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Confronting the History of World War II: An International Comparison

In 1996 the Swiss Federal Council established an Independent Commission of Experts (ICE) to investigate Switzerland's role in World War II, with a special emphasis on the Swiss financial center. Headed by Prof. Jean-François Bergier of ETH, the group of historians also became known as the "Bergier Commission." Now that the results of the commission are published, the question of how Switzerland examines its past is gaining new relevance. Since similar efforts are undertaken in other countries, too, the CIS organized a symposium dealing with the issue in a comparative manner. The meeting was held on 9 April at the University of Zurich.

Efforts to achieve a better understanding of the past must also include information and discussion on these processes in other countries, with an aim of finding answers to open questions in international cooperation. On the occasion of the publishing of the Final Report of the ICE in March 2002, the CIS held a public symposium on the efforts towards clarification in three countries that had very different roles in World War II. Germany, Austria, and Switzerland take different approaches in coming to terms with their past, and the content of the debates in each country varies as well.

The symposium opened with a presentation by Professor Norbert Frei, one of the most eminent researchers of Germany's National Socialist past. Frei explained that Germany has been dealing intensively with its past for many decades. He determined four phases in the historical inquiry in this field: The first phase, from 1945–1949, was



Speakers and CIS participants at the symposium: Petra Barthelmess, Prof. Jürg M. Gabriel, who organized the symposium, Prof. Jörg Fisch, Daniel Mückli (front, from left). Ronny Siev, Prof. Norbert Frei, Prof. Andreas Wenger, Prof. Hans Ulrich Jost, Prof. Jean-François Bergier (back, from left).

marked by the Nuremberg War Trials and political cleansing by the Allies. The second phase, up to the mid 1950s, involved targeted reparations. By the late 1950s, a third phase had begun, during which there were pleas for a critical reassessment of the Third Reich, while simultaneously some were calling for the closing of this chapter of the past. The fourth and current historiographical phase began in the late 1980s. The debate over the Wehrmacht exhibition, for example, showed that while scientists recognize the Wehrmacht's crimes as fact, society as a whole does not. In closing, Frei voiced his objections to current arguments that isolate the Holocaust from its historical context and use it to promote legal policies.

Austria, on the other hand, saw itself immediately after the war as a victim of National Socialism. The occupation theory – which holds that Austria was not responsible for its actions because it was not a sovereign

state under international law from 1938 to 1945 – had become widely accepted. Clemens Jabloner, Chair of the Historical

► continued on page 2

In this Issue

Confronting the History of World War II: An International Comparison	page 1–2
The Long Prelude to UN Membership: Swiss Foreign Policy 1969 – 1986	page 3
Success and Failure of International River Management	page 4–5
Policy Dilemmas in Banking Regulation	page 5
Strengthening Euro-Atlantic Security Through Training and Cooperation	page 6–7
Calendar	page 7
E-learning: New Strategies and Methods in Teaching Security Policy	page 8–9
Decision-Making in the EU after Nice	page 10
Recent CIS Publications	page 11



Prof. Dieter Ruloff introduced Prof. Jean-François Bergier, former President of the Independent Commission of Experts Switzerland – Second World War (ICE)

Commission of the Republic of Austria and President of the Administrative Court in Vienna, stressed that Austria, in the post-war years, should have avoided defining its role according to the occupation theory. However, a change in paradigm came about only very gradually, and no steps in this direction were taken until Austria's accession to the European Union. In 1998 the Historical Commission was mandated to research and report on the looting of property during the Nazi era. This move was partly due to the fact that Switzerland was increasingly being challenged on this point and partly due to the newly developing voices of groups of victims. The commission reports are to be published this year. As Jabloner pointed out, Austria's experience shows just how much time it can take for a nation to critically examine its dark side. The commission has often been criticized by those who consider its mandate to be too narrow, given that it only addresses the victims of the Holocaust and not those of many other injustices for which reparations still need to be made, such as the Benes decrees. However, there can be no ultimate justice for the injustices that have been done. And, as Jabloner argued, linking the Benes decrees with the Czech Republic's entry into the EU, is clearly unreasonable. In fact, the very unity of the EU is threatened by political groups who, in order to force their argument, overemphasize historical injustices that have not yet been reappraised.

Hans-Ulrich Jost, historian at the University of Lausanne, pointed out that history does not deal exclusively with the past. Just as much, it is at the same time clarification of the present and options for the future. In this way, history is at the mercy of politics. This was very much so the case in Switzerland with the history of World War II, even more because the Swiss political leaders were for the most part not replaced at the end of the war. The mixing of history and politics as well as different perceptions held by different generations made the clarification of history difficult and rife with conflict. The instrumentalization of neutrality for foreign trade policy led to a conflict of aims that was typical of the post-War period. The myth of a spotless Swiss past coupled with the purity of neutrality stood in glaring contrast to Switzerland's actual role as a nation bound within the international context. This duality in public consciousness is still reflected today in the reactions to the ICE report.

