Hochschule Wismar
University of Technology, Business and Design
Fachbereich Wirtschaft

Hochschule Wismar
University of Technology, Business and Design
Faculty of Business

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Austrian Neutrality: Setting the Agenda

Heft 13 / 2006

W D P

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ISSN 1612-0884
ISBN 3-939159-03-4

JEL-Klassifikation N44, Z00, Z13

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Printed in Germany

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Preface

Broadening one's horizon is probably the most fascinating opportunity offered by universities to their students. Therefore, lectures, seminars, and projects should not only focus on transfer of knowledge, but also offer incentives for (self-)education. If this comes to happen, "broadening one's horizon" may well be taken literally: A political science and economics major from the Northwest of Germany being shipped to the University of Nebraska in Lincoln or a postgraduate student of German studies from Grand Island, Nebraska being transferred from the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque being transferred to Graz University in Austria.

Such experiences will not only have a lasting effect on the individual in question, but can also lead them to choose a research topic, where interdisciplinary methods and intercultural perspectives can be brought together. At its worst, such an attempt ends as a dubious mixture, neither flesh nor bone. At its best, a new perspective is applied and new insights are to be gained – as is shown in this paper.

During her studies in Austria, Kristine Sue Ankenman became interested in the strongly disputed concept of Austrian neutrality and as a researcher with a broad background in political science as well as in German studies she started to wonder, why there was so much discussion going on and so little formal change seemed to happen. Looking for an explanation for such a non-development, she became familiar with Kingdon's model of policy windows. Using Kingdon's concept as an analytical instrument, Ankenman, a former colleague from the University of Nebraska, was able to explain, why neutrality has been discussed for a long time, how it has been changed and re-contextualized, and why it will continue to exist.

In the fall of 2005, her research has been accepted as a master thesis in German Studies at the University of Mexico. I am honoured to accept this paper from Kristine Sue Ankenman for publication in this series – an American researcher's explanation for Austrian political issues.

Wismar, June 2006

Jost W. Kramer

Dedication

I wish to dedicate this to a very special group of people:

To Michaela Kollman und Günther Sammer. They are two of Austria's greatest Ambassadors. Ihr habt mir nicht nur eure Wohnung gezeigt sondern auch eure Herzen geöffnet, um mir ein unglaubliches Jahr in Österreich zu ermöglichen. Prosit!

To my twin 'miracles', Missy and Lambchop, who 'interrupted' my academic journey in a very good way. May their lives be full of happiness, health, love and intellectual stimulation.

"We do not stop learning because we grow old,
we grow old because we stop learning." – Unknown.

But most of all, I wish to dedicate this to Glen, the farm boy from Nebraska, who has stuck with me through thick and thin, who has always known what I am capable of and who challenges me to finish what I start.

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank my very good friend, Professor Jost Kramer, for starting me off on this incredible journey all those years ago and having the courage to check in on me every now and then with more encouragement and all those wonderful books! Recht herzlichen Dank!

I would also like to thank my "professorial triumvirate" at the University of New Mexico's German Studies program. Professor Peter Pabisch, Austrian and Renaissance man, who like a good geologist is able to see the gem inside the plain, rough rock. Professor Susanne Baachmann, who has always been gracious and helpful. My understanding of 'paradigms' will never be the same. And most of all, to my committee chair, Professor Katrin Schröter, who is as kind, caring, and generous as she is stubborn. Her meticulous attention to detail and insistence on "discussing it" made this all possible. She has helped me to accomplish the impossible.

I also wish to gratefully acknowledge the faculty of the German Summer School in Taos, New Mexico, especially, Professor Bea Müller-Kampel, who inspired me to look beyond the classroom. The Österreichische Austauschdienst for the award of "Bewerber aus aller Welt" and those incredible avour sors at Karl-Franzens-Universität in Graz. They have opened up a life-long love of all that is Austrian.

I. Abstract

By the time Austria prepared to join the European Union on Jan. 1, 1995, neutrality law and policy had been adapted, modified, and "re-contextualized" to the point where many policy experts maintained, that it existed only as a law on paper. Yet public opinion is still overwhelming in avour of continued neutrality. This dissonance between public perceptions and governmental avourtives came to a head in 2005, when amidst constitutional reform; the Austrian constitutional convention uncovered a conflict between the *Neutralitätsgesetz* and BV-G BGBl Art. 23f.

While conditions in 2005 initially appeared to avour change to constitutional neutrality, this did not happen. Many experts attribute the lack of substantial change to overwhelming public support for neutrality. However, with the use of Kingdon's model of agenda setting, as outlined in the ninth edition of Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policy, I will demonstrate how neutrality has become less an issue of national identity and more of a domestic, political tool for maintaining the balance-of-power between the Austrian political parties since the fall of the two-party system in the 1980s.

After a brief overview of Kingdon's policy model, I review the historical context of neutrality including its Cold War context, its role in the construction of national identity, and for the "re-contextualization" of security and defense in the 1990s.

In addition to shedding new light on the dichotomy between constitutional neutrality and the requirements of the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy, the following analysis shows how neutrality is still not considered a problem, but a solution to EU domination over national interests. It also shows how the EU's proposed Constitution has failed to provide a viable policy alternative to neutrality. Finally, this analysis shows that while the Austrian people still overwhelmingly support neutrality, it is actually the political parties, who continue to value neutrality as a political tool for maintaining domestic, political stability as Austria transitions from a two-party consociational democracy to a western-style, multi-party democracy.

VI. Introduction

In the year 2005, Austria celebrated various anniversaries marking the establishment and achievements of the Second Republic. Ironically, 2005 also saw the Austrian government make sweeping changes to the very constitution it celebrated. This included the potential repeal of constitutional neutrality in the face of continued European integration and the ratification of the European Constitutional Treaty in May 2005. Inherent in debates on Austria's role within the new European order has been the ongoing problem of reconciling

constitutional neutrality with membership in a European Security and Defense structure.

Historically, neutrality has proven a very successful policy instrument permitting Austria to emerge from the rubble of World War II and avoid the costs associated with maintaining a large, standing army. It also permitted the construction of a uniquely "Austrian" national identity removed from the "pan-Germanic" one that had previously marked the outbreak of two world wars, while still promoting an international image of stability, prosperity, and moral superiority. This, however, changed in the mid-1980s, when globalization and economic pressures forced Austrian business and industry to demand membership in the European Union. Up until then, classical or traditional definitions of neutrality, as established by the Hague Conventions of 1907, had largely gone unchallenged. Yet even before it established itself as a permanently neutral country on October 26, 1955, Austria had already set out to define neutrality on its own terms quickly deviating from the Swiss model, which failed to take into account Austria's unique circumstances[1]. With each new challenge to its foreign policy stance, Austria managed to re-interpret neutrality to its advantage without rejecting the basic tenants of classical neutrality. By the time Austria prepared to join the European Union on January 1, 1995, neutrality law and policy had been adapted, modified, "re-contextualized", "re-conceptualized", and generally altered to the point where policy experts could argue that the federal government had deviated so far from the original context of Austrian neutrality as to render even constitutional neutrality meaningless.

It is believed that when Austria joined the European Union, the Austrian SPÖ-ÖVP coalition government not only relinquished total control over foreign policy; but also, committed the country to an as yet undefined military pact. Policy experts could now argue that Austria's commitment to a regional military union, as proposed in the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), was in direct conflict with constitutional neutrality [B-VG BGBl. 1955/211] and that it could only be a matter of time, before neutrality was formally repealed. By 2005, it seemed the potential for change might actually exist as a right-far right coalition, already considered an outspoken opponent of neutrality and a proponent of NATO membership, began revising the Austrian federal constitution amid ratification of the proposed Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe. It was feared that the ÖVP-FPÖ government had been given the opportunity to repeal constitutional neutrality; yet, this did not happen.

The popular reason given for continued neutrality is that the Austrian peo-

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[1] Austria insisted during final negotiations of the State Treaty, that it be allowed to join the United Nations, and that neutrality was compatible with membership in that organization, something Switzerland rejected. On 14 Dec 1955, Austria became a full member of the UN.

ple have come to associate neutrality with national identity and no government would risk voter backlash. The dissonance between public and governmental perceptions of neutrality policy has been well documented by numerous Austrian policy experts, as has the link between neutrality and national identity. It is not within the scope of this paper to revisit these topics; however, building on the premise that neutrality is closely linked to Austrian identity and that public perceptions of neutrality are not concurrent with governmental avourtives, it is possible to demonstrate with the use of a valid policy model that overwhelming popular mood is not alone responsible for continued neutrality in Austria. In fact, with the use of John W. Kingdon's policy model, as outlined in the ninth edition of Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policy, I will demonstrate that neutrality has become less an issue of national identity and more a political tool for maintaining a balance of power between the political parties since the fall of the two-party system in the new multi-party system.

Evidence of this assertion can be found as far back as 1955, at the time neutrality was established to "stabilize" the new democracy and most recently in 1995, when the SPÖ-ÖVP coalition, or Social Partners, managed to persuade the Austrian people to vote for EU membership despite the apparent avour r tions to neutrality (Lantis/Queen). Lantis/Queen have demonstrated the successful use of a double-edge diplomacy model which showed how the Austrian coalition government (Social Partnership of the SPÖ and ÖVP), when they presented a united front, were able to persuade the EU to grant membership to a neutral nation in exchange for concessions and promises to repeal neutrality at a future date; while at the same time persuading the Austrian people that neutrality could be made compatible with membership in a supranational union – even with military pretensions. It is ultimately, however, the events of late 2004 and 2005, which have demonstrated that neutrality has come full circle and remains an important political tool, used by the Austrian political elite to control domestic political events.

Much like the problem-solving processes in the business world, Kingdon's model identifies three process streams, which at their most simplistic include the processes of accurately identifying a problem, finding the best solution, and promoting both to a receptive group of people who are able to effect change. Assuming all of these processes are in place at the right time, change will occur. In the case of Kingdon's model, these have translated into a problem stream, a policy stream, and a political stream which when conditions are right will open a policy window or "window of opportunity" in which the potential for change is at its greatest. By analyzing neutrality within the context of this model, I have been able to show that neutrality has never really been identified as a policy problem and that no viable alternatives to neutrality exist.

The failure of neutrality to make it onto the governmental agenda has

widely been attributed to the overwhelming popularity of neutrality among the Austrian people; however, public mood or opinion alone cannot account for the continued success of neutrality. As Kingdon's model will demonstrate, it is not necessarily the Austrian people who are the defenders of neutrality, but the Austrian political parties, which consider neutrality a powerful political tool, which have prevented any real change to constitutional neutrality.

In analyzing the findings from Kingdon's model, it becomes apparent that neutrality continues to favour the purpose for which it was created. It was designed in 1955 to prevent political instability in Austria, assuming that this in turn would prevent future wars in Europe – and that is exactly what neutrality continues to do today, especially as Austria evolves back into a true multi-party democracy. Neutrality is proving to be a form of "checks and balances" on the present political parties and their ruling political elite – reinforcing and gradually replacing the artificial system of consociational democracy that for decades worked under the two-party system of the SPÖ-ÖVP Social Partnership, but has begun to erode as Austria has developed into a multi-party system and the far-right, "nationalist" elements have begun to re-emerge.

Austria is of particular interest because of the unique circumstances favouring the origin and development of perpetual, constitutional neutrality and the current dichotomy between Austrian law and policy. In an effort to better understand the dynamics of neutrality in its present context, as well as the events, people, and processes, which are presently shaping the course of neutrality policy, it is first necessary to understand Kingdon's model of agenda setting, which will be covered in section II. In section III, the historical context in which Austrian neutrality policy was conceived and developed, up to and including the present relationship to the European Union's security and defense options, will provide the basis for my argument in section IV that neutrality has since 1955 been a political tool to control the Austrian people; but, as Austria has evolved from a two-party consociational democracy into a true, democratic, multi-party political system in the 1990s, neutrality became a political tool for the various political parties to reduce conflict and instability.

In a final analysis of neutrality and the Austrian governmental agenda, in section V, I will demonstrate with the help of Kingdon's model how neutrality is still a very necessary and valid policy process for Austria, even if public mood were not acting as a constraint on the political process, if only to help Austria continue the transition process to a true, multi-party democracy.

III. Modeling Kingdon

A. Why Kingdon?

I have chosen Kingdon's model for its unique applicability to public policy formation. Not only is it a well-developed policy model incorporating aspects

of how issues become problems and gain prominence on a national agenda, but it is also applicable to the study of policy formation in other countries where the decision making process is not concentrated in the hands of one individual or select group.

Kingdon's research was designed to follow public policy formation over time, allowing for the interaction of various process "streams" which affect the setting of governmental agendas. He based his research on years of interviews, case studies, data, and observation of agenda and policy processes involved in the creation of U.S. health and transportation policy during the 1970s and 1980s. Using a modified version of the Cohen-March-Olsen "garbage can" model of public policy formation, he proposed three process streams that generally flow independently of one another until such a time as elements in all three converge and a *policy window* or "window of opportunity" opens (83-84).

Kingdon's model focuses mainly on the "*pre-decision process*" of how issues or problems get onto the governmental agenda, rather than the "*decision*" process of a formal vote or final decision. In chapter one, he outlines his motivation for studying agenda setting by noting Victor Hugo's phrase, "an idea whose time has come" (Kingdon 1); and, by suggesting that the phenomena behind the rise and fall of such ideas or "issues" are not as random as many think. They can be recognized by such things as "sustained and marked changes in public opinion, repeated mobilization of people with intensely held preferences, and bandwagons onto which politicians of all persuasions climb" (1). He goes on to point out that, "The patterns of public policy, after all, are determined not only by such final decisions as votes in legislatures, or initiatives and vetoes by presidents, but also by the fact that some subjects and proposals emerge in the first place and others are never seriously considered" (2). His model finds patterns and elements of predictability within the chaos that is public policy formation. By using Kingdon's model of agenda setting, one can ascertain which actors and events have elevated neutrality to a *problem*, forcing it onto the governmental agenda, and into public awareness. Kingdon's model will also help to make sense of the *policy* community or "policy primeval soup" and its processes, which include generating policy proposals and potential alternatives. Lastly, we will look at those *political* events and conditions, including public mood/opinion, election results, and government turnover, which have recently affected neutrality policy.

Although Kingdon's model was developed while studying United States government and policy, it can easily be applied to the study of Austrian neutrality with minor modifications to allow for differences in political structure: the most obvious difference being at the executive level, where in Austria power is not concentrated in the hands of a single leader; but, divided between the federal government (federal chancellor and ministers) and the federal

president. While such differences are not important to the final analysis of a potential policy window, they are significant to the understanding of the conditions within each process stream.

I wish to add one final important note before entering into an overview of Kingdon's model of agenda setting. It must be remembered that for Kingdon, why policy change fails is nearly as important as why it succeeds. This point will prove critical in the following analysis of Austrian neutrality policy.

B. Explaining Kingdon

Although Kingdon's model of agenda setting at first seems quite complex, there are discernable elements which can be highlighted and used as the starting point for any analysis of neutrality policy. The key to understanding Kingdon's model is to remember that it focuses on the "*pre-decision*" processes of agenda setting and alternative specification rather than the actual "*decision*" processes of making an authoritative choice and implementation of the policy, i.e. a formal, legislative vote (2-3). It is also important to keep in mind that Kingdon differentiates between three types of agendas: *specialized*, *governmental*, and *decision*. *Specialized* agendas are created primarily within the various government agencies (or in Austria's case, ministries) and they seldom garner attention outside of the governmental agencies that develop them (3). Our attention, for the purpose of this study, will be directed towards the *governmental* agenda, which Kingdon defines as "the list of subjects or problems to which governmental officials, and people outside of government closely associated with those officials, are paying some serious attention at any given time" (3). Assuming a subject rises high enough on the governmental agenda, it will often move to a *decision* agenda for an "active decision", usually in the form of a vote or executive order (Kingdon 4).

Kingdon also distinguishes between the *agenda* and *alternatives* noting that once an issue or problem makes it onto the governmental agenda, a solution must be found from within a set of available alternatives in order for the problem to stay on the agenda (4). If no viable solution exists at the time a problem rises onto the agenda, the problem will in all likelihood be tabled in avour of more pressing issues or ignored entirely until it either goes away or a solution is eventually found. Armed with these definitions, it is now possible to explain Kingdon's model of agenda setting in greater detail.

Kingdon has identified two important "factors" that "might affect agenda setting and the specification of alternatives: the participants who are active, and the processes by which agenda items and alternatives come into prominence" (15). The interaction of these two factors, *participants* and *processes*, determines whether an issue even gets on the agenda; but also whether it stays on the agenda and what importance is attached to the issue. The interplay of participants and processes lead to the rise and fall of issues on the agenda.

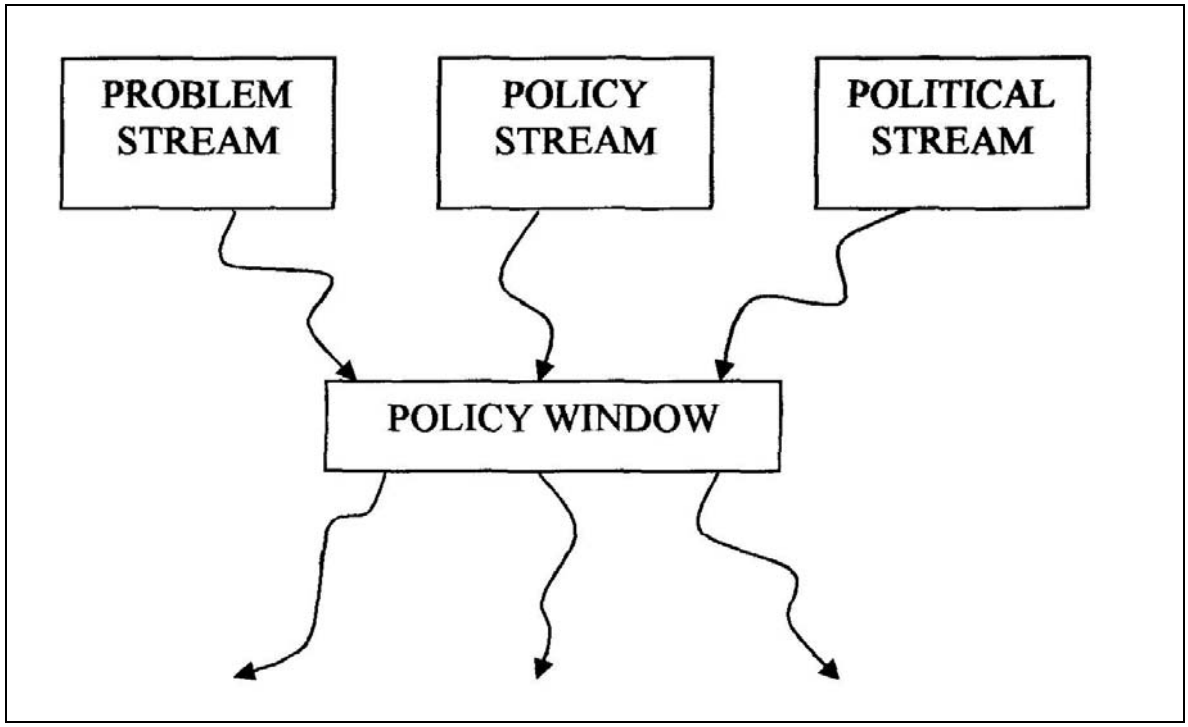
While Kingdon is careful to categorize the various participants throughout the processes, he gives special notice to what he calls "*policy entrepreneurs*" (122-124,179-183, 204). These are individuals who not only have a special interest above and beyond other participants in these processes; but who are also willing to invest their resources to see their pet problem or solution become policy. They are largely distinguished from mere participants by their level of commitment to the agenda item.

Kingdon has categorized participants based mainly on two sets of criteria: level of authority and visibility. Participants or "players" can be both "*inside*" and "*outside*" of government, distinguished largely by whether or not they have formal or informal authority over policy (45). Formal authority is considered to be imparted through either an electoral mandate or presidential appointment; whereas, informal authority is generally reserved for avour r fy ties, presidential staff, and high-level advisers. Participants are also categorized by the level of media and public attention they receive. "V*isible*" and "*hidden*" clusters of participants are important to understanding the agenda process when one considers the amount of public attention they receive (68). Kingdon's research has shown that a visible insider like the president of the United States has more power over setting the governmental agenda than an undersecretary or presidential staffer (inside, hidden) or a local radio station (outside). In the final analysis it can be concluded that in general, the closer one is to the center of power and the more visibility one has, the greater the ability to affect the governmental agenda (Kingdon 68-70).

Participants alone, however, do not set the agenda. Kingdon has identified three processes, which are also important to agenda setting: *problem* recognition, generating *policy* proposals from available *alternatives* and *political* events or conditions (87). While his model is relatively complex, these three processes can be outlined in a simple diagram (see Fig. 1.) based on Kingdon's own summary: "We conceive of three process streams flowing through the system – streams of problems, policies, and politics. They are largely independent of one another and each develops according to its own dynamics and rules. But at some critical junctures the three streams are joined, and the greatest policy changes grow out of that coupling of problems, policy proposals, and politics" (19). Figure 1 provides a visual overview of Kingdon's policy model.

Kingdon has adapted the general concept of identifying a problem, finding a solution, and building consensus for proposed change to the political environment, having identified various mechanisms and sub-processes specific to politics and policymaking. In Kingdon's processes, the presence or absence of these mechanisms and sub-processes, help determine whether the criteria for the individual process stream have been met.

Figure 1: Simplification of Kingdon's process model



Source: Simplification of Kingdon's process model based on Kingdon (1995: 19).

The process streams, which Kingdon proposes in his model, are fluid, complex, and rely heavily on policy entrepreneurs to bring them together in order for a window to open (182). While it is not within the scope of this paper to cover in great detail all of the intricacies of the three process streams, it is necessary to provide a cursory overview of each along with a summary of how they "*couple*" to form a policy window.

VI. The Problem Stream

The first process stream, which Kingdon identifies, is the *problem* stream. The difference between a "*problem*" and a "*condition*" is often one of perception. "Conditions become defined as problems when we come to believe that we should do something about them" (Kingdon 109). Identifying whether or not neutrality is recognized as a problem will be the first step in applying Kingdon's model to Austria's condition. Kingdon suggests several ways in which conditions become problems in Chapter 5 of Agenda, Alternatives, and Public Policy. In summary, these are [systemic] "*indicators*", "*focusing events*", such as crises, disasters, and symbols; and, "*feedback*". Kingdon notes that those in and around government are constantly dealing with a myriad of problems and that some problems tend to receive more attention than others do. How some problems are chosen for attention over others tends to be dominated by the occurrence of indicators, focusing events, and feedback in combination or

alone (90).

Statistical or quantitative in nature, systemic *indicators* are often tracked over long periods of time, rely on accurate methodology, and the interpretation of data by experts; however, they are still considered powerful measurements of a problem (Kingdon 90-91, 93). Examples of systemic indicators include the increase in number of road accidents at a certain intersection, increasing budget deficit in a school district or decline of individuals covered by private health insurance. Kingdon notes that there are three qualities to indicators that often make indicators hard to ignore: They are *pervasive*, *necessary*, and *powerful* (93).

