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The German Leadership Philosophy in the Information Age

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Abstract:

The concept *"Innere Führung"* is the organizational culture of the *"Bundeswehr"* [German Armed Forces]*,* which incorporates a leadership philosophy. In light of today's evolving western militaries one must ask, whether this leadership philosophy is still a suitable concept for the "*Bundeswehr"* in today's Information Age. This paper argues that although "*Innere Führung*" has its origins in the early 1950's, it remains a relevant and an effective leadership philosophy.

In order to determine the requirements for "*Innere Führung*", the post World War Two environment is examined. Political and social aspects related to the rearmament of West Germany are outlined, in a necessary effort to understand the German psyche. A detailed description of "*Innere Führung*" assists in analyzing this complex concept. Influences from German society, evolving information technology in the "*Bundeswehr"* and the leadership process are examined. Finally, this essay concludes that the leadership requirements of today can be met by continuing to operate in accordance with the philosophy of the "*Innere Führung*".

Adapting to and adopting changes of the modern era, allows organizations and societies to cope with evolutionary change. A major influence on a society has always led to a restructure of all parts of that society, including the military.[1] At the onset of the 21st Century, western industrial-societies changed very quickly and developed into information societies.[2] In these societies, information became an important and decisive production factor.[3] Additionally, in western armed forces, information already has become another operational factor, next to time, forces and area.[4] Thus information and information technology has significantly influenced western militaries including their organizational cultures. Evidence for this is found in the recent conduct of military operations such as the First Gulf War, the Kosovo Conflict or the recent Operation "Iraqi Freedom", as well as in daily peacetime working routine.[5]

The concept of the "*Innere Führung*" [inner leading] is considered to be the mental blueprint and organization culture of the German Armed Forces, since its founding after the Second World War.[6] Embedded into this overriding concept is a leadership philosophy, as the concept name "*Innere Führung*" already suggests.[7] In the context of change and its influence to society and also the military, the question is apparent as to whether this mental foundation is still a suitable concept for the German

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[1] Bernhardt, G.: *Kamerad Computer-Herausforderungen für Ausbilder und Führer im Informations-zeitalter II*, Truppenpraxis/Wehrausbildung 1, 1994, page 53.
[2] Probst, G.: *Organisationales Lernen*, Wiesbaden, 1998, page V.
[3] Herzog, R.: *Erziehung im Informationszeitalter*, Speech of the German Bundespräsidenten in Paderborn at the 09.06.1998, Media Centre of the German Federal Government, Bulletin No. 43, page 565.
[4] Prayon, H.: *Herausforderung Kommunikation-Bundeswehr und Informationsgesellschaft*, IFDT 9/95, page 44 and following.
[5] Sloan, E. C.: *The Revolution in Military Affairs*, McGill-Queen's Univ. Press, Montreal, 2002, page 19.
[6] Unknown/Editorial, *Innere Führung-eine Bestandsaufnahme*, Reader Sicherheitspolitik, Ergänzungslieferung 2/2001, page 9.
[7] Federal German Ministry of Defence, *Innere Führung-soldiers in a democracy*, Bonn, 1999.

Armed Forces. This paper will argue for the following thesis; although "*Innere Führung*" has its origins in the early 1950's, it remains a relevant and an effective leadership philosophy for German Armed Forces today in the Information Age.

To understand why the "*Innere Führung*" remains a relevant and effective philosophy, it is necessary to examine several related issues. First, the environment in Germany and Western Europe, post World War Two, has to be addressed, to determine the impact and requirements for a concept like the "*Innere Führung*". This will include political, social as well as military aspects related to the rearmament of West Germany following World War Two, in an effort to understand the German psyche. A detailed description of "*Innere Führung*" as well as its roots will assist in outlining this complex concept. Further, important changes in Western Europe and Germany, with an impact on the German Armed Forces, and subsequently, on the "*Innere Führung*", lead the way towards the Information Age. The major influences out of the German information society require examination, followed by a determination on the impact of the evolving information technology on the German Armed Forces. Finally, the process of leading needs to be explored for the examination of the relevance and effectiveness of the "*Innere Führung*" in meeting the challenges today. It will be concluded that the leadership requirements of today can be met by continuing to operate in accordance with the philosophy of the "*Innere Führung*".