In his address at the University's Aula, the president of the ICE, Prof. Jean-François Bergier, pointed out that the Final Report of the ICE will attain its full value not as the end of efforts to come to terms with the past, but only if it becomes the starting point for further debate. Bergier focused on three findings of the work of the commission that will be highly relevant both today and tomorrow and that require more research: the colliding of three ideological

worldviews (fascism, liberalism, and communism), the events of the war, and the Holocaust must not be viewed separately, just as the period itself should not be studied in isolation. The decision-makers in World War II were marked by their experiences of World War I. The out-of-date perceptions of the general situation were a major factor in the failure to recognize the real dangers and injustice in time. Bergier voiced his disappointment at the handling of neutrality, which served to legitimize everything, but was simply twisted out of shape when it came to exports of federal war materials or the lack of appropriate control of the transit between Germany and Italy, for example. And third, the issue of who actually led Switzerland during the period has not yet been clarified. The Federal Council, said Bergier, did not fulfill its leadership role and delegated its responsibility to the administration, which, while it was often competent, stood at a loss when faced with political decisions. Power actually lay in the hands of the business associations that managed the war economy.

Bergier recapitulated that it is not the task of historians to assign blame. What is at issue here is responsibility – responsibility that must also be extended to the outside world, the international society of which every nation is a part. Switzerland failed to assume its full responsibility, it acted with too little solidarity, and today it must confront this past. What is important now will be the effort to place the findings within the international context and to evaluate them. Many of the issues cannot be resolved within the limits of national horizons, and research must be conducted on an international scale. Only in this way will it be possible to fully assess the roots and repercussions of the catastrophes of the 20th century. ■

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The Long Prelude to UN Membership: Swiss Foreign Policy from 1969 to 1986

When Swiss voters finally agreed in March 2002 in a national referendum that Switzerland should join the United Nations as a full member, the issue had been on the political agenda for over 30 years. Since the early 1970s the government had promoted Swiss accession to the UN in an attempt to activate its foreign policy potential in the multilateral framework. During that same time, the decision was made to play an active role in the CSCE process then underway. Yet, Swiss participation in the process lost much of its dynamics in the early 1980s, and a negative vote in 1986 postponed UN membership for another two decades.

In a dissertation, CIS researcher Thomas Fischer explores the reasons why official Swiss foreign policy goals were not implemented in the later Cold War years. He examines in particular the influence of the worsening international environment in the early 1980s on foreign policy decision-making. In the 1970s, the idea that Switzerland could pursue a more active foreign policy within the framework of multilateral institutions, namely the United Nations (UN) and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE, today OSCE), was becoming a government objective. This tendency had been bolstered by the easing of tension at the international level during the period of détente in the first half of the 1970s. However, worsening superpower relations towards the end of the decade, entailing crises in both the CSCE and the UN, had a strong negative impact on implementation of the proclaimed goal to activate Swiss foreign policy in the multilateral context. Despite the government's intention to move towards increased multilateral cooperation, Swiss engagement in the CSCE process in the early 1980s was reduced to the traditional role of a third party mediating between East and West, and a first referendum on full UN membership was rejected in 1986.

By examining the international context and



Thomas Fischer examines why, in the later Cold War years, a more active Swiss foreign policy within the UN and the CSCE framework could not be implemented, despite the government's intention to move towards increased multilateral cooperation.

how it was perceived at the level of national decision-makers in foreign policy, Fischer explores why a more active multilateral approach to foreign policy as envisioned by the government could not be implemented in the 1980s. The role theory approach to foreign policy analysis and in particular the idea of national role conceptions in foreign policy as developed by Kalevi J. Holsti provide useful aids to explanation. Furthermore, Fischer draws our attention to the importance of national identity as a determining framework for implementation of these role conceptions. Through detailed archival research in the Swiss Federal Archive in Bern, Fischer's foreign policy study examines closely the national role conceptions and ideas of national identity held by decision-makers and how they influence the outcome of foreign policy. In addition, the research is complemented by interviews with contemporary witnesses, politicians, and academics.

Fischer's research reveals that the beginning of international détente stimulated broader discussions at the national level among Swiss foreign policy makers. The issue was whether neutrality and abstention from political multilateralism, which had served as extremely stable guidelines in the past, were still valid for the future. Many politicians and academics were won over to

support of UN membership. Furthermore, active participation in the initial phase of the CSCE-process was raising somewhat deceptive hopes for a more active and initiative role for Switzerland within the framework of multilateral negotiations. Yet, closer examination of the possibility of UN membership led policy makers to conclude that the world organization most certainly would not grant explicit recognition of the principle of neutrality. In consequence, the question of the role Switzerland should play in international relations (participation vs. abstentionism) became a heavily debated issue. The worsening of the international situation from the mid-1970s onwards provided renewed validation of the traditional isolationist self-image to which many members of the government, parliament, and administration still adhered. As Fischer argues, the period of international détente and cooperation did not last long enough to cause a real shift in Swiss foreign policy towards multilateralism. Traditional role perceptions and persisting conceptions of the national identity of Switzerland as a neutral small-state gained revalidation in the context of Cold War tensions in the early 1980s. ■

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Success and Failure of International River Management

When and why are international efforts to solve transboundary river management problems successful? When and why do such efforts fail, and what does success or failure mean? With more than 200 international river basins covering 45 percent of the Earth's land surface and with freshwater being humanity's most valuable natural resource, these questions are hardly trivial. Natural scientists and engineers have provided some answers, but they remain far from complete without major input from the social sciences. While technical know-how and innovation are crucial to successful international river management, success in this context hinges primarily on political processes in which institutional arrangements are designed and implemented.

