for Hollywood," or even more explicitly, "Tom Daschle for president of France," and a rally for America in March, 2003 demonstrates that sentiment for France has become heavily polarized.

Indeed, according to a very recent poll, there was essentially no difference in evaluation of France by party in May 2000. Now, three years after, the Republicans are driving the changes in ratings. Republicans who see France as unfriendly or as an enemy have jumped from 6 to 52 percent, whereas the increase for Democrats has been from 7 to 29 percent. That's for the bad news, but, as Walter said, the good news is that we're still ahead of the North Koreans. (Scattered laughter.)

The third new element is the virulence of this new wave of francophobia. And I don't think it's exaggerated to say that some of its expressions have become far worse than any current expression of French anti-Americanism. One good example is the use of animals to insult the French, and you don't find that in French anti-Americanism, at least since Tallyrand. (Laughter.)

You have of course the famous phrase, "the cheese-eating surrender monkeys," coming from "The Simpsons," but also the example of the New York Post, which showed the doctored front-page photo in which the heads of the French and German ambassadors to the U.N. were replaced by weasel faces. Chirac has also been compared to a rat in the mainstream press by Christopher Hitchens. And so, actually, these kind of – this type of insult you would actually not find in French anti-Americanism.

Another example, it seems to me, is conspiracy theories. A lot has been made about Thierry Meyssan's infamous anti-American conspiracy theory about 9/11, but it has provoked a unanimous and heartfelt condemnation from across the French political spectrum and – whereas conspiracies here on purported military assistance to Saddam, on the supposed help given to fleeing Iraqis, on the sharing of classified information with the Iraqi government, et cetera, are brought up by mainstream intellectual and political figures, and I'm thinking of William Safire, Newt Gingrich, Michael Ledeen or the Washington Times in general.

New Gingrich declared that "France had twisted Turkish arms to block a vote in favor of the United States using Turkish soil to create a northern front" – and that's a quote from his recent speech two weeks ago. Indeed, it's true that the Americans only offered them $26 billion to override 95 of the public opinion to support Washington's position, but as we all know, it's really Paris that calls the shot in Ankara. (Scattered laughter.)

So how do we explain this latest wave of francophobia and its specificity? I won't get into much detail about the – let's say the traditional or the general causes of francophobia. Let me just mention them, and they are actually largely the same as the ones that explain anti-Americanism in France and in other countries.

First, it's a booster of identity and self-pride, and in this respect, France is in an interesting position. It's close enough and exotic enough to be rejected, to serve as a useful stooge for self-glorifying and self-righteous discourses.

It's also – second point – explained by – basically by diverging democratic models of society on such fundamental issues as the role of the state, the conception of the general interest, the proper place of religion, management of minorities, and all that.

Third, I think the use of negative stereotyping, were it for anti-Americanism or for francophobia, allows one to change the very focus of the debate, the very nature of the debate by disqualifying the other country through the use of these stereotypes – the U.S. is hegemonic, it is violent, it's racist, et cetera; or on the other hand, France is coward or anti-Semitic or whatever – rather than addressing the point of view. Indeed, it's easier to say that, for example, the U.S. is hegemonic rather than to address some of the points that were made in favor of the war – that's for French anti-Americanism.

Four, I think it would be – an important element would be the lack of political correctness. You were talking about the non-existence of an anti-French defamation league, and I think that's pretty much the point. I think that many anti-French jokes are stereotypes, like military cowardness or body odor, would be unacceptable if they dealt with other people. You wouldn't see the New York Post replace the face of an African, of an Israeli or a Mexican official with an animal face.

And last but not least, of course, I think all this has to do with the actions of the French themselves. To some extent francophobia exists because France agrees to it and agrees to pay this price for its independent foreign policy.

So the question would be – what makes this wave of francophobia specific. I think there are basically two elements. The first one is 9/11 and the other one is the encouragement of francophobia by the Bush administration, which represents a real major difference from other crises, especially the ones of the '60s – the way, for example, LBJ handled the crisis with De Gaulle – or maybe even of the 1980s.