In the early 1950's Europe was separated into East and West. The Soviet Union had a massive conventional force in Eastern Europe, many times stronger than the western conventional Forces. In Western Europe, the fear of Soviet aggression grew

after the impression of a communist ambush against South Korea and the blockade of West Berlin (1948) took place.[8] This introduced a substantial fear of war with the Soviet Union to the Western European Countries and into Western German society. In addition, most Germans were still living with the images and realities of the Second World War. Germans learned about the horrible crimes against humanity conducted by the Nazi regime in their name and many German soldiers were still held as prisoners of war in the Soviet Union.[9] Throughout all elements of German society, a strong opinion against war was present. Slogans such as "no more war from German ground", and, "without me", opposed any effort to rearm Germany, either from the outside or inside of Germany.[10] Barely ten years after the Second World War, which had been characterized for Germans by demilitarization, re-education, and occupation-time, the Germans and most of their European neighbors opposed a new militarism in Germany.[11] In fact, in May 1955, prior to German partial sovereignty,[12] the majority of Germans opposed rearmament.[13] First German Chancellor, Dr. Konrad Adenauer, favored German rearmament in order to reintegrate West Germany into West Europe; he received vital support from both the United States and the United Kingdom. The first attempt was unsuccessful with the failure of the European Defence Union (EDU), but Adenauer's initiative became

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[8] Heinemann, W.: *50 Jahre Himmeroder Denkschrift – "Magna Chrem Cscher Denemhr583.85998 0.3 Tfact B14 BDC B6TT0 1 T*

successful in 1955 with the integration of western German Armed Forces into the 1948/49-formed NATO. [14] This plan became both successful and acceptable for German society and Germany's European neighbours.[15] Parallel to this foreign political development, the hour of a German, "*Staatsbürger in Uniform*"[16] [citizen in uniform], derived from the basic thoughts of the concept of the "*Innere Führung*", had come. The development of the "*Innere Führung*" as the mental foundation of the "*Bundeswehr*" needs to be examined in more detail, however the outlined political awareness of the German public must be kept in mind.

The concept of the "*Innere Führung*" originated in 1950; one year after the Federal Republic of Germany promulgated a new constitution known as the Basic Law. The Basic Law was a direct result of the recent German history as well as an answer to it.[17] With the new German constitution, new norms and values were introduced to Germany. These norms and values put man as an individual, at the center of all state activity. Article 1 [protection of human dignity] Para. (1) expresses this in the prescript: "*The dignity of man is inviolable. To protect it shall be the duty of all public authority.*"[18] Further the constitution did neither consider nor rule out a German Armed Force. In 1950 Chancellor Adenauer saw the chance to gain more sovereignty by giving an armed contribution to the defence of Western Europe from Germany.[19] As a result, a group of experts met in Himmerod, an old monastery, on the Adenauer initiative. The meeting was highly

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[14] Ibid, page 11.

[15] Heinemann, W.: ibid.

[16] Note: The [citizen in uniform] is the role model that idealizes the expectations, duties and responsibilities of a German soldier.

[17] German Ministry of Defence, *"Innere Führung" – soldiers in a democracy*, Bonn 02/1999.

[18] Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany. Article 1, Para 1.

[19] Heinemann, W.: ibid. Note: [Inner cohesion] was the working title for the concept, which summarised the main thoughts of the "*Himmeroder Denkschrift*".

politically charged and therefore was to be kept secret, because any military related activity was still under penalty by law.[20] This meant all participants, including the hosting monks, could possibly have been imprisoned. Its participants were general staff officers from the former "*Wehrmacht*" who were associated with the German resistance movement.[21] The meeting started with a general overview by Herbert Blankenhorn, the closest advisor to Adenauer, on the general security-political situation. Blankenhorn made it clear, that due to the overall political environment and of course recent German history, any new Western German Military could not follow the traditions and forms of the former "*Wehrmacht*", but had to reflect necessary military values like the "*Auftragstaktik*" [task-oriented leading].[22] The new Western German Armed Forces had to be an efficient organization and at the same time had to reflect the new political, democratic start of Western Germany. Only this way could ensure the acceptance to all parts of society and the European neighbours.[23]

The result of this meeting was the so-called "*Himmeroder Denkschrift*", which was classified. This document touched several aspects related to new Western German Armed Forces, including strengths, organization, and most important the mental foundation named, *"Inneres Gefüge"*[24] [inner cohesion]. The conceptional thoughts of the *"Inneres Gefüge"* laid the base for the conscript system, which still ensures a constant integration of the German Armed Forces into society.[25] These conscripts continue to influence the German Armed Forces today by requiring professional soldiers to reflect upon them, their