Social scientists have made considerable progress in this field in recent years, which has included developing explanatory models based on solid theoretical foundations and evaluating the models against an increasing store of empirical information. Several researchers at CIS have been part of this research effort (see box). A study recently completed by Raphaël Tschanz of the Bernauer Group at CIS is noteworthy in this regard.

Tschanz's investigation starts out by asking whether – and if so – why legally non-binding international agreements are more effective than legally binding agreements.

Political scientists have become increasingly interested in this issue because of the growing number and importance of such agreements, particularly in environmental policy. Contrary to conventional wisdom among legal scholars and many policy-makers, political scientists have argued in recent years on the basis of theoretical reasoning and empirical research that non-binding agreements may be more effective under some circumstances. Conventional wisdom assumes that legally binding agreements can be better enforced. The empirical evidence shows, however, that sanctions are extremely rare in international environmental policy. It also shows that legal compliance frequently does not correlate with success in problem solving – in fact, whereas compliance with international environmental agreements is generally high, many of these agreements operate at the lowest common denominator and are quite unsuccessful in solving environmental problems.

Raphaël Tschanz connects this issue to an ongoing debate in international relations about whether and how the design of international regimes matters for success/failure of problem solving in the international arena. He then proceeds to examine the effects of changes in the design of the environmental protection regime for the river Rhine, particularly the effects of the shift from a regime based on an international treaty, concluded in 1976, to the Rhine

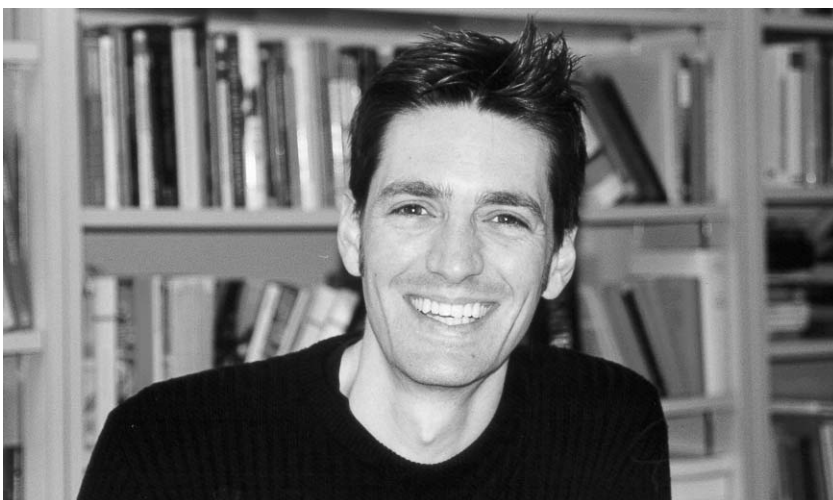
Examples of research on international river management at CIS:

- (a) Frank Marty, *Managing International Rivers*, Bern: Peter Lang, 2001;
- (b) Thomas Bernauer, "Explaining Success and Failure in International River Management", *Aquatic Sciences*, Vol. 64, Nr. 1, 2002;
- (c) Research project of the Center for Security Studies and Conflict Research: *Environment and Cooperation in the Nile Basin (ECONILE)* www.fsk.ethz.ch/research/research_cr.cfm;
- (d) Jazmin Seijas Nogareda, *Internationales Flussmanagement auf der Iberischen Halbinsel. Eine Regimeanalyse anhand Annahmen aus der Collective Action Theorie und dem funktionalen Regimeansatz*, University of Zurich, 1999;
- (e) Raphaël Tschanz, *Gewässerschutz am Rhein: Grenzüberschreitende Zusammenarbeit zur Lösung von Umweltproblemen*, University of Zurich, 2002;
- (f) Seminar on international river management for doctoral students at ETH, organized by Thomas Bernauer (CIS) and Bernhard Wehrli and Alfred Wuest at the Swiss Federal Institute for Environmental Science and Technology (EAWAG).

Action Program, established in 1986. Both international efforts seek to reduce pollution of the Rhine by heavy metals, nutrients, and other contaminants. By the early 1970s, pollution of the Rhine had reached a stage where most scientists regarded the river as ecologically almost dead.

