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THE WEIGHT OF HISTORY:
CHANGE AND CONTINUITY IN GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS THE
ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

By

Anne-Kathrin Kreft

Accepted in Partial Completion
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

Moheb A. Ghali, Dean of the Graduate School

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MASTER'S THESIS

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Anne-Kathrin Kreft
January 21, 2010

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A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of
Western Washington University

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Of the Requirements for the Degree
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Abstract

This study tests whether the consensus on German foreign policy continuity after unification is applicable to foreign policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, where the involvement is complicated by historical legacies resulting from the Holocaust, and includes an evaluation of realist and constructivist theories. An interpretative case study with comparative insights from EU, UK and French foreign policy considers three cases in the pre- and two in the post-unification period: the 1967 War, the 1982 Israel-Lebanon War and the 1987 Intifada; and the Red-Green Coalition period from 2000-2005 and the Grand Coalition period from 2005-2009 respectively. The hypothesis of foreign policy continuity caused primarily by an elite level norm of philo-Zionism is confirmed, although a constructivist reading needs to also acknowledge rational liberal norm compliance. European integration and national interests are further determinants of German foreign policy towards the conflict, whereas transatlantic relations and U.S. involvement have merely an enabling or obstructing impact on the success of German (and European) policy. While the findings support constructivism and illustrate the salience of norms in German foreign policy making, they also demonstrate the limitations of the civilian power model, which is at the core of the constructivist continuity thesis.

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Introduction

German unification in 1990 was an epic event with global implications that sparked lively debates about the future of Europe. Realists predicted instability, conflict and a belligerent Germany; constructivists a continuation of the pre-1989 trends of peaceful coexistence and stability, including a tame Germany. Consequently, the debate over change and continuity has been the major theme in the literature on German foreign policy since unification, with continuity generally found to be dominant. My thesis tests whether this consensus on continuity is applicable to German foreign policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which is not commonly addressed within the change and continuity framework. As Germany's foreign policy is commonly described as being constrained by German history, my constructivist hypothesis is that historical narratives pertaining to the Holocaust and World War II caused the emergence of a norm of philo-Zionism at the elite level in the aftermath of World War II, which continues to inform German foreign policy towards Israel and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict after unification. An assessment of constructivist and realist theories and their applicability to German foreign policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will be a central aspect of this thesis.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, Jewish and Israeli observers were particularly wary of the unification of the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic. The prospect of a united and powerful Germany brought back memories of the Holocaust and World War II and thus sparked fears about the security of Jews in Germany (Gilman, 1991; O Dochartaigh, 2007). On a more symbolic dimension, people feared that the dominant historical narrative of the Holocaust would be replaced by a new, entirely German-centered perspective that would "forget" the past: the long-desired reunification of a people

separated for most of the Cold War period. Jewish misgivings were reinforced by the fact that the date the Berlin Wall came down, November 9, was the same as that of Reichskristallnacht in 1938, commonly regarded as the onset of Nazi Germany's "Final Solution to the Jewish Question." Such refocusing would, of course, also have very real implications for the German-Jewish and the German-Israeli relationships, which had always been grounded firmly in the Shoah¹ (Gilman, 1991). These concerns were amplified by the fact that the GDR had been very hostile towards Israel for most of its existence, condemning Zionism as bourgeois nationalism and chauvinism and Israel as a racist, imperialist aggressor state (Timm, 2000).

But Jews and Israelis were not alone in their skepticism. Realists (Mearsheimer, 1990; Waltz, 1993) feared a German return to the pursuit of power politics and predicted that Germany would acquire nuclear weapons and pursue a more unilateral foreign policy while abandoning the European project. Mearsheimer (1990) even suggested that Poland and Austria might once more face German aggression. On the other hand, constructivists (Maull, 1990/91; Rittberger, 1992; Markovits & Reich, 1993) predicted that Germany would not relinquish its commitment to multilateralism, European integration and its status as a civilian power, all of which had been characteristic of the post-World War II Bonn Republic. Increases in German power would be concentrated in the economic realm, and Germany's ensuing regional economic hegemony would be benign rather than aggressive.

Consistent with the constructivist position, I hypothesize that the foreign policy of the Berlin Republic has been characterized by continuity rather than change as it is firmly grounded in history-derived norms. I will apply this theory of continuity to the Israeli-

¹ Shoah is the Hebrew word for the Holocaust. The two terms will be used interchangeably.

Palestinian conflict, with the underlying assumption being that German foreign policy towards Israel is informed by a sense of historic responsibility, derived from the Shoah. The German case is interesting precisely because of the intervening event of unification, and the expansion of the material power base and acquisition of full sovereignty that came with it, which rendered the Berlin Republic an “almost ideal test case” (Rittberger, 2001, p. 2) or an “easy case” (Malici, 2006, p. 40) for realism.

Literature Review

Theories of International Relations and Foreign Policy Analysis

Foreign policy analysis (FPA) and international relations (IR) have since the 1950s been disconnected fields of study (Kubalkova, 2001; Houghton, 2007). Mainstream IR scholars, most notably realists, traditionally “black box” the state, i.e. they treat states as rational and unitary actors and study their interactions in the international system from a systemic point of view (Kubalkova, 2001; Hudson, 2005). FPA scholars, on the other hand, open the black box and study the impact of domestic politics and attributes within the state on foreign policy behavior, while also increasingly drawing on IR theories (Kubalkova, 2001; Kaarbo, Lantis, & Beasley, 2002). Decision-making by individual or group actors, the foreign policy elites, is at the core of FPA (Hudson, 2005; Houghton, 2007). Foreign policy decision-making is assumed to be influenced by multiple factors at multiple levels of analysis, i.e. at the individual, domestic and international levels. Because of the comprehensiveness of units of analysis and factors involved, FPA draws on sociology, psychology, anthropology, economics and other fields and is therefore interdisciplinary and integrative in orientation (Hudson, 2005). While FPA is disconnected from major IR theories and can thus be seen as both “without a home” and “its own home” (Houghton, 2007, p. 25), constructivist scholars in particular see the potential of bringing FPA and IR back together (Kubalkova, 2001; Hudson, 2005; Houghton, 2007).

Constructivism emerged in the 1980s and 1990s as a response to dominant international relations theories, putting into focus “the content and source of state interests and the social fabric of world politics” (Checkel, 1998, p. 324). Ideas, values and intersubjective understandings figure prominently. Actors attach meanings to objects, including other actors, and act towards them according to that meaning (Wendt, 1992). For constructivists, the world

and the political environment in which states interact are therefore not only material but also socially constructed. The international political structure is a social one (Checkel, 1998; Houghton, 2007; Holsti).

Social practices “reproduce the intersubjective meanings that constitute social structures and actors alike” (Hopf, 1998, p. 178). Once a social fact has been established by actors, it “influences their subsequent social behavior” (Ruggie, 1998, p. 858). While agents play a central role in establishing the social structures within which they interact they cannot be considered autonomous from them. Agents and structures mutually constitute each other (Wendt, 1987; Wendt, 1992; Wendt, 1996; Checkel, 1998; Ruggie, 1998; Fierke, 2007; Houghton, 2007).² This dynamic can be applied to domestic politics as well: “the identity of the state and of social actors – for example, interest groups or political parties – could be understood only as mutually constitutive” (Jepperson, Wendt, & Katzenstein, 1996, p. 51).

State identities are thus considered endogenous to interaction (Wendt, 1992; Finnemore, 1996; Checkel, 1998; Hopf, 1998) and are shaped by collective ideas and other ideational factors, such as norms (Houghton, 2007). States’ interests, in turn, are not seen as unproblematic and given but as informed by these identities (Wendt, 1992; Hopf, 1998; Houghton, 2007). In short, norms are not only regulative, i.e. they specify behavior, but also constitutive, i.e. they shape identities and interests (Finnemore, 1996; Jepperson, Wendt, & Katzenstein, 1996; Katzenstein, 1996; Checkel, 1998; Ruggie, 1998). This constructivist understanding of norm-compliance must be contrasted with the rational-liberal understanding.

² While mutual constitution generally implies a symmetric relationship and equal attention to structure and agency, constructivists have been charged with focusing more on social structures and norms than on agency – both to compensate for the oversights of mainstream international relations theories and because an empirical engagement with mutual constitution is difficult – and with neglecting social construction at the agent level (Checkel, 1998). I too am forced to bracket agency in this thesis, due to time and place constraints.

In the liberal interpretation, decision makers are likely to engage in a rational cost-benefit analysis. Contrary to the constructivist contention that states follow a logic of appropriateness, i.e. they do what they perceive as right, liberals suggest that states act in accordance with a logic of consequences and weigh the costs and benefits of pursuing a specific policy. Thus, while decision makers may comply with norms, they do so without internalizing them and without changing their interests (Checkel, 1997). In this thesis, I try to identify if norm consistent behavior must be attributed to a constructivist conception or to a liberal one.

With their emphasis on norms, constructivists differ greatly from realists. Broadly speaking, realists treat states as rational and unitary actors pursuing their national interest, which is variously defined in terms of power (Morgenthau, 1967; Holsti), security or survival (Waltz, 1979; Grieco, 1997; Holsti), or in terms of relative capabilities (Holsti). This means more specifically that states are seen as goal-oriented, as having consistent goals and devising strategies to pursue these goals as well as being sufficiently independent from their national societies and domestic forces (Grieco, 1997). In an anarchical international system marked by uncertainty (Waltz, 1979; Grieco, 1997; Walt, 1998; Holsti), states are worried about their relative capabilities more than anything because a state's primary concern is how it is positioned relative to others (Waltz, 1979; Holsti). An increase in a state's power base will therefore produce a commensurate increase in its exercise of that power. This reasoning was employed by realist scholars in the wake of German unification (Mearsheimer, 1990; Waltz, 1993).

Contingent realisms, taking context into account, consider norms and other non-systemic factors as intervening variables, through which systemic factors must be translated (Rose, 1998; Wivel, 2005), while strict neorealism or structural realism focuses exclusively

on systemic factors (Waltz, 1979). While it has been argued that neorealism is unsuitable as a theory of foreign policy (Waltz, 1996; Wivel, 2005; Wohlforth, 2008), contingent realisms have been used, and praised, as foreign policy approaches (Rose, 1998; Wivel, 2005; Wohlforth, 2008) because contingent realists “occupy a middle ground between pure structural theorists and constructivists” (Rose, p. 152). From a realist perspective, considerable German foreign policy change in the form of increasing power politics should have occurred because of extensive changes in the power base, through unification, and in the international system, through the end of the Cold War and the erosion of the bipolar power structure (Mearsheimer, 1990; Waltz, 1993).

Constructivism offers a good basis for foreign policy analysis and is especially applicable to the German case. A useful approach to German foreign policy is to start from a constructivist standpoint and investigate how norms and other ideational factors impact the *content* of Germany’s foreign policy (thus bracketing agency), while investigating what (contingent) realism has to offer with regards to the *amount* of power that it can and will exert.

From a constructivist perspective, one would expect very little change in German foreign policy towards the conflict after unification, at least as long as norms remain intact. A commitment to Israel, derived from historical narratives, would maintain German sensitivity to Israeli concerns and would thus produce continuity in German foreign policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The perseverance of norms associated with the civilian power model would continue to result in some amount of norm conflict and a restrained policy. For realists norms would play a subordinated role at best, and no role at all for neorealists. Instead, the expansion of Germany’s power base would be expected to result in an increase in the exercise of its power with the aim of wielding greater influence in the Middle East. Now

clearly surpassing the United Kingdom and France in terms of economic and political power, Germany might be expected to display a more assertive unilateralism and seek to advance its material national interests.

Change and Continuity in German Foreign Policy

The theme of change and continuity is prevalent in the literature on German foreign policy and constitutes the framework within which this thesis is situated. Pre-1990 German foreign policy had a distinctly restrained and multilateral focus. It was characterized by a Western orientation (*Westbindung*), i.e. by close European and transatlantic alliances, particularly the European Community (EC) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Germany was concerned with issues “close to home,” and German foreign policy had a distinctly Euro-centric character. The country was willing to cede sovereignty to supranational and international organizations and strictly rejected unilateral action. As Germany “imported” its security from the U.S. throughout the Cold War, Germany could develop a distinctly anti-militarist culture and was generally viewed as a civilian power (Webber, 2001; Wittlinger & Larose, 2007).

The classification as a civilian power is the overriding concept in German foreign policy analysis. It is based on the constructivist premise that political actors act in accordance with the logic of appropriateness rather than with the logic of consequences and that norms are fundamental in shaping states’ interests (Beck, 2006). More specifically, a civilian power desires and pursues the monopolization of force in collective security arrangements, embodies restraints on violence and non-violent conflict resolution, maintains a commitment to the rule of law, to participatory forms of decision making and to social justice, and strives to uphold interdependence achieved through a division of labor among states (Harnisch, 2001;

Beck, 2006). A civilian power values cooperation and acts within multilateral institutions, while emphasizing non-military, primarily economic, means to pursue national goals (Maull, 1990/91).

Pre-1990 German foreign policy has been described as being characterized by a unique political-military culture emphasizing antimilitarism (Berger T. U., 1996; Duffield, 1999), a “culture of reticence” (Malici, 2006) or, in emphasizing the economic component of Germany’s foreign relations, a cooperative or integrated trading state (Rittberger, 1992). The development of an anti-militarist culture is thereby attributed to the trauma of the Holocaust and the Second World War (Berger T. U., 1996; Duffield, 1999; Malici, 2006).

Unification and the end of the Cold War resulted in gains in territory, population and resources, while Germany was no longer divided and constrained by Cold War security threats and obtained full sovereignty with the Two-Plus-Four Treaty between the four occupying powers and the two Germanys (Banchoff, 1999; Duffield, 1999; Rittberger, 2001; Malici, 2006). From a realist perspective, Germany therefore fulfilled all the requirements for a return to (aggressive) power politics. Especially if one takes the GDR’s Soviet foreign policy style and its lacking sense of historical responsibility into account (Timm, 2000), the case for a change in German foreign policy can theoretically be sustained. Today, however, the academic consensus is that foreign policy since unification has been marked by more continuity than change (Duffield, 1999; Rittberger, 2001; Webber, 2001; Maull, 2006). Therefore, it has been suggested that constructivism is superior to alternative theories, and most clearly to neorealism, in explaining German foreign policy after unification (Banchoff, 1999; Harnisch, 2001; Rittberger, 2001).

Germany has maintained its Western orientation and multilateralism by increasing its involvement in NATO and the EC, and then the EU (Banchoff, 1999; Duffield, 1999; Rittberger, 2001; Webber, 2001). The FRG has further integrated its army into NATO (Berger T. U., 1996; Rittberger, 2001; Overhaus, 2005) and the European Common Foreign and Security Policy (Banchoff, 1999; Ed. Overhaus, Maull, & Harnisch, 2007). Post-unification Germany makes every effort to “devise and execute its security policy almost entirely in cooperation with others and within the context of international institutions” (Duffield, 1999, p. 783), strengthening existing multilateral security frameworks and working to establish new ones. Germany also remained reluctant to deploy military forces abroad (Berger T. U., 1996; Duffield, 1999; Malici, 2006) while its leaders exhibited a strong belief in diplomacy and the peaceful resolution of conflicts, even when crises occurred in close geographic proximity (the Balkans), and used multilateral institutions to propagate their approach (Malici, 2006).

This perspective, however, is disputed. Some suggest that the civilian power status has been compromised after the German Constitutional Court ruled in 1994 that the *Bundeswehr*, the German army, can participate in military missions outside the NATO area if the deployment is authorized by the German parliament, the *Bundestag* (Baumann & Hellmann, 2001). Changes in public discourse, public opinion and foreign policy behavior are said to have eroded the civilian power status and heralded foreign policy “normalization,” which has allowed stronger assertions of the national interest and articulations of greater confidence (Baumann & Hellmann, 2001). Collective memory and lessons learned from the past have taken on a flexible character and can be instrumentalized to justify various foreign policy de-

cisions, ranging from military intervention to the refusal to participate in military action (Wittlinger & Larose, 2007).

Pressure by allies and a process of transnational socialization (Harnisch, 2001) have further been found to impact Germany's foreign policy, both in terms of relaxing the German position on military missions outside the NATO area (Duffield, 1999; Baumann & Hellmann, 2001; Harnisch, 2001) and in terms of causing foreign policy inaction (Overhaus, 2005; Maull, 2006).

German Middle East Policy

The Middle East is not commonly addressed by scholars discussing change and continuity in German foreign policy since unification – at least not within a rigorous theoretical framework (for a theoretically informed post-unification analysis see Mueller, 2007). The following overview therefore considers the broader literature on German Middle East policy.

German interests in the Middle East today are not significantly informed by economic considerations, but rather by a combination of security concerns (spillover effects of the region's instability and Islamist terrorism) and moral obligation (Covarrubias & White, 2007; Mueller, 2007). It is commonly acknowledged that Germany, due to the perpetration of the Holocaust, has a special responsibility for Israel's existence and security and that it is therefore often an outlier within the EU, embracing a more clearly pro-Israeli stance (Beck, 2006; Belkin, 2007; Ed. Overhaus, Maull, & Harnisch, 2007; Covarrubias & White, 2007; Mueller, 2007). Germany generally supports Israel in European institutions and the UN (Covarrubias & White, 2007), while pursuing a rather passive role in the Middle East (Covarrubias & White, 2007; Mueller, 2007), and has been instrumental in advancing European-Israeli coop-

eration. Germany also commonly softens EU positions by refusing to condemn Israeli actions and impose sanctions on the Jewish state (Belkin, 2007; Covarrubias & White, 2007).

Despite the moral commitment to Israel, German political elites and decision makers have long evoked the notion of a policy of evenhandedness (*Politik der Ausgewogenheit*) in the conflict and have advocated Palestinian self-determination since the early 1980s. This support for Palestinian self-determination was exclusively rhetorical (Hubel, 1992) until Germany started assuming a more involved role in the 1990s, when Israel demonstrated its willingness to engage in direct negotiations with the PLO (Beck, 2006). The FRG has earned the respect and trust of Palestinian and Arab factions and is therefore often seen as a fair mediator – a role that neither the EU nor the U.S. can fulfill (Belkin, 2007; Covarrubias & White, 2007). The German intelligence service, *Bundesnachrichtendienst* (BND), has mediated several prisoner exchanges between Israel and Iran and Israel and Hezbollah (Belkin, 2007; Lapid, 2008; Shpiro, 2008).

Overall, Germany treads cautiously in the Middle East and even after unification has not developed a cohesive Middle East policy, often finding it hard to reconcile its double commitment to Israel and the Palestinians while, less importantly, also trying to balance its commitment to Israel with its economic and diplomatic ties with Arab states (Covarrubias & White, 2007; Ed. Overhaus, Maull, & Harnisch, 2007). While ties to Arab states were important up until the 1970s and 1980s, they no longer figure as prominently in Germany's Middle East policy (Covarrubias & White, 2007; Mueller, 2007). Instead, the commitment to Israel is in tension with other domestic norms derived from the civilian power status. Illustrating the dilemma of the Israeli-Palestinian double commitment, Martin Beck suggests that the notion of responsibility for Israeli security clashes with, but trumps, a rejection of occupation,

which would be prescribed by Germany's civilian power status (Beck, 2006). Furthermore, there is an inbuilt tension between German support for Israel and its desire, as a member of the EU and the European value community, to act as a neutral player in the peace process (Covarrubias & White, 2007).

Finally, it has been suggested that the heavily under-institutionalized Middle East is an unfavorable environment for a civilian power to begin with, and that therefore the effectiveness of German (and EU) foreign policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is limited (Beck, 2006). That crafting a common EU Middle East policy still constitutes a major challenge further complicates this situation (Ed. Overhaus, Maull, & Harnisch, 2007). With, relatively speaking, Germany representing the pro-Israeli position on the one end of a continuum and France occupying the pro-Arab position on the other, the EU has been able to agree only on the least common denominator: the recognition of Israel's right to exist and to defend itself and the Palestinian right to self-determination. As a consequence, Israel has been less than enthusiastic about the EU as a mediator in the conflict (Hoelters, 2008).

Despite these difficulties, Patrick Mueller has identified some change in German Middle East policy starting in the mid-1990s. Contrary to its previous restraint, Germany now supports a greater political, rather than just economic, role of the EU in the peace process while also favoring the development of a more comprehensive European policy towards the Middle East and North Africa region. Parallel processes of national and transnational socialization in the EU community have thereby resulted in a "dual strategy" in German Middle East policy: the legacy of Nazi Germany calls for a "low key political role" in the Middle East, while on the other hand Germany's European identity requires that Germany support a more proactive and engaged EU role (Mueller, 2007, p. 27).

On the whole, the literature suggests that German foreign policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict exhibits predominantly traits of continuity – in terms of a cautious involvement and a high degree of sensitivity to Israeli concerns.

Theory

This study aims to answer the question of whether the consensus in the literature on German foreign policy continuity after unification is applicable to German foreign policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Employing a constructivist approach, I hypothesize that historical narratives pertaining to the Shoah and the Third Reich caused the emergence of an elite-level norm of philo-Zionism in the aftermath of World War II, which continues to inform German foreign policy towards Israel and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict after unification.

The dependent variable in my study is German foreign policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the first independent variable is a norm of philo-Zionism, i.e. a strong commitment to Israel's security and a high sensitivity to Israeli concerns, derived from historical narratives of the Holocaust and the Third Reich. I will further consider norms derived from the civilian power model, such as the commitments to human rights, peaceful conflict resolution and multilateralism, where discernible. Additional independent variables will need to be considered. First, the impact of the U.S., the most significant international actor in the Middle East and Germany's closest ally outside Europe, on German Middle East policy deserves attention. Second, European integration and the movement towards a Common Foreign and Security Policy within the EU, which as a whole is considered relatively more pro-Palestinian, is an important factor to consider. Third, Germany's economic interests in the Middle East can be expected to impact its foreign policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as well. Finally, security interests in the Middle East, in particular concerns about spillover effects of the region's instability and Islamist terrorism, must be taken into account. Continuity in German foreign policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is expected in

two respects. First, a sensitivity to Israeli concerns that is not shared by the relatively more pro-Palestinian EU is expected to persist and to continue to produce a pro-Israeli bias. Second, continuity is expected also in terms of a cautious involvement in the Middle East.

By definition, foreign policy includes specific decisions, general guidelines, observable state behavior as well as verbal pronouncements targeted at other states, individuals, non-state actors or international conditions (Kaarbo, Lantis, & Beasley, 2002). When I write about change and continuity in German foreign policy, I refer to the foreign policy of the Federal Republic of Germany, i.e. West Germany, in the period from 1945 to 1990 and to that of the Federal Republic of Germany post-1990. The foreign policy of the German Democratic Republic will not be considered because the GDR was essentially incorporated into the Federal Republic with unification, which means that the latter has to be treated as the predecessor of today's Germany.

The underlying assumption of my theory of continuity is, in line with Jeffrey W. Legro's (2005) implicitly path-dependent constructivist foreign policy theory, that collective ideas drive foreign policy change and continuity. Foreign policy change requires two successive processes: collapse and consolidation. Existing collective ideas collapse if the social expectations associated with them were not fulfilled. Collapse is only a necessary condition, however, and foreign policy change occurs only if new ideas, and hence policies, are perceived as successful by the state's decision-makers and its population. Collective idea change in post-World War II Germany, Legro suggests, was successful partly because of the economic boom years the country experienced, while collective idea change after World War I failed in the aftermath of the Treaty of Versailles, which left Germany humiliated. I posit that philo-Zionism as a norm, and support for Israel as a foreign policy doctrine, developed post-

World War II as part of Germany's quest to be readmitted into the international community as a respected state, which in turn fostered economic growth and ended political isolation. Unless a cataclysmic shock occurs in German-Israeli relations, this norm is expected to persist.

Norms are understood as “intersubjectively shared, value-based expectations of appropriate behaviour” (Boekle, Rittberger, & Wagner, 2001, p. 106) held by a “community of actors” (Finnemore, 1996, p. 22). In my thesis I will proceed according to a partial application of the constructivist foreign policy theory advanced by Henning Boekle, Volker Rittberger and Wolfgang Wagner (2001). Their main assumption is that collectively held norms, if they have sufficient commonality and specificity, will have a constitutive effect on foreign policy behavior. As do Boekle et al., I will bracket agency (a state's constitutive effects on the domestic and international structure) and consider only the constitutive effect of norms on foreign policy behavior. This effect will be contrasted with other impacts, in particular economic and security interests and transnational pressures. Should the EU assume a greater political role in the conflict, tensions between the philo-Zionist norm and EU pressures in particular will likely come to bear more strongly on German foreign policy.

Methodology

This study employs the qualitative method. As Germany is a unique case, considering the extent of the atrocities committed by the Nazi regime, the change in national identity that occurred in the aftermath of World War II, and then the experience of unification, I conduct a case study. Comparative insights from EU policy and the foreign policies of the United Kingdom and France are used to illuminate the character of German Middle East policy, but this thesis will not be an explicitly comparative project. A better understanding of German foreign policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its determinants, and not theory development, is the purpose of this thesis. The study therefore employs an interpretative case study, as introduced by Arend Lijphart: it “make[s] explicit use of established theoretical propositions” and applies them to a particular case, with the aim of “throwing light on the case rather than on improving the generalization in any way” (Lijphart, 1971, p. 692).

The empirical evidence considered includes, first of all, secondary literature on German foreign policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and, where such literature is scarce, newspaper articles. I further employ an analysis of a range of primary sources: parliamentary debates, political party programs, official statements and decisions, and statements made by high-ranking party officials. The goal is to identify the major factors influencing foreign policy making and to discern the interplay of the norm of philo-Zionism with norms derived from the civilian power status, economic and security interests and transnational pressures. Public opinion data is juxtaposed to elite level attitudes, and the relationship between the two is evaluated.

My analysis is limited to those years that correspond with major developments in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: the 1967 Six Day War, the 1982 Lebanon War, and the First *Inti-*

fada in the pre-unification period; and the Red-Green coalition from 2000 to 2005, starting with the Second *Intifada*, as well as the Grand Coalition period from 2005 to 2009 in the post-unification period. Moreover, I conducted interviews with German, Israeli and Palestinian diplomats, including Coordinator of German-American Cooperation, Karsten Voigt, as well as with member of the *Bundestag*, Dirk Niebel (FDP) and the Director of the American Jewish committee in Berlin, Deidre Berger. Efforts to find interview partners from all political parties were unsuccessful because of the parliamentary recess in the summer of 2009 and the subsequent election campaigns.

The Early Years: Realpolitik and Morality

The key in the development of the philo-Zionist norm lies in the economic and political benefits that reconciliation with Israel was expected to have for Germany. Guilt and moral obligation constituted only part of German motivations to “make good” for the atrocities committed during the Third Reich (Deligdisch, 1974; Lewan, 1975; Neustadt, 1983; Gardner Feldman, 1984; Witzthum, 1992; Lavy, 1996; Weingardt, 2002; Jelinek, 2004; O Dochartaigh, 2007). Realpolitik played an at least equally important role: the readmission of Germany into the international community as a civilized state, which was also a precondition for economic development, was contingent on how Germany addressed the question of restitution to the victims of Nazism and dealt with the horrors of its past (Deligdisch, 1974; Neustadt, 1983; Gardner Feldman, 1984; Lavy, 1996; Weingardt, 2002; Jelinek, 2004). Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, epitomizing the ambiguous feelings that were shared by the German political elite at large (Jelinek, 2004), insisted that reconciliation with the Jews was crucial “from the moral and political as well as the economic standpoint” (O Dochartaigh, 2007, quoted in Herf, p. 286). Adenauer was further concerned about negative consequences for the London Debt Conference, which would determine Germany’s payments to 23 states in the post-war period (Omar, 1982). Finally, his judgment that Jews had great sway in the economic and financial sectors also motivated him to pursue reconciliation and financial restitution (Weingardt, 2002; Jelinek, 2004). The political and economic importance or inevitability, in light of the Cold War division, of complying with U.S. demands for support of Israel also needs to be borne in mind (Lewan, 1975; Timm, 2006).

When it came to the vote, the Social Democratic Party (SPD) unanimously supported the Luxembourg Agreement (Jelinek, 2004), in which the FRG pledged to pay goods and

services in the amount of three billion DM to Israel and another 450 million to the Jewish Claims Conference over a period of twelve years (Frohn, 1991; Weingardt, 2002; Timm, 2006). Of Konrad Adenauer's Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and Christian Social Union (CSU) bloc 106 out of 214 voted in favor of the agreement, with 39 abstaining from the vote. The Free Democrats (FDP), harboring a considerable number of former Nazis, did not show up for the vote in large numbers (Jelinek, 2004), while other small parties represented in the *Bundestag* were opposed to the agreement (Lewan, 1975). Overall, 360 out of 402 members of the *Bundestag* voted, and the Luxembourg Agreement was adopted by a vote of 239 to 25, with 86 abstentions (Jelinek, 2004).

Lily Gardner Feldman (1984) postulates that the uniquely desperate situations in which both the FRG and the State of Israel found themselves after the war contributed greatly to the establishment of contacts so soon after the Holocaust. Ironically, each state's security and future depended on the other: for Germany, reparation payments to the young Jewish state were a precondition for trust-building and acceptance by other Western states; Israel had to accommodate thousands of refugees from Europe while facing hostility and military threats from its Arab neighbors and realized the advantage of having the support of the FRG. The 1952 Luxembourg Agreement thus arose largely from pragmatic concerns and geopolitical constellations and was not a phenomenon of reconciliation. Economic considerations and the prospect of gaining an important market in Israel made the Luxembourg Agreement popular in the German government, industry and the business community (Omar, 1982). German economic aid and exports helped immensely in the expansion of Israeli infrastructure, including the train, electricity, telephone and telegraph systems (Lewan, 1975; Omar, 1982).

The issue of Palestinian refugees, a legacy of the 1948/49 Arab-Israeli war, was not high on West Germany's agenda. The FRG increased its payments to UNRWA after 1952 to counterbalance the restitution payments to Israel, by which Germany stood against all Arab opposition; to improve the West German reputation in the UN; and for moral reasons. In 1950 the FRG had contributed an initial amount of 100,000 DM, then annual payments of 70,000 DM until 1957. In 1957 Germany responded to Arab demands and contributed 1 million DM, and another 346,000 in 1959 (Jelinek, 2004).

Arms shipments and German-Israeli military and intelligence cooperation too, both of which had become extensive by the late 1950s and early 1960s (Omar, 1982; Lavy, 1996; Shpiro, 2008) were at least initially motivated by a sense of pragmatism, encouraged or even requested by the U.S. (Omar, 1982) and often conducted despite (mutual) mistrust to serve national interests (Shpiro, 2003; Shpiro, 2008). David Ben-Gurion has been quoted as saying that the West German government did more than any other state in contributing to Israel's military security in the early 1960s (Weingardt, 2002, p. 148), while German decision-makers were interested in political and practical benefits arising from such arms shipments (Jelinek, 2004). Military cooperation was strongly motivated by facing a common enemy: the Soviet Union. (Shpiro, 2003).

The establishment of official relations with Israel in 1965, finally, was influenced by a combination of American public pressures; a feeling that one could no longer refuse to oblige the Israelis' request for diplomatic relations, particularly in light of the decision to end arms shipments to the Jewish state; and a reaction to the improving relations of Arab states with the GDR (Lavy, 1996; Weingardt, 2002; Jelinek, 2004; Schumann, 2007). Both German states instrumentalized Israel, making use of the threat to establish diplomatic relations with

it to advance their interests in the Arab world (Jelinek, 2004). The Jewish state was in this sense reduced to a pawn in the political power struggle between the GDR and the FRG.

