

Rolf Steininger is probably one of the most productive historians Germany has produced in the last few decades. His new book on German-American relations since 1945 (*Deutschland und die USA. Vom Zweiten Weltkrieg bis zur Gegenwart*) is a massive volume (over 900 pages). The book is a succinct analysis of the complicated relationship that constantly sways to and fro from partnership, alliance and friendship to suspicion and mutual mistrust. Based on a plethora of primary documents and the skillful interpretation of the most important secondary literature, Steininger has produced a massive volume that will remain the classic on this topic for years to come. Thankfully the author has turned his book into a volume which will not only impress his fellow scholars and students but also the general reader. The book is written in a lively and accessible style and illustrated with a large number of well-selected photographs.

Steininger focuses on the most important issues in German-American relations for the last 70 years, such as the Marshall Plan, the Stalin note and the various Berlin crises, the building of the Wall, the Vietnam War, détente and acrimonious relations in the 1970s and 1980s over rearmament and economic issues. Of course the end of the Cold War and the process of German reunification, unthinkable without strong U.S. support, is also given much space. More recent developments such as the enmity caused during the Iraq war of 2003 and other more recent events have been included as well. Yet, the author also pays due attention to the leading personalities of the day. He paints very vivid pictures of the great influence tandems such as Adenauer and Eisenhower/Kennedy, Johnson and Erhard, Schmidt and Carter and Kohl and Reagan had on the nature of the relationship.

Rolf Steininger has written a highly impressive book. The volume ought to be compulsory reading for anyone interested in German-American and indeed transatlantic relations in general in the 20th and 21st centuries. A translation into English would make a great deal of sense.

Professor Klaus Larres, Richard M. Krasno Distinguished Professor in History and International Affairs at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, NC.