Whereas many conditions remain constant over time (e.g., the nature of the environmental problem, the states involved), Tschanz observes a correlation between variation in the design of the regime (change from binding to non-binding agreement) and the extent of problem solving (quite spectacular success in cleaning up the river since the late 1980s). The Rhine riparians remained deadlocked over the 1976 agreement. Most notably, efforts to implement this framework agreement through protocols on specific pollutants failed. The riparian countries only became

Referring to the case of the Rhine protection regime, Raphaël Tschanz examines whether and how the design of international regimes matters for success and failure of problem solving.



► continued on page 5

Policy Dilemmas in Banking Regulation

more active when a major accident at Sandoz, a Swiss chemical firm near Basel, virtually destroyed most life in the river downstream in 1986. A few months after the accident, the countries adopted the Rhine Action Program. This program has led to dramatic improvements in water and ecosystem quality along the Rhine.

The correlation between regime design and problem solving observed by Tschanz provides a first “smoking gun” in regard to the key hypothesis. But every social scientist knows that correlation does not automatically mean causation. Tschanz therefore explores causal effects of the Rhine Action Program by tracking its consequences for national water regulations and their implementation and by testing explicitly for alternative explanations of problem solving. As to the latter, for example, he shows that voluntary pollution reductions by industry can not account for improvements in water and ecosystems quality, but that industry generally acted mostly in the “shadow of the law.” Explicit evaluation of such rival propositions bolsters the principal hypothesis: that the Rhine Action Program is at least in part responsible for the successful clean up.

As to the ways in which non-binding agreements lead to greater effectiveness, the following conclusions are noteworthy. First, the cooperating states were more willing to adopt clear and ambitious goals in the framework of the non-binding agreement. Second, the non-binding agreement allowed for more rapid adoption and implementation (particularly because it did not require ratification by national parliaments). Third, the non-binding agreement turned out to be more flexible with respect to implementation and further development, notably in its use of best available technology practices. ■

The large number of financial crises in countries ranging from the US and Japan to Korea, Mexico, India, and Russia in the last two decades of the 20th century has focused attention on the need to ensure the safety and soundness of the international banking system. The adoption and implementation of domestic and international agreements such as the Basle Accord’s minimum capital to risk-weighted asset ratios aim at reducing risks in the international banking system.

The increase in the probability of bank failures during recessions creates a policy dilemma. If government regulators intervene in financial markets by toughening capital and other prudential requirements or by more strictly enforcing existing regulations, they may succeed in lowering the probability of bank failures and bank panics. Their actions, however, could lead to a credit crunch that might exacerbate the recession and create a vicious circle. The risk of a credit crunch emanates from the fact that banks typically respond to stricter risk-weighted capital-asset requirements by reducing their assets and/or not acquiring new assets, particularly riskier ones against which they must hold more capital. Vice versa, if regulators are more lenient in regard to prudential requirements they may avoid a credit crunch, but at the risk of more bank failures or even bank panics.

Thomas Bernauer and Vally Koubi examine whether this policy dilemma can be observed empirically and whether policy makers concentrate more on preventing bank failures or avoiding credit crunches. They infer policy makers’ behavior from economic data in an effort to complement research work that explores the issue on the basis of qualitative historical information on policy preferences and choices. In particular, they study risk-taking and capitalization by US banks in the 1990s. They focus particularly on those banks that are more likely to find themselves in trouble and hence constitute the main source of the policy dilemma. Their most important presumption is that a

pro-cyclical capital-asset ratio constitutes prima facie evidence that policy makers are more concerned about preventing a credit crunch than about decreasing the probability of bank failures. A counter-cyclical pattern indicates that policy makers are more concerned to prevent bank failures.

Their findings suggest that during recessions policy makers do indeed encounter a policy dilemma and that this dilemma influences regulatory responses. Regulators appear willing to prevent a worsening of macroeconomic conditions by allowing average capital-asset ratios to fall during recessions. They do so, however, in a qualified fashion. While being more permissive towards economically stronger banks, they seem to put pressure on weaker (poorly capitalized) ones. Weak banks end up raising their capital-asset ratios during recessions.

In a companion paper, Bernauer and Koubi investigate the cyclical behavior of bank capital in 1330 banks in 28 OECD countries from 1992 to 1998. They find significant differences across countries. In the US and Japan, bank capital is counter-cyclical; that is, banks typically strengthen capital holdings during periods of weak economic activity. In the other countries studied, there is no relationship between the level of macroeconomic activity and bank capital. Bernauer and Koubi infer that severe banking crises alert policymakers towards the likelihood of trouble in the banking sector and that regulatory authorities take measures to prevent this even at the expense of increasing the risk of credit crunches. In countries that have not experienced severe crises, policy-makers seem to be less concerned about bank systemic risk. These results suggest that the strong push by the US for the Basle Accord may have been a reflection of increased awareness of this issue. ■

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Strengthening Euro-Atlantic Security Through Training and Cooperation

ISN www.isn.ethz.ch The growing digital divide in and between the member countries of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council mirrors the general disparities in socio-economic development and institutional reforms in the regions of the former Soviet Union and Eastern and Central Europe. For over two years, the International Relations and Security Network (ISN) has been developing training and awareness programs on security and defense policy and its relation to information and communication technologies (ICT) in these regions to address the specific needs within the framework of the NATO Partnership for Peace (PfP).