So the first point is that many Americans, as Walter said, have become anti-French because they consider that France has basically betrayed America, has stabbed Washington in the back at a critical juncture for its national security. This is I think because the climate has changed since 9/11. This time they fear for their very security, and many of them that – many of them think that Iraq is actually linked to 9/11 and that the invasion of Iraq has actually made them safer from terrorism, which I personally don't think is the case.

The Bush administration has used 9/11 in a very clever and efficient way, and it could do the same overnight for other countries. I mean, for example, it could claim overnight that Pakistan possesses nuclear weapons, harbors terrorists, is an autocratic regime and that America can't sleep quietly one night longer with the danger it represents and should face its responsibility and should take military action. And most Americans would probably agree with that, and any country that disagrees or gets in the way with – disagrees with the threat assessment would be a traitor to be punished. So I think that's one way that 9/11 has changed the climate and the relationship with other countries.

I think a sort of renewed sense of patriotism since 9/11 has certainly been a driving force behind the recent spike of francophobia and that certainly a very important element to understand transatlantic relations as a whole. Indeed the pro-war "rallies for America" in favor of the war have witnessed the most heated francophobe rhetoric – "Bomb France Now," "Iraq Now, France Next" were some of the bumper stickers that were distributed in these rallies. That's why, for example, there's no real – this patriotism thing is the reason why there is no real distinction between Chirac and France. The French – and maybe we can talk about that – are not massively anti-American. Some of them of course are, but much less so than in the past. They are anti-Bush.

The Americans are not anti-Chirac; they are anti-French, and unlike most Europeans, they consider – Americans consider that they are at war and that their national security is at stake. For them it's not just foreign policy disagreement; it's a national offense.

Let me get to my second point – the instrumentalization by the Bush administration. On March 5th of this year, President Bush declared, "There is an interesting phenomena taking place here in America about the French, and there is a backlash against the French not stirred up by anybody except by the people." This thesis of a spontaneous reaction by the American people against France doesn't tell the whole story, and there are many indications that the administration, indirectly and through its political allies, has indeed encouraged francophobia in its popular forums. First there's of course a sort of indirect involvement. The administration has created a climate in which stigmatization of any kind of dissent, whether domestic or international, could thrive. It's the rationale repeated many times by the president: either you are with us or you are with the terrorists.

The Bush administration has also used what I would call the French card – the myth of a filibustering and unreasonable France to account for its own diplomatic failure to gain even nine votes in the United Nations, even though it didn't force a vote as was announced by the president on March 6th, which clearly showed that France indeed was not alone in advocating the reinforcement of the inspection process.

The Bush administration used specifically President Chirac's sentence on March 10 – "Ma position, c'est que, quelles que soient les circonstances, la France votera non parce qu'elle considère ce soir qu'il n'y a pas lieu de faire une guerre pour atteindre l'objectif que nous nous sommes fixé" – as a pledge to always to veto – and here I translate – a second resolution "whatever the circumstances" in Iraq. But actually whatever the circumstances was, in this interview, a clear reference to however the other nations in the Security Council might vote, and not a reference to what was happening on the ground in Iraq; that is, if the conditions changed, this was – this "whatever the circumstances" thing was not applying. Thus France was clearly designated by the Bush administration as a scapegoat to account for the administration's own diplomatic failure.

The second stimulus of this spontaneous – so-called spontaneous wave of France bashing is the active intervention of some media and has been already talked about that.

The political allies of the administration – pundits like Charles Krauthammer, Michael Kelly, George Will, William Safire – are good examples in this category. Whatever the seriousness and the basis of for their allegations against France, they are used and repeated by other conservative commentators, and they become conventional wisdom, and comfort the image of a perfidious nation that stabs the U.S. in the back.

And a second specific category of France-bashing media is made up of Rupert Murdoch outlets – they range from the low-brow Fox News Network to the much more intellectual Weekly Standard magazine, and include the New York Post, a tabloid, and its British counterparts. And it has been a constant position of all Murdoch media outlets to urge for a war in Iraq and bash France and use negative stereotypes and insults when referring to it.