On the whole, moral obligation played a minor role at best in Germany's foreign policy and its relations with Israel up to 1965, although some political leaders acted out of a moral imperative. The FRG's every move was determined by economic, political or strategic interests, while opposition to close ties with Israel among the political elite ran high. The fear of endangering German relations with Arab states, which would have economic repercussions, was the primary concern in this respect. Realpolitik, not morality, dictated German foreign policy until 1965. A commitment to Israel was embraced chiefly for pragmatic reasons. The case studies will trace the consolidation of the norm of philo-Zionism as well as other factors impacting German foreign policy from 1967 to 2009.

My analysis starts with the 1967 War. German foreign policy and sovereignty had matured somewhat by 1967³, while reintegration into the international community had largely been completed. Germany had in 1957 become a member of the EEC and had established official diplomatic ties with Israel in 1965. Moreover, although the 1948/49 Arab-Israeli war caused the Palestinian refugee problem, Palestinian nationalism and a Palestinian dimension in the conflict were at first eclipsed by a pan-Arab nationalist movement (Weingardt, 2002; Dowty, 2008). The "re-emergence of the Palestinians" (Dowty, p. 105) came only after the 1967 War, which left the West Bank and the Gaza Strip under Israeli occupation, and intensified in subsequent years, when Arab states started to withdraw from the conflict, leaving the field to the PLO (Weingardt, 2002; Dowty, 2008). My other cases in the pre-unification pe-

³ The Western occupying powers, reluctant to delegate sovereignty to the FRG, formally lifted the status of occupation and authorized the establishment of the German Federal Foreign Office only in 1951 (Deligdisch, 1974).

riod are the 1982 Lebanon War and the First Intifada (1987-1991). After unification I analyze the Red-Green coalition years starting with the Second Intifada (2000-2005) and the Grand Coalition period (2005-2009).

Case 1: The 1967 War

To this day, disagreements about who was responsible for the outbreak of the 1967 War persist. Israel responded to an Egyptian troop build-up in the Sinai peninsula and to the Egyptian demand that the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) securing the border between Israel and Egypt withdraw, which in turn was a reaction to an apparently inaccurate Soviet notice that Israel was planning an attack on Syria to topple the regime in Damascus. Egypt moreover closed the Strait of Tiran to Israeli ships, thus closing off Israeli access to Africa and East Asia. As the tensions unfolded, Egypt entered into a mutual defense pact with Syria and Jordan, and Israel attacked the three states by land and air on June 5, capturing and occupying within six days of fighting the West Bank from Jordan, the Golan Heights from Syria and the Gaza Strip and the Sinai peninsula from Egypt (Lavy, 1996; Dowty, 2008). Both the Arab and the Israeli sides insisted that their moves were actions of self-defense and that the other side was to blame for the outbreak of military confrontation (Dowty, 2008).

German Foreign Policy

The FRG's position in the run-up to the war was one of strict neutrality and non-intervention, although foreign minister Brandt asserted a strong interest in regional peace. The emphasis on non-intervention but by no means indifference (Deligdisch, 1974) closely resembled U.S. rhetoric: the pledge of neutrality in "thought, word and deed" did not mean indifference (Archiv d. G., June 15, 1967, pp. 13228-37; Die Zeit, Joachim Schwellen, 1967). The FRG supported free navigation rights in the Gulf of Aqaba (AAPD (188), May 29, 1967, pp. 809-12) but was restrained otherwise.

The fear of a greater military confrontation between east and west that would draw in the FRG was a strong motivation for German restraint and neutrality (Deligdisch, 1974;

Lavy, 1996). German division and its location in the geographical and political center of the superpower struggle made West Germany especially vulnerable. In particular, the Middle East conflict was perceived as indicating that divided Berlin too may be drawn into a military confrontation in the future (Die Zeit, Becker 06/09/1967).

The Hallstein Doctrine⁴ and economic considerations were further reasons for Germany's strict neutrality. The FRG could not risk a further deterioration of its relations with Arab states, which were already strained in the aftermath of West Germany's Middle East crisis of 1965. A series of German arms shipments to Israel had become public in 1964, resulting in Arab outrage, and the Egyptian president Gamal Abdul Nasser subsequently extended an invitation to the head of state of the GDR, Walter Ulbricht, who came to Egypt on an official state visit in February 1965. When the FRG established diplomatic relations with Israel on May 12, Egypt and many other states severed diplomatic ties with it (Lavy, 1996; Gerlach, 2006; Schumann, 2007).

Against this backdrop, the German government articulated its doctrine of neutrality. The FRG pledged strict adherence to the commitment, specified in the constitution and emphasized following the German-Arab crisis in 1965, that it would not ship arms to international areas of tension (Lavy, 1996), although the arms shipments had been replaced by financial aid to Israel (Schumann, 2007; Lapid, 2008). Brandt also pointed to the limited diplomatic influence that Germany could exercise in the Middle East (Bulletin, September 8, 1967, pp. 831-2) but highlighted the German interest in good relations with both Israel and the Arab states (Deligdisch, 1974).

⁴ The FRG's policy of diplomatically isolating the GDR: insisting on being the sole representative of the German people and desiring reunification, the FRG would sever ties with any state that recognized the GDR.

Responding to an Israeli request, the FRG shipped 20,000 gas masks to Israel, taking them from civilian stores so they would not qualify as military equipment. This decision was taken unanimously in the cabinet and was classified as a strictly humanitarian gesture; if Arab states desired similar humanitarian assistance, the FRG would consider their requests as well (Archiv d. G., June 5, 1967). Germany further supplied Israel with medical and clinical equipment as well as obliging an Israeli request for the shipment of trucks (Lavy, 1996; Weingardt, 2002). Opposition to the supply of gas masks and trucks came from the FDP, which argued that both were military equipment whose shipment to an area of tension was unlawful (Lavy, 1996). The government also “more or less secretly” approved the shipment of American arms to Israel via Germany (Weingardt, 2002, p. 190).

The GDR accused the FRG of being a collaborator in the “Israeli aggression” and supplying the Israeli army with arms and military equipment. (Archiv d. G., June 21, 1967, pp. 13245-9). These claims were vehemently rejected as fabrications of the eastern bloc by the FRG (Bulletin, July 5, 1967, pp. 609-10). Daniel Gerlach finds, however, that the West German claim to have ended all arms shipments to the Middle East after 1965 was a “fairy-tale,” as arms shipments and security cooperation continued in secret and with greater care taken that arms not be identifiable as being of German origin when used in combat. Similar shipments to Arab states played no significant role and were heavily restricted, following the principle that “exports were not to cause damage to Israel”⁵ (Gerlach, 2006, p. 141). Many of the arms delivered by France were actually financed by the FRG, which “paid directly to the French government for deliveries to Israel” (Shapiro, 2003, p. 319). A message from German Ambassador to Israel Pauls to Foreign Office Headquarters (AAPD (214), June 16, 1967, p.

⁵ “Exporte nicht zum Schaden Israels gereichen durften”

888) mentions a German shipment of “modernized and more heavily armored tanks M 48,” which, according to an Israeli General Staff Officer, had “proven themselves outstandingly.”⁶ German-Israeli military and intelligence cooperation made a “considerable contribution” to Israel’s victories in 1967, 1973 and 1982 (Shapiro, 2003, p. 310).

In the eyes of the Arab states, Germany assumed a pro-Israeli position in the war. The FRG lost from one day to the next 83.6 percent of its oil imports as all oil pipelines to the Mediterranean were blockaded, and Iraq, Saudi-Arabia, Kuwait, Libya and Bahrain implemented an export stop to Europe on June 6, while Algeria exported oil only to France (Lieser, 1976, p. 322). On June 27, 1967 German-Arab relations had reached a “low point” from which Arab League Secretary General Hassouna saw at the time “no way out” (AAPD (285), June 27, 1967, pp. 1145-6). Nevertheless, all Arab states except Iraq and Libya started again to supply oil to states guaranteeing that they would not provide oil to the “aggressor states,” the U.S. and the UK. The selective embargo against the U.S., the UK and Germany was finally lifted at a summit meeting of Arab heads of state from August 29 to September 1 (Lieser, 1976).

The 1967 War had proven that the destruction of Israel was not imminent and that the Jewish state was safer than thought (Weingardt, 2002, p. 192). In subsequent years the FRG therefore once more turned its attention to the Arab states. The German interest in the resumption of good relations with all states in the Middle East was repeatedly articulated (Bulletin, June 23, 1967, pp. 566-7; Bulletin, July 5, 1967; Bulletin, August 1, 1967, p. 694) and the FRG also “addressed” the refugee issue. Foreign Minister Brandt proclaimed: “[The federal government] pays particular attention to the fate of the refugees and is ready to con-

⁶ “modernisierten und staerker armierten Panzer M 48”; “hervorragend bewaehrt”

tribute, to the best of its abilities, to a solution to this problem”⁷ (Bulletin, August 1, 1967). The 1967 War had caused another 200,000 to 250,000 Palestinian refugees (AAPD (242), June 30, 1967, pp. 980-3), and the *Bundestag* allotted 5 million DM for the purpose of humanitarian aid (Bulletin, June 23, 1967). This payment pales in comparison to the loans granted Israel and to the sums that were raised by the German public for Israel.

A second German-Israeli economic aid agreement was signed only four months after the war, on October 4, 1967, without further negotiations: the FRG granted Israel 160 million DM in loans. In July 1968, a third economic aid agreement was signed, but the amount of the loan was reduced to 140 million DM, causing moderate protests in Israel. Despite the reduction in the loan amount, economic aid to Israel that year was second only to that to populous India, while Israel had up to this point received half the amount that all Arab states had been given combined (Weingardt, 2002). In other words, despite the attempted rapprochement with the Arab world Israel continued to enjoy “preferential treatment” (Weingardt, 2002, p. 195). In the years following the war an understanding took hold among the German political elite that “the present generation in the German administration as well as the German people felt responsibility for Israel’s fate” (Lapid, 2008, p. 70).

Analysis of Primary Documents - The Foreign Service

A close review of West German *Drahtberichte*⁸ conveys a somewhat different story than the official doctrine of neutrality: the internal diplomatic documents indicate a distinct anti-Arab and pro-Israeli tenor. A circular decree issued by Under-Secretary of State Schuetz (AAPD (186), May 26, 1967; pp. 794-6) put blame on Egypt for causing a “dangerous situa-

⁷ “Dem Schicksal der Fluechtlinge schenkt [die Bundesregierung] ihre besondere Aufmerksamkeit und ist bereit, nach besten Kraeften zur Loesung dieses Problems beizutragen.“

⁸ *Drahtberichte* are encrypted confidential and secret messages exchanged within the Federal Foreign Office, i.e. between headquarters in Bonn and embassies, consulates and diplomatic missions around the world.

tion” in the Middle East through the build-up of troops in the Sinai peninsula, while the Egyptian assertion that this was a response to a planned Israeli strike on Syria was rejected as a mere pretext. Similarly, a possible Israeli strike was classified as a “strike of despair” (*Verzweiflungsschlag*) and the document spoke of the need to “rescue Israel from its exigency, i.e. to prevent an Israeli military action,”⁹ suggesting that the Egyptian behavior was giving Israel no alternative to a military strike. Schuetz ordered the deletion of a sentence concluding that Israeli actions had contributed to the emergence of the crisis¹⁰ as well as formulations indicating that Jordan would face equal or worse repercussions from an outbreak of war than Israel. Strikingly, Schuetz’s circular decree was in its major aspects and rhetoric – blaming Egypt for the crisis, mentioning the threat to moderate Arab states and highlighting Israel’s exigency – surprisingly congruent with the position of Israeli Ambassador Ben Natan (AAPD (188), May 29, 1967). Schuetz expressed the German willingness to assist Israel in any way possible below the “threshold” of non-interference (AAPD (190), May 29, 1967, pp. 817-9).

After the war, the German position maintained its distinctly pro-Israeli touch. A June 23 record of the FRG’s Middle East policy (AAPD (232), June 23, 1967, pp. 950-2) listed the following German interests in the Middle East:

preservation of our economic interests; protection of the southeastern edge of Europe from increasing Soviet penetration; political presence including re-

⁹ “Israel aus seiner Zwangslage zu befreien, d.h. von einer militaerischen Aktion abzuhalten”

¹⁰ The deleted sentence was: “We do not ignore, however, that Israel through its tough retaliatory strikes, which it initiated in response to Arab infiltrations on November 13, 1966 against the Jordanian village Samu and on April 7, 1967 against Syria, as well as through its announcements of further retaliatory strikes against Syria from May 12, 1967 for its part pursued a politics that facilitated the emergence of the crisis” – “Wir verkennen allerdings nicht, dass Israel durch die harten Gegenschlaege, die es in Antwort auf arabische Infiltrationen am 13. November 1966 gegen das jordanische Dorf Samu und am 7. April 1967 gegen Syrien gefuehrt hat, sowie durch seine Ankuendigungen weiterer harter Gegenschlaege gegen Syrien vom 12. Mai 1967 seinerseits eine Politik betrieben hat, die das Entstehen der Krise beguenstigte”

sumption of diplomatic relations with 9 Arab states; prevention of the GDR's recognition under international law.¹¹

All four of these interests would have called for a distinctly pro-Arab orientation in German foreign policy. Nevertheless, the remainder of the document had a clear pro-Israeli tenor, detectable in the reference to "Israeli aggression" in quotation marks, in the explicit condemnation of a policy aimed at the destruction of Israel and the simultaneous absence of criticism of Israeli policies or actions, as well as in the list (and its order) of requirements for a peace agreement in the Middle East:

- 1) recognition of the State of Israel by the Arabs
- 2) free navigation for Israel in the Gulf of Aqaba and the Suez Canal
- 3) solving the Arab refugee problem
- 4) peace without annexation
- 5) a solution for Jerusalem that is acceptable to all parties
- 6) control of arms shipments to the Middle East¹²

With regards to issues affecting the Palestinians and the Arab states, the German position became a lot less explicit.¹³ Interestingly, while the NATO Council agreed on the independent principle of no annexation (AAPD (242), June 30, 1967), the German position spoke of "peace without annexation," which implies an acceptance of the Israeli occupation as long as no peace agreement is signed. Overall, the content and rhetoric of the document suggest that the ties to Israel existed beyond the scope of material interests but had a disproportionate

¹¹ "Wahrung unserer wirtschaftlichen Interessen; Schutz der Suedostflanke Europas vor zunehmender sowjetischer Durchdringung; eigene politische Praesenz einschliesslich Wiederaufnahme der diplomatischen Beziehungen mit 9 arabischen Staaten; Verhinderung einer voelkerrechtlichen Anerkennung der DDR" (passage includes Brandt's handwritten corrections)

¹² "1) Anerkennung des Staates Israel durch die Araber; 2) freie Schifffahrt fuer Israel im Golf von Akaba und im Suez-Kanal; 3) Loesung des arabischen Fluechtlingsproblems; 4) Friedensschluss ohne Annexion; 5) eine fuer alle Seiten tragbare Loesung fuer Jerusalem; 6) Kontrolle von Waffenlieferungen in den Nahen Osten" (passage includes Brandt's handwritten corrections)

¹³ Compare with the principles agreed on within the NATO Council: recognition of the existence of the State of Israel; preservation of the territorial integrity of all Middle East states (no annexation); just solution to the refugee problem; guarantee of free navigation rights in the Suez Canal and the Gulf of Aqaba; ending the arms race in the Middle East through restrictions agreed on by supplying countries; a solution acceptable to all parties – not just Israelis and Arabs – on Jerusalem (AAPD (242), June 30, 1967).

impact on German foreign policy. This is surprising also if set against concerns about the German inclusion in an oil embargo and its expected domestic repercussions (AAPD (227), June 20, 1967, pp. 936-8).

In two debates in the NATO Council the German representatives argued for peace from an Israeli perspective. First, it was suggested that the Arabs need to accept the existence of Israel as an irrevocable fact while Israel needs to understand that the “creation of faits accomplis” and an aggravation of the refugee problem would endanger its own security (AAPD (242), June 30, 1967). Second, Israel’s security in the absence of external threats must be guaranteed (AAPD (220), June 14, 1967, pp. 905-10). No mention of Arab interests was recorded in either session.

While there was no hesitation to award Israel the requested economic aid in 1967 “despite considerable difficulties,” the Foreign Office wanted a postponement of negotiations until the crisis had subsided because public announcements of the agreement would further weaken the German position in the Arab world (AAPD (200), June 2, 1967, pp. 854-5). Later, concerns about acting in a way that would be perceived as pro-Israeli, which would put Germany at odds with the consensus at the United Nations, might cause German inclusion in the Arab oil embargo, and could radicalize the moderate Arab states, were voiced. To minimize possible damage it was suggested that the conclusion of the agreement be kept secret (AAPD (245), July 4, 1967, pp. 990-3). Humanitarian aid to Arab states was seen in instrumental terms: the expected gain was to improve the German reputation in the Arab world (AAPD (217), June 13, 1967, pp. 894-7) and thus to strengthen the relations with Arab states (AAPD (232), June 23, 1967). Chancellor Kiesinger emphasized that the benefits of good relations with Arab states lay especially in avoiding a further penetration of the Middle East

by the Soviet Union, which might pose a danger to Europe (AAPD (261), July 12, 1967, pp. 1035-47).

Overall, the uniqueness of German-Israeli relations beyond the realm of material national interests is obvious. Nevertheless, the fact that “pro-Israeli” statements were added by Brandt and Schuetz to diplomatic documents while “pro-Arab” statements were removed points to a division between a pro-Arab and a pro-Israel camp within the Foreign Office, which has also been identified in the 1945-1965 period (Jelinek, 2004). In 1967, the pro-Israeli side dominated.

Party Positions

Two *Bundestag* debates, from June 7, 1967 (111th Session) and June 14, 1967 (115th Session), offer an insight into party positions towards the Middle East conflict and the parties involved. A commitment to neutrality and *Nichteinmischung* (non-interference) was enunciated by politicians across all three parties.

The need for German neutrality was voiced on grounds of security, and three interrelated themes were stressed. First, Schmidt (SPD) highlighted the geographical proximity of the Middle East and the possibility of a direct spread of the conflict to Europe (111th Session). Second, Chancellor Kiesinger (CDU) and Schmidt (SPD) expressed fears about a deterioration of world politics and indirect repercussions for Germany (111th Session). Third, the FDP highlighted that the location of a divided Germany at the frontline of superpower confrontation and the exposed location of Berlin made Germany particularly vulnerable (111th Session: Freiherr von Kuehlmann-Stumm, Mende; 115th Session: Mende).

Despite the expressed commitment to neutrality and *Nichteinmischung* and the justifications given for it, an anti-Arab tenor was apparent in CDU/CSU and SPD, while the FDP

as a party could be best associated with neutrality. Barzel (CDU) spoke of a “terrible collection of evil words” in the Arab world that clearly showed the “extermination intentions” (*Vernichtungsabsichten*) of Arab states (111th Session, 5227A). He further asserted that the German position was in line with international law, which meant for him personally also “that you may not force anyone into self-defense”¹⁴ (111th Session, 5277A-B), which could only be a reference to Israel’s state of exigency as expressed also in diplomatic circles. Saenger (SPD) expressed “contempt” for those Arab leaders who, unlike their moderate counterparts, were unwilling to improve the living standards of their own populations and all other people in the Middle East but who “think they can escape such a task through acts of war or who offer to their starving people the delirium of enthusiasm instead of bread”¹⁵ (111th Session, 5317A).

A sense of responsibility for Israel was most prominent among SPD politicians. Brandt famously proclaimed that German neutrality “cannot mean moral indifference or indolence of the heart”¹⁶ (5304C). Schmidt stated that for the Social Democrats *Nichteinmischung* did not mean moral or political indifference towards the outcome of the war: strongly rejecting the intentions of Arab leaders to destroy the State of Israel, he expressed solidarity with the Israeli people and evoked the “special responsibility” that Germans have for the Israeli people (111th Session, 5270C). According to Eppler (SPD), in the German conscience the State of Israel was “simply not just a state like all others”¹⁷ (111th Session, 5301D), and the FRG wanted a peace that secures Israel’s right to exist, as German history contributed to

¹⁴ “dass man auch niemanden zur Notwehr zwingen darf“

¹⁵ “die sich einer solchen Aufgabe in Aktionen kriegerischer Art glauben entziehen zu koennen oder die ihren hungernden Menschen den Taumel der Begeisterung statt Brot darbieten. ”

¹⁶ “keine moralische Indifferenz und keine Traegheit des Herzen bedeuten kann”

¹⁷ “eben nicht einfach ein Staat ist wie alle anderen auch”

its creation. Metzger (SPD) even demanded, on moral grounds, an association agreement between the EEC and Israel to ensure the preservation not only of its physical but also of its “economic existence” (111th Session, 5321C).

The FDP advocated the “strictest neutrality as understood under international law” (111th Session, Freiherr von Kuehlmann-Stumm) and opposed, as the only party, the shipment of the 20,000 gas masks through official channels, suggesting that such a move was bound to be interpreted as taking sides in the conflict. Scheel, for example, argued:

I believe that it is problematic ... in this situation to officially deliver material, namely material that can be used in cases of conflict or war, even if it serves to protect, into areas of tension. This is not about preventing the buying of gas masks from German manufacturers, but for us this is about whether it is not a form of taking sides if the German government supplies such gas masks from its stores.¹⁸ (111th Session, p. 5280D-5281A)

Zoglmann (FDP) further suggested that the Israeli request may not have arisen from material but from political interest and may have been a sly attempt to commit Germany to the Israeli side in the conflict (111th session).

Finally, a sense of disillusionment was expressed in light of Europe’s limited influence on war and peace in the Middle East. Chancellor Kiesinger confessed himself aggrieved that Europe, both individual states and as a whole, had so little to say on the conflict and called for a resumption of regular meetings between the European heads of government, while Barzel (CDU) attested to the insignificance of Europe in influencing matters of war and peace in the world (111th Session). Brandt spoke of “political underdevelopment” (*poli-*

¹⁸ “Ich glaube ..., in dieser Situation Material, und zwar fuer den Konflikts- und Kriegsfall einsetzbares Material, wenn es auch nur dem Schutze dient, offiziell in Spannungsgebiete zu liefern. Es geht ja nicht etwa darum, zu verhindern, dass bei deutschen Produzenten Gasmasken gekauft werden, sondern uns geht es nur darum, ob es nicht eine Form von Parteinahme ist, wenn die Bundesregierung aus ihren Bestaendedn solche Gasmasken liefert. ”

tische Unterentwicklung) in Europe as there was hardly any sign of European political cooperation “in light of a heavy crisis before Europe’s front door”¹⁹ (115th Session, p. 5693C).

Overall, the parliamentary debates indicate a divergence between SPD and CDU/CSU on the one hand, and the FDP on the other hand, in terms of the interpretation of neutrality. SPD politicians in particular presented moral arguments in favor of Israel, while the condemnation of Arab actions and attitudes was shared both by CDU/CSU and SPD. Of course, a discussion of the disconnect with the FDP must not ignore the fact that the latter was the opposition party. Nevertheless, other authors find that the FDP in general was more hesitant in its support for Israel than the other two parties were (Deligdisch, 1974; Lavy, 1996; Gerlach, 2006).

Public Opinion

The official commitment to neutrality, and even the cautious support for Israel expressed by some *Bundestag* politicians, was at odds with “the excitement and pro-Israeli euphoria shown by the West German media and public” (Lavy, 1996, p. 146). Donations in money, in kind and of medical material were widespread among the population, as were public expressions of sympathy with, and support for, Israel (Deligdisch, 1974; Lavy, 1996; Weingardt, 2002). A sense of responsibility for the State of Israel was prevalent (Deligdisch, 1974). Individuals, groups and local authorities raised millions of Deutschmarks for Israel (Weingardt, 2002). Survey data places pro-Israeli sentiments at over 50 percent during and immediately following the 1967 War, while about 5 percent of the population expressed a pro-Arab attitude. Similarly, 52 percent of Germans blamed the Arab states for the outbreak of the war, with only 8 percent blaming Israel (Bergmann & Erb, 1991, pp. 182, 184).

¹⁹ “angesichts einer schweren Krise vor der Haustuer Europas”

Following the 1967 War, the extreme left, and in particular the student protesters, adopted an increasingly pro-Palestinian, anti-Zionist and occasionally anti-Semitic position, although the majority of the public continued to support Israel (Weingardt, 2002). This trend is reflected in public opinion polls conducted by the *Institut fuer Demoskopie Allensbach*. In May 1970, 45 percent of Germans supported the Israelis, 7 percent the Arabs, and 32 percent were neutral in the Middle East conflict (1973 / Nr. 19). Three years later, in April 1973, support for Israel had sunk to 37 percent, while 5 percent claimed to sympathize with the Arabs (1973 / Nr. 19). An opinion poll in October 1973, in the midst of the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, however, shows an upsurge in support for Israel: 57 percent said they sympathized with Israel, compared to 8 percent support for the Arabs (1973 / Nr. 41). By April 1978, support for Israel had fallen to 44 percent, while support for the Arabs still hovered at 7 percent (1978 / Nr. 22).²⁰ These public opinion data indicate a mobilization on behalf of Israel in times of war, while generally an Israel-friendly or at least not an anti-Israel attitude prevailed.

German Foreign Policy in the European Context

Before the outbreak of the war, the UK declared neutrality in the conflict (Archiv d. G., June 5, 1967, pp. 13212-22), which was classified as “military neutrality,” as politically the UK sided with Israel (Die Zeit, Wocker, 06/09/1967). Following a Soviet refusal to impose an arms embargo in the Middle East, a stop of arms shipments implemented by the UK following the outbreak of hostilities was revoked in order to avoid “a one-sided and unfair” embargo (Archiv d. G., June 15, 1967). British troops were ordered not to participate in the fighting in any way, however (Archiv d. G., June 15, 1967). Fearing unpredictable economic

²⁰ Differences in wording must be noted. In 1970, 1971 and 1978 the question was: “Which side are you on, more on the side of the Palestinians or more on the side of the Arabs?” The question for both 1973 polls was: “Who has your sympathy in the Middle East conflict, the Israelis, the Arabs or neither of the two parties?” – “Auf welcher Seite stehen Sie, mehr auf der Seite der Israelis oder mehr auf der Seite der Araber?”; “Wem gehoert Ihre Sympathy im Nahost-Konflikt, den Israelis, den Arabern oder keiner der beiden Parteien?”

and financial repercussions in case of an expansion of the war (the UK obtained 72 percent of its oil from the Middle East), the government supported a quick ceasefire implemented by the UN. The British position did not, however, desire a return to the pre-war status quo, as that would have implied accepting Egyptian control of the Strait of Tiran, which was not in the British interest (Die Zeit, Wocker, 06/09/1967). Attempts to convince other states to sign a declaration classifying the Strait of Tiran as an international waterway proved fruitless (Archiv d. G., June 5, 1967). Public opinion, like in Germany, largely favored Israel in the conflict (Die Zeit, Wocker, 06/09/1967).

The French position of neutrality was more true to the term. President de Gaulle insisted that France had in no way committed itself to either side (Archiv d. G., June 15, 1967; Die Zeit, Ernst Weisenfeld, 1967). Before the outbreak of violence, de Gaulle had indicated that whichever state would commit the first strike would not obtain French approval or support. He had stated that if Israel was attacked, France would not allow it to be destroyed, but should Israel start the hostilities, France would condemn the initiative (De Gaulle Press Conference, 1967). De Gaulle's disapproval of Israel's first strike marked "the beginning of a general change of direction of French foreign policy in favour of the Arabs" (Lavy, 1996, p. 148). After the outbreak of hostilities, an arms embargo was imposed on the entire Middle East, which hit Israel especially hard because it used predominantly French equipment (Die Zeit, Weisenfeld, 06/09/1967). France subsequently became "a major arms supplier to Arab countries" (Soetendorp, 1999).

After the war, France issued its own statement, distinct from the other western governments, condemning the "opening of hostilities by Israel" (Deligdisch, 1974, p. 135). The new pro-Arab position was reflected also in the French translation of Security Council reso-

lution 242, which was interpreted to demand an Israeli withdrawal from *all* occupied territories.²¹ In a November 27, 1967 press conference (De Gaulle Press Conference, 1967), finally, de Gaulle strongly criticized Israel, a “bellicose state determined to expand,”²² for having attained in the Six Day War a central objective: to increase its territory in order to accommodate the growing influx of Jewish immigrants. As for the outcome of the war, de Gaulle famously assessed:

Currently, it [Israel] is organizing in the territories that it has taken an occupation that cannot proceed without oppression, repression, expulsions; and a resistance against it manifests itself, which Israel classifies as terrorism.²³

Following the war the realization that “Europe,” i.e. the EEC²⁴, had been unable to exercise any power in the Middle East crisis and had been incapable of ensuring the security of their allies as well as their own, was sobering (Die Zeit, H.K., 06/16/1967). In 1971, the six EEC foreign ministers agreed on a common position on the Middle East and composed a confidential paper that was leaked to the press. The recommendations and positions specified went beyond UN Security Council resolution 242 in the following ways: (1) the French version of resolution 242 constituted the basis for the paper; the withdrawal of Israeli forces to the pre-conflict lines and borders was demanded, although room was left for “possibly minor

²¹ In November 1967, the UN Security Council passed resolution 242, which lays out two central principles necessary for peace in the Middle East:

- (i) Withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict;
- (ii) Termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force (UN Security Council Resolution 242, 1967)

Arab and Israeli opinions on the first principle diverged considerably. While the Arab side interpreted “from territories occupied in the recent conflict” to mean “from *the* territories” or “from *all* territories,” in the Israeli interpretation the missing specification was taken to mean that borders are negotiable (Dowty, 2008). France went along with the Arab interpretation, which was reflected in the French version, referring to *the* territories (Weingardt, 2002; Gerlach, 2006).

²² “Etat d’Israël guerrier et résolu à s’agrandir”

²³ “Maintenant, il [Israël] organise sur les territoires qu’il a pris l’occupation qui ne peut aller sans oppression, répression, expulsions, et il s’y manifeste contre lui une résistance, qu’à son tour il qualifie de terrorisme”

²⁴ Consisting at the time of Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxemburg

adjustments agreed on by the parties”²⁵; (2) Jerusalem should be placed under international authority, and free access to the holy sites should be guaranteed; (3) the six suggested the creation of a commission to ensure “the refugees’ freedom of choice between gradual return and resettlement, with compensation, in other countries.”²⁶

Following Israeli criticism, Germany back-paddled from the 1971 position and pledged adherence to the English version of resolution 242, which caused a crisis in German-French relations (Gerlach, 2006). In response to Israeli criticism, foreign minister Scheel (FDP) justified the EEC paper by pointing to the need for closer cooperation and coordination in Europe, while also pledging a commitment to the special relations with Israel, which were grounded in the past (AAPD (237), July 7, 1971, pp. 1098-102; AAPD (238), July 7/8, 1971, pp. 1102-9; Bundestag, 133rd Session, 1971).

Summary

Even if the Arab states and relations with them moved up on the FRG’s agenda following the 1967 War, German-Israeli relations were hardly touched by these developments. Even the 1971 common statement by the EEC foreign ministers, which was in Israel perceived to be pro-Arab, marked less a change in Germany’s attitude and was rather indicative of the French influence within the EEC (Weingardt, 2002; Gerlach, 2006). Closer German-French cooperation regarding the Middle East, incidentally, had been desired in the Arab world (Bulletin, September 8, 1967), but angered the Israelis and led to German backpadding. Overall, it appears that Germany did not pursue a coherent Middle East policy but had deadlocked itself into a position of inconsistency and confusion, by trying to please the

²⁵ “eventuellement de rectifications mineures agréées par les parties”

²⁶ “la liberté de choix des réfugiés entre le repatriement échelonné et la réinstallation, avec compensation, dans d’autres pays”, full French text of the document, in Gerlach, 2006, pp. 209-213

Arabs, the Israelis and the French at the same time while operating under a Cold War umbrella and clinging to the Hallstein Doctrine.

