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# Soft Power Politics

The Role of Political Foundations in Germany's  
Foreign Policy towards Regime Change in Spain,  
Portugal and South Africa 1974-1994

Jens-Ulrich Poppen

London School of Economic and Political Science  
Department of International Relations

A thesis submitted to the University of London for the Degree of Doctor  
of Philosophy in International Relations

Summer 2006

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# Abstract

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### The Role of Political Foundations in Germany's Foreign Policy towards Regime Change in Spain, Portugal and South Africa 1974 - 1994

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This thesis explores new analytical ground in analysing and describing power in the pursuit of Germany's postwar foreign policy, particularly during the Cold War era. With reference to Germany's party foundations, the dissertation provides an introductory discussion of the prevailing narratives on power in the discourse over Germany's postwar foreign policy, namely 'forgetting power', civilian power, tamed power and middle power.

It advances the critical argument that the realist 'forgetting power' narrative remains too narrowly focused on coercive and unilaterally realised power projection capabilities while appreciating multilateral forms of external action only as an expression of weakness. On the other hand, the largely constructivist approaches of civilian, tamed and middle power analysis put too exclusive an emphasis on multilateral frameworks of diplomatic action in the pursuit of the FRG's foreign policy.

Instead, this research concludes that postwar Germany's foreign policy cannot be fully understood without paying ample attention to the two-layered operational nature of the FRG's diplomacy, which is based on the systemic relationship of transnationally operating nongovernmental actors *and* state institutions. Postwar Germany was therefore neither 'forgetful of its power' nor did it play out its power resources solely within multilateral organisations. In fact, it pursued state interests regularly through non-multilateral channels and by mobilising noncoercive power potentials.

The thesis utilises Joseph S. Nye's concept of soft power as the ability to shape the preferences of actors through inducement and attraction rather than coercion and threat in order to highlight the specific configuration of the FRG's postwar foreign policy displayed on a sub-state level. This model is then applied to analyse the democracy promotion activities of two German political foundations or *Stiftungen*, the Friedrich-Ebert Foundation (FEF) and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAF) during the regime change processes in Spain, Portugal and South Africa respectively.

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*"We see the curtain closed, the plot unended."*  
(B.Brecht)

London, August 2006

In the bar parlour of my favourite Holborn local *Ye Old Mitre* which links Hatton Gardens and Ely Place in the heart of London's old diamond trading quarter, the stump of an old cherry tree silently witnesses the myriad of guests enjoying each other's company, a stimulating conversation and an amber-coloured pint of real ale at the end of a long day. History has it that the Bishop of Ely was forced by her Majesty Queen Elisabeth I. to grant the lease of his official residence's gatehouse and fourteen acres of land in 1589 to the monarch's Lord Chancellor Sir Christopher Hatton for the rent of a red rose, ten loads of hay, ten pounds and the right to walk in the gardens whenever the Bishop chose. The tense relationship between the cleric and the politician caused a disagreement concerning the actual boundary of the part of the garden included in the lease. The parties involved needed to bring about territorial clarification and a cherry tree was planted to mark the division. Later, the tree turned into a symbol of joy and enthusiasm when it was reported that Queen Elizabeth danced the maypole around the tree during one of her many visits to Hatton who she adored.

Ever since I became a PhD student at the LSE, I liked the story, the pub, the tree and the dance. Now, after four years of sleepless nights over the disputed meaning of power, strength and triumph in international politics and after endless discussions about the beauty of democracy and the wickedness of tyrants, I finally managed to dance my personal maypole having finished what turned out to be another fascinating journey in a student's life. It is with happiness, amazement, satisfaction and, yes, some nostalgia that I am looking back at the years during which I used to tell peers, friends and family with a wink that "cutting-edge" research would be produced which one day would shake the fundamentals of human science. Of course, my true personal ambition was of a significantly more modest nature and now, at the end of it all I would feel honoured if the reader's judgement of my thesis would entail attributes such as structural coherence, analytical solidity and intellectual originality.

No dance of the maypole would have been possible without the support, encouragement and friendship of others. If I had had to walk the walk alone, the years of living and studying in London and Madrid would not have been the unique experience I so enjoyed. My supervisor Chris Alden was both a fine friend and an outstanding academic teacher. Throughout my time around Big Ben he safely guided me through the troubled waters of methodology, patiently answered questions about theoretical details, fundraised, encouraged, constructively criticised, honestly advised and intellectually challenged. Our history of teamwork goes back to my days as a student in South Africa and for half a decade now he superbly manages my academic education. My best friend and old London House mate Eric Easley proved to be the incredible incarnation of many admirable human traits: He is vastly knowledgeable about Kant's perpetual peace, the most brilliant fly-fisher along the shores of the Thames, the best company one can hope for during cold winter evenings enjoying fellowship near the *Lamb's* fireplace in Bloomsbury and a scholarly inspiration of the highest order. He the finest son of his native Kentucky, a life-long *aficionado* of catfish dishes and I am proud to be his friend.



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Finally, the biggest thank you is reserved for my parents Udo and Iris Poppen. Not in their wildest dreams had they imagined their eldest son to become an academic globetrotter who would travel from the Northern shores of Germany to the concrete jungle of downtown Johannesburg, enjoy his morning coffee in Madrid's *Café Commercial*, silently admire Segovia's Roman viaducts, become a parliamentary assistant in the House of Commons and get a PhD in the process. It was a long journey indeed and my parents were always by my side, every minute along the way. The importance of their emotional and financial support cannot be exaggerated. Without them and their love, I would not have found my place in life. This thesis is dedicated to them.

## List of Acronyms

AdsD	Archiv der sozialen Demokratie
ACILS	American Centre for Labour Solidarity
AD	Democratic Alliance
ANC	African National Congress
AP	Alianza Popular
APU	United People's Action/ Aliança "Povo Unido
AVU	Afrikaner Volksunie
BND	Bundesnachrichtendienst
CC.OO.	Comisiones Obreras
CDP	Co-operative Development Programme'
CDU	Christlich-Demokratische Union Deutschlands
CES	Centre for Trade Union Studies/Conselho Económico e Social
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CIPE	Centre for International Private Enterprise
CONTRALESA	Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa
COPCON	Comando Operacional do Continente
Coordenadas	Cooperativa Cultural de Estudios e Documentacao
COSAG	Concerned South Africans Group
CSU	Christlich-Soziale Union
DDP	Democracy Development Programme
DGB	Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund
DP	Democratic Party
EU	European Union
FDP	Freie Demokratische Partei
FEF	Friedrich-Ebert Foundation
FJF	Fundacao José Fontana
FLC	Fundación Llargo Caballero
FNF	Friedrich-Naumann Foundation
FNAF	Fritz-Naphtalie Foundation
FPI	Fundación Pablo Iglesias
FRELIMO	Front for the Liberation of Mozambique
FRS	Republican and Socialist Front
FUR	United Revolutionary Front
GAF	Get Ahead Foundation
GDR	German Democratic Republic
GEW	Gewerkschaft Erziehung und Wissenschaft
GODSA	Gabinete de Orientacion y de documentacion
HBF	Heinrich-Böll Foundation
HSF	Hanns-Seidel Foundation
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
IAFLU	International Association of Free Labour Unions
IAICL	Ibero-American Institute for Constitutional Law
ICS	Institute for Constitutional Studies

IDO	Inkatha Development Office
IED	Instituto de Estudos para o Desenvolvimento
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
INREC	Inkatha Research and Information Centre
IFD	Institute for Federal Democracy
IR	International Relations
IRI	International Republican Institute
KAF	Konrad-Adenauer Foundation
KZN	KwaZulu/Natal
MCE	Movimiento Comunista Español
MFA	Movimento das Forças Armadas
MDP	Movimento Democrático Popular
NDI	National Democratic Institute for International Affairs
NED	National Endowment for Democracy
NP	National Party
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PAIGC	African Independence Party of Guinea and the Cape Verde Islands
PAC	Pan African Congress
PCE	Partido Comunista de España
PCP	Partido Comunista Portugues
PDS	Partei des demokratischen Sozialismus
PDSA	Political Dialogue South Africa
PIDE	Policia Internacional e de Defesa do Estado
PPD	Partido Popular Democrático
PS	Partido Socialista
PSA	Portuguese Socialist Action
PSD	Partido Social Democrata
PSI	Partido Socialista del Interior
PSOE	Partido Socialista Obrero Español
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
RF	Rural Foundation
RL	Radio Liberty
RLF	Rosa-Luxemburg Foundation
SADF	South African Defence Force
SANCO	South African National Civic Organisation
SED	Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands
SI	Socialist International
SPD	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands
STP	Specialised Training Programme
UCD	Unión de Centro Democrático
UCO	Unión de Cooperativas Obreras
UDF	United Democratic Front
UGT	União-Geral de Trabalhadores Portugueses
UGT	Unión General de Trabajadores

## Introduction

In January 2003, the Office of the Public Prosecutor in the Turkish capital Ankara charged the resident representatives of five German political foundations or *Stiftungen* with the “creation of a secret alliance to launch activities directed against the Turkish Government and intended to promote separatism.”<sup>1</sup> The Turkish High Court for State Security subsequently opened trial proceedings against the *Stiftungen* – the Christian Democratic Konrad-Adenauer Foundation (KAF) closely affiliated with the German Christian Democratic Union (CDU), the Social Democratic Friedrich-Ebert Foundation (FEF) linked with the Social Democratic Party (SPD), the liberal Friedrich-Naumann Foundation (FNF) close to the Free Democratic Party (FDP), the Bavaria-based Hanns-Seidel Foundation (HSF) as the think tank affiliated with the Christian Social Union (CSU) and the party foundation of the German Green Party, the Heinrich-Böll Foundation (HBF) – and their representatives, which found themselves threatened with a possible maximum sentence of up to 15 years imprisonment for trying to conspire against the national unity and the secular structures of the Turkish state.<sup>2</sup> Ironically though, the prosecutor coined the allegations “legal espionage.”<sup>3</sup> The accusations of external interference in domestic Turkish affairs had been triggered by the book of the nationalistic history professor Necip Hablemitoglu of the University of Ankara, ‘The Bergama Dossier and the German Foundations’, in which the Turkish academic accused the transnationally-operating organisations of having incited local farmers in the town of Bergama to protest against the commercial exploitation of natural gold deposits by an Australian company, which would cause environmental damages by using the toxic substance cyanide in the washing process.<sup>4</sup> According to Hablemitoglu’s hypothesis, the *Stiftungen*, acting on behalf of the German Government and being disguised agents of the country’s intelligence agency *Bundesnachrichtendienst* (BND), followed the long-

---

<sup>1</sup> Spiegel-Online, ‘Deutschen Stiftungsmitgliedern drohen 15 Jahre Haft’, 2 January 2003.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> BBC News Online, ‘German group rejects ‘spy’ charges’, 26 December 2002, available from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/2606513.stm>, cited on 12 March 2003.

<sup>4</sup> Shortly after the publication of the ‘Bergama Dossier’, Hablemitoglu was assassinated by unknown gunmen in front of his house in Ankara, see Evangelos Antonaros, ‘Ein unbequemer Mann’, *Die Welt*, 20 December 2002.

term goal of undermining the cultural, ethnic and religious unity of the Turkish state. Since Germany possessed the world's largest gold reserves including Jewish gold inlays robbed from inmates in the Nazi-run concentration camps, the government in Berlin tried to prevent Turkey from exploiting its own resources thereby stabilising the international market and avoiding a free fall of gold prices through growing supply.<sup>5</sup> The academic's analysis, which was subsequently used by the equally nationalistic state attorney Nuh Mete Yüksel in his indictment to illustrate the *Stiftungen's* intention to lastingly erode the fundamentals of Turkish sovereignty, appeared to be "just as unbelievable as it was absurd"<sup>6</sup> and was widely seen as an 'academically' supported attempt of anti-European forces in the highest echelons of government and the justice system to sabotage the country's future accession to the European Union (EU) and to slow down any attempts of further European integration.

The episode, which ended with the acquittal of all accused, highlighted some characteristic aspects of the operational nature of Germany's foreign policy and its multifaceted and multilayered set up. The country's transnationally operating political foundations are a foreign policy instrument, which helps Germany's parties to implement project-based programmes of political co-operation aimed at promoting democratic structures and the strengthening of a global ethos of good governance. They have become an integral part of the FRG's foreign policy system since their coming into existence in the late 1950s and are neither mere tools for the Federal Republic's official diplomacy nor are they foreign policy actors that operate without political affiliation in the anything-goes environment of an international relations vacuum. Their high degree of manoeuvrability in the international system comes as a result of their "ambivalent position within the FRG's institutional structure"<sup>7</sup> and adds to the diversity of Germany's foreign policy system. The tense reaction on the part of Ankara's conservative establishment highlights the widespread sensitivities and often almost allergic reaction in certain political circles provoked by the appearance of the *Stiftungen*

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<sup>5</sup> Günter Seufert, 'Im Auftrage Berlins', *Berliner Zeitung*, 23 December 2002.

<sup>6</sup> Harald Weiss, 'Das Ankaraner Staatssicherheitsgericht und die deutsche Aussenpolitik', available from [www.swr.de/nachrichten/kommentare/2002/12/27/456](http://www.swr.de/nachrichten/kommentare/2002/12/27/456), cited on 16 March 2003.

<sup>7</sup> Sebastian Bartsch, 'Politische Stiftungen: Grenzgänger zwischen Gesellschafts- und Staatenwelt', in Wolf-Dieter Eberwein, Karl Kaiser (eds.), *Deutschlands neue Außenpolitik - Institutionen und Ressourcen*, vol.4, (R.Oldenbourg Verlag München 1998), p.193.

on the political scene of their respective host country. The fear of outside meddling in the internal affairs of a sovereign polity leads many governments to either observe the activities of the German political foundations with the utmost level of suspicion or to ban the transnational organisations altogether from their state territory. This fear comes as a reaction to a form of German diplomatic power that largely eludes the control of foreign governments. Their decidedly low-key approach to international projects has frequently aroused the suspicion of foreign governments that the foundations were in fact influencing political developments in third countries through a “secret-service-style invisible hand”.<sup>8</sup> The *Stiftungen* provide political aid and infrastructural expertise through various channels on sub-governmental level and operate behind-the-scenes of the target country. They transcend borders and systems, stabilise and strengthen democratic forces in transitional societies and in countries undergoing phases of a consolidating “democratic deepening.”<sup>9</sup> The Foundations’ democracy promotion activities can be seen as an expression of post-war Germany’s pro-active foreign policy approach, which appeared to be everything but abstemious in the conduct of the FRG’s external relations and the shaping of its international milieu in spite of its semi-sovereign status and its strong multilateral integration.

Therefore, the *Stiftungen* model seems to run counter to a number of common assumptions about the operational mode of (West) Germany’s foreign policy in the aftermath of the Second World War and calls for a conceptual rethink of long-established narratives that have sought to explain idea, configuration, historical transformation and structure of political power in the Federal Republic.<sup>10</sup> This study seeks to address these existing imbalances arguing that postwar Germany’s foreign policy cannot be fully understood without paying ample attention to the *two-layered operational nature* of its diplomacy, which is based on the systemic relationship of transnationally operating nongovernmental actors (like the political foundations) *and* state institutions. It will further argue that the FRG pursued its state interests often through non-multilateral channels and by mobilising noncoercive power potentials.

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<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*, p.194.

<sup>9</sup> Georg Sorensen, *Democracy and Democratization: Processes and Prospects in a Changing World*, (Westview Press, Boulder 1993), p.40.

<sup>10</sup> See p.4 as well as Chapter 1.

## Literature

The widely held view in academia, journalism and on the political scene both in West Germany and abroad was that the FRG had become a fragmented entity on the international map and that its society defined itself exclusively through its economic success rather than through a people's traditional arsenal of collective sentiments such as patriotism, national pride or military glory. This narrative adumbrated the FRG as the semi-sovereign torso of the former German Empire, a geographically 'amputated' state that remained permanently handicapped by the loss of one-third of its territory to the Soviet sphere of influence. Bonn's satellite dependency on the United States hegemon and the surrender of crucial elements of its state sovereignty such as the right to produce and possess nuclear weapons were seen as further illustration of German weakness and its diplomatic vulnerability.<sup>11</sup>

Consequently, critics argued, West Germany sought compensation for its loss of great power status by carving out an operational niche as a medium-seize actor in international relations. Its post-war appearance as a middle power with a strong preference for multilateral means of resolving international conflict within European or transatlantic frameworks led a number of conservative academic commentators to remark often aghastly that the Federal Republic's foreign policy was characterised by a "fear of power", a "forgetfulness" or *Machtvergessenheit* displayed towards more assertive forms of international self-conduct, which in their view was the expression of an attitude that frowned upon the use of coercion to change other states behaviour. Reflecting on his country's foreign policy before the historical watershed of reunification in 1989/90, realist IR scholar Hans-Peter Schwarz could barely conceal the acidity in his critique when he pointed out "over the past few decades, it was not exactly common practice to emphasise 'German interests'".<sup>12</sup> The 'forgetting power' theorists like Schwarz put forward a general critique of those societal and political forces, which in their opinion had declared the pursuit of classical power politics and any diplomacy

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<sup>11</sup> Hans-Peter Schwarz, *Die Zentralmacht Europas – Deutschlands Rückkehr auf die Weltbühne*, (Siedler Verlag, Berlin 1994); Christian Hacke, 'Nationales Interesse als Handlungsmaxime für die Aussenpolitik Deutschlands', in Karl Kaiser, Joachim Krause (eds.), *Deutschlands neue Außenpolitik – Interessen und Strategien*, vol.3, (R.Oldenbourg Verlag München 1996), pp. 3 – 13.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, p.17.

guided by national interests to be inadmissible. “The idea of ‘nation’ was demonised, European integration idealised” writes Christian Hacke, “at the same time, the notion of ‘power’ was abolished and replaced by ‘responsibility’ and ‘peace politics’.”<sup>13</sup>

Realists accused West German foreign policy elites and the intellectual masterminds of the FRG’s post-war middlepowerdom of having swapped the rationality-based calculus of state interests for some diffuse attempt at diplomatic altruism with the process of European integration as the new catalyst for identity building. Deeply traumatised by the horrors of the Second World War and the genocide that came in its wake, West Germany’s 60-million strong population surrendered to a pacifist reflex, which excluded from the exercise of political power as the ability to “make or receive any change, or to resist it”<sup>14</sup> not only any use of physical force but also any consideration given to self-advancement and self-interest. Realist scholars therefore deplored what they perceived to be West Germany’s schizophrenic predisposition towards expressing the national interest of others rather than its own with multilateralism being elevated to the level of diplomatic dogma at the expense of an autonomous foreign policy. In their eyes, the FRG’s “forgetfulness of power” amounted to a free fall from a near indomitable position in the international arena to the pitifully pusillanimous manoeuvring of an ‘emasculated’ foreign policy.

In contrast, a number of mostly constructivist analysts have rejected the acerbity with which realism had described West Germany’s Cold War appearance on the international stage and have instead highlighted the *multilateral* configuration of Bonn’s post-war power politics. They put forward the proposition that following a ‘civilianising’ impulse, the FRG’s foreign policy merely adjusted to changes in the structure of the international system commonly described as global interdependence and as, what Richard Rosecrance has described as ‘trading states’<sup>15</sup>, had replaced the old confrontative patterns of foreign policy behaviour by co-operative strategies and

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<sup>13</sup> Christian Hacke, ‘Nationales Interesse als Handlungsmaxime für die Aussenpolitik Deutschlands’, op.cit., p.3; See also Egon Bahr, *Deutsche Interessen – Streitschrift zur Macht, Sicherheit und Außenpolitik*, (Karl Blessing Verlag, München 1998), p.18.

<sup>14</sup> Steven Lukes, ‘Power and the Battle for Hearts and Minds’, *Millenium: Journal of International Studies*, vol.33, no.3, p.478.

<sup>15</sup> Richard Rosecrance, *The Rise of the Trading State – Commerce and Conquest in the Modern World*, (Basic Books, New York 1985).



approaches, which were more conducive to international economic relations than unilateral forms of coercion-based power politics.<sup>16</sup> In their assessment, the FRG far from being oblivious of power had in fact pursued power politics with the necessary degree of assertiveness only that in an increasingly interdependent world and, crucially, with a radically altered normative system and post-Auschwitz national identity, German power now was being played out within multilateral frameworks and through international organisations. Three approaches within the constructivist camp have minted the debate on power in the pursuit of West Germany's foreign policy. Certainly the most influential narrative appeared to be the *civilian power* hypothesis, which argued that instead of having experienced a depletion of political power, West Germany merely reconfigured its power projection capabilities thus moving away from a thinking in realist terms of deterrence and containment towards a multilaterally grounded diplomacy that sought to achieve international consensus on issues of 'high-politics' and promoted institutionalised forms of conflict-resolution.<sup>17</sup> Civilian power theorists discern the FRG's rejection of any militarised foreign policy as part of a civilisational process, which they see characterised by the partial transfer of sovereign rights and the taming of social violence domestically as well as internationally. Civilian powers are therefore anything but *machtvergessen*, instead they dexterously use the operational space that multilateral organisations provide for the pursuit of state interests.

The theme of an 'institutionalisation of power' is being taken up by Peter Katzenstein, who also demurs the realist assertion of West Germany's forgetfulness of power, complements the civilian power approach and argues that rather than German power having sunken into oblivion it has been *tamed* through a process of thorough European integration. Katzenstein argues that this European institutional context had facilitated the emergence of a new national identity in West Germany, which favoured bargaining, negotiating and consensual approaches over threatening military postures. In his view, the FRG's postwar aversion towards the use of force found its expression in Bonn's dialogue-oriented multilateral diplomacy, which Katzenstein classifies as 'soft'.

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<sup>16</sup> Gunther Hellmann, 'Jenseits von "Normalisierung" und "Militarisierung": Zur Standortdebatte über die neue deutsche Außenpolitik', *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, vol.47, 1997, no.1-2, p.26.

<sup>17</sup> See e.g. Hanns W. Maull, 'Zivilmacht Bundesrepublik Deutschland – Vierzehn Thesen für eine neue deutsche Außenpolitik', *Europa-Archiv*, vol. 43, no. 10, 1992, pp. 269–278.

The final narrative depicts the FRG as a *middle power*, which after its defeat in the Second World War learned to play the role of good international citizen in international fora.<sup>18</sup> This, middle power theorists would argue, was expressed in West Germany's proneness to display certain patterns of foreign policy behaviour such as bridge-building, mediation, 'honest broker', two-track diplomacy and multilateral forms of dispute resolution. The middle power approach also contrasts starkly with the rather disparaging remarks made by realist scholars about the "German public's provincial lack of understanding regarding the central position of power in international relations" and their scoffing at the "Federal Government's general obsession with harmony, which is being exceeded only by the tendency to either create a new intergovernmental organisation or to inflate an already existing one for every new problem."<sup>19</sup>

Both realist as well as constructivist analytical *modi operandi* remain unsatisfactory in their explanatory power. While Schwarz and Hacke assign extraproportional significance to a state's ability and preparedness to pursue its interests through the use of military force and other forms of coercion, constructivists show *only* the *multilateral* dimension of soft power. The realist paradigm of a German 'forgetfulness of power' leads to an analytical disequilibrium, which debar any softer forms of power from the discussion on West Germany's foreign policy and dismisses the FRG's multilateral predisposition and its underlying co-operative internationalism as an expression of weakness. On the other hand, the various constructivist narratives are projecting a similar degree of explanatory exclusiveness only that they replace the primacy of unilateral foreign relations management by a behavioural predisposition towards collective action. Civilian, tamed and middle power approaches provide important insights into the interconnectedness of identity, structural change in the international system and new forms of power. However, this thesis will argue that they too fall short of delivering the whole story of the FRG's foreign policy pre-1989 as they equate the use of soft power with a state's multilateral integration thus overlooking an important transnational dimension of West Germany's foreign policy that allowed for a certain degree of autonomous action on a sub-state level and which facilitated the

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<sup>18</sup> See e.g. Wolfram F. Hanrieder, *Germany, America, Europe*, (Yale University Press, New Haven 1989).

<sup>19</sup> Hans-Peter Schwarz, *Die Zentralmacht Europas – Deutschlands Rückkehr auf die Weltbühne*, op.cit., p.61.

pursuit of state interests *outside* of multilateral frameworks. Insights into this ‘private’ foreign policy can be gleaned from an analysis of the informal diplomacy of Germany’s party foundations and particularly of their democracy promotion activities in transitional theatres. In fact, it is only through a conflation of governmental (‘public’) and non-state (‘private’) level that any scholarly examination can adequately dissect the multilayered facets and complex operational structure of West Germany’s foreign policy apparatus. This thesis argues that this conflation and its underlying complexity are expressed in the systemic relationship between the international activities of the *Stiftungen* and Bonn’s official diplomacy. Instead of abstaining from power politics being content with an effete foreign policy that simply dawdled along in the international realm, the FRG pursued its interests in a co-ordinated effort, in which state actors operated abreast nongovernmental organisations. While governmental foreign policy administered bilateral relations and dealt with questions of state security and economic relations on a multilateral level, sub-state actors like the political foundations employed soft power beyond the framework of international institutions and furthered state and party interests through transnational channels.

Typical instruments of their soft power interventionism are seminars, conferences, workshops, publications, skill and knowledge transfer from foreign, often German experts to elites in transition countries as well as the setting up of intermediary organisations often involved in think tank activities and political research. In addition, the political foundations provide material support for foreign partners although they are legally prevented from *directly* financing political parties abroad. In their international activities, Germany’s political foundations usually focus thematically on capacity and constitution-building as well as on party management and electoral assistance whereby they adapt their strategies regularly to the specific circumstances and dynamics of different regime change processes. Their sub-state level democracy promotion projects target elites as well as the general public, the former by organising platforms and for a for the exchange of concepts and ideas, the latter through programmes of civic education.

## Soft Power

West Germany's informal *Stiftungen* diplomacy helps to illuminate and analytically explore the specific operational mode with which the FRG during the Cold War and beyond mobilised its 'power of attraction'. All of the previously discussed constructivist narratives have pointed at the soft power phenomenon but have failed to say what exactly the concept entails and where it derives from. While for realists softer forms of power do not exist at all and scholarly references to soft power need to be seen as figments and attempts to deaden the phantom pain of lost sovereignty and real might, constructivists in their discussion of power in West Germany's Cold War foreign policy have simply equated the 'power of attraction' with multilateral action. In trying to examine soft power-based foreign policy initiatives in the pursuit of state interests, this thesis will draw on the work of American academic Joseph S. Nye, who has set non-coercive forms of power against the traditional compendium of interstate power politics with its emphasis on physical force and economic pressure. He describes soft power as "the ability to set the political agenda in a way that shapes the preferences of others"<sup>20</sup> The concept of attracting others to one's cause draws from the model of early childhood socialisation during which parents use their ability to shape their children's beliefs and preferences through the attractiveness of their own ideas. "Parents of teenagers know that if they have structured their children's beliefs and preferences, their power will be greater and will last longer than if they had relied only on active control."<sup>21</sup> Similarly, the "ability to affect what other countries want tends to be associated with intangible power resources such as culture, ideology, and institutions."<sup>22</sup>

The seeds for what later became known as soft power were academically sown in the late 1970s when Joseph S. Nye and Robert Keohane described the international intertwining and interweaving state's interests as *global interdependence*.<sup>23</sup> In their seminal work, the two scholars argued that "the resources that produce power

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<sup>20</sup> Joseph S. Nye, *The Paradox of American Power: Why the world's only superpower can't go it alone*, (Oxford University Press 2001), p.9.

<sup>21</sup> Joseph S. Nye Jr., *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power*, (Basic Books, New York 1991), pp.31-32.

<sup>22</sup> Joseph S. Nye, 'Soft Power', *Foreign Policy*, Fall 90, issue 80, p.159.

<sup>23</sup> Joseph S. Nye, Robert O. Keohane, *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition*, (3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Longman, Boston 2001).

capabilities have become more complex” and that power ought to be understood as control over outcomes as well as control over resources.<sup>24</sup> According to Nye and Keohane, asymmetrical interdependencies had become sources of power for international actors and required a rethinking on the part of power theorists. The phenomenon of global interdependence and the post-modern reality of a world of shrinking boundaries transcended the narrow focus on military and economic might and led to an increasingly blurred distinction between the ‘inside’ and the ‘outside’ thus rendering the separation into the realm of the ‘domestic’ and the ‘international’ questionable at best. In such an interdependent world, West Germany’s political foundations were an insightful example of how transnational actors of democracy promotion managed to carve out an operational sphere in “their quest for a niche in global politics” thus cashing in on the asymmetrical nature of political power.<sup>25</sup>

Therefore, it seems justified to make the assertion that the FRG’s postwar adroitness in becoming a skilled negotiator within multilateral organisations was complemented by a nongovernmentally operated form of soft power politics, which engaged in reputation-building and sought to influence the process of structural transformation and institutional change in transition countries. In the light of the abovementioned, it seems untenable to maintain the realist depiction of West Germany as a ‘forgetting power’. Instead, this thesis will argue that the FRG did in fact pursue power politics guided by state interests but that the power at its disposal was softened through its reliance on co-optation and the ability to convince others of the rightness of its ideas and policies. Furthermore, the study aims to show that contrary to both realist and constructivist beliefs (West) German foreign policy had indeed a *non-multilateral* dimension, in which nongovernmental actors through transnational channels were employing soft power. Given that soft power’s working is very difficult to prove empirically, I will argue that much is already gained by specifying precisely those channels through which soft power operates.

It is important to stress that although this thesis will occasionally contextualise (West) Germany’s foreign policy towards regime change in Portugal, Spain and South Africa

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<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, p.10.

<sup>25</sup> Amir Taheri, ‘The Perils of ‘Soft Power’, *New York Post*, 8 December 2003. On ‘niche diplomacy’ see Frank Bruni, ‘A Nation That Exports Oil, Herring and Peace’, *Washington Post*, 21 December 2002.

by highlighting aspects of its European and hence multilateral dimension, it does *not* examine the process of the FRG's European integration nor does it discuss the emergence and operationalisation of an European foreign policy. Therefore, the notion of Europe as a "normative power" and its "ideational impact"<sup>26</sup> on the Iberian transitions will not feature on this study's research agenda. Surely, the European Community's (EC) own soft power resulting from its normative framework of peace, democracy, the rule of law and human rights on the one hand and social solidarity, sustainable development and good governance on the other played a crucial role in the political transformation of Spain and Portugal with both countries eventually joining the EC in 1986.<sup>27</sup> There is no doubt that the prospect of joining the economically successful supranational organisation and to have the new democracy legitimised through EC membership in the eyes of the public played a hugely important role for the ultimate course of the democratisation process in both countries. "In a country, used to national projects being framed in the rhetoric of dictatorship" write Carlos Closa and Paul M. Heywood, "the European ideal – embracing the rule of law, participatory democracy, a market economy, constitutional order and so forth – offered an alternative overarching political project."<sup>28</sup> In Portugal, the political elites were won over by the same "complex system of material and symbolic incentives" that reinforced the Community's soft power and Beate Kohler has therefore rightly pointed out that "closer links between Portugal and the EC are seen not only as providing foreign support for her domestic political arrangements but also as a means of increasing internal economic efficiency."<sup>29</sup>

However, the importance of the transnational diffusion of norms through European institutions and the 'power of attraction' exercised by the EC do not take away from the argument pursued in this thesis, which is that soft power does not *need* to operate multilaterally, that it can be operationalised on a transnational level and that

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<sup>26</sup> Ian Manners, 'Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, vol.40, no.2, p.238; Ian Manners, 'Normative Power Europe Reconsidered', October 2004, CIDEL Workshop, Oslo 22 – 23 October 2004, available from <http://www.arena.uio.no/cidel/WorkshopOsloSecurity/Manners.pdf> From civilian to military power: the European Union at a crossroads?, cited on 6 June 2002, pp. 4 – 5.

<sup>27</sup> For a discussion of the normative aspects see *ibid*, pp. 242 – 243.

<sup>28</sup> Carlos Closa, Paul M. Heywood, *Spain and the European Union*, (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan 2004), p.17.

<sup>29</sup> Beate Kohler, *Political Forces in Spain, Greece and Portugal*, (Butterworth, London 1982), p.245.

much is already gained by identifying the channels through which soft power operates given the difficulties to prove its effectiveness empirically.<sup>30</sup> Without question, (West) Germany's soft power was being amplified through its integrated position within Europe's multilateral structures. The thesis, however, analyses only the German foreign policy decision-making and implementing process and does not seek to establish causal nexuses between external democracy promotion and the outcome of regime change processes. Therefore, the question of other forms of soft power and their importance needs to be addressed in a different study.

### **Thesis Structure**

*Chapter One* sets out to develop the theoretical argument as sketched out above. In its first part, the chapter's main thrust is to discuss the most important narratives in the literature on West Germany's foreign policy and their dealing with concept and configuration of power. It highlights the tension between realism's 'forgetting power' proposition and constructivism's focus on a multilaterally integrated form of power in an interdependent world. While criticising both the *Machtvergessenheit* paradigm as well as the definition of (West) German power as soft, tamed or of medium proportions as being too exclusive and not allowing the necessary complexity of the FRG's international relations to be fully taken into account, the argument calls for an emendation of existing narratives and approaches in FPA and calls for the reaching beyond the narrow confines of coercion while also carrying the discussion of German power outside of the multilateral sphere of collective action. The second part of the first chapter will examine in greater depth the concept of soft power as introduced to international relations theory by Joseph Nye. It will then connect Nye's main hypothesis with a compendious introduction of Arnold Wolfers classical study of milieu and possession goals. Given that milieu goals aim at the stabilisation of a state's extraterritorial environment and promote co-operative interstate relations, they lend themselves to the pursuit through soft power because influencing the process of structural transformation through the provision of ideas, policies and expertise will

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<sup>30</sup> For the transnationally promoted internalisation of international norms see Thomas Risse, Stephen C. Ropp, Kathryn Sikkink (eds.), *The power of human rights – international norms and domestic change*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press 1999).

ensure a high degree of systemic compatibility and thus a stable external environment. Soft power furthers milieu goals by helping the power wielder to appeal to others through his own democratic values while hard power can be seen as the traditional modus operandi to work towards the realisation of possession goals i.e. territorial gains or economic advantages. However, Wolfers rightly points out, milieu goals might be only a necessary step on the path to acquiring new possessions. Following the discussion of soft power, Chapter One will finally provide an overview of the system of West Germany's political foundations as part of the FRG's foreign policy apparatus. It will highlight the historical origins of these nonstate actors and their close affiliation with (West) Germany's main political parties. Their legal and institutional status will be examined, their generous funding provided by the Federal Government will be put under the spotlight and strategic orientation, thematic priorities and operational modalities of their democracy promotion activities in host countries will be subjected to closer scrutiny.

*Chapters Two to Five* will test the argument of a sub-state level pursuit of national interests through the *Stiftungen's* informal and soft power-based diplomacy by analysing their involvement in different transition scenarios. Having fenced in the theoretical playground, the study will focus in its empirical part on the role of the Friedrich-Ebert Foundation (FEF) in post-Franco Spain and post-revolutionary Portugal between 1974 and 1982, as well as on the activities of the Konrad-Adenauer Foundation (KAF) in South Africa from the early 1980s to the country's first democratic elections in 1994. The case studies will conduct a thorough investigation into forms of political co-operation between the foundations and their respective partner organisations. In Spain and Portugal, the thesis will trace the efforts of West Germany's soft power diplomacy to hedge the institutional transformation of Spain's Socialist Workers Party (PSOE) led by Felipe Gonzalez and the Portuguese Socialist Party (PS) headed by Lisbon lawyer Mario Soares from exiled political movements to serious political party contenders. In South Africa, the KAF's support for the *Inkatha* movement (later Inkatha Freedom Party IFP) of Zulu leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi was aimed at strengthening a regionally-based organisation, which sought to become a countrywide political



representation of the country's disenfranchised black population while rejecting armed resistance and externally imposed economic sanctions.

In detail: The transition to and consolidation of democracy in Portugal is being discussed in two chapters. *Chapter Two* of the dissertation covers the first phase of democratic change from the Revolution of the Carnations in April 1974 onwards, during which West Germany's Social Democratic Party (SPD)-led foreign policy sought to stabilise Portugal's Socialist forces against a possible Communist onslaught. *Chapter Three* takes a closer look at FEF-directed capacity-building measures as part of the phase of democratic consolidation spanning the period between 1976 and 1981. Both chapters will alternate between the analysis of governmental diplomacy, foreign policy decisions made by the SPD as the majority party in the West German Government and the FEF's transnational activities. Spain's transition from Franco-style authoritarianism to liberal democracy will be submitted to a careful examination in *Chapter Four*. It shows how West Germany's Social Democracy in its governmental role as well as through its party foundation provided the SPD's partner organisation PSOE with financial, logistical and political aid. In highlighting the way in which West Germany's Social Democrats sought to help Spain's Socialists to develop PSOE's organisational structures, build a non-Communist union organisation and play a leading role in the constitution-building process, the role of the FEF office in Madrid will take centre stage. Finally, *Chapter Five* shifts the analytical focus towards West German Conservatism and examines a case of transnational democracy promotion during the tenure of Chancellor Helmut Kohl. It will document the KAF's cross-border activities, in particular its support for the *Inkatha*-run think tank, the Inkatha-Institute and the Democracy Development Programme (DDP), after the foundation was being permitted to open an office in the apartheid state in 1982. Although the Cold War is commonly thought to have ended with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, it seems justified to continue the analysis of nonstate actor KAF's democracy promotion projects in South Africa well into the first four years of the post-Cold War era as it will show strong elements of continuity in the soft power-based pursuit of Germany's foreign policy. Finally, the concluding chapter undertakes to firmly connect the various strings of analysis and to sum up findings and observations about formation, genesis, modality and

direction of the FRG's soft power politics and the role of FEF and KAF within the context of the transitional processes in the Iberian Peninsula and South Africa.

### **Selection of Case Studies**

The reasons for having chosen the Iberian and South African transition theatres to exemplify nature and workings of (West) German power in its international relations after the Second World War were manifold. Firstly, political developments in all three countries and the outcome of their respective transformation processes were of particular importance to German foreign policy makers given that the Iberian Peninsula was part of the FRG's immediate European neighbourhood and South Africa's supply chain for raw materials needed by West Germany's industry was crucial for the viability of certain business sectors. From a security point of view, West Germany together with its NATO allies faced the sobering prospect of losing Portugal to the Soviet-dominated Communist world in a process often described as 'Nato's crumbling Southern flank'. The risk of a serious destabilisation of Bonn's regional milieu - in its 'backyard' as it were - affected the Federal Republic's national interest of regional security and economic stability much more than it was the case with other transitions e.g. in Latin America (Brazil, Chile). In South Africa, West Germany's raw material dependency as well as its cultural links with the apartheid state's white minority constituted a similar situation affecting the FRG's national interest. Secondly, the democratisation processes in the Iberian Peninsula in their international dimension were often highly personalised and regularly driven by long-standing friendships between West German politicians and their Spanish and Portuguese counterparts. Willy Brandt's relationships with both PSOE leader Gonzalez and PS-Chairman Soares are cases in point. It seemed therefore obvious to focus on these two transformation cases as the close political friendships helped to connect the dots in the relations between West Germany's foreign policy actors and the Spanish and Portuguese recipients of political aid.

Finally, the involvement of FEF and KAF in Portugal, Spain and South Africa might appear to be a geographically rather random choice of democracy promotion case studies but the foundations' time of engagement in these three settings provides a continuous timeline commencing in the first half of the 1970s at the outset of what

Samuel Huntington has described as the “third wave of democratisation”<sup>31</sup> and ending in the mid-1990s with the colonial era finally buried in South Africa with the first democratic elections in 1994. Therefore, the choice of case studies seemed to be an analytically fecund approach to look into questions of continuity and change in the modality of (West) Germany’s foreign policy and its soft power-driven democracy promotion activities over a period of more than twenty years.

Placing the regime change processes in Lisbon, Madrid and Pretoria analytically next to each other also allows for a comparative perspective, which brings out the differences in operational strategies and thematic foci as applied by the political foundations within different transformation frameworks. The Portuguese ‘Revolution of the Carnations’ brought about fundamental change of political structures by means of a coup d’etat or *ruptura pactada* while the end of the Franco regime in Spain and the governmental changing of the guard in South Africa were characterised by established elites gradually surrendering power as part of a negotiated settlement process or *reforma pactada*.<sup>32</sup> Therefore, the choice of case studies in this thesis supports its attempt to show that and how soft power needs to adapt to different types of regime transitions. At the same time, the combination of Iberian and South African democratisation processes makes an examination of the international activities of the two biggest political foundations – FEF and KAF – possible thereby forestalling criticism of a too narrowly construed analytical focus and political one-sidedness. It is important to mention that although West Germany’s soft power politics is being examined in the context of various regime change processes, the thesis does not aim at making a contribution to the ever-growing field of transformation literature. This is not to say that the empirical material produced in the country studies will not provide food for thought for other researchers to pursue new paths of inquiry, which might help them to shed more light on

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<sup>31</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *The third wave: democratization in the late twentieth century*, (University of Oklahoma Press 1991).

<sup>32</sup> See Juan Linz, Alfred Stepan, ‘The Paradigmatic Case of Reforma Pactada – Ruptura Pactada: Spain’ in *Problems of Democratic Transitions and Consolidation – Southern Europe, South America and Post-Communist Europe*, (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press 1996), pp. 87 – 115.

the international dimension of regime change as an important aspect of any process of transition from authoritarian rule<sup>33</sup>.

## **Methodology**

The study follows a qualitative methodology and derives its empirical evidence from a combination of primary and secondary sources. The primary source base consists of interviews, written correspondence, archives material and official publications made available by the political foundations as well as by Germany's Lower House, the *Bundestag*. Scholarly books and articles fall into the second category of sources covering a broad range of thematic areas such as Germany's post-war history, Cold War foreign policy analysis, regime change, transnationalism, global interdependence and soft power. The thirty interviewees can be grouped into five categories, namely foundation officials, government officials, party officials, journalists and diplomats. The material on FEF activities in Spain and Portugal, correspondence between SPD, PSOE and PS leaders and internal analyses of the SPD's International Affairs Department were collected in the *Archiv der sozialen Demokratie AdsD* (Archive of Social Democracy) in Bonn. Generally, the lamentable scarcity of primary sources needs to be seen as a consequence of the foundations' policy of blocking access to the original documentation of the foundations' international activities. Therefore, the archived material used in this study had to be 'dug out' from a number of individual depositories in the AdsD. In the case of the KAF's democracy promotion activities in South Africa, the Foundation's Archive of Christian-Democratic Politics (*Archiv für Christlich-Demokratische Politik*) in Sankt Augustin near Bonn could not be accessed, as documents relating to events that have taken place less than 30 years ago remain barred for research purposes. The thesis also provides additional archives material including political assessments by regional desks, annual reports, background notes, briefing papers and memoranda for the years 1974 and 1975 by the West German Foreign Office or *Auswärtige Amt*. The 30-year freeze on access to official ministerial documents had been lifted in 2005 for the abovementioned years and more material could be therefore recovered from the Political Archives of the German Foreign Office in Berlin (*Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen*

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<sup>33</sup> See Prospects for Further Research, p.317.

*Amtes*). German and Spanish secondary literature, archive documents and interviews have been translated into English by the author of this thesis whereby longer passages have been additionally marked as 'translated by author' in the footnotes.

## Chapter 1

### **Renouncing Power Politics? – The FRG’s Foreign Policy, *Machtvergessenheit* and the Soft Dimension of Power**

#### ***1.1. Introduction***

The first chapter is divided into three parts. In its *first part*, it critically analyses the prevailing narratives in the literature on West Germany’s foreign policy by contrasting the realist *Machtvergessenheit* approach prominently advocated by Hans-Peter Schwarz and Christian Hacke with the largely constructivist theoretical frameworks of ‘civilian power’, ‘tamed power’ and ‘middle power’ represented by scholars such as Hanns W. Maull, Peter Katzenstein and Kim Nossal (see 1.2.). It advances the argument that the realist narrative focuses two heavily on coercive power projection capabilities thus overlooking important means and channels of influence in international relations based on persuasion and co-optation. Although the approach acknowledges the importance of multilateralism in West German diplomacy, it sees such a ‘concerted’ form of external action and its underlying co-operative internationalism simply as an expression of weakness, which only illustrates the ‘powerless’ nature of West German foreign policy. On the other hand, it is being argued that the constructivist approaches in their discussion of German postwar power also fail to fully grasp the nature and multifaceted make-up of the FRG’s foreign policy. Although they reject the realist argument of ‘forgetting power’ and instead claim that the FRG was powerful indeed, used its power and was guided in its foreign policy behaviour by its national interests and in spite of their willingness to incorporate forms of noncoercive power into their analysis of the Federal Republic’s Cold War diplomacy, the literature review shows that the constructivist focus rests almost exclusively on multilateral frameworks of operation such as the European Community or NATO. Since constructivist narratives therefore provide important insights into the interconnectedness of postwar identity, structural changes on an international level and new forms of power but hardly go beyond the realm of multilateral action, the ambition in developing the thesis’s theoretical framework of enquiry is to show that (West) German foreign policy did not only have a

power dimension, which rested largely on noncoercive instruments, but that these softer forms of power were often operationalised outside of multilateral channels.

In the *second part*, the chapter will therefore introduce the concept of soft power setting forth the essential propositions made by American academic Joseph S. Nye in his writings on the noncoercive ‘power of attraction’ (see 1.3). It will further highlight the relevance of what Arnold Wolfers has coined ‘milieu goals’ for the utilization of soft power i.e. the attempt to influence the dynamics and conditions of a state’s extraterritorial environment thus anticipating the operational context of Bonn’s persuasion-based democracy promotion activities in Spain, Portugal and South Africa on a theoretical level. The study identifies soft power as the FRG’s postwar mode of external action (which serves to repudiate the realist claim of a ‘forgetfulness of power’) while arguing that, contrary to constructivist belief, West German soft power was not only displayed within multilateral fora but through transnationally operating non-governmental organisations on a sub-state level as well. The latter point serves as the basis for the analysis in the chapter’s *third part*, which will highlight the role of Germany’s political foundations (*Stiftungen*) as an important component of the FRG’s foreign policy system.

Apart from providing a brief historical overview of *Stiftungen* activities, the third section concerns itself with an examination of the foundation’s organisational structure, their institutional status and relationship with political parties, the sources of funding and their operational mode in the pursuit of international activities (see 1.4.). Having identified the political foundations as transnational organisations of democracy promotion dependent on soft power, the chapter will conclude that only through a conflation of both operational levels i.e. governmental diplomacy (‘public’) and transnational foreign policy (‘private’) can one arrive at a complete narrative that adequately depicts (West) Germany’s Cold War foreign policy tools, methods and strategies and that can provide an accurate picture of the nature and configuration of German power and power politics in the postwar era.

## ***1.2. Discourses on power in the FRG’s foreign policy pre-1989***

The FRG’s foreign policy with its preference for multilateral problem-solving mechanisms, its rejection of the pursuit of an international agenda by military means, its

appreciation of the concept of collective security and its active participation in international institutions in order to strengthen the global acceptance of international legal norms has been always met with a mixed response in academic circles. While mostly liberal commentators acknowledged that Bonn's diplomacy had managed to "not only increase the security of its democracy and to enhance its prosperity but also to earn the recognition, respect and trust of the international community" through its *Selbsteinbindung* i.e. self-integration in intergovernmental structures and through its co-operation with others, more sceptical observers ridiculed the Federal Republic's "self-denial vis-à-vis the outside world" and deplored its "renunciation of national interests."<sup>34</sup> While one faction argued that 'power politics' had fallen victim to the legacy of Germany's wartime past, the other faction insisted that power had remained a central concept in the FRG's Cold War foreign policy only that changes in the external environment and a newly emerged post-Auschwitz national identity had altered the nature of power politics, re-configured its operational framework and enabled diplomats and politicians to explore new channels through which power was being projected. At the heart of the scholarly argument lies therefore the question of what exactly constitutes or qualifies for political power and to what extent the Federal Republic had either overcome, transcended or simply modified elements of power in the management of its external relations.

Four discourses are standing out in the debate over the FRG's Cold War foreign policy suggesting different ways to think about power in the Federal Republic's international relations. The first approach carries most of the classical hallmarks of realist analysis and puts forward the proposition that power and power politics had become somewhat scorned concepts among West Germany's political decision-makers with the national interest being rejected as a guiding principle of the FRG's post-war diplomacy. This narrative's central theme is a qualitative change in the substance of external action, which is characterised by a principled aversion towards the use of force, an abstention from conflict situations in world politics and a 'forgetfulness' related to

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<sup>34</sup> See the diverging assessments of August Pradetto and Karl Feldmeyer during the round table workshop 'Deutsche Aussenpolitik im Spannungsfeld von nationalen Interessen, moralischen Ansprüchen und neuer amerikanischer Dominanz' organised by the BMW-Herbert Quandt Foundation, October 15, 2003, available from [www.politik.uni-bonn.de/main/dokus/quandt\\_rtw2.pdf](http://www.politik.uni-bonn.de/main/dokus/quandt_rtw2.pdf), cited on 12 February 2006, pp.5-12.



political power coined *Machtvergessenheit*. The second school of thought objects to this interpretation of West Germany's foreign policy as being devoid of state interests and argues instead that the FRG did in fact possess a 'power' dimension, which however found its expression in new forms of global influence. This approach identifies the FRG as a 'civilian power', which pursues its foreign policy goals by pre-dominantly non-military means and mostly within multilateral frameworks. The third discourse puts less emphasis on the impetus of promoting civilianised interaction between states but shares with the former the analytical focus on the institutionalisation of West Germany's foreign policy describing its effect as a 'taming' of German power. Finally, the FRG's classification as a middle power attempts to lay bare nexuses between status and type of states and their foreign policy behaviour. The following sub-sections will examine the four approaches more closely showing that the realist narrative remains analytically too one-sided in its fixation on the coercive dimension of power while the civilian, tamed and middle power approaches limit the power dimension of West German foreign policy to the country's membership in multilateral organisations such as EC and NATO. The lopsided nature of the four narratives merits an integrated approach, which brings together the utilizable propositions of both realist and constructivist analyses while adding and integrating the study's central argument of an often non-multilaterally operationalised soft power politics by West Germany's foreign policy elites.

### **1.2.1. Forgetting Power**

Realist FPA scholars have come to strongly influence explanatory models explaining nature and configuration of the Federal Republic's external relations during the Cold War. Their leading voices have consistently deplored what they believe to be the FRG's disregard for any unilateral and 'selfishly' interest-driven pursuit of its foreign policy agenda.

The lamentable German '*Machtvergessenheit*' and the inhibition to face the often-discomforting realities of world politics have led to provincialism in foreign affairs. German politicians and many scholars abhor terms such as power politics and the

national interest and the concepts behind them. Instead, a peculiar extensive moralism, altruism, and self-denial characterise German foreign policy.<sup>35</sup>

According to realist interpretation, the Federal Republic never escaped the birth defect of its post-Second World War genesis as a remote-controlled model democracy supervised and monitored by the Western wartime alliance. It was only within the operational space prescribed by governments in Washington, London and Paris that German foreign policy makers were able to conduct their diplomatic business on the international stage and successive chancellors in Bonn presided over a state whose military micro-sovereignty and guilt-ridden national identity prevented the Germans from fully 'normalising' their international relations. Some writers on German foreign policy claimed that Europe had become a "substitute fatherland" for post-war Germans in the West, and in conservative academic circles, it became a fashionable habit to describe the West German foreign policy establishment as being essentially *machtvergessen* i.e. in denial of the importance of power politics.<sup>36</sup> After the Hitler regime had justified genocide by way of referring to Germany's national interest, post-war society categorically rejected any 'national' sentiments and images in its public domain with post-war integration in multilateral structures becoming the new *raison d'état* of the FRG's diplomacy. Realists have therefore coined the phrase of West Germany as a "traumatised giant" in international affairs, who had surrendered its diplomatic autonomy partly because of external pressure and partly because it did not even trust itself.<sup>37</sup>

Hans-Peter Schwarz, one of Germany's most prolific foreign policy analysts has pointed out "multilateral systems were in the utmost interest of German foreign policy makers since the Federal Republic needed to find its postwar niche from a position of weakness."<sup>38</sup> Within the German IR community, Schwarz articulated most eloquently

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<sup>35</sup> Christian Hacke, 'Power and Morality – The Legacy of Hans J. Morgenthau', available from <http://www.politik.uni-bonn.de/main/lesthal/files/hacke-afpil.pdf>, cited on 9 March 2006, p.7.

<sup>36</sup> Max Otte, *A Rising Middle Power – German Foreign Policy in Transition 1989-1999*, (St. Martin'Press, New York 2000), p. 15.

<sup>37</sup> Hans-Peter Schwarz, *Die Zentralmacht Europas – Deutschlands Rückkehr auf die Weltbühne*, (Siedler Verlag, Berlin, 1994), p.13.

<sup>38</sup> Hans-Peter Schwarz, *Die gezähmten Deutschen – Von der Machtbessessenheit zur Machtvergessenheit*, (Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, Düsseldorf 1985), p. 42.

the realist conviction that Bonn's dependency on the United States was simply an expression of political guardianship and a telling illustration of the fragmented state of Germany's foreign policy. Its postwar democracy, he argued, was left with only a few options of positioning itself in the international arena as it remained territorially divided, morally discredited and operationally constrained. Although multilateralism enabled the German government to eventually regain some of its previous maneuverability in international affairs, its increasingly accentuated role and growing importance as one of Washington's staunchest allies in the bipolar world of superpower confrontation could not conceal the fundamental change that had taken place in Germany's external relations with a dramatically curtailed ability to engage in an unconstrained employment of hard coercive power for the realisation of state interests. In Schwarz's opinion, the fact that any unilateral use of military force by Germany's political leadership had become morally unthinkable and politically impossible demonstrated that the country's foreign policy had experienced an almost seismic shift from its former great power status characterised by the restless pursuit of political power and military glory coined *Machtbesessenheit* towards becoming a medium-seized European polity whose global ambitions were reduced to playing the role of good international citizen within the transatlantic and European communities. "There has been a fundamental weakening of the Federal Republic compared to the great power status of the Reich based on the autonomy of decision-making" concludes Schwarz and points at the total absence of any foreign policy strategies that had not been coordinated with its Western alliance partners.<sup>39</sup> The latter led him to believe that "multilateralism prevents autonomous foreign policy."<sup>40</sup>

Academic advocates of the *Machtvergessenheit* approach stressed that the disappearance of autonomous external action and the "negative attitude vis-à-vis the very notion of power since the 1950s" was followed by an operational mode of West German diplomacy that was not only multilaterally grounded but also accompanied by strong moral considerations.<sup>41</sup> The normalisation of relations between the Federal

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<sup>39</sup> *Ibid*, p.116.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid*, p. 117.

Republic and the member states of the Warsaw Pact towards the end of the 1960s, which came to be known as *Ostpolitik* derived its legitimacy therefore from the moral dimension of closer co-operation and national reconciliation between old enemies. According to Schwarz, the new priorities in German foreign policy seemed to be the preservation of good neighbourly relations and the promotion of tolerance and understanding between adversaries rather than the maximisation of wealth and the acquisition of territory through the use of economic coercion or military threats. Realists in the German IR community were under no illusion that the pursuit of national interests by conventional means such as gun boat diplomacy or economic bullying was no longer feasible and that the new democracy needed to find its niche as a non-militarist, internationalist and second-tier semi-sovereign actor in international organisations. “Power politics after Hitler remained a German taboo with war going through a process of criminalisation” complains Schwarz and he continues to argue “in the Federal Republic internationalist ideas concerning the principal question of power were as dominant as the thinking in military categories during the Bismarck and the Wilhelmine era.”<sup>42</sup>

In fact, it was this internationalist ethos in the FRG’s foreign policy with its potential to affect as much the interests of foreign societies as they affected West German interests, which in the eyes of its realist critics was merely the flip side of its *Machtvergessenheit*. Besides the rejection of power politics with its employment of hard power, particularly military force, Schwarz identifies additional components of what he calls the internationalist trait of West German foreign policy. They include the attempt to further deepen political co-operation in Western Europe, the categorical rejection of colonialism in all its variations, the support for disarmament processes, an unqualified support for development aid and Third World concerns, a preference for providing global solutions to solve ‘big’ problems, unconditioned and uncritical co-operation within international organisations as well as the promotion of global human rights policies.<sup>43</sup> As far as conservative IR scholars were concerned, the pacifist configuration of West Germany’s foreign policy throughout the Cold War era had to be seen as an

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<sup>42</sup> *Ibid*, p.117.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid*, p.123.

attempt at political catharsis after the Nazi regime had presided over a genocidal overstretch of power politics with disastrous consequences for global peace. Germany's post-1945 internationalism became the new diplomatic doctrine and any thinking in categories of power, coercion, threat and national interest, which had previously dominated foreign policy planning, was replaced by a non-belligerent, cosmopolitan and tolerant foreign policy attitude, which sometimes seemed to take the form of political altruism. The new catch word that summed up Bonn's new foreign policy parameters was *Friedenspolitik* or peace politics which, according to Schwarz, led to the marginalisation of military power, downgraded the criteria of Germany's national interest and focused on strategies of conflict resolution as the centrepiece of post-war foreign policy concepts. *Friedenspolitik* and *Machtvergessenheit* not only 'revolutionised' Germany's foreign policy and its elite-driven discourse but it also changed the public's perception of the legitimacy of a foreign policy driven by national interests. Realists pointed out that the trauma of collective guilt was deeply ingrained in Germany's national psyche and the country's new political culture of humility and good international citizenship was characterised by an almost introverted and often reluctant approach to independent action in international affairs. In Schwarz's concept of power, which was uni-dimensionally defined as the coercion-based ability of states to impose their will on rival governments, <sup>^</sup>was clearly no place for internationalism and *Friedenspolitik*.<sup>44</sup> West German 'forgetfulness' or 'obliviousness' in its employment of power during the Cold War resulted in several behavioural characteristics displayed in the FRG's foreign policy. He argues that besides its willingness to adopt the role of moderator, mediator and bridge-builder, Bonn's diplomacy favoured multilateral solutions particularly within the transatlantic alliance, which it "understood as a permanent framework for orientation", and engaged in foreign policy decision-making accompanied by strong moral over-tones."<sup>45</sup>

Fellow realist Gregor Schöllgen describes the 'Bonn Republic' as a medium-seize state, which occupies a peripheral position in the international system until the fall

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<sup>44</sup> *Ibid*, p.70.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid*, p.24.

of the Berlin Wall and the reunification of Germany's East and West in 1989/90.<sup>46</sup> He agrees with his colleagues' general verdict that the Federal Republic in its post-war history had developed a paralysing "fear of power." This fear syndrome led to a "factual withdrawal from world politics after 1945 in order to disrupt any attempt to continue Germany's great power politics."<sup>47</sup> The erstwhile great power had become a political dwarf in international affairs condemned through the atrophy if not total disappearance of any *Machtwillen* or 'will to power' and had become content to watch former rivals engaging in the game of international high politics from the sidelines.<sup>48</sup> Schöllgen strikes up a familiar tone by highlighting Germany's multilateral commitments, which were a direct consequence of the generational experience of war by successive chancellors and an expression of the country's multinational interwovenness, which had come to replace the old dashing attitude in German foreign policy.<sup>49</sup> However, he does not disguise the fact that the international environment of superpower confrontation and substantially diminished German power projection capabilities greatly contributed to the economic recovery and industrial success story of the FRG with West Germany "prospering in the lee of the East-West conflict."<sup>50</sup>

Other authors of the *Machtvergangenheit* School interpret the FRG's preference for multilateral action simply as a "pretext for national abstention"<sup>51</sup> In their view, the institutionalisation and multilateralisation of Germany's post-war diplomacy kept the FRG in a state of incompleteness and fragmentation.<sup>52</sup> While 'complete' states and 'complete' foreign policies required a conscious decision to use military force in international affairs, West Germany's "deep-seated aversion to power politics" disabled its foreign affairs apparatus and prevented it from effectively pursuing the FRG's national interests. Thus realists like Schwarz postulate that without soldiers, missiles and

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<sup>46</sup> Gregor Schöllgen, *Angst vor der Macht – Die Deutschen und ihre Aussenpolitik*, (Verlag Ullstein, Berlin 1993), p.27.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid*, p.47.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid*, p.55. See also 'Deutschlands neue Lage – Die USA, die Bundesrepublik Deutschland und die Zukunft des westlichen Bündnisses', *Europa-Archiv*, no.5, 1992, p.130.

<sup>49</sup> Gregor Schöllgen, 'Die Zukunft der deutschen Aussenpolitik liegt in Europa', *Das Parlament – Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, no. 11, 2004, p. 13.

<sup>50</sup> Gregor Schöllgen, 'National Interest and International Responsibility: Germany's Role in World Affairs', in Arnulf Baring (ed.), *Germany's New Position in Europe*, (Palgrave Macmillan, 1994), p.40.

<sup>51</sup> Franz-Josef Meiers, 'Germany: The Reluctant Power' *Survival*, vol.37, no.3, autumn 1995, p.83.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid*, p.84.

bombs, there cannot be any power projection capability, and that the satisfactory realisation of one's national interests, goals and preferences depended on one's own ultimate willingness to embrace the idea of 'warriorhood' in international affairs. Furthermore, realist scholars decried the post-national *raison d'état* of the FRG, which in their view subordinated Bonn's foreign policy goals to the sacrosanct political doctrine of Western integration and described the latter as standing in stark contrast to the FRG's most obvious national interest, namely that of reunification. In their view, Adenauer's *Politik der Stärke* i.e. the politics of strength, which rejected suggestions of achieving German reunification by accepting a position of neutrality between East and West and through the FRG's disassociation from the Western postwar alliance was the expression of a central contradiction in German foreign policy planning. *Politik der Stärke* sought to convince Soviet leaders that their long-term goal of installing Communist puppet regimes in Western Europe including the FRG was impossible to realise and that once Soviet rulers had realised the futility of their ambitions, the West German government was able to negotiate reunification in an atmosphere of *détente*.<sup>53</sup> Adenauer's uncompromising insistence on Western integration, maintained the critics, had tied the political fate of 50 million Germans in the Western part of the country inextricably to the ultimate triumph of capitalism and Western-style democracy while sacrificing national unity on the altar of great power politics and ideological principles. The "strengthening of the FRG's Western integration was prioritised over any other foreign policy goals. Since 1949, it in fact enjoyed priority over the goal of national reunification."<sup>54</sup>

Therefore, the fragmentation and partition of German state territory as a consequence of the Second World War was followed by the fragmentation of the FRG's *raison d'état* and, as a result, caused the unravelling of its definition of the 'national interest'.<sup>55</sup> When Hans-Peter Schwarz pointedly asked "what does 'national interest'

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<sup>53</sup> Christoph Bluth, *Britain, Germany and Western Nuclear Strategy*, (Clarendon Press, Oxford), p.21.

<sup>54</sup> Hans-Peter Schwarz, 'Die Politik der Westbindung oder die Staatsraison der Bundesrepublik', *Zeitschrift für Politik* vol.22, no.4, 1975, p.308.

<sup>55</sup> Christian Hacke, 'Die Rolle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland zwischen Ost und West: Von der Tyrannei der Wahl zur glücklichen Krise', in Karl Dietrich Bracher, Manfred Funke, Hans-Peter Schwarz (eds.), *Deutschland zwischen Krieg und Frieden – Beiträge zur Politik und Kultur im 20. Jahrhundert*, (Festschrift für Hans-Adolf Jacobsen, Droste Verlag 1991), p.222.

consist of when a nation is divided” and subsequently stressed the obvious fact that “West Germans were thus for a long time tempted to define what was in the ‘national interest’ solely in terms of the western portion of their divided country”, he simply highlighted the change of political reference points and external constraints that had occurred in the immediate postwar era.<sup>56</sup> Inevitably, Adenauer’s *Politik der Stärke* and its emphasis on Western integration triggered a “conflict of foreign policy priorities” with periodic frictions between the goals of alliance and security policy, on the one hand and national unity and détente, on the other.<sup>57</sup> The approach to treat the policy of Western integration as part of the national interest required arguably a rethink on the part of West Germany’s political elites as to how permanent the FRG’s very existence was likely to be. The ‘Hallstein Doctrine’, which sought to establish the government in Bonn as the only legitimate representation of Germans and their interests on the international stage and which threatened any country that recognised the Communist regime in East Berlin with the breaking-off of diplomatic relations did not allow for a definition of the national interest that incorporated both eastern and western part of the divided country. In this context, Jonathan Bach has remarked, “West Germany became the ‘real’ Germany, morally whole though territorially truncated.”<sup>58</sup>

*Machtvergessenheit* theorists regularly stressed the power of external preferences in the formation and articulation of Germany’s national interest sometimes leading them to accept the dichotomy of national interest and multilateralism unquestioned. “Germany has always been reluctant to conduct foreign policy making by means of a domestically driven definition of the ‘national interest’”, writes Christian Tuschhoff, “instead, it engaged in processes of multilateral negotiations that allowed it to co-determine common solutions.”<sup>59</sup> The view that the FRG lacked the determination

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<sup>56</sup> Hans-Peter Schwarz, ‘Germany’s National and European Interests’, in Arnulf Baring (ed.), *Germany’s New Position in Europe – Problems and Perspectives*, op.cit., p.108.

<sup>57</sup> Helga Haftendorn, ‘Außenpolitische Prioritäten und Handlungsspielraum – Ein Paradigma zur Analyse der Außenpolitik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland’, *Politische Vierteljahresschrift*, vol.21, 1989, p.35.

<sup>58</sup> Jonathan P.G.Bach, *Between Sovereignty and Integration – German Foreign Policy and National Identity after 1989*, (St. Martin’s Press, New York 1999), p.72.

<sup>59</sup> Christian Tuschhoff, ‘Explaining the Multilateral Reflex – German Foreign Policy 1949-2002’, Working Paper 12/2005, BMW Centre for German and European Studies, Georgetown University, available from [http://cges.georgetown.edu/docs/Docs\\_Working\\_Papers\\_Page/Tuschhoff\\_Working\\_Paper.pdf](http://cges.georgetown.edu/docs/Docs_Working_Papers_Page/Tuschhoff_Working_Paper.pdf), cited on 12 January 2006, p.4.



to formulate its foreign policy preferences and to articulate its own interests clearly and without ambiguity within and outside of multilateral fora was widely held not only in academic circles. The former CSU-Minister for International Development and Economic Co-operation, Carl-Dieter Spranger, remembered, “unfortunately, Germany’s ability and willingness to define its ‘national interests’, let alone to pursue those interests actively was as poorly developed in the 1980s and 1990s as it is today. Its foreign policy was dominated by ideational and humanitarian goals and purposes while other countries such as Britain, France, Russia and the United States pursued overarching national interests through their development aid policies.”<sup>60</sup> Its diplomacy in international organisations is being described as the routinely displayed behavioural pattern to “hide behind foreign partners” with the intention to evade its international responsibilities as one of Europe’s leading powers.<sup>61</sup> In the age of bipolarity, West Germany found itself pursuing a restless diplomatic campaign to repair its tarnished reputation, improve its image and to reassure its neighbours and partners of the moral sincerity of its ambitions and intentions. In the eyes of the traditionalists, West Germany’s ‘ignorance of power’ was expressed in its quest for rehabilitation, its low diplomatic profile, its co-operative attitude and, most importantly, in the transfer of sovereign rights and national prerogatives to multilateral bodies.<sup>62</sup> The surrender of autonomy and the blurring of its diplomatic contours were driven by the negative connotation that ‘power’ had in the perception of the majority of Germans.

According to *Machtvergessenheits* proponents, the result was a “relatively passive attitude in foreign policy, the absence of any systematic attempt to engage in a discussion about one’s own interests and an extremely cautious approach to enforce the latter.”<sup>63</sup> Historian Michael Stürmer has pointed out that in the international post-war geometry of power, the “organising principle” i.e. *raison d’etat* with which West Germany defined and determined its interests always came from the outside.<sup>64</sup> The

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<sup>60</sup> Personal correspondence with Carl-Dieter Spranger, 31 March 2006.

<sup>61</sup> Karl Kaiser, ‘Das Vereinigte Deutschland in der Internationalen Politik’, in Karl Kaiser, Hanns W. Maull (eds.), *Deutschlands Neue Außenpolitik*, vol.2, (R. Oldenbourg Verlag, München 1995), p.8.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p.9.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>64</sup> Michael Stürmer, ‘Deutsche Interessen’, in Karl Kaiser, Hanns W. Maull (eds.), *Deutschlands Neue Außenpolitik*, op.cit., p.52.

guiding principle for West German foreign policy and its underlying state interests was the congruence of the FRG's goals and preferences with European interests and transatlantic priorities. In its diplomatic behaviour, West German politicians wanted to remain 'predictable' in the eyes of their international counterparts and this predictability was to be guaranteed through Bonn's co-operative attitude, the 'multilateralisation' of its international actions and its unceasing emphasis on dialogue. Therefore, Stürmer argues, the exact nature, content and direction of what the FRG actually wanted to achieve and secure *for itself* was often unclear.<sup>65</sup>

### 1.2.2. Civilian Power

The second discourse dealing with the problem of power in the context of the FRG's foreign policy is based on a largely constructivist narrative and positions itself in clear opposition to the 'forgetfulness of power' approach introduced by Schwarz and other mostly realist writers. This discourse, which has been primarily advanced by German IR scholar Hanns Maull, defines the FRG as a 'civilian power i.e. a type of actor "whose foreign policy role concept and role behaviour is linked with objectives, values, principals and with forms of influence and instruments of power, which seek to further the civilianisation of international relations."<sup>66</sup> The emergence of civilian powers was made possible by structural changes in the post-war world of international relations such as an increasing degree of economic interdependence and political interconnectedness.

According to Maull, global interdependence facilitated the emergence of new operational modes for Western foreign policies prioritising co-operative forms of international interaction, a heavy emphasis on non-military instruments in the pursuit of political and economic agendas as well as a partial transfer of sovereign rights from the nation-state to supranational institutions.<sup>67</sup> He argues that a process of global social change furthers a tendency in societies around the world to tame organised social violence, formulate and enforce universal legal norms, institutionalise conflict-solving

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<sup>65</sup> *Ibid*, p.59.

<sup>66</sup> Hanns W. Maull, 'DFG-Projekt 'Zivilmächte – Schlussbericht und Ergebnisse', (Department of Foreign Policy and International Relations, University of Trier, 1997), available from <http://www.politik.uni-trier.de/pubs/forsch/civil.pdf>, cited on 4 March 2006, p.22.

<sup>67</sup> Hanns W. Maull, 'Germany and Japan: The New Civilian Powers', *Foreign Affairs*, winter 1990/91, vol.69, issue 5, p.92.

mechanisms and to work towards the eradication of economic disparities guided by the principle of solidarity.<sup>68</sup> His approach calls for a “New Thinking” in Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) and rejects the idea that international relations require an analytical prism different from domestic politics. It puts forward the proposition that the post-national (ist) state system is increasingly shaped by civilian powers and geared towards the promotion of international order through universally accepted legal norms.<sup>69</sup> In Maull’s view, the process of civilianising the realm of international politics ultimately heads towards the creation of a world society complete with authority structures and a global judicial system based on international law. In the medium to short-term, however, it facilitates the “internalisation of socially accepted norms (politics through legitimacy) replacing the forced implementation of rules (politics through power) in analogy to the domestication of the societal use of force.”<sup>70</sup> Maull stresses the fundamental changes in the international system since the end of the Second World War, which he deems significant enough to call into question the traditional assumptions and conventional political vocabulary of the realist school. In his analysis, the permeability of national boundaries, the economic and social interdependencies between countries, private sectors, societal groups and political elites as well as the unprecedented scope of global environmental and transnational challenges were all features of totally altered structures and dynamics in the international system that rendered the realist definition of power, national interest, sovereignty, autonomy or anarchy obsolescent.

Maull argued that many members of the international community had already begun to move away from a ‘militarised’ foreign policy of the realist kind with its terminological paraphernalia of the balance of power, containment and deterrence towards what he calls a civilianised diplomacy, which projected the notion of citizenship, institutionalised channels of conflict resolution and participatory forms of political decision-making onto the level of the international system. Nothing less but a “new world order” needed to be created based on the principle of broad international

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<sup>68</sup> Hanns W. Maull, ‘Zivilmacht Bundesrepublik Deutschland – Vierzehn Thesen für eine neue deutsche Außenpolitik’, *op.cit.*, p.270.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> Sebastian Harnisch, ‘Deutsche Aussenpolitik nach der Wende: Zivilmacht am Ende?’, Beitrag für den 21. DVPW-Kongress in Halle, available from <http://www.deutsche-aussenpolitik.de/resources/conferences/harnisch.pdf>, cited on 25 January 2006.

consensus and preventing unilateral impulses in the foreign policies of member states as well as any attempts to establish unipolar hegemony by one of them.<sup>71</sup> As the result of a postwar “learning process”, West Germany’s democracy had internalised such “New Thinking” in foreign affairs with its voluntary abstention from the “development of autonomous power projection capabilities”<sup>72</sup> and its decision to end the “vain search for autonomy, dominance and status.”<sup>73</sup> Its new identity and role concept as a civilian power rested on three core principles, namely a morally charged pacifism (‘never again’), the FRG’s integration into Western multilateral organisations (‘never alone’) as well as a pronounced preference for political solutions.<sup>74</sup> Although Maull concedes that what he described as a “revolutionary change” in West German foreign policy thinking was as much a product of operational necessity in the absence of sufficient material resources as it was based on a voluntary act of will and a conscious decision by political leaders, he nevertheless places strong emphasis on the element of choice.

He remains sometimes unclear though in his attempt to determine the exact nature and scope of anti-militarist sentiment in West German society and as part of his civilian power concept.<sup>75</sup> While at one point he described the dominant mentality in West Germany’s ‘civilian power society’ as that of a “widespread, instinctive pacifism”<sup>76</sup>, which required controversies and collisions of interest to be solved through dialogue, negotiations and reasoning rather than by employing B-52 bombers, nuclear warheads or biological agents, other remarks run counter to the pacifism thesis. “Civilian powers are by no means pacifist” he writes in 1999 and adds that his concept has been often misunderstood because of the frequent confusion of strictly non-military foreign policy instruments with the ‘civilian’ element in the operational design of

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<sup>71</sup> Hanns W. Maull, ‘Zivilmacht Bundesrepublik Deutschland’, op.cit., p.272.

<sup>72</sup> Hanns W. Maull, Germany and the Use of Force: Still a Civilian Power?, Paper prepared for the Workshop on ‘Force, Order and Global Governance: An Assessment of U.S., German and Japanese Approaches’, The Brookings Institution, Washington DC, 25 August 1999, p.5.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid*, p.3.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid*, pp.4-7.

<sup>75</sup> This lack of consistency or change of hearts in Maull’s work on the question of military force and pacifist attitudes has been noticed by Christian W. Burckhardt, Why is there a public debate about the idea of a Civilian Power Europe, EI Working Paper 2004 - 02, October 2004, London School of Economics and Political Science, pp.11-12.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid*, p.4.

civilian powers.<sup>77</sup> In allowing for the residual employment of military power by civilian powers, Maull rejects the competing discourse, which sees any violation of the principle of non-violent self-conduct in international affairs by civilian powers as a titular contradiction in terms.<sup>78</sup> It seems that he finally settles for the possibility of civilian powers resorting to military action in cases of individual and collective self-defence as well as in the pursuit of collective security against an international aggressor.<sup>79</sup>

The term 'civilian power' refers to three categories of analysis and description: Firstly, it introduces the ideal type of an *actor*, which is prepared to actively shape international structures but consciously maintains a profile distinct from traditional great powers. Secondly, it refers to a *role concept*, which introduces certain values and a specific diplomatic style to the practice of foreign policy and thirdly, civilian powers are being seen as the embodiment of particular foreign policy strategies adopted in the pursuit of political goals and the implementation of diplomatic agendas.<sup>80</sup> In stark

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<sup>77</sup> Hanns W. Maull, *DFG-Projekt 'Zivilmächte – Schlussbericht und Ergebnisse*, op.cit., p.26;

<sup>78</sup> Richard Rosecrance, 'The European Union: A new Type of International Actor' in Jan Zielonka (ed.) *Paradoxes of European Foreign Policy*, (The Hague, Kluwer Law International, Brill, 1998), pp.15-25; Ole Waever, 'The EU as a security actor - reflections from a pessimistic constructivist on post-sovereign security orders', in M.Kelstrup, M.C.Williams (eds.), *International Relations theory and the politics of European integration: power, security and community*, (London, Routledge 2000), pp.250-294; Karen E. Smith, 'Still 'civilian' power EU?', European Foreign Policy Unit Working Paper 2005/01, available from <http://www.arena.uio.no/cidel/WorkshopOsloSecurity/Smith.pdf>, cited on 12 March 2006, p.12. The argument over the military dimension of civilian power has largely taken place within the context of the Civilian Power Europe debate, which developed starting from Francois Duchêne's assertion of the anti-military value system of European peoples possibly, which he hoped would lead to the creation of a continental i.e. European civilian power as a force in world politics that promotes institutionalised forms of conflict resolution by non-violent means. Francois Duchêne, 'The European Community and the Uncertainties of Interdependence', in H.Kohnstamm, W. Hager (eds.), *A Nation Writ Large? Foreign Policy Problems before the European Community*, (London, Macmillan 1973), pp. 1-21.

<sup>79</sup> Knut Kirste, Hanns W. Maull, *Zivilmacht und Rollentheorie*, DFG-Projekt 'Zivilmächte', 1997, available from <http://www.deutsche-aussenpolitik.de/resources/conferences/zib.pdf>, cited on 9 September 2005, p.26. Maull therefore teams up with a second group of scholars, which argues that the term 'civilian' does not preclude the mobilisation of military capabilities. Henning Tewes echoing Maull's later thoughts on the issue defines the primary foreign policy goal of civilian powers as the "civilianisation of the international environment" and rejects the idea of equating the civilian dimension with an absolutist pacifism that does not leave sufficient space for the "residual" use of force. See Henning Tewes, *Germany, Civilian Power and the New Europe – Enlarging Nato and the European Union*, (Palgrave, Basingstoke 2002), p.11. Tewes links the concepts of civilian power to Joseph Nye's operational category of soft power when he explains that "coercive power attempts to get others to do what they otherwise would not do, civilian power is aimed at getting them to want what they otherwise would not want", p.20. See also A. Schünemann, N.Jörning, 'Die Sicherheits- und Verteidigungspolitik der "Zivilmacht Europa" - Ein Widerspruch in sich?', *HFSK-Report 13/2002*, Hessische Stiftung für Friedens- und Konfliktforschung, available from <http://www.hsfk.de/downloads/Rep1302.pdf>, cited on 2 July 2006, Frankfurt a.M. 2002.

<sup>80</sup> Hanns W. Maull, *DFG-Projekt 'Zivilmächte – Schlussbericht und Ergebnisse*, op.cit., pp.20-21.

contrast to Schwarz's 'forgetfulness of power' approach, Maull's 'civilian power' model, with which he examined both pre- and post-reunification foreign policy does not deny the relevance of the FRG's national interest for the formulation and execution of its foreign policy. It rather understands state interests as being essentially conditioned and shaped by norms, values and ideas, which provide the ethical and normative framework for their pursuit. The civilianisation of world politics requires a particular form of self-awareness of actors, which in turn expresses itself in a non-utilitarian diplomatic practice.<sup>81</sup> In the foreign policy of civilian powers, norms and values coincide with the national interest, and as its norms and values claim universal validity they also coincide with the national interest of other states. Put differently, 'civilian power' diplomacy carries the signs of a certain missionary zeal as expressed in Maull's frank assessment that "civilian powers have never renounced the possibility of them meddling in the internal affairs of other states" because they act on the realisation that "if one wants to make civilianisation processes succeed on a global scale, one needs to create the conditions for civilised state interaction."<sup>82</sup>

It follows from such a global role sought by civilian powers in general and the pre-1989 FRG in particular, that far from being oblivious of its own power projection capabilities, the West German state demonstrated a clear willingness to shape the structures of the international system only that influence and diplomatic initiatives were now being played out multilaterally. "Civilian powers reject unilateral and autonomous action," writes Maull and instead he contrasts traditional concepts of leadership based on hegemony, domination and military superiority with the operational mode of multilateralism as being key to the foreign policy of civilian powers.<sup>83</sup> In this sense, the FRG was 'powerful' indeed while acting in the national interest. However, for civilian power theorists national interest never meant only one's own advantage and power as the will and capacity to shape structures in the external environment and to bring about global change remained meaningless if not linked to multilateral integration and collective action. The 'never alone' factor was expressed in numerous phrases such as

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<sup>81</sup> *Ibid*, p.21.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid*, p.24.

<sup>83</sup> Knut Kirste, Hanns W. Maull, *Zivilmacht und Rollentheorie*, op.cit., p.25.

civilian powers' preparedness to take "collective action against international aggressors", their "pursuit of national interests through international co-operation", their foreign policy being subjected to increasing "institutionalisation through partial transfer of sovereignty" or the repeated use of terms such as 'partnership' and 'co-operation'.

While realists' accepted only unilateral practice based on hard i.e. coercive potential as evidence of real power, civilian power constructivists rejected the "traditional play of geopolitics" and the uni-dimensional definition of power by pointing at the multilateral integration of West Germany's foreign policy institutions. "The term 'power' no longer means what it used to: "hard" power, the ability to command others, is increasingly being replaced by "soft" (persuasive) power."<sup>84</sup> The transformation in the structural reality of the post-war international system was accompanied by a transformation of the basic 'ingredients' of power introducing a softer dimension to the previously hard forms of interaction in world politics. In a world dominated by civilian powers, political, social and economic interaction between members of the global community often revolves around supranational institutions and is governed and ultimately decided by the rule of international law. The military dimension in world politics became stunted if one leaves out the nuclear option as a strategic 'game' of mutual deterrence lacking the practical utility of conventional weaponry. "The Bundeswehr from this perspective" writes Maull, "could not plausibly be seen as a traditional military instrument" instead arguing that "its real purpose was to underpin a delicate, highly complex and dynamic strategy of war-avoidance through nuclear deterrence."<sup>85</sup> Measured by these criteria, the FRG's foreign policy behaviour can be justifiably described as that of a civilian power and its self-conduct in the international realm as certainly more 'civilised' than that of its Nazi or Wilhelmine predecessors.

However, with its doctrine of a perceived "New Thinking" in international affairs – a doctrine that pictures West Germany's foreign policy as essentially deriving its moral legitimacy from the "voluntary" act of "abstaining from autonomous power

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<sup>84</sup> Hanns W. Maull, 'Germany and Japan: The New Civilian Powers, *Foreign Affairs*, vol.69, no.5, winter 1990/91, p.106.

<sup>85</sup> Hanns W. Maull, 'Germany and the Use of Force: Still a Civilian Power?', Paper prepared for the Workshop on Force, Order and Global Governance, The Brookings Institution, Washington DC, July 1-2, 1999, available from [www.deutsche-aussenpolitik.de/resources/tazip/tazip2.pdf](http://www.deutsche-aussenpolitik.de/resources/tazip/tazip2.pdf), cited on 23 September 2005, p.7.

projection capabilities” and from its dismissal of dominance, status and autonomy as important driving forces for governmental action – and its insistence on a process of continuously progressing structural change characterised by the taming of social violence in domestic as well as in international politics, the ‘civilian power’ approach detects a *qualitative* transformation of the territorially constituted structures of the Westphalian state system. It argues that this transformation needed to be seen as the manifestation of a fundamental change in the *substance* of foreign policy behaviour rather than as mere change in the *form* of external interaction, the latter being a consequence and expression of changes in the state’s operational environment.<sup>86</sup> There are several problems with the conceptual pillars of such an approach. Firstly, Maull’s claim of a renunciation of autonomy by West German foreign policy makers appears to be questionable. Surely, the bipolar structural reality of the Cold War undoubtedly constrained the operational freedom of the FRG and other middle and great powers with its “shackles of ideological competition.”<sup>87</sup> However, if one defines autonomy classically as the “right of a state to self-government, law-making and self-administration” (Oxford English Dictionary<sup>88</sup>), it has never been renounced by post-war German elites nor eliminated by outside powers.

Maull acknowledges the validity and usefulness of power as an analytical category stating that he could not “imagine any politics, in which power would not play a role” and insisting, “the crucial question is in what form and context power is being brought to bear.”<sup>89</sup> Contrary to the realist mocking of West Germany’s alleged post-war illness of *Machtvergessenheit*, he insists in more recent publications that “the FRG’s foreign policy tradition was anything but *machtvergessen* (otherwise it would not have been so successful)” and describes West German diplomacy as pursuing “highly discreet and ‘intelligent’ power politics to achieve its interests and goals.”<sup>90</sup> However, his

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<sup>86</sup> For the hypothesis of a *qualitative* transformation in international relations see Hanns W. Maull, ‘Zivilmacht Bundesrepublik Deutschland’, op.cit., p.269.

<sup>87</sup> Wilfried von Bredow, Thomas Jäger, *Neue deutsche Aussenpolitik – Nationale Interessen in internationalen Beziehungen*, (Leske & Budrich, Opladen 1993), p.24.

<sup>88</sup> Available at <http://www.oed.com>, cited on 22 January 2006.

<sup>89</sup> Personal correspondence with Hanns W. Maull, 18 August 2005.

