

# The Third Gulf War and its impact on German-American relations

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## **Abstract**

*The third Gulf War constituted an important turning point in the nature of German-American relations, and for the first time since the end of the Second World War, Germany took a position opposing the American position, so that the pattern of the relationship between the two parties shifted from the type of relationship based on the policy of the subordinate to that of the relationship based on isolation and opposition before The German side towards the US policy towards Iraq, for the first time in the history of relations between the two countries, economic interests, especially with the Arab East, constitute a point of contention and tension between the two parties.. Therefore, this study aims to reveal the nature and causes of this shift in the nature of the relationship between the two countries by answering the following questions: - Was the completion of the German unity, with its geographical, demographic and economic impact, the reason for the German devising a foreign policy independent of the United States of America? -Berlin's desire, after being freed from the restrictions of dependency on the American foreign decision, to assume the leadership of Europe far from the American intervention through its opposition to the policy of aggression against Iraq in 2003.*

**Keywords:** *The Third Gulf War, German-American Relations*

## **Introduction**

The third Gulf War left a clear impact on German-American relations. For the first time since the end of World War II, the relations between the two sides witnessed a clear tension due to their differing positions on the American aggression against Iraq in 2003. For the first time in the history of relations between the two countries, economic interests, especially with the Arab Mashreq, were formed, A point of contention and tension between the two parties. It was the reason for the escalation of German rhetoric opposing US foreign policy. Therefore, this study aims to reveal the

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nature and causes of this transformation in the nature of the relationship between the two countries by answering the following questions: - Was the completion of German unity with the consequent geographical, demographic and economic impact on it, the reason for the German to set a foreign policy for itself independent of the United States of America? The role of economic problems in the impact on the orientations of German foreign policy, Berlin's desire, after being liberated from the constraints of dependency on the American foreign decision, to assume the leadership of Europe away from American interference through its opposition to the policy of aggression against Iraq in 2003. These questions will be answered through research axes that will address the stages of development of German-American relations, and then we will address in some detail the third Gulf War, the nature of the American goals to strike Iraq, and then the nature of the German position by reviewing the justifications and reasons for rejection The German for Washington's policy to strike Iraq, and its impact on the relations between the two parties.

### **Literature review**

#### **1. German-American relations (historical background)**

US -Germany fledgling relations were not necessary, which resulted in the United States of America's victory in World War II, but are relations with the roots of historical dating back to the eighteenth century, which reflected the nature and the depth of relations between the two countries was Russia's first countries that recognized the independence of the United States of America In 1785, this recognition was reinforced by the signing of the Treaty of Amity and Commerce between the two countries on September 18, 1785. Her foreign minister, John Middleton, said that his country was ready to recognize any German government capable of preserving the unity and integrity of German territory. As a result of these developments, the United States raised its representation in the German Empire by opening its embassy on October 26, 1893 in Berlin and appointing Theodore Runyon as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Germany. (Mcmaster, 1918) The political and economic relations between the two countries continued at a good pace until the outbreak of the First World War, specifically on the first of March 1917, when the American ambassador in London Walter Heinz Page received from British Foreign Minister Arthur Balfour a telegram revealed by American intelligence sent by the German Foreign Minister Arthur Zimmermann (1916-1917) to the German

