

# Ethics of Peace – Ethics of Leadership – Ethical Education: A Luxury or the Lifeblood of modern Armed Forces?

A Workshop on Ethical Education in the German Armed Forces  
for developing a Central Service Regulation on Ethical Education  
in the Bundeswehr

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.0 Claus Philipp Maria Schenk Graf von Stauffenberg

In my book *Hitlers Kriegsreligion* (2 Vols. Bonn: VKW, 2007), I examined how Adolf Hitler used religious arguments to proclaim that war is a normal state of affairs and that peace is at most a temporary ceasefire to gather new forces for the next war; the world, Hitler held, only achieves progress through war.

How different is the Germany which grew out of the ruins that Hitler left behind. Peace is now the normal state of affairs to be maintained. It is the situation in which the individual as well as the whole country is able to unfold; war is the bitter and unfortunately sometimes unavoidable exception. It is never to be sought or glorified.

It is an honor for me to be allowed to present my thoughts in the Stauffenberg Room of the Federal Ministry of Defence. It is also an honor to do so with a view of the bust of this heroic soldier who was executed in Bendler Block because he knew that in a state of emergency, escalating injustice on an unimagined scale can only be ended by military resistance. He acted upon that idea.

## 1.1 A Minefield

In a sense, our project is a **minefield** – please excuse the military pun. Thus, my opening speech is a minefield in which I cannot resort to numerous conversations with many of you and express myself more cautiously. That has disadvantages but also advantages.

Nothing of what I say is binding on anyone here. They are highlight-like utterances coming from a member of civil society, which in turn is only conceivable because the concept of the internal leadership principle exists in Germany.

In addition, if I have correctly understood all those with whom I have spoken in advance, our project is not about questioning the “Inner Leadership Principle” itself, nor is it about reforming proven structures of ethics education. Rather, it is about concrete implementation at the level of education and bringing together all existing activities in this area, from life skills instruction to the Central Contact Point for Military Ethics Education (Zentrale Ansprechstelle für militärische Ethikausbildung, or ZETHA) in the Centre for Inner Leadership in Koblenz to advanced medical-ethical training in the Medical Academy.

When the 'skull affair' in Afghanistan alarmed the Bundeswehr and the public – whoever it was who in 2006 passed on photos taken privately in a gravel pit in 2003 to the media – there was an immediate reaction with additional local training measures in the areas of ethics and intercultural competence and thus new structures were created on a small scale in addition to old ones. This in itself is a good example of the Inner Leadership Principle, and it is within this context that I understand the “development” that is beginning today. This is not as an occasion for something new. Rather, it is to update what has been tried and tested and bundle it in a new service regulation and thus also to serve the idea of cross-linked security.

## *1.2 The View other Countries take*

The former Inspector General of the Bundeswehr, Wolfgang Schneiderhan, once wrote that “no other Western nation . . . has a comprehensive concept for harmonizing the tension between soldier and democracy similar” to that of the Bundeswehr. After more than 40 years of service, Schneiderhan was absolutely certain on one point: “Without the Inner Leadership Principle we would have a different Bundeswehr. This is because of the simple existence of tension between personal freedom and military order.”

After a trip to South America he said: “A model of success that is in demand worldwide: The Inner Leadership Principle is a trademark of the Bundeswehr. . . . The concept of the Inner Leadership Principle harmonizes the principles of freedom of the democratic constitutional state with the principles of order and function of the armed forces to fulfill their constitutional mandate. More than ever it is the unmistakable trademark of the German armed forces. German experiences to date . . . have also met with strong interest in other countries.” Therefore he had the Zdv 10/1, today the A-2600/1, translated into numerous languages.

One of the first visible manifestations of this trend was the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, approved in December 1994 by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). It commits participating States to minimum standards for the integration of the armed forces into the democratic state, to control of the armed forces, to providing a guarantee of the legal status of soldiers which protects their fundamental rights, and to assuring that all members of the armed forces have personal responsibility for their actions. It also clearly designates the political task of promoting the further development and concretization of the norms stipulated in this Code.

The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces should also be mentioned here, in which Germany and a total of 30 states are members ([www.dcaf.ch](http://www.dcaf.ch)). Austria is also a member, and with its “Spiritual National Defence” concept, is pursuing a direction very similar to that of the Inner Leadership Principle. EuroISME, the European branch of the International Society for Military Ethics, should also be mentioned, which is prominently represented among us today.