Even if indicators are present, they alone do not always have the power to push a problem onto the agenda. Often, they require or are reinforced by a *focusing event*, such as a crisis or disaster before sufficient attention is paid to a problem (94). In some policy arenas, a condition is not generally considered a problem unless there is a crisis or disaster to garner sufficient attention (95-96). Although a crisis may push a problem onto the agenda, it does not necessarily guarantee that the problem will stay there. In these cases, crises or disasters are often reinforced by the experiences of policy makers and/or the power of symbols (96). A recent example of a focusing event is the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. The twin towers became a symbol for not only the U.S. but also the rest of the world, symbolizing everything from an attack on democracy to the fall of imperialist capitalism. Focusing events almost always need to be accompanied by some other problem process (98). In general, focusing events can strengthen an existing perception of a problem, can forewarn of an even greater problem, or taken in avour tion with a series of similar or related crises they can affect how the problem is defined (Kingdon 98). In addition to focusing events and indicators, feedback is another method in which problems gain prominence on the agenda (100)

Feedback, or the response to the *operation of existing programs*, is the third way in which problems come to the attention of government. Is the program working as planned? Are there unanticipated consequences or side effects? Kingdon identifies four ways in which feedback brings problems to the attention of government: feedback on *implementation*, *failure to meet goals*, *cost*, and *unanticipated negative consequences* (102-103).

Although feedback can come from diverse sources, including the general public through complaints, town meetings or organized groups, feedback from bureaucrats tasked with administering the program through casework, systemic monitoring or general perceptions tends to carry more weight, both in promoting a problem up the agenda or preventing it from getting serious attention (101).

Sometimes, despite the appearance of indicators, focusing events, and feed-

back, a problem will still "fade" off the agenda (103). Why issues or problems fail is as important to Kingdon's model as why they succeed. According to Kingdon, problems fall from the agenda because it is believed that they are solved, those in government lose interest, there is a lack of viable proposals or alternatives, the item is too large or requires too much effort, the short attention span of the public or "fads"; or, finally, because there is a lack of necessary resources (103-105).

Conversely, how one defines a problem can determine if a "condition" becomes a "problem" in the first place. Kingdon notes that, "The problem definition and struggles over definition turn out to have important consequences" (110). The value one places on a condition or problem determines how problems get defined (110). When dealing with values, Kingdon notes that perceptions between an ideal and reality or "observed conditions" often lead to a perceived problem (110). As does any discrepancy in a comparison, such as the comparison of health care systems between two nations (111). Our tendency to categorize or classify things in order to find similarities and differences, however, can also lead to difficulties in defining problems. "The emergence of a new category is a signal public policy event. When people start thinking of transportation or energy, for instance instead of their separate components classified into other categories, entirely new definitions of problems and conceptualizations of solutions come into play" (113).

The process of identifying a problem accurately does not insure that the problem will receive the necessary attention to elevate it onto the agenda; but the appearance of one or more supporting events like indicators, focusing events, and feedback increase the likelihood that it will. The probability increases when a problem is linked to a policy proposal (115).

VI. The Policy Stream

The second process stream, which Kingdon proposes is the policy stream. In chapter 6, he equates the process of policy generation with the biological process of natural selection, even going so far as to call it a "policy primordial soup" (116). Nascent ideas are floated around in the right mixture of research and intellectual debate, eventually congealing into recognizable forms and a formal policy proposal. Still, Kingdon finds key elements to the process of policy formation, which again affect how a problem rises or falls on the agenda. These include a community of specialists or "*policy community*", ways in which ideas are exchanged, a period of "*softening up*" the policy community, a set of criteria for the survival of an idea, and the presence of an available alternative (117).

The policy community, as Kingdon conceives of it, is a community of specialists or experts, such as researchers, governmental support staff, academics, and interest group analysts who are largely responsible for the development of

ideas from which policy and alternatives are eventually taken (116). "This community of specialists hums along on its own, independent of such political events as changes in administration and pressure from legislators' avour r fcies (Kingdon 117). Kingdon allows that political events do affect the policy community, but not in the ways that they affect the political stream (118). The differences between the policy and political streams will be addressed later in the analysis of the political stream. For now, it is important to understand the dynamics of the policy stream as well as the impact of the policy stream on the problem stream.

Central to the policy stream is the policy community and level of fragmentation within the community. This means not only level and type of contact or interaction; but, also the ways in which information is exchanged and the focus on a common goal. In communities where specialists deal with the same problems, there tends to be less fragmentation; whereas, in communities where a division of labor or compartmentalization of competencies exist, there will be greater fragmentation. The consequences of community fragmentation is "…disjointed policy, lack of common orientation, and agenda instability" (143); and, the effect on the policy stream is a lack of viable policy alternatives (121). It is, therefore, extremely important to the setting of the agenda that a cohesive community and a common paradigm exist within the policy stream in order for an alternative to be available at the right time.

Key to the policy stream is the appearance of policy entrepreneurs. "These entrepreneurs are not necessarily found in any one location in the policy community. They could be in or out of government, in elected or appointed positions, in interest groups or research organizations. But their defining characteristic, much as in the case of a business entrepreneur, is their willingness to invest their resources – time, energy, reputation, and sometimes money – in the hope of a future return" (Kingdon 122). Whether for personal or altruistic reasons, policy entrepreneurs are critical to the coupling of policy and problem (179). They are also important in the process of softening up both the policy community and the general public; a process considered "…necessary before a proposal is taken seriously" (143, 130).

Ultimately, policies proposed within a policy community have to meet certain "criteria" in order to survive (131). This includes technical feasibility, compatibility with the values of specialists and the anticipation of future constraints (131-139). Assuming these criteria are met, those alternatives that survive the selection process are ready for consideration by policy makers (139). "The policy stream thus produces a short list of proposals. This short list is not necessarily a consensus in the policy community on the one proposal that meets their criteria; rather, it is an agreement that a few proposals are prominent" (144). Thus, the policy stream includes a policy community responsible for producing not only policy options, but also individuals or entrepreneurs to

promote one or more of those options.

Although having viable alternatives and policy entrepreneurs available when a problem comes along does not guarantee it will make it onto the agenda, it does increase the probability that it will place high on not only the governmental agenda, but also the decision agenda (144).

VI. The Political Stream

With this in mind, we can next turn our attention to Kingdon's final process stream – the *political* stream. Factors such as the national mood, organized political forces, and the role of government, including turnover of key personnel, election results, and questions of jurisdiction, dominate this stream (162-163). Kingdon notes that, the political stream has a significant impact on setting the agenda (145). This is especially seen whenever there is a change in administration where new elected officials bring with them different values and objectives or whenever there is strongly organized and vocal opposition to a proposal.

Events within the government itself have a strong influence on the promotion or demotion of items on the agenda (163). In addition to changes in political and administrative leadership, there is also the issue of bureaucratic "turf" or "jurisdiction" (155). Kingdon's research has shown that such disputes over competencies and territory generally inhibit a problem or solution from receiving government attention (156). An example of this is the failure to address a problem or provide a solution because they are perceived to be outside the agency's jurisdiction (158). The exception to this, Kingdon notes, is when there is a bureaucratic "stalemate" which results from competition between departments or agencies. In these instances, issues tend to be promoted up the agenda (157). Still the promotion or demotion of an item on the agenda rests largely with perceptions of popular mood.

"People in and around government sense a national mood. They are comfortable discussing its content, and believe that they know when the mood shifts. The idea goes by different names – the national mood, the climate in the country, changes in public opinion, or broad social movements. But common to all of these labels is the notion that a rather large number of people out in the country are thinking along certain common lines that this national mood changes from one time to another in discernable ways, and that these changes in mood or climate have important impacts on policy agendas and policy outcomes" (Kingdon 146). Kingdon concedes that diagnosing public mood is an inexact science. Still, those who follow such tendencies closely, i.e. researchers of public opinion (147), can generally recognize it. Mail, town meetings, visits by delegates and opinion polls are used to help gauge what the population is thinking or feeling.

Once again, the perceptions of those in and around government are impor-

tant in reading public mood. If perceptions suggest the majority of the constituency is against a policy course, the policy maker will quickly discard it. “They also judge whether the general public would at least tolerate the directions pursued at the elite level. Without tolerance, the potential for retribution at the polls is likely to torpedo the idea in Congress [or in the case of Austria, the parliament]” (163). Kingdon also notes that despite questions of opinion poll validity, the important thing to remember is that those in power still place great importance on them (147, 149).

Political leaders also place great importance on the cohesion or conflict among organized interest groups. Organized political forces include interest group pressure, political mobilization, such as grass-roots movements, and avour r of political elites. If there is consensus among those groups promoting a problem or policy, then those in government are more likely to listen. If, as is more often the case, conflict among the interested parties results in a perceived balance between those for and those against a policy, government is likely to assume there is a “balance of organized forces” which “mitigates against any change at all” (Kingdon 151).

Kingdon expands on this observation in the political process by suggesting a cause for such stalemates. “One major reason, for governmental inertia is the nearly inevitable building of clientele in avour of an existing program. Once a government program is established, the clientele it benefits organizes into an impressive collection of interest groups whose major purpose is to protect the program from which they draw their sustenance. Not only does this clientele fend off attacks on the program, but it also makes consideration of proposals that might change the program difficult” (152).

Kingdon notes two other characteristics of organized interest – like politicians, they will do a cost-benefit analysis to see if the policy is worth the investment of resources and reputation (151). The other characteristic that gives organized interest greater influence in the political process is that they sometimes have representation disproportionate to their numbers (150). Kingdon’s final research regarding organized interest groups, however, is that, “…powerful interests are sometimes overcome, and change occurs despite their opposition” (163).

There is little doubt that the major influences in the political stream are public mood, role of government, including elections and jurisdiction, and organized interest groups; yet, Kingdon is quick to caution that these can not be viewed equally (164). “In particular, the complex of national mood and elections seems to create extremely powerful impacts on policy agendas, impacts capable of overwhelming the balance of organized forces” (164). But this is mitigated by the fact that national mood and elections set the agenda; whereas, organized interests tend to affect the availability of alternatives (164).

There is one final difference to point out before we proceed to Kingdon’s

analysis of coupling and policy windows. According to Kingdon, the process of *consensus building* takes place both within the policy and political streams. Within the policy stream, the policy community is busy presenting, discussing, modifying, and discarding various ideas over long periods of time. They create a *short list of alternatives* that they eventually come back to over and over again largely by the processes of *diffusion* and *persuasion* (139-141, 163). Within the political stream, process of consensus building becomes more of a *bargaining process*, taking on aspects of favors, and fears of lost benefits (159-160).

Once an idea finally "catches on", one sees the effects of "*tipping*" and "*bandwagoning*" where perceptions "tip" in avour of a specific policy and participants are suddenly quick to "jump on the bandwagon" to insure they receive any and all possible benefits (161). These effects usually precede the opening of a policy window or a window of opportunity in which all three process streams come together long enough to allow for policy change.

VI. Coupling and Windows

The intricacies of Kingdon's model are perhaps best explained by him: "The separate streams com together at critical times. A problem is recognized, a solution is developed, and available in the policy community, a political change makes it the right time for policy change, and potential constraints are not severe" (165). It is only when the streams join that the potential for a policy window to open is at its greatest; yet, predicting when a window will open or how long it will remain open is often difficult.

Kingdon's research has found that, more often than not, policy windows do not happen very often and even when they do, they do not stay open for very long (166). Identifying *why* and *when* a policy window opens is the purpose of Kingdon's model of agenda setting. By following events, conditions, and participants within each of the three processes streams and observing for signs of coupling, one begins to get a sense of how potential policy windows appear. One also begins to see a way to make sense of the enormous task of analyzing data, events, moods, perceptions, and values.

It is often easy to discern when a policy window has opened. The appearance of a policy window means that a change in the political stream has pushed the issue or item onto the *decision* agenda and action will most likely be taken in the form of policy change (166, 168). This would generally mean a change in public mood or the turnover of key political positions. The absence of an issue or item from the decision agenda generally indicates that either a window has already opened and closed without anyone recognizing it (possible, but not likely) or that one has simply not opened yet.

It is important at this point to reiterate the effects of the various process streams on the agenda and alternatives. The *problem* and *political* streams af-

fect the setting of the *governmental* agenda; whereas, the *policy* stream affects the specification of *alternatives* (168). The appearance of a policy window or the coupling of all three process streams enhances the likelihood of an item going from the *governmental* agenda to the *decision* agenda (178).

Thus far, the focus of this paper has largely been on the processes that promote an issue onto the agenda. However, as I mentioned earlier, understanding why issues drop from the agenda is nearly as important as determining how they succeeded in getting onto the agenda in the first place. This is where the process of coupling plays a critical role. At the time a policy window opens, all three streams must come together or couple; otherwise, the window quickly closes (178). Here, too, is where policy entrepreneurs play a significant role in bringing the various streams together (181-182).

Once an idea's time has come, it can also quickly pass. Those in power may feel that the problem has been addressed or they failed to get the desired results and no longer want to invest their resources (169). Or, those participants or focusing events, which caused a window to open in the first place, may disappear or be replaced by an even greater problem or a newly elected official. Finally, the absence of available alternatives will cause a window to close (169). The end result is that a problem did not make it from the governmental agenda onto the decision agenda and no policy change will happen.

While Kingdon admits that determining when a window will open is difficult at best, he does note that, "any residual randomness in predicting when a window will open does not invalidate the entire process" by which issues make it onto an agenda (189-190). He argues that by identifying the various constraints on the processes within each stream, such as "budgets, public acceptance, [and] the distribution of resources" one can also identify patterns within the various streams and thus find a measure of probability within each of the process streams (222-223). So, while Kingdon's model is not considered predictive, there are identifiable elements within each process stream that when combined, allow for probability.

The element of probability is rather attractive, when one considers the randomness inherent in most areas of the social sciences. It is largely for purposes of gaining new insight into the complex issue of Austrian neutrality policy that I have selected Kingdon's model. One of the inherent weaknesses of policy models is the potential for infinite regression when looking at historical setting and policy formation. That can also be said of Kingdon's model; however, it is fortunate for the purposes of this study that neutrality policy in Austria had a clear origin in 1955, which will serve as a starting point for any historical analysis.

As we shall see despite clear beginnings in 1955, neutrality policy is hardly a simple issue to follow given the economic and social ramifications of any change. As Kingdon so eloquently put it, "The formation of policy agendas

and the determination of the alternatives from which final choices are made are not tidy and tight" (222). The case of Austrian neutrality is no exception.

IV. Historical Context of Austrian Neutrality

A. Why Austria?

Historically, neutrality has proven a rather successful instrument for Austrian foreign and domestic policy. While in the 1950s, neutrality was initially perceived as a negative condition often associated with isolationism, economic limitations, and a withdrawal from power politics, the Austrians managed not only to make their presence felt on the international scene in the 1970s; but also, to construct a positive and uniquely Austrian identity around it. By the early 1980s, however, economic recessions, political upheaval in Eastern Europe and pressures from globalization revealed a crack in neutrality policy. By the mid-1980s, Austrian politicians could no longer afford to ignore these threats.

A window of opportunity opened on December 9, 1988, when Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev declared in a United Nations General Assembly address that all nations, without exception should have "the freedom to determine their own destiny" (Judge & Langdon 240-241). With the collapse of Communism and the fall of the U.S.S.R. in 1991, the final hurdle to Austrian membership in the European Union was removed. Austria was now free to construct its economic and foreign policy without the threat of Soviet reprisals, although Austrian policy makers still had to move cautiously. In order to persuade both the Austrian people and the European Union that Austria could avour the requirements of membership, the Austrian government had to find a way to make neutrality compatible with EU membership. The process of "recontextualizing" neutrality required the joint efforts of Austria's two main parties and as Lantis/Queen have demonstrated, without the coordinated efforts of the Social Partners, the Austrian people would not have been persuaded to join the EU.

While the 1994 popular referendum to join the European Union passed 2:1, voices among the opposition were quick to point out the dichotomy of constitutional neutrality and membership in a regional military alliance. Despite this seeming disparity between law and policy, Austria became a full member of the European Union on January 1, 1995; and, in doing so, agreed to participate in the eventual development of a common security union that would eventually include a standing European army.

Even though the historical context in which neutrality was formulated has significantly changed, the original purpose of neutrality still weighs heavily in the policy-making process. It is still popularly equated with establishing an Austrian national identity, but, in addition to maintaining domestic unity, neu-

trality also continues to be an important domestic political tool for maintaining political stability and a check on nationalists and extremists. Any attempt to modify or abandon neutrality policy could be difficult at best given continuity with the past; yet, it appears efforts to reconcile EU membership with neutrality finally came to a head in 2005, as Austria began to prepare to vote on the proposed European Constitutional amidst revising the national constitution. Underlying the parliamentary debate on both the federal and EU constitutions were the golden anniversary celebrations of independence, sovereignty, and the State Treaty, none of which would have been possible without constitutional neutrality. Additionally, Austria celebrated the tenth anniversary of EU membership, a milestone that seemed to undermine the very foundations of neutrality law.

None of the events of 2005 can be fully understood without understanding the historical context in which neutrality policy was adopted and evolved or without understanding the complex relationship between neutrality, Austrian identity, the EU, and Austria's unique form of Consociational Democracy. The starting point for any explanation of neutrality is the Cold War, which essentially lasted from 1945 until 1989, and influenced the policies and avour r of generations of Austrians. The golden era of neutrality under Chancellor Bruno Kreisky (1970-1983) is especially important when evaluating how neutrality was used to construct and manipulate the Austrian national image.

Yet it is probably the events of the late 1980s and the resulting push for EU membership, which have had the greatest impact on neutrality policy and political events in 2005. Increased pressure to demonstrate solidarity and comply with the EU's mutual assistance pact as outlined in the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), as well as successive revisions to Austria's own security and defense policy, have created policy confusion, which in turn has led to increased political tension – a tension which in 2000 threatened to spill over into an international incident, as the far-right, nationalist Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs (FPÖ) or Freedom Party, under charismatic leader Jörg Haider joined the Österreichische Volkspartei (ÖVP) in a minority coalition in Februay of that year.

The common link to all of these events is the ongoing battle over neutrality; and, what role, if any, neutrality should play in Austria's future, especially within a supranational military alliance. While Kingdon's model of agenda setting and policy formation will later be used to provide insight into the current policy situation, it still relies to some extent on historical regression in order to understand why the problem and alternatives have not adequately been identified. More importantly, it is also able to explain why the Austrian people are not the only political force blocking any real changes to neutrality policy.

B. Explaining Austria

The context in which Austrian neutrality was conceived, evolved and "re-contextualized" is best explained by first examining the historical conditions, from its Cold War inception. This includes the formulation of law and policy, to its evolution as a symbol for post-war national identity and finally to the process of "re-contextualization" which prepared the way for EU membership in 1995 and the present security and defense environment. Along the way, the role of the Austrian government in promoting neutrality will be addressed, since much of neutrality's success as a foreign policy is due to the uniquely Austrian political processes of "Consociational Democracy" or "consociationalism". These invariably resulted in the uniquely Austrian political institutions of the "Social Partnership", "Corporatism", and "*Proporz*".

VI. Historical Context of Neutrality Policy & Law

The historical context in which neutrality originated and evolved began with the end of World War II. Operating under allied occupation at the start of 1945, the reformed Austrian provisional government under federal Chancellors, Karl Renner (1945) and Leopold Figl (1945-1953), began the process of damage control and reconstruction. Unlike Germany, Austria had an ace up its sleeve. The 1943 Moscow Declaration, declaring Austria the first victim of Nazi aggression, allowed for special concessions – most specifically, the ability to sue for a separate peace. Still, the Austrian State Treaty did not happen for another ten years. Even then, the conditions, which the Austrian government agreed to, were less than ideal. In exchange for the end to allied occupation, full sovereignty, and independence, Austria would declare its constitutional neutrality "of its own free will".

Once the State Treaty was signed, on May 15, 1955, Austria quickly set about convincing both the international community and its own citizens that neutrality was a good thing. Ultimately, however, the influence of the Soviet Union as a superpower, the difficulties in defining neutrality within the Cold War environment and the need to forge a new national identity would dominate the next thirty years.

VI. Cold War (1945-1989)

The influence of the Cold War on Austrian neutrality is profound. Caught between the Communist East and the Capitalist West, Austria sought to find its own way after being stripped of the ability to join any economic union that could potentially draw it into a conflict – especially one that included Germany. National defense in the case of attack or invasion was considered token, with the prevailing expectation being that NATO, under the auspices of the

UN, would come to the rescue after it was probably too late (Pelinka "Out" 161). Consigned to playing "second cousin" to a larger, more strategically important West Germany, Austria fought to keep its position as a world player while protecting the nascent national image and social welfare economy it had carefully created after the war.

Despite carefully controlling its domestic policy, Austria could do little in the face of events during the summer and fall of 1989 as thousands of vacationing East German tourists fled across the Hungarian border into Austria (Viets). Caught between political events in East and West Germany, Austria and Hungary once again became allies in order to assist Germany. However, no one anticipated the consequences this event would have on Austrian neutrality. For some political observers, events had come full circle as Germany reunited. Others felt that Europe had finally found closure from World War II with the reunification of Germany – but what closure was there for Austria? Thirty-four years of neutrality could not be abandoned over night. Nor could Austrians ignore the historical context in which neutrality was imposed. Even as Austria began negotiations in the spring of 1989 for membership in the European Economic Community, it had to return to its past in order to "re-contextualize" the future of neutrality.

VI. Constructing Identity

Austrian neutrality has two components: *law* and *policy*, both of which are based on a variety of written sources and customs. Although Austria had flirted with neutrality during the First Republic, it was not seriously considered as an option at the time (Österreichische Gesellschaft 9-10). The first indication that neutrality could be a viable policy came after World War II during allied occupation and the start of the Cold War. As the occupation wore on, it appeared that Austria's fate would be coupled to that of Germany's if something drastic were not done. Several Austrian politicians began to entertain the idea of neutrality, which had worked for other small European nations, such as Sweden and Switzerland.

While experts still disagree about the role the Soviets played in establishing neutrality and who was the first person to suggest it as a treaty option, there is no doubt that a final settlement could not have been reached without the Soviets' endorsement (Liebhart 13). Prior to 1955, any discussion of Austria's situation by the allies was linked to the German question. It was not until Stalin's death in March 1953 that a discernable policy shift towards an Austrian settlement was seen and the negotiations, which had started in 1947, began once again in earnest (Allard 105, Scheuch 8).

It is interesting to note that just before the April meeting in Moscow, a con-

ference took place between the newly elected Chancellor Raab[2] and the Austrian ambassadors to London, Moscow, Paris, and Washington on March 28, 1955 (Giesinger). They met to discuss the implications of the Soviet invitation; since, it was generally believed at the time that any agreement could not be reached unless all four allied powers were present. It is clear from the transcript that the Austrian leadership did not rule out the possibility that the Soviets would present them with a viable settlement offer.

In the meeting, Bischoff, Austrian ambassador to Moscow, noted that recent trends showed the Soviets were constructing a neutral zone from "Lübeck to Triest". "Diese Linie wird immer mehr zur Realität und droht unser Land entzweizuschneiden. Die Unterbrechung dieser Linie scheint augenblicklich eine der wichtigsten Aufgaben der russischen Diplomatie zu sein. Deren Ideal ist es, einen Zustand in Europa herbeizuführen, bei dem eine neutrale Zone avour r fy t, ähnlich wie sie im Norden bereits durch Schweden und Finnland repräsentiert wird. Eine derartige Neutralitätszone, umfassend die Schweiz, Österreich und Jugoslawien würde Donaueuropa abschirmen" (Giesinger). This observance shows that the Austrians had a fairly clear understanding of Soviet objectives and understood that neutrality might be the only way to avoid either becoming a Soviet satellite or being permanently divided along allied occupied zones. Martin Herz's memoir Understanding Austria also demonstrates that the Soviet occupation policy in Austria from 1945 to 1955 was similar to its other occupied or "protected" territories, thus avour ing the fear that Austria could very easily become a Soviet satellite. What differentiated Austria from its former Habsburg territories and other Eastern bloc neighbors was the degree to which the Western allies would fight to keep Austria firmly in the Western sphere of influence and the marked lack of Communist sympathy among its own labor force.[3]

It did not, however, make the condition of neutrality in the final settlement any more acceptable to the Austrian leadership. In addition to the potential economic and political isolation, there was the issue of security and defense. Neutrality was perceived by many nations, including the Americans, as a negative situation (Ruddy). Although neutrality had been suggested as early as 1945, it would clearly be used as a last resort (Waldheim 53, 56-57 "Austrian")[4]. Bundeskanzler Raab noted at the end of the March 28th meeting, "Für

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[2] Raab officially assumed office April 2, 1953. Gehler and Kaiser point out that the new Raab government was quick to support "a policy of permanent neutrality in exchange for securing Austria's territorial integrity and regaining national sovereignty" (82).