ambassador in Mexico, urging him to incite the Mexican government to attack the United States of America (Dukes, 1950). The publication of this message coincided with the submarine war launched by the German government with the aim of breaking the naval blockade imposed on it by Britain, which did not It excludes merchant ships. The announcement of that telegram provoked both the American administration and the American people, so on April 6, 1917, the American administration declared war on Germany (Halborn, 1951). It was Germany's policy that caused America to abandon its isolation and enter World War I, and when the war ended, the Treaty of Versailles negotiated by US President Woodrow Wilson (US President for the period from 1913-1921) during the peace conference established a new order for Europe and imposed harsh conditions Germany, and in the end the US Congress did not ratify the treaty, which it considered a complex alliance better left to the Europeans. However, compared to the other victors Washington played an important role towards Berlin, the Congress passed a resolution on July 2, 1921, stipulating the end of the state of war between the United States and Germany On August 25 of the same year, the two parties signed a treaty to restore friendly relations between the two parties, which was known as the (Berlin Treaty) (Flenley, 1956, p. 122), and it was the first country that took the initiative to call for renegotiating the compensation installments imposed by the major powers. On Germany, it provided large loans to Germany in order to help it advance its economy again. The American administration, in cooperation with the British government, tried to find a program that would help Germany improve its economy and enable it to pay the compensation money imposed on it. On this basis, an international committee was formed, headed by the American economist Charles Dawes, in April 1924. After the committee conducted a study on the German situation, it proposed a project It was called the Dawes Plan, according to which Germany pays the amount of compensation imposed on it gradually, starting in the first year by paying one billion gold marks, then the premium rises to two and a half billion in the fifth year. Under this project, the United States of America granted Germany a loan of 800,000,000 German marks The German government succeeded in exploiting the American loan funds, as we note that it witnessed clear economic progress in the period between 1924-1928, and one of the most important manifestations was the construction of many factories, factories and housing projects that greatly served the working class, as the government was interested in using scientific methods and techniques. Modern economic production processes, which

reflected positively on German society in various aspects of life (Sabri, 2014). In 1929, another international committee was formed, headed by the American Owen Young, in order to review the Dawes project, according to which it was agreed to reduce the total amount of compensation to 8,000,000,000 dollars, to be paid in annual installments over a period of 59 years. The German government agreed to this project on the condition of the withdrawal of foreign forces from the Rhine region. The countries agreed to this and those forces withdrew from the aforementioned region in June 1930 after an occupation that lasted about 12 years thanks to the American efforts that sought to restore the European balance by returning Germany to the European arena. (Denio, 1962) But with Hitler's accession to power on January 30, 1933, alarm bells began to ring again, especially after the Nazis' arbitrary policy against Jews in Germany, preventing Jewish doctors and lawyers from practicing their work, and imposing increased censorship on German media. As a result of these measures, large numbers of Jews emigrated out of Germany, and the United States of America attracted many of these Jews. Since German Jews were among the best educated immigrants, this was reflected positively on the United States of America, which benefited from the scientific capabilities of German Jews and used them against Germany, and the German physicist Albert Einstein was one of these immigrants who had a major role in creating the atomic bomb. (, 2011). With the emergence of World War II signs that German forces invaded Polish lands on September 1, 1939, US President Franklin Roosevelt passed the American Neutrality Act (1933-1945), which prohibited the sale of arms to all countries participating in the war, now the sympathy that the President had Roosevelt to the Allied countries made him urge the US Congress to amend the provisions of the aforementioned law so as to allow American sponsors to sell weapons provided that they are not transferred to those countries on American ships. When the German forces occupied France in 1940, the position of the allies became very difficult, so the US administration decided to support the Allied forces informally and undeclared. However, the Japanese forces on the 7th of September 1941 bombed the American fleet located at Pearl Harbor base in the Hawaiian Islands in Pacific Ocean, pushed the United States of America to end its state of neutrality and officially announce its accession to the Allied countries on December 8, 1941. Especially after American politicians realized that their country's entry into the war was in order to protect the country's interests, whether in Europe or in the Far East, which became under threat Axis countries. The

Congress has approved the allocation of an amount of 59,000,000,000 dollars to finance the US forces (Hart, 1970). Thus the leaders of the United States of America the international coalition against Germany and forced it to surrender unconditionally. As of 1945, Germany became an American concern, and Washington was concerned about any other revival of the Nazi national spirit, especially as the Communists moved to fill the void in Germany for the post-Hitler era, and increased its fear that the division of Germany between the Allies and the Soviets would carry the seeds of a new global confrontation. (Sabri, 2014)

