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Germany and Peace Support Operations: Policy After the Karlsruhe Decision

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The end of the Cold War fundamentally transformed the political environment in the Federal Republic of Germany. At a time when some countries were fragmenting or dissolving altogether, Germany grew larger with unification. The end of the occupation of Germany by the World War II victors restored full sovereignty to the rehabilitated German state. Together with the sweeping changes in Central and Eastern Europe, this restored sovereignty quickly thrust the Federal Republic of Germany into the limelight of international foreign and security affairs. Its geopolitical position, as well as its obvious economic strength, guaranteed a central role for Germany in the unfolding events. The only questions concerned the precise form and nature of that emerging role.

The reemergence of a fully sovereign Germany also coincided with the explosion of peace support operations under the auspices of the United Nations, and attention quickly focused on the role Germany would play in such operations. This article addresses the emergence of Germany as a "normal" international actor from the perspective of its evolving policies regarding peace support operations.[1]

The focus on peace support operations is important because it affects issues related to US and allied military operations. Military leaders from these countries need to know more about what to expect from Germany in future contingencies. It is also important to the strategic community because it is at the heart of a perplexing set of issues currently on the international agenda, namely the kinds of conflicts generating a need for such operations and the appropriate responses and requisite capabilities to address them.

In the context of a general examination of German peace support operations, this article argues that it is a mistake to draw sweeping conclusions from the June 1995 Bundestag decision to contribute to the UN Rapid Reaction Force (RRF) and subsequently to the NATO-led Peace Implementation Force (IFOR). What is occurring in Germany today is a serious and profoundly difficult debate about its new identity and what the world expects from it. External forces and events are pushing Germany at a time when its leaders and people would prefer to go much more slowly. The real world will not allow them that luxury, and hence we see a policy process that is filled with tensions and even contradictions. Those outside Germany must understand something of the mix of external and internal forces at work in order to understand what to expect from Germany today and in the near future.

Background

As post-Cold War conflicts began to appear, Germany initially had an easy answer to the questions about the role it would play. Its constitution (Grundgesetz or "Basic Law") prohibited it from actively participating in military operations outside of Germany and NATO. So while it might contribute a substantial sum of money in support of the coalition arrayed against Saddam Hussein,[2] it would not have to debate whether it should send troops. Yet even then, most observers felt that the constitutional issue would be rather quickly resolved, at which time the debate about the new German role in international security affairs would begin in earnest. And indeed, on 12 July 1994, the German Constitutional Court in Karlsruhe handed down its ruling that would, in future, allow for the use of the Bundeswehr in "out-of-area" operations. And, rather than putting an end to the debate, the Court's ruling was actually the starting point; now the issues would have to be discussed, debated, and decided in the domestic political arena without the protection of a constitutional prohibition. The issue had been fully joined. What views would the German government articulate on the use of military force in international affairs generally and in support of peace operations specifically? [3]

The events in Yugoslavia played a significant role in the debate. Feeling the economic, social, and political effects of the transformations in Eastern Europe perhaps more acutely than any other West European country, Germany under Chancellor Helmut Kohl had moved quickly to express its views about the necessity of expanding Western institutions, such as the European Union (EU), eastward. Eager to support liberal international principles such as self-determination, and perhaps somewhat frustrated by the slowness of its European allies to respond to the very real threat of massive refugee movements, Germany was the first to grant formal recognition to Croatia and Slovenia in December 1991.

A wave of criticism and analysis followed. Was this the sign of the new, independent Germany? Would it press its foreign policy desires unilaterally? While in retrospect much of this debate appears exaggerated and a bit alarmist, the repercussions for Germany have been apparent. As the crisis in the former Yugoslavia worsened, and the calls for Western intervention intensified, Germany found it increasingly difficult to hide behind its constitutional prohibition. If the new Germany was going to take foreign policy initiatives on its own (so went the logic at the time), then it would have to become a full partner in all international affairs, including paying the full costs (not just financial) of political-military follow-ons to those initiatives. Whether the Germans wanted to or not, the shroud of the constitutional prohibition would have to be lifted. It was not simply a matter of domestic politics; the issue had been fully internationalized.

Official Policy Statements

Although written prior to the Federal Constitutional Court ruling of July 1994, the *White Paper 1994* contains the most current and comprehensive official statement of German policy concerning peace support operations.[4] Yet, there is no section devoted solely to that topic. In fact, there is no chapter or sub-chapter heading referring to such operations or even to crisis management. Rather, one finds references to such operations interwoven throughout the discussions of the contemporary international situation, the concept of German security and defense policy, and the role of Germany as a country firmly committed to, and embedded in, a set of multilateral security institutions. The search for official German policy on peace support operations begins with this document.

In forewords to the *White Paper*, Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Federal Minister of Defense Volker Rühe both acknowledge the importance of peace support operations to German security policy by pointing to the contributions already made by German forces.[5] Both make overt references to the manner in which those contributions have been received by the international community. Notably absent is any clear reference to German security interests served by these operations. Further evidence of the extent to which the issue of German involvement in such operations had been internationalized appears throughout the *White Paper,* most obviously in the frequency with which it acknowledges the new and broader role that Germany must play in international security affairs.[6] The language is clear if not direct: Germany is "called upon" and "expected to" contribute to and share in the responsibility.

Yet the regional analyses, as well as important qualifying language throughout the document, make it clear that German interests are primarily, if not exclusively, located in Europe.[7] Although responding to external pressures to assume greater international responsibility, German security policy seems to be laying the groundwork for limiting that responsibility to Europe and circumscribing the possible range and scope of operations into which the Bundeswehr might be drawn. It is as though Germany is defining a role for itself as a willing, but not too able, partner.