Different trends in German foreign policy making towards the Middle East can be observed in 1967 and the following years. First, no doubt owing to the Cold War division Germany closely followed the U.S. position during the 1967 War, practicing “benevolent neutrality” (Lavy, 1996, p. 160), which was reinforced by public opinion. The fear of a spillover effect of the Middle East conflict appears to have been the most important factor that reinforced the German desire to keep up the best impression of neutrality possible. The economic need for good relations with the Arab states appears to have had a minor impact only, despite German dependency on Arab oil. The Hallstein Doctrine too required a rapprochement with the Arab world.

Second, a European (particularly French) influence, which in this case countered the U.S. position, on Germany’s Middle East policy transpired with the crafting of the 1971 EEC paper, several years after the war. The FRG was quick to backpaddle from the common EEC position in the face of Israeli criticism, however, not wanting to endanger the special German-Israeli relations. A clash between the desire for European cooperation and multilateralism and Germany’s obligation towards Israel was apparent, although the commitment to multilateralism and European coordination was more a consequence of Europe’s limited influence in the Middle East and the world than it was a norm. The parliamentary debates as well as the FRG’s indecision regarding the EEC paper, the first joint agreement on foreign policy of the sort, indicate that the European factor only just started developing in the late 1960s. During the war, there was no European influence on German foreign policy to speak of, while after the war finding a common position was marked by considerable difficulties.

Third, German neutrality and *Nichteinmischung* were a cover for an Israel-friendly policy. CDU/CSU and SPD politicians and diplomats alike shared a concern for Israel's security and well-being, which was not seldom informed by moral considerations. The fact that from a strict "national interest" perspective the FRG should have pursued a distinctly more pro-Arab position, but did not, illustrates this phenomenon. The shipments of gas masks, trucks and even tanks to Israel are indicators of the pro-Israeli position. At the same time, a division between a pro-Arab and a pro-Israeli camp within the Foreign Office can be detected. The possible argument that in the Cold War context Germany's ability to adopt a more pro-Arab policy was limited is discounted by the U.S. desire to improve its relations with Arab states and the assessment that Germany could play an important role in bringing about such a rapprochement as Germany had the best access to the Arab world in the west (AAPD (208), 8. Juni 1967, pp. 875-8). But in its endeavor to improve its relations with the Arab world following the war Germany did not allow its relations with Israel to suffer. In fact, German economic aid to Israel continued, and any payments made to Arab states, aimed at alleviating the refugee problem, paled in relation to the loans reaching Israel. The Palestinians, at any rate, played no role for the FRG; the only West German interest was in the Arab states, and the fate of the Palestinian refugees was at best a piece in the Arab puzzle. Overall, a norm of philo-Zionism, even if it was counterbalanced by other factors, existed and left its mark on German foreign policy. Public opinion supported the pro-Israeli bias.

It cannot be concluded that moral considerations or norms trumped all else, in particular the "national interest," although they shaped the tenor in German diplomacy and among political elites in SPD and, less so, in CDU/CSU. Germany's geopolitical insecurity was clearly not conducive to a norm-driven foreign policy. Moreover, the West German gov-

ernment appears to have wanted to comply with the various demands and expectations of its international partners, thereby compromising consistency and coherence. No one international relations theory fits this case perfectly. The weight of security political concerns cannot be downplayed, which gives support to realism. Another pivotal factor was the Hallstein Doctrine and concerns about a permanent institutionalization of German division, and as such – it must be noted – of a reduced German power base, which ranked high on the FRG’s agenda. The “national interest” was clearly the predominant variable in the 1967 War. The FRG’s attempts to adapt its official position to improve its standing with a particular actor and make material or political gains are probably most in line with liberalism’s conception of rational decision making, which supposes that a cost-benefit analysis informs every decision. That this sequence of rational decision making resulted in a chameleon foreign policy making style can be attributed to the fact that a long-term perspective appears to have been compromised in favor of short-term gains.

The rhetoric employed by government and *Bundestag* politicians as well as in confidential Foreign Office documents indicates, however, that the German commitment to Israel influenced German foreign policy making to a considerable extent. Constructivism is supported in this regard also by the German unwillingness to compromise Israel’s special status in favor of the Arabs and to refrain from taking actions that may damage Israel. Due to the dependency of the FRG on Arab oil exports, this moral concern in a way overrode economic interests.

Case 2: 1982 Lebanon War

Background

A discussion of German foreign policy towards the 1982 Lebanon war requires a brief overview of the development of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and of German and European positions in the 1970s and early 1980s. In proving European incompetence at containing conflict and advancing peace in the Middle East, the 1967 War had sparked a European desire to develop a common approach to the region. The 1971 EEC paper set the stage for closer European coordination throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Moreover, the defeat of the Arab states in the 1967 War for the first time put the Palestinians at the forefront of the conflict and thus marked the rise of the PLO²⁷ (Starke, 2000; Weingardt, 2002; Dowty, 2008).

The Rise of the PLO

The PLO's new charter, crafted in 1968, abandoned the notion of Palestine as a pan-Arab issue and highlighted a unique Palestinian identity instead (Dowty, 2008). After the 1973 War had destroyed the "myth of Israeli invincibility" and set the stage for a land for peace agreement between Israel and Egypt, Egypt started to withdraw from the conflict (Starke, 2000; Dowty, 2008). Soon Jordan, Egypt and Saudi Arabia started favoring a political solution to the Middle East conflict, heralding a new phase of pragmatism (Starke, 2000). When the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty was signed in 1979 and when Jordan abandoned its claims to the West Bank in 1988, the Palestinian dimension of the conflict became even more prominent (Dowty, 2008).

²⁷ While the PLO established itself as the primary Palestinian organization it was by no means the only one. Infighting between several Palestinian factions continues to this day. Even the PLO itself was and continues to be internally divided along a moderates-extremists continuum. The complexity of Palestinian identity and Palestinian factions cannot be adequately addressed in this paper.

Although initially desiring the eradication of the State of Israel and the “total liberation of Palestine” (Dowty, 2008, p. 122), the PLO, out of political calculations, gradually moved towards accepting a two-state solution. For hardliners accepting a small Palestinian state was only the first stage in the eventual reconquest of all of Palestine (Hottinger, 1989; Starke, 2000; Dowty, 2008). Whatever the underlying motivation, the change in the PLO position constituted a remarkable adaptation to new realities, including the changed attitudes of Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Jordan. In its struggle for Palestinian self-determination the PLO soon capitalized on diplomatic means, using the UN as a forum as well as entertaining bilateral relations with a vast number of states (Starke, 2000; Dowty, 2008). Following Arafat’s speech before the UN General Assembly on November 13, 1974 the body affirmed “(a) The right to self-determination without external interference; (b) The right to national independence and sovereignty” for the Palestinians (UN General Assembly Resolution 3236, 1974). Gradually, the PLO established itself as the primary antagonist for Israel and could no longer be ignored by the world (Starke, 2000).

The German and European Response

Thanks to the successes of the FRG’s *Ostpolitik* – the rapprochement with the Soviet Union, the GDR and other east European states – and the consequent improvement in its security situation, West Germany gained in confidence and started to pursue a foreign policy distinct from the U.S. (Lavy, 1996). The FRG set greater store by coordination with the other EC states, which had developed a more pro-Arab position after 1967. Germany developed its official doctrine of “evenhandedness” in the Middle East conflict (Jaeger, 1994; Lavy, 1996).

Owing to the Arab oil embargo on Europe, enforced during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, the admission of pro-Palestinian states (such as Greece) into the common market, and

the election of the Likud hardliner Menahem Begin in Israel in 1977, the EC became a lot more susceptible to Palestinian concerns. The European position toughened in light of Israeli settlement expansion, Israel's perceived unwillingness to engage in meaningful dialogue and the annexation of Jerusalem and the Golan Heights (Kirisci, 1986).

Following the 1973 War, the EC issued a declaration on the Middle East that demanded adherence to UN Security Council resolutions 242 and 338²⁸ and reiterated principles such as the inadmissibility of acquiring territory by force and the right to territorial integrity of all states in the Middle East. Going beyond resolution 242, it requested that a peace agreement consider "the legitimate rights of the Palestinians"²⁹ (Neustadt, 1983; Jaeger, 1994; Lavy, 1996). The acknowledgment of the rights of a Palestinian people was "revolutionary" as no UN resolution had to that day made any reference to the Palestinians (Jaeger, 1994, p. 55). When it came to addressing the "Palestinian question" the EC, led by France and the UK (Soetendorp, 1999), was the precursor in the west. That the FRG had prevented the declaration from assuming an even more pro-Palestinian character did not mitigate Israeli outrage and protests; neither did Chancellor Brandt's vows that nothing had changed in Germany's Israel-friendly politics (Jaeger, 1994). He presented the document as a compromise between the FRG's pro-Israeli attitude and the need to cooperate with the other EC states and suggested that as such it had caused some dissatisfaction for everyone (Neustadt, 1983; Lavy, 1996). European dependency on Arab oil was also an important factor in the crafting of the EC declaration (Neustadt, 1983).

²⁸ Demanding a ceasefire in the 1973 War and an immediate implementation of resolution 242 (UN Security Council, 1973)

²⁹ "die legitimen Rechte der Palaestinenser", full German text of the declaration in Jaeger, 1994, App. 9

Channels to officials and politicians in various European states increasingly opened to the PLO, including in West Germany. In 1975, a newly launched Euro-Arab dialogue gave the PLO further access to Europe (Kirisci, 1986; Weingardt, 2002). While France was the first western European state to maintain direct official contacts with the PLO, the FRG was the first state in the EC to acknowledge, in 1974, the Palestinian right to self-determination and the right to establish a state authority (Kirisci, 1986; Muellenmeister, 1988).

In 1980 the EC passed the Venice Declaration, which extended the resolution of 1973 by defining the Israeli settlements as illegal under international law and by calling for self-determination of “the Palestinian people, which is aware of existing as such.”³⁰ The declaration further called for an inclusion of the PLO in negotiations, which was rejected by the U.S. and Israel (Weingardt, 2002). Again, the FRG had prevented more distinctly pro-Palestinian language (Lavy, 1996). Overall, the tone in Europe had changed dramatically and the PLO had come to be seen as a fixture and a legitimate actor in the Middle East.

It must be noted that the EC continuously pressed the PLO to recognize Israel, to work towards a political solution to the conflict and to renounce violence (Kirisci, 1986). Moreover, despite their demand that the PLO be included in negotiations, the EC refused to recognize it as the sole representative of the Palestinian people (Kirisci, 1986; Weingardt, 2002). In 1974 France abstained on the resolution that eventually granted the PLO observer status at the UN, while all other eight EC members were opposed (Lindemann, 1988). Germany, unlike France, refused to initiate official relations with the PLO as the latter refused to recognize Israel’s right to exist (Muellenmeister, 1988; Jaeger, 1994; Weingardt, 2002). Weingardt suggests that a divergence existed between official statements in the FRG proc-

³⁰ “Das palaestinensische Volk, das sich bewusst ist, als solches zu existieren”, full text in Jaeger, 1994, App. 6

claiming a politics of evenhandedness and its actual policy, which was marked by strong support for Israel (Weingardt, 2002), much as I found for the 1967 War. In her analysis from 1975 to 1983, Lindemann (1988) found that Germany was the pro-Israeli pole among the EC states when it came to votes on the Middle East and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict at the UN, with France and especially Greece having, relatively speaking, a pro-Arab record.

On the whole, the EC position on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the 1970s and early 1980s reflected developments in the Middle East that awarded the PLO increasing legitimacy, although neither declaration actually had an impact in the Middle East other than angering and alienating various factions in the Arab world as well as Israel (Neustadt, 1983; Jaeger, 1994; Soetendorp, 1999; Weingardt, 2002). The U.S., for its part, was very critical of EC involvement in the Middle East, which it perceived as being in competition with its own efforts, and the rift between their positions became more pronounced. While France pushed for an independent position, Germany acted as broker between EC and U.S. (Weingardt, 2002).

The 1982 Lebanon War

The 1982 Israeli invasion into Lebanon, Operation “Peace in Galilee,” was a response to the buildup of a PLO base in southern Lebanon, from which attacks on northern Israel had been launched for years (Reich, 2008). In another interpretation, the Israeli invasion was an attempt to undermine moderate Arab forces, including the PLO, to avoid the division of *Eretz Israel* into two states (Starke, 2000). Likud-governed Israel was willing to award the Palestinians local autonomy at best and was opposed to the establishment of a Palestinian state. The institution of a moderate regime in Lebanon and the signing of a bilateral peace treaty between Israel and Lebanon are further ventured as goals of the invasion (Weingardt, 2002).

In the 1982 war, Israel allied itself with anti-Palestinian forces in Lebanon, especially the Maronites, with the aim of forcing the PLO out of the south of the country and diminishing the Syrian presence in Lebanon. The Israeli military eventually advanced all the way into Beirut, while Maronite forces murdered between 700 and 3000³¹ Palestinians in refugee camps in the Sabra and Shatila massacres, which caused outrage in Israel as well as internationally. An investigative commission found the Israeli military to be indirectly responsible for the massacres. The Israeli army withdrew from Lebanon in two stages in 1983 and 1985, instituting a buffer zone controlled by pro-Israeli Lebanese forces at the border (Dowty, 2008).

German and EC foreign policy

In the 1980s the FRG regarded the EC as the framework within which it could and should employ its political weight (Weingardt, 2002). The economic and political value of the EC and of European unity was highlighted particularly by SPD politicians (Bundestag, 108th Session, 1982), while the CDU/CSU emphasized the importance of the transatlantic alliance (Bulletin, November 11, 1982, pp. 993-6; Bundestag, 108th Session, 1982; D-B 18.11, 1982).

Chancellor Schmidt and Israeli Prime Minister Begin had a very tense relationship and expressed their mutual animosity in a number of public statements, which led to a mini-crisis in German-Israeli relations. Among other things, Begin strongly criticized the German contribution to EC declarations, in particular the Venice Declaration, which were perceived as pro-PLO and hostile to Israel (Neustadt, 1983; Jaeger, 1994; Lavy, 1996). Just two days before the Israeli incursion into Lebanon, German foreign minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher

³¹ Different estimates exist. Steininger (2006) speaks of 3,000 casualties, while Weingardt (2002) and Jaeger (1994) speak of 700 to 800 casualties reported by the Israelis and 2,000 by the Palestinians.

(FDP) left from a visit to Jerusalem. Reiterating in several talks, speeches and interviews Germany's special responsibility for Israel and highlighting the weight of the past (D-B, 18.7/8, 1982), he clearly tried to convey the impression that the German support for the Venice Declaration and for Palestinian self-determination was not in any way aimed against Israel. The acknowledgment of German responsibility for Israel and the desire for closer German-Israeli relations, he said, was shared across all German governments and by all parties in the German parliament (D-B, 18.7/8, 1982), thus evoking the notion of an elite-level norm. Simultaneously, he contended that respecting the Palestinians' right to self-determination was necessary for peace and security in the region, including Israel's security (D-B, 18.7/8, 1982; D-B, 18.9, 1982). He further repeated a theme already articulated in 1967: "peace in the Middle East is also our peace" (D-B, 18.7/8, 1982, p. 8).

In a June 9 declaration³², the EC "condemn[ed] emphatically the renewed invasion of Israel into Lebanon,"³³ which was described as "unjustifiable" and a "flagrant violation of international law as well as of the most basic humanitarian principles."³⁴ The EC called for the recognition of Lebanon's "independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and national unity"³⁵ and demanded an immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all Israeli forces. Clearly, the EC did not share Israeli foreign minister Shamir's assessment that Israel was "engaged in a struggle for its existence."³⁶ Threats of sanctions against Israel remained without consequences, although the EC did not sign a planned financial agreement with Israel, thus denying the Jewish state a promised 40 Million DM loan (Weingardt, 2002). The UK,

³² Full German text printed in Deutschland-Berichte (D-B), 18.7/8, 1982, p. 13

³³ "verurteilen nachdruecklich den neuerlichen Einfall Israels in Libanon"

³⁴ "eine flagrante Verletzung des Voelkerrechts sowie der elementarsten humanitaeren Grundsaeetze"

³⁵ "Unabhaengigkeit, Souveraenitaet, territoriale Unversehrtheit und [nationale] Einheit"

³⁶ Full speech (in German) printed in D-B, 18.7/8, 1982, p. 6

France and Greece had supported EC sanctions should Israel occupy Beirut, while the FRG and the Netherlands had favored the more moderate approach of withholding loans (Archiv d.G., June 27, 1982, pp. 25738-48) and prevailed. Germany and the Netherlands also opposed explicit references to the PLO in EC statements, favored by France (Greilshammer, 1988; Soetendorp, 1999). Contrary to the EC, Secretary of State Dr. Corterier explained that the German government was not planning to suspend the payment of the annual 140 million DM loan, which it granted in light of German history (Deutscher Bundestag, Drucksache 9/1904, 1982). Further, a limited EC embargo on military shipments to Israel was lifted on German insistence in June 1983 while the FRG held the EC presidency (Greilshammer, 1988).

The EC's principles from June 9 were extended in the conclusions of two sessions of the European Council in late June³⁷ and early December³⁸ by the demand for a withdrawal also of Palestinian, Syrian and all other foreign forces from Lebanon. Moreover, the June declaration cautioned that Israel could not ensure its own security through the use of force but only through respecting "the legitimate efforts of the Palestinian people."

The basic points of the EC declarations were repeated by Genscher, who used the same strong language but did not explicitly call for an Israeli withdrawal. Instead, he called on all parties in the Middle East to find a solution to restore Lebanon's sovereignty and its state authority.³⁹ Subsequently, several government officials reiterated in speeches, press conferences and interviews the necessity of ensuring the Palestinian right to self-

³⁷ Full text printed in Bulletin, July 1, 1982, pp.609-611

³⁸ Full text printed in Bulletin, December 7, 1982, pp.1109-1111

³⁹ Full text of the statement printed in D-B, 19.7/8, 1982, p. 13

determination (Speaker for the government Dr. Ruehl⁴⁰; Genscher⁴¹, Undersecretary of State Dr. Mertes⁴²), the need for a PLO withdrawal from Lebanon to restore Lebanon's sovereignty, territorial integrity and state authority (Dr. Ruehl), as well as the rejection of war as a means to achieve political ends (Chancellor Schmidt⁴³). In Amman, Genscher asserted that "the politics of the Federal Republic of Germany is a politics of peace"⁴⁴ that accepts only non-violent means of conflict resolution.

Interestingly, EC and U.S. positions converged again when the U.S. adopted some basic principles outlined in the Venice Declaration – no annexation of territory, a stop to settlement construction and full autonomy for the Palestinians in the occupied territories – and incorporated them into a peace plan (Weingardt, 2002). This illustrates yet again the limitations of Europe's power and influence in the Middle East. The European position meant nothing until the U.S. took up some of the issues expressed in the Venice Declaration. More to the point, beyond statements, condemnations and declarations that were inconsequential in the Middle East, there was no German or EC foreign policy to speak of. Preoccupation with the Falklands crisis and the Iran-Iraq war as well as the rift that had occurred between European leaders and the Reagan administration certainly deterred a more active EC involvement (Greilshammer, 1988). In addition, developing a common European position still constituted a major challenge and resulted in watered-down documents that were rejected in the Middle East. The U.S. had little actual impact on German and EC positions, although the lack of Eu-

⁴⁰ Statement on the withdrawal of the PLO from West-Beirut on August 20, 1982, full text printed in D-B, 18.9, 1982

⁴¹ Genscher in the ZDF's television program *Bonner Perspektiven* on the situation in the Middle East on July 18, 1982, full text printed in D-B 18.9, pp.4-5

⁴² Speech before the VI. German-Israeli Conference on November 8, 1982, full text in Bulletin, November 11, 1982, pp.993-996

⁴³ Interview with *Die Welt* on August 14, 1982, full text printed in D-B, 18.9, 1982, pp.3-4

⁴⁴ "Die Politik der Bundesregierung ist Friedenspolitik"; full text of speech printed in Bulletin, July 14, 1982, p. 651

ropean influence gave the latter little choice other than to support the Reagan plan. The Venice Declaration “was completely relegated to the background” in the process, which alienated the Arab world (Greilshammer, 1988, p. 298). Reagan’s peace plan was rejected by Israel and the PLO (Greilshammer, 1988; Weingardt, 2002).

The EC⁴⁵ and the FRG⁴⁶ strongly condemned the atrocities committed in the Sabra and Shatial massacres. Both statements expressed “deep shock” and “horror” at the massacres, called for measures to ensure the safety of civilians and demanded the immediate withdrawal of all Israeli troops from West-Beirut and a withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon at the earliest possible date. The EC further declared the ongoing settlement construction in the occupied territories a violation of international law, while this aspect was absent from the FRG statement. Finally, both statements expressed support for Reagan’s peace plan and approval of the Arab willingness to work towards a peaceful solution of the conflict, as expressed in the Fez plan.⁴⁷ Although the Fez plan was not a viable peace plan for the FRG, it was praised for containing “a series of absolutely positive approaches” by Speaker for the German government Klaus Boelling⁴⁸, and for departing from the three nos of Khar-toum from 1967 – no to negotiations, no to peace, and no to recognition of Israel – by Undersecretary of State Dr. Mertes.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ Statement issued on September 20, 1982, full text in D-B 18.9, 1982, pp.4-5

⁴⁶ Full text in Bulletin, September 24, 1982, pp. 807-8

⁴⁷ The plan implicitly recognized Israel by speaking of an Israeli withdrawal, including a removal of settlements, from the territories occupied in 1967 only but otherwise included no explicit mention of a recognition. The new Palestinian state would be placed under the leadership of the PLO, the “sole and legitimate representative” of the Palestinian people, and would have Jerusalem as its capital. The UN would supervise the implementation of the peace plan, and freedom of religion would be guaranteed for the holy sites (the full text, in German, is printed in *Die Bundesrepublik Deutschland und der Nahe Osten: Dokumentation*, pp.243-5).

⁴⁸ “eine Reihe durchaus positiver Ansaetze,” text printed in D-B 19.10, 1982, p.6

⁴⁹ In the speech before the VI. German-Israeli Conference on November 8, 1982

The striking congruence of FRG and EC positions was not least of all the product of the FRG using its power to prevent sanctions against Israel and the inclusion of a reference to a Palestinian state in the June declaration. Further, the FRG remained the only EC state that refused to establish official contacts with the PLO (Jaeger, 1994). By contrast, Weingardt describes the EC as an opportune forum for the FRG within in which it could be less inhibited in its criticism of Israel. While the EC was also a convenient institution to hide behind when it came to escaping different demands from the U.S. and the various parties in the Middle East (Weingardt, 2002), such tensions could not be avoided at all times. At the UN, the FRG tended to vote with the EC on issues pertaining to the Middle East conflict, while the U.S. and Israel were isolated (Archiv d.G., August 23, 1982, pp. 25879-87; Jaeger, 1994). More than in 1967, the commitment to Israel clashed with the desire for a common European position. As a consequence Germany decided to hide behind EC decisions on some occasions and was actively engaged in crafting them on others.

Following the change in government on October 1, Undersecretary of State Dr. Mertes explained the new CDU/CSU/FDP coalition's approach to the Middle East, which continued in the tradition of the SPD/FDP government. He made it plain that the Palestinians' "right to self-determination does not mean the right to annihilate Israel. The Palestinians' right to self-determination does not mean the right to rule over the neighboring state Lebanon."⁵⁰ Before the *Bundestag*, Dr. Mertes reaffirmed that as long as the PLO did not expressly recognize Israel's right to exist, the FRG would not initiate official contacts with the PLO and would not extend an invitation to Yassir Arafat (*Bundestag*, 128th Session, 1982).

⁵⁰ "Selbstbestimmungsrecht bedeutet nicht Vernichtungsrecht gegenueber Israel. Selbstbestimmungsrecht der Palaestinenser bedeutet nicht Verfuegungsrecht ueber den Nachbarstaat Libanon", full text printed in D-B, 18.11, 1982, pp.4-6.

An interview with Chancellor Kohl from January 1983⁵¹ also shows consistency with the previous government's commitments: to maintain good relations with Israel and the Arab world, to advocate on behalf of Israel within the EC and to work towards a lasting peace in the Middle East based on Israel's right to exist within recognized and secure borders, Palestinian self-determination, and the renunciation of force.

Party Positions

The *Bundestag* did not debate the Lebanon War or the situation in the Middle East at length. The tone of the debates that did take place was critical of Israel in the FDP and pro-Israeli and critical of the PLO and Syria in the CDU/CSU, with the SPD situated in between. Even FDP politicians, despite voicing disapproval of Israeli government officials and Israeli actions, did not condemn the Israeli invasion in clear language, which confirms Jaeger's (1994) assessment of restraint. All three parties agreed on the basic requirements for peace in the Middle East and in Lebanon: the recognition of Israel's right to exist within secure borders, the Palestinian right to self-determination, and the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon and an end to Palestinian violence against Israel. The need for nonviolence was emphasized by all parties as well (Bundestag, 105th Session, 1982; Bundestag, 108th Session, 1982).

Beyond this basic consensus, rhetoric and content diverged. For the SPD the conflict had been caused by Israel's invasion of Lebanon, while the presence of the PLO and Syrian forces in southern Lebanon constituted only a secondary factor (Dr. Soell, 105th Session). Nevertheless, the SPD was restrained in its criticism. Soell merely suggested that a multilateral approach would be more fruitful than Israel's unilateral action in achieving a lasting

⁵¹ Full text printed in Vogel, *Der deutsch-israelische Dialog*, 1988, pp. 899-902.

peace and overall provided a rather balanced statement that also placed blame on the PLO and Syria. At the same time, he acknowledged an indirect German responsibility for the Palestinians as they had been impacted by the creation of the state of Israel (105th Session). Brandt suggested that historical guilt cannot compel Germans to “hold their tongue about serious mistakes or new bloodshed”⁵² (108th Session, p. 6591B). He further expressed understanding for Israeli concerns and motivations but classified the Israeli invasion as a disproportionate response to terrorist attacks and security deficits. Lebanon, which had become the pawn of several foreign powers, could only regain its territorial integrity if all foreign forces withdrew (108th Session).

The FDP, similar to 1967, presented itself as the least Israel-friendly. Israel was considered the primary aggressor and was described as acting as though it had “special rights that were not granted any other state in the world”⁵³ (Schaefer, 105th Session). Schaefer accused Israel of having long planned the invasion although a ceasefire agreed with the forces in Lebanon had been kept and wondered about Israel’s true intentions, suggesting that maybe the aim was a division of Lebanon into a Syrian-controlled north and an Israeli-controlled south (105th Session). Further, he evoked the notion of the Palestinians as “the last victims of national socialism”⁵⁴ and blamed Israel, but also the Arab states, that there was no state the PLO could withdraw to if it left Lebanon, although he supported the withdrawal of all foreign forces (108th Session, 6624B). He further asserted that the PLO could not make unilateral concessions, such as recognizing Israel, as long as Israel denied the Palestinians the right to

⁵² “man zu ernsten Fehlern oder neuem Blutvergiessen den Mund haelt”

⁵³ “Sonderrechte, die keinem anderen Staat der Welt zugebilligt werden”

⁵⁴ “diese letzten Opfer des Nationalsozialismus”

self-determination (108th Session). Overall, Schaefer called on Germans to reconsider their sense of moral obligation:

There is no question about Israel's right to exist for any of us, but we cannot from this draw the conclusion that, because of a fear nourished in Israel 20 years ago to be thrown into the sea, one can now allow others to be driven into the sea.⁵⁵

Schaefer also expressed the need for an evenhanded policy in deeds as well as in words and called on the European foreign ministers to identify other measures than mere declarations (Schaefer, 105th Session). Finally, he articulated fears of a possible spillover effect of the conflict (105th Session, 108th Session). Despite all the criticism, even he did not condemn the Israeli invasion or Israeli actions in clear language.

The CDU/CSU regarded the Syrian and PLO occupation of Lebanon, as well as attacks on Israel launched by the PLO, as the primary causes of the war. This position was presented by Klein, Graf Huyn, Lenz (105th Session), Dr. Dregger, Dr. Woerner (108th Session) and Dr. Mertes in his capacity as speaker of the CDU/CSU parliamentary group (D-B, 18.7/8, 1982). The PLO was blamed for stalling the peace process by not recognizing Israel (Reddemann, 108th Session). On the other hand, the Israeli invasion was not condemned or even criticized; instead, Israel was praised for its willingness to trade land for peace, as demonstrated by the Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai. Lebanon was seen as a possible case to ensure a second secure border for Israel (Klein, 105th Session). The *faits accomplis* created by Israel's invasion were simply accepted: "Maybe the current conflict is a chance for a new

⁵⁵ "Das Existenzrecht Israels steht fuer uns alle nicht in Frage, aber wir koennen daraus nicht den Schluss ziehen, man koenne nach der vor 20 Jahren in Israel gehegten Befuerchtung, ins Meer geworfen zu werden, umgekehrt zulassen, dass andere ins Meer getrieben werden" (108th Session, 6625B-C)

beginning with another neighbor” (Klein, 105th Session).⁵⁶ Dr. Dregger moreover cautioned against reprimanding Israel from a moral high ground when the German security situation was not comparable to Israel’s (108th Session).

The possible argument that the CDU/CSU’s advocacy on behalf of Israel might have been a consequence of its opposition role is somewhat weakened by the continued skepticism of the PLO that Secretary of State Dr. Mertes expressed once the CDU/CSU was in government. Further, the Kohl government worked towards improving German-Israeli relations in 1983 (Greilshammer, 1988), although Kohl’s subsequent emphasis on “normal relations” was met with disapproval in Israel (Weingardt, 2002). Compared to 1967, the CDU/CSU and the SPD had switched positions, while the FDP maintained its neutral tone. Foreign minister Genscher (FDP), however, was perceived in Israel as one of the greatest advocates of Israeli interests in the German government (Weingardt, 2002).

Public opinion

Although the German public was one of the more moderate in Europe, the 1982 Lebanon War changed previously philo-Zionist attitudes (Greilshammer, 1988). This was reflected in the press coverage of the war, exemplified by several articles from *Die Zeit*. One author titled his comment “Blind Vengeance” and characterized the Israeli invasion as exhibiting “brutal ruthlessness” that targeted “guerillas” as well as civilians (Die Zeit, Strothmann, 06/11/1982). Another spoke of a “crusade of extermination” (*Vernichtungsfeldzug*) that “with imperial arrogance” turned Lebanon into a “blood-soaked battleground” and classified the Palestinians as “the Jews of the Arab world,” who are no more terrorists than Jewish resistance fighters had been in the 1940s (Die Zeit, 07/17/1982). Yet another concluded:

⁵⁶ “Vielleicht bietet die gegenwaertige Auseinandersetzung eine Moeglichkeit fuer einen Neuanfang mit einem weiteren Nachbarn.”

Such a war can never achieve peace. Even if Begin gives it the tag ‘self-defense’ – it does not serve any purpose other than liquidation. Revenge has always been a bad counselor. Have the Jews forgotten their own, terrible past?⁵⁷

Even more moderate commentators suggested that the war was not one of necessity and constituted just another episode in undermining Palestinian self-determination, thus diminishing the chances for peace (Die Zeit, 06/18/1982). Further, the idea that the Palestinians were the indirect victims of the Holocaust, suffering the consequences of the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine, started resonating with the public (Die Zeit, 07/02/1982).