## **2. US-German relations during the Cold War era**

In light of these fears, Washington politicians realized the need to avoid imposing peace forcefully on Germany and that it was wise to provide aid to Germany's pro-democracy leaders in order to absorb the resentment of the German people by providing a better life for Germans. Therefore, it rejected France's request for increased compensation and imposed permanent restrictions on Germany's industrial capacity. It also rejected Moscow's demand to combine massive reparations with strong central control. In this context, the United States of America summarized its goals towards Germany at an early date, specifically on September 6, 1946, by Secretary of State James Burns, who emphasized, "The American people want to restore the German government to the German people. And the American people want to help the German people restore peace", Musharraf among the free and peace-loving nations of the world." (Geoffrey, 1993) That is why Washington and its allies followed a special policy in the German western section, which was placed under the tutelage of France, Britain and Washington with the aim of strengthening it in order to be an impenetrable dam against the eastern camp. It was agreed between America and its allies, specifically in November 1947, to merge their areas of occupation for economic purposes into one area called Bizonia. (Gatzke, 1980) Washington's goal with this measure was to make the western region of Germany economically and politically superior to the eastern region, with the aim of weakening The Soviet position and limiting the spread of communism in Germany, and that is why Washington's policy at this stage focused on two basic issues: the first: working to link West Germany to the Western camp by including it in international organizations such as NATO, the European Union and European coal and steel groups, and the second: protecting personal freedoms and guarantees Constitutionalism as the basis

for a democratic political system with the containment of Germany's foreign policy through international organizations and treaties. Its first means to achieve this policy was by launching the 1947 Marshall Plan, according to which it decided to contribute to the economic reconstruction of Germany instead of encircling it and turning it into an agricultural country, as was demanded by some European countries, especially France. It also called for Germany's economic and political reintegration into the international community and enabling it to play a role in maintaining stability in Europe, especially since the Marshall Plan provided more than 12 billion dollars to European countries through which it was able to turn enemies into friends (Gunther, 2008). On May 5, 1955, Washington succeeded in persuading its allies and partners in occupying the western part of Germany (Britain and France) to officially end its military occupation of West Germany, which became an independent state, and four days after that date, Germany was included as a member of NATO. For me, policy makers in the United States, this step was an essential step in the defense of Western Europe. Despite the opposition of some European countries, especially France, to the rearmament of Germany, even if it was an ally, the United States believed that the rearmament of West Germany was very necessary. In order to set up a defensive perimeter to contain any possible Soviet attempts at expansion, the entry of West Germany into NATO was considered the last step to integrate it into the defense system in Western Europe. Thus, Germany became an extension of the American political system, which was confirmed by US President John F. Kennedy during his visit to West Germany in June 1963 as part of his tour of many European countries. In his speech at the base of the city of Schöneberg, he emphasized his country's commitment to West Germany, stressing at the conclusion of his speech. All free Germans wherever they live are citizens of Berlin and therefore as a free man, then he said in German *Ich bin ein Berliner*, which means I am proud to be from Berlin (Gunther, 2008).. The relations between the two countries during this period were characterized by a state of political and economic interactions, reflected in the position of both countries on some foreign policy matters, especially those related to the position of East Germany and the Soviet Union. At a time when the United States of America was looking to make West Germany a wall against any Soviet expansion in Europe, and although West Germany did not hesitate to side with Washington, it was more hesitant at this stage on the issue of the anti-Soviet, and lies in its fear that this hostility would undermine the goal it seeks, which is the return of its eastern part,

as it was afraid of the possibility of concluding The United States had a deal with the Soviets that included giving up East Germany to the Soviet in exchange for the Soviet Union's agreement to adopt the principle of accord between the two parties. Therefore, starting at the end of the sixties, Bonn became the strongest advocate for a policy of openness towards the east and work to normalize its relations more with its eastern part. The leader of this trend was German Chancellor Willy Brandt, who was calling for improving personal relations between citizens in the two Germans. At the time, Washington shared Bonn's goal. In seeking to reintegrate the eastern section, however, there were some conflicting goals between the two parties; the United States worried that a united Germany might once again become a threat to its neighbors and an element of instability on the continent (Schwabe, 1976). In fact, German-American relations have witnessed, since the late sixties, a clear divergence on a number of foreign policy issues. In addition to the difference in the position of the Soviet government, the economic aspect is another of the factors that cast a shadow on the relations between the two countries. It is known that Washington supported the German economy by providing foreign aid and unilaterally opening its markets for German goods. However, with the recovery of Germany, it became more caught in the European Community market. That is why voices in Washington rose to demand that Bonn bear part of the burden in the field of security, and many Americans questioned the reasons for Washington to bear the cost of deploying its forces on German soil to protect German citizens in addition to ensuring the security of the West. On the other hand, Germany, from the Americans' point of view, did not sufficiently contribute to the joint defense operations. With the continuation of German economic progress, the feeling of American concern about the increasing German trade benefits continued with it (Jeffrey Carton, p. 73). This contrast and the American concern about the German economic invasion of the American market was reflected in the differing position of the two countries on a number of foreign issues. Bonn did not support the American involvement in Vietnam during the sixties, nor did it support the decision of US President Jimmy Carter to cut off grain shipments to the Soviet Union in the late seventies after the campaign Soviet repression in Poland. Germany resisted US President Jimmy Carter (1977-1981) linking foreign aid to human rights issues, and Bonn was incensed when President Ronald Reagan (1981-1989) demanded that Germany cancel natural gas contracts with the Soviet Union during the eighties, and stop shipments of precision equipment that was supplied with