<sup>90</sup> Hanns W. Maull, ‘Deutsche Machtpolitik ohne Macht’, in *WeltTrends*, vol.43, no.12, summer 2004, p.61.



insistence on the causal nexus between global interdependence and the proclaimed fundamental erosion of a nation-state's autonomy in the external realm appears to subsequently shift the focus too strongly towards multilateral structures as the only remaining residual framework within which political power can be exercised by nation-state governments. Likewise, civilian power theorist Henning Tewes reflecting on the numerous cases of regime change and democratic transitions in Eastern and Central Europe after the demise of the Soviet Union sees the ultimate connection between the foreign policies of civilian powers and multilateral modes of operation. He asks "How does a civilian power behave towards a set of nascent market democracies right on its borders?" and that predicts that "it would attempt to stretch civilian power to these countries, that is would attempt to incorporate them into the network of interdependence in order to stabilise their democracies and to support their prosperity."<sup>91</sup> And he concludes: "Hence, civilianisation occurs through stabilisation, which in turn occurs in multilateral frameworks."<sup>92</sup> This near-exclusive concern with the multilateral configuration of the foreign policy of civilian powers and the approach's strong emphasis on receding autonomous spaces within them appears to be not necessarily in accord with the FRG's diplomatic reality and the activities of the political foundations. While multilateralism played a crucial role in West Germany's external relations management it was clearly not the only level on which influence in the international realm was brought to bear and the civilian power approach fails to pay sufficient attention to the transnational and sub-state dimension of soft power.

### 1.2.3. Tamed Power

The constructivist argument of a constituent influence of norms, ideas and values on foreign policy strategies and state interests in the context of West Germany's Cold War diplomacy is being further elaborated upon by a group of scholars, whose central propositions should be arguably read and interpreted in connection with the core argument of Maull's civilian power theory. They too view the "institutionalisation of power" as the most distinctive feature of West Germany's post-war foreign policy and describe Bonn's declared preference for concerted action within multilateral fora and for

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<sup>91</sup> *Ibid*, p.48.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid*.

| Tewes?

diplomacy through “institutionally mediated systems” as the consequence and product of an “internationalised state identity” with strong European traits.<sup>93</sup> According to their interpretation, power in the FRG’s foreign policy had not been forgotten, ignored or rejected but “tamed” through multilateral arrangements particularly through the process of an institutional ‘Europeanisation’ of its external relations. Peter Katzenstein for example writes, “The institutionalisation of power is the most distinctive aspect of the relationship between Europe and Germany. The institutionalisation of power matters because it takes the hard edges off power relations.”<sup>94</sup> His constructivist interpretation, which highlights historically induced changes in Germany’s national identity leading to a re-configuration of power in West Germany’s diplomacy and the selection of new channels and instruments through which it is being exercised shares a common analytical angle with the institutional preoccupation of neoliberalism. But while neoliberalism stresses the importance of institutions as means to reduce transaction costs, to strengthen predictability and certainty in an otherwise unpredictable and anarchic international environment and to improve efficiency in bargaining and negotiating situations between states, Katzenstein and his fellow ‘tamed power’ theorists evoke the norm-setting qualities of international institutions. They argue that the significance of an institutionalisation of state power and state action needed to be seen in the normative ferment that these institutions provide and which begets actor identities and international structures “in which the reputation of actors acquires meaning and value.”<sup>95</sup> Katzenstein himself clarifies that

This is not to argue that German policy reflected idealist motives in the 1980s and 1990s. It did not. It reflected German interests. But those interests pursued through power and bargaining were fundamentally shaped by the institutional context of Europe and the Europeanisation of the identity of the German state that had taken place in the preceding decades.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Peter Katzenstein (ed.), *Tamed Power – Germany in Europe* (Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London 1997), pp. 4-5.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid*, p.3.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid*, p.13.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid*, pp.14-15.

Katzenstein's version of West German foreign policy incorporates many of the basic characteristics of a civilian power with its strong focus on multilateralism and its thesis that state interests needed to be seen as a product rather than a producer of a polity's normative structures. He refrains from labelling Germany's discomfort vis-à-vis the mobilisation of military resources 'pacifism' instead describing the antimilitarist component of Germany's post-war identity as a "widespread aversion to the use of force" which had become "an institutionalised norm" in the country's quest for international rectification and the purging of its political soul after years of totalitarianism. What is new about the 'tamed power' paradigm compared to the civilian power discourse is that it introduces the idea of 'soft power' into the discussion linking 'softer' forms of external action with multilateral diplomacy.

Between 1958 and 1989, Germany projected its power softly, revealing a form preference for normative and institutional over material interests, an ingrained support for multilateralism, and a greater inclination than its large European partners to delegate sovereignty to supranational institutions.<sup>97</sup>

Seen through a constructivist lens, Germany's totalitarian past triggered the emergence of a new postwar identity, the new identity facilitated new normative choices, new norms produced new interests and these interests were pursued within new institutions (which in turn shaped West German interests). 'Tamed power' theorists argue that unlike previous operational modes adopted by German foreign affairs elites, the postwar modality of the FRG's multilaterally packaged foreign policy was soft. Several references are being made to this softer dimension. "The German approach to power and the practices that sustain and reformulate it, emphasises its 'soft' elements,"<sup>98</sup> writes Katzenstein and claims, "institutionalised power is 'soft' compared to other types of power."<sup>99</sup> The 'taming' of German power led to the grinding down of its hard power profile, the latter presumably referring to the unilateral use of military force although 'tamed power' constructivists never provide a precise definition of what in their view

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<sup>97</sup> Jeffrey J. Anderson, 'Hard interests, Soft Power and Germany's Changing Role in Europe', in Peter Katzenstein (ed.), *Tamed Power – Germany in Europe*, op.cit., p.80.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid*, p.3.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid*, p.4.

qualifies as soft and hard power. Like Maull, they think of unilateral forms of West German foreign policy and diplomatic action on Bonn's own initiative as inconceivable. "What is distinctive about Germany" it is being concluded, "is that its political leaders exercise power only in multilateral...systems – in the EU, the Atlantic Community, and broader international fora – that soften sovereign power."<sup>100</sup>

#### 1.2.4. Middle Power

Finally, in a further attempt to develop a conceptual framework for the employment of power in West Germany's foreign policy proponents of the idea of 'middlepowerdom' seek to identify distinct behavioural patterns in West Germany's foreign policy based on status categories. As early as 1970, Waldemar Besson had highlighted the strategic choice, which the Federal Republic was confronted with namely either to oppose the political consequences of bipolarity or to define its role within these bipolar structures carving out its diplomatic niche. He points out that the first option was "driven by stronger national ambitions" whereas the latter approach required "an understanding of the Federal Republic as a middle power", which despite its lower ranking status "was not willing to renounce its say in world politics."<sup>101</sup> The FRG's de-facto limited sovereignty, constraints on its operational freedom caused by a multitude of multilateral commitments as well as the impact, which postwar identity and reduced material power projection capabilities had on West Germany's state behaviour both externally and internally led a number of FPA scholars to categorise the Federal Republic as the prototype of a medium-seized actor in international relations.<sup>102</sup>

In Besson's assessment, the FRG's material capabilities in the realm of military strength were obviously of a more limited nature than those of its partners in the

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<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>101</sup> Waldemar Besson, *Die Aussenpolitik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland - Erfahrungen und Maßstäbe*, (München 1970), p.329.

<sup>102</sup> The term 'middle power', which seeks to establish a hierarchy of states in the international system or to identify certain behavioural patterns as being characteristic for a group of states needs to be distinguished from the alternative analytical use of 'middle power' within the German context, which interprets Germany's geographical position in the middle of Europe (*Mittellage*) through a historical prism. According to the proponents of the *Mittellage* approach, Germany's central position between East and West forces the country to meet certain political, economic and cultural expectations and requirements. See Wilfried von Bredow, 'Die Mittelmacht – Über die Rolle des vereinten Deutschland in der internationalen Politik', in: Bernd Guggenberger, Klaus Hansen (eds.), *Die Mitte – Vermessungen in Politik und Kultur*, (Westdeutscher Verlag, Opladen 1993), p.164.

Western alliance or in comparison with the Soviet Union. “Its status as a middle power” writes Besson, “illustrates the difference to nuclear great powers” but he is quick to stress that even without the coercive, threatening or deterrent potential of atomic weapons, the FRG’s industrial potency and geopolitical position entitled her to stake “an independent claim to join in the game of world politics.”<sup>103</sup> Middlepowerdom in Germany’s specific postwar configuration meant to perform a permanent balancing act between reliance on multilateral structures to ensure one’s own survival in the uncertainty of an era of superpower confrontation and the determination to develop a distinct national profile equally driven by self-interest and characterised by competitive aspirations to succeed in an internationally competitive environment. Besson called this the “dialectic of security and national ambition”, which was to illustrate the material dependency of the FRG as a middle power at the same time highlighting Bonn’s alternative power resources some of them equally effective to produce desired outcomes in an interdependent world. In the view of many observers, West German foreign policy managed to successfully operate in such an environment characterised by a “fatal dualism of bi-polarity and interdependence.”<sup>104</sup>

In stark contrast to Schwarz’s *Machtvergessenheit* approach, the middle power paradigm makes out a distinct profile and an assertive yet conciliatory approach to bilateral and multilateral interaction adopted by FRG foreign policy decision-makers. Far from displaying the neurotic behavioural tendencies of a political dwarf, West Germany played its role as a “self-confident middle power relying on its economic power and competitiveness, geopolitical position and proven loyalty and reliability as an alliance partner” in the frontline of world politics.<sup>105</sup> However, the reference to self-confidence and the assertion that the FRG as a middle power and its political elites were determined “to have their say” in international diplomacy was not meant to be interpreted as a megalomaniac pursuit of foreign affairs synonymous with a denial of the limitations on the operational space available. It rather helped to reduce the discrepancy

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<sup>103</sup> Waldemar Besson, *Die Aussenpolitik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, op.cit., p.458.

<sup>104</sup> Klaus Ritter, ‘Zum Handlungsspielraum der Bundesrepublik Deutschland im Ost-West-Verhältnis’, *Europa-Archiv*, vol.39, 1984, p.540.

<sup>105</sup> Helga Haftendorn, *Sicherheit und Entspannung – Zur Aussenpolitik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1953 - 1982*, (Baden-Baden, Nomos Verlag, 1983) p.56-57.

between 'claim to fame' rhetoric based on high-flying foreign policy goals and the de-facto power resources at the FRG's disposal thus bringing in line expectations and reality. Therefore, West Germany's realistic yet self-confident approach turned out to be conducive to a "moderation in the implementation and pursuit of one's own interests and to the renunciation of any hegemonic ambitions."<sup>106</sup> In the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, the fragmentation of Germany's territory and the allied occupation condemned the erstwhile great power to the passive existence of a state, which had been largely stripped off its sovereignty. Later, after the West German government had regained most of its sovereign rights, it quickly became a trusted partner in alliance circles through its predictable, intelligent and diplomatic maneuvering within multilateral organisations. It thereby "achieved an increase of influence and legitimacy that elevated it to the status of a middle power, centrally involved in the Atlantic alliance and the European political order."<sup>107</sup> Some FPA scholars have classified the FRG as a middle power not only because of the limitations of its quantifiable material power projection capabilities or because of its ability to carve out an operational niche between Washington and Moscow e.g. through its *Ostpolitik* in the later years of the 1960s.<sup>108</sup> It has been given the label of being a middle power also because its domestic political culture and specific post-war identity facilitated certain behavioural patterns, which distinguished it from great power foreign policy. "Foreign policy agents" write Louis Belanger and Gordon Mace, "are at the same time agents of domestic political culture by reproducing and orienting typical external behaviour of middle powers."<sup>109</sup> Middle powers' relationship to 'power' in international relations was crucially shaped by their domestic political structures and state and societal identity influenced the role conception of middle powers in general and the Federal Republic in particular.<sup>110</sup>

Located within the broader context of middle power research as an attempt to explore the interface of state type and foreign policy behaviour, the middle power

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<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>107</sup> Wolfram F. Hanrieder, *Germany, America, Europe*, (Yale University Press, New Haven 1989), p.1.

<sup>108</sup> Carsten Holbraad, *Middle Powers in International Politics*, (Macmillan Press, 1984), p.145.

<sup>109</sup> Louis Belanger, Gordon Mace, 'Middle Powers and Regionalism in the Americas', in Andrew Cooper (ed.), *Niche Diplomacy – Middle Powers after the Cold War*, (Palgrave Macmillan, London 1997) p.167.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*

narrative in the debate over power and state interests in West Germany's foreign policy derives its theoretical underpinning from two explanatory approaches. Firstly, the *quantitative-material* and positional approach to middle power research emphasises the centrality of the quantifiability of political power and the importance of a state's material resources for its classification as great, middle or minor power. Following a realist paradigm which claims that the ability of a state to exert influence "is proportional to its underlying power, which is defined in terms of its access to exogenously varying material resources", the quantitative approach stresses GNP as a primary indicator for the categorisation of states followed by the seize of the armed forces, level of military expenditure and the quantitative dimension of military equipment.<sup>111</sup> Walther Besson's reference to the possession of nuclear weapons as a defining material condition drawing the line between middle and great power status needs to be seen as an example for such a quantitative-positional interpretation. It represents a largely realist analysis linking state power to coercive potential and hard assets and analytically marries a polity's military capacity with its economic capabilities framed by its geopolitical location. Equally, references to the FRG's economic strength and geopolitical position point at a realist appreciation of political power, of which the FRG had enough to play its role as a middle power with self-confidence, but not enough to count itself among the group of Cold War great powers.

Secondly, the *behavioural* explanatory approach to middle power research seeks to identify middle powers primarily through their foreign policy behaviour. It introduces the concept of middlepowermanship as a role-based and context-dependent status category, which displays a number of key behavioural aspects such as multilateralism and good international citizenship. Middle power behaviouralists underline the order-maintaining roles medium-seized states play on the international stage and within regional security arrangements, and they highlight the idealistic impulse, which often characterises the diplomatic performance of states positioned on the medium level of the international system. The FRG's "increase in influence and legitimacy" as a trusted alliance partner reflects the aforementioned behavioural aspect of regularly acting within multilateral frameworks. Furthermore, like the aforementioned civilian power

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<sup>111</sup> Carsten Holbraad, *Middle Powers in International Politics*, op.cit., p.79.

and tamed power narratives the behavioural approach to middle power foreign policy displays a clearly constructivist handwriting allowing for the epistemological integration of the aspect of cultural identity and a conceptual evaluation of the values embedded in the political culture of middle powers. Rather than trying to globally compete in a myriad of different issue areas thus greatly overstressing their power resources, middle powers play out their expertise derived from specialised interests, employ their issue-specific skills and their “reputational qualifications” in certain operational niches.<sup>112</sup> In that way, second-tier powers can exercise international leadership by playing out their comparative advantage vis-à-vis great powers and small states.

Unlike analysts favouring the use of quantitative criteria to determine small, middle and greatpowerdom, behaviouralists make the distinction between second and third-tier states on the basis of the degree of autonomy vis-à-vis the hegemon or leader although “their freedom of action cannot be confused with the manifestation of structural leadership expected from major powers.”<sup>113</sup> The relationship between leader and follower, between great and middle power is not based on coercion but on the entrepreneurial and technical superiority of the latter in specific issue areas and regarding certain operational spaces. As one Canadian scholar remarked about the only marginal significance of military assets for middle power strategic thinking and global action: “We have our wheat and our diplomacy and certain skilled and bilingual soldiers to offer but military power in the abstract has really mattered little to our role as a middle power.”<sup>114</sup> Middle power behaviouralists identify three important roles for niche actors to play out their issue-specific skills and to impact on the course, dynamic and content of international relations. Firstly, instead of overstressing their unevenly distributed resources, middle powers focus on the initiation of political processes and dialogues as catalysts, engage in two-track diplomacy by promoting coalition-building, agenda-setting and policy planning as facilitators and supervise the technical, logistical and organisational dimension of institution-building and dispute resolution in their

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<sup>112</sup> Louis Belanger, Gordon Mace, ‘Middle Powers and Regionalism in the Americas’, Andrew F. Cooper (ed.), *Niche Diplomacy*, op.cit., p.164

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*.165.

<sup>114</sup> John W. Holmes, ‘Most safely in the middle’, *International Journal*, 39, spring 1984, pp.379-380.



function as managers.<sup>115</sup> Secondly, like their fellow constructivist peers in the area of civilian power research, behaviouralist middle power theorists stress the crucial meaning of collective action. In pursuit of their consensus-building and coalition-forming diplomacy, middle powers act in concert within multilateral frameworks thereby expressing their preference for conflict management through international institutions.<sup>116</sup> Thirdly, niche diplomacy also allows for the role of regional hegemon, which enables middle powers to adopt a leadership position below the level of the global system thus stabilising the regional order and regulating regional spheres of influence.<sup>117</sup> Like civilian power theorists, scholars of the medium-level category of state types emphasise the crucial importance of constructive internationalism, which provides governments with important legitimacy in the eyes of civil society actors at home. Middle powers' behavioural predisposition for conciliatory and mediating diplomatic roles follows their interest in the promotion of an international order and the stabilisation of a global framework within which middle powers are able to pursue domestic values, preferences and principles.<sup>118</sup> Niche politics by middle powers explores operational spaces, which are conducive to noncoercive forms of external action, and which are explained by David R. Black: "Middle-sized states are generally unable and less inclined to try to impose their views on other governments, as a consequence, they favour the middle power concept for the analysis of West Germany's foreign policy and the role of its political foundations? Waldemar Besson provides the most convincing description of the FRG's overall priorities when he talks about the "dialectic of security and national ambition' as expressed in Bonn's seesawing between multilateralism and the quest for a self-interested driven foreign policy agenda while Haftendorn and Hanrieder have shifted their focus already stronger towards the

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<sup>115</sup> Andrew F. Cooper, Richard A. Higgott, Kim Richard Nossal, *Relocating Middle Powers: Australia and Canada in a Changing World Order*, (Vancouver UBC Press 1993), pp.25-26.

<sup>116</sup> Kim Richard Nossal, Richard Stubbs, 'Mahathir's Malaysia', in Andrew F. Cooper et.al. (eds.), *Niche Diplomacy*, op.cit., p.151. See also Michael K. Hawes, *Principal Power, Middle Power, Or Satellite? Competing Perspectives in the Study of Canadian Foreign Policy*, (York University Centre for International and Strategic Studies, 1989), pp. 3-8 for the behavioural aspects in Canadian middlepowerdom.

<sup>117</sup> Anoushiravan Ehteshami, Raymond Hinnebusch, *Syria and Iran – Middle Powers in a Penetrated Regional System*, (London & New York, Routledge 1997), p.20.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid*, p.103.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid*, p.111.

operational frameworks of “Atlantic alliance and the European political order”,<sup>120</sup> which inevitably limits the attention given to foreign policy action outside of multilateral organisations. The more recent constructivist literature on middle power (Higgott, Cooper, Nossal) diplomacy has developed an interesting catalogue of behavioural patterns based on persuasion such as mediation, consensus- and bridge-building to exercise leadership in regional contexts and operational niches. However, behavioural middle power theorists link these forms of niche diplomacy regularly to multilateral action and therefore soft power, once again, remains largely confined to West Germany’s participation in intergovernmental organisations thus overlooking an important non-multilateral component of FRG foreign policy.

### **1.2.5. A Second Dimension of Power Politics - Preliminary Conclusions**

The previous section has looked at four narratives – one realist, two constructivist and one combining both material-positional and identity-based behavioural criteria to arrive at the construction of status categories explaining state behaviour – which have thus far dominated the discourse in FPA over nature, configuration and employment of power in the FRG’s foreign policy during the Cold War. It became clear that inherent in the realist narrative of West Germany as forgetting power was the uni-dimensional notion of power as the coercion-based potential to make other states behave in a way, which they would otherwise not consider to be an option for action in their foreign policy. This realist approach asserts that only if a state possesses the capabilities to force a rival into compliance or cause him to change his behaviour can this state be seen as powerful. Realist writers on power in West Germany’s foreign policy regard multilateral diplomacy as a sign of weakness and not a sign of strength. In their view, only coercive potential (played out unilaterally) qualifies for power. The realist narrative holds that Germany’s national psyche struggled to come to terms with the magnitude of crime perpetrated by the Nazi’s totalitarian regime against Europe’s Jewry and that the singularity of Auschwitz silenced any attempt to revive great power politics after the war. The very idea of power remained associated with physical coercion and equated with an aggressive self-conduct in international affairs, which should never again be

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<sup>120</sup> See p.40.

allowed to challenge the political order in Europe or elsewhere. Therefore, the FRG's foreign policy elites supported by the general public distanced themselves from key concepts in international diplomacy such as the national interest and renounced power politics as the immoral and egoistic pursuit of material gains.

On the other hand, the remaining three narratives of civilian power, tamed power and middle power all dismiss the 'forgetting power' narrative's claim of a West German absenteeism in the field of interest-driven and assertive diplomacy and argue instead, that the FRG had indeed a power dimension, pursued power politics and followed its national interest, but that it did so exclusively as a member of international organisations using multilateral fora instead of unilateral action. In their interpretation, power and power politics still existed as an operational option for West German politicians, it was however being pursued through different channels, by different means, in different fora and expressed itself in different configurations. The three narratives answering power in the affirmative affix a different operational mode to the pursuit of power politics in the interdependent post-war world highlighting that the FRG did not coerce other members of the international community anymore but persuaded, convinced, attracted and co-opted other governments to its cause and ideas i.e. it displayed a willingness to co-operate internationally. Although all four narratives stress the importance of multilateralism in the pursuit of West German diplomacy in the Cold War era, they differ in their assessment of the true nature of these multilateral commitments. While the 'forgetting power' school sees co-operative internationalism as a "pretext for national abstention", civilian power, tamed power and middle power theorists conclude that multilateral frameworks were the *only* operational option available, in which national interests could be successfully pursued. In the eyes of the latter, international and supranational organisations provided platforms, on which the FRG played out softer forms of power while for realists, who complained about the FRG's obliviousness vis-à-vis the concept of power, there did not exist any softer dimension to a truly interest-driven foreign policy. This thesis rejects the 'forgetfulness of power' approach with its uni-dimensional analysis of power based on coercion, quantifiability and material resourcefulness of nation-states. In contrast, it agrees with the (largely) constructivist argument that power has certainly not ceased to exist in (West) Germany's external

relations management but that it had taken different forms, which can be labelled 'soft power'.

However, civilian, tamed and middle power narratives appear to be too narrowly construed in their exclusive focus on multilateral frameworks. In their interdependence-soft-power model, there does not seem to be any space for single-state initiatives nor room for any meaningful transnational activities by private or non-governmental diplomatic actors. Changing external conditions as well as a changed post-war identity and value system led the FRG to pursue its interests within the confines of multilateral organisations and *only* within such a radius of action. Therefore, the question at the end of the first chapter's literature review appears to be the following: Does an additional aspect in the history of power in West Germany's foreign policy remain, which has not been given the necessary attention? And if so, how one can think about such a second dimension of West Germany's 'soft power' besides its tested multilateral diplomacy? Have there been any forms of non-multilateral and semi-autonomous diplomacy with which FRG state interests have been pursued, and how was this 'private' diplomacy operationalised? I argue that the equation of soft power with multilateralism misses important aspects of the FRG's foreign policy and does not tell us either what the structural underpinnings of soft power are. Put differently, while realists dismiss soft power as irrelevant, the existing non-realist literature discusses power in the FRG's foreign policy by applying an exclusively multilateral prism and remains silent on what soft power as a concept entails.

In the following section, I will take up the issue of soft power, to which civilian, tamed and middle power narratives have assigned equal significance as the 'new' operational mode in the pursuit of the FRG's post-war foreign policy. Since the argument asserts firstly that the FRG's foreign policy had remained interest-driven and 'powerful' but that secondly, in contrast to previous historical periods, German interests after the Second World War were being pursued through non-coercive i.e. softer forms of power and thirdly, that this soft power did not necessarily require multilateral channels for its operationalisation, the second part of this chapter needs to a) take a closer look at the content and conceptual design of soft power and b) subsequently to introduce the system of Germany's political foundations or *Stiftungen* as an example for

the type of transnationally operating organisation that backs my claim that parts of the FRG's foreign policy system were being involved in non-multilateral diplomacy based on soft power and driven by state interests.

### ***1.3. Soft Power***

American IR scholar Joseph S. Nye's reflections on soft power stand out among the growing IR literature on noncoercive forms of interaction between states. Nye divides power into two basal categories characterised by different behavioural patterns. *Hard power* is being brought to bear either through means of military or economic coercion such as armed attack or the issuing of threats to impose sanctions ('sticks') or through the provision of inducements ('carrots'), which Nye largely reduces to financial rewards. *Soft power* on the other hand is defined as "the ability to get what you want through *attraction* rather than coercion or payments."<sup>121</sup> While hard power rests on command structures and control, soft power seeks to co-opt. Nye's approach appears to be largely in agreement with those scholars of power analysis who recognise the situationally specific nature of power. He emphasises the importance of knowing the preferences of potential influencees as a pre-requisite for the successful measurement of power "in terms of the changed behaviour of others."<sup>122</sup> Knowing about the crucial significance of contextual variables, Nye metaphorically urges analysts of power "to understand what game you are playing and how the value of the cards may be changing before you judge who is holding the high cards."<sup>123</sup>

He rejects the notion of fungibility by asking, "which resources provide the best basis for power behaviour in a particular context?"<sup>124</sup> According to Nye, hard power is generated by the sophistication of one's armoury or it facilitates the magical effects on human behaviour, which often money can have. Soft power on the other hand "is based on our political ideals and our policies."<sup>125</sup> Such an ability to set the political agenda, to shape the preferences of others and to successfully sell one's own political philosophy,

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<sup>121</sup> Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, (Public Affairs, New York 2004), p.x.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid*, p.2

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid*, p.4.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid*, p.3.

<sup>125</sup> Joseph S. Nye, 'Soft Power can fight terrorism', *Alameda Times*, 4 April 2004.

socio-economic concepts and cultural achievements on the international marketplace of values and ideas has been occasionally described as the *second face of power*. Nye likes the effects of “an attractive ideology, culture and institutions” to the outcome of seductive processes and argues, that an evolutionary process has transformed the international political landscape and radically changed the sources of power in present day’s politics.<sup>126</sup> “Today” he writes, “the foundations of power have been moving away from the emphasis on military force and conquest.”<sup>127</sup> Various developmental stages of European and American societies had brought about a succession of different power resources critical for the strength of a state or political entity in international relations. The agrarian economies of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries came to rely on population as a crucial power resource for taxation and military recruitment. The technological innovations of the industrial age enabled states with efficient administrative structures combined with the unparalleled firepower of new weaponry and new means of transportation to triumph over the sheer numerical strength of the enemy’s armed forces. All this, says Nye, came to an end with the advent of the *information age* and the phenomenon of *globalisation*. A state’s war-winning ability as a decisive indicator for powerfulness has been largely replaced by other factors. “In assessing power in the information age” writes Nye and co-author William A. Owens, “the importance of technology, education and institutional flexibility has risen, whereas that of geography, population and raw materials has fallen.”<sup>128</sup>

He explains the changing nature of power and the growing importance of the power of attraction by highlighting four paradigm shifts. First, the destructive power of nuclear weapons had claimed a price too high to pay for by human society. Therefore, as a means of deterrence nuclear weapons served their purpose during the Cold War but the lack of actual battlefield quality contributed to their increasingly diminished strategic significance.<sup>129</sup> Secondly, the rise of nationalism in Europe’s overseas

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<sup>126</sup> Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, op.cit., pp.5-6.

<sup>127</sup> Joseph S. Nye, *The Paradox of American Power: Why the world's only superpower can't go it alone*, (Oxford University Press, New York 2002), p.5.

<sup>128</sup> Joseph S. Nye Jr., William A. Owens, ‘America’s Information Edge’, *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 1996, vol. 75, no. 2, p.22.

<sup>129</sup> See Mary Kaldor, ‘American power: from ‘compellence’ to cosmopolitanism’, *International Affairs* vol. 79, no. 1, 2003, p. 5 where she argues that the end of the Cold War has presented the United States with the

territories put an end to imperialistic expansion and colonial rule and ended an era of divide-and-rule by conquest and military superiority. A third shift away from the dominant role military capabilities played in international politics occurred *within* the societies of the great powers. After the unprecedented destruction caused by two world wars, any traces of a formerly dominant warrior ethic disappeared from Western societies only to be replaced by the primacy of civic interaction among societies. The lack of will to fight became a trait of the post-industrial age. Finally, in an economically interdependent world the use of military force regularly collided with global business interests of great and middle powers. Nye does not deny the role that hard power resources and especially military capabilities still play in today's world. He is also keenly aware of the fact that the information age with its Internet revolution, the free global movement of capital and the activities of transnational actors transcending geographic boundaries "has yet to transform most of the world."<sup>130</sup> He acknowledges the still violent face of world affairs with its civil wars, ethnic hatred and the menace of international terrorism all of which defy peaceful ways of human interaction and all of which are immune to the soft power "that is associated with ideas, cultures and policies"<sup>131</sup>. Therefore, he emphatically warns international relations scholars "to ignore the role of force and the centrality of security would be like ignoring oxygen."<sup>132</sup>

However, Nye urges his own country to adopt a broader analytical focus in order to understand the complexity of variants and manifestations of power in a globalised international environment. Winning additional international allies by positively shaping the opinion of foreign audiences and elites and by manipulating political agendas in foreign countries, he argues, would substantially reduce operational costs normally generated by a "stick" approach to foreign policy. Instead, it would enable the United States to maintain its global hegemony through an inexpensive "carrot" strategy.

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need for the development of a new institutional framework in order to successfully adjust to changed contextual circumstances. One of the crucial changes was the "decline of military power; that is to say the declining ability of states to use military force for 'compellence' because of a "growing destructiveness." According to Kaldor, the globalisation age is characterised by the fact that "superior military technology rarely confers a decisive advantage in conflicts between armed opponents."

<sup>130</sup> Joseph S. Nye Jr., *The Paradox of American Power*, op.cit., p.7.

<sup>131</sup> Joseph S. Nye Jr., 'The Information Revolution and American Soft Power', *Asia-Pacific Review*, vol.9, no.1, 2002, p.67.

<sup>132</sup> Joseph S. Nye Jr., *The Paradox of American Power*, op.cit., p.7.

“Nearly five centuries ago” asserts Nye, “Niccolo Machiavelli advised princes in Italy that it was more important to be feared than to be loved” not without expressing his belief that “in today’s world, it is best to be both.”<sup>133</sup> But love requires the many Davids to perceive Goliath’s action as being *legitimate* whereas fear requires only a determined and sufficiently reckless use of superior power by the hegemon. Therefore, soft power will be rapidly undermined and eventually rendered inadequate if the foreign policy of a dominant actor appears to be unjust, unjustified and ignorant in the eyes of the outside world. “Our attractiveness as a shining city on the hill can be undercut by policies that others see as illegitimate” warns Nye and urges decision-makers to bear in mind that “since legitimacy rests in the eyes of the beholders, it is not sufficient to simply assert the superiority of our civic culture.”<sup>134</sup>

The importance of soft power in the context of this study derives not least from its relevance for the realisation of *milieu goals*.<sup>135</sup> Evaluating the multitude of foreign policy goals on which nation-states base the pursuit of their external relations, political scientist Arnold Wolfers in an early collection of essays directed the attention of his fellow colleagues towards the important distinction between *possession goals* and *milieu goals*. While competing “with others for a share in values of limited supply”, states would strive for the preservation or enhancement of their own ‘belongings’. The defence of a state’s *possessions* – territorial gains, political privileges or economic advantages – prioritises issues of national security and appears to be guided by a narrowly defined national self-interest.<sup>136</sup> In contrast, through the pursuit of *milieu goals* states aim to actively influence the dynamics and conditions of their extraterritorial environment. States that pursue milieu goals seek to shape the operational framework within which they interact with other states. Their aim is to promote peaceful and co-operative bilateral relations, to strengthen multilateral institutions or to contribute towards socio-economic stability in developing countries. By stressing the importance of what Stanley

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<sup>133</sup> Joseph S. Nye Jr., ‘The velvet hegemon: how soft power can help defeat terrorism’, *Foreign Policy*, May/June 2003, p.75.

<sup>134</sup> Joseph S. Nye, ‘Lonely at the Top’, *Washington Post*, 18 April 2004; *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, op.cit., p.26.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid*, p.17.

<sup>136</sup> Arnold Wolfers (ed.), *The Goals of Foreign Policy, Discord and Collaboration: Essays on International Politics*, (Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press 1962), p.72.



Hoffmann has described as the “international milieu that will provide a modicum of order i.e. reduce the inevitable loads of violence and chaos that an anarchic international system carries”, Wolfers does not deny the possibility that milieu goals often turn out to be only a processual step in a much more broadly conceptualised strategy of realising possession goals.<sup>137</sup> Although he does not see anything contradictory or impossible in a state engaging in acts of political altruism “if its people or its rulers so desire”, he does not have any illusions either about the centrality of the milieu-goal pursuing benefactor’s self-interest.<sup>138</sup> “Acts of national foreign policy expressing a generous and sympathetic impulse” writes Wolfers, “Usually will be found to have served the national security interest or economic interest of the donor as well.”<sup>139</sup>

His interest in the motivational predisposition of the donor is explained by his belief that to enquire about intentions, interests and preferences of the actor promoting milieu goals is an indispensable scholarly prerequisite if one wants to avoid navigating in complete analytical darkness because of the high level of ensuing abstraction. If a nation is helping others through economic aid to raise their standard of living, it may make a great deal of difference for the chances that such aid will be continued or extended whether the nation extending the aid considers economic improvement abroad as being desirable in itself, or promotes it merely for the sake of cementing its alliance with the assisted country or of drawing that country over to its own side. Wolfers recognises the difficulty of pinpointing the reciprocal elements inherent in cases of milieu goal driven foreign policy and notes the challenge for any attempt to determine the motivation of actors. He does not view the goal of creating a peaceful external environment and to better the living standards of others through charitable commitments as something that would not permit the benefactor to keep his personal interest in mind.

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<sup>137</sup> Stanley Hoffmann, ‘In Defence of Mother Teresa: Morality in Foreign Policy’, *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 1996, available from <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/19960301faresponse4194/stanley-hoffmann/in-defense-of-mother-teresa-morality-in-foreign-policy.htm>, cited on 4 March 2004.

<sup>138</sup> Wolfers separates the *possibility* of altruistic behaviour from the actual *occurrence* and *likelihood* of occurrence of political altruism underlying the pursuit of milieu goals. “Whether such altruistic acts are likely to occur, or whether, if a government claimed credit for them, its motives would be found to have been as pure as one were asked to believe, is another question.” Arnold Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration*, op.cit, p.74

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*

Charitable behaviour in many instances goes hand in hand with the expectation of “high dividends to the donor and yet be a moral credit to him.”<sup>140</sup>

In his approach, Nye connects the two ends of soft power and milieu goals. He deems noncoercive influence to be the most effective way to realise a foreign policy agenda that transcends strict national security concerns and pursues the goal of creating a stable external environment. In his view, appealing to other countries through one’s own democratic values and through the power of one’s own cultural achievements promises to be the most successful strategy to convince their governments to adopt similar positions and to introduce comparable policies. Realising that “it is easier to attract people to democracy than to coerce them to be democratic”, Nye stresses the crucial role of soft power for democratisation, human rights advocacy and the promotion of market economies on a global scale.<sup>141</sup> He describes the operational framework for foreign policy as a “three-dimensional chess game in which one can win only by playing vertically as well as horizontally.”<sup>142</sup> On the top board, conventional strategic thinking focuses on military issues and the categorisation of international relations is one of unipolarity versus multipolarity, hegemony versus a balance of power. The middle board is dominated by economic relations between states and characterised by a more even distribution of power resources. Finally, transnational relations are being played out on the bottom board and issues such as terrorism, international crime, climate change or democracy promotion is holding centre stage. And it is the bottom board with its transnational channels of interaction between states and societies where soft power can contribute towards the realisation of milieu goals i.e. create a more peaceful and stable external environment. Global interdependence has significantly altered the nature of political influence and the issues on the bottom board are “now intruding into the world of grand strategy.”<sup>143</sup> The transnational level of world affairs responds favourably to the use of noncoercive forms of influence and enables states to effectively target foreign elites as well as the broader public and civil society organisations in other countries on a sub-governmental level.

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<sup>140</sup> *Ibid*, p.75.

<sup>141</sup> Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, op.cit., p.17.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid*, p.4.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid*.

How is all of the above relevant for this study's main argument of the existence of a power and state interest driven West German foreign policy located on a sub-state level and supplementing governmental diplomacy pursued through bilateral and multilateral channels? The aforementioned realist and constructivist narratives of nature and configuration of power in West Germany's foreign policy have largely failed to take the bottom board of international relations as described by Nye in his analysis of soft power sufficiently into account. It is on this operational level that the democracy promotion activities of Germany's political foundations are being played out thus constituting an important non-multilateral dimension of the FRG's foreign policy. The 'three-dimensional chess board' accommodates state as well as sub-state actors and actions and provides an analytical tool that helps to illustrate the FRG's two-level foreign policy system with its multilateral (and often coercion-based) initiatives on the top and middle board and diplomatic soft power based on ideas, concepts and values on the bottom board. The final section of this chapter will take a closer look at the *Stiftungen* model of democracy promotion in order to make the use of soft power outside of multilateral frameworks clearer.

#### ***1.4. Operationalising Soft Power - The Stiftungen's Informal Diplomacy***

Germany's *Stiftungen* or political foundations have been a highly visible component in the international dimension of regime change being described as a foreign policy tool "unique for almost 20 years."<sup>144</sup> The idea of promoting political pluralism in authoritarian societies around the globe provided the Western part of post-war Germany with the invaluable opportunity to regain ground in the international arena and to spruce up its blemished reputation inconspicuously without facing the risk of being immediately blinded by the spotlight of international public attention which had been extraordinarily aware of the country's external relations after the disastrous era of Nazi rule. At a time when memories of the fascist era were still fresh and when many West German ambassadors had started their careers in the days of the Third Reich, "aid for democracy-building was thought to be more acceptable abroad if it came in the name of

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<sup>144</sup> Stefan Mair, 'The Role of the German *Stiftungen* in the Process of Democratisation', ECDPM Working Paper no 32, available from [www.oneworld.org/ecdpmpubs/wp32\\_gb.htm](http://www.oneworld.org/ecdpmpubs/wp32_gb.htm), cited on 14 March 2004.

political parties rather than from the German government.”<sup>145</sup> The *Stiftungen* model caused observers to describe it as the representation of “a long-standing German practice, dating back to Bismarck, of funding so-called middle organisations to engage in what elsewhere would be considered government business at home and abroad.”<sup>146</sup> The FEF as the oldest of Germany’s political foundations had been established as early as 1925 and was banned from the political scene by the Nazis in 1933 thus sharing the fate of many other democratic organisations after the *Machtergreifung*. It immediately resumed its activities after 1945 first in domestic politics and in the area of civic education and subsequently in the international realm. FNF, KAF and HSF were established in 1958, 1964 and 1967 respectively and more recently, the HBF affiliated with the German Green Party and the RLF close to the leftwing PDS further broadened the spectrum of political foundations in 1996 and 1999 respectively.<sup>147</sup> The young democracy’s historical experience with citizen participation and democratic nation building soon developed into a permanent feature in its foreign policy. “Being a new democracy itself, the Federal Republic approaches democracy as something which can be taught and learnt.”<sup>148</sup> West Germany’s democratic society was still in its infancy but the democratic learning process of the post-war generation created a specific foreign policy environment that had political leaders genuinely believe that liberal democracy was an attractive political model not only for their own country but for other countries as well where rulers still rejected any notion of human rights, civil liberties and the rule of law. Therefore, the origins of German democracy promotion efforts with the *Stiftungen* as their organisational transmission belt appear to be inseparably intertwined with the country’s contemporary political history. They highlight the founding ethos of a

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<sup>145</sup> Michael Pinto-Duschinsky, ‘International Political Finance: The Konrad Adenauer Foundation and Latin America’, in Laurence Whitehead (ed.), *The International Dimensions of Democratization: Europe and the Americas*, (Oxford University Press, New York, 1996) p.233.

<sup>146</sup> Ann L. Phillips, *Power and Influence after the Cold War: Germany in East-Central Europe*, (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Maryland, 2000), p.128.

<sup>147</sup> Norbert Lepszy, ‘Politische Stiftungen’, in Uwe Andersen, Woyke Wichard (eds.), *Handwörterbuch des politischen Systems der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, (5. Auflage, Opladen, Leske + Budrich 2003), p. 103.

<sup>148</sup> Alan Watson, *The Political Foundations in West Germany*, Report for the Anglo-German Foundation, London, p.3.

society in which “every democrat is seen as a step away from the memory of dictatorship towards the hope of a totally secure and maturing democracy.”<sup>149</sup>

The international activities of West Germany’s party foundations also proved to be a useful strategic vehicle to activate transnational channels of cross-border interaction and to exert influence in the target society through soft power. The *Stiftungen* proved to be adequate foreign policy responses to the phenomenon of the ‘societalisation’ of Germany’s external relations. Walter L. Bühl remarks: “In the processes of multilateralisation, transnationalisation and the ‘societalisation’ of foreign policy, external and internal issues merge together beyond recognition.”<sup>150</sup> Being almost entirely funded by taxpayer’s money<sup>151</sup>, the political foundations take over a broad range of diplomatic responsibilities while operating with a much smaller bureaucratic apparatus, less personnel and a greater freedom of political manoeuvrability than the Foreign Service.

#### 1.4.1 Legal and Institutional Status

The political status of Germany’s party foundations and the nature of their relationship with the Federal Government does not allow for a simplistic institutional analysis. Instead it requires locating the *Stiftungen* in the organisational grey zone between a semi-state and a non-governmental actor. The following observation made by American political analyst Peter D. Bell in his study of the Ford Foundation’s transnational activities some thirty years ago remains applicable in the context of Germany’s political aid system:

The importance of foundations as transnational actors does not result from their dominance in policy areas deemed important by governments. The relationship between foundations and governments is subtler. Under varying circumstances foundations support activities, which might have been financed by government and thus themselves, bear the risk of failure or reaction. Foundations inform and evaluate governmental policies, serve as resource bases for ideas and talent and even legitimate or undermine governmental programs and actions by supporting them or failing to do so. Foundations also influence, if only by assisting, other transnational and national actors which, in turn

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<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>150</sup> Walter L. Bühl, ‘Gesellschaftliche Grundlagen der Deutschen Aussenpolitik’, in: Karl Kaiser, Hanns W. Maull (eds.), *Deutschlands neue Aussenpolitik*, vol.1: Grundlagen, (R. Oldenbourg Verlag, München 1994), p.182.

<sup>151</sup> See 1.3.2.

affect domestic and world politics. In short, consideration of foundations as transnational actors does not impair our view of the importance of governments. Instead, it gives us a richer picture of the complexity of world politics.<sup>152</sup>

Each of the foundations is closely affiliated with a particular political party and they are defined as private organisations under civil law, which provide services in the public interest. Being officially non-state actors, they emphasise their de-jure as well as de-facto independence from the world of governmental politics thereby “carrying out their tasks independently, responsibly and with intellectual open-mindedness” and with an awareness of the “required distance to political parties.”<sup>153</sup> The political foundations are not subject to the body of law governing political party activities in the Federal Republic (*Parteiengesetz*) nor does constitutional law regulate their operations abroad or their domestic activities.<sup>154</sup> In order to avoid a conflict of interests between parties and foundations, to maintain the political independence of *Stiftungen* staff and, given the enduring chorus of numerous critics, to shield the agencies against recurring accusations of political patronage and nepotism, the foundations do not select and appoint *leading* party functionaries for service on their managing boards or filling with them the positions of chairman, spokesperson, managing director and treasurer.<sup>155</sup> Nevertheless, separation of party posts and leading positions within *Stiftungen* management does not extend to elected members of the *Bundestag*, former or actual members of the cabinet or junior party officials.<sup>156</sup> The *Stiftungen* are de-facto members of one of the existing political ‘families’ and thus integral part of the broader party machinery. The close interconnectedness of parties and foundations is reflected in the number of cabinet

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<sup>152</sup> Peter D. Bell, ‘The Ford Foundation as a Transnational Actor’, *International Organizations*, vol. XXV, 1971, no. 3, p. 478. Another scholar concludes: “The foundations’ foreign policy and governmental foreign policy complement one another to a large extent. This does however not rule out attempts on the part of the foundations, very much to the regret of the Foreign Ministry, to occasionally correct or even undermine official foreign policy”. Sebastian Bartsch, ‘Politische Stiftungen: Grenzgänger zwischen Gesellschafts- und Staatenwelt’, in: Wolf-Dieter Eberwein, Karl Kaiser (eds.), *Deutschlands neue Aussenpolitik, Bd. 4: Institutionen und Ressourcen*, (R. Oldenbourg Verlag München 1998), p.195.

<sup>153</sup> Gemeinsame Erklärung zur staatlichen Finanzierung der Politischen Stiftungen, Zweiter Abschnitt: Status der Politischen Stiftungen, available from [www.KAF.de/stiftung/erklaerung.html](http://www.KAF.de/stiftung/erklaerung.html), cited on 8 August 2004, p. 3; The constitutional basis for the foundations’ activities can be found in Art.5, Art.9,1 and Art 12,1 Basic Law (Grundgesetz).

<sup>154</sup> Art.21 Basic Law (Grundgesetz).

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid*, p.4.

<sup>156</sup> Norbert Lepszy, ‘Politische Stiftungen’, op.cit., p. 104.

ministers and other leading politicians who are alumni of their respective party foundation. Therefore, the *Stiftungen* serve as a recruitment ground for the political class and various dependencies and cross-institutional linkages are part of the network connecting parties and foundations.<sup>157</sup>

In fact, foundation officials stress the crucial importance of their organisations' political integration into wider party structures. The global promotion of pluralist concepts of democracy could only be pursued with the necessary credibility by making the value system as represented by individual political parties at home the ideological bedrock of the *Stiftungen's* international activities. KAF Latin America analyst Werner Böhler writes: "Any attempt to disseminate democracy must be based on specific values. It is the political parties themselves that decide about values, contents and programmes."<sup>158</sup> Their value orientation differentiated them from other democracy promotion agencies such as the International Institute for Democracy (IDEA) or the World Movement for Democracy (WMD), which only introduced the technical and procedural components of modern democratic systems in a non-partisan spirit without making basal value and preference-based choices. "Democracy can only be promoted through values because it is legitimised as a system through elections, in which rival parties compete with each other," writes Böhler and stresses "this requires a politically educated electorate, which cannot be neutral and impartial but needs to make value judgments."<sup>159</sup> Despite their party political affiliation, they are significantly more than just a mere appendix of their respective 'mother parties' and keenly aware of their position within the FRG's political spectrum.

The FRG's Federal Constitutional Court (*Bundesverfassungsgericht*) ruled in 1986 that political foundations needed to maintain a minimum degree of independence from their affiliated parties. *Stiftungen* are neither allowed to co-operate with political

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<sup>157</sup> Former Minister of State in the Ministry for International Development Wighardt Härdtl remembered that a total of six ministers in the cabinet of Chancellor Helmut Kohl had received scholarships from the Konrad-Adenauer Foundation. Interview Wighardt Härdtl.

<sup>158</sup> Werner Böhler, 'Die Rolle der politischen Stiftungen in der deutschen Entwicklungspolitik', *KAF Auslandsinformationen*, no. 6, 2005, available from [http://www.inwent.org/E+Z/content/archiv-ger/07-2005/trib\\_art1.html](http://www.inwent.org/E+Z/content/archiv-ger/07-2005/trib_art1.html), cited on 23 February 2006.

<sup>159</sup> Werner Böhler, 'Es kommt auf Werte an', *E + Z – Zeitschrift für Entwicklung und Zusammenarbeit*, July 2005, available from [http://www.inwent.org/E+Z/content/archiv-ger/07-2005/trib\\_art1.html](http://www.inwent.org/E+Z/content/archiv-ger/07-2005/trib_art1.html), cited on 23 February 2006.

parties e.g. on election campaigns nor can they directly enter into the process of competing for political power.<sup>160</sup> It therefore seems to be justified to describe the multifaceted relationship between political foundations and political parties as the simultaneous existence of two phenomena, namely proximity and independence.<sup>161</sup> Neither are they umbilically linked nor remain foundations completely autonomous and unaffected by external influence. They are non-governmental actors yet always two of them are closely connected with the government through their affiliation with respective political 'mother parties' and the interweavement of party and foundation personnel. "The political and institutional independence of political foundations is also always useful for official foreign policy as an exculpation, for example when certain controversial facts and activities are reaching the German public or when they anger politicians in host countries" says Ulrich Karpen, a constitutional lawyer and university professor who has advised parties and governments in South Africa, Guatemala, Afghanistan and Chile in their constitution-building process as an expert in KAF democracy promotion projects. "In those cases" he adds, "official diplomacy can always point at the *Stiftung* and blame the foundation for those developments or incidents, which do not go down well with public opinion."<sup>162</sup>

Both proximity and independence characterising the relationship between the institutions of governmental foreign policy and the informal and non-governmental operations of Germany's political foundations often clearly reveal their instrumental character. The foundations' position within the German foreign policy system occupying the interface between the FRG's public management of its external affairs and the realm of (civil society) goes regularly beyond a mere co-existence of governmental and sub-state diplomacy.<sup>163</sup> One analyst of *Stiftungen* activities in Africa describes the division of labour and responsibility between foundations, which he labels

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<sup>160</sup> BverfGE 73,1 (14 July 1986), available from <http://www.oefre.unibe.ch/law/dfr/bv073001.html#Rn155>, cited on 7 September 2003.

<sup>161</sup> Gerd Langguth, 'Politische Stiftungen und politische Bildung in Deutschland', *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* B43, p. 42.

<sup>162</sup> Personal interview with Ulrich Karpen, Hamburg, 10 February 2006.

<sup>163</sup> The difficulties to pin down the exact nature of role, mission and systemic integration of the political foundations within the FRG's foreign policy system are evident in Nicole Renvert, 'Mission Possible? Die Rolle der deutschen parteinahen Stiftungen in den USA', DAAD/AICGS Working Paper, available from <http://www.aicgs.org/documents/Renvert%20FINAL%20eng.pdf>, cited on 26 February 2006, p.3.



'clandestine diplomats' and official diplomacy by asserting that "in a sense the foundations are, on the one hand, an arm of German foreign policy, but on the other are supposed to be 'autonomous' with the upshot that they operate (with implicit approval of the Ministry) in an area, which the official policy wants to avoid."<sup>164</sup> Their combined presence in foreign countries mirrors the pluralist nature of Germany's post-war democracy and their promotion of German society's political values and preferences abroad makes them ideal sub-state transmitters of German interests. "In this way" writes the former KAF bureau chief in Johannesburg, Michael Lange about the general strategic goals of his organisation as a German foreign policy actor, "it is actively assuming a share of responsibility for shaping international relations, while conveying modern German political culture to the rest of the world."<sup>165</sup>

#### 1.4.2. Funding

Although Germany's political foundations are being 'privately' organised i.e. non-governmental agents of democracy promotion, they provide 'public' services in the domestic and international realm and are predominantly publicly funded receiving their funds from four different ministries.<sup>166</sup> The Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development (BMZ) provides the lion's share of funding with roughly 90 percent of the

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<sup>164</sup> Gero Erdmann, 'Hesitant Bedfellows: The German *Stiftungen* and Party Aid in Africa. - An Attempt at an Assessment', CSGR Working Paper no 184/05, December 2005, available from <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/csgr/research/workingpapers/2005/wp18405.pdf>, 27 February 2006, p.4.

<sup>165</sup> Michael Lange, 'Opening Remarks' at the KAF Seminar 'Democratic Transformation of Education', 27 - 28 September 2000, Stellenbosch, available from <http://www.KAF.org.za/Publications/SeminarReports/democratictransformationofeducation/lange.pdf>, cited on 27 February 2006.

<sup>166</sup> During 1999, the Konrad-Adenauer Foundation for example received 96.3% of its budget from the Federal Government or the German *Länder* while fees for conferences and other cover charges generate only 2.9% of the Foundation's financial resources. Private donations and bond revenues account for 0.8%. Rolf Halfmann, 'Principles governing the funding of political Foundations', Konrad-Adenauer Foundation, February 2000, available from [www.KAF.de/publikationen/2000/staat/finanz\\_stift\\_e.html](http://www.KAF.de/publikationen/2000/staat/finanz_stift_e.html), cited on 4 April 2002, p.1. See also Ann L. Phillips, *Power and Influence after the Cold War*, op.cit., p.129. Phillips mentions the Ministry for Education as well as the Interior Ministry as sources for funding of domestic activities. She also presents funding figures, which show an increase from DM 25 million in 1967 to DM 650 million in 1994. This is followed by a decrease to DM 600 million in 1996 due to the budgetary constraints in the public sector. Michael Pinto-Duschinsky speaks of a total amount of DM 290 million in 1988 for overseas programs, a sum which is being split into DM 170 million spent on foreign projects and DM 20 million on inland activities related to the Foundation's international project agenda. According to Pinto-Duschinsky, the Foundations received a total of DM 2,895.16 million between 1962 and 1988 from the Ministry for International Development (*Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit* BMZ), Michael Pinto-Duschinsky, 'Foreign political aid', op.cit., pp.35-36.

expenditures while the Foreign Ministry (*Auswärtiges Amt*) provides the remaining 10 percent of the foundation's budgets for international activities.<sup>167</sup> The political foundations are required to apply for funding for each of their democracy promotion projects to the BMZ while Ambassadors and the Foreign Ministry reserve a right to veto specific projects for diplomatic reasons.<sup>168</sup> The foundations receive additional grants, which in the case of the KAF amount to approximately 30 percent of its annual budget covering expenses for conferences, seminars, research, consulting, publications and human resources.<sup>169</sup> The exact amount of public funding is being determined by the parliamentary budget select committee and depends on the relative strength of the foundation-affiliated political parties in the German Lower House or *Bundestag*. It can be put at around one third each for KAF and FEF (32.5%) as well as circa 10 percent for FNF, HSF, and HBS respectively.<sup>170</sup> In order to be eligible for state funding and despite their relatively independent position in the political system, a political foundation must be officially recognised by a political party in parliament.<sup>171</sup> In recent years, the annual budgets of Germany's *Stiftungen* have by far outstripped the financial resources available to the other political foundations in Europe. In 2004, the combined total budget of Germany's party-affiliated democracy promotion agencies has reached an impressive €358 million while the remaining organisations received only €42 million in funds.<sup>172</sup>

Having been confronted with accusations of financial mismanagement and a lack of accountability, the foundations responded to the criticism of numerous commentators by adopting a joint declaration in which they argued that by financially supporting the *Stiftungen* as organisations, which would promote "societal and democratic educational

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<sup>167</sup> Sebastian Bartsch, 'Politische Stiftungen: Grenzgänger zwischen Gesellschafts- und Staatenwelt', op.cit., p.187.

<sup>168</sup> Embassies do not use their veto against *Stiftungen* projects very often and only in those instances where there are concerns that a proposed project is likely to violate norms of international law or partner organisations are undemocratic. *Ibid*, p.187.

<sup>169</sup> Rolf Halfmann, 'Principles governing the funding of political foundations', op.cit., p.1.

<sup>170</sup> Stefan Mair, 'The Role of the German 'Stiftungen' in the Process of Democratisation', op.cit., p.3.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>172</sup> Jos van Wersch, Jeroen de Zeeuw, 'Mapping European Democracy Assistance – Tracing the Activities and Financial Flows of Political Foundations', Working Paper 36, Conflict Research Programme, Netherland Institute for International Relations, November 2005, available from [http://www.cdi.anu.edu.au/featured\\_articles/featured-articles\\_downloads/CDI.News\\_FEB\\_MAR\\_06\\_FA\\_2.pdf](http://www.cdi.anu.edu.au/featured_articles/featured-articles_downloads/CDI.News_FEB_MAR_06_FA_2.pdf), cited on 25 April 2006, pp.11-12.

services, information and political consulting”, the federal government promoted citizen education as a necessary prerequisite for political pluralism.<sup>173</sup> The foundations see themselves as “an important part of the Federal Republic’s political culture” in so far as they actively promote the general political maxim of liberal democratic societies that “political discourse and political decision-making require information and ethical-political orientation” which ought to be provided by “non-state actors in the area of education policy.”<sup>174</sup>

### 1.4.3. Modus Operandi

The party foundations are trying to identify societal spaces in order to facilitate political dialogue. They work towards far reaching changes in political attitudes and seek to initiate or facilitate democratisation processes. By identifying politically compatible partner organisations in authoritarian settings the foundations would steer these “Trojan horses” in the target country towards a strengthening of civil society,<sup>175</sup> something the former Acting Chairman of the Konrad-Adenauer Foundation (KAF) Gerd Langguth called “legal interference in the internal affairs of other countries.”<sup>176</sup> They work behind the scenes of a target country’s political process and provide financial support for both political projects organised by democratic parties as well as for civil society organisations like human rights groups, trade unions or independent media organisations. Michael Pinto-Duschinsky writes:

They shape political outcomes, which were negotiated during periods of transition from authoritarian rule to democratic orders demonstrating their usefulness as “a successful

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<sup>173</sup> Gemeinsame Erklärung zur staatlichen Finanzierung der politischen Stiftungen, op.cit., p.4. One author summarises the often polarised debate about the foundations’ institutional, democratic and financial legitimacy as follows: “The Foundations as generators of democratic vitality, as powerhouses or pillars of West German democracy - this is *one view*. The Foundations being the product of hidden channels for financial transactions of public funds und state-sponsored letter box institutions for their affiliated parties – that’s the *other view*.”, Henning von Vieregge, *Gesellschaftspolitische Stiftungen in der Bundesrepublik*, (Deutscher Instituts Verlag, Köln, 1980), p.44. See also ‘Die gesetzlosen Fünf’, *Der Spiegel*, 52, 1994; Hans Apel, *Die deformierte Demokratie: Parteienherrschaft in Deutschland*, (Deutsche Verlags Anstalt, Stuttgart, 1991), pp.130-139.

<sup>174</sup> ‘Gemeinsame Erklärung’, op.cit., p.2.

<sup>175</sup> See Jens-Ulrich Poppen, *Transnational Actors, Political Aid and the Transition from Authoritarian Rule: The Role of Germany’s Political Foundations within South Africa’s Process of Democratisation, 1984-1994*, unpublished Masters thesis, Faculty of Arts, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 2000, p.53.

<sup>176</sup> Personal Interview (phone) with Gerd Langguth, 26 July 2006.

instrument in generating networks of contacts [...] powerful instruments not only for promoting democracy, but also for furthering Germany's interests and contacts.<sup>177</sup>

However, being questioned on the link between governmental foreign policy and the foundation's international operations, *Stiftungen* management insists that it is "really the absolute exception that political foundations act as merely biddable tools of nation-state foreign policy."<sup>178</sup> Their ability to access different sectors of civil society gives them a distinct advantage over the traditional Foreign Service and they are able to respond flexibly and with immediacy to the particular needs of their partner organisations.<sup>179</sup> Often, politicians value this freedom of movement. "The foundations are often not bound by the same diplomatic considerations that restrict the activities of the official representations" points out Germany's late President Johannes Rau in a speech commemorating the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the KAF's international programme and he reminds his country's foreign policy community that political foundations "can often co-operate with those groups, with which the German state and its official diplomacy needs to maintain a distance."<sup>180</sup> The process of democracy promotion begins with the identification of a partner organisation, which should ideally operate *within* the target country.<sup>181</sup> The foundations represent Germany's multiparty democracy and since they operate collectively in their host society they are seen as credible agents for the promotion of democratic pluralism.<sup>182</sup> In their international operations, KAF, which is

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<sup>177</sup> Michael Pinto-Duschinsky, 'Foreign political aid: the German political Foundations and their US counterparts', *International Affairs*, vol. 67, no. 1, January 1991, p.60.

<sup>178</sup> Personal interview with Uwe Optenhögel, Berlin, 7 March 2002.

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>180</sup> Johannes Rau, 'Demokratie weltweit fördern – ein Auftrag an uns alle', Ansprache aus Anlass des vierzigjährigen Jubiläums der internationalen Arbeit der Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung, available from [http://www.KAF.de/publikationen/2003/1272\\_dokument.html](http://www.KAF.de/publikationen/2003/1272_dokument.html), cited on 21 March 2006.

<sup>181</sup> The case of the international dimension of regime change in South Africa illustrates the fact that Germany's *Stiftungen* sometimes need to co-operate with political parties and organisations in exile. During the apartheid era, the FEF supported the illegally operating liberation movement ANC as its main partner organisation (besides the trade union organisation COSATU as the representative of the labour movement). In the eyes of the FEF strategists, the moral and political credibility of the ANC prevailed over the organisation's disadvantage of having only limited means to influence the political development *within* the South African political system. The liberal FNF, like the FEF, was not allowed to open an office in South Africa until 1991/92 and instead launched its operations from the Zimbabwean capital Harare.

<sup>182</sup> According to the 'Principles of co-operation in the area of international development agreed upon between the Federal Government and the political foundations', *Stiftungen* cannot operate in host countries and launch democracy promotion projects without having identified a suitable partner organisation with the

closely affiliated with the German Christian Democratic Union (CDU), enters into transitional alliances with conservative organisations in the host country. The Friedrich-Ebert Foundation (FEF) with its institutional links to the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) works closely together with a variety of union and labour movements as well as with centre-left political parties. Being committed to the ideals and values of political liberalism with its emphasis on individual rights, private property, democratic constitutionalism and a free market economy, the Friedrich-Naumann Foundation (FNF) promotes entrepreneurial initiatives, human rights groups, legal support groups and liberal think tanks.<sup>183</sup> On the right of the democratic spectrum, the CDU's Bavarian sister party Christian Social Union (CSU) participates in international democracy promotion efforts with its own party Foundation, the Hanns-Seidel Foundation (HSF). Identifying mainly smaller centre-right parties as partners for their international projects, the HSF positions itself as a regionally-based provider of expertise on federalism, local government, administrative modernisation, market economy and national security.<sup>184</sup> The HSF successfully defined its operational niche vis-à-vis its conservative sister organisation KAF in a division of labour which covers "both partners and issues" and which "has evolved in the field as a natural outgrowth of different priorities and the political partnership of their affiliated parties at home."<sup>185</sup> Finally, the Green party's Heinrich-Böll Foundation (HBF) focuses particularly on environmental issues in developing countries, whereas the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS) promotes Socialist policies via the Rosa-Luxemburg Foundation (RLF). All of Germany's political Foundations need to act with a high degree of cultural sensitivity as they cooperate with civil society and political actors from a broad range of cultural, ethnic,

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ability of having a future impact on political structures abroad, quoted in Norbert Lepszy, 'Politische Stiftungen', op.cit., p.104.

<sup>183</sup> The FNF described its political co-operation during South Africa's transition to democracy: "The existing relationship of trust between the Foundation and its partners creates a situation in which the Foundation is in a position to contribute with some firm liberal solutions to the political work in South Africa. With its resources and instruments, through political education and the promotion of democratic institutions and structures, the Foundation can help the transition to majority government lose its threatening character." FNF Annual Report 1993, p.93.

<sup>184</sup> Gerhard Michels, 'Die Hanns-Seidel Stiftung in Südkorea – Arbeiten in einem Schwellenland', available from <http://www.koreaverband.de/publikationen/archive/2-99/2-99-art.11.pdf>, cited on 2 March 2006.

<sup>185</sup> Ann L. Phillips, *Power and Influence after the Cold War*, op.cit., p.132.

religious and ideological backgrounds encompassing Ibero-American Catholicism, African one-party systems or Islamic societies.<sup>186</sup>

How are the international operations of democracy promotion by Germany's party foundations put into practice? How do these aid agencies strengthen democratic forces abroad through their "power of attraction" (Nye) being "mediators in a de-limited world"?<sup>187</sup> James M. Scott lists four key activities of think tanks and political Foundations as cornerstones of their agenda for democracy promotion. Financial support is being given to a broad range of civil society organisations including political parties, trade unions, human rights groups, local government initiatives, media organisations and private research institutes. The funding of research and analysis enables practitioners including state as well as non-state actors to develop the conceptual basis for democratisation projects and may focus on "the foreign policies of countries trying to promote democracy, the policies of countries engaging in democratisation and/or the efforts of democracy activists."<sup>188</sup> Also, foundations and think tanks establish useful channels for network activities by facilitating the exchange of political information between and organisational interaction among democracy campaigners, foreign policy makers, civil society representatives and pressure groups.

In a different approach, Dutch scholars Jos van Wersch and Joeroen de Zeeuw have categorised the thematic foci of political foundations by grouping activities in the three areas of civil society, political parties and remaining projects.<sup>189</sup> Support for civil society organisations includes trade unions, business associations and human rights groups. Trying to strengthen pluralist structures in emerging democracies, party assistance seeks to provide foreign party leaders with organisational skills, supports youth organisations or co-operates with foreign parties during election campaigns. The final category consists of broad range of issue areas such as election support, capacity

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<sup>186</sup> Personal interview with Uwe Optenhögel, Berlin, 7 March 2006.

<sup>187</sup> Ernst Hillebrand, Uwe Optenhögel, 'Mediatoren in einer entgrenzten Welt: Zur aussenpolitischen Rolle der politischen Stiftungen', available from [www.demglob.de/arthillopten.html](http://www.demglob.de/arthillopten.html), cited on 8 January 2002.

<sup>188</sup> James M. Scott, 'Transnationalizing Democracy Promotion: The Role of Western Political Foundations and Think Tanks', *Democratization*, vol. 6, autumn 1999, No. 3, p.155.

<sup>189</sup> Jos van Wersch, Jeroen de Zeeuw, 'Mapping European Democracy Assistance', op.cit., pp.13-14.

building, institution building or the promotion of good governance.<sup>190</sup> Active democracy building appears to be the most direct form of what has been called the ‘new interventionism’ and sees aid agencies such as the German political Foundations at the forefront of institution building in transitional settings. These soft power actors of democracy promotion enjoy a great freedom of movement and political manoeuvrability to help other countries to “make the transition to modernity, to successful, participatory systems within the context of their own individual histories, cultures and traditions.”<sup>191</sup> Summarised in the words of Gerhard Raichle, the FNF’s former director of external affairs: “I did what my superior colleague has not prevented me from doing.”<sup>192</sup>

In particular, transnational actors provide transitional elites with the necessary political skills to formulate their partisan interests through capacity-building measures.<sup>193</sup> The *Stiftungen* influence future decision-makers and their perspective on crucial policy areas by transferring urgently needed political-administrative know-how to spiritually akin partner organisations.<sup>194</sup> The political foundations describe their soft power-based democracy promotion activities, as being demand-driven i.e. political actors in predominantly developing countries would approach the political aid agencies in the first place in order to equip themselves with expertise on specific issues. However, the principle of reciprocity applies to their soft power relations with the *Stiftungen* and although political actors in newly emerging democracies will have the utmost interest to benefit from external experience and know-how, the political foundations as part of Germany’s foreign policy system will often have a strong interest themselves to make an impact on the political agenda of transitional states. Although they are providing foreign elites and organisations with the necessary tools to further the cause of democracy in their countries seemingly without much self-interest, they are

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<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.* In 2003/04, the entirety of Europe’s political foundations spent 72% on support for political parties, 17% on civil society actors and only 11% on remaining thematic areas. In comparison, the German KAF spent 30% of its international budget on civil society projects, only 20% for the support of political parties and 50% on projects in the category ‘other’.

<sup>191</sup> Carl Gershman, *The Political Foundations in the Western Democracies: What Role and What Future?* A presentation by the President of the National Endowment for Democracy at the French Senate, Paris, 6.6.1996, in: available from [www.iran.org/news/960606\\_Gershman\\_Paris.html](http://www.iran.org/news/960606_Gershman_Paris.html), cited on 9 December 2002.

<sup>192</sup> Personal interview with Gerhard Raichle, Berlin, 6 December 1999.

<sup>193</sup> Personal interview with Uwe Optenhögel, Berlin, 7 March 2002.

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*

indeed working towards the creation of an international environment, which is conducive to the realisation of milieu goals. FEF international affairs expert Dieter Optenhögel explains:

Although we are talking more about a demand-driven than supply-orientated programme of democracy promotion, I don't think that this necessarily translates into less influence. We will not become active in target countries as agencies of intervention with an only short-term perspective but we are always acting with the awareness that these long-term processes, which are supported by us, will eventually generate Social Democratic ideas.<sup>195</sup>

Therefore, the pay-off of democracy promotion activities might not be immediate and tangible but the creation of an international environment shaped by "Social Democratic" ideas means that soft power has helped political forces in the driving-seat with which the German Government can do business with – economically as well as politically. The foundation's *strategic planning* of these long-term processes experienced significant changes over the past thirty years. The idea of a centralised and systematic approach to the management of democracy promotion operations in foreign settings was largely unknown in foundation headquarters and a lot of responsibility for the preparation and implementation of transition projects rested therefore with the *Stiftungen* offices in the target countries.<sup>196</sup> During the Spanish transition for example, FEF resident representative Dieter Koniecki did not produce any written planning material for project management and the foundation "was used only as an instrument for political intervention integrated into a macro strategy which was dominated by the transition's European dimension and the Kissinger-Schmidt connection."<sup>197</sup> The absence of any strategic planning was not necessarily a disadvantage. The party foundations became "an invaluable source for top politicians and *their* strategic planning."<sup>198</sup> Also, FEF analyst Günther Esters stresses the inevitable lack of flexibility, which the introduction of a concept of strategic planning would have caused:

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<sup>195</sup> *Ibid* (translation by author).

<sup>196</sup> Personal interview with Günther Esters, Bonn, 18 April 2002.

<sup>197</sup> Personal interview with Uwe Optenhögel, Berlin, 7 March 2002.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid*.



In economics, one calls the rather inflexible model of management planning and organisational structure a 'fit model'. In this model, the different components fit together at one particular moment in time. The remaining question is if these components are indeed the right elements. As a general rule one can say that the faster societal conditions change the more likely it is that the components do not fit anymore. What would have happened for example during the transition in Portugal, if we had geared the different parts of our strategy towards the specific political situation of 1974 given that things changed rapidly? Therefore, we were rather in favour of a 'three-joint-system', which operated with a greater degree of flexibility. The FEF rejected the idea of a fit-planning model.<sup>199</sup>

Having arrived in the age of globalisation, the importance of strategic planning has changed for the *Stiftungen* not least because they have to meet additional requirements of transparency and are being subjected to public scrutiny as organisations, which are largely funded by the taxpayer. Today, political foundations need to account for the way they spend public funds on democracy promotion projects by keeping a record of their project management which is based on the concept of an 'objectives-oriented project planning' (*zielorientierte Projektplanung*). The concept is based on an evaluation of the needs of partner organisations and target groups and defines the key elements of any democracy promotion project in co-operation with the different planning units involved.<sup>200</sup> Objective-oriented project planning consists of various elements such as problem analysis, situation analysis, objectives analysis and goal formulation, the creation of a project planning matrix, the identification of indicators and operation planning.

### ***1.5. Conclusions***

Although multilateralism arguably limits autonomous decision-making, acting in concert and coordinating policies, strategies and tactics with alliance partners does not diminish the crucial importance of state interests, power resources and regional or global ambitions driven by considerations of self-advancement and collective gains. Timothy Garton Ash has once called this form of collective action "attritional multilateralism" through which "German diplomacy has excelled at the patient, discreet pursuit of

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<sup>199</sup> Personal interview with Günther Esters, Bonn, 18 April 2002 (translation by author).

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*

national”<sup>201</sup> and Christoph Bertram has remarked that “of all Western countries, post-war Germany has been most conscious of the need to be part of a team in international affairs” because it had realised that “to be lonely meant to be either ineffectual or isolated.”<sup>202</sup> And despite the traumatic experience of systematic abuse of political power during the Nazi era, West German foreign policy makers had neither particularly desired inefficiency nor isolation or a lack of influence and power after the war. “Making Germany influential by making her part of a group of influential states was the objective of successive German governments” writes Bertram.<sup>203</sup> Furthermore, it does also not follow from Bonn’s multilateral commitments that single state initiatives, bilateral action or ‘private’ foreign policy agendas and institutions did not play a role in the pursuit of West Germany’s diplomatic agenda.

Needless to say that the prominence of multilateralism in academic studies dealing with the FRG’s foreign policy has more than some justification and pointless to question the credentials of Bonn’s foreign policy elites as being committed team players within NATO and EC. However, the argument pursued in this thesis is that other diplomatic initiatives were being played out parallel to the country’s multilateral commitments, single-state initiatives which were launched through the aforementioned informal diplomatic channels of the *Stiftungen* and located within bilateral and transnational frameworks thus pointing at a different configuration of power with a different selection of foreign policy instruments. The dualism of ‘private’ and ‘public’ foreign policy and the simultaneous activities of diplomatic institutions of government and transnationally operating semi- or non-state actors arguably require a more comprehensive analytical approach. Rather than the FRG’s national interests such as security or the maximisation of wealth, it was the modality of West Germany’s foreign policy i.e. the way the Federal Republic operationalised its diplomacy that was shaped by changes in its external environment. Despite agreeing with Maull on the ‘civilian power’ hypothesis of a change in substance and nature of post-war international relations, German academic Beate Kohler-Koch concedes that “the increase in

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<sup>201</sup> Timothy Garton Ash, ‘Germany’s Choice, *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.73, July/August, p.71.

<sup>202</sup> Christoph Bertram, ‘The Power and the Past: Germany’s New International Loneliness’, in: Arnulf Baring (ed.), *Germany’s New Position in Europe*, op.cit., p.93.

<sup>203</sup> *Ibid.*

international co-operation is not necessarily an indication for a qualitative transformation in international politics” but can be “interpreted with equal plausibility as the successful adjustment of national power politics within a changing framework for international action.”<sup>204</sup> The interpretative approach followed in this study argues that in the Federal Republic precisely such an adjustment process in reaction to the “main tendencies in international politics” had taken place in order to “increase its influence through international co-operation”.<sup>205</sup>

British scholars Simon Bulmer and William I. Patterson have summed up the nature of the change in the configuration of power in Germany’s post-war foreign policy. “Power and influence do not derive only from their explicit use in a purposive manner through governmental diplomacy” the authors write in a 1996 publication on Germany’s role in Europe, “they may also derive from Germany’s policy credentials, from reputation. German power may also be facilitated by the actions of private actors.”<sup>206</sup> Rather than indulging in diplomatic asceticism without any clear idea or guidance as to how to define its national interest and far from using the country’s totalitarian past as a “pretext for national abstention”, Germany’s foreign policy experienced a thorough change in its operational modality shifting away from predominantly coercion-based and unilaterally deployed instruments of global interaction towards a two-track approach to diplomacy characterised by multilateral integration of its ‘public’ dimension and the more autonomous activities of ‘private’ or ‘semi-private’ actors. Such a change was quite different from an alleged “abstinence in world politics”.<sup>207</sup> One scholar has described the multifaceted and multilayered nature of such an approach by acknowledging that

One can pursue national interests, preferences and values with different methods, multilateral ones and with an emphasis on the rule of international law, whenever there

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<sup>204</sup> Beate Kohler-Koch, ‘Deutsche Einigung im Spannungsfeld internationaler Umbrüche’, in: *Politische Vierteljahresschrift*, No.32, 1991, Vol.4, p.606.

<sup>205</sup> Werner Link, ‘Die Außenpolitik und internationale Einordnung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland’, in: Werner Weidenfeld, Hartmut Zimmermann (eds.), *Deutschland-Handbuch – Eine doppelte Bilanz 1949-1989*, (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, München 1989), p.584.

<sup>206</sup> Simon Bulmer, William E. Paterson, ‘Germany in the European Union: gentle giant or emergent leader’, *International Affairs*, vol. 72, no.1, January 1996, p.29.

<sup>207</sup> Josef Joffe, ‘Deutsche Aussenpolitik – postmodern’, *Internationale Politik*, no.1, 1995, p.44.

is an opportunity for it, or by employing *soft power* (normally one of the less expensive resources) or by falling back on other means of power politics (usually the more expensive alternative).<sup>208</sup>

West Germany's Cold war foreign policy was therefore characterised also by a turn-away from the unilateral use of hard power i.e. military force and, to an extent, coercive economic tools of statecraft towards softer forms of power and influence. Bonn's remaining hard power capabilities were increasingly integrated into structures of collective decision-making whereas its soft power capabilities helped the FRG to meet the post-war challenges of global interdependence. It was thus the notion, content and configuration of power in international relations that had undergone change but not the country's political class's willingness, preparedness and determination to engage in power politics. *Machtvergessenheit* would have required a behavioural predisposition with abstention following denial and for a country as resourceful as West Germany, neither abstention nor denial was an option. "Countries that have reached a critical mass of power cannot abstain from shaping the international system" writes Edwina Campbell, "and their attempt to abstain will often have consequences more profound than their willingness to employ the power and influence they wield"<sup>209</sup>. Obviously, the unilateral use of military force for purposes other than securing the physical survival of the state was not an option anymore in the country's foreign policy after the collapse of the Nazi Regime. The necessity to fill the ensuing operational vacuum and to respond to structural changes in the external environment caused by the deepening of global interdependence was acknowledged by exploring what Walter L. Bühl has called the "social dimension of political power".<sup>210</sup> Better equipped for the task of carving out operational niches in an interdependent international system, non-state or semi-state actors like political foundations became useful vehicles to mobilise new power resources based on positive sanctions and characterised by their potential to influence

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<sup>208</sup> Wilfried von Bredow, 'Machtpolitikresistenztestanordnungsproblem', in: *WeltTrends*, vol.43, no.12, summer 2004, p.22 (translation by author).

<sup>209</sup> Edwina Campbell, 'Berlin – Look to the World', in: *WeltTrends*, Vol.43, No.12, Summer 2004, p.33.

<sup>210</sup> Walter L. Bühl, *Transnationale Politik – Internationale Beziehungen zwischen Hegemonie und Interdependenz*, (Stuttgart Klett, Verlag 1978), p.180.

the perception, preferences, agendas and conceptual approaches of other actors in the international community.

The FRG's 'private' foreign policy enjoyed a degree of autonomy in its decision-making, agenda setting and implementation of policies, which governmental diplomacy was not always able to muster. It introduced a notion of political power to West Germany's management of international relations that had been transformed from being a coercive strategy of limiting the choices for rivals, competitors and enemies into a non-coercive operational mode of promoting domestic social concepts and societal values abroad thus creating comparable structural conditions in third countries. Instead of forcing others into behavioural changes or trying to impose an external political agenda on weaker states, the FRG's post-war variant of 'power politics' sought to enhance the international compatibility of public policies, technical expertise or pluralist structures. This employment of soft power resources with its emphasis on inter-governmental co-operation and its targeting of conceptual and structural deficiencies, needs and challenges in third countries helped the FRG to stabilise its operational environment and enabled the government in Bonn to play a constructive order-maintaining role within regional contexts. As it constantly sought to identify and carve out operational niches within the international network of economic, social and political interdependencies, West Germany's foreign policy displayed the role-based and context-dependent configuration of its power projection capabilities that behavioural middlepower research has centred its analysis on. According to Brian Hocking, middle powers act on the realisation that "tangible power differentials can be compensated for both by tangible resources ("soft power") and by the processes through which these power resources are converted into actual influence" in order to establish themselves as niche players and to secure their influence in asymmetrical power relationships.<sup>211</sup> In the case of West Germany, this meant turning to the vehicles of its informal or 'private' diplomacy as conducted by party foundations to further state interests.

The multilateral dimension of its 'public' diplomacy based on the ethical maxim of good international citizenship represented therefore only one aspect of the FRG's foreign policy system. While its engagement in NATO and EC addressed mostly

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<sup>211</sup> Brian Hocking, 'Finding your Niche', in: Andrew Cooper (ed.), *Niche Diplomacy*, op.cit., p.135.

questions of what has been conventionally described as 'high politics', the other 'private' side of its international appearance concerned the transfer of issue-specific expertise and the attracting of others to its political ideas through the FRG's 'reputational qualifications'. Postwar German power politics and the promotion of its national interest were not played out any longer through the mobilisation of the army or exclusively through its economy's coercive potential nor through reference to the geopolitical factors of territory or population. During the Cold War, Bonn's influence was based primarily on its entrepreneurial and technical superiority as well as on its socio-economic competency. Self-awareness, role identity and changing external environment caused West Germany's foreign policy elites to realise their potential to influence processes of opinion-forming, decision-making or institution-building in other countries thereby exploring new forms of demonstrating *Machtbewusstsein* while acknowledging the paramount importance of state interests. In a speech to the German Foreign Policy Association in 1995, former FRG President Roman Herzog has called such an operational 'philosophy' of shaping and stabilising the regional dimension of a nation-state's operational environment an example of "security policy through soft power", and he reminded his audience that the "secret of success" of West Germany's foreign policy during the Cold War could only be fully understood by examining the 'power of attraction', which the Federal Republic's model of socio-economic partnership and political pluralism exhibited.<sup>212</sup> According to Herzog, these 'soft' power projection capabilities were put into practice "not only through professional diplomacy" but equally "through political foundations, companies and private sector interest groups as well as via cultural and scientific institutions."<sup>213</sup>

Niche diplomacy with regional contexts often conducted through the 'informal' employment of soft power had become the hallmark of West Germany's middlepowerdom. Self-awareness, domestic and foreign role expectations, societal norms and questions of national identity were as crucial for West German preference formation as was the FRG's material and structural position in the international system. Its status as a middle power was therefore as much based on necessity, as it was the

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<sup>212</sup> Roman Herzog, 'Die Grundkoordinaten deutscher Außenpolitik', in: *Internationale Politik*, No.4, 1995, p.5.

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.*

result of a conscious decision to ‘cash in’ on its issue-specific expertise within regional niches played out parallel and in addition to its multilateral commitments. In short, soft power politics emerged in a historical situation, in which perception of one’s own status was married with changes in the structures of international politics and a realisation of the constraints imposed by the country’s material position. Holbraad’s *quantitative* approach on the other hand with its exclusive focus on the availability of material resources as a kind of analytical panacea does not answer the question why it is that some states claim and are being awarded great power status - Britain and France’s foreign policies being a case in point - while other states such as Germany and Japan although clearly commanding superior economic weight in terms of e.g. GNP have either not been granted a similar status or have rejected the label as great power themselves.

In 2002, German FPA scholar Sebastian Bartsch wrote regarding the changing perception and configuration of power in West Germany’s foreign policy as reflected in the activities of the country’s political foundations:

The fact that the multitude of publicly financed international projects launched and administered by the *Stiftungen* have developed into an important though hardly visible and often unreported element of Germany’s international influence can hardly be reconciled with widespread opinion about the Germans as being *machtvergessen* or even ‘afraid of power’. The *Stiftungen*’s integration into the institutional framework of the FRG’s foreign policy system bears testimony to the country’s willingness to actively shape international relations and to the fact that power and power politics were not forgotten but needed to adjust to changing political goals and a changing international environment at the same time drawing lessons from the country’s historical experience.<sup>214</sup>

The first chapter has aimed at paving the way for the subsequent examination of the *Stiftungen* model and its employment of soft power previously described by Bartsch in the context of the FRG’s ‘private’ diplomacy. It provided a critique of the realist narrative of *Machtvergessenheit* and presented its argument of a continuation of German power politics ‘by other means’ in contrast to the interpretative notion of the FRG as a “reluctant power”. Its central argument was that it was not the motivation of German

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<sup>214</sup> Sebastian Bartsch, ‘Politische Stiftungen: Grenzgänger zwischen Gesellschafts- und Staatenwelt’, available from <http://www.weltpolitik.net/print/1452.html>, cited on 12 January 2006 (translation by author).

elites to pursue a foreign policy agenda of self-advancement, one-sided wealth and utility maximisation and political dominance that had disappeared after the Second World War, but that it was the configuration of power in the management of West Germany's international affairs and the selection of its diplomatic instruments that had changed. The argument at no point suggested that hard power elements would not play a role in the FRG's foreign policy (and if one classifies financial incentives and material rewards i.e. the area of political financial aid as hard power because of the coercive flipside of such actor relations namely the possibility of withholding these incentives in cases of non-compliance with certain pre-conditions, even the work of the political foundations on the Iberian Peninsula and elsewhere would have had a strong hard power dimension). Rather, it put forward the proposition in order to effectively secure its national interest through regionally oriented niche diplomacy as a middle power, the FRG in its 'private' diplomacy mobilised its soft power resources. These 'private' actors did not only possess greater access to elites in target societies, unrivalled expertise, skills and experience in the management of socio-economic issues and more autonomy in their setting and implementation of political agendas. They were also proof that the conclusion drawn by some analysts about Bonn's foreign policy establishment relying on "proxies to articulate West German foreign policy" such as the European Political Co-operation (EPC) was inaccurate. It was precisely through the conflation of 'public' and 'private', governmental, semi- and non-governmental, transnational and multilateral agency that structures in the external realm were shaped and state interests promoted.



## Chapter 2

### Pursuing Soft Power Politics I: The Friedrich-Ebert Foundation in Portugal 1974-1975

A tense situation has emerged today with the Prime Minister and most of the government besieged in the Santo Bento Parliamentary Building by Construction Worker Union demanding 45% pay rise...obviously a major attack on the government...the government has been surrounded all night without food and much sleep, only the Communists knowing what was up in advance had supplied themselves with roast chicken and so forth [...]to the fury of the rest they sat in a special room eating while everyone else had to do without.<sup>215</sup>

#### 2.1. Introduction

The previous chapter has introduced the central argument of an important yet often overlooked transnational dimension of West Germany's foreign policy that was both interest driven, geared towards influencing political processes in other countries and operationalised outside of multilateral frameworks. It has rejected the realist narrative of a German postwar 'forgetfulness of power' while criticising constructivist approaches for their seeming inability to transcend the multilateral dimension of the FRG's international relations and to give due attention to noncoercive foreign policy initiatives launched by sub-state actors within the broader framework of national diplomacy. The following case study seeks to support this argument as well as the proposition sketched out in the first chapter that only through a conflation of governmental and nongovernmental foreign policy actors and action can any analysis of West Germany's external relations management fully capture the multi-level structural reality of the FRG's foreign policy with its pursuit of soft power diplomacy within *and* outside of multilateral frameworks. The focus of the Portuguese case study will be squarely on the democracy-supporting role of the Social Democratic Friedrich-Ebert Foundation (FEF)

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<sup>215</sup> Mrs. Caspari, spouse of West Germany's Ambassador to Portugal, Prof. Fritz Caspari, Personal interview with Fritz Caspari, London, 18 June 2002.

and its political co-operation with the Portuguese Socialist Party (PS) embedded in the broader institutional context of West Germany's foreign policy apparatus. Since the historical dynamics changed from direct confrontation and an ensuing power struggle between Communist forces and newly emerged democratic parties to the phase of democratic consolidation, the Portuguese process of political transformation is being divided into two parts. Events that unfolded until the end of 1975 are being dealt with in this chapter while the Chapter Three covers the period from 1976 to 1981. The case study will highlight the Cold War context, in which the FRG's state interests during the Portuguese transition were being played out. It will show the crucial importance, which the West German Government as well as its majority party SPD and its affiliated transnational arm FEF attached to the containment of Communism and the determination, with which it tried to prevent the occupation of key power positions by the Portuguese Communist Party (see 2.2.). The organising of political counterpressure through the provision of political support for Socialist leader Mario Soares's PS sought to push back the ideological frontline and was part of the foreign policy goal of facilitating political pluralism. It will be shown that by seeking to enfeeble PCP cadres and to prevent the ruling Armed Forces Movement (MFA) from further radicalisation towards the extreme left, West Germany's governmental foreign policy institutions in co-operation with the majority party's political foundation FEF aimed at maintaining the stability of Western security architecture and at preserving the integrity of the NATO alliance.