The ISN is a leading information technology platform of the PfP community. It is committed to working with PfP individuals and institutions to ensure that today's policy-makers and practitioners in international security master the key knowledge management skills they need for contributing effectively to Euro-Atlantic security. In 1999, after discussions with the NATO Defense Partnership and Cooperation Directorate, the ISN designed a set of ICT training and capacity-building activities to benefit the international security policy community. Their purpose is to close the growing digital gap between PfP member countries, especially

in the former Soviet Union and Eastern and Central Europe. At one end of the spectrum are transition countries like the Baltic States, who boast functioning e-government systems and broadband access. At the other end are countries like some of the Central Asian republics, whose public still has very limited access to the Internet.

“We have concluded that the excellent training provided by the ISN proved to be useful for our participants of the Ministry of Defense and in general for our efforts to approach the standards of membership to NATO.”

Etleva Bisha, Director of Information, Albanian Ministry of Defense, Tirana

The decision to complement the ISN's electronic platform with an extensive PfP seminar and workshop program marked an important step in the diversification of the ISN's services. This step closed a gap in the ISN's knowledge management portfolio, which consisted primarily of information and news services, research and publications, and e-learning. Also, the activity has been addressing the considerable need for tailored ICT training in response to divergent levels of national ICT infrastructures and competencies.

Two major types of activity were developed as part of this mandate: a week-long core PfP seminar on the Internet for security and defense policy professionals, and a regional PfP executive conference cycle on ICT prospects. These official Swiss PfP contributions run by the ISN are included in the Partnership Work Program under the Defense Policy and Strategy area of cooperation.

The ISN training team has organized and implemented the core PfP seminar in cooperation with PfP partner nation institutions 14 times in the past two years, providing training and instruction to individuals and institutions alike. Combining technical and security policy subject matter content, the ISN's PfP seminar has trained over 380 high-level participants in information and web management, information technology trends, technical Internet infrastructure, and virtual media resources and communications. The specific topics discussed are: tools, terminology, analysis and evaluation, security and privacy, search techniques, search engine functionalities, case simulations, web creation concepts and strategies, web design, graphics, technical infrastructure, information security. The PfP seminar has been held at the Romanian, Albanian and Moldovan ministries of defense and foreign affairs, the Latvian, Slovenian, Slovak, and Bulgarian national defense colleges and military academies, the national parliaments of Georgia and Moldova, and the national security councils of the Republics of Kyrgyzstan and Macedonia (presidential cabinet).

There is little knowledge on the extent to which ICT has had an impact on the political processes, government, society, and economics in transition countries and regions with a central planning legacy. Through its PfP executive conference on ICT trends and prospects in the various PfP regions (Central, Eastern, and Southeastern Europe, the Baltics, Caucasus, and Central Asia) and other regional PfP conference activities in cooperation with ISN partners,



Anna Sargsyan and Michel Hess from the ISN training team.



ISN PfP training seminar in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

the ISN has started the ambitious endeavor of serving as a main repository of data, information, and knowledge on ICT dimensions in PfP countries and regions. Held at ministerial level, these conferences have brought together over 320 experts, policy-makers, and academics from the ISN partner network and the PfP community.

“We are pleased to have a NATO PfP Seminar of the ISN in the Republic of Macedonia as a contribution to the vital field of human resource development.”

Stevo Pendarovski, National Security Adviser,
Cabinet of the President of the Republic of
Macedonia, Skopje

Participants from whom papers have been commissioned have included high-level representatives from the parliaments, various ministries, research institutions, the private sector, military and defense establishments, and non-governmental organizations. The following questions have been examined: To what extent can ICT be leveraged to effect economic, political, and

social change? What has been and will be the course of the information revolution in PfP countries and regions in all dimensions – technology, economy, politics, society, and culture? And finally, how will the information revolution vary from country to country and between one region of transition and another in the future? As the need for information on these questions is particularly acute in the South Caucasus and Central Asia, the ISN has particularly focused its initial activities in these geostrategically important regions (see <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/caucasus>).

The recent hiring of an ISN course coordinator and the further development of new training content (knowledge management and information security) and new programs (cooperation with international and regional initiatives in academic networking) will strengthen the ISN's solid and recognized position at the intersection of ICT and international security. ■

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Calendar

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- **Vom Konflikt zur Kooperation – weltweite Perspektiven**

Prof. Hans Küng
Public lecture (in German),
26 June 2002, 5:15 p.m.
Auditorium maximum,
ETH Zurich.

- **Von Krieg und Frieden**

Prof. Kurt R. Spillmann
Public lecture (in German),
3 July 2002, 5:15 p.m.,
Auditorium maximum,
ETH Zurich.