In a small PowerPoint set of slides, I will briefly touch on the fact that my connection to the topic lies primarily in international contacts (see the appendix). Abroad, one repeatedly hears of the good reputation of the soldiers of the ISAF mission because they had immense intercultural competence. Even with an example like the skull affair in Afghanistan, one hears more that something similar can never be completely avoided but that in comparison to other armies, something of this sort seldom happens and that the reaction took place immediately and completely in line with the sense of the Inner Leadership Principle.

Above all, I hear from other countries that they envy us, that for historical reasons the Inner Leadership Principle, since 1955, has been deeply involved in the thinking, structures, and education and training of the Bundeswehr, even of the Parliament itself. It would be incomparably more difficult today to introduce this retrospectively, as armies from other countries are currently trying to do.

### ***1.3 Rule of Law, Rule of Force to preserve Law***

In 2017, 90,000 people died in armed conflicts worldwide. That is a third less than in 2014, but 90,000 too many. One wants to immediately react as the World Council of Churches said at its founding in 1948: "According to God's will, wars should not occur."

At the same time, however, we know that such conflicts can unfortunately only be prevented, contained, or ended by armies supported by the rule of law, albeit surely in cooperation with the state and other security organs, just as violence in our streets can alas only be contained by a functioning police force and other security organs.

I once got into a lot of trouble because at a police college I said that a constitutional police force was one of the most important human rights organizations. The same applies, however, to an army governed by the rule of law.

A Bundeswehr sniper as a human rights activist? Many find it difficult to reconcile this thought. Consider the following, however: If the sniper is legally legitimated and integrated into a healthy command structure, why else do we need the sniper than to protect human lives and thus human rights?

The military shares the use of legitimate force with other state institutions, such as the police or penal institutions, but the concentration on (constitutional) force goes far beyond any other state institution.

Present with us today is Hartwig von Schubert, the Protestant military dean at the German Armed Forces Command and Staff College in Hamburg. He has military operations experience in Afghanistan and has said the following in unadorned fashion: "The exercise of massive force in armed combat is at the center of military action" (*Integrative Militäretik*, p.7; title translation, *Integrative Military Ethics*). He aptly calls one of his books *Ethik rechtserhaltender Gewalt* (title translation: *The Ethics of Force to preserve Law*).

This is not least expressed in the fact that by 2017, 35 soldiers had lost their lives in attacks and battles in the Hindu Kush. Others died in accidents, etc., hundreds were injured, thousands traumatized, and 5,800 individuals received a medal for their participation in combat operations.

3,200 members of the Bundeswehr, including civilians, have died since the beginning of the Bundeswehr while performing their official duties. They are commemorated by the Bundeswehr memorial here on the grounds of the BMVg (as is well known, without losses of the Special Forces Command – as of 10.10.2018).

### ***1.4 All Forces have to pull in the same Direction***

If the Bundeswehr is to reflect the value system of Germany's Basic Law and its implementation, in particular through the German Bundestag, and if it is to defend, indeed implement and apply this value system, then a discussion as the one beginning today cannot be an easy undertaking or a 'nice walk in the park.' Rather, it will partake of the discourse –

let's just say a little casually 'the wrangling' – in our democracy. For the forces involved constitute an enormous range. In principle, the whole of civil society should be involved in the discussion – otherwise I would not be standing before you, for example – in addition to many forces of a social and political nature. Moreover, the Bundeswehr itself stands in the triad of an elected parliament, ministries, and officers, not to mention NATO and other institutions. Since 1957, the large churches of our country have not only been integrated into direct military pastoral care, but have also been present through lessons on life skills and ethical education that is not linked to religion. For ethics training must also apply to the large number of Bundeswehr members who are not religious adherents as well as to the – admittedly still small – number adhering to non-Christian religions, be it Judaism, Islam, or Buddhism.

At the end there should be a central service regulation, which on the one hand will have a flagship aspect (and therefore has to be 'politically correct,' to use the term in a positive manner). On the other hand, it has to be fit for service, i.e., practically obligatory from top to bottom, from the Inspector General to the reservist and to the soldier who is currently on acute duty, and furthermore to civilians in the Bundeswehr.

This will only be possible if all the participants involved place the great goal of jointly formulating how all our values are concretely reflected in the service of the Bundeswehr at the forefront.

### ***1.5 This includes Cooperation between Religious and Non-religious Forces***

Let me address one more point. When our Basic Law was drafted, one found at the table very religious Christians and very convinced atheists – often recognizable by party affiliation – and, of course, with all shades of gray in between. In spite of all the tug-of-war and compromises on the details, a community arose in which both camps gave each other free space. The Christians, that is essentially also to say the major historical mainline churches represented here today, accepted a secular state with religious freedom. The others accepted a country in which Christians and churches, in principle of course religious people generally, also occupy the entire public space. Church and state have been clearly separated, and yet they remain active in the same space. And at numerous interfaces there is one – perhaps typically German? – at least well thought out interrelationship between both sides, as in the cases of religious education or military pastoral care.