This broader tension is evident throughout the document. On the one hand, rhetoric abounds about the need for more effective and comprehensive international conflict prevention and crisis management mechanisms, including the possible use of military force.[8] On the other hand, qualifications about the German role in such international mechanisms appear with equal regularity. At times they appear to contradict the argument that Germany will now play the role it is "called upon" or "expected" to play, either by limiting that role geographically or in kind.[9]

Finally, there is an inherent tension in the approach toward crisis and conflict management and prevention as advocated and the procedures Germany would employ in arriving at a decision to participate in peace support operations. The *White Paper* implies that Germany would use essentially the same criteria for deciding as are required for similar Western European Union (WEU) decisions. This includes provisions that a WEU resolution be unanimous, and that each member state remain "free to decide on the basis of its constitution whether or not to participate."[10] It

is hard to imagine how such procedures can be used in support of a crisis management system; timely, decisive action is the hallmark of successful crisis management, a commodity rendered virtually unattainable in such a system of individual political decisionmaking. Each member will review any proposed action on a case-by-case basis, and that review will include a full domestic debate and decision. For Germany, already seeking to set limits on its contributions, the process almost guarantees that the Bundeswehr will not be "ordered into action under WEU command" any time soon.[11] By implication, German participation in peace support operations will occur only after intense public deliberation.

In sum, the *White Paper*, as a formal statement of German policy in regard to peace support operations, contains unresolved tensions and perhaps contradictions. There is ample acknowledgment of the changing nature of international conflict in the post-Cold War world. The proliferation of ethnic and religious conflict, and its emergence in the form of civil wars and the collapse of governability, represent increasing threats to international security and the security of Europe and Germany. Similarly, the discussions frequently address the need for more effective systems of conflict and crisis management to deal with such threats, including the willingness and capability to use force if necessary. And finally, there is substantial awareness of the growing expectation that Germany must play a greater role in, and share the responsibility for, the operations that support such systems. However, the caution in circumscribing just what that role might be for the Federal Republic of Germany in general, and the Bundeswehr specifically, seems at times to run counter to the acknowledgment that Germany must assume its full share of the responsibilities. Because this document was written prior to the Federal Constitutional Court decision, it is necessary to examine what has happened since that decision was announced to see if some of the potential tensions have been resolved or clarified.

The Tornado Controversy

For supporters of an expanded German role in international security affairs, the Constitutional Court decision represented a completion of the transition to full sovereignty which was begun with the unification process and the Two-plus-Four agreement. To others more critical of such a role, the decision opened the way to a "remilitarization" of German foreign policy.[12] Two subsequent developments deserve attention, the first a general development in the debate about German military involvement "out-of-area" and the second a specific policy issue that arose late in 1994.

The general development was already in evidence prior to the Court's decision, but became more apparent in the months thereafter. This was the increased use of the "history" argument against German involvement "out-of-area," especially in the former Yugoslavia. The argument, expressed simply, is that the reappearance of the German military would be counterproductive and potentially disastrous for peace efforts in parts of Europe occupied by the Wehrmacht during World War II. Initially referring specifically to the Serbs in the Bosnian crisis,[13] this argument grew and expanded over time. By June 1995, there was a recognition that this had become for many the substitute for the constitutional prohibition argument. As one member of the Bundestag put it, in words used nearly verbatim by a retired senior army officer and former member of the Defense Ministry staff one day later, such an argument would mean that "there would be virtually no place in all of Europe that the Bundeswehr could be deployed."[14] Although this argument subsequently lost some of its resonance, SPD Party Leader Rudolf Scharping observed during the 30 June 1995 parliamentary debate on allowing German combat planes to be sent to Bosnia that ECR-Tornados with the Iron Cross would only heat up the conflict rather than diffuse it.[15] The reference to the "history" argument was clear.

The specific policy issue resulted from a request made by the SACEUR, General George Joulwan, for Luftwaffe Tornados.[16] On 30 November 1994 General Joulwan approached the German government about providing six ECR-Tornados to be used by NATO. The Serbs had a growing surface-to-air missile capability around Bihac, and the Tornados offered a favorable counter-threat capability. But Bonn was not yet prepared to deal with such a request. Following the Karlsruhe decision, there was no attempt to initiate a broad-ranging discussion of the appropriate roles and missions for the Bundeswehr in peace support operations. In fact, political leaders generally wanted to avoid such a discussion. The political climate at the time made some of that reluctance understandable; national elections coming up in October cast long shadows, making members of all the major parties unwilling to risk an emotional and divisive debate. And for a country new to such debates, the example of the US anguish over the Haiti decision could not have offered much encouragement. Why launch such a debate if no concrete situation made it necessary?

What ensued was a very interesting, even entertaining, exercise in creative diplomacy. In effect, the German

government chose not to respond to General Joulwan's request. Classifying Joulwan's action as an "informal inquiry" rather than a formal request from NATO, Bonn simply gave no answer. This removed any immediate necessity to initiate a debate, either within the government or in parliament. And to bolster the non-decision further, members of parliament and the government pointed out that NATO was unlikely to order any military mission involving the German Tornados; therefore, as the Christian Democratic Union/Christian Social Union parliamentary group leader Wolfgang Schaeuble stated, a "decision in reserve" was unnecessary.[17]

What is clear from these developments is that the question of German participation in peace support operations had become fully politicized. Under the oft-cited constraints of the constitutional question, Germany could avoid the perplexing debates about whether to participate in such operations and, if so, under what conditions. Once the legal issues were clarified, it was only natural that political considerations would take over. The question then is whether the political debate will be a full and open one or more like what followed General Joulwan's request in November 1994. In that debate a host of political considerations led to some amazing antics on the part of the German government to avoid giving any clear answer at all. The "history" argument was simply one of many justifications offered up as a logical, nonpolitical explanation for what is and always will be a very political (and difficult) decision for any country.

Current Policy Perspectives

This section examines the perspectives of several key players in the German policymaking process, including the military, the political parties, the government, and public opinion. The purpose is to provide a brief sketch of the views that obtain within each grouping; this is not an attempt to present a thorough delineation of all views, nor to decide which view currently prevails.[18] This section begins with the defense planning community, turns next to an overview of public opinion, and finally examines the contemporary political landscape.