Two processes within parts of German society changed the perception of Israel. First, the younger generation started rejecting the notions of collective guilt and shame and hence of the special commitment to Israel, embracing a less inhibited approach to German-Israeli relations (Jaeger, 1994; Dr. Mertes⁵⁸). Second, the 1982 Lebanon war, which was not seen as a war of self-defense or of necessity for Israel’s survival, was instrumentalized to demonstrate that Israel was not the eternal innocent victim but was supposedly capable of the same atrocities that the Nazis had been – that the victims had become perpetrators. Comparisons with the Third Reich abounded, especially in the case of the Sabra and Shatila massacres. In some interpretations this strategy was employed to negate German guilt (Neustadt, 1989; Jaeger, 1994), which was observed by politicians as well. In his capacity as SPD chairman, Brandt cautioned his “fellow compatriots” in a November 9, 1982 *Bundestag* debate that “we

⁵⁷ “Frieden kann solcher Krieg nie schaffen. Auch wenn Begin ihm das Schild ‘Selbstverteidigung’ umhängt - er bezweckt doch nichts anderes als Liquidierung. Rache war noch immer ein schlechter Ratgeber. Haben die Juden ihre eigene, schreckliche Geschichte vergessen?” (Die Zeit, 06/11/1982)

⁵⁸ In a speech before the VI. German-Israeli Conference, Dr. Mertes mentioned this phenomenon. He emphasized also that Germany has to voluntarily accept a sense of commitment to Israel and that this cannot be externally enforced by Israel. Full text in Bulletin, November 11, 1982, pp.993-996

do not escape the responsibility for Auschwitz by pointing to Beirut”⁵⁹ and suggested that balancing the victims of the Nazis against the victims of the war in the Middle East will not rid Germany of its responsibility.

Jaeger also points to a third factor in the change in German public attitudes: the consolidation of a *Friedensverstaendnis*, the rejection of war as a political means (Jaeger, 1994). Bergmann and Erb similarly attribute the high degree of empathy with the Palestinians among young people to the existence of a pacifist orientation and a commitment to values such as human rights and international law. For the first time, the public showed greater empathy and support for the Palestinians than for the Israelis (about 25 vs. 20 percent) in 1982 (Bergmann & Erb, 1991, p. 182).

Summary

What had clearly emerged after the 1970s was an understanding that a Europe speaking with one voice would be the only way the EC could have an impact in the Middle East. The FRG embedded its foreign policy in the European framework as much as possible and focused on impacting EC policies rather than acting through bilateral channels. Nevertheless, finding a common position remained a major challenge, and the divisions between different EC states (ten at the time) caused weak and ineffectual compromises. Still more difficult than agreeing on a common position was agreeing on a course of action. Greilshammer (1988) concludes, *inter alia*:

The Europeans should refrain from making numerous 'solemn declarations' and proposing ready-made solutions, and should rather employ discrete diplomatic methods, in order to suggest to the parties a wide range of alternatives to put an end to the crisis. ... The Europeans must understand that their intervention in an international crisis can never be effective if they are not ready to

⁵⁹ “Wir entgehen der Verantwortung fuer Auschwitz nicht dadurch, dass wir auf Beirut zeigen”, excerpt printed in D-B, 18.10, 1982, pp.8-9

commit themselves, if not militarily, at least on an economic level. This implies, on the one hand, a promise of massive economic and military aid to the parties who *accept* the demands of the Europeans and, on the other, a real threat of *serious* sanctions against a party who refuses. (p. 301, emphasis in original)

The most important impression to take away from this case may be that a European identity became ingrained in the FRG's foreign political culture and received the highest priority at the expense of an effective Middle East policy. European integration certainly had material advantages for Germany, but in light of the difficulty of developing a coherent and substantive EC Middle East policy, the FRG might have achieved more on the bilateral level in the Middle East, considering its standing with Israel, the Arab states, the Palestinians and, of course, the U.S.

Unlike in 1971, the FRG continued to express its commitment and adherence to the Venice Declaration, in particular on the issue of Palestinian self-determination, and there was no backpadding and there were no qualifications of principles in light of Israeli protests. In highlighting Germany's continued responsibility for Israel and repeating the understanding that peace in the Middle East is impossible without taking the needs and rights of both sides into account, Genscher merely tried to show that the support for Palestinian rights did not constitute an anti-Israel policy. This determined consistency was not, however, backed up by "discrete diplomatic methods" or any substantial involvement in the conflict.

Germany and the EC were certainly absorbed by other international crises as well as transatlantic tensions and operated within a framework of constrained foreign policy independence, all of which prevented a more proactive engagement. European acceptance of the status quo, as far as European influence in the Middle East was concerned, was probably also a consequence of normalized political and economic relations with Arab states and the limi-

tations of European power, especially compared to the U.S. Nevertheless, taking into account the proximity of the Middle East and the proclaimed German and European interest in regional peace, the almost exclusively rhetorical involvement is puzzling. Defensive realism explains German and EC policy in the 1982 Lebanon War only insofar as the chosen policies produced no political and economic losses in the relations with the Arab world or with Israel.

In addition to the commitment to a common EC position, the philo-Zionist norm was the most important determinant of German foreign policy. In a review of his position as German ambassador in Israel from 1981 to 1985, Niels Hansen reports that the past was omnipresent and impacted German foreign policy and the German-Israeli dialogue significantly on a daily basis (Hansen, 2005). A commitment to Israel, derived from the past, remained evident especially in German reticence – at the governmental level as well as in *Bundestag* debates. The FRG also continued to pursue a pro-Israeli policy in the EC and, to a lesser extent, at the UN.

This commitment to Israel was increasingly challenged by other norms and interests. On the German (Dr. Mertes⁶⁰, Boelling⁶¹) and on the Israeli (Ambassador in Bonn, Ben Arie⁶²) side the connection between the demand for Palestinian self-determination and German self-determination was accentuated. A plausible interpretation is that the German interest in unification and in full self-determination developed over time into a universal norm whose application to other peoples could not be denied. The clash of the norm of philo-Zionism and the commitment to national self-determination had transpired in the mid-1970s,

⁶⁰ Expressed in a declaration on behalf of the CDU/CSU Bundestag parliamentary group in July 1982 (full text printed in D-B, 18.7/8, 1982, pp. 12-3) and in a speech in the capacity of Undersecretary of State on November 11, 1982 (full text printed in Bulletin, November 11, 1982, pp.993-6)

⁶¹ Undersecretary of State Boelling in a press conference on September 23, 1982 (full text printed in D-B, 18.10, 1982, p.4)

⁶² In an interview with Rolf Vogel in July 1982 (full text in D-B, 18.7/8, 1982, p. 10)

when the FRG first started evoking the Palestinian right to self-determination and was chastised for it by Israel. A commitment to international law and peaceful conflict resolution had also solidified, both in the political elite and among the population.

One must caution against too readily embracing a constructivist reading of the case, however. The support for Palestinian self-determination could also have been a self-interested, strategic move aimed at dispelling suspicions that the German leadership employs double standards, which would reflect positively upon the FRG. In a more instrumental interpretation still, the extension of the norm of self-determination to the Palestinians constituted the basis for demanding the same sort of acknowledgment of self-determination for the divided German people from states that granted it to the Palestinians. Furthermore, German reticence was not necessarily a consequence of a sense of responsibility for Israel in its own right but may also be interpreted as an attempt to prevent a further deterioration of German-Israeli relations, which could eventually have repercussions on levels of bilateral relations other than the political as well. In these cases, a liberal reading of German foreign policy would be more convincing. Finally, the commitment to the renunciation of force cannot be regarded simply as a norm but was sparked also by the fear of a war in Europe, which would be most detrimental for the FRG.⁶³ Both liberal and realpolitical elements impacted German foreign policy, although the divergence between German and UK and especially French attitudes lends support to the constructivist interpretation.

⁶³ This perspective was shared particularly by CDU/CSU politicians, who remained more critical of the Soviet Union and its policies than the SPD and FDP, while the FDP was most fearful of a spillover effect of conflict in the Middle East (Bundestag, 105th Session, 1982; Bundestag, 108th Session, 1982).

Case 3: The First Intifada (1987-1989[1991])

The First Intifada, the Palestinian uprising against the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, was a response to the detrimental political and economic effects the occupation had on the Palestinian population as well as on the exercise of their human rights. Frustration that attempts to obtain a sovereign Palestinian state had failed sparked mass mobilization and streamlined Palestinian nationalism (Hottinger, 1988; Hottinger, 1989; Stein, 1991; Dowty, 2008). The *intifada* brought Palestinian national consciousness to unprecedented heights and produced “a deeper and prolonged Palestinian national coherence” than the uprisings of 1936-9 had done (Stein, 1991, p. 3). Following a trend that had emerged after 1967, this phenomenon was reinforced by a sense of disillusionment with neighboring Arab states, whose support for the Palestinian cause was perceived to be predominantly “rhetorical and self-serving” (Stein, 1991, p. 7). The new Palestinian nationalism had its base in the occupied territories rather than in the Palestinian refugee communities dispersed in the Arab world, and its leaders were more prone to make territorial concessions to Israel in exchange for statehood (Hottinger, 1988; Hottinger, 1989; Dowty, 2008). At the same time, widespread despair and disillusionment galvanized an Islamic religious as well as a militant element in the resistance (Stein, 1991; Dowty, 2008).

The *intifada* was initiated by the Palestinian groups *Hamas* and *Islamic Jihad* (Weingardt, 2002). It was only two to three months into the uprising that the PLO managed to obtain a measure of control (Stein, 1991) and gradually became the driving force behind it (Weingardt, 2002). Acts of civil disobedience and political violence dominated (Stein, 1991), while terrorism was also pursued by various Palestinian factions (Hottinger, 1988; Weingardt, 2002). For the international community, the face of the *intifada* were stone-

throwing children and youth, who faced heavily armed Israeli troops (Die Zeit, 1988; Stein, 1991; Jaeger, 1994; Weingardt, 2002). This had a great propaganda value for the Palestinians (Jaeger, 1994), and the PLO could strengthen its international profile, including in the West, until it supported Saddam Hussein in the Kuwait crisis in 1990 (Weingardt, 2002). When in 1988 Jordan relinquished its claims to the West Bank, Yasser Arafat proclaimed a Palestinian state consisting of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. He further renounced terrorism and explicitly recognized the state of Israel (Hottinger, 1989; Weingardt, 2002). This shift in PLO attitudes brought about the first series of official talks between the U.S. and the PLO, which were opposed and criticized by Israel (Hottinger, 1989; Weingardt, 2002; Dowty, 2008).

The reported number of casualties varies greatly from source to source: by November 1989, for example, the PLO reported 1003 Palestinian casualties, while the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) counted 525 Palestinian and 19 Israeli casualties. Similarly, different authors provide different statistics (Weingardt, 2002). Little doubt exists that the Israeli government encouraged a brutal approach to stone-throwing Palestinians. The IDF drew international criticism for its brutal and repressive dealings with the rebelling Palestinians (Hottinger, 1988; Jaeger, 1994; Weingardt, 2002). The Israeli army foraged also into southern Lebanon, where it targeted the *Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine* in air-bombings (Die Zeit, 01/08/1988).

German and EC Foreign Policy

The analysis of this case is confined to 1987-1989, i.e. to the pre-unification period. Although spanning the fall of the Berlin Wall and German unification, the First Intifada does not lend itself to identifying change and continuity pre- and post-unification. The FRG was so absorbed with domestic issues and with ensuring as smooth a process of national unifica-

tion as possible that its late 1990/early 1991 foreign policy profile could hardly be representative of post-unification foreign policy. If unification produced a foreign policy change, it will not have shown in the early 1990s.

German and EC foreign policy towards the *intifada* must be considered in the international political context. At the time the Palestinian uprising gained momentum, an end to the Cold War was imminent, brought about by Soviet détente policy (Weingardt, 2002). This development further decreased concerns about Soviet penetration in the Middle East, which had already played a minor role in 1982, thus diminishing the strategic interests of the EC and its member states in the region. The FRG, caught up in a power struggle with the GDR throughout the Cold War period, was especially impacted by this change.

Another factor was European integration, which was rapidly progressing and absorbed much political, economic and diplomatic energy. In a press conference in February 1988, Chancellor Helmut Kohl emphasized the “existential significance” that European integration had for the FRG and that this integration should not just be of an economic but also of a social and political nature. The eventual aim should be a Europe “that can make its voice heard, speak with one voice, that can live up to its responsibility in the world, can do its bit to tackle problems on the old continent and outside in the world.”⁶⁴ In January 1989, Kohl highlighted the priority of establishing the European single market and furthering cooperation on the issue of a monetary union. He also announced that the EC was determined to exert its

⁶⁴ “das seine Stimme erheben kann, mit einer Stimme spricht, das seiner Verantwortung in der Welt gerecht wird, seinen Beitrag leistet zur Bewältigung der Probleme im alten Kontinent und draussen in der Welt”, full text printed in D-B, 24.3, 1988, pp.9-10

“political weight” in the peace negotiations in the Middle East, “still one of the most dangerous conflict zones on the planet”⁶⁵, but did not discuss specific initiatives.

As had been the case in 1982, the German and European response to the First Intifada was characterized above all by reticence and was largely limited to rhetoric: declarations, resolutions and demarches were the tools of choice. The FRG ambassador to Israel expressed, on behalf of the twelve⁶⁶ EC states, “concern” at Israel’s decision to “pursue a policy of deportations in the occupied territories”⁶⁷ in a January 1988 demarche. The EC states called on Israel to end this practice, while pointing out that the 1949 Geneva Convention on the protection of civilians in times of war applied to the occupied territories. Another demarche criticizing deportations was undertaken in August 1988.⁶⁸ The U.S. administration as well, departing from its traditional pro-Israeli stance, classified the deportations as a violation of international law (*Die Zeit*, 01/08/1988) and reacted with outrage to Israel’s disproportionate use of force (*Die Zeit*, 01/15/1988). The U.S. government’s 1988 report on human rights abuses dedicated twelve pages to Israeli violations of human rights in the occupied territories (*Die Zeit*, 02/17/1989)

In a February 8, 1988 statement, the EC described the status quo in the occupied territories as “untenable” and “deeply deplore[d]”⁶⁹ the continuing construction of illegal Israeli settlements as well as Israel’s repressive behavior in dealing with Palestinian protestors. The member states reasserted their commitment to the 1980 Venice Declaration, expressed support for the idea of an international peace conference under the auspices of the UN and

⁶⁵ “noch immer einer der gefaehrlichsten Konfliktherde dieser Erde”, full text printed in D-B 25.2, 1989, pp.2-4

⁶⁶ Belgium, Denmark, FRG, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, UK

⁶⁷ “in den besetzten Gebieten eine Ausweisungspolitik zu verfolgen”, full text in Europa-Archiv 6, 1988, D 184

⁶⁸ Full German text in Europa-Archiv 1, 1989, D 10; D-B 24.3, 1998, pp. 8-9

⁶⁹ “unhaltbar”; “bedauern zutiefst”, full text in Europa-Archiv 6, 1988, D 187-8

pledged to continue the EC development program in the occupied territories and increase humanitarian aid. An April 1988 statement again only “deplored” the increases in the number of casualties caused by continued use of violence in the territories, further deportations of Palestinians, and Israeli repressive measures violating international law, including the demolition of Palestinian homes. Israel was called on to consider “the impacts of such measures on the deteriorating situation in the occupied territories as well as on the search for a sustainable peace achieved through negotiation.”⁷⁰

Clear condemnations of Israeli actions, even if they were in violation of international law, were absent from all statements, which used largely cautious language. The EC and its member states exercised restraint: although support for the peace process was repeatedly reiterated, it was not backed up by deeds. One exception was that the European Parliament, despite Genscher’s opposition, put already agreed-upon trade agreements on hold.⁷¹ Both the inward focus of the EC and the realization that the U.S. was the only external actor powerful enough to impact developments in the Middle East deterred a more proactive European involvement (Weingardt, 2002). Further, Israel made it quite plain that, after the 1980 Venice Declaration, it would not accept the EC as a mediator in the conflict (Jaeger, 1994; Haas, 2005). The consensus at the German embassy in Israel in the second half of the 1980s was that a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was out of reach (Haas, 2005).

While many EC states called off or postponed planned official visits to Israel to protest the Israeli response to the *intifada*, German visits continued unabated: for example, President of the German *Bundestag* Jenninger was the only foreign parliamentary president to

⁷⁰ “die Auswirkungen solcher Massnahmen auf die sich verschlechternde Lage in den besetzten Gebieten sowie auf die Suche nach einem dauerhaften und auf dem Verhandlungswege erreichten Frieden”, full text printed in *Europa-Archiv* 16, 1988, D 458-9

⁷¹ As asserted by Genscher in the *Bundestag* on March 11, 1988 (Bundestag, 69th Session, 1989)

attend the celebrations commemorating Israel's 40th anniversary in 1988, while a unit from the German *Bundeswehr* visited Israel for the first time that same year (Bar-On, 2008). Demands by the SPD and the Green Party, now represented in the *Bundestag*, to seek dialog and establish relations with the PLO were rejected by the government (Bundestag, 83rd Session, 1988, p. 5657C; Bar-On, 2008).

The Proclamation of the Palestinian State and the PNC Political Statement

On November 15, 1988, following Jordan's decision to relinquish its claim to the West Bank, the Palestine National Council (PNC)⁷² issued a Palestinian Declaration of Independence. The declaration referenced UN Security Council resolution 181 from 1947, which partitioned Palestine into a Jewish and a Palestinian state and which had long been rejected by the Palestinians and Arab states, as a document granting the Palestinian right to "sovereignty and national independence" international legitimacy. The newly proclaimed Arab Palestinian state was to be a parliamentary democracy, based on freedom of expression, social justice, equality and the rule of law, and majority-governed while protecting minority rights. It was further proclaimed to be committed to the principal of peaceful coexistence and a "peace-loving state," while the Israeli occupation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip was condemned as "organized terror."⁷³

The PNC's Political Communiqué accompanying the proclamation of the Palestinian state recognized UN Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, thus implicitly recognizing Israel, and called for an international peace conference under the auspices of the UN. Further, the "blessed" or "glorious intifadah" was praised and its fighters encouraged to keep up the resistance, while Israel was condemned as "a fascist, racist, colonialist state built on the

⁷² The PLO's legislative body

⁷³ Full text in Documents and Source Material, *Journal of Palestine Studies* 18.2, 1989, pp.213-6

usurpation of the Palestinian land and the annihilation of the Palestinian people.”⁷⁴ In light of such content and rhetoric it is hardly surprising that Israel rejected the proclamation and the communiqué as “a further maneuver of disinformation with the aim of spreading illusions and misleading the world public”⁷⁵ and insisted that the PLO remained the major obstacle to Middle East peace.

American and European reactions were a lot more positive. Genscher, in an official response to the PNC decisions, called the recognition of resolutions 242 and 338 “an important step” and expressed German support for an international peace conference to be arranged as soon as possible.⁷⁶ Beyond that, the FRG refused, out of consideration and solidarity with Israel and the U.S., to revise its critical stance vis-à-vis the PLO, even though the EC had decided to initiate a political dialogue with the PLO and some of its member states, including France, were upgrading their relations with the PLO (Jaeger, 1997; Bar-On, 2008). Due to the FRG’s pro-Israeli attitude, German defense minister Scholz was received warmly in Jerusalem in the spring of 1989 (Bar-On, 2008). German ambassador to Israel from 1985 to 1990, Wilhelm Haas asserts that this period further consolidated German-Israeli relations and that Germany emerged as Israel’s second-most important partner after the U.S. (Haas, 2005). According to the journalist Inge Deutschkron, the *intifada* improved German-Israeli relations because Israelis realized that, apart from the U.S., they would not encounter a “similarly empathetic understanding” anywhere but in Germany (Haas, 2005, p. 181). *Die Zeit* reported that for many Israelis the Germans had proven to be reliable partners and not seldom even the only true friends. Thus, president of the *Bundestag* Jenninger’s 1988 visit to Jerusalem to at-

⁷⁴ Full text in Documents and Source Material, *Journal of Palestine Studies* 18.2, 1989, pp. 216-23

⁷⁵ “ein weiteres Desinformationsmanöver mit dem Ziel, Illusionen zu verbreiten und die Weltoeffentlichkeit zu täuschen”, full German text of the statement in *Europa-Archiv* 2, 1989, D 56

⁷⁶ Full German text in *Europa-Archiv* 2, 1989, D 55

tend the celebrations marking Israel's 40th anniversary was gladly received in Israel as a sign of German support (Die Zeit, 05/20/1988).

When Arafat also renounced terrorism and explicitly recognized Israel's right to exist in safe and secure borders, the U.S. for the first time entered into direct talks with the PLO. These were broken off in June 1990, when the U.S. found that the PLO had not truly distanced itself from terrorist attacks (Weingardt, 2002). In November 1988, the EC expressed its "satisfaction" at the renunciation of terrorism and at the recognition of Israel's right to exist by the PNC, once more expressed itself "deeply concerned" at the further deterioration of the situation in the occupied territories and called on all parties to end violence and other actions that may further escalate the situation.⁷⁷ That this communiqué did not have a more pro-Palestinian character, as desired by the French, Italian and Greek foreign ministers, and was restrained in its deprecation of Israel's negative response to the PNC's political communiqué was a result of German influence (Jaeger, 1997). It was also owing to Germany's skepticism of the PLO and its solidarity with Israel that the EC never commented on the declaration of Palestinian statehood and that a meeting with Arafat never took place (Weingardt, 2002). The FRG voted in favor of the UN allowing Arafat to address the UN General Assembly in Geneva in November 1988, however; only the U.S. and Israel were opposed (Jaeger, 1997).

Only about a year after the proclamation did the FRG initiate official talks with the PLO and receive political advisor to Arafat Bassam Abu Sharif in Bonn. According to Weingardt, the FRG did so gladly because of its continued interest in close economic relations with the Arab world; it wanted to send a "positive signal" (Weingardt, 2002, p. 340). Never-

⁷⁷ "Befriedigung"; "aeusserst besorgt", full German text of the statement in Europa-Archiv 1, 1989, D 14-5

theless, the FRG refused to establish political relations with the PLO, unlike other EC states (including France and the UK) had done (Jaeger, 1997), and insisted that Germany's Middle East policy would be informed first and foremost by German history (Bar-On, 2008). France, on the other hand, had officially received Arafat "with all protocolary honors" (Dr. Osswald, SPD, Bundestag, 171st Session, 1989, p. 12831B).

Increasingly, the FRG found itself in the dilemma of balancing its European identity with its historic commitment to Israel (Bar-On, 2008), which was also reflected in debates in the *Bundestag* (Bundestag, 171st Session, 1989). The FRG was the last EC member state to cling to its distinctly pro-Israeli stance but in June 1990 supported an EC condemnation of Israel's policies vis-à-vis the Palestinians which used "unusually critical words" (Bar-On, 2008, p. 123) and was unable to annul EC sanctions against Israel, decided in early 1990 (Bar-On, 2008). Whether the German change of direction was a genuine commitment to the European consensus or whether it was the byproduct of a focus on domestic issues following the fall of the Berlin Wall is hard to determine. When the PLO expressed support for Iraq in the Kuwait crisis in 1990, the EC states followed the U.S. example and distanced themselves once again from the organization (Bar-On, 2008).

Foreign aid to the Palestinians in the occupied territories amounted to 28 million DM between 1967 and 1988, with payments amounting to 10 million DM in 1987 and to 11 million DM in 1988, while 1.2 million DM were contributed in humanitarian aid. In addition, the FRG paid 9.92 million DM to UNRWA directly in 1988 and contributed about 27 percent of the EC's \$40 million aid, although these payments benefited also Lebanon, Jordan and Syria, which hosted Palestinian refugees. The FRG further contributed to the EC Commission's aid program, which provided 2.97 million ECU in 1988 to support small scale agricultural

and industrial programs, education and local governance initiatives (Deutscher Bundestag, Drucksache 11/4870, 1989). It is hard to reject contentions that compared to the FRG's continued annual payments to Israel in the amount of 150 million DM, the financial aid to the Palestinians looked like charity (Dr. Osswald, SPD) or like a symbolic gesture (Beer, Greens, Bundestag, 171st Session, 1989).

Party Positions

A March 11, 1988 *Bundestag* (69th Session) debate provides a surprisingly balanced assessment of the First Intifada, which can under the circumstances even be described as distinctly pro-Israeli. The position towards the Middle East in all parties remained grounded in the principles articulated in previous years: Israel's right to exist in secure borders, the Palestinian right to self-determination, and the renunciation of force. Beyond this, the overall empathetic and determinedly Israel-friendly tone of the debate reflects neither the severe criticism issued by the EC nor the restrained-perturbed tenor of official government statements.

Every single speaker evoked the notion of a German responsibility for the state of Israel and peace in the Middle East, derived from the Holocaust.⁷⁸ Gansel (SPD) went as far as asserting that a debate in the German *Bundestag* about the situation in the Middle East "is invariably also a debate about ourselves"⁷⁹, while Bulmahn (SPD) stated similarly that it is also "a debate about our past, about our heavy heritage, about our self-conception and about our future."⁸⁰ In the 171st session on October 26, 1989, Dr. Osswald (SPD) classified Germany's reticence vis-à-vis the Middle East and especially vis-à-vis Israel, practiced by governments across all parties, as "part of our coming to terms with the past" (p. 12831A).

⁷⁸ Dr. Stercken (CDU/CSU), Gansel (SPD), Dr. Hamm-Bruecher (FDP), Genscher (FDP), Renger (SPD), Geiger (CDU/CSU), Schily (Green Party), Bulmahn (SPD)

⁷⁹ "ist unverneidlich auch eine Aussprache ueber uns selber" (p. 4669D)

⁸⁰ "eine Debatte ueber unsere Vergangenheit, ueber unsere schwere Erbschaft, ueber unser Selbstverstaendnis und ueber unsere Zukunft" (p. 4682A)

How emotional an issue was debated became evident during Schily's (Green Party) speech, when he remained silent for 40 seconds after insisting that nothing can undo German guilt and then had to end his speech prematurely (Jaeger, 1994).⁸¹ A prominent theme, evoked by members of CDU/CSU, SPD and FDP, was the concept of Israel as the home for Holocaust survivors, who had endured persecution and had escaped the industrialized murder of six million Jews in Europe⁸², only to find themselves face to face with Arab states desiring the eradication of the newly founded Jewish state. Speakers from CDU/CSU, SPD and FDP highlighted their understanding for Israel's perception of insecurity and its heightened need for security, reinforced by Arab hostility, which had led to several interstate wars and had been officially proclaimed by Arab leaders on various occasions.⁸³ Opinions on this situation as of 1988 differed, however. While Dr. Stercken (CDU/CSU) and Gansel (SPD)⁸⁴ considered threats to Israel's survival a phenomenon of the past, Dr. Hamm-Bruecher (FDP) and Renger (SPD) pointed to continued terrorism and hostile statements by Palestinian and Arab leaders. Likewise, assessments on the nature of the *intifada* diverged between those who considered it a popular uprising that employed non-military means (Gansel, SPD; Genscher, FDP) and those identifying a violent element of terrorism at its core (Dr. Hamm-Bruecher, FDP; Renger, SPD; Bulmahn, SPD).

Strong criticism of Israeli actions – most prominently the violent IDF response to stone-throwing Palestinian youth, but also of deportations (Genscher, FDP) and of Israeli set-

⁸¹ Schily had vehemently rejected comparisons of Israel with Nazi Germany and criticized some Germans' assertions that after Israeli wrongdoing in the Middle East, Germans and Jews were even. After saying "But the blood cannot be washed off" he fell silent and had to resume his speech at a later point.

⁸² This position was presented by Dr. Stercken, CDU/CSU, Gansel, SPD, Genscher (FDP) and Renger (SPD).

⁸³ See Dr. Stercken (CDU/CSU), Dr. Hamm-Bruechen (FDP), Genscher (FDP), Renger (SPD) and Bulmahn (SPD)

⁸⁴ Gansel stated: "Israel's security is not threatened by burning car tires, by strikes or even by stone-throwing Palestinian youth"; "durch brennende Autoreifen, durch Streiks und selbst durch Steinwuerfe palaestinischeser Jugendlicher wird die Sicherheit Israels nicht gefaehrdet" (p. 4671)

tlement construction (Renger, SPD) – was voiced unanimously. It was, however, mentioned jointly with criticism of Palestinian violence across the board, with references to protests within Israeli society and to the Israeli peace movement (Genscher, FDP; Renger, SPD; Geiger, CDU/CSU; Schily, Green Party), and with the contention that Israeli soldiers were not trained to deal with popular uprisings but that human rights violations were punished (Renger, SPD; Geiger, CDU/CSU). Overall, blame was placed on Israel and the Palestinians equally, while an understanding for Israeli security concerns resonated with all speakers. Representatives of FDP (Genscher), SPD (Renger) and the Green Party (Schily) called for an international peace conference under the auspices of the UN and involving all parties to the conflict, including the PLO.

Despite minor deviations, the debate was marked by great inter-party agreement, reflected also in the unusually high rate of universal or near-universal applause during the speeches. Judging by the rhetoric employed, the primary reason for the FRG's involvement in the Middle East should be of a moral or humanitarian kind. The weight of the past was undoubtedly great and appears to have entrenched a norm of philo-Zionism across all speakers. Genscher (FDP) and Renger (SPD) did evoke security interests, though as little more than side notes, and Geiger (CDU/CSU) described the Middle East as a “politically, strategically and economically very important region” (p. 4680A). Only Genscher (FDP) mentioned the traditional friendship with the Arab world. Then-German ambassador to Israel, Wilhelm Haas, reports that the March 11, 1988 *Bundestag* debate was received very positively in Israel because it expressed understanding for Israel's situation despite the criticism (Haas, 2005). Nevertheless, positions and statements beyond this March 1988 debate indicate a more diverse set of perspectives.

A debate on October 26, 1989 (171st Session) on the political, economic and security political situation in the Mediterranean region exhibited more realpolitical thinking. Kittelmann (CDU/CSU) spoke of European interests in the Mediterranean as including free navigation rights; political, social, foreign- and security-political stability in the region; the guarantee of energy supplies via the Mediterranean Sea; and maintaining access to European export markets. Dr. Feldmann (FDP) highlighted the importance of peace and stability in the Mediterranean region by pointing to the European dependency on oil, which had transpired in the oil crisis of the 1970s. Antretter (SPD) pointed to both a security-political and an economic interest in the Mediterranean region, suggesting that its states were as important a market for the EC member states as were the U.S. and Canada. The notion of Germany having indirectly become a Mediterranean state was also evoked (Dr. Feldmann, FDP; Dr. Adam-Schwaetzer, Under-Secretary of State). Dr. Osswald (SPD), while acknowledging German responsibility for Israel, also posited that Germany should feel solidarity with the Palestinians, as with “other suppressed peoples” (p. 12831B) and criticized Israel, which was increasingly moving towards “injustice” (p. 12831C).

Beer (Green Party) criticized the German government for supporting Palestinian self-determination but not statehood and for not addressing “the monstrous human rights violations of the Israeli occupying power.”⁸⁵ The Green Party parliamentary group further submitted a motion to the *Bundestag* requesting that it recognize the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, that it assume talks with the PLO in Tunis, that it officially receive Yasser Arafat in Bonn, that it award the PLO mission the status of an embassy, and that it support the convention of an international peace conference (Deutscher

⁸⁵ “die ungeheuren Menschenrechtsverletzungen der israelischen Besatzungsmacht” (12835C)

Bundestag, Drucksache 11/5452, 1989). Further, the Green Party had caused a major *éclat* when some of its members had held talks with representatives of two of the PLO's military factions in Syria in 1984 and "openly put their anti-Zionist disposition on display."⁸⁶

Clearly, the tenor of *Bundestag* debates varied with the target group – those with a heartfelt interest in Israeli-Palestinian peace and/or German-Jewish reconciliation used different rhetoric than those politicians concerned with trade and economic relations and of a realpolitical orientation. The Greens as a party were most clearly critical of Israel and pro-Palestinian, while among the other three parties the attitudes appeared rather balanced or possibly of "benevolent neutrality," to borrow a term evoked in 1967. The two most vocal critics of Israel in the FRG government were members of the FDP: education minister Moellemann and Under-Secretary of State in the Foreign Office Schaefer, whose comments and statements drew criticism from other members of the government (Bar-On, 2008). It must be borne in mind that all parties harbored (more) pro-Israeli as well as (more) pro-Palestinian politicians.⁸⁷ Other authors have found the SPD to be less inhibited because of its opposition role, allowing it to call for an upgrading of relations with the PLO and receiving PLO-representative Abdallah Frangi while the government still rejected talks with the PLO (Jaeger, 1994; Jaeger, 1997).