Here in Germany it would be unthinkable that a pastor would open the new Bundestag with prayer. This is usual in the USA in the House of Representatives. However, a voluntary ecumenical opening service outside the Bundestag is voluntarily attended by the majority of members of Parliament. Religious instruction takes place at school and is paid for by the state, and yet the contents are provided by representatives of the religious communities and only administered according to their convictions.

Human rights, which also determine the Inner Leadership Principle, are a similar example: Are they religiously justified or are they secularly justified? Every religion and every non-religious ideology needs its own justification for human rights from its own DNA. At the same time, human rights define the secular constitutional state, and human

rights bind religious and ideological communities as institutions across all borders and evaluate their actions.

Much has happened since the Basic Law was adopted and the Military State Treaty came into force in 1957. The number of non-religious German citizens has risen sharply, various currents of Islam taken together form a second major religion in Germany, and the number of Christian churches has increased, for instance due to the fact that almost all churches of an Eastern tradition can now also be found in Germany as a result of migration. This is the case even though they do not have millions of members.

Nevertheless, this achievement should be preserved and stand the test in the development of the Central Service Regulation (ZDv) for ethical education in the Bundeswehr: Let me put it in a nutshell: Only if religious and non-religious forces pull together on the same rope can the result be achieved.

In 2012, I went through this at the academic level with my Catholic colleague Uto Meier, who is present here, and the Austrian military ethicist Edwin R. Micewski, who does not argue religiously but rather based on Immanuel Kant. The result was published by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Defence:

Edwin R. Micewski, Thomas Schirmacher (eds.). *Ethik im Kontext individueller Führung und militärischer Verantwortung. Ethica Themen: Reihe des Instituts für Religion und Frieden* (translation of the title: *Ethics in the Context of Individual Leadership and Military Responsibility. Ethical Topics: Series of the Institute for Religion and Peace*. Republic of Austria/Bundesministerium für Landesverteidigung (Federal Ministry of Defence) . . . : Vienna, 2012, [https://www.bucer.de/fileadmin/dateien/Dokumente/BQs/zu\\_BQ200-299/zu\\_BQ249/20121122\\_ET\\_ethik\\_individuelle\\_verantwortung\\_militaerische\\_fuehrung.pdf](https://www.bucer.de/fileadmin/dateien/Dokumente/BQs/zu_BQ200-299/zu_BQ249/20121122_ET_ethik_individuelle_verantwortung_militaerische_fuehrung.pdf)

More and more companies and banks have ethics consultants. Many of them are theologians. One wonders why this is the case since religious background is as unimportant to companies as possible understanding on the part of churches. Of course, theologians are also essentially concerned with ethics during their studies. But so are philosophers. However, philosophers do not have to regularly speak to the normal population as active theologians in the church do. They also do not have regular contact with all sorts of people, for example after a church service or in pastoral care. Such experiences with many ethical situations in the everyday life of normal people are also familiar to medical doctors or psychologists, but these are usually not connected with comprehensive academic questions. I think it is the combination of the strong academic pursuit and thorough study of ethical issues with a 'down to earth' presentation combined with many personal insights through pastoral care that often gives theologians an initial advantage.

## **1.6. The Bicycle Shop**

Let me take a vivid example. I hope that neither the simplicity of comparing ethics training with a bicycle shop nor an estimation of ethics training of the Bundeswehr itself is misunderstood by anyone.

There are shops that have a great shop window, but inside the story is different. The shop is badly managed, much of what is in the shop window is not in stock, and it is all more allusion than reality. There are also shops where, conversely, the shop window is an understatement. It is not very attractive and does not convey that within the shop there are highly committed employees with a great deal of knowledge offering a wide range of interesting goods.

When it comes to training the Bundeswehr in ethics, the first picture would be the wrong one. Ethics training, as it results from the Inner Leadership Principle, covers all soldiers and ranges from the board game ETHIKXX bios to the highly specialized professional-level debate in the medical academy about the situation of seriously ill people. To me, it is the second picture that seems to apply: There are many more products in the shop, and the products in the shop are much better than the shop window would suggest.