it. Moscow, and during the first visit of German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt (1974-1982) to Washington, the issue of advanced German precision equipment at that time in terms of measuring and control devices was a subject of contention between West Germany and America. At the joint press conference, one of the American journalists asked Helmut Schmid: Why does Germany insist on supplying such equipment to the Soviet Union, which invaded Afghanistan a year ago? And what is the size of the economic profit from those contracts that makes them so important to you that you disagree with the United States? The German chancellor replied to the journalist that this is not an American affair, nor is it a place for discussion. Rather, we decide for ourselves according to what we see as our best interest, and the matter is not only measured in material profit. (Johann, 2008) In fact, in German strategic thought, Russia is a warehouse of raw materials. And Germany in Russian strategic thought is the source of technology. Until the morning of Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union, trains were carrying strategic goods to Germany from the Soviet Union, copper, petroleum, aluminum, rubber, and nickel, With the end of the eighties era, America's relationship with Germany showed more hesitation and ambivalence that will emerge in the nineties and beyond. Despite the American joy when I saw German citizens dancing over the Berlin Wall, this raised fears in Washington, while President Bush the father (1989-1993) and the majority of Americans are fully supportive of Chancellor Helmut Kohl's efforts (1982-1998) to speed up the timetable for unity. Many Americans in turn ask where Germany is heading and whether the most unfair side of its history will reappear.

The American role in ending the partition and declaring German unity in 1990, Germany has proven to be one of the major economic powers in the world. The entry of the United States of America into any regional conflict, whether in the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, or Kosovo depends a lot on German financial aid to finance the American war because Germany has many international responsibilities as a major economic country in the world, the United States of America is working in its policy towards Europe to bring Germany closer to it and at the same time trying to make Germany a security concern for Europe. In 1989, former US President George W. Bush raised Germany to The degree of a partner for the United States of America to change their relations to the level of strategic relations in order to continue the American military presence in Europe and expand its influence in Central and Eastern Europe. As for Germany, for its part, it wanted to play a global role while maintaining

military cooperation with the United States of America, especially after the announcement The United States of America says that Germany is an important military and economic ally, but this does not mean that there is no disagreement Between them, and we can seek that within two main things: the first is Germany's quest to play a greater role, which Washington does not agree with. The other is related to the policy of the United States of America, which wants to lead the regime by relying on military means, and this is what Germany does not want, which emphasized the use of diplomatic means. Relying on collective action and within the framework of international institutions, especially the United Nations, it believes that the interest of the European Union, which considers itself a part of it, lies in a multipolar world and not an international system dominated by a single power, because the multipolar international system guarantees European countries led by Germany participation in international decision-making It enables it to play an important role in the international arena in proportion to the strengths it possesses. Therefore, the United States learned the importance of Germany and worked to obstruct any alliance of European countries led by Germany, especially when there was a rapprochement between France and Germany by offering temptations to Germany and to suggesting that it represents the partner The strategic plan of the United States of America is for America, because it knows that if France and Germany defy, they will not leave the United States of America an opportunity to be unique in Europe(Mark Leonard, 2009) Therefore, the United States of America increased its interest in the American-German alliance, which gave Germany the opportunity to increase its interference in the internal affairs of the countries of the world through its economy and to engage in international organizations, especially the United Nations, which is the third largest contributor to it and has become since 1996 From the headquarters of the United Nations (Leonard, 2009). In fact, the foundations of the rapprochement between the United States of America and Germany came on the advice of US President Richard Nixon in his book "America and the Opportunity" when he said: (The United States of America needs a strong European partner to increase its participation in international trade, and since Germany exports about 35 percent of the volume of its production, it is in its interest to keep the market open for its goods, and therefore the United States of America must comply and sometimes work according to German trends in the field of foreign trade and financial sovereignty) (Nixon, 1992). This fact was confirmed to the Americans after Germany