Public Opinion

The public response to the *intifada* was largely a continuation of 1982. Criticism of Israeli actions and the violent response of Israeli soldiers to the rebelling Palestinians was widespread, which again transpires in a review of a small selection of newspaper articles

⁸⁶ "ihre antizionistische Gesinnung unverblümt zur Schau trugen" (Hansen, 2005, p. 161)

⁸⁷ Renger (SPD) and Schily (Green Party) were known to be particularly Israel-friendly (Bar-On, 2008). Another example was Dr. Hamm-Bruecher (FDP), who not only gave a very pro-Israeli speech in the 1988 Bundestag debate but who left the FDP in 2002 after Moellemann caused a scandal by distributing anti-Israeli pamphlets and after she found that the FDP was not doing enough to distance itself from him (Tagesschau.de, 2002).

from *Die Zeit*. One author asserted that Israel was employing disproportionate force in a war against women and children and suggested that the young generation of Israelis grew up with “a feeling of security that they were living in a Greater Israel from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River”⁸⁸ (*Die Zeit*, 01/15/1988). Another author predicted that Israel might turn into “the South Africa of the Middle East,” employing a similar practice of apartheid and possibly with the aim of “liberating” the occupied territories from Arabs (*Die Zeit*, 12/25/1987). Even more objective and sober coverage (*Die Zeit*, 01/08/1988) lacked the sense of understanding exhibited by at least a considerable portion of the political elite.

Public opinion data paints an ambivalent picture: In December 1987, 75 percent of Germans supported closer relations with Israel (compared to 81 percent before the start of the intifada in November 1987) and 63 percent in February 1989. These numbers increased again in July 1989, while at the same time 63 percent of Germans said they disliked Israelis (Jaeger, 1994, p. 184).

Amnon Neustadt suggested in a 1989 article that, while both the German and the Israeli national characters were grounded in the Shoah, they had produced different narratives. Germans drew from the Holocaust the conclusion that patriotism and nationalism were to be rejected while they embraced anti-militarism. Israelis, on the other hand, having survived the Holocaust and being forced to continue fighting hostile Arab states, had embraced nationalism and militarism. Coupled with vast differences in their security concerns, these divergences caused little understanding for Israel among the German population. Further, some Germans instrumentalized Israeli violence to negate German guilt and to speed up a process of historical revisionism (Neustadt, 1989). Comparisons of Israel with Nazi Germa-

⁸⁸ “in dem sicheren Gefühl, in einem Groß-Israel vom Mittelmeer bis zum Jordan zu leben”

ny, lamented a German Jewish author, were prominent in the media and among the public (Die Zeit, 03/18/1988). Discussions about “the historical-moral aspects of the German-Jewish past” did not occur on the same scale as during the 1982 Lebanon war, however (Jaeger, 1994, p. 184).

Summary

As had been the case in the 1982 Lebanon war, German and EC policy were restrained and largely limited to rhetoric, except for the EC trade agreement with Israel that was put on hold in 1988 and the sanctions that were imposed by the EC in 1990. These decisions were marginal, however, and certainly had no impact on Israeli policies. The FRG continued to act as an advocate for Israel within the institutions of the EC, softening its positions and preventing e.g. an EC response to the PNC’s declaration of Palestinian statehood. Other than that, however, the FRG too maintained a low profile.

The Soviet policy of détente had removed Soviet penetration of the Middle East as a concern for the EC and for Germany and had also ended the power struggle between the FRG and the GDR in the Arab world. Compared to 1982, German and EC strategic interests in the Middle East had therefore declined; at the same time these new developments had opened the door for a less inhibited and a more independent EC Middle East policy. This opportunity was not, however, seized. Instead, the EC focused primarily on itself in this period of global change.

The March 11, 1988 *Bundestag* debate on the situation in the Middle East indicates the existence of a philo-Zionist norm at the elite level and a sense of responsibility and understanding for Israel that was unparalleled in the world except in the U.S. By contrast, the October 26, 1989 debate on the Mediterranean region shows that other factors were at work

as well. A realpolitical element, embodied in the view of the Mediterranean as a region of utmost economic, strategic and security-political significance, must be acknowledged to have impacted German foreign policy making in the Middle East as well. Neither the German government nor the *Bundestag* is a homogeneous entity: some politicians are more inclined to act on moral impulses and others are guided by more narrowly defined (i.e. economic and security) national interests.

Most likely, German foreign policy during the *intifada* was impacted by a combination of national interests and the philo-Zionist norm – a strictly realist explanation, in any case, would not account for the pro-Israeli position that the FRG continued to exhibit in the EC. Dependency on Arab oil in particular, brought up in the 1989 *Bundestag* debate, would have prescribed an alignment with the other EC member states. While without access to internal Foreign Office documents it is impossible to trace the process of foreign policy decision making during the First Intifada, only the existence of a philo-Zionist norm seems able to account for the FRG's foreign policy. This is especially so as the eventual initiation of talks with the PLO was expected to improve Germany's economic ties with the Arab world. Yet, the FRG remained far behind other EC member states, especially France, as far as the depth of relations with the PLO was concerned and refused to officially recognize the PLO until Israel did. A liberal interpretation would not account for the German "delinquent" status in the EC either, considering that the government saw great value in progressing European integration and in the development of a common foreign policy.

The impact of the EC on German foreign policy appears to have been limited, despite the increasing dilemma of reconciling the European identity with the German responsibility for Israel. Rather, the FRG exercised its influence within the EC on behalf of Israel – some-

times successfully and sometimes less so. The impact of the U.S. on Germany's Middle East policy is hard to determine. Although the FRG did not assume official talks with the PLO until the U.S. had done so (and long after most European states had taken this step), it is unclear whether this had a direct or an indirect impact on German foreign policy. In other words, without reviewing classified Foreign Office documents one cannot determine whether U.S. pressures or encouragements impacted the German decision to relax its position vis-à-vis the PLO or whether the FRG waited for Israel's most important ally to make this move first and then followed suit. The latter possibility would support a rational-liberal interpretation of the case, while a constructivist reading is supported by the advocacy on behalf of Israel that the FRG carried out in the EC. Although the FRG and German politicians responded positively to the U.S.-PLO dialogue, the FRG itself was still reluctant to take a more proactive role vis-à-vis the PLO (Jaeger, 1997), which suggests a considerable impact of the philo-Zionist norm. Jaeger too attributes the FRG's aberrant position to its special obligation to Israel but suggests that the eventual, limited upgrading of relations with the PLO was a response to EC and U.S. pressures (Jaeger, 1997).

Anti-militarism, already brought up in 1982, had consolidated into a German public norm. This norm, coupled with a high degree of scrutiny when it came to the state of Israel, sparked widespread criticism in the media and the population. Frustration with the collective guilt narrative and the desire to unload some of the German burden by pointing to Israeli wrongdoing appear to have played into the public reaction as well. Nevertheless, Israel came to consider Germany as one of its best friends in the world. The opposition parties, SPD and the Greens, criticized the government's uncompromising stance vis-à-vis the PLO and favored official diplomatic relations long before the government decided to take such steps.

Pre-Unification Foreign Policy: A Summary

The lukewarm support for German-Jewish and German-Israeli reconciliation from the 1950s had developed by the late 1980s into a norm of philo-Zionism. Already the 1967 War was an opportunity the FRG used to express its solidarity with Israel and to practice “benevolent neutrality.” While criticism of Israeli policies and actions became more vocal during the 1982 Lebanon War and the First Intifada, the German position nevertheless exhibited a high sensitivity to Israeli security concerns and Israeli interests that was not shared in other European states. Not only did all governments and many politicians repeatedly evoke the notion of a historical responsibility for Israel; they also advocated on behalf of Israel in the EC, while officially proclaiming a policy of evenhandedness. Differences between the governing and opposition parties, who tended to represent a more pro-Palestinian orientation (except for the CDU/CSU in 1982), need to be noted in this context. Electoral concerns, the opposition role and the ability to embrace a less inhibited stance than the government are all contributing factors.

The existence of a philo-Zionist and of other norms does not in and of itself confirm constructivist theories. The fact that on several occasions the FRG gave in to Israeli pressures indicates that a logic of consequences was also at play because no German government wanted and could afford to permanently damage its relations with Israel. That opposition parties tended to be less inhibited in their criticism of Israel also suggests a combination of the two logics. The philo-Zionist norm clashed with economic and security interests, sometimes trumping them and sometimes being trumped. Security interests had an important impact on German Middle East policy. Superpower struggles and the Cold War scenario were the major foreign policy determinants in the 1967 War – the pro-Israeli stance articulated in internal

Foreign Office documents indicates that the FRG would have pursued a different course had it not been restricted by Cold War constellations.

By 1982 and more so by the late 1980s, an east-west rapprochement and détente policies had reduced the Cold War factor considerably. This had little impact on EC Middle East policy, however. The EC and its member states pursued a restrained, predominantly rhetorical and incoherent foreign policy in the region. With the Cold War diminishing as a constraint, the diversity of European positions and opinions emerged as a complicating factor. The FRG increasingly found itself trying to balance its moral obligation towards Israel and its own national interest with its European identity and the interests of other EC member states. Moreover, the FRG found itself at the center of clashes between the EC and the U.S. – particularly in the 1970s and early 1980s – which it tried to mediate.

At the same time, the gap between the political elite and the population, which had come to embrace a norm of anti-militarism, widened. Bergmann and Erb further find that although a generally Israeli-friendly attitude that acknowledges the concept of moral responsibility prevailed through 1987, the German public favored a foreign policy style that prioritized national, material interests (Bergmann & Erb, 1991).

Post-Unification German Foreign Policy

Post-unification German Middle East policy has been characterized by greater openness. Previously secret arms shipments to Israel have increasingly been carried out in the open, while opponents of this policy – both within in Germany and Europe – have been confronted (Voigt, 2009). While German foreign policy itself has been marked by continuity, a major change is the new public assertiveness of German support for Israel as well as the possibility for greater domestic dialogue and debate. The following discussion will show that although support for Israel and its security remained a fundamental tenet of German Middle East policy through 2009, opposition to this policy increased and was voiced in clearer language than before while at the same time the FRG embraced a more evenhanded approach. It supported, for the first time, a resolution that condemned Israeli actions (the construction of illegal Israeli settlement) in 1997, although only after the text of the resolution had been softened and a condemnation of Hamas terrorism had been included (Pallade, 2004).

The 1993 Oslo Accords marked a sea change in Israeli-PLO relations and in the dynamics of the peace process. Not only did the two-state solution consolidate into the single viable option recognized by regional actors as well as by the international community and was reiterated in subsequent agreements and initiatives, such as the Wye River Memorandum, the Arab Peace Initiative and the Middle East Quartet's Roadmap for Peace. Israel's official recognition of the PLO also led Germany to recognize the organization and to upgrade its relations with it. The accords thus gave the start signal for greater German involvement in the Middle East peace process and heralded the era of German and EU involvement in institution building and economic development in the PA. The 1999 Berlin Declaration for

the first time expressed the EU's readiness to recognize "a democratic, viable and peaceful sovereign Palestinian state on the basis of existing agreements" (Perthes, 2002, p. App. I).

Case 4: German foreign policy of the Red-Green Coalition (2000-2005)

The Second Intifada

The Second Intifada broke out in the aftermath of the failed Camp David talks, convened by U.S. President Bill Clinton in July 2000 with the aim of arriving at a final status agreement, as anticipated in the Oslo Accords. In the aftermath of the failed talks, Hamas threatened with a new, and more lethal, *intifada* (Spiegel Online, 07/12/00; Spiegel Online, 07/25/00). Likud leader Ariel Sharon's visit to the Temple Mount, accompanied by 1,500 Israeli police, is commonly considered to have triggered the Second Intifada, although opinions diverge on whether he or Palestinian groups are to blame for the renewed violence. The international Mitchell Report, led by former U.S. Senator George Mitchell, put blame both on the Palestinians for starting the violence and on Israel for the pursuit of its settlement policies (Die Welt, 05/05/01). As in the First Intifada, the violence escalated and the Israeli military was criticized for its excessive use of force, while terrorist attacks were a part of the Palestinian strategy.

When Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder visited the Middle East in October 2000, shortly after the outbreak of the *intifada*, he did not want to get involved or take sides in the conflict. The media cited both the "shadow of the past" (Spiegel Wissen, 10/23/00; Die Zeit, 24/2001) and the more pragmatic desire not to get involved in such an intractable conflict (Spiegel Online, 08/22/01; Die Zeit, 24/2001) as reasons for the German restraint. First and foremost, Germany did not want to assume a position in which it would have to criticize Israel for its dealings with the Palestinians (Spiegel Wissen, 10/23/00). Similarly, it did not support condemnations of Israel at the UN Human Rights Commission, in the UN General Assembly

(Spiegel Wissen, 10/23/00) or in the EU (Die Welt, 11/10/00)⁸⁹. Subsequently, Germany voted against two resolutions critical of Israel in the Human Rights Commission in 2002 and 2003, finding them unbalanced because they included no reference to Palestinian terrorism, while supporting four other UN resolutions critical of Israeli settlement activities, the plan to build a security fence and imminent changes in the legal character of the Golan Heights (Pallade, 2004). While it appears that a taboo had been broken in that Germany now supported motions criticizing Israel, it only did so when the text was considered balanced, i.e. when it included simultaneous criticism of Palestinian misconduct. The FRG refused to support motions containing terminology such as “Israeli aggression,” “crimes against humanity” or “war crimes” (Pallade, 2004, p. 285).

Tentative Mediation: The Fischer Factor

When during foreign minister Joschka Fischer’s visit to Israel 21 people died in a terrorist attack in a Tel Aviv club on June 1, 2001, Fischer extended his stay and immediately started mediating between Yassir Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon (Die Welt, 06/03/01), knowing that the German delegation would most likely be the last to meet with Arafat before Israel’s looming counterstrike (Fischer, 2007). Fischer’s shuttle diplomacy has been credited with preventing an Israeli counterstrike (Spiegel Online, 08/22/01; Die Zeit, 24/2001) and with moving Arafat to renounce violence in Arabic in front of the press and to order an end to attacks on Israeli targets in front of his own Fatah organization (Spiegel Wissen, 11/02/01; Die Zeit, 24/01; Forward, 03/25/05; Pallade, 2004). Specifically, he pushed Arafat to renounce all acts of terrorism and violence and to express a commitment to an immediate and unconditional ceasefire as well as to effective security cooperation with Israel

⁸⁹ Germany, the UK, Italy and the Netherlands abstained from the European vote, as did Norway.

(Fischer, 2007). Fischer had been able to help establish a “fragile ceasefire” (Spiegel Wissen, 11/02/01) not least because he enjoyed the respect of the Israelis and the Palestinians (Spiegel Online, 08/03/01; Spiegel Online, 08/22/01), both of whom considered him one of their “greatest friends in Europe” (Forward, 03/25/05). He had also, however, threatened Arafat that a failure to condemn terrorism would produce “disastrous consequences” for European-Palestinian relations (Pallade, 2004, p. 300). A leading German diplomat attributes Fischer’s successful shuttle diplomacy also to the European presence on the ground, i.e. to police and security mission, and to the trust it generated (German Diplomat 3, 2009).

While Fischer and Schroeder rejected a German mediator role, at least in the form of a more prolonged and involved foreign policy (Spiegel Wissen, 10/23/00; Spiegel Online, 08/22/01), the overall tenor in the German media was supportive of such a role in light of the good relations that Germany entertained with both the Israelis and the Palestinians (Die Welt, 10/13/00; Die Welt, 11/10/00). German politicians from SPD (Christoph Moosbauer), CDU (Hermann Groehe) and the Green Party (Christian Sterzing) all favored greater German involvement and more diplomatic initiatives in the conflict and criticized Fischer’s restraint (Spiegel Online, 08/22/01). This cross-party support for greater German engagement attests to the emergence of a post-unification consensus that Germany should more actively and deliberately employ its influence in the world as well as to the recognition that Germany’s good relations with Israel and the Palestinians were an important asset.

Israeli views on a greater German involvement diverged: Speaker of the Israeli Embassy in Berlin, Yuval Fuchs, expressed skepticism of a German mediator role (Spiegel Online, 08/22/01), while Ron Pundak, advisor to Shimon Peres, expressed support for a more involved EU with Germany at the helm (Spiegel Online, 08/03/01). The Palestinian position

was in favor of greater EU engagement (Die Welt, 2002). At the same time, the realization spread that as the U.S. withdrew from the peace process during George W. Bush's first term the EU had to step up to the plate (Die Welt, 08/21/01; Die Zeit, 51/2004).

Fischer was very sympathetic to Israel's security concerns. Thus he acknowledged Israel's right to build a security fence to protect its citizens but voiced strong criticism of its construction beyond the Green Line (Die Welt, 12/08/03). He also argued that military superiority in the Middle East was a necessity for the Jewish state (Die Zeit, 05/11/05), for which he drew criticism from Palestinian Delegate General to Germany Abdallah Frangi (Die Zeit, 22/2005).

German Involvement and the Roadmap for Peace

Joschka Fischer's "Seven Point Plan" for a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from April 15, 2002, presented to the EU foreign ministers, reflects two different processes in Germany. On the one hand, the crafting of the plan showed the FRG's commitment to finding a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In that respect, it attests to Germany's increasing assertiveness and involvement in the Middle East. On the other hand, the document was a blueprint for a truly international action in the conflict, involving UN, EU, the U.S. and Russia – which reflects both a commitment to multilateralism and the realization, shared globally (Die Welt, 08/21/01; Die Welt, 12/10/01), that only a concerted international effort could advance the peace process.

Fischer's plan⁹⁰ outlined seven steps towards peace: (1) Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza, "including the dismantling of settlements"⁹¹; (2) the proclamation of a

⁹⁰ Full English text in Perthes, Germany and the Middle East: Interests and Options, 2002, p.220-1

⁹¹ As with UN resolution 242, the formulation chosen by Fischer is vague: it is unclear what "dismantling of settlements" refers to. Considering that settlements were to be an issue included in the final status negotiations he most likely did not intend for this formulation to mean "withdrawal from all settlements." One may speculate

democratic and demilitarized State of Palestine with provisional borders, with Jerusalem as the capital of both Israel and Palestine; (3) mutual recognition and renunciation of violence, conclusion of final status negotiations to be concluded within two years, (4) international guarantees, under U.S. leadership, and including the EU, Russia and the UN, (5) final status negotiations on border issues, settlements, Jerusalem and the holy sites, refugees, and military, water and transit security that would also include Syria and Lebanon; (6) international conference on security and cooperation in the region; (7) endorsement of this roadmap by the UN. With this plan Fischer is generally credited for giving the initial impetus for the Middle East Roadmap for Peace (Perthes, 2005; Asseburg, 2009; Berger D. , 2009).

The Roadmap⁹², introduced to Israeli and Palestinian leaders by the Quartet, is a performance-based three-phase timetable to solve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict within a five-year framework. Phase one envisions the immediate and unconditional cessation of Palestinian violence, a resumption of Israeli-Palestinian security cooperation, the drafting of a Palestinian constitution and the holding of elections, an Israeli withdrawal from areas re-occupied after the start of the *intifada*, and a freeze on all settlement activity. In phase two (transition phase), a Palestinian state with provisional borders should be created and bolstered by the international community; an international conference convened by the Quartet should also include Syria and Lebanon. Phase three would produce final status negotiations on borders, Jerusalem, refugees and settlements and would end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Fischer's notion of a joint U.S.-EU-UN-Russian supervision of the Middle East peace process makes the Roadmap and the Quartet "in a sense the German Foreign Ministry's fos-

that Fischer wanted to be cautious and leave the discussion of what settlements Israel should withdraw from up for further debate in the EU and then at the UN.

⁹² Full text online: BBC News (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/2989783.stm>)

ter children” (Perthes, 2005, p. 2). The Quartet was described by a leading German diplomat as the product of lessons learned from the Camp David Accords, which had been negotiated by the U.S. alone and lacked European and Arab support. While Germany attempted to convince the Arabs to accept the accords, Arafat considered them too vague and feared that the Arab states would stab him in the back if he signed on. The Roadmap was an attempt to avoid the repetition of such mistakes in a new peace initiative (German Diplomat 3, 2009). Rather than clamoring a German leadership role, however, Fischer gladly let the U.S. administration present both initiatives as American inventions (Perthes, 2005). Germany had the Roadmap introduced to the Quartet by the Danes and wanted the U.S. to present it as an American plan. Unlike the Camp David Accords it was moreover flanked by Arab support: although the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative was perceived as one-sided, Arab states were included in the peace process this time around (German Diplomat 3, 2009).

While German political involvement had increased considerably, the notions of multilateralism and German/European complementarity to U.S. leadership were upheld. Despite Fischer’s obvious passion for the peace process he accepted a German role behind the scenes – reinforced both by a realistic evaluation of German/EU diplomatic limitations and by the constraints of German history (Fischer, 2007). A truly regional approach also became the vehicle of choice. Subsequently, Fischer insisted that the U.S. could not bring peace to the Middle East on its own and that a European commitment was essential (Deutsche-Aussenpolitik.de, 06/21/03).

Stagnation in the Middle East and strains in the transatlantic relationship and in EU-Israeli relations soon inhibited progress on the Roadmap, however. The *intifada* continued unabated even after Israel and the Palestinians had committed themselves to the Roadmap.

Israel's assassination of Hamas founder and alleged mastermind behind countless terrorist attacks Sheikh Yassin in March 2003, which drew heavy EU, French and British criticism and a more restrained German announcement of dismay (*Die Welt*, 03/23/04), was only one indication that a solution to the Middle East peace remained as far away as ever. Additionally, the world was divided over the U.S. decision to invade Iraq in March 2003. Germany (as well as most of Europe) was at odds not only with the U.S. but also with Israel, which supported the U.S. invasion. German opposition to the war therefore compromised Fischer's mediator status in the Middle East (*Die Welt*, Schuster, 04/09/03), although Germany's reputation had improved in the Arab world (*Die Zeit*, 09/22/05).

Not wanting to accept a failure of the Roadmap, Fischer and the Red-Green government upheld the illusion of transatlantic cooperation on the issue of Middle East peace and were reluctant to voice criticism of the Bush administration's unilateral initiative, knowing that U.S. leadership was unavoidable.⁹³ President Bush implicitly supported Ariel Sharon's plan to unilaterally disengage from the Gaza Strip while annexing settlements in the West Bank (*Die Welt*, 04/17/04; *Die Welt*, 04/19/04; *Die Zeit*, 04/22/04). Time and again Fischer and Schroeder referenced the Roadmap, denied allegations that it had failed and called on the parties to the conflict to adhere to its stipulations while emphasizing the need for U.S. leadership and an important role for Europe in the peace process (*Deutsche-Aussenpolitik.de*, 06/21/03; *Die Welt*, 06/23/03; *Die Welt*, 06/24/03; *Die Welt*, 02/17/04; *Die Welt*, 04/17/04). This behavior was mirrored in the EU (*Die Welt*, 04/17/04), which was aware that the death

⁹³ By contrast, leading politicians in SPD and the Green Party were outspoken against Bush's one-sided and unconditional support for Ariel Sharon and of his tendency to ignore all EU efforts in the peace process (*Deutsche-Aussenpolitik.de*, 06/28/02).

of the Roadmap would heavily undermine a European role in the conflict (Die Welt, 04/19/04), once again illustrating European weakness and inefficiency in the political realm.

It did not help that Israeli skepticism of the EU had reached unprecedented heights, not least because a lawsuit against Ariel Sharon for crimes against humanity was underway in Belgium (Deutsche-Aussenpolitik.de, 04/08/03).⁹⁴ Sharon's plan to remove all settlements from the Gaza Strip was welcomed in Germany, but both Schroeder and Fischer repeatedly emphasized the need for the disengagement to be carried out in accordance with the Roadmap and in coordination with the Palestinians (Die Welt, 02/17/04; Die Welt, 04/18/04; Deutsche-Aussenpolitik.de, 05/17/04; Bulletin, 03/01/05). By contrast, Israeli ambassador to Germany, Shimon Stein, announced in an interview that Israel would adhere to the Roadmap only as long as it was in Israel's national interest and that a unilateral course would be pursued if found more promising (Die Zeit, 12/19/03). Unlike the Palestinians, argued an article in *Die Zeit*, the Israelis did not need the Roadmap (Die Zeit, 51/2004).

An interesting development was Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder's proclamation that, while history-derived sensibilities determine what Germany can and cannot do, a UN military mission might be necessary to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and that a German participation could not be ruled out on principle (Deutsche-Aussenpolitik.de, 04/17/02; Bundestag, 233rd Session, 2002). He specifically cautioned against recreating old taboos, suggesting that military means are sometimes necessary to achieve peace (Bundestag, 233rd Session, 2002). This marks a stark departure from the pre-unification doctrines of anti-

⁹⁴ Significantly, Shalom stated that the EU "has an important role to play in the peace process. It can take on the task of causing a balance in international forums once again. It could free the UN of anti-Israeli committees and resolutions" (Die Welt, 07/13/2003). One and a half years later he said once the EU has developed a more balanced approach it could participate in the peace process – especially by providing financial assistance (Die Welt, 12/07/04). It could not have been plainer that Israel's appreciation for the EU was at a deep low.

militarism and restraint in the Middle East. By contrast, CDU/CSU candidate for chancellor Edmund Stoiber opposed the deployment of German troops to Israel, invoking German history and special relations with Israel (Pallade, 2004; Bundestag, 233rd Session). Considering that the Grand Coalition government sent German troops to Lebanon within the UNIFIL framework in 2006, one may speculate that Stoiber's position was at least in part an attempt to appeal to the public's opposition to the deployment of *Bundeswehr* troops abroad. Fischer too, referencing the burden of history, rejected the idea of deploying German troops in the Middle East (Die Welt, 06/23/03).

Arms Shipments, "Embargos" and Sanctions

The imposition of a "silent arms embargo," in the form of a halt on arms exports to Israel in the absence of an official declaration, was reported by the media in April 2002. Included in the export hiatus were sniper rifles, parts of electronic systems and components for the battle tank MERKAVA IV. While a temporary solution in which the tank components were manufactured in a U.S. plant affiliated with the German producer was found, the problem was eventually solved diplomatically and arms shipments resumed. Defense Minister Scharping later stated that Germany had wanted to send a signal, responding to the "over-reactions" of the IDF but that "in principle one has to help a friend in the case of tensions, even if the world around us regards this as an aggravation of the conflict" (Pallade, 2004, p. 189). The silent embargo was therefore an opportune way to express disapproval of Israeli policies while not deviating from German policy towards the Jewish state. An actual embargo would also have damaged relations with Israel, on whose technology Germany was more dependent than vice versa, and hurt Germany's reputation as a supplier of defense technolo-

gy. The decision to resume arms exports was thus not solely motivated by a commitment to Israel. Both France and Britain placed similar embargos on Israel (Pallade, 2004).

While Germany delivered PATRIOT batteries capable of destroying SCUD missiles to Israel in light of the 2003 Iraq War (Pallade, 2004) and had supplied three Dolphin submarines, only one of which Israel paid for, in 1999 and 2000 (Sterzing & Boehme, 2002), it denied an Israeli request for FUCHS APC transport tanks made in 2002. Several politicians voiced concern about a possible delivery of the tanks to Israel because they were deemed offensive weapons that might be used against the Palestinians. While the SPD and the Greens tended to be opposed to the delivery, the CDU/CSU and FDP opposition was more supportive (Pallade, 2004). In an interview with *Der Spiegel* Israeli President Moshe Katsav stated that he could not guarantee that the tanks would not be used in the occupied territories (Spiegel Wissen, 12/09/02). The request was eventually denied on a technicality: Germany's FUCHS tanks were in use in Afghanistan and elsewhere, and the *Bundeswehr* could not spare them (Pallade, 2004).

As in previous decades, the FRG blocked attempts by the European Commission, the French foreign minister and Sweden to impose economic sanctions on Israel and was the major opposition force to the suspension of the EU-Israeli Association Agreement, favored by Commissioner on Foreign Affairs Chris Patten, in reaction to Israel's harsh military response to the *intifada*. Fischer argued that imposing sanctions on Israel would undermine the EU's credibility as a partner in the peace process. Together with the UK and Italy, Germany also foiled an attempt by the European Parliament to impose an arms embargo. The government's stance that it would not support sanctions against Israel if the peace process stalled was shared also by the leadership of the major opposition party CDU/CSU (Pallade, 2004).

State-Building in the Palestinian Authority

The Oslo Accords stipulated a significant financial and economic role for the EU in the build-up of the Palestinian Authority. EU financial contributions, totaling 179 million € annually from 1998 to 2004, were earmarked for infrastructure and institution building and for strengthening the private sector, including the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation, the police and the legislative council. By 2004, the EU was the most important non-military aid donor in the peace process (Schaefer, 2004). When in 2000 Israel started withholding all transfer payments to the PA in response to the Second Intifada because it accused Arafat of fueling Palestinian violence, the EU took over the payments of 10 million € per month (Die Zeit, 24/2002; Die Welt, 06/08/2002; Asseburg, 2003).

Within the EU context as well as bilaterally Germany stepped up its support for the PA. Annual payments of 40 to 50 million € throughout the Red-Green Coalition years helped with the building of infrastructure and schools, with bolstering the Palestinian economy, public administration and civil society as well as with guaranteeing the water supply (Die Zeit, 2002; Spiegel Online, 04/17/2002; Bulletin, 03/01/2005). The provision of Palestinian stamps and passports became an integral part of German support for the PA early on (Generaldelegation Palaestinas, Deutsch-Palaestinensische Beziehungen). The BND further assisted with the training of Palestinian security forces, while Germany's financial commitment and cooperation was welcomed and encouraged by Israel (Pallade, 2004). Following the outbreak of the Second Intifada, Germany shifted its support from long-term infrastructure building to humanitarian and development aid. While ranking seventh among donor countries to the PA by December 2003 (Generaldelegation Palaestinas, Deutsche Entwicklungszusammenarbeit), Germany had become the largest bilateral donor by June 2005, with PA

state-building one of Germany's foreign policy priorities (Perthes, 2005). Germany had been one of the first states to institute a permanent mission in the Palestinian territories in 1994 (General Delegation of Palestine in the FRG, 2009).

In January 2002, the EU responded with fierce criticism and a formal protest when Israeli forces destroyed several projects in the Palestinian territories, including Gaza Airport, that had received EU funding. The damage was estimated at 9.3 million €. Further, the EU called on Israel to withdraw its military, to end extrajudicial killings and to stop settlement construction while demanding that Arafat destroy terrorist networks and put an end to the *intifada* (Spiegel Online, 02/28/02). Subsequently, the EU drew heavy criticism when Arafat was accused of financing terrorism against Israeli civilians, and partly with EU funds. Documents obtained by the IDF during a raid of PA headquarters in Ramallah allegedly proving that Arafat funded terrorism were found to be authentic by the German Foreign Office and the BND (Die Welt, 2002; Die Zeit, 24/2002). There was also evidence that Arafat used EU funds to spread anti-Semitism via the TV station PA-TV and via school books and to directly fund terrorist attacks carried out by his security forces. The EU insisted, however, that there was no hard proof that EU funds had been misused (Die Zeit, 24/2002; Die Zeit, 34/2002). Eventually, the EU responded to international and internal criticism by suspending its monthly 10 million € payments in June 2002 (Die Welt, 06/08/2002).