In other words – and I don't want to be misinterpreted on that – while there is no doubt that many patriotic Americans resented French President Jacques Chirac's policy vis-à-vis Iraq, and took a spontaneously took a negative view of France as the result, the Bush administration and its allies in the media have encouraged concrete expressions in the recent spike of francophobia because it was in their political interest to do so to muster domestic support, and the role played by Republicans in Congress, especially Dennis Hastert, in fanning anti-French sentiment, should also be noted.

I'll stop with that as a conclusion. I think we will – we should probably see – and there's been talk about that – the current crisis in the broader context of the souring of transatlantic relations and of what Americans have – some commentators have called a global American Europhobia. But for all the signs that Europe as a whole may ease the burden of the French and become the new villain in Washington, I think there are other signs that point out with specificity to an enduring and really specific anti-French bias. Not many countries have the costly privilege of being so close and yet so different from the the American Superpower and of being at the same time its oldest ally and its first critic.

Thanks.

(Applause.)

MR. DIONNE: I think what I'd like to do -- with Philip's permission, we could go over a little bit. I looked at the schedule; it looked like that was planned into the schedule.

I'm wondering if Philip has a response – are you miked up over there? And then what I'd like to do is turn to our distinguished audience, and while you folks answer some of the thoughts and questions. You might also consider responding to each other as you see fit.

But Philip, do you want to just say anything in response?

MR. GORDON: No, I think the audience has been patient enough. There's been a lot of interesting things said, a lot of provocative things, and I think we should open the floor to them.

MR. DIONNE: So who – who has the first question. Ah, sir. We have a mike – we have two – (unintelligible) -- the next – who wants to – Mr. Pisar (ph) up front. Could you bring a mike over to Sam Pisar. Sir?

Q: Chuck Cogan, Kennedy School. My view is that this is a very serious crisis because you have two of the major powers in the western alliance went to war and the other two major powers didn't, so we're now in a matter of blood – there wasn't much blood, but there's blood.

Secondly, this Big Three existed for the whole last century, from the First World War onward. It didn't always function very well, but there were always meetings – the Bermuda meeting in '53, et cetera. They were a team – Britain, the United States and France. This is now broken.

MR. MEAD: Well, I would agree with you to some degree, and I think part of what we're seeing, by the way, is for the last 50 years international relations have been very slow to move if you look at historic patterns; that in everything else about the world has become sort of more fluid, more volatile – economies change much more quickly, industries rise and fall, cultural things change more quickly, but international relations since the 1940s – and for obvious reasons – have tended to stay rather fixed. I think part of what we're seeing now in the new dances of allies and enemies in the world is that we are going to see international relations less institutionalized and more volatile. People will change partners more often and more frequently.

That poses special problems for the U.S.-French relation because, again, this idea of the hyper-independent ally presupposes to some degree a strong institutional continuity in international life where basic facts like alliance membership aren't frequently questioned or challenged. So I think we are in volatile era and that is contributing to the crisis.

MR. DIONNE: Anyone else?

Sam Pisar?

Q: I have a comment, Mr. Mead, and a question to the panel as a whole. Mr. Mead, I would like to challenge your assertion that America bears grudges – long-term, incurable grudges. I don't think that was the case vis-à-vis Japan; it was not the case vis-à-vis Germany; it doesn't seem to be the case vis-à-vis Russia. Please reassure us, please qualify that we are not in a situation here where the United States is going to bear grudges against France, even though France does presumably merit some kind of a lesson in this situation.

MR. MEAD: Those countries had the good taste to admit surrender or defeat. (Laughter.) And it's true – when a country collapses or surrenders, Americans don't hold grudges. It's the failure to observe that important ritual – (laughter) – that causes difficulty.

Q: I fear you are painting a very pessimistic vision of the future – of our future together. I think it would be a pity to leave that impression.

My question to the panel is this: It is obvious, I think, from everything we've heard and from everything that we observe that in the long and troubled history of the Franco-American marriage this is perhaps the most serious crisis in recent memory.

What I would like to know is this: Is it a crisis which, like the other crises, will dissipate in due course, or are we faced here with a situation where now that there is no other superpower and America isn't challenged, that France is deliberately leading a charge with Russia, with Germany, which intends to contain American power – in which case we are facing a very serious and conflictual situation? Could the panel focus on this and tell us which is it, if a simple answer is at all possible? Thank you.