proved that It has a significant financial impact in the global financial system, it has a strong currency with little inflation and the German mark has become the anchor of the current global system in contrast to the instability in the dollar, and German banks have clear stakes in industrial companies, and this has led to the presence of companies with a strong financial and industrial presence. From this we conclude that the United States was in need of an economic partner in Europe that would make an effective contribution to achieving balance in the global system. That is why Washington was supportive of every direction of the Bonn government towards the return of unity between the “eastern and western” parts of Germany by creating a climate of trust between the Germans and European leaders. When East Germany announced in 1989 the opening of the borders with West Germany and the influx of thousands of immigrants towards the West welcomed US President George Bush “the Father” took this step, declaring that “he is satisfied with the decision of the East German authorities to open their borders to those who wish to immigrate and travel to it” (Mustafa, 2020). The United States of America also made contacts to persuade the leaders of East Germany to accept the matter of unity and to reassure its politicians, and also to reassure Moscow, it signed an agreement with the East German government known as (The Nine Guarantees), which included nine steps, that could be a comprehensive agreement that the United States of America and Western countries were ready to implement If German unity is achieved. (Mustafa, 2020) In return for these guarantees that accelerated the process of German unity, Washington presented a number of conditions to the leaders of West Germany, which were a condition for completing the American support for the movements of German Chancellor Helmut Kohl within the framework of the (2 + 4) formula, which ended with the signing of an agreement on the twelfth of September 1990. The premise of these guarantees is the continuation of Germany's membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, a condition that contradicts what Moscow has proposed of the necessity of neutrality for a united Germany. And that Germany remain within the framework of the capitalist industrial grouping led by the United States of America, in order to limit German influence. Finally, Germany's foreign orientations should not conflict with the international policy of the United States of America. (Asmus, 1993) The American position, which adhered to these conditions, focused on the possibility of the United States of America retaining the role it had played during the Cold War. Especially since the issue of German unification raised many fears in European circles

of a new emergence of the specter of the Fourth Reich, and positions varied amid the Germans' enthusiasm and joy for unity because what happened is a decisive historical turning point in Europe. But this pivotal role on the European arena was matched by a clear deviation in the orientations of German foreign policy in line with American interests, and the second Gulf War (the Iraq-Kuwait war in 1990) came to reflect this fact. Germany had to implement its pledges to Washington to devote its foreign policy to what It does not conflict with the international policy of the United States of America, even if these trends are not consistent with German interests, and that balance was difficult for Germany, as its drift behind American policy would endanger its interests in the Arab region in general and Iraq in particular. In fact, this was Deviation has its causes, and it can be summarized as follows:

- The timing between each of the crises that occurred between Iraq and Kuwait and the unification of Germany had a clear impact on the official German position on the crisis. The entry of Iraqi forces to Kuwait occurred on 2/8/1990, while the German unity was announced on 3/10/1990, two months after Iraq's entry into Kuwait, which it did not withdraw from until March of 1991. These timings caused inconvenience to the German leadership, fearing that this would negatively affect the arrangements made with the Soviet side in order to achieve German unity. That is why the foundations of German foreign policy in this era were linked to the legacy of the Cold War by not involving itself in any situation or conflict outside the scope of the international alliance, and then the priorities of German foreign policy in this era of German history were to complete the process of unity, even if it was at the expense of its foreign foundations. (Thana Fouad Abdullah, 1991)

A feeling of gratitude towards Washington, which has sponsored the German cause since the end of World War II and working to return Germany to the international community as a basic member enjoying equality and respect, passing through the Berlin Air Bridge, the Marshall Plan, and support for Germany's membership in NATO and the European Community, and finally the great American support for Germany's unification despite from the frequency of some states; Especially France and Britain, not to mention the position of the Soviet Union.