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[20] Ibid.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Diefenbach, K.: ibid, page 10.
[24] Heinemann, W.: ibid.
[25] Ehlert, H.: *Die Entscheidung für die Wehrpflicht*, in *Legitimation soldatischen Dienens* – Schriftenreihe Innere Führung, German Ministry of Defence, Bonn, 1987, page 26.

beliefs and attitudes. Most importantly, the conceptional thoughts of the *"Inneres Gefüge"*

formed the base for "*Innere Führung*" as it exists today.[26] *"Inneres Gefüge"* outlined that

the new German soldier had to be, "a soldier for peace".[27] Derived from this, the mission

of the "*Bundeswehr*" is and was defensive.[28] This is based on the political and moral

responsibility of Germany and expressed in Article 26 [prohibition of an offensive war] of

the Basic Law that prohibits any action, which would disturb the peaceful living of people.

In 1951, the conceptional phase of the *"Bundeswehr"* started as Major (Retired) Graf von

Baudissin was appointed in the, "*Amt Blank*"[29], as head of the development of the *"Inneres*

Gefüge" for the upcoming Western German Forces.[30] The outcome of Baudissin's work

was the concept of the "*Innere Führung*". The overall components and action areas of the

"*Innere Führung*" are outlined in Annex A (attached). Being a mirror of German social,

military and ethical values, this concept needs to be described in further detail, with a focus

on the leadership philosophy integrated.

The concept was first documented in the Handbook for the "*Innere Führung*" from

1957. In 1972, the "*Zentrale Dienstvorschrift*" (ZDv 10/1), a standing order document

called "*Hilfen für die Innere Führung*", updated the original version. The newest version

of the ZDv 10/1 named "*Innere Führung*" from 1993 marks the third edition of the concept

in its history.[31] Focusing back, the challenge faced by the planners of the West German

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[26] Heinemann, W.: ibid.
[27] Diefenbach, K.: ibid, page 10.
[28] German Ministry of Defence, *"Innere Führung" – soldiers in a democracy*, Bonn 02/1999.
[29] The "*Amt Blank*" was the federal security department, which was headed by Theodor Blank, a former Christian democratic union leader and now a member of the German Bundestag. The department's task was to develop the basic concept for German Armed Forces/Federal Police units ("*Bundesgrenzschutz*").
[30] Diefenbach, K.: ibid, page 12.
[31] Zentrum Innere Führung, *Konzeption der Inneren Führung*, www.zentruminnerefuehrung.de/Innere Fuehrung/konzeption.htm, accessed 23.03.2003.

Armed forces, was tying indispensable principles of any armed forces such as hierarchy, orders and obedience to the liberal idea of man, laid down in the new German constitution.[32] Therefore the planner set the following purpose for the "*Innere Führung*":

> "*to make the system of values and norms of the Basic Law binding for leadership, education, training and personal development in the Bundeswehr. The soldier is to understand his rights as being derived directly from the guarantee of human dignity in the Basic Law.*"[33]

The original concept as well as the revised editions, has a central role model; A free, weapon-carrying citizen, who sees his duty as part of his political responsibility.[34] This raw model being the "brand mark" of the German forces is called "Citizen in Uniform".[35] The "Citizen in Uniform" acknowledges that his basic rights, guaranteed by the basic law, stay valid, and can only be restricted by the duties defined in the Legal Status of Military Personnel Act by the German Bundestag.[36] Therefore, unlike in other states, a soldier of the "*Bundeswehr*" plays an active role in social, public and political life.[37] Also, the concept of the "*Innere Führung*", ties the soldiers equal of his rank to the principles, norms and values of the Basic Law. The "Citizen in Uniform" should be convinced and aware of his personal responsibility for the safety and for the advancement of the German common good and norm system, even if this means the ultimate sacrifice.[38] Further, "*Innere Führung*" means that soldiers must submit to the will of elected politicians.[39]

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[32] German Ministry of Defence, *"Innere Führung" – soldiers in a democracy*, Bonn 02/1999.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Diefenbach, K.: ibid, page 13 and 14.
[35] Position paper of the "*Gemeinschaft Katholischer Soldaten*" [catholic soldier society],in: Auftrag 244, 41/2001 page 40.
[36] German Ministry of Defence, *"Innere Führung" – soldiers in a democracy*, ibid.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Ibid.