MR. DIONNE: Philippe, why don't you start?

MR. ROGER: Well, I think you are coming back to the – your first point. I do feel that – there's a key phrase in the American response to the situation, which has been "there will be consequences," and I found it extremely interesting that this phrase, which is being widely replayed by the French press, has struck the French enormously, and I think it has struck the French enormously for one good reason, which is that for more than a century in what could be described as a kind of (Sartrean about face ?), the French practiced anti-Americanism with the secret idea that there would be no consequence ever – although I don't think it was true. I mean, I think there were consequences that were not perceived, or ill understood, and I was mentioning the end of the 1930s as one of these moments with – where, directly or indirectly, the isolation was part of the problem. But I think that this very long period of time that French anti-Americanism was all the more widespread, thriving in a very quiet way, with no insults, as Justin noticed, with not that kind of violent feeling of betrayal and aggression, which is clearly present in American – in the American obfuscation (?) of these days. So I think that that's a very important point, and this is also a new element in the present equation.

MR. DIONNE: Justin?

MR. VAISSE: Nothing specific.

MR. DIONNE: Do you have something on that, Walter, and if I could piggyback on that question, it's a double question – one, to go back to why the breakup with Powell, which – at that critical moment, how do you analyze that? And the other is the sense – and Justin referred to this – that there seemed to be domestic political uses to this anti-French feeling. How do you kind of parse that in terms of American politics?

MR. MEAD: Well, I can't really tell you what went on between Powell and the French, but I – it's no secret to people around Washington that the State Department has felt betrayed by what happened – whether it was because they didn't understand sufficiently clearly or whether they were misled, who can say? But that's the situation. And I find the fact that the Bush administration finds it politically useful to at least give countenance to anti-French feeling as, you know, an element – this administration has a fairly good sense for where popularity is, and that they find this to be a promising tactic shouldn't reassure us to say, well, it's officially promoted, but should say, oh-oh, if you want – if you want to get elected in America, bash France – at least that's what a lot of people are thinking.

But to get to the core of your question, you know, I – personally, again, I think that rhetoric of punishing France is unfortunate and misjudged. One doesn't punish a country. But I think the more broad issue of consequences – what American statesman now wouldn't prefer to do important business in a room where there was no French representative? It simply makes sense not to have the French present when important decisions are taken, and that will be an American disposition now. It was true before last winter in the Defense Department; it's now much truer in the State Department that it has been in the past.

And I think really the – there is a question for France here. Is it willing to continue a – sort of a policy of – that can be interpreted, even by over sensitive Americans, as attempting to contain the United States, faced with consequences? Or was that a strategic error that needs to be reversed and France needs to learn to live happily with unipolarity. To some degree, the future of U.S.-European relations does not greatly involve Paris. It's a Washington-Berlin issue; that if Washington and Berlin find a way to go together, there will be – old Europe will cease to exist as an anti-American possible front, and French isolation on this issue would be complete. Germany would sort of take a step toward Warsaw and London. And I think calculations of national interest make that rather likely, though not inevitable.

So France is in a rather difficult position, and it now needs to ask itself did we mean what we said, and I don't really know the answer. I think they thought they did when they said it, but again, I think Philippe Roger may be right, that a century of being able to play a kind of a double game created a false confidence that yet another time this maneuver could be employed without consequence.

MR. DIONNE: Thank you. Dutch Allman (sp) has the mike, I believe, then this gentleman over here, you – had you raised your hand, sir? And then Norman Birnbaum and right next to him. So if this gentleman could get a mike and start us off. So why don't we collect a few comments because we're going to have to shut this down. The – go ahead, sir.