The chapter will then look at the interplay between state and sub-state actors and the way, in which Chancellery and SPD in conjunction with FEF helped to facilitate the transformation of political infrastructure through the exercise of soft power, the latter being expressed in the transfer of concepts, expertise and ideas (see 2.4.). Besides highlighting the role of key political personalities such as SPD-Chairman Willy Brandt (see 2.6.1.), the chapter will broach the issue of political aid in the area of party management, campaigning and civic education as part of a 'soft' and non-multilateral approach to shape the preferences of future elites in transition countries (see 2.7.3. – 2.7.4.). Instead of congealing into the passive role of an international bystander forgetful of its power, the chapter argues that the FRG through government action and political

foundation sought to actively intervene in its operational environment by means predicated on attraction and co-operation and performed in a more autonomous fashion than realist and constructivist narratives are willing to concede.

## ***2.2. Stabilising the Operational Environment - Containing Communism***

Five days after the demise of the Portuguese *Estado Novo*, German Social Democratic parliamentarian Alwin Brück published his assessment of the immediate post-coup situation:

Every democrat must feel deep satisfaction and great joy about what happened over the past few days in Portugal. The importance of Portugal's political development goes far beyond its domestic context. Something important happened for Europe and Africa, for NATO and the world. For a democratic Portugal, the door of the European Communities remains wide open [...] A democratic Portugal would strengthen the moral integrity of NATO just as fascist Portugal together with Greece had weakened it. Portugal's colonial policies have discredited the alliance in the entire Third World.<sup>216</sup>

In Brück's view, the Cold War context would provide the strategic framework for Western military interests, tactical calculations and ideological aspirations as well as for expansionist and potentially destabilising political intervention by the Soviet Union. Although there seemed to be a real opportunity to create sustainable democratic structures in the Iberian country almost fifty years after the end of the Portuguese First Republic in 1926, Western leaders quickly realised the imminent danger of a Communist power grab during the transition. "In future, Portugal will steer a course to the left within democratic boundaries – at least until the next general elections scheduled to take place in a year from now" predicted the West German magazine *Vorwärts* thus warning of the possible radicalisation of Portugal's post-revolutionary politics.<sup>217</sup> The rapid emergence of the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP) as a political actor "which had courted and infiltrated the MFA from the very first days of the revolution"<sup>218</sup> would soon pose the most serious threat to the survival of democratic structures. Since Portugal

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<sup>216</sup> Alwin Brück, 'Ein Erfolg für die Demokratie – Das Ende der faschistischen Diktatur in Portugal', *SPD-Pressedienst*, 29 April 1974, pp.5-6 (translation by author).

<sup>217</sup> Herman Deml, *Vorwärts* 23 May 1974, p.9.

<sup>218</sup> Stewart Lloyd-Jones, Portugal's history since 1974, CPHRC Working Papers, series 2, number 1 (November 2001), available from <http://www.cphrc.org.uk/essays/portugal-since-1974.pdf>, cited on 2 February 2002, p.5.

was a NATO member state, any political regime in Lisbon guided by Communist ideology threatened to undermine alliance stability and to cause a creeping erosion of transatlantic defence capabilities often described as “Nato’s crumbling Southern flank.”<sup>219</sup> “The revolutionary process in Portugal” writes an observer of Portugal’s transition, “was seen as posing a serious threat to the alliance’s political cohesion and its military communication”<sup>220</sup> and the British Foreign Secretary James Callaghan bleakly assessed the situation:

The southern flank is in the worst case scenario and many countries may go Communist by the end of the 70’s – Spain, Portugal, Italy and conceivably Greece and Turkey. The causes are different. The virus isn’t travelling north at the moment. It is not a trend, but there are increased opportunities.<sup>221</sup>

Also, the EC’s ‘open-door policy’ with future Portuguese membership in the organisation was inseparably tied to the transition’s democratic outcome. The question of unhindered Portuguese access to Europe’s lucrative common market was of the utmost importance for the country’s private sector and a successful Communist power grab would have meant Portugal’s almost indefinite political and economic isolation. West Germany’s SPD-led coalition government shared the fear of a Communist takeover. Former SPD minister and head of the Federal Chancellery Horst Ehmke recalls the position of his party vis-à-vis the newly arisen political challenge in NATO’s South European outpost: “After the revolution in Portugal, the SPD leadership formed the working group ‘South West Europe’. The declared goal of West Germany’s social democracy was to work towards the fragmentation of Communist forces.”<sup>222</sup> Ehmke and other SPD leaders took an unambiguous stance towards any attempts by the Soviet Union to intervene in the transitional process through support for the PCP. Ehmke recalls:

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<sup>219</sup> David Rees, ‘Southern Europe, NATO’s Crumbling Flank’, *Conflict Studies*, August 1975, No. 60, p.85.

<sup>220</sup> Rainer Eisfeld, *Elite Pluralism and Social Movements*, available from <http://www.qsilver.queensu.ca/~leuprech/ipsa-pluralism/pdf/ElitePluralism.pdf>, cited on 12 January 2002.

<sup>221</sup> Digital National Security Archive (hereafter DNSA/KT), 01774, Memorandum of Conversation, The White House, 5 September 1975.

<sup>222</sup> Personal interview with Horst Ehmke, Bonn, 17 April 2002.

We made it clear to the Russians that it would be the end of détente if they would help PCP Chairman Cunhal to seize power positions. We told them in no uncertain terms that they had had their Prague Spring and now they should let us have our Lisbon Spring.<sup>223</sup>

The emerging rivalry between the Portuguese Socialist Party (PS) with its cosmopolitan leader Mario Soares and the PCP resurfacing after decades of clandestine struggle against the Salazar and Caetano regimes carried all the symptoms of the ideological infighting between Communist and Socialist forces throughout the 1920s in Europe. Having been traditionally described by its Communist opponents as ‘social fascists’ who served as ‘useful idiots’ for their Capitalist masters, West European Socialists and Social Democrats did not take the threat lightly.

Only subsequent developments would reveal that within the MFA, as within the Portuguese polity at large, the forces for radical change were mounting an all-out challenge to the pro-Socialist moderates – a logical consequence, perhaps, of the dynamics of revolution in which voices of moderation become all too vulnerable to charges of counterrevolutionary collusion.<sup>224</sup>

Deeply traumatised by their own historical experiences in the Weimar Republic and by their forced merger with the Moscow-backed German Socialist Unity Party (SED) in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, West Germany’s Social Democrats remained deeply suspicious of any cross-party co-operation between PS and PCP dismissing the notion of a ‘popular front’. Although SPD politicians were prepared to acknowledge the high level of societal acceptance and the political importance of Communist parties in France and Italy, they remained deeply sceptical. Reviewing the principal relationship between Socialists and Communists during the second half of the 1970s, SPD foreign policy expert Ehmke wrote:

Socialists have sufficient experience with Communists to be able to unemotionally assess the internal development of Communist parties in Italy, Spain and France. At the present stage, nobody knows if this development will tactically exhaust itself or if it is going to lead to a genuine opening of West European Communist parties for liberal

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<sup>223</sup> *Ibid* (translation by author).

<sup>224</sup> Joan Barth Urban, ‘Contemporary Soviet Perspectives on Revolution in the West’, *Orbis*, vol. XIX, winter 1976, no. 4, p.1387.

ideas. Democratic Socialists will not believe in a proclaimed change only because there is a proclamation.<sup>225</sup>

While Ehmke stressed that Social Democrats “have a foreign policy-related interest in the independence of Communist parties from Moscow”<sup>226</sup> such independence had not become reality in Portugal’s transition. Alvaro Cunhal’s PCP benefited from a well-functioning party apparatus, a dense network of political contacts particularly with the USSR and strong links with the country’s labour union movement. It impressed FEF Managing Director Günther Grunwald with its readiness to dominate the political scene after decades of clandestinity and exile:

One notices how brilliantly the Communists are organised. The structure of their cells and local branches is, according to observers of the situation, “exemplary” and “enviably good”. No other party in the country is equally capable of organising a demonstration on such short notice. Their ingenious public relations work is an obvious asset of Communist cadres.”<sup>227</sup>

The PCP was also guided by the Machiavellian personality of its leader, who made no secret of his ideological agenda:

The allies of the proletariat for the Socialist revolution are not the same as those for the democratic and national revolution. In the first case, the proletariat carries out the fundamental attack on the monopolies and *latifundiarios* allied with the part of the bourgeoisie...interested in the antimonopolistic fight. The Socialist revolution is directed against the bourgeoisie in its totality and for this reason some of the allies of the proletariat during the first stage (sectors of the urban middle-class, sectors of the rural peasantry, and some elements of the petit bourgeoisie) cease to be allies during the Socialist revolution.<sup>228</sup>

Given Cunhal’s hard-line stance, insouciance towards the PCP was dangerous and Portugal’s democratic parties had every reason to reject the idea of political co-

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<sup>225</sup> Horst Ehmke, *Der demokratische Sozialismus als geistige und politische Kraft: Entspannungspolitik und ideologische Auseinandersetzung*, (Gesprächskreis Wissenschaft und Politik, Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung, Bonn Bad-Godesberg 1976), p.22 (translation by author).

<sup>226</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>227</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.244, Report Dr.Grunwald, 13 March 1975 (translation by author).

<sup>228</sup> Alvaro Cunhal, *Radicalismo Pequeno Burges da Facada Socialista*, (Lisbon, Edicoes Avante, 2nd edition, 1974), p.82, quoted in Kenneth Maxwell, ‘The Communists and the Portuguese Revolution’, *Dissent*, spring 1980, p.202. See also Arnold Hottinger, ‘The Rise of Portugal’s Communists’, *Problems of Communism*, July-August 1975, vol. XXIV, pp.4-8.

operation with Communist forces. The challenge for governments in Western Europe was to create a situation in which a democratically elected government would secure the country's membership in NATO and lead Portugal gradually into the European Community.

Initially, there seemed to exist diverging foreign policy approaches and different operational foci on both sides of the Atlantic. "A radical line wanted to isolate the Portuguese revolution – the "vaccine theory" – while a bolder position was committed to support democratisation against both the Soviet party and a majority of the praetorian party."<sup>229</sup> According to high-ranking West German officials, leading members of the U.S. administration favoured the build-up of a credible threat scenario vis-à-vis Portugal's Communists and their Soviet backers and seriously considered a military intervention – a "Chilean solution - in order to prevent another coup d'etat."<sup>230</sup> American policy planners, military strategists and not least the Secretary of State himself were convinced that strength could only be demonstrated and Lisbon's political apostasy could only be prevented through the use of coercive means. "I think the Communists will try to move quickly" Kissinger said in October 1974, "because they've learned from Chile that if they move too slowly we will do something".<sup>231</sup> Eberhard Dingels, the former Head of the SPD's international relations department and a close adviser to party Chairman Willy Brandt recalls a meeting between Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and Brandt during which both men discussed the democratic prospects of the Portuguese transition. "Kissinger was extremely sceptical, and he was even more sceptical regarding the general abilities of the Europeans to provide political solutions."<sup>232</sup> According to Dingels, the Secretary of State expressed his firm belief that only hard

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<sup>229</sup> Carlos Gaspar, 'International dimensions of the Portuguese transition', Instituto Português de Relações Internacionais, available from [http://www.ipri.pt/prog\\_invest/tema.php?id=5](http://www.ipri.pt/prog_invest/tema.php?id=5), cited on 23 February 2006. The formulation "praetorian party" refers to those members of the MFA, who held strong sympathies for the PCP and the long-term installation of a Communist regime in Lisbon.

<sup>230</sup> 'Portugal als Lehrbeispiel der Demokratisierung; 25 Jahre nach der Nelkenrevolution', *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 24 April 1999.

<sup>231</sup> DNSA, Kissinger Transcripts 1966 – 1977, 01228, Secretary's Staff Meeting, Department of State, 9 October 1974.

<sup>232</sup> Personal interview with Hans Eberhard Dingels, Bonn, 18 April 2002.

power could prevent Portugal from drifting into the hands of the Soviet Union and concluded, “We have to land the marines.”<sup>233</sup>

According to German sources, the SPD’s rank and file as well as government officials in Bonn sought to ensure the commensurability of means and remained aloof towards overtly confrontational policies. SPD foreign policy expert Ehmke remembers: “We were concerned that the Americans would initiate a Western version of Prague in 1968. The greatest mistake we could make was to imitate Russian authoritarianism as exercised during the Prague Spring.”<sup>234</sup> Kissinger’s scepticism became apparent when in October 1974 the U.S. Secretary of State denounced the then Portuguese Foreign Minister and PS leader Mario Soares as a “loser”<sup>235</sup> and “the classical Kerensky type” of the Portuguese transition, “always understanding things three weeks too late”.<sup>236</sup> Kissinger abrasively brushed off Soares’s reply that he had no intention to become a Portuguese Kerensky by reminding his Portuguese counterpart that neither Kerensky had such an intention.<sup>237</sup> Although the U.S. Secretary of State admitted his lack of knowledge on issues relating to Portugal, he made no secret of his deep mistrust vis-à-vis the democratic forces in the transition country:

I don’t know anything about Portugal, but I have the impression that my view, which was based on pure dogmatism, was better than the reports I was getting from Portugal. I think the only effective organised political force in Portugal is the Communists. I know Soares and he reminds me of my colleagues at Harvard; he talks a lot and can do nothing.<sup>238</sup>

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<sup>233</sup> *Ibid.* Horst Ehmke confirms the hawkish attitude of American officials, “important representatives who actively contemplated an intervention in Portugal.”

<sup>234</sup> Personal interview with Horst Ehmke, Bonn, 17 April 2002.

<sup>235</sup> DNSA/KT, 01774, Memorandum of Conversation, The White House, 5 September 1975.

<sup>236</sup> DNSA/KT, 01228, Secretary’s Staff Meeting, Department of State, 9 December 1974.

<sup>237</sup> Tad Szulc, ‘Lisbon and Washington: behind the Portuguese revolution’, *Foreign Policy*, vol.21, no.3, p.3. The Russian politician Alexander Fjodorowitsch Kerenskij became Prime Minister in the Provisional Government of 1917 and was widely seen as the most powerful member of the revolutionary Soviets i.e. locally assembled worker and soldier councils that exercised ‘popular’ democracy after the demise of the Czarist monarchy. However, Kerenskij failed to prevent the Bolshevik infiltration and take-over of the powerful Soviets and remained unable to solve Russia’s constitutional crisis and the question of landownership. After the Soviet system was firmly controlled by Vladimir Lenin and Leon Trotsky from October 1917, Kerenskij fled into exile in the United States.

<sup>238</sup> DNSA/KT, 01228, Secretary’s Staff Meeting, Department of State, 9 October 1974.



Ehmke and Dingel's recollection is being disputed by the U.S. Ambassador in Portugal at the time and former Deputy Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Frank C. Carlucci, who "knew of no plans for a military intervention."<sup>239</sup> Instead, the diplomat insisted that he "did not believe that Communism could endure in Portugal due to a) geography b) economic ties c) the influence of NATO d) the conservative nature of the Portuguese people and e) the influence of the Church. Consequently" he added, "I consistently urged support for the democratic parties and the electoral process."<sup>240</sup> Others support Carlucci's recollection. The former Head of the State Department's Iberian Desk, U.S. Ambassador Edward Rowell speculates that Ehmke and Bahr "have not understood Kissinger who was – and is – notorious for saying outrageous things in order to provoke a reaction."<sup>241</sup> Asked if the American administration had at any point seriously contemplated a military intervention, Rowell stresses that he never heard of "any suggestion of that nature, nor did any of my many friends and associates at the Pentagon."<sup>242</sup>

Instead, it was understood in Washington as much as in European capitals that a multifaceted approach on the level of civil society as well as on bi- and multilateral level needed to be adopted, which would strengthen Portugal's democratic parties, stabilise its economy, help to reintegrate returning settlers from Lisbon's African territories and support those members of the MFA that "were committed to a democratic outcome" in order to "strengthen the armed forces' affinity within the NATO alliance".<sup>243</sup> Some observers believe that it was due to Carlucci's tempering influence and his far-sighted strategy of support for democratic parties in Portugal that from early 1975 onwards, American foreign policy towards the Portuguese transition shifted replacing its initially confrontative stance with a more pro-active approach. Carlos Gaspar sees this policy shift as the expression of Washington's acceptance of West German leadership in the democratisation process. "By then (i.e. August 1975), the United States had already changed to follow the West German strategy of democratic engagement, at least for the

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<sup>239</sup> Personal correspondence with Frank C. Carlucci, 21 April 2005.

<sup>240</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>241</sup> Personal correspondence with Edward Rowell, 3 April 2006.

<sup>242</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>243</sup> *Ibid.*

time being. This was the first time the American party in a Cold War crisis had been led by a German strategy.”<sup>244</sup>

Carlucci himself stressed the excellent co-operation between him and West German Ambassador Fritz Caspari with whom he was “in daily touch”, but also pointed out that both diplomats found themselves relatively isolated as far as their strategy of constructive engagement was concerned. “We saw the situation in very much the same way, although most of our colleagues did not agree.”<sup>245</sup> Given Kissinger’s gloomy assessment of the situation, which he “later brought with him during visits to the Federal Republic in conversations with Schmidt and Genscher”, and his condescending attitude towards Europe’s transitional ‘optimists’, Washington’s Ambassador in the FRG, Martin J. Hillenbrand described U.S. foreign policy at the time of the Portuguese Revolution and throughout the ‘hot’ transition phase as having “missed the boat”.<sup>246</sup> The senior diplomat recalls:

The Germans and some of our other European allies deserved much credit for conducting a purposeful and effective policy with respect to Portugal in the years immediately after 1974. They obviously had better intelligence and political judgement about trends in the country than we did.<sup>247</sup>

Hillenbrand’s colleague Edward Rowell, admitted that “the U.S. had no comparable tools in its bags, which meant that without the activities of the German *Stiftungen*, the effort to help Portugal’s democratic parties would have been very weak and unsatisfactory”.<sup>248</sup> Portugal expert Kenneth Maxwell agrees with Hillenbrandt’s assessment and pointed out that “the US took away major lessons from that experience and the various “democracy building” institutes were a result in many ways of the fact the US felt the Germans had tools for overt intervention in Portugal they did not at that time have.”<sup>249</sup> In any case, Washington’s Social Democratic allies in Europe eschewed

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<sup>244</sup> Carlos Gaspar, ‘International dimensions of the Portuguese transition’, op.cit.

<sup>245</sup> Personal correspondence with Frank C.Carlucci, 21 April 2005.

<sup>246</sup> Martin J. Hillenbrand, *Fragments of Our Time – Memoirs of a Diplomat*, (The University of Georgia Press, Athens 1998), p.341.

<sup>247</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>248</sup> Personal correspondence with Edward Rowell, 3 April 2006.

<sup>249</sup> Personal correspondence with Kenneth Maxwell, 30 July 2006.

military action and favoured the support for Portugal's democratic actors in order to play out what Joseph Nye had called the "power of attraction that is associated with ideas, cultures and policies."<sup>250</sup> The democratisation of post-revolutionary Portugal was identified as a strategic milieu goal on West Germany's diplomatic agenda and foreign policy planners in Bonn decided to work towards the realisation of such a milieu goal by actively influencing the dynamics and conditions of their extraterritorial environment. Both governmental and nongovernmental diplomatic actors in the FRG's foreign policy system realised that characteristic for Spain and Portugal's transitional challenges was the need for "both countries to come to terms with the historical burden of past dictatorships and the lack of experience in dealing with democratic institutions and playing by democratic rules."<sup>251</sup> This required the use of soft power – the transfer of ideas, concepts and expertise - for the creation of a political environment, which was not least conducive to Social Democratic ideas. Far from abstaining or rejecting its regional responsibility and renouncing the pursuit of state interests as the *Machtvergessenheit* realists claim, West Germany's foreign policy on state and sub-state level mobilised their autonomous power projection capabilities to shape the emerging political structures of Portugal's new democracy.

West German politicians shared Kissinger's scepticism only to a certain extent. Contrary to the interventionist concept of hard coercive power, the West German Government presided over by Brandt's successor Helmut Schmidt thought the situation in the South European state to be ideologically in flux and politically manageable. "One cannot form a final assessment of the matter. The Communists are well organised, but economically they have to rely entirely on Soviet aid. I don't think that the Soviet Union will be prepared to provide long-term economic assistance to Portugal on any significant scale"<sup>252</sup>. Helmut Schmidt recalls:

Since the end of Salazar's dictatorship and during the final stages of the Caetano years, the Portuguese revolution had been domestically drifting strongly towards Communism.

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<sup>250</sup> Joseph S. Nye, 'The Information Revolution and American Soft Power', op.cit., p.67.

<sup>251</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.245, Southern Europe Desk (Referat 203), Report 'Situation auf der iberischen Halbinsel', 27 November 1975.

<sup>252</sup> Conversation with Gerald Ford and Henry Kissinger on the 29 May 1974 in Brussels in Helmut Schmidt, *Menschen und Mächte*, (Siedler Verlag 1999), p.207.

A number of officers who represented Portugal in the different political bodies of NATO expressed surprisingly naïve, partly vulgar Marxist opinions and views. That was the case especially with Prime Minister Goncalves and President Costa Gomes. Therefore, I could perfectly understand that Ford and Kissinger gave the regime in Lisbon the cold shoulder; but we still maintained our hopes for a democratic development although East European attempts to prop up Communist cadres in the government were quite obvious.<sup>253</sup>

In July 1975, foreign affairs analyst John C. Campbell in an astute analysis of political instability in the Mediterranean region made out the case for the employment of soft power in order to strengthen democratic parties in the Portuguese transition. He urged West European foreign policy makers to exercise international leadership because they would be in many respects “better situated than the United States.”<sup>254</sup> Campbell dismissed any interventionist strategy by America and Europe thus rejecting the idea of a hard power based operational mode of action. “Force is ruled out,” he writes, because the West does not “have a Brezhnev Doctrine.”<sup>255</sup> Instead, he expressed his conviction that although the international community’s arsenal of tools and strategies for democracy promotion on the Iberian Peninsula was admittedly limited, soft power would be a key approach for the diplomatic efforts of external actors. Campbell writes:

The problem is not one for spectacular coups or even primarily for conventional diplomacy. It is one of attitudes and influence. To have influence, outsiders must first of all have channels of communication to the government, the political parties, and the people of Portugal. They should not rebuff the government because it contains Communists. They should not prejudge the domestic issues under debate or challenge measures of social reform. But they quite properly could and should strengthen economic ties and provide financial aid.<sup>256</sup>

He suggested that West European countries should provide non-material and material support as well as knowledge and expertise to democratic forces in transitional Portugal. Knowing that “democratic European countries have a spectrum of political parties

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<sup>253</sup> *Ibid* (translation by author), p.208. The West German magazine *Spiegel* concluded that the differences in opinion concerning Portugal and the discrepancy between European and American interests were a result of the “American involvement in South East Asia for many years.” *Der Spiegel*, 26 May 1975.

<sup>254</sup> John C. Campbell, ‘The Mediterranean Crisis’, *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 53, no.4, July 1975, p.616.

<sup>255</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>256</sup> *Ibid*.

which are counterparts of those which have come onto the political scene in Portugal”, he advised left-of-centre parties in Europe to strengthen Mario Soares and his PS through “moral and financial support.”<sup>257</sup>

### ***2.3. The Identification of Political Partners - FEF, PS and PPD***

Expressing his “confidence in individuals and structures”, West Germany’s Chancellor Helmut Schmidt turned to the experts of the Friedrich-Ebert Foundation (FEF) for advice.<sup>258</sup> Former FEF managing director Günther Grunwald remembers being approached by Schmidt who asked him “if it would be possible to change the course of events and to influence the political development in Portugal by getting the Foundation actively involved.”<sup>259</sup> Being kept informed about the situation on the ground through “regular reports from our guys in Lisbon”, Grunwald indicated his organisation’s preparedness to help.<sup>260</sup> Although Schmidt expressed his confusion about the “multitude of political groups and parties which labelled themselves Socialist or Social Democratic”<sup>261</sup>, the identification of a politically compatible partner organisation preceded Portugal’s transition. Through its support for the Lisbon lawyer Mario Soares and his Socialist Party (PS), West Germany’s SPD and its transnationally operating soft power tool FEF had been far-sightedly preparing the ground for the emergence of a successful democratic party in post-authoritarian Portugal. In retrospect, Willy Brandt asked:

What would have happened after the foreseeable fall of the Portuguese dictatorship if the international solidarity of democratic Socialists had been formed in advance i.e. before 25 April 1974? And what would have happened if it had not been in place after 25 April 1974, refrained but tangible, when political and moral support was needed?<sup>262</sup>

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<sup>257</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>258</sup> Personal interview with Hans Eberhard Dingels, Bonn, 18 April 2002.

<sup>259</sup> Personal interview with Günther Grunwald, Bonn, 11 December 2002.

<sup>260</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>261</sup> Helmut Schmidt, *Die Deutschen und ihre Nachbarn : Menschen und Mächte II*, (Berlin 1990), p.429.

<sup>262</sup> Willy Brandt, ‘Das portugiesische Volk kann sich auf uns verlassen’, in Friedhelm Merz, Victor Cunha Rego (eds.), *Freiheit für den Sieger – Testfall Portugal*, (Schweizer Verlagshaus AG, Zürich), pp. 186 – 187 (translation by author).

Political co-operation between the two parties reached back several years. In the 1970s, the SPD leadership began to take a more proactive approach towards the long-term promotion of democracy in Portugal by establishing permanent channels of contact with several exiled opposition groups and individuals. The FEF being an SPD-affiliated organisation appeared to be the natural choice for transitionally implemented democracy promotion projects especially since the SPD did not possess the logistical, organisational and operational know-how and resources to maintain behind-the-scenes channels of political communication. Gerhard Fischer, Portugal expert and first FEF resident representative in Lisbon remembers:

In order to identify a partner for political co-operation, we asked ourselves who could share in the enmity towards the regime in Lisbon the answer to which we found abroad. Normally, one finds politically complementary partners among exiled opposition groups the members of which often know each other because of their common escape from persecution. In the Portuguese case, we could count on a significant number of these dissidents.<sup>263</sup>

The FEF began to organise political seminars and invited Portuguese dissidents from several European countries. In facilitating these meetings, it intended to provide a forum for exiled opposition figures and to enable the dissident community to freely exchange information and to engage in political discourse without having to worry about material constraints. The FEF's role was also to deliver political messages and to maintain channels of communication:

FEF officials would occasionally travel to Portugal on a tourist visa to meet up with 'friends' of exiled Socialists. Every now and then we were told a name and we would then visit that person. This was usually followed by an invitation to a seminar in West Germany and we later picked them up behind the border.<sup>264</sup>

FEF officers would also covertly stay in the country for several weeks to maintain contact with the clandestine domestic opposition. Furthermore, the Foundation provided scholarships for selected Portuguese students to spend time at West German universities. It was hoped that these FEF-sponsored future elites would use the skills,

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<sup>263</sup> Personal interview with Gerhard Fischer, Bonn, 25 April 2002 (translation by the author).

<sup>264</sup> Personal interview with Gerhard Fischer, Bonn, 25 April 2002 (translation by the author).

ideas and concepts that they had become familiar with through their studies abroad, in the democratic reconstruction of their country.<sup>265</sup> Before the Revolution of the Carnations in Portugal, approximately 100 students were given scholarships by the FEF. All of them were to become members of the PS at a later stage causing FEF Portugal expert Gerhard Fischer to say that “this form of political aid turned out to be quite fruitful in future.”<sup>266</sup> One of the intellectuals benefiting from the FEF scholarship programme was Mario Soares, who at the time was still a member of the Portuguese Socialist Action (PSA), an umbrella organisation for Portugal’s Socialist opposition based in Geneva.<sup>267</sup> His friendship with Willy Brandt, which dated back to 1965, was crucial as it opened Soares the resources and contacts of West Germany’s powerful SPD. Through the FEF’s democracy promotion activities, he got into contact with other opposition activists thus enabling him to solidify his future political base and to coordinate tactics, strategies and concepts.<sup>268</sup> On the 19 April 1973 at an FEF-sponsored seminar in the West German town of Bad Münstereifel, the PSA was renamed the Portuguese Socialist Party (PS) with twenty-six founding members.<sup>269</sup> Mario Soares was elected to the post of Secretary-General with 20 ‘yes’ against 7 ‘no’ votes.<sup>270</sup>

The new party leader visited his SPD friends in Bonn two days before rebellious military officers finally ended Portugal’s dictatorship. Arriving on 23 April 1974, Soares

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<sup>265</sup> Personal interview with Günther Grunwald, Bonn, 11 December 2002.

<sup>266</sup> Personal interview with Gerhard Fischer, Bonn, 25 April 2002.

<sup>267</sup> He was financially supported – “prepared for his eventual return to Portugal” - by the FEF during his exile in France. Personal interview with Günther Grunwald, Bonn, 11 December 2002. See also Willy Brandt, *Begegnungen und Einsichten*, op.cit., p.629. In 1972, the PSA became a member of the Socialist International (SI).

<sup>268</sup> Soares remarks at one point about his friendship with Brandt: “The history of the previous years has indeed brought me closer to the ex-Chancellor than to the leader of the French Socialists. This explains itself easily if one knows to what extent the SPD has supported us in our anti-fascist struggle: We founded our party in Germany and also organised our first party congress there. Our German friends never held back with their support – proportionately to their abilities and resources.” And he writes at a later stage about his first visit as Foreign Minister in European capitals and his decision to accept the post: “Who knew Brandt well enough to request a meeting with him for the same day?” in: Mario Soares, *Portugal – Welcher Weg zum Sozialismus? Interview mit Dominique Pouchin*, pp.52,79. Mario Soares, ‘Der portugiesische Sozialismus und Willy Brandt’, in Richard Löwenthal (ed.), *Demokratischer Sozialismus in den achtziger Jahren*, (Köln 1979), p.196.

<sup>269</sup> See Thomas Schroers, *Die Aussenpolitik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland: Die Entwicklung der Beziehungen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland zur Portugiesischen Republik (1949 – 1976)*, unpublished PhD Thesis, University of the Federal Armed Forces (Universität der Bundeswehr, Hamburg, 1998), p.126.

<sup>270</sup> Lajos Pandi, Mario Soares, in Otfried Dankelmann (ed.), *Lebensbilder europäischer Sozialdemokraten des 20. Jahrhunderts*, (Verlag für Gesellschaftskritik, Wien 1995), p.433.

provided his West German friends with a first-hand account of the political situation back home. In conversation with SPD frontbencher Holger Börner, Soares almost prophetically highlighted the possibility of fundamental change in Portugal given the “deepening political, economic and colonial-military crisis”.<sup>271</sup> According to Soares, opposition forces and civil society actors were looking at a range of possible options to work towards regime change including terrorist action, civil unrest, military uprising or through institutional reform of state-run organisations like the trade unions. However, he assured his German hosts that the PS leadership rejected violent means, was committed to a peaceful and if necessary negotiated transition and maintained “good relations with young army officers” and “liaison persons inside the ministries.”<sup>272</sup> The crucial question for West German politicians was, which position the PS and other opposition parties would adopt regarding Portugal’s membership in NATO after a possible regime change. Any radicalisation of Portugal’s political leadership, the forging of closer ties with the Soviet Union and Lisbon’s possible withdrawal from Western security structures would have meant a serious de-stabilisation of the FRG’s operational environment. The Foreign Office therefore voiced its strict opposition to any Communist infiltration of security-sensitive areas:

We need to have an open dialogue with the Portuguese about the necessity to restrict the exchange of information on certain questions of Western security in case of a Communist presence in government. No Communist in the area of security! We need to make clear time and again that in the long-run the involvement of Communist cabinet members is incompatible with Portugal’s NATO membership.<sup>273</sup>

Soares insisted that he and his fellow dissidents were united in their support of Portugal’s NATO membership “as long as there was no alternative security system in place in Western Europe” and as long as the East-West confrontation persisted.<sup>274</sup>

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<sup>271</sup> Political Archives *Auswärtiges Amt* (hereafter PolArch/AA) B26, 110.214 (Notes Veronika Isenberg, 26 April 1974).

<sup>272</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>273</sup> *Ibid* (translation by author).

<sup>274</sup> *Ibid.*



Clearly relieved, SPD international affairs analyst Veronika Isenberg concluded, “It emerges as a result of the talks that the PS leadership adopts a pro-Western position.”<sup>275</sup>

Initially, the newly founded political organisation appeared to be a classical cadre party “without significant roots in Portuguese society.”<sup>276</sup> The PS served as a reservoir for a wide range of ideological beliefs, which led to a number of structural deficiencies. “We lacked almost everything to effectively impact on national political life. We did not have enough active party members in cities and villages, no battle-hardened party organisation with functioning structures, no effective information channels and almost no money.”<sup>277</sup> After 25 April 1974, the PS expanded its membership rapidly incorporating ultra-leftists, Social Democrats, Catholics, freemasons and Marxists thus drawing criticism of turning into a ‘vacuum cleaner party’ without a clear-cut political profile.<sup>278</sup> The diversity of viewpoints, mentalities and ideological agendas created not only a pluralist and lively framework for discourse but at the same time undermined party unity in the ensuing power struggle with other political actors. Soares remembers:

Nobody really knew the troops, which had joined us. They were very heterogeneous. One did not speak the same language in Faro and Brago, the training was extremely poor and the party line was frequently ignored. It was difficult to unite all these political wings because the party meant something else to every one of them.<sup>279</sup>

In December 1974, the first PS party conference adopted a manifesto, in which the political principles of Portugal’s Socialists were outlined. The programme openly embraced Marxism as its guiding ideology thus proving to remain a far cry from the SPD’s political philosophy. The strong left-wing tendencies of the programme were probably due to the PS’s heterogeneity of membership and to the influence of left-wing PS firebrand Manuel Serra. The programme expressed the party’s rejection of “all those movements which call themselves Social Democratic or even Socialist but which only

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<sup>275</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>276</sup> Mario Soares, *Portugal – Welcher Weg zum Sozialismus?*, op.cit., p.65.

<sup>277</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>278</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 66-67.

<sup>279</sup> *Ibid.*, p.67 (translation by author).

serve the interests of imperialism thus preserving the structures of capitalism.”<sup>280</sup> It called for plebiscitary forms of democracy, union activism, worker’s councils, and producer co-cooperatives as well as for the self-administration of organised labour.<sup>281</sup> It committed the party to fighting capitalist orders and bourgeois rule.<sup>282</sup>

Despite the PS manifesto’s unashamed leftwing radicalism and boisterously doctrinaire stance towards ‘neo-capitalism’ and despite its hostility towards all those social orders which, according to the authors of the programme, “appear to be democracies only in form and which call themselves consumer societies, but which in fact increase the inequality among human beings”<sup>283</sup>, West German Social Democracy had no reason to be overly worried about the internal maturing process of its Portuguese partner as the PS leadership remained controlled by the conservative wing within the party. Among the 40 members on the PS’s executive board were only four or five proponents of the Serra-wing and only Serra himself got elected into the executive party secretariat as a representative of the left wing.<sup>284</sup> The almost flamboyant Marxist radicalism of the manifesto never seriously undermined co-operation between FEF and the PS leadership, and the transitional process, which according to FEF strategists was to “eventually generate Social Democratic ideas” (Optenhögel) was never put at risk by radical rhetoric.

In his study on the international dimension of regime change in Portugal, German political scientist Rainer Eisfeld interprets the adoption of the party manifesto as a tactical manoeuvre and as the attempt to present the party as an ideological alternative to its main political competitor on the moderate left, the Partido Popular Democratico (PPD).<sup>285</sup> The latter organisation was founded in May 1974 by three

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<sup>280</sup> See party programme of the Portuguese Social Party, printed in: Friedhelm Merz, Victor Cunha Rego, *Freiheit für den Sieger*, op.cit., p.210.

<sup>281</sup> *Ibid*, p.209.

<sup>282</sup> *Ibid*, p.210.

<sup>283</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>284</sup> Rainer Eisfeld, *Sozialistischer Pluralismus in Europa: Ansätze und Scheitern am Beispiel Portugals*, (Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik, Köln 1984), p.49. SPD international relations expert Dingels described the deteriorating and antagonistic relationship between Soares and Serra as “negative for the democratisation process in Portugal and the electoral prospects of the Socialist Party.” (*Archiv der sozialen Demokratie* (hereafter AdsD), Willy Brandt Collection (hereafter WBC), Box No. 127 (hereafter BN), Letter Hans-Eberhard Dingels to Willy Brandt, 9 January 1975.

<sup>285</sup> *Ibid*, p.50.

former ‘liberal’ members of Portugal’s Salazarist state party ANP, Francisco Sa Carneiro, Joaquim Magalhaes Mota and Francisco Pinto Balsemao with a clearly expressed orientation towards the establishment of Capitalist economic structures and the constitutional protection of private economic activities and private property. Although the PPD has been described as a formation of “liberals who do not dare to appear under a liberal label because everyone who does not pretend to be politically left puts himself at risk of being suspected a fascist”<sup>286</sup>, the PPD claimed to be a Social Democratic party and started to canvass for support by the SPD ever since its inaugural party conference of November 1974.<sup>287</sup> Observing the catwalk of post-revolutionary political actors in Portugal, the SPD-owned *Vorwärts* commented about the PPD’s positioning within the kaleidoscope of ideological positions:

It characterises the current political climate in Portugal, that the first centrist party established last Saturday labels itself leftist. The ‘Party of the Left Centre’ – this will be probably the name under which it will campaign in future – brings together a number of young technocrats and liberal professors who worked under Caetano after the death of Salazar but broke with him when his relapse into the openly fascist policies of repression became apparent.<sup>288</sup>

In October 1974, the PPD co-founder Francisco Pinto Balsemao approached the West German Ambassador in Lisbon Fritz Caspari and asked the diplomat to arrange a meeting with Willy Brandt or any other leading member of the SPD. Although Caspari speculated that the SPD leadership might be interested in exploring possible forms of future co-operation with the PPD, contacts between the two parties did not develop into any significant partnership in the long-run after talks between the head of the SPD’s international relation department Hans-Eberhard Dingels, Willy Brandt and Minister of State in the *Auswärtige Amt* Hans-Jürgen Wischnewski had failed to produce any result

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<sup>286</sup> Hans Ulrich Kempfski, ‘Ein Troupier und ein Träumer zeigen Macht’, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, No.162, 17.7.1974.

<sup>287</sup> Personal correspondence with Luis Brito Correia, 11 July 2006.

<sup>288</sup> Eberhard Rondholz, ‘Kein Putsch wie jeder andere: Lissaboner Frühling dauert an’, *Vorwärts*, 9 May 1974 (translation by author).

that could serve as a basis for co-operation. However, Dingels was told to stay in touch with the PPD leadership.<sup>289</sup>

In the run up to Portugal's first democratic elections on 25 April 1975, the PPD leader Rui Machete visited the German capital to establish contacts with officials of the FEF and to convince them to provide the PPD with political aid. Although PPD emissaries held talks with the British Labour Party as well as with Danish, Dutch and Swedish Social Democrats, West Germany received particular attention as it was "the country with the richest parties and the greatest willingness to help."<sup>290</sup> The Portuguese politician requested 'technical support' for the establishment of a trade union organisation, the training of political cadres and for educational programmes promoting producer co-operatives.<sup>291</sup> Referring to the SPD-affiliated Institute for International Dialogue (IID), which had previously granted assistance to his party, Machete inquired if West Germany's Social Democrats were prepared to send once again "Mr. Sahrholz to Lisbon to provide support as a consultant for party organisation and political campaigning to Lisbon."<sup>292</sup> The PPD's campaign office can only benefit from his experience."<sup>293</sup> Machete made no secret of his expectation to see his party entering the new government after the elections in April 1975 "if the elections, against all odds, are going to take place under normal conditions." Once in the cabinet, it was crucial for the PPD to obtain "direct political aid from the Federal Republic and to let the militaries know that even for them there are political limits in the exercise of power."<sup>294</sup> Machete stressed the importance of a strong PPD in the international realm and suggested that the Portuguese Ambassador Ernani Lopes as an active supporter of the party should serve as

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<sup>289</sup> AdsD, Bruno Friedrich Collection (hereafter BFC), BN/1537, Telegram Fritz Caspari via Auswärtiges Amt to Bruno Friedrich, 3 October 1974.

<sup>290</sup> Personal correspondence with Luis Brito Correia, 11 July 2006.

<sup>291</sup> Archiv der sozialen Demokratie (hereafter AsdD), Helmut Schmidt Collection (hereafter HSC), BN/7340, notes of a conversation with Prof. Rui Machete, 10 April 1975.

<sup>292</sup> PPD international affairs expert Brito Correia remembered that his party and the affiliated Fundação Oliveira Martins had received "political aid from FEF and an Institute" and it seems plausible to assume that this Institute was in fact the IID. See personal correspondence with Luis Brito Correia, 11 July 2006.

<sup>293</sup> *Ibid.* SPD functionary Richard Sahrholz of the SPD-affiliated Institute for International Dialogue (IID) visited Portugal in the run-up to the April 1975 elections to monitor the PPD's campaign activities and to provide the party with electoral assistance. He held conversations with several PPD leaders such as Alfredo de Sousa, Luis Brito Correia, Manuel Castello Branco, Mario Pinto, Rebello de Sousa and Jorge Correia de Cunha.

<sup>294</sup> AsdD, HSC, BN/7340, notes of a conversation with Prof. Rui Machete, 10 April 1975.

a cross-party liaison person who would maintain lines of communication between PPD and SPD headquarters.<sup>295</sup> Machete informed his German hosts about an upcoming visit of two members of the PPD - the international relations expert Luis Brito Correia and for legal affairs, Prof. Paulo Pitta e Cunha – to West Germany and mentioned the interest of the two envoys to meet “important SPD politicians.”<sup>296</sup> The PPD leader also announced his intention to set up a party office in West Germany and to request the help of the IID for this project.<sup>297</sup>

Earlier, SPD Chairman Willy Brandt on his first visit to Lisbon after the overthrow of the Salazarist regime was welcomed by a 100-strong delegation of PPD supporters who displayed placards conveying the political message of a partnership between SPD and PPD. On several occasions, Brandt needed to answer sceptics who questioned the SPD’s commitment to its partnership with Soares’s PS given the latter’s radical Marxist stance.<sup>298</sup> Possibly in reaction to the radical tendencies of the PS manifesto, Brandt rejected the notion of an exclusive partnership between SPD and PS and spoke publicly about the possibility of also admitting the PPD into the Socialist International (SI).<sup>299</sup> Brandt’s foreign policy adviser Hans-Eberhard Dingels hoped that “eventually informative contacts between the SPD and the PPD could turn out to be helpful.”<sup>300</sup> Because of Brandt’s critical attitude towards the PS’s programmatic radicalism and his rejection of an exclusive relationship between the two parties, the PS

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<sup>295</sup> *Ibid.* See also personal correspondence with Luis Brito Correia, 11 July 2006

<sup>296</sup> *Ibid.* Correia and Pitta e Cunha held talks with representatives of SPD and FEF in Bonn to press the Germans further on the point of a possible PPD membership in the Socialist International (SI) and future co-operation with the FRG’s Social Democrats. Their German contacts told them that the SI recognised only one party per country with the exception of political splinter groups. However, since Mário Soares “would not allow the PPD to become Portugal’s second SI member”, the talks between the Germans and the Portuguese envoys remained without success.

<sup>297</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>298</sup> See Rudolf Wagner, ‘Klare Absage an die Volksfront’, *Vorwärts*, 24 October 1974.

<sup>299</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>300</sup> AsdD, Bruno Friedrich Collection (hereafter BFC), BN/1537, Notes concerning the visit of SPD Chairman Brandt to Portugal by Hans-Eberhard Dingels, 22 October 1974. Dingels acknowledged that among the members of the PPD there are “without any doubts Social Democrats” but he also had no illusions about the conservative and liberal elements of the party structure and concluded that “an institutionalised connection between SPD and PPD is not on the agenda.” *Ibid.*

leader reacted irritably. “It seemed” noted Dingels, “as if the farewell for Brandt by Soares turned out to be a touch less cordial”.<sup>301</sup>

FEF analyst Hans Ulrich Büniger was asked by Brandt to become the liaison officer for FEF and SPD in charge of maintaining contacts with Portugal’s political parties. He recalls, “The PPD was constantly seeking contacts with FEF and SPD” but stresses that those contacts “were limited to mere conversations and suggestions.”<sup>302</sup> Machete’s PPD did not possess the PS’s long-standing relationship with West Germany’s Social Democrats and it also lacked any pre-revolutionary democratic credentials. Although the PPD’s commitment to market economic principles and entrepreneurial initiative contrasted starkly with the quasi-revolutionary Marxist rhetoric expressed in the PS manifesto, the party was never able to replace the SPD-PS axis with an alternative model of transnational co-operation.<sup>303</sup> The PPD leadership was told time and again that West Germany’s SPD could only grant support to members of the Socialist International to the point where several high-ranking PPD politicians complained about the obvious lack of interest by the SPD to establish and maintain a real political partnership.<sup>304</sup> Nevertheless, PPD politician Luís Brito Correia remembers that West Germany’s SPD provided some political support for his party “although not officially and directly but through the FEF in order to avoid problems with PS leader Soares.”<sup>305</sup>

#### ***2.4. The Conflation of State and Sub-State Diplomacy in the FRG’s Foreign Policy***

West Germany’s foreign policy system is best described as a dense network of different institutional units or as a conglomerate of external affairs players simultaneously engaging in agenda setting, conceptualising, political communication and decision-

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<sup>301</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>302</sup> Personal correspondence with Hans Ulrich Büniger, 15 January 2002.

<sup>303</sup> Certain circles within the SPD would have certainly appreciated a closer co-operation between PPD and West Germany’s Social Democrats. SPD heavyweight Hans Matthöfer admitted in an interview with the German public broadcaster ZDF in March 1976 that personal animosities between individuals posed a bigger problem for political partnership than differences in manifesto or ideology.” With regard to the PPD’s claim to be a social democratic party he assured his interviewer that, “I do not want to question their right to call themselves Social Democrats.” ZDF Bonner Perspektiven, 28 March 1976.

<sup>304</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.244, Report Richard Sahrholz ‘Elections in Portugal, 25 April 1975’.

<sup>305</sup> Personal correspondence with Luís Brito Correia, 11 July 2006.

making. It lends itself to the description of being a multilayered diplomatic apparatus, in which different operational levels permanently interact with the external environment as well as with each other. At the same time, the different units of the system process and forward insights gained, information acquired and analyses developed. At the helm of the system, state-to-state interaction is being managed by traditional governmental institutions of national diplomacy, namely the Federal Chancellery, the *Auswärtige Amt* and increasingly internationally active ministerial departments in the Federal Ministry for Economic Co-operation and International Development (*Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung BMZ*) as well as in the Ministry of Trade and Industry (BWI). This 'public' institutional texture is being supplemented by 'private' i.e. transnationally operating sub-state actors such as Germany's political parties and their affiliated foundations. It is the latter category, which regularly harnesses the Federal Republic's soft power resources while official diplomacy either maintains largely symbolic bilateral relations or acts within much more effective multilateral frameworks. Within the system, governmental and non-governmental actors co-operate and co-ordinate their activities in often subtle, sometimes unintended but always multifaceted ways.

In Portugal, the FRG's governmental foreign policy establishment believed deficits in the area of political infrastructure with political pluralism being in a dangerously embryonic state, a crippled legal system, a largely silenced and otherwise Communist-dominated trade union movement as well as politically marginalised media organisations to be the main obstacles for Portugal's successful democratisation. The FEF with its soft power capabilities appeared to be the most promising tool to remove those obstacles. The nature of the transitional framework and the aforementioned structural deficits required soft power-based outside intervention on a transnational level. While the Federal Government contemplated and co-ordinated more coercive steps towards the new regime in Lisbon within established multilateral parameters, the FEF with its close affiliation to West Germany's ruling Social Democrats was to provide knowledge, expertise and information for the strengthening of democratic forces.

According to the FEF's political maxim that the "essential elements of democracy need to be developed within civil society"<sup>306</sup>, the FEF as a transnational actor was uniquely positioned to operate within Portugal's transition theatre. "Religious organisations and political foundations are often able to flexibly react to requests coming from civil society, something which bilateral co-operation usually is obliged to take into account."<sup>307</sup> The FEF served as a central agency for political communication as well as a political Trojan horse for the exercise of soft power and provided Portugal's democrats with practical solutions for a sustainable build-up of democratic structures, tried and tested in a German setting. Although often described as a nongovernmental organisation, the FEF was anything but a mere tool in the hands of ministers, permanent secretaries or party leaders and maintained clear links with the institutions of West Germany's public diplomacy. Its preference formation and agenda-setting was guided not only by partisan considerations to help improve the position of like-minded political forces but also to work towards the maximisation of wealth and to ensure the FRG's security by creating an operational environment that closely resembled West Germany's own politico-structural reality. Therefore, the sometimes seemingly elusive shibboleth of the 'national interest' did play a not insignificant role in the international soft power driven activities of the FRG's sub-state diplomacy. Ernst Hillebrandt and Uwe Optenhögel have correctly remarked "not only those political and social interest groups behind the foundations benefited from this foreign policy instrument but German society as a whole."<sup>308</sup>

The conflation of governmental and transnational diplomacy is clearly expressed in a situational report on the West German involvement in the Iberian country, which remarked "there are multiple connections with Portugal via SPD and FEF, in particular with the PS, which have also practical implications. The government of the Federal Republic supports this moral and material assistance (campaign assistance, assistance in

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<sup>306</sup> Friedrich-Ebert Foundation, *Das mühsame Geschäft der Demokratieförderung: Konzepte und Erfahrungen aus der Internationalen Entwicklungszusammenarbeit der Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung*, (Bonn, 1999), p.8.

<sup>307</sup> *Ibid*, p.10.

<sup>308</sup> Ernst Hillebrandt, Uwe Openhögel, 'Mediatoren in einer entgrenzten Welt – Zur außenpolitischen Rolle der politischen Stiftungen', *Politik und Gesellschaft Online*, no.2, 2001, available from [http://www.FEF.de/ipg/ipg2\\_2001/arthillebrand.htm](http://www.FEF.de/ipg/ipg2_2001/arthillebrand.htm), cited on 8 January 2002, p.7.



the build-up of party structures, the reinforcing of anticommunism etc.)”.<sup>309</sup> The same report also highlights the CDU’s Portuguese contacts, in particular to the conservative CDS. It points out that “here too material aid has been given the exact amount of which remains unknown.”<sup>310</sup> Public and private diplomacy dealt with the transitional challenges posed by the Portuguese post-revolutionary period through a clear separation of political responsibilities and operational strategies. Threatening postures and the public mobilisation of the coercive instruments of hard economic power such as sanctions, boycotts or the withholding of financial aid remained largely in the multilaterally controlled toolbox of governmental institutions.

On the other hand, democracy promotion based on institution building and the strengthening of political pluralism belonged to the domain of the political foundations with their employment of soft power and their greater degree of autonomy i.e. the attempt to influence the transformation of political infrastructure in transition countries by ‘conceptually’ co-opting foreign elites. This was acknowledged by the *Auswärtige Amt*, which pointed out that besides the exchange of high-ranking political visitors on governmental level, the “focus of our foreign policy towards Portugal remains the support for democratic forces through political parties and foundations.”<sup>311</sup> The latter worked towards the consolidation of political pluralism in Portugal thus trying to shape societal and systemic structures through transnational intervention while the FRG’s public diplomacy represented by various ministerial bureaucracies and attributed to the Federal Government as a unified actor defined its “vital interest” as “securing Portugal’s membership in NATO.”<sup>312</sup> Both operational components of West Germany’s post-war power politics – public and private, governmental and non-governmental – concerned themselves with questions of national security although with two different aspects of it. While SPD and FEF (as well as the other parties and their respective political foundations) sought to stabilise West Germany’s operational environment by creating the necessary structural preconditions for liberal democracy and strong private sectors in the Iberian Peninsula, the Schmidt-Genscher government worked towards the

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<sup>309</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.244, Report ‘Portugal-Hilfe’, no date.

<sup>310</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>311</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.242, Briefing Paper ‘Die Portugal-Politik der Bundesregierung’, 18 March 1975.

<sup>312</sup> *Ibid.*

preservation of alliance structures thus stabilising the institutional framework of Western security architecture. Although both official diplomacy and the international *Stiftungen* activities were integral parts of the FRG's foreign policy system working simultaneously towards West German state interests on different operational levels, their co-ordination proved sometimes difficult. Chancellor Schmidt told his cabinet in March 1975 that "it would be important to differentiate between activities of the government and initiatives taken by political foundations" and urged his fellow ministerial colleagues to "maintain an overview of what the political foundation are actually doing."<sup>313</sup>

As has been mentioned earlier, the SPD and its international relations department also pursued informal diplomacy on a transnational level. This involvement coincides with Sebastian Bartsch's observation that the FRG's

political parties are themselves societal actors of foreign policy through their strongly developed external relations, which they maintain in co-operation with their political foundations. In this sense, they are [...] important institutions facilitating public participation in Germany's foreign policy.<sup>314</sup>

Individual contacts of prominent party officials often trumped institutional links, which was expressed in the extraordinarily prominent role SPD Chairman Willy Brandt played in strengthening the SPD's foreign policy profile. In Portugal especially his close personal contacts turned out to be invaluable for the political partnership between SPD and PS. The winner of the Nobel Peace Prize would later use his international reputation in his job as chairman of the Socialist International (SI) from 1976 onwards for the benefit of Socialist parties during the transition processes in the Iberian Peninsula. Furthermore, the SPD party apparatus maintained working relations with the Federal Chancellery (*Bundeskanzleramt*), a connection between sub-state actor and state executive, which appears to be "naturally closer than the one maintained by opposition

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<sup>313</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.242, Briefing Paper, Cabinet Meeting, 26 March 1975.

<sup>314</sup> Sebastian Bartsch, 'Aussenpolitischer Einfluss und Aussenbeziehungen der Parteien', in Wolf-Dieter Eberwein, Karl Kaiser (eds.), *Deutschlands Neue Aussenpolitik – Institutionen und Ressourcen*, vol. 4, (R. Oldenbourg Verlag München, 1998), p.172 (translation by author).

parties.”<sup>315</sup> Although during the 1970s, the West German Government did contain a liberal element through the participation of the smaller Free Democratic Party (FDP) led by Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, Bonn’s political aid programme for Portuguese democracy was heavily dominated by the SPD’s cross-border party co-operation on a transnational level. The three *institutional* levels, which form the basis for (West) Germany’s foreign policy system – political parties, political foundations and governmental diplomacy – with their two-layered *operational* dimensions - state and sub-state, ‘public’ and ‘private’, multilateral and transnational – were informally combined in the so-called Circle of the Six (*Sechserkreis*), a committee which incorporated SPD officials, cabinet ministers and representatives of SI and FEF. SPD foreign affairs expert Horst Ehmke remembers:

This committee was the initial power centre for the coordination and decision-making within West Germany’s foreign policy. The *Sechserkreis* also illustrated the complex structures underlying the interaction between semi-governmental actors, government, Chancellery and SI.<sup>316</sup>

The *Sechserkreis* met on a more or less regular basis in the parliamentary building “depending on demand and able to decide on an ad-hoc basis if necessary.”<sup>317</sup> It then “entered into deliberation about the possible ways to become politically involved in

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<sup>315</sup> *Ibid*, p.168. Hans Matthöfer whose activities in the area of democratisation on the Iberian Peninsula date back to the 1960s embodied both governmental as well as transnational components of Germany’s foreign policy system being a SPD minister and member of the government as well as a member of the SPD’s executive board. Asked whether he would “coordinate” his activities as a party functionary with the federal government he insisted that “the SPD acts independently” retaining its own responsibility for external affairs. At the same time though, Matthöfer expressed his conviction that the party leadership “would not do anything, which might contradict the goals of the Federal Government.” *ZDF Bonner Perspektiven*, 28 March 1976. As part of the bureaucratic structures of the Federal Chancellery, the department for external relations (*Abteilung für Auswärtige Angelegenheiten*) needs to be mentioned at this point. Although its leading personnel is normally recruited from the diplomatic cadre at the German Foreign Office, these civil servants and career diplomats are often chosen for their political sympathies

<sup>316</sup> Personal interview with Horst Ehmke, Bonn, 17 April 2002 (translation by the author). Among others, the head of the SPD’s internal relations department Hans Eberhard Dingels Minister in the *Auswärtiges Amt* Hans Jürgen Wischnewski, Minister for Telecommunication and Technology Horst Ehmke, the mayor of Bremen and member of the executive board Hans Koschnik, the SPD foreign policy expert and architect of Brandt’s *Ostpolitik* Egon Bahr as well as the Managing Director of the FEF Günther Grunwald were regular participants in the *Sechserkreis* meetings.

<sup>317</sup> Personal interview with Günther Grunwald, Bonn, 11 December 2002.

Portugal's transition."<sup>318</sup> The activities of the *Sechserkreis* were supplemented by regular briefings between FEF and SPD on the level of the executive board."<sup>319</sup>

## **2.5. Governmental Diplomacy after 25 April 1974**

After the almost bloodless overthrow of Portugal's authoritarian regime in April 1974, the SPD/FDP coalition government under Chancellor Helmut Schmidt was confronted with a foreign policy dilemma, which only the ideologically bipolar nature of the international Cold War environment could create. Parts of Portugal's newly 'inaugurated' ruling elite, the Armed Forces Movement (MFA), displayed either strong sympathies for the PCP or continued to toy more generally with the idea of political reform along Marxist lines. On the one hand, the officers had freed the country from the agonising dictatorship of the Salazarist regime thus leading society into a formerly unknown realm of political freedom. On the other hand, the left-leaning ideological background of many leading figures within the movement led to fears in Western capitals of an imminent political shift towards the extreme left, a fraternisation with the Soviet Union and an ultimate "socio-revolutionary leftwing dictatorship, possibly supported by the PCP, and secured by the armed forces."<sup>320</sup> The consequential political reaction in Bonn was summarised by Manfred Schüler, then Minister in the Chancellor's Office: "Our assessment of the situation in Portugal left us with the belief that wherever there were Communists positioned at crucial points within the power structure, they had to be pushed out."<sup>321</sup> Schmidt's own political evaluation of the Communist threat in Portugal and of a possible fragmentation of Western security architecture shared in the widespread pessimism of many European but particularly American analysts.<sup>322</sup>

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<sup>318</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>319</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>320</sup> PolArch/AA B26, Report 'Situation in Portugal', Southern Europe Desk (Referat 203), 13 February 1975. In conversation with the Minister of State in the Portuguese Foreign Office, Jorge Campinos, SPD international relations officer Dingels was told that several observers in Lisbon believed the Soviet Union to even accept a failed Communist coup d'état, which would then be used as a pretext by rightwing elements to establish their own authoritarian regime. Such a scenario would enable Moscow to discredit the Western alliance by pointing at the political turmoil in Southern Europe's "Portuguese Chile". See PolArch/AA B26, 110.244, Notes (Hans-Eberhard Dingels), 3 February 1975.

<sup>321</sup> Personal interview with Manfred Schüler, Berlin, 20 June 2002.

<sup>322</sup> Horst Ehmke admitted that the West German Government "thought a Portuguese drift towards a Communist system and a political positioning in great proximity to the Soviet Union to be extremely likely." Personal interview with Horst Ehmke, Bonn, 17 April 2002. SPD chairman Willy Brandt admitted

However, the Chancellor and his administration were still convinced that the situation provided sufficient space for a more pro-active political manoeuvring. Horst Ehmke remembers:

The crucial experience for Schmidt was a conversation with Kissinger, in which the latter articulated his harsh and deeply rooted anti-Communist stance and in which he expressed his pessimism regarding the Portuguese case. In reaction to the Secretary of State's remarks, Schmidt expressed the determination of the Europeans to put themselves in charge of the Portuguese transition process.<sup>323</sup>

And his cabinet colleague Egon Bahr recalls the American secretary of state's attitude:

For Kissinger, the situation seemed utterly hopeless. He already expected Portugal's NATO membership to vanish. We, on the other hand, were always conscious of the necessity not to give in because there was a chance for West Germany's Social Democracy to contribute to an ultimately positive outcome.<sup>324</sup>

In Kissinger's view, the "political parties in Portugal" were "not able to exert any influence" and in talks with the West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher he confessed that "I don't think they will survive. We cannot kid ourselves. The prospects are that we will have a dictatorial regime in Lisbon."<sup>325</sup> West Germany's career diplomats in the *Auswärtige Amt* shared Bahr and Ehmke's description of the U.S. position at the outset of Portugal's transition. "Right from the beginning, the American attitude towards the Portugal problem was a nuance more pessimistic than ours. Apparently, Kissinger has personally re-directed Washington's policies in Lisbon a few times."<sup>326</sup> In contrast to more conservative elements in the U.S. Administration, West German foreign policy makers warned "we cannot allow Communist provocations

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in 1976: "We agreed with what the Americans said: It would not be good if there are certain NATO member states in which Communists are part of the government. On the other hand, the Portuguese case has shown that it would have been wrong to remove Portugal from NATO just because there were Communist temporarily in government." *Westfälische Rundschau*, 28 April 1976.

<sup>323</sup> Personal interview with Horst Ehmke, Bonn, 17 April 2002 (translation by author).

<sup>324</sup> Personal interview with Egon Bahr, Berlin, 21 June 2002.

<sup>325</sup> DNSA/KT, 01707, Memorandum of Conversation, The White House, 27 July 1975.

<sup>326</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.244, Southern Europe Desk (Referat 203), Report 'Situation in Portugal', 13 February 1975; See also West German Ambassador Berndt von Staden's remarks to Kissinger that after assessing the situation in Portugal "we are slightly more optimistic", DNSA/KT, 01591, Memorandum of Conversation, Department of State, 23 April 1975.

to push us into a confrontation with Portugal's ruling officers. Any measures leading to Portugal's greater isolation will only play into the hands of the Communists."<sup>327</sup>

In April 1975, the *Auswärtige Amt* formulated its catalogue of politico-economic policies to facilitate the emergence and ensure the subsequent survival of democratic structures in Portugal. It placed great emphasis on financial incentives and economic rewards suggesting the pay-out of a DM 40 million emergency loan to the Portuguese Government, which "for public relation-related reasons should be increased to DM 100 million soon".<sup>328</sup> It also envisaged increased economic activities of the FRG military including *Bundeswehr* purchases of ammunition from Portuguese manufacturers worth another DM 40 million. Within multilateral fora as the traditional operational environment for the FRG's governmental diplomacy, the government promised to lobby decision-making bodies of the European Community to have them lift existing trade restrictions and reduce tariffs on agricultural products, textiles and paper.<sup>329</sup> The Schmidt Government was prepared to accept the role of international advocate for Portuguese interests and expressed its determination to convince EC institutions to provide Lisbon with urgently needed financial support, in particular with loans by the European Development Bank.<sup>330</sup>

### 2.5.1. Financial Support

During the following months, Schmidt relied heavily on SPD Chairman Willy Brandt's personal contacts with PS leader Mario Soares because of "Brandt's role in the operative domain until 1974."<sup>331</sup> Changes in the coalition government in Bonn after Brandt's resignation over a case of East German espionage may have also contributed to a more visible role for the former Chancellor, who began to establish the party apparatus as his new foreign policy bastion. Schmidt and his foreign policy entourage quickly identified three main tasks: The strengthening of Portugal's fragile institutional structures, the promotion of political pluralism and constitution building and the provision of economic

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<sup>327</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.244, Report 'Situation in Portugal', 30 April 1975.

<sup>328</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.242, Briefing Paper 'Die Portugal-Politik der Bundesregierung', 18 March 1975; Also PolArch/AA B26, 110.242, Briefing Paper 9 April 1975.

<sup>329</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>330</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>331</sup> Personal interview with Manfred Schüler, Berlin, 20 June 2002.

aid.<sup>332</sup> “The role of political parties in this context was absolutely decisive.”<sup>333</sup> Leaders of West Germany’s parliamentary parties including representatives of their respective foundations discussed the Portuguese situation at a meeting with the President of the Federal Republic (*Bundespräsident*), SPD politician Gustav Heinemann whereby the “debate was not about the ‘If’ but dealt exclusively with the ‘How’ of political aid.”<sup>334</sup>

A second meeting followed between Schmidt and the party chairmen. As a result, it was agreed to allocate a certain amount of money to all of West Germany’s political parties, which would then be responsible for the implementation of political programmes first in Portugal, from 1975 onwards in Spain and later in Turkey too. According to Manfred Schüler, the Chancellery had to convince the Federal Financial Auditing Authority (*Bundesrechnungshof*) that it was not intended to channel the money around the legally required control mechanisms or to avoid transparency, but that the matter of financial aid for Portugal’s democrats had to be solved “discreetly due to its political sensitivity.”<sup>335</sup> Being a “politically farsighted man”,<sup>336</sup> the president of the auditing authority promised support and accepted the argument of the special nature of the planned operation. The financial allocations were made out of a reserve fund of the Federal Intelligence Agency BND (*Bundesnachrichtendienst*). Since West Germany’s Finance Minister Hans Apel immediately rejected the idea of allocating money for the democratic build-up in Portugal from his ministerial budget, party chairmen and foundation officials decided to approach the BND in order to access its secret financial reserves.<sup>337</sup> According to Schüler, the agency agreed provided the operation would not become a secret service project and the money would be paid back at a later stage. The Portuguese partner organisations made it clear that high visibility and noisy publicity of Bonn’s democracy promotion projects were not in their interest because of feared public debates in the target country about the role of foreign influence. The accusation of being

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<sup>332</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>333</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>334</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>335</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>336</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>337</sup> The Germany correspondent of the London-based *Times* newspaper Roger Boynes reported in 2000, that “a few German officials, including a senior intelligence agent worked out ways to help Social Democrats in Portugal.” ‘Secret Service funds may have bolstered Bonn party war chests’, *Times*, 2 February 2000.

dominated by outside powers could be easily used as a political weapon against political opponents during the transition.<sup>338</sup>

In the absence of officially published figures, analysts have to rely on the documentary evidence produced more or less coincidentally in the wake of the slush fund scandal surrounding former Chancellor Helmut Kohl's time in office, which concussed Christian Democracy in 1999. According to internal documents of the Chancellery, the FRG's political parties represented in the *Bundestag* received a total of DM 47 million as well as US\$ 2.5 million for their international democracy promotion activities in Spain, Portugal and Turkey between 1974 and 1982.<sup>339</sup> Both CDU and SPD received around DM 12 million and the smaller FDP slightly less.<sup>340</sup> Listed under budgetary item number 0404 covering financial allocations for special operations of the intelligence service and being labelled 'top secret', only four people, namely the President of the Federal Auditing Authority and three members of parliament as the so-called 'correspondent group' were allowed to monitor the money transfers made out of the secret fund.<sup>341</sup> The parliamentary 'correspondents' were shown receipts of payments issued by their respective party treasurers, who collected the money in cash, a modality of payment at their own request.<sup>342</sup> The Chief of Staff in the Chancellor's Office Manfred Schüler even remembered: "We paid them the money in used US \$20 notes instead of giving out initially requested new Deutsche Mark bank notes."<sup>343</sup>

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<sup>338</sup> Regarding the financial aid obtained by the PS, Rainer Eisfeld rejects the notion of an altruistic nature of political support for Soares by declaring that "as early as 1974, the PS did not only receive massive support from abroad, but was also confronted with equally massive expectations directly linked to this aid." *Sozialistischer Pluralismus in Europa*, op.cit., p.131.

<sup>339</sup> Hans Leyendecker, 'Geheimfonds der Regierung Schmidt enthielt 52 Millionen Mark – Unterlagen weisen höhere Summe aus als bisher bekannt', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 3 February 2000.

<sup>340</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>341</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>342</sup> Hans Leyendecker, 'Geheime Zahlungen aus dem Geheimdienst-Etat - Deutsche Parteien verteilten BND-Geld ohne jede Kontrolle an Partner in Spanien und Portugal', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 1 February 2000. The former Director of the KAF's Department for International Co-operation, Josef Thesing, made the rather incredible claim that his Foundation had not received any of the money out of the secret fund and was not even informed about the existence of these financial resources. *Associated Press Worldstream*, 7 February 2000. Also contradicting the existing evidence that party treasuries had in fact received money from the secret fund, former SPD treasurer Inge Wettig-Danielmeier insisted that "this was an operation of the German and other governments, which supported Spain and Portugal. We as a party did not have anything to do with it." in Tina Stadlmayer 'BND-Geld für Portugal und Spanien', *taz*, 2 February 2000.

<sup>343</sup> Personal interview with Manfred Schüler, Berlin, 20 June 2002.



In 2000, German investigative reporter Hans Leyendecker, whose work on the diffuse nature of the financing of democracy promotion activities in the Iberian Peninsula helped to shed light on the financial dimension of the FRG's political aid received information from an unidentified FEF informant that the political foundation received between DM 3 million and DM 5 million from the secret fund in ten successive transactions.<sup>344</sup> During the 1980s and 1990s, SPD and CDU faced allegations of illegal party financing when investigators suspected both parties of having channelled the money via foreign bank accounts back into their respective treasuries instead of spending the funds completely on support for democratic partner organisations in Spain and Portugal.<sup>345</sup> The public prosecutor's office in the West German capital Bonn believed that the FEF had transferred vast sums of money, which it had received through the secret BND fund to the Tel Aviv-based Fritz-Naphtalie Foundation (FNAF). In 1984, investigators recovered documents during a raid of FEF offices in Bonn that showed the transfer of approximately DM 22 million between 1975 and 1981 into a Swiss-registered account of the FNAF.<sup>346</sup> The true nature of these money transfers, however, could not be conclusively determined as most potential witnesses had died and others involved chose to remain silent.<sup>347</sup>

In addition, funding for the support of Socialist forces in Portugal came allegedly from the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and was channelled via Socialist parties in Western Europe. Former adviser to U.S. Ambassador Frank Carlucci, Howard Wiarda, even recalls from his own investigations that "the CIA may have done the overall coordination for this entire project (Western democracy promotion efforts in

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<sup>344</sup> Hans Leyendecker, 'Bares ohne Belege', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 25 September 2000. Claude Montagny's claimed that SPD and FEF spent DM 13.5 million for the support of the PS between April 1974 and May 1975, 'La fondation Friedrich Ebert: Efficace demarcheur de la social democratie allemande', in *La Social-Democratie au present*, Paris, ES, 1979, p.120.

<sup>345</sup> SPD officials got worried when they remembered an episode in 1980 involving the party's former treasurer Alfred Nau, in which Nau wanted to deliver a briefcase with DM 6 million in cash to then Chancellor Helmut Schmidt. He insisted the money was the result of donations but refused to identify the donors. Another SPD ex-treasurer, Fritz Halstenberg, said that he was not prepared to "exclude the possibility" that Nau's 'donations' did not in fact originate from the Iberia fund.

<sup>346</sup> The Foundation was established by Israel's Labour Party in 1970 with the support of West Germany's Social Democrats

<sup>347</sup> Hans Leyendecker, 'Schweigen ist Geld', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 1 February 2000.

Portugal, the author)".<sup>348</sup> Although the latter assertion remains without substantiation, there is in fact evidence to suggest that Europe's powerful and well-connected Social Democrats and Socialist parties, unions and affiliated organisations, including the West German SPD, had received money from the U.S. American intelligence community. "In the spring of 1975" writes Gregory Treverton "the CIA began passing money, several million dollars a month to the party (the PS, the author) through its fellow Socialist parties in Western Europe, before it began receiving support directly from those fellow parties."<sup>349</sup> These financial channels must have been the "specific project" that the member of the U.S. Secretary of State's staff, U.S. diplomat Wells Stabler, mentioned in December 1974 to help Soares's party, which he believed to be in "bad shape."<sup>350</sup> The staffer informed Kissinger that "Carlucci now is endeavouring to work out something, there is something strange in the atmosphere, they are talking about it, a specific project, trying to get started".<sup>351</sup> When Kissinger responded that "I thought you were going to say he was going to use the CIA. We wouldn't go to that extreme", he is being told that "we have to go for it, though, on a specific project, using some of the US\$ 10 million funds".<sup>352</sup> Despite Kissinger's initial rejection of the CIA-administered "aid project", Stabler assured him that Carlucci was "already in touch with Soares and the Embassy has been in touch with the Portuguese who are responsible for this."<sup>353</sup>

However, a couple of months later Kissinger made remarks, which suggest that either the CIA had after all not provided the allegedly large amounts of money for democracy promotion in Portugal or that the Secretary of State was not informed about the true extent of the operation "Now what happened in Portugal might well have happened even with a massive CIA campaign, but we acted like children" he lamented and decried the fact that "we gave something like US\$10,000 to some German party

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<sup>348</sup> Personal correspondence with Howard Wiarda, 22 June 2006.

<sup>349</sup> Gregory F. Treverton, *Covert Action – the CIA and the Limits of American Intervention in the Postwar World*, (I.B.Tauris & Co Ltd. Publishers, London 1987), p.216.

<sup>350</sup> DNSA/KT, 01228, Secretary's Staff Meeting, Department of State, 9 December 1974.

<sup>351</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>352</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>353</sup> *Ibid.*

which they were going to pass onto the Portuguese. It was peanuts. Brandt came and finally asked for some help.”<sup>354</sup>

### 2.5.2. The West German Embassy

At the time of the coup d'état, a new Ambassador was appointed to head West Germany's diplomatic mission in Lisbon. Everyone did not welcome the appointment:

The Embassy does not have an easy position in the new era. Instead of being an expert of the lusobrazilian world, the new Ambassador is an informed person in the Anglo-Saxon world and does not speak a word of Portuguese unlike the Ambassador of the German Democratic Republic (GDR); the press attaché who was called back to Bonn shortly after the 25 April and who is needed in his job especially now in order to stand up to the countries of the Eastern Bloc has not been replaced yet. Instead of reacting to the slightest developments and signals, the Embassy is engaged in tactical manoeuvres disguised by blinds.<sup>355</sup>

The new Ambassador, Prof. Fritz Caspari, was not an experienced career diplomat but served as Deputy Director of the President's Office (*Bundespräsidialamt*) before taking up his new post. He visited Portugal for the first time on a preliminary fact-finding tour on 23 April 1974 one day before the revolution in Lisbon.<sup>356</sup> The more experienced background of his diplomatic staff may have compensated for his lack of knowledge of Portugal's regional, political and cultural history. The deputy head of mission Heibach could use his personal contacts to a number of MFA officers who he had befriended during his posting as Consul General to Mozambique and his successor, the diplomat Keil had lived and studied in Coimbra and therefore knew parts of the new bureaucratic elite.<sup>357</sup>

The Embassy served as the medium-level communication channel between the West German Government and EC member states in Portugal whereby political developments in the country were discussed in a circle of EC Ambassadors on a monthly basis. The Embassy also served as a reference point for political foundations, particularly the FEF. SPD Chairman Brandt had handpicked the Attaché for Social

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<sup>354</sup> DNSA/KT 01486, Secretary's Staff Meeting, Department of State, 29 January 1975.

<sup>355</sup> Curt Meyer-Clason, *Portugiesische Tagebücher (1969-76)*, (Bergisch Gladbach, 1987), p.3 (translation by author).

<sup>356</sup> Personal interview with Fritz Caspari, London, 18 June 2002.

<sup>357</sup> *Ibid.*

Affairs Hans Ulrich Bünger in order for him to act as a political analyst and observer for FEF and SPD in Lisbon and as a go-between responsible for political communication with Portugal's democratic parties.<sup>358</sup> Every two weeks, Bünger held talks with PS foreign policy expert Jorge Campinos, in which the FEF officer turned diplomat was provided with background information on the latest political developments.<sup>359</sup> He also maintained channels of communication with parts of the strongly Communist-infiltrated trade union movement through members of its umbrella organisation *Intersindical* in the Ministry for Labour Affairs.<sup>360</sup> At the same time, it was Bünger's responsibility to monitor and support Socialist efforts to create labour organisations free from the influence of PCP activists such as the *Forca democratica do trabalno*.<sup>361</sup>

In a case of institutional cross-linkage between transnational party foreign policy and governmental diplomacy, SPD international relations expert Hans-Eberhard Dingels briefed Ambassador Caspari on the transitional situation in Lisbon not without mentioning the importance of the PS for Portugal's future democratic development. He pointed out that because of the SPD's long-standing relationship with Mario Soares the Portuguese moderate left had developed a positive attitude towards the country's membership in NATO and its political connectedness with Western Europe.<sup>362</sup> Dingels urged Caspari to "remain in close contact" with the SPD international relations department in order to ensure a concerted and coordinated effort of democracy promotion and assured the incoming Ambassador that "democratic forces in Portugal will have a chance to stop the Communist influence and to prevent a falling back into past times in the long-run only if the democracies in the European Community and the West as a whole are going to assist them."<sup>363</sup> Caspari himself commented occasionally on FEF projects or provided reference letters for funding applications to the BMZ.<sup>364</sup>

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<sup>358</sup> Personal correspondence with Hans-Ulrich Bünger, 15 January 2002.

<sup>359</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.240, Report West German Embassy 'Partido Socialista', 26 August 1975.

<sup>360</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.242, Telex (Caspari/Bünger), 'Kontakte mit portugiesischen Gewerkschaften', 7 February 1975.

<sup>361</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>362</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1535, Letter Hans-Eberhard Dingels to Fritz Caspari, 9 July 1974. Dingels told Caspari that "it is the intention of *all of us* to strengthen democracy by supporting our political friends in Portugal to the best of our abilities."

<sup>363</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>364</sup> Personal interview with Fritz Caspari, London, 18 June 2002.

Although personally a liberal conservative, Caspari supported Social Democratic efforts in democracy promotion in Portugal stating, “it is remarkable that almost nobody here knows what Social Democracy actually means. This appears to be a promising area to be targeted by an information campaign, in which the SPD can play a crucial role.”<sup>365</sup> However, he was particularly concerned that West German aid projects were administered in a strictly behind-the-scenes fashion and with “great sensitivity.” Despite his lack of knowledge about Portugal, Caspari soon realised that “the Portuguese were very concerned about their independence and that they outrightly rejected any form of patronising intervention with a headmaster attitude from abroad.”<sup>366</sup> He therefore urged FEF personnel in Lisbon to “keep a distinctly low public profile, a guideline they have followed throughout.”<sup>367</sup> At the same time, he made no secret of his intention to “help the country develop in a direction which is in accordance with the interests and positions of the West” and he was fully aware that “the contacts between our three parliamentary parties and Portuguese parties are of the utmost importance.”<sup>368</sup> During Portugal’s ‘hot summer’ of 1975, the diplomatic mission prepared itself for the possibility that democratic politicians might seek political refuge on the Embassy compound. Even prominent political figures in the country were concerned about their personal safety taking security precautions, among them Mario Soares who constantly changed his whereabouts.<sup>369</sup>

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<sup>365</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.240, Report ‘Politische Parteien in Portugal – Angriff auf Sozialdemokratie’, 17 September 1975.

<sup>366</sup> SPD foreign affairs expert Dingels echoed Caspari’s thoughts when he stressed that although Germany’s Social Democrats would work towards the “broadening of Portugal’s democratic potential” providing the PS with “organisational support”, the SPD would not be a “headmaster of its partner organisations.” AdsD, WBC, Bn/127, Notes Hans-Eberhard Dingels, 17 October 1974.

<sup>367</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>368</sup> Telegram Caspari to *Auwartiges Amt*, 10 October 1974, Willy Brandt Archive, SPD Chairman, Folder 127. In March 1975, the extreme leftwing newspaper *Berliner Extradienst* quoted Caspari as saying that “we should help the country (i.e. Portugal) to develop in a political direction compatible with the interests of the West. Therefore, financial allocations on the part of the Socialist International should be discreetly increased. Relations of the SPD Chairman to Portugal’s democratic parties are of the utmost importance not least in order to spare the free world the uncertainties of a Portuguese “Santiago” as the CIA’s deputy director Vernon Walters has put it during his stay in Lisbon in August.” Cited in *Berliner Extradienst*, No.22, 14 March 1975.

<sup>369</sup> During the summer of 1975, Hans Ulrich Büniger stayed in close contact with Soares during the latter’s campaign tours and was always informed about his ever-changing whereabouts. Caspari also recalls an episode involving the PPD co-founder Francisco Pinto Balsemao who he met walking up and down in front of the fence of the embassy compound. After being asked by Caspari about his reasons to do so he replied

In July 1975, the Embassy warned the West German Foreign Office that the prospects for the development of political pluralism in Portugal were increasingly clouded by a creeping radicalisation of certain elements within the MFA. “The trend” writes FEF liaison officer Büniger “goes towards a leftist single-party system”.<sup>370</sup> He pointed out that despite repeated assurances given by the country’s military leadership to honour the importance of political parties for the functioning and viability of democratic structures, it “remained more and more unclear, which real ways of influence would be left available for parties“ given the MFA’s attempts to install a country-wide ‘popular’ decision-making system with a pronounced egalitarian ethos based on its revolutionary credentials.<sup>371</sup> The *Auswärtige Amt*’s own assessment reflected Büniger’s warning and added to it the expression of a growing unease among West German diplomats about the ideological affiliations of leading military officers in Portugal. “The political attitudes of large parts of the officer corps will remain obscured as long as all non-Socialist alternatives relevant to the future of the country are being excluded from public discourse,” wrote the Foreign Office’s Iberia analysts concluding that “an escalation into civil war seems possible.”<sup>372</sup> However, Büniger himself insisted that it would be still premature to declare the survival of democracy in Portugal failed stressing the growing awareness on the part of several MFA leaders of the dire economic situation the transitional country had been manoeuvred into. “Part of that awareness is the realisation that in the long-term, Portugal can arguably expect substantial aid and support only from Western democracies.”<sup>373</sup>

### 2.5.3. Foreign Office Minister Wischnewski in Lisbon, June 1974

In June 1974, Foreign Office Minister Hans-Jürgen Wischnewski travelled to Lisbon in order to assess the political situation, to evaluate the prospects for a possible Portuguese long-term commitment to the process of European integration and to obtain clarification

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that he intended to find the best place to jump over the fence to seek asylum in the embassy in a case of emergency. Personal interview with Fritz Caspari, London, 20 June 2002.

<sup>370</sup> PolArch/AA B26 110.243, Embassy Lisbon, Report ‘Situation in Portugal’, (Caspari/Büniger), 18 July 1975.

<sup>371</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>372</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.243, Assessment *Auswärtiges Amt*, Southern Europe Desk (Referat 203), 15 August 1975.

<sup>373</sup> *Ibid.*

regarding the attitude of the MFA vis-à-vis Portugal's NATO membership. Wischnewski held talks with Prime Minister Adelino Palma Carlos, Foreign Minister Mário Soares and other members of the new government. Back in Bonn, the Social Democrat stressed the fact that political developments in transitional Portugal were taking place in a "stormy" but otherwise "planned" way, and he emphasised that despite the de-facto control of political power by the MFA general elections for a constituent assembly as well as the drafting of a new democratic constitution and elections for a general assembly had been scheduled to take place before the end of June 1975. Wischnewski assured his government that it could do business with the transitional country and that Portugal was far from being lost for the Western community of states.<sup>374</sup> Like other strategists in West Germany's foreign policy circles, he realistically assessed the operational environment in Portugal as being conducive for a successful employment of soft power in order to shape the international milieu. In other words, a stable democracy in Portugal in which a Social Democratic or Socialist party would play a leading role would become a reliable political and trading partner in international affairs. The employment of soft power i.e. the transfer of policy templates, socio-economic concepts, expertise on party management and the strengthening of institutional research capacities at this early stage of the Portuguese transition would nevertheless in the long-run be rewarded paying, in the words of Arnold Wolfers, "high dividends to the donor and yet be a moral credit to him."<sup>375</sup>

The minister who had urged NATO's leadership three weeks before the Revolution of the Carnations to reassess its relationship with Portugal because "colonial policies and NATO's aims cannot be reconciled" and who had openly stated that "Portuguese colonialism discredits the transatlantic alliance especially in the countries of the Third World",<sup>376</sup> appeared now relieved to report to his government that "in future, Portugal will remain fully integrated in NATO" and that the new Portuguese government had accepted the need for a Western defence alliance as long as the Warsaw

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<sup>374</sup> Hans-Jürgen Wischnewski, 'Gute Gespräche in Lissabon', *SPD-Pressedienst*, 28 June 1974.

<sup>375</sup> Arnold Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration*, op.cit., p.75.

<sup>376</sup> Hans-Jürgen Wischnewski, 'Keine Waffen mehr für Portugal', *SPD-Pressedienst*, 4 April 1974.