Out of "*Innere Führung*" there are four basic objectives derived: legitimization, integration, co-responsibility together with motivation, and internal order.[40] All four cannot be seen or achieved independently, because they are tied to each other by internal links.[41] Legitimization aims to provide a sense for military duties, for the primacy of the politics and give explanations for understanding the military mission.[42] Integration aims to promote ties to society, the socio-political environment and existing alliances. Co-responsibility and motivation aims to enhance the willingness of each soldier to carry out duties.[43] Co-responsibility is fundamental in the concept. According the ZDV 10/1 Para. 202, a military leader is also responsible for all actions taking place in his respective area of influence.[44] Delegation does not mean a lack of responsibility. Tasks can be delegated but the responsibility is non shareable. Further, the internal order regulates interaction of personnel in the Armed Forces with the emphasis on personal responsibility. Actions should be in accordance with the principles of the German Basic Law, i.e. constitutional, respect the dignity of man, be task-oriented to reflect the fundamental perception of humans as free citizens, and be effective and flexible in manner.[45] The application of these outlined objectives serves two purposes: maintenance of the functional capability and operational readiness of the armed forces as well as implementing the central role model as the prerequisite of personal readiness.[46] Both applications serve the same purpose for different sides.[47] Overall this means that…

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[40] Ibid.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Führungsakademie der Bundeswehr, Fachbereich Sicherheitspolitik und Strategie, *Reader Sicherheitspolitik für den Stabsoffiziergrundlehrgang*, Edition 2002, page.8.
[43] German Ministry of Defence, *"Innere Führung" – soldiers in a democracy*, ibid.
[44] German Ministry of Defence, ZDV 10/1 [central duty regulation No. 10/1], Para. 202.
[45] Ibid, Para. 201.
[46] German Ministry of Defence, *"Innere Führung" – soldiers in a democracy*, ibid.
[47] Ibid.

> *"...the success of a mission depends on the willingness of a soldier to play his full part. It is thus necessary that the purpose of a mission is explained to him. If he fails to understand why and what purpose he should act and even place his life on the line, he will be unable to produce the military efficiency expected of him."[48]*

The concept of the "*Innere Führung*" therefore calls for a leader, who is capable of mastering both sides: the human and the operational.[49] Annex B (attached), visualizes the way from a given task via the leadership process, supported by the "*Innere Führung*", to a humanely, professional and legal task fulfillment. In that process, eight guidelines of the "*Innere Führung*" reflect the values and norms of the German Basic Law.[50] The eight guidelines give soldiers the main orientation and guidance about the parameters of their own actions as elements of modern leadership:[51]

- First, soldiers are to have a positive attitude towards other human beings as the center of German values.
- Second, a leader must convey an understanding of necessary actions.
- Third, a leader should create a climate of trust.
- Fourth, a leader should create motivation through participation and integration.
- Fifth, enhance cooperation with teamwork.
- Sixth, a leader should enhance cohesion.
- Seventh, leading should be, whenever possible, task-oriented and;
- Lastly, a leader should always explain the rationale and value of his orders.

These principles and guidelines form the basis of the leadership philosophy and reflect the organizational culture of the "*Bundeswehr*". They aim to convert German soldiers into a "citizen in uniform" and they express the German understanding of leadership competence.[52] Leadership competence consists of four sub competences: Value and

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[48] Ibid.
[49] German Ministry of Defence, ZDV 10/1 [central duty regulation No. 10/1], Para. 201, 204, 205, 206, 207, 210, and 302.
[50] Zentrum Innere Führung, *Unterrichtshilfen "Innere Führung" Foliensatz*, 3/2002, slide 732.
[51] Ibid, slide 602.
[52] Ibid, slide 733.

regulation competence, social competence, professional competence and methodical competence.[53] All four serve the overall task fulfillment as demanded by the "*Innere Führung*". Further details outline the connection of leadership competence and "*Innere Führung"* are provided at Annex C (attached). Having examined the concept of "*Innere Führung*" a brief look at the major events in Germany and Europe since the 1950's will now lead into the Information Age. This will specify the main influences from the society onto the German Armed Forces as summarized in Annex D (attached).