- Germany's leaders had to deal with caution with the United States of America, as its lands are still occupied by American military bases, albeit with the approval of the German government.

For these considerations, German politicians have adopted a cautious policy toward Washington, and we are fully behind its foreign policy toward Iraq.

With the aim of appeasing Washington to complete the steps of declaring German unity, the value of German aid provided to the United States of America amounted to 8,735 billion marks, while what was provided to Britain amounted to 800 million marks. Thus, Germany's contribution to the Second Gulf War amounted to about a third of the annual German defense budget. The bill of German solidarity with the coalition in this war from the end of January 1991 until 31/3/1991 amounted to ten million marks per day, and in general, the German financial treasury was open to support the allies in the Second Gulf War, and the political scenes in Bonn took a hesitation with money, all things going (Mit Geld Geht Alles). (Nazim, 2003), but these considerations did not exist in the third Gulf War in 2003, and Germany had made great strides in building its internal house and addressing the problems of unity, especially economic ones, and returned a country with political and economic weight and a geographer on the European political scene, and therefore it was difficult for Washington to proceed with Germany's foreign policy in line with its reconciliation, especially in an important region such as the Middle East. Therefore, the third Gulf War constituted the first turning point in The nature of German-American relations, as we will note in the following topic.

### **3. The third Gulf War and the beginning of the American-German differences**

The third Gulf War was characterized by three main features that reflected the nature of US-German relations on one side and the US-European relations on the other: First: This is the first time since the end of World War II that the US and German foreign policy orientations conflict, and Berlin stands on the opposite side to the US foreign policy orientation. And the second, for the first time since the end of World War II, Europe is divided into two camps, a camp that supports the American policy in striking Iraq, led by Britain, and a camp that rejects the policy of the American war and calls for solving the issue by peaceful and diplomatic means, led by Germany and France. As for the third: This is the first time in the history of American relations. Germany The issues of the Middle East constitute a point of contention between the two sides, especially since Germany's relationship in this region was mainly limited to pleasing Israel only. In fact, this German position that rejects the direction of the American policy in striking Iraq has a number of considerations that cannot be

ignored if we want to address the reality of the German position against the American position on this war, and it comes at the forefront of these considerations:

- - Liberating Germany at this stage in its history from its knot of gratitude to Washington, especially after it succeeded in achieving its unity and proving its important role on the global political arena through its participation in many international issues, foremost of which is its role in the Kosovo issue and its participation in peacekeeping operations
- It was formed by Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder's coming to power in 1998 after defeating Chancellor Helmut Kohl, who held the position for more than 16 years, the beginning of a new phase in German history. Internal problems, especially economic ones, dominated the government's electoral program to reach power.
- - For the first time in the history of Germany, foreign policy plays an important and influential role in the electoral program, which is what Schroeder exploited to gain power, especially in the second election cycle in 2001. The importance of this factor came because it is related to matters of war, a word that the Germans were keen to remove from the dictionary of their lives.
- The reunification of Germany meant the return of Germany to its role in the international balance due to its position in the European continent. Therefore, the change in the geographical and demographic power of Germany after the union was naturally leading to a change in the external behavior of this country..

According to these considerations, the term of Schroeder's rule (1998-2005) marked the beginning of a period of coldness in German-American relations due to his government's refusal to support the aggression against Iraq and this situation continued until Schroeder's government changed in 2005 and the advent of Angela Merkel's government, especially since this period has also witnessed For the first time, the formation of a German-French axis reversed the viewpoint rejecting the leadership of the United States of the European continent, which for the first time after World War II divided Europe into two parts. Middle East, especially in Iraq, Germany was aware that the United States of America had plans to occupy Iraq after the overthrow of the Taliban regime, which was notified to its foreign minister by the American Secretary of Defense on the nineteenth of September 2001, and at the Security Conference in Munich in February 2002 announced The American president said that Iraq is one of the members of what he called the axis of evil, and the American president stressed that the United States of America must act with its allies