Pact was in existence.<sup>377</sup> Furthermore, Wischnewski highlighted the European dimension of Portugal's transitional process. He expressed the West German government's hopes that the political development in the Iberian country, which was largely controlled by its left-wing military rulers would eventually help to facilitate "economic and social progress" in order to develop Portugal's relationship with the EC.<sup>378</sup> The *Auswärtige Amt* envoy made no secret of the fact that risky political experiments, ideological kamikaze enterprises and economic reform radicalism would alienate European allies and would shut the door on bitterly needed material assistance.<sup>379</sup> Portugal's Foreign Minister Mario Soares had already assured the Western community of states that his country would meet his obligations resulting from its NATO membership. During a first phase of European integration, he proposed an association agreement with the EC stating "this is a very complex problem with extraordinarily far reaching economic and social consequences which needs to be considered and evaluated by a newly formed government in a very careful manner."<sup>380</sup> The concept of a multiple-step integration process and a preparatory associative membership was supported by the West German Government.<sup>381</sup>

In fact, the European dimension of Portugal's transition was to become one of the cornerstones for Socialist politics in Lisbon. It provided both a multilateral economic and political framework, which helped to reinforce the country's cultural identity as part of the European family of states and a potentially useful financial connection which could help the country overcome its chronic budget deficit, its massive foreign debts and further inflationary turmoil. The Schmidt Government quickly realised the importance of offering a 'European package' as an incentive for further mobilisation of democratic resources and as a means to appeal to the Portuguese electorate. Although Portugal's point of departure did not appear to be greatly favourable to a speedy *acquis*

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<sup>377</sup> Hans-Jürgen Wischnewski, 'Gute Gespräche in Lissabon', op.cit.

<sup>378</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>379</sup> The policy of threatening the Portuguese rulers with a withholding of financial support and economic assistance remained unchanged throughout the transition, see e.g. PolArch/AA B26, Southern Europe Desk (Referat 203), Report 'Situation in Portugal', 26 August 1975, in which *Auswärtiges Amt* diplomats stated that "we have always made it clear to the Portuguese that they could expect Western assistance only in case of a pluralist and democratic development."

<sup>380</sup> Basil P. Mathiopolous, 'Ich bin optimistisch, Interview with Mario Soares', *Vorwärts*, 9 May 1974.

<sup>381</sup> Hans-Jürgen Wischnewski, 'Gute Gespräche in Lissabon', op.cit.



*communautaire* – an inflation rate of up to 30 percent, widespread unemployment and a payment deficit totalling US \$ 500 million as well as potential political problems associated with the return of thousands of Portuguese settlers from Africa – the enthusiasm for the European project in Lisbon left observers of its transition to concede that such high levels of public support for European integration was “probably unique in the Western parts of the continent.”<sup>382</sup>

## **2.6. Sub-State Diplomacy 1 – SPD and Soft Power after 25 April 1974**

Parallel to the government’s ‘public’ diplomacy, West Germany’s interests in the creation of non-Communist operational environment in Portugal complete with market economic structures and political pluralism was furthered on a sub-state level through the foreign policy initiatives of the SPD. Former Chancellor Willy Brandt largely drove the party’s foreign policy decision-making process and its democracy promotion activities in Portugal. Horst Ehmke ascertains that

The West German involvement in Portugal was a project initially initiated by Brandt, who co-ordinated political measures as well as any further steps with the British, who at that time had the closest contacts with the Portuguese. In all our efforts, Brandt was the driving force not least because Schmidt did not have any personal contacts.<sup>383</sup>

Although Schmidt later realised the usefulness of a division of labour between him and Brandt, he did not suppress his irritation about the frequent foreign policy activities of the SPD leader for a long time. Schmidt was concerned that Brandt would neglect his responsibilities on the domestic front while sharpening his profile as a mediator between the developed and developing world. This disquiet found its expression in the words of a local party activist that Brandt “sees himself more as Portuguese Foreign Minister than as SPD Chairman.”<sup>384</sup>

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<sup>382</sup> Egon C. Heinrich, ‘Athen und Lissabon vor der EG-Tür’, *SPD-Pressedienst*, 10 September 1974.

<sup>383</sup> Personal interview with Horst Ehmke, Bonn, 17 April 2002 (translation by author). The argument that after his resignation Brandt concentrated his foreign policy activities on “relatively peripheral matters” and that the “party’s foreign policy was closer to Schmidt’s conceptions” must be consequently dismissed given his crucial role in West Germany’s transnational intervention in Portugal and Spain. See George C. Kyrtos, *The Attitudes and Policies of European Socialists regarding Spain, Portugal and Greece since 1967*, p. 194, here quoting Paul Friedrich, ‘The SPD and the Politics of Europe: From Willy Brandt to Helmut Schmidt’, *Journal of CM Studies*, June 1975, p.433.

<sup>384</sup> *Der Spiegel*, 31 May 1976.

### 2.6.1. Brandt's Crucial Role

According to SPD politicians Horst Ehmke, Hans-Eberhard Dingels and Egon Bahr, it was elder statesman Brandt who convinced Kissinger to trust the political judgement of its European allies concerning a democratic outcome of the power struggle between PCP, parts of the MFA spearheaded by its Revolutionary Council and the newly formed democratic forces in Portugal.<sup>385</sup>

For the Americans, there was no difference between Communists in the West and those in the satellite countries of the Eastern Bloc. In the eyes of Brandt, the opposite was true. He regarded the Euro Communists as lost brothers who were on their way back home. Therefore, he was convinced that the chances were good to prevent the supposedly inevitable from happening.<sup>386</sup>

Brandt, who fled Germany after the Nazi's power grab in 1933 and who himself experienced the hardship of a life in exile after having sought political refuge in Norway could impress his foreign counterparts with his outstanding personal reputation and his impeccable democratic credentials "representing the 'other' Germany to the outside world."<sup>387</sup> He was able to draw from his vast foreign policy experience having been not only head of the West German Government but also Foreign Minister himself. Since 1976, he could also employ the (although only rudimentarily developed) organisational apparatus of the Socialist International (SI) for the sake of democracy promotion in the Iberian Peninsula. The SI was a global association of Socialist and Social Democratic parties, which Brandt energetically freed from its shadowy existence and successfully

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<sup>385</sup> "Brandt had a conversation with Henry Kissinger and from then onwards, the topic of a possible American intervention did not resurface." *Ibid.* Confronted with Kissinger's belligerent attitude and his nervously issued threat to land American ground troops in the case of a further deterioration of political circumstances in Portugal, Brandt responded: "You can forget about that, we Europeans will sort this out!" Personal interview with Hans-Eberhard Dingels, Bonn, 18 April 2002.

<sup>386</sup> According to Bahr, Kissinger later admitted in a letter to Brandt ("normally the guy never admits anything") that Brandt's analysis of the Portuguese situation was more accurate than his own. Bahr's statement also reveals Kissinger's lack of information about the political dynamics in Lisbon, something that may illustrate the invaluable intelligence and precise political analysis provided by the FEF. "The fragmented nature of political information Kissinger possessed caused Brandt to believe that the Americans would give up too early." Personal interview Egon Bahr, Berlin, 21 June 2002 (translation by author). In February 1976, Kissinger expressed his appreciation of the SPD's role during Portugal's phase of political instability. For years, Willy Brandt and his party had put up resistance against tendencies, which were not taken as seriously in the West as it would have been appropriate. The U.S. Secretary of State also acknowledged Brandt's achievements for the stability of the NATO alliance in the face of a possible Communist infiltration after the Portuguese revolution. *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 2 February 1976.

<sup>387</sup> Personal interview with Horst Ehmke, Bonn, 17 April 2002.

revitalised as acting President.<sup>388</sup> He concluded that if “Portugal could be successfully secured for the West it would be advantageous for the SI, for the SPD and for West Germany.”<sup>389</sup>

A few days after the overthrow of the Caetano Regime, the SPD issued an official statement assuring Portugal’s democrats that it would assist the country in returning to “the community of free and democratic nations and peoples so that Portugal after gaining internal and external stability can play its role as an equal partner in Europe.”<sup>390</sup> Activating his almost decade-long friendship with Portugal’s new Foreign Minister Mario Soares, Brandt rightly interpreted the alarming signs and signals coming from the Tejo as “worrying” after “political friends appealed to me forcefully, and experience as well as intellect alarmed me.”<sup>391</sup> Brandt feared that when the PCP leadership would “seize power to destroy the just recently established young democracy” an international crisis could do lasting harm to the international balance of power and would negatively impact on the long-awaited democratisation process in neighbouring Spain.<sup>392</sup> Obviously, any further polarisation of the political situation in Madrid was a real danger for the stability of the FRG’s regional milieu in Europe’s southern corner and any radicalisation of political positions within Spain’s gradually emerging transitional process that would involve either the continuation of Franco’s dictatorship or a fundamental shift towards the extreme left were clearly going against Bonn’s national interest.

Soares did not waste any time and provided his West German comrades with his personal assessment of the transitional situation. On 3 May 1974 he met with West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, Willy Brandt, SPD foreign affairs expert Wischniewski and other SPD grandees for talks about the emerging political situation in Portugal. His visit was undertaken with approval of the newly ruling military junta and

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<sup>388</sup> See also George C. Kyrtos, *The Attitudes and Policies of European Socialists regarding Spain, Portugal and Greece since 1967*, op.cit., p.195.

<sup>389</sup> Personal interview with Egon Bahr, Berlin, 21 June 2002.

<sup>390</sup> Socialist International, Circular No. 3, May 1974, quoted *ibid*.

<sup>391</sup> Willy Brandt, *Erinnerungen*, op.cit., pp. 348-349. Brandt told reporters later that Spanish enthusiasm for the democratic transition would have been substantially diminished if the Portuguese experiment had gone wrong, *Westfälische Rundschau*, 28 April 1976.

<sup>392</sup> *Ibid*.

served the purpose of evaluating the general preparedness of West European governments to politically and financially support the new cabinet in Lisbon. In Bonn, Soares made clear to the assembled SPD rank and file that he insisted on Communist participation in the interim government not least because he was not prepared to individually take the blame for governmental failures in the absence of any democratic legitimacy usually bestowed upon political actors through elections. In particular, he described the yet outstanding decolonisation process as being a minefield for any political leadership and underlined his determination to let the PCP shoulder its share of responsibility inside government rather than as external critics.<sup>393</sup>

Being under no illusion about the organisational advantage of Cunhal's Communist propaganda machine, Soares concluded that his strategic response had to rely on support by West European Social Democratic and Socialist parties if he wanted to transform the PS into a competitive political force without too much delay. In addition, Soares intended to open communication channels with the Soviet Union in order to prevent the PCP from monopolising bilateral relations through talks with the Soviet Ambassador in Bonn.<sup>394</sup> In his talks with his West German hosts and U.S. Ambassador Martin J. Hillenbrand in Bonn, Soares emphasised the Portuguese commitment to NATO. He argued again that as long as the Warsaw Pact would shape Cold War security structures, the existence of a Western defence alliance appeared to be both justified and necessary. Furthermore, he stressed West Germany's extraordinary importance for Portugal's political future and described the Federal Republic as a political heavyweight in Europe while praising its well established connections with Portugal's Socialist movement.<sup>395</sup>

#### **2.6.2. SPD Foreign Policy Spokesman Bruno Friedrich in Portugal, August 1974**

In August 1974, SPD foreign affairs spokesman Bruno Friedrich travelled to Lisbon to hold talks with the PS leadership. Friedrich's visit served mainly the purpose of testing the grounds for future transitional aid and co-operation between the two parties. The SPD politician was to sound out the operational space, which SPD and its political

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<sup>393</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1537, Report Veronika Isenberg, May 1974.

<sup>394</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>395</sup> *Ibid.*

Foundation FEF with its soft power capabilities would be able to fill. During his conversations with PS officials, the SPD envoy pointed out that an indispensable precondition for West Germany's political support was the Socialist's consequent rejection of any tactical people's front alliance with Cunhal's PCP. Friedrich learned that Soares and his political friends desperately needed office space, printing devices, a member address filing system and the organisational know-how to effectively communicate between the party's central office and its local and regional branches.<sup>396</sup> Earlier, SPD foreign affairs expert Dingels had asked Friedrich to raise three issues during his talks with Portuguese Socialists. The first issue was the build-up of effective party structures. Dingels wrote: "In my opinion our Portuguese friends are currently in no position to cope with the sort of modern political techniques that we use in Germany."<sup>397</sup> The PS's Social Democratic identity was a second issue to be discussed. Dingels had to find the right balance between his intention to abstain from any patronising interference in the internal affairs of the Portuguese partner and his determination to prevent any uncontrollable drift of PS cadres towards the extreme left. He was convinced that "especially in the Romanesque form of democratic Socialism the borderline of what has been labelled revolutionary Socialism but what is in fact Communism is constantly in flux."<sup>398</sup> The final issue on Friedrich's agenda was Portugal's future role in Europe, development policies and the country's overseas territories.<sup>399</sup> The SPD politician optimistically concluded, "The Socialists have a clear chance to be far ahead of the Communists. If this happens it is likely that the party is going to follow politically into the SPD's footsteps."<sup>400</sup>

In numerous talks with Mario Soares, the Minister for Justice Salgado Zenha, PS Secretary-General Tito de Morais and two Ministers of State in the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour, Friedrich sensed a strong Portuguese interest to

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<sup>396</sup> *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 30 August 1974. See also Thomas Schroers, *Die Aussenpolitik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, op.cit., p.150.

<sup>397</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>398</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>399</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1535, Letter Hans-Eberhard Dingels to Bruno Friedrich, 24 July 1974.

<sup>400</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1536, Report Bruno Friedrich on his visit to Portugal 29 July – 2 August 1974. Dingels was assured by the Portuguese Minister in the Foreign Office Jorge Campinos that the organisational strengths of the Communists was undisputable but that the party had no significant support base in the country, AdsD, BFC, BN/1537, Notes Hans-Eberhard Dingels.

learn and benefit from political concepts tried-and-tested in Germany. Zenha expressed his interest to send a high-ranking delegation of jurists to West Germany and immediately accepted an invitation by the SPD's legal expert Hans-Jochen Vogel. The Socialist politicians suggested institutional long-term co-operation in the area of teachers' training and pedagogic research, and they invited a qualified media advisor from Germany to Portugal.<sup>401</sup> His Portuguese hosts left Friedrich in no doubt about their interest to obtain both material support as well as non-material assistance and to benefit from West Germany's knowledge and expertise acquired through the FRG's own experience with transitional challenges. The FRG's Foreign Office supported the approach to introduce Lisbon's political elite to the practical reality of West German governmental bureaucracy emphasising that "these visits are so important because right now there is a general lack of orientation within Portugal's ministries and it seems as if these inter-ministerial exchanges are currently much more effective than official visits."<sup>402</sup> Promoting their political ideals and policies, Germany's Social Democrats in co-operation with the FEF therefore used their "power of attraction" to influence Socialist decision-makers in Portugal by shaping the latter's preferences. Examining the organisational state of the PS's headquarters, Friedrich observed "the absence of any visible form of structured political work."<sup>403</sup> Admitting that there was "a lot of good will but no experience" and bemoaning the fact that the positive phenomenon of a strong increase in party membership appeared to be neutralised by a lack of internal coordination, the SPD foreign policy expert demanded a change of approach to political work on local level. The party was in dire need for a central office building, which it was offered to purchase for DM 800.000 causing Soares, Zenha and Morais to enquire for a loan of DM 1-2 million provided by the SPD. The money would enable the PS leadership to not only purchase a new party building but also to provide regional PS offices with urgently needed equipment and to improve the technical preparation of election campaigns.<sup>404</sup>

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<sup>401</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>402</sup> PolArch/AA B26, Report (Drahterlass), 27 January 1975.

<sup>403</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1536, Report Bruno Friedrich on his visit to Portugal 29 July – 2 August 1974, op.cit.

<sup>404</sup> *Ibid.*

On a final note, Mario Soares asked his German guest to deliver an invitation to Willy Brandt whose presence in Lisbon would be greatly appreciated. Soares suggested a preliminary schedule for the visit, which was supposed to include talks with Prime Minister Goncalves and himself. Part of the suggested itinerary was a massive PS election campaign event in the city of Porto. Friedrich commented positively on the idea because it could provide the SPD with an opportunity to “exert great influence on the development of the PS, strengthen Socialist self-esteem and to contribute towards the sidelining of the Communists. The visit could also counter liberal and conservative attempts to occupy Social Democratic positions.”<sup>405</sup> In the absence of a functioning network of local party branches in the country, Friedrich urged his own party to concentrate on the establishment of regional PS offices rather than to promote the set-up of local branches in countless communities. He noted that the dominance of the public realm by PCP activists was exaggerated by the mass media, which, in his opinion focused too much on the display of party symbols and the masquerade of colourful public appearances. Months later, Friedrich summarised Portugal’s most serious post-authoritarian problems and mentioned the “decolonisation process, the transformation of the political system from a dictatorship to a democracy and the economic crisis as well as the reform of social structures.”<sup>406</sup> He proposed a third way between a capitalist economy and a Socialist order, which would guarantee “democratic control of the economy while maintaining parliamentary democracy at the same time.”<sup>407</sup>

### 2.6.3. Willy Brandt’s Portugal Visit, October 1974

In October 1974, Brandt travelled to Portugal for a three-day visit. His tour of the country was aimed at strengthening Soares’s domestic position, to assess the state of Portugal’s transition and to assure the international and Portuguese public of the proactive nature of the co-operation between PS and SPD.<sup>408</sup> The *Auswärtige Amt* supported the SPD Chairman’s initiative as a “useful contribution to the consolidation of

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<sup>405</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>406</sup> Bruno Friedrich, ‘Portugal’s schwieriger Weg’, *SPD-Pressedienst*, 12 March 1975.

<sup>407</sup> *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 30 August 1974.

<sup>408</sup> Willy Brandt, ‘Das portugiesische Volk kann sich auf uns verlassen’, *op.cit.*, p.182. In his study of Socialist attitudes towards Portugal, George Kyrtos distinguishes between the “radicalised masses” for which Soares’ ideological attraction could not be enhanced, and the moderate segment of the electorate which viewed the SPD as the “standard bearer of European Social Democracy”.

democratic forces in Portugal” and pointed out that the risk of a “better organised and materially superior Communist Party, which continues to gain weight within the governmental coalition and within the armed forces”, persisted.<sup>409</sup> Announcing that he was by no means a teacher who intended to “impose his wisdom” on Portugal’s Socialists, Brandt accompanied Soares to a PS meeting in the Northern city of Porto where both party leaders spoke in front of five thousand assembled Socialist supporters in the Crystal Palace.<sup>410</sup> Brandt avoided any rhetorical commitment to an exclusive political partnership with the PS possibly deterred by the political radicalism shown by certain PS activists.<sup>411</sup> He also reiterated his firm rejection of any form of political co-operation between PCP and PS. In his memoirs, he recalls how he had noted during his visit how “the carnations, which became the symbol of the revolution had withered”, and in Porto, he uncompromisingly warned the Portuguese public not to enter into any short-lived pact with the enemy for the sake of creating a dangerously fragile and naturally short-lived ideological unity on the political left.<sup>412</sup> In obvious reaction to Brandt’s campaign support for the PS, the PCP’s news magazine *Avance* launched an embittered attack against the SPD leader accusing him of “having interfered with internal matters of the Communist Party and in the Portuguese election process”.<sup>413</sup>

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<sup>409</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.242, Auswärtiges Amt, Political Affairs Department (Pol. Abteilung 2), 14 October 1974.

<sup>410</sup> *Die Welt*, 19 October 1974. Dingels noted that the visit was being “perceived by large parts of the population as a sign of the connectedness between Portugal and democratic Europe.” See also See Rudolf Wagner, ‘Klare Absage an die Volksfront’, *Vorwärts*, 24 October 1974

<sup>411</sup> Soares on the other hand was only too keen to stress the close relationship with his West German friends. In an interview with the German magazine *Quick*, he made much play with his “very good contacts to politically influential forces in the Federal Republic” and stressed the fact that he maintained “a friendly relationship in great solidarity with the SPD. Numerous times, I had the pleasure to consult with former Chancellor Brandt and several ministers. Within the framework of the Socialist International, we maintain contacts with SPD and Friedrich-Ebert Foundation.” Interview Mario Soares, *Quick* 17 October 1974; As late as August 1975, the *Auswärtiges Amt* warned West German politicians to “tie the interests of the Western world too closely with any of the political players on the transitional stage in Lisbon”, see PolArch/AA B26, Southern Europe Desk (Referat 203), Report ‘Situation in Portugal’, 26 August 1975.

<sup>412</sup> Soares’ foreign policy adviser Campinos had told Dingels that the PS together with the country’s new President Costa Gomes seriously considered to invite a moderate conservative party to enter the cabinet in order to broaden the government’s focus and support base towards the centre-right of the political spectrum. AdsD, BFC, BN/1537, Notes Hans-Eberhard Dingels, 2 October 1974.

<sup>413</sup> Herman Deml, ‘Chile ist weit’, *Vorwärts*, 19 December 1974. A month later, Brandt reflected on his visit to Portugal in a letter to a personal friend: “Democracy in Portugal stands a chance. Nevertheless, it is imperative that Europe contributes to the economic stabilisation and improvement of the situation.” AdsD, WBC, BN/132, Letter Willy Brandt to Robert Brunn, 11 November 1974. Brandt repeated his assessment in a statement to the German United Nations Association in which he demanded “solidarity” with Portugal



## ***2.7. Sub-State Diplomacy 2– The Friedrich-Ebert Foundation in Portugal after 25 April 1974***

In retrospect, SPD Chairman Willy Brandt responded to critics of West Germany's democracy promotion activities and the involvement of the FEF during the transitional processes on the Iberian Peninsula:

It had been occasionally criticised that parties and foundations of the Federal Republic have supported certain groups with a similar political orientation by providing them with rather modest forms of aid. This has always made me angry. I have always thought of material support as something desirable and laudable. I am still proud today that the SPD helped Spanish democracy to get back on its feet not only with sweet talk. Apart from that, our century – until long after the Second World War - has truly not suffered from an inflationary supply of European solidarity.<sup>414</sup>

West Germany's solidarity with Portugal's embattled democrats, which contained a significant degree of self-interest to create a politically and economically level playing field by fighting Communist parties and their proxies, was shown not only through the support granted by the SPD's leadership but also demonstrated through the parallel activities of the FEF. The Foundation's involvement in the Portuguese democratisation process was proof of an important non-multilateral dimension of West German diplomacy, for which state interests were just as germane and central as for other power configurations and operational modes. The different layers of Bonn's foreign policy system, which, as has been previously argued, can be broadly grouped in a 'public' set of actors and a 'private' realm, in which non-governmental external affairs players pursue German interests on a transnational level. Although state and sub-state level display a certain degree of interconnectedness and co-ordination, they are not hierarchically structured and lack a clear-cut institutional chain of command. However, both sets of foreign policy actors let their decision-making be governed by traditional considerations of state security and maximisation of national wealth. Within transitional settings, these goals and their realisation required the creation of compatible political and economic structures in the target country i.e. parliamentary democracy, political pluralism, a codified legal framework as well as market economic principles governing

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and its people to "establish a democratic order. These efforts cannot leave us indifferent." AdsD, WBC, BN/22, Telegram Willy Brandt to West German United Nations Association, 8 November 1974.

<sup>414</sup> Willy Brandt, *Erinnerungen*, op.cit., p.348 (translation by author).

private sector activities. This in turn made it necessary for West German foreign policy to a) help eliminate all those political actors that opposed such politico-economic structures and to b) prop up those parties in support of the creation of a liberal democracy. While West Germany's diplomacy on a governmental level wielded multilaterally packaged coercive power by threatening punitive action through sanctions in case of a Communist take-over in Lisbon, SPD and FEF sought to convince, attract and impress through soft power and a co-operative approach, which aimed at moulding the structural reality of the new democracy.

### 2.7.1. The Embassy Connection

From June 1975, FEF analyst Hans Ulrich Büniger embarked on his mission to "stay in close contact with political parties and societal actors."<sup>415</sup> He was personally chosen by Willy Brandt and 'disguised' as an Attaché for Social Affairs at the West German Embassy in Lisbon. Although as a diplomat he needed "to go the conventional route i.e. my reports were signed by the ambassador and were then sent back to the *Auswärtige Amt*", Brandt as well as Chancellor Helmut Schmidt "were personally interested in any political information I could get hold of and they used them as the basis for their own decision-making."<sup>416</sup> In Lisbon, Büniger gathered intelligence, provided analysis, identified and activated sources and supervised the work of West German foreign correspondents. He also maintained contact with PS leaders Mario Soares and Francisco Salgado Zenha, Francisco Sa Carneiro and Rui Machete of the PPD-PSD, Freitas do Amaral and Avelino Amaro da Costa of the conservative CDS as well as with MFA strongmen Ramalho Eanes and Melo Antunes.<sup>417</sup>

The FEF opened its first official bureau in Lisbon only as late as 1977. Until then, the Foundation concentrated on the gathering of information in order to provide

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<sup>415</sup> Personal correspondence with Hans-Ulrich Büniger, 15 January 2002.

<sup>416</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>417</sup> Concerning the MFA, Büniger recalls that "of course we tried to find out who in the circle of officers would be rather open-minded regarding our political position." *Ibid.* In 1976, influential West German unionist Eugen Loderer noted that "both attachés for social affairs at our embassies in Madrid and Lisbon gave me the impression to be very well informed. They have developed a thorough understanding of the political terrain in these transitional settings." AdsD, WBC, BN/45, Letter Eugen Loderer to Willy Brandt, 8 March 1976.

SPD and government with adequate situational reports and political analyses including opinion polls and behind-the-scenes talks with import political players.

It goes without saying that in the heavily beleaguered Portugal, the Friedrich-Ebert Foundation has co-operated with its partners and friends in the Portuguese labour movement in a very intensive and close way through training programmes and other measures of co-operative assistance. We could make a significant contribution to the support of all those befriended groups in Portugal that wanted to lead their country back into the community of democratic countries in Europe despite the intensive efforts of others to achieve the contrary.<sup>418</sup>

According to a SPD news magazine, the FEF's political investment in Portugal amounted to DM 882,000 (approximately £280,000) between April and December 1974. The money was used to fund programmes of political education and to provide technical support for the development of democratic structures and organisations.<sup>419</sup> FEF managing director Günther Grunwald describes the transitional phase as being a period of "strategic planning of a different sort, which means that we thoroughly analysed the wishes and needs of our political friends particularly those of Mario Soares."<sup>420</sup> The abovementioned support was supplemented by invitations for political activists from Portugal to study at West German universities and by providing support for countrywide political training projects for PS cadres.<sup>421</sup> "Our approach was a strengthening of political centre-left forces rather than a revaluation of the right against the extreme left."<sup>422</sup> The funding of FEF activities remained a sensitive issue, as was the question of transitional financial aid for democratic parties from abroad. In January 1975, the West German Embassy in Lisbon warned political parties and their affiliated foundations of a lack of transparency and illegal funding practices in their support for Portuguese activists. It stressed that

Portuguese parties will be fully held accountable for their campaign expenditures. Neither they nor their candidates are permitted to accept financial contributions neither

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<sup>418</sup> FEF Annual Report 1975, p.76 (translation by author).

<sup>419</sup> *Sozialdemokrat-Magazin*, 1975, no.1, p.21.

<sup>420</sup> Personal interview with Günther Grunwald, Bonn, 11 December 2002.

<sup>421</sup> Personal correspondence with Hans Ulrich Bünger, 15 January 2002.

<sup>422</sup> Personal interview with Michael Dauderstädt, Bonn, 21 April 2002.

from foreign companies or private individuals nor from domestic commercial entities. No political party or coalition of parties is permitted to spend more than DM 8000 (approximately £ 2500)!<sup>423</sup>

### 2.7.2. *Auswärtige Amt*, FEF and the U.S. Administration

In order to maintain a necessary level of co-ordination, the West German Government was “very interested to maintain our exchange of information with the Americans” throughout the transition.<sup>424</sup> The FEF possessing up-to-date political analyses of the Portuguese situation and being provided with crucial information by top-level sources within the Portuguese political establishment served as a reference point for the co-operation between West Germany’s foreign policy makers and American diplomats. In an internal memorandum to the Chancellery labelled confidential, the FEF suggested three ways to provide U.S. diplomats with information. FEF reports could be given to the Americans either directly by foundation officials, they could be forwarded through the *Auswärtige Amt* or delivered through the Chancellor’s office.<sup>425</sup> The document suggests the handover of FEF background analyses to the U.S. Ambassador’s personal assistant by staff of the Chancellor’s office and that as soon as this procedure had developed a certain routine, a driver could deliver the reports in an envelope.<sup>426</sup> Two weeks earlier, another confidential document confirmed, “the exchange of information with the Americans can be described as routine although the different ways to establish and maintain contacts are used with varying degrees of intensity.”<sup>427</sup> The author of the document emphasises that the head of the SPD’s international relations department Hans-Eberhard Dingels “maintains good contacts with the U.S. Embassy which therefore receives appropriate information.”<sup>428</sup> Additionally, FEF Managing Director Grunwald maintained an alternative communication channel: “In most of the cases, the Americans sent somebody from their European Affairs Desk. If he wanted to talk to

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<sup>423</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.240, 8 January 1975 (translation by author).

<sup>424</sup> *Ibid.* Such a regular exchange of information was ensured for example through high-level visits such as the talks of Permanent Secretary Günther van Well held in Washington in May 1975.

<sup>425</sup> AdsD, HSC, BN/7340, Memorandum 2 July 1975.

<sup>426</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>427</sup> AdsD, HSC, BN/7340, Document, 19 June 1975.

<sup>428</sup> *Ibid.*

either the SPD or the German Confederation of Trade Unions (*Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund DGB*) we would organise that.”<sup>429</sup>

As mentioned earlier, U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger’s pessimism regarding the prospects for a democratic outcome of Portugal’s transition threatened to undermine European efforts to aid political parties in their struggle against Communist forces.

The U.S. Government could not be convinced that Portugal will honour its obligations as a member of NATO. The PCP’s increasing activities as well as radical public announcements by leading members of the MFA have conveyed an image of Portugal to the Americans, which bears some resemblance to Allende’s Chile and Fidel Castro’s Cuba. The recent replacement of Washington’s Ambassador illustrates the importance, which Portugal has been assigned as a result. The new Ambassador is a confidant of Secretary of State Kissinger and is widely regarded as a dynamic personality, who is being trusted with a more effective representation of American interests. However, despite their scepticism, the United States is prepared to support Portugal economically.<sup>430</sup>

Washington eventually warmed up to the idea of a European solution for the Iberian crisis and a report by the *Auswärtige Amt* in February 1975 stated “In our meetings with the Americans it became clear that they would appreciate a greater involvement of West European countries”. The same report made clear that for West Germany’s state diplomacy democracy promotion on a sub-state level involving the political foundations was a central pillar of any foreign policy approach towards the Iberian country. “In our view” the document stresses, “bilateral contacts, particularly the activities of non-governmental organisations seem to be the appropriate way to go because one needs to avoid any impression of an outside interference in Portugal’s internal affairs.”<sup>431</sup> Throughout 1974 and 1975, the West Germans continued to lobby the U.S. Administration on the Portuguese case knowing that the U.S. Secretary of State had still substantial reservations and doubts concerning protagonists, processes and eventual

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<sup>429</sup> Personal interview with Günther Grunwald, Bonn, 11 December 2002.

<sup>430</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.242, FRG Embassy Lisbon, Annual Report, Political Affairs Portugal 1974 (Politischer Jahresbericht) (translation by author).

<sup>431</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.243, Report ‘Situation in Portugal’, Southern Europe Desk (Referat 203), 5 February 1975.

outcome of the transition.<sup>432</sup> “We should convince him through direct contacts not to write off the Portuguese” advises an *Auswärtige Amt* memorandum in May 1975, when the power struggle between MFA, PCP and PS had reached its climax, “the outcome of the elections has shown that the West still stands a chance to succeed.”<sup>433</sup> Lobbying the U.S. administration on key issues within Portugal’s transitional process, FRG diplomats relied in their policy planning on behind-the-scenes information from Lisbon mostly provided by FEF analyst Bünger. The foundation official turned social affairs officer at the West German Embassy kept in close contact with the entire spectrum of Portugal’s political actors and enjoyed privileged access to Mário Soares and the PS leadership. Bünger in his multifaceted role brought together the governmental and the nongovernmental dimension thus illustrating how state diplomacy often benefited from the *Stiftungen’s* informal foreign policy operations in transition country. The FEF’s first-hand knowledge of the situation on the ground provided Foreign Office diplomats as well as the West German Government with constantly updated information, which was subsequently used in the foreign policy decision-making process. West German politicians therefore knew that the “revolutionary wing” and the “reform wing” within the MFA both commanded an equal amount of power and support within the junta and that such political parity justified a cautiously optimistic attitude towards the democratisation process.<sup>434</sup>

In the early days of 1975, when the PS, PPD and CSD’s bitter opposition to new trade union legislation brought tens of thousand of demonstrators out into the streets of Portugal’s biggest cities, another report recommended that the West German Government should “continue to support democratic forces through our political

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<sup>432</sup> See PolArch/AA B26 Notes ‘Gespräche des Aussenministers mit U.S. Botschafter Hillenbrand über die Situation in Portugal’, 31 January 1975, in which Kissinger and Defence Secretary Schlesinger were described as being “extremely concerned” about the political developments in Portugal.

<sup>433</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.243, Report, ‘Situation in Portugal’, Southern Europe Desk (Referat 203), 12 May 1975; Kissinger visited the FRG in July 1975 and was told that the West German Government not only believed to be able to help steering the political process in Portugal towards liberal democracy but that it also intended to invite more members of the Revolutionary Council such as Information Minister Jesuino or Labour Minister Costa Martins as well as MFA officers, see PolArch/AA B26, 110.243, Briefing Paper ‘Situation on the Iberian Peninsula’, 8 July 1975.

<sup>434</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.240, Report Elke Esters ‘Revolutionskommittee des MFA’, attached to letter from Dr. Günther Grunwald (FEF) to Permanent Secretary in the *Auswärtiges Amt* Walther Gehlhoff, 8 August 1975.

foundations and via inter-party contacts” thus echoing the call for the use of interventionist instruments of a non-governmental or ‘private’ nature.<sup>435</sup> In particular, the results of the April 1975 elections for a constituent assembly convinced FRG foreign policy makers to continue with their support for democratic forces committed to political pluralism, party politics and market economic structures. The electorate had “rejected leftwing totalitarianism” and West German analysts were confident that progressive elements within the MFA would be influenced by the “public show of support” for democratic parties.<sup>436</sup> Although Washington eventually toned down its rhetoric and adopted a more constructive attitude towards the political developments in Portugal, discussions within the American foreign policy establishment continued throughout the revolutionary struggles of 1975. Therefore, the Head of the Southern Europe Desk in the U.S. State Department Edward Rowell told his West German counterparts that there existed substantial differences in opinion among his colleagues as to the extent, timing and nature of public statements made by Western governments in reaction to political developments in Lisbon. “One is aware of the usefulness of Western support for moderate and democratic forces. At the same time one is also aware of the risk that such support might also lead to a radicalisation of the Communist leadership as a consequence of outside intervention.”<sup>437</sup>

In the summer and autumn of 1975, concerns in Washington grew again expressing fear that the group of moderate MFA officers led by the charismatic Melo Antunes were to be sidelined by the passive stance, which President Costa Gomes took on the issue of Prime Minister Vasco Goncalves’s resignation. Determined to strengthen the position of Antunes against his hard-line rivals within the MFA, the U.S. State Department urged the West German Government to have Ambassador Caspari personally put pressure on Gomes by making clear to the Portuguese President that especially on a multilateral level support by the Europeans crucially depended on a

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<sup>435</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.244, Report (Drahterlass), 27 January 1975.

<sup>436</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.243, Report, ‘Die politische Situation in Portugal’, Southern Europe Desk (Referat 203), 18 May 1975.

<sup>437</sup> PolArchAA B26, 110.245, Telex (Drahterlass), 27 August 1975; PolArch/AA B26, 110.245.

pluralist and democratic transitional development.<sup>438</sup> A similar *demarche* had been previously made by U.S. Ambassador Frank Carlucci, in which the U.S. diplomat had bluntly confronted Gomes with Washington's belief that "currently, the Portuguese were oppressed by a government, which enjoyed only very little public support."<sup>439</sup> According to Carlucci, decision-makers in Western capitals were asked themselves if support by the international community was not "misused to finance the totalitarian restructuring of Portuguese society based on Communist principles."<sup>440</sup> The demarche also warned of possible consequences for Portugal's NATO membership.

### 2.7.3. FEF Fact-Finding Mission

In May 1974, FEF analyst Elke Esters and senior government official Winfried Böll of the BMZ travelled to Portugal on a fact-finding tour, which came as a result of an unofficial agreement between the Chairman of the SPD committee for international relations Hans-Jürgen Wischnewski and PS leader Mario Soares.<sup>441</sup> The task was to identify the main structural deficits of the Socialist Party and to develop soft power solutions for the most pressing problems. The two German visitors highlighted three major challenges to be targeted by any democracy promotion campaign – the supply of basic political information on democratic procedures for the electorate, the strengthening of the PS's capabilities to effectively communicate its political message to the Portuguese public, and finally the forging of medium- and long-term co-operation between PS and soft power actor FEF reaching beyond the immediate post-coup period.<sup>442</sup> Esters and Böll quickly realised that the organisational capacities of Portugal's Socialists were hopelessly fragmented and that this would mean a dangerous hazard in any upcoming political competition with Communist forces. In order to

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<sup>438</sup> The U.S. lobbying of West German decision-makers came also in response to a personal request by Antunes, who specifically asked the American government to bring about concerted diplomatic action by getting the UK, FRG and the Netherlands to co-ordinate their efforts. Ministerial documents however show, that the *Auswärtiges Amt* rejected the idea of an official demarche instead suggesting that have German concerns expressed through its Ambassador in a less public fashion, PolArchAA/B26, 110.245, Briefing Paper, 26 August 1975.

<sup>439</sup> *Ibid.* PolArchAA/B26, 110.245, Telex (Drahterlass), 2 September 1975.

<sup>440</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>441</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1535, Elke Esters, Winfried Böll, Report 'Besuch in Lissabon', 8 May – 11 May 1974, 14 May 1974.

<sup>442</sup> *Ibid.*



establish counter hegemony and to balance Communist pressure during the transition phase, the PS needed to be organisationally stabilised through a transnationally operated soft power campaign. The situational analysis of the West German ‘expeditionary force’ turned out to be brief but precise:

The democratic groups [...] are suffering from a lack of mid- and lower career level cadres, publication and training facilities and equipment (ranging from desks and cupboards to copy machines). Most importantly, they are lacking in experience and technical know-how concerning organisation and public relations.<sup>443</sup>

The political training of activists, an urgently needed improvement of the PS’s public relations capacities and the strengthening of institutional structures were identified as future areas for political co-operation. FEF strategists knew that to mobilise ‘multiplying factors’ was decisive to tangibly impact on course and outcome of the Portuguese transition. Political aid from abroad needed to

create opportunities for bridge-building between underground and exile forces on the one hand and the masses, especially the spontaneously developing and not always legal organisational initiatives (labour unions, producer cooperatives, committees for various economic and societal questions) on the other hand. That bridge has to be more solid than connections through manifestos, speeches and public demonstrations.<sup>444</sup>

Based on their findings, Esters and Bölke suggested a range of immediate measures for the period 1974 to 1975 to be supervised by FEF personnel on the ground. First, they suggested starting political training programmes. These were to be conceptualised and implemented by the PS organisation *Coordenadas* (Cooperativa Cultural de Estudos e Documentacao), which was destined to play the role of an executive front organisation to facilitate political training. Portuguese lecturers were to establish local centres for citizen education in which they taught a total of 74 courses thus activating “medium and bottom-level multiplying factors.”<sup>445</sup> Additionally, trained PS cadres were to meet with representatives of African liberation movements as well as representatives of Portuguese

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<sup>443</sup> *Ibid* (translation by author).

<sup>444</sup> *Ibid* (translation by author).

<sup>445</sup> *Ibid*.

settlers in order to deal with the pressing problem of decolonisation.<sup>446</sup> Two non-regional seminars organised by *Coordenadas* were used as a forum for dialogue.

Another seminar series was to address “crucial structural questions and problems of modern industrialised societies” such as citizen rights and duties, state and society in the 20th century, institutions of modern democracy such as labour unions, consumer cooperatives, publishing houses and mass media, international organisations and others. The implementation of the seminar programme was the sole responsibility of *Coordinadas* and the funds necessary were to be paid to the Portuguese organisation in instalments via the FEF co-ordinator.<sup>447</sup> The role and responsibilities of FEF experts involved were clearly defined. The experts were to “broaden the organisational horizon of the Portuguese partner” and to “contribute their experience in adult education and in the creation of democratic institutions.”<sup>448</sup> The coordinator was to serve as the go-between between FEF and its respective partner organisation controlling and auditing the correct use of financial allocations. He was supposed to maintain contacts with those organisations in West Germany and Europe, which might be willing to provide further political assistance. The international seminars had to be “sharply separated from election campaigns and events of political agitation because it is essential to avoid any impression of an interference in Portugal’s domestic affairs.”<sup>449</sup> The FEF report stressed that Mario Soares had explicitly requested the secondment of experienced political staff from West Germany to Portugal.<sup>450</sup> The seminars discussing Portugal’s overseas

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<sup>446</sup> Soares informed the SPD leadership a few days before the coup d’etat not only about his personal conviction that Portugal needed to enter into official negotiations with the African liberation movements in Mozambique, Angola and Guinea-Bissau quickly in order to avoid a deepening radicalisation of their leaders but also that he himself had already opened talks with anti-colonial movements in Africa, see PolArch/AA B26, 110.214 (Notes Veronika Isenberg, 26 April 1974).

<sup>447</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>448</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>449</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>450</sup> *Ibid.* FEF strategists were extraordinarily aware of the danger of appearing as a patronising external force, which would be seen as controlling domestic actors by political remote control. Therefore, the activities of the FEF team were regulated and precisely defined by a contractual agreement between *Coordinadas* and the FEF. In 1975, Soares also urged the SPD leadership to instruct the FEF to invite certain members of the MFA, a request to which Minister of State in the Foreign Office and leading SPD politician Wischnewski replied that this “was not the job of the FEF” and that “the *Auswärtiges Amt* would have to prevent such an invitation”, PolArch/AA B26, 110.244, Southern Europe Desk (Referat 203), ‘Minister Soares’ Besuch in Bonn vom 14-15 June 1975’, 23 June 1975.

territories were organised on the request of Kenneth Kaunda, who as President of Zambia maintained excellent contacts with West Germany's Social Democrats.

Secondly, Esters and Bölke urged the West German Government and the SPD leadership to provide printing paper for the centre-left newspaper *Republica*, as this would initiate a "publicity-effective show of solidarity on the part of the SPD. The SPD's executive board was supposed to collect the money needed to buy the required quantity of printing paper."<sup>451</sup> Thirdly, the improvement of working and production conditions at *Republica* and the acquisition of a newspaper-owned publishing house, which would broaden the political scope of the traditional daily would ultimately strengthen the public standing of the Socialist cause. Also, the FEF report pointed out that "if one can show the relevance (of the newspaper) for Portugal's overseas territories and (Portuguese-speaking) Brazil plausibly", *Republica* could be possibly supported by the FEF as a mass media project in the context of adult education in development studies.<sup>452</sup> Fourthly, the West German observer team stressed the importance of a distribution of political information on issues of international trade union activism, European integration, energy and natural resources, the state of East-West relations or on the structural challenges of modern industrialised societies. Esters and Böll also suggested a range of public relation campaigns to be launched by the Council of Europe, the European Movement, national UN associations and broadcasting houses because they realised that "Portugal needs to be admitted into Europe long before any formal association is being established."<sup>453</sup> Their recommendations also included the launch of projects for a successful re-integration of Portuguese migrant workers returning to their motherland in the wake of the decolonisation process in Africa.<sup>454</sup> The aforementioned transitional measures were discussed between the Germans and their Portuguese hosts whereby Böll and Esters noted that the financial expectations of their political partners were "fairly modest and restrained."<sup>455</sup> The well-known financial dimension of FEF democracy promotion projects in Latin America did not motivate the PS leadership to

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<sup>451</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>452</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>453</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>454</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>455</sup> *Ibid.*

request an equal share of the funds. The German experts estimated the total amount of financial support required for 1974 and 1975 with DM 970, 000 and DM 730, 000 respectively.<sup>456</sup>

#### **2.7.4. Party Management and Electoral Assistance**

Two months later, the SPD's international relations department in close co-operation with the FEF began to strengthen the institutional structures of the PS and to launch training programmes for political activists. Being afraid that PS leader Soares would be prevented by his duties as Foreign Minister from efficiently managing the party apparatus, the SPD strategists were aware of the danger that Socialist forces might be unable to counter the PCP's institutional onslaught especially in the trade union sector where Communists "had already taken over command positions."<sup>457</sup> West Germany's Social Democrats were worried about the lack of political know-how and lamented the fact that only a few "Portuguese friends possess a minimum of organisational and administrative skills."<sup>458</sup> SPD and FEF officials expressed deep scepticism about the prospects for further democratic developments in Portugal and predicted a high probability of intervention by the MFA if strikes would not cease and the economy would not be revived.<sup>459</sup>

In July 1974, the FEF sent Günter Wehrmeyer, an expert for the training of party activists to the Portuguese capital where he was asked to help to set-up a model party branch on local level. His involvement was part of a two-phase strategy of transnationally provided transition support by the Foundation, the first phase of which was the creation of an early-response plan based on a sound assessment of the political situation.<sup>460</sup> During a second phase, the FEF would then provide "technical assistance (material) necessary for the PS to campaign and to implement its programmes of

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<sup>456</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>457</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1535, Letter Hans-Eberhard Dingels to Willy Brandt, 24 July 1974.

<sup>458</sup> *Ibid.* Despite the fact that theoretically PS party structures appeared to be extraordinarily diversified with 304 sub-regional councils (*Conselhos*) and approximately 4700 local branches (*Freguesia*), party's organisational capacities were seen by the SPD as deficient and weak not least because of a lack of qualified political personnel. AdsD, BFC, BN/1535, Note, 4.7.1974.

<sup>459</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>460</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.242, Friedrich-Ebert Foundation, Report (Siegfried Bangert), 'Aktivitäten der Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung in Portugal', 1 April 1975

political education in the provinces.”<sup>461</sup> Such technical support included the supply with sound trucks, recording and office equipment as well as “occasional financial aid to rent venues for political events in the provinces.”<sup>462</sup> In order to ‘disguise’ the involvement of the FEF and to provide West German cross-border assistance with a Portuguese ‘face’, the PS used its centre for political education – the C.E.D. – with offices in Lisbon and Porto through which technical, financial and political support was provided and implemented.<sup>463</sup> “This local PS office was to serve as a model for other regional and municipal party outposts to copy. SPD foreign affairs expert Dingels advised Wehrmeyer that in addition to his organisational tasks he should also “provide our Portuguese friends with a form of Social Democratic spirit and some self-esteem so that they can enter the upcoming elections with a firm stand.”<sup>464</sup> The SPD was alarmed by suggestions of French Socialist Party leader François Mitterrand to form a united left-of-centre popular front in Portugal incorporating the PCP and other leftwing extremists. Therefore, the promotion of an ideological independence of Socialist forces in Portugal was an important point on Wehrmeyer’s agenda, with which SPD official Dingels hoped to “cause a certain immunisation effect.”<sup>465</sup> Nevertheless, Dingels also pointed out that it could not be in the SPD’s interest to “talk our Socialist friends into a situation, in which they would uncritically adopt our concept of Social Democracy which has been developed under specific historical circumstances.”<sup>466</sup> Political co-operation during Portugal’s transition process appeared to be so delicate that Dingels advised party manager Wehrmeyer to avoid anything that could lead to the FEF activities being uncovered. “Either leave this letter back home” he advised his colleague about the

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<sup>461</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>462</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>463</sup> *Ibid.*; The C.E.D. was founded in 1969 and served as an institutional cover for the PS of Mario Soares during the final years of its clandestine existence under the Caetano Regime with both organisations continue to share the same physical address after the 25 April 1974. See PolArch/AA B26, 110.242, FRG Embassy Lisbon, 18 June 1974.

<sup>464</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>465</sup> AdsD, WBC, BN/127, Letter Hans-Eberhard Dingels to Willy Brandt, 24 July 1974. Three months later, West German Ambassador Caspari cast doubt on the success of such an immunisation effect when he warned the *Auswärtiges Amt* about a “two-track strategy” pursued by Soares’ which would have the Socialist leader “working towards the political unity of leftist parties and supporting their activities to bring about a Socialist society while at the same time dampening concerns of a people’s front in Western countries.” Telegram Ambassador Caspari to *Auswärtiges Amt*, 15 October 1974.

<sup>466</sup> AdsD, WBC, BN/127, Letter Hans-Eberhard Dingels to Günter Wehrmeyer 17 July 1974.

correspondence between them, “or destroy it. Don’t take it to Portugal.”<sup>467</sup> Wehrmeyer was told that Communist activists mostly occupied leadership positions within trade union organisations, but that his chances of playing a constructive and successful advisory role within the union movement “at grass-roots-level” were promising.<sup>468</sup> In this context, Dingels recommended the West German trade union official Dieter Wagner, head of the international relations department of the DGB as a possible briefing point.<sup>469</sup>

The training of activists and the strengthening of the PS’s organisational structures as suggested by Esters and Böll and echoed by political consultant Wehrmeyer a few months later continued in 1975 by helping Soares’s PS to organise an effective political campaign in the run-up to the elections for a constituent assembly. Two FEF consultants assisted the PS leadership in the “organisation of awareness-raising measures”, which included the planning, implementation and analysis of countrywide political education programmes and which “aimed at generating sympathy and acceptance for Socialist positions, which are seen as necessary to protect democracy in Portugal.”<sup>470</sup> At the same time, FEF-PS co-operation extended to the area of worker education organised within a broad range of industrial sectors to be able to counterbalance the dominance of PCP cadres with the labour union’s umbrella body *Intersindical*.<sup>471</sup> Unconnected to the PS election campaign, the FEF sent a third expert to the Iberian country after being asked by the Portuguese Government to assist in the evaluation of Lisbon’s mass media sector, which was to be modernised and seen as crucial in the area of civic education.<sup>472</sup> Already reaching into the second phase of the FEF’s transitional Portugal programme, the aforementioned Studies and Documentation Centre C.E.D. not only served as a ‘blackbox’, in which West German democracy assistance was given a ‘Portuguese face’ but the Centre was also used as a platform to host a series of events in the area of civic and political education. Coordinated by the

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<sup>467</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>468</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>469</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>470</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.242, Friedrich-Ebert Foundation, Report (Siegfried Bangert), ‘Aktivitäten der Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung in Portugal’, 1 April 1975.

<sup>471</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>472</sup> *Ibid.*

Head of the FEF's Latin America Desk Elke Esters, two political consultants were sent to Portugal on request of PS leader Soares and assigned to the task of assisting their Socialist partners in the build-up of the C.E.D.'s training facilities. The FEF requested a total of DM 970, 400 in 1974 for 26 classes and DM 730,000 in 1975 for a total of 48 classes of political training from the West German Ministry of Economic Co-operation, which was responsible for the approval of the *Stiftungen's* project funding.<sup>473</sup>

The goal was to achieve a multiplying effect through the establishment of local and regional education centres, which were to offer seminars, workshops and training sessions for a broad range of citizens. "In that way" the FEF wrote in its project exposé, "we can provide the kind of political reconstruction, which religious academies, trade unions and producer co-operatives have provided in Germany after the war."<sup>474</sup> The Centre's thematic focus and the political topics discussed in its seminars covered the "important structural questions and problems of modern industrial societies to set standards for public participation in the political running of the country."<sup>475</sup> An understanding of the institutional reality in modern democracies and the issue of civic responsibility in companies, local communities, professional associations and political parties were among the list of seminar topics as were discussions on the role of Portugal's overseas territories or the country's authoritarian past.<sup>476</sup> In particular, the C.E.D.'s seminars on decolonisation and Portugal's African possessions were the result of contacts between Zambia's President and prominent African nationalist Kenneth Kaunda, high-ranking SPD politicians and the FEF leadership. After the Portuguese Revolution, Kaunda had expressed his "urgent wish" to have representatives of the African liberation movements being invited to the Centre's discussions on colonialism to be able to present their viewpoints to a Portuguese audience and to join the necessary dialogue on decolonisation and questions of political independence.<sup>477</sup> The FEF's

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<sup>473</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>474</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.242, Friedrich-Ebert Foundation (Dr. Günter Grunwald), 'Hilfe der Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung für das C.E.D. in Lisbon und Oporto', 16 May 1974.

<sup>475</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>476</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>477</sup> *Ibid.* The long-standing co-operation between FEF and the liberation movements in Lusophone Africa was a constant thorn in the side of the Caetano Regime, which in 1970 launched an official protest through its Ambassador de Mello complaining to the West German Government about the Foundation's alleged support for rebel fighters in Mozambique. In its reaction, the Brandt Government stressed that it had no

financial support for the C.E.D. programme was to be monitored and approved by the Foundation's officially appointed co-ordinator Elke Esters, who was also responsible for the "strengthening of the C.E.D.'s organisational capabilities by benefiting from the FEF's experience in democratic institution-building."<sup>478</sup> Furthermore, Esters was supposed to provide a link between the C.E.D. and its Socialist backers on the one hand and West German as well as European union organisations, publishing houses and co-operatives.

However, the FEF project in its relatively partisan outlook was not particularly well received by the West German Embassy, which stressed that "given the specific circumstances in Portugal it seems necessary to point out that outside assistance shall not give critics the impression of an exclusive German support for one particular party."<sup>479</sup> Instead, Acting Head of Mission Heibach, whose closeness to conservative political circles was no secret on the diplomatic scene, suggested in correspondence with the *Auswärtige Amt* to make a non-partisan project structure a precondition for approval. "The non-partisan approach could find its expression in a broader recruitment strategy, which would employ a teaching staff from various political backgrounds, not only seminar leaders from the FEF."<sup>480</sup> Yet despite the Embassy's critical evaluation of the C.E.D. project, the *Auswärtige Amt*'s Southern Europe Desk re-connected public and private dimension of Bonn's foreign policy by dismissing Heibach's comments and stating that "it fits our foreign policy strategy to promote democracy in Portugal through private organisations." Other private actors such as KAF or FNF would ensure fairness,

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influence over the activities of the FEF, which was a private and independent organisation, and described the organisation's support for FRELIMO as being merely "humanitarian assistance without military relevance", PolArch/AA B26, 110.242, Notes 'Gespräche zwischen dem portugiesischen Botschafter und Staatssekretär Braun', (Referat IA4), 8 January 1971; PolArch/AA B26, 444, Note 'Westdeutsches Komitee für Angola, Guinea-Bissau und Mozambique', 21 June 1971. However, the two-dimensional character of West Germany's foreign policy system with its conflation of private and public operational modes became clear when FRG officials subtly hinted at the diplomatic division of labour in certain political theatres. For example, SPD Minister Erhard Eppler pointed out to members of the Kaunda Government during talks in Lusaka that "the FRG being a NATO member state cannot provide support for liberation movements" but that "the FEF maintains the necessary contacts with these organisations." PolArch/AA B26, 110.242, FRG Embassy Lusaka, Report 'Portugiesisch-Zambische Beziehungen', 6 August 1971.

<sup>478</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>479</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.242, FRG Embassy Lisbon.

<sup>480</sup> *Ibid.*



political balance and ideological pluralism as representative trademarks of the FRG's political system."<sup>481</sup>

The democracy promotion activities of FEF and other political foundations were not only explicitly endorsed by West Germany's 'public' diplomatic establishment but also integrated in a broader governmental strategy of strengthening democratic parties during the transition.<sup>482</sup> In April 1975, a few days before the long-awaited general elections the German diplomat Laub travelled to Portugal to co-ordinate the ministry's democracy promotion efforts with the West German Embassy. Upon return to Bonn, Laub was unambiguous in his analysis that "Western-style liberal democracy still stands a chance in Portugal and we need to adopt a positive stance towards change."<sup>483</sup> Given the lack of political and international experience on the part of several MFA leaders, he recommended a governmental policy of co-operation instead of alienation and confrontation. Democracy promotion needed to take place on different levels of Portugal's political system and therefore had to originate on different levels of the FRG's foreign policy apparatus mobilising its public and private, governmental, ministerial and transnational actors and resources. "Despite all the support that we are currently providing to democratic parties, which is something that we should continue, we must avoid antagonising the MFA leadership to prevent them from fraternising with the Communists in a public display of solidarity."<sup>484</sup> Instead, Laub advocated a series of strategic short- and medium-term measures to stabilise democratic structures and facilitate political pluralism. He suggested urgent talks between Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, in which the American should be persuaded by his German counterpart to adopt a more open-minded and optimistic approach towards the Portuguese transition. The Portuguese Foreign Minister Melo Antunes was to be invited by the West German Government "and we should let him have some success in his negotiations so that he can bring back

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<sup>481</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.242, Auswärtiges Amt, Southern Europe Desk (Referat 203), 28 June 1975.

<sup>482</sup> "The democratic political organisations in Portugal should continue to receive support from German parties and political Foundations before the April elections", PolArch/AA B26, 110.242, Political Affairs Department (Politische Abteilung 2), Report 'Unsere Portugal-Politik', 28 April 1975.

<sup>483</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>484</sup> *Ibid.*

to Portugal tangible results.”<sup>485</sup> Less high-profile assistance was to include the promotion of positive German media coverage on political developments in Lisbon while positively reporting on the results of the Portuguese Revolution and the role of the MFA, the lifting of trade restrictions such as the reform of import regulations for port wine as well as “all possible forms of material support”.<sup>486</sup>

The strategy adopted by West Germany’s governmental diplomacy remained unchanged throughout 1975 and continued to be preoccupied with Portugal’s membership in NATO, the containment of Communist forces through the support for Socialist parties and the prevention of the emergence of a popular front alliance based on a tactical co-operation between PCP and PS. In transitional Portugal, West Germany’s Cold War version of power politics pursued state interests by employing ‘softer’ foreign policy instruments within transnational spaces and often used by non-state actors like the country’s political foundations. The stabilisation of Bonn’s operational environment in Europe’s southern corner required a combination of both public diplomacy with the FRG playing its classical role as a committed multilateralist with its privately packaged foreign policy. The former was responsible for lobbying alliance partners on key political issues thus having the Western or European community of states rallying behind specific courses of action while the latter worked more directly towards the shaping of political structures in target countries by co-opting influential political elites as recipients of West German democracy promotion programmes.

The level of co-ordination and strategic connectedness between public and private diplomacy changed regularly with the actors neither becoming completely delinked nor involved in overlapping activities within transitional processes. Governmental foreign policy faced the natural constraints of official diplomatic channels and practices, multilateral integration and domestic political environment while *Stiftungen* diplomacy retained more autonomy in the mobilisation of its niche-oriented power projection capabilities, which allowed it to display a greater degree of self-interest and national ‘narrow-mindedness’ while pursuing its democracy promotion

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<sup>485</sup> *Ibid.* Other members of the MFA to be invited by the Schmidt Government were Vice Admiral Pinheiro de Azevedo, Labour Minister Major Costa Martins and MFA official Ramiro Coreia.

<sup>486</sup> *Ibid.*

activities. The need for a division of labour was understood by both sets of actors often leading *Auswärtige Amt* strategists to urge political decision-makers to entrust foundation(s) and party activists with the implementation of politically sensitive transitional projects that required longstanding contacts between protagonists. In September 1975, the *Auswärtige Amt*'s Southern Europe Desk therefore advised Foreign Minister Genscher and Chancellor Schmidt to "encourage Soares *through party channels* to maintain his demand not to allow the PCP into the cabinet beyond its proportional strength as expressed in the election results of 25 April 1975 and without participation in the running of Portugal's security i.e. NATO."<sup>487</sup> West Germany's career diplomats identified transnational cross-party connections as the most promising way to influence PS politicians to make them meeting Bonn's demands or expectations. "In the medium to long-term" the memorandum continued, "we should convince Soares *through the SPD leadership* to reject any governmental co-operation between PS and the PCP."<sup>488</sup> In the eyes of West Germany's political and ministerial elite, Portugal's post-authoritarian democracy was to be modelled along the lines of the FRG's own post-war metamorphosis from dictatorship to pluralist polity. Therefore, the strengthening of Portugal's slowly emerging multiparty system ranked high on Bonn's democracy promotion agenda. Its official diplomacy was well aware of the importance of nonstate actors. The *Auswärtige Amt* therefore recommended:

The support for Portugal's most important democratic parties PS and PPD should be increased and continued through the FEF, and CDU and KAF should be encouraged to intensify their co-operation and contacts with the *Centro Democrático Social* (CDS) to prepare these parties for future work in a political coalition. Apart from material assistance – preferably provided through the political foundations – it would be moral support through invitations and seminars, which seems to be important.<sup>489</sup>

At the same time, West Germany's coercive economic power could be best played out on a governmental and multilateral level, where Portugal's power holders were confronted with a choice of compliance or non-compliance with potentially serious

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<sup>487</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.243, Southern Europe Desk (Referat 203), Briefing Paper 'Material für Gespräche in Washington', 12 September 1975.

<sup>488</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>489</sup> *Ibid* (translation by author).

consequences for the country's socio-economic stability. "The promise of economic aid over the next few years" reads the strategic Foreign Office assessment of West Germany's contribution to Western-style democracy "needs to be tied to our expectation to see Portugal remain a member of the Western socio-economic order."<sup>490</sup> It was the collaboration of official and informal diplomacy as part of a systemic relationship between the two operational levels, which characterised West Germany's foreign policy and provided a two-level operational framework for the exercise of soft power, and where necessary, for the use of often multilaterally configured instruments of coercion such as the threat of the withholding of economic aid.

## **2.8. Conclusions**

This chapter has examined the 'hot' phase of Portugal's transition spanning the immediate post-revolutionary period after the MFA's coup d'état in April 1974 and ending with the aborted attempt of leftwing extremists to take over power by similarly 'robust' means in November 1975. During this time, Portugal's democratic structures were under the existential threat of Communist counter-revolution with Bonn's diplomacy seeking to stabilise the country's new democratic parties against the risk of sudden annihilation accordingly. The chapter has exemplified West Germany's attempt at safeguarding political pluralism in Portugal by singling out the FRG's biggest political Foundation FEF and by highlighting its activities in the realm of civil society. The chapter has shown how institutions of governmental diplomacy such as the West German Foreign Office have repeatedly enlisted the services of the *Stiftungen* as actors of democracy promotion. The *Auswärtige Amt* professed its strategy to secure West Germany's national interest in a pluralist parliamentary democracy in Portugal based on a free market economy through sub-state actors like the FEF. Its previously cited internal memorandum emphasised that "the focus of our foreign policy towards Portugal remains the support for democratic forces through political parties and *foundations*" thus highlighting the two-layered nature of the West German foreign policy system.<sup>491</sup> Rather than displaying "provincialism in foreign affairs", demonstrating abhorrence at the concepts of power politics and national interest, indulging in political altruism or

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<sup>490</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>491</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.242, Briefing Paper 'Die Portugal-Politik der Bundesregierung', 18 March 1975.

exhibiting the practice of “a peculiarly extensive self-denial” in international affairs as ‘forgetting power’ realists have alleged, the FRG Government tried pro-actively to shape the outcome of Portugal’s transition through a combination of soft power interventionism and multilateral diplomacy.

In a broad range of areas – decolonisation, political management, campaigning, and civic education – the FEF (besides the other West German foundations) sought to establish moderate left-of-centre counter-hegemony in the face of a continued PCP’s onslaught. Through its intermediary organisation *Coordenadas*, the Foundation helped to provide political training programmes and facilitated the establishing of local centres for civic education. A total of 74 courses between 1974 and 1975 were aimed at a stronger participation of members of the public in Portugal’s political life. The beneficiaries of *Coordenadas*’s educational programmes were multipliers as their involvement in local politics and community affairs helped to spread ideas, introduce concepts and transfer skills on a larger scale. The organisation also provided a forum for the exchange of ideas and opinions between the liberation movements from Portugal’s African territories and the PS thus aiding the process of decolonisation. Further transition aid in the area of civic education was provided by the FEF through the Studies and Documentation Centre (CED) in another attempt to improve the skill and knowledge base of a population that had been starved of political information by Portugal’s authoritarian regime for decades. On request of PS leader Soares, the FEF provided campaign and media advisers in the run-up to the elections for a constitutional assembly to support Socialist efforts to establish a strong parliamentary representation in a future democracy. In addition, the Foundation strengthened the PS’s competency in the area of party management by sending a political adviser to help establish a nationwide network of local party offices. In sum, its methods and approaches towards democratisation sought to influence foreign public and elites alike through the supply with concepts, ideas and skills compatible with West Germany’s political and socio-economic system. Instead of imposing its political convictions on its Portuguese partner, the FEF provided support mostly upon request and thus enjoyed a high degree of acceptance by the recipients of political aid..

At the same time, governmental diplomacy sought to stabilise Portugal's embryonic democracy by providing an emergency loan of DM 40 million and a renewed commitment to continued arms purchases from Portuguese manufacturers. The government-SPD-FEF axis supports the argument that non-multilateral channels of international interaction and a remarkable degree of diplomatic autonomy were in fact as much part of the FRG's foreign policy as was Bonn's multilateral diplomacy within NATO and EC. After November 1975, the dynamics of Portugal's democratisation process began to change and increasingly political actors had to meet the challenge of capacity building, industrial relations management and conflict resolution in labour disputes rather than helping to defend the very existence of democratic actors. The next chapter will therefore trace the shift away from ensuring the survival of democratic structures towards the consolidation of Portugal's structural transformation starting in 1976 and ending in 1981.

## Chapter 3

### **Pursuing Soft Power Politics II: The Friedrich-Ebert Foundation in Portugal 1976-1981**

#### ***3.1. Introduction***

The previous chapter has focused on West Germany's involvement on state and sub-state level in Portugal's transition from authoritarian rule. It has shown that only by conflating governmental diplomacy with the democracy promotion activities of the FRG's political foundations – here the SPD-affiliated FEF – can one provide an accurate analysis of West Germany's foreign policy in the Iberian country. It has been demonstrated through empirical evidence that the FEF pursued its goal of paving the way for a pluralist parliamentary democracy in Portugal through conferences, seminars, workshops, study trips and the establishment of civic education centres in the area of electoral assistance, research and the media. Furthermore, the chapter has highlighted the financial dimension of support for Portugal's Socialist Party, an aspect of political aid that connected state and sub-state actors as the money was allocated by the West German Government but 'invested' in the transition country and distributed through the political foundations. In this chapter, the study will examine the FEF's democracy promotion activities in Portugal during the phase of democratic consolidation from 1976 until 1981. In particular, the focus will be on four thematic areas, in which the Foundation provided expertise, ideas and concepts for the creation of a modern civil society. Firstly, it will highlight a FEF media seminar for Portuguese journalists, which served as a platform for the exchange ideas bringing the first generation of democratic journalists in contact with professional colleagues in West Germany (see 3.3.). Secondly, the chapter will take a look at the workings of Lisbon-based think tank *Instituto de Estudos para o Desenvolvimento* (IED), which was partly financed by West Germany's Social Democracy (see 3.4.). Thirdly, the spotlight will be on the FEF's advisory role in the area of producer cooperatives predominantly in the agricultural sector (see 3.5. – 3.6.). Finally, the chapter is going to centre on the Foundation's role in the promotion of Portugal's Socialist-dominated union organisation UGT especially

since industrial relations formed a traditional area of the FEF's international operations (see 3.7.).

### ***3.2. Changing Transitional Dynamics***

Despite the PS's tremendous efforts to prevent the country from plunging into the hands of yet another dictatorial regime, the FEF assessment of the prospects for Socialist politics in Portugal turned out to be a rather concerned and at times pessimistic analysis. FEF expert Büniger left strategists at Foundation headquarters in no doubt that after the preparatory phase and the achievements of the PS-SPD-FEF support axis, West Germany's Social Democrats needed to "open a new chapter in the history book."<sup>492</sup> Understandably, the PS leadership was determined to prolong the political partnership with its West German sister party hoping "to continue to obtain the help and assistance Germany has been providing to us, and which has been essential in many aspects to overcome the problem of our young democracy."<sup>493</sup> But it became also clear that since challenges had changed, tactics had to be adjusted and emphasis needed to be put on new 'hot spots' on the transitional road map. Soft power appeared to be a promising operational mode for the stabilisation of democratic structures and the realisation of milieu goals through the transfer of non-material and material support, knowledge, expertise and information keeping the focus of international actors firmly on the change of attitudes, the shaping of preferences and the strengthening of the PS's political competitiveness. The phase of democratic consolidation, which began after the failed Communist coup d'état in November 1975, did also lend itself to the employment of soft power in order to successfully manage the transformation of political infrastructure. However, the nature of political challenges had changed and called for an operational adjustment. Soon after November 1975, it became clear that democracy had become indeed "the only game in town"<sup>494</sup> and the only legitimate framework for seeking and exercising political power. Now democratic structures needed to mature and deepen.

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<sup>492</sup> AdsD, Horst Ehmke Collection (hereafter HEC), BN/0403, FEF Report by Hans-Ulrich Büniger, 12 February 1976.

<sup>493</sup> AdsD, HSC, BN/6605, Letter Mario Soares to Helmut Schmidt, 18 November 1977.

<sup>494</sup> Larry Diamond, Doh Chull Shin, 'The Rough Road to Democracy', *Hoover Digest*, 1999, no.4, available from <http://www.hooverdigest.org/994/diamond2.html>, cited on 23 March 2006.



Therefore, the strategy of moderate centre-left politics as well as of soft power-based foreign policy required an overhaul and a process of Socialist re-positioning.

FEF analyst Hans-Ulrich Büniger pointed at the extreme right in Portuguese politics as the new menace for any future democratic development and he highlighted its potential to provide the breeding ground for future coup d'états. He stressed the fact that sympathisers of PPD and CDS occupied various military positions and highlighted the intense circulation of rumours about a general sense of fatigue concerning party politics and secretly planned coups. "There is a widespread belief that the problems in Portugal are so enormous that given the Portuguese's national trait to talk a lot and to act little, only a firm hand can provide stability and progress."<sup>495</sup> And he warns: "This threat does exist on all levels and requires a new strategy by SPD and FEF."<sup>496</sup> Büniger urged SPD and FEF planners to provide further material assistance to the PS and suggested FEF support for an effective public relations campaign in the run-up to the first general elections. He warned of an unjustifiably optimistic attitude regarding the PS's prospects of winning the upcoming elections and lamented in bitter words the adverse and cynical attitude of the broader public towards the past achievements of Socialist politics:

If conservative forces in Portugal as well as abroad have so far shown sympathy for the PS because the party was perceived to be a bulwark in the fight against Communism, then this attitude has vanished. The PS has served its purpose and can be simply discarded. It is shameful to see how the rats are coming out of their holes and are starting to denounce the PS. There are now even those who are counting on the forgetfulness of the people and who accuse the PS or parts of it of sympathising with Communism despite the fact that it was the PS that led the nerve-wrecking fight before 25 November 1975. Sá Carneiro is responsible for remarkable demagogic achievements by accusing the PS to be a Marxist party (whatever that means). I can say only one thing about all that and I believe to know the party: The fight against a leftist dictatorship has brought together the entire PS, which sees the PCP as its main enemy.<sup>497</sup>

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<sup>495</sup> AdsD, HEC, BN/0403, FEF Report Hans-Ulrich Büniger, 12 February 1976.

<sup>496</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>497</sup> *Ibid* (translation by author). The SPD's leadership maintained its low public profile in its dealings with the PS. In April 1976, the party's foreign affairs analyst Veronika Isenberg advised her party colleagues to "refrain from any comments about a possible single-party PS government, a possible role for the PS on the opposition benches or about any coalition. This would be seen as an interference in internal affairs and would be very careless indeed because unforeseeable changes would be possible at any time given Portuguese political practices." AdsD, WBC, BN/128, Note Veronika Isenberg, 23 April 1976. After the general elections, Isenberg's superior in the SPD's department of international affairs Hans-Eberhard Dingels expressed similar concerns vis-à-vis an upcoming visit of Mario Soares during which the Socialist

Echoing thoughts that “democracy in Portugal can only exist as long as it is supported by Mario Soares and the PS”, Büniger’s message to those in SPD circles who may have still toyed with the idea of a political co-operation with the PPD was clear: “A support of the PPD of any kind can be interpreted by the PS only as treason.”<sup>498</sup> He confirmed the assumption of many that “despite all tactically induced statements of its leadership. The PPD is everything but a Social Democratic party” and expressed his hope that “this will be acknowledged within the SPD as well.”<sup>499</sup> Büniger also highlighted the emerging problem of thousands of mostly conservative Portuguese settlers returning from the country’s overseas territories in Africa to their homeland in the wake of the ongoing decolonisation process. Illustrating the urgent need for comprehensive reintegration measures, the political challenge to socially accommodate the returning settlers from Angola and Mozambique was thought to turn into another battle ground for party political competition causing Büniger to suggest that a “spectacular support campaign” initiated by SPD and FEF and co-ordinated by the PS Office for Angola Returnees would prove to be a “great help for our friends.”<sup>500</sup>

What had changed as far as the FEF’s soft power activities were concerned? The 1976 FEF Annual Report laconically mentioned, “Since the end of the year, the Foundation operates through a representative in Portugal.”<sup>501</sup> The need for clandestine activities had vanished, the PS had established itself as the dominating force in Portuguese politics and the uncertainty of a permanently changing political scenery had been replaced by a situation in which the focus of Portuguese politicians as well as of foreign supporters shifted towards the question of how to strengthen and deepen the structural fundament of democracy rather than how to establish it in the first place. The ever present danger of rightwing or leftwing counter-revolutionary activities with the

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leader was planning to brief SPD Chairman Willy Brandt as well as West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt about the political situation in Portugal. Dingels warned that Soares would try to exploit the visit for propaganda purposes, which might in turn “give the impression of an interference in internal Portuguese affairs” and he pointed out that such public support could possibly create an impression of Portuguese dependency on West Germany. AdsD, WBC, BN/128, Note Hans Eberhard Dingels, 5 May 1976.

<sup>498</sup> Horst Seefeld, ‘Solidarität für Portugals Sozialisten’, *SPD-Pressedienst*, 20 April 1976; AdsD, HEC, BN/0403, FEF Report Hans-Ulrich Büniger, 12 February 1976.

<sup>499</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>500</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>501</sup> FEF Annual Report 1976, p.60.

ultimate aim of destabilising the fragile Iberian democracy had not entirely disappeared, but Portugal's democrats, who enjoyed an increased political breathing space after 25 November 1975 were aware that more important challenges were waiting to be tackled. The transformation of political infrastructure, the development of a citizen mentality and the construction of a democratic framework for pluralist governance were the new demands of the day. SPD foreign affairs spokesperson Bruno Friedrich summarised the transitional problems that needed to be addressed by the FEF through soft power based democracy promotion campaigns: "The challenge is to overcome the economic and social problems, to stabilise democratic pluralism and to facilitate a close co-operation between a democratic Portugal and a democratic Europe".<sup>502</sup>

The dramatic events between April 1974 and November 1975 caused the FEF to focus on financial assistance, party management and campaign support in order to prevent democratic socialism from a political death by drowning. The consolidation phase on the other hand required a different set of tools, a different type of expertise and a different organisational 'rhythm' vis-à-vis a significantly altered political dynamic. The FEF needed to prevent its transitional partner organisation from developing a fatal 'recipient's attitude', a mentality of dependency which "had to be curtailed immediately."<sup>503</sup> The simple handout of large-scale funds was to trigger a dangerous political lethargy and needed to be replaced by a more pro-active model of co-operation. From a donor's perspective, the second phase of the democratisation process, which started in January 1976 required a contextual adjustment as well the linking of political aid programmes to criteria of efficiency and effectiveness.

Having opened an official office, the FEF's transitional activities contained "political points of emphasis but no absolute priorities."<sup>504</sup> Its first resident representative Gerhard Fischer recalls the enormous demand for political expertise in the thematic areas of regionalisation and local government, trade union organisation, producer co-operatives and mass media, after "the political chaos had ended."<sup>505</sup> In the area of devolution, regionalisation and local government, the FEF provided expertise

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<sup>502</sup> Bruno Friedrich, 'Soares braucht zuverlässige Partner', *SPD-Pressedienst*, 27 April 1976.

<sup>503</sup> Personal interview with Günther Esters, Bonn, 18 April 2002.

<sup>504</sup> Personal interview Gerhard Fischer, 25 April 2002.

<sup>505</sup> *Ibid.*

through its representative in Lisbon, who directly co-operated with the PS on various policies. These were to be subsequently used for parliamentary work and in election campaigns. Research studies, surveys and opinion polls, drafts of policy white papers and other legislative work provided the basis for FEF activities in Portugal. The Foundation's work has been characterised as being "less of a political nature but with a strong focus on technical questions in the areas of a re-allocation of land, planning law and building regulations as well as the law of local government."<sup>506</sup> Portugal had not only to rely on the old public service personnel inherited from the former regime but it also had to accept the fact that large parts of the country's corporatist legislation were not simply up for quick grabs of reform but required a long-term commitment of the new elites to change and modify them where appropriate and to replace them where necessary.

In this context, the FEF proved to be a useful partner for Soares's Socialists by organising seminars and by publishing as well as translating up-to-date research on a wide range of issues. Once again, the employment of soft power led the FEF to provide expertise, skills and know-how, vast experience in a broad range of socio-economic, political and legal issue areas as well as platforms for the exchange of information. On a sub-state level, the Foundation continued to shape the FRG's regional milieu in Southern Europe by organising and providing conceptual solutions for the process of post-authoritarian institution- and capacity-building. Its democracy promotion projects in Portugal were integral part of the non-multilateral dimension of the FRG's foreign policy, a form of 'soft power politics' that sought to influence the process of political transformation through persuasion and co-option rather than coercion. Initially, Portugal's withdrawal from NATO and its falling into the hands of Communist forces had to be prevented at almost any costs. This foreign policy goal was partly pursued through the kind of classical multilateralism that had so successfully helped to re-integrate West Germany into the international community of states as well as through the 'private' and informal diplomacy of the political foundations, in particular the FEF with its close connection to the government. After November 1975, the transitional dynamics had changed and so had the strategic calculus for the West German

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<sup>506</sup> *Ibid.*

Government. Now it was the long-term prospect of winning a democratic and politically stable Portugal as a reliable partner in the areas of trade and multilateral diplomacy, which became the expected pay-off.

### **3.3. FEF Media Assistance**

One extraordinarily important societal playing field was the question of how to bring about a more balanced, diversified and professional media sector providing information for the general public. Many newspapers were insufficiently prepared for the economic challenges ahead. Programmes of state-run television channels were in parts infiltrated by Communist producers leaving a clear mark on the overall direction of public broadcasting. Three FEF media consultants were employed in Portugal's public broadcaster in order to help change the political tendencies of broadcast programmes. "These experts provided new TV programme material to the Portuguese which did not glorify Communism."<sup>507</sup> Besides the political adjustments ensuring an ideologically more balanced broadcast service, the FEF media consultants also assisted their Portuguese colleagues in overcoming technical difficulties to directly feed TV programmes that had been produced in EC member states into the Portuguese television market. FEF representative Fischer described Portugal's TV programmes as consisting of 70% politically neutral shows whereas the remaining 30% "offered opportunities to subtly change the political content in order to get the people away from the numerous Eastern Bloc productions."<sup>508</sup>

The media-related FEF activities were supplemented by a number of training seminars for Portuguese journalists who were invited by the Foundation to its headquarters in Bonn. The first of these media seminars took place between the 16 and 26 May 1977 with six Portuguese journalists being invited to the Federal Republic on what was called an educational and information visit to evaluate and study the current political, economic and social situation in West Germany. The selection was not linked to any party political activities or even PS membership and the participants represented the entire spectrum of political beliefs as represented in the Portuguese Parliament except the PCP. The participating journalists had entered journalism after April 1974

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<sup>507</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>508</sup> *Ibid.*

and had “relentlessly worked towards the consolidation of democratic structures in Portugal.”<sup>509</sup> The Portuguese guests were introduced to West Germany’s economic policies and labour laws as well as to a variety of political concepts, which West Germany had developed during its own phase of reconstruction after the Second World War. The Portuguese participants learned about the FRG’s own transitional experiences when facing a comparable set of political, economic and social challenges in the context of a general overhaul and build-up of political infrastructure. The first set of seminar discussions focused on Portugal’s possible membership in the EC, covered West German legislation underlying vocational training in the Federal Republic and introduced the law of co-determination. The Portuguese guests were introduced to the situation of Germans returning to the FRG from former state territory east of the Oder-Neisse border after the Second World War and familiarised themselves with the way in which the West German Government had dealt with the problems of their integration. Parallels to the Portuguese situation with thousands of settler returnees from Portugal’s overseas territories were clearly recognisable.

Furthermore, the seminar focused on the structural reality of West Germany’s media market as well as on the situation of print media in Portugal. The Portuguese guests informed their German hosts that the ideological equilibrium in the Portuguese media sector resulted in balanced reporting, a diversified flow of information and a fair representation of political opinions. Newspapers run by political parties enjoyed widespread popularity. Given the fact that every Portuguese spent an average of 15 Deutsche Mark per month on press products, a remarkable sum given the average per-capita income in Portugal in 1977, the media sector and the information business were seen as crucial for the outcome of the transition. Despite the generally positive nature of the transitional development of democratic mass media in Portugal, the FEF was fully aware that as a result of the nationalisation campaigns in 1977 still 70% of the national press remained firmly in public ownership. The media seminar therefore concluded that if the state had a continuous interest in the existence of a private media sector it would

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<sup>509</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1566, FEF Report ‘Besuch von sechs portugiesischen Journalisten in der Bundesrepublik vom 16. to 26. Mai 1977’, 20 June 1977.

need to subsidise the acquisition of printing paper by private publishing houses or offer tax benefits.

Finally, seminar participants were introduced to developments in the West German market for newspapers and magazines. In Portugal, readers were confronted with an almost inflationary number of publications and it was expected that the overburdened market would soon collapse under the weight of an unnaturally high number of competitors. The Portuguese guests learned that the West German media market had experienced a similar downturn in 1976, which ended a 20-year phase of an extraordinarily high density of competitors on the market. Despite the small number of only six participants, the organisation of seminars and information visits to FEF headquarters enabled key foreign experts, professionals and the 'movers and shakers' of Portugal's democratisation process to interact with their West German partners and to exchange ideas and concepts on a broad range of topics. Soft power was employed once again in order to co-opt foreign elites and opinion-formers through the supply of knowledge, expertise and experience and by providing for the exchange of information. The seminar was based on the assumption that the handful of Portuguese guests would return to their country where they would prove to be effective multiplying factors 'spreading the gospel' of possible conceptual responses to transitional challenges modelled on German experiences.

#### ***3.4. Instituto de Estudos para o Desenvolvimento (IED)***

One of the most successful projects of political co-operation between West Germany's Social Democrats and Portugal's Socialists was the Institute for Development Studies (*Instituto de Estudos para o Desenvolvimento*) founded in 1979. During the second half of the 1970s, the PS had to deal with the question of Portugal's future accession to the European Community, something that by the end of the 1970s turned out to be an economic challenge for Lisbon's political sector more than a political obstacle. Therefore, the FEF had to address the question of how to transfer urgently needed economic and technical know-how to its Portuguese partners. Analytical resources and transferable expertise were of decisive significance for the attraction of bitterly needed foreign investment. "Long-term problems can be seen in the strengthening of investor confidence through the effective protection of investment and common-sense economic

and social policies” stated a document of the Chancellor’s Office in 1977 and pointed out that “we will try to give assistance for decision-making through bilateral negotiations and through the responsible and discrete activities of our political Foundations.”<sup>510</sup>

The initiative for the IED project originated in the FEF department for the study of developing countries, which in 1979 sent its researchers Konrad Stelzel and Günther Esters to Lisbon in order to investigate the depth of existing economic expertise. The result of what was essentially a fact-finding tour to “evaluate the political research capacities” was devastating.<sup>511</sup> “The question was: What do Portuguese know about the economy and the answer was - nothing.”<sup>512</sup> Being confronted with the bleak reality of a prevailing knowledge gap during a crucial phase of democratic consolidation and being aware of the warning, that a leading foreign relations expert of the West German government had issued in 1977 saying that “in the case of a continuous failure of governmental economic policies, uncontrollable domestic political developments may be triggered”, Stelzel and Esters held background talks with approximately 20-30 different organisations.<sup>513</sup> The FEF’s point of departure was its belief that “a democratically organised parliamentary system requires an open scientifically-based discourse.”<sup>514</sup> The Foundation’s findings suggested that apart from a single international seminar organised by the Portuguese Gulbenkian Foundation no domestic institution in the Iberian country had ever made an effort to spearhead the development of an institutional micro- or macroeconomic-focused research and analytical capacity. After Esters and Stelzel had met the managing director of the economic research section of one of Portugal’s private banks, they stressed the need for “an institution that would process economically relevant knowledge and which would thereby provide the political sector with expertise and consultancy services.”<sup>515</sup>

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<sup>510</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1566, Federal Chancellery Memorandum ‘Politische Beziehungen mit Portugal’, 20 May 1977.

<sup>511</sup> Personal interview with Michael Dauderstädt, Bonn, 21 April 2002.

<sup>512</sup> Personal interview with Günther Esters, Bonn, 18 April 2002.

<sup>513</sup> AdsD, HSC, BN/7279, Notes Federal Chancellery, 3 March 1977.

<sup>514</sup> Personal interview with Günther Esters, Bonn, 18 April 2002.