Western European history from the 1950's on, was influenced by the Cold War, from the building of, and until the fall of, the Berlin Wall in 1989. The main influences on the „*Bundeswehr"* and its mental foundation, resulted in public discussions about the nuclear arms race and the associated treaties[54] between the West and East, as well as the continual discussion regarding the conscript system in Germany.[55] Here the "*Innere Führung*" served and still serves as a guideline for explaining and discussing the need and the legitimacy of serving as a professional or conscript.[56] The fall of the Soviet Union resulted in German reunification in 1990 and added new challenges to the German Armed Forces. The first challenge was, the integration of former Eastern German "*Volksarmee*" soldiers into the "*Bundeswehr*". Secondly, there was a required and necessary reduction in strength and restructuring according the 2+4 Treaty[57]. The third

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[53] Ibid.
[54] Examples are the SALT I, SALT II, ABM treaty and, the double track decision.
[55] de Maiziere, U.: *Kann ein Christ heute noch Soldat sein?*, in *Legitimation soldatischen Dienens* – Schriftenreihe Innere Führung, German Ministry of Defence, Bonn, 1987, page 128 and following.
[56] Ruge, F.: *Voraussetzungen einer wirksamen Verteidigung*, in *Legitimation soldatischen Dienens* – Schriftenreihe Innere Führung, German Ministry of Defence, Bonn, 1987, page 91, and de Maiziere, U.: *Armee im demokratische Staat*, ibid, page 100.
[57] Treaty between the USA, UK, France Soviet Union and the two German states which regulates German unification and gave Germany its full sovereignty. (See also page 3 note 12).

challenge was the integration of differently socialized conscripts from the parts of the

former German Democratic Republic of Germany. Lastly the integration of women into

all units including combat units of the "*Bundeswehr*", according to the European Court of

Justice, also influenced the German Forces.[58] In all cases, the concept and its guidelines

of the "*Innere Führung*" could give guidance and help to the organization members, be it

soldiers or civilian employees. The call for a positive attitude towards others reduced

prejudice against eastern conscripts and women in combat units and the climate of trust

based on the principles of participation, enhanced cohesion and motivation in units. But

notably and most importantly, one basic principle of the German Leadership philosophy,

the call for adapting to change, proved to be suitable in the practical application of the

"*Innere Führung*".

> *"The Innere Führung is nothing static, because its prerequisites are oriented on the constant change. It is dynamic, always in evolution, not with revolutionary steps, but in constant development."[59]*

This quotation of General de Maiziere illustrates the potential ability of adaptation to

constant and accelerating change. This is also true in the case of continuous reforms and

the direct impact on units, soldiers, and their families. The "*Innere Führung*" ensures

that all superiors to consider all personal circumstances in decisions about personal

development.[60] Out of a strong social competence provided by the "*Innere Führung*", a

balance between political and military necessity on one side and the rights of soldiers and

their families on the other, needs to be found. Here, the integration into society and the

idea of a "citizen in uniform" helps to make difficult decisions easier and, enhances

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[58] German Ministry of Defence, *The Bundeswehr in 2002-the current situation and perspective*, Bonn, page 55.
[59] de Maiziere, U.: quoted in: *Innere Führung im Meinungsstreit*, Rümmer, H.O., Koblemz 1984, page 7.
[60] German Ministry of Defence, ZDV 10/1 [central duty regulation No. 10/1], Para. 333-339.

understanding on both sides. The same understanding and care became important in a new mission spectrum of the German Armed Forces post 1990.

After the German reunification, the most significant development for the "*Bundeswehr*" was the decision of the German Constitutional Court about the legality of out of area missions for German soldiers. The decision of the Court on 12 July 1994 verified that German soldiers could serve outside of Germany and NATO-territory in other than humanitarian missions.[61] Since the decision of the constitutional court, German soldiers have served in multiple missions with the UN and NATO. Today, German soldiers form the second largest contingent, with approximately 10,000 soldiers, in these kinds of missions.[62] The security environment in the world today inflicted a priority shift for the German Armed Forces missions. Currently, participation in crisis management and conflict prevention has the same priority today, as does collective homeland defence.[63] Together with a tied, yearly financial budget, the new mission spectrum and the international obligations from the reunification treaties initiated a reform process. This process is still ongoing and the "*Innere Führung*", is most likely to ensure adaptation of the organization, as expressed by the current Minister of Defence, Dr. Peter Struck in a speech at the "*Führungsakademie*" at the 27 August 2002.

> *"The concept of the "Innere Führung" stays the mental foundation of the "Bundeswehr". We will further develop this concept in accordance with the norms of the Basic Law, to ensure an adaptation to the challenges of Armed Forces commitments."[64]*

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[61] Führungsakademie der Bundeswehr, Fachbereich Sicherheitspolitik und Strategie, <u>Reader Sicherheitspolitik für den Stabsoffiziergrundlehrgang</u>, Edition 2002, page 26 and following.
[62] German Ministry of Defence, <u>The Bundeswehr in 2002-the current situation and perspective</u>, Bonn, page 3.
[63] Ibid, page 6.
[64] Translated by the author from: Speech of the German Minister of Defence, Dr. P. Struck, at the Führungsakademie Hamburg Germany, 27 August 2002.