[3] See Herz. In his capacity as Political Officer with the U.S. legation in Austria (1945-1948), Herz documented relations between the Allied Council and the Austrian government, noting the various positions of the allied governments and the impact their policies had on Austria.

[4] Documentation for post World War II neutrality discussions go back as far as 1945. Ac-

uns ergeben sich schwierige Fragen, wenn wir in eine Neutralisierung einsteigen, insbesonders wegen Deutschland. Wer wird dann die Russen aufhalten, wenn sie bis zum Atlantik marschieren wollen. Andererseits können wir die gebotene Hand nicht zurückweisen. Wir wollen aber keine österreichische Unabhängigkeit unter russischem Protektorat" (Giesinger). Concerns that neutrality would not insure a complete withdrawal of Soviet troops or return total independence were repeatedly brought up by the assembled diplomats in which their final understanding was, "…daß Österreich in avour Weise dem Kommunismus eine Tür öffnen werde" (Giesinger).

Clearly, Austrian politicians did not consider neutrality to be an ideal situation, but given the conditions between the United States and the Soviet Union in 1955, it was definitely the lesser of two evils (Scheuch 8). The Austrian government was under pressure to end allied occupation. They would accept the condition of neutrality only if it came with total independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. The result of the April 1955 Soviet-Austrian meeting was a joint memo agreeing to terms that would later be spelled out in a final treaty. Austrian neutrality agreed to during the April visit to Moscow was formally proposed in the bi-lateral agreement called the Moscow Memorandum. It was to be avour after the Swiss' example, formalized in state treaty, and eventually codified into Federal Law on October 26, 1955.

The Moscow Memorandum, the Austrian State Treaty, and the Federal Constitutional Article (B-VG BGBl. 1955/211) form a "triumvirate" upon which Austrian neutrality policy has traditionally been interpreted. In addition to these state documents, Austria agreed to abide by international laws and customs set forth in the 1907 Hague Convention when it joined the United Nations in December 1955. Yet, despite international laws and customs, neutral countries have primarily based their neutrality on custom or precedent, even when treaties or agreements exist. It is this latitude in determining how neutrality will be interpreted that has provided the Austrian government with the tools to develop a post-war national identity around the self-imposed policy.

Pelinka identifies two lessons Austrians learned from World War II: "Greatness doesn't pay; and, to be German, means to be on the losing side" ("Out" 13-14). Inside of thirty years, Austria had experienced two world wars. In both

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cording to K. Waldheim, Chancellor L. Figl mentioned neutrality in a November 25, 1945 government statement (Waldheim 53). A month later, K. Renner reputedly proposed a "Swiss" form of neutrality in a Dec. 19, 1945 report to the provisional government (Waldheim 53). Waldheim also adds that as early as April 1952, neutrality was included in a parliamentary debate (Waldheim 56-57). Allard suggests that it was Bruno Kreisky, as Foreign Secretary, who first proposed an "alliance-free" policy after exile in Sweden (Allard 50-51). Kreisky had read aloud the Swiss Declaration of Neutrality at the Congress of Vienna in March of 1955, which supposedly led the Soviets to believe Austria preferred that form of neutrality (Allard 224).

In both cases, they had suffered severe losses while fighting on the side of Germany. The cultural link to Germany had become too great a liability (Unterberger 70). Austrians would have to find a way to make their small, neutral democracy succeed while rejecting their German heritage; but if Austrians were no longer part of a Grand Monarchy and union with Germany was out of the question, what was left to build on?

By the time the State Treaty was signed, the majority of Austrians believed that they were better off without Germany; however, there was still a void that needed to be filled. Both democracy and neutrality were relatively new and untested conditions (Waldheim "Austrian" 52, 75). "Anfangs wurde nur wenig getan, um die Bevölkerung mit dem neuen Status vertraut zu machen. Anfangs musste vor allem das Misstrauen vieler Österreicher, darunter führender Vertreter der Sozialdemokratie, überwunden werden, Neutralität könnte einen ideologischen Anstrich bekommen und zu einer schleichenden Sowjetisierung führen" (Zemanek "Wie lange"). The fear that neutrality could lead to political instability or eventual re-occupation was soon tested in 1956 during the Hungarian uprising. Even though events in Hungary brought to the fore Austria's vulnerability in the face of Soviet aggression, it reinforced the belief that neutrality was a viable security and defense policy for Austria (Scheuch).

Despite the resolve to begin anew, there was some measure of continuity with the past. For lack of anything better, Austria had reinstated an outdated constitution from the First Republic. Old religious, racial, and authoritarian attitudes also re-emerged (Sully "Political effects" 239) and underlying all of this was the question of what to do with former Nazi party members (Pelinka "Out" 19). Ultimately, a new identity construct had to be found; and, it would have to be re-enforceable and able to withstand the pressures to fall back on old habits or ways (Thaler 141). The task of re-inventing the nation in 1945 fell primarily to Austria's two largest political parties: the Austrian Social Democrats (SPÖ) and the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP) who during the First Republic had been violent rivals.[5] "Since 1945, when the Communists had also participated briefly, the government had been made up of a coalition between the two largest parties, the People's Party and the Social Democrats. Their predecessors in the days of the First Republic had fought each other bitterly, not only in Parliament but also in the streets" (Allard 41). The political instability that had marked the failure of the First Republic was still fresh in the minds of many Austrians, including Chancellor Renner, who had been Chancellor under the First Republic from 1918 to 1920.

Unlike conditions in 1918 under the First Republic, Austrians at least felt some affiliation to the democratically elected government of the Second Republic (Jankowitsch 361-362, Rauchbauer). Even though the parties were re-established along the traditional milieu of religion, class and ethnicity, their

[5] See Pelinka "Out" 22, Wright "Introduction" 2, and Thaler 59 for additional information on the impact of the political parties in the First and Second Republics.

established along the traditional milieu of religion, class and ethnicity, their fervent commitment to co-operation and stability became a hallmark of the Second Republic (Pelinka "Out" 74; Allard 44).

The flexibility of the Austrian constitution, which had not saved the First Republic, did allow for many extra-constitutional processes to emerge after 1945, along with the unusual political partnership formed by the two main political parties, the SPÖ and the ÖVP, which created what Pelinka calls, "the domestic equivalent of neutrality" ("Out" 37-38, 91). Extra-constitutional or consociational aspects of Austria's government have also meant unique structures and processes have developed alongside Austria's legal structures. Pelinka references Arend Lijphart's four characteristics of consociational democracies in order to better identify the political processes in Austria: formation of a grand coalition, mutual veto or "concurrent majority" rule, proportionality with respect to political representation and a high degree of autonomy for each segment of the political system ("Out" 22). These characteristics of consociationalism became the extra-constitutional institutions of the Social Partnership, *Proporz*, and Corporatism in Austria, which have significantly influenced the political environment of neutrality since the end of World War II. This form of appeasement, according to Pelinka, was a lesson from the First Republic and was designed to minimize political unrest ("Out" 23). Pelinka goes on to argue that since Austrians previously did not place much importance on the written constitution the influence of traditions or customs on the establishment of law has played a greater role ("Out" 42).

In reality, this has meant a domestic version of neutrality in which all parties avoided conflict in order to promote the larger ideal of peace and stability abroad at the cost of diversity of opinion. Rauchbauer expanded on this opinion noting, "In the Austrian context, consociationalism refers to the close relationship between the two main political parties, the socialist SPÖ and the Christian Democratic ÖVP, and virtually all institutions that have any influence over Austria's political system. In practice, it meant until recently that if you wanted to get anywhere in Austria, it was advisable to be a member of one of these two parties" (Rauchbauer). This has also meant that the two largest political parties have historically exhibited a greater influence on the agenda process than perhaps even the federal government. In other words, only those issues or problems that the two main parties wanted to address have traditionally made it onto the agenda. This was reinforced by the nature of the Austrian constitution, which was considered extremely flexible and was easy to amend.

In avoiding party conflict, the Austrians turned compromise to a political art form. There was something in it for everyone – including the losers. "According to an unwritten and strictly observed law, the coalition party with the most parliamentary seats was entitled to name the head of the government, the federal chancellor. According to the same unwritten law, the vice-chancellor be-

longed to the other coalition party" (Allard 42). This practice extended to the appointment of secretaries under ministers – posts would be divided between the two ruling parties (Allard 49). The practice of "*Proporz*" or proportional distribution of offices between the two largest parties will be covered in greater depth as the various political offices and processes that have the greatest influence over setting the national agenda are examined.

This domestic form of neutrality has been regarded as compromise designed to reduce social unrest and promote stability. The focus on conflict management and co-operation between the government, business and labor also came to be a symbol of Austrian postwar identity (Thaler 35). Pelinka notes, "The ÖVP-SPÖ alliance had to prove that this new kind of cooperation was the patriotic Austrian answer to the Nazi experience. And the alliance also had to prove that it was the only alternative to Communism. Without this alliance, there would be chaos and dictatorship and foreign rule" ("Out" 24). Missiroli writes, "Even in disagreement, though, the parties contained their differences very carefully, on the principle that Austria's foreign policy had to be predictable and constant so that Austria would be considered (first of all by Moscow) as a stabilizing force in Europe" ("Austria" 2). "Domestic neutrality" would become a political tool to promote an identity.

Fear of instability and change invariably reinforced consociationalism and the neo-corporatist arrangements of the Social Partnership. "The two major camps [ÖVP-SPÖ] controlled not only the parties but also the organized economic interests. There was no significant voice on the corporatist level that was not controlled by the parties, and no significant voice was heard on the government level unless it was under the control of major economic interest groups" (Pelinka 25 "Out"). This extra-constitutional division of government or proportional allocation of jobs between the two main parties extended from cabinet posts right down to the lowest civil service positions and came to be known as "*Proporz*" (Rauchbauer, Ulram 213-214). To a large extent, it reinforced the government's commitment to neutrality – both at home and abroad – through a show of political solidarity.

While it was not the immediate intention of leadership to develop a national consciousness centered on neutrality, a new "Austrian identity" was emerging as a result of concerted efforts by the Socialists and the People's Party to establish and sustain social peace (Gehrlich "National" 237). Thaler notes that, "In order to achieve their national goals, the postwar Austrian elites had to transform the existing national consciousness of an already politicized modern population that is; they had to change the reference group while maintaining the existing level of consciousness" (2). In effect, the Austrian leadership had to demonstrate internationally that Austria was a "peaceful, stabile nation", finding ways to redirect attention away from anything German while cultivating those positive aspects of what it means to be Austrian in order to achieve

social stability, prosperity and security. Neutrality became a symbol for Austria's rise from the ashes and a critical tool in the construction of post-war identity.

Throughout the early years of the Grand Coalition, the SPÖ-ÖVP partnership reiterated the importance of neutrality in securing Austria's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. In the 1960s, it would also come to symbolize a new cultural "tradition". In his May 1965 State Address commemorating the signing of the State Treaty, Chancellor Josef Klaus (ÖVP, 1964-1970) equated neutrality with this new Austrian tradition, while promoting the idea of neutrality as a positive force that would define a new Austria as a stabilizing force between east and west (Österreichische Gesellschaft 117-118). This was the beginning of Austria's emergence onto the international scene as a world player, which under Kreisky would expand Austria's importance disproportionate to its small size.

The perception of Austria as a peaceful "buffer zone" between the two superpowers only reinforced Austria's developing self-image and the belief that neutrality was a good thing. By 1965, the majority of Austrians firmly believed any association with Germany was unrealistic and unwanted, and that the current government could actually be trusted to represent their interests (Waldheim "Austrian" 52; Jankowitsch 361-362). This was a far cry from the social unrest and political instability of the interwar years. Still, it was not until the 1965 proclamation of the Austrian national holiday that popular acceptance of an "Austrian" identity was first noted and celebrated (Gehrlich "National" 237).

Throughout the 1960s, neutrality would become a depository for those feelings and emotions that had gone unaddressed since the end of the war and the Grand Coalition promoted this link in order to facilitate reconstruction, stability and prosperity. The proclamation of Neutrality on October 26, 1955 was the first sovereign act of the new Republic and soon became associated with a multitude of positive images (Lahodynsky). The fact that it took the Austrian government 10 years to proclaim that day a national holiday suggests that at the time of the State Treaty, they did not focus on the symbolic meaning of neutrality in constructing post war identity, so much as neutrality as a tool to achieve postwar reconstruction and a return to "normalcy". It was not until 10 years later, on the 10th anniversary of the signing of the neutrality law that political leaders were ready to imbue neutrality with symbolic meanings such as independence, sovereignty, security. However, unlike most countries where the national holiday commemorates the founding of the nation, Austria's national holiday recognizes the withdrawal of foreign troops from Austrian soil and the passage of a law – specifically, neutrality – in order to regain sovereignty (Gehrlich "National" 224). Still, the connection between neutrality and those qualities sought by every nation cannot be ignored. With the announce-

ment of a national holiday, Austrians began to consciously associate neutrality with a uniquely "Austrian" identity and the political parties began to see it more as a tool to manipulate popular opinion (Wright "Introduction" 2-3).

The success of neutrality not only as a foreign policy tool, but also as a tool for constructing a new, uniquely Austrian identity is largely due to the political acumen of the political leaders at the time.[6] However, Thaler argues that rather than having to start from scratch, Austrian leaders had only to dig back in their recent past to transform old ideas and expressions, redefining them in new terms and allowing them to crystallize within the realm of public opinion (162). This would account for much of the continuity with the past as with the re-establishment of those political parties and institutions, including the 1921 Constitution, from the First Austrian Republic.

By the late 1960s, it can be said that neutrality went from being a policy tool, initially used to pacify the allies and international community, to a political tool used by the Grand Coalition to promote a new "tradition" of social peace, prosperity, and freedom. In learning from the past, the two main parties, the SPÖ and the ÖVP, had developed a uniquely Austrian system of compromise and cooperation, a type of domestic neutrality, in which they were able to promote economic and social stability. They were also able to promote neutrality as a successful policy for promoting regional, if not global, stability. With every challenge to neutrality, Austria's leadership adapted the policy to suit national needs. From the very beginning, while still negotiating the terms in the Moscow Memorandum, Austrian leadership had fought to maintain control over how Austrian neutrality would be defined, insisting that theirs would not be "an ideological" neutrality and that it would also be "an active" one. The ability of the Austrian government to promote and manipulate the image of neutrality became somewhat of an art under the chancellorship of Bruno Kreisky (SPÖ) from 1970 to 1983. Still, towards the end of his chancellorship, in the late 1970s, pressures from globalization, new social movements, and the failure of long-term governmental intervention, along with a series of focusing events, set the stage for change.

VI. Kreisky Era (1970-1983)

While the Austrian government's primary objectives after declaring neutrality were to find a role for the small republic within the new European order and to garner both international and domestic support for the new policy, it still took the better part of the next two decades for either task to be fully realized. Al-

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[6] See Gehrlich, "National consciousness and national identity: A contribution to the political culture of the Austrian system" in the Austrian Party System for additional information on how identity was consciously used by Austria's ruling elite to re-define Austrian identity after 1945.

ready in 1955, the door to international legitimacy and acceptance had been opened, thanks in large part to membership in the UN (Österreichische Gesellschaft 119, 156-157). However, Austria was still primarily focused on avouring internal stability, which was critical to achieving legitimacy for the international image of a peaceful, neutral country and placating the Soviets.

Shortly after Kreisky was elected chancellor in 1970, Austria was declared an "Insel der Seligen".[7] It was clear that enough time had passed making it feasible for Austria to shift foreign policy from a regional platform to a global one; and, in doing so, re-establish Austria as a "world player". This image of Austria as an international meeting place was reinforced in 1979 when Vienna became the Third UN City thanks in large part to neutrality (APIS "Austrian Foreign"). Although the push for a UN presence in Vienna originally came from the People's Party, popular belief holds that Chancellor Bruno Kreisky was personally responsible for the honor – a misconception, he has admitted to promoting (Kreisky 54).

While Kreisky did not establish an international role for Austria, he did successfully promote the policies of previous governments to the point of chauvinism and in so doing, restored pride to Austria. Lantis/Queen note, it was Kreisky along his Foreign Minister, Rudolf Kirchschläger, who chose to avoid EEC relations in the 1960s and 1970s and instead focused on relations with non-aligned and less developed nations, especially those in the Middle East and Central America (154-155). As with the establishment of the United Nation's third city, many of Kreisky's achievements were the result of careful image manipulation centered on the personal conviction that neutrality could be used to establish global peace and being present when "windows of opportunity" had opened (Kreisky 55-56).

At a public address in Zürich, Switzerland, in May 1958, Foreign Minister Kreisky outlined a "Brückefunktion" for Austria between Eastern Europe and the West based on Austria's geopolitical location and history within Central Europe (Österreichische Gesellschaft 112). Under Kreisky, this "Brückefunktion" would later be extrapolated to include other parts of the globe with a revised "active" neutrality policy (and Austria!) at the political center of each development. This foreign policy concept, built around Austria's unique status as a neutral nation at the geographical and political "center" of Europe, would become known as "the Austrian Way", "the Third Way", or "the Austrian Example".

Under Kreisky, "active" neutrality no longer meant simply ideological freedom or the ability to defend one's borders militarily as it had in the 1950s. It now meant "active participation" at the international level – not only in the UN – but also as a mediator between the communist East and capitalist West,

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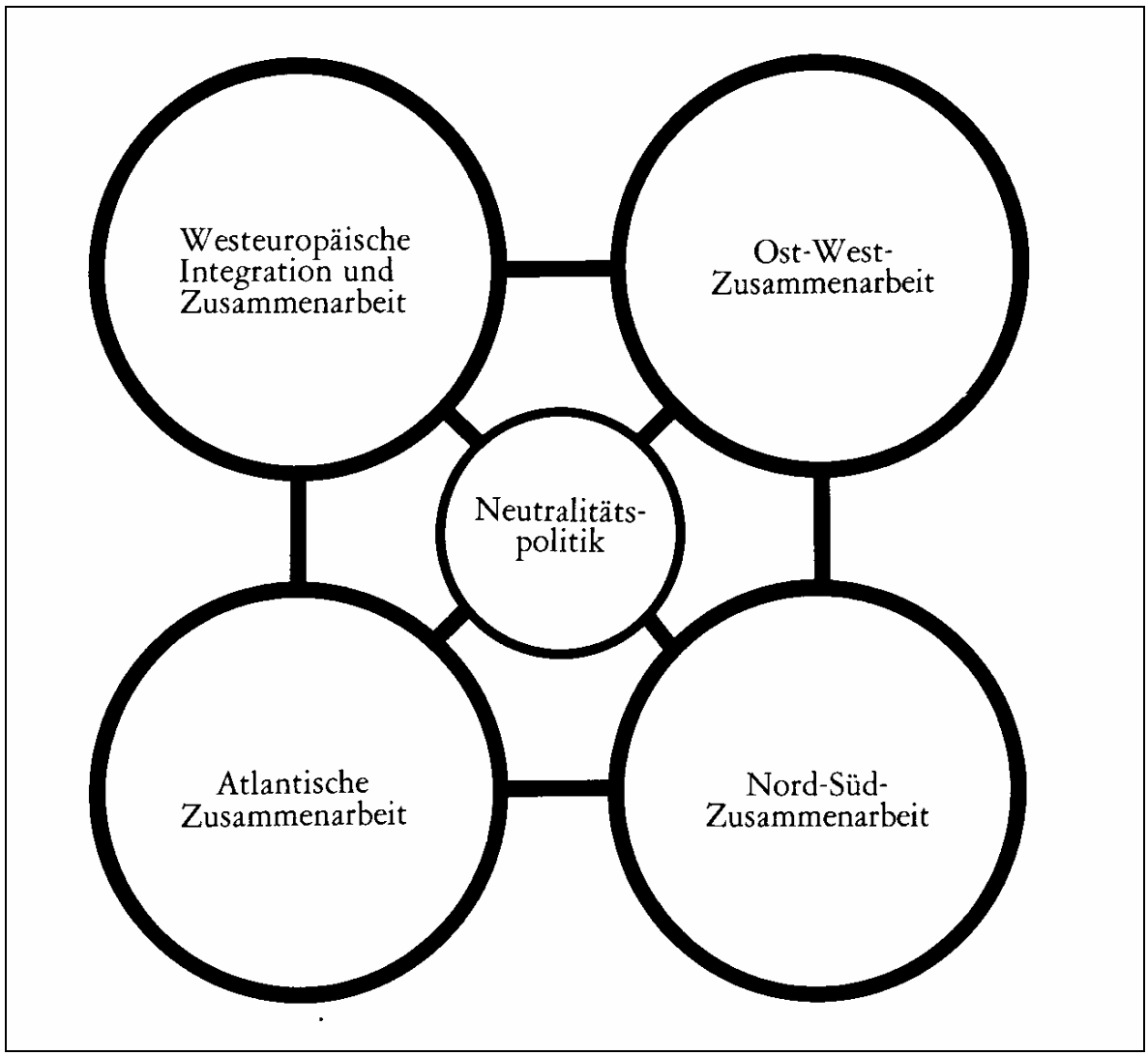
[7] It was Pope Paul VI, who during an unofficial trip to Austria in 1971 designated Austria as an "Insel der Seligen".

the industrialized North and under-developed South. Austria would assume a "Brückefunktion" in which Austrian understanding of former Habsburg territories would lead to reduction in tensions between the two super powers (Bock 159). Active neutrality would also be used to promote human rights, as well as peace and understanding between the economically developed northern countries and those nations which had until recently been European colonies. In Figure 2, Mayrzedt/Hummer's conceptualization of Kreisky's policy of "active neutrality" shows the central role neutrality played in foreign and domestic policy in addition to establishing a visual reference for Kreisky's "Austrian Way" (Österreichische Gesellschaft 2).

Figure 2: "Neutralitätskonzept"



Source: "Neutralitätskonzept" from Österreichische Gesellschaft f. Aussenpolitik u. internationale Beziehungen, Band 9/1 (1975: 2). The diagram represents the relation of neutrality policy to the various issues affecting Austrian foreign policy.

Gehler/Kaiser noted the result of Kreisky's "Austrian Way": "...temporarily secured for Austria a prominent international diplomatic role out of all proportion to the country's size or economic strength or strategic importance" (94). It also established Austria once again as "powerful, necessary and special", reinforcing the link between neutrality and identity (Liebhart 23).

Kreisky observed in his book, Die Zeit, in der wir leben: Betrachtungen zur internationalen Politik that "a true Austrian variation" of neutrality had been found (Kreisky 53). The nascent image of Austria as a free, democratic, sovereign, and neutral nation had slowly evolved into something more complex and enduring; and, the Austrian government under Kreisky was adept at manipulating those resources necessary to rally support for its new image. The process of image management was quite successful, thanks in large part to the system of consociational democracy, *Proporz,* and state ownership of most of the media.