<sup>515</sup> *Ibid.*



Although serving as an economic think tank for Socialist parliamentarians, the planned institute was anxious to maintain an organisational distance to the political arena. “It was supposed to be an institute which was politics-affiliated but not politics-integrated”, remembers Esters.<sup>516</sup> The practical utility of IED research for Portugal’s day-to-day politics was ensured through a range of working relationships between IED staff and PS parliamentarians with the former ones often acting as research assistants in the MP’s offices. Its first Managing Director Heinz-Michael Stahl, who headed the Institute from 1978 to 1981 points out that the Institute was supposed to “support the PS’s parliamentary work in the area of socio-economic policies” and that “the FES’s vision was to have the PS run the IED as a party think tank.”<sup>517</sup> Esters stressed the Foundation’s intention to ‘release’ the IED into institutional and, more importantly, financial independence as soon as possible to encourage the necessary institutional emancipation of the Institute and to hand responsibility for Portuguese affairs back to their owners. The FEF launched the IED’s think tank activities by providing an initial financial injection and through the transfer of managerial know-how including the appointment of a German managing director but it left the daily running of the Institute in the hands of its Portuguese staff provided the institute’s management would operate within the confines of social democratic and Socialist policies respectively.<sup>518</sup> “At the beginning we were still pushing but during the final phase we had merely decorative function.”<sup>519</sup> The FEF emphasised the need for a broadening of the Institute’s thematic scope once the deficits in the economic realm had been overcome. This was discussed between FEF experts and the PS leaders Mario Soares and Salgado Zenha both of whom shared the opinion that a broadening of topics and activities would be desirable to develop the IED as a useful research organisation for the time after the transition. A contractual agreement determined that the research director with overall responsibility for the political management of the IED would be always a selected FEF official, and the Portuguese academic and PS parliamentarian Teresa Ambrosio was appointed

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<sup>516</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>517</sup> Personal correspondence with Heinz-Michael Stahl, 18 April 2006.

<sup>518</sup> Stahl remembers that the FEF retained its right to have its say on organisational and managerial questions but kept largely out of the scientific work of the IED. Personal correspondence with Heinz-Michael Stahl, 18 April 2006.

<sup>519</sup> Personal interview with Günther Esters, Bonn, 18 April 2002.

managing director. Zenha was appointed as official liaison person for maintaining contacts with the PS.<sup>520</sup> Also, the IED worked on new developmental policies for Portuguese Africa, which opened up a new field of international activities at first sight unrelated to the democratisation process in Portugal.<sup>521</sup> The IED remained the smallest FEF project in transitional Portugal counting for approximately 15-20 percent of the Foundation's activities.

The IED encompassed three research departments, which were responsible for what the Institute's first director Heinz-Michael Stahl described as a "remarkable degree of publicity."<sup>522</sup> The three departments were the section for socio-political affairs, technical-economic studies as well as the research department for short-term studies.<sup>523</sup> During the start-up phase between August 1979 and January 1980, a tangible dominance of research activities supervised by the department of socio-political affairs caused the FEF to modify the accounting procedures of the IED in order to strengthen the standing of the remaining two departments. A full-time research officer formed the analytical and organisational backbone of each of the three departments. In 1979, the department for socio-political research completed three major studies on 'The Development of Power and Societal Structures since the Revolution', which were to be evaluated and later published in an IED publication series. These studies dealt with the "electoral behaviour of the population in the light of demographic, economic and cultural explanatory factors." They provided analysis of the "influence of the church on the political behaviour of the population" and measured out the "regional differences in the distribution of income in Portugal."<sup>524</sup>

A second research area developed by the same department was entitled "General principles of an educational concept for Portugal" which sought to complete a report on the "sociological characteristics of students of higher education along regional criteria."<sup>525</sup> In 1980, the IED launched another three research projects on "the situation

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<sup>520</sup> Personal correspondence with Heinz-Michael Stahl, 18 April 2006.

<sup>521</sup> Personal interview with Michael Dauderstädt, Bonn, 21 April 2002.

<sup>522</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1411, 2. Bi-Annual Report by Heinz-Michael Stahl, Instituto de Estudos para o Desenvolvimento

<sup>523</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>524</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>525</sup> *Ibid.*

of resources of the Portuguese regional authorities”, on the “technological progress and professional training in Portugal – a project on behalf of UNESCO” and on Portugal’s foreign debt. The IED aimed at broadening the financial basis of its research activities by approaching major research organisations for funding such as the German Society for Peace and Conflict Research (in order to obtain financial assistance for a future project on ‘Cultural conflicts in Portugal’s developmental process’), the Thyssen Foundation (to deepen the research on ‘Portugal’s External Debt in the Context of its Economic Development’) or the German Marshall Fund of the U.S.<sup>526</sup>

Being able to mobilise a broad range of additional financial resources, the IED secured substantial funds, which enabled it to continue with a diverse research agenda throughout 1980 and during subsequent years. In 1980, public funding was received by the Portuguese *Departamento Nacional de Investigação Científica* totaling Escudos 500.000 (ca. £5000). This was seen as being not only financially important but also administratively and research-politically crucial for the recognition of the IED as a Portuguese research institution.<sup>527</sup> Another project aiming at the modernisation of Portugal’s labour laws governing industrial relations in publicly owned companies was commissioned and paid for by the *Fundacao José Fontana* (FJF). This PS-affiliated Foundation, which was set up under the guidance and with the assistance of the FEF to oversee the development of the Socialist trade union organisation UGT paid a total of Escudos 242.000 (ca. £2800) to the IED for the completion of the legal project. In January 1980, the Institute had already secured a total amount of Escudos 3.700.000 (ca.£40.000) for its research programme, a sum that would be supplemented by Escudos 10.500.000 (ca. £120.000), which were paid to the IED by the FEF as an annual contribution.<sup>528</sup> This meant that during the first two years of its existence, 25 percent of the IED’s budget was secured through non-FEF sources. Furthermore, co-operation between the EC and the IED deepened over Portugal’s prime political project of future accession. Questions of European integration occupied a prominent place on the think tank’s research agenda. After having taken up membership in the Council of Europe

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<sup>526</sup> *Ibid*, p.4.

<sup>527</sup> *Ibid*, p.5.

<sup>528</sup> *Ibid*, p.6.

(CoE) in September 1976, the project of EC enlargement was to become the second major step of Portugal's steady European integration.<sup>529</sup> The IED took seriously the remark of then EC Commission President Francois-Xavier Ortoli, who on the occasion of the ratification of the Financial and Additional Protocol (which extended the relations to areas other than trade) as well as of the Interim Agreement between Lisbon and the EC stressed the fact that

The intensification of our relations is a logical element in the political plan of a Portugal, which is aware of having stabilised its newly restored democracy, eager to achieve economic recovery and keen to guarantee economic development, and which desires to take its rightful place among the European democracies.<sup>530</sup>

Acknowledging that "seen from a political perspective, Portugal's accession to the EC is without alternative"<sup>531</sup>, the IED concentrated increasingly on providing Portuguese and European institutions as well as the Portuguese political sector with 'hard currency' in terms of economic expertise and political analysis.<sup>532</sup> SPD and FEF assumed that the question of Portuguese EC membership and its consequences meant a "political sheet-anchor in the short-term" and a "pre-condition for the political and economic stabilisation in the long-run."<sup>533</sup> West Germany's Social Democrats were aware of the fact that a future accession "will come at the price of immense economic and political difficulties for Portugal and the Community" and that first and foremost "a massive transfer of resources appears to be inevitable."<sup>534</sup> Therefore, the Portuguese partners of SPD and FEF had to be provided with the necessary analytical tools to thoroughly examine the multifaceted implications of the transition's European dimension and to politically prepare the country for eventual membership. The Community and its

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<sup>529</sup> On 22 September 1976, the country's Foreign Minister José Medeiro Ferreira deposited the instrument of accession to the Council of Europe's Statute and signed the European Convention on Human Rights, Report on the activities of the Council of Europe: September 1976 – August 1977, p. 32.

<sup>530</sup> The Community and Portugal, *Bulletin of the European Communities*, No 9, 1976, p. 18.

<sup>531</sup> AdsD, HSC, BN/8951, Notes Federal Chancellery 'Gespräch zwischen Ministerpräsident Pinto Balsemao und Bundeskanzler Schmidt am 15. Juni 1981'.

<sup>532</sup> A prominent member on the IED's Board of Governors was the Deputy Director of the Portuguese Central Bank and Chairman of the Portuguese Commission for the Accession Negotiations with the EC Victor Constancio.

<sup>533</sup> AdsD, HSC, BN/7279, Notes Federal Chancellery, 3 March 1977.

<sup>534</sup> *Ibid.*

member states on the other hand had to be kept informed about the exact nature and state of the Portuguese democratisation process to be able to adequately assess the prospects for Portugal's EC entry. The IED thus fulfilled a bridge-building function between accession candidate Lisbon and EC authorities in Brussels and provided important analyses on selected topics of wider significance.

In December 1979, the IED signed a research contract with the EC which provided Escudos 2.563.000 (ca. £30.000) for a major study to be finished until November 1980, which was to be used in the political negotiations about Portugal's accession. The study, which was conducted by the IED's department for technical-economic research was to evaluate and scientifically predict the potential Portuguese reservoir of immigrant workers, who would seek employment in the various labour markets of EC member states following Lisbon's accession to the Common Market over a period of 10 years. Furthermore, the EC was interested in the IED's findings concerning the demand of Portuguese labour in EC member states. Another project examined possible effects of Portugal's EC accession on the intra-European division of labour. A working group at FEF headquarters in Bonn dealt with those research areas, that concerned the impact of Lisbon's EC membership on the industrial complexes of member states while the IED concentrated on the implications of membership for Portugal's industrial structures. The project, which was later presented to the Volkswagen Foundation for funding was designed to provide the actors and institutions involved in decision-making in either private sector, legislature or political parties with a useful arsenal of scientifically-based findings forecasting the broadest range of possible political outcomes, economic implications and socio-economic problem scenario. It was intended to identify those sectors of Europe's national economies that would have to expand in reaction to stiffened competition in a common European market as well as those sectors that would be subjected to a process of declining growth.<sup>535</sup>

The FEF deepened its focus on Portugal's European integration by organising a major conference on the country's European perspectives in June 1980 the findings of

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<sup>535</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1411, 2. Bi-Annual Report by Heinz-Michael Stahl, Instituto de Estudos para o Desenvolvimento.

which were later published in a joint publication of IED and FEF.<sup>536</sup> The delegates discussed various crucially important aspects of the future integration process. The conference highlighted possible risk factors and identified problematic economic implications deriving from Portugal's position on the outset of the integration process. Given the country's alarming economic key data with a per-capita gross domestic product reaching only 55 percent of the Spanish and 60 percent of the Greek level and its significantly underdeveloped agricultural sector, in which 27 percent of the total Portuguese workforce produced only 12 percent of gross domestic product, Portugal's ability to adopt the EC's *acquis communautaire* without major disruptions of its own economic development caused by the comparative weakness of its private sector structures appeared to be rather bleak.<sup>537</sup> The FEF conference report highlighted the need for parts of the Portuguese economy to be adequately protected from the full wrath of common market forces and warned of a situation, in which Portugal would be confronted by a community of member states determined to protect their domestic markets in the few areas, in which Portuguese agriculture and industry could benefit from clear economic advantages.<sup>538</sup>

Rather than demanding additional investment in export capacities, the FEF-IED conference urged Brussels and the government in Lisbon to improve Portugal's productivity in order to significantly strengthen its position as a trading partner. The authors of the conference report concluded that "if one accepts those propositions then there remains only one way of integration, in which the EC freezes its basic accession principles in favour of a general or at least Portugal-specific emphasis on regional, industrial and developmental aspects of community policies."<sup>539</sup> FEF and IED clearly realised the possibly disastrous consequences of an integration process without Brussels' preparedness to walk the extra mile in what appeared to be in many respects a political and economic relationship with a developing country on the periphery of the

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<sup>536</sup> Forschungsinstitut der Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung, Abtlg. Entwicklungsländerforschung, *Portugal's Beitritt zur Europäischen Gemeinschaft: Perspektiven und Strategien*, Diskussionsveranstaltung des Forschungsinstituts der Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung in Verbindung mit dem Instituto de Estudos para o Desenvolvimento, (Lissabon, Bonn vom 2. bis 3. Juni 1980, Bonn 1981).

<sup>537</sup> See Portugal's application for membership, *Bulletin of the European Communities*, No 5, 1978, p.8.

<sup>538</sup> Forschungsinstitut der Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung, Abtlg. Entwicklungsländerforschung, *Portugal's Beitritt zur Europäischen Gemeinschaft: Perspektiven und Strategien*, p.12.

<sup>539</sup> *Ibid*, p.32.

European Community. The FEF seemed to be uniquely qualified, experienced and credible to convince its own government as well as other political actors involved that the integration project did not consist only of the economic dimension but that it had also a crucial political side, which may well have been negatively affected by an unconciliatory stance on the part of Brussels. Having worked at the forefront of structural transformation in the aftermath of regime change in Portugal, being well connected with domestic political and economic actors and being familiar with political dynamics, mentalities and sensitivities in transitional countries, the FEF was predestined to advocate the interests of its Portuguese 'client' within the integration debate.

Portugal's Foreign Minister Correia Gago pointed out the necessity for a longer economic transition period in order to achieve a complete opening of the agricultural market, as "in some cases productivity and prices in Portugal are further away from those of the Community than in others."<sup>540</sup> He highlighted the need for his country to "carry on with the task of modifying structures and modernising technologies in order to develop production capacities, to increase productivity and to guarantee wages and living standards in the agricultural sector to be on a par with those of other workers."<sup>541</sup> The FEF was not only an invaluable helping hand of crucial importance for the success of such a structural modification process but also an international relations actor uniquely qualified to convince key individuals and organisations of the need to accept a longer transition in certain areas. The Foundation was favourably positioned to help reconciling the EC's economic standards and expectation and the political and economic needs of a transitional society with still fragile democratic structures. Therefore, the FEF authors correctly observed:

The political system in this developing European country needs to absorb the competitive pressure generated by the EC and to translate this pressure into norms and priorities for Portuguese companies. Success or failure of the integration process will have to be measured and assessed on the analytical level of the company for a long time to come.<sup>542</sup>

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<sup>540</sup> Portugal: Opening of accession negotiations, *Bulletin of the European Communities*, No 10, 1978, p.9.

<sup>541</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>542</sup> Forschungsinstitut der Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung, Abtlg. Entwicklungsländerforschung, *Portugal's Beitritt zur Europäischen Gemeinschaft: Perspektiven und Strategien*, p.32, op.cit. (translation by author) These remarks echoed what the EC itself acknowledged when it highlighted the fact that "the Community's

Back in 1979, the IED had already pushed for another international high-profile seminar, which was widely believed to be a highlight of the Institute's activities during its Foundational phase. Under the title of the "Portuguese economic development in a changing international environment", the IED approached two sets of political issues one of which highlighted the European focus of the organisation in years to come. This encompassed structural changes of the Portuguese economy in the wake of EC accession as well as the changing relationship between Lisbon and its former colonies.<sup>543</sup> Besides providing the usual forum for dialogue and scholarly debate, the event was hoped to sharpen the IED's profile in the public domain. According to IED managing director Stahl, the latter aim was fully realised with the IED becoming the object of intense media attention. The list of speakers guaranteed high-quality contributions and included Swedish Nobel Prize winner Gunnar Myrdal, EC Commissioner for Politics of the Regions António Giolitti or the prominent Spanish diplomat Raúl Morodo, who played an important role in the transitional processes of his own country. Pires Miranda as the head of the Portuguese delegation for the accession negotiations, the leading PS politician and future Portuguese President Jorge Sampaio or CDS leader Freitas do Amaral as well as the Portuguese economist Vitor Constancio were further political heavyweights on the list of participants.<sup>544</sup>

The conference initiated an elite-based brainstorming process, which helped to clarify conceptual approaches, solved disagreements among actors involved and determined necessary steps to take. Far from being an inward-looking scholarly summit designed to bring a handful of ivory tower experts together to let them enthusiastically talk to themselves, the symposium as well as any other conference organised by FEF and IED formed part of a communication chain carefully designed and set up by the West German soft power actor. The exchange of thoughts and concepts between policy specialists and between specialists and the interested public helped to develop more

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structural policy corresponds with Portugal's essential requirements and would therefore have beneficial effects. In its present form, however, it would probably prove inadequate to cope with the scale of the problems that need to be tackled." Portugal's application for membership, *Bulletin of the European Communities*, No 5, 1978, p.9.

<sup>543</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1411, 2. Bi-Annual Report by Heinz-Michael Stahl, Instituto de Estudos para o Desenvolvimento.

<sup>544</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 9-10.



solidified concepts, which would subsequently find their way into practical political recommendations for delegations, political practitioners, civil servants and parliamentary committees. Convincing a few key actors in parties, think tanks or national institutions such as central bank of the value of the conferences' conceptual findings could mean to activate formidable multiplying factors that would 'spread the gospel' and communicate political messages and programmes to electorate, party members, government ministers and leading intellectuals.

The activities of the IED were of great importance to the FEF as its Portuguese partner organisation turned out to be an exemplifying case study of institutional emancipation in the realm of transitional soft power politics. The FEF noticed a strong ambition by the Portuguese IED staff to independently ascertain and follow its own scientific and political agenda. The IED determinedly claimed exclusive authority concerning the identification, selection and preparation of research projects and rejected any interference by the FEF. Stahl concludes: "The German director may participate in committee meetings where he is free to voice his concern or support. His advice though will be ignored without hesitation if it does not mirror the Portuguese partner's general policy line."<sup>545</sup> Far from being the remote-controlled institutional puppet in the hands of mighty West German political and economic interests, the determination of the IED management to remain master of its own affairs clearly documents the professional relationship between political aid actor FEF and its partner organisations in a transitional setting. It is important to note though that the emancipatory tendencies on the part of the IED were also responsible for a situation in which

The ideas of professional efficiency, the realistic and concrete nature of research as well as the practical usefulness of measures taken by the IED are only being implemented under certain conditions, which may have had a negative impact on the possibilities of financial support for research projects by the institutions responsible.<sup>546</sup>

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<sup>545</sup> *Ibid.*, p.14.

<sup>546</sup> *Ibid* (translation by author).

The FEF was confident that the IED's clear domestic profile would prevent a dependency on the West German donor.<sup>547</sup> However, the principle of reciprocity still applied and the Foundation did exercise subtle means of keeping partner organisations in line with broadly defined policy directions. This was far from surprising given the substantial amounts of money, which were provided for the structural build-up and transitional aid. "Certainly, the German partner can achieve his political goals indirectly i.e. through its budget policy and the financial plan for 1980."<sup>548</sup> After all, one recalls Dieter Optenhögel's remarks about the Foundation's soft power goal to support long-term democratic processes, which will eventually "generate social democratic ideas."<sup>549</sup> Any serious attempt to turn the IED into a radical leftwing think tank that would generate ideas alien to social democratic thinking would not have been tolerated or even supported. And although the IED's German director "retained the administrative and qualitative control of IED activities but held only little political authority", the FEF did not completely waive its norm-setting authority as far as general policy guidelines were concerned.<sup>550</sup> FEF analyst Günther Esters remembers for example that "the principal pre-condition was that within the institute it could not be openly voted against Mario Soares and no anti-PS activities were permitted."<sup>551</sup>

The fact that the IED became a battleground for party-internal faction fighting at the end of the 1970s illustrated the occasional difficulties for the FEF to stay clear of any involvement in internal disputes and controversies of its partner organisations. A situation characterised by what the IED's former managing director Michael Dauderstädt described as "a cold split-up" of the PS brought about the formation of two opposing groups with the Portuguese Socialist Party assembling behind PS godfather Soares and his erstwhile ally Salgado Zenha respectively.<sup>552</sup> FEF strategists viewed the feud between the two factions as a standoff between a catholic group led by Zenha and

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<sup>547</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>548</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>549</sup> Personal interview Uwe Optenhögel, Berlin, 7 March 2002.

<sup>550</sup> Personal interview with Guy Clausse, Luxembourg, 16 March 2003.

<sup>551</sup> *Ibid.* Former IED director Guy Clausse remembers that "when the controversy between Soares and Zenha spilled out of control the director of the IED fulfilled a balancing and moderating role but far from that of a *Politkommissar* (political supervisor).

<sup>552</sup> Personal interview with Michael Dauderstädt, Bonn, 21 April 2002.

the 'freemason' group supporting Soares. Triggered by widespread cronyism under Soares's leadership with the distribution of lucrative positions within the PS bureaucracy to members of a small clique of friends and Soares loyalists, the Zenha-wing was going to use the IED as its transitional power base.<sup>553</sup> Although Soares alarmed his friends in FEF headquarters about the emerging internal threat to his leadership, the FEF consequently refused to interfere in the internal affairs of the IED and to reduce the freedom of political expression and individual manoeuvrability within the institute. This subsequently caused Soares to massively complain at SPD headquarters about the FEF's de-facto "support for his enemies."<sup>554</sup> Generally, the IED was intended to be a genuinely Portuguese think tank and its West German mentors consequently rejected any attempts by political actors in Lisbon to implicate them in the internal politics of the organisation.

The IED and PS-internal conflict between Zenha and Soares reached its peak at the beginning of the 1980s, when Soares's rival launched his bid for the Portuguese Presidency at that point resigning from the Presidency of the IED. Trying to prevent Zenha from reaching the highest echelons of political office, Soares tried to lobby his SPD allies to put pressure on his archrival in order to withdraw his bid. The episode of the party internal cabal between the two Socialist leaders also highlighted "strategic acting in the absence of strategic planning."<sup>555</sup> The FEF intended to provide a research tool for the development of political expertise in the long-term by setting up the IED. Therefore, the organisational character of the organisation required a long-term perspective as to who would dominate Socialist politics after Soares. Although "central planning was non-existing on the part of the FEF"<sup>556</sup>, the Soares-Zenha episode showed that the FEF "generally speaking only supported Portuguese socialism as a whole but that it also provided a certain political segment within the PS with a political focus and a "parking lot" to prepare for the time after Soares."<sup>557</sup> Almost the entire PS leadership

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<sup>553</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>554</sup> Personal interview with Günter Esters, Bonn, 18 April 2002.

<sup>555</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>556</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>557</sup> Personal interview with Michael Dauderstädt, Bonn, 18 April 2002. Former IED Director Guy Clause expressed a similar view saying that "(it) could be seen as a medium-term strategic planning not to exclude or marginalize the Zenha wing of the PS." Personal interview with Guy Clause, Luxembourg, 16 March

that was to dominate Portugal's political arena during the second half of the 1980s had close institutional connections to the IED or was directly linked through membership on its executive board.<sup>558</sup>

The second German director of the IED was the FEF economist Guy Clause, who took over from Stahl in 1980 and continued the range of activities of the organisation in the areas of education, migration and economic policies. Research studies on the situation of Portugal's foreign debt and on Spanish-Portuguese economic relations were supplemented by surveys and analyses, which focused on problems of the reintegration of returning Portuguese migrant workers or on the development of agricultural policies. One third of the IED's annual budget of approximately DM 1 million (ca. £330.000) was provided by West German sources while the remaining two-thirds came from Portuguese or international donors or through the IED itself.<sup>559</sup> A number of full-time staff was supported by approximately 50 freelance project assistants and consultants who worked on behalf of the IED on projects commissioned by institutions such as the Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the Institute for the Promotion of Technology.<sup>560</sup> In the first half of the 1980s, selected research topics had to be increasingly marketable, which was a result of an increasing financial dependency of the IED on international sponsors. The latter were predominantly interested in various aspects of economic policies in the light of a Portugal's future accession to the EC. Observers pointed out that "the pre-dominance of the political realm had been replaced by the pre-dominance of the economic realm" and they stressed that a phase had been reached, in which the PS had to ultimately clarify its position on the basic political principles of economic policies.<sup>561</sup> Occasionally, the FEF would provide funds for certain projects in order to 'test the waters' and to develop a sense of viability, efficiency, quality of personnel and public perception. It would then transform the

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2002. However, the SPD foreign affairs establishment wanted to "avoid the impression that the SPD interferes in the internal skirmishes and the faction fighting of its sister party by siding with one group or another." AdsD, WBC, BN/106, Note for the Circles of Six (*Sechserkreis*) by Hans-Eberhard Dingels, 30 October 1980.

<sup>558</sup> Prominent IED alumni were Jorge Sampaio and Antonio Gutierrez both later Heads of State.

<sup>559</sup> Among the donors were the German Volkswagenstiftung and Thyssenstiftung as well as sponsoring institutions in Switzerland, Canada and the United States.

<sup>560</sup> Personal interview with Guy Clause, Luxembourg, 16 March 2002.

<sup>561</sup> *Ibid.*

project's financial framework into a largely foreign funded operation resting on the broadest possible fundament of donor organisations.

Why was the IED such an important feature of West Germany's transnationally operated soft power strategy? In his widely acclaimed study on the Portuguese transition, Kenneth Maxwell described the Institute as a think tank which was "headed by very able foreigners, which have been a key source of excellent studies and blueprints for reforms with direct consequences on governmental programs."<sup>562</sup> The FEF served as a conceptual "incubator of ideas, which were of a top priority and could only be continued through outside financial sources."<sup>563</sup> The IED combined foreign expertise and indigenous talent and enabled political and scientific elites in Portugal to broaden their knowledge base, benefit from the experience of their German partner organisation and to strengthen their country's position vis-à-vis the various political and socio-economic challenges by supplying policy concepts to decision-makers. The employment of soft power meant the channelling of non-material as well as material support from the FEF to the economists, sociologists and political scientists of the IED where external democracy assistance would be transformed into blueprints and studies for decision-makers in parliament and government. Within the wider context of transitional constitution building, policy planning and institution building, the IED helped to stabilise the structural framework for democracy and contributed to the successful political management of the democratic process. It helped to consolidate and further develop the democratic consensus among the Portuguese electorate through its institution-building activities and positively influenced the attitudinal and behavioural components of the democratisation process. Through the establishment of the IED, West Germany's foreign policy and its transnational democracy promotion agency FEF provided a convincing interventionist approach based on the mobilisation of soft power, which sought to co-opt the Socialist leadership by supplying it with social democratic policy concepts, expertise based on German experience and the financial means to put ideas into practice.

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<sup>562</sup> Kenneth Maxwell, *The Making of Portuguese Democracy*, (Cambridge University Press, 1995), p.213.

<sup>563</sup> *Ibid.*

The FEF realised that the Portuguese knowledge gap in the area of economics and international trade and finance carried the risk of prolonging the failure of governmental economic policies with potentially dangerous consequences for the stability of the democratic system. It was therefore crucial to enable Portugal's new political elite to cope with the demands of the international political economy, to solve the problems caused by demographic changes and to take on the challenges posed by policy areas such as education, regionalism, foreign debt, European integration or development in Portuguese Africa. Questioned on the IED's impact on policy making and on a possibly causal relationship between FEF input and democratisation output, former IED director Clausese speculates, "The institutionalisation of political deficits would have been significantly higher without the contribution of the FEF which set up the IED in the first place."<sup>564</sup> The prioritisation of key themes and topics at the earliest possible stage and the international interconnectedness of social science research carried out through the IED lastingly stabilised the professional continuity of elites and technocrats in Portugal.

### ***3.5. Producer Cooperatives***

A further challenge that was taken on by the FEF and its democratisation assistance programme in Portugal was to find a 'middle-of-the-road' approach to solve the problem of the tremendous social and economic differences between aristocratic landowners, small-holding peasants and other competitors in the agricultural market and to balance and dampen the effects caused by these grave socio-economic inequalities. In this context, the creation of farming cooperatives was seen as a compromise model of collective economic action, which avoided the anti-competition oriented and centrally planned Communist model of nationalised economic structures while at the same time preventing small-farm holders from falling into the rough waters of unconstrained economic individualism. Former FEF resident representative in Portugal Gerhard Fischer described the FEF's activities in the area of producer co-operatives as being part of the three-pillar-theory advocated by the international labour movement, the three

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<sup>564</sup> Personal interview with Guy Clausese, Luxembourg, 16 March 2002.

pillars being party, labour unions and cooperatives.<sup>565</sup> The FEF realised that the implementation of concepts of collective ownership or the introduction of co-operative management in transitional Portugal required careful supervision as well as “guidance and orientation” in order to prevent developments from heading towards an ideological radicalisation.

Our Portuguese friends needed urgent assistance in these matters since their models had been tried in different contexts before. In some instances like in the case of the so-called *corporativas* we could safely tell them to get their hands off these ideas because they have failed their test long ago.<sup>566</sup>

Other FEF planners in the Foundation’s international development department displayed greater scepticism as far as the implementation of co-operative models and the introduction of collective forms of trading in Portugal was concerned. The disagreement among senior FEF staff contradicts the assumption easily made by critics and supporters of the international activities of Germany’s political foundations alike that democratisation programmes in transitional settings are set up, launched, executed and completed in an organisationally unanimous, internally unopposed and ideologically homogenous fashion. The former head of the FEF’s development research section Günther Esters thought about a remodelling of the country’s agricultural economy along the conceptual lines of cooperative theories as being “far too complicated without any practical value for the situation in Portugal.”<sup>567</sup> Indirectly echoing his concerns with a particular view on Portugal’s accession to the European Communities, the SPD Chairman of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Nutrition, Agriculture and Forestry remarked that

It has no relevance for the Common Agricultural Market, what type of private ownership – cooperative company or individual farming – dominates. It is important that after the transition process, the Portuguese agricultural sector will be competitive.<sup>568</sup>

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<sup>565</sup> Personal interview with Gerhard Fischer, Bonn, 25 April 2002.

<sup>566</sup> *Ibid* (translation by author).

<sup>567</sup> Personal interview with Günther Esters, Bonn, 18 April 2002.

<sup>568</sup> Martin Schmidt, ‘Den Weg in eine dauerhafte Demokratie können Portugal und Spanien nur im Rahmen der EG finden’, *Sozialdemokratischer Pressedienst*, vol.33, no.217, 10 November 1978 (translation by author).

Esters pointed at Mário Soares's political goal to create a Socialist model democracy based on the Zionist concept of collective economic and social action as being the party's driving force, which explained why the PS focused so determinedly on the transfer of know-how concerning agricultural cooperatives. "The model of cooperatives mirrored the Socialist nature of the revolution of carnations, but on the other hand Portugal was planning the accession to the European Communities where economic criteria rather than social engineering were decisive."<sup>569</sup> Esters was convinced that the cooperative policies, which were temporarily supported by the FEF, was used by Soares as an instrument to satisfy the demands and respond to the ideological expectations of the PS left. "The leadership of the PS was merely interested in strengthening the political position of the party, to lead the trade union sector against the Communists and to only superficially pay tribute to the principals of Socialist thinking."<sup>570</sup>

In the realm of producer or consumer cooperatives, the FEF delivered political, economic, social and technical expertise through intermediary organisations, which were set-up in order to efficiently outsource research and consulting capacities and to hand over overall responsibility for projects and campaigns to the Foundation's partner organisation in Portugal. Besides the *Fundação Antonio Sergio*, which served as an umbrella body and a controlling device for agricultural cooperative projects, the Portuguese consulting agency SERVCOOP was an example for such an intermediary organisation underneath the organisational level of a foundation. The company provided management-consulting services for consumer cooperatives in the Lisbon region and promoted mergers and organisational alliances between farming and consumer cooperatives on regional and national level.<sup>571</sup> SERVCOOP was supposed to serve as a political instrument for PS ministers enabling them to introduce organisational initiatives and conceptual proposals outside of the ministerial apparatus. Furthermore, SERVCOOP provided legal aid, conducted research and offered consulting services with which it tried to prevent the infiltration of agricultural cooperatives by the extreme left. An internal FEF report stresses that "the statutes of the cooperatives need to be

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<sup>569</sup> Personal interview with Günther Esters, Bonn, 18 April 2002.

<sup>570</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>571</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1566, FEF Report on SERVCOOP.



legally sealed against any attempts of Communist forces to take over the management of the cooperatives.”<sup>572</sup> In order to create an effective shield against a silent PCP onslaught by moving into positions of responsibilities within the various cooperatives, SERVCOOP set up a study group, which would make the necessary legal recommendations and implement them in all existing cooperatives.<sup>573</sup>

More than two years after the failed coup d’etat of November 1975, Socialist politics on all levels appeared to be still in a state of constant alert concerning the possibility of a creeping invasion of Communist activists into public spaces and administrative positions. This explained repeated attempts by organisations such as SERVCOOP to filter out possible Communist influences. A comparable project was a survey produced in co-operation with the Portuguese Ministry for Agriculture and Fishing mapping out the respective cooperatives, in which Socialists, Social Democrats and Communists were exerting predominant influence. Since PS-dominated agricultural cooperatives had to compete with the PCP-leaning Soviet-style *kolkhoz* organisations for grants being made available by the Portuguese Ministry for Agriculture, SERVCOOP began advising cooperatives on the successful launch of grant applications.

Furthermore, the FEF organised seminars, which would provide platforms for the exchange of concepts and ideas were also part of SERVCOOP’s services. Among the seminar projects planned in 1978 was a seminar on cattle trade and marketing as well as a consumer cooperative seminar. The FEF being still the coordinating and politically driving force behind SERVCOOP intended to invite participants of the seminars to West Germany in order to provide them with additional know-how in follow-up events.<sup>574</sup> Although the question of leadership within SERVCOOP rested officially in the hands of the PS secretariat, it appears safe to assume that the FEF retained a significant influence in the area of human resources. The calm yet determined remark of two FEF officials present at the discussion about the appointment of a new secretary-general of SERVCOOP after the resignation of PS politician Rui Mateus, that “we made it clear that our preference would be Eduardo Perreira” instead of the second

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<sup>572</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>573</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>574</sup> *Ibid.*

candidate, PS treasurer Tito de Morais, may be seen as the subtle exercise of ‘guidance’ by the ‘paymaster’.<sup>575</sup> In sum, the FEF’s help to set up SERVCOOP and to sponsor and organise a range of seminars on questions of agricultural management were intended to facilitate the transfer of ideas, concepts and expertise in order to empower Portuguese recipients of West German support to take full responsibility for the running of their new democracy. Like in previous situations, this aid for the transformation of the political and socio-economic infrastructure in transition countries was provided through non-multilateral channels by a nongovernmental organisation.

### ***3.6. The FEF and Organised Labour***

In order to further strengthen civil society, the FEF supported the establishment of a free trade union organisation from 1977 as part of its soft power-driven democracy promotion programme realising that the PS had failed to counterbalance the dominance of PCP cadres in the single labour union umbrella body *Confederação-Geral dos Trabalhadores – Intersindical Nacional*. Repeated attempts to work towards politically more balanced union policies through the PS dominated *carta aberta* trade unions failed.<sup>576</sup> *Intersindical*, although being a political product of the Caetano regime, appeared to be heavily infiltrated by Communist activists who had received thorough training in member countries of the Warsaw Pact and who had successfully penetrated the Salazarist union body. Consequently, the PCP turned out to be well prepared for the silent take-over of the majority of the 480 individual union organisations after the revolution of carnations while their Socialist competitors remained organisationally fragmented suffering from a significant lack of trained personnel. Many Socialists were also trapped in their belief of the importance of a unity of action and a collective front with the PCP with which they were allied during years in exile.<sup>577</sup> In order to respond to the urgent need for trained PS cadres, the party decided to set up the worker’s commission in 1974 headed by prominent PS politician Marcelo Curto, which in due

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<sup>575</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>576</sup> German Embassy Lisbon, Report ‘Politischer Jahresbericht Portuga’, 1976, 7 February 1977, p.15. The West German union leader Heinz-Oskar Vetter (DGB) announced as early as July 1975 that his organisation was planning to support its Portuguese colleagues in their efforts to modernise corporate legislation and to launch co-operation in the field of cooperative forms of management. *dpa*, 2 July 1975.

<sup>577</sup> AdsD, HEC, BN/0403, Interpretative report on the PCP by Hans Ulrich Büniger.

course started to identify possible trade union activists in co-operation with the Centre for Trade Union Studies (CES). At the same time, the *Auswärtiges Amt* urged the German Confederation of Trade Unions (DGB) to intensify its contacts with the Portuguese labour movement “with the declared aim to support democratic labour activists in their struggle with Communist forces.”<sup>578</sup> Permanent Secretary in the Foreign Office Walther Gehlhoff in correspondence with DGB Chairman Oskar Vetter suggested assistance through the invitation of Portuguese labour activists and trade union officials to West Germany followed by a visit of high-ranking FRG union delegates to Portugal. In Gehlhoff’s opinion, such an exchange of labour representatives “would demonstrate to Portuguese workers that it is possible to have trade unions that are free *and* powerful” thus highlighting an alternative to the Communist-dominated labour organisations.<sup>579</sup>

At the time, the DGB had already taken action through the International Association of Free Trade Unions (IAFTU) assigning a member of its International Affairs Division shortly after 25 April 1974 to assist his Portuguese counterparts as part of an international team of experts in the creation of a democratic union movement.<sup>580</sup> Vetter clearly realised that “as in the area of political parties, it became quickly obvious in the area of labour representation too that the Communists were determined to maintain and expand their power positions.”<sup>581</sup> However, the DGB leadership adopted a far more pessimistic view concerning the prospects for democratic change than party activists, political Foundations or *Auswärtiges Amt*. Realising that *Intersindical* leaders manipulated institutional processes, ignored procedural regulations and constantly lobbied cabinet ministers and MFA officers in order to maintain the upper hand over their mostly Socialist critics, Vetter left others in no doubt that in his view it would prove difficult to organise “a democratic majority within Portugal’s union movement.”<sup>582</sup> Nevertheless, West Germany’s powerful trade union organisations remained committed to the strengthening of political pluralism within Portugal’s

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<sup>578</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.242, Letter Permanent Secretary Gehlhoff to DGB Chairman Ernst Vetter, 24 June 1975.

<sup>579</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>580</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>581</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>582</sup> *Ibid.*

workforce “trying to avoid anything that could possibly be seen as co-operation with the Communist trade union leadership.”<sup>583</sup>

Two mutually exclusive principles were driving the conflict between PS and PCP and would ultimately lead to the establishment of the new union body, the *União-Geral de Trabalhadores Portugueses* (UGT), namely the principle of unity of the labour union movement through legislative provision, which sought to maintain the primacy of *Intersindical*, and secondly, the principle of unity of the labour union movement through free vote of individual members, which was the option pursued by Socialist forces. The FEF was aware that if political developments within *Intersindical* remained unchallenged and “the Communists were allowed to hold the monopoly over political power, this would generate a dangerous concentration of power in the hands of Communist activists in co-operation with the PCP.”<sup>584</sup> After the failed coup d’etat of former President Spínola, the PCP doubled its efforts to marginalize the role of its Socialist rival in the trade union movement not least through the union law passed by the III. Provisional Government on 27 April 1975. In the aftermath of the political showdown in November 1975, the Communists maintained their dominant position within *Intersindical* whereby the attempt to organise a congress of political parity, which would represent all union organisations failed.<sup>585</sup> This was indeed surprising given the virulent accusations by democratic union activists that the *Intersindical* was actively involved in the coup d’etat of 25 November 1975. FEF liaison officer Büniger informed political decision-makers back home that various pamphlets circulating in leftist union circles in Portugal alleged that *Intersindical* had instructed workers in all industrial sectors to actively support “progressive militaries” by occupying key ministries, public institutions and companies.<sup>586</sup>

Being a potentially decisive institutional tool to ‘blackmail’ democratically elected governments in case of an exclusion of the PCP from governmental responsibility, a Communist dominated single union association like the *Intersindical*

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<sup>583</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>584</sup> Personal interview with Michael Dauderstädt, Bonn, 21 April 2002.

<sup>585</sup> AdsD, HEC, BN/0403, Report on the PCP by Hans Ulrich Büniger.

<sup>586</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.242, German Embassy Lisbon, Report (Hans-Ulrich Büniger) ‘Rolle der Gewerkschaften während des Staatstreiches’, 12 December 1975.

remained an incalculable risk for any long-term PS policies. The bitterly needed economic reform process for the necessary overhaul of Portugal's economic structures came close to being a transitional Russian roulette with at least one Communist bullet in the political barrel. The FEF admitted, "It seems to be difficult to implement the necessary concept for economic recovery. It will mean hardship for the great majority of workers if these parts of the population are represented by a Communist single union organisation which at the same time sees itself as the Socialist government's main adversary."<sup>587</sup> The congress of Portugal's union organisations, which was organised by the *Intersindical* in January 1977, was declared to be representative of 80 percent of all Portuguese workers and employees. FEF analyst Büniger held a different view:

The Congress represented only 20-30 percent of the Portuguese workforce. The problem was that the non-Communist forces were incapable of mobilising the silent majority for its ends. There cannot be any doubt that the overwhelming majority of Portuguese workers are not Communist-orientated, something that is clearly documented by the election results."<sup>588</sup>

In 1976, the legislative situation changed allowing for the establishment of competing union organisations. A new government initiative to change the law and to hold elections for worker representations as well as the legislative attempt to outlaw the collection of monthly membership fees from being by employers were widely perceived as measures to effectively curtail the influence of the Communists on *Intersindical* structures and policies. In 1977, the FEF helped to establish the *Fundação José Fontana* in order "to promote the development of a democratic trade union movement" through "the training and dynamisation of union activists and functionaries."<sup>589</sup> The ambivalent attitude on the part of Portugal's Socialists where "one dreamt of the unity of the working class on the one hand but would respond to the call for a single union organisation by suggesting to split the union movement in Portugal and to establish a

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<sup>587</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN-1566, Notes Federal Chancellery, 'Politische Beziehungen mit Portugal', 20 May 1977.

<sup>588</sup> AdsD, HEC, BN/0403, Report on the PCP by Hans Ulrich Büniger (translation by author).

<sup>589</sup> cited in Rainer Eisfeld, *Demokratischer Pluralismus*, op.cit., p.175.

Socialist but non-Communist labour union on the other hand appeared to be slowly dissolving.”<sup>590</sup>

Portugal’s Socialists and West Germany’s Social Democrats finally decided to set up a new union organisation after acknowledging that the democratisation of *Intersindical* was not feasible.<sup>591</sup> In order to secure the expertise of foreign trade union officials, the FEF arranged visits of leading members of the West German DGB to Portugal.<sup>592</sup> The Foundation also sought to influence the legislative process in the Portuguese Parliament to ensure that trade union involvement remained without negative professional consequences for the activists.<sup>593</sup> Furthermore, the FEF drafted a preliminary budget and provided Socialist union activists with a financial plan for the months ahead.<sup>594</sup> As a result, in 1979 the UGT was founded which brought together Socialist party members and PSD activists and “broke the monopoly of Communists in the labour union sector”<sup>595</sup>. The new organisation was politically embraced by the PS party conference, which took place between 2 and 4 March 1979 in Lisbon. The SPD’s Veronika Isenberg remarked that although “support was not unanimous, the opponents of the UGT did not manage to formulate a convincing alternative and did not appear in great numbers.”<sup>596</sup>

### 3.7. Conclusions

This chapter has focused on a selected blend of issue areas to highlight the FEF’s transnational assistance during the phase of democratic consolidation in Portugal. The Foundation strengthened pluralist structures within Portugal’s state-run media by

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<sup>590</sup> Personal interview with Günther Esters, Bonn, 18 April 2002. Nevertheless, co-operation between SPD, FEF and PS cadres did not always develop smoothly and some West German observers expressed their frustration that “despite our relentless efforts to point out the importance of intensified union activism [...] everything came to a standstill before it had even started.” AdsD, WBC, BN-131, Note Hans-Eberhard Dingels, 13 June 1978.

<sup>591</sup> SPD parliamentarians Uwe Holtz and Günther Schluckebier reported upon return from a visit to Portugal: “The Communist union organisation is aware of the genesis of a democratic rival.” *Associated Press*, 19 August 1977.

<sup>592</sup> Personal interview with Gerhard Fischer, Bonn, 25 April 2002. In 1976, the Metallworkers Union *IG Metall* organised a seminar on organised labour representation in Germany for which it invited twenty Socialist union activists. AdsD, WBC, BN/45, Letter Eugen Loderer to Willy Brandt, 8 March 1976.

<sup>593</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>594</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>595</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>596</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1537, Notes Veronika Isenberg, 12 March 1979.

providing media consultants to help diversify programming and by organising seminars and study trips for Portuguese journalists. The latter were intended to have Portuguese media workers familiarise themselves with the workings and management of a democratic press thus enabling them to scrutinise government action on behalf of civil society. Furthermore, the FEF responded to the scarcity of research institutions by establishing the IED think tank, which conducted studies, organised seminars and advised a range of PS parliamentarians on social and economic policies. Thirdly, the Foundation supported Mário Soares's efforts to establish a network of non-Communist producer cooperatives in the agricultural sector and fourthly, traditionally strongly represented in the area of trade union activism, West Germany's Social Democracy was the ideal partner for co-operation in the labour sector. The FEF with its transnational channels of political communication and its international network of contacts was an obvious choice to assist Portugal's Socialist forces with the creation of a non-Communist union organisation. Soft power was played out by supplying knowledge, expertise and information and through channels that connected FEF and SPD as nonstate actors with Portuguese civil society. The experienced West German union movement was a powerful ally and Portugal's union activists could only benefit from the vast experience and professional know-how that its West German partners were able to muster. Within Portugal's framework of democratic consolidation, the power to "convince with ideas and policies" (Nye) and the ability to attract foreign elites to certain conceptual approaches and models of political problem-solving were seen as the most promising way to shape West Germany's regional milieu in Southern Europe. It was obviously desirable for the Federal Republic's ruling Social Democrats to help develop socio-economic structures in Portugal largely compatible with the ones at home. Thus any soft power-driven contribution to "generate Social Democratic ideas" in the target country and to help creating a Social Democratic environment in Portugal by facilitating the creation of a Socialist union organisation would "pay high dividends and yet be a moral credit" (Wolfers) to West Germany's foreign policy makers.

The proponents of the *Machtvergessenheit* narrative maintain that foreign policy behaviour driven by self-interest and the determination to actively influence international developments was only rudimentarily developed in Bonn's diplomatic

circles. However, the FRG's informal diplomacy during the Portuguese transition suggested otherwise. The FEF's democracy promotion activities showed that the SPD-led West German Government was determined to influence the future shape of Portugal's socio-economic and political system in a way that ensured compatibility with the Federal Republic's own structural make-up. Soft power was being channelled via the FRG's transnational agencies of democracy promotion (*Stiftungen*) and sought to contribute to the genesis of democratic institutions in post-authoritarian Portugal such as IED and UGT and the strengthening of their resource base. At the same time, Bonn's national interest required that institutions and structures in the transition country resembled West German institutions and structures as much as possible. Therefore, neither the idea of a total 'forgetfulness of power' with an altruistically-driven foreign policy nor the notion of an exclusively multilaterally operated diplomacy are sufficient analytical tools to explain the concept of power in the FRG's external relations. The case of regime change in Portugal illustrates the fact that rather than being lost, German power was subjected to a re-configuration after the Second World War, which profoundly lessened the importance of coercion in the pursuit of its foreign policy largely replacing confrontative means and strategies with the power generated by its post-war ideas, values and concepts. Instead of the formerly often loudish diplomatic appearance of Germans on the international stage, a largely persuasion-based and limber approach to international affairs had taken centre stage 'selling' the values and concepts of political pluralism, consensual forms of dispute resolution in industrial relations and the stabilising effects of the FRG's constitutional framework in foreign societies undergoing transitions from authoritarianism. Not long after the overthrow of the Salazarist regime in Lisbon, its northern neighbour Spain began its long walk to democracy with the death of dictator Francisco Franco in November 1975 as the transition's prelude. The next chapter will therefore examine the FEF's role in the Spanish process of regime change thus enabling the analysis to approach political developments in the Iberian Peninsula as part of a broader geographical context.



## Chapter 4

### Pursuing Soft Power Politics III: The Friedrich-Ebert Foundation in Spain 1976-1981

“The money that flows into the pockets of Spanish Socialists does not emanate from the Ebro, nor out of the Guadalquivir or from any other ordinary Spanish river but out of the waters of the far German Rhine.”<sup>597</sup>

#### 4.1. Introduction

After the previous chapter has explored the non-multilateral dimension of West Germany's foreign policy with its employment of soft power during Portugal's phase of democratic consolidation, this chapter continues the analysis of the modality of West Germany's foreign policy i.e. the way the Federal Republic operationalised its external relations during the Cold War era with an examination of the Spanish case of democratisation. It will again look at the interplay between the FRG's state diplomacy and the FEF's transnationally pursued informal diplomacy the latter resting the bulk of its democracy promotion activities on 'softer' forms of power with their operational predisposition towards attraction and co-option. Again using a Social Democratic prism through which to exemplify the workings of Bonn's diplomacy, the chapter will show how West German experiences with challenges of democratisation and its ideas, values and policies guided the FRG's persuasion-based soft power interventionism in Spain. It will illuminate the close political co-operation between the Spanish Socialist Workers Party (PSOE) and West Germany's ruling Social Democrats, an institutional connection that appears to be strongly redolent of the SPD-FEF-PS axis during the Portuguese

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<sup>597</sup> Spanish Communist Party leader Santiago Carillo as quoted in Walter Haubrich, 'Was hat der Bundeskanzler denn mit "Entesa dels Catalans" zu tun? – Die Deutschen im spanischen Wahlkampf', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* 28 February 1979 (translation by author).

transition. After examining the FEF's efforts to help broadening PSOE's resource base and preparing the Spanish partner organisation for future elections (see 4.3. and 4.4.), the focus will be on the Foundation's support for PSOE-affiliated actors such as the *Union General de Trabajadores* (UGT) (see 4.5.) and its involvement in the constitution-building process from 1977 (see 4.8). The contextual similarities to the Portuguese theatre of regime change are obvious and belie the realist allegation of a foreign policy stripped of national interest considerations. In both transition cases, bi-polarity and superpower confrontation led Western powers including the FRG to see Communist parties and their expansionist tendencies as the biggest menace to regional security. Hence in Spain as well as in Portugal, both tiers of West Germany's foreign policy – state and sub-state, multilateral and transnational – were geared towards preventing the *Partido Comunista Português* (PCP) and the *Partido Comunista de España* (PCE) from occupying crucial power positions during the transition and beyond. Like in Portugal, FEF (and other political foundations) backed by the West German Government sought to curb Communist influence by establishing counter-hegemony through the support for Felipe González's PSOE. It will become clear that besides the area of regional security, West Germany's national interest was also guided by criteria of wealth maximisation, which required decision-makers in government, party and foundations to ensure the future compatibility of German and Spanish economic structures. This chapter will highlight the channels through which FEF diplomacy promoted the creation of a socially regulated market economy, the principle of a social partnership in industrial relations, the build-up of a strong Socialist labour movement and the drafting process of Spain's democratic constitution the latter safeguarding basic human rights, the principle of private property and strongly decentralised structures.

#### **4.2. *The International Context of the Spanish Transition***

Veteran German foreign correspondent Walter Haubrich who covered Iberian affairs for more than thirty years for the prestigious German daily *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and who extensively commented on the transitions in Southern Europe noted in his acclaimed account of "Spain's difficult path to freedom":

More than twenty years after the downfall of the dictatorship, a number of politicians and other contemporaries of the *transición* still alive produce some palliating accounts of these events, which assign the different political roles incorrectly. Relying on the short historical memory of the Spanish people, this eventually reaches the point of downright falsification of history. By creating a myth around the transition, they celebrate certain politicians involved and exaggerate their own role. It appears that part of this phenomenon is the desire to forget or deny the support one received from abroad whereby politicians and correspondents, political parties and foundations and other organisations especially from Germany have contributed significantly to the success of the *transición*. The support of the Europeans for Spanish democrats robbed the right-wing enemies of democratisation, which still held de-facto political power of their most important argument, namely that Spain would be right on track into chaos and Communism.<sup>598</sup>

Indeed, Haubrich's journalistic analysis hints at the important role, which the international environment played for Spain's structural transformation during its transition from authoritarianism. International actors provided platforms for political dialogue bitterly needed in a society that had experienced deep social divisions ever since the outbreak of the Civil War in 1936. Haubrich's remarks highlighted the widespread symptom of 'national amnesia' concerning outside support for Spain's democrats. Just as Philippe Schmitter with his assertion of the overwhelming primacy of domestic factors for course, speed and success of transition periods in the scholarly realm, a significant number of Spanish politicians and intellectuals in the public realm frequently stressed the exclusive responsibility of Spanish actors for the establishment of democratic structures. These commentators outrightly rejected any notion of noteworthy logistical, financial and political support obtained from foreign democrats.<sup>599</sup> During the Spanish transition about which the FEF resident representative in Madrid Dieter Koniecki once said that during its heydays there "was hardly a chair to sit on in the offices of the *Partido Socialista Obrero Español* (PSOE), which I had not paid for"<sup>600</sup>, the dependency of domestic democratic parties on foreign support was a natural consequence in a process, in which political actors with experience, expertise

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<sup>598</sup> Walter Haubrich, *Spaniens schwieriger Weg in die Freiheit: Von der Diktatur zur Demokratie*, (vol.2, 1975-1977), p.10 (translation by author).

<sup>599</sup> Philippe C. Schmitter, 'An Introduction to Southern European Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Italy, Greece, Portugal, Spain', in Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe C. Schmitter, Laurence Whitehead (eds.) *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule – Southern Europe*, (Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1986), p.

<sup>600</sup> Personal interview with Dieter Koniecki, Madrid, 5 April 2003.

and financial resources supported those with an only theoretical knowledge of democracy in action. Drawing from its experiences during the Portuguese transition, the FEF in its soft power approach focused on political bridge-building, identified the most effective multiplying factors for translating the results of its democracy promotion projects into civic education and facilitated vital contacts between forces of the old regime and Spain's new political actors. The former deputy Chairman of the Partido Socialista del Interior (PSI) and recipient of the FEF's political aid Raúl Morodo remembered:

At the end, the international Foundations played a very important role. Not so much economically but politically. They provided legitimacy and served as fora for bilateral relations and assistance. One needs to acknowledge that all of the Foundations within their respective political limitations played a very positive role in the preparation of democracy. And generally, they appeared to be discrete and did not act like doctrinal supervisors or political *orientadores*.<sup>601</sup>

As in the Portuguese case, soft power was employed for the realisation of milieu goals i.e. the creation of an international environment, which would be conducive to close bilateral relations between the Federal Republic and a future Spanish democracy. The transnationally operated foreign policy strategy sought to co-opt or, as Gramscians would define it, to 'socialise' future democratic elites by helping to facilitate the emergence of a moderate left-of-centre political realm. In order to achieve the future political dominance of PSOE, soft power actor FEF in co-operation with SPD and West German Government had to strengthen, develop and improve its partner's organisational structure, boost its financial potency and train its cadres to ensure Socialist competitiveness at the polls. The 'power of attraction' (Nye) was in fact a 'power of conception' and West German policies, ideas and concepts had to be 'sold' to Spain's future decision-makers to achieve the highest possible compatibility between the two polities.

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<sup>601</sup> Raúl Morodo, *Atando Cabos: Memorias de un conspirador moderado*, (Taurus, Madrid 2001), p.484 (translation by author).

### 4.3. FEF Office in Madrid, January – June 1976

The Foundation's democracy promotion activities in Spain became an almost tailor-made political project for a single individual – the FEF resident representative in Madrid Dieter Koniecki, a former activist of the West German Liberal Students Association in Berlin. While on FEF assignment in Mexico, Koniecki was asked by Willy Brandt and SPD Finance Minister Hans Matthöfer in 1975 to help open a Foundation office in Spain in order to co-ordinate and develop FEF activities and to oversee the Foundation's support for the still exiled PSOE.<sup>602</sup> Koniecki could draw from his vast experience as a political campaigner – “not a political trainee anymore”<sup>603</sup> as Willy Brandt used to say – and his fluency in Spanish proved to be an invaluable asset besides his outstanding organisational talent. In addition to his role as FEF country representative, he would be later remembered many of those involved in FEF-sponsored constitution-building conferences as the “permanent link between the German SPD and the Spanish PSOE, and the main channel for the German financing of the latter.”<sup>604</sup>

Koniecki also possessed various personal contacts to exiled Spanish political activists, a network he had developed during his time in Mexico. What exactly his mission was supposed to achieve was by his own recollection the great unknown in Social Democratic circles and among those who sent him. Koniecki remained officially on assignment in Mexico until August 1976 and pointed out that before any political co-operation between FEF and PSOE could be conceptualised and implemented, the Foundation had to overcome serious bureaucratic hurdles convincing the Spanish authorities to let the West German nonstate actor establish an office in Madrid. “Under those circumstances it was necessary to solve a number of formal problems in order to ensure the legality of co-operation with social organisations, which were not officially recognised at that time.”<sup>605</sup> In this context, the FEF's worldwide network of contacts turned out to be of particular usefulness for West Germany's sub-state diplomacy in Spain. The Foundation maintained lines of communication with the Spanish Minister of

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<sup>602</sup> Personal interview with Dieter Koniecki, Madrid, 5 April 2003.

<sup>603</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>604</sup> Personal correspondence with Antonio Bar Cendón, 19 June 2006.

<sup>605</sup> Dieter Koniecki, ‘Actividades de la Fundación Friedrich Ebert en España a través de su oficina en Madrid’, in *20 Años de la Fundación Friedrich Ebert en España*, (Friedrich-Ebert Foundation, 1996), p.21.

the Interior and leading regime soft-liner Manuel Fraga Iribarne ever since he was Franco's Ambassador at the Court of St. James.<sup>606</sup> In January 1976, Koniecki began talks with the Spanish Ministry of the Interior during which the West German Embassy and FRG Ambassador Georg von Lilienfeldt initiated the contacts.<sup>607</sup> Fraga expressed his suspicion concerning the Foundation's proposed Iberian activities telling Koniecki "the FEF in its international projects usually concentrates on developing countries, which makes it difficult to understand its interest in Spain."<sup>608</sup>

In personal conversations, Fraga asked Koniecki with whom the FEF was planning to politically co-operate only to find Koniecki replying that he contemplated entering into partnership projects with the still outlawed labour union UGT and the equally banned PSOE. Koniecki reminded the minister that a Socialism à la PSOE was certainly more acceptable than the Socialist model Libyan-style with which he hinted at the ideological coquetries of Partido Socialista Popular (PSP) Chairman Tierno Galván's Mediterranean Socialism.<sup>609</sup> The message was unambiguous: The political situation in Spain was about to change fundamentally and sooner or later the government had to allow opposition forces to enter the political arena. By allowing for a co-ordinated re-admission of those political parties that promised to play the transitional game by the rules which the government had set thus ensuring stability and political order during the interim phase, Fraga on behalf of the Spanish Government would retain a maximum of control and secure influence on the emergence of pluralist structures.<sup>610</sup>

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<sup>606</sup> Personal interview with Dieter Koniecki, Madrid, 5 April 2003.

<sup>607</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>608</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1540, FEF Report, 'Über meine Aktivitäten in Madrid', Dieter Koniecki, 28.1 bis 20 March 1976. The exact classification of the country in overall terms of economic strength, social standards and political stability was indeed crucial for FEF democracy promotion projects since approval of funding depended on the status of the target society as part of the developing world. Spain was classified as a developing country in *political* terms and was therefore eligible for funding by the West German Ministry for Economic Co-operation and International Development (BMZ) with an only minimal influence of the *Auswärtiges Amt* on FEF activities, Personal interview with Dieter Koniecki, Madrid, 5 April 2003.

<sup>609</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>610</sup> According to Koniecki, the FEF criticised him strongly for his frankness in his approach during his conversation with Fraga. The regular contacts between him and the Interior Minister were synonym for something the West German weekly *Die Zeit* described as the impossibility of Bonn's foreign policy to operate without maintaining contacts to governmental institutions *as well as* opposition forces. The newspaper described the task for West Germany's foreign policy as stabilising Spain's transition by providing a political framework that incorporated and accommodated both power holders and power contenders. This would lead in turn to a "division of labour" between Federal Government as a whole and the majority party. *Die Zeit*, 10 October 1975. On governmental level, West Germany's Foreign Minister

Despite the constructive atmosphere of the talks, Fraga did not make a final decision until 15 February 1976, when Koniacki informed FEF headquarters that “because of Minister Fraga and his positive political attitude towards support for the opening of formal activities of the FEF, the establishment of a Foundation office in the near future seems to be likely.”<sup>611</sup> Koniacki suggested a two-step approach to organise FEF projects in the Iberian country. During the first phase until June 1976, the FEF office in Madrid had to be set-up whereby it was suggested that renting and furnishing of the office could begin earlier. The second step was to launch political projects of democracy promotion. “The actual public seminar programme and those measures required for its set-up - unknown to the public - are supposed to start from 1 January 1977. Until then, there will be sufficient time to think about the most appropriate form of accreditation for the FEF, which will depend not least on the question of the legalisation of PSOE and the institutions affiliated with it such as the *Fundación Pablo Iglesias*.”<sup>612</sup>

Fraga, who had previously served as Franco’s Information Minister was about to establish himself as the “liberal leader of the political centre” and tried to rid himself of the image of being “an authoritarian, short tempered and quickly punishing” Francoist.<sup>613</sup> He was promptly invited to visit the FEF headquarters in Bonn where the

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Hans-Dietrich Genscher echoed Koniacki’s earlier thoughts on regime liberalisation while holding talks with Fraga during his consultations in Madrid in April 1975. Genscher expressed his belief that an early opening of the political system would be far-sighted and that this would ensure a smooth transition to a stable democracy. “Nothing would be more dangerous than being faced with regime change unprepared.” Genscher emphasised that the example of Portugal demonstrated that democratic parties and unions had to be given a chance to operate legally if Communists were not to dominate the opposition in illegality. *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 5 April 1975. SPD foreign policy spokesman Bruno Friedrich bluntly rejected an end to political communication with the Spanish Government arguing that the authoritarian regime would eventually collapse anyway and that large parts of Spanish society are not under the control of the government anymore. *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 4 October 1975.

<sup>611</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1540, FEF Report on the preparatory measures for the opening of an FEF office in Madrid, 15 February 1976. FEF Managing Director Günther Grunwald and Foundation Chairman Alfred Nau announced the opening of an FEF office in Spain at a press conference in Madrid. Officially, the FEF described its activities in Spain as “organising courses for citizen education” and the creation of a scholarship programme with which Spanish students should be enabled to study at universities in Spain and West Germany. *ddp*, 18 February 1976.

<sup>612</sup> *Ibid.* The Fundación Pablo Iglesias (FPI) focused on the three subject areas of research, training and documentation, but used its resources predominantly to provide support for PSOE’s parliamentary work.

<sup>613</sup> Walter Haubrich, ‘Der neue Fraga’, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 18 December 1975; Fraga described his role in the government from 1962 to 1969 as the attempt to “develop in my position as Information Minister the kind of liberalisation that would have made a transition easier”. DNSA/KT 01885, Memorandum of Conversation, 25 January 1976.

Foundation introduced him to its international programme.<sup>614</sup> The visit was considered to be “very positive” and Fraga’s private secretary Carlos Argos Garcia subsequently informed FEF officer Koniecki in March 1976 that he could apply for a residence permit for him and his family “without having to expect difficulties.”<sup>615</sup> The FEF office in Madrid was officially opened in April 1976 and Koniecki proceeded to enter what he retrospectively coined the “institutionalisation phase.”<sup>616</sup>

#### **4.4. Party Management and Electoral Assistance**

In order to speedily, adequately and effectively tackle the organisational and structural deficits of PSOE caused by decades of exile and clandestine existence, the FEF drew from the experience of those staff that had previously assisted Mario Soares and his PS in the summer of 1975. Former FEF campaign manager in Portugal Klaus Wettig advised his colleagues in Spain “the result of our involvement in Portugal should be that we start preparations in Spain for the era after Franco *now* and that we try to avoid the deficiencies and shortcomings of our work in Portugal”<sup>617</sup>. The FEF together with its Spanish partner developed the concept of an “Action Plan for the Establishment of a Nation-Wide Organisational Structure for PSOE.” Koniecki correctly observed that

The current epoch which is characterised by a wild jostling of illustrious personalities on the vanity fair outbidding themselves with ideas and attributes vis-à-vis one another and in front of an audience that gets tired very quickly appears to be simply a short-lived transition towards a situation, in which only those groups will survive that possess solid organisational structures besides strong personalities.<sup>618</sup>

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<sup>614</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>615</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1540, FEF Report, ‘Über meine Aktivitäten in Madrid, 28. Januar bis 20. März 1976’, Dieter Koniecki.

<sup>616</sup> Dieter Koniecki, ‘Actividades de la Fundación Friedrich Ebert en España a través de su oficina en Madrid’, op.cit., p.22.

<sup>617</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1537, FEF Report ‘Über die Situation in Portugal’ (Klaus Wettig), 7 May 1975. Wettig’s report was intended to be a “manual and guide for transitional activities in Spain” and subsequently submitted to the Circle of Six (*Sechserkreis*). Personal interview with Klaus Wettig, Göttingen, 23 October 2003. On the other hand, some observers such as prominent SPD politician Hans Matthöfer questioned the usefulness of any comparison between Spain and Portugal. Matthöfer was convinced that “Spain is completely different from Portugal. The armed forces have not lost a war, Spain has completely different social structures, a different mentality and different party structure. I think one needs to see developments in Spain in a different light.” *ZDF Bonner Perspektiven*, 28 March 1976.

<sup>618</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1540, FEF Report, ‘Über meine Aktivitäten in Madrid, 28. Januar bis 20. März 1976’ by Dieter Koniecki (translation by author).



Especially the upcoming general elections scheduled for 1976 caused PSOE leader Felipe Gonzalez and the FEF to want to provide the Socialist party with a solid organisational framework in order to remain competitive as a serious contender for future governmental responsibility in the new democracy.<sup>619</sup> During an initial phase of two years, the FEF would help PSOE to establish a network of 27 identification centres dotted over all of Spain's provinces each of them managed by a newly appointed organisational administrator. The administrators were to be full-time party staff and took up their duties in April 1976. Furthermore, the Action Plan provided for the creation of a PSOE Press, Media and Campaign Office, which also opened on 1 April while operating under a different name. Also, an institutional strengthening of the PSOE-affiliated union movement UGT featured high on the agenda outlined by the FEF-PSOE catalogue of rapid-reaction measures.<sup>620</sup> Koniecki himself organised the necessary training programmes for the organisational administrators, which were supposed to take place in the West German city of Mannheim. Koniecki subsequently travelled through Spain accompanied by a PSOE official to visit all of the party's provincial committees and to supervise the newly trained administrative teams.

The Action Plan envisaged the start of project-based co-operation for 1977 with an initial duration of five years.<sup>621</sup> Koniecki stressed a number of important measures in his conceptual outline for a long-term FEF involvement. Since Spain's provincial and administrative structure were likely to change because of the passing of new electoral legislation, PSOE had to have 46 instead of the originally planned 27 provincial centres and an equal number of organisational administrators. This meant an additional financial burden that needed to be compensated for by budgetary discipline in other areas. Koniecki expected that in order to maintain the organisational structure for party offices in 46 provinces the required monthly sum would come up to DM 120.000 (ca. £40.000) for salaries, technical equipment and public relations material. He therefore emphasised

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<sup>619</sup> The Action Plan or 'Catalogue of Priorities' was discussed during a visit of FEF Managing Director Günther Grunwald and FEF-Chairman Alfred Nau and approved by PSOE and UGT. AdsD, BFC, BN/1540, FEF Report, 'Über meine Aktivitäten in Madrid, 28. Januar bis 20 März 1976', (Dieter Koniecki).

<sup>620</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1540, FEF Report 'Über die vorbereitenden Massnahmen zur Eröffnung eines FES-Büros in Madrid', 15 February 1976.

<sup>621</sup> *Ibid.*

the importance of high-profile projects – “neutral” seminars, scholarships etc. - which the FEF would have to organise and which would prove to be useful to explore potential areas of political activities and to identify possible partners for co-operation. Koniecki was aware that the Foundation’s soft power-driven strategy based on the supply of knowledge, expertise and information required channels through which political know-how could be transferred. He therefore underlined the crucial importance of the creation of intermediary organisations to organise seminars, training courses and to provide other platforms for political communication with a low public profile. These officially independent institutions would provide political cover behind which FEF involvement would attract considerably less attention in the Spanish public.<sup>622</sup> Koniecki wrote: “In future, the party needs contacts to those organisations which are not seen as ‘organically’ belonging to PSOE.”<sup>623</sup> In this context, he mentioned the *Fundación Pablo Iglesias* and a number of private organisations in the field of adult education as possible partners for Spain’s Socialists. However, precise planning and a reliable strategic conceptualisation were difficult undertakings since transitional challenges arose unexpectedly and on very short notice. Koniecki stressed the importance for the FEF to ensure that despite the transitional uncertainties the maintenance of PSOE’s newly established organisational structure would be guaranteed. Only two people were fully informed about the exact scope and nature of political co-operation between FEF and PSOE – Felipe Gonzalez and his secretary-general Alfonso Guerra. Koniecki writes:

For obvious reasons the number of persons completely familiar with the concrete form of our involvement is kept as small as possible. Seminars are organised under the participation of Prof. Luis Gomez Llorente. The other members of the PSOE executive know in principal about our contribution of solidarity but not about the exact amounts invested and specific forms chosen.<sup>624</sup>

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<sup>622</sup> The new Spanish legislation on party financing would soon outlaw foreign financial support for party political actors. Foundations on the other hand were not affected by the new legal situation so that FEF support channels would simply be re-directed but not lastingly disturbed. Personal interview with Dieter Koniecki, Madrid, 5 April 2003.

<sup>623</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1540, FEF Report ‘Über die vorbereitenden Massnahmen zur Eröffnung eines FES-Büros in Madrid’, 15 February 1976.

<sup>624</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1540, FEF Report, ‘Über meine Aktivitäten in Madrid, 28. Januar bis 20. März 1976’, Dieter Koniecki (translation by author).

A commission was set up in order to monitor the use of funds by PSOE's executive. It was not authorised to publish its findings and it could not question the origins of financial support unless they would have been illegally obtained.<sup>625</sup> In the same way in which the secrecy and discretionary nature of FEF involvement was squeamishly upheld through the measures described above, the accounting procedure for the use of FEF funds was designed to ensure the low profile and behind-the-scenes operational mode of the West German Foundation. Firstly, the party official on the PSOE executive board responsible for liaising with the FEF resident representative had to issue a receipt over a particular project-related sum, which was listed in the budget. At a later stage, the PSOE official had to submit the receipts either as photocopies or as original documents and to send them to PSOE Secretary-General Alfonso Guerra.

Thereby one avoids that the provincial identification centres are becoming objects for speculation about the exact origins of the money and that one could make the argument about an outside interference in internal Spanish affairs. On the other hand, it ensures a precise and project-conform use of FEF funds which will subsequently convince the German taxpayer that the money is used in a correct way and had been fully accounted for.<sup>626</sup>

At this early stage, Social Democratic democracy promotion and the mobilisation of soft power for the support of democratic parties required the FEF to grant material assistance and to cover PSOE's expenses. Koniecki requested immediate financial assistance to pay the wages of twelve PSOE caseworkers and to purchase furniture and equipment for the PSOE election and media office and for UGT headquarters.<sup>627</sup> For future co-operation, he identified seven issue areas in which the Foundation should launch democratisation projects. First, a wide range of seminars was to deal predominantly with PSOE's organisational techniques. Secondly, the FEF intended to target centres of research in the academic field. The Faculties of Sociology and Political Science at the Autonomous University of Madrid were of particular importance. The consulting institute *Consulta*, which was managed by PSOE staff was named as a future partner for

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<sup>625</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>626</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1540, FEF Report 'Über die vorbereitenden Massnahmen zur Eröffnung eines FES-Büros in Madrid', 15 February 1976 (translation by author).

<sup>627</sup> *Ibid.*

political co-operation with the FEF office in Madrid and provided political analyses. Thirdly, the Foundation proposed the establishment of a scholarship programme although with an only limited financial endowment. Koniecki believed that stipends appeared to be a measure “generally accepted by the Spanish public“. They were intended “to safeguard and partly “disguise” other measures.”<sup>628</sup> Fourthly, the FEF planned to set up a small library in order to introduce visitors to the activities of the Foundation and to didactically prepare and implement seminars. Political analyses and monitoring, the maintaining of contacts and communication with key political personalities in the host country as well as the organisation of visits by high-profile politicians from West Germany was to supplement the FEF agenda in the foreseeable transition period.<sup>629</sup>

In March 1976, Koniecki warned of serious logistical problems for PSOE in the face of the new Law of Political Associations to be passed by the *Cortes*. This legislation allowed only a limited number of political groups to participate in municipal and general elections. Koniecki predicted the legislative process to be a long-lasting procedure that would require a constitutional amendment before any political association would be allowed to enter the political arena. Since members of the corporatist pseudo-parliamentary *Cortes* would have to vote in favour of their own disappearance from the political stage by constitutional amendment, the timeline for the new law would likely be stretched out indefinitely. Even if parliamentary deputies would pass the law quickly, it would take another two to three months until the final decision on any admission of political associations would be made. This would consequently create a situation in which a party unknown to large segments of society could not organise itself effectively before July 1976. Given that the municipal elections were scheduled for November of the same year, this meant a serious setback for any

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<sup>628</sup> *Ibid.* One of the beneficiaries of the FEF scholarship programme was Eduardo Foncillas who later became the Spanish Ambassador in Bonn and who was one of the politically best-connected interlocutors for the Foundation. His outstanding professional career in the diplomatic service illustrates how the operational FEF approach to identify multiplying factors and future key players worked in practice. Being Felipe Gonzalez’ representative in Bonn with excellent links to FEF and SPD, Foncillas was predestined to interconnect the sub-governmental with the governmental level and to promote bilateral relations between the two countries in a rather unique way. Personal interview with Dieter Koniecki, 5 April 2003.

<sup>629</sup> *Ibid.*

electoral preparations.<sup>630</sup> Ironically, the man who finally approved of the FEF's presence in Spain enabling the Foundation to establish itself as PSOE's most important foreign partner, Interior Minister Fraga Iribarne, prepared himself for a future political career in the new and democratically legitimised Spanish political system by launching his own electoral platform GODSA (*Gabinete de Orientacion y de Documentacion*). Fraga's attempt to split the heterogeneous opposition and to present himself as a new strong party leader who could guarantee law, stability and an orderly transition into a new era was likely to benefit from GODSA's organisational advantage in the context of the new legislation. Commenting on the emerging competition with Fraga's party, Koniecki remarked, "Our partners who are still very much trapped in a form of catacomb thinking can learn a great deal."<sup>631</sup> Foreseeing the stabilising effect an active democratic participation of the "reasonable right" would have, he even admitted that

For the sake of a non-violent transition from a dictatorial regime to democracy one should wish them (i.e. GODSA) success. In the long run, a tense social and economic climate of crisis would not be beneficial for our political partners and for a genuinely progressive Spain.<sup>632</sup>

In summary, one can say that during the initial phase of the Spanish transition, the FEF in its utilisation of soft power concentrated on the strengthening of PSOE's organisational structures to help the Socialist party launch a successful bid for political power in the newly emerging democratic system. Drawing from its expertise in the area of party management and electoral assistance, the Foundation aided efforts to establish a nationwide network of PSOE offices, trained and paid party functionaries and administrators and set up a PSOE Media and Campaign Office. It thus sought to influence the process of political socialisation, which a part of Spain's new political elite experienced, through the transfer of knowledge, concepts and ideas on a transnational

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<sup>630</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1540, FEF Report, 'Über meine Aktivitäten in Madrid', 28. Januar bis 20. März 1976'. op.cit.

<sup>631</sup> Koniecki repeatedly emphasised the difficulties of transforming the specific 'cell thinking' caused by decades of clandestinity on the part of PSOE and UGT into a more 'relaxed', open-minded and less distrustful attitude, which would not affect the organisation's daily political work. He stressed that the mentality of "being feeling responsible for everything and anything" was prevalent among Socialists because throughout their exiled existence they could not implement any of their political goals." Personal interview with Dieter Koniecki, 5 April 2003.

<sup>632</sup> *Ibid* (translation by author).

level. In a next step, the FEF focused on the area of organised labour and the support for the Socialist union organisation UGT.

#### **4.5. FEF and Organised Labour**

The *Unión General de Trabajadores* (UGT) was ideologically positioned in close proximity to PSOE and received financial, logistical and political backing from the FEF. The Foundation convinced the UGT leadership to establish a private Foundation – the *Fundación Largo Caballero* (FLC) - in order to simplify technical aspects of co-operation between West German Social Democrats and Spanish unionists as well as to outsource responsibilities and tasks to an officially independent but politically affiliated organisation. The FEF worked regularly with the FLC (as well as with the newly established party foundation *Fundación Pablo Iglesias* (FPI) organising a total of 20 seminars between 1977 and 1978. Its Madrid office estimated that the seminars reached approximately 2000 individuals during the first six months of 1977 while additional print material and brochures were distributed to an even broader range of individuals.<sup>633</sup> The transitional connection between UGT and FEF as well as between the Spanish unionists and the West German DGB began with the visit by an UGT delegation and some PSOE officials to West Germany in July 1973. The delegation met with DGB-Chairman Oskar Vetter, who suggested that the West German union movement could provide financial assistance to cover the salaries of three full-time UGT employees assigned to the important job of printing and publishing union pamphlets, flyers and placards.<sup>634</sup>

Although the Germans certainly realised that it was not only an urgent challenge to assist UGT in its fight against the Communist labour union organisation *Comisiones Obreras* (CC.OO.) but also in the best interest of Socialism in Spain, the 1973 meeting did not bring about any concrete and binding decisions concerning possible DGB support for its Spanish counterpart. SPD, FEF and DGB as the three columns of West Germany's Social Democracy were concerned about the unity of Socialist forces in Spain and demanded a guarantee that PSOE and UGT would adopt a collective

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<sup>633</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>634</sup> Pilar Ortuño Anaya, *European Socialists and Spain: The Transition to Democracy 1959-77*, (Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2001), p.172.

approach and maintain unity in any future political endeavours.<sup>635</sup> Three years later, West Germany's Social Democrats had finally decided to pro-actively take on the transitional challenge by providing support for UGT and PSOE as well as to bring about an "approximation of the partners of the social contract"<sup>636</sup> – trade unions and employer organisations. SPD leaders, who in 1975 were sceptically questioning, "If Spanish Socialists are able to counterbalance Communist organisations given the latter's material dominance" finally acted on the realisation that their Iberian party colleagues had to "receive every possible assistance."<sup>637</sup>

In 1976, large-scale labour unrest and nationwide strikes paralysed the country and the UGT became a leading voice on strike committees while at the same time maintaining its critical attitude towards union organisations on the extreme left such as the *Movimiento Comunista Español* (MCE). For many years, the observation that "any form of compromise-oriented thinking was completely alien to the labour union"<sup>638</sup> described the prevailing attitude within the UGT leadership with great precision. Now, the Socialist union had at least tactically changed its approach demanding a genuine preparedness for negotiations on both sides of the labour market. It urged the government to initiate a reform of the Francoist system of vertical syndicalism in the area of organised labour but, as Koniecki noted, "without a clear idea of the modalities –

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<sup>635</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>636</sup> Personal interview with Dieter Koniecki, Madrid, 5 April 2003.

<sup>637</sup> Notes Hans-Eberhard Dingels for Willy Brandt, 'Über Dein Gespräch mit den spanischen Freunden am 18. April 1975', 17 April 1975, Depository Bruno Friedrich, Box No.1542. In 1976, DGB-Chairman Ernst Vetter together with the leader of the industrial union *IG Metall* Eugen Loderer visited Spain in what was a show of support by West Germany's labour unions for its UGT colleagues. Loderer expressed his belief that "our partner union organisation as well as PSOE need and deserve our support." AdsD, WBC, BN/45, Letter Eugen Loderer to Willy Brandt, 8 March 1976. At a press conference, Loderer named four crucial steps expected from the Spanish authorities: Freedom of political association, legalised union activism, the abolition of special tribunals and the release of imprisoned politicians and unionists. *dpa*, 6 February 1976. Loderer also held talks with PSOE leader Felipe Gonzalez, *Metall Pressedienst*, 5 February 1976. See also Carsten R. Moser, 'Mit Geld und guten Worten: Gewerkschafter und Politiker aus der Bundesrepublik bemühen sich um den Export des "deutschen Modells"', *Die Zeit*, 17 December 1976. In 1977, the Chairman of the public services union *ÖTV* Heinz Kluncker as well as the miner's union *IG Bergbau* boss Adolf Schmidt visited Spain. Kluncker held talks with the UGT leadership in Madrid, Schmidt travelled to the mining areas of Asturias. *dpa* 21.4.1977, 8 March 1977. DGB President Heinz Vetter intensified contacts with his Spanish UGT colleagues during talks in Düsseldorf where he welcomed a union delegation led by Nicolas Redondo as the UGT's Secretary-General and Manuel Simon, member of the UGT's executive board and responsible for the organisation's external relations. *DGB Nachrichtendienst*, 17 March 1977.

<sup>638</sup> Personal interview with Dieter Koniecki, Madrid, 5 April 2003.

at the moment they only know what they do not want, namely a government-devoted national union council.”<sup>639</sup> He underlined the ideological character of the controversy and acknowledged that even the UGT for the most part dismissed pragmatic solutions as being reformist or opportunistic.<sup>640</sup> However, the union organisation gradually adopted a more pragmatic attitude not least because the Ministry of the Interior had tacitly approved of the UGT union congress to take place in Madrid in April 1976. At the end of the transition period, FEF representative Koniecki could report with satisfaction from the UGT’s 32. Congress in 1980 that

The most important outcome of the Congress is the decision of the great majority of the delegates to embrace a policy of dialogue with the employer organisations and that the idea that power and strength of a labour union can be measured in terms of the number of strikes launched is not majority opinion anymore.<sup>641</sup>

Koniecki stressed the fact that a dogmatically pursued confrontational stance by UGT would have the general public regard the Socialist union as an obstructionist force not willing to show the urgently needed open-mindedness and preparedness for compromise in the face of the country’s disastrous economic pretext. By demonstrating a willingness to engage in constructive pragmatism rather than ideological armament, the UGT would be able to gain ground specifically in its rivalry with the CC.OO. Koniecki writes:

It is evident that UGT has gained important ground with the Spanish public and among those workers who are not organised in union organisations not least because of it demonstrated flexibility to embrace dialogue and displayed a sense of reality. UGT will consolidate itself if it can manage to bring those new members in line that used to previously advocate an uncompromising strategy of confrontation. The union will then be able to open up new membership reservoirs and to sharpen its profile vis-à-vis the workers commissions.<sup>642</sup>

In 1982, the elections to the workers committees became a major success story in so far as UGT secured a dominant position among the Spanish unions gaining 36.5% of the

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<sup>639</sup> Walter Haubrich, 'Volksfrontregierung nicht möglich', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 11 March 1976.

<sup>640</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1540, FEF Report, 'Über meine Aktivitäten in Madrid', 28. Januar bis 20. März 1976' (Dieter Koniecki).

<sup>641</sup> AdsD, HEC, BN/0403, FEF Report on the 32. UGT Congress, (Dieter Koniecki), April 1980 (translation by author).

<sup>642</sup> *Ibid* (translation by author).



votes in all of the country's provinces and leaving the Communist workers commissions with only 32.74% behind. From a regional perspective, UGT won majorities in the chemical industry, the energy and transport sector, food industry, the civil service as well as in the construction business and the mining industry while CC.OO. secured majorities in forestry and the garment and leather industries.<sup>643</sup> Especially during election time, the FEF's informal soft power diplomacy focused on the transfer of urgently needed knowledge and the know-how essential for successful political management and campaigning. Preparing the election campaign, UGT's election committee and the union's organisational secretary Anton Saracibar in co-operation with Koniecki's Madrid office developed an information campaign, which was based on three pillars: Firstly, support and assistance for UGT election monitors and 'flying squads', which campaigned on provincial level and in companies during the 'hot' pre-election phase from October to December 1982. These campaign teams were supposed to aggressively highlight the ideological and conceptional differences between UGT and its Communist rival. The UGT campaigners had to defuse the repeated message spread by Communist propaganda that a vote for the UGT would equal a vote for a future government-controlled official union (alluding to the UGT's unofficial but publicly known affiliation and political proximity to PSOE).<sup>644</sup>

Secondly, a comprehensive programme of publications including an election guide was developed to provide practical solutions to deal with the various technical deficits and organisational flaws of the election campaign. Manuals were published describing the exact procedures and organisational details of the voting process and its technicalities. Thirdly, FEF and UGT organised locally based training seminars in order to provide additional know-how on ways to 'reveal' the Communist strategy and 'decode' its propaganda.<sup>645</sup> Furthermore, the FEF financially supported parts of the UGT poster and placard campaign and covered the costs for training course material. Koniecki described the defeat of the CC.OO. in the elections to the worker's advisory committees in 1982 as a traumatic experience for the battle-hardened Communist trade

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<sup>643</sup> AdsD, HEC, BN/0403, FEF Report 'Über die Wahlen zu den Arbeiterkommittees', 1982, (Dieter Koniecki), 27 January 1983.