Despite the extensive financial involvement of the EU, its political role remained negligible. Diverging national interests and positions, as well as the EU's military weakness, continued to inhibit a comprehensive common foreign policy, which made the criticism that the EU's Middle East policy was one of declarations "certainly legitimate" (Schaefer, 2004, p. 49). In 2000 the European Council passed a *Common Strategy for the Mediterranean Re-*

gion to reinvigorate the stagnating Barcelona Process. Largely owing to Germany's desire to prevent the Council from passing far-reaching resolutions concerning Israel by majority vote it was decided that the strategy would come into effect only once the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been resolved (Schaefer, 2004). Moreover, Muriel Asseburg criticizes the EU's institution- and state-building efforts as a post-conflict peacebuilding approach that cannot be effective while the conflict is ongoing. Overall, she concludes, EU involvement in the conflict has not had a positive impact; a minor success was a local ceasefire secured between the cities Gilo and Beit Jalla (Asseburg, 2003). Joschka Fischer also referenced this monitoring success of a six party team of secret service agents that included also one German (Bundestag, 233rd Session, 2002).

Party positions

An April 25, 2002 *Bundestag* debate (233rd Session) on the situation in the Middle East shows a cross-party consensus on the central points concerning the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: the establishment of a democratic Palestinian state, which necessitates the removal of Israeli settlements; an end to terrorist attacks on Israeli targets and the renunciation of force on both sides; adherence to UN resolutions; a political, negotiated solution to the conflict; and international security guarantees by the Quartet under U.S. leadership.⁹⁵ Members of SPD (Schroeder, Weisskirchen, Moosbauer, Klose), the Green Party (Fischer, Mueller), CDU/CSU (Stoiber, Lamers) and FDP (Gerhardt) highlighted the special relationship between Germany and Israel grounded in history and Germany's consequent responsibility towards Israel. The PDS, predecessor of the Left, while emphasizing that Israel's right to exist must not be denied, was the only party not evoking the special relationship and German re-

⁹⁵ See Schroeder (SPD); Stoiber (CDU/CSU), Fischer (Green Party); Gerhardt (FDP); Moosbauer (SPD); Kerstin Mueller (Green Party); Gehrcke (PDS); Hans-Ulrich Klose (SPD)

sponsibility. While presenting itself overall in a surprisingly balanced manner for a left-wing party, it was also the most vocal in its criticism. Roland Claus classified Israeli violence against Palestinians as “terrorism” (23129D) and “state-sanctioned force against human beings” (23130A) and asserted that achieving peace was in the hands of the Israelis.

The overall tone of the debate can be described as very balanced, with all speakers expressing understanding for both sides but also criticizing the use of violence on both sides without condemning either party. As in the case of the First Intifada this can, in light of overall European attitudes and the state of public opinion, be equated with a pro-Israeli bias. In fact, Stoiber (CDU/CSU), Gert Weisskirchen (SPD) and Dr. Friedbert Pflueger (CDU/CSU) were more sympathetic in their understanding for Israel’s security fears and needs and accordingly more critical of the Palestinians, in particular of Palestinian terrorism. Weisskirchen even expressed understanding for Sharon’s unilateral course of action in light of internal pressures and pointed to Israel’s right to defend itself, although in accordance with international law. On the other hand, Karl Lamers (CDU/CSU) showed great understanding for Palestinian feelings of frustration and humiliation, while insisting that neither justifies terrorism, and criticized Israel’s disproportionate response to the *intifada*. The goal of Israeli military actions, he stated, was to destroy PA institutions to prevent the creation of a Palestinian state. Christoph Moosbauer (SPD) too expressed his incomprehension at the destruction of PA institutions, olive trees and infrastructure. Lamers (CDU/CSU) and Gehrcke (PDS) once more brought up the notion of German responsibility for the Palestinians, who had suffered under the creation of the state of Israel.

The understanding that criticism of Israel must be possible in a democratic society and must not automatically be equated with anti-Semitism was also voiced (Schroeder, SPD;

Gerhardt, FDP; Moosbauer, SPD; Klose, SPD), while always mentioned in connection with the special relationship. Kerstin Mueller (Green Party) suggested that any criticism of Israel has to be measured by Germany's special responsibility for Israel.

Several politicians rejected the idea of imposing sanctions or an embargo on Israel bilaterally or through the EU – because of Germany's historic responsibility (Schroeder, SPD), because of shared democratic values (Schroeder, SPD) or because sanctions were deemed ineffective and would only undermine the EU's negotiating potential (Fischer, Green Party; Weisskirchen, SPD; Mueller, Green Party; Klose, SPD).⁹⁶ Chancellor Schroeder stated: "I want to say quite unequivocally: Israel gets what it needs for the maintenance of its security, and it gets it when it is needed."⁹⁷

International terrorism, still on everyone's minds after the September 11, 2001 attacks on the U.S., was – besides the German responsibility for Israel and the Middle East – the most-cited reason why Germany should be committed to the peace process: Schroeder (SPD), Stoiber (CDU/CSU), Fischer (Green Party) and Gerhardt (FDP) asserted that a continuation of the conflict would pose a security threat also to Europe and Germany. Chancellor Schroeder also invoked the notion that as the only democratic state in the Middle East Israel was an important partner for Germany, although the classification of Israel as a functioning democracy was contested by Roland Claus (PDS). Schroeder also mentioned German economic and political interests at stake in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, without elaborating. Despite their call for an international military involvement in the conflict, Edmund Stoiber

⁹⁶ Stoiber (CDU/CSU) also opposed sanctions against Israel but did not elaborate on the reasons.

⁹⁷ "Ich will ganz unmissverstaendlich sagen: Israel bekommt das, was fuer die Aufrechterhaltung seiner Sicherheit braucht, und es bekommt es dann, wenn es gebraucht wird." (23115A)

(CDU/CSU) and the PDS (Claus, Gerhcke) spoke out against the deployment of German soldiers in the Middle East.

Significantly, universal norms associated with the civilian power status were brought up by only two speakers. Gehrcke (PDS) demanded that Germany be consistent in its commitment to human rights and criticize Israeli violations as well as those of other states. Dagmar Schmidt (SPD) pointed to three goals of German policy – strengthening civil society, advancing processes of democratization and safeguarding human rights – and suggested that against this backdrop Germany should remain committed to the building of democratic Palestinian institutions.

Two external factors must be taken into account in assessing this *Bundestag* debate. First, it occurred in the middle of an election campaign. In light of public skepticism of Israel the generally pro-Israeli tenor as well as the high degree of cross-party consensus in the middle of a campaign suggest the existence of a philo-Zionist norm. The PDS alone used language inconsistent with this norm when its representatives spoke of “Israeli terrorism.”

Second, the *Bundestag* debate took place at a time when criticism of Israel was voiced more clearly by German politicians than it had been before. Norbert Blum (CDU) had accused Israel of fighting an “unrestrained war of annihilation” (Pallade, 2004, p. 318), while segments in all parties distanced themselves from the Sharon government (supported by 80 percent of the Israeli population) and aligned themselves with the Israeli peace movement, which was a minority in Israel (Pallade, 2004). The loudest and most controversial critic was FDP politician Juergen Moelleman, who previous to the *Bundestag* debate had spoken of “Israeli state terrorism” and had expressed understanding for Palestinian suicide bombers by stating that if Germany were under occupation, he would respond with violence

too – violence not only in his own country but also in that of the aggressor (TAZ, 04/04/2002). Subsequently, he suggested that Sharon and Vice Chairman of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, Michel Friedman, contributed to an increase in anti-Semitism in Germany. While at first the FDP leadership defended Moellemann, they distanced themselves from him when he distributed anti-Israel flyers to all households in North Rhine-Westphalia without the party's consent (Pallade, 2004). The FDP drew criticism also for accepting Jamal Karsli into their party in North Rhine-Westphalia. Karsli had been forced to leave the Green Party after he had accused the Israeli army of employing “Nazi methods” against the Palestinians and claiming that Germans feared an international Zionist lobby (Spiegel Online, 05/16/2002).

While a rise in criticism of Israel could be perceived in Germany in the early 2000s it was counteracted by protests and proclamations of solidarity with Israel from politicians from various parties. The April 2002 *Bundestag* debate was not least a response to the escalating criticism of Israel. Responsibility for Israel as part of Germany's *raison d'état* was repeatedly evoked as well (Pallade, 2004). In response to the Moellemann scandal Joschka Fischer proclaimed:

No line can be drawn under Germany's historical and moral responsibility for the destruction of European Jewry. It forms the basis of Germany's special obligation to uphold the right of existence and security for Israel and its citizens. This responsibility is not a matter of current political constellations, but a permanent principle of German policy ... Criticism [of Israel] is possible only on the firm foundation of indelible solidarity (Fischer, 2002).

Although German foreign policy in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict had become more active, involved and evenhanded, the commitment to Israeli security remained one of the pillars of German foreign policy and of elite level political culture.

Public opinion

Overall, German public opinion during the Second Intifada lay in the European mainstream, occasionally more supportive of Israel, occasionally less so. A March 2001 survey by the *Institut fuer Demoskopie Allensbach* found that 15 percent of Germans favored Israel in the conflict and 14 percent, the Palestinians, although a subsequent survey found that only 2 percent of Germans felt “particular sympathy” for Israel, which suggests that “to a large extent those who favoured Israel in the former poll were rather motivated by a dislike of the Palestinians” (Pallade, 2004, p. 344). The Anti-Defamation League found in a study in May 2002 that 17 percent of Germans supported Israel while 25 percent supported the Palestinians. 36 percent said they supported neither, 8 percent supported both while 7 were undecided (Anti-Defamation League, 2002, p. 13). In 2003 Germans rated Israel at 43 degree on a 0 to 100 scale (with 50 meaning neutral) and the Palestinians at 40 degrees (Transatlantic Trends 2003, p. 16). By 2004, German support for Israel was still at 17 percent whereas support for the Palestinians had dropped to 21 percent, with 43 percent supporting neither party, 11 percent supporting both and 6 percent undecided (Anti-Defamation League, 2004).

Interestingly, 60 percent of Germans supported sending a peacekeeping force to the Middle East while 37 percent were opposed (Pallade, 2004, p. 345), while almost 40 percent of Germans subscribed to the proposition that “under some conditions, war is necessary to obtain justice” (p. 14). Both of these outcomes call the existence of a popular norm of anti-militarism in doubt. Support for the “special relationship” with Israel was also low: between 46 and a “slight majority” were in favor of terminating the special relationship (Pallade, 2004, p. 348), while 25 percent of Germans found comparisons of Israeli practices with the

Nazis acceptable; 69 percent of respondents chose to “rather not agree” with this statement (Pallade, 2004, p. 346).

Overall, the period from 2000 to 2005 saw a continuation of the trends apparent in the 1980s: the public was largely critical of Israel, questioned the “special relationship” between Germany and Israel while increasingly choosing not to take sides in the conflict, i.e. being equidistant if not necessarily indifferent. The philo-Zionist norm therefore appears to have existed only at the political elite level, although it no longer had the same character there either. Criticism of Israel started to be voiced more openly, sometimes bordering on anti-Semitism, while the majority of politicians continued to acknowledge the special relationship with Israel and a special German responsibility for Israel.

Summary

Under foreign minister Fischer Germany saw an increase in political involvement in the Middle East. Unification, the Oslo Accords and the end of the Cold War certainly were all enabling events in this regard. But one must also take Fischer’s personality into account: He has been described as someone for whom reviving the peace process was a “*Herzensangelegenheit*,” a matter very close to his heart (Berger D. , 2009) and who made the conflict one of his foreign policy priorities soon after taking office (Berger D. , 2009; Voigt, 2009). No German foreign minister before him had been as passionate about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and shown such a high profile in the Middle East (Die Zeit, 51/2004; Voigt, 2009).

To an extent, Germany’s policies have become more evenhanded than they were before unification: the fact that Germany now supported some UN resolutions criticizing Israel indicates that a previous taboo had been broken. The “silent embargo” against Israel must also be taken into account as a sign of increasing German evenhandedness in the conflict. It

has been suggested that a Europeanization of German foreign policy had taken place (Schaefer, 2004). One can certainly detect that as Germany continued to integrate into the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) – established in 1993 – it also adapted its positions to the European mainstream. On the other hand, the Oslo Accords and Germany's subsequent recognition of the PLO, concomitant with a significant economic and financial role in the peace conflict, also impacted the course of German foreign policy.

At the same time, Germany remained the most clearly pro-Israeli pole within the EU as well as one of the more pro-Israeli states at the UN. Germany was the major opponent to the imposition of sanctions against Israel, although apart from a normative argument this opposition also served a more pragmatic purpose. Fischer's insistence that sanctions or a boycott against Israel would undermine the EU's credibility as a mediator in the conflict, shared by several other SPD and Green politicians, is more in line with a rational liberal than with a constructivist reading. Nevertheless, one may ask why only Germany was as adamant on this issue within the EU.

Yves Pallade concludes in his extensive study of German-Israeli relations in the 1990s and beyond that Germany did not have closer political relations with any non-European state besides the U.S. than it did with Israel and that within the EU Germany was willing to prioritize its commitment to Israel and to preventing one-sided criticism of Israel over a common European position "in times of political tension" (Pallade, 2004, p. 365). The FRG remained reticent in its statements while addressing disagreements directly and behind closed doors. Among the political elite, the Shoah remained an important aspect in the formulation of the German commitment to Israeli security, although the gap between political elites and the public was substantial (Pallade, 2004). Rudolf Dressler, German ambassador in

Israel from 2000 to 2005, also points to the continued presence of the past in the German-Israeli relationship and asserts that in light of their common history “normal relations” between the two states are impossible (Dressler, 2005). Similarly, Moshe Katsav said in a speech before the *Bundestag* that while Germany is “a true friend of Israel,” “the Shoah will always constitute the starting and the end point” of the German-Israeli relationship (Die Zeit, 05/31/2005).

A cross-party consensus on special German-Israeli relations and on Germany’s responsibility for the Jewish state remained, despite some outspoken opposition, strong. In Israel the predominant view was that Germany could be trusted and was one of few reliable partners in Europe. This perspective was voiced by Shimon Stein, Israeli ambassador in Germany, former Israeli ambassador to the EU, Ephraim Halvey (Pallade, 2004) and Israeli President Moshe Katsav (Spiegel Wissen, 12/09/02). Stein even suggested that Germany was the only state in the EU that Israelis felt they could rely on (Pallade, 2004). The German position as mediator between Israelis and Palestinians as well as between Israelis and the EU and, to a lesser extent during the Bush years, between the EU and the U.S. must be considered a major asset.

Besides the commitment to Israel, international terrorism was the reason brought up the most by politicians to explain the German interest in resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This concern made it onto the radar screens of all European states following the September 11, 2001 attacks and the subsequent attacks in Madrid and London. Economic interests, on the other hand, appear to not have had a major impact on foreign policy making, although it has been suggested in German diplomatic circles that security, economic and other national interests are increasingly hard to disentangle in today’s era of globalization (German

Diplomat 1, 2009). It appears, however, that in the complex web of national interests the security aspect was predominant in this case.

Surprisingly little support can be identified for the prevalence of norms derived from the civilian power status: only two politicians in the April 2002 *Bundestag* debate explicitly brought up the issue of human rights (one of them a representative of the marginalized PDS) and Germany's role in promoting the values associated with its civilian power status. Of course commitments to human rights, the rule of law and national self-determination are implicit in the kind of solution Germany envisions to the Middle East conflict and in the kind of approach it favors. At the same time, the German response to, and stance on, issues such as settlement construction and the security fence seem to confirm that a commitment to Israel outweighed concerns about human rights, national self-determination and international law. Although Germany was opposed to settlement construction it was unwilling to put pressure on Israel and repeatedly prevented EU sanctions. Moreover, the FRG deviated from the European mainstream in its recognition of Israel's right to build the security fence. The existence of a norm of anti-militarism, proscribing also the deployment of German soldiers abroad, must be seriously questioned based on Schroeder's pronouncements as well as on public opinion data.

Solely a commitment to multilateralism was apparent across the board and repeatedly articulated by Joschka Fischer. Both Germany's past and a realistic assessment of the limitations of German (and EU) power moved Joschka Fischer, for example, to reject a greater mediator role for Germany in the conflict. Coordinator of German-American Cooperation in the Federal Foreign Office, Karsten Voigt, suggests that while Germany was unable to impact the conflict at its core, it tried to decrease the human suffering it caused (Voigt, 2009). A

truly multilateral involvement in the peace process and U.S. leadership, quite at odds with German and EU positions throughout Bush's first term, were desired mostly because of a realistic assessment of the limitations of European power.

Summing up, security concerns and the norm of philo-Zionism appear to have been the major determinants of German foreign policy, while a combination of developments in the Middle East (the Oslo Accords) and in Europe (the Maastricht Treaty that founded the EU in 1993) facilitated a more active and evenhanded approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The basic tenets of German Middle East policy remained unchanged, however: the policy of the Red-Green Coalition continued in the tradition of pre-unification policy (German Diplomat 3, 2009).

Case 5: 2005-2009 (Grand Coalition)

The Grand Coalition period was in the Middle East dominated by the conflict between Israel and Hamas as well as by the intra-Palestinian struggle between Hamas and Fatah. In January 2006, the radical Hamas, which does not recognize Israel and has been responsible for numerous rocket attacks on southern Israeli cities fired from the Gaza Strip, won the majority in the Palestinian parliamentary elections. It obtained 74 of 132 seats; Fatah won 45, and the remaining 13 seats were divided up between smaller alliances, parties and independent politicians (Asseburg, 2006, p. 3).⁹⁸ After a national unity government had been in place for only three months, violence between Hamas and Fatah escalated in June 2007 and Hamas remained in control of the Gaza Strip while the PA governed over the West Bank. This Hamas-Gaza and PA-West Bank split persists to this day and has produced a “West Bank first” approach in the U.S. and the EU, aimed at propping up PA President Mahmoud Abbas and Prime Minister Salam Fayyad in the West Bank while pursuing a strategy of isolating Hamas in the Gaza Strip (Asseburg, 2009, p. 29). On December 27, 2008 Israel responded to renewed rocket fire on Israeli cities by launching a three-week military attack, Operation *Cast Lead*, on the Gaza Strip. Israel faced international criticism for the high number of civilian casualties, while Israel accused Hamas of using civilians as human shields by launching attacks from, and hiding in, civilian facilities, such as hospitals.

The consensus in the scarce evaluative literature of German Middle East policy during the Grand Coalition years suggests continuity vis-à-vis previous administrations. Muriel Asseburg describes German foreign policy towards the Middle East conflict as influenced by three factors: a historically derived commitment to Israel, security interests (protection from

⁹⁸ Third Way: 2; Independent Palestine: 2; The Alternative (left-wing parties): 2; Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine: 3, independents: 4.

terrorism, irregular migration and organized crime), and good relations to resource-rich Arab states and Iran, related to concerns about energy security. Among these three, Israel's security and interests are clearly prioritized by the political elite across all parties represented in the *Bundestag*, and Germany continues to see itself as an advocate of Israel within the EU. Asseburg even suggests that Germany uncritically adopts Israeli security perceptions and conceptions, even if they clash with other declared objectives of German and EU foreign policy, such as a commitment to international law (Asseburg, 2009). Similarly, Isabel Schaefer suggests that the historic dimension of German-Israeli relations continues to restrict the FRG's room to maneuver in the Middle East. The determinants of German foreign policy during the Grand Coalition years were the special relations with and moral obligation towards Israel, multilateralism, and security and energy interests. International terrorism, migration, energy security and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction were issues high on the German agenda in the Middle East. Chancellor Angela Merkel's foreign policy style was marked by "continuity, serenity and modesty," yielding "few fundamental changes and few significant results"⁹⁹ (Schaefer, 2008, p. 3). EU representative to the peace process, Marc Otte, highlights security political interests: Muslim immigrants from the Middle East increasingly expose Europe to the conflict, while Islamist terrorism, previously an Israeli problem, has also reached Europe (Otte, 2008). Foreign Minister Steinmeier evoked a common history of Europe and the Middle East, security interests and special relations with Israel (AA, 01/25/07).

After taking office as Chancellor, Angela Merkel was described as feeling strongly about Germany's friendship with Israel and as firmly rejecting Iran's anti-Israeli rhetoric (Hacke, 2006). Throughout her time in office, she repeatedly emphasized that because of the

⁹⁹ "la continuité, la sérénité et la modestie"; "peu de changements de fond et peu de résultats significatifs"

Shoah Germany's commitment to Israel is part of Germany's *raison d'état*, while also not holding back with criticism of Israeli policies, e.g. its settlement activities. Common values, challenges and interests, Merkel suggested, also play into the friendly relations between the two states (Bundesregierung, 03/18/08). Therefore German-Israeli relations are not only focused on the past but also future-oriented and should deepen further across the cultural, economic and political spheres (Bundesregierung, 04/01/07a). In Israel, Merkel was perceived as being close to Israel and as further intensifying German-Israeli relations (Israeli Diplomat, 2009). In 2008, for example, Germany and Israel agreed on annual consultations at the governmental level (Bundesregierung, 03/18/08). Merkel was also committed to improving relations with the U.S. after the break over the Iraq war (Hacke, 2006).

Steinmeier, while not displaying the same "historic pathos" that Fischer had embodied (Voigt, 2009), had an obvious interest in the Middle East and in the solution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Berger D. , 2009; Voigt, 2009). He pursued Fischer's idea of including Syria and Lebanon in the peace process with greater rigor and embraced a more comprehensive regional approach than his predecessor had done (Berger D. , 2009). Within the EU he intensively advocated and advanced a regional approach to the Middle East conflict starting in the summer of 2008 (German Diplomat 1, 2009). Indicative is his endeavor, preceding that by French President Sarkozy, to end Syria's political isolation. Coordinator of German-American Cooperation in the German Foreign Office, Karsten Voigt, attests both Merkel and Steinmeier "a personal commitment to Israel's security" and "sympathy for

Israel.”¹⁰⁰ Steinmeier had a close relationship of personal trust with Israeli foreign minister Tzipi Livni (Voigt, 2009).

The response to Hamas

The German response to Hamas’s election victory in 2006 and to the Hamas coup in the Gaza Strip in June 2007 was a policy of isolation, in line with the policies of the EU and the Middle East Quartet. No direct talks and cooperation with Hamas would take place unless the party fulfilled three central conditions: recognition of Israel’s right to exist, renunciation of terrorism and violence, and a recognition of all previous agreements relating to the peace process (Beck, Fuertig, & Mattes, 2008; Asseburg, 2009). As Hamas was unwilling to accept these criteria, the international community imposed a boycott: not only did the Quartet¹⁰¹ refuse direct talks and cooperation; Israel also started again to withhold transfers of VAT and customs duties and sealed off the border to the Gaza Strip while the EU suspended its budgetary assistance and the U.S. imposed sanctions (Asseburg, 2009). The necessity for Hamas to accept the Quartet’s three conditions were repeatedly articulated by both Merkel and Steinmeier (AA, 02/05/06; AA, 09/18/06; Bundesregierung, 02/23/07; Bundesregierung, 04/01/07a; AA, 05/14/08), often in connection with Germany’s special responsibility towards Israel. Preceding the Palestinian parliamentary elections Angela Merkel first mentioned these three conditions as the German position, which it would also introduce in the EU (Bundesregierung, 01/29/06). Israel was called on to improve the Palestinians’ freedom of movement so that the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip could improve (AA, 05/22/07).

¹⁰⁰ “ein persönliches Engagement fuer die Sicherheit Israels“; “Sympathie fuer Israel”

¹⁰¹ Disagreements existed within the Quartet as to which strategy might lead Hamas to accept the criteria. While Russia considered direct talks useful, the EU and U.S. rejected such an approach.

In order to alleviate the devastating humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip, where 80 percent of the population was dependent on foreign aid, the EU initiated an international funding mechanism (*Temporary International Mechanism*) that circumvented Hamas while still allowing humanitarian assistance to reach the population (AA, 06/21/09; Steinmeier, 2007). In 2007, the EU contributed more than 300 million € in humanitarian aid – more than in previous years (AA, 05/22/07). While the national unity government was in place in the Palestinian Territories, the EU foreign ministers agreed to talk to, and cooperate with, those ministers that accepted the Quartet’s criteria while maintaining the policy of isolation for all other ministers (Bundesregierung, 04/01/07a; Bundesregierung, 04/01/07b; AA, 05/22/07). As far as the peace process was concerned, the PA (Mahmoud Abbas and Salam Fayyad) remained the partner on the Palestinian side for Israel and the Quartet, including Germany and the EU (AA, 05/22/07). Scholars have criticized this “West Bank first” approach for implicitly supporting the Israeli blockade of the Gaza Strip and for contributing to the deterioration of the humanitarian situation and the escalation of violence (Perthes, 2007; Asseburg, 2009).

EU Presidency

In the first half of 2007, Germany assumed the EU Council presidency and could thus considerably impact the EU’s foreign policy. The revival of the Middle East Quartet and a return to the Roadmap had become central goals of German Middle East policy (AA, 09/18/06; AA, 01/25/07; Bundesregierung, 02/05/07; Bundesregierung, 01/17/09). The involvement of the international community in a multilateral approach – under U.S. leadership, with a significant role for the EU and an inclusion of Arab states – was seen as the best means to advance the peace process (AA, 01/18/08). The endeavor to revitalize the Quartet was successful: high-level and lower level Quartet meetings resumed during the German

presidency and continued beyond (Asseburg, 2008; Schaefer, 2008), and the German government claimed credit for this development, including for re-engaging the U.S. and for engaging Arab states in the peace process (Bundestag, 94th Session, 2007; p. 9621A; AA, 09/24/07).

The revival was only a marginal accomplishment, however, and not a true victory for multilateralism: the U.S. nomination of Tony Blair as the Quartet's official envoy occurred without consulting the EU and the other Quartet partners (Asseburg, 2008; Schaefer, 2008). A mandate narrowly focused on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its inefficiency as a "coordination and co-operation body" rendered the Quartet eventually insignificant (Asseburg, 2008). Steinmeier, aware of the Quartet's limitations, considered it nonetheless the only viable body to address Middle East peace negotiations (AA, 02/23/07). Although the FRG successfully re-engaged the international community, including the Arab states, achieved unified European positions by relegating its own pro-Israeli bias to the background and "contributed to the renewed diplomatic vigour in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process," these efforts were eventually fruitless because "the diplomatic process was not grounded in the realities of the Middle East" (Asseburg, 2008, p. 86): The division into a Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip and a Fatah-controlled West Bank did not equip Abbas and Fayyad with the necessary legitimacy to represent the Palestinian people in the peace process. Germany confidently used its power and influence to achieve what it possibly could – to place the Middle East conflict back on the international agenda – while the situation in the Middle East was simply not conducive to substantial progress and results.

A second effort during the German presidency that also indicates greater self-confidence and a German willingness to be actively involved in the Middle East as well as in

shaping the EU's Middle East policy was the introduction of Steinmeier's *Action Plan for the Middle East*, which led to the adoption of the *EU Action Strategy on the Middle East*. Steinmeier's plan (Steinmeier, 2007) envisioned a significant European role in the U.S.-led peace process following the November 2007 Annapolis Conference. He suggested that the EU could, firstly, be instrumental in engaging international and regional actors to create an atmosphere conducive to negotiations between Palestinian President Abbas and Israeli Prime Minister Olmert and, secondly, step up its state- and institution building efforts in the PA by 1) strengthening the private sector, 2) assisting with the build-up of modern and democratic security forces, 3) providing funds for students and universities to prevent brain drain, and 4) assisting with institutional and state structure reform. The *EU Action Strategy on the Middle East* incorporated and expanded Steinmeier's suggestions. In it, the EU committed to engaging the conflict parties, the U.S., the Quartet and the Arab states in the peace process and to assist with Palestinian state building as well as to provide support for the transition period and for conflict resolution. Specifically, the EU pledged to help build up a modern and democratic police force, assist with institution building and good governance, stimulate the Palestinian private sector, assist with the creation of a customs and trade policy and institutions, and intensify its emergency and humanitarian support for the refugee population and the people in the Palestinian territories. If requested, the EU would also "contribute to a system of security arrangements that would be agreed between the parties in the framework of a permanent settlement" (EU Action Strategy, 2007).

German and EU involvement in the Palestinian Territories

Of course, the EU had been involved in the areas of institution and state building already since the 1993 Oslo Accords, and the major goal as articulated in the Action Strategy

was to intensify and modify existing activities according to the agreement reached between the Israelis and the Palestinians at the Annapolis Conference in November 2007. One area of EU involvement is the *EU Police Mission in the Palestinian Territories* (EUPOL COPPS), which started its work on January 1, 2006 with the aim of allowing the PA to build up an autonomous and self-sufficient police force capable of ensuring public order and law enforcement. EUPOL COPPS provided equipment and training and coordinates and facilitates financial support (EU Police Mission for the Palestinian Territories, 2008). While the U.S. assumed responsibility for the National Security Forces, the EU assisted the civil police and the judiciary (AA, 06/24/08). Another EU mission, the *EU Border Assistance Mission at Rafah Crossing Point* (EUBAM RAFAH), provided a third-party presence at the Rafah border crossing between the Gaza Strip and Egypt with the purpose of building confidence between the Israeli government and the PA. Started on November 24, 2005, the mission was suspended following the Hamas takeover of Gaza in June 2007. Nevertheless, EUBAM maintained its operational capacity so it could redeploy at short notice (EU Border Assistance Mission at Rafah Crossing Point, 2009).

German involvement within the EU context was substantial. Between 2007 and 2009 the German Foreign Office donated over 50 cars and 550 radio sets to the Palestinian police. Germany also supported the construction of 55 police stations in the West Bank, assisted with education and training initiatives (Bundesregierung, 05/28/09) and helped finance, amongst other things, an industrial park in Jenin, which was to create more than ten thousand jobs (AA, 06/24/08). As part of the *Future for Palestine* initiative Germany further funded a number of educational and cultural projects in the Palestinian Territories, such as e.g. the

foundation of an acting school, the rebuilding of a cinema in Jenin and initiatives to foster the political education of teenagers (AA, Projekte der Initiative).

Part of Steinmeier's Action Plan and the EU's Action Strategy was the *Berlin Conference in Support of Palestinian Civil Security and The Rule of Law* on June 24, 2008. Forty states and representatives of international organizations pledged to contribute \$242 million for the creation of a functioning civil police and judicial system. The "implementation package" included training opportunities, provision of equipment and the establishment of institutions. Germany allotted 15 million € and the EU Commission 35 million € (AA, 10/09/09). Already at a donor conference in Paris in December 2007 Germany had earmarked 200 million € for state-building in the Palestinian territories for the 2007-2010 period (AA, 12/17/07). Its humanitarian aid amounted to 5 million € each in 2006 and 2007 (AA, 12/17/07) and to 8 million € in 2008 (AA, 04/24/08). In June 2009 Germany contributed 25 million € "at short notice" to safeguard energy supplies in the Palestinian Territories (Deutsche-Aussenpolitik.de, 07/01/09).

At the Berlin Conference Steinmeier highlighted the importance of creating realities, i.e. state structures and viable institutions, in the Palestinian territories that complement negotiations towards finding a political solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. A political solution to the conflict, he argued, could only be realized when structures are in place that make the implementation of such a solution feasible (AA, 06/24/08). Muriel Asseburg calls the effectiveness of this approach into question: not only did the asymmetric support for the West Bank/PA exacerbate the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip; the EU also had to pump more and more money into Palestinian institution building to prevent a complete collapse of the PA. The catastrophic security situation, the Gaza Strip-West Bank division, the

security barrier in the West Bank and continuing Israeli settlement activity ultimately rendered all EU efforts at institution and state building fruitless (Asseburg, 2009).

