

demonstrations.

Prior to the outbreak of the war, the CDU/CSU was united in their criticism of Mr. Schroeder's diplomacy. By refusing to increase the pressure on **Saddam Hussein** and thus exacerbating the split in the UN security council, he contributed to a situation where war was inevitable. Now, however, some CDU/CSU politicians voice their concern over the American policy. The sharpest criticism came from **Peter Mueller**, the *Ministerpraesident* (governor) of the Saarland. It was a mistake of the US to act without a UN mandate, he said. The CDU should not approve of such unilateral action. The vice-chairman of the CDU parliamentary group, **Wolfgang Schaeuble**, more carefully remarked that a war without a UN mandate was of "considerable risk." Still, the general position of the CDU, as expressed by chairman **Angela Merkel**, remains unchanged. She refrained from any criticism of the US and confirmed that the CDU "stands by the side of the USA." She hopes for a swift resolution of the conflict in Iraq. CSU chairman **Edmund Stoiber** agreed with Mrs. Merkel's point of view and said that dissenters among the CDU/CSU were "expressing their personal and private opinion, not the policy of the party."

The FDP, the liberal party, is also opposed to a war without UN approval. The US was waging a war without a UN mandate and, moreover, without having sufficiently tried to resolve the conflict peacefully. "The FDP will not accept this," said FDP chairman **Guido Westerwelle** and the chairman of the FDP parliamentary group, **Wolfgang Gerhardt**. As the only major German party, the FDP wanted to discuss whether the American strike against Iraq was in accordance with international law. If this was not the case, that is if the UN resolutions citing "serious consequences" did not provide a basis for war, German law dictated a withdrawal of German soldiers in Turkey. It would also require a withdrawal of the right to use military bases in Germany granted to the US. This issue of legality also stirred irritation about whether there needed to be a vote in parliament in order to allow deployment of defensive German AWACS units to Turkey or whether the administration could decide this on its own – the legal situation concerning the deployment of German forces abroad is less than clear. In reaction to an urgent lawsuit initiated by the FDP, the German supreme court ruled that in this current situation no parliamentary vote seemed necessary. However, a further judicial investigation of the more general issue was advisable, the judges said.

II. **Agenda 2010: Chancellor Schroeder announces major reform program**

On March 14, chancellor **Gerhard Schroeder** outlined his reform program, designed to lift Germany from its current economic depression. This "Agenda 2010" adds up to a restructuring of the welfare state, including changes in labor laws and cuts in the health care

system. Mr. Schroeder referred to dozens of minor regulations which he seeks to amend or abolish. The most consequential ideas pertain to cuts and structural changes in the unemployment benefits and the protection against dismissal. The latter was a suggestion of minister of labor and the economy, **Wolfgang Clement** (SPD), who had drawn a lot of heat from the unions for tinkering with this worker-friendly law. In defining the guideline for his reform project, Mr. Schroeder said: "We will cut the benefits provided by the state and strengthen the responsibilities of the individual citizen."

The announcement of a major, innovative, and daring speech had created great expectations. Mr. Schroeder's actual performance, however, fell flat. "This was not the promised big bang," CDU chairwoman **Angela Merkel** said. "We need a new social market economy for the twenty-first century," she explained. Mr. Schroeder, however, only delivered "vague hints" instead of the truly bold reform that was necessary. On the many little steps Mr. Schroeder had listed, Mrs. Merkel offered the collaboration of the CDU. In accordance with Mrs. Merkel, CSU chairman **Edmund Stoiber** criticized Mr. Schroeder's plans as "too little, too late." At least, Mr. Schroeder was right in his analysis of the dire situation: "Germany needs redevelopment measures. Additional wage costs are too high. Taxes are too high. Government spending is too high," Mr. Stoiber said. Unfortunately, Mr. Schroeder's remedies and policies were confused and lacked bite. To FDP chairman **Guido Westerwelle**, Mr. Schroeder's speech was "pure rhetoric," not courageous enough, and too obsessed with the role of the state instead of the possibilities of civil society. Even leftist commentators called Mr. Schroeder's lack of focus "disappointing," while leaders of the unions criticized Mr. Schroeder for dismantling the welfare state.

III. End of the Affair: Juergen W. Moellemann leaves FDP

On March 17, **Juergen W. Moellemann** left the FDP amidst a swirl of accusations of illegal campaign financing, improper conduct, and anti-Semitism. Mr. Moellemann was one of the most prominent German politicians. Under chancellor **Helmut Kohl** he was first a *Staatssekretär* (deputy secretary) to the foreign minister, then minister of education, minister of the economy and vice-chancellor. Until recently, he was the chairman of the FDP in Northrhine-Westphalia, the largest regional group of the party, and vice-chairman of the FDP. His talent for public relations and political strategy made him one of the most influential and vocal German politicians.

His downfall began last summer, when he voiced extremely sharp criticism of Israel's premier **Ariel Sharon** and his policy towards the Palestinians. **Mr. Moellemann** is chairman of the German-Arabic society. In the subsequent harsh debate with members of the German Jewish Committee, Mr. Moellemann accused the committee's vice-chairman, **Michel Friedman** (CDU), of "contributing to anti-Semitism in Germany" because of his "arrogant and mean behavior." Mr.

Friedman is a very outspoken and polarizing public figure and best known for his controversial TV talk show in which he confronts politicians with tough questions and his impatient style. Mr. Moellemann's statement was widely rejected and scandalized, because it encouraged the anti-Semitic notion that the Jewish community itself is—at least in part—responsible for the hatred it encounters. Under pressure from the public and other political parties, the leaders of the FDP, such as chairman **Guido Westerwelle**, forced Mr. Moellemann to publicly regret his "mistakes."

Shortly before the German election in September 2002, however, **Mr. Moellemann** widely distributed a brochure as a part of his campaign for the FDP that featured a polemic against Sharon and Friedman. This move was not in accordance with the leadership of the FDP and led to renewed public upheaval. Some pundits argue that this scandal was in large part responsible for the disappointing result of the FDP in that election. Later it turned out that Mr. Moellemann did not finance this particular brochure according to campaign financing laws. The FDP launched an investigation which brought to light a whole system of illegal financing in Mr. Moellemann's Northrhine-Westphalian FDP. Since then, efforts were underway to oust Mr. Moellemann from the FDP parliamentary groups in the state parliament of Northrhine-Westphalia and the *Bundestag* (national parliament) and the party itself. With his recent decision to leave the party but remain an independent delegate to—as of now—both parliaments, Mr. Moellemann preempted the final decision of the party.

A few days before his decision, **Mr. Moellemann** published a book, entitled *Klartext* ("in clear"). Part autobiography, part tell-all, part political platform, the book lashes out at Mr. Moellemann's former colleagues and presents his view of current politics and his scandals. Mr. Moellemann continues to nourish rumors about a soon to be founded "Moellemann Party," which could be based on the political concepts advanced in the book. Nonetheless, observers do not expect such a project to succeed.

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