<sup>644</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>645</sup> *Ibid.*

unionists while pointing out that the poor performance by the Spanish Communist Party (PCE) at the polls was not exactly reflected by the CC.OO.'s performance in the private sector. In his analysis, the workers' commissions were able to draw from a vast experience in political campaigning and could advantageously cash in on the high-quality training of their cadres, which operated as part of a nationwide network. He envisaged a radicalisation of the CC.OO. as a result of the election defeat making it difficult for UGT's leadership to live up to the expectations of its members and to participate in justified strike action while at the same time avoiding any significant damage for the Socialist government.<sup>646</sup>

The approval of UGT activities by the Spanish authorities was still not more than a tacit acceptance and the organisation remained officially outlawed throughout 1976. Therefore, its leadership was faced with the difficult task of raising its public profile without being able to use mass media or publicly visible campaigns for canvassing and recruitment. This deficit was partly offset by the assistance provided by PSOE's newly established Press and Media Department, which had been set up as part of the FEF Action Plan. "PSOE hopes that the unmistakable tendencies within the UGT to strive for total institutional autonomy will in the long-run work out in its favour and might even mobilise political potential in areas that were so far not accessible to the party."<sup>647</sup> But Koniecki was under no illusions that institutional animosities between UGT and PSOE were still the order of the day and that many PSOE members viewed the union organisation as simply an extended arm of the party categorically denying the autonomous movement within the UGT any legitimacy.<sup>648</sup> During the 30<sup>th</sup> UGT-Congress in April 1976 the motion to declare parallel membership on PSOE and UGT's governing boards to be mutually exclusive was rejected with great a majority.<sup>649</sup>

The underlying tensions though remained a constant feature of UGT-PSOE relations. In April 1980, Koniecki reported from the 32. UGT-Congress about two rivalling factions led by former Executive Secretary Manuel Garnacho and the member

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<sup>646</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>647</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>648</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>649</sup> Walter Haubrich, 'Erster Gewerkschaftskongreß seit 37 Jahren', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 20 April 1976.

of UGT executive board José Maria Zufiaur respectively. Arguing in favour of an 'organic development', Garnacho intended to tie the union organisation closely to the party and to maintain a relationship of dependency and subordination whereas his opponent Zufiaur tried to initiate a process of political opening in order to re-position and re-structure UGT to be accessible to a broad range of political forces on the left.<sup>650</sup> Being able to fight off his most outspoken critics, Zufiaur managed to achieve a partial opening of the UGT whereas Garnacho ceased his efforts to be re-elected.<sup>651</sup> During talks between Koniecki and the UGT leadership at the end of March 1976, the Spanish union activists expressed their hope that certain forms of assistance provided by the West German DGB, which had previously been dealt with by the International Association of Free Labour Unions (IAFLU) and the European Union Association, should in future be preferably batched off through the FEF office in Madrid. Koniecki remarks: "I am on-site and can deal with everything much quicker and less bureaucratically than the IAFLU."<sup>652</sup> UGT would appreciate international support but the fact that a large number of people were involved would also lead to unwanted publicity. In anticipation of the upcoming new legislation on political associations, UGT appeared to be keen to establish covert channels of foreign support rather than receiving political assistance from high-profile sources that would be subject to constant public scrutiny and a possible legal ban. Koniecki suggested background talks between the Spanish union and its West German counterpart.<sup>653</sup>

Co-operation between West Germany's Social Democrats and Spanish trade unionists and the organisational support provided for UGT cadres by SPD, FEF and DGB found the approval of King Juan Carlos who expressed a notable interest in the creation and long-term development of a strong, pluralist and independent union movement in post-authoritarian Spain. In the spring of 1977, prominent SPD anti-Franco campaigner Hans Matthöfer advised the royal Head of State in a written report on the reform of Spain's syndicalist union organisations that it would be desirable to

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<sup>650</sup> AdsD, HEC, BN/0403, FEF Report on the 32. UGT Congress by Dieter Koniecki April 1980.

<sup>651</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>652</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1540, FEF Report, 'Über meine Aktivitäten in Madrid', 28. Januar bis 20. März 1976', op.cit.

<sup>653</sup> *Ibid.*

create a “big confederation of union organisations, which would be comparable with the German DGB.”<sup>654</sup> Matthöfer outlined necessary steps towards an operational strengthening of UGT such as an improved political training programme for union activists as well as the publishing of newsletters and other printed material in order to be able to counter the “propaganda of employers.”<sup>655</sup> He stressed the crucial importance of a continuously high-profile recruitment campaign especially among “those workers in Spanish companies who are the most representative of the country’s workforce.”<sup>656</sup> Juan Carlos was told that West Germany’s ruling Social Democrats regarded UGT as “the only organisation, which has the potential to become a truly independent and democratic union organisation.”<sup>657</sup> In such a way, Socialist union activists could successfully take on the challenge posed by Santiago Carillo’s PCE who benefited greatly from UGT’s relative weakness with its lack of organisational infrastructure. According to Matthöfer, UGT’s main task being a political centre of gravity was to organisationally absorb and integrate smaller groups of organised workers. Matthöfer in his report to the King advised UGT to integrate the entirety of corporatist union organisations – “its leadership and institutions” – in its own apparatus.<sup>658</sup>

Finally, the German SPD leader stressed the operational advantages of the FRG’s model of a single union organisation. Representatives of the DGB and its various branches sat on the boards of directors of major companies and were responsible for the control of the executive management. Being members of these important entrepreneurial decision-making bodies DGB officials were fully informed about the economic policies of their corporate negotiation partners and vice versa private sector representatives were aware of the fact that the union interacted with employers being in command of such knowledge about key economic data. Therefore, Matthöfer argued, the “demands of West Germany’s unions are realistic demands and the divergence of opinions about concessions necessary to be made is pretty marginal.”<sup>659</sup> The SPD politician concluded

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<sup>654</sup> AdsD, WBC, BN/121, Report for King Juan Carlos by Hans Matthöfer, no date.

<sup>655</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>656</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>657</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>658</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>659</sup> *Ibid.*

that the ability of West German workers to articulate their demands with one voice made possible by the existence of a single union organisation and the absence of any internal rivalries within the labour movement was a crucial ingredient for a constructive, smooth and productive working relationship between union and employers. In his view, the active participation of union officials in the management of private businesses greatly strengthened the former's bargaining position and prevented union activists from formulating unreasonable demands.<sup>660</sup>

From the FEF's perspective, UGT had managed to successfully unbalance the Communist *Comisiones Obreras* in "their tactical approach towards the UGT's specific form of labour representation, which was oriented towards the institutional models of industrial relations in Western Europe". The CC.OO. on the other hand described itself not as a conventional union organisation but as a permanent action group.<sup>661</sup> Triggered by growing internal dissent within CC.OO, the FEF expected a wave of new applications for membership in the UGT, which carried the risk of overcharging the organisation's still fragile provincial infrastructure and to cause a "creeping infiltration or structural reorientation whereby one can safely assume profound experience on the part of *comisiones* members not to reveal their identity."<sup>662</sup> Koniecki emphasised the urgent need to provide FEF support for the build-up of organisational infrastructure and suggested to increase the number of training programmes for UGT cadres on provincial level.<sup>663</sup> Furthermore, it was suggested to co-ordinate administrative as well as technical and financial assistance on an international level in co-operation with the IAFLU to strengthen the infrastructural consistency of UGT. Koniecki intended to bring together UGT representative Javier Solana and European union leaders such as Oskar Vetter and Alfons Lappas. From 1977, Koniecki also hired experts on union management as well as opinion polling and electoral analysis with the latter producing working papers every 3-6 months. These area studies were subsequently used for political projects of both UGT

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<sup>660</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>661</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1540, FEF 'Bericht über die politische Situation in Spanien nach der Regierungserklärung des Ministerpräsidenten Carlos Arias am 28. April 1976', (Dieter Koniecki), 11 May 1976.

<sup>662</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>663</sup> *Ibid.*

and PSOE.<sup>664</sup> Furthermore, the FEF continued to provide a media monitoring service reaching a total of thirty different institutions that held subscriptions. In order to support Spain's Socialists in their efforts to keep up with political developments in Latin America, the FEF also published a Latin America Bulletin, which was distributed monthly to various departments of UGT (as well as PSOE).<sup>665</sup> Two additional staff members were hired by Koniecki's office and a further two FEF staff were assigned to UGT's monitoring programme dividing their work between union organisation and the Foundation.

In sum, the creation of electoral platforms and the model of institutional 'tandems' of co-operation – UGT and PSOE being formally independent but institutionally intertwined as supporters of the same political cause – were seen as important components of the FEF's transitional activities. The Foundation realised that the organisational platform to be developed for the union organisation needed to be seen by the public as being separate from PSOE. At the same time it had to serve "as a transmission belt during the election campaign" reaching a level of electoral strength and efficiency "unrivalled by any other opposition party."<sup>666</sup> The ambition of West Germany's sub-state diplomacy embodied in the FEF's democracy promotion programme was to enable PSOE, UGT and affiliated Socialist organisations to stand operationally on their on feet, to help them to successfully take on their political competitors at the polls and to assist them in their political preparation for the eventual takeover of governmental power and responsibility. West Germany's public diplomacy provided knowledge, expertise and information to help Socialist forces during the Spanish transition to become independent actors on the political scene well equipped for the political challenges ahead. The supply of know-how, skills and varied forms of non-material and material support were to contribute to systemic stability. The democratic process rests on the principle of political competition and ideological pluralism and only a competitive Socialist party with adequately developed organisational structures was able to build a reputation for efficiency. Soft power and inter-party assistance would

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<sup>664</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>665</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>666</sup> *Ibid.*

therefore shape the behavioural and attitudinal component of the transition and consolidation phase. In the following section, the FEF's democracy promotion activities in the area of industrial relations will be examined thereby identifying the future socio-economic context within which the mass appeal of Socialist institutions would have the greatest effect.

#### **4.6. Social Partnership**

In order to introduce Spanish democrats to the idea of a social partnership, which was developed in West Germany in the post-war era and which became an essential component of the concept of a 'social market economy', FEF representative Koniecki launched a string of transitional political aid projects bringing together employer associations and organised labour. In the summer of 1976, the SPD foreign affairs spokesman Bruno Friedrich during a visit to the Spanish capital had made remarks about the "connection between market economy, economic democracy and social policy typical for West Germany's Social Democracy and our labour unions", and he had suggested in talks with the Spanish Ambassador in Bonn Emilio Garrigues y Diaz-Canabate that "of course the Godesberg Programme<sup>667</sup> and our policies should not become export products. However, the self-perception of West Germany's Social Democracy may be of interest in the process of transformation in Spain."<sup>668</sup> The idea of helping Spanish Socialism to familiarise itself with the concept of a social partnership was clearly an attempt to use soft power by presenting an example that demonstrated one's own political practice and handling of certain issues. West German foreign policy makers of SPD and FEF seemed to act on Klaus Knorr's observation that "achievements and successes can generate the admiration of other societies and their decision-makers and provide them with new insight."<sup>669</sup> By demonstrating the concept of a social partnership's successful performance in West Germany, FEF and SPD would use soft power to attract their Spanish colleagues to their conceptual strategy. In talks with Willy

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<sup>667</sup> In its Godesberg Programme of 1959, the SPD eliminated any reference to Marxism as a guiding political manifesto for West Germany's Social Democracy and declared its commitment to a market economic system and private ownership of the means of production.

<sup>668</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1540, Letter Bruno Friedrich to Emilio Garrigues y Diaz-Canabate, 2 June 1976.

<sup>669</sup> Klaus Knorr, *The Power of Nations – The Political Economy of International Relations*, (Basic Books, New York 1975), p.256.

Brandt and Hans Matthöfer, even King Juan Carlos had expressed an interest in the West German model of labour representation and asked his visitors what advice they could give.”<sup>670</sup>

Even West Germany’s Christian Democratic Party (CDU) advocated the concept of a social partnership as an essential prerequisite for economic success. During the ‘German Week’ in Madrid in 1977 at a time, when most Spanish trade unions were still illegal, CDU-Chairman Gerhard Stoltenberg told Spanish entrepreneurs that the fact that the DGB was a knowledgeable, reliable and moderate partner in negotiations with the private sector was an important aspect of West Germany’s economic stability.<sup>671</sup> The fact that the SPD’s main political rival equally supported the idea of a social partnership made it extremely credible in the eyes of Spain’s transitional elites. The FEF appeared to be the perfect instrument to promote tried-and-tested West German policies abroad and to ‘sell’ it to a ‘transitional customer’. The Foundation provided a great amount of expertise to enable Spanish Socialists to successfully manage the difficult task of reconciling the often diametrically opposed interests in industrial relations disputes. Koniecki and his colleagues could effectively cash in on their traditionally excellent contacts with the FRG’s labour union movement. The soft power actor described itself as “an institution that had turned into a discreetly operating but open platform where the representatives of the private sector and unionists could express their concerns concerning everything that affects them in the area labour relations in an informal way.”<sup>672</sup>

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<sup>670</sup> AdsD, HSC, BN/6566, Telegramme Lilienfeldt to *Auswärtiges Amt*, 8 December 1976. Matthöfer promised the King to provide him with an exposé outlining the organisational structures of the West German labour unions.

<sup>671</sup> Friedrich Kassebeer, ‘Traumland soziale Stabilität’, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 22 April 1977. The CEO of West Germany’s Dresdener Bank Reinhold Stoessl who frankly admitted that “we have suggested to our unions to make their experience available to the unions of other European countries so that we can ideally achieve a maximum of stability everywhere” echoed Stoltenberg’s positive assessment. *Ibid.* The West German entrepreneur and CDU politician Elmar Pieroth and the conservative Norbert Blüm travelled to Spain in 1976 to promote the West German model of an industrial union organisation Carsten R. Moser, ‘Mit Geld und guten Worten: Gewerkschafter und Politiker aus der Bundesrepublik bemühen sich um den Export des deutschen Modells’, *Die Zeit*, 17 December 1976.

<sup>672</sup> Dieter Koniecki, ‘Eröffnungsworte anlässlich des 1. Treffens der Arbeitnehmer- und Arbeitgebervertreter aus Westdeutschland und Spanien’, in: *Empresa y Sindicato en un Estado Social de Derecho*, (Documentos y Estudios, Fundación Friedrich Ebert, February 1978), p.2.



One year after the Madrid office opened its transitional gates, the FEF began to work towards bringing leaders of PSOE and UGT on the one hand and labour lawyers and employer representatives on the other hand together at the negotiation table.<sup>673</sup> Koniecki was convinced that the entrepreneurial side had a “much more difficult task to democratise itself than the unions, because they were not integrated in any international movement.”<sup>674</sup> He therefore sought to provide Spain’s employers with an international framework in order to enhance their legitimacy and credibility. Additionally, the profile of private sector entrepreneurs had to be sharpened because “the people were on strike precisely for the reason of not knowing with whom to negotiate.”<sup>675</sup> The concept paid off and Koniecki recalls that corporate leaders quickly realised that they were able to greatly improve their reputation as a collective bargaining unit by using the international stature and the European connections of their negotiation partners. This notion was reinforced by the psychological appeal that “if they in West Germany can organise matters in that way then we can do it as well.”<sup>676</sup> Once one was able to overcome old habits and mentalities, a “sophisticated form of labour representation and a collective approach to negotiations emerged in contemporary Spanish history.”<sup>677</sup> In private talks with the West German Ambassador and in the presence of King Juan Carlos, Spanish managers accepted the close co-operation between West Germany’s SPD and PSOE. According to Ambassador von Lilienfeldt, Iberian business leaders were conscious of the fact that PSOE could claim a “key role in the process of stabilising a pluralist democracy in Spain especially as far as industrial relations were concerned.”<sup>678</sup> The entrepreneurs welcomed the international context of political aid and democratisation assistance although some of them hinted at the structural differences between West Germany and Spain, which made the application of foreign socio-economic models desirable but problematic.<sup>679</sup>

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<sup>673</sup> *Ibid*, p.12.

<sup>674</sup> Personal interview with Dieter Koniecki, Madrid, 5 April 2003.

<sup>675</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>676</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>677</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>678</sup> AdsD, HSC, BN/6634, Letter Lilienfeld to Helmut Schmidt, 25 January 1977.

<sup>679</sup> *Ibid*.

On the other hand, the belief that by facilitating dialogue between private sector and union organisations, the FEF would be able to convince the two sides to adopt a consensual rather than a confrontational approach towards labour disputes was certainly not shared by all people and institutions involved in the daily running of the West German economy. A number of businessmen strongly criticised co-operation between SPD and PSOE and described Spain's Socialists as a political force driven by Marxist ideas and without much influence on the working class sector. They feared negative economic repercussions caused by the policies of a party, which promoted the nationalisation of key industries.<sup>680</sup> Their sentiment was clearly not shared by Prime Minister Adolfo Suárez who appeared to be convinced of the "immense importance" of political assistance provided by the FEF for the creation of a stable political system.<sup>681</sup> Ambassador von Lilienfeldt writes in a letter to Chancellor Helmut Schmidt:

Those diametrically opposed opinions reflect the lively if not passionate interest with which one follows our efforts to stabilise Spanish democracy in general and our relationship with PSOE in particular. The change of attitude since the PSOE party conference regarding the party's future role seems to be very encouraging and is certainly due to the intensification of the dialogue between government and opposition and to your visit together with Willy Brandt. The negative reaction by representatives of West Germany's industrial sector seems to me explainable by the fact that they had to fight hard for new orders and that they see a risk for their own existence because of the deterioration of the economic situation, an increasing strike rate and the general uncertainty which accompanies the process of democratisation. In order to avoid any misinterpretation of our attitude towards PSOE, it seems to be advisable to introduce employers back home more thoroughly to our policy planning.<sup>682</sup>

The FEF office in Madrid described mediation and platform building as its most important transitional contribution.<sup>683</sup> The question of how to efficiently restructure industrial relations after the slow death of Franco's authoritarianism and how to replace

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<sup>680</sup> *Ibid.* Von Lilienfeldt tried to calm his guests by pointing out that contacts and political interaction between the two parties were taking place with the full knowledge of the King and Prime Minister and that they were intended to "prevent a drift of Spain's strongest democratic workers party towards Communist waters." In a conversation with Felipe Gonzalez, Helmut Schmidt had stressed the crucial importance to establish a "relationship based on co-operation between employers and employees" and emphasised that the labour unions had to be integrated into a framework of responsibility.

<sup>681</sup> AdsD, HSC, BN/6566, Telegramme Lilienfeldt to *Auswärtiges Amt*, 8 December 1976.

<sup>682</sup> AdsD, HSC, BN/6634, Letter Lilienfeldt to Helmut Schmidt, 25 January 1977 (translation by author).

<sup>683</sup> Personal interview with Dieter Koniecki, Madrid, 5 April 2003.

the legacy of a syndicalist union organisation by a pluralist system of unions and employer associations engaging in free and self-determined negotiations was of the utmost significance not only for PSOE and its foreign backer but also for the Spanish Government. For West Germany's foreign policy elites, soft power as an operational mode for diplomatic action was the most promising tool to aid the transformation of political infrastructure on a transnational level. In January 1976, the country's Foreign Minister José Maria de Areilza expressed his interest in the creation of an independent, united and powerful system of labour unions in talks with SPD Foreign Office Minister Hans-Jürgen Wischniewski.<sup>684</sup> The Permanent Forum for Social Partnership between the different *agentes sociales* hosted a total of 40 meetings between 1978 and 1988.<sup>685</sup> The FEF published numerous economic analyses of the findings of the meetings between employers and labour representatives organised by the Foundation under the title of *Encuentros entre empresarios, laboralistas y sindicalistas*.

One example was the thirteenth volume of the FEF series *Documentos y Estudios*, which contained a number of West German contributions on the topic of 'Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitrary Decision'.<sup>686</sup> The FEF had invited West German trade union official and member of the executive of the West German Metal Workers Union *I.G. Metall* Friedrich Neudel as well as the Managing Director of the West German Employers Association Peter Knevels as a political counterweight. The Spanish seminar participants were being told about the crucial importance of keeping an equilibrium between the two warring sides in a labour dispute following the principle of institutional autonomy of employers and unions (free collective bargaining). If the necessary balance of power between the two sides would not be maintained and if one side would impose its demands on the weaker negotiation partner, the probable consequence were continuous clashes and strike action on the labour market. "Therefore, the system that we are discussing here can only solve labour disputes if

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<sup>684</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1540, Notes on a conversation between Hans-Jürgen Wischniewski and the Spanish Foreign Minister on the 9 January 1976 in Bonn ( Hans-Eberhard Dingels).

<sup>685</sup> Dieter Konecki, *20 Años de la Fundación Friedrich Ebert en España*, op. cit., p.22.

<sup>686</sup> Fundación Friedrich Ebert, *Mediación, conciliación y arbitraje: Estatuto de los trabajadores productividad*, (Documentos y Estudios 13, 1979).

there exists a situation of equilibrium or almost equilibrium between the players and if there exists a desire to arrive at an agreement.”<sup>687</sup>

In 1978, bridge-building efforts undertaken by the FEF were indirectly rewarded with the creation of the *Acuerdo Marco Interconfederal* (AMI) between employer association *Confederación Española de Organizaciones Empresariales* (CEOE) and UGT. It incorporated the West German model of orderly negotiations between the two sides as a quintessential component of social partnership. The agreement also provided for the obligation of the parties to the labour dispute to call on a mediator in cases in which they would reach a political cul-de-sac. The framework agreement of 1978 between corporate leadership and UGT followed exactly this mechanism by incorporating a tried-and-tested model of social co-operation into the new operational code for a democratic Spain. The FEF through its soft power strategy continued to systematically strengthen the institutional capacities and resources of UGT. A range of projects together with various union branches were launched in particular with the Teachers Union and supported by a number of West German industrial unions and the Union for Education and Science (*Gewerkschaft Erziehung und Wissenschaft GEW*). The latter co-operation took on challenges in the area of schoolbook didactics and reform.<sup>688</sup> Furthermore, the FEF developed a working relationship with the *Unión de Cooperativas Obreras* (UCO), which paved the way for a joint project in the area of producer cooperatives.

In sum, the FEF's use of soft power in the area of industrial relations sought to transfer the idea of a social partnership to the transitional context of Spain's nascent democracy. Operating on a sub-state level, the Foundation helped Spanish political actors and business entities to familiarise themselves with the consensus-oriented approach of collective bargaining, dispute mediation and reduced strike action as successfully practised by West Germany's union movement and the country's employer associations such as the Federation of German Industries (*Bundesverband der deutschen Industrie BDI*). The FEF brought in German expertise, facilitated contacts between

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<sup>687</sup> Peter Knevels, 'Mediación y conciliación en Alemania', in *Mediación, conciliación y arbitraje: Estatuto de los trabajadores productividad*, (Fundación Friedrich Ebert, Documentos y Estudios 13, 1979), p.45.

<sup>688</sup> AdsD, HEC, BN/0451, FEF Report Madrid Office, no date and author.

PSOE, UGT and West Germany's DGB and promoted a system of compromise-seeking industrial relations, in which trade unions and private sector organisations would be less militant in the pursuit of their interests and more interested in fair competition and negotiations. By 'exporting' the concept of social partnership, the Social Democratic Foundation helped to set the transition agenda and shape the preferences of Spain's new elites thereby working towards the stabilisation of the FRG's extraterritorial environment through soft power. In the following section, the focus will shift towards the FEF's effort to bring academic experts and Socialist political decision-makers from PSOE and UGT together on a common platform to exchange ideas and concepts.

#### ***4.7. PSOE Summer School, September 1976***

Between 16 and 23 September 1976, PSOE and UGT's training departments assisted by the FEF organised a political training seminar with 120 leading functionaries of party and union organisations in Escorial near Madrid. This nationwide Summer School was conceptualised in preparatory talks between the head of the PSOE's education department Professor Luis Gomez Llorente, FEF resident representative Dieter Koniecki and the future political training expert of the Foundation Eteivino Gonzalez in order to introduce the Spanish public to PSOE's training activities through co-operation with Spain's mass media.<sup>689</sup> The event was not without risk given UGT and PSOE's still illegal status. Therefore, Koniecki acknowledged the need for extraordinary discretion stressing that a mentioning of FEF involvement had to be avoided and that producing the required teaching material turned into a delicate task.

Didactical and material assistance provided by the FEF was crucial in making the seminar a success and this included a preliminary preparation seminar in order to train Summer School staff and to professionally stage-manage the event. Given the political and psychological importance of the seminar, no failure was allowed.<sup>690</sup>

The Summer School offered two types of classes: Plenary sessions which centred around a presentation and the so-called evening seminars, which were run by a lecturer and two monitors supported by two technical assistants, and in which the 24 participants

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<sup>689</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1540, FEF Report 'Sommerschule vom 16. bis 23. August 1976', (Dieter Koniecki), 9 September 1976.

<sup>690</sup> *Ibid* (translation by author).

had to develop and present their own opinion on a range of topics. In order to simulate the organisational processes governing political work within party apparatuses, they then had to prepare a motion e.g. for a PSOE congress. Felipe Gonzalez (discussing PSOE's political direction), Gregorio Peces-Barba (lecturing on Socialism and the rule of law), UGT Secretary-General Nicolas Redondo (outlining UGT's political programme), Miguel Boyer (introducing participants to PSOE's economic policies) and Pierre Guidoni as member of the executive board of the French Socialist Party (giving a panoramic view on European Socialism) were 'hired' by Koniacki as the seminar's main speakers to ensure a high-level of media interest.<sup>691</sup> Although still being officials of an illegal organisation, parts of Gonzalez and Peces-Barba's presentations were even broadcast on Spanish television, something Koniacki described as "sensational."<sup>692</sup>

The seminars were platforms for the display of frequent verbal clashes between PSOE 'ideologues' and 'pragmatists'. The political mindset of using Marxism as an analytical tool for the dealing with any political question was formed during decades of forced exile, and Koniacki realised that the problem of ideological pragmatism would become a future playground for FEF projects seeking to prepare PSOE-UGT cadres effectively for the 'real world' of parliamentary politics. Gonzalez tried to strike a compromise by declaring PSOE to be a Marxist and class-based party. At the same time, he rejected "the maximalist approach of the high priests of dogmatic Socialism" and argued in favour of using Marxism as a "methodology."<sup>693</sup> The Summer School connected a broad range of political opinion-formers and helped to instil in them an idea of the necessary organisational division of labour between and within PSOE and UGT. By organising seminars, discussion groups and workshops, the FEF aimed at subtly setting the agenda through a selection of participants, the raising of important issues for debate and the inclusion of its own experts to provide outside experience. With its

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<sup>691</sup> Manuel Boyer would declare his resignation from the PSOE executive and renounced his membership in February 1977 allegedly because of the general stance adopted by PSOE's leadership on economic policies, which he deemed as "being too unrealistic, theoretical and politically leftist to be implemented in contemporary Spain." Walter Haubrich, 'Bruch im Parteibund der Sozialisten', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 7 February 1977.

<sup>692</sup> *Ibid.* However, Gonzalez asked his West German supporters "particularly during the complicated transition and of course in the run-up to the PSOE-Congress to shield our contribution from public view – a wish which does not require further explanations." AdsD, BFC, BN/1540, FEF Report 'Sommerschule vom 16. bis 23. August 1976', (Dieter Koniacki), 9 September 1976.

<sup>693</sup> Interview Ramón Pi with Felipe Gonzalez, *La Actualidad Española*, 6 December 1976.

Summer School, the Foundation provided a forum for the exchange of different views within the realm of Socialist politics thus helping to stimulate the dialogue between various wings within PSOE and the union movement and enabling delegates to reconcile their differences and find compromise solutions.

#### ***4.8. The FEF in Spain during 1977***

During the first half of 1977, the FEF's general transition strategy did not significantly change. At the end of the previous year, the influential SPD 'Circle of Six' as an interdepartmental working group on foreign affairs that incorporated members of SPD, Cabinet, FEF and SI had decided to "continue with our support for PSOE though we should not deny ourselves contacts and talks with other actors politically close to us"<sup>694</sup>. In Madrid, Koniacki continued to target the infrastructural, organisational and educational deficits of PSOE and UGT in order to help the electorate realise that the two organisations had become a credible alternative to its competitors on the left and right of the political spectrum. Koniacki's office in Madrid acknowledged a "slight modification of the initial timing and selection of topics." It organised seminars with a higher number of participants than usual "at venues other than the FEF office" while keeping PSOE's German connection hidden from the full view of the general public.<sup>695</sup> On the other hand, its co-operation with UGT appeared to be subjected to lesser scrutiny and there appeared to be no need to disguise the fact, that a Spanish union obtained support from a West German partner organisation. Hence a seminar between the German Union for Education and Science (*Gewerkschaft Erziehung und Wissenschaft GEW*) and its Spanish counterpart could take place in the full light of the public.

In 1977, the FEF organised a range of seminars to take place in its Madrid office, which focused on a selected range of political questions. The seminar findings and concluding reports would later be used in future workshops and, depending on quality would be published in a new series of short analyses under the title of *Documentos y*

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<sup>694</sup> AdsD, HEC, BN/0748, Notes by Hans-Eberhard Dingels 10 December 1976. Dingels writes: "The SPD is well advised to continue the privileged relationship with PSOE while at the same time maintaining connections with other opposition groups and even with Suarez." AdsD, HSC, BN/6566, Notes 22 December 1976.

<sup>695</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1541, FEF Bi-Annual Report (Halbjahresbericht), FEF Office Madrid, (Dieter Koniacki), 1 January –30 June 1977.

*Estudios.* A slide show on the history of PSOE was to supplement the range of educational instruments of PSOE's training specialists and was used in eight subsequent public events for the recruitment of new members and activists. Because of the show's extraordinary success, the FEF was planning to provide a similar multimedia survey for UGT. FEF representative Koniecki predicted the exponential growth of new tasks to be taken on by the Foundation in the area of political communication and the dispersion of party information. An example for a news and media-related project was the weekly press review edited and published by the FEF's Madrid office since March 1977. One of the main challenges for soft power-driven democratisation assistance was the preparation of a negotiation process in order to develop a democratically legitimated constitution for the Spanish people, which would safeguard human and basic individual rights, re-structure the realms of labour and criminal law and redefine the responsibilities and limitations of and for state organs.<sup>696</sup> This was "seen as being of the utmost importance."<sup>697</sup>

A symposium discussing the constitutional significance of political parties served as a point of departure for the FEF (see next section). Again, the identification of multipliers and the 'socialising' and shaping of future elites appeared to be the decisive factor in the Foundation's conceptualising of projects. Since a number of seminar participants went on to become members of the newly assembled *Cortes* (three of them as delegates for PSOE) and some would move on to take their seats on parliamentary committees, which were to deal with the drafting of a final democratic constitution, it was assumed that they would carry their seminar experiences and the political concepts discussed within these fora into the political arena. The symposium served as a door opener for future activities in the academic field and, which was even more important to

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<sup>696</sup> Especially in the area of human rights, the transitional ship had still to manoeuvre through troubled waters. Official German-Spanish relations were vehemently criticised by the Federal Republic's Amnesty International Section, which in 1976 expressed its regret about the support provided by West Germany's Government for Spain's future membership in the EC. AI stressed the fact of an only partial legal amnesty declared in November 1975 and highlighted Prime Minister Arias Navarro's responsibility for the draconian Anti-Terrorist Law and the execution of five ETA prisoners in 1975. Therefore, the organisation concluded that "one cannot speak of a democratisation process because nothing important has changed", AdsD, BFC, BN/1122, Letter Heinz Brändle (Amnesty International Section Germany) to Herbert Wehner MP.

<sup>697</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1541, FEF Bi-Annual Report (Halbjahresbericht), FEF Office Madrid, (Dieter Koniecki), 1 January -30 June 1977.



PSOE's leadership, showed a politically wary public that the FEF was far from being the clandestine and secretive organisation, which semi-legally supported PSOE and UGT in the shadows. It could be shown that the FEF was a transparently operating organisation engaged in political and citizen education as well as democracy-building and that it provided services, which were generally beneficial to Spaniards from all walks of life irrespective of their political affiliation. Another seminar in Valladolid on 'Christians and Socialists' was organised in co-operation with the University of Salamanca, the Institute of Advanced Philosophy and the Association of Protestant Religious Communities and showed the FEF in a similar light as a politically and operationally vitreous organisation, which moved and manoeuvred freely and openly in Spain's community of societal actors and institutions.

To sum up, it can be concluded that thanks to the political intuition of FEF representative Koniecki who managed to regularly identify and thematically operationalise key political issue areas to be tackled by Socialist forces, the Foundation's democracy promotion programme built valuable bridges connecting PSOE with societal and political actors with which the party had no previous relations. Koniecki pointed out that: "it does not need much imagination to understand the importance of such an opening of one's channels of communication for PSOE's future electoral support, which can be easily manipulated e.g. by working with the Church."<sup>698</sup> In 1977, the Foundation's soft power with its transfer of ideas, concepts and expertise continued to be operationalised through seminars and workshops with findings made available to a broader public through a FEF-sponsored publication series. According to Koniecki, the pragmatic nature of the seminars helped to overcome also the "politically obstructive trauma" of PSOE's Marxist wing, a trauma he attributed to years of "winter sleep in the subculture of illegality" that "pure ideologues" went through.<sup>699</sup> After transnational democracy promotion projects in the realm of party management, electoral assistance, organised labour and policy planning, the following section will highlight the FEF's contribution to the Spanish process of constitution-building.

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<sup>698</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>699</sup> *Ibid.*

#### 4.9. Constitution-Building

During his assignment to Mexico, Koniecki helped to establish the Ibero-American Institute for Constitutional Law (IAICL). The Institute's activities would serve him as a reference point for one of the FEF's most important democracy promotion projects during the Spanish transition, namely the assembling of legal experts to discuss and accompany the political process towards a new Spanish constitution. The Institute organised a number of international conferences in Latin America where experts met to discuss "the development of the political and constitutional order on the continent between 1950 and 1975."<sup>700</sup> The constitutional expert Professor Pedro de Vega was invited to initiate the opening of a Spanish section of the IAICL and to establish contacts with Portuguese constitutional jurists in order to launch a legal democracy promotion programme in the neighbouring country.<sup>701</sup> The Foundation's links with the prestigious Faculty of Law at the University of Salamanca was an important channel for institutional co-operation throughout the transition phase and "predominantly organised by constitutional lawyers who were members of PSOE or at least politically sympathetic towards its goals."<sup>702</sup> Initially, the suggestion to open a Spanish section of the IAICL was met with a certain degree of hesitation and scepticism as the regime occasionally reacted with repressive measures to political activities organised by academics. However, at the end of 1976 the project got on its way and a group of constitutional experts formed a first working group discussing the role of political pluralism.<sup>703</sup>

After the FEF office in Madrid had been opened in April 1976, Koniecki began to establish contacts with the *Instituto de Estudios Políticos*, which was politically close to the Franco-Regime. Koniecki initiated a permanent dialogue with a number of young Spanish constitutional experts, which quickly turned into a series of twelve seminars on

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<sup>700</sup> Personal interview with Dieter Koniecki, Madrid, 5 April 2002.

<sup>701</sup> AdsD, HEC, BN/0351, FEF Report '1. Symposium über die verfassungsmässige Rolle politischer Parteien', 28 April 1977.

<sup>702</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>703</sup> The group consisted of Carlos Ollerom, Chair for Constitutional Law in Madrid, Gumersindo Trujillo, Chair in La Laguna and self-declared Socialist, Juan Ferrando, Chair in Alicante, Manuel Ramírez, Chair in Zaragoza and PSOE member, Francisco Rubio Llorente, Chair in Madrid and member of PSOE and UGT and Pedro de Vega, Chair in Salamanca without PSOE membership but co-operating member in a constitutional committee of the party. *Ibid.*

various topics of constitution building.<sup>704</sup> Constitutional experts were invited to establish a professional network while using the seminar framework as a platform for the exchange of information, the holding of discussions and the interaction with foreign colleagues. The FEF also helped establishing the *Asociación Española de Ciencias Políticas* being the result of a seminar series in Barcelona.<sup>705</sup> The first international constitution-building symposium on the constitutional role of political parties, which took place in April 1977 with more than 70 delegates in Salamanca, was an example of the manner in which the FEF provided platforms for domestic actors in the transition country. The conference provided a forum for debate and a platform for the exchange of information while incorporating foreign experts who would support the constitution-making process through their presentation of concepts and approaches applied in other countries. By organising an international conference, the Foundation also enabled the participants to develop comparative historical perspectives useful in the discussion of a future democracy in Spain. “The seminars held with constitutional jurists and politicians during the constitution-building phase were particularly important because they provided a forum for the contextualisation of theoretical concepts and enabled the experts involved to compare them with the experiences of a multifaceted political reality in other western European countries” remembers political scientist Hans-Jürgen Puhle, who by his own account “attended numerous constitutional as well as party conferences, meetings of Spanish party executives and training seminars for Spain’s new political elites”.<sup>706</sup>

Furthermore, workshops and seminars “provided an opportunity to discuss certain essentials of democracy, political priorities including cost-benefit analyses and strategic alternatives in a more differentiating manner with a stronger focus on implementation and decision-making.”<sup>707</sup> Although Puhle points out that the transnationally operationalised and soft-power-based activities of the FRG’s political

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<sup>704</sup> We deliberately chose a new generation of constitutional jurists who would embody the future on the legal debate and would provide the interest and open-mindedness required for the intellectual process of democracy-building; Interview Dieter Koniecki. See also Dieter Koniecki, *20 Años de la Fundación Friedrich Ebert en España*, op.cit., p.22.

<sup>705</sup> Personal interview with Dieter Koniecki, Madrid, 5 April 2002.

<sup>706</sup> Personal correspondence with Hans-Jürgen Puhle, 24 June 2006.

<sup>707</sup> *Ibid.*

foundations “did not implement detailed concepts developed by the West German Government”, he concedes the existence of a “general concept” that underlied the democracy promotion projects of Bonn’s sub-state diplomacy, namely the “regulatory idea of West Germany’s civil society-oriented development policies in various parts of the world since the 1960s to ensure an optimal support for democratisation with the necessary resources.”<sup>708</sup>

One of the country’s leading constitutional jurists for example, Pedro de Vega, highlighted possible lessons to be learned from earlier German experiences with democratic transitions and constitutional orders by pointing warningly at the latter’s first parliamentary democracy. “An institution that seems to be theoretically perfect does not always lead to an acceptable practice in reality. In this sense, my country needs to see the constitution of Weimar as a clear example; despite its perfection it could not prevent the emergence of a dictatorship.”<sup>709</sup> But clearly of greater relevance than the Weimar Constitution were the constitutional concepts and mechanisms enshrined in West Germany’s Basic Law.

Because of a range of functional and historical similarities between the German and Spanish processes of democratisation – the necessity for an institutional stabilisation in the aftermath of authoritarianism and previous breakdowns of democracy, anti-party sentiments, negative majorities and fragile democratic traditions – and because a number of German advisers had participated in Spain’s post-Franco constitution-building process while many Spanish constitutional experts were very familiar with the West German legal system, the Basic Law to a disproportional extent turned into a model for Spain’s constitutional design e.g. the constructive vote of no-confidence, the Constitutional Court, the constitutionally guaranteed role for political parties, a bill of rights, constitutional protection of the environment etc.<sup>710</sup>

Puhle’s Spanish colleague Antonio Bar Cendón agreed. “Many scholars” he remembered about the decentralised nature of West Germany’s constitutional design, “myself among them took German federalism as the model to follow for the future

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<sup>708</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>709</sup> ‘Inauguración del simposio sobre constitucionalidad de los partidos políticos’, *La Gaceta Regional*, 20.4.1977.

<sup>710</sup> Personal correspondence with Hans-Jürgen Puhle, 24 June 2006 (translation by author).

Spanish democratic system.”<sup>711</sup> Pointing at the *Estados de las Autonomías* as Spain’s version of the West German *Länder* structure, he expressed his conviction that “the present Spanish political system and its constitutional organisation owes a lot to the German influence.”<sup>712</sup> At a later stage of the constitution-building process, the FRG’s Constitutional Court (*Bundesverfassungsgericht*) “was taken as a model to follow by the Spanish Constitutional Court”.<sup>713</sup>

The series of constitution-building conferences was therefore another example of how the FEF sought to exert influence by means of soft power i.e. transnationally provided political aid. Koniecki stressed that “it should not come as a surprise that the FEF is active in the area of constitutional law since 1920 and that it is practically the only civil society organisation that has survived the Third Reich.”<sup>714</sup> It was within these parameters that the Foundation decided to take on the “authentic scientific challenge” that the Spanish situation posed to constitutional experts. Koniecki’s realisation of the enormous importance of political parties for the stability of any democratic system was shared by many Spanish observers, who became aware of the impact that forty years of authoritarianism had on independent political thought in the Iberian country. “Although our political parties did manage to escape persecution, they were never able to rid themselves of their clandestine reflexes and organisational fragmentation the latter caused by very time-consuming internal skirmishes and debates.”<sup>715</sup> The Salamanca seminar was described by the FEF as “of crucial importance for the development of democracy in Spain”<sup>716</sup> The morning sessions were arranged around a total of 29 presentations in plenary and working groups whereas the afternoon sessions facilitated further discussions. Furthermore, a range of *conferencias magistrales* invited several foreign guest speakers in the ongoing discussions, among them the Italian Socialist and constitutional expert Antonio La Pergola (‘The constitutional position and constitutionality of political parties), the President of the IAICL Dr. Fix Zamudio (‘The

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<sup>711</sup> Personal correspondence with Antonio Bar Cendón, 19 June 2006.

<sup>712</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>713</sup> *Ibid.*; See also Personal correspondence with Klaus von Beyme, 11 July 2006.

<sup>714</sup> *La Gaceta Regional*, 21 April 1977.

<sup>715</sup> ‘El Vacío’, *La Tarde*, 27 September 1977.

<sup>716</sup> FEF Annual Report 1977, p.78.

Mexican constitution regarding individual and collective basic rights') or the Spanish-American political scientist Juan Linz of Yale University (Power structures and political parties). The FEF sent its own constitutional experts to Spain. Initially, FEF representative Koniiecki tried to convince the German constitutional law professor, foreign policy expert and SPD politician Horst Ehmke to make a contribution to the constitutional debates by attending the high-profile meeting in Salamanca. In a letter to the politician, Koniiecki reasoned about the seminar in Salamanca:

For the first time, this event will provide us with the opportunity to present our activities to the public via the academic realm. This will be of the utmost importance for our Spanish partners and us. From the Spanish side there will be more or less the entire academic rank and file. Also the fact that currently a Spanish television team produces a series on the activities of the German political foundations in Spain, which will focus in particular on the symposium in Salamanca, adds a further political element to my decision to ask you to participate. Your position as foreign policy spokesman of the SPD is an additional reason.<sup>717</sup>

Since Ehmke responded negatively to Koniiecki's request, the FEF official invited the German law professor Hans-Peter Schneider from the University of Hanover as an expert on federalism to the symposium in Salamanca. Schneider, who described the Spanish transition as a "historically unique revolutionary process leading from one constitutional order to another" while not being the "result of a fight but one of arguments and reason"<sup>718</sup> was 'hired' not only as a conference speaker. Besides attending the seminar, Schneider was asked to professionally support his Spanish colleagues from PSOE who worked on the constitutional committee of the newly elected *Cortes* under the chairmanship of Gregorio Peces-Barba.<sup>719</sup> The committee was to consult with constitutional experts of three countries: Mexico because of its exile contacts with Spanish Republicans (through the IAICL), Italy because of its experience with regionalism and West Germany.<sup>720</sup> Schneider attended the conference in

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<sup>717</sup> AdsD, HEC, BN/0544, Letter Dieter Koniiecki to Horst Ehmke, 5 March 1977 (translation by author).

<sup>718</sup> 'El proceso español de transición a la democracia es único y sorprendente', *El País*, 21 April 1977.

<sup>719</sup> The parliamentary constitutional committee of the *Cortes* had seven members who represented the main political forces in the country: UCD (Pérez Llorca, Cisneros, Herrero de Miñón), PSOE (Peces-Barba), Alianza Popular (Fraga Iribarne), PCE (Solé Tura) and Catalan nationalists (Roca Junyent).

<sup>720</sup> Personal interview with Hans-Peter Schneider, Hanover, 4 April 2002.

Salamanca where he gave a presentation on “The Constitutional Position of Political Parties in the Federal Republic of Germany.”<sup>721</sup>

The Salamanca seminar received a high degree of public attention, something Koniecki and the FEF “had not expected to that extent.”<sup>722</sup> The FEF office in Madrid reported back to its headquarters that Spanish as well as West German TV crews had covered the meeting and that the news programme *Telediario* had reported on the seminar with a ten-minute trailer. The participants in Salamanca concluded their findings in a common statement in which they publicly outlined the requirements any future democratic constitution must address in order to represent a nation still suffering from historical divisions. The document demanded that the future *Cortes* would have to be a constituent parliament and it vehemently condemned any attempts to ridicule or even deny the “constituent character of the current historical situation.”<sup>723</sup> The authors also demanded that equal access to state media was granted to all political actors, urged the government to stop exploiting its privileged access to means of communication and clamoured for a nation-wide general amnesty for political activists who were prosecuted by the old regime as a gesture of reconciliation.<sup>724</sup> Furthermore, the Salamanca Declaration of Spain’s leading constitutional lawyers stressed the importance of a constitutional role for the country’s political parties and described political pluralism as a pre-requisite for any successful creation of a diverse democratic system. The Spanish jurists realised the high risk posed by the “hegemonic ambitions of all those groups that think of their own interests as being the interest of the whole country.”<sup>725</sup> They stressed the necessity to provide the electorate with “clearly distinguishable political choices that are easy to understand and which are based on the premise that all ideologies should be guaranteed the right to co-exist.”<sup>726</sup> A broadly based consensus among the wide spectrum of political forces was seen as crucial to ensure constitutional stability and the

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<sup>721</sup> Schneider’s work as a constitutional adviser to PSOE’s legal team was later published by the *Centro de Estudios Constitucionales* under the title *Democracia y Constitucion*, (Madrid 1991).

<sup>722</sup> AdsD, HEC, BN/0351, FEF Report ‘1. Symposium über die verfassungsmässige Rolle politischer Parteien’, 28 April 1977.

<sup>723</sup> ‘Clausurado el I Simposium sobre Constitucionalización de Partidos Políticos’, *El Adelanto*, 23 April 1977.

<sup>724</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>725</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>726</sup> *Ibid.*

main parties were urged to guarantee the safeguarding of minority rights in order to satisfy the “democratic expectations of the whole of Spanish society.”<sup>727</sup> The declaration did not fail to underline the pressing problem of a lack of autonomy for Spain’s regions and it made it clear, that a continuation of Spain’s traditional centralism would trigger potentially disastrous consequences. In the opinion of the assembled constitutional experts, the idea of decentralisation, which would integrate structural elements of regionalism and federalism into the new constitutional order, was posing no threat to the principle of Spanish unity. Last not least, a catalogue of basic democratic institutions, mechanisms and checks-and-balance provisions was added i.e. control of the executive by parliamentary majority and the creation of a Supreme Court as a supervising and regulating legal institution particularly in the area of constitutional law, basic individual rights and regional autonomy.<sup>728</sup> In short, the constitution was to be what the historian Juan Pablo Fusi later said about the final product namely “neither the unilateral imposition of one party nor the expression of a single ideology but the synthesis and reconciliation of ideologically divergent and potentially antagonistic positions.”<sup>729</sup>

In his own assessment of the seminar, Koniiecki emphasised that the FEF was able to present itself as a natural partner to a broad range of political actors on the centre-left and to recommend itself for further co-operation on constitutional matters. One leading constitutional expert, however, describes Koniiecki’s own role as of “key importance” for the success of the conference series and the degree to which Spanish and foreign experts were able to trade ideas and exchange conceptual approaches concerning Spain’s new constitutional make-up.<sup>730</sup> His report notes that all of the academics involved expressed their interest in future co-operative projects with the West German Foundation and two more symposiums were organised, one in La Laguna on the question of ‘Federalism and Regionalism’ and one in the city of Zaragoza on the “Position of Municipalities in Spain’s Constitutional System” and on “Parliamentary Control of the Government in Pluralist Democracies”. The former discussed the

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<sup>727</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>728</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>729</sup> Juan Pablo Fusi, Jordi Palafox, *España: 1808-1996. El Desafío de la Modernidad*, (Espasa Calpe, Madrid 1997), p.379.

<sup>730</sup> Personal correspondence with Manuel Contreras Casado, 3 May 2006.



question of federalism and Spain's political decentralisation firmly within the context of other European and Latin American constitutional orders.<sup>731</sup> The Spanish academic Gumersindo Trujillo as one of the co-organisers of the conference stressed the importance of this platform-building event for the successful solving of problems posed by the various demands for provincial autonomy that swirled around during the transition process. "During the transition from autocracy to democracy, it becomes necessary to develop certain constitutional formulae, which permit the integration of the different nationalities the Spanish state is composed of."<sup>732</sup> Hence the regionalism conference provided leading Spanish and foreign constitutional experts with a stage to "play their technical role" namely to arrive at the aforementioned formulae through discussions and to "identify and to offer solutions and alternatives to political parties."<sup>733</sup> On the German side, Koniecki invited political scientist Hans-Jürgen Puhle of the University of Münster to provide the conference with an introduction to the federal element in West Germany's political system. Puhle's connection with the FEF dated back to his years as Managing Director of the FEF-affiliated *Instituto Latinoamericano de Investigaciones Sociales* (ILDIS) from 1966 to 1968 in Santiago de Chile and his role as a co-ordinator of the FEF's political programmes in Latinamerica.<sup>734</sup>

Six months later, more than fifty lawyers, sociologists and political scientists discussed the separation powers and forms, methods and functions of parliamentary control of the government at a third conference – the *Jornadas Internacionales de Ciencia Política y Derecho Constitucional: El control parlamentario del Gobierno en las democracias pluralistas* - in Zaragoza.<sup>735</sup> Among the assembled legal scholars and social scientists, the Heidelberg-based academic Klaus von Beyme focused on questions of stability in coalition governments and the impact of interest groups on the policy

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<sup>731</sup> 'Comenzaron las sesiones de trabajo del Simposio sobre Regionalismo y Federalismo', *El Dia*, 28 September 1977.

<sup>732</sup> 'Apertura del Simposio Internacional sobre Regionalismo y Federalismo', *El Dia*, 27 September 1977.

<sup>733</sup> 'Comienza el Simposio sobre Sistemas Regionales y Federales Contemporaneos', *La Tarde*, 26 September 1977.

<sup>734</sup> Personal correspondence with Hans-Jürgen Puhle, 24 June 2006. FEF resident representative Koniecki held an ILDIS scholarship before he took over the Foundation's office in Mexico.

<sup>735</sup> 'Jornadas de Derecho Constitucional en Zaragoza', *Heraldo de Aragon*, 12 March 1978.

making process.<sup>736</sup> Finally, the FEF organised another legal conference, which took place in June 1979 in Granada. Again, delegates from a broad range of national, political and academic backgrounds exchanged their views on the development of Spain's democratic structures, among them prominent public figures such as senator Luis Sánchez Agesta and the Catalan Communist MP Jordi Solé Tura.<sup>737</sup> In addition to the conference series, the FEF suggested establishing institutional long-term arrangements for scholarly co-operation between research centres in West Germany and the Spanish section of the IAICL. The symposium resulted in a final resolution by the Spanish IAICL section to establish a permanent working group with interested colleagues from Germany and Italy, which was to accompany the constitution-building process in Spain.<sup>738</sup>

However, the meeting in Granada came after the Spanish people in a referendum had finally approved a new constitution in December 1978 with 87% of all votes cast.<sup>739</sup> Despite the majority of 'yes' votes in favour of the constitution, the senior Spanish politician and former Foreign Minister Jose Maria de Areilza warned of the "current climate of unhappiness and protest" caused by a "state of affairs dominated by mismanagement of the public domain", which had led 41% of all eligible voters to abstain or vote against the constitution.<sup>740</sup> He stressed that such a public mood could not be changed by putting forward a new constitution but required the holding of general elections.<sup>741</sup> Other commentators agreed by urging the political class to "identify ways and develop concepts that raise the public's interest in the functioning of democratic institutions".<sup>742</sup> It was at this point that any future FEF activities had to depart from as the constitution-building process with its final document was in fact "not the conclusion

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<sup>736</sup> 'III Jornadas Internacionales de Ciencia Política y Derecho Constitucional', *Heraldo de Aragon*, 18 March 1978.

<sup>737</sup> 'La Fundación Ebert patrocina jornadas sobre ciencia política', *El País*, 10 June 1979.

<sup>738</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>739</sup> 67% of eligible voters heeded the call by Spain's democratic parties to vote in the referendum with 7,83% voting against the constitution, *Ya*, 22 December 1978.

<sup>740</sup> 'Existe hoy otro marco de tendencias', *ABC*, 9 December 1978.

<sup>741</sup> *Ibid.* See also 'Análisis de Urgencia', *ABC*, 8 December 1978.

<sup>742</sup> 'Después de la Constitución', *El País*, 8 December 1978.

in the long chapter about the transition and the democratic process” but only one necessary task that needed to be continued in the legislative work of parliamentarians.<sup>743</sup>

#### **4.10. SPD and PSOE – The Transnational Party Connection**

In her doctoral thesis on the European dimension of Socialist political aid and transnational party solidarity, Spanish scholar Pilar Ortuño Anaya concluded: “It was clear, that for many SPD leaders and German trade unions fear of Communist dominance among Spanish workers in Spain was a constant preoccupation.”<sup>744</sup> West Germany’s Social Democrats were not only mobilising financial, logistical and political resources to prevent the creation of a popular front between Socialists and Communists that could potentially set the pretext for a fully-fledged Communist take-over of power positions. They were also aware of significantly more radical ideological tendencies within PSOE and UGT. In October 1977, the FEF office in Madrid reported that

If one follows the resolutions of the 27<sup>th</sup> PSOE Congress and the ongoing communiqués of the federal executive committee of the party it becomes very clear that a majority within PSOE sees the party as a Marxist organisation and believes that a number of discrepancies exist between PSOE and SPD.<sup>745</sup>

Initially, West Germany’s SPD provided financial support to the *Partido Socialista del Interior* (PSI), a party chaired by the popular law professor and future mayor of Madrid Tierno Galván. The SPD also maintained cross-party links with the exiled PSOE *histórico* enabling the senescent Socialist party leader Rodolfo Llopis to “monopolise international relations, prevent any contacts between the European Socialist parties and members of the PSOE inside Spain.”<sup>746</sup> The situation changed when from 1972 West Germany’s Social Democrats with their new Chairman Willy Brandt switched their support to the newly established PSOE *renovado* led by the charismatic young Seville labour lawyer Felipe González.<sup>747</sup>

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<sup>743</sup> ‘Manos a la obra’, *La Vanguardia*, 7 December 1978.

<sup>744</sup> Pilar Ortuño Anaya, *European Socialists and Spain*, op.cit., p.183.

<sup>745</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1542, FEF Report ‘Die PSOE vor dem Treffen der Sozialistischen Internationalen in Madrid vom 14. bis 16. Oktober 1977’, (Dieter Koniecki), 28 October 1977 (translation by author).

<sup>746</sup> Pilar Ortuño Anaya, *European Socialists and Spain*, op.cit., p.166.

<sup>747</sup> *Ibid.*, p.172.

This was partly due to the ideological independence displayed by the González-led PSOE wing, which clearly distanced itself from any co-operation with Carillo's PCE and rejected the idea of Mediterranean Socialism. In 1975, the West German Embassy in Madrid informed the *Auswärtige Amt*:

PSOE does not believe the PCE to be a democratic party. It believes that the Communist's ultimate aim is to occupy key power positions within the Spanish political system including the military after ending the tactical alliance with Bourgeoisie and Socialist parties to rule the country single-handedly. Felipe González has expressed his fear that in such a case Socialists would become the PCE's first victims.<sup>748</sup>

Brandt's SPD colleague Hans Matthöfer summarised West German expectations when he expressed his confidence that "PSOE has the ability to integrate numerous leftist splinter groups and to become *the* decisive force for political change towards a democratic Socialism in Spain."<sup>749</sup> The PSI would later be incorporated into PSOE and Tierno Galván was to become Honorary President of the party.

In the meantime, the SPD leadership offered its services as a mediating force in order to bring about a greater unity of the Spanish left.<sup>750</sup> Its transnational party support became even more important since Foreign Minister Genscher hesitated to establish official contacts with what the Foreign Office described as "radical democrats" for fear of putting his working relationship and channels of political dialogue with reform-minded members of the Spanish Government at risk. The Foreign Office warned "despite the temporary tolerance displayed towards PSOE activities by the Spanish Government discretion remains crucial for West Germany's official institutions."<sup>751</sup> Geopolitical considerations and multilateral priorities ranked most prominently on the agenda of West Germany's public diplomacy. Its declared goal was Spain's gradual European integration including its future membership in the EC and the FRG's foreign policy strategists admitted that it was imperative "to secure the country's geostrategic

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<sup>748</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.257, FRG Embassy Madrid, Report 'Spaniens Innenpolitik und die Position der Kommunistischen Partei', 12 August 1975 (translation by author).

<sup>749</sup> *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 22 April 1976.

<sup>750</sup> AdsD, HEC, BN/0748, Notes Veronika Isenberg on the findings of the meeting of the *Sechserkreis*, 4 June 1976.

<sup>751</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.256, Auswärtiges Amt, Notes 'Spanish Party System', 14 May 1975.

position and considerable military potential for the Western alliance.”<sup>752</sup> As in the case of Portugal’s transition, Bonn offered its good offices to the government in Madrid indicating its preparedness to act as an advocate for Spanish interests within multilateral fora.<sup>753</sup> However, Genscher and his advisers were afraid that any closer interaction with opposition members other than ‘soft-liners’ within the regime could lead to unwarranted publicity thus undermining German efforts to tie Spain closely to EC and NATO. “We had not been credible if the minister had received members of the radical opposition (e.g. PSOE) during his official visit,” states a Foreign Office report in the wake of Genscher’s visit to Spain in March 1975.<sup>754</sup> On the other hand, so-called “reformers” within the Franco Regime (among them Carlos Arias Navarro, who took over as Prime Minister after his predecessor General Carrero Blanco’s death) described as being “socially acceptable” were considered useful to prepare Spain’s eventual membership in both organisations and West Germany’s public diplomacy “insisted on meeting with them.”<sup>755</sup>

At the same time, public diplomacy realised the importance of transnational democracy promotion pursued by private actors i.e. political parties and foundations. “PSOE maintains close contacts with the SPD and is also member of the Socialist International. In the long-term, this relationship can help us to soften certain tendencies towards political co-operation between Communists and Socialists based on the idea of

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<sup>752</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.213, Auswärtiges Amt, Notes for Foreign Affairs Select Committee ‘Situation in Spain’, 23 April 1975. However, Bonn’s diplomatic circles were also aware how important a cautious pursuit of these foreign policy goals was as domestic opposition to Spain’s Nato accession in West Germany forbade any “spectacular” policies in this area, which could have drawn public attention to Bonn’s external relations with the authoritarian regime, PolArch/AA B26, 110.258, Report ‘Situation in Spain’, 9 May 1975.

<sup>753</sup> West Germany’s Embassy in Madrid also pointed out that political developments in Spain’s immediate neighbourhood had an impact on Western strategic thinking. “Spain’s strategic importance for the United States and the Western alliance increases because of the situation in Portugal.” PolArch/AA B26, 110.258, FRG Embassy Madrid, Annual Report Political Affairs (Politischer Jahresbericht) 1975, 22 January 1976.

<sup>754</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>755</sup> *Ibid.* Also PolArch/AA, B26, 101.442, Auswärtiges Amt, ‘Deutsch-Spanische Ministerberatungen’, 6 March 1975; PolArch/AA B26, 110.258, Letter Ambassador v. Lilienfeldt to Chancellor Schmidt, 6 January 1975. At the same time, the *Auswärtige Amt* was careful not to damage West Germany’s foreign relations with Spain’s ‘illegal’ opposition by behaving in a way that could be seen as “granting demonstrative support for the regime in the eyes of its critics” thus making the FRG’s ‘private’ diplomacy via its political Foundations and parties impossible, PolArch/AA B26, 110.258, Auswärtiges Amt, Southern Europe Desk (Referat 203), Report ‘Situation auf der iberischen Halbinsel’, 8 July 1975.

a Mediterranean Socialism à la Mitterand.”<sup>756</sup> The *Auswärtiges Amt* therefore concluded that “the contact between SPD and PSOE needs to be seen as positive and merits our support, which should be provided discreetly.”<sup>757</sup> And the same assessment suggests that “the *Asociación Reforma Social Española* seems worthy of West German assistance possibly through the FEF” and maintains that “we should also encourage SPD and FEF to continue their co-operation with PSOE.”<sup>758</sup> The selection of partners, issue areas and operational modality of governmental diplomacy and transnational actors illustrate the conflation of private and public elements in the FRG’s post-war foreign policy with both sets of actors operating on two different levels within the international system to deliver policy outcomes to two different audiences but guided by a broadly identical hierarchy of state interests. “A practical foreign policy towards Spain should not take place only between governments but should be implemented simultaneously also by political parties and their affiliated foundations” advises the Foreign Office’s Southern Europe Desk and points out that

contacts already exist between CDU, SPD and *Stiftungen* with the opposition Christian Democrats and the Socialist Party in Spain. They should be urgently extended to help train a political elite, which will be able to take political responsibility after Franco’s death. The political foundations are playing a particularly important role in this context by training junior politicians abroad.<sup>759</sup>

Shaping Spain’s future leadership and creating structural similarities with West Germany’s post-war democracy were the main goals of Bonn’s ‘softer’ form of power politics. It pursued this agenda as much through transnational channels as it operated within the familiar spaces of multilateralism realising that “in the eyes of the younger generation of Spanish politicians (including members of the opposition), the FRG’s

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<sup>756</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>757</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>758</sup> *Ibid.* Also PolArch/AA B26, 110.257, Auswärtiges Amt, Southern Europe Desk (Referat 203), Report ‘Politische Gruppierungen und Parteien in Spanien’, 24 July 1975.

<sup>759</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.258, Memorandum ‘Vorschläge für eine praktische Politik gegenüber Spanien in den nächsten Monaten’, 25 October 1975 (translation by author); PolArch/AA B26, 110.258, Telex (Fernschreiben), FRG Embassy Madrid, 27 October 1975; PolArch/AA B26, 110.258, Auswärtiges Amt, Southern Europe Desk (Referat 203), Report ‘Demokratische Kräfte in Spanien und ihre deutschen Kontakte’, 6 November 1975.

political and social structures serve as model and example”.<sup>760</sup> In fact, the FRG’s governmental diplomacy acknowledged that “*our most effective* way of influencing key political actors in a future democratic Spain” were West Germany’s political connections maintained by its political foundations.<sup>761</sup> At the same time, public diplomacy continued to operate on a government-to-government level. In November 1975, diplomats at West Germany’s Embassy in Madrid outlined a package of measures of bilateral assistance in a ‘Draft Plan of Encouragement for a Policy of Democratic Opening by the Spanish Government’. The plan suggested three areas of possible support namely in the realm of foreign policy, domestic politics and military affairs.<sup>762</sup> The international dimension of the plan included a positive response to democratic change shown by the member states of the European Community, an invitation for a visit of the Spanish Prime Minister to the Federal Republic, a subsequent state visit by the West German President to Spain and closer diplomatic co-operation with “special attention being paid to Spanish requests in multilateral fora.”<sup>763</sup>

Domestically, the memorandum suggested the creation of a German-Spanish Parliamentary Association, the deepening of political contacts through West Germany’s political foundations and assistance for Spanish trade unions.<sup>764</sup> Militarily, the authors recommend a return to the tradition of officer exchanges and joint meetings of the general staff, co-operation in the area of defence industries and the training of Spanish officers at the Leadership Academy of the FRG’s armed forces. “The aim of these measures” declares the report “is to make it easier for the Spanish military to co-ordinate its activities more closely with NATO. It therefore aims at increasing the familiarity of Spanish officers with NATO doctrines and operational plans, their participation in joint training sessions and the implementation of NATO strategies within the framework of military exercises of the *Bundeswehr*. Economically, the

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<sup>760</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.258, FRG Embassy Madrid, Country Study Spain 1975 (Länderaufzeichnung), 10 October 1975.

<sup>761</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.258, Auswärtiges Amt, Southern Europe Desk (Referat 203), Report ‘Demokratische Kräfte in Spanien und ihre deutschen Kontakte’, 6 November 1975.

<sup>762</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.258, ‘Entwurf eines Planes zur Ermutigung einer demokratischen Öffnung’, 4 November 1975.

<sup>763</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>764</sup> *Ibid.*

Federal Government was urged to launch an official campaign promoting German investment in Spain, provide loans when requested and intensify the scientific-technical co-operation. Culturally, the plan called for increased activities of the *Kulturinstitut*, renewed exchanges between universities, additional Max Planck scholarships and deepened co-operation in the areas of film, play and opera.<sup>765</sup> Finally, like private foreign policy actors so did public diplomacy realise that “for a long time now Spanish politicians and journalists have expressed an interest in getting to know the inner workings of the Federal Republic’s parliamentary system, German experiences with solving domestic political disputes, the functioning of the *Bundestag*, political parties, trade unions and media organisations.”<sup>766</sup> It was this area in which the ‘power of attraction’ aimed at helping to create an environment structurally compatible with post-war society in West Germany, and power politics of such a configuration remained the stronghold of private diplomacy on a transnational level.

In April 1975, the new PSOE leadership held talks with Willy Brandt in which both sides discussed possible forms of future co-operation between the two parties as well as logistical, organisational and financial questions. Brandt and his colleagues were aware that Santiago Carillo’s PCE and its affiliated union organisation CC.OO. appeared to be the widely acknowledged representation of working class interests and that Communist forces commanded the “best functioning apparatus.” SPD international relations expert Dingels stated unambiguously “it is acknowledged that Spanish Socialists ought to receive every conceivable form of assistance” and he stressed the importance for PSOE “to create a counterweight given the material dominance of Communist organisations.”<sup>767</sup> Antonio Bar Cendón, a constitutional lawyer and participant in FEF-sponsored conferences points out that at the outset of Spain’s democratic transition, PSOE was “almost nonexistent” and that in terms of financial and political backing from abroad “no other party received a similar amount or so qualified help from foreign organisations.”<sup>768</sup> At a meeting in September 1974, the Foundation brought together thirteen political activists from five different organisations in six

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<sup>765</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>766</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>767</sup> *Ibid.* AdsD, BFC, BN/1542, Notes Hans-Eberhard Dingels for Willy Brandt, 17 April 1975.

<sup>768</sup> Personal correspondence with Antonio Bar Cendón, 19 June 2006.



Spanish provinces. The participants of the meeting agreed, “it was a political necessity to act in a co-ordinated and united way.”<sup>769</sup> The idea of a unification of the political left by means of merging various Socialists groups into a single party was rejected and instead one proposed the establishment of a “Socialist Confederation” to overcome the “long-standing fragmentation” of Spanish Socialism.<sup>770</sup> The FEF-facilitated conference which was initiated in co-operation with PSOE expressed its intention to co-opt additional Socialist groups in the near future but rejected any co-operation with Rodolfo Llopis and his PSOE *histórico* as well as with Tierno Galvan’s PSI. According to West German trade unionist Max Diamant who attended the conference both politicians “were characterised as representatives of the most flagrant personality cult.”<sup>771</sup>

He also pointed out that Galvan’s political integrity was in doubt because of his “tactical co-operation with Carrillo’s PCE.”<sup>772</sup> Galvan’s growing political isolation, which left him cut-off from any significant support by centre-left parties in Europe, continued well into the second half of the 1970s. According to a West German observer at the party’s third congress in June 1976, not a single representative of a major Socialist or Social Democratic party attended the event and “one can get the impression that only Communist parties and parties of the Third World are supporting the PSI.”<sup>773</sup> Koniecki was opposed to any form of tactical alliance on the left and reported to FEF headquarters that González while speaking at PSOE’s 27<sup>th</sup> Congress had left no doubt that “any form of revolutionary Socialism under the current Spanish circumstances is an utopian idea.”<sup>774</sup> He warned Helmut Schmidt during the latter’s visit to Madrid in January 1977 about possible questions by members of the press which might try to insinuate West German support for PSOE’s alleged Marxist “maximalism.” Koniecki advised Schmidt to counter these questions by dismissing any “over-accentuated

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<sup>769</sup> AdsD, WBC, BN/22, Report Max Diamant, without date. Willy Brandt writes on the question of a united political left : “This is a problem which needs to be solved by the Spanish Socialists themselves. In my view, external mediation seems to be a promising approach only if all parties involved would request it.” AdsD, WBC, BN/43, Letter Willy Brandt to Tierno Galvan, 12 July 1976.

<sup>770</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>771</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>772</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>773</sup> AdsD, WBC, BN/43, Report Volkhart Müller

<sup>774</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1542, FEF Report ‘Die PSOE vor dem Treffen der Sozialistischen Internationalen in Madrid vom 14. bis 16. Oktober 1977’, (Dieter Koniecki), 28 October 1977.

ideological approaches” on the part of PSOE as the “natural result of a party that had operated in illegality for 40 years.”<sup>775</sup> Earlier, the SPD’s head of international affairs Dingels had characterised PSOE as the “possible nucleus for a future Social Democratic party in Spain.”<sup>776</sup> Consequently, SPD politician Ludwig Fellermaier who attended the PSOE Congress in December 1976 made a financial donation on behalf of the social democratic parliamentary group in the Bundestag totalling DM 25.000 (ca. £8000).<sup>777</sup>

Besides financial support, PSOE activists enjoyed political protection by the SPD, which continued to closely monitor Spain’s political situation. Spain’s Socialists also enhanced their prestige through their partnership with West Germany’s majority party and its political foundation, and the FRG’s governmental diplomacy acknowledged that PSOE’s “recognition by SI and other West European Socialist parties has greatly strengthened its reputation.”<sup>778</sup> West Germany’s Social Democrats supported leading PSOE personnel whenever the Franco regime tried to silence the still illegally operating opposition with additional repressive measures.<sup>779</sup> The excellent line of communication between SPD and the West German Embassy would more than once serve as an early-warning system. When in October 1975, the international secretary of the PSOE Luis Yanes was arrested and PSOE leader Felipe Gonzalez was put under intense surveillance by the Spanish secret police, a diplomat of the German Embassy informed SPD international relations envoy Veronika Isenberg about the fact that the political right rather than the Prince or the Prime Minister was behind the draconic action.<sup>780</sup> The FRG’s diplomatic representation in Madrid called on the SPD to officially protest against the arrest but advised party officials not to accuse Juan Carlos of bearing any responsibility for the incident. At the same time, a high-ranking German diplomat would deliver a demarche to the office of the Prime Minister highlighting the grave

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<sup>775</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>776</sup> AdsD, HSC, BN/6566, Notes Hans-Eberhard Dingels, 22 December 1976.

<sup>777</sup> AdsD, Ludwig Fellermaier Collection (hereafter LFC), BN/072, Letter Ludwig Fellermaier to Hans-Eberhard Dingels, 26 November 1976.

<sup>778</sup> PolArch/AA B26, 110.258, FRG Embassy Madrid, Annual Report Political Affairs (Politischer Jahresbericht), 1975, 22 January 1976.

<sup>779</sup> At a press conference in Bonn in October 1975, Brandt described transnational party co-operation as “humanitarian support” and admitted “good contacts” between SPD and PSOE politicians some of which had already visited West Germany. *Die Welt*, 16 October 1975.

<sup>780</sup> AdsD, WBC, BN/127, Letter Veronika Isenberg to Willy Brandt, 31 October 1975.

consequences that would follow any arrest of Gonzalez.<sup>781</sup> Strong transitional ties between PSOE and SPD and especially between opposition *matador* Felipe González and his fatherly mentor Willy Brandt also helped to secure the political backing of international organisations such as the Socialist International (SI). As mentioned in Chapter Two, after his resignation in April 1974, Brandt had played an increasingly active role in the SI and took over the chairmanship in 1976. His influence within the Socialist organisation made it arguably easier for PSOE's leadership to establish itself as the undisputed champion of progressive, left-of-centre transitional politics in Spain not least in the eyes of its politically and financially potent European sister parties.

The session of the SI's Spain committee in Amsterdam on 16 November 1975 shortly after Franco's death was an example for the usefulness of such exclusive contacts. Expressing his concern about contacts between European Socialist and Social Democratic parties and Tierno Galvan's PSP as well as Santiago Carillo's PCE, González's representative on the committee asked the assembled party leaders to exclusively support PSOE.<sup>782</sup> The party official urged his colleagues not to send high-ranking delegations to Madrid neither to the dictator's funeral nor to the enthronisation of his handpicked successor Prince Juan Carlos, which was supposed to take place a few days later.<sup>783</sup> In return, the SI agreed to organise a Day of Solidarity with its Spanish comrades with money being collected for the financial support of PSOE. SI member parties committed themselves to a public relations campaign in order to raise the political profile of Spanish Socialists. They agreed that West European governments ought to change their standoffish attitude towards Spain's new political leadership only if the new head of state was to take concrete steps towards real democratisation.

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<sup>781</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>782</sup> Felipe Gonzalez made no secret of his concerns about the contacts between various European Social Democratic parties and PCE boss Santiago Carillo. He warned his SPD friends that these links meant "political advertisement for the PCE, which should not be underestimated." AdsD, WBC, BN/128, Note Veronika Isenberg, 23 January 1976.

<sup>783</sup> Members of the international community concerned PSOE about any expression of support for the regime. For González, developments such as a possible closer co-operation between Madrid and the EC would mean an "international revaluation of the current regime." *dpa*, 4 August 1975. Consequently, no Head of State attended the dictator's funeral while a number of Western leaders followed the invitation to attend Prince Juan Carlos coronation, among them West German President Walter Scheel, the French President Giscard d'Estaing, U.S. Vice President Rockefeller and the Duke of Edinburgh. Raymond Carr, see Juan Pablo Fusi Aizpurua, *Spain: Dictatorship to Democracy*, (George Allen & Unwin, London 1979), p.208.

Although sooner or later PSOE would have become a member of the SI anyway, SPD advocacy on its behalf certainly helped to speed up the process and secured precious support during the transition's initial phase.<sup>784</sup>

Although it was vital for PSOE to secure international political assistance in order to acquire bitterly needed political know-how for any upcoming political elections, and although at times the party had to “be encouraged by us and to be reminded that it was not fighting on its own but that it was embedded in and assisted by an international Socialist movement”<sup>785</sup>, party leaders had to dissolve the widespread fear and perception on the part of the Spanish public that PSOE was a mere puppet in the hands of foreign powers and remote-controlled by West Germany's SPD. According to one West German observer, the integration in international support structures did not pose a problem to the domestic reputation of political parties. It would rather have an advantageous effect. What had to be avoided at all costs was the impression of being surrounded by “patronising advisers who would publicly warn or criticise.”<sup>786</sup> Often the polemic discourse culminated in popular *bon mots* such as that “if PSOE wins the elections Spanish politics will be made in Bonn.”<sup>787</sup> SPD Chairman Brandt angrily rejected any accusation of an external tutelage and an imposition of foreign political concepts by West Germany's Social Democrats.

This is the difference between democratic Socialism and other political movements. Our way is not an ideological export product and it is not a recipe which we impose on our sister party. The basic values of democratic Socialism is one thing, their application to particular national and historical situations quite another. We do not see the principle of international solidarity as an instrument of manipulation or even as an instrument to

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<sup>784</sup> In Amsterdam, the different parties pledged to provide financial support to PSOE: £7500 from the Swedish party, £1000 from the British Labour Party, £4000 from the SI and £1000 from Israel's Labour Party. *Ibid.*

<sup>785</sup> Personal interview with Dieter Koniecki, Madrid, 5 April 2003.

<sup>786</sup> Walter Haubrich, 'Mit Pablo Iglesias als Symbolfigur: Die Spanische Sozialistische Arbeiterpartei hofft auf eine führende Rolle', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 3 December 1976.

<sup>787</sup> Quoted in Walter Haubrich, 'Was hat der Bundeskanzler denn mit „Entesa dels Catalans“ zu tun? – Die Deutschen im spanischen Wahlkampf', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* 28 February 1979. The French philosopher Jean Paul Sartre who accused the SPD of being the accomplice of the United States made a similar argument. “It is obvious that Germany's Social Democracy is one of the preferred instruments of American imperialism in Europe.” According to Sartre, the SPD had restored capitalism in West Germany and had collaborated with the “Nazis of capital.” In the international arena, the SPD interfered in the internal affairs of other states aiming for the position of “German proconsul in Europe.” *Vorwärts*, 14 April 1977.

exercise hegemony over our sister party. The phrase of ‘restricted sovereignty’ does not have a place in our vocabulary.<sup>788</sup>

In striking resemblance of Portugal’s political developments, González rhetorically rejected any suggestion that foreign political concepts were imposed on domestic actors in the Spanish transition and he claimed to follow a uniquely ‘Spanish way’ just as Soares had done to convince his fellow party members and the electorate of his independent standing among the multitude of foreign friends.<sup>789</sup> FEF representative Koniecki writes:

PSOE seeks to prevent at all costs accusations of an outside influence on its decision-making by West Germany’s SPD, which is the most powerful Social Democratic party in Europe. Many of the partly obscured, partly openly launched attacks on Social Democrats as being mere ‘lackeys of capitalism’ are identical with the political position of Communist parties.<sup>790</sup>

On the other hand, in direct talks with their West German counterparts Socialist leaders were not holding back with their affirmation of how much the SPD’s support was appreciated, crucial and influential.

The PSOE leadership reiterated once more in my talks with them how influential the West German Government and the SPD were in Spain and told me how valuable the SPD’s assistance was. They explicitly mentioned Willy Brandt and Helmut Schmidt and others who would make their job of establishing relations with the public much easier.<sup>791</sup>

Among the many services of transnational and bilateral co-operation were various humanitarian interventions on the part of the German Embassy and continuous efforts to help PSOE leaders to obtain passports.<sup>792</sup> However, the “battle for jackpots”<sup>793</sup> as SPD

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<sup>788</sup> Speech Willy Brandt at the PSOE party conference in December 1976., *SPD Pressedienst* (translation by author).

<sup>789</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1542, FEF Report ‘Die PSOE vor dem Treffen der Sozialistischen Internationalen in Madrid vom 14. bis 16. Oktober 1977’, (Dieter Koniecki), 28 October 1977.

<sup>790</sup> *Ibid* (translation by author).

<sup>791</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1540, Notes Veronika Isenberg on the visit of a SI delegation to Spain from the 14.-18. Januar 1976, 21 January 1976 (translation by author).

<sup>792</sup> In concerted efforts, Ambassador von Lilienfeldt, SPD foreign relations expert Dingels, the Chancellor’s Office as well as SPD Chairman Willy Brandt would put pressure on King Juan Carlos and Spain’s

international relations director Hans-Eberhard Dingels had coined the transitional practice of establishing political links with foreign donors needed to unfold with the lowest public profile possible. The position of PSOE's leadership receiving support from SPD and FEF appeared to be particularly tricky as Carillo's Communists were determinedly trying to portray González's party as occupying the centre-right of the political spectrum thereby claim-staking leftist politics in Spain for the PCE. At the same time, the PCE approached the electorate in a moderate manner and managed to find access to centrist voter segments.<sup>794</sup> Felipe González tried to dispense fears of a West German 'dictatorship of ideas' when he outlined his political relationship with the SPD:

If I would be German I would be probably on the left of the SPD. That means that I would be a member of the SPD. However, the Spanish and German situations cannot be compared. Brandt and Germany's Social Democracy enjoy the support of the working class. One needs to take into account that the Germans deal with totally different societal and economic structures. Furthermore, there is the constant presence of East Germany. You cannot compare that to Spain. On the other hand, if I would be French I would be a member of the French Socialist Party. If I would be Italian, I would nevertheless belong to the Italian Socialist Party. And if I would be Hungarian or Czech I would certainly not be a member of the Communist Party.<sup>795</sup>

Writing in the acclaimed political journal *Diario 16*, Spanish journalist Luis García San Miguel observed changing political attitudes on the part of the anti-Franco left after the dictator's death. According to San Miguel, the new transitional climate had generated a situation in which the aim was not to "destroy *franquismo* but to build democracy".

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political leadership. In December 1975, PSOE leader Gonzalez was refused a passport to follow the invitation of the Socialist group in the European Parliament. Lilienfeldt was instructed to intervene on Gonzalez' behalf. Writes Dingels: "The delaying tactics of the Spanish authorities is obvious. Ambassador v. Lilienfeldt made abundantly clear to the King that we have the utmost interest in Gonzalez' visit." AdsD, WBC, BN/127, Letter Hans-Eberhard Dingels to Willy Brandt, 26 November 1975.

<sup>793</sup> Personal interview with Hans-Eberhard Dingels, Bonn, 18 April 2002.

<sup>794</sup> A few years later, PCE leader Santiago Carillo himself publicly advocated a close co-operation between SPD and PCE. Willy Brandt's former Chief of Staff Klaus Harpprecht recalls a train ride with Carillo. While both men were scheduled to attend a party conference of the Italian Communist Party in Livorno, Carillo used the opportunity to raise the issue of closer ties between PCE and SPD and asked Harpprecht to arrange a direct meeting with the SI-President. "Brandt rejected the former Stalinist's request immediately not least because of his memories of the Spanish Civil War." Interview Klaus Harpprecht. According to observers, this change in Carillo's political orientation was based on the conviction that "the SPD has become an important factor for stability and political balance in Europe." AdsD, WBC, BN/132, Note Gerhard O. Klepsties, 31 January 1980.

<sup>795</sup> Interview with Ramón Pi, in: *La Actualidad Española*, 6 December 1976 (translation by author).

Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Communist propaganda had bandied the stereotype about that “Social Democracy equals social treason, an instrument in the hands of the bourgeoisie to discipline the proletariat.”<sup>796</sup> Even years after the beginning of political co-operation between PSOE, SPD and FEF, González’s international connection remained a useful weapon in the hands of his political foes and the PCE spearheaded the banging of the drums holding SPD Chairman Brandt responsible for the prevention of unity among Spanish leftwing forces.

Others were equally keen to drive a wedge between the two parties, attempts that did not go unnoticed by the SPD’s international affairs department. West Germany’s Social Democrats were concerned that certain political groupings with political aspirations to replace González’s PSOE as the sole recipient of West German political and financial soft power assistance would try to undermine the institutional fundament of trust between party headquarters in Bonn and Madrid. Their efforts were seen as an attempt to “get back into talks with the SPD” after having successfully destroyed the axis Brandt-González.<sup>797</sup> These groups were identified as ‘Spanish Social Democrats’ and as members of the old historical wing of PSOE apparently trying to provide the Spanish media with background information on statements allegedly made by SPD leaders. Brandt was quoted as describing the PSOE as “a maximalist doctrinaire and immature party without any humility”, and the Madrid-based newspaper ABC reported that the SPD would financially support PSOE *histórico* and the Socialist Party of Catalonia.<sup>798</sup> Furthermore, SPD foreign affairs expert Veronika Isenberg pointed out that the aforementioned efforts to undermine the SPD-PSOE alliance were met with only thinly disguised sympathies in Spanish government circles. The government tried “to convince the SPD that PSOE was a party far more radical than West Germany’s Social Democrats and that other parties in Spain existed in greater ideological proximity to the SPD’s political positions.”<sup>799</sup>

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<sup>796</sup> Luis García San Miguel, ‘La Socialdemocracia, a la vista (I): Socialdemocracia, Socialismo y Comunismo’, *Diario 16*, 21 February 1977.

<sup>797</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1542, Notes Veronika Isenberg on a press campaign in Spain, 7 January 1977.

<sup>798</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>799</sup> *Ibid.*

By and large, the political tandem SPD-PSOE maintained its channels of communication, preserved and strengthened cross-party connections and continued unperturbed to co-operate throughout the transition phase. Although the frequent allegations of a meddling in the internal affairs of the Spanish state appeared to not have failed to have an effect on public opinion and although the Spanish Government may have welcomed the opportunity to disrupt the exchange of political ideas between the two parties in order to weaken PSOE as a future contender for political power, Madrid's official attitude remained unagitated. In an interview with *Cambio 16*, Spanish Foreign Minister Areilza had unambiguously stated that his government would not perceive SPD support for PSOE as outside interference, and that it appreciated inter-party links.<sup>800</sup> Echoing Areilza's position, the Spanish Ambassador in Bonn Emilio Garrigues reasoned in a frank letter to SPD foreign policy spokesman Bruno Friedrich:

The days when non-interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign state was seen as a national taboo are long gone and I am asking myself if that has been always so particularly since – according to Talleyrand's cynical but important opinion – the principle of non-intervention appears to be the one with the most similarities to the principle of intervention.<sup>801</sup>

According to Garrigues, PSOE appeared to be still strategically and ideologically torn between working towards “a Social Democracy German style or a people's front à la Mitterrand.”<sup>802</sup> He stressed the fact that the path ultimately chosen by the party “will be of the utmost importance for Spanish politics” and that therefore the guiding hand of its

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<sup>800</sup> It is important to note that the Spanish Government requested in talks with German diplomats a “discrete approach which would be in the interest of all parties involved although in principal it welcomed the inter-party contacts”, AdsD, HSC, BN/6566, Country Report Spain (Länderbericht), German Embassy Madrid, 1976. In talks with SPD foreign affairs expert Hans-Jürgen Wischniewski, Spanish Foreign Minister described Gonzalez as a “modern young politician of absolute integrity” and he promised that he and his colleagues would “support the creation of a truly democratic leftist movement in order to prevent Spain from falling prey to left or rightwing extremism.” Areilza also supported the creation of a strong union organisation. AdsD, WBC, BN/131, Note Hans-Eberhard Dingels, 11 January 1976. In this context, it is important to note Koniecki's statement that “bilateral assistance according to the official line does *not* exist (e.g. between SPD and PSOE) but that assistance is provided via international organisations e.g. the SI or the International Association of Free Trade Unions”, AdsD, HSC, BN/6566, Recommendations by Dieter Koniecki for background talks with German journalists in the Embassy.

<sup>801</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1540, Letter Emilio Garrigues to Bruno Friedrich, 28 April 1976 (translation by author).

<sup>802</sup> *Ibid.*



West German mentor SPD was crucial during the *transición*.<sup>803</sup> SPD official Isenberg concludes: "Our diplomatic mission here does not only interpret this as the desire of the Foreign Minister to maintain an orderly relationship with the SPD but it goes on the assumption, that he sees the tempering influence on the Spanish Socialists as positive."<sup>804</sup> Earlier, West Germany's Ambassador von Lilienfeldt had informed SPD-Chairman Brandt about the positive attitude displayed by the Spanish Government vis-à-vis the democracy promotion activities of SPD and FEF:

The King as well as Foreign Minister Areilza and Interior Minister Fraga confirmed to me that without the participation of PSOE their reform projects would be doomed to failure. They all want to see a strong Socialist party under the leadership of Felipe González, which is going to compete politically within the newly emerged democratic structures in Spain. Therefore, they welcome the contacts between SPD and PSOE and appreciate the positive influence the former has over the latter.<sup>805</sup>

Prime Minister Adolfo Suárez was interested in the creation of two equally potent power blocs in Spain's transitional arena, which would dominate the political scenery on the centre-left and centre-right of the ideological spectrum. His own party *Unión de Centro Democrático* (UCD) was to represent the Conservative segments of the electorate, González's PSOE being a moderate Socialist party would represent progressive voters.<sup>806</sup> Together, they would stake a sufficiently large claim on the transitional and post-transitional chessboard, which would permanently exclude radical parties. In 1977, FEF resident representative Koniecki wrote:

According to Suárez's plan, it will be crucial for UCD and PSOE to maintain the current distribution of power and to occupy future political spaces. Together, the two parties are representing circa 80 percent of the electorate and if they continue to adopt moderate positions in their political programmes the regular rotation of political power from one

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<sup>803</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>804</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1540, Notes Veronika Isenberg 'Der Besuch einer SI-Delegation in Spanien vom 14. bis 18. Januar 1976', 21 January 1976.