In addition to state-owned media coverage, periodic symposia, and conferences were held under the auspices of various federal ministries. Bureaucrats and scholars, who owed their patronage to either Social Partner, would naturally promote the coalition's agenda, in order to further domestic peace and stability. Anniversaries were seen as especially good times to present revised images of Austria "then" and "now".[8] There is little doubt that Kreisky was able to utilize the existing bureaucracy and public institutions to promote his active neutrality policy and thus built domestic consensus for his "Austrian Way"; however, this approach has often been criticized as being patriarchal and an illusion.[9]

Still, there is no denying that Kreisky's policy of "active neutrality" helped Austrians feel good about themselves once again. At the time Kreisky assumed office, there still existed the very real fear that Austria was not taken seriously and seen as unimportant to larger nations (Schlesinger 140-143). Relegated to the periphery or edge of Europe meant obscurity and might eventually lead to economic or political instability. With limited maneuverability in Europe, Kreisky had to focus his efforts on finding other ways of meeting Austria's needs. Seen in this light, the jump to international politics and global

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[8] Excellent examples are the 16th Symposium on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the State Treaty released by the Austrian Federal Ministry for Science and Research (Portisch & Janko) or with the 1976 "Project Ö '85", in which 110 experts presented various possible scenarios for Austria's future as a neutral country by 1985 (Veselsky).

[9] Pelinka pointed out, that "The state, politics, and not least of all national consciousness have been mandated from above – by the government, bureaucracy, party leaders and majority interest groups ("Out" 226)." Gerlich noted that, "Among wide sectors of the population in Austria, national consciousness is less the result of active participation and or participatory traditions than in other countries" ("National" 227). He added, that there was still the tendency to treat individuals as subjects and not as citizens as well as for parties to prefer patronages to consensus creation ("National" 254).

markets was a natural progression. The fact that Austrians were able to identify in a positive way with many of the resulting policies was simply an added bonus. Austria was no longer an international social pariah, but had assumed the respected role of an international mediator and bridge between disparate parts of the globe. Permanent neutrality, it was understood, was only available to a few, special nations (Neuhold "Permanent" 179). However, it was not until Kreisky that neutrality bestowed a "special" status on Austria and became part of national identity (Liebhart 20).

VI. "Re-contextualization"

Towards the end of the 1980s, Austria's economic situation became a serious *problem* (Lantis/Queen 161). Amidst the rising economic crises, Austrian business and industry began searching for *policy* solutions; and in 1987, the Federation of Austrian Industrialists or *die Vereinigung der Österreichischen Industrie* (VÖI) commissioned a study on the compatibility of EU membership with neutrality (Pelinka "Out" 165-166). In May 1987, they presented the Austrian government with the demand for EEC membership (Luif "Austrian" 29). Support by other interest groups, chambers, and federations soon followed, culminating in a final push from the ÖVP in January 1988 (Luif "Austrian" 29). Additionally, Luif notes the request was made at a time when there were avour r *political* conditions. "A qualitative change in the integration policy of Austria's government came only in mid-1986. A group of younger politicians from the SPÖ got important positions in the government" (Luif "Austrian" 27). Most importantly was the election Fred Vranitzky as chancellor (SPÖ) in 1986. Vranitzky (1986-1997) was the first Austrian chancellor with no direct experience in World War II; and, with his election, political conditions in Austria began to change (Pick 181). On April 31, 1989, the senior coalition partner, the SPÖ finally agreed to negotiations, provided the importance of neutrality was stressed. Underlying the government's willingness to consider membership in the EU was a series of focusing events that began with the signing of the Treaty of Rome and ended with the break-up of Yugoslavia.

The success of the 1994 EU vote was underscored by focusing events, such as the signing of the Single European Act in 1987 and the fall of communism (1989-1991), which elevated the economic problem higher on the agenda and reinforced its prominence for nearly ten years. Additionally, the policy community successfully "re-contextualized" neutrality to allow for compatibility with EU membership. Within the political arena, the ÖVP and SPÖ were able to present a united front increasing the legitimacy, while the presence of key policy entrepreneurs, like Austrian Foreign Minister, Alois Mock and Chancellor Vranitzky, were successfully able to execute a strategy of "double-edged diplomacy" to insure electoral success on two fronts (Lantis/Queen).

All of these conditions led to the opening of a policy window in 1994-95, when Austrians chose to join the European Union by a two-thirds majority (APIS "Austrian Foreign").

The events of 1994-95 could not have happened, however, without the convergence of key process streams: recognition of an economic *problem*, availability of EU membership as a viable *policy* alternative to EFTA, and a avoutive *political* environment. In the case of Austria, the receptive political environment was helped significantly by the united front presented by the two main political parties. As Kingdon has suggested, understanding the key events and participants within these three process streams helps to understand the complex way in which issues makes it on to the governmental or national agenda, garner sufficient attention to make it onto the *decision* agenda and eventually become new policy. Nevertheless, as Kingdon also points out, success in one policy area often creates problems in another (192). This has also been the case with EU membership and Austrian neutrality. Membership in an economic union would also require a show of political solidarity, including the means to secure and defend the economic investment. This, in turn, would mean membership in a military union, which was in direct violation of constitutional neutrality. Invariably, conflict over how neutrality would continue to be interpreted would lead to the dissolution of the Social Partnership by the end of the 1990s.

VI. EU Membership: A Window of Opportunity

Austria's push to join the European Union is an excellent example of what can happen when Kingdon's policy streams converge: the seemingly impossible happens. It is important to understand what happened in 1994 domestically for two reasons. In the first place, the success of the 1994 EU referendum caused a spillover of problems into other areas of Austrian national policy, specifically in the area of national security and defense. Secondly, it demonstrated the ability of the Austrian government to overcome popular opinion in order to achieve foreign policy objectives.

While the initial push for EEC membership came from business and avoutry, the lobby was quickly taken up by the ÖVP, which included the request for EEC membership in its autumn 1988 *Europamanifest* (Missiroli "Austria" 14). But policy entrepreneurs lobbying for EU membership would first have to find a way to reconcile constitutional neutrality with membership in a supranational organization with military aspirations or at least, make the costs of membership "bearable".

As noted earlier, by the early 1980s, Austria had experienced lower economic growth, a rising budget deficit, and rising unemployment, which only served to exacerbate the pressures to decentralize and restructure its welfare economy (Tálos/Horvath 28; Luif "Austrian" 29). A series of focusing events

in the late 1980s and early 1990s, including the signing of the Single European Act and the fall of communism, reinforced the need for change. Austrians also had to contend with increased social unrest in their own back yard as the various ethnic regions of Yugoslavia devolved into ethnic "states" (Lantis/Queen 164). While war was no longer considered a direct threat to Europe anymore, new threats transcended borders. Under these conditions, the SPÖ, nudged along by Vranitzky, agreed to pursue negotiations as long as they did not endanger neutrality. The economic problem attached to the proposed policy of EU membership had made it onto the governmental agenda in late 1988.

By mid-1989, the Austrian government was ready to take the formal step toward economic integration with the EEC/EU[10]. Lantis/Queen have proposed that consensus was pursued on two fronts: domestically and at the EU level. This meant reassuring the Austrian people that the benefits of membership far outweighed the costs, while convincing the EU partners that Austria would be able to meet the terms of membership – including those in a future, as yet undefined, security and defense alliance. Inevitably, the issue of Austria's permanent neutrality came up on both fronts despite every effort by the Social Partners to avoid it.[11]

Lantis/Queen have suggested in their Double-Edge Diplomacy model that during domestic consensus building, two themes were repeated: Special concessions for Austria and the potential economic benefits (165). In demanding special concessions, issues related to the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) both the EU and Austrian government appear to have taken a "wait and see" approach to negotiating the status of neutrality.

Domestically, arguments that neutrality was compatible with EU membership were downplayed in an effort to minimize the anticipated adverse effects of membership (Höll/Pollak/Puntscher-Riekmann 6). The effort to keep neutrality off of the agenda, worked for the most part, as Austrians seemed to focus on the economic aspects of membership. Dr. Schmidt-Chiari, General director of Creditanstalt wrote in 1989, "Von einem bin ich überzeugt, das mag jetzt wiederum sehr pragmatisch klingen, avo ein neutraler Staat seine Unabhängigkeit nur dann behaupten kann, wenn er auch wirtschaftlich stark ist" (10). The message coming from the Social Partners was to focus on fixing the

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[10] Gehler & Kaiser have argued that it has always been Austria's intent to join the EU and that the primary constraints to membership were the position of the Soviet Union prior to 1989 and finding a way to reconcile 'military neutrality' with membership in the EU (76). By 1991, fear of Soviet reprisal was removed and Austria had only to reconcile neutrality with membership in any CFSP developed by the EU.

[11] At home, the opposition FPÖ and Green parties campaigned against EU membership, arguing that the costs to the environment were too high, that there would be an increase in unemployment due to an influx if foreigners and most importantly, that membership would result in a loss of sovereignty.

larger problem, which was the economy and not worry about neutrality, since issues pertaining to neutrality wouldn't matter if Austria became economically unstable.

The government's message was delivered at both levels by effective policy entrepreneurs at both levels. Foreign Minster Alois Mock led the Austrian delegation and negotiated membership terms in Brussels, while the domestic publicity campaign consisted largely of the use of key policy promoters, such as President Klestil (ÖVP) and Chancellor Vranitzky. Additionally, numerous public speeches, guest appearances and symposia consisting of foreign policy experts were held (Lantis/Queen 165; Pick 8). Repeated assurances by policy entrepreneurs and the government that EU objectives were the same as Austrian objectives assisted the policy community in the process of re-contextualizing neutrality at the domestic level until it became compatible with EU membership (Luif "Austrian" 33; Sucharipa 85).

Lantis/Queen note the second phase of the double-edge diplomacy began in 1993 with the actual start of EU negotiations (168). When neutrality was questioned at the EU level, "The government made it clear that the interpretation and form of Austrian neutrality was a matter for Austria alone; and, that any negotiations on this subject by third parties were out of the question" (Lahodynsky). What was actually decided between the Austrian negotiators and the EU has remained unclear. Lahodynsky suggests that Austria relied on Articles 223 and 224 of the EC Treaty to allow it to remain neutral despite EU pressure to show solidarity before eventually accepting Austria's neutrality along with membership. Lantis/Queen concur, noting an "unofficial" March 1994 agreement in which the EU would not use the Court of Justice in cases where Austria sought exemptions based on neutrality and to allow for a transition period (170).

Lantis/Queen have also suggested that, "…the Commission quietly assured the government leaders that transitional or temporary measures might be enacted during the negotiations". This implies that the Austrian negotiators could go home victorious and announce that they had received "special concessions" for neutrality, while softening up the public for an eventual repeal at some unspecified future date. Gehler, however, maintains that Austrian negotiators made it clear at the time that neutrality would not be abandoned with membership (52). Luif supports this position, adding that government statements reaffirmed Austria's stance that loopholes within the EC treaties had allowed for "re-interpretation" of neutrality, thus making it compatible with membership ("Austrian" 28-32). Still, Lantis/Queen point out that in the end, the government had to have known going into negotiations that a military union of some kind was inevitable, given Title V of the 1992 Maastricht Treaty (152).

Whatever the international agreement resulted in, domestically, the Austrian government still had to reassure the public that they would not be pulled into

future wars and that the EU would not demand military support in direct violation of neutrality at some later date. This was done by touting the benefits of membership in an regional economic union that was also committed to the deterrence of war, conflict, and revived nationalism; while at the domestic level, it was suggested that in joining the EU, Austria would return to the "heart of Europe" and have a say in how Europe's future would be shaped. Continuity with a past, great Holy Roman identity and its "historic role" at the Center of Europe was often stressed to mitigate the fear of change – especially given the challenges in the East.

In his "Austria First" campaign, Jörg Haider linked membership in the EU with a loss of sovereignty, which would result in a loss of identity. Although neutrality was reinforced as a "symbol" of sovereignty and national identity, it failed to garner sufficient public attention during the 1994 referendum. Both Pinnemore and Missiroli concluded that this was due in large part to the fact that the government did everything possible to keep a debate on neutrality from the agenda (Pinnemore 366-367; Missiroli "Austria" 13). Gehler suggests that the public relations campaign avoided the issue of neutrality, largely because if the populace had been better informed, they would have rejected membership (54).

Even though neutrality was definitely on the governmental agenda in 1994 going into the national referendum, the Social Partners did everything possible to suppress a debate at home and neutrality did not figure prominently on the domestic agenda. The fact that during the EU negotiations Austria was never asked to rescind constitutional neutrality also helped to manage the domestic debate. In the end, the Austrian government was able to convince the EU that they would be able to participate fully in any CFSP while maintaining at home that neutrality was not open for discussion.

In the days going up to the referendum, Foreign Minister Mock appealed to voters from his hospital bed in a June 5, 1994 radio address, "There are certain windows of opportunity in history, and if they are not opened at the right time, one misses historic changes for one's country. There was such a window in 1955….There is such a window again today" (qtd. In Lantis/Queen 172). The parallels drawn between 1955 and 1994 were not lost on the Austrian voters, who once again trusted in their leadership to see them through the difficult times ahead. On June 12, 1994, the EU accession treaty was passed. Just over 82 % of eligible voters turned out, with 66.58% of them voting in avour of the treaty and 33.4% voting against it (Gehler/Kaiser 96, APIS "Austrian Foreign").

VI. The "Fallout" & "Spillover"

The events of 1994-95 could not have happened without the convergence of events in Kingdon's policy streams: recognition of pressing economic prob-

lems, membership in the EU as a viable policy alternative to EFTA, and a receptive political environment. Ultimately, however, the vote to join the EU resulted in political "fallout" that began shortly after Austria joined the EU in 1995 and culminated with the break up of the SPÖ-ÖVP coalition in 1999. Although the EU was, and still is, viewed as a solution to Austria's economic problems, membership requirements created a new set of problems, which invariably "spilled over" into other policy arenas, specifically, the area of national security and defense, which encompasses constitutional neutrality.

It is generally accepted that consensus for EU membership was built by key policy entrepreneurs who found a way to make EU membership compatible with neutrality. Ironically, the fate of neutrality policy never really became an actual item on either the EU's or the Austrian government's decision agenda despite the overt implications of the proposed CFSP and potential impact of any future mutual assistance pact. Its prominence on the agenda was much lower than issues related to economic policy, or even the environment. According to Missiroli ("Austria"), as well as Lantis/Queen (171), this was due to the combined efforts of the Social Partners to minimize any open debates on neutrality until after a final decision on the EU had been made. Since the decision to join the EU was largely made by the ruling political elite (Missiroli "Austria" 17), it was not surprising that shortly after the referendum, the coalition partners would suffer serious losses in regional and national elections as the realities of membership set in (Lantis/Queen 174). In October of 1994, this translated into the SPÖ and ÖVP both losing votes to the FPÖ; and, even though the numbers were not all that impressive, it did presage a trend in voter dissatisfaction with the status quo which had first been identified back in 1986 (Lantis/Queen 174-175; Gehmacher/Birk/Ogris 93-94; Plasser/Ulram 69-70). Public confidence in the political system was shaken as the effects of Eastern European migration took hold, ethnic fighting in Yugoslavia continued, unemployment rose, and the promised economic improvement failed to happen (Lantis/Queen 175). Höll/Pollak/Puntscher-Riekmann have suggested that the push to meet EU expectations came at a time when there were bureaucratic layoffs and unemployment fears rose (13). By the time most Austrians had fully realized the consequences of EU membership, it was too late.

An exit poll conducted shortly after the EU referendum on membership found that roughly 46% were last-minute deciders (Plasser/Ulram 171). A lack of voter savvy going into the European elections has often been attributed to an attitude of unquestioning loyalty to authority (Traur/Birk 137). Pre-poll estimates had shown two-thirds of Austrian voters were still undecided going into the referendum and their decisions had largely been influenced by last minute appeals by prominent members of the Social Partnership (Thurow). Once the referendum to join the EU had finally passed, however, the political elite were unsure of which direction to take next and dissention between the

parties grew, culminating in the dissolution of the SPÖ-ÖVP partnership in 1999. Membership requirements in the European Union had uncovered structural weaknesses in many of the domestic sectors, but most importantly, in the political sphere (Gehler/Kaiser 97).

Höll/Pollak/Puntscher-Riekmann recently analyzed the structural changes which EU membership imposed on Austria and studied the link between level of support for the EU and the shift in political power domestically. "With EU membership the perception of the Austrian society as being composed of quite stable relationships of relatively equal interest groups suddenly was superimposed by the reality of antagonisms between winners and losers of the integration process" (7). In arguing the move from a consociational democracy to a competitive or pluralistic one, Höll/Pollak/Puntscher-Riekmann have echoed the arguments made recently by Pelinka, Gehler/Kaiser, as well as many other policy experts, who suggest that Austria has lost much of its "uniqueness" and become a "normal" democracy in the European sense (Höll/Pollak/Puntscher-Riekmann 17; Pelinka "Out" 232). While part of this "normalization" process has been attributed to the rise of a true "third" party, namely that of the far right party, the FPÖ, it is also being attributed to voter education – that is, the ability of Austrian voters to make decisions outside of the paradigms of traditional milieu (Höll/Pollak/Puntscher-Riekmann 17). This "normalization" of Austria is also heavily dependent on the "Europeanization" of Austrian institutions and political structures in the wake of EU integration (Höll/Pollak/Puntscher-Riekmann 17). This process of normalization is not without drawbacks.

Gehler/Kaiser have attributed the rise of anti-European sentiment, capitalized on by populist leader, Jörg Haider, to the fear of change and to the general stresses from having to adapt to a greater, "European" mentality and to formulating policy on a much larger scale (97). On the one hand, experts argue that Austria is becoming "normal" and "Europeanized"; on the other hand, there are indications of resurgence in nationalism, fed by fears of lost identity and sovereignty. Väyrynen has suggested this aspect of evolution from a "nation-state" mentality to a larger level is a response to increased ethnic conflict: As nations maneuver towards supra-national unions, devolution among pockets of groups that feel their identities are threatened increases (15). This latent form of nationalism has at times, been equated with the peculiar manner in which the Austrian public has clung to neutrality, despite government efforts to abandon it. However, Gehler/Kaiser have suggested that the political elite in Austria had "internalized" the concept of neutrality to the point where the Austrian people now firmly believe the official position (98-99). Any attempts to change it would meet with angry voters. However, as Kingdon's model will show, this is only part of the reason why neutrality has not been repealed. A clue to the rest of the answer was found by mapping out the rise and fall of

neutrality on the national agenda from 1995 until 2005. In looking at those processes, as proposed by Kingdon, which promoted, constrained, and demoted neutrality on the national agenda, one begins to see patterns of favour and recognizable motives for seemingly random events, especially within the area of Austrian national security and defense policy.

VI. Changes to the Security Environment: Setting the Agenda

From 1995 to 1999, neutrality was largely considered a "frozen issue", since the SPÖ-ÖVP coalition could not reach an agreement on Austria's future within Europe and a common security and defense structure (Gehler 79-80). What little debate there was on neutrality was generally consigned to the impact on military expenditures, which have consistently been held to below 1% of Austria's GDP (BMLV Bericht). The failure of a governmental subcommittee in 1996 to propose a revised security and defense in conjunction with EU expectations revealed the ideological differences between the People's party and the Socialists with respect to neutrality ("Austria: Coalition"). By 1999, events in Yugoslavia, the Treaty of Amsterdam, and the success of the FPÖ in the 1999 elections revived the issue of support for the European Union's CFSP and pushed neutrality back onto the agenda (Höll/Pollak/Puntscher-Riekmann 19; Gehler 80-81). Neutrality has since remained on the national agenda at various levels; however, it is usually coupled with larger, more pressing policy problems, such as meeting the EU's proposed "Headline Goal" as outlined in the EU's Treaty of Amsterdam (1993) and subsequent agreements (EU: Council "CFSP"). First and foremost has been the debate over what form the European Union's security and defense structures will take and whether or not this is the best policy course for Austria. The spillover effect of policy from the economic sphere into the military sphere was not unanticipated; however, many of the new problems arising out of EU membership came from outside of Austria's borders.

Pelinka has suggested that Austria's sudden push for membership in the EU had less to do with changes during the 1980s than from the sudden awareness that Austria was no longer an "island" ("Out" 36). Domestic problems that had been contained, but still unresolved since World War II, re-surfaced under new, external pressures, which had been largely ignored under Kreisky. These were manifested in the rise of anti-Semitism and anti-immigrant sentiments that began with the Waldheim affair resurfaced in the late 1990s with the rise of the FPÖ under Jörg Haider, although in the latter case, the situation was interpreted as voter dissatisfaction with consociationalism and the ability of the traditional parties to handle global change (Plasser 45).

Going into treaty negotiations with the EU, Austria had still been considered to be "on the periphery of development", having been situated on the eastern edge of the capitalist West (Pelinka "Out" 130). Over time, Austria's

neutrality policy had not been able to overcome EEC administrative and trade barriers. “After a period of political stagnation within the Community in the 1970s, the EC Commission suggested in 1985 the abolition of these non-tariff barriers and the creation of an internal market in goods, capital, services, and people by 1992. This initiative started a dynamic phase in European integration, which lasted until the signing of the Maastricht Treaty in 1992” (Gehler/Kaiser 95). In the fall of 1991, the EC had already rejected EFTA requests for additional concessions, effectively limiting trade and the power of the EFTA states (Missiroli “Austria” 15). “Representatives of the EC made it clear that participation in EC decisions about the internal market would be reserved for full members” (Luif “Austrian” 27). Even though the EC needed Austria as a critical transit link between north and south, its members were not sure that they wanted to address the issue of neutrality, which would mean opening a discussion on long-term security plans (Missiroli “Austria” 14, 16). For Austria, it was either join the EU or face further economic discrimination (Missiroli “Austria” 14). “Business, government, and labor agreed that remaining outside the EC’s tariff barriers would place Austrian companies at a competitive disadvantage *vis-à-vis* firms in the Community and cost Austria exports and (over time) also investments” (Missiroli “Austria” 7). Neutrality would be small consolation for Austrians, if the country was once again crippled by uncontrolled inflation, high levels of unemployment and general economic and political chaos, as it had in the early twentieth century. While EU membership promised to bring greater economic and political stability, it also required that states surrender control over many areas of policy to the EU.

It is therefore necessary to consider any debate on Austrian neutrality within the context of those larger security and defense issues, which also confront the European Union. This includes coordinating the national policies of 25 member states, along with the proposed policies and structures of the CFSP/CSDP, the WEU, NATO, OSCE, and the UN.

With approximately 453 million inhabitants and a GDP of over $11 billion, the EU-25 has become one of the largest economic powers on the planet (“European Voters”). It is only logical that some form of security arrangement would have to evolve from the economic and political union in order to protect the Union’s economic interests and its citizens. Austrian leaders probably knew they would eventually be asked to show solidarity by participation in the CFSP and an eventual defense structure. At the time Austria joined the EU in 1995, however, these expectations were vague and still far enough into the future as to allow for possible concessions. Taking the initiative on how neutrality would be “re-contextualized” or re-conceptualized the Austrian government once again set out to reconcile neutrality with the changing security and defense environment. Varying degrees of compatibility with the WEU, OSCE, and NATO were studied; however, the element of uncertainty inherent

in each, as well as growing political dissention between the SPÖ and ÖVP, seems to have led Austria to prefer a course of "wait and see".

The original intention of neutrality was to insure peace in Europe, stabilize Austria, and to re-establish Austrian independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. Seen in a prudential light, it was believed, these objectives could also be fulfilled as a member of the European Union (Schüssel).