to confront this danger, and prevent him from threatening it. He added, "The day of reckoning is approaching for Saddam Hussein." This statement was a clear indication. To all the allies - including Germany - that the United States of America is determined this time to take real military action to change the political system in Iraq. (Mustafa, 2020) After the conference ended, Germany announced that in order to support any military operation, Washington should obtain an international authorization To start military operations in accordance with the principles of international law, and to have a clear and public role for the United Nations in this matter. (Mustafa, 2020) The United States did not respond to the German conditions, but it seemed clear that the Iraqi issue had become an issue of conflict between the United States and Germany. For this reason, the first stage of the German position was characterized by media escalation and the response by the Schroeder government against the American policy towards Iraq, especially since the stage of the American escalation to strike Iraq coincided with the start of the election campaigns in 2002, which witnessed a strong competition between the Social Democratic Party led by Schroeder, which aspired for a second round to remain in the government, and the Christian Democratic Alliance, and Schroeder's party was aware of the difficulty of achieving victory in the elections, especially since his government lost Much of its popularity, as a result of the economic crisis, and this was confirmed by all opinion polling institutes. Unemployment rose in July 2002 to the highest level, and coincided with this case the decline in German stock prices to their lowest levels with the increase in the rates of collective dismissal from work, this to In addition to the measures taken by the government called (welfare reduction measures), which was one of the reasons for the deterioration of the party's popularity, this coincided with the government's announcement of a reduction In social spending due to lower tax revenue, the party's popularity further deteriorated. In light of these indicators, it was clear that the ruling party would be difficult to win, which was confirmed by the US President when he stated that "the German opposition should prepare itself to join the international coalition" (Abdul Azim Hammad, 2002). This statement came after Washington felt that the Schroeder government did not support its policy of striking Iraq, and that the Christian party - as it is known for its pro-American inclinations - in the event of winning the elections would be a withdrawal of Germany from the French camp that rejects the war and its annexation to the European camp that supports the war, That is why Bush was cautious in his negotiations with the German

government, at the summit meeting held at the White House on January 31, 2002 , Which included, in addition to Chancellor Schroeder, German Ambassador Wolfgang Ischinger and Head of the Foreign Policy Department of the German Chancellery Dieter Kastrup, this meeting mentioned by George W. Bush in his memoirs in which he confirmed that Schroeder assured him in this meeting of his full support for American policy in Iraq, and he, in turn, explained to Schroeder that He believes that the military solution is the last solution that will be taken against Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. Schroeder replied, according to what Bush wrote: "What is true for Afghanistan is true for Iraq. Nations that support terrorism must bear the consequences of this matter, and if you can resolve this matter quickly, we will be With you," Bush asserted, "that he took this as a declaration of support" (Harith Muhammad Hassan, 1999). From this meeting, Bush stated that Schroeder was on his side on the issue of war, and assumed that he should take into account the period of the German elections in 2002, and on the sidelines of a meeting of the General Assembly of the United Nations, Bush asked German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer jokingly, "When will these damned elections end?" This talk before the parliamentary elections on the twenty-second of September 2002 However, Chancellor Schroeder quickly began to draw the threads of the issue of the war on Iraq in a different way, and this matter was due to a completely personal, spontaneous and nascent decision. In August 2002, some Schroeder party politicians met in the party headquarters to consult on the "third way" on the issue of the war on Iraq. Iraq, and Schroeder left the session to participate in an interview on the air with the second channel of German TV in the program "Al-Youm Newspaper". After the meeting ended, he returned to the meeting, noting to them that he had spoken about interference in Iraq and rejected any military aggression. It is certain that there are many diplomatic solutions, and he did not speak About the third way, which raised the astonishment of the two communities (Martin, 2002). Bush accused Schroeder of retracting his first positions he had promised him, for the sake of the parliamentary elections, and said: "When the German parliamentary elections were about to start, Schroeder turned against his position." He stated to an ambassador: "This person (Schroeder) deceived me." He stated frankly. In his memoirs, this behavior resulted in a permanent break in their relationship: "I value personal diplomacy, and place great importance on trust, and if that trust is established, it is very difficult to maintain a constructive relationship" (Rolf Steiger, 2018). German Chancellor Schroeder