Let us compare the ethics training of the Bundeswehr with a bicycle shop. In the shop window, it becomes clear that we are dealing here with the leading bicycle shop. But one expects only normal bicycles in large numbers. If you enter the bicycle shop, you are quite surprised at how many departments and adjoining rooms there are in the shop offering an enormous range of bicycles: Children's bicycles with training wheels to start with and highly specialized bicycles for participants in the Tour de France. It quickly becomes clear that not everyone in the children's department knows what the racing bike department does. They have to look in a list to see where these racing bikes are actually offered. The bicycle shop lacks neither bicycles nor good staff. It lacks networking and a complete display in the shop window.

### ***1.7 Military Ethics and Military Justice? ?***

A short word as to why I do not speak of a special military ethics.

In the USA, Israel and Turkey, to name just three examples, the military is an integral part of day-to-day politics for very different reasons. Like the police, the military is routinely used for all sorts of things. At the time of the German emperor, who resigned 100 years ago, this was the same.

The astonishing thing is that it is precisely at that point that there is much less of an integration of the ethics of the military into the ethics of society as a whole. Rather, each has a military ethic of its own (and mostly a form of pure military justice), which leads a life of its own and is hardly accessible to outsiders.

The renunciation of an independent military ethic and its own military justice only works where the military is integrated into the overall social framework and canon of values.

I believe that the Bundeswehr would do well to also make this clearer in its public relations work since the many American television series translated into German convey a completely different picture, even a series as rightly successful as NCIS.

## 2 Regarding The Debate

### *2.1 Should naive Civilians Make Military Regulations?*

Is 'ethics' a special sort of myth that only hinders an army in its effectiveness? As if you wanted to force all officers to knit stockings during a mission or to have soldiers take daily piano lessons in the barracks?

Or is it about imposing moral guidelines on a squad force that otherwise might end up unnecessarily endangering lives, just as in previous centuries the flag had to be carried forward and defended to the death without there being any strategic advantage or it being linked to a reduction in losses.

No, it can't be a matter of a naive civilian making all sorts of moral demands that have little to do with reality and, like an excessive bureaucracy, constantly adding new moral wishes until the commander is no longer occupied with anything else.

It can also be formulated differently: Does ethics interfere with the function of the Bundeswehr? No, ethics actually only helps to ensure that not only one function works but that all functions can take effect. The example of skull photos in Afghanistan shows that nowadays such a derailment can also considerably disrupt the actual functioning of the Bundeswehr.

In order to function and operate, armed forces must be built on command and obedience and cannot be voted upon. But this is not the only obedience structure to be considered. Also here within the BMVg, the employees do not vote on what the Minister has to do next, and the BMVg's guidelines are binding for the Bundeswehr. Even the idea of a parliamentary army implies that the army 'obeys' the parliament, and it is not a situation where the qualified majority of soldiers decide. Parliament also monitors the BMVg. Parliament and the BMVg are in turn audited by the Federal Audit Office and 'monitored' by the media, albeit in a completely different sense. Judgment can also be passed on a Bundeswehr mission by German or European courts. These judgments in turn largely shape the public image of the Bundeswehr since the suspension of compulsory military service means that no large number of young people gain experience on their own and pass it on to family and friends. In the ideal case, all of this has to "work," even if it seems to be increasingly distancing itself from the actual function of the Bundeswehr.

### *2.2 The Significance of the Time Factor for Ethics*

Using the time factor example, let me explain the difference between a form of ethics up in the clouds making unrealistic demands and a responsible ethics.

As an ethicist, I could spend several years writing a book on medical ethics in the intensive care unit and about switching off coma patients' equipment. Without reference to reality, I could come with the argument that in the final instance it is a life and death decision that lies with the doctor. I could create a huge checklist and install systems of security. I could act as if the doctor would only have to decide once a month about such a case.

In fact, however, this ethical question is primarily determined by the time factor. The doctor has a time allowance of minutes from the health insurance company in which he or she also has to input reports and can hardly manage to fulfil the legal requirements – all too often colleagues who are actually obliged to consult each other can only sign documents for each other in the evening. In the case of private patients and in Bundeswehr hospitals, the situation immediately looks somewhat better because the time pressure is not quite as severe and there is more room to maneuver.

Those who do not take this into account will only do doctors an injustice with respect to why they do not do this or that, or they imply that doctors do not see the seriousness of a situation.

In the end, however, ethics is not a discussion in a castle in the air, as important as it may be to formulate ideals. Rather, ethics always discusses concrete action that is not only determined by values and ideals but by countless situational factors, including the time factor.

And this brings us to a military mission, which is determined by the fact that a large number of decisions have to be instantly made in parallel on the basis of constantly changing information. The Inner Leadership Principle does not see this situation from the point of view of the media, which may later be able to do research for a number of years, but from the point of view of the responsibility of the commander in combat or on a mission.

