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The United States is in a precarious, unsupported position, facing criticism and a shakedown in power and popularity from all directions. In a world in which we are the dominant superpower, supremacy and influence are suddenly and rapidly changing, forcing the United States, as well the rest of the world (and the common people included), to take notice.

Less than a week ago, on March 5th, 2003, when Germany, Russia, and France declared their position **against** war in Iraq, threatening the use of their veto power, the U.S. government and officials were caught off guard, not ever expecting an official declaration against their present plans and actions. Patrick E. Tyler of the New York Times called it “the loudest “No!” shouted across the Atlantic in a half century or more.” Additionally, Henry Kissinger noted that “allies [should] not act this way.... If this keeps up, we will wind up in a sort of 19th-century balance-of-power game, in which it is not self-evident that we will lose.” And today, the opinions against the war have been fortified by China’s stance in disagreeing with the proposed U.S. tactics.

In an editorial from the French newspaper, Le Monde, on March 6th, 2003, the author remarked that the Berlin-Moscow-Paris trio is a curious assembly of old-school powers, especially since they haven’t had much in common in their recent decisions in international relations. If anything, France, Russia, and Germany have tried to make it clear that they’re “too large a force, if not in military power, then in economic and cultural terms, to ignore.”

The international government and law-making bodies aren’t the only ones expressing opinions. Protests and anti-war demonstrations are still popping up all around the world on a constant basis. Even Texans, the heart and soul behind George W. Bush,

aren't "wholeheartedly support[ing] a war with Iraq." Their views, reported by Peter Kilborn of the New York Times, "run the gamut of national opinion. In terms of both their faith and their oil-dependent pocketbooks, they can see as much to lose as to gain from war." And that indeed *does* reflect national opinion. Just yesterday, the latest New York Times/CBS News Poll came out with results that indicated that numbers favoring "military action against Iraq" have risen slightly. In fact, "55 percent of respondents would support an American invasion of Iraq, even if it was in defiance of a vote of the Security Council." All of these numbers and percentages, as the reporters say, "suggest that Mr. Bush has made progress, at least at home, in portraying Saddam Hussein as a threat to peace while rallying support for a war over rising objections in the international community. They also signal that the nation may be moving toward the traditional war-time rallying around the president that the White House — and Mr. Bush's Democratic opponents — have anticipated." However, just because the poll hints at an increase in support, "a majority of Americans say the White House has failed to tell them what they need to know about the justification for a pre-emptive attack." And more importantly, "the number of Americans who believe that their president enjoys the respect of world leaders has dropped from 67 percent to 45 percent in the space of a year." Public opinion, however, is extremely volatile. A poll taken on Valentine's Day, approximately only 3 weeks ago, noted that the public was unsure as to whether or not Colin Powell and the Bush administration have a good enough case for going to war immediately. Today, statistics have changed, not only because the public has been affecting each other, but also because many have North Korea on their minds as well.