<sup>805</sup> AdsD, WBC, BN/45, Letter Lilienfeldt to Willy Brandt (translation by author).

<sup>806</sup> Interior Minister Fraga had earlier remarked about the role of political parties in Spain's new democracy: "They are like fungus now. There are too many of them. We would like to see four main parties, two on the right and two on the left." DNSA/KT 01885, Memorandum of Conversation, 25 January 1976

party to the other is going to become a normal democratic development accepted by the Spanish citizenry.<sup>807</sup>

The importance of the German-Spanish political aid connection and the importance that PSOE's leadership attached to the SPD's opinion on crucial political questions became evident in cases in which the PSOE leadership consulted the SPD before policies were finalised, laws conceptualised or even parliamentary decisions taken. The visit of two members of the PSOE's Defence Committee in April 1978 – Enrique Múgica and Luis Solana – to Germany to discuss the PSOE's defence policies and related parliamentary proceedings with a number of individuals and institutions can be seen as an example that highlighted the nature of the relationship between PSOE and SPD and PSOE and the West German Government respectively. FEF Resident Representative Koniecki writes:

The visit, which was initiated by the SPD executive and not by us, is of the utmost urgency. Concerning the final wording of certain parts of the Spanish constitution which will also include the question of defence alliances the decisions need to be taken until the end of the month. It goes without saying that the PSOE will need to take into account the opinion and expertise of the West German Ministry of Defence and of the Federal Government during the parliamentary debate in the *Cortes*. The Federal Republic is one of the major West European powers and my conversation partners see their talks in Bonn as crucial.<sup>808</sup>

The FEF acted not only on behalf of Germany's Social Democracy in order to strengthen the electoral position of PSOE but the Foundation also helped to reduce what Koniecki called the PSOE's "ideological frigidity."<sup>809</sup> The FEF needed to ease its Spanish partner's political fears of being indefinitely trapped in what at times appeared to be an image-cracking Faustian pact with one side selling its political soul and ideological convictions in exchange for urgently needed technical and financial support.

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<sup>807</sup> AdsD, WBC, BN/62, Report 'Die politische Situation in Spanien', (Dieter Koniecki), 17 October 1977 (translation by author).

<sup>808</sup> AdsD, BFC, BN/1542, Notes Dieter Koniecki 'Besuch des PSOE-Verteidigungsausschusses in Westdeutschland' (translation by author).

<sup>809</sup> *Ibid.*

#### ***4.11. Conclusions***

This chapter has set out to highlight the channels through which West Germany's foreign policy pursued a transnational form of soft power politics towards regime change in Spain. Rather than abstaining from interventionist approaches to further its state interests during the phase of political transformation, the SPD-led government supplemented the diplomatic efforts of the German Foreign Office by encouraging the pursuit of an informal diplomacy operationalised via Germany's political foundations in general and the FEF in particular. Bonn's security interest of containing Communist influence and preventing the PCE from occupying crucial power positions in Spain's emerging democratic system was best served by pursuing a diplomatic bottom-up approach, in which external democracy promotion activities sought to establish counter-hegemony through the support for Socialist forces. This support was provided by means of soft power and aimed at the transformation of Spain's political infrastructure by influencing and 'socialising' future democratic elites. Without the necessary experience to 'work the electorate' as it were after decades of exiled existence, Spain's political parties were firm in their political values and beliefs but lacked policies and concepts and hence the ability to put these values and beliefs into practice. It was on this practical level that West German soft power politics sought to shape the political preferences of PSOE's leadership and to help setting the party's agenda for change.

With its Action Plan, the FEF sought to help PSOE, which emerged from exile after decades of clandestine existence, to develop durable organisational structures and to establish a nationwide network of party offices. The Foundation filled a significant skill gap by training political activists and party workers thus boosting PSOE's capacity to successfully contest elections at a later stage. After having prepared PSOE for the electoral battles ahead by helping the party to establish a countrywide network of offices, train party activists in campaigning and political communication and get the Socialist message across to the public through pamphlets, manifestos and flyers, the Foundation set out to strengthen the labour union UGT as the second pillar of Spain's Socialist movement. In particular, the model of consensual strategies of dispute resolution in West Germany's industrial relations provided UGT as well as Spanish employers with a template that could be used in the process of re-structuring Spain's

labour relations. Furthermore, the FEF's Madrid office helped to set up the *Fundación Largo Caballero* (FLC) as UGT's policy planning and research arm. The Foundation's traditional democracy promotion activities in the realm of industrial relations found their further expression in a range of seminars and publications on the model of a social partnership as practised between employers and organised labour in West Germany. Also, in order to aid the process of policy planning and to help shape PSOE's political positioning on socio-economic issues, the FEF organised a Summer School programme in 1977 with the question of Marxism's continuous relevance for PSOE's policy making a hotly contested issue.

After the phase of institutionalisation, additional guidance was provided in the area of constitution building, where the FEF helped to facilitate the process of legal debate on the various aspects of the new constitutional document. The decentralisation of political power became a central theme in the discussions and West Germany's experiences with political federalism and devolution neatly fitted into the conceptual vacuum of the transition. In sum, West German soft power driven foreign policy on its sub-state level of operation facilitated the transfer of ideas, policies and concepts in order to ensure the highest possible degree of compatibility between German and Spanish political and socio-economic structures. The ultimate aim was to stabilise the FRG's extraterritorial environment and regional milieu through promoting political pluralism while actively obstructing Communist efforts to play a leading role in Spain's new democracy. Several statements by the German Foreign Office demonstrated the systemic relationship between state and sub-state diplomacy and showed that the FEF's democracy promotion projects were welcomed and encouraged by the FRG's official diplomacy as important 'pioneering' work with democratic actors on the ground, which only transnational actors could engage in. In the words of the *Auswärtige Amt*, the political foundations were supposed to "train future political elites"<sup>810</sup> in the transition country thus binding Spain's democratic leadership closely to West Germany's political establishment. The diplomatic 'division of labour' with governmental diplomacy being engaged in bilateral and, regularly, multilateral endeavours of promoting democracy and the FEF's transnational co-operation with PSOE, UGT, FLC, FPI and other Socialist

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<sup>810</sup> See p.219.

organisations illustrates the two-tier nature of West Germany's foreign policy system whereby the operational mode on sub-state level is best described by Joseph Nye's concept of soft power.

In the following chapter, the FRG's non-coercive power of attraction, co-option and persuasion based on the transfer of ideas, concepts, values and expertise will be explored in a third transition setting. After the study in Chapter Two to Four has examined West German involvement in the Iberian processes of regime change throughout the 1970s, the next case study will focus on regime change in South Africa thus scrutinising a process of political transformation that spanned most parts of the 1980s and extended into the post-Cold War era ending with the country's first democratic elections in 1994. Again, it will be shown how (West) Germany's foreign policy operationalised soft power on a transnational level and outside multilateral frameworks. As in the Iberian cases of regime change, political foundations worked abreast governmental foreign policy actors furthering state as much as party interests. However, the chapter's focus will shift away from the Social Democracy-led governments of the 1970s towards the democracy promotion activities of the conservative Konrad-Adenauer Foundation (KAF) backed by a Christian Democratic dominated coalition government in Bonn.

## Chapter 5

### Pursuing Soft Power Politics IV: The Konrad Adenauer Foundation in South Africa 1982-1994

#### 5.1. Introduction

After having examined the role of West Germany's nongovernmental diplomacy in the Iberian Peninsula by maintaining an exclusive focus on the democracy promotion activities of the FEF throughout the 1970s, this chapter will put the spotlight firmly on channels of sub-state foreign policy during South Africa's 'long walk to freedom'<sup>811</sup> between 1982 and 1994. The case study differs in several respects from the previous investigations into the uses of German soft power in transitions from authoritarian rule. Firstly, the chapter shifts the scope of its inquiry from highlighting developments in European theatres of democratisation towards an African setting. This altered geographical orientation finds its justification in the prominent role, which South Africa played in the considerations of German industrialists. In addition, ethno-cultural links with Southern Africa's white minority population and its significant proportion of settlers of German descent had the apartheid state feature prominently on Bonn's foreign policy agenda. Secondly, the chapter continues the approach previously adopted in this thesis to single out the one political foundation affiliated with the majority party in the FRG Government. Although such a selective account will ineluctably fall short of providing an empirical analysis of the *Stiftungen* model as a whole, it will at the same time allow for a more detailed evaluation of democracy promotion projects and a closer interaction between state and sub-state diplomacy. In 1982, West Germany's political landscape had changed when CDU Chancellor Helmut Kohl took office after his Social Democratic opponent Helmut Schmidt was forced to resign after a vote of no confidence in West Germany's Lower House. This chapter will therefore provide an analysis of the role played by the Christian Democratic Konrad-Adenauer Foundation (KAF) in the transformation of South Africa's apartheid system. This focus will also help to shield

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<sup>811</sup> Nelson Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom – The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela*, (London, Little Brown, 1994).

the empirical part of this thesis from critical objections of having placed a rather lopsided emphasis on SPD-led foreign policy approaches. Finally, following KAF activities in South Africa until the holding of South Africa's general elections in 1994, the timeframe chosen in this chapter obviously exceeds the commonly accepted 1991 demarcation for the end of the Cold War. This does not seem to be entirely reconcilable with the general argument sketched out in the thesis to broaden existing narratives on German power *during* the Cold War and to add a previously under-researched operational dimension to the analysis of *West German* foreign policy. After all, most writers on German politics adhere to the distinction made between the historical periods of pre- and post-reunification marked by the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. However, it would seem incomprehensible to accept such an artificial historical bifurcation for an analysis of German foreign policy as if conditions, circumstances and policies for Bonn's diplomatic establishment had changed overnight. In order to show lines of operational continuity, it seems therefore justified to extend the period of inquiry into the soft power-based activities of one of Germany's political foundations a few years into the 1990s ending the analysis with the first democratic elections in 1994.

This chapter seeks to appreciate the transnational dimension of the FRG's informal diplomacy and to gain a greater understanding of the channels through which the KAF's sub-state activities were being operated. It will highlight the various phases of political co-operation between KAF and the South African Zulu movement *Inkatha* led by the ambivalent Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi while placing the former's support for the latter squarely within the context of (West) Germany's national interests (see 5.5). As in previous transitions, Bonn's foreign policy towards regime change in South Africa sought to ensure the highest possible level of compatibility between German and South African political and socio-economic structures as structural congruence would facilitate political stability and create a favourable investment climate for German industry (see 5.2. – 5.4.). The chapter will show how the Foundation's range of co-operation partners and policy areas in its democracy promotion activities was significantly broadened after President Frederick Willem de Klerk's historical announcement in February 1990 lifting the ban on the African National Congress (ANC) after decades of political stasis (see 5.7.). It will focus on the KAF's efforts to

help domestic actors and experts to write a new South African constitution (see 5.9.) and visit the Foundation's capacity-building programme with its emphasis on traditional leadership, local government and small business development (see 5.10. – 5.11.). At the same time, the chapter will compound its analysis of *Stiftungen* diplomacy with a parallel reflection on the FRG's official foreign policy to compare preference formation and show interaction between the two levels of Germany's foreign policy system. The argument is that contrary to the *Machtvergeessenheit* paradigm, both tiers of foreign policy - state and sub-state – were guided by state interests, which in turn were pursued not only within multilateral organisations such as the European Community (EC) but also through soft power on a transnational level.

## ***5.2. South Africa and West Germany's National Interest***

The Konrad-Adenauer Foundation (KAF) launched its democracy promotion activities in South Africa as early as 1981. Its Africa expert Frank Spengler described the country as an exception on the FRG's foreign policy agenda towards the African continent as in West Germany "there existed no coherent Africa policy. South Africa was a special case, on the one hand because many German investors had substantial business interests there<sup>812</sup>, and on the other hand, because we were already sensitised to the problem of European minorities in Southern Africa through our cultural affinity to white settlers of German descent in neighbouring Namibia."<sup>813</sup> West Germany's national interest in South and Southern Africa was therefore multifaceted resting on five interrelated motivational pillars. Firstly, for decades the African continent had become a battleground in the Cold War with both sides keen to attract an increasing number of postcolonial regimes to their cause. Within this bipolar context, FRG foreign policy in both its 'public' as well as 'private' variant' sought to contain Communist activities and to keep as large a part of Africa free from Soviet influence as possible. The safeguarding of free market economic structures was crucially linked to the second area of German interests, namely the protection of the FRG's significant economic investments and business interests. Bonn's concern about the potentially revolutionary nature of the

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<sup>812</sup> See pp.241-242.

<sup>813</sup> Personal interview (phone) with Frank Spengler, 13 June 2005.



ANC's liberation struggle needs to be also seen as a protectionist reflex with regards to its economic interests in the apartheid state.

Thirdly, South Africa's extraordinary wealth in natural resources and its role as a supplier of precious raw materials needed for production processes in important industrial sectors in the FRG created a sense of vulnerability on the part of Europe's industrial societies including West Germany.<sup>814</sup> It was therefore in the FRG's vital interest to prevent any possibly disruptive effects on the chain of supply from materialising. Fourth, West Germany depended in its international dealings on what may be called 'reputational power' i.e. a form of globally acknowledged moral integrity, which qualified the FRG for international leadership roles in the areas of bridge-building, conflict-resolution and mediation. This variant of the national interest was regularly put at risk by the often-hesitant stance of Bonn's government diplomacy with regards to tougher action vis-à-vis the apartheid regime. The danger of an erosion of Germany's 'reputational power' was highlighted by liberal MP Ulrich Irmer in 1988, who warned that "if we remain passive, South Africa's economic and strategic importance will one day turn against us, because we are at risk to lose our credibility with the countries of the Third World when they accuse us of reacting only verbally to this unacceptable situation."<sup>815</sup> Finally, West Germany's national interest derived also from a certain cultural affinity to Southern Africa's white settler population, a significant percentage of which were of German ancestry. "I believe" said the Minister of State in the German Foreign Office Helmut Schäfer in 1990, "that nothing has changed, that the Federal Republic of Germany still has a considerable responsibility for Southern Africa. We still have a significant interest in this region. Our involvement in Namibia forces us to confront the situation in the whole of Southern Africa."<sup>816</sup>

Officially, the West German Government presented itself prepared to engage in working relationships with "all politically and socially relevant groups in South

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<sup>814</sup> Ulrich Albrecht, 'The Policy of the Federal Republic of Germany towards the South', in Ekkehart Krippendorf, Volker Rittberger (eds.), *The Foreign Policy of West Germany – Formation and Contents*, (German Political Studies, vol.4, Sage Publications, London, 1980), p.173.

<sup>815</sup> Stenographic Report Deutscher Bundestag, 10th Legislative Period, 80th Session, 19 May 1988.

<sup>816</sup> Stenographic Report, Deutscher Bundestag, 11th Legislative Period, 202nd Session, 15 March 1990.

Africa.”<sup>817</sup> Bonn’s public diplomacy thus adopted the role of honest broker and a potential facilitator of dialogue between the opposing camps by “talking to the South African government as well as to the opposition [...] in particular to the labour unions.”<sup>818</sup> However, the CDU-led government shunned direct and public interaction with South Africa’s most important liberation movement, the African National Congress (ANC) and its smaller rival Pan African Congress (PAC) because of their commitment to the armed struggle and violent forms of resistance.<sup>819</sup> In addition, the ANC’s distinct Socialist orientation as well as its political co-operation with the South African Communist Party (SACP) led by veteran activist Joe Slovo remained a stumbling block for any high-profile diplomatic support by the West German government.<sup>820</sup> In particular, the CDU’s Bavaria-based coalition partner Christian Social Union (CSU) and its leader Franz-Josef Strauss thought it necessary to see the apartheid problem within the broader context of Cold War confrontation. Volkmar Köhler, former CDU Minister of State in the Ministry for Economic Co-operation and International Development (BMZ) remembered that Strauss “who was a great friend of the Afrikaner” was an example, “that certain CDU/CSU politicians viewed South Africa as a bulwark against Communism.”<sup>821</sup> Köhler himself highlighted South Africa’s economic importance based on its wealth of mineral resources.

The geographic and economic position of southern Africa and its deposits of raw materials make it imperative to counteract the Soviet Union’s attempt to extend its influence to other states in Africa. A particular danger consists in the influence and the

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<sup>817</sup> Statement of the Federal Government/Motion, (Drucksache 10/833), 21 December 1983.

<sup>818</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>819</sup> Personal correspondence with Alois Graf v. Waldburg-Zeil, 30 November 2005.

<sup>820</sup> However, CDU politician Volkmar Köhler stresses the fact that the FRG Government did in fact maintain contacts with the ANC and that in his function as a Minister of State, he had personally held talks with several leading ANC members in Bonn. These contacts intensified in the first half of the 1990s, when the ANC prepared for governmental responsibility and the CDU-led government aimed at “influencing the direction of the ANC’s economic policies, which at the time were of a strongly Socialist nature.” Personal interview (phone) with Volkmar Köhler, 27 January 2006.

<sup>821</sup> *Ibid.*. According to Köhler, Strauss had changed his opinion after talks with Soviet leader Michail Gorbatchev who told him that the relation between input and output, investment and profit had become completely disproportionate in the eyes of the Soviet Union. Köhler therefore concluded that the “argument of the defense of the West’s raw material and commodity security in South Africa had been invalidated.” The former editor of the West German publication *Afrikaforum* and CDU development expert Alois Graf von Waldburg-Zeil also described South Africa as a “battlefield of the Cold War”. Personal correspondence with Alois Graf v. Waldburg-Zeil, 30 November 2005.

operations of other non-African Communist states, the instigation of wars by proxy and the terrorist activities of organisations which, under the guise of freedom movements, are in reality pursuing totalitarian aims.<sup>822</sup>

Furthermore, the lack of coherence in the FRG's foreign policy towards the apartheid regime appeared to be also the result of policy differences between CSU foreign policy experts and the FDP-dominated *Auswärtige Amt*. While CSU leader Franz Josef Strauss displayed barely concealed sympathies for South Africa's white minority and expressed concern about their prospects of survival in a majority-ruled system, Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher of the liberal Free Democratic Party (FDP) favoured the stabilisation of the so-called frontline states such as Zambia, Botswana and Zimbabwe as part of a regional strategy of peaceful change.<sup>823</sup> Chancellor Helmut Kohl although initially hesitant backed the more inclusive and less divisive approach of the *Auswärtige Amt*, which rejected Pretoria's controversial homeland policy, sought to assist the independence of neighbouring Namibia and pursued the goal of ending the system of racial segregation through multilateral channels as well as through private and individual initiatives.<sup>824</sup>

This approach was guided by the idea of a 'critical dialogue' as a strategy of "constant push and demand based on an anti-apartheid stance and being part of the FRG's 'quiet diplomacy'".<sup>825</sup> Generally speaking, the conservative elements in the FRG Government rejected any confrontative stance towards the white minority government in Pretoria instead advocating "a policy of association with South Africa as the best

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<sup>822</sup> Volkmar Köhler, 'Europe's role in Africa: A German view', *International Affairs Bulletin*, 1982, Vol.6, p.38.

<sup>823</sup> Minister of State in the *Auswärtige Amt* Helmuth Schäfer, Stenographic Report Deutscher Bundestag, 11<sup>th</sup> Legislative Period, 80<sup>th</sup> Session, 19 May 1988. In an interview with the author, Volkmar Köhler criticised the strategy of supporting democratic forces in the frontline states as promoted by Genscher and his *Auswärtige Amt*, which he said was introduced by the previous SPD-led government of Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, as being "absurd" given the natural limitations on budgetary allocations for development aid. Instead, he urged the governing coalition to help establish a "co-operative relationship between South Africa and the frontline states" ultimately leading to Pretoria's admission into SADC. "South Africa's economic potential was crucially important for a successful development of sub-Saharan Africa." Personal interview (phone) with Volkmar Köhler, 27 January 2006.

<sup>824</sup> 'Die Antwort der Bundesregierung auf die Große Anfrage der Fraktion der SPD: Politik der Bundesregierung im Südlichen Afrika', *Auswärtiges Amt* (ed.), *Die Bundesrepublik Deutschland und Afrika*, (Bonn 1985), pp.99-100.

<sup>825</sup> Claudius Wenzel, *Die Südafrikapolitik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1982-1992 – Politik gegen Apartheid ?*, (Opladen 1994), p.63.

strategy to nudge the apartheid regime towards instituting necessary political and socio-economic reforms.”<sup>826</sup> Its development spokesman Karl-Heinz Hornhues in a parliamentary debate outlined the official position of the government in May 1988. According to Hornhues, the FRG’s foreign policy sought to bring about “peaceful change” in South Africa through a three-level approach. The first level envisaged a “massive involvement of the politically and economically most important countries” in the West in order to facilitate negotiations between white rulers and black majority.<sup>827</sup> In a second step, the West German Government and its European allies through training and education programmes, development aid and the ending of sanctions should support a democratic transition.<sup>828</sup> Finally, West German foreign policy needed to aid attempts at two-track diplomacy, which were aimed at dispelling prejudices and stereotypes through dialogue.<sup>829</sup> One dissident government ministers, senior CDU politician Norbert Blüm, was more critical of the officially adopted strategy for change advocating a “a tougher gait” towards the racist regime in Pretoria and rejecting the primacy of national interests in what they perceived to be a “fight for human rights” as “human rights are not ‘national’.”<sup>830</sup>

With its adherence to a policy of evolutionary change, the CDU-led West German Government acted in accordance with the policies of President Ronald Reagan’s conservative U.S. administration. Reagan’s foreign policy adviser and main theorist of critical engagement, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Chester A. Crocker describing “effective coercive influence” as a “rare commodity in foreign policy”<sup>831</sup> had defined the task for Western diplomacy in its dealing with the apartheid regime as steering “between the twin dangers of abetting violence in the Republic and aligning ourselves with the cause of white rule.”<sup>832</sup> Crocker, who was described by the CDU’s

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<sup>826</sup> Bolade Michael Eyinla, *The Foreign Policy of West Germany towards Africa*, (Ibadan University Press 1996), p.127.

<sup>827</sup> Stenographic Report Deutscher Bundestag, 11th Legislative Period, 80th Session, 19 May 1988, p.5371.

<sup>828</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>829</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>830</sup> Personal correspondence with Norbert Blüm, 30 March 2006.

<sup>831</sup> Chester A. Crocker, ‘South Africa: Strategy for Change’, *Foreign Affairs*, vol.59, no.2, p.326.

<sup>832</sup> *Ibid.*, p.325.

South Africa expert Köhler as “an old friend of the Konrad-Adenauer Foundation”<sup>833</sup> saw both Washington and Bonn following the same path of nimble diplomacy of maintaining channels of political communication with a broad a spectrum of actors as possible foreboding that it was “risky to burn one’s bridges in any direction”.<sup>834</sup> He described the West’s foreign policy approach towards the South African problem including the strategy adopted by the FRG Government as standing in contrast to the elephantine position of many left-wing critics of the policy of ‘constructive engagement’, who argued that the invoked was nothing more than a cloak for foreign intervention and a disguise of the fact that “the West’s relationship with Africa was largely predicated on a long-term strategic alliance with the apartheid regime.”<sup>835</sup> Questioned on the wisdom of decision-makers in Western capitals to maintain a sometimes almost piqued distance to the revolutionary cadres of the ANC, Crocker remarked:

I believe we handled this question effectively, having low-level diplomatic and intelligence contacts from time to time and then raising those contacts to a higher level as events unfolded. It is not necessarily a wise thing to ‘recognise’ one organisation in a fast moving and fluid political situation such as in South Africa’s in the 1980s, but it is also unwise to cut oneself off from contact with an important movement such as the ANC.<sup>836</sup>

The seeming inefficiency of West Germany’s quiet diplomacy and its critical dialogue often paraphrased as “co-operation without change”<sup>837</sup> by its critics, and the continuous

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<sup>833</sup> Volkmar Köhler, ‘Europe’s role in Africa: A German view’, op.cit., p.43.

<sup>834</sup> Chester A. Crocker, ‘South Africa: Strategy for Change’, op.cit., p.342.

<sup>835</sup> Julie Hearn, ‘Aiding Democracy? Donors and civil society in South Africa’, *Third World Quarterly*, vol.21, no.5, p.821.

<sup>836</sup> Personal correspondence with Chester A. Crocker, 27 March 2006. His diplomat colleague Princeton Lyman, who headed Washington’s diplomatic mission in South Africa during the Clinton presidency, adopted a more critical attitude towards the transition policies of Western leaders. “Had the western governments been more open to the ANC earlier, it might have softened the rather deep anti-western feelings that exist within the ANC, feelings that linger today and contribute to some difficulties in the relationship between South Africa and western countries.” He points at the only restricted insight of Western governments into the internal developments of the ANC. “The West was not privileged to the debates going on within the ANC during the 1980s, when the whole strategy of armed resistance was being rethought.” Lyman admitted, “Had we understood that better, we might not have been so influenced by ideology and the overall impact of Cold War concerns when looking at the ANC. We certainly should have opened channels of communication before 1987.” Personal correspondence with Princeton N. Lyman, 3 May 2006.

<sup>837</sup> Uschi Eid, Green Party Development Spokeswoman, Stenographic Report Deutscher Bundestag, 11<sup>th</sup> Legislative Period, 80<sup>th</sup> Session, 19 May 1988, p.5372.

deepening of economic relations with South Africa became increasingly subject of a heated public debate, which escalated into the subsequent controversy over sanctions, a policy towards which the FRG displayed a traditional hostility. The International Development Spokesperson and South Africa expert of the opposition Green Party Uschi Aid, later Under-Secretary of State in the Ministry for International Development in the government of Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, points out that

The policy of 'critical dialogue' was unrecognisable and any efforts of promotion democracy based on this strategy were simply not crowned with success. South African President Botha was not forced to resign as a consequence of the Kohl Government's 'critical dialogue'. Our point of criticism was that the Federal Government during the 1980s refused to jointly implement the sanctions and boycotts, which were imposed by the European Community. West German politicians still travelled to South Africa and economic sanctions were not adopted at all.<sup>838</sup>

Together with the United States, West Germany's private sector ranked among the biggest suppliers of goods for the South African market since 1977. In 1984, the FRG's total exports to South Africa amounted to DM 6,65 billion (ca. £2,2 billion) making Pretoria the third-biggest export market for West German products in the Third World.<sup>839</sup> An estimated 400 West German companies led by industrial giants Daimler-Benz, BMW, Siemens, AEG and Bosch benefited from South Africa's extraordinarily cheap labour force, which until the second half of the 1980s was effectively controlled by the apartheid government thus enabling West German investors to extract high profits in a relatively stable business environment. Given the substantial economic interests at stake, it came as no surprise that the CDU-led government did not embrace coercive and potentially disruptive measures to end apartheid and, as the next section will show, only reluctantly went along with the application of hard power as expressed in the sanctions policy adopted by the EC in 1985.

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<sup>838</sup> Personal interview (phone) with Uschi Aid, 13 April 2006.

<sup>839</sup> Rainer Falk, 'Das Apartheid-Geschäft – Dimensionen der deutsch-südafrikanischen Wirtschaftsbeziehungen und ihre Rolle bei der Stabilisierung des Apartheidsystems', *Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik*, Köln 1985, pp.1046-1047.

### 5.3. *The Pros and Cons of Economic Sanctions*

Given its status as one of the world's most export-dependent trading states, the FRG categorically rejected any suggestion of bringing about political change through economic pressure. The opponents of economic sanctions stressed the FRG's extreme dependency on a number of raw materials and minerals such as chromium, platinum, different types of asbestos, manganese and antimony. Some even went as far as to argue that a 30% reduction in the supply with these raw materials would cause a 25% reduction in West Germany's GNP with high unemployment as a consequence.<sup>840</sup> The government also argued that the social hardship caused by economic sanctions would only hit the already impoverished and disenfranchised parts of the population.<sup>841</sup> "Our experience shows" argued the Minister of State in the *Auswärtige Amt* Lutz Stavenhagen in 1986, "that economic sanctions are not an effective tool to ensure the implementation of political demands."<sup>842</sup>

Contrary to the government's position on the usefulness of economic sanctions and cultural boycotts, the SPD and Green Party opposition in West Germany's Lower House demanded emphatically the tightening of diplomatic pressure and the use of economic coercion to force the apartheid regime to change its segregationist policies. In May 1988, the SPD parliamentary party introduced an (unsuccessful) motion in the *Bundestag*, which called for the withdrawal of the FRG's Ambassador to South Africa, the tightening of existing visa requirements for South African citizens travelling to West Germany, the refusal of landing rights for South African aircraft and a total stop of flights operated by West Germany's airline industry to the African country.<sup>843</sup> A year later, another motion initiated by Green Party MPs Halo Saibold and Uschi Eid urged the Kohl-Government to put a stop to South Africa promoting activities by publicly owned German companies in the tourism industry. The government-dominated Select Committee for Economic Affairs rejected the motion describing it as an attempt to

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<sup>840</sup> Günter Poser, 'Südliches Afrika und deutsche Sicherheit' in Uwe Vogel, Günter Poser, *Afrika und deutsche Sicherheit*, (Deutsche Afrika-Stiftung, Schriftenreihe 5, Bonn 1980), p.17.

<sup>841</sup> Stenographic Report Deutscher Bundestag, 11th Legislative Period, 80th Session, 19 May 1988.

<sup>842</sup> Lutz Stavenhagen, Deutscher Bundestag, 10th Legislative Period, Bulletin (Drucksache) 10/5887, 18 July 1986, p.3.

<sup>843</sup> Deutscher Bundestag, 11th Legislative Period, Bulletin (Drucksache) 11/2326, 18 May 1988.

unilaterally impose economic sanctions on Pretoria and stressing the need for a concerted Europe-wide approach if sanctions should be effective.<sup>844</sup>

Bonn's position on the issue remained unchanged until the EC decided at its meeting of foreign ministers in September 1985 in Luxembourg to adopt a tougher diplomatic stance including restrictive measures to facilitate and accelerate democratic change in South Africa and to react to the continuing violation of human rights. The EC catalogue built on the 1977 EC Code of Conduct for companies involved in business activities in South Africa and contained the imposition of a weapons embargo, the ending of any military co-operation, the temporary freeze on cultural and scientific contacts, a sports boycott, the end to oil exports, a ban on the supply of 'sensitive' equipment to the South African police forces and an end to nuclear co-operation. This package of restrictions was followed by a ban on iron and steel imports from South Africa and the recall of military attachés accredited to Pretoria.<sup>845</sup> Among the positive policies adopted by the West German Government was the 'Special Agenda Southern Africa' (*Sonderprogramm Südliches Afrika*), the support for the activities of non-governmental organisations and the EC Code of Conduct for companies trading with Pretoria.<sup>846</sup> The Special Agenda Southern Africa sought to improve the situation of educationally disadvantaged non-white South Africans and was endowed with a budget of DM 33 million between 1981 and 1990.<sup>847</sup> Despite a stronger foreign policy role for the CSU-led BMZ towards the end of the 1980s, the FRG did not provide official development aid, as South Africa did not qualify for developing country status according to the classification of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).<sup>848</sup> However, between 1975 and 1990 West German NGOs were financially assisted in their work with a total of DM 106,4 million, chiefly among them religious and humanitarian organisations but also the parties' political foundations

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<sup>844</sup> Deutscher Bundestag, 11<sup>th</sup> Legislative Period, Bulletin (Drucksache) 11/4453, 28 April 1989.

<sup>845</sup> Charles M. Becker, 'The Impact of Sanctions on South Africa and its Periphery', *African Studies Review*, vol.31, no. 2, 1988, p.61.

<sup>846</sup> Claudius Wenzel, *Die Südafrikapolitik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, op.cit., p.107.

<sup>847</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>848</sup> CDU development expert Köhler even argues that Foreign Minister Genscher "had lost any hope that the conflict in South Africa would be ended peacefully" with his ministry taking an increasingly low-profile stance on the issue. Personal interview (phone) with Volkmar Köhler, 27 January 2006.



including KAF.<sup>849</sup> Their soft power-based transition strategy will be discussed in the next section.

#### ***5.4. KAF, Cold War Context and Transition Strategy in South Africa***

While Bonn's governmental diplomacy locked horns with its critics over the usefulness of economic sanctions and the justification for cultural boycotts, private foreign policy actors like the *Stiftungen* explored possible ways of "facilitating peaceful change through partnerships with an organisation representing the country's black majority".<sup>850</sup> In focusing on democratic change in South Africa, the Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung (KAF) acted on the realisation that the apartheid state was "politically and strategically important particularly when seen through the prism of West German interests."<sup>851</sup> While official diplomacy was reluctant to adopt coercive measures towards South Africa in either unilateral or multilateral form, the sub-state actor KAF sought to influence the political process in the apartheid state by attracting South African partner organisations to its concepts, ideas and proposals. It represented a German foreign policy approach *outside* of multilateral fora, which was nevertheless guided by state interests despite being first and foremost a vehicle for the promotion of party political values.

Like West Germany's government diplomacy, the KAF's democracy promotion activities – directly or indirectly - sought to contain Communism in Southern Africa, secure the supply with raw materials, protect West German business interests in the country, maintain German advocacy on behalf of South Africa's white minority and to preserve the FRG's reputational credentials at the same time. Like other political foundations, the KAF pursued these interests through the use of soft power i.e. the transfer of ideas, values and policies through transnational channels in the pursuit of state interests outside multilateral frameworks. Instead of seeking the death of the apartheid regime through political strangulation from the outside, the Foundation like its Social Democratic equivalent FEF in Spain and Portugal aimed at preparing ideologically compatible political actors for leadership roles in the future democratic polity. Thus KAF democracy promotion experts sought to identify the most promising

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<sup>849</sup> Claudius Wenzel, *Die Südafrikapolitik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, op.cit., p.108.

<sup>850</sup> Personal correspondence with Josef Thesing, 9 January 2006.

<sup>851</sup> *Ibid.*

channels through which South Africa's authoritarian system could be effectively undermined from within after the Foundation had come to the conclusion that "ever since the assassination of (former Prime Minister Hendrik Frensch) Verwoerd, apartheid had become a discarded policy".<sup>852</sup> The aim was to identify a political partner organisation, which would be able to organise political campaigns free from the patronising interference by the South African authorities and without facing the risk of legal prosecution.<sup>853</sup> In the medium term, KAF strategists saw political change as inevitable and a memorandum published by the Foundation's first resident representative, Gerd D. Bossen in 1983 outlined the organisation's principle attitude vis-à-vis a future democratic transition.

Bossen described the Foundation as being committed to working towards democratic change in the apartheid state and to strengthening opposition forces as the "interests of the Federal Republic as being part of the free West and being a member of NATO should be directed towards the aim of keeping South Africa within the Western camp."<sup>854</sup> South Africa's strategic position and its natural wealth were described as important aspects, West German foreign policy decision-makers should take an interest in. The author argued, "in general, it is in the interest of the West to prevent a further expansion of the Soviet sphere of influence in Southern Africa."<sup>855</sup> Bossen stressed West Germany's economic interests and highlighted the importance of mutual trade relations.

Therefore, a violent conflict in South Africa would bring not only the economy to a complete standstill, something which cannot be in our interest. We should be rather interested in contributing to a peaceful evolutionary political process, something that will only become possible by the step-by-step elimination of racial segregation.<sup>856</sup>

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<sup>852</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>853</sup> Ulf Engel, Hans-Georg Schleicher, *Die beiden deutschen Staaten in Afrika – Zwischen Konkurrenz und Koexistenz 1949-1990*, (Hamburger Beiträge zur Afrika-Kunde, 57, Hamburg 1999), p.344; Theodor Hanf, Rolf Hofmeier, Stefan Mair, 'Evaluierung der Aktivitäten der politischen Stiftungen in der Republik Südafrika', Berichtsentwurf, January 1995, p.34.

<sup>854</sup> Gerd D. Bossen, 'Überlegungen für eine neue deutsche Aussenpolitik in Richtung Afrika, Asien/Pazifik und Lateinamerika', Teil 2, *IIS-Auslandsinformationen*, Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung, 29.3.1983, p.14.

<sup>855</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>856</sup> *Ibid.*, p.15 (translation by author).

Finally, Bossen pointed at the "human rights considerations, which should cause us to press South Africa for change into this direction."<sup>857</sup> In the strategy paper, the KAF South Africa expert urged West Germany's governmental foreign policy planners in Bonn to replace what he perceived to be an idealistic conception of democratic change characterised by unrealistic demands on the part of European powers by a more tactical approach. He accepted the widespread fears of many white South Africans to end up marginalised in a political system controlled by the country's black majority as an important social dynamic and did not hide his belief that therefore the principle of 'one man - one vote' was an utopian demand and an illusory principle. In fact, KAF analyst Bossen perceived the political and operational radicalisation on the part of South Africa's liberation movements and the intensification of 'white fears' taking place at the same time to be the most serious threat to any peaceful solution of the conflict. In his opinion, the majority of the country's white community rejected any real political participation by black, mixed-race and Indian-South Africans while the oppressed developed an increasingly uncompromising attitude towards any conciliatory solutions the longer the authoritarian structures remained in place.

It is within these coordinates, that the KAF developed its operational strategy for the promotion of political change in South Africa. After consultation with its International Relations Department, the KAF Board of Directors decided to devote financial and human resources within a strategic democracy promotion framework designed to help overcome the apartheid system. Although the decision-making process of the Foundation remained "free from governmental interference", the fact that Chancellor Helmut Kohl was a KAF board member since 1968 and "always has been actively involved in decision-making" ensured close interconnectedness between 'public' and 'private' foreign policy institutions.<sup>858</sup> Former CDU-Minister of State in the Ministry for Economic Co-operation and International Development Wighardt Härdtl points out that "the Foundation's 'deployment' by CDU-led governments has a long tradition. The KAF can be seen indeed as a foreign policy instrument and operates more

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<sup>857</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>858</sup> Personal correspondence with Josef Thesing, 9 January 2006.

effectively in many areas than the diplomatic missions".<sup>859</sup> Furthermore, the link between government and Foundation was maintained through the regular exchange of information between government ministers, members of the CDU parliamentary party, officials in party headquarters and KAF analysts. Once in the field, the Foundation's resident representative filed regular reports, which were circulated among the CDU rank and file in parliament, government and party and provided Christian Democratic decision-makers with unvarnished information, something the official diplomatic bulletins and embassy reports often lacked.<sup>860</sup> KAF seminars and conferences on South African issues supplemented the intelligence supplied by the KAF office in Durban, whose activities were financially supported after both the BMZ and the *Auswärtige Amt* had approved funding for the Foundation's South Africa programme.<sup>861</sup> The gradual dissolution of racial prejudices, the eradication of ethnic stereotypes and the initiation of a process of societal interaction between the different ethnic groups were seen by the Foundation as the most important aspects of its transitional strategy. KAF officials realised that only a massively increased degree of political co-operation between black South Africans and their white compatriots would enable the country to free itself from the looming scenario of civil war and political chaos.

This leads to the realisation, that besides the approach to exerting influence on the government, one needs to co-operate with those political forces committed to peaceful change. Unfortunately, there are not too many people among blacks, coloureds and Asians anymore, who would advocate peaceful change. Many of them are leaning towards more radical movements.<sup>862</sup>

Although the KAF acknowledged that the black liberation movements PAC and ANC were political factors that "had to be taken into account"<sup>863</sup>, the Foundation emphasis on the non-violent nature of any democracy promotion activities in South Africa as well as

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<sup>859</sup> Personal interview (phone) with Wighardt Härdtl, 30 March 2006.

<sup>860</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>861</sup> Personal correspondence with Alois Graf v. Waldburg-Zeil, 30 November 2005. His CDU colleague Wighardt Härdtl remarked that although the German Government and the BMZ had not provided the KAF with additional funds, they assessed and looked at them with great „sympathy“. Personal interview (phone) with Wighardt Härdtl, 30 March 2006.

<sup>862</sup> Gerd D.Bossen, 'Überlegungen für eine neue deutsche Aussenpolitik in Richtung Afrika, Asien/Pazifik und Lateinamerika', p.17 (translation by author).

<sup>863</sup> *Ibid.*

significant ideological differences prevented the Foundation from establishing partnerships with the two aforementioned organisations. The pre-condition of non-violence was one of the few operational restrictions imposed on the Foundation by the government although KAF strategists never seriously entertained the possibility to politically co-operate with organisations involved in the armed struggle.<sup>864</sup> The following section will therefore focus on the question of political co-operation by taking a closer look at the political partnership between KAF and the South African Zulu movement *Inkatha*.

### **5.5. KAF and Inkatha**

The conservative Zulu movement *Inkatha* headed by Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi was thought to be the political force, which "deserves more support by the West and the Federal Republic."<sup>865</sup> The organisational forerunner of the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) seemed to be the ideal partner organisation for the West German foundation because of its status as being the mainstream cultural representation of South Africa's largest ethnic group combined with the fact that as a political party it was tolerated by the apartheid government and furthermore officially committed to non-violent means of political activism. However, the Foundation was aware of the militancy of certain segments of the Zulu movement. "We knew that *Inkatha* was not free from violence," admits KAF manager Josef Thesing not without immediately pointing out "in its rivalry with ANC both sides used violence."<sup>866</sup> In order to guide its South African partner on a path of peaceful change and negotiated political settlement while confronting both the apartheid regime and its main rival ANC, foundation diplomat Thesing emphasised that "in our contacts with leading personalities of the *Inkatha* movement, we always tried to have a tempering effect on their self-conduct."<sup>867</sup>

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<sup>864</sup> The insistence on the non-violent nature of any resistance to the apartheid regime was adopted not only by the KAF but by the CDU/FDP coalition government as a whole, see e.g. Statement by Helmut Schäfer, Minister of State in the *Auswärtige Amt*, Deutscher Bundestag, 11<sup>th</sup> Legislative Period, Bulletin (Drucksache) 11/2647, 29 June 1988.

<sup>865</sup> Gerd D.Bossen, 'Überlegungen für eine neue deutsche Aussenpolitik in Richtung Afrika, Asien/Pazifik und Lateinamerika', op.cit., p.18.

<sup>866</sup> Personal correspondence with Josef Thesing, 9 January 2006.

<sup>867</sup> *Ibid.* However, opposition politician Hans-Günther Toetemeyer questioned the 'pacifying' impact the KAF had on its South African partner. Despite substantial financial support provided by the Christian Democratic democracy promotion agency, Toetemeyer argues that the Foundation "could not

Nevertheless, the principal of non-violent activism was frequently violated in the first half of the 1990s although never towards the white minority regime. Rather Inkatha's political rivalry with the ANC led to regular violent clashes between the two groups particularly in Buthelezi's home province of KwaZulu-Natal. The KAF leadership knew that its South African partner organisation's self-conduct "was not free from violence" but later pointed out that "we tried to bring our moderating influence to bear on Inkatha leaders, which was not always successful but generally possible."<sup>868</sup> And another KAF analyst added that "future conflicts no matter if expressed in the increasing polarisation over the Inkatha connection in West Germany or visible in the violent power struggle between *Inkatha*, ANC and other black political groups could not be foreseen when the KAF started its democracy promotion activities."<sup>869</sup> However, certain government officials were cautiously critical of the often-aggressive political strategy and public appearance of Inkatha. "One could get the impression that Buthelezi regularly mobilised tribal structures to eliminate political rivals" recalls CDU minister Köhler and adds that "it was therefore pretty obvious that support for him needed to have limits."<sup>870</sup> Buthelezi himself described his own attitude towards political violence as the attempt to honour the initially peaceful methods of the rival ANC, which he saw as the historical legacy of South Africa's black resistance movement.

I, for one, endorsed the original strategy of the ANC, which was based on non-violence, passive resistance and the seizing of the moral high ground to promote and negotiate a

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constructively influence the democratisation process, to the contrary, it only helped to promote Buthelezi's segregationist policies." Personal correspondence with Hans-Günther Toetemeyer, 13 April 2006.

<sup>868</sup> Personal correspondence with Josef Thesing, 9 January 2006.

<sup>869</sup> Silke Krieger, 'Ziele, Aufgaben, Arbeitsweisen und Erfahrungen der politischen Stiftungen in Afrika und im Nahe Osten am Beispiel der Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung', in Udo Steinbach, Volker Nienhaus (eds.), *Entwicklungszusammenarbeit in Kultur, Recht und Wirtschaft – Grundlagen und Erfahrungen aus Afrika und Nahost*, (Festgabe für Volkmar Köhler zum 65. Geburtstag, Leske + Budrich, Opladen 1995), p.353.

<sup>870</sup> Personal interview (phone) with Volkmar Köhler, 27 January 2006. According to political analyst Klaus Freiherr von der Ropp, Köhler "was one of the few CDU politicians, who was conscious of the fact that among the liberation movements it was the ANC and not the IFP that was the most important actor", 'Die Entwicklungsgemeinschaft im Südlichen Afrika (SADC) – Utopie oder künftige Realität?', in Udo Steinbach, Volker Nienhaus (eds.), *Entwicklungszusammenarbeit in Kzultur, Recht und Wirtschaft – Grundlagen und Erfahrungen aus Afrika und Nahost*, op.cit., p.219.

solution. The Konrad-Adenauer Foundation, and through it the German Government, were very conducive to this approach finally prevailing.<sup>871</sup>

And he thanked his German supporters for having demonstrated a rare pragmatism in their dealing with the IFP.

I am personally indebted to the government of Germany for the support it gave me when I took a principled stand for a negotiated solution to the South African dilemma, rather than the path of the armed struggle and military confrontation. Other governments isolated leaders of the liberation struggle such as myself, who did not jump on the bandwagon of the armed struggle, international sanctions against South Africa, and the campaign for disinvestments. But the German Government maintained a more pragmatic approach.<sup>872</sup>

The organisation was undoubtedly one of the most powerful opposition forces with an estimated 400.000 members at the outset of the 1980s. It was well noted by the German foundation that Buthelezi and his party vehemently opposed economic sanctions by the international community, and that the Zulu leader had adopted a much more compromise-oriented approach to political change than ANC, PAC or SACP arguing that “through limited participation in the system of ‘separate development’, the system could be changed from within.”<sup>873</sup> Succinctly describing the attraction, Buthelezi and his movement held for many conservative parties and governments in the West, New York Times journalist Christopher S. Wren wrote in 1991:

His friends, among them conservatives in the United States, Britain and West Germany, applaud Buthelezi for denouncing the ANC’s alliance with the South African Communist Party and find his endorsement of free market economics more palatable than the ANC’s talk about nationalisation and redistribution of wealth. They like Buthelezi’s opposition to economic sanctions and to the guerrilla struggle that the ANC finally suspended last August. They like Buthelezi, in short, for the very reason his

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<sup>871</sup> Mangosuthu Buthelezi, ‘The role of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in the past ten years of South African democratic evolution’, Remarks made at the Goethe Institute Symposium ‘Promoting Democracy! – The world of the German political Foundations’, available from [http://www.KAF.de/publikationen/2005/5973\\_dokument.html](http://www.KAF.de/publikationen/2005/5973_dokument.html), cited on 25 January 2006.

<sup>872</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>873</sup> Michaela Frischauf, *Inkatha, Zulu Nationalismus und Neuerfindung der Vergangenheit in Südafrika* (Verlag Dr. Kovač, Schriften zur internationalen Politik, 2003), p.38.

enemies, at home and overseas, hate him: his ideology sounds neither revolutionary nor romantic but pragmatically middle-of-the-road.<sup>874</sup>

Western diplomatic observers involved in the transition process agree with Wren's assessment. "Buthelezi presented himself as pro-capitalism, against armed resistance, and for a negotiated settlement" remembers Princeton Lyman, Washington's Ambassador in Pretoria between 1992 and 1995, "both the UK and the German government and foundations were enthralled with Buthelezi. So too were the AFL-CIO in the U.S., along with conservative members of Congress and business interests."<sup>875</sup> The logic behind the proposed political partnership with the Zulu party was that an increased level of international recognition made possible by *Inkatha's* West German connection would "cause the South African government to deal seriously with *Inkatha's* offer of peaceful and fair reconciliation of the conflicting interests between black and white."<sup>876</sup> The KAF urged the West German Government to maintain its criticism of the white minority regime's homeland policy and to refuse diplomatic recognition for the Pretoria-controlled satellite states while KAF partner Mangosuthu Buthelezi strictly refused to accept any form of homeland 'independence', rejected negotiations with the apartheid government as long as ANC leader Nelson Mandela had not been released from prison and uncompromisingly obstructed Pretoria's segregationist divide and rule policy. Acting on the realisation that the "ideal partner did not exist", KAF strategists in co-operation with CDU leaders opted for a transnational partnership with the Buthelezi party because the Zulu movement was the "only legally recognised opposition in South Africa."<sup>877</sup> His West German mentors saw the Zulu aristocrat as a "special factor", as the "peace-loving black man"<sup>878</sup> who was indispensable for any "all-inclusive South African solution" to the country's political conflict.<sup>879</sup> "By co-operating with *Inkatha*,

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<sup>874</sup> Christopher S. Wren, 'The Chief Steps Forward', *New York Times*, 17 February 1991.

<sup>875</sup> Personal correspondence with Princeton N. Lyman, 3 May 2006.

<sup>876</sup> Gerd D.Bossen, 'Überlegungen für eine neue deutsche Aussenpolitik in Richtung Afrika, Asien/Pazifik und Lateinamerika', p.19. Apparently, the head of the KAF Southern Africa Desk, Josef Luetke-Entrup on a visit to South Africa in 1981 began to establish links with the *Inkatha* movement, which he saw as a potential political partner for the Foundation, in Ulf Engel, Hans-Georg Schleicher, *Die beiden deutschen Staaten in Afrika*, op.cit., pp.341-342.

<sup>877</sup> Personal correspondence with Josef Thesing, 9 January 2006.

<sup>878</sup> Personal interview with Karl-Heinz Hornhues, Berlin, 3 December 1999.

<sup>879</sup> Personal interview (phone) with Frank Spengler, 13 June 2005.



we hoped to train and support future leaders for a democratic South Africa. Without our financial support, it can be safely assumed that Buthelezi would have had to close down his activities.”<sup>880</sup>

*Inkatha* appeared to be the ideal recipient for political aid because the movement was able to occupy political niches in the apartheid system and was tolerated by the South African government. It advocated a strategy that sought to facilitate change from *within* the system to achieve the political goal of overcoming white supremacy and to bring about democratic change.<sup>881</sup> *Inkatha's* economic agenda contained a commitment to the principle of market economy and competitive entrepreneurial structures, and it embraced the prospect of a federalist constitution for a democratic post-apartheid South Africa. In an official report on the activities of West Germany's political foundations, *Inkatha* was described as “an interesting partner for the KAF because of the movement's preparedness to work towards the improvement of living standards of the disadvantaged majority in South Africa even before South Africa's political system experienced fundamental change.”<sup>882</sup> The *Inkatha* connection would therefore reflect “the interests and values” of the conservative Foundation and its affiliated political party in Germany.<sup>883</sup> The efforts made by the KAF to be allowed an official representation in the country dated back to 1981 and were met by the stern opposition of the South African Government. “Pretoria's argument always was that if the KAF was allowed to run its projects” remembers CDU development expert Volkmar Köhler, “other NGOs would demand similar concessions, namely to interfere in South Africa's internal affairs.”<sup>884</sup>

However, the more obstructive the authorities in Pretoria became, the more demanding the West German Government appeared in its attempt to convince Pretoria to let the KAF operate from a base in South Africa. Köhler remembers that “I and my cabinet colleagues supported the negotiations conducted by KAF Chairman Bruno Heck

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<sup>880</sup> Personal interview with Michael Lange, Johannesburg, 6 October 1999.

<sup>881</sup> For a history of the *Inkatha* movement from a German perspective see Franz Ansprenger, *Inkatha – Eine politische Kraft in Südafrika*, (Bouvier Verlag, Bonn 1999).

<sup>882</sup> Theodor Hanf, Rolf Hofmeier, Stefan Mair, 'Evaluierung der Aktivitäten der politischen Stiftungen in der Republik Südafrika', op.cit., p.34.

<sup>883</sup> Ulf Engel, Hans-Georg Schleicher, *Die beiden deutschen Staaten in Afrika*, op.cit., pp.342.

<sup>884</sup> Personal interview (phone) with Volkmar Köhler, 27 January 2006.

with the authorities by making clear to representatives of the South African Government that we *expected* them to give us the green light for the opening of a KAF office and that any negative decision would certainly trigger disadvantageous consequences.”<sup>885</sup> This was confirmed by the former Head of the KAF’s International Relations Department Josef Thesing, who frankly concedes, “the Federal Government subjected the South African authorities to a lot of pressure as far as KAF activities were concerned”.<sup>886</sup> In addition, both KAF and West German Government lobbied the South African Ambassador in Bonn and after KAF President Bruno Heck had signed a co-operation agreement with *Inkatha* Chief Buthelezi, the first KAF representative Gerd Bossen opened an official office in the coastal city of Durban making the Christian Democratic organisation West Germany’s first political foundation to operate in South Africa. However, Bossen was forced to leave the country regularly to renew his visa.<sup>887</sup>

Having identified the *Inkatha* movement as its South African partner, the KAF began to pursue a democracy promotion programme, which can be described as “partisan support of specific sections of the social and political realm whose existence is in their opinion a necessary ingredient for the functioning of a pluralist democracy.”<sup>888</sup> This partisan support found its expression in financial allocations to various political campaigns and initiatives” during “decisive stages of the transition period.”<sup>889</sup> The political partnership, in which the recipient of political aid retains its organisational and ideological independence helped to prevent the Foundation from accusations of external interference in the domestic affairs of a sovereign state.<sup>890</sup> In its activities, the KAF followed a kind of ‘Trojan horse’” principle to strengthen political values and democratic forces. It co-operated with an ideologically compatible partner organisation, which served as a vehicle for the transfer of political ideas and concepts. In doing so, it promoted a future political system that would guarantee a sufficiently high degree of “justice, pluralism, competition and control of the political sector by parliament and

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<sup>885</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>886</sup> Personal correspondence with Josef Thesing, 9 January 2006.

<sup>887</sup> Ulf Engel, Hans-Georg Schleicher, *Die beiden deutschen Staaten in Afrika*, op.cit., pp.342.

<sup>888</sup> Stefan Mair, The Role of the German ‘Stiftungen’ in the Process of Democratisation, ECDPM Working Paper, no.32, June 1997, pp.5-6.

<sup>889</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>890</sup> Personal interview with Michael Lange, Johannesburg, 6 October 1999.

media.”<sup>891</sup> The Foundation’s co-operation with *Inkatha* and its democracy promotion activities resulting from this partnership bore witness to a form of modern power politics, which was based on noncoercive instruments and methods and did not require a multilateral configuration for its operationalisation. Instead of abstaining from the attempt to shape the outcome of South Africa’s democratic transition thus displaying *Machtvergessenheit*, the Foundation sought to co-opt and persuade one segment of South Africa’s future political elite through transnationally transferred concepts and expertise thereby meeting Joseph Nye’s criteria for the classification of international interaction as soft power. Although leading parliamentary Africa experts within the CDU warned that “the exclusive connection with *Inkatha* should have been dissolved, because we ended up in an impasse, which significantly limited our ability to manoeuvre”, the Zulu movement was to remain the KAF’s political partner in South Africa for a long time.<sup>892</sup> It was a political force with a significant numerical constituency and it was the only political representation for black South Africans that provided a credible electoral alternative to the dominant ANC in a post-apartheid democracy its existence guaranteeing a minimum of political diversity and pluralism. Together with its partner, the KAF set out to focus on a programme of capacity-building on regional and municipal level, which will be examined in the following section.

### ***5.6. Capacity-Building – Inkatha I, II and III***

The so-called liberalisation phase is often the most important phase of the regime change process bringing about a crucial destabilisation and weakening of authoritarian structures caused by internal power struggles within the regime.<sup>893</sup> During the liberalisation phase, the activities of international actors can help to open up societal spaces, in which opposition groups can gather, prepare and develop their strategies. Mediation between rulers and opposition can take place and the first steps towards the launch of a sustainable dialogue can contribute to an atmosphere of reconciliation.

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<sup>891</sup> J.Stoll, ‘Die Demokratieförderung durch Projekte der Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung e.V. in Südafrika’, Vortragskonzept, St.Augustin, 23 May 1993, p.1.

<sup>892</sup> Personal interview with Karl-Heinz Hornhues, Berlin, 3 December 1999.

<sup>893</sup> Philippe C.Schmitter, Guillermo O’Donnell, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule – Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies*, (Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore 1986), p.7.

During the liberalisation phase, soft-liners in the authoritarian government are beginning to 'test the waters' and to explore the opportunities for talks with anti-regime forces while particularly open-minded members of the nomenclature express their willingness to cross the political divide often in a symbolic way. After having established its political connection with Inkatha, the KAF launched its democracy promotion programme in the liberalisation phase with the intention to "build bridges between political adversaries" and to bring representatives from "all political forces" to the negotiation table.<sup>894</sup> The pre-condition, was that the beneficiaries of its political aid campaigns had to "have the will to work towards social peace."<sup>895</sup> KAF experts believed that "only by supporting internal opposition groups it would be possible to overcome the apartheid system."<sup>896</sup> They favoured a combination of socio-political and socio-economic activities in order to "re-gain confidence, something that is important to blacks because the future in this country belongs to them and something that counts for whites because they are the key to this future."<sup>897</sup> Besides its partnership with *Inkatha*, the German Foundation maintained only "sporadic contacts with the ANC", an organisation, which had called off its previously peaceful means of resistance. "As a partner" insists Thesing, "the ANC was out of the question because of its concept of armed struggle."<sup>898</sup>

Based on the co-operation agreement, which *Inkatha* Secretary-General Oscar Dhlomo, the Zulu leader Frank Mdlalose, KAF representatives and the leader of the CDU opposition in the *Bundestag* Helmut Kohl signed in March 1982 after talks in Bonn, the KAF launched three initial democracy promotion projects in South Africa. *Inkatha I* set out to explore development opportunities within the South African municipal district of Msinga. This programme lasted only for a short period of time and was later taken over by another West German NGO. The remaining two projects became the backbone of KAF activities in the Cape Republic during most parts of the

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<sup>894</sup> Silke Krieger, *KAF-Auslandsinformationen*, December 1990, p.1.

<sup>895</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>896</sup> Frank Spengler, 'Entwicklungspartnerschaft der Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung mit der Republik Südafrika', St. Augustin 1995, p.2.

<sup>897</sup> Gerd D. Bossen, 'Überlegungen für eine neue deutsche Aussenpolitik in Richtung Afrika, Asien/Pazifik und Lateinamerika', op.cit., p.21.

<sup>898</sup> Personal correspondence with Josef Thesing, 9 January 2006.

1980s. *Inkatha II* was the internal KAF code name for the Community Service Training Programme (CSTP) while *Inkatha III* was the project title for the co-operation between Foundation and the Inkatha Institute in Durban with the Inkatha Research and Information Centre (INREC) at its centre.<sup>899</sup> The Inkatha Institute was established in 1988 in an attempt to provide the Zulu movement with the resources of a political think tank. KAF and *Inkatha* officials realised that Buthelezi's political force "lacked the quantity and quality of intellectuals available to the National Party and the ANC" while at the same time "it was fighting on two fronts (trying to understand the nature of change in both the rural and the urban areas) whereas the NP and ANC were primarily urban movements".<sup>900</sup> It conducted research in the areas of land development (especially housing and services), urbanisation, municipal and regional boundary re-definitions and development projects. Furthermore, the Institute provided policy papers and research services to the KwaZulu provincial government on topics such as taxation, allocation of resources and municipal services.<sup>901</sup> Initially, the Institute's organisational structure included three departments, namely Research headed by the former IFP parliamentarian Gavin Woods who was also the think tank's executive director, Finance and Library. The research section was divided into the Departments for Economic and Social Research respectively whereby the former provided expertise to the KwaZulu Government while the latter was given "watching briefs for developmental activities where the IFP was represented."<sup>902</sup>

As the violent clashes with *Inkatha*'s main rival ANC intensified, the Violence Monitoring Unit was added as a fourth division to the Institute's already existing departments. The unit sought to counter the ANC own statistics of fatalities. Former Inkatha Institute analyst Errol Goetsch remembered:

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<sup>899</sup> According to internal budgetary documentation on KAF-administered democracy promotion projects, INREC was financially supported with DM 19,574.152 (approximately £6.3 million). Furthermore, the Foundation spent a total of DM 5,919.220 (approximately £2 million) on the Inkatha Development Office between 1986 and 1992. Budgetary Supplement 1993 (Begleitpapier zum Entwurf des Bundeshaushaltsplans), Single Financial Plan 23 (BMZ), Personal correspondence with Hans-Günther Toetemeyer, 13 April 2006.

<sup>900</sup> Personal correspondence with Errol Goetsch, 20 March 2006.

<sup>901</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>902</sup> Among those activities were the Durban Convention Centre, the Durban Waterfront and Cato Manor, the Ndwedwe electrification and the Water 2000 projects. The Social Research Department was headed by Errol Goetsch, the Economic Research Desk by Peter Christensen. *Ibid.*

The IFP was media-shy whilst the ANC was media-savvy. The ANC had mobilised its monitors first, so it had the advantage of feeding the news media with its combination of facts and spin. In its news reports, the dead were either ANC leaders, or members of the community. News of deaths of IFP leaders and supporters were suppressed. The Violence Study [...] highlighted how often IFP leaders were the victims of ANC aggression. Interestingly, the unit attempted to depoliticise the numbers by showing that some portion of the violence was not tied to IFP vs. ANC and belonged to tribal and local land disputes, thefts, vigilantism etc.<sup>903</sup>

Inkatha II encompassed a variety of measures aimed at enhancing, improving and strengthening the position of the Zulu movement as a central actor in the area of local and regional development and community management.<sup>904</sup> Buthelezi's organisation was to become a more accessible and competent partner for KwaZulu's rural and urban population alike. The strengthening of *Inkatha's* role as a representation of the disenfranchised black masses sought to counter the ANC's claim to be the sole legitimate representative of the oppressed majority. The CSTP provided professional support for *Inkatha* leaders, offered educational programmes, organised research activities and developed strategies for the development of rural and urban areas.<sup>905</sup> The Foundation provided a total amount of DM 3.7 million between 1983 and 1993 for the running of Inkatha II.

Inkatha III or INREC was financed with DM 3.2 million between 1983 and 1992 for the purpose of establishing an Information- and Consultation Centre within the Inkatha Institute.<sup>906</sup> The project provided information about the Zulu movement to the public, organised legal aid and advice on employment and labour market issues and supported black communities in the KwaZulu/Natal region in legal and administrative disputes.<sup>907</sup> A monthly publication on problems of socio-economic development on local level as well as a published introduction to basic development projects was to increase the movement's attractiveness as a political representation and a future electoral alternative for black South Africans. In short, by establishing a direct channel

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<sup>903</sup> Personal correspondence with Errol Goetsch, 20 March 2006.

<sup>904</sup> Ulf Engel, Hans-Georg Schleicher, *Die beiden deutschen Staaten in Afrika*, op.cit., 346.

<sup>905</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>906</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>907</sup> Amelie Maier-Oswald, *Die Politik deutscher politischer Stiftungen in Südafrika in den Jahren 1990 bis 1994*, unpublished MA thesis, University of Munich 1998, p.55.

between INREC and *Inkatha*, KAF strategists hoped to strengthen the communication and public relation capabilities of the IFP, and to provide the party leadership with necessary expertise for political decision-making through the Centre's research activities.<sup>908</sup> However, the Foundation realised the need to extend its democracy promotion programme to other political actors as well as ordinary South Africans after the conditions for political activism had changed at the beginning of the 1990s. The Democracy Development Programme (DPP), discussed in the following section, reflected this strategic shift in capacity-building and civic education.

### ***5.7. Democracy Development Programme (DPP)***

On 2 February 1990, South African President Frederick Wilhelm de Klerk declared an end to apartheid and the system of racial segregation after a parliamentary session in Cape Town. KAF strategists found themselves rather unexpectedly confronted with a different political landscape and subsequently adjusted their democracy promotion programme thus reflecting Philippe Schmitter and Guillermo O'Donnell's observation that "factors that were of crucial importance in undermining a dictatorship, such as the conflict between hard-liners and soft-liners within the regime or the institutional decay of the military, become less relevant once new actors have been mobilised and the rules have begun to change."<sup>909</sup> In 1991, the Foundation opened an office in South Africa's economic capital Johannesburg. This "important step for the broadening of our spectrum of partners" was followed two years later by the launch of the KAF project Institute for Federal Democracy (IFD) - Democracy Development Programme (DDP).<sup>910</sup> The IFD-DDP project replaced the Inkatha Institute and was conceptualised as a "political education and consultation programme for leaders in the field of democratic development."<sup>911</sup> The IFD-DDP project "took the political development and changes,

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<sup>908</sup> The CDU-led government in Bonn insisted that it did not „directly provide financial aid for the *Inkatha* movement. However, the government provides project-related assistance via an NGO (Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung) for an *Inkatha* training and information centre, Lutz Stavenhagen, Deutscher Bundestag, 10<sup>th</sup> Legislativer Period, Bulletin (Drucksache) 10/5887, 22 July 1986, p.5.

<sup>909</sup> Philippe C.Schmitter, Guillermo O'Donnell, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule – Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies*, op.cit., p.65.

<sup>910</sup> Frank Spengler, 'Entwicklungspartnerschaft der Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung mit der Republik Südafrika', op.cit., p.3.

<sup>911</sup> J.Stoll, 'Die Demokratieförderung durch Projekte der Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung e.V. in Südafrika', op.cit., p.6.

which evidently occurred since 1990 stronger into account.”<sup>912</sup> In the first half of the 1990s, the Foundation adjusted its thematic focus to the changing political landscape in South Africa, which was characterised by a gradually emerging competition between apartheid and anti-apartheid forces. The KAF provided funds specifically “for research, which would allow parties to articulate their policies” and which would “strengthen the capacity of political parties involved in the negotiation process.”<sup>913</sup> The changing political environment since de Klerk’s announcement in 1990, which paved the way for a re-admission of the ANC and other previously outlawed opposition groups into the political arena, required a modified operational strategy by KAF with a shift away from maintaining the life support for opposition movements in order to facilitate regime change towards the creation of a full-fledged system of political parties as the backbone of the new democracy. “During a time of transition to democracy” writes Clarence Tshitere, “there are likely to be no established party organisations. Help from abroad albeit on a temporary basis, may therefore play a positive role in helping new parties to build themselves from scratch.”<sup>914</sup>

The Foundation implemented a concept of democracy promotion through political education, consultation and analysis thus moving away from its pre-transitional agenda during the 1980s. The latter largely focused on the strengthening of the IFP as a political representation within South Africa’s black community and as a principled opponent of the apartheid government. During the democratisation process from 1990 to the first democratic elections in 1994, KAF policy planning worked towards a situation in which the transitional, “largely unpredictable effect on how and by whom the normal political game will be played in future” would become a bit more predictable.<sup>915</sup> The Foundation received DM 2.5 million between 1990 and 1992 out of a total DM 47 million, with which the German Government funded the activities of its political foundations as well as the work of other German NGOs “in support of South African

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<sup>912</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>913</sup> Caroline Kihato, *Shifting Sands: The relationship between foreign donors and South African civil society during and after apartheid*, Research Report no.86, Centre for Policy Studies, Johannesburg, August 2001, p.9.

<sup>914</sup> Clarence Tshitere, *Securing democracy: Party finance and Party Donations – the South African Challenge*, Institute for Security Studies, Occasional Paper No.63, November 2002, p.6.

<sup>915</sup> Philippe C.Schmitter, Guillermo O’Donnell (eds.) , *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule – Tentative Conclusions*, op.cit., p.66.



institutions and projects”.<sup>916</sup> Towards the end of the 1980s, the question of foreign funding developed into an increasingly thorny issue for the apartheid regime, which enacted several laws to force South African civil society organisations to disclose the origin and amount of their financial support from abroad. In particular, the Disclosure of Foreign Funding Act (Act 26 of 1989) obliged anti-apartheid groups to report meticulously their budgetary support received from outside South Africa to the government in Pretoria.<sup>917</sup>

The Foundation recognised the need to broaden the spectrum of potential political partner organisations. This, however, did not mean a sudden break with its well-established IFP partnership. “The KAF’s co-operation with the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP)” writes Frank Spengler as late as 1994, “does not limit our ability to enter into a dialogue with other parties.”<sup>918</sup> For example, we had high-ranking ANC officials participating in our seminars, joining us in round-table talks and following our invitation to visit us on study trips to Germany. KAF is recognised by all political parties as an honest broker.”<sup>919</sup> Others were more explicit in their explanations as to why KAF strategists and Germany’s governmental foreign policy had sought a shift away from *Inkatha*. “One realised” admits one senior administration official, “that with *Inkatha*, KAF would never play a central role on the new South Africa’s political scene and that co-operation with a minor political force such as the IFP would marginalise German democracy promotion.”<sup>920</sup> The pluralist nature of democratic competition as well as the Foundation’s bridge-building function in its role as a transnational actor that operated within a deeply divided society were compelling reasons for the strategic re-focusing of KAF activities in South Africa. It was therefore only a matter of time for the conservative Foundation to supplement its close political connection with *Inkatha*. The

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<sup>916</sup> Parliamentary Secretary of State (BMZ) Hans-Peter Replik, Deutscher Bundestag, 12<sup>th</sup> Legislative Period, Bulletin (Drucksache) 12/3047, 7 July 1992, p.73.

<sup>917</sup> Caroline Kihato, *Shifting Sands*, op.cit., p.6. In addition, three other laws sought to restrain the financial maneuverability of apartheid-critical civil society organisations: the Prohibition of Foreign Financing of Political Parties Act of 1985, the Affected Organisations Act (Act 31 of 1974) and the Fund-Raising Act (Act 107 of 1978).

<sup>918</sup> The *Inkatha* movement had been re-named Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) in July 1990.

<sup>919</sup> Frank Spengler, *Beeinflussung der Rahmenbedingungen in der Republik Südafrika*, KAF Report 1994, p.24.

<sup>920</sup> Personal interview (phone) with Wighardt Härdtl, 30 March 2006.

DDP illustrated this change. Although at the beginning, the project was organised on the basis of an organisational unity with the Inkatha Institute<sup>921</sup> (which was re-named in IFD in 1994), it subsequently opened its programmes to include the entirety of the South African political spectrum soon after its launch. The Foundation set the transitional goal of “spreading and stabilising a democratic value system within every sector of society” and aimed at the “integration of all political forces for the purpose of the joint creation of a socially, politically and economically strong community while concentrating its programmatic efforts on three areas.”<sup>922</sup> Like the FEF in the Iberian Peninsula, KAF as a sub-state foreign policy actor used soft power to help aid the transformation of political infrastructure in a country deemed important for Germany’s national interest. By providing political education for political leaders, mayors, civil servants, journalists, teachers and entrepreneurs through a variety of seminars, workshops and study trips, KAF strategists sought to shape the agenda and preferences of South African decision-makers in a way that would ensure the emergence of political structures comparable to and compatible with German models. In the area of political consulting, the Foundation supported political decision-makers by providing political expertise via foreign experts as well as by organising seminars and workshops, which discussed issues of parliamentary democracy, the political management of democratic parties and questions of local government and municipal administration.<sup>923</sup>

The third sector of the DDP project focused on political analysis. Like the IED in Portugal, the DDP project provided academic expertise for the political decision-making process and aimed at strengthening the competency of political representatives during the transition. The lack of political knowledge, experience and parliamentary skills in South Africa’s newly emerging democratic system were seen by the Foundation as obstacles for the smooth functioning of a pluralist and politically stable polity. Democracy promotion experts in KAF headquarters realised the threat posed to the new

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<sup>921</sup> The Inkatha-Institute and its successor organisation received approximately DM 6 million between 1983 and 1995, Statement Wighardt Härdtl, Minister of State in the Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development (BMZ), in Deutscher Bundestag, Stenographic Report, 9 March 1994, 18567C.

<sup>922</sup> Frank Spengler in KAF Annual Report 1994, Institute for Federal Democracy – Democracy Development Programme, Durban 1995, quoted in Amelie Maier-Oswald, ‘Die Politik deutscher politischer Stiftungen in Südafrika in den Jahren 1990 bis 1994’, op.cit., 56.

<sup>923</sup> *Ibid*, pp.56-57.

and still fragile democratic structures by the legacy of authoritarianism. They warned in an internal memorandum:

It is of a particular importance for the country's future development that its political actors are able to agree on a new constitution, which will take the interests of all South Africans adequately into account. South Africa's political stability depends on how a democratically elected government will be able to meet the materialist expectations of the formerly disadvantaged parts of society. Within this framework, the KAF has launched activities to contribute to the creation of a truly democratic order, to a greater degree of social justice and to the development of a humane political culture."<sup>924</sup>

KAF strategists realised that "*all* South Africans" could not be fairly, adequately and equally considered and treated in a new political system, in which no provincial, regional or tribal counterweight was being constitutionally enshrined and they warned that "a centralist system would not work in South Africa's multicultural society".<sup>925</sup> A "truly democratic order" as defined by the KAF emphasised the aspect of political pluralism and the creation of a broad political party spectrum. "In this context", another KAF representative put it with regard to the Foundation's democracy promotion projects in South Africa, "the crucial point is not the transfer of European models to South Africa, but primarily to offer assistance for reaching political decisions, assistance in the light of German experiences."<sup>926</sup> The DDP project launched more than 300 different activities between December 1993 and the end of April 1994.<sup>927</sup> In the run-up to South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994, it focused particularly on the drafting of a national constitution with strong federalist elements as well as on a provincial constitution for KwaZulu/Natal (KZN). The draft of the provincial constitution would be then used to support the legislative process in other provinces. Furthermore, the

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<sup>924</sup> J.Stoll, 'Die Demokratieförderung durch Projekte der Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung e.V. in Südafrika', op.cit., p.2 (translation by author).

<sup>925</sup> Personal interview (phone) with Frank Spengler, 13 June 2005.

<sup>926</sup> Frank Spengler, KAF Annual Report 1994 – Political Dialogue Republic of South Africa, p.2. South African constitutional expert Hugh Corder stressed the causal nexus between the effectiveness of Germany's democracy promotion programmes administered by its political foundations and the non-patronising mode of operation. In his view, the "interventions were precisely more effective for being so prescriptive/soft. Very few politicians/negotiators like to be told what to do and how to do things and the German approach worked far more effectively than did that of the USA in this country." Personal correspondence with Hugh Corder, 20 April 2006.

<sup>927</sup> Amelie Maier-Oswald, Die Politik deutscher politischer Stiftungen in Südafrika in den Jahren 1990 bis 1994, op.cit., p.58.

Foundation used its role within the DDP project to push the IFP, and its hesitant leader Buthelezi to participate in the 1994 elections, a crucial task given the tense atmosphere between ANC and IFP in parts of the country. KAF officials had prepared several meetings between Buthelezi and Chancellor Kohl since the mid-1980s and many credited the West German statesman and his influence with the achievement of having convinced the stubborn Inkatha leader to participate in the electoral process.<sup>928</sup>

### **5.8. KAF, Inkatha and Political Violence**

In the meantime, Buthelezi's party had gained notoriety in parts of the German public for its hard-line attitude in its dealings with the ANC. Towards the end of the 1980s, the close partnership between KAF and the Zulu party had stirred up public controversy in West Germany, which broke out over the question of Buthelezi's "opaque"<sup>929</sup> political role, his responsibility for acts of political violence in his homeland of KwaZulu-Natal and his alleged collaboration with the South African police and military. In particular, the FRG's Protestant Church criticised the Foundation for its unflinching support for the Zulu leader, a public condemnation, which KAF officials dismissed as a product of the Church's liberation theology with its strong sympathies for methods and strategy of the armed struggle.<sup>930</sup> However, the 'robust' way, in which the *Inkatha* leader allegedly dealt with dissenting voices within his homeland communities turned into a potential public relations disaster for KAF and CDU. Buthelezi's militant followers were increasingly implicated in massacre-style killings of political opponents in KwaZulu's townships and the Zulu leader himself was politically linked to these atrocities in his capacity as KwaZulu's Chief Minister, President of *Inkatha* as well as KwaZulu's Minister of Police. Between 1987 and 1990, the clashes between *Inkatha* and its main rivals ANC and the United Democratic Front (UDF) had cost the lives of an estimated 3000 people in Buthelezi's provincial stronghold of KwaZulu-Natal and particularly in the urban ghettos of the province's administrative capital Pietermaritzburg.<sup>931</sup> *Inkatha's* obvious superiority in terms of weaponry and the fact, that arrests for the unlawful

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<sup>928</sup> Personal correspondence with Josef Thesing, 9 January 2006.

<sup>929</sup> Personal correspondence with Norbert Blüm, 30 March 2006.

<sup>930</sup> Personal correspondence with Josef Thesing, 9 January 2006.

<sup>931</sup> Eddie Koch, 'Angel of Peace or War?', *Inter Press Service*, 11 April 1990; Bill Schindler, 'Africa's Zulu leader Buthelezi fights 'collaborator' image', *Toronto Star*, 15 April 1990.

possession of firearms were made almost exclusively among ANC and UDF supporters while Zulu warriors remained unchallenged by the police and were being allowed to carry their traditional weapons led many observers to presume a collusion between the apartheid regime's security forces and *Inkatha*.<sup>932</sup> The possibility that a German political foundation, which was linked with the government in Bonn via its affiliated party and which pursued external relations on a transnational and sub-state level in order to further the FRG's interests in Southern Africa could be accessory to the attempts of a controversial group of Zulu militants "at establishing hegemony"<sup>933</sup> and of "smashing progressive political organisations"<sup>934</sup> proved too outrageous for some German opposition politicians as to not to be challenged politically.

In 1995, the German Green Party MP Uschi Eid and her parliamentary party inquired during a session of the *Bundestag* if the government was able to confirm media reports, according to which "millions of Deutsche Mark in development aid had been channelled to South Africa via the Konrad-Adenauer Foundation in order to be used for the financing of an intelligence service for the Inkatha Freedom Party."<sup>935</sup> Buthelezi always angrily denied the accusations levelled against him stating "*Inkatha* does not act in co-operation with the police or anybody else to increase violence."<sup>936</sup> Claims made by a retired officer of the South African Defence Force (SADF) in 1991, that the army had in fact provided *Inkatha* supporters with an unspecified number of AK-47 assault rifles to strengthen their position in fights with militant ANC activists were categorically disavowed by Buthelezi.<sup>937</sup> The allegations of weapons proliferation to the IFP were not

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<sup>932</sup> Matthew Kentridge, *An Unofficial War: Inside the Conflict in Pietermaritzburg*, (David Phillips Publishers, London, 1990), p. 128; 'Ex-Officer Says Military Arming Inkatha, Planned To Discredit ANC', *The Associated Press*, 12 June 1991.

<sup>933</sup> Nkosinathi Gwala, 'Political Violence and the Struggle for Control in Pietermaritzburg', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, vol.15, no.3, April 1989, p.506.

<sup>934</sup> *Ibid*, p.518.

<sup>935</sup> Deutscher Bundestag, Bulletin (Drucksache) 13/2397, 20 September 1995. Eid admits that the fact of "*Inkatha* being a political partner for KAF was a constant thorn in the side of the Green Party not because we thought that the ANC was the only game in town but because *Inkatha* never laid any claim to being an organisation with internal democracy." Personal interview (phone) with Uschi Eid, 13 April 2006.

<sup>936</sup> 'Buthelezi attacks Tutu Statement on Police Support for Inkatha', *South African Press Agency* (SAPA), 27 December 1988; 'Message to Church Leaders: Inkatha Not To Blame For Spiralling Violence', *Clarion Call*, vol.1, 1990; 'violence – What Lies Behind It', *Clarion Call*, vol.1, 1990.

<sup>937</sup> 'South Africa Buthelezi categorically denies allegations of IFP-SADF collusion', *South African Press Agency* (SAPA), 11 June 1991, reprinted by *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, 13 June 1991.

only serious within the domestic context of South Africa's transition but also threatened to derail KAF activities as soon as speculations surfaced about a possible involvement of the political Foundation in the arming of *Inkatha* cadres.<sup>938</sup> However, the white minority government in Pretoria admitted in mid-1991 that it had indeed paid US\$ 700,000 to *Inkatha*, which the Zulu chief had officially used to finance "rallies to oppose international sanctions against apartheid".<sup>939</sup> Despite the scandalous nature of the allegations, which were quickly dubbed 'Inkathagate', not even further revelations about the apartheid regime's financial support for the *Inkatha* union UWUSA and the training of Zulu death squads in SADF camps in Namibia could bring the KAF leadership to question its increasingly controversial partnership with the IFP.<sup>940</sup>

### **5.9. Constitution-Building**

In 1992, the KAF set up its programme Political Dialogue South Africa (PDSA). Between 1992 and 1995, the project was financed with a budget of DM 1,12 million to ensure a "peaceful competition between political decision-makers."<sup>941</sup> The PDSA targeted the entirety of South Africa's political forces:

The KAF co-operated with all relevant political forces on various projects (e.g. programmes that initiated dialogue on economic issues, round-table talks, trips to Germany). The Foundation generated an atmosphere of trust, which made it possible since 1 January 1992 to organise the political programme "Political Dialogue South Africa."<sup>942</sup>

The political goals of the PDSA project were to influence constitution-building processes during South Africa's transition and to promote federalist structures. The South African constitution was to provide for gender equality, the creation of local

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<sup>938</sup> Personal interview (phone) with Volkmar Köhler, 27 January 2006.

<sup>939</sup> Barry Renfrew, 'Secret Funds Scandal Embroils Controversial Zulu Leader', *Associated Press*, 22 July 1991.

<sup>940</sup> Ulf Engel, *Die Afrikapolitik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1949 – 1999 – Rolle und Identitäten* (Habilitationsschrift, Lit Verlag, Hamburg 1999), p.79. As the use of violence was unequivocally rejected by the KAF, its co-operation with the IFP in the light of the credible allegations of *Inkatha's*

<sup>941</sup> Frank Spengler, KAF Annual Report 1994 – Political Dialogue Republic of South Africa, op.cit., p.1.

<sup>942</sup> J.Stoll, 'Die Demokratieförderung durch Projekte der Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung e.V. in Südafrika', op.cit., p.7 (translation by author).

government structures and the initiation of an institution-building process guided by the rule of law. Furthermore, the PDSA programme worked towards the societal acceptance of democratic values through programmes of political education and aimed at influencing the public debate in favour of a socially responsible and ecologically sensitive market economy. Finally, the reduction of politically motivated violence and the promotion of political tolerance featured prominently on the KAF agenda during the first half of the 1990s.<sup>943</sup>

The constitutional vacuum after the demise of the apartheid government was filled by an interim constitution enacted on 27 April 1994, which was replaced two years later by the final constitution after being approved by the Second Certification Judgment of the South African Constitutional Court in December 1996. The constitution-building process turned out to be one of the most controversial and divisive issues during the transition.<sup>944</sup> During the constitutional negotiations, the KAF tried to shape the legal debate by regularly highlighting the pros and cons of a federalist versus a more centralist constitutional model in seminars and symposiums. KAF activities in the area of constitution building needed to be seen in the context of Germany's specific historical experiences during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. The constitutional shortcomings of the Weimar Republic, the emergence and reign of terror of the National Socialist regime between 1933 and 1945 with its bureaucratic centralism and the readiness of German society after the demise of the Hitler regime to 'learn' from these historical experiences were crucial components of the Foundation's political and operational approach to democratisation in foreign countries. Legal advisor to the constitutional committee and law professor Hugh Corder, who was intimately involved in the drafting process of the interim constitution between 1994 and 1996, remembers that "the whole structure and approach to rights-protection was modelled on the post-war experience of West Germany, latterly as representative of the emerging European approach to Bills of Rights."<sup>945</sup> He stresses the enormous symbolic value that the 'German experience'

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<sup>943</sup> *Ibid*, pp.1-2.

<sup>944</sup> Thomas Michael Grupp, *Südafrikas neue Verfassung – Mit vergleichender Betrachtung aus deutscher und europäischer Sicht*, (Schriftenreihe Recht und Verfassung in Südafrika, vol.4, Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 1st edition, Baden-Baden 1999), p.149.

<sup>945</sup> Personal correspondence with Hugh Corder, 20 April 2006.

carried for South African negotiators based on the realisation that the “German constitution had been drafted for a society emerging from a ghastly period in which fascism had caused huge suffering, and the constitution and Bill of Rights was the ‘never again’ symbol.”<sup>946</sup> Frank Spengler, the KAF resident representative in South Africa during the democratic transition noted in 1992:

During the course of the debate about the future distribution of power in South Africa, political decision-makers, especially representatives of NP and ANC are increasingly oriented towards constitutional models used in other countries. It seems, that particularly Germany’s federalist state structures are being looked at as a guiding concept for a future constitutional template in the Cape Republic.<sup>947</sup>

Furthermore, Thomas Michael Grupp in his study on South Africa’s post-apartheid constitution remarked vis-à-vis the West German Basic Law and its influence in Pretoria:

The reason for South Africa to incorporate similar legal solutions in its new constitution may be related to a similar concern. In future, the disdain and disregard for fundamental human rights as expressed in the history of both countries should be prevented.<sup>948</sup>

This does not only explain the KAF’s strong focus on the problem of constitutional development during the transition but its prioritisation of federalist templates counterbalancing more centralist proposals. The federalist constitutional model offered a compromise for political parties like IFP or the conservative National Party (NP), which were in favour of a radical constitutional de-centralisation of the country’s power structures to avoid a possibly dangerous concentration of power in the hands of the ANC. Buthelezi’s warning that the Zulu people “do not want to replace an awesomely powerful apartheid regime with any other awesomely powerful regime” was an

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<sup>946</sup> *Ibid.* Corder points at the hate speech exclusion in the South African Bill of Rights, which mirrored the holocaust-denial outlawing in German law.