responded to what Bush wrote publicly: "Former US President Bush did not tell the truth, the conversation (on January 31, 2002) was about the question of whether the terrorists responsible for the September 11, 2001 attacks in the United States had received With the support of Saddam Hussein, and in my subsequent interview with the American president, I said clearly that Germany would confidently stand by the American side, if it was proven that Iraq and before that Afghanistan constituted in fact a haven for al-Qaeda terrorists, and as it was proven during the year 2002, this justifying context was wrong. And fabricated, the justifications provided by the Bush administration for the war on Iraq were based, as we know today, on lies" (Rolf Steinger, 2018). Schroeder's policy of rejecting the war found the support of senior German politicians, as did all the participants in his meeting with Bush. Ambassador Ischinger said: "No one can interpret the context of the conversation that took place in the meeting as a blank check for military intervention in Iraq" (Ralph Steinger, 2018). It seems that one of the main reasons that prompted Schroeder to change his position besides what was mentioned was the emergence of a strong current in the German street, led by the Green Party, rejecting the American war on Iraq, calling on the government not to support such a decision, emphasizing in their slogan that this war does not bring woes to the people The Iraqi community only, but on the European community, it means more victims and more expenses, more immigrants, and in any case the consequences of a negative impact on Europe and Germany. Schroeder wanted to exploit this popular trend to save his government from electoral defeat with his government's failure to develop solutions to the economic crisis, so he focused in his election campaign on his party's opposition to the war on Iraq to achieve two goals :First, he won public opinion on his side, and distracted him from economic matters, and the second: showing the other party (the Christian Democratic Party) as a supporter of the war, and then his arrival to power meant sending German youth to death outside the German borders, which put the Democratic Party The Christian, who was more in line with American policy in an embarrassing situation among his voters, began to lose his voters' votes (Hassan Nafaa, 2004). The strong statements made by German Chancellor Schroeder during his election campaign in June 2002, which he swore at the time that he would never support an attack on Iraq, led some European countries reluctant to oppose the American campaign to openly declare their rejection of the military option and reinforce the axis of rejection that they are leading Berlin and Paris. The intensity of the tone of the powerful statements of

American foreign policy was not limited to Chancellor Schroeder only, as it was launched from within his government cabinet as well, and from the sharp criticism that targeted President Bush, what was issued by the German government spokesman (Uwe Carsten Heber), who expressed his serious doubts about the prospect of the American president. In an interview with the (N42) news channel when he said: “We noticed that the cultural level of the head of the most important country was exceptionally low and for this reason it was difficult to communicate with him, he did not have the slightest knowledge of what was going on in the world, and he was determined to be a Texan, and I I think he knows every buffalo in Texas” (Rolf Steinger, 2018). The anti-American rhetoric toward Iraq reached its climax when the German justice minister described Bush’s Iraq policy as aiming to direct the attention of the American people to foreign victories in order to distract attention from the poor economic situation Which the United States of America was going through because of the foreign war expenses starting in 1990, and he likened this policy to one of the means used by Nazi leader Hitler to occupy German public opinion Regarding the bad internal conditions due to the complexity of Hitler's foreign wars, and despite the official apology offered by the German government, Washington confirmed that this policy was tantamount to destroying German-American relations and their achievements at the Atlantic level since 1949 (Bassem Al-Janabi, 2006). At a time when President Bush saw that Schroeder had betrayed the covenant he gave to the American administration during the summit that brought them together at the White House before the elections, and that was the reason for breaking the relationship between the two parties. However, this same reason was the only way for Schroeder to win a second election cycle, which kept him in the chancellorship until 2005, so it was not in his interest to sacrifice him for the benefit of America and its ally, the Christian party. In fact, with the strength of the diplomatic and political efforts made by France and Germany, which not only encouraged the United Nations to continue dialogue with Iraq since 2002, but also prompted Iraq to announce its acceptance of the return of the inspectors unconditionally while the American political discourse continued Focusing on the possibility of resorting to the military option as a proactive option within the framework of the national security strategy, however, this stage proved the failure of the European countries to find a line independent of their policy from the American line, whether individually as Germany’s attempts or collectively as the (French-German-Russian) axis. With the emergence of signs of the start of US

military operations against Iraq without taking into account the approval of the international legitimacy represented by the Security Council and its insistence on going to war, whether the United Nations agreed or not. Germany had to review its calculations and show some leniency towards American policy, especially within the framework of the alliance NATO at least to ensure the protection of its interests in Iraq after the end of the operations of the third Gulf War

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