The "*Innere Führung*" provides suitable guidelines with its proactive approach to human beings and its basic strength through its provided competence. It cannot solve all problems in advance, but the concept can give guidance to all soldiers. All German soldiers can rely on the concept, because it transports manifested German values and guidelines to a theatre of operations. The incorporated links of the "*Innere Führung*" to military chaplains and political education give soldiers a good preparation, mentally and professionally. The concept aims towards social competence as well as professional competence, which are the two aspects of leadership. From this, a non-prejudicial approach towards other cultures is possible and can provide positive inputs for the success of missions in the new mission spectrum. In these new missions, interoperability with coalition and partner forces is vital.[65] However, personal interaction with other nation's soldiers and the people living in a crisis region is only one side. One must consider the technological aspect, which leads directly to the involved information technology. German Defence Minister Struck identified information technology as another challenge for the "*Innere Führung*". Struck sees a direct impact on a practical aspect of military leadership by the new technologies. It is the necessary implementation of participation rights in the decision-making process, derived from the principles of the "*Innere Führung*".[66] This and other challenges for modern armed forces that coincide with Information Technology are now subject of the further analysis.

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[65] German Ministry of Defence, *The Bundeswehr in 2002-the current situation and perspective*, Bonn, page 53.
[66] Ibid.

In the western societies, people live with an information overflow and multiple ways of transferring and presenting any kind of data based on information technology.[67] From now on the fight for information in cyberspace supplements the fight for water, natural resources and oil.[68] Today, information already has an exposed position, because information management is an important factor of our time. The generation, gathering and analysis of information is the central point in collective crisis recognition and prevention, as well as in the conduct of all military operations.[69] This is a direct reflection of the rapidly changing security environment in the Information Age and outlines the increasing dependency of information societies from information and communication systems on one hand, and the vulnerability of these systems on the other.[70]

Communication in the Information Age has become more and more depersonalised. The use of Internet, chat-rooms, e-mail, fax and cell-phones is replacing personal face-to-face communication and interaction. Communication in general has become more 'matter of fact' as opposed to personal.[71] This is a major vulnerability, because trust, the basic factor of reliability is becoming more and remote from the centre of communication.[72] Further the increase of technology challenges the principles of authority and personality, orders and complying, the chain of command and team spirit.

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[67] Probst, G., Büchel, B.: *Organisationales Lernen*, Wiesbaden, 1998, page V.
[68] Buchholz, D.: *Total Digital-Herausforderungen an die Informationsgesellschaft*, IFDT 12/96, page 26 and following.
[69] Ungerer, D.: *Information als Mittel zur Stabilisierung und Destabilisierung von Führungsprozessen*, Speech at the Zentrum für Innere Führung, 06.03.1991.
[70] Habermeyer, H.: *Information Warfare, die neue Dimension*, Austrian Military Journal, 5/98, page560.
[71] Grote, G.: *Auswirkungen elektronischer Kommunikation auf Führungsprozesse*, Zeitschrift für Arbeits- und Organisationspsychologie, 2/92, page 73.
[72] Ibid.

On the other hand the principles of order and compliance still have a major impact, because cooperation alone is not suitable for handling the extraordinary situation of military conflict. Orders and the un-reflected compliance to them, will fail to handle the different and most cognitive challenges derived from the technical environment.[73] The "*Innere Führung*" supports German leaders in the leadership process with its principles and guidelines derived from its objectives. These principles and guidelines call for leading task oriented when possible; they manifest responsibilities and, vitally call for a climate of trust. This can oppose the loss of trust in the communications process of the Information Age because trust can create the necessary conveyance and understanding of an order or task/mission.

From this basis, one can deduce that a military leader in the information age must have a strong social, professional, and methodical competence in order to face society as a member of the public, in uniform, and cope with communication challenges.[74] This is one of the basics of the "*Innere Führung*". Leading, based on the principles of task orientation, with a strong leading competence, backed by all other sub-competences, is the necessary base to create the required trust in daily routines. This enables leaders to lead with orders in extraordinary situations, where there is no time available to do otherwise.