The Ministry of Defense. It is not surprising that some of the clearest statements and policies on German peace support operations are found among the military and the civilian planners within the Ministry of Defense (MoD). The German defense planning system requires thinking on such issues to develop without a highly publicized political debate. Of course, once those policies are outlined and presented to the cabinet, before a recommendation goes to the full parliament, they become the object of intense public scrutiny, and political leaders are identified as being responsible for them. But prior to that point policy discussions often occur in relative quiet. This helps explain why some of the clearest statements about emerging security policy, including potential problems, exist within the MoD.[19]

One document in particular provides an interesting overview of current MoD thinking on German peace support operations. Written in July 1994 and circulated publicly, it is entitled *Conceptual Guideline for the Further Development of the Bundeswehr*.[20] The *Guideline* attempts to build a bridge between the wide-ranging analysis of the 1994 *White Paper* and actual force planning. It distinguishes between two missions for the Bundeswehr: traditional territorial defense and crisis reaction. The document points out that while the traditional defense mission remains an important focus of German defense planning and force structure, it is ironically the greatest threat but the least likely contingency in the post-Cold War security environment to which the Bundeswehr might have to respond. On the other hand, crisis reaction is the most likely operation, but the one for which the Bundeswehr is the least well prepared.[21] It then discusses the kinds of changes anticipated in reconfiguring the Bundeswehr to meet the requirements of a fundamentally changed strategic situation. Particularly significant is the assessment that the current strategic environment allows for a noticeable reduction in the forces-in-being devoted to territorial defense, and hence their reallocation to the crisis reaction mission.[22] Although not released until after the Karlsruhe Court ruling, the thinking behind this document obviously was underway well before the constitutional issue was clarified.

The most recent MoD thinking was evident in interviews and discussions in June 1995, and undoubtedly appeared in some form in the Bosnian policy recommendation and subsequent debate later that same month.[23] Referencing "interests and objectives of German foreign and security policy," as well as German "responsibilities as an Alliance partner," several individuals referred to what can be stated as basic principles underlying emerging German policy. First, everyone interviewed made clear references to a case-by-case decision process, always involving public debate and parliamentary approval. Obviously, domestic political processes will dominate; there will be no automatic formula for German participation. Second, some of the views are carryovers from previously articulated guidelines, such as the general limitation of German support to conflict management in the European region, and the requirement for

multinational participation and international mandates in support of such operations. Third, there must be a clear, credible political strategy that leads or contributes to the resolution of the conflict, and the military operation must have a definable end state and exit strategy. Fourth, there must be compelling reasons for the use of force under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, and the threat to German security, European stability, or international peace must be evident. Finally, there is a strong rejection of the "history" argument against German participation, at least as a *sui generis* limitation. On the surface at least, current MoD thinking appears to reflect significant progress in the development of Germany as a normal international actor, reacting to important changes in the international security environment and attempting to define some criteria to be used in reaching decisions about where, when, and how to participate.

However, some caution is in order about this interpretation, and it relates directly to the role and influence of the MoD in the overall political processes. In short, it is difficult to say in advance how much of the MoD staff view will prevail in the end. As Catherine Kelleher observed more than ten years ago, the German defense organization is quite idiosyncratic and most often dominated by the personality and style of the Defense Minister.[24] Certainly Rühe has demonstrated a willingness to go outside the established bureaucratic procedures when he deems it necessary or desirable, which means that he may or may not accept his own ministry's positions and arguments. Moreover, he must ultimately convince the Federal Security Council of the Cabinet and the parliamentary Defense Committee, which may require substantial modification of the original MoD views.[25] And historically, the MoD (as distinct from the Defense Minister) has not been especially powerful or influential in determining overall policy.[26] So despite the generally high quality of the work being done there, one should be cautious in assessing the significance of MoD thinking for the future of Germany as a normal international actor. The key will be how much influence such thinking has on Rühe and the government.

Public Opinion. Analyses and commentaries frequently point to the reticence of the German public to accept any departure from the traditional "culture of restraint" in post-World War II West German foreign and security policy. This has generally included maintaining a low profile for Germany in the power politics of international affairs, particularly in crisis management, and especially in the use of force. One of the central issues in the question concerning Germany's evolution into a normal international actor, then, is whether public opinion will allow or accept such a change. For the purposes of this article, it is necessary to examine public opinion briefly as it pertains to the role of Germany in international peace support operations.

The skepticism of the German public about an activist international role for their country is well documented, as is a pervasive aversion for power politics. In the recent debate concerning German participation in the RRF, numerous references were made to what the public would or would not support, with members of the coalition and the opposition frequently citing the limits of public support as justification for their positions.[27] While the public remains generally skeptical of such operations, recent evidence suggests that subtle but important shifts in public attitudes and opinions are under way.

Support for continued German ties to NATO is very strong; a recent Institut für Demoskopie Allensbach survey found that 69 percent considered NATO membership important compared to 70 percent at the beginning of the 1980s (arguably at the height of the Cold War).[28] In fact, the escalating instability and crisis situations in the former Soviet Union have increased public desires for NATO to remain both intact and strong, going from 57 percent in 1991 to 71 percent today. And Franz-Josef Meiers notes that 74 percent of the public support "NATO involvement in new crises on Europe's periphery."[29] However, 55 percent of those same respondents "agreed that the Bundeswehr's role should remain limited to territorial defence and that Germany's allies must assume responsibility for such missions [crisis management] themselves."[30]