<sup>947</sup> Frank Spengler, ‘Republik Südafrika: Unitärer Staat, Staatenbund oder Föderation? – Die Positionen der wichtigsten Parteien und politischen Gruppierungen’, *KAF-Auslandsinformationen*, 10/92, p.11 (translation by author); Frank Spengler, ‘Entwicklungspartnerschaft der Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung mit der Republik Südafrika’, op.cit., p.4.

<sup>948</sup> Thomas Michael Grupp, *Südafrikas neue Verfassung – Mit vergleichender Betrachtung aus deutscher und europäischer Sicht*, op.cit., p.149 (translation by author).



expression of deeply rooted fears of a new form of ethnic domination by non-Zulu power holders and had to be taken into account by KAF officials in their dealing with KwaZulu's Chief Minister.<sup>949</sup> In a meeting with a five-member delegation of the German-African Parliamentary Group, Buthelezi provided his guests from the FRG's Lower House with two constitutional drafts, one for his province of KwaZulu Natal, the other for a future democratic South Africa. Both legal documents were a manifestation of the Zulu leader's rejection of the constitutional compromise negotiated between the ANC and the South African Government and demanded autonomous rights for KwaZulu Natal and the involvement of independent legal experts in the constitution-building process. Understandably, the ANC tried to achieve a maximum of political centralism to take real advantage of its position as a majority representation.<sup>950</sup> Buthelezi quickly realised the ANC's desire for a unitary state solution: "The ANC approached negotiations from the viewpoint of a centralising philosophy to state and government."<sup>951</sup> Mandela's liberation movement had rejected earlier IFP proposals, which put forward the idea of the holding of a referendum in Buthelezi's homeland of KwaZulu-Natal on the federal structure of the future South African state as an attempt "by those who spawned apartheid to perpetuate this crime against humanity under a new guise", and warned of the "balkanisation" of the country.<sup>952</sup> Buthelezi's fears made him temporarily enter into co-operative agreements with rather strange bedfellows such as the Afrikaaner leader Ferdinand Hartzenberg's extremely rightwing Conservative Party

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<sup>949</sup> 'South Africa: 'Buthelezi tells of fears by whites', *Inter Press Service*, 7 November 1990. He re-phrased the same sentiment one year later saying that "we would not like to exchange one intolerant master for another. The fact that it is a black master does not make any difference" in Christopher S. Wren, 'The Chief Steps Forward', op.cit.

<sup>950</sup> The SPD's Southern Africa expert Hans-Günther Toetemeyer insisted that Buthelezi's preference for models of constitutional federalism remained an isolated position within the transition context and was driven by egoistic motives. He stresses that in case Buthelezi had been supported by Germany's opposition Social Democrats in his desire to decentralise the future South African state, other groups such as Conservative Afrikaaners had to be granted equal concessions. „Therefore, the SPD had no reason to bring the ANC (its traditional partner) to change its policies on federalism.“ Personal correspondence with Hans-Günther Toetemeyer, 13 April 2006. This recollection is not entirely accurate as German federalism expert Hans-Peter Schneider was sent to South Africa by the SPD's party foundation FEF to assist the ANC in the constitution-building process.

<sup>951</sup> Mangosuthu Buthelezi, 'The role of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in the past ten years of South African democratic evolution', op.cit.

<sup>952</sup> 'ANC lashes out at Buthelezi's proposals for a new federal state', *Agence France Press*, 3 December 1993; The proposal envisaged the creation of a provincial President, KwaZulu's own constitutional court, an autonomous central bank and its own armed forces.

(CP) and the Afrikaner Volkspartij (AVP) with whom he founded the 'Concerned South Africans Group' (COSAG) in 1992 after the first two rounds of constitutional negotiations commonly known as Codesa I and II had broken down. Buthelezi pulled his IFP negotiating team out of the constitutional talks with the ANC threatening to let the process finitely derail and hinting at the possibility of civil war. Some prominent observers at the time speculated that the IFP leader's real plan was to have a strongly federal constitution agreed upon by the transitional negotiation teams rather than by a constituent assembly, in which his political importance would be severely diminished. Ultimately, they claimed, Buthelezi aimed at establishing his independent Zulu state.<sup>953</sup>

Together with its South African partner organisation Groundswell, the KAF launched a joint project 'Federalism – Making it work' in 1992. The Foundation invited CDU politician Hartmut Perschau, the former Interior Minister of the German federal state of Saxony-Anhalt to attend the event as a legal expert and to present the model of democratic federalism as embodied in the West German constitution.<sup>954</sup> Together with the ANC and Groundswell, the organisation organised the international seminar 'Federalism – The Great Debate' as well as workshop events on 'Federalism – A Comparative Perspective' and 'The Dawn of Constitutionalism in South Africa' in co-operation with the Centre for Constitutional Analysis of the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC). Furthermore, in co-operation with the Centre for International and Comparative Politics of the University of Stellenbosch, the Foundation facilitated debate on 'The Political Economy of Federalism in South Africa: Policy Opportunities and Constraints of the Interim Constitution' as well as on issues of 'Parliamentary Dynamics: Understanding Political Life in the new South African Parliament'. It also supported the KwaZulu Foundation through the seminar on 'A Constitution for South Africa'.<sup>955</sup>

A further component of the federalism programme, the KAF organised round-table talks with decision-makers from all political parties as well as study trips to Germany for high-ranking parliamentarians and participants in the multi-party

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<sup>953</sup> Allister Sparks, 'Examining a leader's motives', *The Toronto Star*, 28 July 1993.

<sup>954</sup> Amelie Maier-Oswald, *Die Politik deutscher politischer Stiftungen in Südafrika in den Jahren 1990 bis 1994*, op.cit., p.60; Ulf Engel, Hans-Georg Schleicher, *Die beiden deutschen Staaten in Afrika*, op.cit., 358.

<sup>955</sup> Frank Spengler, 'Beeinflussung der Rahmenbedingungen in der Republik Südafrika', op.cit., p.17.

negotiations.<sup>956</sup> West German constitutional experts were sent to South Africa to serve as contact, liaison and consultation partners for politicians and jurists. Among them the academics and legal experts Ulrich Karpen (University of Hamburg), Christian Starck (University of Hanover), Rudolf Dolzer (Office of the Chancellor)<sup>957</sup>, Peter Molt (University of Trier), Walter Rudolf (University of Mainz), Dieter Umbach (University of Potsdam) and Johannes Vöcking (Under-Secretary of State).<sup>958</sup> In particular, the Hamburg-based law professor and CDU politician Ulrich Karpen became one of the KAF's most productive constitution-building experts and a semi-permanent legal adviser to Chief Buthelezi and his IFP colleagues. Together with his FEF counterpart Hans-Peter Schneider from the Institute of Federalism at the University of Hanover, Karpen travelled frequently to South Africa between 1993 and 1994 to advise the Zulu party during the constitutional negotiations. "In South Africa, I and my team focused in our legal advice on the system of the West German *Länder* as a model for the newly decentralised constitutional design because the FRG's Basic Law provided a prime example for a legal framework guaranteeing order in a pluralist and very heterogeneous society."<sup>959</sup> The legal expert, who undertook similar constitution-building missions for the KAF in Chile, Guatemala, Afghanistan and Cambodia, was aware of the fact that his role was to secure indirect influence in the host country. "The Foundation has always aimed at influencing political developments in the highest echelons of the target society, namely in constitutional courts, governments and national parliaments."<sup>960</sup> Inkatha leader Buthelezi himself recognised the KAF's importance as a constitutional 'coach' although the IFP initially rejected the compromise solution agreed upon by ANC, NP and a few smaller political parties at the Codesa III negotiations at Kempton Park in November 1993:

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<sup>956</sup> The KAF invited five South African parliamentarians on a study trip to Germany – Dr. Conny Mulder (Freedom Front), Tony Leon (Democratic Party), Ncumisa Kondlo (ANC), Dr. Ziba Jiyane (IFP) and Danie Schutte (National Party).

<sup>957</sup> In his meeting with delegates from South Africa's political parties, churches, the judiciary and academia, constitutional law expert Rudolph Dolzer focused on principal questions of federal systems. German experiences with constitutional federalism were central to his advisory role as were references to the political system of the United States. Personal correspondence with Rudolph Dolzer, 11 May 2005.

<sup>958</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>959</sup> Personal interview with Ulrich Karpen, Hamburg, 10 February 2006.

<sup>960</sup> *Ibid.*

At the negotiating table, the Konrad-Adenauer Foundation also had a major influence. While American political Foundations, like the National Democratic Institute and the International Republican Institute, were less inclined to participate in the process with actual inputs of thinking, reflection and critical analysis, the Konrad-Adenauer Foundation made several inputs available to all participants to highlight the importance of a federal model of democracy.<sup>961</sup>

However, by the end of 1993 the constitutional impasse had not been resolved and Buthelezi's stubborn refusal to accept a compromise on the question of homeland independence threatened to undermine the electoral process with incalculable consequences for domestic security. In March 1994, the Zulu leader still showed no signs of coming around stressing the possibility to boycott the elections if his demands for KwaZulu self-rule were not met.<sup>962</sup> In order to cajole Buthelezi into joining the electoral contest, German Chancellor Helmut Kohl had not only received the South African politician twice for talks in Bonn, but also sent his envoy, Minister of State in the BMZ Volkmar Köhler to see Buthelezi in South Africa.<sup>963</sup> In several background talks, Köhler made clear to the IFP President that "help and support from Germany is linked to the IFP's preparedness to take part in the elections."<sup>964</sup> Köhler informed Buthelezi "the German Government was not interested in seeing the IFP play simply a regional role. In that case, there was no willingness to support him further."<sup>965</sup> The former U.S. Ambassador to South Africa Princeton N. Lyman echoed Köhler's recollection of Germany's stance on IFP participation in the elections: "As the election approached and Buthelezi sought support from Germany to help him oppose the

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<sup>961</sup> Mangosuthu Buthelezi, 'The role of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in the past ten years of South African democratic evolution', op.cit.

<sup>962</sup> Tina Susman, 'Buthelezi Reiterates Zulu Homeland Demand', *The Associated Press*, 2 March 1994.

<sup>963</sup> Personal interview (phone) with Volkmar Köhler, 27 January 2006; 'Inkatha-Chef soll Gespräche mit anderen Gruppen fortsetzen, Buthelezi besucht Bundeskanzler, Kohl fordert Fortsetzung des Reformprozesses in Südafrika' *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 1 September 1993; 'Buthelezi lehnt Rückkehr an Verhandlungstisch ab', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 2 September 1993. In 1992, Kohl had urged Buthelezi, President de Klerk and ANC leader Nelson Mandela to set their differences aside and to return to the negotiation table, Response of the Federal Government to the motion of der Ursula Fischer MP and the parliamentary group PDS/Linke Liste, Bulletin (Drucksache) 12/4853, 4 May 1993.

<sup>964</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>965</sup> *Ibid.*

negotiated constitution and the election, he came home empty handed. This was very much a turning point for him. His international support had dried up.”<sup>966</sup>

Also, an international attempt at mediation was made, which was initially supported by all parties involved. After consultations with the ANC, *Inkatha* leader Buthelezi appointed West German political scientist Paul Kevenhörster as an adviser to the so-called Kissinger-Carrington Group of Mediators in March 1994, his appointment financed by the KAF.<sup>967</sup> “We made it clear to Buthelezi that it was better to sit around the table instead of lurking in the trenches” recalls the former KAF resident representative and IFP adviser Frank Spengler his negotiation strategy.<sup>968</sup> The mediation effort was an attempt to break the deadlock, which had ensued when ANC and NP negotiators agreed on changes to the draft of the interim constitution without consulting the IFP leadership.<sup>969</sup> Shortly after the high-profile mediators, former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and former British Foreign Secretary Lord Carrington had arrived in South Africa, ANC delegation leader Cyril Ramaphosa and NP negotiator Roelf Meyer began to change the terms of reference governing the mediation process demanding acceptance from the IFP that no amendments to the text of the interim constitution will come into effect before the elections and that the result of the Kissinger-Carrington mission equalled a recommendation to the Constitutional

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<sup>966</sup> Personal correspondence with Princeton N. Lyman, 3 May 2006.

<sup>967</sup> Personal correspondence with Paul Kevenhörster, 25 April 2005; Frank Spengler, ‘Südafrika. Die Rolle der Regionen und Kommunen im Verfassungsprozess’, *KAF-Auslandsinformationen*, 4/94, pp.12-17; Frank Spengler, ‘Verfassungsentwicklung in der Republik Südafrika’, *KAF-Auslandsinformationen*, 6/95, p.18; Frank Spengler, ‘Republik Südafrika: Unitärer Staat, Staatenbund oder Föderation’, op.cit., pp.7-11; Ulrich Karpen, ‘Südafrika auf dem Weg zu einer demokratisch-rechtstaatlichen Verfassung’, *KAF-Auslandsinformationen*, 1995, pp.8-13; Hans Friedrich Heese, Thomas H. Boehnke, ‘Die neue Übergangsverfassung der Republik Südafrika. Ende der Apartheid – Aufbruch in die Demokratie’, *Verfassung und Recht in Übersee*, vol. 27, no.4, 1994, pp. 491-515; Kader Asmal, ‘Federalism and the Proposals of the National and Democratic Parties’, in Robert A. Licht et.al. (eds.), *South Africa's Crisis of Constitutional Democracy – Can the US Constitution help?* (American Enterprise Institute, Washington D.C. 1994); Mervyn Bennum, Malyn D.D.Newitt (eds.), *Negotiating Justice – A New Constitution for South Africa*, (Exeter 1995); Chris R. Cilliers, ‘The Prospects for Federalism in South Africa’, *Responsa Meridiana*, vol,6, 1995; Hugh Corder, ‘Towards a South African Constitution’, *The Modern Law Review*, vol.57, no.4, 1994, pp.491-533.

<sup>968</sup> Personal interview (phone) with Frank Spengler, 13 June 2005.

<sup>969</sup> Dirk Kotzé, Mediation during the Transition in South Africa, Paper presented to the 2nd Pan-European Conference on International Relations, European Consortium on Political Research, Paris, available from <http://www.unisa.ac.za/default.asp?Cmd=ViewContent&ContentID=14553>, cited on 22 February 2006.

Assembly.<sup>970</sup> “The deal was supposed to be made between ANC and NP,” remembers Spengler “and Buthelezi should be sidelined and isolated.”<sup>971</sup> Expectedly, the IFP leadership rejected the conditions and Kissinger ended the discussions declaring the mission to be a failure. KAF mediator Kevenhoerster also left South Africa empty-handed despite his previously optimistic assessment that “the problem can be solved within 3-4 days”.<sup>972</sup>

However, Kenyan mediator Washington Okumu continued his efforts “on his own account”<sup>973</sup> and behind the scenes the international community including KAF officials stepped up the pressure on the Inkatha chief to come to some form of agreement that would enable the IFP to join the electoral process. Finally, one came to an understanding in the ‘Memorandum on the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation’ in April 1994, which constitutionally secured status and independence of the Zulu kingdom. Although Buthelezi stressed Okumu’s shuttle diplomacy as a crucial factor for the IFP’s last minute compromising, KAF adviser Spengler pointed at the enormous pressure put on Buthelezi by the U.S. Administration, which had led to *Inkatha*’s participation in the elections. However, his governmental colleague Köhler believes that “agreement was reached between the two ‘aristocrats’ Mandela and Buthelezi.”<sup>974</sup> Köhler, who was in South Africa at the time in his capacity as the FRG Government’s election monitor, remembers that the deal came on such short notice that he personally helped to put the IFP logo on countless newly printed ballot papers while voting had already started.<sup>975</sup>

The IFP Chief credited Germany’s nongovernmental diplomacy directly with the incorporation of strong federal elements into South Africa’s interim constitution after its finalisation in 1993. Stating that “we could not have achieved what we did without the assistance of the Konrad-Adenauer Foundation”, he stressed the KAF’s

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<sup>970</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>971</sup> Personal interview (phone) with Frank Spengler, 13 June 2005.

<sup>972</sup> Willi Germund, ‘Wir müssen erst die Toten begraben’, *Die Tageszeitung*, 30 March 1994.

<sup>973</sup> Personal correspondence with Paul Kevenhörster, 25 April 2005.

<sup>974</sup> Personal interview (phone) with Volkmar Köhler, 27 January 2006. KAF adviser Kevenhörster comes to a similar conclusion saying that besides strong American pressure, “revisions of certain stipulations of the constitutional draft as well as property rights seemed to have played a crucial role” in getting *Inkatha* to take part in the elections. Personal correspondence with Paul Kevenhörster, 25 April 2005.

<sup>975</sup> *Ibid.*

important role in convincing the ANC critics of federal concepts of the benefits of a decentralised constitutional order.<sup>976</sup> Buthelezi pointed out that the Foundation's influence was exercised "not only on us as one of the participants who were devoted to the notion of federalism, but also and foremost on those who were against it."<sup>977</sup> By introducing concepts into the South African debate that expressed the FRG's political ideals and values, the KAF exercised soft power through agenda setting and the shaping of transitional actors' preferences. The 'seductive' qualities of its non-multilateral, semi-autonomous and transnationally operated diplomacy were based on what Joseph Nye described as the effects of "an attractive ideology, culture and institutions"<sup>978</sup> The 'private' dimension of German foreign policy refrained from coercive measures instead seeking to shape the mind-sets of elites in target countries and providing practical solutions based on tried-and-tested concepts to political actors in transformation processes. "The Konrad-Adenauer Foundation made available a wealth of knowledge to the ANC, which enabled it to move away from the fears it had that federalism or the devolution of power was tantamount to the Balkanisation of South Africa."<sup>979</sup> Exercising its 'power of attraction' was not an example for German selflessness as "cases of political altruism are very rare and normally, soft power is normally based on a combination of different intentions and motives."<sup>980</sup> Instead of using the conventional carrot and stick approach of hard power based foreign policy, *Stiftungen* diplomacy attempted to convince foreign political actors of the utility value of Germany's public policy concepts and to spread the FRG's basic administrative, legal or economic principles to enhance the social knowledge of foreign decision-makers about established political concepts. "The more the ANC leaders became familiar with the German models" remembers Buthelezi, "the more they realised that they had nothing to fear

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<sup>976</sup> Mangosuthu Buthelezi, 'The role of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in the past ten years of South African democratic evolution', op.cit.

<sup>977</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>978</sup> Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, op.cit., pp.5-6.

<sup>979</sup> Mangosuthu Buthelezi, 'The role of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in the past ten years of South African democratic evolution', op.cit.

<sup>980</sup> Personal interview with Joseph Nye, Oxford, 19 May 2005.

from opening the door to federalism and devolution of powers.”<sup>981</sup> The greater familiarity with policy proposals previously associated only with the political opponent “resulted in an even greater appreciation of the German federal model after the adoption of the interim constitution, as the Konrad-Adenauer Foundation was extremely active in providing wealth of information to the Constituent Assembly, which began drafting the final constitution right after the April 1994 elections.”<sup>982</sup>

Publications proved to be an important tool to provide parts of the abovementioned “wealth of information”. With its published seminar reports as well as the ‘Occasional Papers’ series, which was described by South African legal experts as “very useful in popularising and giving greater depth to the analysis of several important constitutional issues, especially the federalism question”<sup>983</sup> and a federalism reader, the KAF hoped to achieve a more profound understanding of the constitutional concept of federalism and its stabilising effect on West Germany’s post-war democracy.<sup>984</sup> The federalism debate on national level was only one side of the coin. The Foundation realised that an equally strong focus had to be on the strengthening of the role of South Africa’s provinces and the development of new provincial constitutions. However, KAF legal experts freely admitted that although the FRG’s Basic Law with its model character of being the legal fundament for a decentrally-administered modern democracy formed the backbone for West Germany’s advice in the area of constitution-building, the complex social reality of transitional countries were anything but conducive to an ‘one size fits all’ approach. “In South Africa as anywhere else, it is far from clear what ‘federalism’ actually contains. There are as many concepts of federalism as there are federal states.”<sup>985</sup> In this context, the KAF (not least because of its traditional partnership with the IFP) sought to shape the debate about South Africa’s political decentralisation by supporting the constitution-building process in KwaZulu/Natal. Using soft power in its attempt to convince future elites of the idea of

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<sup>981</sup> Mangosuthu Buthelezi, ‘The role of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in the past ten years of South African democratic evolution’, op.cit.

<sup>982</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>983</sup> Personal correspondence with Hugh Corder, 20 April 2006.

<sup>984</sup> Frank Spengler, ‘Beeinflussung der Rahmenbedingungen in der Republik Südafrika’, op.cit., pp.21-22.

<sup>985</sup> Ulrich Karpen, ‘Südafrika auf dem Wege zu einer demokratisch-rechtstaatlichen Verfassung’, *Jahrbuch des Öffentlichen Rechts der Gegenwart*, vol. 44, 1996, p. 618.



political decentralisation and federal state structures tried and tested in the FRG, the Foundation transferred German expertise, experience and personnel organising a number of workshop with parliamentarians both from KwaZulu/Natal as well as from West Germany. In order to overcome the language barrier and to help South African negotiators to familiarise themselves with German concepts, the KAF had a large number of federal state constitutions (*Länderverfassungen*) translated into English and subsequently published. In addition to its involvement in the area of constitution-building, which was aimed at providing a future democratic South Africa with a stable framework for political pluralism and the safeguarding of human rights, the Foundation sought to pave the way for democracy on municipal and regional level through its programme of local government and traditional leadership, which will be examined in the following section.

#### ***5.10. Local Government and Traditional Leadership***

In October 1994, the head of the civil service in the West German city of Siegen, Dr. O. -W. Rappold, travelled to Johannesburg and Durban to offer his expertise in the area of local administration. Rappold travelled on a KAF ticket and participated in seminars, acted as a political consultant and held talks with his South African hosts on West German experiences with local government. His work in South Africa reflects the Foundation's aim to work towards the "democratisation of the lowest administrative levels in the light of German experiences."<sup>986</sup> In addition, the KAF in co-operation with the University of Pretoria, the HSRC and a number of NGOs launched a range of educational programmes for political decision-makers on local level including city councillors as well as members of the South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO). Once again, the KAF seized the opportunity to have South African participants benefit from West Germany's values and visions and its tried-and-tested methods and models. The members of the management committees of the Local Government Negotiating Forum, who had to negotiate the reform of South Africa's municipal administration, were invited to visit West Germany and in 1994 and 1995 and several experts in local administration participated in a seminar at the University of

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<sup>986</sup> Frank Spengler, KAF Annual Report 1994 – Political Dialogue Republic of South Africa, op.cit., p.16.

Marburg. The international symposiums on 'Perspectives on Local Government Management and Development in Africa' (in co-operation with the University Durban-Westville) as well as on 'Key Issues for a New System of Local Government' (in co-operation with the School for Public Management and Administration at the University of Pretoria) were part of this framework of communal reform.<sup>987</sup>

Through the launch of another projected entitled 'Rural communal administration', the Foundation recognised the importance and unique societal role of tribal authorities. Particularly in rural areas, these traditional leaders were often the only representatives of the lowest administrative level of government. Although not democratically elected, they wielded significant political and cultural power and exerted strong influence on large parts of the rural population. KAF bureau chief Spengler realised the importance of the integration of traditional leaders for peace and stability particularly in rural communities. "You cannot just ignore traditional forms of governance. The idea of getting elected was simply unknown and unacceptable to these traditional leaders and tribal elders. This did not mean that traditional forms of local government were entirely undemocratic."<sup>988</sup> The Foundation rightly identified the issue of integrating traditional authorities into the newly emerging democratic structures as being a question of potentially "great political explosiveness" especially since it was intertwined with the problem of political rivalry between ANC and IFP. It enabled these "stakeholders...to make substantial inputs in the White and Green papers on local government."<sup>989</sup> Its focus on the traditional elements of governance in rural areas highlighted the bridge-building and mediating role of the KAF. The Foundation helped to kick-start political dialogue between political competitors by providing fora like the workshop on 'The Role of Traditional Leaders in Local Government', which for the first time brought ANC and IFP opponents together for discussion. Later, the Chairman of the Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa (CONTRALESA), Chief Patekile Holomisa said: "The Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa expresses its gratitude to the Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung for organising this seminar, particularly to

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<sup>987</sup> Frank Spengler, 'Beeinflussung der Rahmenbedingungen in der Republik Südafrika', op.cit., p.19.

<sup>988</sup> Personal interview (phone) with Frank Spengler, 13 June 2005.

<sup>989</sup> Mangosuthu Buthelezi, 'The role of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in the past ten years of South African democratic evolution', op.cit.

Mr. Frank Spengler, the Resident Representative of the Foundation, for his wisdom in highlighting the constitutional role of traditional leaders in local government.”<sup>990</sup>

In addition to its democracy promotion projects in the area of constitutionally enshrined federal structures, the KAF also contributed to the formation of South Africa's legal system and to the strengthening of the rule of law by aiding the creation of a South African constitutional court. Some South African legal experts have expressed their conviction that “the ready acceptance of the idea of a constitutional court can be directly ascribed to the German model, representing a new start, a break with the past.”<sup>991</sup> In April 1994, the Foundation invited the German law professor and constitutional court judge Hans Klein to act as an adviser to his South African colleagues. In return, the country's newly appointed constitutional court judges were invited to Germany in November 1994 to exchange information with judges at the West German constitutional court in Karlsruhe. Klein published an article on the ‘Unconstitutional Nature of the Imperative Mandate’ in the KAF’s ‘Occasional Papers Series.’ Later, party officials of the Democratic Party (DP) introduced the same issue of a rotating parliamentary representation to the political debate on national and regional level.<sup>992</sup> In co-operation with the University of Bloemfontein, the Foundation published a textbook on South Africa's new constitution, which was supposed to help making the constitutional document more easily accessible to the general public. Translations into several native South African languages were to enhance the public understanding of the new constitution as the founding document of a radically changed political system. The KAF tried to avoid adopting too narrow a focus on heavily theoretical debates, which had shut the door on the initiation of the necessary public discourse. Instead, it attempted to bring the constitution and its implications to the attention of a broader public. South African society needed to overcome decades of institutionalised racism and authoritarianism and its people had to realise that the new political era provided them with the advantages of a system based on the rule of law.

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<sup>990</sup> Frank Spengler, KAF Annual Report 1994 – Political Dialogue Republic of South Africa, op.cit., p.17.

<sup>991</sup> Personal correspondence with Hugh Corder, 20 April 2006.

<sup>992</sup> *Ibid.*

In sum, through their targeting of local government structures and its strategy of co-opting traditional leaders into the new political system, KAF activities refute the realist notion of a 'forgetfulness of power'. Instead, the Foundation tried to introduce South African decision-makers to forms of local government relied upon in the Federal Republic since the beginning of the Cold War era. Through support for institutions such as the Local Government Negotiating Forum, KAF strategists sought to attract South African politicians to their ideas, values and policies thus working towards the long-term stabilisation of the emerging democratic system and the highest possible degree of political and socio-economic compatibility between the two countries. Once again, soft power was used on transnational level to integrate political shareholders – traditional leaders being one example – into the transition process and to make them susceptible to German proposals. In a further step, the Foundation sought to enhance the South African populace's understanding of the benefits of private sector initiatives and the running of small businesses, which the following section will look at.

### ***5.11. Economic Transformation and Entrepreneurial Initiative***

Furthermore, the KAF offered its expertise in the process of economic transformation and utilised its experience with the problem of an economic reintegration of the five new German *Länder* into the economic framework of the Federal Republic after the demise of the Communist system in East Germany. The White Paper on the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), which was published in September 1994, provided the framework within which the Foundation could launch its democracy promotion activities.<sup>993</sup> From 1989, the KAF's 'Programme for Economic-Political Dialogue' consisted of economic symposiums in Johannesburg and the Zimbabwean capital Harare with representatives of all relevant political parties. KAF strategists highlighted West Germany's post-war economic success story, which was based on a capitalist private sector balanced and 'tamed' by strong regulatory mechanisms to reconcile competitive requirements and social needs. The concept of a market economy with a social conscience was meant to provide South Africa with a possible guiding light for the reshaping of its own economic future. In co-operation with

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<sup>993</sup> *Ibid.*

the University of Stellenbosch, the KAF organised an international seminar on 'Democratisation in South Africa – The Economic Structural Adjustment Programmes and the Role of the IMF.' Prominent ANC leaders like Trevor Manuel, who was to become Minister of Finance in South Africa's first democratic government, were invited to visit the German *Bundesbank* (Central Bank) in Frankfurt. Besides various publications the Foundation also organised short-term visits by German economic experts who provided their insight in talks and lectures to South African audiences covering issues such as the German model of a socially 'tamed' market economy or regional economic co-operation.

Apart from its democracy promotion activities in the area of economic transformation, constitution-building and local government, the KAF helped to stimulate socio-economic education on grassroots level through co-operation with the South African Get Ahead Foundation (GAF). The GAF was set-up as a community-based, non-for-profit organisation, which worked towards the strengthening of South Africa's slowly emerging non-white middle-class through loan-based financial support for the establishment of small and medium-sized businesses within South Africa's informal sector. During the apartheid era, black entrepreneurs were "discriminated against in two regards."<sup>994</sup> The white minority government in Pretoria curtailed entrepreneurial initiatives of its non-white citizens, and the black liberation movements despised private sector initiatives by fellow Africans as distracting from the political goal of freeing the oppressed masses. In order to promote black entrepreneurial activities, the GAF worked in close collaboration with traditional 'saving clubs' (Stokvels) that offered loans to their members provided the borrower first participated in a special training programme for managers, the 'Specialised Training Programme' (STP).<sup>995</sup> Until 1995, GAF projects were subsidised by the KAF with DM 200,000 (approximately £ 70,000) annually.<sup>996</sup> Besides its Stokvel Programme, GAF had adopted a distinctly multifaceted approach towards community development, which included social programmes, financial services

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<sup>994</sup> Frank Spengler, KAF Annual Report 1994 – Political Dialogue Republic of South Africa, op.cit., p.17.

<sup>995</sup> The 'Business Loan Programme' offered loans from R5000 to R30,000 and the Micro Credit Programme provided loans of up to R5000, Amelie Maier-Oswald, Die Politik deutscher politischer Stiftungen in Südafrika in den Jahren 1990 bis 1994, op.cit, p.70.

<sup>996</sup> *Ibid.*

i.e. business loan programmes and partnership lending schemes as well as non-financial services such as business skills training and marketing courses.<sup>997</sup>

The Rural Foundation (RF) was another KAF partner organisation operating in the area of rural and social development. The Foundation aimed at "mobilising self-help activities to generate higher incomes and to promote local government and institution-building" among the rural population by identifying small farmers and farm workers as potential recipients of political and development aid.<sup>998</sup> The RF programme offered leadership training for "qualified personalities" and provided support for self-help groups in rural areas.<sup>999</sup> The improvement of the socio-economic situation of South Africa's rural population through the promotion of its vocational qualifications was seen as a remedy to the pressing problem of economic and political transformation. It seemed imperative to eradicate the devastating effects triggered by the Group Areas Act with an unemployment rate of up to 70% in South Africa's rural areas. The 1994 land reform legislation needs to be seen as a supplementary transitional measure to respond to this dangerous situation.<sup>1000</sup> Notwithstanding the aforementioned democracy promotion campaigns launched by the KAF in co-operation with various partners, Buthelezi's *Inkatha* remained an important recipient of political aid. The Zulu party's activities in the area of poverty eradication were supported by the Foundation through the 'Co-operative Development Programme' (CDP). Previously named the Inkatha Development Office (IDO), the project featured under the label of "The Promotion of Self-Help-Groups and Co-operatives throughout KwaZulu/Natal" from 1989. It focused particularly on the participation of women working in the informal sector, who were given an opportunity for further education.

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<sup>997</sup> See C.Churchill, 'Case Studies in Microfinance: South Africa – Get Ahead Foundation (GAF)', World Bank – Sustainable Banking with the Poor, 1996, which also provides a critical analysis of the involvement of international donors in GAF programmes. Available from [www.microfinancegateway.org/content/article/detail/2014?PHPSESSID=0560925f7a6](http://www.microfinancegateway.org/content/article/detail/2014?PHPSESSID=0560925f7a6), cited on 5 March 2006, p.2.

<sup>998</sup> J.Stoll, 'Die Demokratieförderung durch Projekte der Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung e.V. in Südafrika', op.cit., p.8.

<sup>999</sup> Frank Spengler, 'Entwicklungspartnerschaft der Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung mit der Republik Südafrika', op.cit.,p.7.

<sup>1000</sup> Amelie Maier-Oswald, Die Politik deutscher politischer Stiftungen in Südafrika in den Jahren 1990 bis 1994, op.cit., p.72

## 5.12. Conclusions

The FRG pursued its foreign policy goals towards apartheid-ruled South Africa on an inter-governmental level within the EC's multilateral framework *as well as* through the instrument of its *Stiftungen* on a transnational platform. This 'tandem' approach between Foundation(s) and government has been described as a form of "complementary division of labour", in which the government "as being publicly more exposed to criticism maintains contacts with the governments of developing countries in order to pursue short-term state interests of a mostly economic nature."<sup>1001</sup> The political Foundation(s), however, "pursue long-term interests in the public realm protected by their anonymity but endowed with the political weight of a party in government"<sup>1002</sup> Therefore, the *Stiftungen* system of sub-state foreign policy actors not only in Africa anticipates a broad range of political scenarios in target countries as part of a "policy of re-insurance", which has *Stiftungen* act on the realisation that "whatever political force occupies power positions in the host society at any given time, there is a high probability that one of the political Foundations commands sufficient influence to ensure Bonn's continued presence."<sup>1003</sup> Although all four Foundations – KAF, FEF, FNF and HSF<sup>1004</sup> – were involved in democracy promotion projects in South Africa from the beginning of the 1990s onwards, only the KAF operated from an official base in the target country with the permission of local authorities from as early as 1981. Its ideological proximity to the CDU as the majority party in the West German Government enabled it to mobilise political pressure in order to secure operational space to manoeuvre within South Africa's authoritarian system. Although the KAF was not merely the extended arm of the conservative majority in government, it clearly promoted the values, visions and goals that featured on the CDU's foreign policy agenda. At the same time, the Foundation's operations in South Africa blended into the FRG's overarching foreign policy parameters towards Southern Africa, which

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<sup>1001</sup> Rainer Tetzlaff, 'Grundzüge und Hintergründe Bonner Afrika-Politik: Eine Einführung', in Helmut Bley, Rainer Tetzlaff (eds.), *Afrika und Bonn*, (Reinbek 1978), p.62.

<sup>1002</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1003</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1004</sup> For an overview of FEF activities in South Africa see for example Ernst Hillebrandt, Volker Vinnai, 'The Friedrich Ebert Stiftung and German Policy on Africa – Some remarks', in Ulf Engel, Robert Kappel (eds.), *Germany's Africa Policy Revisited - Interests, Images and Incrementalism* (Politics and Economics in Africa, Lit-Verlag, Hamburg, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2006).

irrespective of their shortcomings and deficits followed a set of nationally defined interests predetermined by Cold War dynamics. Through its long-standing co-operation with Mangosuthu Buthelezi's *Inkatha* movement and its political support for the IFP, KAF strategists sought to parlay conservative influence on political actors in a future democracy, counterbalance the massive dominance of the ANC within the anti-apartheid movement and transfer as much free-market ideology into the democratisation process as possible. The stronger *Inkatha* became the more effective it could neutralise the revolutionary fervour and Socialist programme of ANC and PAC both of which were seen as potential threats to West Germany's economic interests on Bonn's government benches.

The FRG's sub-state foreign policy in pursuit of the national interest required persuasion rather than coercion and depended largely on the attractiveness of the 'exported' policy concepts. The KAF's informal diplomacy and its democracy promotion activities were based on soft power and sought to influence structures and actors in emerging democracies thus working towards what Arnold Wolfers has called milieu goals. As elaborated upon in the first chapter, the 'soft' pursuit of these milieu goals encompasses multiple facets ranging from the promotion of co-operative bi- and multilateral relations to the safeguarding of socio-economic stability in developing countries. The KAF's *Inkatha I, II* and *III* projects were an expression of such stabilising influence. Their focus on regional development, improvement of community management skills, enhancement of *Inkatha's* research capacities and legal aid advice as well as information on employment issues came in reaction to the paucity in administrative competency, political management skills and the lack of experience in running local government bureaucracies. The 'power of conceptual attraction' was played out in the area of capacity building, in which serious deficits hampered *Inkatha's* ability to sell itself as the credible representation of South Africa's black majority. After the legalisation of previously outlawed liberation movements, civic initiatives and union organisations by President de Klerk in 1990, the KAF launched its DDP project, which continued the capacity-building efforts of the liberalisation phase only that this time political assistance was offered to a multitude of individuals and actors with more than just the IFP as the programme's only beneficiary. In trying to influence the



transformation of political and economic structures and to steer the course of events towards a democratic society based on free market principles protected by the rule of law, the Foundation continued to safeguard German business interests, to secure minority rights for members of the white community and to cash in on its 'reputational power'. In that sense, the DDP was only the continuation of the KAF's soft power-based informal diplomacy of the 1980s, which promoted the values and priorities of German conservatism as well as state interests. The KAF's transnationally operationalised democracy promotion contradicted the *Machtvergessenheit* narrative of realist critics while showing that contrary to constructivist belief in its civilian, tamed or behaviouralist middle power fabric, power politics in its 'soft' configuration did not require multilateral frameworks to be pursued. The programme's emphasis on political education, its incorporation of foreign experts and its targeting of future elites was designed to ensure democratic stability through the integration of the broadest possible spectrum of political forces. The KAF's focus on the promotion of a constitutionally integrated federalism needs to be seen as an example of the *Stiftungen*'s soft power approach, which expected the recipients of political aid to determine their preferences under the influence of alluring German concepts and ideas.

Finally, the Foundation's activities within the ambit of traditional leadership in South Africa were meant to re-visit the fundamentals of African societies, particularly in rural areas, and to help anchor the political structures of modernity in hierarchically composed communities, which after almost a century of oppression were given the freedom to manage their own affairs. Its decision to pick out as a central theme the integration of tribal elders, chiefs or *sangomas* i.e. traditional healers into a political system, which for the most part derived its legitimacy not from family or clan-based authority but from public acclamation through elections was intended to further stabilise the emerging democracy. In sum, the Konrad-Adenauer Foundation's transnationally configured diplomatic' activities of democracy promotion in South Africa from the beginning of the 1980s until the holding of democratic elections in 1994 appear to be a befitting operational approach to influence the structural transformation of a transitional country, based on Germany's state interests and outside of multilateral fora. Such an approach, which certainly does not translate into the surreptitious workings of a "secret

diplomacy”<sup>1005</sup> as Rainer Tetzlaff has labelled the *Stiftungen* operations, contrasts with the widespread belief that West Germany’s relations with African states during the Cold War were merely the strategically incoherent product of ad lib diplomacy.

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<sup>1005</sup> Rainer Tetzlaff, ‘Grundzüge und Hintergründe Bonner Afrika-Politik’, op.cit., p.64.

## Conclusions

This thesis has provided supportive evidence that the realist depiction of post-war Germany as being ‘forgetful’ of its power cannot be sustained. On the contrary, empirical research strongly suggests that the counter-claim the FRG had pursued power politics driven by state interests cannot be dismissed as mere escapism but provides a convincing description of a multilayered foreign policy system, which was based as much on self-interest and power as the diplomacy of other states only that German power in the post-war world was ‘soft’ rather than ‘hard’. The latter assumption constituted the vantage point for this study and subsequent efforts were made to come to terms with the ramifications this noncoercive dimension of power holds for attempts to explain some of the main features of the FRG’s international relations. The argument as presented in the light of the relevant literature on West Germany’s foreign policy was that the main narratives dominating the discourse over autonomy, self-interest, power and sovereignty in Germany’s external relations during the Cold War did not adequately reflect the configuration and complexity of their subject.

On the one hand, the *Machtvergessenheit* label with which predominantly realist scholars and public commentators dismissed the FRG’s strong multilateral integration after the war in partly sneering manner and partly in high dudgeon reduced Bonn’s external relations management to an interest-free ideational foreign policy. The fact that the country did not possess nuclear weapons, had developed a deeply rooted aversion against the use of military force and refrained from acting unilaterally in international crisis scenarios led scholars such as Hans-Peter Schwarz to argue that the FRG’s state and society had banished the very notion of power from its political vocabulary. Although the ‘forgetting power’ narrative gained a remarkable level of acclaim in academic circles and in the public debate, it obviously focused too narrowly on military capabilities and a state’s preparedness to mobilise the coercive potential of its economy by unilateral means at the expense of softer forms of power. On the other hand, the constructivist approaches and here most notably the ‘civilian power’ paradigm acknowledged the continuing relevance of power and state interests in the pursuit of the FRG’s foreign policy because they focus on alternative dimensions of power different

from military capabilities and coercively used economic strength. Unlike realists, constructivists did not perceive of West Germany's diplomacy as being flaccid and driven by altruism and deliberate self-neglect. However, civilian, tamed and middle power narratives conceived of the exercise of power in the international realm only as a multilateral endeavour without leaving sufficient room for more autonomous forms of diplomatic action pursued on a sub-state level.

The argument developed in the first chapter recognises that constructivist authors have included those forms of power into their analysis that seek to influence other actor's behaviour through co-option and attraction rather than coercion and threats. It nevertheless maintains that constructivism's almost exclusive focus on multilateral frameworks obstructs the necessary view on the transnational and nongovernmental dimension of West Germany's post-war diplomacy. Therefore, the hypothesis introduced at the outset of the study sought to do justice to both the multilateral as well as transnational components of the FRG's foreign policy system by putting forward the argument that a) West Germany was anything but forgetful of its power, b) that Bonn pursued its power politics predominantly 'softly' i.e. by non-coercive means and that c) this soft power-based foreign policy was exercised *not only* multilaterally. Such a hypothesis acknowledges West Germany's exceptionally strong multilateral predisposition while at the same time freeing up new areas of inquiry into non-collective forms of external action. I have argued that without paying due attention to the conflation of the government's public diplomacy with its often multilateral operational mode and the party foundation's 'private' diplomacy, which was played out parallel to the frameworks of action provided by NATO and EC and unfolded on a sub-state level where it pursued state and party interests through transnational channels, any analysis of West Germany's foreign policy needed to remain one-dimensional and incomplete. Throughout the era of bipolar confrontation, West Germany's political foundations with their democracy promotion campaigns have made their contribution to the establishment of "democratic hegemony" in various parts of the world and the power of attraction which was generated by the FRG's post-war political pluralism, the success story of its economic prosperity and its model of a socially 'tamed' yet capitalist-driven private sector became one of the metronomes that would prevent democratic novices in

transitional countries from losing the beat during the process of political change.<sup>1006</sup> The *Stiftungen* played this role of transitional metronome being in a unique position within the institutional structures of the West German foreign policy system. They are politically connected with either government or opposition thus partly integrated into state and governmental structures. Through their de-facto embeddedness in the network of public institutions they frequently serve as vehicles for the promotion of state interests.

At the same time, their role and agenda extend beyond the mere representation of state interests and their largely autonomous way of conceptualising and implementing their international democracy promotion programmes shows that they are not as ductile a foreign policy instrument as some critics have alleged. This study has focused on KAF and FEF activities because these foundations commanded the greatest financial resources, were affiliated with the respective majority parties in government and are widely seen as the most active and influential foundations in all three transition processes. Both of the foundations were 'in government' as it were since their respective mother parties led the government coalitions with the much smaller Free Democratic Party (FDP) during the 1970s and 1980s. It was the thesis's ambition to sketch out the operational requirements, situational specifications and political modes of action, which underpinned West Germany's foreign policy and its pursuit of soft power politics. The challenge as set out in the introduction has been to find a way to exhibit *how* Bonn's soft power politics has been exercised to enable the West German Government, its majority parties SPD and CDU and their political foundations FEF and KAF as transnational foreign affairs actors to work towards shaping the political attitudes of foreign partners. The case studies aimed at showing in what ways the *Stiftungen* got themselves involved in agenda-setting, assisted foreign political elites in their choice of policies and helped facilitate the transformation of political infrastructure through the provision of material and non-material support, knowledge, expertise and information. It has been noted earlier that the analytical role of empiricism in the research on political foundations remains rather limited as far as establishing a causal nexus between *Stiftungen* democracy promotion input and transition outcome is concerned. Since soft power's

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<sup>1006</sup> Adrian Karatnycky, 'The Democratic Imperative', *The National Interest*, Summer 2004, no.76, p.107.

working and effectiveness are difficult to circumstantiate, the thesis has eschewed from trying to prove causal linkages and has sought instead to identify and highlight the channels and operational modalities of West Germany's informal diplomacy. The thesis intended to unravel the complexities of some of the foreign influences accompanying regime change in the Iberian Peninsula and South Africa. The FEF's top international relations expert Dieter Optenhögel explains:

Concerning the measurability of success one needs to say that we influence only a fraction of socio-political variables and that societal processes bring constant change. Probably the most appropriate way to make statements about the impact which political Foundations have on the course and the outcome of democratic transitions seems to have a look at the legislation that was passed by national parliaments after it had been supported by the *Stiftungen*. Countries that could be mentioned in this context would be Greece, Spain, Portugal, Chile, Brazil, South Korea, South Africa, Namibia and Serbia. The political Foundations also work towards a change in the working relationship between capital and labour. At the same time, they help union organisations to transform from being para-governmental foot soldiers to service institutions.<sup>1007</sup>

A revealing picture of the role of West Germany's employment of soft power in the area of democracy promotion has emerged through charting the historical events in Lisbon, Madrid and Cape Town from 1974 onwards. In contributing to the necessary transformation of political infrastructure in the two South European countries and in the apartheid state, German soft power diplomacy had to adjust to different political, social and cultural circumstances. As previously mentioned, the political foundations adapted their strategies, approaches and methods to the specific dynamics of different transition situations ranging from the post-revolutionary phase in Portugal and the gradual democratic opening of Francoism during the liberalisation phase in Spain to the outright authoritarian structures of apartheid South Africa. However, a core set of political issue areas and a basic arsenal of operational approaches and instruments can be made out largely irrespective of political affiliation.

### **Main Findings**

The FEF concentrated its soft power resources on five major areas of political support for Iberian Socialists. It is through an identification and exploration of these that the

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<sup>1007</sup> Personal interview with Uwe Optenhögel, Berlin, 7 March 2002 (translation by author).

case studies on regime change in Spain and Portugal have been drawn together. Firstly, the governmental-transnational support axis of Federal Chancellery and FEF in close cooperation with the DGB brought its concentrated expertise in the area of labour representations to bear and made a major contribution to the build-up of democratically elected union organisations in Portugal and Spain. In Portugal, workers were left with only one choice when it came to the question of which organisation was supposed to represent them at the negotiation table. Being forced to either support the heavily Communist-infiltrated *Intersindical* as the powerful umbrella body for approximately 480 equally Communist-dominated member organisations or to remain politically passive, the call for the establishment of a second union organisation was simply a matter of time. From a West German perspective, the growing influence which PCP cadres exerted not only on the ideological course and leadership composition of Portugal's single union association but also on the future constitutional set-up of the country's private sector posed an almost uncontrollable risk to the SPD-led government in Bonn. Given the SPD's commitment to the economic prerogatives of a capitalist market economy and considering the ongoing process of further economic integration of the European Common Market, it did not come as a surprise that the Federal Republic's political leadership actively tried to prevent the Portuguese economic system to slide into the authoritarian grip of Stalinist forces after having actively supported the transition from fascist rule only a few months before.

One of the biggest challenges for the FEF was the lack of training and political experience on the part of Socialist activists. This was a great cause of concern and the establishment of the *Fundação José Fontana* in 1977 as a training ground for future trade union functionaries had to be seen in the light of these deficiencies. The West German soft power actor also pursued the realisation of milieu goals by organising bilateral contacts between DGB experts and members of the PS planning committees who were involved in the set-up of the new union organisation UGT. The Foundation took over limited responsibility for the financial consolidation of the UGT project and drafted a preliminary budget for the new organisation. Based on these measures, an urgently needed transfer of organisational and political know-how i.e. international public goods was initiated and the Portuguese 'patient' received a bitterly needed

injection deemed suitable to cure her with a cocktail made of experience in political management, administrative skills for the successful operation of union organisations and an understanding of the game of power politics within the labour movement

In Spain, the situation appeared to be fundamentally different. The gulf between the ideological agenda of the Spanish Communist Party (PCE) and the political programme of the Spanish Socialist Workers Party (PSOE) was nowhere as irreconcilably and unbridgeable wide as it was in the case of PS and PCP in Portugal. The undogmatic and politically open-minded Euro Communism of party leader Santiago Carillo caused alarm only on the reactionary benches of Spain's fascist *falange* movement, with right-wing nostalgics in the politically geriatric *Cortes* and within certain circles of the officer corps, but certainly not in European capitals. Soft power was used to strengthen the Socialist labour union organisation UGT bringing it into a favourable position vis-à-vis the Communist-dominated *Comisiones Obreras* (CC.OO.) To this end, the FEF played out its experience of many years of electoral campaigning for parties and trade unions on national as well as international level and it supported political cadres of UGT (and PSOE) on various campaign trails in the run-up to a multitude of elections to worker advisory committees on company level. During the 1982 elections in Spain, the FEF's political aid programme was set up with public funds promoting the establishment and training of political 'flying squads', providing printed election manuals and guides for the workforce, creating and distributing political posters and organising training seminars on local and regional level. Again, the knowledge transfer intended to fill large gaps in the areas of political expertise and democratic experience, which came as the result of more than thirty years of dictatorial rule. By enabling the Socialist union movement in Spain to stand on its own feet and to become a strong, well-organised, effective and widely respected political player in the new democratic order, West German soft power positively shaped the Federal Republic's operational environment in Southern Europe. Political pluralism and a well-grounded sector of civil society organisations actively participating in public policy decision-making would structurally and institutionally arm Spain's democracy against its future enemies from within the ranks of the military, the *falange* or any other institution of the old authoritarian order.



FEF support was used to enable Spanish labour activists to effectively compete with the CC.OO. The two major tasks were to convince the majority of the workforce that a vote for the UGT would not mean a vote for future government-controlled unions and, secondly to “decode Communist propaganda” which, expressed in a less polemic way, meant to engage in a head-on debate about the pros and cons of political concepts and ideas. With his experience as a political manager, FEF resident representative in Madrid Dieter Koniecki often acted as an early warning system to SPD and West German Government when it came to political counter-manoeuvres by the Communist workers commissions such as the attempt to silently infiltrate the ranks of UGT activists on provincial level. The decision to invest heavily in the organisational infrastructure of the Socialist union organisation and to provide the UGT with an electoral platform to provide workers with political messages paid off and helped to secure a dominant position for the UGT in the labour movement for years to come.

Another crucial aspect of FEF soft power support for the UGT in Spain was clearly the formation and strengthening of what came to be known as *social partnership*, a model for the consensual resolution of conflicting interests on the labour market between employer associations and worker representations. A dense network of union organisations could only positively contribute to a fairly balanced situation at the negotiation table and would thereby minimise strike action and unwarranted disruptions of industrial production with damaging effects on the economy. Also, the existence of two left-of-centre union organisations would ensure the utmost degree of democratic pluralism and would provide workers with a real option of choice between two political programmes. Since 1976, the FEF resident representative in Madrid made the replacement of syndicalist structures in the area of labour representation a top priority on his transitional agenda. The West German model of economic conflict resolution which was promoted by the FEF in its co-operation with UGT and PSOE was later incorporated in the *acuerdo marco confederal* of 1978 and provided Spain’s economic system with an urgently needed conciliatory framework to reconcile corporate interests and the professional grievances of the working class. The idea of a social partnership in the realm of labour relations and its calming effect on disputes related to wages, working conditions and entrepreneurial commitment to social security benefits would

also send a signal to Spanish society as a whole that the end of Franco's rule and the democratisation of the political system did not equal the take-over of power positions by Communist forces who would irresponsibly drive the country straight into the arms of the Soviet Union. The way the transition unfolded and the political sensitivity with which PSOE and FEF approached the transformation process clearly demonstrated to the more sceptical segments of the Spanish public that the legalisation of left-of-centre political parties and civil society organisations did not lead to economic chaos and disorderly political management but helped to stabilise the fragile young democracy.

Secondly, the FEF quickly realised that a political party, which had spent many decades in exile bore more resemblance with an organisational paper tiger than with a battle-hardened campaign weapon. Therefore, PSOE in Spain and PS in Portugal could not be expected to effectively and successfully compete for political power against their well organised and solidly trained competitors on the far left without foreign support. With a view on the then embryonic organisational structures of Spain's Socialists and their lack of political experience, constitutional expert Antonio Bar Cendón says that "consolidating and educating PSOE, modernising its discourse – then anchored in the thirties – and adapting it to West European – German – standards was crucial for the success of the Spanish transition."<sup>1008</sup> Similarly in Portugal where an evaluation team of experts from FEF and the Ministry for Economic Co-operation was sent to the country in order to provide Social Democrats in Bonn with a clearer understanding of the immediate post-coup challenges. Supplemented by a number of official visits by key foreign policy makers such as Brandt, Friedrich and Wischnewski, the FEF campaign targeted the obvious institutional and organisational deficits of the PS such as the lack of trained party activists and political cadres, the absence of printing devices, office equipment and training facilities as well as the rather embryonic shape of the party's public relations department. The Foundation focused on the rapid improvement of campaigning skills and worked towards the development of party structures on provincial, municipal and regional level in order to quickly get the PS's political message across to the Portuguese electorate. Every trained PS activist would serve as an ideological catalyst, a multiplying factor to spread the message of the party's manifesto

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<sup>1008</sup> Personal correspondence with Antonio Bar Cendón, 19 June 2006.

across the country. Especially the generation of young voters between the ages of 18-24 who were initially neglected by the PS campaign was targeted after FEF suggestions.

The Foundation also convinced the Socialist leadership that a successful election campaign had to be construed around the charismatic personality of party Chairman Mario Soares. Between May 1974 and December 1975, approximately DM 1.7 million (ca. £500.000) in political aid were provided by SPD and FEF, a financial commitment without which the Socialist cause in transitional Portugal would have been in peril of becoming marginalised and politically sidelined. The secondment of the FEF party manager Günther Wehrmeyer in July 1974 and the support mission of FEF analyst Klaus Wettig and his colleagues as campaign advisers in the run-up to the elections to a constituent assembly in April 1975 were concrete and crucial steps towards the goal of turning the PS into a serious political contender for political power. Without any practical experience of political activism other than its conspiratorial activities in West European countries during the many years of exile, Mario Soares and his Socialist faithful were heavily dependent on the form of political 'nursing' which the West German government in co-operation with the FEF provided. In addition, Soares's contacts to SPD elder statesman Willy Brandt played an immensely important role during the transition's 'hot phase' opening channels of political communication and providing access to the highest echelons of West German and European politics. Soft power enabled the FEF to lead the process of organising political party management for the PS in Portugal by example drawing from many years of campaign experience in West Germany. Concepts, ideas and approaches of political advertisement, public relations in election times and office as well as campaign management on national, regional and provincial level which had successfully stood the test of time in the Federal Republic naturally appealed to Portugal's Socialists as they had proven to be both effective and ideologically compatible. The power of attraction therefore helped to motivate the influencee to adopt certain political models, behavioural patterns and organisational tactics, which promised long-term returns for the power exerciser.

In Spain, the situation appeared to be of similar bleakness. The 1976 transitional action plan which was set up by FEF resident representative Koniecki after the opening of a Foundation office in Madrid came in response to the conspicuous structural deficits

of a Socialist party that continued to suffer from a severe political and organisational trauma caused by its years in exile. The FEF enabled the largely defunct partner organisation to rest its various election campaigns on a properly laid out country-wide organisational party structure with 46 PSOE offices ('identification centres') which were headed by newly appointed organisational administrators. The FEF also strengthened the organisational capacities of the PSOE headquarters and supervised and monitored the training of political cadres for the party's provincial committees. The creation of a media and campaign office was one such FEF brainchild, which enabled PSOE to launch its political public relations operations from a central unit. The presumed banalities of daily political life such as public relations material, printing presses and office equipment turned out to be of vital importance for an effective and smooth functioning of the Socialist electoral campaign. The creation of cover organisations run by the FEF in co-operation with PSOE (and UGT) helped to set up a program of training courses and seminars which covered a broad range of political topics while allowing the FEF to keep a distinctly low profile and to prevent itself from becoming a magnet of public attention and political criticism.

The improvement of PSOE's organisational structures and the enhancement of its capacities to succinctly formulate political manifestos and to provide analyses were supplemented by the creation of a Madrid-based think tank *Consulta*. Further transitional 'investments' were the organisation of a Socialist summer school in September 1976 and the creation of a scholarship programme, which would finance the studies of a selected group of Spanish students at West German universities and would enable its participants to learn the language, to follow their academic interests and to participate in political training seminars. The PSOE-FEF Summer School on the other hand helped political activists and union cadres to familiarise themselves with key issue areas for future political campaigns. In all of the aforementioned cases, the aim was to significantly solidify the electoral position of PSOE and UGT, and to organisationally help these organisations to stand on their own feet.

Thirdly, the FEF organised a range of *legal seminars* in Spain, which served as communication platforms on which the Socialist intelligentsia in close co-operation with legal practitioners and academic constitutional experts were able to debate the future

constitutional outlook of the post-Franco polity. FEF resident representative Koniecki quickly realised that his political partner organisation had to be able to competently shape the new constitution with its own legal handwriting. Being able to draw from his previous experience with the Ibero-American Institute for Constitutional Law (IAICL) in Mexico, he promoted the creation of a Spanish office of the IAICL. The prioritisation of constitutional issues by the FEF even led the Foundation's Madrid office to facilitate contacts between Spanish constitutional experts and Portuguese jurists via the Spanish branch of the IAICL. The Foundation realised that in order to ensure the constitutional implementation of key issues such as the decentralisation of political power, Socialist forces had to be provided with a platform for the exchange of political and scholarly concepts. The series of constitutional conferences organised and funded by the FEF brought together a formidable ensemble of leading constitutional lawyers and political scientists who would pass the clear message to the general public that the democratic transition was not only undoubtedly a defining historical opportunity to reclaim 'law's empire' but also an obligation to guarantee the constitutional role of political parties in a country that had not seen any ideological pluralism for several decades. One of the participants of the constitutional seminar series and frequent collaborators was Gregorio Peces-Barba who was to become PSOE representative on the constitutional committee of the *Cortes* from 1977 onwards.

Like Eduardo Foncillas in the realm of diplomacy, Peces-Barba acted as a political 'transmission belt' translating the findings of FEF-sponsored transitional brainstorming sessions into concrete steps towards the development of sustainable democratic structures. His case exemplifies that the merit of FEF involvement in the pre-drafting period of the post-Franco constitution did not derive from any patriarchal attempt to provide the politically 'guiding light' for the Spanish partner organisation and to impose its will on Spain's centre-left democrats. Instead, the FEF provided the PSOE leadership as well as Socialist intellectuals with the indispensable logistical and financial framework for an undisturbed analytical comprehension of the transitional phase and offered political advice only when it was explicitly sought. Although it goes without saying that constitutional experts from West Germany such as the law professor Hans-Peter Schneider of the University of Hanover would try to make the Federal

Republic's Basic Law and its core principles palatable to the most influential members of PSOE, the FEF's subtle approach would never anticipate the results of political discussions and would always leave sufficient space for finding a genuinely Spanish solution for Spanish problems by Spanish actors. West German soft power in the area of constitution building can therefore be seen as being based on "diffuse reciprocity" which according to Nye is "less tangible than an immediate exchange."<sup>1009</sup>

Fourthly, in order to strengthen the standing of its transitional partner organisations in Portugal's mass media sector and to undermine the monopoly of Communist forces in newspapers, radio and national television, the FEF invited a number of Portuguese journalists as participants to a range of media seminars to West Germany. It also provided PS media experts with politically 'neutral' broadcast material to be incorporated into news and current affairs programmes of public broadcasters. It even positioned three German news experts among the ranks of the Portuguese state-broadcasting corporation to 'supervise' and monitor the political tendencies of public programmes. Furthermore, during the 'hot phase' of the Portuguese transition between April 1974 and November 1975 the FEF stepped up its support for Socialist flagship media institutions such as the prestigious newspaper *República*, which it provided with printing devices and paper. The FEF invited foreign journalists in order to let them develop familiarity with specifically German solutions for social or economic problems, which arise during phases of the transformation of political infrastructure. Participants in these seminars learned about the often-striking similarities between the transitional challenges, which West Germany had to face during the first twenty years of its post-World War II history and those of post-Salazar Portugal. By and large, this was a promising way of inter-societal knowledge transfer in the context of the supply of international public goods, which, in the hands of political journalists would ensure the utmost degree of publicity and a widespread effect on the Portuguese public.

The supply of economic expertise for its Socialist sister party in transitional Portugal began to feature prominently on the FEF agenda as soon as the imminent threat of a Communist onslaught had disappeared. Having detected alarming deficits in the area of applied economics, the West German soft power connection proved to be crucial

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<sup>1009</sup> Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, op.cit., p.16.

for enabling Portuguese decision-makers to forcefully contribute to the debate on the country's future accession to the European Communities. It also helped the new democratic elite to develop analytical capacities in order to adequately tackle a broad range of socio-political questions with an economic relevance such as the reintegration of Portuguese immigrant workers and overseas returnees from the country's former colonial territories in Africa into Portuguese society and its labour market. Therefore, the Foundation in co-operation with the Portuguese Socialist Party set up the *Instituto de Estudos para o Desenvolvimento (IED)* as the party's major think tank on socio-economic issues. Again, soft power actor FEF adopted a low-profile approach leaving the day-to-day running of the IED largely in the hands of its Portuguese staff. Of course, a radical departure from political common ground between PS and FEF would have had an impact on future inter-institutional co-operation with possibly negative consequences for further allocations of financial aid. But within the established confines of Socialist and social democratic economic and social politics – private property rights, market economy etc. – the Portuguese IED team was not subjugated to any foreign pressure. Whenever the greater political experience of the FEF could add more weight to a particular research project's policy recommendations, the West German Foundation would willingly provide its expertise.

The IED was established as a well-resourced training ground for Portuguese economists and fitted well into the overall soft power-based support strategy of the FEF, which promoted the transfer of democratic know-how into an institutional framework in order to develop in-depth expertise on political issues. Yet again, the aim was to favourably shape Bonn's operational environment in Southern Europe, to lay the foundation stone for future bilateral relations and to pave the way for productive political co-operation with Portugal's new democratic and preferably social democratic government. Providing economic expertise and enabling the influencee to use such expertise to develop its own capacities meant to realise milieu goals through noncoercive forms of influence. The institute's very existence also highlighted the particular way in which the FEF tried to shape the future direction of political developments in a transitional setting through the employment of soft power. Towards the end of the 1970s, the IED provided a political hideout for PS politician Selgado

Zenha who as Mario Soares' greatest rival was able to prepare his future leadership bid and his role in Socialist politics. The institute produced a variety of analysis papers, medium and long-term studies and background briefs on a thematically broad range of socio-economic issues. The finding of the IED often enabled Socialist MPs to contribute to the parliamentary debate in an informed and adequately prepared manner and helped to stimulate and strengthen not only portfolio-related competency but also the democratic process in general.

A second pillar of the FEF' foreign aid programme to facilitate the transformation of private sector structures and to provide social democratic solutions for the economic challenges lying ahead through soft power was the Foundation's political assistance for the set-up of producer co-operatives in the agricultural sector. Targeting the country's hopelessly anachronistic quasi-feudal structures and the problem of economic survival arising from the great discrepancies between landowners, small-holding peasants, landless peasantry and day-labourers, the FEF supported the establishment of a number of Foundations, agencies and companies which would provide management consulting services and which would form the link between the farming sector and consumer cooperatives. The example of the instigation of co-operative forms of production, marketing and consumption in transitional Portugal also illustrates two important aspects of the FEF' political aid programme. Firstly, according to West German observers it was the PS as the recipient of political aid, which insisted on keeping a distinct focus on collective modes of economic action although the concept was widely believed to be outdated and irrelevant as a solution for the problems in the agricultural sector. This might refute those critics who would persistently stress the overwhelming hegemonic influence that soft power actors like the FEF would exercise over their junior partners. Secondly, the disagreement between certain members of the FEF department of international affairs over the usefulness of co-operative models does highlight the fact, that often the ultimate course and direction of the Foundation's programmes of democracy promotion was less the result of a carefully orchestrated and unanimous institutional strategy but the outcome of a bureaucratic process in which individual responsibilities, personal political convictions and the freedom of operational manoeuvrability for FEF personnel in host countries played an important role.



On a governmental level, close bilateral relations between the two South European countries and West Germany backed up the Iberian activities of the FEF as did inter-party co-operation between SPD, PSOE and PS characterised by a busy exchange of political activists and functionaries. Felipe Gonzalez' connection with West German Social Democrats turned out to be more of a liability during the second half of the transition process because of the often polemic and politically overcharged hostilities on the part of mostly Communist forces which the public was only too eager to absorb. However, party and union leaders in Spain and Portugal were able to reap tangible benefits from the spotlight on the international stage which their West German mentors would bestow upon them. Particularly in Portugal, the advocacy of SPD Chairman Willy Brandt for his Socialist protégé Soares as well as Chancellor Helmut Schmidt's frequent intervention on behalf of non-Communist democrats within the *European multilateral framework* turned out to be a great advantage for the PS leader in several ways. On the one hand, it was clearly a demonstration to the Portuguese public that foreign governments and international policy makers would wholeheartedly embrace and trust a PS-led government in Lisbon and that Mario Soares was seen as a credible democratic figure with an international stature. At the same time, the European embeddedness and international connectedness of Mario Soares and his PS left the ruling MFA junta in no doubts that to tolerate or even to encourage a Communist take-over of power would certainly cause Portugal's total economic and political isolation in Europe. The political aid connection between PS, FEF and SPD worked both as a reassurance towards the general public at home as well as a deterrent towards the ruling clique of left-wing officers in the MFA.

In South Africa, the KAF supported West Germany's official foreign policy line towards the apartheid regime, which rejected economic sanctions, favoured gradual change through regime liberalisation and sought to contain anti-Western activities by exiled liberation movements. The Foundation's strategic calculation maintained that West Germany was dependent on the supply with South Africa's raw materials, that German companies held massive investments in the apartheid economy and that Bonn needed to honour its cultural affinity towards South Africa's white community many of whom were of German descent. Therefore, both Chancellor Helmut Kohl's CDU being

the majority party in government as well as its political Foundation were anything but interested in abrupt and radical change in Pretoria accompanied by permanent diplomatic fracas. Instead, they sought to identify a politically compatible South African partner organisation with the potential to take on leadership tasks and governmental responsibility after the demise of apartheid. Therefore, West Germany's soft power-based diplomacy aimed at changing the political structures of racial segregation while maintaining social peace and preserving the economic framework of South Africa's capitalist business sector. It promoted the FRG's own political ideals and values thereby trying to shape the preferences of its foreign partners and recipients of political aid. The political force deemed capable to play the role of constructive opposition and to safeguard German interests during a possible transition was the Zulu movement *Inkatha* of Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, with which CDU and KAF shared not only the emphasis on a business-friendly environment but also the conviction that change in South Africa needed to be brought about by negotiated settlement rather than armed struggle.

At the beginning of the 1980s, *Inkatha* was first and foremost a cultural representation of the Zulu nation resting on ethnic appeal rather than political credibility. KAF strategists therefore began to involve the Foundation's Durban-based office in programmes of *capacity building*. During the first phase of democracy promotion in South Africa from 1982 to 1990, the Christian Democratic Foundation supported the Buthelezi movement in its efforts to become a central actor in the area of community management and local government. If *Inkatha* was to consolidate its existing support base in KwaZulu as well as to attract new political faithful to its cause, and if in the medium-term it wanted to gain influence among South Africa's downtrodden population that went beyond the borders of its provincial stronghold, the organisation was to be bound to enhance both its accessibility and its resource base. KAF officials realised that its partner organisation needed to provide more services directly to South Africa's black majority and its democracy promotion projects Inkatha I, II and III were designed to achieve exactly that. While Inkatha I's local government project soon continued under the auspices of another NGO, Inkatha II with its Community Service Programme (CSTP) and Inkatha III with the Inkatha Institute at its

centre were clearly intended to provide the Zulu movement and with it the 'homeland' government of *Inkatha* leader Buthelezi with additional resources for management, communication and research.

In particular, the Inkatha Institute focused on those issue areas that previously lied fallow such as urbanisation, rural development and housing. The think tank provided *Inkatha* and the KwaZulu Government with an urgently needed research base for their policies, speeches and publications. Supporting the Institute, the German Foundation's soft power-based diplomacy sought to improve *Inkatha*'s standing in the public domain by enhancing its operational capabilities. The Institute's Violence Study Unit need to be seen in the context of the IFP's political rivalry with the ANC and was intended to boost the party's public relations capabilities in its daily 'media war'. As both sides resorted to violence towards the end of the 1980s, the conflict was certainly fuelled by *Inkatha*'s relative organisational weakness and it seems plausible to assume as former IFP researcher Errol Goetsch has, that "by giving the IFP a stronger head, the Foundation probably reduced the need for tactical violence."<sup>1010</sup> At the time, KAF democracy promotion was therefore less concerned with the direct transfer of concepts tried and tested in a German setting than with enabling the Foundation's partner organisation to become a credible political force that was both attractive and competent in the eyes of the South African public.

In the early 1990s, the KAF's exclusive focus on the Zulu movement turned party (it had by then renamed itself Inkatha Freedom Party) was gradually relaxed with the Foundation opening its democracy promotion projects to a broader political gamut. With its *Democracy Development Programme* (DDP), KAF stayed abreast of changes in the political landscape after de Klerk's groundbreaking speech in February 1990. Although initially, the DDP continued the KAF-IFP co-operation, it soon invited other political actors to join its programme of political education and training in order to "integrate *all* political forces."<sup>1011</sup> The DDP's less ideological nature was obviously due to the fact that the once outlawed ANC had re-entered the domestic political arena and had to be seen as the strongest aspirant for the country's future leadership in any

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<sup>1010</sup> Personal correspondence with Errol Goetsch, 20 March 2006.

<sup>1011</sup> Personal interview (phone) with Frank Spengler, 13 June 2005.

electoral contest. Therefore, Germany's CDU-led government as well as KAF project planners realised that they needed to intensify ties with the former liberation movement if Bonn's foreign relations with a democratic South Africa were to remain as politically fertile as the previous KAF-Inkatha connection. In addition, the FRG's foreign policy could also fall back on the traditionally close relations between the KAF's Social Democratic counterpart FEF and the ANC reminding one of Rainer Tetzlaff's remarks that "whatever political force occupies power positions in the host society at any given time, there is a high probability that one of the political foundations commands sufficient influence to ensure Bonn's continued presence."<sup>1012</sup> DDP projects provided a whole package of seminars, workshops and study trips to deepen the knowledge of South Africa's emerging democratic parties on questions of parliamentary procedures, party management and local government. As in the transition cases in Spain and Portugal, none of the actors that had newly arrived on South Africa's political scene had the experience and skills necessary to run a modern party organisation, to effectively manage an election campaign, to develop concepts of political communication or to competently run a town hall. The DDP programme included more than 300 events and activities and was aimed at enabling all those political forces that had been silenced for decades to articulate their vision of a new South Africa.

Another pillar of KAF involvement during the first half of the 1990 was the round-table project Political Dialogue South Africa (PDSA), which sought to promote cross-party consensus on economic and constitutional issues. The strategic calculation was that the better the new democracy's political players were trained and endowed with the necessary resources the higher the level of societal acceptance of democratic values and principles. From a German point of view, these values and principles should be preferably compatible with the Federal Republic's own socio-economic structures in order to ensure a smooth functioning of bilateral relations and a mutually beneficial commonality of interests. Since its inception in 1992, PDSA workshops and seminars facilitated inter-partisan dialogue on South Africa's future economic structures and the controversial issue of federalism. Particularly regarding the latter, German soft power as part of its transnationally operated *Stiftungen* diplomacy realised the demand for tried

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<sup>1012</sup> Rainer Tetzlaff, 'Grundzüge und Hintergründe Bonner Afrika-Politik', op.cit., p.62.

and tested foreign concepts making the FRG's federalist structures the selling point of its transition projects. In co-operation with the NGO Groundswell, the Centre for International and Comparative Politics at the University of Stellenbosch and the Centre for Constitutional Analysis in Pretoria, the Foundation helped political actors previously hostile to the idea of decentralisation, regionalism and constitutional federalism to overcome their inhibition thresholds by making them familiar with the experiences of others and by introducing participants of its seminars to the advantages of a diversified power structure in modern nation-states. In spite of its traditional partnership with *Inkatha*, the KAF's reputation as an honest broker enabled it to provide proposals, make suggestions and offer services to a broad range of parties without being suspected of bias and partisanship. As in the Iberian Peninsula, the FRG's own historical and transition experience after the Second World War was an important means of conveyance in the area of constitution building. The Foundation's facilitating role for dialogue across South Africa's political spectrum on the question of devolution and federalism, which was based on seminars, conferences and the contributions of German guest speakers and legal advisers, was supplemented by publications on constitutional issues funded by the KAF. The German soft power actor was under no illusion that without enabling ordinary citizens to access information on those new rules and regulations that were to govern their lives in future, the post-apartheid democracy would remain an elitist experiment without any real relevance for the formerly disenfranchised.

Another project, namely financial support for the Get Ahead Foundation (GAF) was also aimed at delivering services to the disenfranchised. Its Stokvel programme was an attempt at black economic empowerment and, like KAF support for the Rural Foundation (RF) designed to strengthen small-scale entrepreneurship among non-white peasants and business owners. Finally, the Foundation displayed great sensitivity for local customs and cultural characteristics when it initiated several projects in the area of traditional leadership. Its co-operation with organisations such as the Congress of Traditional Leaders (CONTRALESA) accrued from the realisation that modern democracy with its strong European influence had to remain an artificial superstructure in rural African communities if it did not pay sufficient attention to the needs, expectations and preferences of indigenous power structures.

Soft power as generally understood by the *Stiftungen* in the context of their international work in general and as applied in the context of the Iberian and South African transitions in particular did not mean to work towards the total domination of new democracies by one particular political force. It rather aimed for the stabilisation of the democratic system as a whole in order to shape the operational environment in a way that future (West) German governments could 'do business' with. An important part of this soft power-driven stabilisation process was undoubtedly the promotion of 'system loyalty' i.e. the acceptance of democratic structures. In order to promote this loyalty, the FEF's transitional agenda did not change significantly over the years. In 1999, the former head of the FEF working group on economic co-operation Erfried Adam summarised the following core elements of the Foundation's catalogue of soft power measures for the promotion of democracy: Firstly, economic development and social participation, secondly the rule of law and thirdly political pluralism.<sup>1013</sup> Looking at the transitional processes in Spain and Portugal through such a conceptual prism, one has to concede that the overall approach to foreign aid for the transformation of political infrastructure has remained continuously in place for more than 25 years.

KAF activities in South Africa, which went through a two-phase process with the Foundation's *Inkatha* connection during the Botha presidency and the political broadening of KAF democracy promotion projects after de Klerk's dismantling of apartheid in the first half of the 1990s, bore great similarities with the FEF catalogue of political aid programmes. The most important area of activity was capacity building, as only parties with thoroughly developed and stable organisational structures would guarantee the survival of political pluralism in South Africa. Secondly, in order to strike roots in post-apartheid society the rule of law required a broadly accepted constitutional framework, which led the KAF to identify constitution building as a politically rewarding area for its informal diplomacy. Project work in the realm of development and social participation – e.g. traditional leadership or the Rural Foundation - topped KAF democracy promotion off.

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<sup>1013</sup> Erfried Adam, 'Gesellschaftliche Transformationsprozesse in unterentwickelten Ländern: Ansätze und Erfahrungen der Demokratieförderung in der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit', in Friedrich-Ebert Foundation (ed.), *Das mühsame Geschäft der Demokratieförderung*, op.cit., pp.36.

The aim of West Germany's soft power diplomacy in both the Iberian Peninsula and South Africa was to facilitate the institutionalisation of democracy through a variety of programmes attributable to one of the thematic areas previously mentioned. Authoritarian rule is eventually followed by phases in which political opponents decide to pursue their leadership ambitions through political reform and by non-conflictual means thus initiating the transition to democracy. In such a situation, Germany's political Foundations provide domestic players in the new democratic game with tried-and-tested concepts of socio-economic integration and help to stabilise the transformation process.<sup>1014</sup> By providing material support, they enable democratic parties to tackle essential political tasks and to master political competition in new democracies. They provide other forms of material support too to enhance their partner's operational effectiveness and they lead by example and contribute knowledge, expertise and information to the institutional maturing process of political parties and civil society organisations. Soft power actors like FEF and KAF act on the "willingness of people to voluntarily recognise that the culture, lifestyle and values of another country are at least as attractive as their own, a country with whom they want to trade, help or form alliances."<sup>1015</sup> Being non-governmental organisations operating through channels of political communication on sub-state level, FEF and KAF as transnational actors are able to successfully penetrate transitional societies, which would otherwise remain inaccessible for conventional diplomacy. Soft power as exercised by the Foundations aims at influencing foreign elites while adopting a low public profile and a strict behind-the-scenes approach to transnational co-operation. One of the FEF's most senior international relations expert explains:

In their transitional activities, the political foundations support the elites of these societies and political systems and provide them under the heading of capacity-building with the knowledge of how to formulate their own interests in a way that their interests will be noticed on the international stage.<sup>1016</sup>

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<sup>1014</sup> *Ibid*, p.41.

<sup>1015</sup> Will Hutton, 'Comment: Let's extend our global reach: By funding a television World Service, the government would be helping itself and the BBC', *The Observer*, 4 July 2004.

<sup>1016</sup> Personal interview with Uwe Optenhögel, Berlin, 7 March 2002 (translation by author).

Besides promoting a positive image of Germany in the world, the political Foundations introduce leaders of the developing world and elites of societies in transition from authoritarian rule to the “context of globalisation.”<sup>1017</sup> The FEF’s contribution to regime change in Portugal, Spain and South Africa can be best described by borrowing Guillermo O’Donnell’s words used in a different context as the “politicised resurrection of civil society which was initially triggered by the liberalisation process.”<sup>1018</sup> This was quintessentially achieved through the modernisation of party structures, the organisational strengthening of trade union organisations, the influencing of public opinion via media seminars, journalism training courses and broadcast productions, the facilitation of platforms for the exchange of ideas and concepts between academics and political practitioners and the training of party activists and inter-party co-operation in the run-up to local, regional and general elections.

The realms of the governmental and of the non-governmental, the nation-state with its foreign policy apparatus and the seemingly borderless world of transnational actors are not mutually exclusive domains but part and parcel of the same jigsaw that represents the international system. Joseph Nye’s three-dimensional chess game explicitly acknowledges that in order for an international actor to play his high cards well he needs to remain engaged horizontally as well as vertically. Furthermore, the activities and institutional nature of Germany’s political foundations demonstrate that transnational relations taking place on the bottom board do in fact *not* necessarily “lie outside the control of governments” as Nye suggests.<sup>1019</sup> Although his observation remains valid for certain transnational actors such as international terrorist movements, the global operations of FEF, KAF and other German democracy promotion agencies takes place in close co-operation with the nation-state government. Both sets of actors, state diplomacy with its public institutions, its bi- and multilateral channels of political communication and its institutionalised forms of international interaction as well as Germany’s political Foundations with their transnationally operated ‘private’ diplomacy

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<sup>1017</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1018</sup> Guillermo O’Donnell, ‘Notes for the Study of Processes of Political Democratisation in the Wake of the Bureaucratic-Authoritarian State’, in *Counterpoints: Selected Essays on Authoritarianism and Democratisation*, (University of Notre Dame Press 1999), p.123.

<sup>1019</sup> Joseph S. Nye, ‘Redefining the National Interest’, *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 1999, vol.78, no.4, p.24.



need to be seen as complementary components of the same foreign policy system. It was only the instrument of informal or nongovernmental diplomacy as expressed in the *Stiftungen's* international activities that was new to Germany's external relations management. The political Foundations emerged after the Second World War in reaction to both changes in the international system as well as changes in domestic attitudes vis-à-vis (West) Germany's self-conduct in international affairs.

In all three transition theatres, Germany's Foundations pursued state as much as party interests, in fact the latter were largely congruent with the former. Political developments in the Iberian Peninsula were as much embedded in the Cold War context as were issues of change and transformation in South Africa thus defining a large part of the FRG's national interest. While in Portugal a credible threat existed that a Communist coup d'état would quarry an erstwhile NATO member out of the alliance, the activities of Spain's Communist cadres raised more concerns over the Iberian country's future economic system than over Western security interests. In both cases though, the SPD-led West German Government sought to stabilise its operational environment and regional milieu by assisting Spanish and Portuguese Socialists in their quest for power. Bonn's national interest called for the containment of Soviet-backed Communism, the promotion of market economic structures and, in the medium-term, the gargantuan task of integrating the economically antediluvian countries into the European Community. While public diplomacy frequently resorted to coercive strategies of threatening economic 'sticks' within multilateral frameworks, the Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung aimed at helping Iberian Socialists to become the dominant political forces in their respective countries by exerting its soft power. Both foreign policy approaches were thus anything but *machtvergessen* and needed to be seen as a clear expression of Bonn's willingness to actively shape its regional neighbourhood, facilitate structural change and model institutions in foreign countries along West German lines. In South Africa, West Germany's diplomacy on both state and sub-state level was guided by economic, cultural and ideological considerations. The foreign policy of government as well as *Stiftung* sought to prevent cataclysmic and radical change as the FRG's industrial investments in South Africa and its raw material dependency hinged on economic liberalism and, technically speaking, political stability.

The close relations between the main liberation movement ANC and the Soviet Union threatened to undermine both South Africa's economic order as well as its governability. Furthermore, any diplomacy had to take cultural links into account, and a liberation movement like the ANC that had occasionally given out the battle cry of 'one settler – one bullet' was simply unacceptable to the FRG's conservative government.

The interplay between governmental foreign policy and sub-state diplomacy is not to deny the fact that the political foundations enjoy a high degree of operational freedom and agenda-setting authority. They are neither bossed around politically by state institutions nor kept on a short leash deprived of the right of having their own opinion. Their activities need to be seen as "complementary to the interests of governmental foreign policy."<sup>1020</sup> Political foundations operate as part of a foreign policy 'tandem', which combines the traditional diplomatic resources of a nation-state with the more flexible and organisationally agile soft power modes of international engagement commanded by transnational actors. Therefore, FEF, KAF and other political foundations work relatively independently but still "with the national interest in mind."<sup>1021</sup> Their clear anti-Communist stance throughout the 1970s and 1980s mirrored the antipathy of both CDU and SPD and the majority of the West German public towards radically egalitarian experiments and defined the national interest unambiguously as preserving market economic structures based on the principle of private property in the Iberian Peninsula and South Africa.

"How does one globalise political power" was the question SPD foreign policy expert Horst Ehmke regarded to be at the heart of the international activities of West Germany's political Foundations and indeed the very existence of the *Stiftungen* provides a satisfactory answer.<sup>1022</sup> The political Foundations use soft power to help other countries participate in the transfer of know-how and experience, concepts and expertise. In their international operations, they transcend cultural, political and geographical boundaries and contribute towards the transformation of political infrastructure in newly emerging democracies. On the Iberian Peninsula, West German

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<sup>1020</sup> Guillermo O'Donnell, 'Notes for the Study of Processes of Political Democratisation', op.cit, p.123.

<sup>1021</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1022</sup> Personal interview with Horst Ehmke, Bonn, 17 April 2002.

soft power was employed for the political renewal of the body politic just as sharply, swiftly and effectively as hard military power has been unleashed on the Cold War's battlefield on many occasions, and far from leading to the rigmarole of 'pulpit diplomats' in the seclusion of their intellectual ivory tower, the FEF's mobilisation of its soft power resources facilitated the vigorous pursuit of a structural transformation and the successful co-option of future political elites in Spain, Portugal and South Africa. Thus soft power proved to be more than merely an academic razzmatazz circling around a fashionable but impracticable and largely unrealistic idea of persuasion-based foreign policy. At the same time, soft power obviously does not constitute the only game in town as far as a country's foreign policy strategy is concerned and neither is it or was it the *pièce de résistance* of (West) German diplomacy. Changing circumstances, policy frameworks and situational variables may require a shift towards a more confrontational stance in foreign affairs. Joseph Nye has provided a useful analytical magnifying glass with his three-dimensional model of the distribution of power, which suggests that only by playing vertically as well as horizontally, coercively, *and* co-optively can a state play out its full potential in international relations. It is the 'variegation' of diplomatic means, the diversity of operational modes in international relations and the complexity of situational variables, which require a thorough contextual analysis before an actor, can be labelled relatively powerful or powerless. But being forgetful of its power was arguably neither a trait nor an option for the FRG's foreign policy during the Cold War and beyond.

### **Prospect for Further Research**

The present research framework has focused on the use of soft power by two of Germany's political foundations in order to highlight an often overlooked non-multilateral yet interest-driven dimension of the FRG's foreign policy. It has not tried to make a contribution towards the scholarly field of 'transitology' although it seems obvious that multiple connections exist between the two research areas. A potential avenue for future research would shift the analytical focus away from the examination of German foreign policy and its noncoercive operationalisation towards an analysis of the international context of political transformation in general involving an inquiry into

the principal role, usefulness and effectiveness of soft power instruments and strategies as adopted by international actors at different stages of regime change such as liberalisation, democratisation and consolidation. Further research would act upon Philippe C. Schmitter's remark that it might be "time to reconsider the impact of the international context upon regime change" and to question whether external factors could possibly be "more significant than it was originally thought."<sup>1023</sup>

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<sup>1023</sup> Philippe C. Schmitter, 'The Influence of the International Context upon the Choice of National Institutions and Policies in Neo-Democracies', in: Laurence Whitehead (ed.), *The International Dimension of Democratisation – Europe and the Americas*, (Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 27-28.

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