Q: I'm Bob Lieber from Georgetown University. I wonder whether, as brilliant and insightful as the panel participants were – and I think they really gave us some –

went far beyond the typical conventional wisdom – whether nonetheless there's a tendency to extrapolate an existing downward trajectory without sufficient sense of the fundamentals. By that I mean even though I think there's fair reason to say that both Chirac and Villepin engaged in altogether too much hubris and were intoxicated by their own positions and went well beyond what De Gaulle and Mitterrand and Pompidou and so on always understood not to do -- despite those things, the argument would be then in fact there ain't going to be a U.S.-European rupture or really a truly fundamental U.S.-France rupture, and the reason is that neither the French nor the Europeans have a viable option; that is, France cannot build a successful containing or balancing coalition. The Europeans are too divided, Europe is too weak in defense terms and will not, for any time in the foreseeable future, have a defense option. The Europeans need the U.S. for security reasons.

There are shared economic interests in that both the U.S. and Europe are each other's major partner. Both have a shared interest in the viability and institutions of the existing economic regimes, and despite strong value differences, they are what Freud called the narcissism of small differences, and if you look globally, the U.S. and Europe still share far more in value terms than what divides them. So the implication is that although we are seeing the perfect storm, and one shouldn't minimize the damage that has been done, it would be a mistake to extrapolate from this, and more likely the recipe remains serious trouble, but no divorce.

MR. DIONNE: Thank you. The allusion – the first allusion to Robert Kagan.

This gentleman over here, if we could bring the mike there, and then pass it next to – right next to you to Norman Birnbaum if you could. Go ahead – you can go and then give it to Norman.

Q: Anti-semitism was just mentioned and dismissed in passing, but is there appropriate acknowledgement of Christian, Jewish and Muslim influence on each country? Did each speaker deliberately avoid such religious talk?

MR. DIONNE: Thank you. And Norman, are you right – you're right there, aren't you? Yes.

Q: Yes, I – well, I think I'm here, yes. (Laughter.)

I'm Norman Birnbaum from Georgetown University. It seems to me that one overlooks the fact that whatever the domestic elements in the United States, drawing upon centuries of anti-French feeling; I mean, if you think of the Protestant image sinister, dark Catholic France, which even appears in American literature in – at the highest level, in James and Wharton. It also occurs at the lowest in the notion of Puritanism as the deep suspicion that someone somewhere might be enjoying themselves when – well, this is always attributed to the French. (Scattered laughter.)

If you look at all of this, it still doesn't obliviate the fact that in Europe there are strong tides of opinion outside of France, which backed Chirac and Villepin, particularly in Germany but not alone in Germany – in Spain, in Italy, everyone thinking of the opinion that opposed these governments. And therefore, the question arises whether this is, as Walter Russell Mead suggested, something perhaps more fundamental and it doesn't just involved France and United States, but it involves the inner search of the Europeans, let's say, for a geopolitical identity. At the end – their own common values, as Bob Lieber pointed out, but at the end of this month, for instance, in the major European papers, a group of distinguished European intellectuals, individually, are going to publish papers or articles demanding a European political identity and making clear that, in their view, this involves a strict demarcation, if not at times antagonism to United States politics. So it seems to me it is a European-American and not just a French-American problem, and we'd be, I think, under an illusion to suppose that in any event the French can be eliminated from the political map and somehow ignored whilst we deal with world powers like Romania and so on. That just won't work.

MR. DIONNE: Thank you very much. We have two more and then I want to go back to the panel. This gentleman over here, can you raise your hand? You had been wanting to come in. If we could bring him the mike, there is a mike in the back there. I don't know who has it. Whoever has the mike, it's yours. (Laughter.) Your turn to – yes.

Q: Do you want me up – okay. Gordon Adams, George Washington University. Perceptions are, of course, a lot of the battle in international relations, and we've had a great entertainment – a profusion, I should say, of entertainment about perceptions here today.

I wanted, if I could, to push the panel a little bit to the substance and perhaps the substance on a side that has gotten relatively little attention so far, which is to interpret the degree to which French policy, or for that matter, German policy in Europe is also in part driven by the nature of the American leadership over the past two years. Or to put it another way, that policy may have a role to play here as well, and that it is driven in part, not solely by the fracas over the resolution in the Security Council, but also in part by a rather general tendency of the current administration to treat the Europeans in general with a certain amount of disdain in developing a number of policies, whether it has to do with international agreements, or the development of the strategy of preemption. But I'd like to push the panel a little bit to comment on the sources and origins of American policy, which may indeed be an independent variable in influencing the way the French, in particular, have reacted.