Dissention between the Social Partners began with the pressure to meet specific EU deadlines. The SPÖ, which in 1997 was led by Chancellor Viktor Klima, sought to maintain a neutral Austria within the EU. The ÖVP, on the other hand, was already proclaiming neutrality a relic of the Cold War and recommending full NATO membership if Austria wanted to avoid being an "island" again.

In the late 1990s, the diverging positions of the Social Partners had translated into a haphazard approach to national security and defense resulting in federal laws that were incompatible. Much of the statutory conflict came from Austria's legal process of incorporating treaties directly into its federal constitution (Hajnoczi 9). In order to resolve issues of compatibility between Art. J-4 of Maastricht, which outlined the objectives of the CFSP, and BGBl. 211/1955, or Austria's *Neutralitätsgesetz*, the Austrian government proposed an amendment to the federal constitution narrowing the scope of neutrality to accommodate certain types of joint military ventures (Hajnoczi 9). Article 23f/1994 of the Austrian constitution indirectly adapted BGBL. 211/1955 to allow for EU membership and participation in the CFSP. Art. 23f was again altered in May 1999 to allow for "peacekeeping measures" in conjunction with the Petersberg Tasks and yet again in 2001 and 2002 narrowing the definition even further to allow for greater participation in "humanitarian peace operations" (Zemanek "Wie lange"). This has led policy experts and critics of the government to note that neutrality has been abandoned "s*cheibchenweise*" or one piece at a time. Zemanek notes in his final analysis that all that is left of neutrality is a "*Bündnisverbot*" in the sense of a defense or military union (Zemanek "Wie lange") and even that is under scrutiny as Austria negotiates the exact terms of the EU's "*Beistandspflichtklausl*" or mutual assistance clause.

The modifications to national law do not, however, release Austria from the continued burden of coordinating security and defense policy on four different levels: national, regional (EU), supranational (NATO), and international (UN). Although much of the shift in present defense policy began in 1989 when the Hungarians began to destroy their part of the Iron Curtain, real changes were not effected until 1995 when Austria joined the European Union. The most significant impact to security and defense, was the incorporation of "the *acquis*" or complete body of EU law and rules directly into Austria's own body of law" (Krüger 9-10). Even though the Austrian Parliament had added Art.

23f in 1994 to mitigate the impact of EU law on national law (Krüger 10), the approach was reactive and rather haphazard, and politicians have generally relied on constitutional law and policy experts to go back and clear up the confusion whenever two or more laws conflict. Such has been the case with Austrian neutrality and Austria's own security and defense doctrine.

The present doctrine, which was adopted in 2001 shifted the focus of security away from Cold War policy to conflict management and re-defined Austria as "non-aligned" or "alliance free" (Chruschtschowa).[12] The 2001 revision still retained the original four objectives for Austria's armed forces, as outlined under Kreisky, which were to defend Austria, to protect the constitutionally established institutions and the population's democratic freedoms, to maintain order and security inside the country, and to render assistance in the case of natural disasters. However, the new doctrine also drastically restructured the armed forces and reduced troop totals from 300,000 to 120,000 at a time when Austria would be expected to contribute troops at the EU level (BMLV: Austria Armed").

An important example of conflicting law is found in BGBl. I-Nr. 57, from June 2000, which allowed Austrian troops to participate in various EU, OSCE, and UN actions as long as it did not violate neutrality ("Truppenaufenthaltsgesetz"). The new law also allowed for the stationing of foreign troops on Austrian soil, in so far as these did not involve weapons and were used for training or other *diplomatic* exchanges such as those required by NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP) program ("Truppenaufenthaltsgesetz"). To some critics, this law violates the basic tenants of Austria's own neutrality clause, which stipulates that, "Österreich wird zur Sicherung dieser Zwecke in aller Zukunft keinen militärischen Bündnissen beitreten und die Errichtung militärischer Stützpunkte fremder Staaten auf seinem Gebiete nicht zulassen" (B-VG, BGBl 1995/211 Art. 1(2)). To others, it has simply narrowed the definition, reducing it to the core elements of classical neutrality, where neutrality only applies to nations "outside" of the EU.

This contradictory approach to foreign policy is due in large part to the schism between the two ruling parties over neutrality since 1995; but, it is also manifest in the disconnect between political leadership and the general public. While to some extent, this dissonance between public and governmental perceptions has meant that neutrality has remained on the national agenda since Austria joined the EU, it has not guaranteed neutrality a prominent place. As Rathkolb pointed out, since 1990 neutrality has become more of a "domestic" issue than an international one, noting that the Austrians seem more concerned about defining neutrality than other nations (87). It must, however, be noted, that the domestic debate does not seem to be centered around neutrality per se,

[12] The present doctrine replaced the one from 1973 (Winkler "Österreich").

but rather on the impact of economic, security, and defense matters on Austria's neutral status.

Although Austria may be committed to joint military ventures under the auspices of the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy, it still lacks the resources to follow through on these commitments ("NATO-Standard"), which has meant that it must find alternate ways to avour its obligations within the EU. At present, Austria's leaders seem to be hedging their bets in two areas: by using the UN to legitimize the use of any military force and by forming a "neutral bloc" within the EU.

The 1997 Treaty of Amsterdam, which had already adopted the WEU's differentiation between Article V and Non-article V actions relied on the fact that any proposed EU military action would probably be at the request of the UN and would include the support of NATO (EU: Council "CSDP"). Under Amsterdam, Non-article V military actions, which became known as the "Petersberg Tasks", it became easier for neutral or non-aligned nations to participate in joint venture operations for humanitarian and peacekeeping; however, it also left many questions regarding the eventual shape of a European armed forces unanswered. The leap from crisis management and peace operations to a standing European armed forces where the security and defense of the partners was mutually assured by a mutual assistance pact has not been made in large part due to disagreements by members over national budgets and the division of competencies. "[Critics] doubt that EU member states will be willing to make the hard political choices that could ultimately produce more "bang for the euro" because these could infringe on national sovereignty" (Archick/Gallis 16).

Under the present wording of the CSDP, Austria could be obliged to come to the aid of another member state under attack, despite "opt out clauses" which could endanger the legitimacy of article 23f of the Austrian Constitution as well as the status of neutrality. Additionally, Austria's two largest parties, the SPÖ and ÖVP, continue to disagree about the level of military integration they are willing to assume under constitutional neutrality. Up until recently, the ÖVP was committed to pursuing solidarity with the EU at the cost of neutrality; however, the stance has changed since 2003 (Austrian Parliament "Wie ist Solidarität"). The SPÖ, on the other hand, has made it clear that neutrality is not up for negotiation. They have sought to "re-contextualize" or "re-conceptualize" the clause, suggesting the use of "*Beistandsmöglichkeit*" instead of "*Pflicht*" ("EU-Beistand"). The EU, itself, has declared that members are expected to show solidarity in any joint action; but are not compelled (EU: Council "CFSP"). The final proposed draft of the Constitution for Europe not only allows for a variety of responses; but, also various means of cooperation, including the possibility of abstaining from participation in joint actions where "national interests" are threatened (Archick "EU's Constitution"

5).

While EU security and defense objectives seek to develop a military structure apart from NATO, it is clear that the EU still relies on NATO for much of its security and defense (CFSP). This was made apparent in 1999 when NATO was called in to establish peace in Kosovo. Luif notes, "…that the Europeans were unable to act alone and heavily dependent on U.S. forces" ("Austria's Permanent" 147). It has also been noted that most Europeans are loath to bear the costs of any standing military at the level necessary to insure the EU's security and defense. "Die Europäer geben 60 Prozent von dem [Geld] aus, was die Amerikaner für die Verteidigung aufwenden, haben aber gerade zehn Prozent ihrer Fähigkeiten" ("Die Neutraliät"). Therefore, the biggest issue facing Europe's members at this time is what role, if any, NATO will play in the CFSP/CSDP. The link between NATO and the EU has added another dimension to the neutrality debate in Austria – the compatibility of neutrality with overt military organizations, such as NATO.

Shortly after the events of September 11, 2001, the push by the ÖVP to join NATO intensified. NATO already manages many of the Petersberg Tasks where Austrian troops are stationed ("Die Neutralität") and Austria joined NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP) program February 10, 1995 shortly after joining the EU (Gehler 55). To some extent, Austria has already forged an initial link with a military alliance. The problem with Austria's role in the PfP is that while Austria exerts no real influence (Gustenau 10); NATO has demanded concessions, such as over-flight permission, from its members (Sperl). This has meant revising the Austrian constitution.[13] It is interesting to see how Austria has linked its national security and defense policy, including any proposed EU or NATO actions, to the United Nations, deferring to the UN as the final authority for the use of force. Luif has suggested that UN obligations have even taken precedent over Austria's responsibilities as a neutral country ("Austrian" 24).[14]

Ultimately, by deferring military action to the United Nations, Austria would first be able to hide behind the mantel of the UN in cases where national interest, i.e. neutrality, is jeopardized. However, this tendency to subordinate neutrality to UN mandates is based on the assumption that the UN will continue to define humanitarian and peacekeeping missions in the broadest possible sense and ultimately defend Austria's neutral status. As Kunz pointed out, however, unconditional membership in the UN is also incompatible with

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[13] This allowed for co-operative training, transport, and over-flights of NATO troops for peacekeeping or humanitarian actions under the auspices of the UN. It has also been viewed as a rather one-sided relationship.

[14] This was demonstrated in both the 2001 Security Doctrine as well as in the 2004 proposed draft of the Austrian constitution (Austrian Const. Convention "Bericht des Ö-Konvents").

neutrality (423). Krüger notes, that Austria has traditionally expected the United Nations to observe its commitment to neutrality and not request or require participation in Title VII actions. This, however, changed in 1991 with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, where "humanitarian" obligations to the UN took precedent over neutrality (Krüger 9).[15]

Although Austria remains constitutionally neutral, the current Austrian leadership has defined its current security and defense policy stance as "non-aligned" or "alliance free" instead of neutral. The other members of the European Union, as well as NATO, have sensed this indecisiveness and have even gone so far as to designate Austria, Sweden, Ireland and Finland as "former neutrals" or "post-neutrals", preferring not to give them a neutral designation until a final status within the EU has been determined (Sloan; Gustenau 2). The ambiguity caused by Austria's adherence to constitutional neutrality has remained unresolved, largely because of the formation of a neutral "bloc" within the EU by the so-called "post-neutrals" and the lack of concrete developments with the EU's security and defense structures. In December 2003, Austria, Sweden, Ireland and Finland issued a joint letter rejecting aspects of the proposed CFSP as incompatible with their neutral status and suggested a revision be made to the proposed EU Constitutional Treaty to subsume any military action to the UN per article 51 of the UN charter (Missiroli "Conference" 437-438). While Austria and Sweden later went on to break ranks and accept what became known as the "Italian Compromise", the message had already been sent: the neutral states within the EU were ready to band together to maintain neutrality ("2 States accept"). Gustenau notes that the biggest advantage to post-neutrals is the ability to advance their national policy agendas and effect outcomes within a supranational context; something traditional definitions of neutrality severely limited (11).

The case for a neutral bloc within the EU has also been extended to proposals and theories allowing for participation in international "peacekeeping" missions (Pelinka "Out" 168: Gustenau 12). The distinction between "peacekeeping" and "peace making" is an important one for Austria, since the latter implies a greater level of military participation. In 1999 in Helsinki, it was proposed that neutral nations could be allowed to provide civilian task forces

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[15] "Since 1960, about 50,000 soldiers from Austrian Armed Forces have taken part in UN-Authorised operations" (Hajnoczi 7). As of 2002, Austria had just over 900 troops under UN auspices stationed abroad. In many respects, these troops symbolize Austrian ambivalence towards neutrality policy in the new security environment. On the one hand, the fact that Austria has contributed troops to *any* military venture seems at odds with Cold War interpretations of neutrality; yet, on the other hand, the total number of Austrian troops abroad is but a "token" show of support and cannot in all honesty be construed as a military presence or threat. Another sign of Austrian ambivalence towards neutrality has been the self-imposed, revised designation of "non-aligned" instead of "neutral".

in lieu of armed forces; making the transition from neutral to "non-aligned" or "post-neutral" easier to sell back home to the constituency (Steyerer). By focusing on peaceful initiatives, including police actions, with the potential for a constructive opt out on a case-by-case basis; neutral EU countries with limited military resources would be able to participate in EU missions without directly jeopardizing neutrality (Havel; Gustenau 8-9). The EU's neutral bloc would be further enhanced by the presence of the Swiss, should they eventually decide to join the EU.

While Europe's "post-neutrals" are already forming a "bloc" within the EU, as is evidenced by a December 3, 2003 letter requesting changes to Article 40/7 of the EU's proposed constitution ("Analyse"); such a bloc would be counterbalanced by what some call an "exclusive defense club" of those "core" EU countries, such as Britain, France, Germany, and Italy, with the means to dictate or develop military policy ("Verfassung"). This could once again put Austria in the minority and on the periphery of European development and power – a status the Austrians have fought to avoid for centuries.

Ultimately, Austria alone must decide what constitutes a violation of its neutrality and what risks it will assume in any security and defense action. Obtaining international approval or legitimacy for any action in the present security environment may actually be easier for Austria to accomplish, than obtaining approval for any *inaction* under the pretext of neutrality. A precedent was set, however, in the early 1990s, when the Danish were given the opportunity to "opt out" of the EURO zone and the CFSP after rejecting Maastricht in a popular referendum (Lahodynsky). Based on this, Austria has continued to push for exemptions or special status to allow for continued neutrality within the EU. In addition to a new "exit clause", the proposed EU constitution included additional safeguards to neutral nations. "Language in the "mutual assistance clause" and on "structured cooperation" in defense was also reportedly modified to satisfy UK concerns that neither provision weaken the transatlantic link, and to guarantee Austria, Ireland, Finland, and Sweden that EU efforts to forge a more common defense would not compromise their neutrality policies" (Archick "The European Union's Constitution" 5).

Still, perceived problems with neutrality do not lie with the EU. They are domestic and lie in the struggle between the Austrian government's desire for greater flexibility in the field of foreign policy, the overwhelming need for domestic peace and stability and the Austrian people's conviction that neutrality is a solution to the loss of sovereignty and a distinct national identity in the face of EU integration. This, more than anything, has resulted in the inability of other nations to clearly determine Austria's foreign policy stance with respect to national, regional, and international security and defense.

While unlikely, it is not inconceivable that Austria could exercise its right as a sovereign nation and at some point in the future withdraw from the Euro-

pean Union. The EU constitutional treaty has even proposed a new "exit clause" to allow member states to withdraw from the union voluntarily (Archick "European Union's Constitution" 5); however, the conditions under which Austria might withdraw from the EU at this point can only be considered speculation. Still, there have been recent indications that some political elements in Austria wouldn't mind seeing that happen and are actively trying to open a policy window with the fate of neutrality, Austrian identity and EU membership hanging in the balance. At this point, I must rely on Kingdon's model to help identify and analyze those participants and policy processes in Austria that are presently affecting neutrality and the national agenda and establish why they are proving to be significant to Austria's future within the EU.

VI. Neutrality and the Governmental Agenda

Due to the complex nature of neutrality, it is often difficult to separate a problem from the condition. If, as many policy experts assert, a problem exists with Austrian neutrality, then Kingdon's model will shed new light on the dimensions of the problem. Even if the final analysis shows that a policy window has not opened, Kingdon's model will still help explain why no real action has been taken to repeal constitutional neutrality. This will inevitably bring us closer to understanding those processes in Austria that develop or constrain national policy.

The historical context of Austrian neutrality plays a significant role in how both neutrality law and policy continue to be managed. Designed to promote stability in Europe, while re-establishing Austrian sovereignty and independence, it did come at the cost of potential economic and social isolation. While these were mitigated by UN membership in 1955, these negative associations were gradually replaced by newly constructed "positive" ones by the end of the Kreisky era in the form of policy initiatives, such as " *die Brückefunktion*", "the Austrian Way" and other metaphors, such as "*Insel der Seligen*" that evolved to reinforce neutrality as an inherent part of Austrian national identity.

Ultimately, however, these images were challenged as external pressures from globalization in the mid-1980s meant any form of isolation could be devastating to Austria's economy. Lantis/Queen were able to demonstrate, with the use of their "dual diplomacy model" that Austrian scholars and the Social Partnership were able to "re-contextualize" neutrality to accommodate membership in the EU at a time when there existed great uncertainty with respect to regional security and defense, while the Austrian people were still clinging tenaciously to a national image created around constitutional neutrality. The successful 1994 referendum, however, was short-lived and resulted in voter backlash, which revealed a disconnect between the Austrian people and the federal government.

Pelinka, Gehler/Kaiser, Plasser, et al have shown that since 1986, Austria is evolving into a "normal", westernized democracy, shedding many aspects of Lijphart's "consociationalism", which can be seen in the rise of a true pluralistic party system, with greater and more direct voter participation as well as increased demands for governmental accountability. This pace of change has been accelerated since 1996 according to Höll/Pollak/Puntscher-Riekmann, who have studied the effects of EU integration on the various institutional and structural aspects of the Austrian government and law-making processes. The result has been even greater discord among the various political parties and institutions, as each vies with the others for a greater share of political power. It is, therefore, not unexpected that changes to Austria's security and defense environment have been considered "haphazard" and "sporadic", often more a response to perceived crisis than any real effort to anticipate future needs. This also explains why there continues to be a domestic debate about the future role of Austrian constitutional neutrality.

Ironically, recent debates over neutrality have taken place at a time when Austria is celebrating anniversaries that in many respects are representative of two diverging identities. The year 2005 has been officially designated the Jubilee celebration of Austrian identity (Morak "Jubiläumsjahr"). In addition to the 60th anniversary of the Second Republic, Austrians celebrated any and all anniversaries that have contributed to the post-war construction of present day Austria.[16] This included ten years as a member of the EU.

The link between past achievement and future objectives is perhaps best summarized in an editorial comment by Austrian State Secretary for Arts and the Media, Franz Morak: "2005 wird Österreich erstmals diese großen Jahrestage seiner jüngeren Geschichte nicht mehr in einer Randlage, sondern im Herzen eines größer gewordenen Europas feiern. Das ist kein Anlass zu einem nostalgischen Blick zurück, sondern eine einmalige Chance, das österreichische Bewusstsein in einem erweiterten Europa zu definieren. Das Jubiläumsjahr 2005 bietet Gelegenheit, aus dem Wissen und dem Bewusstsein um unsere Vergangenheit Perspektiven für die gemeinsame Gestaltung der Zukunft zu erarbeiten. Darin liegt die große Herausforderung des vor uns liegenden Jubiläums" (Morak "Jubiläumsjahr 2005). State Secretary Morak has noted that the inclusion of the EU anniversary is an attempt to create a "larger" Austro-European identity instead of a state-centered identity. The question has been, however, what role neutrality will play in this larger *Identitätskonzept*.

The irony in celebrating constitutional neutrality while at the same time lauding membership in the very organization that threatens the foundations of

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[16] The 2005 Jubilee celebrations also recognized the 50th anniversaries of the State Treaty and resulting independence, UN membership, the founding of the Austrian military, the re-opening of the Vienna Burgtheater and State Opera, as well as 60 years of the Austrian Workers Union ("Jubiläumsjahr 2005").

neutrality can only be understood against the backdrop of neutrality as an identity construct. Yet, it is the underlying use of neutrality by the various political parties to manipulate the public for various reasons, which is truly at the heart of these celebrations. Amidst various state sponsored activities and exhibits, the Austrian government ratified the proposed EU constitutional treaty on May 11, 2005 while still in the process of revising the federal constitution (Austrian Parliament "Chronologie"). The debate on both constitutions has included deliberations on what role, if any, neutrality will play in the future; yet, this has set the stage for the present coalition government, which has already gone on record in the past against neutrality, to repeal constitutional neutrality or even to force a withdrawal from the European Union.

At the start of 2005, conditions appeared avour r to change: the Austrian constitutional convention identified a problem with the *Neutralitätsgesetz* and Art. 23f of the current Austrian constitution, which allowed for deployment of Austrian troops under the auspices of either the EU or NATO with a UN mandate. An available policy alternative, full participation in the EU subordinating any action to the UN with possible "opt out" clauses, was in place. Political conditions seemed right for change, in that the current ÖVP-FPÖ government, which had previously and very publicly called for a repeal of neutrality, has been handed the opportunity to do so quietly while "revising" the present Austrian constitution.

However, appearances may be deceiving. Distinguishing between a condition and a problem can be tricky, given the importance of perception in the process of defining a problem. In the case of Austria, neutrality may not be the problem at all. Kingdon suggests that the appearance of certain mechanisms within the problem stream, contribute to the prominence of a problem, in this case neutrality, on the agenda (113). These mechanisms can be either routine statistical monitoring or "indicators" to the more sporadic events, such as a sudden crisis or disaster. The increase in number and severity of these mechanisms also increase the likelihood of a condition becoming diagnosed or perceived as a "problem" (Kingdon 113). With this in mind, I would like to see whether or not neutrality has been accurately identified as a problem, and if so, who is driving the push to identify neutrality as a problem and what criteria have been used.

VI. *The Problem Stream: Identifying the Problem*

Has a problem with neutrality been identified? How has the problem been defined? Who is promoting neutrality as a problem? The answer to these questions is key to deciding if neutrality is really on the governmental agenda. Part of the process of identifying a problem comes from recognizing specific ways in which a condition becomes a problem.

In the past, Cold War tensions between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. have been

the standard for determining how neutrality and any problems associated with neutrality would be defined. As tensions eased in the late 1960s and early 1970s with détente, so did perceptions of neutrality. With the fall of Communism, the success or failure of neutrality could no longer be measured against this standard. Although neutrality is still considered a successful foreign policy tool, its unbeaten record as a security and defense policy is suspect, having never actually been tested under conditions of war. Nor has political maneuverability with respect to economic policy and the pressures of globalization endeared it to Austrian business and industry. If anyone has considered the limits of neutrality a problem, it has been the VÖI and its political representative, the ÖVP.

Falling back on classic definitions of neutrality and BGBl. 1955/211, proponents of neutrality have had to find another *raison de être* for neutrality or risk repeal as pressures from EU integration and globalization have made it harder to reconcile a neutral course within Europe. So far, they have been able to "re-contextualize" neutrality to their own advantage, placing neutrality in a new, post-Cold War context, while working out the details of how neutrality could function as a viable policy amidst EU military integration. Although this, in effect, re-affirmed a place for constitutional neutrality as a viable foreign policy in the new security and defense environment for the short term, it has not guaranteed that problems with neutrality policy could be avoided entirely.

While it is not the intent of this paper to argue the pros and cons of neutrality, it is important to understand both sides and how they are driving or inhibiting the definition neutrality as a problem. Critics of the present Austrian government, who were also outspoken opponents of the SPÖ-ÖVP grand coalition at the time of EU ascension in 1994-1995, have re-emerged in 2005 to accuse leadership of getting rid of neutrality in small pieces or "*scheibchenweise*" and suggesting that a final decision on the status of neutrality should be made in a public referendum (Austrian Parliament "Wie ist Solidarität", "Gorbach für Volksabstimmung"). Even though Kingdon deals with the policy theory of "incrementalism", or gradual policy change over longer periods of time (79), he argues that this only explains some aspects of policy formation, specifically alternative generation (82) and does not account for the sudden, overwhelming interest in a particular issue or problem that drives true policy change (80). However, the concept of incrementalism is important to understanding the process of "softening-up" and the present condition of neutrality policy. The softening-up process, while largely considered a mechanism in the political stream, is also detectable in the problem stream where policy entrepreneurs are driving the need to have neutrality identified as a problem. Exactly what their motives are, what methods they have used, and are continuing to use to promote neutrality as a problem is best understood by looking at the

present political situation in Austria, beginning with those mechanisms, which Kingdon suggests, help identify problems.