The same Demoskopie survey found that the participation of German soldiers as international peacekeeping troops of the United Nations was supported by a majority only in the former West Germany; in the former East Germany only 29 percent favor such participation whereas 52 percent are opposed.[31] Meiers also cites the results of a poll conducted by Infratest Burke Berlin after the 1994 national elections in which as many as 75 percent of the German public supported the use of military force for humanitarian purposes and traditional peacekeeping missions. However, he observes that this support declines "when specific scenarios including combat missions were put to Germans."[32] In principle the German public supports peace support operations, including the use of military force if necessary; in

practice, however, they seem less inclined to support specific operations and especially Bundeswehr involvement in them.[33]

Yet it appears that German public opinion has begun to acknowledge, at least in part because of all the media coverage of crises, civil wars, and human tragedy around the globe, that the end of the Cold War and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact do not mean that the world is necessarily a safer place. This shows up most clearly in the reversal of public attitudes about military service. A majority of the German public had by 1993 concluded that obligatory public service was more important to society than military conscription. By 1995 this view had shrunk to 32 percent in the former West Germany (from 50 percent) and to 33 percent in the former East Germany (from 60 percent).[34] The trend is toward a view of the world and German society that on the surface seem compatible with a more activist international role for Germany, including, if necessary, the use of military force. However, there is still a prevailing view that such military action can be left largely to Germany's allies, especially the United States.

Nonetheless, current opinions suggest there are increasing opportunities for German leadership to convince the public that "out-of-area" peace operations are necessary and that they support German and European interests. But the necessity for Bundeswehr participation in such operations, whether to protect those interests or to respond to external calls for greater German responsibility and burden-sharing, seems to have registered only weakly in the minds of the public. This represents the challenge for German political leadership: to convince the public, which is increasingly inclined to see the dangers and threats of post-Cold War conflicts (especially those close to home), that Germany is "called upon" and "expected" to include Bundeswehr participation in operations to meet those threats and counter those dangers. Is German political leadership up to that challenge?

The Political Landscape. One word summarizes the overall political landscape in Germany today in the realm of peace support operations: divided. As one senior retired Bundeswehr officer put it, the "main problem is that there is no unified German position" on what policy should be. These divisions exist not only between the coalition and the opposition, but within the coalition itself, within the government and the ministries, and even within the individual parties. Given the historical emphasis on consensus decisions, and the special requirement for overwhelming consensus when it comes to issues involving the possible use of military force, it is hardly surprising that Germany has found it so difficult to devise a policy with clear guidelines.

The Government. The Kohl-led government has taken the lead in forging some consensus on peace support operations generally and the Bosnian policy specifically.[35] The road to this consensus, however, was anything but smooth. Rifts have appeared within the coalition and even within the Chancellor's own party. Policy has appeared to vacillate and change dramatically almost overnight. Kohl has been variously characterized as, on the one hand, craftily leading Germany down a path toward militarizing German foreign policy and, on the other, as allowing German policy to drift aimlessly as he plays games with the allies, desperately seeking ways in which to avoid making any commitments or giving any clear answers. Neither statement is accurate, for the truth lies somewhere in between these two extremes. Simply put, Kohl's political margin for error is so narrow following the 1994 parliamentary elections that he cannot afford a major policy disaster. Particularly in an area fraught with so many emotional time bombs as this, being caught too far out front or too far behind elite and mass opinion could seal the coalition's, as well as Kohl's own political fate. At the same time, external pressures from allies, bound together with questions about the future of NATO and the EU, also place stresses and strains on the government. Extreme caution is the guiding principle behind the Kohl approach.[36]

Perhaps the most significant political problem within the coalition concerns the present and future of the Free Democratic Party (FDP). It is not only divided on the issue of peace support operations, it is badly split over a variety of key issues. In fact, the FDP is in the throes of a struggle for its political survival. Having watched its support in the national elections dwindle dangerously close to the minimum threshold of five percent for remaining in parliament, it has recently faced a series of embarrassing losses in state elections. Its performance in elections in North-Rhine Westphalia and in Bremen were so poor that they prompted Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel to resign as party leader. Kinkel continues to serve as Foreign Minister and Vice-Chancellor, but at a time when he will need to be a forceful spokesperson for any future deployment of the Bundeswehr in peace support operations, the precarious situation of the FDP works strongly against him and his ability to provide that much-needed support.[37] Critical elections in several German states early in 1996 may provide a clearer view of the FDP's future.

Within the cabinet differing views on peace support operations have also emerged, especially between Foreign Minister Kinkel and Defense Minister Rühe. Kinkel has been openly supportive of a broader role for the Bundeswehr in peace support operations, whereas Rühe has been much more cautious and circumspect.[38] The differences were still evident in the carefully coordinated statements made by both Kinkel and Rühe before the German parliament as they sought support for the government's recommendation to contribute forces to the RRF. Kinkel stressed the need for Germany to show solidarity with the UN Security Council, NATO, and the EU; the German interests that are involved; the need to expand the concept of security in German thinking; and the expectation that Germany would "actively share in protecting the international order."[39] Rühe emphasized the limiting features of the policy: the mission was to help people and nothing more; the collapse of the UN mission must be prevented; the ECR-Tornados would be used only in the event of an attack against the Blue Helmets, and then only to protect the aircraft of other countries.[40] While Kinkel continued to suggest much broader reasons for German participation in such operations, Rühe seemed to be concerned with delineating the limitations on this mission so that no broader implications could be drawn. This is a fundamental difference of views that is unlikely to disappear soon, not only between these two cabinet ministers but within Germany generally.[41]

Social Democratic Party (SPD). In early 1995 the SPD enjoyed much stronger electoral prospects than the FDP, and it appeared to be gaining ground on the CDU/CSU. But it was also a badly divided party, a fact that became more evident as the year unfolded and the debate on German participation in peace support operations grew more specific. A bitter public challenge to SPD party leader Rudolf Scharping was being waged by Gerhard Schröder, and the battle intensified as the party suffered some electoral setbacks in the first half of the year. Public support for the SPD fell steadily from the 36 percent level it received in the 1994 parliamentary elections to around 30 percent by mid-1995. SPD party members grew increasingly disenchanted with Scharping, and by the end of June 1995 only 38 percent preferred him as party leader to 36 percent for Schröder.[42] And as the time drew near for the parliamentary vote on the government's recommendation to contribute Bundeswehr forces, including Tornados, to the RRF, a significant minority of the SPD parliamentary delegation was already voting with the government and against its own party position.[43]