- **15th PfP Training Seminar**

17–19 July 2002,
Yerevan, Armenia.

- **5th International Security Forum: Setting the 21st Century Security Agenda**

International Conference,
14–16 October 2002,
Kongresshaus Zurich.
Conference website:
<http://www.fsk.ethz.ch/5isf/>

- **Corporate Strategy, Regulation, and Global Competition**

CIS Workshop,
November 2002,
ETH Zurich.

- **Hard Law, Soft Law, and Private Legalities**

CIS Workshop,
November 2002,
University of Zurich.

E-Learning: New Strategies and Methods in Teaching Security Policy

ISN www.isn.ethz.ch New technologies can help to improve teaching and learning processes. Schools, institutions of higher education, and companies are therefore making increasing use of electronic learning. While traditional didactic methods and the physical presence of teachers and students remain important, e-learning can complement traditional coursework in important ways. With its new pilot project ERLES, the e-learning team of the International Relations and Security Network (ISN) is contributing to the development of teaching methods that are innovative both in technology and in didactics.

Interest in e-learning has grown rapidly over the last few years. New ways to learn and teach have been made possible by technological progress, and the number of e-learning projects is on a steady rise. While distance learning in the past mainly

involved the distribution of course material, today's e-learning strategies attempt to enhance interactivity between teachers and students. E-learning projects can help overcome the problems confronting many institutions of higher education today, such as increasing numbers of students and increasing disparity in the levels of knowledge that students possess. The pilot project ERLES, which receives financial support from the ETH's FILEP fund, is a response to these challenges.

ERLES stands for "Erweiterte Lernformen im Bereich Sicherheitspolitik," or new learning strategies in security policy. It is designed to complement Professor Andreas Wenger's summer 2002 lecture series at ETH, "World Politics since 1945: History of International Relations" (Security Policy II). The main aim of ERLES is to reduce the number of classroom lectures that students attend, so that they have more time to work on a number of assignments via a Web-

based learning platform. The approximately 70 course participants make up three distinct groups: officers in the Swiss Armed Forces, natural science and engineering undergraduates at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH), and political science students at the University of Zurich. Students benefit from the new design of the lecture series in that they can manage their time flexibly and pace their learning. The lecturer and his assistants also benefit from ERLES in that they can take into account the different levels of knowledge of the three student groups.

The main features of ERLES, all of which can be accessed via a secure and moderated learning platform, are an interactive timeline and an online course designed specifically for the lecture series. Students gain credit for the lecture series by writing an essay on a historical topic and by participating in a group assignment. For their essay, students choose a topic from a time-

The designer's view of the Partnership for Peace Learning Management System (PFP LMS). The triangles symbolize options for creating and changing learning objects.

line that contains topic descriptions and pictures. Completed student essays are then posted on the timeline, together with primary sources. For support for their research and writing tasks, students may use the online course SPIRIT (Security Policy, International Relations, and Information Technology). The course is run on the Partnership for Peace Learning Management System (PfP LMS), which is being co-developed by the ISN. SPIRIT explores the impact of new technologies on politics, offers an overview of information sources, explains strategies for searching the Internet, and presents the ISN information and news services. In addition to the timeline and SPIRIT, the Web-based ERLES learning environment contains a discussion forum, e-mail, information on group assignments, a reader on the history of international relations, and a collection of links to historical documents.

Initial feedback on ERLES has been positive. Students value the new format of the lecture series and have enjoyed learning about the Internet as a source of historical material. Moreover, they have not experienced any major technical problems with the platform. At semester's end, ERLES will undergo systematic evaluation by an external institution. The results of the evaluation will serve as an aid to the ISN e-learning team when applying the features of



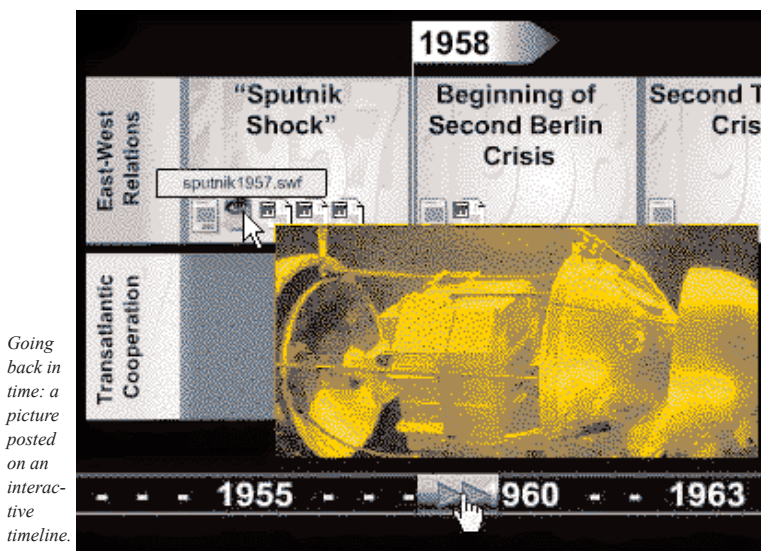
The ISN e-learning team: Christoph Isler, Michael Reimann, Prof. Andreas Wenger, Timo Staub, Urs Ingold, Cornelius Friesendorf (from left). Missing in the photo: Matthai Kurian

ERLES to further lecture series – a prime goal of the project.