Has the condition of neutrality really become a problem? It would depend upon the variables one uses in identifying the problem, including if one is focusing on neutrality law, neutrality policy or both. It also depends on how closely one associates neutrality law with national security and defense. For the purposes of this paper, it is assumed that neutrality law, which encompasses policy, is the potential problem, given the findings of the Austrian Constitutional Convention and recent FPÖ and BZÖ public statements calling for a public referendum (Austrian Parliament "Wie ist Solidarität"). With respect to the dimension of security and defense, however, there is greater latitude for interpretation. With this in mind, an analysis of constitutional neutrality beginning with Kingdon's mechanisms in the problem stream, can begin.

It was not until President Klestil suggested a problem with constitutional neutrality in his January 2004 New Year's address that a fierce debate within the government took place. By asking for a discussion on the issue of EU "*Beistandspflicht*" without allowing nostalgia getting in the way, Klestil unleashed what could only be called a final debate on neutrality ("SP: Noch keine"). The proposed European Constitutional treaty, which would avour edly strengthen the EU in three main areas, including the CFSP, was once again raising concerns about compatibility of EU objectives with constitutional neutrality ("Verfassung: Neue Kompetenzen"). Included in the proposed EU constitution was a mutual assistance clause or "*Beistandspflicht*", which has been the focus of recent debates with respect to Austrian security and defense. At the time, Klestil unleashed the neutrality debate, the status of constitutional neutrality, with respect to the EU could still be considered uncertain.

Neutrality had made it onto the governmental agenda, but in what form? Was there truly a problem with constitutional neutrality? Or did they problem lay somewhere else? Why was neutrality suddenly such a "hot topic"?

VI. Focusing Events, Crises, and Symbols

Although Kingdon identifies three "tools" to help define a problem, not all need be present to elevate a condition to a problem on the agenda. With respect to Kingdon's model, there are no statistical indicators that suggest constitutional neutrality is a problem. Reliable quantitative measurements of whether or not neutrality is performing to expectations simply do not exist. Even the role of popular opinion polls, while statistical in nature, generally cannot be considered a scientific measurement of policy performance. They can, however, provide feedback on the performance of existing policy. In the case of neutrality, public opinion remains overwhelmingly in avour of continued neutrality. Polls can also provide insight into the impact of focusing

events or crises on a given policy.

The terrorist attacks on the U.S. on September 11, 2001 once again elevated the issue of neutrality back onto the national agenda (Sperl). There existed the perception that Americans were not the only ones who were attacked on September 11, 2001 as fourteen Austrians were declared missing in the attacks on the World Trade Center ("14 Österreicher"). The attacks on the U.S. forced the Austrian government and even the political opposition to evaluate the likelihood of such an attack happening on Austrian soil and the nation's ability to protect itself in the event that such an attack did happen. The most significant impact that 9/11 had on the neutrality debate was to the proposed draft of the national Security Doctrine, which had been caught up in debate. After September 11, it suddenly received broad support across party lines and was passed on ("Weitgehende Einigkeit").

Many Austrian politicians softened their position on neutrality and the strict interpretation of security and defense after the events of September 11 (Einem: NATO-Überflüge"). If anything, the events of September 11, 2001 affected perceptions of air security and renewed calls for cooperative defense that extended beyond national borders ("Überwachung"). In response to the terrorist attacks, the Austrian government gave permission for NATO to use Austrian airspace, something it had refused to allow during the Kosovo crisis just two years earlier ("NATO-Bomber"). The ensuing U.S. war in Iraq brought home the possibility of the proposed EU's mutual assistance clause invariably pulling Austria into unwanted conflict.

In 2003, proposed revisions to Austria's own constitution amid the development of a European Constitution helped to focus national attention on the related issues of neutrality, security, and defense policy. According to an EU Business online article from December 10, 2003, it was suggested that the EU's proposed security and defense clause has "sparked a heated debate" over Austrian neutrality ("EU constitution leads"). The debate, however, did not accurately identify neutrality as a problem, since any debate on neutrality was invariably linked to debates on security and defense.

Crises and focusing events alone are not enough to keep neutrality on the agenda. In order to keep neutrality on the agenda, it needs to be accompanied by "something else", such as a reinforcing symbol or increased feedback. Even though neutrality has risen on the agenda during these crises and public attention was focused on the potential problems with security and defense, the common denominators among each has been a perceived failure of national security and defense and/or loss of national sovereignty in the course of EU integration, not necessary a failure of constitutional neutrality.

Every time a problem with national security and defense has surfaced, it brought with it the inevitable debate about neutrality. It is this link, which has been exploited by successive Austrian governments, as they have sought to

gain legitimacy for constitutional neutrality while maintaining peace and stability at home. The link between neutrality and Austrian stability, peace, and prosperity has been symbolized in the year 2005.

The year 2005 can also be considered a focusing event, in that it marks the golden anniversary of statehood, independence, the signing of the State Treaty, and the establishment of constitutional neutrality in addition to commemorating the end of World War II, the beginning of the Second Republic, and ten years as a member of the EU. Most importantly, 2005 is also being celebrated as the "year of Austrian identity" ("Staatsvertragsjubiläum"). It is therefore safe to say that 2005 celebrates what it means to be "Austrian".

It has been suggested by members of the opposition that despite outward appearances, Schüssel's plan has been all along to soften-up the Austrian public by shifting national identity away from its Cold War beginnings and reinvent a new "Austro-European" identity without neutrality (Linsinger, Austrian Parliament "Wie ist Solidarität"). This view has been reinforced by public statements, in which Schüssel has suggested that Austrians look to the new Constitution for a "new" national identity, rather than to an identity created back in 1955 ("Staatsvertragsjubiläum").

The symbolic meaning of neutrality has not gone unnoticed by policy experts or academia (Pelinka 169). "Austrian neutrality must or at least can be seen as a concept of International Politics; as a set of rules in International Law; as an instrument to strengthen Austrian identity; as a possibility to avoid victimization; as a doctrine permitting pacifists to be pacifists without avour ing their pacifism; as a 'double standard' which allowed the country to be Western and non-Western at the same time; as an illusion to live on an island; as a possibility to mediate credibly international conflicts; as the politics of egotistical national cynicism" (Pelinka/Wodak 4). Liebhart's study has also noted the "symbolic" importance of neutrality in establishing Austrian identity and the development of national consciousness (25).

Still, it is perhaps the symbolic nature of neutrality as a source of independence and sovereignty, especially with respect to immigration and the EU that has had the greatest impact on neutrality and the agenda. The successes of the FPÖ in the 1999 elections were not entirely due to protest votes. EU policy has been and continues to be seen as a threat by some to Austrian security and Austrian culture, by forcing Austria to relinquish authority or control over its borders and concede power to other nations. As unemployment throughout Europe rises and immigration rates continue to hold, national sovereignty is becoming increasingly tied to the issue of neutrality, which is seen as a way to protect "Austrian" identity.

Neutrality has been a symbol of peace, stability, and prosperity for so long that any threat to these cannot be blamed on the failure of neutrality, but on a failure of the government to implement or support the necessary policy reform

in other areas. Feedback on the success or failure of neutrality; however, is still linked to the EU's CFSP and more recently, to the legal findings of Austria's Constitutional Convention.

VI. Feedback

In addition to using focusing events, crises, and symbols to identify problems, Kingdon also suggests the use of feedback, which is often informal and sporadic, such as letters to representatives in government or public meetings in a local town hall.

With respect to Austrian neutrality, feedback has primarily come from two directions: The European Union's CFSP (security & defense) and the Austrian Constitutional Conventions recent findings of a conflict between two Austrian laws, the Neutralitätsgesetzes and Art. 23f, which was passed to accommodate EU law.

Kingdon identifies several ways in which feedback is used to identify problems: 1. Feedback on problems of implementation. 2. Feedback where legislative intent is not followed through or failure to meet stated goals indicates a problem. 3. Feedback where the cost of a program can indicate a problem, especially when dealing with projections. 4. Feedback on unanticipated avouquences of a policy (101-103). By looking at how feedback has affected the CFSP and the findings of the Constitutional convention, we can begin to see where a potential problem may lie. It must be noted, however, that with respect to Austrian neutrality, feedback is coming mainly from bureaucrats and experts on foreign and defense policy.

It is with great diplomatic skill that Austria has been able to maintain its neutral status within the EU, given the objectives of the EU's CSDP. The fact that Austria was able to gain concessions for neutrality from the EU not only in the Austrian Treaty of Ascension, but also in the recently proposed Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe, has meant that Austria can continue to structure its security and defense policy around constitutional neutrality. It has not, however, taken neutrality off the agenda, if anything; it has meant greater prominence on the agenda at critical times.

Shortly after Austria joined the European Union, problems of greater significance seemed to replace neutrality on the Austrian national agenda. With the exception of conflict in Yugoslavia, the issue of neutrality was frozen from 1995 to 1999 as Austria and the European Union worked out the economic problems of integration, including the EURO zone. At the time that the SPÖ/ÖVP government was considering EU membership, the SPÖ had done everything possible to minimize the importance of neutrality on the agenda ("SPOe-OeVP Dispute"). Conversely, the ÖVP did not want NATO membership to become an issue prior to the 1999 elections fearing public backlash ("SPOe-OeVP Dispute"). These accusations seem rather odd, given the 1997

ÖVP party platform statement, which publicly included the intent to seek full NATO membership. There was also unspoken fear in the SPÖ-ÖVP government, in which any discussion of neutrality would lead to an unwanted decision on NATO (Winkler "Streit"). Now that the latest EU expansion (EU-25) has taken place and the EU is focusing on security and a European constitution, the dust has settled and Austria can now focus on what the full implications of EU membership will mean in the area of security and defense.

Feedback in area of military preparedness and cooperation within the parameters of the EU's CFSP has shown a direct link between matters of national security, defense, and constitutional neutrality. This is perhaps best exemplified in the 1999 National Council elections, where overall dissatisfaction with the SPÖ-ÖVP coalition government came to a head, when both of the traditional parties lost significant votes to the far-right FPÖ. The 1999 elections spilled over into the problem stream when the far right, "nationalist" party, the FPÖ under Jörg Haider, succeeded in garnering 27% of the popular vote. Media coverage of the 1999 general elections showed that both neutrality and NATO membership [security & defense] had became hot topics and that differences over these two issues are believed to have contributed to the collapse of the Social Partnership ("SPOe-OeVP Dispute"). While feedback from general population is that neutrality can be maintained within the EU's CFSP ("Trotz EU-Heer"), experts regardless of position, anticipate that neutrality will eventually be abandoned.

This may not be outside the realm of possibility, when one considers the constitutional challenges Austria faces, at the end of 2005. Due to the unusual scope of Art. 9 of the Austrian Federal Constitution, which automatically incorporates international laws and treaties signed by Austria back into the Austrian constitution, a conflict between neutrality law, security, and defense has arisen (Seidl-Hohenveldern "Relation" 467, Krüger 9-10). Therein lies a potential problem between neutrality and membership in the EU.

Yet, problem recognition is not sufficient by itself to place an item on the agenda. "Getting people to see new problems, or to see old problems in one way rather than another, is a major conceptual and political accomplishment" (Kingdon 114). This seems to have been the government's objective prior to the presidential elections in 2004. The ÖVP-FPÖ coalition, from 2000 to 2004 was pursuing a course of NATO membership with eventual repeal of neutrality. Feedback from negotiations on the 2001 Security and Defense Doctrine, as well as the Helsinki Headline Goals outlined in the EU's CFSP showed that a potential problem existed with constitutional neutrality and Austrian security and defense policy. Even though security and defense had been constructed around constitutional neutrality, in the government's haste to show solidarity with the EU, they were believed to be willing to sacrifice it in order to achieve economic security and stability.

In 2003, Chancellor Schüssel called for a constitutional convention to revise the present Austrian constitution. The issue of "secondary duties" under the EU constitution has created problems for the EU's neutrals, especially the obligation under Art. 23f, which would violate the neutrality clause requiring Austria not to undertake in peacetime any alliance or agreement that may compromise neutrality (Sucharipa 86).[17]

In summary, although a problem has been formally identified, the problem is not necessarily with constitutional neutrality; but with Art. 23f, which was considered an ad hoc response to the legal demands of Art. 9. It must be remembered at this point that Art. 23f was enacted in order to bring EU treaty law into line with Austria's own constitutional laws. It is, therefore, also the potential source of a problem.

VI. *The Policy Stream: Policy, Alternatives & Entrepreneurs*

According to Kingdon, the policy stream is much like a "policy primeval soup", in that much of the basic material for formulating policy is present at the time a problem arises, it may simply be that the material has not had time to congeal into a viable or even intelligible policy solution (116-117). By using the analogy of biological "natural selection", Kingdon is able to emphasize the seemingly random way in which policy alternatives are created (116-117). The survival of any proposed policy solution within the policy stream essentially relies on the process of "trial and error", often requiring years to produce results (117, 143). Proposals that have met the necessary criteria of technical feasibility, value acceptability, and anticipation of future constraints, generally end up on a "short list" of ideas, from which a final solution will be selected (143-144).

In the case of Austria, a well-established policy community has been working on alternatives to neutrality for decades; however, their proposals have been tempered by the inability to accurately define the exact nature and problem of constitutional neutrality. Even as the Austrian Constitutional Convention began the task of revising the Austrian federal constitution, the challenges of accurately defining neutrality as a "problem" quickly became apparent (Austrian Const. Convention "Bericht des Ausschusses I").

VI. Policy Community & Proposals

The policy community, as Kingdon identifies it, is made up of specialists, such as policy experts, researchers, bureaucrats, academics, and interest groups, which in Austria can include anyone with the declared interest in policy

[17] Luif noted that Art. 23f made allowances for EU's CFSP, thus opening a contradiction in law between neutrality and EU obligations (143-144).

change (116). These policy specialists create a pool of ideas that are exchanged both formally and informally, often working independently of the political stream. However, in Austria, this is not necessarily the case, since many members of the policy community are directly affiliated with one of Austria's political parties as part of the "pre-parliamentary stage" of legislation (Pelinka "Out" 50-51). Because of its long-established history of consociationalism, Austria has a well-defined policy community adept at researching, debating, evaluating, proposing alternatives, and formulating final policy proposals; however, this has not always guaranteed a faster response to problems.

In Austria, the political parties are generally the source of agenda initiatives, and once a problem has been identified, locating or developing a policy solution is usually delegated to a lower-level bureaucrat within the related ministries to draft proposed legislation (Pelinka "Out" 50).

The cohesiveness of the policy community directly affects policy outcome. "Among the consequences of fragmentation [of a policy community] are disjointed policy, lack of common orientations, and agenda instability" (Kingdon 143). This is especially true with respect to constitutional neutrality, since dissension within the policy community has led to a marked lack of policy alternatives.

In March 2003, the Austrian policy community was given a mandate by Chancellor Schüssel, in which he outlined in a policy statement the government's objectives to revise the present Austrian constitution, which consists of over 1000 provisions (Schüssel, Austrian Convention "Tasks").[18] Publicly, the objectives were to restructure the outdated and confusingly complex constitution making it more "citizen friendly" (Austrian Convention "Tasks"); however, it was understood that the sudden need to revise all of Austria's laws was the direct result of the EU's push to formulate its own constitution. On January 31, 2005, the Austrian convention submitted the final proposed draft to the federal government (Austrian Convention "Bericht des Österreich-Konvents"). The anticipated savings under the revised constitution was estimated at around € 2 billion by simply streamlining governmental processes, eliminating redundancies at the various levels, and clarifying the laws ("Convention on Austrian Constitution"). However, there were unanticipated side effects to the process.

In general, a policy community largely addresses two issues: awareness of the problem and agreement on potential solutions (Kingdon 139). Failure to identify or address a problem, or to identify and agree on potential solutions, will weaken the policy stream and the potential for an issue to make it onto the

[18] The constitutional convention, established on June 30, 2003 with approximately 70 members from the political and legal fields, as well as experts in various areas under the guidance of Franz Fiedler ("Convention on a new", "Österreich-Konvent: Neue Verfassung").

agenda. Although a problem was identified with the *Neutralitätsgesetz* or constitutional neutrality, the policy community seems hesitant to say outright that neutrality was the problem. Due to the fact that the convention reached decisions by consensus rather than by that of a simple majority, various dissenting opinions had to be included in the final proposed draft, underscoring the fragmented nature of the Convention itself ("Österreich-Konvent: Neue Verfassung").

VI. Viable Alternatives

The convention could have proposed a repeal of constitutional neutrality.[19] Instead, they proposed that the National Council clarify this situation, before it becomes a problem. Their findings, or proposed "short list" of ideas, demonstrates the difficulties of defining a problem. The proposed wording of the EU constitution[20], submitted in June 2004, would have required, at best, a avourcation of the Austrian constitution and, at worst, a repeal of neutrality ("EU-Beistand").

"Officially, Austrian neutrality has no obligation beyond the military aspects expressed in the Neutrality Act and in the rules of International Law" (Pelinka "Out" 158). This means reducing the context of neutrality to the basic tenets as outlined in the Hague conventions of 1907 – that of proclaiming one's neutrality once war has been declared.

In the Convention's final proposal to the federal government, a lack of consensus among the convention's experts was noted in the form of three proposed variations to the new constitution (Austrian Convention "Tonbandabschrift 8"). The first recommended wording offered by Mayer clearly sets UN and EU obligations before neutrality without advocating an outright repeal (Austrian Convention "Bericht des Österreich-Konvents"). The second proposed wording offered by Specht calls for a "re-contextualization" of neutrality forbidding "military" action, but allowing for economic and political avourity, reducing the previous interpretation to allow for EU membership in as far as it does not require Austria to abandon neutrality (Austrian Convention "Bericht des Österreich-Konvents"). The final variations, offered by Wittmann and Öhlinger argue no change to the present text of B-VG BGBl. 1955/211 is needed at this time and that neutrality, in all its variations, should be adhered to over outside influences and seek clarification of the European Union's intent to develop and enforce the CFSP/CSDP with respect to the "*Beistandspflicht*" or mutual assistance clause (Austrian Convention "Bericht

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[19] Given the conflict between BGBl. 211/1955 and B-VG Art. 23f, either law could have been repealed.(Austrian Convention Bericht des Österreich-Konvents).

[20] The EU treaty was ratified on 11 May 2005 and purportedly required no changes to constitutional neutrality ("EU-Verfassung: Strache").

des Österreich-Konvents").

In the final report to Parliament from January 31, 2005, the Austrian Convention reaffirmed constitutional neutrality. Although no consensus was reached on the final wording of the law, the incompatibility of Art. 23f B-VG with BGBl. 211/1955 (Neutrality Law) was noted (Austrian Convention "Bericht des Österreich-Konvents"). The effects of this incompatibility have spilled over into other policy arenas and national defense, making it difficult to structure these. While on the one hand this presents a problem for the government, on the other hand, it is not uncommon for policy to be implemented without being fully realized.

Otherwise, the only indication that there might be a problem with constitutional neutrality is the final Convention report to Parliament on the incompatibility of B-VG Art. 23f with BGBl. 211/1955 (Austrian Convention "Tonbandschrift" 12). Has this been enough to elevate neutrality from a condition to a problem?

Theo Öhlinger suggested in his position paper to the Austrian Convention that Austria could always fall back on Article II, Sect. 1 of the present EU constitution, which subsumes EU action to the UN. Under this argument, Austria could theoretically legitimize or withhold any action it deemed appropriate or incompatible with neutrality (Öhlinger). The "opt out" or escape clauses that the final EU Constitutional Treaty contained, would in theory make any repeal of neutrality unnecessary, if only for the immediate future.

There was also a tendency among the Convention's experts to defer military actions to the UN instead of the EU, once again affirming the Austrian tendency to "protect" national sovereignty by requiring that any military action permitted under B-VG Art. 23f have UN backing. As long as an action is sanctioned by the UN, Austria can participate as part of an EU contingent as a neutral nation (Specht). Additionally, several policy experts were able to propose peaceful alternatives to military participation. Hämmerle suggests that Austria include a "peace service" along with military and civilian options. Suggesting that a peace corps could avour mandated military service while promoting peaceful alternatives and improved standards of living abroad ("Hearing" 1-2).

While Article 5 of the proposed EU Constitutional Treaty secures the right of an individual nation to refrain from common action when issues of national or cultural identity are threatened (Lanc 2), the EU's Constitution hardly provides a viable alternative to constitutional neutrality. It has already been pointed out that one of the three criteria for the success of a policy proposal is value acceptability (Kingdon 34). This is broadly interpreted to mean, acceptability within the parameters of the existing culture. Given the focusing events of 2005, one would expect Austria to redouble efforts to protect constitutional neutrality as a symbol of state sovereignty and national identity.

While experts argue that any repeal of neutrality would have to pass a popu-

lar referendum, the impossible has been accomplished before. In 1994, the Austrian government managed to convince the Austrian people to ignore neutrality in lieu of economic gain. The earlier analysis of the EU application for membership using the findings of Lantis/Queen's has shown how in 1987 a problem was recognized, a viable alternative was available and political conditions were just right, so that a policy window opened in 1994.

Unlike 1994, however, the policy community in 2005 has been divided, as are the two main political parties. With no consensus on either identifying neutrality as a problem or on finding alternatives to constitutional neutrality, there is little likelihood of neutrality staying on the governmental agenda.

Are there viable alternatives to neutrality? Not at present. The EU has not adequately defined its political and military objectives and there is still no final word on the role WEU or NATO will ultimately play. While the present EU constitution allows for "wiggle room", Austria may still be confronted with a military situation where it will be asked to participate under the mutual assistance clause. Even assuming, Austria chooses to opt-out of a proposed joint military operation, it might still face less obvious forms of retaliation, such as the diplomatic sanctions it had in 2000.

At present, there is no consensus within the policy community with respect to Austrian constitutional neutrality. There seems to be a general call to once again "re-contextualize" security and defense or find an alternate understanding of neutrality in the constitutional convention's position papers and final proposal rather than suggesting repeal.

VI. *The Political Stream: Political Events*

The forces of national mood, including public opinion, and organized politics or interest groups, formulate patterns of support for and against neutrality. These forces, coupled with governmental phenomena such as "bureaucratic turf" and turnover of key personnel by elections, have a powerful effect on the agenda (Kingdon 145). Public mood or opinion in Austria, has historically been a constraint on any neutrality debate in Austria, given the public's overwhelming support of constitutional neutrality. It has also been used as the general excuse for any policy inaction on the part of the Austrian government. After all, who would dare risk a voter backlash in an attempt to repeal neutrality? But as we shall see, this is only part of the reason why a policy window did not open in 2005.

Organized interest has also largely been disassociated from any change to neutrality, and given the balance between the interest groups and level of interest "for" and "against" constitutional neutrality; their impact on the agenda can generally be considered a draw, neither significantly promoting or demoting neutrality on the agenda for any length of time. It is, however, within the election processes that one begins to see where the agenda tends to be affected

most.

What is it exactly that is pushing neutrality onto the agenda? In applying Kingdon's model, it has become apparent that the tension between a European identity and a national identity is perhaps the greatest influence on agenda status. The evolving European CFSP also still plays a residual role in determining neutrality's place on the agenda, despite having reached a settlement in the proposed Constitutional Treaty. And finally, the shifting political platforms or party manifests, as well as political maneuvering in anticipation of important political events in 2006 are also determining the prominence of neutrality on the Austrian agenda.