The official SPD position on Bundeswehr participation in peace support operations was that each potential deployment should be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, but that in general all missions should be strictly limited to non-combat support roles. Scharping continued to argue the party view that in the case of Bosnia in particular, the "history" argument was especially relevant. Germany should contribute only medical and logistical support for the RRF, a view that was not sustained in the vote on 30 June 1995. And by the fall it was evident that the SPD had lost on the broader issue of German participation as the decision was made to contribute 4000 Bundeswehr troops to the NATO-led IFOR. In November, Scharping was defeated in his bid to remain as party leader.[44] As of early 1996, it appears that the SPD leadership, parliamentary delegation, and rank-and-file membership remain sharply divided on the issue of peace support operations.

The Alliance 90/Greens. Although there is general opposition among the Alliance 90/Greens group to the use of the Bundeswehr for anything other than strictly humanitarian operations, the situation in Bosnia has proven difficult for them, too. The reason is that the ongoing war and associated atrocities have become a human rights issue for many of their members. And the picture of the West, including Germany, standing on the sidelines and not using force to stop the aggression against innocent civilians runs counter to even a pacifistic sense of what is right.[45] In the run-up to the Bundestag debate, the group decided to reject the deployment of combat units and instead to call for "`massive German support' by nongovernmental organizations for humanitarian aid shipments."[46] The leader of the Alliance 90/Greens group, Joschka Fischer, was apparently relieved that this decision avoided a major dispute by satisfying those who wanted to support humanitarian aid by the Bundeswehr. But three members of the group voted against this "common policy" position, and in the final Bundestag vote three members openly acknowledged that they voted with the government.[47]

The growing tension and division finally surfaced officially in early August 1995 when Fischer circulated a policy paper in which he called "for a redefinition of the Greens' foreign policy principles." He spoke "openly in favor of an expansion of UN involvement in Bosnia," including "surface and aerial protection for the remaining UN safe zones."[48] He personally believes that it is time for the party to move away from rigid opposition to the use of force. At a minimum the Fischer paper will ensure a bruising debate within the party on this fundamental question, and the

divisions are likely to grow before they begin to disappear. At the same time, it is clear that the party's desire to be a genuine force at the national level, including as a possible coalition partner for the SPD, requires a more generally applicable and acceptable approach to foreign policy than a simple renunciation-of-force policy will allow.[49]

Assessment of the Political Landscape. All of the major parties are therefore split to varying degrees on issues pertaining to peace support operations generally and Bundeswehr participation in Bosnia specifically. Further, the entire electoral environment is highly uncertain for all of the parties. When combined with the at best skeptical attitude of the German public and the still-prevailing "culture of restraint," this electoral uncertainty creates a situation in which any bold, new policy initiative related to peace support operations is highly risky with unclear benefits. The result is that all of the parties and their major personalities will probably continue to be extremely cautious in developing policy, choosing general statements and case-by-case delimiters over broad, clear policy directives or guidelines. Careful coalition building will prevail. Building consensus and compromise reduces the opportunities for opponents to exploit any public perception of a policy that is out of step with German opinion. In that environment, it seems highly unlikely that the leadership required to forge a broad public consensus on peace support operations will be forthcoming any time soon. It suggests that German policy will develop slowly and incrementally, and the case-by-case approach will be preferred by almost all of the political players.

Conclusions

This overview of German policies for peace support operations indicates that external influences have moved Germany subtly but noticeably toward a clearer and more forthright recognition of the need for military power in the post-Cold War international system generally, and for a German contribution to that capability. Among those external influences, the ongoing tragedy in the former Yugoslavia is certainly paramount. The German public and political elites have seen constant images of the atrocities, and they have witnessed the recurrent and complete failure of all attempts to control the violence through non-military means. These failures in Europe's own backyard have helped push the debate in the direction of recognizing the need for an effective international military capability. Among the military and political professionals, one hears frequent and blunt references to the failures of the UN, and especially the "dual key" approach of NATO military power serving UN operations. Such criticism was virtually unheard of as recently as two years ago.

The external pressure from allies and international opinion has also continued. The frequent references to what Germany is "expected" and "called upon" to contribute provide ample evidence. The US decision to remain significantly on the sidelines in the Bosnian crisis, at least until the NATO air strikes began in earnest in late August 1995, certainly contributed to the pressures on Europe generally and on Germany specifically. It is painfully evident to many Germans today that the days of American military action making German action unnecessary are gone, unless there is a happy coincidence of interests.[50] As frustrations with the lack of effective action to counter the violence in Bosnia have grown, they join with the humanitarian argument for the justifiable use of military force. This in turn is reinforced by German desires not to be isolated from its allies and to demonstrate solidarity with them. Moreover, the perhaps idealistic view that the UN can be an effective guarantor of international security, thereby continuing the trend toward de-nationalizing security policy, gives Germany few alternatives but to try to strengthen the flagging image of that organization. There seems little doubt that all of these factors were at work in the decision by the Bundestag on 30 June 1995 approving Bundeswehr participation in the RRF.