Apart from the gains that ERLES brings for teaching, the project has also facilitated the definition of future activities of the ISN e-learning team. On the development side, the team will promote the PfP LMS as a user-friendly e-learning tool. The PfP LMS allows designers to compose and publish courseware via the World Wide Web. They can easily create learning objects, or content, on a topic of their choice. Learning objects, in turn, can be assembled in sets that correspond to users' specific learning requirements.

The PfP LMS includes features such as virtual classrooms, interactive tests, games, a dictionary, a highlighting function, the tracking of learning progress, threaded discussions, e-mail, and public user comments. A crucial asset of the system is its compliance with emerging technical standards, one of the most important of which is SCORM (Sharable Content Object Reference Model). SPIRIT is the first course to run on the new version of the PfP LMS, and more courses will follow.

On the cooperation side, the ISN e-learning team will contribute course material and technical know-how to PolitikON, a German online political science initiative. Through engaging in dialogue with other institutions, both inside and outside the ETH, resources and knowledge can be pooled. This cooperation will also allow the ISN e-learning team to anticipate future trends.



Going back in time: a picture posted on an interactive timeline.

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Veto Players and Decision-Making in the EU after Nice

In order to prepare the European Union for enlargement to include Central and Eastern European, Mediterranean, and Baltic countries, the Treaty of Nice (2001) amends the existing treaties with the aim to make significant improvements to the institutional framework of the EU. Thus, the treaty also changes decision-making in the EU. What are the likely outcomes of these changes with respect to the effective functioning of the EU? The CIS invited Professor George Tsebelis to talk on the consequences for decision-making and the role of and interaction among the EU's major institutions.

In his research, George Tsebelis, Professor of Political Science at the University of California in Los Angeles, concentrates on political institutions, the differences in decision-making in polities, and the effects of such differences. At the invitation of the CIS, Tsebelis gave a presentation at the University of Zurich last December on decision-making in the EU since the Nice Treaty, based on findings published in his latest book *Veto Players: How Political Institutions Work*. Tsebelis focused on the implications of changes in decision-making rules in terms of the distribution of legislative power among the Council of Ministers, the European Commission, and the European Parliament and in terms of the effects on bureaucracies and the European Court of Justice (ECJ).

The Council, the Commission, and the Parliament compose the legislative branch of the EU. The Treaty of Nice introduced a triple majority for decision-making in the Council of Ministers: a qualified majority of the weighted votes of its Members, a majority of the EU Member States, and a qualified majority by Member States that represents at least 62 percent of the population of the Union. According to Tsebelis, this will make decision-making in the EU more difficult: Every political system has a configuration of veto players, i.e., individ-



Gathering after George Tsebelis' presentation: Manfred Elsig, Michael Cemerin, Thomas Sattler, Arlette Flücking, Prof. George Tsebelis and Prof. Dieter Ruloff

ual or collective actors specified by the system that are able to prevent policy changes. In order to change policies, or the legislative status quo, a certain number of veto players have to agree to the proposed change. Veto players affect the winset of the status quo, that is, the set of policies that can replace the existing set. When veto players are many, the winset is small, and significant departures from the status quo are impossible ("policy stability"). The modification in decision-making introduced by the Treaty of Nice is equivalent to increasing the number of veto players in that system. This modification, and also the fact that enlargement is likely to produce more diversified interests, will shift legislative power to the Council.

In addition, the role of the judiciary and the bureaucracy will become more important as the increasing number of veto players expands the core of EU legislative procedures. The core is the set of outcomes that cannot be overruled by the legislative rule. The greater the policy differences between the Council and the EP, the greater the size of the core, and hence the greater the discretion available to the Commission in policy implementation and the ECJ in statutory interpretation. The likely outcomes of the Treaty of Nice are thus an increased difficulty of legislative decisions and a further bureaucratization of the EU.

Tsebelis concluded that, since Nice, the Commission has lost significant powers as a legislative agenda setter, but gained them as head of the bureaucracy. The Council is empowered to veto many more alternatives to the status quo than before, and decision-making in the Parliament following Enlargement will become more difficult. The only institution that comes out relatively empowered is the European judiciary. ■

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Recent CIS Publications



Jürg M. Gabriel, *The American Conception of Neutrality after 1941*

Updated and Revised, Hampshire: Palgrave, 2002, ISBN 0-333-76256-8

Available through www.palgrave.com

This revised edition of Gabriel's study of America's attitude towards neutrality contains new chapters, including an insightful introduction and conclusion that draw on recently released documentation, most importantly on Southeast Asia and the Vietnam War. This book looks at world affairs through the eyes of neutrality. It covers, among other issues, America's contribution to the general decline of neutrality in the 20th century, the major economic and military events surrounding World War II, and the various phases of neutralism during the Vietnam War and with the role neutrality played at the end of the Cold War and in the reunification of Germany.