The German Armed Forces understand leading as a process, where information is the central factor and information management influences success or failure

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[73] von Breow, W.: *Befehl und Gehorsam*, in : Bundeswehr und Gesellschaft, Edited by Zoll, R., Lippert, E., Roessler, T., Opladen, 19777, page 51.
[74] Pust, C.: *Führung im Informationszeitalter-Anforderungen und den Marineoffizier unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Führungsprozesses*, Truppenpraxis/Wehrausbildung, 7/2000, page 35.

significantly.[75] The success of leading in a rational way depends heavily on the leader's

ability to handle the available information within the four phases of the leadership

process. Annex E (attached) illustrate these Phases which are: situation analysis or

recognition with information processing, planning with information presentation,

decision making with information transfer followed by an action; and, controlling with

information gathering.[76] With adequate information management, supported by modern

information and communication devices, a military leader can handle his total

information resources so that he is able to cope with any unexpected, or even time

critical, situation. In order to do so, he always needs an information reserve to cope with

unexpected situations.[77] The military leader who lacks information will lose the fight and

therefore insufficient information management can have catastrophic consequences.[78]

Within this context, the dynamic ability of information processing of all leaders is

affected by the situation, by stress and by other factors. As one can see, the quality of a

leader's mental ability to process and manage information is dependant on technical

resources and the capability of the human being. Other than computers; humans

concentrate more on the decision than on a situation. The faster that situational

awareness is lost, the more human decisions are based on the subjective perception of the

environment.[79] Here the rate of mistakes increases statistically.[80] Therefore computers

and information systems alone cannot enable a military leader to cope with the challenges

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[75] Führungsakademie der Bundeswehr, Fachbereich Führung und Management, Lernunterlage Allgemeine Führungslehre, _Der Führungsprozess_, 11/98.
[76] Ibid.
[77] Ibid.
[78] Ungerer, D.: ibid.
[79] Ibid.
[80] Zimm, A. D.: _Human Centric Warfare_, United States Naval Institute, Proceedings, 5/99, page 30 and following.

of the information age and his human insufficiencies. A framework provided by a suitable and effective leadership philosophy is also necessary.[81]

Generally speaking, a military leader cannot influence the quality of his technical equipment, nor can his opponent. Further, today the technology factor for armed forces is driven mainly by politicians, technological development and of course the budget. So far possible fictive opponents can be even. Of course, an important factor is the given technology as seen in recent and concurrent conflicts like the War on Terror or Operation "Iraqi Freedom". But, it can be imagined that the side that has no technological advantage, can create an even situation on the battlefield, when they can create an operational advantage through operational art, or with the use of asymmetric warfare methods. In other words, next to technology a leadership philosophy, which can support operational design and enhances information management, can be the decisive factor. Task oriented leading in a team, with flexibility and creativity can prove to be more decisive than computers. Therefore, in the leadership process, a surplus of computers cannot be the answer to human insufficiencies, new challenges on a battlefield and new technology.

The analysis of the process of leading has shown, that information management is a vital key to success. Since the beginning of the Information Age, information has become more and more important.[82] But it must be recognised, that humans often forget basic book information within a small amount of time.[83] However, information recived

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[81] Pust, C.: ibid, page 37.
[82] Wellershof, D.: *Führen, Wollen-Können-Vertrauen*, Bonn, 1997, page 120.
[83] Prayon, H.: ibid, page 46.

from a human being in a conversation lasts longer.[84] Out of conversations one can better deduct, whether he can trust the person, or even see whether he was interested and aware of his responsibility. Finally, behind the mountain of recognized data the spirit and ideas will be recognized and remembered.[85] This, in turn, is vital for task-oriented leading, because if communication is interrupted the commander's intent can still be followed. In the Information Age, decision cycles are shortend and it is therefoe even more important to have a stable guidance through "*Innere Führung*". "*Innere Führung*" gives stable orientation parameters that are not influenced by technological changes. In turn it supports a leader in handling fast technological change.

One of the advantages of fast technological change is the very quick transfer of information. Although in former times the problem was to get the information, today in the Information Age, a leader has to decide what is and what is not relevant.[86] A military leader, equal on which level of warfare, [87] must be able to select within the shortest possible time. "*Rapid decision making will be an essential tactical skill.*"[88] Information and communication technology create a time shortage with raising transmission rates and capabilities. This leads to an overall and actual availability of information on all levels and produces an opportunity to link unlimited amounts of units into an information network.[89] Here, a question is to be raised about which human being can process this amount of available information. The soldiers in most western militaries are familiar

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[84] Ibid.

[85] Ibid.

[86] Pust, C.; ibid, page 37.

[87] Tactical, operational or strategic.

[88] Antal, F.: *It is not the speed of the computer that counts-The case for rapid battlefield decision making*, Amour, 5/6 1998, page 13.