Does all of this mean that Germany is now a "normal" international actor, or at least well on its way toward becoming one? This conclusion remains at best premature. The decision to participate in the RRF, although significant, still includes many conditions and qualifications that are hardly normal. Only time and specific events will reveal the extent to which Germany is both willing and able to make a genuine and significant contribution to peace support operations in the post-Cold War world.[51]

Yet it would also be unfair and inaccurate not to acknowledge the movement of Germany in the direction of "normalcy." Germany is attempting to develop policies and procedures for participating in multinational peace operations at a time when the world's only superpower, the United States, appears to be disengaging itself from such operations. It hardly seems appropriate to judge Germany as not having done enough when the United States is itself paralyzed by domestic politics and a lack of consensus on foreign and security policy. Moreover, there has been a detectable shift in the substance and the rhetoric of the debate in Germany. Although the Kohl government has been

careful to continue the consensus-building, coalition approach to policy making that has long characterized German foreign and security policy, one hears more references to "German interests" and the concepts of power politics than at any time in the recent past.[52] And even the Greens have apparently launched an internal debate about the possible irrelevance of their party's rigid principle of non-violence for post-Cold War international affairs, certainly another indicator of movement toward "normalcy."

But German policy regarding peace support operations will continue to be characterized by considerable tension and even contradiction. How it evolves will be determined to a large extent by the perceived success or failure of German participation in the RRF and IFOR specifically and Western policy toward Bosnia generally.[53] Others in the West must not expect too much, too soon, from a country whose domestic inclinations and political forces make it very difficult to break with strongly held convictions about its role in international affairs. Yet it would be at least equally misguided to expect too little. The domestic situation in Germany is such that external expectations and pressures are absolutely essential to the further evolution of that country as a normal international actor. The process Germany intends to use for deciding on participation will make it very difficult for it to respond in a timely and decisive manner, and its allies need to recognize this fact and work to influence the process. But as one member of the SPD confidently put it, Germany will eventually assume a full role in support of international peace operations. "It will go slower than many, especially the US, want to see. But German policy will and already is moving in that direction."[54]

In the end, however, the events reviewed here suggest that the German decisions on Bosnia are not a general indicator of evolving German policy on peace support operations. The sequence of events and decisions composing the "Bosnia policy" of Germany is remarkable and unique. German decisions on Bosnia have been heavily driven by external factors and pressures, made all the more possible by a sense both outside and inside the country that the German decision to recognize Slovenia and Croatia in 1991 was at least partly responsible for the Bosnian crisis.[55] And as current attempts to lay out some guidelines for that policy indicate, German participation in peace support operations will be decided on a case-by-case basis and with the full participation of the parliament. Those features alone should make us skeptical of any attempt to discern a general German policy, and especially to predict just what kinds of actions Germany will take in the future. For some time to come, Germany will continue to be caught, as Clemens observed in an earlier period, "between its commitment . . . to demilitarization and its growing recognition that military strength can contribute to a more stable, humane post-Cold War order."[56]

Finally, this analysis makes it apparent that an understanding of current and future German policy in peace support operations requires an understanding of external and internal factors and processes. No systemic-level explanation focusing on German national interests and structural characteristics of the international system will provide even a reasonably accurate, let alone full understanding of German actions. Much the same can be said of the general research question about the emergence of Germany as a normal international actor. The external events and forces acting on Germany are indeed significant, but so, too, are the domestic forces. For those who wish to understand the future role of the Federal Republic of Germany in international peace support operations and its development as a normal actor, the answers lie in that nexus between international events and domestic political exigencies.

NOTES

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1. Gordon describes the "normalization" of German foreign policy as "the gradual attenuation of the particular restrictions that have influenced and constrained Germany's international actions since, and because of, World War II." See Philip H. Gordon, "The Normalization of German Foreign Policy," *Orbis*, 38 (Spring 1994), 225.

2. For a wide-ranging and thorough analysis of the different dimensions of the German contributions to the Gulf War

alliance, see Michael J. Inacker, *Unter Ausschluss der Öffentlichkeit: Die Deutschen in der Golfallianz* (Bonn, Berlin: Bouvier Verlag, 1991). Inacker places the total German contribution at 17 billion Marks (p. 106).

3. The potential limiting effects of this prohibition on German support of its allies had long been recognized and debated conceptually in the context of NATO and "out-of-area" operations. However, until the end of the Cold War simultaneously reinstated full German sovereignty and refocused international attention on conflicts requiring peace support operations, this debate was largely academic. The Persian Gulf crisis of 1990-91 first raised the issue in the context of a full and fair share of international military responsibility for a Germany now seen by many as a major power.

4. *White Paper 1994: On the Security of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Situation and Future of the Bundeswehr* (Bonn: Federal Ministry of Defence, 1994).

5. Chancellor Kohl observes: "In international peace missions, the exemplary conduct, personal dedication and skill of our soldiers, sailors and airmen have enhanced Germany's standing in the world." (p. vii) Rühe notes that the Bundeswehr "is participating with great success in international peace missions" and "has greatly enhanced its reputation by its activities in Cambodia, Iraq, the former Yugoslavia and Somalia." (p. ix)

6. For example, "Germany must assume new international responsibility. By virtue of its political and economic strength, it has a key role to play in the development of European structures and is called upon to make a contribution to the resolution of future problems throughout the world." (p. 24)

7. So the statement on p. 40: "Today, Germany has greater international responsibility, especially as far as security in and for Europe is concerned."

8. Consider the following statements:

"Conflict prevention and crisis management in a widened geographical setting, with a mandate legitimizing such activities under international law, must be at the forefront of preventive security measures." (p. 37)

"In a political framework that aims at solving crises and conflicts by tackling their roots and causes, it may also be necessary to employ military means to prevent, confine, or terminate violence or war." (p. 37)

"Even after the end of the East-West conflict, lasting peace cannot be guaranteed without the possibility of employing armed forces if necessary." (p. 43)

For a country that has consistently denied or played down the role of force in international relations, these references are no small matter. See, for example, the discussion in Clay Clemens, "A Special Kind of Superpower? Germany and the Demilitarization of Post-Cold War International Security," pp. 199-240 in Gary L. Geipel, ed., *Germany in a New Era* (Indianapolis: Hudson Institute, 1993). See also the arguments by Franz-Josef Meiers, "Germany: The Reluctant Power," *Survival*, 37 (Autumn 1995), 82-103.