Germany's involvement can therefore be described as well-meaning and committed, although it proved – with the possible exception of humanitarian emergency assistance – inconsequential. Of course, there are limits to what Germany, the EU and the international community can achieve as outside actors. In the end, however, the Quartet and EU response to Hamas as well as the continuation of previous state-building efforts are symptomatic of an involvement that does not address the actual fault lines in the conflict. Calls for Palestinian reconciliation were not supplemented by active mediation, which was left to Egypt, while statements and pronouncements demanding concessions from Israel were likewise not backed by tangible action. The policy of isolating Hamas, even if pursued with good reason, doomed all international initiatives at Palestinian state-building and the peace process to failure.

2008-09 Israel-Gaza Conflict

After Israel initiated Operation *Cast Lead* on December 27, 2008 Germany sided with Israel in the conflict. Steinmeier asserted that the German government had no understanding for Hamas's one-sided ending of the ceasefire, which had been in place for six months, and called for an immediate and permanent cessation of rocket fire. At the same time he affirmed Israel's right to defend itself, although he called for adherence to the principle of proportionality (AA, 12/12/08). Similarly, Merkel saw Hamas solely responsible for the escalation, emphasized Israel's right to defend itself and asserted that it was up to Hamas to end the violence. She insisted that cause and effect must not be confused in the conflict (Bundesregierung, 12/29/08; German Diplomat 2, 2009). Subsequently, Steinmeier attempted

to help negotiate a humanitarian ceasefire (Deutsche-Aussenpolitik.de, 12/30/08; AA, 01/15/09) as well as a permanent ceasefire (AA, 01/05/09; AA, 01/09/09; Bundesregierung, 01/12/09). He also offered that a German expert team assist Egypt with developing a strategy to secure its border with the Gaza Strip (AA, 01/11/09; Bundesregierung, 01/12/09). Steinmeier emphasized that the international community could not desert Israel in light of daily rocket fire from the Gaza Strip (AA, 01/12/09; Bundesregierung, 01/12/09), while criticizing Israeli attacks on UN Headquarters in Gaza and the Al-Quds hospital (Bundesregierung, 01/16/09) as “inacceptable” and a “dangerous escalation” of the conflict (AA, 01/15/09). He welcomed both the unilateral Israeli ceasefire, implemented on January 18, 2009 (AA, 01/18/09), and the subsequent ceasefire announced by Hamas, although he insisted that direct talks with Hamas remained out of the question (AA, 01/19/09).

German humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip was continuously increased as the crisis progressed and amounted to 13 million by January 20, 2009 – reaching UNRWA as well as humanitarian non-profit organizations (AA, 01/20/09). At an international donor conference in March 2009, whose convention Steinmeier had vigorously supported, Germany additionally pledged to contribute 150 million € for Gaza reconstruction (AA, 03/02/09).

Once again, Steinmeier was at the forefront of EU action in the Middle East. He developed a five-point plan for the establishment of a permanent ceasefire between Hamas and Israel that was adopted, with minor modifications, by the EU. Components of the plan were humanitarian aid, prevention of arms smuggling, opening of border crossings for the Palestinians, reconstruction, and a resumption of peace negotiations as well as Palestinian reconciliation (AA, 01/20/09; AA, 02/27/09). Overall, however, the European response to the Middle East crisis was inconsistent, with no official EU response to the conflict being issued.

While Germany and the Czech Republic prioritized Israel's right to defend itself, French President Sarkozy and British Prime Minister Brown highlighted Palestinian suffering (Tagesschau, 01/13/09). Former foreign minister Joschka Fischer, while praising Germany's commitment to Israel's security, criticized the European response to the Middle East as "a diplomatic flea circus": the EU did not speak with one voice but was instead represented in the Middle East by a plethora of foreign ministers and competing delegations (Die Zeit, 01/08/09).

The response to the 2008-09 Israel-Gaza conflict illustrates the very rudimentary character of the CFSP and the fact that individual states continue to prefer autonomous foreign policy making to finding a common European position – at least when it comes to quick responses to sudden developments. Common positions, however vague and broad, are possible only on the fundamental issues underlying the Middle East conflict and on the central components of a peace process. When it comes to responding to escalations in the Middle East finding a consensus becomes almost impossible. This is a major reason why the EU can do little more than support the peace process financially, assist with Palestinian institution building and supplement U.S. mediation efforts in areas where it has established itself as a trusted partner, such as on issues of security cooperation and border controls. As has been discussed, such an involvement can be effective only if it takes the realities on the ground into account. The EU could also become more active in the crafting of peace initiatives and behind the scenes mediation rather than just in the implementation process.

The new Israeli government

In March 31, 2009 a new and controversial right-wing government under Likud Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu was formed. The major problem for Germany was that

the Netanyahu government had not committed itself to a two-state solution and was reluctant to resume peace negotiations with the Palestinians. Chancellor Merkel (Haaretz, 05/06/09) and foreign minister Steinmeier (Tagesschau, 05/08/09) insisted on a two-state solution as the only viable option for peace. The EU, meanwhile, decided to freeze its upgrading of relations with Israel unless Israel changed its strategy and publicly committed itself to a two-state solution (Haaretz, 05/06/09). In July 2009, Steinmeier welcomed the Israeli government's official recognition of the two-state solution as the right goal and reiterated that Germany would stand by Israel and that the precondition for all talks with the Palestinians would have to be Israel's security (AA, 06/07/09). Israel's new and controversial foreign minister, Avigdor Lieberman¹⁰², was received in Berlin shortly after taking office, but in the absence of the press. FDP politician Werner Hoyer and SPD politician Gert Weisskirchen expressed themselves disappointed by Lieberman's positions and foreign policy priorities, which did not include advancing the peace process (Tagesschau, 05/08/09). Overall, however, the change in government produced no change in German-Israeli relations. Bilateral relations have become good enough for Germany to use clear language and to voice its criticism behind closed doors (German Diplomat 1, 2009; Voigt, 2009), while Israel perceives German criticism, still relatively cautious, as that of a friend rather than as "bashing Israel where you can" (Israeli Diplomat, 2009).

German diplomats characterize Germany's Middle East policy as being embedded in international law, previous peace process agreements and UN Security Council resolutions (German Diplomat 1, 2009; German Diplomat 2, 2009). In response to a minor interpellation by the Green Party the government expounded that the Hague Conventions on the laws of

¹⁰² Lieberman was known for his anti-Palestinian and anti-Arab attitude.

war as well as the Geneva Conventions on the protection of civilians in times of war, which declare the relocation of citizens into occupied territories illegal, apply to the Palestinian Territories (Deutscher Bundestag, Drucksache 16/13311, 2009). The German government considered the continued settlement activity a major obstacle to peace and called on the Israeli government to comply with the specifications of the Roadmap (German Diplomat 3, 2009). Steinmeier (AA, 05/29/09; AA, 06/04/09; AA, 06/11/09; AA, 07/03/09) and Merkel (Bundesregierung, 07/02/09; Bundesregierung, 08/27/09) were determined in their opposition to Israeli settlement construction, although Merkel used more cautious language than Steinmeier did. The demand for a halt to settlement construction was congruent with the Obama administration's new stance as well (AA, 05/29/09; AA, 06/04/09). In line with EU regulations, the German government considered the EU-Israeli Association Agreement to apply only to products originating from Israel proper, whereas products originating from the Palestinian Territories were to be excluded from the preferential customs provisions. The German government, pointing to relevant UN Security Council resolutions, also refused to recognize Israel's annexation of East Jerusalem (Deutscher Bundestag, Drucksache 16/13311, 2009).

Despite its foundation in international law German foreign policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict maintained its distinctly pro-Israeli character, where Israeli security conceptions and interests tended to be prioritized. Germany's positioning in the 2008-09 Israel-Gaza conflict was the most prominent example. Moreover, the German government deviated from the European mainstream by explicitly recognizing Israel's right to protect its citizens from harm and to build a security barrier for this purpose, while referencing the EU Council's ruling that the construction of such a barrier on Palestinian territory violates international law. The government further rejected the notion that Israel's blockade of the Gaza Strip is

an act of collective punishment as such: measures necessary for security reasons and in compliance with international law cannot be considered collective punishment; the legitimacy of Israeli measures might instead be evaluated on a case by case basis (Deutscher Bundestag, Drucksache 16/9889, 2009).

Party positions

Among all parties represented in the *Bundestag* in the 16th legislative period consensus existed on the necessity for a comprehensive approach to the Middle East that addresses not only the Israeli-Palestinian conflict but also other conflicts and tensions in the region, such as those emanating from Iraq and Iran, and that engages the Arab states. Representatives of all parties moreover desired greater German involvement in the peace process, including in the formulation of initiatives (Bundestag, 74th Session, 2006). A *Bundestag* debate on the 2008-09 Israel-Gaza conflict (Bundestag, 198th Session, 2009) shows cross-party consensus on the necessity for a ceasefire and for an end to Hamas rocket fire as well as for a political solution to the conflict. Overall, politicians of SPD, CDU/CSU, FDP and the Green Party expressed understanding for Israel's security situation and emphasized Israel's right to defend itself whereas the Left was more critical of Israel.

Foreign minister Steinmeier (SPD), referring to daily rocket fire from the Gaza Strip, highlighted the legitimacy of Israel's right to respond to violence and to defend itself while asserting that Hamas shared the responsibility for the high number of civilian casualties during Israel's military offense. Similarly, Hans-Ulrich Klose (SPD) highlighted that Hamas had ended the ceasefire, and that the extent of the rocket fire onto Israeli territory, reaching ever further into the country, made normal life there impossible. While vowing to take seriously accusations of disproportionality leveled at Israel he further placed blame on Hamas for stra-

tegitically using civilians as human shields. Dr. Rolf Muetzenich (SPD) cautioned against apportioning blame and suggested that the democratic election of Hamas, despite its violent character, is a fact that the international community needs to deal with.

For the CDU/CSU, Eckart von Klaeden and Philipp Missfelder evoked the question of cause and effect, highlighted by Chancellor Merkel, and blamed Hamas for the escalation of violence. Hamas ended the ceasefire and resumed rocket fire on Israel, which increased not only in quantitative but also in qualitative terms (von Klaeden) and aimed to terrorize the Israeli civilian population and making Israel uninhabitable (Missfelder). Quoting passages from Hamas's charter calling for the murder of Jews, von Klaeden and Missfelder insisted that direct talks with Hamas should remain out of the question. Dorothee Baer insisted that Hamas's practice of using civilians as human shields is to be "fiercely condemned."¹⁰³ Hamas, she asserted, tries to generate as many Palestinian victims as possible to win the fight in the media. Both von Klaeden and Baer highlighted the need to destroy tunnels used by Hamas to smuggle weapons from Egypt into the Gaza Strip.

The opposition parties were, overall, more critical of German and EU policies towards the Middle East, although the Left was alone in its fierce criticism of Israel. Dr. Werner Hoyer (FDP) evoked the notion that Europeans do not understand Israel's security situation. The trivialization of the permanent threat of rocket fire in the European media he described as cynical. It is necessary to understand both the Palestinians' feeling of permanent humiliation and the meaning for the Israelis of the unknown fate of the abducted soldier Gilad Shalit. At the same time he expressed opposition to the idea of apportioning blame, while criticizing the uncoordinated and insubstantial EU response to the crisis and questioned the

¹⁰³ "auf das Schaerfste zu verurteilen" (21463A)

suitability of the “undifferentiated policy of isolation” in light of Hamas’s heterogeneity. Because of the trust it enjoys both with the Israelis and the Palestinians, Germany could fulfill an important role as mediator in the peace process.

For the Green Party, Juergen Trittin called the rocket fire on Israeli cities a war crime and asserted Israel’s right to defend itself, while rejecting the idea of apportioning blame in the conflict as counter-productive. In light of the large number of civilian casualties on the Palestinian side, Trittin found it hard to “contend himself” with the term “disproportional,” although he too evoked the notion that Hamas used civilians as human shields, thus suggesting a shared responsibility of Hamas and Israel.

Chairman of the Left’s parliamentary group, Gregor Gysi, rejected Merkel’s one-sided blaming of Hamas for the escalation of violence as false, although he acknowledged that it shared the responsibility. While finding it “wrong” that Hamas ended the ceasefire, he accused Israel of violating it first when it tried to destroy tunnels in military actions. He further called the blockade of the Gaza Strip resulting in “collective confinement” (*Kollektivhaft*) a violation of international law and wrong. Israel’s war with bombs and ground troops he called “unacceptable and exorbitantly exaggerated.”¹⁰⁴ Gysi also fiercely criticized the German government for continuing to export arms to Israel.

The notion that a responsibility for Israel’s security is part of Germany’s *raison d’état* was evoked by Klose (SPD), Missfelder (CDU/CSU) and Dr. Hoyer (FDP), while Trittin (Greens) spoke of “a basic consensus on the solidarity with Israel and its right to self-determination.”¹⁰⁵ Dr. Muetzenich (SPD) too highlighted Germany’s responsibility for Israel

¹⁰⁴ “inakzeptabel und masslos uebertrieben” (21458A)

¹⁰⁵ “ein Grundkonsens ueber die Solidaritaet mit und das Selbstbestimmungsrecht von Israel” (21461A)

and implied special relations. Germany's commitment to Israel's right to exist and a condemnation of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's Holocaust denial and threats against Israel had been expressed in a 2005 motion that was introduced by all parties represented in the *Bundestag*: CDU/CSU, SPD, FDP, Green Party and the Left in December 2005 (Deutscher Bundestag, Drucksache 16/197, 2005).

In an interesting twist Gysi (the Left) and Dr. Hoyer (FDP) supported the hypothetical idea of an international peacekeeping force between the Israelis and the Palestinians in principle although they rejected, for historic reasons, a German participation in such a force (Bundestag, 198th Session, 2009). A similar pattern had become apparent during the *Bundestag* debate (Bundestag, 49th Session, 2006; Bundestag, 50th Session, 2006) on the deployment of a German naval mission within the UNIFIL framework following the 2006 Israeli-Lebanon war. On that occasion, the majority of CDU/CSU, SPD and the Green Party had supported a German participation while the majority of the FDP and the Left in its entirety were opposed. The rhetoric employed reflects the flexible and ambiguous nature of how change and continuity can be classified. Representatives of CDU/CSU, SPD and the Green Party evoked foreign policy continuity, as the UNIFIL mission's goal was to foster peace, was only one of several measures (including political and humanitarian) to establish peace, had been requested by Israel and Lebanon and was in line with multilateralism. By contrast, the FDP perceived the government's desire to deploy German troops in the Middle East as breaking a taboo and thus as marking foreign policy change. The FDP, while generally appreciative of the UNIFIL mission, opposed the deployment of German troops primarily because it considered such a move imprudent and feared that it would undermine Germany's mediator role. The fear that German soldiers might face IDF soldiers was also voiced. By

contrast, the Left's primary argument against German participation was historical: because of history Germany had a special obligation both towards Israel and the Palestinians and did not embody the neutrality necessary for participation in the UNIFIL mission. Fears about compromising Germany's mediator position were also voiced. Notably, the once pacifist Green Party differed neither in its positioning nor in its rhetoric from the governing parties CDU/CSU and SPD, despite its opposition status. Of the reasons given for German involvement in the Middle East the interest in Israel's security was presented as the most prominent one, while security, economic and other national interests were also mentioned by some members of parliament. As during the Red-Green Coalition years the existence of a norm of anti-militarism must be questioned at the political elite level – at best it was embraced by the Left.

The governing parties, CDU/CSU and SPD, were very pro-Israeli in their rhetoric in response to the 2008-09 Israel-Gaza conflict, which was also reflected in official Germany foreign policy. Among the opposition parties, the Left was the only one fiercely critical of Israel, while the FDP and the Green Party expressed understanding for Israel's security situation, clearly shared the fundamentals of government policy but assumed a somewhat more balanced position that also criticized nuances of German, EU and Quartet policy. The FDP in particular supported the convention of a Conference on Peace and Cooperation in the Middle East, modeled on the Conference on Peace and Cooperation in Europe, and introduced a corresponding motion in the *Bundestag* in December 2006. The government finally adopted the suggestion (Niebel, 2009).

Interestingly, the Green Party appears to have been fully socialized into the mainstream by the 16th legislative period. Apart from the fact that it had been included in two con-

secutive coalition governments with the SPD, in December 2006 Eckart von Klaeden of the governing CDU/CSU called a Green Party motion on reviving the peace process superior in diligence and quality to motions introduced by the FDP and the Left (Bundestag, 74th Session, 2006), while Dr. Rainer Stinner of the opposition FDP praised and expressed support for a Green Party motion in support of the Palestinian unity government, debated in April 2007 (Bundestag, 94th Session, 2007). In both cases, the competing motion introduced by the Left was criticized and rejected by the other parties. The notion of a largely “undisputed” Middle East policy (German Diplomat 1, 2009) can be confirmed¹⁰⁶; only the Left deviated from the policy mainstream.

A major step towards socializing into the political mainstream, however, was Gregor Gysi’s April 2008 speech in light of Israel’s 60th anniversary (Gysi, 2008), in which he outlined the position of the German left towards Israel. For the first time, a member of the Left openly classified a responsibility for Israel as part of Germany’s *raison d’état* and called it the most stable of the three pillars of German foreign policy – the other two being the transatlantic alliance and European integration. Gysi rejected the language of imperialism in the case of Israel and called for a more differentiated assessment of Israel and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict than had been common on the left. At the same time, he asserted that solidarity with Israel should have a critical character and was linked to solidarity with Palestine. Despite the importance of this speech, which was criticized by large sections of the par-

¹⁰⁶ As further evidence, Secretary General of the FDP, Dirk Niebel, suggested in an interview that Israel would have to accept the creation of a Palestinian state, withdraw from the occupied territories and dismantle most of its settlements while the Palestinians need to live in peace with Israel, end terrorism and adopt democratic state structures (Niebel, 2009). These specifications reflect government policy and hint at a basic consensus on Middle East policy.

ty for moving the Left towards the center (Zwarg, 2009), the Left remained outside the mainstream of German politics and marginalized by the other parties at the federal level.

Public opinion

Reliable public opinion data for the Grand Coalition period is scarce. A Pew Global Attitudes study reports 37 percent of Germans sympathizing with Israel following Hamas's electoral victory in 2006, while only 18 percent sympathized with the Palestinians (World Public Opinion, 06/20/06). By contrast, a May 2007 Anti-Defamation League study (Anti-Defamation League, 2007) finds that 22 percent of Germans sympathized more with the Palestinians in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, while 20 percent sympathized more with the Israelis, 12 percent with both and 40 percent with neither. Similarly, 27 percent held "very favorable" or "fairly favorable" views of Israel, compared to 23 percent responding with "very unfavorable" or "fairly unfavorable." 55 percent of Germans supported the EU's withholding of funds to the Palestinian government in the aftermath of Hamas's election victory, with 31 percent opposing this policy. The discrepancy in the Pew and ADL polls may at least to an extent be influenced by developments on the ground, the election of Hamas producing an increase in support for Israel and the 2006 Israel-Lebanon war, a decline. BBC World Service Polls from 2007 (BBC World Service Poll 2007) and 2009 (BBC World Service Poll 2009) find that 11 and 9 percent of Germans consider Israel's influence in the world mainly positive, compared to 64 and 65 percent considering it mainly negative. Overall, public opinion follows the trend from previous years, although it appears that the number of people favoring neither party in the conflict decreased slightly and that support for Israel grew somewhat despite an overall high degree of skepticism of Israel's influence in the world.

Summary

German foreign policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the 2005-2009 period continued the Red-Green coalition trend by becoming more active and involved, especially within the EU. The German EU Presidency was particularly successful, thanks to the revival of the Middle East Quartet, the return to the Roadmap that coincided with it and to the inclusion of Arab states that had become a cornerstone of German Middle East policy. Steinmeier also essentially crafted two EU initiatives, the *EU Action Strategy on the Middle East* and the five-point plan for Gaza reconstruction. The former specified the contours for EU measures to support the Annapolis Conference and constituted the framework for the *Berlin Conference in Support of Palestinian Civil Security and The Rule of Law*, which in itself is indicative of greater German involvement. Further, PA state building was a priority focus of German Middle East policy: the *Future for Palestine* project, donations of police cars and radio sets to the PA authorities and the overall German contribution to EUPOL COPPS were extensive. The General Delegation of Palestine in the Federal Republic of Germany viewed bilateral relations as “excellent” (*hervorragend*), as separate from German-Israeli relations, and as having gained in density ever since 1993 (General Delegation of Palestine in the FRG, 2009).

All of these developments had little impact on the conflict itself, which has been in stagnation since the failed Camp David Accords of 2000. The Bush administration’s 2007 Annapolis Conference was barely a drop in the ocean and did not result in substantial peace negotiations between Israel and the PA. Palestinian infighting and the subsequent split between a Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip and a PA-governed West Bank have further complicated the

situation on the ground and deprived Mahmoud Abbas and Salam Fayyad of the legitimacy necessary to negotiate with Israel on behalf of the Palestinian people.

Another factor undermining the effectiveness of German involvement are the limitations of European power. The CFSP works haphazardly at best and European foreign policy continues to be characterized by a lack of cohesion and distorted by too many national voices. The “European” response to the 2008-09 Israeli-Gaza war is only the most prominent example. Moreover, as civilian powers and unlike the U.S., Germany and the EU cannot generally provide hard security guarantees to either the Israelis or the Palestinians (German Diplomat 3, 2009; Voigt, 2009). The “currency” in the Middle East is “violence and violence prevention,” and power and influence are measured in “cannons and rifles,” which means that being a civilian power is no influence-maximizing factor (Voigt, 2009). The EUBAM and EUPOL COPPS missions indicate that the EU can use its strengths to assist with some aspects of the security dimension (German Diplomat 3, 2009), although these are focused on “soft” security (civilian police) rather than on hard security guarantees between the two parties. For all of these reasons, an increase in German and European involvement did not translate into tangible changes on the ground.

Overall, German foreign policy was premised on support for the Palestinian Authority, which was also in Israel’s interest, while the commitment to Israel transpired in the rhetoric of members of parliament (except in the Left) as the primary factor for German involvement in the Middle East. The official government response to the 2008-09 Israeli-Gaza conflict exemplifies the strength of the philo-Zionist norm. Within the EU Germany continues to be the advocate for Israel, although a more pragmatic view of Israel as a democratic, important and reliable partner in a neighboring region (German Diplomat 3, 2009) also con-

tributes to this Israel-friendly attitude. A strictly constructivist reading would therefore ignore the degree of pragmatism that has entered into German-Israeli bilateral relations; rational liberalism has some explanatory power as well. Finally, the importance of security interests, in the form of concerns about geographical proximity and the threat of spillover effects as well as Islamist terrorism, were evoked by politicians and have undoubtedly been a significant determinant of German foreign policy in the post-9/11 era. Some members of the *Bundestag* also evoked economic and other national interests, which as discussed in case 4, are becoming increasingly hard to disentangle.

My findings are on the whole in line with the consensus in the evaluative literature: a combination of the commitment to Israel, which has both a moral-historical and a pragmatic dimension, and national (particularly security) interests was at play in the Grand Coalition period, while multilateralism constituted the framework for German involvement. U.S. leadership continued to be acknowledged as inevitable and desirable. My interviews confirm this assessment as well: German diplomats described German foreign policy towards the conflict as being impacted by the special relations with Israel as well as by the European interest in peace and stability in the Middle East, which is a strategically important region for Europe (German Diplomat 1, 2009; German Diplomat 2, 2009). Director of the *American Jewish Committee* in Berlin, Deidre Berger, listed history, a dense web of German-Israeli relations in the political, military, scientific and other spheres, and realpolitical considerations as the major determinants of German foreign policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Berger D., 2009).

Philo-Zionism as an Elite-Level Norm?

As Germany's economy recovered and then boomed in the post-World War II years, the ideas of multilateralism, antimilitarism, European integration and the transatlantic alliance consolidated into norms and became integral to German political culture over time, as several studies (Banchoff, 1999; Duffield, 1999; Malici, 2006) have demonstrated. My hypothesis was that a similar process consolidated a norm of philo-Zionism at the elite political level, which would in turn influence German foreign policy making towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The rhetoric of government officials and *Bundestag* parliamentarians lends support to this hypothesis. A commitment to Israeli security and support for the Jewish State is today identified by diplomats and politicians across the political spectrum as part of Germany's *raison d'état* (see discussion of party positions during the Grand Coalition period; also: Dressler, 2005; Gysi, 2008; Niebel, 2009; German Diplomat 1, 2009). The perception of a commitment to Israel's security as one of the pillars of German foreign policy is shared also by Israeli diplomats (Israeli Diplomat, 2009). Diplomats and politicians of all parties moreover continue to highlight the presence of the past in German-Israeli relations and suggest that the Shoah will always be a central aspect of bilateral relations (as demonstrated in my case studies; see also Niebel, 2009; German Diplomat 1, 2009; German Diplomat 2, 2009). Particularly in the post-unification period, this notion has been complemented by the future-oriented theme of common norms and values and of Israel being the only democracy in the Middle East (as evidenced e.g. in *Bundestag* debates and Merkel's rhetoric; also Niebel, 2009). A realistic and pragmatic assessment of Israel as the most reliable partner in the Middle East conflict has also been noted (German Diplomat 3, 2009).

Over time, German-Israeli relations have developed a great density across the political, economic, military, cultural and other spheres (Berger D. , 2009; German Diplomat 2, 2009; Niebel, 2009; Voigt, 2009) that is unparalleled elsewhere (Israeli Diplomat, 2009). Reinforced by the desire to “overcome” the past and work towards a cooperative future, the special relations have developed a momentum of their own (Voigt, 2009) and have become some of the closest each country entertains. Within the EU Germany continues to act as Israel’s advocate (German Diplomat 3, 2009), while for Israel Germany is the most important partner in Europe and its second-most important partner after the U.S. globally (Berger D. , 2009).

The case studies indicate that the development of the elite-level norm of philo-Zionism was not a linear process and did not occur simultaneously for all parties. The SPD was the first party to exhibit philo-Zionist tendencies, as exemplified in the response to the 1967 War, and was followed by CDU and CSU. The FDP and the Green Party then gradually socialized into the norm, and the Left today finds itself in the early stages of this process. While the FDP was in the 1960s and 1970s skeptical of Israel and pursued a more neutral policy, philo-Zionism had taken hold in segments of the party by the late 1980s and grew stronger after that. The Moellemann scandal called the FDP’s commitment to Israel into doubt, although opposition within the party evoked special German-Israeli relations and a German sense of responsibility for the Jewish state. Secretary General of the FDP, Dirk Niebel, emphasized in an interview in May 2009 that “no one will find a political home for anti-Israeli policies” in the party (Niebel, 2009).

The Green Party, initially pro-Palestinian and still very critical of Israel by the late 1980s had adopted the norm of philo-Zionism by the time it was represented in the govern-

ment (1998-2005). Andrea Humphreys (2004) suggests that the Green Party had to adapt its policies and positions and accept the central tenets of German foreign policy to prove its *Regierungsfähigkeit* (ability to govern in a coalition). Thus, the Greens' lessons from the Holocaust changed from safeguarding human rights and support for the Palestinians in the 1980s to an Israel-centric assessment of the conflict and a rather pro-Israeli positioning in the early 2000s. Joschka Fischer even faced criticism for appearing to speak on behalf of Israel rather than Germany while he held the office of foreign minister (Humphreys, 2004). A certain amount of pragmatism did probably spark the Greens' socialization into mainstream German politics, including the norm of philo-Zionism. The *Bundestag* debates during the Grand Coalition years, exhibiting very Israel-friendly rhetoric among Green politicians although the party was now in the opposition, indicate that this norm clearly persists beyond the Red-Green coalition years, however.

In their most recent political programs, SPD (Hamburger Programm, 2007), CDU (Freiheit und Sicherheit, 2007) and the Green Party (Die Zukunft ist grün, 2002) explicitly mention (for the first time) Germany's special responsibility for Israel's right to exist in safe borders as a central tenet of German foreign policy, as well as referencing the Palestinians' right to their own state. As *Die Zukunft ist grün* is the oldest of the three, the Green Party was actually the first to include the special relationship with Israel in a German party program. The FDP's most recent political program (Wiesbadener Grundsätze, 1997) makes no reference to Israel or the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Neither does the foundational political program of the Left¹⁰⁷ (Programmatische Eckpunkte, 2007). To this day the Left remains a vocal critic of Israeli policies and actions, although its politicians have aligned themselves

¹⁰⁷ In 2007 the Linkspartei.PDS merged with *Labor and Social Justice – Electoral Alternative* to form the Left.

with the other parties in affirming the German responsibility for Israel's security. Gysi's 2008 speech was a benchmark in the Left's socialization process, although much of the party was opposed to this process and Gysi was exceptionally vocal in his criticism of Israel's Operation *Cast Lead* in 2008/09.

On the whole, the existence of an elite-level norm of philo-Zionism that continues to impact German foreign policy decisions cannot be questioned. This does not mean that official pronouncements of special German-Israeli relations and a special responsibility for Israel's security in all cases reflect a heartfelt commitment. The impact of rational liberal norm compliance is apparent e.g. where governing parties are more restrained in their criticism of Israel than when they are in the opposition. Official foreign policy decisions from both the pre- and post-unification period show the influence of the philo-Zionist norm on German foreign policy – although the national interest, especially security concerns, also had a significant impact.

The development of public opinion further confirms that philo-Zionism is an elite-level but not a popular norm. Initially, support for Israel extended to the population at large, with the 1967 War marking the climax of popular support for, and sympathy with, Israel. After 1967 and in light of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights, and – until 1982 – the Sinai peninsula, as well as further Arab-Israeli wars German public opinion has become more critical of Israel. This phenomenon applies particularly to the extreme left and the extreme right. The latter has a long history of anti-Semitism and fascism, while the former developed a strong anti-Zionist current that was a response to the Israeli occupation and was crafted in “anti-imperialist” terms (Deligdisch, 1974). To an extent this phenomenon is mirrored on the left and in conservative circles more generally

(Berger D. , 2009). Psychological processes related to overcoming the German Nazi past, such as the notion that Israeli atrocities negate German guilt and are the basis for historical revisionism, have also played a role in the German public response to the 1982 Lebanon War and the 1987 Intifada.

Elite level decision making today is described as rather isolated from, and immune to, public opinion (O Dochartaigh, 2007; Berger D. , 2009; German Diplomat 1, 2009). Philo-Zionism as an elite level norm can therefore be expected to persist unless a cataclysmic shock occurs in German-Israeli relations.

Change or Continuity?

The question of change and continuity in German foreign policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict after unification must be considered in the international political context and cannot disregard realist assumptions. Not only did the expansion of German territory and population increase the German power base; the erosion of the Cold War bipolar power structure also allowed greater foreign policy independence in Europe, where superpower alliance structures no longer constituted a constraint. The FRG in particular, after gaining full sovereignty with the Two-plus-Four Treaty, experienced unprecedented levels of foreign policy independence.

Moreover, the international community started tackling new problems, in particular conflicts that had broken out after the Cold War. As international intervention in conflicts became common, external pressures on Germany increased: its allies, led by the U.S., requested that Germany partake in multilateral military missions. This notion of increased expectations in and responsibilities for Germany in the post-Cold War world has been acknowledged by politicians.¹⁰⁸ Meanwhile, the deployment of *Bundeswehr* troops outside the NATO area, such as in Kosovo, Afghanistan and Lebanon, constituted a major break with the past. The debate over change and continuity in German foreign policy must take the changes in the structure of the international system and the resulting pressures on a united and fully sovereign Germany into account and cannot consider unification as an isolated event.