Christoph Breitenmoser, *Strategy Without Foreign Policy – The Development of Swiss Security Policy During the Cold War*
Bern et al.: Peter Lang, 2002 (in German), ISBN 3-906769-25-9

Available through www.peterlang.ch

In the 1960s the debate about Swiss security policy was characterized by the fundamental shift from a strict military defense policy towards a comprehensive security policy with an active foreign policy component. But despite the efforts to integrate foreign policy into the existing security apparatus by the government, the obvious conclusion – namely the extension of Swiss foreign relations – was not heeded on the practical level. This book focuses on the reasons for the conspicuous unawareness in Switzerland of the strategic role of foreign policy as a key element of security policy. It analyzes the different international and domestic factors that influenced the evolution of Swiss strategy during the 1960s and early 1970s.



Dieter Ruloff (ed.), *Moral und Moralismus in Politik und Wirtschaft [Moral and Moralism in Politics and Economy]*
Chur/Zürich: Rüegger, 2002, ISBN 3 7253 0720 2 (in German, forthcoming)

Available through www.rueggerverlag.ch

Economics and moral philosophy share the same scientific roots. Adam Smith, for example, developed a theory of moral sentiments, or ethics. The science of economics also teaches that ethics should be applied to economics; if not, it becomes moralism and thus turns into its own opposite. The separation between business and morality is a modern invention that possibly falls short. What is the place of ethics in business and in politics? Is the invisible hand still at work in a globalized world economy, and if so, at work for whom? Contributions by Peter Glotz, Otto Graf Lambsdorff, Lothar Späth, Ruth Metzler, Henning Schulte-Noelle, Hansjürg Elsthorst und Karl Homann throw light upon these questions.



Andreas Wenger (ed.), *The Internet and the Changing Face of International Relations and Security*
Information & Security, Vol. 7, Sofia: ProCon Ltd., 2001, ISSN: 1311-1493

Available online at www.fsk.ethz.ch/pub/pub_new.htm

The relationship between the Internet and modern international relations is a broad and multifaceted topic. This volume of *Information & Security* provides an overview of the scope and complexities of this area of inquiry. The first section of articles deals with the broad challenges to governance posed by the growth of soft power; the second section deals with the security challenges posed by the Internet; and the third section deals with problems that arise from the dual-use nature of information systems and with the need to regulate any use that has bad intent.



Daniel Trachsler, *Neutrality between East and West: The Debate on and Confirmation of Swiss Neutrality in the Early Cold War Years, 1947–1952*
Zurich: Center for Security Studies and Conflict Research, 2002, ISBN 3-905641-79-8 (in German). Available online at www.fsk.ethz.ch/pub/pub_new.htm

When the Cold War began in post-War Europe, Swiss neutrality came under heavy pressure. The Swiss Government was forced to deal with two crucial questions: Was a security policy based mainly on neutrality still justifiable, and was such a policy practicable? Some Federal Council members expressed considerable doubt about whether neutrality was the best way to ensure Switzerland's security. Nevertheless, the Federal Council decided to uphold the policy of neutrality and thus decided not to join any of the Western cooperative efforts that offered protection in case of need. The present study, which is based on recently declassified sources, focuses on the reasons for the council's decision.



Andreas Wenger, *Engaging Russia and its Regions: Challenges and Opportunities for the West*
Working Paper No. 11, Zurich: Center for Security Studies and Conflict Research, 2002

Available online at www.fsk.ethz.ch/documents/WorkingPapers/wp11.pdf

This paper demonstrates that in order to develop coherent Russia policies, Western policymakers must understand the ongoing nature of Russia's transformation and the importance of Russia's regions within the transformation process. Russia's social, political, and economic reality is very different from that of the West, as are Russia's perceptions of the forces that are driving international relations in the 21st century. In particular, Russia understands the challenges and opportunities posed by regionalism in very different terms. This paper suggests that the West should acknowledge these differences when engaging Russia and its regions, while at the same time clearly defining its own global interests.



Jon A. Fanzun, *Swiss Human Rights Policy since World War II: From Reluctance to Normality*

Zürich: Forschungsstelle für Internationale Beziehungen, No. 35, 2002 (in German).

Available online at www.cis.ethz.ch/gabriel (see under Publications)

The study examines the development of Swiss human rights policy since 1945 and argues that Switzerland has moved from a unique and reluctant stance to a normal policy that is comparable to the positions taken by other liberal countries. The country not only joined the most important human rights conventions but also declared human rights an objective of its overall foreign policy. However, Switzerland for a long time was exceedingly reluctant in matters of human rights and only in recent years developed a comprehensive human rights policy. This low-profile stance was reflected in Swiss non-membership in the UN and the Council of Europe for many years. Fanzun's contribution is based on interim results of his dissertation research on the topic.

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