9. Geographically: "Germany has greater international responsibility, especially as far as security in Europe is concerned." (p. 40) In kind: "Even after the question of conformity with the constitution has been settled, Germany's contribution towards the preservation of peace will continue to be primarily of a political and economic character, and not of a military one." (p. 65)

10. See the discussion of the WEU on p. 58 of the *White Paper*. Further stipulations require harmonization with provisions in the UN Charter and with the military obligations of the Atlantic Alliance.

11. It is interesting, and perhaps telling, in this light to examine this statement on p. 59: "The Federal Government is committed to the idea that the WEU be just as capable of managing crises as NATO." Given the opinion held by some policy makers and analysts about the inadequacy or incapacity of NATO in this area, particularly as it related to the Bosnian crisis prior to December 1995, this statement may ring true but in a very ironic way!

12. This was the criticism most frequently cited by members of the opposition, especially in late 1994 and early 1995, and was pointed out to the author in several interviews in June 1995. Evidence that the criticism had some impact is found in one of German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel's earliest public statements about German foreign policy after the Karlsruhe decision. Arguing that defense of the international order sometimes requires the use of force, Kinkel quickly added: "This does not, however, mean a militarization of German foreign policy; the culture of restraint will be maintained." See Klaus Kinkel, "Peacekeeping missions: Germany can now play its part," *NATO Review*, 42 (October 1994), p. 4.

13. In fact, Foreign Minister Kinkel expressed this view in the aftermath of General Joulwan's request for German Tornados (see the following discussion), and it was subsequently referred to as the "Kohl Doctrine." See *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (München), 5 December 1995, "Keine Bodentruppen ins bosnische Kampfgebiet."

14. From an interview with the author on 19 June 1995.

15. See *Der Spiegel* (Hamburg), 3 July 1995, p. 26.

16. See the discussion of the Joulwan request in Meiers, "Germany: The Reluctant Power," especially pp. 85-87.

17. Schaeuble is quoted in Meiers, p. 86, n. 16, citing Udo Bergdoll, "Aus Bonn ein vernebeltes Nein," *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (München), 8 December 1994, and "Bonner Versteckspiel im Tornado-Dilemma," *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 9 December 1994.

18. Much of this section is based on interviews conducted by the author 15-24 June 1995 in Germany.

19. It is also a reason why one must be extremely cautious in imparting too much significance to MoD views. Precisely because the policies have not yet been subjected to the pre-parliamentary and parliamentary phases of debate, policies at this stage may hardly resemble what eventually emerges. As Clemens observes: "analysts who approvingly or disapprovingly cite the readiness of Bonn's military establishment to prepare Germany for the role of a `normal' power in world affairs may underrate the political obstacles blocking such a policy in the first place." (p. 200)

20. *Konzeptionelle Leitlinie zur Weiterentwicklung der Bundeswehr* (Bonn: Informationsstab, Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, 12 July 1994). This document was made public immediately after the Karlsruhe decision, a conscious effort by Rühe to preempt the public debate.

21. Ibid., p. 2.

22. The text reads: "Die strategische Lage erlaubt es, die Präsenz der Streitkräfte für die Landesverteidigung deutlich zu verringern." (p. 4) It goes on to argue, of course, that this conclusion is based on the assumption that there will be adequate warning time to shift some of the crisis reaction forces back to homeland defense should the need arise.

23. Some of those interviewed at the MoD indicated that a new document was in the works with a tentative title "Guidelines for the Use of the Bundeswehr in the Framework of International Peace Missions." It was apparently not written as part of the Bosnia decision of 30 June 1995, but this document would certainly reflect the thinking and analysis going on at that time. The reader should recall that the groundwork was being laid for a cabinet recommendation to parliament (subsequently made on 26 June) that Germany contribute to the protection of the UN Blue Helmets in the former Yugoslavia, including the assignment of 14 ECR-Tornados.

24. Kelleher observed: "Until now, the German central defense organization has functioned more often as an `unstructured structure,' dependent more on the harmonization of personalities and political styles than on formal rules for ultimate decisions." (p. 83) Catherine McArdle Kelleher, "Defense Organization in Germany: A Twice Told Tale," in Robert J. Art, Vincent Davis, and Samuel P. Huntington, eds., *Reorganizing America's Defense: Leadership in War and Peace* (Washington: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1985), pp. 82-107.

25. See the caution in this regard by Clemens, cited earlier in note 19.

26. This is the result of both design and the personal policies of past Defense Ministers. See Kelleher, especially pp. 91-96.

27. See for example, the interview with CDU/CSU defense policy spokesman Paul Breuer in *Welt am Sonntag* (Hamburg), 9 July 1995, *Foreign Broadcast Information Service* (FBIS)-WEU-95-132, p. 7. See also the speeches to the Bundestag by Foreign Minister Kinkel, 30 June 1995, *FBIS*-WEU-95-126, pp. 13-16, and by SPD party leader Rudolf Scharping, 30 June 1995, *FBIS*-WEU-95-127, pp. 10-14.

28. The results of this recent survey are discussed in an article by Dr. Renate Koecher, "Unerwartete Wende," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 14 June 1995, p. 5.

29. Meiers, p. 84.

30. Ibid.

31. Koecher, p. 5.

32. Meiers, p. 85.

33. The same Demoskopie survey found a similar kind of agreement in principle but disagreement in specifics concerning the expansion of NATO. Thirty-three percent favor expansion generally, 25 percent are opposed, and a very high 42 percent are undecided. When Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic are specifically mentioned as candidates for admission, support climbs dramatically to 47 percent while opposition declines to 20 percent. However, the same survey found that the public does not make the connection between including these countries in NATO and being bound to go to their defense if they are attacked. When this point is made, support for NATO expansion drops precipitously, so much so in fact that 41 percent are now opposed and only 27 percent in favor of NATO expansion. Apparently the public is willing to support efforts to address some of the post-Cold War challenges to international security, but only so long as there are no real demands made on Germany. Koecher, p. 5.