MR. DIONNE: Thank you very much -- and then the last comment from this gentleman.

Q: Hi, Robin Laird, I'll just follow Gordon's comments a little bit, but a footnote – in spite of the fact that Rumsfeld doesn't want to deal with French companies, the Coast Guard just bought a European aircraft. We use Predator; it has a French engine.

We used French imagery, we used French communications in the war, B-52s flew over French territory, the French gave access to bases during the war – a small footnote that kind of gets lost in all of this.

Now the – I would make two points, quickly: one, following Gordon's, which is I think the debate on the U.S. side really is the Bush administration pushing an agenda that we have the right to export security anywhere we want to. The reality about 9/11 is we're a major importer of security; that is, even if we don't want to deal with NATO in a classic sense, we have to – we have counter-terrorism coalitions, we have financial coalitions, we – if we want to have port security – something I work on – you cannot have port security starting in the United States. But to hear some of these lunatics in the administration, you'd like that's what we're going to do. So you had Ridge go to Europe and negotiate bilaterally when he had to go to the EU, so he had all of his agreements abrogated by the EU because EU has the authority to do port agreements. So – I mean, there are certain realities.

The flip side – and Chirac is brilliant in foreign policy as he was in domestic policy in calling early elections – the same leadership – he doesn't get it. France is, at best, a medium power in a Europe that has changed dramatically, an America that has changed dramatically, the Middle East has changed dramatically. He needs a strategy that recognizes what's going on. The fracture that kills him on defense is with London, okay? That's the bottom line. I mean, a relationship with Luxembourg is interesting, I'm sure, and very amusing, but the bottom line is he has screwed the French military, which I've worked with for 20 years.

This last decade they have been our strongest ally in every peacemaking operation we've had. These guys were ready to go to Iraq when suddenly Jacques got this vision of being a tier-monde specialist, in getting the Nobel Peace Prize . You know, I don't know what he was smoking – (scattered laughter) – but the bottom line is it kills the French military. What role does the French military have without Britain, without the United States, without NATO, no access to high-intensity weapons, no bilateral relationships with European and American defense companies. This is an insane position. So yes, you need a fundamental decision by Chirac to do something not just of symbolic importance, like to say, gee, I won't object if you do what you're going to do anyway. We need something much more dramatic like volunteering to do peacemaking in Iraq – something dramatic, soon.

MR. DIONNE: Thank you very much.

I will just go down the panel starting with Justin. In my vast oversimplification here, I have – we eventually have to get together and there are shared values; the question of religion in explaining this; is it a European reaction, not just a French reaction; it's Bush, not just grand forces; and lunacy on both the French and the American side – if I may oversimplify your very thoughtful comments that way. (Scattered laughter.)

Let's start.

MR. VAISSE: Yes, maybe I can just take one point – (laughter) – of these, and deal with that, especially on importing security, the sources of American foreign policy, et cetera. I think the misunderstanding – I would like maybe to give the other side of the picture. I think the misunderstanding was mutual; that is to say I think at one point there was the sense of attrition, and Powell went to great length to explain that to journalists during the week of January the 20th, that he had been betrayed, et cetera, but I think the feeling had been the same on the part of Villepin and Chirac that they thought they had an understanding with Colin Powell, that the route of the inspections would be tried to the very so as to try to do this in a peaceful way, and they felt that suddenly during the week of the 20th, he changed his position and basically he adopted during this week the discourse that was the one of the other wing of the administration – Cheney and Powell saying that the inspection would never work, et cetera, whereas a couple of days before he had had quite another line. And I think – I know that at the State Department this also created some reaction; that is to say not only against the French, but also a sort of puzzlement as to why did Colin Powell change his view on these matters. So I don't think it's only quite a question of attrition on the part of the French; it's also a change in the inner balance of the administration that can help explain this.