### ***2.3 The Inner Leadership Principle allows an Army do its Job better***

The effectiveness of the inner leadership principle and an ethical education for such purposes become subject to particular doubt in the case of combat situations. That is why the following is important – and I think this is a common thread running through the documents on the Inner Leadership Principle:

Internal leadership does not aim to paralyze the Bundeswehr but rather to establish a superior leadership model. The Bundeswehr should function better, not worse, with its Inner Leadership Principle.

Of course, you always have to give subordinates who are deliberately thinking along with you the opportunity to ask question of conscience because they are thinking along with you. However, in return you get motivation, proactive thinking along with you, and thus lightning-fast adaptation to constantly changing, serious situations.

Many wars have already been won because motivation on one side was higher, but above all because adaptation through auxiliary decision-making competence was geared to the deployment on the ground. I have just read a military history of the Six Day War, in which the Israelis, who were far outnumbered, had commanders on the ground who were allowed to react with lightning speed to the unexpected withdrawal of Arab armed forces. The Arab forces were led centrally from Cairo or not really led from Cairo because Cairo did not even have a rudimentary understanding of the local situation and did not trust the commanders on the ground.

How does the ZDv state it? “302. The internal leadership principle thus ensures a maximum of military efficiency and at the same time guarantees a maximum of freedom and rights for the soldiers within the framework of our basic free democratic order. 303. The foundations of the Inner Leadership Principle are based on ethical, legal, political, and social principles and correspond to military requirements. . . .”

## ***2.4 There is no automatic Guilt in a Dilemma***

There is an ancient theological discussion, later also a philosophical discussion, about whether one should choose the lesser evil in a dilemma and whether one is nevertheless guilty – just less guilty – or whether the better decision or the serious attempt to find the better decision leads to a situation where guilt does not even exist.

Personally, I have a clear theological and philosophical position, which I have explained in detail elsewhere, for instance in my book *Leadership with Ethical Responsibility*:

Responsibility always involves the possible, not the impossible. Anyone who finds himself or herself in a dilemma and decides for a way that to the best of his or her knowledge and belief keeps the entirety of the problems as limited as possible will also not be guilty.

What a German weekly magazine establishes weeks or months later may be important and interesting. However, if knowledge was not available to the commander of an operation, his decision cannot be measured by such knowledge. This also applies, for example, if important information is provided one minute after a command has been issued and the command has already been executed or cannot be recalled and changed.

Therefore, it was also right from my point of view that Colonel Georg Klein was exonerated by various high-ranking courts with respect to the bombing of two tank trucks in Kunduz on September 4, 2009, in which, for some reason and contrary to information, civilians were found. The Federal Prosecutor's Office stopped the investigations at an early stage.

An exception is, of course, when we deliberately *have not* obtained knowledge for ourselves, but that is the academic in me who wants to list every exception in the footnotes.

An example: That only appropriate protective suits are unavailable or something else might be missing: Maybe one could have known this three years earlier during planning. Or maybe in the final event even a politician has to resign. But here and now, on the spot, a commanding officer bears responsibility and has to decide in the shortest period of time how he can both achieve the military goal and provide for the greatest possible security of his subordinates at the same time and under certain circumstances has to continuously adjust the decision during the operation.

## ***2.5 Mistakes have to be reduced but can never be completely avoided***

Ethics can help to make fewer mistakes or minor mistakes, and ethics can help to deal with and learn from mistakes. But there's one thing it can't do: prevent one hundred percent of mistakes.

Recently I sat next to a string quartet directly under the podium, from which a Prime Minister of a German state thanked the “beautifully playing wind ensemble” while pointing to the stringed instrument musicians. There was laughing in the hall, but the poor man did not know why and did not laugh himself until he was enlightened afterwards. That time it was a harmless mistake, but other high-ranking politicians have lost their office or at least their good reputation by such unavoidable mistakes when speaking.

How much more does that apply to Bundeswehr operations, which occur under enormous stress, time pressure, perhaps fatigue, and problems in translating information from other languages or conferring with partners from other cultures.

Recently, when Professor Uto Meier, who is also present today, Dr. Andreas Berns, Academic Director at the German Armed Forces Command and Staff College, and I were discussing precisely this problem with regard to the Inner Leadership Principle while driving, at one point we took a wrong turn on a daily routine route for completely incomprehensible reasons and almost missed our appointment! Unconsciously, we proved that our theoretical discussion is unfortunately very practical and affects us personally. Fortunately, that time we were able to laugh about ourselves and there were no serious consequences.