34. Ibid. Similar statements about the public and parliamentary perceptions of the Bundeswehr and military missions generally can be found in Rick Atkinson, "Luftwaffe's Wings Clipped in First Action Since 1945," *The Washington Post*, 19 August 1995.

35. The current German coalition government consists of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and its Bavarian sister party, the Christian Social Union (CSU), along with their coalition partner, the Free Democratic Party (FDP). It is commonly referred to as the CDU/CSU-FDP coalition.

36. This view was evident in almost all of the comments of people interviewed in the foreign and security policy community, including the CDU staff.

37. This point was made in more than one interview, including one member of the German Foreign Ministry.

38. For a more detailed treatment of these differences, as well as other aspects of the political landscape, see Robert H. Dorff, "German Policy Toward Peace Support Operations," in *Force, Statecraft and German Unity: The Struggle to Adapt Institutions and Practices*, ed. Thomas-Durell Young (Carlisle, Pa.: Strategic Studies Institute, forthcoming 1996).

39. ZDF Television Network (Mainz), reported in *FBIS*-WEU-95-126, 30 June 1995, pp. 13-16.

40. This latter point has not been very widely discussed in the United States. According to the parameters established in the government recommendation and approved by the Bundestag, the Tornados can be used only in very specific circumstances. As reported in *Der Spiegel* (Hamburg), these conditions do not "fit with Rühe's statements about solidarity" with the allies. For example, the article notes, a British request for the Tornados to accompany transport planes carrying powdered milk to Sarajevo would be denied. So, too, would a request to provide security for a rescue mission should another US pilot be shot down. As one CSU politician put it, "Woe be unto us if an American pilot is

shot down because then the mood [of the NATO allies] will turn against us." *Der Spiegel* (Hamburg), "Letzter Versuch," 3 July 1995, p. 26. See also Atkinson, "Luftwaffe's Wings Clipped."

41. Of course, one should note that these differences are logically related to the two offices and the different perspectives they have. Kinkel, as Foreign Minister, is expected to articulate the broader foreign policy views and to be subjected to more of the external pressures from his foreign affairs counterparts. Rühe rightly views himself as the "protector" of his soldiers, fighting to limit the scope and range of operations they might be called upon to perform. This is probably the more fundamental source of the differences as opposed to pure personality or political philosophy.

42. *Der Spiegel* (Hamburg), 3 July 1995, p. 28.

43. In the final vote on 30 June 1995, 45 SPD delegates voted with the government.

44. Although Scharping's defeat represented the first time in this century that a sitting SPD party leader was ousted, it was obviously not that much of a surprise. What was more surprising, however, was the fact that Schröder was not able to gain a majority, and the position went instead to former Chancellor candidate Oskar Lafontaine. This rather surprising outcome of the leadership struggle signals the very deep fragmentation of the party.

45. This became obvious in the group discussions leading up to the parliamentary debate, as discussed below, and was mentioned by a member of the CDU foreign policy staff in an interview.

46. *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (München), 29 June 1995, in *FBIS*-WEU-95-126, 30 June 1995, p. 16.

47. See *The Week in Germany*, 7 July 1995, p. 1.

48. *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (München), 1 August 1995, in *FBIS*-WEU-95-147, 1 August 1995, p. 13.

49. See *FBIS* Media Note, in *FBIS*-WEU-95-167, 29 August 1995, pp. 10-11.

50. One editorial bluntly stated, "The bitter lesson: The American World policeman will swing its billyclub only when its national security interests are threatened. And they are evidently not for the Americans in the Balkans." *Bild-Zeitung* (Hamburg), 19 July 1995, quoted in *Deutschland Nachrichten*, 21 July 1995, p. 3.

51. The decision by Germany to contribute 4000 troops to the NATO IFOR, while significant, does not necessarily indicate that a threshold has been surpassed. After all, once Germany was participating in the RRF, and after NATO decided to take the lead in the implementation of the Dayton Accords, a decision not to join was all but impossible. And of course, there are still substantial limitations on the nature and scope of Bundeswehr participation.

52. Kinkel's address to the Bundestag on 30 June 1995 is notable in this regard. "But what is asked in the decision we have to make today is not only solidarity, but this is also about our very own German interests and the consistency and credibility of our German policy. . . . It is we who would have to take in the major flow of refugees in the event of a withdrawal of the UN troops." ZDF Television Network (Mainz), 30 June 1995, reported in *FBIS*-WEU-95-126, 30 June 1995, p. 14. While no one, least of all this author, argues that "Realpolitik" is the driving force behind German peace support policy today, the unwritten taboo on talking about German national interests is weakening, a point made by more than one individual in interviews.

53. A reasonably successful outcome of German participation in IFOR and of Western policy generally will reinforce positive developments in Germany, whereas a clear failure or disaster could well result not only in the defeat of the policies and the government that enacted them, but in an anti-internationalist backlash that would see Germany close itself off even more from the power politics of the west. One hopes that leaders in the United States and other Western countries see such a development as profoundly not in their best interests, and definitely as something to be avoided. To date they have not demonstrated such an understanding.

54. This statement was made in an interview on 19 June 1995, well in advance of the Bundestag vote on the UN Rapid Reaction Force, and even prior to the cabinet recommendation.

55. Scharping minced no words on this issue in his speech to the Bundestag on 30 June 1995, in which he stated: "The course that was set in 1991 was wrong, and it damaged the trust in Europe and toward Germany. The policy of quick and early recognition put pressure on the states in the EU to follow the German example. That contributed to the failure of the Yugoslavia policy and the messed-up situation in Bosnia." ZDF Television Network (Mainz), 30 June 1995, reported in *FBIS*-WEU-95-127, 3 July 1995, pp. 10-11.

56. Clemens, p. 228.

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