[89] Lescher, K. W.: *Network-Centric: Is it worth the risk?*, United States Naval Institute, Proceedings, 7/99, page 58.

with the enormous amount of E-mails and signal-messages found daily on his desk. This reality outlines another challenge of the information age; information overflow.[90] Therfore: *"one of the most difficult problems for commanders is, to know what to know."[91]* The principles of the "*Innere Führung*" helps German leaders to cope with this development in providing guidance and leadership competence in a stable framework. Leading in this framework and according to the principles of the "*Innere Führung*", is leading in an environment of trust, because of participation, motivation and cohesion. It is trust that enables a principle of "push and pull" to handle the amount of information.[92] In this environment, a leader can pull the required information from the information network or system. Subordinate units can push required information into it. The result is that the information that needs to be processed by one individual human being is dramatically reduced and maximum use of the technology is made.

The use of these new technologies can enable leaders to micro-manage in their area of responsibility because nearly all information can be made available in no real time. In fact, task-oriented leading as a German military quality, without the overall framework of the concept of the "*Innere Führung*" can lead to micro-management. In turn, micro-management is contrary to trust, teamwork and most important the call for task-oriented leading. Of course, this form of leading can be carried out if politically or militarily necessary. It must be stressed however, that micro-management cannot be the standard, because trust is needed to cope with de-motivating effects on subordinates and

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[90] Fitzgerald, J.-R.: *Network centric antisubmarine warfare*, United States Naval Institute, Proceedings, 9/98, page 93.
[91] Zimm, A.D.: ibid, page 29.
[92] Pust, C.: ibid, page 38.

it has to be the exception, because it contradicts most principles of the German leadership philosophy.

A similar argument applies to situations where a simple order is necessary because there is not enough time to explain the mission or task. Leading by orders should also be the exception; as the necessary trust created in normal situations by leading task-oriented supports leading by orders in exceptional cases. The "*Innere Führung*" supports German leaders by generating this trust. Thus in case of information overflow for critical decisions, the "*Innere Führung*" provides the professional and methodical competence. Of course, the leader makes the decision and is responsible, but the team has also a responsibility and should provide substantial professional advice and mental support. In an environment of trust, the team can identify and articulate mistakes and errors more efficiently, and support a leader in his decision making process, by enabling superior information management.

In conclusion, from the 1950's on, the concept of the "*Innere Führung*" provided the mental foundation of the German Armed Forces. The aims and objectives are derived from the Basic Law, they reflect German history and are based on democratic values. The, "citizen in uniform", has served over the years in the Cold War and continues today, to protect and, foremost, defend peace. German Armed Forces became and continue to be acceptable for the German people and European neighbours, because of the mental foundation given in the early 1950's. German soldiers could cope with the challenges introduced by change out of the society over time, because of the given framework and

integration into society. This became especially apparent in the challenges resulting out of German reunification. It must be stressed, that "*Innere Führung*" ensured integration into the society and proved in all major influencing events, that the idea of a "civilian in uniform" with its eight principles as the main guidance is a suitable concept, because it continues to reflect the democratic values of the Basic Law. Also, German soldiers can successfully handle challenges, which are generated by the new mission spectrum and "*Innere Führung*" provides all necessary tools. It is the social and methodical competence derived from the "*Innere Führung*" and leadership competence, which supports the successful approach to problems concerning other nations, other cultures and their soldiers and civilians in the new mission spectrum of the German Armed Forces.

Leading according the principles and guidelines of the "*Innere Führung*" can also face the challenges resulting out of the new and still evolving information technology in the Information Age. The creation of trust by task-oriented leading, in a cooperative team, aware of one's responsibilities, creates an efficient working environment to cope with the challenges generated by information technology. As analyzed, more and efficient computers alone do not overcome human deficiencies in the event of information overload, stress, depersonalized communication and politically induced micro-management. It is the framework of the "*Innere Führung*", which continues to enable task-oriented leading in a highly technological influenced environment. Trust generated by leadership competence based on the "*Innere Führung*", enables German military leaders to proactively approach any situation created by an opponent or by technology. The guidance provided by the "*Innere Führung*", enables superior

information management in the leadership process and outlines the left and right

parameters for German soldiers and their actions.

Finally, the principles of "*Innere Führung*" strongly support a leader in coping

with the discussed challenges of the Information Age. Therefore, "*Innere Führung*"

which has its origins in the early 1950's, remains a relevant and effective leadership

philosophy for the German Armed Forces today in the Information Age.

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