Modern aviation only became possible after a checklist was devised which two experts go through together. It is one of the most important things thought up in the history of technology, even if hardly anyone is aware of it. Even when using checklists, mistakes can still happen. However, without checklists, the statistical probability of overlooking something, or thinking that you have already checked it, or to think that one thing or another has always worked anyway is much greater.

The Inner Leadership Principle seeks to be nothing more than some kind of ethical checklist. Of course, such a checklist cannot be formulated and processed in the same way as one for an aircraft's take-off. But just as a commander routinely has to consider certain legal questions, he can also make certain ethical questions a matter of course.

At the end of 2006, the shocking photos with skulls in Afghanistan not only led the Institute for Theology and Ethics at the University of the Federal Armed Forces in Munich to train instructors with additional ethical training for contingent soldiers but also to formulating the famous pocket card “Ethics in Action.”

One may consider the formulations there to be banal, but they are only banal if one has been introduced to these questions in the course of one's socialization or education, for example in one's family, school, study, or profession. For soldiers who have never actively dealt with such questions before, the pocket card is a good introduction, even if every point is more of a heading for a necessary conversation or discussion.

The “Koblenz Decision Check,” with four basic questions, is much shorter and less directly intended for use relating to operations. At this point, the board game ETHIKXX, which has been in use since 2016, must also be praised. It is from the same source, the Central Contact Point for Military Ethics Training (Zentralen Ansprechstelle für militärische Ethikausbildung, or ZETHA) in Coblenz (at the Centre for Internal Leadership there) and is able to introduce soldiers to ethics and break the ice on the topic in a fun way.

## ***2.6 Ethics: Discussions can achieve a lot***

Ethics begins by making ourselves aware that people make their decisions consciously or unconsciously on the basis of moral convictions – however different the underlying cultures, religious and ideological systems, and personal influences may be, and that people are in the position to consider, evaluate and discuss their decisions and reasons for them with others. The German word “Gewissen,” meaning conscience, comes from the old word “Ge-Wissen” (the prefix 'Ge' and the German word for knowledge, 'Wissen'). It actually means “Mitwisser,” a German word meaning confidant (the “Ge” prefix is similarly used with the German word Strauch [bush] to form Gesträuch [shrubbery] or 'Wetter' [weather] to form Gewitter [thunderstorms]). As humans, we have, as it were, a second instance of appeal within ourselves that registers what we want, what we do, and can exonerate or condemn our feelings, words, and actions.

Every discussion about ethics is therefore profitable in itself. As right and important as it is to name certain moral cornerstones, to set them down in writing, and to a certain degree to proclaim them in a classroom-type setting, it is also right and important for everyone to learn to discuss ethical questions and to become clear about what the pros and cons of all possible decisions are.

We learn morality from an early age by practicing, questioning, and applying. Only those who learn to analyze their own decisions can then review and improve their value system and prepare themselves better for an emergency.

Moral decisions are not made by teaching or demanding ethics. Rather, ethics only officially makes an issue of what has an impact on us all daily, hourly, and by the minute. As much as vegetative processes, instincts, and many other things belong to us as they do to animals but are not consciously regulated, we also have a mind that can weigh and decide and that can then in the end desire and be able to evaluate everything.

## **3 New Developments which have to be incorporated:**

### ***3.1 A Shopping List***

Finally, I would like to add a kind of shopping list, albeit selective, of new ethical challenges which have arisen in recent history and should be discussed with a view to ethical education in the Bundeswehr. For reasons of time, I will skip many points that I last listed in 2012 in the Austrian book I mentioned.

### **3.2 Civilians in the Bundeswehr**

ZDv A-2600/1 IF is currently only binding for Bundeswehr soldiers, not for civilian staff (and not for the Ministry itself). An opportunity emanating from the discussion we have started today could be to extend the IF to all elements surrounding the Bundeswehr, from the very 'top' in the more political sphere to the very 'bottom,' even in the outsourced civilian sphere.

### ***3.3 Moral Indignation***

All in all, war is more than ever being waged today with reference to morality and moral indignation. Everybody tries to place themselves in a position of being seen as morally right. This also increases the Bundeswehr's pressure to justify its operations and to generally justify itself. The media and social media play a central, if not always praiseworthy, role, but that is simply the world in which the Bundeswehr is operationally deployed.

### ***3.4 A Lack of moral Scruples among Adversaries***

Certainly, especially in asymmetrical or hybrid warfare, it must be borne in mind that a lack of moral scruples on the part of the opponent poses special challenges – even if it may make sense to know the wrong but possibly self-contained justification for a lack of scruples.

According to a proverb, everything has always been permitted in love and war, and many armies have achieved surprise advantages through unexpected acts considered immoral even for a war situation. Today, however, one has to, as it were, deal with it officially.