"The political stream is an important promoter or inhibiter of high agenda status: All of the important actors in the system, not just the politicians, judge whether the balance of forces in the political stream favors action" (Kingdon 163). This would explain, why it is neutrality has been on the agenda since 1999, but has only risen whenever political conditions have favored a debate or possible change. This is especially true in Austria, where it is the federal government who predominantly controls the neutrality debate, determining when, where and if neutrality appears on the agenda.

It has generally been assumed that in order for a repeal to stand a chance, Austria needs to have a government in power, which wants to repeal neutrality. Historically, the Austrian People's Party or ÖVP, with its close links to business and industry, has held this stance; however, this position changed in late 2004 with the election of a Socialist president. Kingdon has noted that "A change of administration is probably the most obvious window in a policy stream" (168). It is in the aftermath of governmental change that the potential for policy change is at its greatest, when new agendas and ideas are pushed by new faces (Kingdon 154).

In Austria, there have recently been three significant elections where key policy entrepreneurs have either appeared or disappeared from the scene: The two National Council elections in 2000 and 2003, and the recent presidential election in 2004. The 2004 presidential election has been a key event in recent neutrality debates and clues to its importance in the policy stream can be seen in the sudden reversal of the ÖVP stance on NATO membership and neutrality, as well as in the recent avour r of the FPÖ and newly formed BZÖ parties who have repeatedly called for referenda on EU membership and neutrality.

Still, the majority of Austrians continue to hold fast to neutrality, despite the unusual debate taking place within the government. This dissonance between government and public perceptions of neutrality can only be explained by examining the present conditions within the context of setting the agenda.

VI. National Mood

"People in and around government sense a national mood. They are comfortable discussing its content, and believe that they know when the mood shifts. The idea goes by different names – the national mood, the climate in the country, changes in public opinion, or broad social movements. But common to all of these labels is the notion that a rather large number of people out in the country are thinking along certain common lines that this national mood changes from one time to another in discernable ways, and that these changes in mood or climate have important impacts on policy agendas and policy outcomes" (Kingdon 146).

In the case of Austria, public mood or opinion has been consistently and overwhelmingly for constitutional neutrality; yet, it would be an avour r fycation of the situation to assume that public opinion is the only constraint on the neutrality debate. Or that neutrality is even the underlying principle that is being protected. Public opinion would not be a factor in governmental decisions, were Austria not a democracy; and, therefore, subject to the checks and balances that all democracies place on their leaders. Kingdon notes that the national mood, although hard to define, is taken very seriously by decision makers, since it "…has important policy consequences. It has an impact on election results, on party fortunes, and on the receptivity of governmental decision makers to interest group lobbying" (Kingdon 149). Concisely, the general public has final policy authority.

Yet, this also assumes that the public knows what is actually going on. Pelinka believes most Austrians still have not figured out the consequences of EU membership and the impact it has had on neutrality ("Out" 168). Since 1955, neutrality has been a constraint on economic development. Because the government was unable to repeal permanent neutrality, they managed to reconcile constitutional neutrality with EU membership; however, many policy experts believe this state of balance is temporary. Once the EU has achieved full political integration, it will then start increasing pressure to fully integrate its military. This would, in turn, require Austria to either re-negotiate concessions, or face potentially damaging repercussions. Overall, there seems to be a disconnect between how the Austrian people perceive neutrality and how the Austrian government views neutrality. The government views neutrality as a problem; whereas, the public has been raised to view neutrality as a condition, if not a solution to foreign policy problems.

Pelinka notes that Austrian voters are also holding the political parties more accountable, noting that they no longer accept governmental policy changes with blind acceptance ("Out" 35). Voters seem willing to demonstrate a greater degree of participation in the policy process and are quicker to demonstrate displeasure for unpopular policy changes during the next elections.

Although public referenda are guaranteed in the Austrian constitution, the present political structure does not encourage them (Gerlich 212). There is also the small detail of a referendum only being able to take place *after* legislation has already been passed; thus, any general vote would be a "yes" or "no" to keeping the present wording of the law. Referenda do not allow for direct access to the policy process, nor is it generally considered to be in the interest of either those in power or in the opposition to call for a referendum, since this essentially hands the people direct access to the law making process (Pelinka "Out" 43); yet that is exactly what the FPÖ and BZÖ are trying to do[21].

The recent rise of the Austrian far right started back in 1985, when then Austrian Minister of Defense, Friedhelm Frischenschlager officially greeted a repatriated Nazi war criminal. Waldheim, who was the ÖVP presidential candidate at the time, was caught up in the scandal (Rathkolb 86-87). Pelinka notes that the Waldheim affair not only brought out unresolved issues of the past, but it polarized the nation into apologizing for the past ("Out" 194-195). It also facilitated a political shift to the right, which brought about increased support for the FPÖ (Pick 163, Omestad). Those "patriots" or "nationalists" who felt there was no need to apologize for the Waldheim affair left the more moderate ÖVP for the unapologetic FPÖ (Plasser/Ulram 95).

Pelinka has rationalized much of the shift to the right as a natural avour sion in Austria's move to become a "normal" democracy ("Out" 95-96) and has pointed to an overall trend in voter avour r to reject traditional or established institutions and political parties ("Out" 82-83). While this has meant greater flexibility with respect to policy initiatives, it has also made the traditional parties more cautious with respect to promoting unpopular changes.

The irony today is that some voters are pushing for change, while others are quick to chastise elected officials for "too much change", which leads to instability and conflict (Sully Political 440). Neutrality, as noted earlier, has been a symbol of Austrian post-war stability and prosperity, and over the course of generations, has become a popular, if not integral, part of Austrian identity.[22] Tálos/Horvath point out that for the longest time, stability and continuity were prized political conditions and in the past decades, these have changed (22).

Gehmacher/Birk/Ogris suggest that the younger generation is not con-

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[21] So far, only one facultative referendum has been called, which was the 1978 bill regarding the Zwentendorf atomic energy plant (Pelinka "Out" 42) and the last obligatory vote was the 1994 vote to join the EU (Tálos et al 9).

[22] "Postwar generations of school children had it drummed into them that neutrality was an indispensable element in their country's constitution, and a clear majority of Austrians is regularly found to favor the continuance of neutrality when polled on the subject (Lahodynsky)."

strained by the past and feels secure in criticizing the political parties and government. They push for change, especially with respect to the Social Partnership, rather than compromise and consensus (Gehmacher/Birk/Ogris 105). In a 2001 U.S. report on Austria to Congress, it was noted that the tradition of consociationalism and social partnership "…has come under criticism for slowing the pace of economic reforms" (U.S. Dept. of State: "Austria: Key Economic"). Pelinka notes, the general perception among young Austrians is that Austria's political parties are ill equipped to handle the problems and avouquences of globalization ("Out" 35).

A "top-down" policy, in which the public entrusts their leaders to make the right decision is still very much in evidence in Austria; however, implicit or blind trust in leadership and the avoidance of confrontation and conflict in order to maintain, albeit artificially, domestic peace and stability is no longer a hallmark of Austria's political culture. The public is now quick to chastise any party in the next election for making unpopular or misguided policy changes. With the popular perception being firmly for constitutional neutrality, any Austrian government hoping to effect any changes to neutrality will have to proceed cautiously, gradually getting the public used to the notion of living without neutrality.

Speculation as to why Austrians continue to "cling to neutrality" is varied, but most scholars believe it has resulted from the government's re-contextualization of the past coupled with the uncertainty of what membership in the EU will ultimately mean (Unterberger 73, Pelinka "Out" 169). Pelinka believes that most Austrians do not associate neutrality with foreign policy because the decision to join the EU was made by Austria's political elites and they have never made the effort to disassociate identity from neutrality ("Out" 169). Regardless of the reason why Austrians still feel bound to constitutional neutrality, there still seems to be a general attitude among the political leadership in Austria, that the public is incapable of fully understanding the issues surrounding neutrality, due mainly to the spillover into other areas of Austrian policy, including security, defense, immigration, and economic policy.

One of the larger issues to spillover into the neutrality debate since EU membership has been the influx of foreigners from the East and xenophobia. In a 20 September 2001 Krone poll "72 Prozent der Befragten verlangten eine schärfere Beobachtung von zugewanderten Ausländern, 57 Prozent waren dafür, die Einwanderung aus Ländern außerhalb Europas zu beschränken" ("Großer Prozentsatz"). The events of September 11, 2001 in the U.S. only magnified the problem of xenophobia. They did not, however, translate into a decline in popularity for neutrality" ("Großer Prozentsatz").

Still, increased unhappiness with the EU's immigration polies has had a direct impact on Austrian perceptions of unemployment, economic stability, and issues of national security. Eurobarometer polls since the spring of 2003, have

consistently shown the importance of unemployment to Austrians (Eurobarometers 59-63.4) . And, it was probably with great relief that the Austrian government has avoided political unrest like that in France in the wake of the ratification of the EU Constitutional Treaty. At the beginning of the new millennium, the FPÖ, considered a xenophobic, far right, nationalist party, was the second largest party in Austria and their percentage of the national vote went from 5% to 27% within 14 years (Pick 182). Haider had risen to power amidst voter dissatisfaction with the traditional parties and by exploiting unaddressed tensions between EU and national policy. While Austria has other pressure or interest groups, as we shall see, none of them has had the impact on the neutrality debate like Haider and his political party *du jour*.

VI. Pressure Groups

Organized political forces, which include interest group pressure, political mobilization, and avour r of political elites, are often perceived as having significant influence on the agenda, since their very nature is to lobby the government for change; however, their tendency to protect the status quo is often greater than their need to promote any real change (Kingdon 152). As with the policy community, if there is perceived consensus or conflict among the major interest groups, the government will generally conclude a balance of support for an issue and invariably nothing will happen (Kingdon 150). Kingdon also argues, “Once a governmental program is established, the clientele it benefits organizes into an impressive collection of interest groups….” These groups, seeking to protect the program, then “have a greater influence in any future changes the government makes and tend to reject future changes” (152). In the case of Austria, there seems to be a balance between those pushing for repeal and those seeking to maintain constitutional neutrality.

Still there is the fact that organized interests sometimes have perceived representation disproportional to their numbers. As in the case of the “squeaky wheel gets the grease”, the more vocal and persistent a group, the more likely their issues are to be heard above competing ones (Kingdon 150). Of those forces in Austria lobbying for change, perhaps the most vocal has been Jörg Haider backed first by the FPÖ and then by the newly formed BZÖ, which to varying degrees has been a vocal opponent of EU policy and its own coalition partner, the ÖVP.

It is important to reiterate the fact that many of Austria’s political processes for creating policy are “extra-constitutional”, allowing for direct participation in the policy formation process by what would normally be considered “outside” or “informal” groups (Marchart). The uniquely Austrian construct of consociationalism, and residual elements of the social partnership have not only given the unions, chambers, and federations a more direct voice in the political process; but, they have also included the smaller parties represented

in parliament in the decision process. This has blurred the lines between what Kingdon has traditionally defined as participants "inside" and "outside" of government. The informal process of consensus building among all interested parties prior to the more formal process of proposing legislation minimizes the potential for governmental collapse, but it also limits the effectiveness of opposition to introduce change. "Even major interest groups are controlled by the party – as posts are filled by proportion by party members. Traditionally certain chambers have gone to certain parties" (Pelinka "Out" 25-26).

In Austria, the main interest groups *are* still represented by SPÖ and the ÖVP, the traditional milieu of labor and industry.[23] Additionally, there are the three large chamber organizations, the Chamber of Labor, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Chamber of Agriculture as well as several smaller, avour sional organizations (Pelinka "Out" 88). The result of this "all-inclusive" attitude towards building consensus has meant that true democratic forms of opposition have never effectively evolved to challenge the establishment.

"Furthermore, in Austria, public discussion in the media is limited by the fact that not only the Austrian Broadcasting Company (ÖRF) is state-owned (considered a "public responsibility"), but also because the print media landscape consists partly of party newspapers (also subsidized) and independent newspapers that have been partially silenced by government subsidies to the press" (Wicha 358).

While pressure groups and the opposition are given a voice in the decision process, many experts, like Pelinka, do not consider this the true voice of opposition. However, as Pelinka has argued, this has changed.

At present, neutrality is being pushed into the national debate by the FPÖ and BZÖ, who have accused the SPÖ and ÖVP of having already eliminated neutrality when they signed the EU treaty of ascension. The SPÖ, largely represented by Federal President Fischer, as well as the ÖVP, have denied the need for a referendum, arguing that there is no change to neutrality ("Es besteht"). By forcing a referendum on the EU constitutional treaty and thereby, neutrality, the FPÖ and their former party members in the BZÖ could either halt Austria's efforts to further integrate its military resources or worse, force a withdrawal from the EU ("EU-Verfassung: Strache"; "Haider-Taktik"). While such a scenario is unlikely, the decades of Social Partnership between the SPÖ and ÖVP, which were spent avoiding conflict and instability, are resurfacing in both parties' positions on a referendum and by the SPÖ's lack of pursuit in a vote of no-confidence during the coalition crisis in April.

An increasing number of legal experts note the dichotomy between neutral-

[23] The Federation of Austrian Trade Unions (Österreichische Gewerkschafts Bund, ÖGB) and the Association of Austrian Industrialists (Verein der Österreichischen Industrie, VÖI).

ity and the EU's mutual assistance clause, making it mandatory for one nation to come to the assistance of another nation if it is threatened (Schnauder). The phrase, "solidarity with the EU, neutral to the rest of the world" is being used sarcastically to describe the Austrian government's attitude towards neutrality policy. The present debate among experts and scholars seems to be reconciling neutrality with EU obligations, specifically in anticipating possible scenarios in which Austria would be expected to provide military support. Zemanek summarizes the Austrian position regarding neutrality: "Solange die innerstaatliche Rechtslage adaptiert werden kann, ohne das Neutralitätsgesetz formal anzutasten, scheinen die Entscheidungsorgane der Republik zu meinen, dass die Welt Österreich auch völkerrechtlich als dauernd neutralen Staat zu sehen habe – einfach, weil wir es sagen" (Zemanek "wie lange").

Austria's newest party, the BZÖ was founded April 17, 2005 in Salzburg with Jörg Haider as the party chair and immediately set about differentiating itself from its former FPÖ parent party with some well-phrased rhetoric ("BZÖ-Gründungskonvent"). It is well known that Haider has been an outspoken opponent of the two-party system in Austria; but his break with the FPÖ comes at an unusual time. The ensuing political excitement that resulted from the split of the junior coalition partner into the FPÖ and the BZÖ nearly caused the government to collapse, however, the extra-constitutional nature of the parties and formation of coalitions allowed for the BZÖ to step into office without the need for new elections. Essentially, the players remained the same; it was largely a name change. As for the BZÖ's party platform, those political analysts who have been following Haider's rhetoric and "populist" views do not consider the split to have changed either party's true nature.

The division of party funds and Bundesrat mandates led many from the SPÖ and Green party to call for a vote of no confidence in the government in May 2005, declaring the potential ÖVP-BZÖ-FPÖ coalition "arbeitsunfähig" ("Opposition will "Rücktritt""). However, in the interest of domestic peace and stability, Federal President, Heinz Fischer (SPÖ) came out in support of the re-organized government, which included the ÖVP-BZÖ with an agreement from the FPÖ to support the government ("Schüssel & Haider").

The remaining FPÖ members elected Heinz-Christian Strache as party leader. "In der Erläuterung seines Leitantrags zum Parteitag hat Strache einen strammen Kurs in der Zuwandererpolitik vorgegeben: "Der Zuwanderungsstopp ist etwas, das notwendig ist, nichts Böses'" ("FPÖ-Parteitag"). This statement was purportedly followed by the sentiment that, "Diese Europäische Union ist nicht unsere Heimat" ("FPÖ-Parteitag").This anti-immigration, nationalist line comes in the face of yet another EU enlargement in 2007 of Romania and Bulgaria with the possibility of Turkey being admitted and is reiterated in the party's program on their website under "dafür stehen wir" (www.fpoe.at). It was also noted in the April 23, 2005 press archive of the

party's convention that the FPÖ present itself as "die Partei des Österreich-patriotismus" in which neutrality was affirmed as a safeguard for Austrian culture and identity ("Parteitag: Bekenntnis zu Neutralität").

The impact of the FPÖ-BZÖ party split on neutrality has been a sudden change in the coalition government's push to repeal neutrality and promote NATO membership. Even as the BZÖ is attempting to portray itself as a "moderate" or "center" party, openly agreeing with the ÖVP on continued neutrality, no NATO membership and a continued, although cautious, approach to the EU's CFSP, its leaders have been calling for a popular referendum to decide the fate of the EU Constitutional Treaty (Ettinger).

The political upheaval would have meant the ÖVP would have to "circle the wagons" to protect and consolidate what support they could in light of the SPÖ presidential victory in April 25, 2004 (Statistik Austria: Statistisches Jahrbuch 2005 476). Even then, National Council elections are slated for the fall of 2006, shortly after Austria finishes its term as President of the EU[24]. Even the Greens are against the need for a referendum ("Neutralität: BZÖ").

The role of popular initiatives in Austria is growing; however, they are still not seen as a reliable method for promoting one's agenda (Pelinka "Out" 54-55). Popular initiatives require the signatures of 100,000 eligible registered voters in order to make it onto a ballot.[25] However, Haider has been quick to realize referenda as a political tool in promoting his party's agenda.

Referenda, such as the Zwentendorf referendum and the 1994 Hainburg dam (Pelinka "Out" 24), or even the threat of one, such as the present situation with neutrality policy and the FPÖ after ratification of the EU's Constitutional Treaty, can be powerful inhibitors of policy change. Although the EU referendum passed, the general consensus by political observers was that the Austrian government did not entrust the Austrian people with all of the facts before pursuing membership. The threat of a referendum on neutrality, however, has kept the ÖVP from making any serious steps towards the repeal of neutrality.

In the recent past, Haider has frequently pushed neutrality onto the agenda, either by referencing it directly or through debates on security and defense ("FPOe urges referendum"). In 2000, he gave an interview to Time Europe, in which he said, "You have no cold war, no Iron Curtain in Europe and this was the basis for our permanent neutrality. There is no function for neutrality now. But there is a need to develop a cooperative security system for Europe, together with the partners in the Atlantic partnership and that can only be NATO. That's the only organization that really exists" (Leuker/Purvis). He

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[24] Austria assumes the EU presidency at a critical time. Not only will the 2007-2013 budget be on the agenda, but Austria will also be leading the sensitive re-negotiations of the failed Treaty on a Constitution for Europe (Schüssel).

[25] The last successful initiative was in 1969 and prior to that, only two others were passed into law (see fig. 3.2, Pelinka "Out" 55).

continues to be a policy entrepreneur, but his policy stance is unclear. "Haider's positions with respect to the EU have undergone repeated change. Initially a supporter of Austrian membership – because he saw it as a way of moving closer to Germany – he opposed membership during the 1994 referendum campaign to join the EC, he swiftly switched to endorse membership, but turned his guns against enlargement and against participation in the Eurozone" (Pick 185). Because of his rhetoric, some prefer to see Haider as nothing but an opportunist and a populist, capitalizing on national sympathies to gain political advantages (Omestad).

VI. Election Results

Events forming the third component of the political stream occur within government itself and include administrative changes, changes to congress, bureaucratic agencies, and congressional committees (Kingdon 153). It is due, however, in large part to consociationalism that election turnover plays a greater role in elevating neutrality onto the agenda than in other processes. It is during major elections that neutrality becomes a "hot" topic. This would reinforce the belief that neutrality does not rise onto the agenda in response to a problem being recognized; but, because specific political parties or policy entrepreneurs view neutrality as a tool to promote other, related issues onto the agenda, or to garner public sympathy for their cause. Neutrality remains a political tool to manipulate political conditions, in as much as Austrian identity. This can be seen in the political maneuvering of the main political parties since 1995 and recent election results.

During the 1980s, the ÖVP reinvented itself as a pan-European party, whereas the SPÖ chose to focus more on domestic issues (Pelinka "Out" 36). In July of 1997, they took this a step further and adopted a new policy platform on Austrian security, which outlined conditions for full membership in NATO and the WEU. At the time, the ÖVP was the junior coalition partner to the SPÖ. The ÖVP's push to join NATO only reinforced the image of the Grand Coalition (SPÖ/ÖVP) during the late 1990s as unresponsive to or incapable of dealing with the larger issues. At the time, the SPÖ chose to ignore the debate on neutrality in order to preserve the illusion of "social cohesion" (Glauber). "During the electoral campaign in the summer 1999 the (old) coalition partners gained profile through different positions regarding Austria's neutrality: The SPÖ wanted to preserve it as a symbol of Austrian identity as well as an instrument of foreign policy focusing on peace without membership in a military alliance. The ÖVP opted for a policy which should lead Austria into NATO" (Pelinka/Wodak "Introduction" 2). The result was nothing short of a surprise. The SPÖ went into opposition, as the ÖVP formed a minority

coalition with the FPÖ. [26]

In Austria policy can be initiated by either the Federal President, the Federal Government (Ministers led by the Chancellor), and the National Council; however, it is traditionally the prerogative of the Federal Government to set the agenda. It is because of this custom that the Chancellor is perceived as the stronger leader with respect to the Federal President. [27]

With respect to constitutional power, however, it is the Federal President who formally exercises greater power, in that he is directly elected and is presumed to represent the majority opinion. While the Federal President in Austria has historically been above the political fray, there have been instances in the past, where "strong" federal presidents have sought to exert greater authority in creating policy.

Pelinka points out that one of the strongest Austrian presidents was Thomas Klestil (1992-2004; ÖVP), who deviated from many traditions and consolidated his powers by insisting on exercising those powers granted by the constitution and generally renounced by previous presidents (Pelinka "Out" 58-59). Klestil's focus on being a strong president led him to a second term in office and the ability to single-handedly raise the issue of neutrality onto the governmental agenda.

In the late 1990s and early into the second millennium, Klestil repeatedly raised neutrality onto the national agenda, often using speeches given on the occasion of national holidays or interviews to spark debate. Zankel accuses Klestil of having introduced the most recent debate on neutrality in 2001 by suggesting it be repealed. "Es war Klestil, der die Lebenslüge Österreichs aufzeigte…verstieg sich Klestil zum Entsetzen vieler Parteifreunde zur ketzerischen Idee, den Staatsvertrag und damit die Neutralität auf dem "Tabernakel der Geschichte" zu entsorgen" (Zankel). Klestil's position seems have been one of closer EU ties in place of nationalism masquerading as neutrality. In his last address as president on January 1, 2004, he cautioned Austrians not to allow nostalgia for the past [neutrality] cloud judgment on Austria's future within the EU ("Klestil: Abschied"). He added that sometimes one had to do unpopular but necessary things, once again suggesting that repealing neutrality would take courage. Klestil was noted for sparking debates on neutrality, having maintained the People's Party line in an office that was supposed to be "neutral". "Klestil hatte seinerzeit während des Wahlkampfes für seine erste Amtsperiode gemeint, die Neutralität gehöre in den Tabernakel der Geschichte" (Krawagna-Pfeifer). He personally demonstrated this by openly taking

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[26] In a 1999 opinion poll, 68% responded that neutrality had been a campaign issue ("Poll: Majority believe").

[27] The two main elections in Austria are those held for the Federal President and the National Council. Both popular elections mirror the presidential and senatorial elections in the U.S. to some extent, but their divisions of powers are vastly different.

sides on the issue of neutrality and pushing for constitutional repeal during his second term in office.

Early in his presidency, Klestil strongly promoted the EU as an "opportunity" and not an "obligation" in an effort to bring Austria out of the economic and political isolation of the previous decades ("Austria: Leaders"). Pelinka has identified Klestil as one of Austria's strongest presidents based on his ability to build consensus ("Out" 58-59). As such, he would have been able to "soften up" the public while lobbying for support among other participants in the process. However, he died shortly before leaving office in July 2004 ("Austrian Federal President").