And just as a footnote to what Walter said, I think of course it would have been better to do this in a much more, let's say, realistic way, but I think also to take into account the reality of the diplomatic context, this administration is not very interested in negotiating, in the give-and-take game that – and there this is an answer to the question about the sources of foreign policy. For evident reasons, I don't think that a dramatic gesture would be welcome by the Bush administration from the French. This administration – Bush has not talked with Gerhard Schroeder since last August. This administration, as it did in domestic policy, has been playing hardball with allies and, you know, expects total compliance with its demands, and so I think it's in this context that you can understand the French position. It's not – it's not any more the Clinton administration, which was interested in give and take, in negotiation, in discussing issues, et cetera. So that is to give a bit of the other side of the image.

MR. DIONNE: Thank you very much.

Philippe?

MR. ROGER: Well, maybe two remarks? One about religion – I quite agree with you. That's an important factor in the general picture and – but it would take a lot of time to dwell on these issues.

Very quickly, Catholicism first, of course Catholicism has been historically an element – a very important element in the negative visions of America. The crusade against Protestantism should never be underestimated. It was really like one of the major components of the anti-Americanism of the intellectuals, starting at the end of the 19th century – even before that – and the mistrian (ph) tradition, but taking full speed in the 1920s and '30s. And all brands of French Catholicism, from Claudelle (ph) to Beranose

(ph) to – we forget because we are now a very secular country that our intellectuals were extremely Catholic and were very influential, not to speak of the brand of Catholicism of the actual Francais (?) at the time. So this is the first point.

Now, as far as Catholicism is concerned, there is a kind of reverse situation because Catholicism, according to all the opinion polls, is still recognized as a majority religion by many French, but the number of French really identifying through practice to the Catholic religion is, as you know, dwindling in a spectacular way. So we are more an institution of very secular society or a society which thinks of itself as secular, and a part – a very important part of the anti-Bush administration campaign, but personally anti-Bush comments, including in major magazines, mainstream press – (unintelligible) – and others. The Express (?), for instance, ran an entire issue on Bush as an evangelist fanatic, more or less. So this is an issue which now has changed direction, but it is still a very important element of anti-Americanism.

Islam, as everybody knows, I guess – although we don't have the figure that we were talking about that yesterday night – French rule doesn't authorize the accountability of the census according to religion for many reasons, which are also good and bad reasons. One reason is why think that people, for instance, from Northern Africa but born in France, the second generation, are they identifying themselves to the Muslim religion – that's not obvious. Anyway, we are six to – five, six, seven million persons living in France were Muslims or could be regarded as Muslim. It's becoming an important element in the process of political choice.

Third point – very important also – anti-Semitism, and this is also a complicated issue because anti-Americanism and anti-Semitism became linked in French history, but they became linked rather late, except in the particular milieu of the actual – (unintelligible) – were, the first link was made in 1919. In fact, in the present situation, there is a very great tension, as we know, around these three. The new surge of anti-Semitism in everyday life in the past two years, but also this surge has been greatly exaggerated in this country, and I've had opportunities for two years to discuss that with friends here in several universities, and there is a feeling in France of unfairness about that because the public authorities, like our minister of police, the interior minister, Sarkozy, was extremely adamant about stopping these things and got – which is rare in France – got praise from a major opponent, Mr. Stroscan (ph) of the Socialist Party about his job about it. That's for the religion.

Last, maybe a very short remark about – about anti-Americanism as a constant factor, which doesn't mean that the present crisis was born out of anti-Americanism. I don't think this is the case at all. I don't think that Mr. Chirac decided on his political or diplomatical – diplomatic line to get popularity. On the other hand, it's always very difficult for any politician, political figure to refuse a stand with allows him to get an 80 percent approval rate.

But one think which I would, again, insist upon because I really believe in that, is that during – when this Gallup opinion poll was taken in this country, it was the Pew

Institute of November, December 2002 – a very interesting thing because it was kind of a dramatic surge of anti-Americanism everywhere – it made the authorities here apparently very worried. First reaction was really rather dramatic – (unintelligible) – and others really stunned by this, whereas the only country where the image of America had improved was Russia, which was oddly a solace for Americans. But one thing which was, I think, not stressed enough that was the only European country – you know, Great Britain was going like this, that was end of 2002. Great Britain anti-Americanism was going like this – Italy, Germany and so on, but the only country where it was exactly the same level was France because we'd pulled so high that it couldn't go – (laughter).