### ***3.5 A Volunteer Army***

Since 2011, the Bundeswehr has been and is for the moment still a volunteer army and a professional army. For this reason, discussions about applicants' motivations largely play a new, or at least different, role. This ranges from the motives for career choice to 'fighting morale.' Thus, the Inner Leadership Principle begins with personnel managers and those who first speak with applicants.

Certainly the German Federal Armed Forces cannot only select for themselves the 'noble knights' and 'noble women' from among the applicants. Also, what applicants say does not by far have to be what really motivates them, if they know at all what motivates them. However, as soon as they are part of the Bundeswehr, the Bundeswehr should strive to strengthen good motives in harmony with the Inner Leadership Principle and address and overcome bad motives.

Since the suspension of conscription, the first generation in German history has developed which has never had an hour's experience in the Bundeswehr and where no one knows someone of the same age who has been in the Bundeswehr. Over the long run, this will inevitably have consequences with respect to how the Bundeswehr is accepted by the general public.

### ***3.6 No longer a common Set of Morals***

At the same time, young recruits do not necessarily bring a high level of ethical education from family, school or church, especially not one based on a broad consensus.

A central problem both for the ethics of the inner leadership principle and for military ethical efforts in general is that there is actually no longer such a thing as a binding morality

and, where it is discussed as ethics, there is an immense army of institutions, positions and claims that are usually less discussed in terms of content than transported by lobbyists.

Classical moral instances such as family, school, and church are losing their significance. Even if one has a good relationship with them, one no longer feels personally bound to their guidelines. Often the moral indignation of the media or the social media, which today condemn this and tomorrow condemns that but is more interested in indignation and the resulting clicks than in common values, has taken the place of a unifying sense moral.

### ***3.7 A Change in the Way the Death of Soldiers is dealt with***

Wounding, dying, and death are handled quite differently today compared to past centuries. On the one hand, the idea of wounding, dying, and death is very strongly suppressed. On the other hand, the death of military personnel is mostly no longer regarded as a sacrifice. This leads to new challenges, also of an ethical nature, although not only so. After all, it seems that one can again speak of the 'fallen,' which for a long period of time was hardly possible. Nevertheless, it remains a sensitive topic.

The role of soldiers' families has long ceased to be one where there is a self-evident willingness to make sacrifices. This also has to be ethically reconsidered.

The psychological stress of soldiers in action plays a much greater role today in preparation, diagnosis, and treatment, and it brings with it its own ethical questions. The number of members of the Bundeswehr returning from combat zones with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is increasing.

### ***3.8 Humanitarian Intervention***

The 1990s saw the development of a new form of armed conflict and human rights-based intervention or 'humanitarian intervention.'

When the German Bishops' Conference published its memorandum *Just Peace* in 2000, Pope John Paul II almost simultaneously proclaimed that serious human rights violations in a country were not a purely national problem. Rather, other states had the right, sometimes the duty, to end epidemic human rights violations in other countries as well, preferably in a multinational group and after authorization by the United Nations (Vitalis ... 62). Previous developments towards ever more frequent acts of humanitarian intervention as a part of international politics have had a decisive influence on the reorientation of the Bundeswehr since its deployment in Kosovo in 1999.

This establishes a relation to human rights that Wolf von Baudissin certainly did not think of when he conceived the Inner Leadership Principle. Humanitarian intervention and the building of a democratic society often following it has also brought with it completely new challenges for the Inner Leadership Principle and for the Bundeswehr's ethical training, which will now certainly flow into the planned, new ZDv.

### ***3.9 Networked Security***

In times in which 'networked security' and even the 'comprehensive approach' – to use two buzzwords that surely apply – have become a matter of course, it is also important that ethical principles be represented in a networked manner, across ministries' departmental divisions and even across party lines.

Also under discussion is the extent to which ethical principles of the Bundeswehr should be implemented, adapted, or abandoned within the framework of multinational missions if partner nations think and act partly or completely differently. Moreover, Germany is only (still) a 'lead nation' in Afghanistan. An ad hoc "coalition of the willing" brings with it particular challenges in regard to this question, since in most cases the parties involved do not enter into any joint commitments at all.

Similar considerations apply to the Bundeswehr's cooperation with civilian reconstruction forces – the UN's Integrated Mission Planning Process (IMPP) and the EU's Civil-Military Co-ordination (CMCO) (Alamir 21).

One of the most challenging tasks in this peacebuilding process is the development, reconstruction, or restructuring of the security sector, in which it is ideally a matter of implementing our Basic Law's ethical principles into an architecture of legitimate force in other countries with the aid of the Bundeswehr.