In their capacity to address the public and sway public mood, both Thomas Klestil and his successor Heinz Fischer have spoken out on neutrality and each has held a different view on whether or not Austria should continue constitutional neutrality.

In contrast to Klestil, Heinz Fischer, as a member of the SPÖ has until recently been a staunch supporter of constitutional neutrality. Since taking office, however, he has modified his position to allow for stronger EU ties and further integration insofar as it does not require "mandatory" participation in military operations. This is, perhaps, in keeping with a December 2003 interview, in which as president of the National Council, Fischer outlined his position on neutrality, the CFSP, and Austria's military obligations. At the time, he deferred any final decision on neutrality until the EU could produce clearer guidelines for the CFSP and CSDP; and although, he did not rule out an eventual repeal of neutrality, he was still careful to tow SPÖ party lines ("Interview: careful"). Later on, as a candidate for federal president in January 2004, he was quoted in die Presse as saying, "neutrality is not a religion and should not be laid out for the next thousand years" ("Fischer: Neutralität kein 'religiöses Modell'"). Fischer added that neutrality was not compatible with the EU's CFSP and that a referendum should decide the issue ("Fischer: Neutralität kein'religiöses Modell'").

Approximately one year later, after being elected president of the republic, he again reiterated his stance, demonstrating a willingness to compromise on neutrality by suggesting that it should no longer be considered "permanent" (Fischer: Neutralität "nicht immerwährend"). Still during the presidential campaign, Fischer had made neutrality a major campaign issue by presenting himself as a defender of neutrality, and thus national identity, in contrast to ÖVP candidate, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, who had already gone on public record in avour of NATO membership and the abandonment of neutrality during her term as Foreign Minister under Chancellor Schüssel.[28] Despite Fischer's own vague position, he was able to capitalize on the link between neutrality and

[28] See "Die Kandidaten", "Putin: Welt vertraut", "Neutralität kein Selbstzweck".

neutrality and national identity by exploiting Ferrero-Waldner's focus on the external relations over national concerns. The 2004 presidential election did not raise the issue of neutrality as a problem, in so much as it promoted neutrality as a defensive tool against EU domination. The electoral loss of Ferrero-Waldner, as a key policy entrepreneur for the repeal of neutrality during the '04 presidential election; also affected the ÖVP which revised its policy platform as a result. Conversely, the election of Fischer reinforced public commitment to neutrality.

Perhaps the most significant change to the agenda occurred during the 2000 and 2003 elections, where the ÖVP formed a minority coalition with the FPÖ. The shift to the right in Austria in early 2000 not only resulted in diplomatic sanctions by the EU; but also in increased talk of abandoning neutrality in favor of closer EU and NATO ties. Ironically, it is the left parties, the SPÖ and the Greens, who appear "nationalist" by seeking to preserve an "Austrian" identity, by reinforcing the link between neutrality and national identity.

In 2000, Schüssel's choice of coalition partner was a controversial move in large part because the FPÖ was considered by outsiders to be anti-Semitic, anti-immigration, anti-EU, and anti-establishment. Still, the results of the 1999/2000 election could not be ignored. Haider's party had garnered nearly 27% of the popular vote, putting them 415 votes ahead of the ÖVP (Statistik Austria: "Bundespräsidentenwahl vom 25. April 2004"). Despite international outcry and diplomatic sanctions imposed by other EU nations in early 2000, the general consensus at the time was that had President Klestil not approved the coalition, the FPÖ might have gone on to gain even more seats in a follow-up election (Omestad; "Europe, Austria, and Turkey").

The result of the February 28, 2003 election reaffirmed the Schüssel government: "Die Österreichische Volkspartei verlor zwar 130.000 Stimmen, bleibt aber mit der Freiheitlichen Partei (FPÖ) gemessen an den Mandaten im Parlament gleichauf" ("Schüssel muss sich"). This not only seemed to reinforce the government's economic policies, but also its push to focus Austrian attention away from "Heimat Österreich" to "Heimat Europa". The April 2004 presidential election demonstrated that this was not the case.

Heinz Fischer, SPÖ, was elected largely on the platform of continued neutrality against B. Ferrero-Waldner. He broke with the party's practice of not discussing neutrality and pushed it back onto the agenda, after it became apparent that the link between neutrality and national pride could be exploited to his advantage. Waldner had publicly proclaimed neutrality was outdated and Fischer, playing on this, elevated neutrality to greater prominence on the election campaign ("SP-Schlusskundgebung"). When asked by die Presse, how each candidate thought they would spend their time in office: "Ferrero ließ sich sogar hinreißen zu sagen, daß sie 70 Prozent im Ausland sein werde. Fischer sieht seinen Arbeitsauftrag genau das gegenteilig: "90 Prozent der Zeit

muss sich der Bundespräsedent im Inland einsetzen'" (Die Kandidaten: Positionen"). Another issue that may have affected voter avour r was Jörg Haider's public support of Ferrero-Waldner ("Wahlmotive: Neutralität"). While Fischer played the neutrality card, Ferrero-Waldner touted her international experience, in which she perhaps misread the level of xenophobia and distrust of rapid EU integration (Kole). The initial tally showed Fischer with 52.41% of the vote and Ferrero-Waldner with 47.59% ("Austria: April 25, 2004"). Neutrality was symptomatic of a much larger, more pressing issue, that of EU integration (Kole).

What is the importance of Fischer's victory? The final results of the election showed that Fischer received 52.39% of the popular vote, whereas Ferrero-Waldner garnered 47.61% with 71.6% of the population turning out for the vote (BMI Bundespräsidentenwahl). While this is a clear victory, it is not an indication of overwhelming support for neutrality. To some extent, this could be seen as a sign that Austrian's would like to see a balance of powers within the government. It might also be the result of increased fears due to economic change. Whatever the reason, the effect of the 2004 election has been to postpone any further discussions of neutrality.

At present, it can be assumed that the political elite in Austria recognize the limitations of neutrality; however, their ongoing task is still to prepare the public for the possibility of change. While the logistical aspects of a repeal have not been worked out, it is clear that not only would the government need a two-thirds majority in parliament to repeal neutrality, but, also a national referendum (Winkler "Österreich"). Given the present political climate in Austria, the use of referenda or the threat of one as a political tool to keep the other parties in check, could lead to political instability. In analyzing the results of these three problem streams, it will become clear, why neutrality is still necessary.

VI. *Coupling & the Policy Window*

It is difficult to remember that neutrality started out as a policy tool, meant to secure peace in Europe. Many people back in 1955 considered neutrality a means to an end. Neutrality was a response to ongoing allied occupation after WWII, the only viable option to regain independence and sovereignty while retaining territorial integrity. Today, it is still perceived as a "tool", but in very different ways. Now, it is perceived as an "insurance policy" against EU dominance in matters related to national sovereignty, security and defense. It is also still considered a political tool, not only for "re-contextualizing" and maintaining Austrian identity; but, also as a check and balance between the Austrian political parties as they move from a two-party to a multi-party political democracy.

It is clear from my analysis of problem, policy, and process streams that any

push to repeal neutrality is not coming from the EU, but from elements within the Austrian government, and even then, the motives of the FPÖ and BZÖ are suspect, since they have alternated between the positions of repealing neutrality and retaining it. Luif has argued that neutrality is still important in domestic politics, if only as a form of control for nationalist tendencies, especially in the case of Haider during the 1990 call to rebuff the EU and join NATO ("Austria's permanent" 152).

Erich Reiter, a former Austrian Ministry of Defense strategist explained the dichotomy between neutrality and solidarity with the EU: If Austria pursues neutrality over EU expectations, it will be seen as "nationalistic"; yet, if it actively pursues solidarity, neutrality will no longer exist and Austria risks losing face (Neuwirth).

Is there really a problem with constitutional neutrality or is neutrality simply a convenient disguise for some other problem? It would depend on one's perception. While there have been focusing events and crises which have created public awareness of neutrality, there has been little discussion of it being an actual problem. Even given the findings of the Austrian Constitutional Convention, there was a marked lack of consensus on a final draft and ultimately no conclusion was reached. In a sense, the policy and political communities have remained largely untouched by events in the problem stream.

At present, neutrality can only be considered a problem in so far as it is a constraint on the Austrian government's ability to maneuver within the EU. Previously, calls to repeal neutrality have come largely from the Foreign and Defense Ministries where policy formulation is severely limited by constitutional neutrality. Since 2003, however, calls to repeal, or at the very least modify, constitutional neutrality have also come from within Austria's policy community.

January 2001, Defense Minister Herbert Scheibner accused Chancellor Schüssel of unleashing an "unnecessary" debate about neutrality just as the federal government began work on a new Austrian Security and Defense Doctrine (Winkler "Österreich"). The proposed document, which was delivered to parliament in January 2001, noted the conflict between neutrality and the need for a show of solidarity within the EU. It underlined the need for legitimacy for any military action, by requiring a UN mandate before Austrian troops could be sent abroad. The debate on the proposed security and defense doctrine ensured that neutrality would be on the governmental agenda, at least in some form for most of 2001.

On October 26, 2001, on the occasion of the Austrian National Holiday, Schüssel raised neutrality higher on the agenda by reiterating the need for European solidarity without reservation during a televised press hour ("Haider fördert"). At the time, it was well known that Schüssel believed neutrality to be obsolete and had publicly supported Austrian membership in NATO

("Schüssel muss sich"). In a controversial TV address, the Austrian chancellor reiterated the importance of neutrality and its place within the EU. The controversy regarding the televised speech centered on the fact that televised national addresses were traditionally the prerogative of the Federal President, who was supposed to be above party concerns. Schüssel's four-minute speech linked those freedoms gained by the State Treaty with the European Constitution, which called for continued integration within the parameters of neutrality ("Schüssel: Bekenntnis zu Neutralität"). Many Austrians, however, doubted the sincerity of Schüssel's position, given his past record of pro-NATO and anti-neutrality statements ("Putin cool").

The message that Schüssel and the ÖVP have sent while in power has been mixed. On the one hand, they have a long history of pursuing NATO membership at the cost to constitutional neutrality. On the other hand, the ÖVP has evidently found it in their interest to modify their party platform and in 2003, they proposed adherence to neutrality in addition to abandoning the push for NATO membership.

Since assuming office in 2000, Schüssel has publicly modified his position to support continued constitutional neutrality, but still maintains that Austria should not underestimate the need for a show of solidarity. Schüssel's sudden position change may actually have resulted more from his weakened position within the government and the ÖVP's desire to recover lost votes in the 2006 National Council elections, than from any change of heart regarding constitutional neutrality.

Trapped in a minority coalition, Schüssel's government lacks the two-thirds majority vote in parliament to make any amendments to constitutional neutrality. Additionally, he has also been recently handicapped by the May 2005 splintering of the BZÖ from the junior FPÖ coalition partner. Although the government managed to stay in office, the political damage could be avour cant in the upcoming 2006 National Council elections. Even though both the FPÖ and BZÖ agreed to abide by the original coalition agreement, it is proving increasingly harder to maintain the alliance. Just as the ÖVP has resigned itself to continued neutrality within the EU – at least for now – both the former coalition partners, the FPÖ, as well as the current partner, the Bündnis Zukunft Österreich or (BZÖ) under Jörg Haider, have come out in avour of a popular referendum to decide whether Austria should stay neutral or continue its membership within the EU, and thus elevating neutrality onto the agenda just as the ÖVP would see it buried.

Although Schüssel's power to dictate the national agenda is only as strong as the parties within the National Council backing him and the support of any junior coalition partner; he does have the power to capture public interest and create consensus (Pelinka "Out" 60). In the case of Chancellor Schüssel, however, this has not been utilized to any great advantage. In a final assessment of

his chancellorship, it would appear that the limitations of his office have exceeded his ability to promote neutrality as an agenda item. While he has been able to spark debate on the topic, it often appears that he is alone in this pursuit, since the election of Fischer as federal president.

Normally, the vice-chancellor is the highest-ranking party member from the junior coalition party. However, another unwritten political tradition was broken in 2000, when senior ranking FPÖ party member, Jörg Haider, was forced to concede the post to one of his party subordinates. At present, Hubert Gorbach (now BZÖ) serves as Vice-chancellor and has been a key participant in raising neutrality onto the agenda by recently calling for a referendum on neutrality ("Gorbach für Volksabstimmung"). In deviating from the ÖVP-FPÖ agreement, Gorbach has created problems for the ÖVP ("SPÖ: Aussagen"). In calling for a popular referendum to decide the fate of neutrality, the BZÖ appears to be reverting back to its pre-coalition position of forcing Austrians to decide which is more important, national identity symbolized by constitutional neutrality or the loss of sovereignty within a greater European order ("SPÖ: Aussagen"). Statements that neutrality should be legitimized by a popular referendum given the changes to the security environment and Austria's commitments to the EU ring hallow when they are coupled with calls to remain open-minded to possible "modifications": "…angesichts des geänderten internationalen Umfelds avo man sich nicht scheuen, über eine Modifizierung zu diskutieren" ("Gorbach für Volksabstimmung").

While Schüssel and the ÖVP seem to be resigned to the present policy course of continued neutrality that does not seem to be the case with Vice-Chancellor Gorbach and the BZÖ. The present debate on constitutional neutrality within the Austrian government is coming largely from the far-right elements within the federal government. To a large extent, this undermines the validity of neutrality as an actual agenda item. Unfortunately, this tendency to see neutrality as a political tool instead of a policy is also seen in the legislative branch of the Austrian government, where the aspects of party politics and consociationalism still play a significant part in the legislative process.

There is an important duality to Austrian culture that can be exploited by willing politicians. On the one hand, Austria is a federalist state, where the federal government has held tight control over many political processes in order to maintain stability and prosperity. On the other hand, the resurgence of local identities centered around villages or counties (*Gemeinde*) has had a significant effect in recent political events. It is the resurgence of regional identities in Austria that made it possible for Haider to emerge in late 1980s while promoting an agenda of "Austria First" and to become a political force in late 1990s. The very nature in which Haider was able to garner power has suggested a resurgence of nationalism to many outside observers; however, internally, this phenomenon is explained more by lack of voter alternatives at the

federal level than any real resurgence of those forces which led Austria to two world wars.

Haider has been able to capitalize on the threat of outside forces on local communities and regional identities. His rise to prominence from governor of Carinthia to a political force at the national level, yet well outside of the norms established by consociationalism, has reinforced Pelinka's claims throughout Austria: Out of the shadow of the past, that Austria is becoming a "normal" democracy in the sense of other western democracies.

It is perhaps Jörg Haider, who has single-handedly kept the debate on constitutional neutrality open and going, having early on seen its potential as a political tool. He has frequently pushed neutrality onto the agenda, either by referencing it directly or indirectly, by debates on security and defense or the influx of foreigners ("FPOe Urges Referendum"). In his "Austria First" campaign (Pelinka "Out" 55), he promoted the fear that the EU would open borders to foreign workers and immigrants ready to take advantage of Austria's comprehensive social welfare system, thus destabilizing Austria's economy (Leuker/Purvis). Neutrality, in this case, would protect Austria from EU policies that would open Austria's back doors wide open to illegal immigration.

The result of having the FPÖ as a coalition partner since 2000 has meant that in 2003, the ÖVP was obliged to back away from its push for NATO membership and a repeal of neutrality in order to avoid alienating their voter base further. The Austrian government has for the most part managed to keep Haider in check, while addressing the issues that brought the FPÖ to power.

Given the proposed constitutional reforms in Austria, Haider's powers to influence the federal agenda, even as governor of Carinthia, may increase as a result of the very institutions he has attacked. This could be one of the reasons, why the ÖVP has chosen to modify its position with respect to constitutional neutrality. The FPÖ-BZÖ push to have a popular referendum on the EU Constitutional Treaty could seriously threaten domestic peace and stability, much as it has in France, by causing the debate to spill over into other areas, such as immigration, unemployment, and the Turkish application for EU membership.

Right now, it is the ÖVP's willingness to stand firm on constitutional neutrality that is keeping any potential referendum from happening. Traditionally viewed as an anti-neutrality party, the ÖVP now finds itself alongside the SPÖ protecting constitutional neutrality in order to prevent a referendum on the EU constitution. This would ensure domestic peace and stability at the cost of political maneuverability on the international scene. Many experts would argue that the purpose of neutrality has come full circle: to keep domestic conflict from spilling over into the international arena.

The two reasons for why neutrality law has not yet been repealed are because parliament lacks the two-thirds majority needed to pass any measure ("Die Neutralität existiert") and because public mood is still overwhelming for

continued neutrality. Phinnemore noted that in addition to public opinion being overwhelmingly in avour of continued neutrality, an appropriate replacement of neutrality law has not been found (369). If neutrality were to be repealed, what foreign policy would the Austrian government replace it with; after all, the EU's policies have not been sufficiently defined. But perhaps the biggest reason why neutrality has not been repealed is that it has not adequately been identified as the problem.

The final determination of the Austrian Convention was that it was not within the scope of power of the convention to delete, or, in any significant way, alter constitutional neutrality (Öhlinger). Legitimacy for such an act should remain either with Parliament or with the public through a referendum. Even then, the issue of what exactly Austrians would be voting on is up for debate.

VI. Summary & Conclusion

The complex historical environment, in which constitutional law and policy were established, has at times made it difficult for outsiders to the policy process to understand what forces are really affecting neutrality. While many of the Cold War constraints on neutrality disappeared with the fall of the Soviet Union, new ones have evolved to replace them. There is no discounting the fact that neutrality was originally considered a foreign policy tool, designed to minimize Austrian participation in future conflicts; however, it quickly evolved into much more.

By 1956, it was an integral part of Austrian security and defense policy, as well as an instrument for constructing a uniquely Austrian identity removed from a "Germanic" one. In addition to having restored independence and national sovereignty, neutrality also secured domestic stability in the form of Consociational Democracy. In the hands of Austria's determined leadership, elements of consociationalism were adapted to form the Social Partnership, Corporatism, and *Proporz*, which created a unique form of "domestic neutrality", where conflict was to be avoided at all cost.

It was not until Chancellor Kreisky that a golden era for neutrality was created. Under Kreisky, the limits of neutrality were "re-contextualized" into the positive images of a "*Brückefunktion*", an "Austrian Way" or "Third Way", and an "*Insel der Seligen*". Even though Kreisky could not claim all of the credit for establishing neutrality as a part of Austrian national identity, he did go a long way to promote these images abroad, and restore a sense of pride in what it meant to be Austrian.

The carefully constructed images that had come to represent Kreisky's Austria were soon shattered as the effects of globalization began to encroach on the small, alpine nation. Austria's policy community set about once again to "re-contextualize" neutrality and the policy environment to permit member-

ship in the European Union, a move that before 1989 would have been difficult at best, if not outright impossible. However, as Lantis/Queen have demonstrated, with the use of their "Double-edge diplomacy model", all of the conditions were right for change at both the national and EU levels

At the time Austria joined the European Union, on January 1, 1995, many policy experts believed that the Austrian government had not only relinquished total control over foreign policy, but that Austria was now committed to a military alliance (CFSP) that was in direct violation of constitutional neutrality. However, Austria was able to resolve this conflict on three fronts, first by forming a neutral bloc within the EU, then, by arguing for concessions, with respect to the Helsinki Headline Goal and the Mutual Assistance Clause, and, finally, Austria was able to "re-contextualize" its own policy environment to permit slight changes to its own laws. Art. 23f was added in anticipation of joint EU actions under a UN mandate.

While any debate on Austrian foreign or security and defense policy inevitably included discussions on neutrality, continued neutrality was never up for a repeal – that is until 2005. In 2003, the Austrian government, which had already gone on record with the intent to see Austria join NATO and repeal neutrality, announced the formation of a constitutional convention to "revise and renew" the confusingly complex constitution from 1921. It seemed that conditions might be right for a window of opportunity.

However, as Kingdon's model has demonstrated, not only did a policy window fail to open, there was never any danger that one would. Constitutional neutrality has never been defined as a policy problem, although other, related areas, such as security and defense have. Although problems from security and defense have spilled over into the area of neutrality policy, neutrality law remains simply a condition. Where focusing events have been able to elevate it into the debate, neutrality, itself, has never come up for a formal decision. Even assuming there was a problem with neutrality, the policy community has been unable to suggest viable policy alternatives to neutrality. European policies simply have not evolved sufficiently to replace national ones. Instead, the policy community has proposed slight modifications to the offending clauses and left a final decision for the Federal Government.

It is perhaps in the political stream, however, that we see the greatest indication that neutrality has not really been on the agenda. The ÖVP, long believed to be neutrality's biggest opponent, changed its positions on NATO membership and neutrality shortly after the 2004 elections. While it would be easy to link this platform change to the need to reach votes for the upcoming 2006 elections, this has been proven to be an oversimplification of what is really happening. In addition to the 2006 National Council elections, the ÖVP has also had to protect the status of the EU Constitutional Treaty.

Trapped in a minority coalition with the newly formed BZÖ, Schüssel has

had very little power to accomplish realistic objectives, let alone pursue the repeal of neutrality. The result of having the FPÖ and BZÖ as coalition partners since 2000 has meant that in 2004, the ÖVP was obliged to back away from its push for NATO membership and a repeal of neutrality in order to avoid alienating their voter base further.

Most importantly, however, neutrality has once again become a tool for the government to maintain domestic and political stability. As the FPÖ and BZÖ have continued to push for a referendum on the EU Constitutional Treaty, they have set up an "either" "or" situation, where in calling for a popular vote on the EU treaty, they are once again raising the issue of national sovereignty in the face of EU domination.

In conclusion, a window of opportunity could not have opened in 2005, since a problem with neutrality was never identified, no policy alternatives to neutrality exist and within the political stream, conditions were not receptive to change. Not only can it be said that national mood is against any change to constitutional neutrality; but, the main parties within the government were also against changes, since it would open up a level of political instability that has not been seen since before 1945.

In effect, neutrality still retains the original purpose for which it was adopted – that of maintaining domestic stability, especially as Austria transitions from a two-party, consociational democracy to a true, Western-European, multi-party democracy. In this respect, neutrality has been an important and necessary tool for the political parties in controlling nationalist elements that might otherwise have caused greater conflict.

Austria's leadership has tended to view neutrality as a policy tool to be used or discarded as needed; whereas, the public has come to view neutrality as a way of life – a part of a unifying national identity (Pelinka "Austria's Future" 78). This dissonance between public and governmental perceptions of neutrality has meant inaction. Reconciling the conflicting articles of the Austrian constitution is easier than convincing the Austrian people that their future does not require neutrality. It is also easier than allowing the system of consociationalism to collapse, when there is still the possibility that nationalist, far-right elements could cause social unrest and even political instability. The fear of revisiting the past is still greater than the limits of neutrality.

While there is no guarantee that the EU will eventually require Austria to formally abandon neutrality, the possibility always exists. Navigating the nuances between "military" and "non-military" operations may prove tricky in the future; but therein lies Austria's greatest strength – the ability to exhaust every possible option and negotiate with patience and persistence.

Artificial political structures, which were designed to insure democracy after World War II may no be longer required to modernize Austria (Pelinka, "Out" 15). However, neutrality and its domestic equivalent, consociationalism,

are still required to maintain political stability, if only for a while longer.

In the final analysis, Kingdon's model of agenda setting has demonstrated that Austrian neutrality was never in immediate danger of repeal and that it is probably quite safe to assume that a repeal of constitutional neutrality will not happen in the foreseeable future. At least, until the EU policy has achieved a level of legitimacy equivalent to neutrality.

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