MR. DIONNE: Thank you.

Walter.

MR. MEAD: Well, it is certainly a good thing that President Chirac isn't running for reelection in the United States and that President Bush isn't running in France because neither would have much success.

I think – I'm glad you brought up religion because I think this is one of the great and growing fault lines in the sense that the United States seems to be becoming more religious and much of Europe seems to be steadily becoming less religious. And I think while the kind of people who go to conferences like this and inhabit such fabulous places as Georgetown and so on tend to be more European in many respects than many Americans, it's probably important to understand that if you talk to a lot of ordinary Americans – and by no means religious fanatics – and ask them what the core – where they see the core of values in the world, they'd answer Christianity – not just religion, but Christianity – and that the perception that the United States and Europe share values is – would be vulnerable in the U.S. – extremely vulnerable – if the thought was that Europe had really, in some sort of definitive, history way, left Christianity behind.

To go a little further, the U.S. is not only largely Christian, it's Protestant – even to some degree its Catholics are – small p – protestant; i.e. they listen with great respect and interest to what the Pope and the hierarchy teach them and then they go on an believe what, in their individual consciences, they think is God's call to them. And the protestant instinct, cultural instinct is that universal institutions are bad and the – small c – which I think still exists in Europe – catholic instinct is that universal institutions are -- by definition, catholic institutions are better than particular ones. And there is an American protestant instinct to distrust universal institutions like the United States – United Nations – (scattered laughter). It comes into – (chuckles) – play among sort of very extremely religious people when they talk about the U.N. as the – or even the E.U. as the embryo of the world government foretold in the Bible as the kingdom of anti-Christ.

But it also appears in just a much more – as sense that, well, when the Europeans are too obnoxious and ask too high a price, just walk away – the protestant instinct – walk away, secede, and the American character, go over the next ridge, you know, go out to

the new territory. And I think you see that tide running very strongly in the United States today – a protestant tide of secession from an institutional apparatus seen as overbearing.

Those of you who have young children or have had them recently may know the Dr. Seuss novel, "Thidwick the Big-Hearted Moose," who ends up – you know, when the other animals, who he's sheltering in his antlers start saying, "No, no, no, by majority vote we have to decide where you go," he shakes off the antlers at the end and swims away over the lake to freedom. That tide has set in strongly in American life.

But then finally, the question that was asked, can I leave with something less pessimistic on – and can this session close – I think so. Having said that, I can't, from an American point of view, see much that can happen from the U.S. side to improve relations. One could very pessimistic and say, well, then we're in trouble. But on the other hand, what that means is that France remains in command of its own fate. French policy can determine the future of the Atlantic alliance, to some degree; certainly of Franco-American relations; and even of this nebulous concept of the West. I remain convinced that the addition of France to the – what some call the "Anglosphere" and so on – this old team you're talking about, that's – without France there is no West. France makes the West by its participation and by its action. I believe that France can continue to make the West by intelligent participation and independent participation in international affairs. It will take great care, great wisdom, great discretion at this point to do it, but I think France can, and I choose to remain an optimist. I choose to believe that France has the capacity and the will, ultimately, to find a way out of this very unhappy impasses in which we find ourselves.

Thank you.

MR. DIONNE: Thank you. I'm going to close with three quick comments and then turn it to Phil Gordon to disentangle us from going overtime, as we did here.

The first is in defense of Georgetown. Georgetown actually has a high church attendance rate relative to a lot of universities.

MR. MEAD: Pardon me, E.J.

MR. DIONNE: Ah, no, secondly, both Walter and Philippe's thoughtful comments on secularization reminded me of a story told in France that the definition of a paranoid Frenchman is someone sitting in a church who says, "I think there's someone sitting behind me." (Laughter.)

And the last point is we do leave on an optimistic note because we started out as pigs and ended up as a moose, so I think we're improving – (laughter) – and now I turn it over.

Thank you very, very much to this great panel.

(Applause.)

(End of panel.)