The findings of this study make it possible to identify three phases in German foreign policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. At first, while there was not so much an Israe-

¹⁰⁸ Chancellor Schroeder (SPD) and Stoiber (CSU) made statements to that effect in a Bundestag debate in April 2002 (Bundestag, 233rd Session, 2002). Foreign minister Steinmeier also mentioned that Germany had become a welcome international partner at whom higher expectations were leveled (AA, 06/21/2009).

li-Palestinian as an Israeli-Arab conflict, Germany emotionally sided with Israel – although the political constellations caused by the Cold War permitted only “benevolent neutrality.” Foreign Office documents exhibit a clear pro-Israeli bias during the 1967 war, although for security-political reasons Germany upheld a neutral exterior. Economic factors and the *Hallstein Doctrine* further pushed the FRG towards neutrality and noninterference. The Palestinian issue existed only in the form of a refugee issue, which was regarded in instrumental terms but received only marginal attention.

The second phase, starting in the 1970s marked an increasing awareness of the Palestinian issue: the EC was first in the west to acknowledge the plight of the Palestinian people and their right to self-determination. It is in this period that Germany developed its policy of evenhandedness, aided by a certain degree of foreign policy independence in light of a global east-west rapprochement (at least between Europe and the Soviet Union). The 1982 Lebanon war and the 1987 *intifada* were still marked by relative inaction, apart from declarations, on the part of Germany and the EC. A combination of the difficulty to get “Europe” to speak with one voice, the limitations of European power and other international crises capturing Europe’s attention were responsible for EC inactivity. The FRG appeared to follow a strategy of hiding behind EC decisions and declarations rather than getting involved and mediating between the conflict parties. Despite the doctrine of evenhandedness German advocacy on behalf on Israel in the EC was considerable: the FRG softened the language of statements and vetoed sanctions. Although the American influence on German and EC policy appears to have been marginal, it transpired that the EC could play only a complementary role to the U.S. in the Middle East.

This theme continued into the third, post-unification phase. When the Bush administration withdrew from the conflict, the “peace process” stagnated throughout the Second Intifada. Nevertheless, something had changed in the German conscience. Not least due to Joschka Fischer’s personal interest in the conflict the FRG started to pursue a more active foreign policy, although the Oslo Accords from 1993 were the primary enabling condition without which no substantial German involvement would have been possible. The end of the Cold War and regained sovereignty had further awarded the FRG unprecedented foreign policy independence. While still preferring to remain behind the scenes and rejecting a mediator role, Fischer’s shuttle diplomacy was effective at impacting symptoms of the conflict following the 2000 Tel Aviv terrorist attack. His subsequent “Seven Point Plan,” from which the Roadmap developed, was a further indicator of an increased German willingness to be involved in the peace process – while at the same it exemplified a commitment to multilateralism and a welcoming of U.S. leadership.

The Grand Coalition government under Chancellor Angela Merkel and foreign minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier continued in this tradition, although pursuing a more determinedly regional approach. Germany was the driving force behind the revival of the Middle East Quartet and the return to the Roadmap, including the re-engagement of the U.S., advanced the inclusion of Arab states in the peace process, and hosted the *Berlin Conference in Support of Palestinian Civil Security and The Rule of Law*. Steinmeier moreover pursued a more active foreign policy in the EU, where he introduced two initiatives that resulted in the 2007 *EU Action Strategy on the Middle East* and the five-point plan for the establishment of a permanent ceasefire between Israel and Hamas in early 2009. Finally, the FRG maintained its advocacy on behalf of Israel within the EU and thus slowly established itself as a three-

fold mediator: between Israelis and Palestinians, between Israel and the EU and, now to a lesser extent, between the EU and the U.S.

These three phases reflect not only a development in German policy but also the development of the conflict itself: from an Arab-Israeli manifestation, via the withdrawal of Arab states and the recognition of Palestinian nationhood, to the recognition that, in the end, there needs to be a Palestinian state, living alongside the Jewish state of Israel. Paradoxically, German involvement reached unprecedented dimensions starting in 2000 while the peace process itself stalled after the failed Camp David Accords. A leading German diplomat asserts that following the Roadmap the unilateral and neoconservative U.S. involvement in the conflict produced no progress and no substantial negotiations (German Diplomat 3, 2009). The enabling condition for German involvement is therefore not so much the willingness of the Israelis and the Palestinians to talk to each other as it is the consolidation of the two-state solution into the accepted goal.

	Israeli-Palestinian Conflict	Global context	European integration	German foreign policy
Phase 1 (1967)	Arab-Israeli conflict Palestinian dimension eclipsed	Cold War Clear alliance structures No foreign policy independence	Loose European association in EEC No coherence or unity	“Benevolent neutrality” Emphasis on non-interference No attention to Palestinians
Phase 2 (1982, 1987)	Israeli-Palestinian conflict emerging PLO as major player	East-west rapprochement, detente Some foreign policy independence	Attempt at more cohesion and unity in EC Still with little power and influence globally	Policy of evenhandedness Declarations, overall inaction Recognition of Palestinian rights
Phase 3 (2000-2009)	Two-state solution recognized as eventual goal post-Oslo Involved international community	Post-Cold War Full foreign policy independence	EU with (goal of) Common Foreign and Security Policy	Active foreign policy Involved in multilateral settings (EU, Quartet) Palestinian state-building

Table 1: *Phases in German foreign policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as they correspond with developments in Europe and the conflict itself*

Finally, the three phases coincide with developments in Europe: from a loose association of EEC states in 1967, via the movement towards a common position in the EC in the 1980s, towards the official establishment (even if flawed and rudimentary) of the Common Foreign and Security Policy as part of the Maastricht Treaty. A European factor is therefore very important, both in the form of European influences on German positions (transnational socialization and pressures) and in the sense that the concept of a unified EU had become a domestic norm and goal in the FRG. This also means, however, that Germany employed its power within the EU and shaped EU decisions according to its national interests and agenda.

The major change from the pre- to the post-unification period, then, is a more active and involved German (and EU) policy that also no longer shies away from broaching controversial issues and policies, such as Israeli settlement construction. German-Israeli relations have become so close and friendly that a new openness and frankness is possible. A significant taboo was broken when during the Red-Green coalition period Germany for the first time supported UN resolutions criticizing Israel, at least as long as the language and criticism were perceived to be balanced.

Continuity can be observed on three fronts. First, a commitment to Israel remains apparent. Highly emotional and passionately conveyed by members of the *Bundestag* during the 1967 war, the responsibility for Israel's security and its basis in the Shoah continue to be evoked to this day but usually without the pathos from the 1960s¹⁰⁹, indicating the consolidation of a norm of philo-Zionism. While no European foreign policy existed in 1967, Germany continued to advocate on behalf of Israel in the EC in the 1970s and 1980s as well as in the

¹⁰⁹ Exceptions are speeches given before Jewish and Israeli audiences, such as Angela Merkel's 2008 speech in the Knesset, or speeches commemorating Germany's Nazi past. Merkel generally displays a heartfelt commitment to the historically derived commitment for Israel's security.

EU from 2000-09, vetoing sanctions and moderating the language of statements and declarations to soften criticism of Israel. When push comes to shove, Germany tends to prioritize its commitment to Israel over a common EU position. Thus, Germany tends to adopt Israeli security perceptions and reasserts Israel's right to self-defense and protect its citizens from harm when other EU states criticize Israeli violations of human rights and international law, such as on the issue of the security barrier in the West Bank or during the 2008-09 Israeli-Gaza conflict. Both Israeli and Palestinian diplomats identify continued German reticence when it comes to reprimanding Israel, although an open dialogue permitting constructive criticism exists between Germany and Israel (Israeli Diplomat, 2009). The General Delegation of Palestine in Germany notes that Germany is "considerably more restrained" than France and the UK in criticizing "clear human rights violations" committed by Israel and is not as explicit and determined in the articulation of its demands on Israel (General Delegation of Palestine in the FRG, 2009). Germany was further instrumental in negotiating the EU-Israeli Association Agreement and in preventing its suspension in light of the Second Intifada.

This pro-Israeli bias is complemented, second, by the official policy of evenhandedness, which gradually developed in the late 1970s and early 1980s as the "legitimate rights of the Palestinian people" were recognized in Germany and Europe. Although predominantly rhetorical in the 1980s, it manifested itself in the German commitment to Palestinian institution and state building, including tremendous financial contributions to the PA, and the *Future for Palestine* project after unification and Oslo. The notion of Palestinian self-determination had developed into the goal of Palestinian statehood by 1993. Rather than actual evenhandedness the German policy means support for the PA and checkbook diplomacy, while Germany continues to be sympathetic to Israeli security concerns and interests. Ger-

many's financial and institution building involvement is in fact supported by Israel, which recognized especially following Hamas's election in 2006 that propping up the (fragile and corruption-ridden) PA and their representatives Mahmoud Abbas and Salam Fayyad was in its own interest. An actual act of balancing the commitment to the Israelis with that to the Palestinians, as identified in the literature review, did in that sense not occur: support for the Palestinians enriches and complements support for Israel. Germany aligns itself with EU (and Quartet) positions on settlement construction, East Jerusalem and the refugee issue, but on the EU continuum it continues to occupy the pro-Israeli pole.

Third, a commitment to multilateralism, under U.S. leadership, figures strongly in Germany's policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The desire for a unified European position was expressed as early as 1967, and European integration has progressed ever since. Limited to statements and declarations in the 1980s, European Middle East policy in the 2000s was marked by an extensive financial involvement as well as institution building and soft security initiatives. As the European states streamlined their basic policies, Germany's involvement in the EU increased. Both Joschka Fischer and Frank-Walter Steinmeier introduced important initiatives that were adopted by the EU and the Quartet. Germany was instrumental in the creation and revival of the Roadmap and the Middle East Quartet, although neither produced significant improvements in the Middle East. Multilateralism is the only aspect of the civilian power model that Germany embraced with determination – although this commitment is more than a norm. The realization that neither Germany nor the EU (or any other individual state or institution) can bring peace to the Middle East was at least as important a factor in Germany's commitment to multilateralism as were the ideas of multilateralism and European integration for their own sake.

Overall, the post-unification period has brought an intensification of the characteristics of pre-unification German foreign policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Unification (foreign policy independence), global developments (the end of the Cold War) and developments in the conflict (mutual recognition of Israel and the PA and acceptance of a two-state solution as the end goal) have caused this development. Simultaneously, these developments, in conjunction with growing expectations on Germany, have impacted the erosion of other elements of pre-unification foreign policy, notably the norm of anti-militarism. Conflicts between multilateralism and the commitment to conflict prevention on the one hand and anti-militarism on the other have eroded the latter and “ambiguated” the former. This finding is well in line with the consensus in the larger literature that in the pre-unification period unambiguous norms yielded predictable prescriptions while post-unification conflicts between these norms have produced greater flexibility in their instrumentalization and the decisions they can justify. This process has resulted in the deployment of German troops in Kosovo and Afghanistan. Germany’s deployment of troops to the UNIFIL mission in Lebanon broke a further taboo: that German troops do not belong in the Middle East. Although a hypothetical German participation in a peacekeeping force between the Israelis and the Palestinians is, for historical reasons, rejected by the majority of German politicians today, the developments of recent years suggest that this taboo too may soon be broken.

Because the basic determinants and goals of German foreign policy have remained the same, despite these changes, I will borrow Sebastian Harnisch’s term “modified continuity” (Harnisch, 2001, p. 38) to describe the development of German foreign policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict pre- and post-unification. Continuity, and the prevalence of the pre-unification foreign policy tradition, has also been identified by several of my interview

partners (Berger D. , 2009; General Delegation of Palestine in the FRG, 2009; German Diplomat 1, 2009; German Diplomat 3, 2009).

In assessing the impact of the independent variables on German foreign policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, one needs to bear in mind that a certain discrepancy between official rhetoric and actual motivations is bound to exist. Identifying the determinants of German foreign policy beyond a doubt based on official documents and public speeches is impossible. Access to classified Foreign Office documents is, at the time of writing, restricted for the period after 1978, and even the official documents consulted for the first case are the product of internal talks and negotiations whose documentation I had no access to. My conclusions therefore have to be taken with a grain of salt. At the same time, my interviews with German diplomats aimed to remedy at least part of this problem.

The case studies suggest that the independent variable with the strongest impact on German foreign policy was the commitment to Israel. This commitment has both a normative and a more pragmatic dimension: a moral obligation derived from the Holocaust as well as the recognition that German-Israeli relations have material benefits for Germany and that Israel is the only reliable partner in the Middle East drive foreign policy decision making. Nevertheless, the weight of the moral dimension is apparent in Germany's pro-Israeli record in the EU and in its unabated advocacy on behalf of Israel. In other words, Israel is no less a reliable partner for France and the UK, but their "unburdened foreign policy" (German Diplomat 1, 2009) results in different expectations, demands and attitudes.

Secondary to the commitment to Israel, the national interest was a central determinant of German foreign policy in all case studies, although particularly so in 1967 and in the post-unification period. In 1967, interestingly, philo-Zionism appeared to override economic in-

terests, which would have called for a more pro-Arab positioning in and following the conflict. It was security concerns, however, that prevented the FRG from clearly taking sides in the conflict, although *Bundestag* debates and Foreign Office documents betray a clear pro-Israeli bias. The Hallstein Doctrine too, prevented an official policy other than neutrality, although *de facto* Germany practiced “benevolent neutrality.” In the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the U.S., security interests were again high on the German and European agenda and were evoked by several politicians and officials. Rather than resulting in perceivable foreign policy change, however, they appear to have offered additional motivation for a more active German involvement aimed at negotiating a political solution to the conflict.

Of the civilian power norms a commitment to multilateralism was the most prominent, although here the pragmatic realization that only a multilateral involvement can produce results in the Middle East weighed more heavily than the norm of multilateralism. In support of a constructivist reading is Joschka Fischer’s desire to act behind the scenes: although Germany was instrumental in crafting the Roadmap, it did not want the limelight and desired U.S. leadership instead. The civilian power argument is further strengthened, and realism weakened, by the questions Germany asks in crafting its foreign policy: *what can we achieve?* (Voigt, 2009) or *are we advancing things?* (German Diplomat 3, 2009). France, by contrast, primarily cares about increasing its influence (Voigt, 2009). Anti-militarism can no longer be considered a norm in the 2000s, and a commitment to human rights, although ingrained in Germany’s self-understanding, was subordinated to the commitment to Israel on various occasions.

Continuing integration into European institutions solidified a commitment to a common European position as a goal and norm in German foreign policy, which became apparent in my interviews with German diplomats. Politicians and scholars also exemplify this phenomenon when they classify European integration and a common European foreign policy as a German national interest in its own right (see e.g. Groehe, Moosbauer, Perthes, & Sterzing, 2002¹¹⁰). Conflict between the desire for a common European position and the commitment to Israel was most obvious and openly acknowledged by politicians in the 1980s. The FRG's aligning with EC and EU statements and declarations and similarities in rhetoric further suggest a considerable European influence on German policies. It can further be assumed that EU positions influenced German support for resolutions criticizing Israel. The reverse is also true, however, considering that Germany is a major player in the EU and its predecessors. On several occasions, the FRG has been found to have prevented sanctions or softened language perceived to be too critical of Israel. Differences between German, French and UK foreign policy and the disjointed response to the 2008-09 Israeli-Gaza conflict further indicate the limitations of the European factor.

The American influence on German foreign policy was inconsistent and dependent on the state of transatlantic relations as well as on the U.S. engagement in the conflict, although it was mentioned by several interview partners (Berger D. , 2009; Israeli Diplomat, 2009; Voigt, 2009). The FRG's response to the 1967 war was, thanks to the Cold War, in line with the U.S. position, while the policy of east-west rapprochement in the 1980s allowed a more independent European foreign policy. Germany established itself as a mediator between the EC and the U.S. in this period. With the end of the Cold War Germany and the European

¹¹⁰ Groehe is a member of CDU/CSU, Moosbauer of SPD and Sterzing of the Green Party. Perthes is a scholar.

states gained unprecedented levels of foreign policy independence. EU involvement fundamentally increased following the 1993 Oslo Accords, although primarily in economic and financial terms. In political terms it increasingly diverged from the U.S. during the years of the Bush administration, despite official statements to the contrary and publicly declared commitments to the Roadmap and the Quartet. The increased German and European commitment did not translate into substantial developments in the conflict, demonstrating the limitations of EU power and the necessity for a devoted U.S. involvement, although no outside actor can dictate peace in the Middle East. On the whole, rather than directly impacting German foreign policy it seems that the state of U.S. involvement in the conflict and of transatlantic relations acts as an enabling or obstructing factor for the success of German and EU involvement.

At the outset of this study my hypothesis was that historical narratives pertaining to the Shoah and the Third Reich caused the emergence of a norm of philo-Zionism at the elite level in the aftermath of World War II, which continues to inform German foreign policy towards Israel and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict after unification. Foreign policy continuity was expected both in terms of a pro-Israeli bias and in terms of a cautious involvement. The hypothesis can be confirmed, although the German involvement has become a lot more active over the last decade and is not, in terms of caution and restraint, comparable to the involvement in the 1980s.

The norm of philo-Zionism has been the primary cause of the modified continuity in German foreign policy making and influenced Germany's policy towards the conflict as well as in the EU, which lends support to constructivism. The cross-party acceptance of a commitment to Israel as part of Germany's *raison d'état* illustrates this point in the sphere of do-

mestic politics. Rational liberalism has some explanatory power as well because the norm of philo-Zionism also has a more pragmatic dimension that regards Israel as a viable partner and bilateral relations as benefiting the national interest (especially economically and scientifically). This dimension has become a lot more prominent since unification, although the historically-derived moral dimension remains dominant.

Unification did not produce a major change in German foreign policy and certainly no power- or influence-maximizing policy as a consequence of the expansion of Germany's power base. Although German foreign policy did become more active, it also became increasingly embedded in multilateral institutions. In the case of the Roadmap for Peace and the Middle East Quartet Germany actually became actively involved in creating new multilateral frameworks. On the issue of multilateralism, a rational liberal approach has more explanatory power than constructivism: the realization that only a concerted international effort can produce change was the core motivating force for the strong commitment to multilateralism. Europe's inability to impact matters of war and peace in the Middle East sparked the desire for a unified position as early as 1967, while in the 2000s the Roadmap and the Quartet were the logical consequences of the lessons learned from past failed peace initiatives. Nevertheless, Germany's desire to play a role behind the scenes, my interviews with German diplomats as well as statements by politicians convey the impression that a commitment to multilateralism and European integration has become a norm in and of itself as well. One diplomat also evoked another rational liberal argument: that Germany takes special care to articulate its policy in European rather than in national interest terms because its European partners continue to evaluate Germany's behavior against its past (German Diplomat 1, 2009).

Realism can be discounted, although unification and the end of the Cold War (in conjunction with developments in the conflict) certainly acted as an enabling condition for a more involved German foreign policy. That this foreign policy by and large continued in the pre-unification tradition lends support to constructivism and the salience of norms, however. Constructivism explains the modified continuity and the *content* of German foreign policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict best, whereas contingent realism merely offers clues as to the *amount* of power Germany could – and did – exercise pre- and post-unification. Rational liberalism also has explanatory power and comes into play in the cases of multilateralism and, to a lesser extent, the philo-Zionist norm. While the norm of philo-Zionism had the greatest impact on German foreign policy, an adherence to the logic of appropriateness that undergirds the civilian power model can, in light of the predominantly instrumental view of multilateralism and the poor performance of human rights and anti-militarism as determinants of German foreign policy, not be confirmed. The civilian power model appears to have had little applicability to German foreign policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; solely the desire to produce results rather than increasing German influence and a normative element when it comes to multilateralism support the civilian power assumption.

Conclusion

This thesis attempted to answer the following research question: is the consensus in the literature on German foreign policy continuity after unification applicable to German foreign policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? My hypothesis was that historical narratives pertaining to the Shoah and the Third Reich caused the emergence of a norm of philo-Zionism at the elite level in the aftermath of World War II, which continued to inform German foreign policy towards Israel and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict after unification. In line with constructivism, continuity was expected in terms of a pro-Israeli bias as well as in a cautious involvement, while I expected to disprove realist predictions of foreign policy change and growing German unilateralism. Rational liberalism explanations for foreign policy decision making based on cost-benefit analyses were considered as alternatives to constructivist interpretations. The study's dependent variable was German foreign policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the independent variables were a norm of philo-Zionism, norms derived from the civilian power model, security and economic interests, the impact of the U.S., and European integration.

In order to test my hypothesis and evaluate the competing theories and paradigms I employed the qualitative method, using secondary literature as well as primary documents and interviews as empirical evidence. The five cases analyzed were the 1967 War, the 1982 Lebanon War and the First Intifada in 1987 in the pre-unification period as well as the Red-Green Coalition years starting with the Second Intifada in 2000 and the Grand Coalition Years (2005-2009). Although this study employed an interpretative case study, comparative insights from EU, UK and French Middle East policy were used to highlight the uniqueness of German foreign policy.

The study produced support for my hypothesis, although the post-unification involvement is not comparable to the cautious engagement in the 1980s, and I could answer my research question in the affirmative: German foreign policy was characterized by “modified continuity,” with the norm of philo-Zionism being the primary independent variable. The other variables largely impacted nuances of German foreign policy making. Thus, security interests explained the German interest in the conflict in the 2000s but did not considerably impact the content of foreign policy except in 1967. European integration produced an alignment with European statements and positions, but Germany still deviated from the EU mean on several occasions and impacted EU policies. U.S. policies did not, apart from 1967, appear to have had a major impact on the content of German foreign policy. Rather, the state of transatlantic relations and of U.S. involvement in the conflict undermined or increased the impact of German and European efforts. Economic interests tended to be overshadowed by the philo-Zionist norm.

The civilian power model, central to the constructivist continuity thesis, performed poorly as an independent variable. Solely the commitment to multilateralism was a strong tenet of German Middle East policy but was predominantly a consequence of the realization that only a concerted international effort can produce advancements in the peace process. The norm of anti-militarism appears to have eroded considerably by 2009, being embraced only by the Left, while the commitment to human rights tended to be subordinated to the philo-Zionist norm.

Contribution to the Literature, Limitations and Areas for Future Research

This thesis contributes to the literature in that it applies the change and continuity framework to an area of German foreign policy that is not commonly addressed by scholars.

My findings suggest a possible reason: in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict Germany's commitment to Israel undermines the civilian power status that is so central to the continuity thesis. Not addressing German Middle East policy because of this circumstance has been a major oversight, however. The findings of my study indicate that norm-consistent foreign policy pre- and post-unification occurred also in the area of Middle East policy and that constructivism explains foreign policy continuity, although rational liberalism has some explanatory power as well. Besides supporting the usefulness of constructivism and strengthening the argument that Germany "confounds neorealism" (Duffield, 1999), my study also identifies the limitations of the civilian power framework.

The limited scope of the primary documents I reviewed, the fact that I did not have access to classified Foreign Office documents after 1978 and that it is generally difficult to determine motivations for action based on rhetoric mean that my findings have to be treated with caution. These deficiencies were somewhat offset by the analysis of five different cases spread out from the 1960s to the 2000s and encompassing the greatest benchmarks in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as well as by my interviews. Nevertheless, the major drawback of an interpretative case study like the one employed here is that it sheds light only on the case under investigation without contributing to theory development. That I employed six variables further decreased the theory-developing worth of my study. Future research could therefore more explicitly compare German Middle East policy to that of other states.

For example, I used comparative insights from France and the UK only sparsely and to illustrate discrepancies between Germany and the other two major players in the UK, comparable among many other dimensions and in terms of economic and political power. A replication of my study that employs a full comparative analysis may shed further light on

the uniqueness of German foreign policy and may illuminate in how far the determinants of foreign policy differ between the FRG, France and the UK. A comparative analysis of party programs and parliamentary debates might also illustrate differences in the sphere of domestic politics and may further illuminate the uniqueness of the norm of philo-Zionism in Germany, including the socialization of leftist parties into this norm. Moreover, my study focused on German rhetoric in national settings (at the federal level) only. It would be interesting for future research to analyze whether rhetoric changes in the European context, e.g. in debates in the European Parliament or the Council of the European Union, and in the UN context, and what implications this has for the conclusions I have drawn in this study.

Finally, future research could contrast German foreign policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict with that towards other ethnic conflicts to investigate whether the civilian power model has greater applicability in cases where no “special relationship” with one of the parties exists.

Future Outlook and Policy Implications

A certain incongruity exists between the statements of diplomats and politicians and reality. The contention that Germany finds itself in the European mainstream when it comes to the Middle East and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (German Diplomat 2, 2009) and coordinates its policy with the EU (German Diplomat 1, 2009) cannot be confirmed. Fischer and Schroeder certainly pursued a more active Middle East policy, both in the region and in the EU, but in times of political tension Germany tended to side with Israel. The evidence examined in this study shows that in its rhetoric, its arms shipment policies and its voting patterns at the EU and the UN Germany must in fact be located at the pro-Israeli end of an (admittedly not too broad) EU continuum. Germany continues to advocate on behalf of Israel in

the EU, and there should be little doubt that Israel calls Germany one of its best friends and its second most important partner for a reason. Nevertheless, the interviews with German diplomats indicate the existence of a strong commitment to Europe and to the CFSP. In conjunction with the insistence on German evenhandedness and mainstream positions this could indicate that further integration into the CFSP would indeed cause a Europeanization of German foreign policy in which the “history factor” would be delegated to the backburner.

Such a scenario is, however, unlikely considering that a true CFSP is out of reach. The December 1, 2009 entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty and the creation of the office of the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy cannot gloss over the fact that, when push comes to shove, EU states prioritize national interests and policies over EU interests and policies. Germany, as my case studies show, is no exception to this rule, even if a furthering of the CFSP is asserted by diplomats to be in the national interest (German Diplomat 1, 2009). The more likely scenario, therefore, is one in which Germany exercises its power in the EU more assertively – in the spirit of a common European identity, while subject to its particular historical legacies and national interests. Hence, the occasional trumping of loyalty to Israel over a common EU position should be expected to persist in the future as well.

A more active and assertive German role in the EU would be advisable also from a policy perspective in light of Germany’s positive reputation among the Israelis, the Palestinians and the Arabs more generally. The FRG can further use its good relations with France and the U.S. to bridge EU-Israel and EU-U.S. divides. A true “Europeanization” of German foreign policy, on the other hand, would further decrease Israel’s appreciation for EU involvement.

An overly optimistic view must be discouraged, however. As the case studies show, European involvement can have a positive impact on the peace process only when the U.S. is engaged in the region and willing to work with – rather than against or without – the EU as well as with regional actors. The EU’s military weakness is a further disadvantage. This leaves a strong economic role, which the EU has exercised since the Oslo Accords already, as well as smaller but more intensive political and diplomatic initiatives that complement U.S. efforts. That the PA desires a stronger European involvement in the conflict and has stronger faith in the EU than in the U.S. on some issues is an important asset in this regard. Germany in particular can use its unique position in the Middle East for mediation and diplomatic initiatives and should exhibit more self-confidence, both in the EU and in the Middle East itself. That Israel has on several occasions requested German involvement or mediation in the conflict indicates also that at least some of the restraint Germany exercises in the Middle East is not only self-imposed but also not desired by its partners.

At the same time, developments in recent years have highlighted the importance of including regional actors in the peace process. Not only do the Israeli-Syrian and Israeli-Lebanese conflicts need to be resolved; but it transpired that other Middle Eastern or Mediterranean states can assume important mediator roles, like Turkey did between Israel and Syria and Egypt did between Israel and Hamas in negotiating a ceasefire and between Hamas and Fatah on the issue of national reconciliation.

Although the international community cannot dictate peace in the Middle East, it has an important role to play in introducing initiatives to the Israelis and the Palestinians. The centrality of U.S. leadership is beyond question, and German and EU efforts must complement U.S. efforts. That does not mean, however, that the EU should content itself with an

exclusively financial and economic role while leaving the political sphere to the U.S. Rather, Germany and the EU should more self-confidently present suggestions and alternatives to the U.S. administration and by so doing be involved in the crafting of peace plans and approaches rather than just in the implementation process.

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Appendix

Glossary of Abbreviations and Terms

Bundesnachrichtendienst (BND)	German intelligence service
Bundestag	German parliament (lower house)
Bundeswehr	German army
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy (of the EU)
EC	European Community, 1967-1993
EEC	European Economic Community, 1957-1967
EU	European Union, since 1993
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
GDR	German Democratic Republic
IDF	Israeli Defense Forces
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PA	Palestinian Authority
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
PNC	Palestine National Council
UN	United Nations
UNEF	United Nations Emergency Force
UNIFIL	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
UK	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
U.S.	United States of America

Important Dates and Events

May 23, 1949	Founding of the FRG
October 7, 1949	Founding of the GDR
September 10, 1952	Reparations Agreement between the FRG and Israel and the Jewish Claims Conference (Luxembourg Agreement), ratified 1953
May 12, 1965	Establishment of German-Israeli diplomatic relations
November 9, 1989	Fall of the Berlin Wall
October 3, 1990	German Unification

Timeline of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (Major Events)

May 14, 1948	Creation of the State of Israel
1948-49	First Arab-Israeli War
June 1967	Six Day War/June War; ended with the West Bank and the Gaza Strip coming under Israeli occupation

October 1973	1973 Arab-Israeli War
1982	First Lebanon War
1987-1991	First <i>Intifada</i> (Palestinian uprising)
1993	Oslo Peace Accords, mutual recognition of Israel and the PLO
September 2000-?	Second <i>Intifada</i> (<i>Al-Aqsa Intifada</i>)
2002	Start of the construction of the Israeli security fence
2003	Road Map for Peace by the Quartet (UN, U.S., EU, Russia)
2005	Evacuation of Israeli settlements in the Gaza Strip
2006	Second Lebanon War
June, 2007	Hamas takes control of the Gaza Strip and ends unity government with Fatah after only four months
November, 2007	Annapolis Negotiations
December 2008 – January 2009	Israeli military operation in the Gaza Strip (<i>Operation Cast Lead</i>)

German Parties

CDU	Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands, Christian Democratic Union of Germany
CSU	Christlich Soziale Union in Bayern, Christian Social Union of Bavaria
Die Linke	The Left
Buendnis 90/Die Gruenen	Green Party
FDP	Freie Demokratische Partei, Free Democratic Party
NPD	Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands, National Democratic Party of Germany
PDS	Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus, Party of Democratic Socialism, predecessor of Die Linke
SPD	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands, Social Democratic Party of Germany

German Governments in Brief

Case 1: 1967 War

1966-1969	Government: CDU/CSU and SPD Opposition: FDP Chancellor: Kurt Georg Kiesinger (CDU) Foreign Minister: Willy Brandt (SPD)
1969-1972	Government: SPD and FDP Opposition: CDU/CSU Chancellor: Willy Brandt (SPD) Foreign Minister: Walter Scheel (FDP)

Case 2: 1982 Lebanon War

1980-09/1982	Government: SPD and FDP Opposition: CDU/CSU Chancellor: Helmut Schmidt (SPD) Foreign Minister: Hans-Dietrich Genscher (FDP)
1982-1983 1983-1987	Government: CDU/CSU and FDP Opposition: SPD Chancellor: Helmut Kohl (CDU) Foreign Minister: Hans-Dietrich Genscher (FDP)

Case 3: First Intifada (1987-1991)

1987-1991	Government: CDU/CSU and FDP Opposition: SPD, Green Party Chancellor: Helmut Kohl (CDU) Foreign Minister: Hans-Dietrich Genscher (FDP)
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Case 4: Red-Green Coalition (2000-2005)

1998-2002	Government: SPD, Green Party Opposition: CDU/CSU, FDP, PDS Chancellor: Gerhard Schroeder (SPD) Foreign Minister: Joschka Fischer (Green Party)
2002-2005	Government: SPD, Green Party Opposition: CDU/CSU, FDP, 2 PDS politicians Chancellor: Gerhard Schroeder (SPD) Foreign Minister: Joschka Fischer (Green Party)

Case 5: Great Coalition (2005-2009)

2005-2009	Government: CDU/CSU, SPD Opposition: Green Party, FDP, The Left Chancellor: Angela Merkel (CDU) Foreign Minister: Frank-Walter Steinmeier (SPD)
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