This will become even more apparent if the Bundeswehr – until now always in association with a multinational mission – becomes responsible for the establishment or reconstruction of a democratic constitutional state.

### ***3.10 Cyber Army***

With respect to armies governed by the rule of law, the Internet and social media have led to the loss of control of information, often even the loss of interpretive sovereignty. There is greater transparency of armed forces in action than ever before. This has consequences for the Inner Leadership Principle.

Since 2017, the Bundeswehr has had, so to speak, a "Cyber Army" with perhaps 13,000 soldiers. This is very welcome because the security and integrity of Germany, which according to the latest White Paper comprise the Bundeswehr's main task, are under strong threat from the cyber sector.

All of this brings with it new ethical questions and challenges for ethical education.

#### 4. Appendix: Powerpoint Slides

My competence as an expert and representative of civil society has brought me to this lecture. More specifically, my expertise lies deeper in the international field, furthermore in the ethics of human rights and in the worldwide fight against violent religious fundamentalism. That has also led me into exchanges with leaders of all major religions.

**A Senior Military Chaplain 1:** 1 Korea, all three arms, 2 Korea, 3 Honduras

**B Chief Military Chaplain 2:**

1 Chaplain Colonel Dr. Timothy Mallard, Commanding Chaplain of the US Army Europe and the 7th US Army, on the day of his appointment in Washington, USA

2 Bishop Franz-Josef Overbeck,

3 Since I am not allowed to show the heads of military pastoral care in Israel, I will take the opportunity to introduce you to my PA Martin Warnecke, who, as you can see, also accompanied me to Israel and from who took most of the photos.

**C Military Chaplaincy:** 1+ 2, with my wife, comprehensive 2015 conference of the Catholic Military Chaplaincy, 3: alone ibid. on the subject of nationalism, 2017

**D Strausberg:**

1 with the Austrian military ethicist Brigadier Edwin R. Micewski in Strausberg, lecturer, National Defence Academy of Austria and professor in the USA,

2 Evening of fireside discussion in Strausberg (Dr. Andreas Berns in younger), 3 Discussion in Strausberg

**E only goes with ecumenism:**

1 Speech to the WCC General Assembly in Pusan, Korea on the situation between North and South Korea,

2 working meeting with Pope Francis, 3 coffee break with Pope Francis

**F Military commanders:** 1 Lebanon,

2 2 Lieutenant General Michael A. Bills, Commanding General of the 8th US Army stationed in Korea,

3 his counterpart: General Jeong Kyeong Doo, Chairman, Joint Chief of Staff, Korea

**G Defense Minister** 1 Pakistan, 2 Morocco, 3 a few minutes with the Indonesian Defense Minister

**H Administering oaths,** etc. 1 Jakarta, 2 Seoul and 3 again Martin Warnecke

**I Parliament hearings** revolving around the subject of 1 Bucharest, Romania, 2 House of Lords, London, 3 Vietnam, at the political party's university

**J UN:** Human Rights Council 1 Hearing on Religion and Violence,

2 I am presenting the UN Rabat Declaration at a press conference in Beirut,

3 Briefing by Stefan Feller, Head of the UN Police and Chief Police Advisor to the UN Secretary General responsible for Blue Helmet operations and their peacekeeping missions; he led the mission in Kosovo and Bosnia; one of the most interesting conversations I have ever had.

**K UN:** Korea: 1 with the UN at the border between North and South Korea, 2 ditto: view of North Korea, 3 visited the UN Security Council with MdBs (Members of the Bundestag)

**L Sensitive conversations 1:** with Abkhazia's government in exile, 2 with the Pope in Azerbaijan, 3 in Azerbaijan's Ministry

M **Sensitive talks 2:** 1 with Latin American parliamentary presidents, etc., in the British Parliament, 2 with the Prime Minister of the Central African Republic 3 talks with four military attachés from different countries at Indonesia's invitation

N **Miscellaneous:**

1 Security panel: Combating religious terrorism, Hanns-Seidel-Foundation, photo: Prof. Dr. Ursula Männle, former Minister of State and Chairwoman of the Hanns-Seidel-Foundation, Member of the Bundestag Julia Obermeier for the Defence Committee, Lieutenant General Peter Schelzig, Deputy Inspector General of the Bundeswehr, Oliver Rolofs, Press Spokesman of the Munich Security Conference

2 with Dr. Andreas Berns and Colonel Hans W. Odenthal at the invitation of the Bundeswehr at the Global Media Forum,

3 Guest lecture at ETH Zurich on military and human rights.