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Leeway for Personal Impact: The Case of Foreign-Policy Making in Norway*

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Setting their focus on the role of decision-makers at intermediate and higher levels of a country's foreign policy administration, the authors analyze contextual factors that may determine the impact of decision-makers' personal characteristics on foreign policy. The article highlights the dynamics of these factors in the case of Norwegian foreign policy-making in the mid- and late 1970s. Over time, there has been a general relaxation of formal bureaucratic constraints, including the use of internally recruited political appointment, compounded by the growth of non-traditional international public affairs. The Foreign Minister's leadership style appears to have served as a catalyst to create an environment in which middle-to-upper level administrative leaders and political appointees have had greater opportunity than previously to garner influence and make it felt.

Introduction

This paper is concerned with the personal characteristics of decision-makers at intermediate and higher levels of a country's foreign policy administration and the extent to which such characteristics may end up affecting policy. Some examples of personal characteristics are personal ability and competence, personal ambition, political attitudes, party preference, personal working style, personal judgement.

From the perspective of the organization, these are characteristics that change as individual role incumbents change. Ideally, in a Weberian bureaucracy such changes are supposed to be either absent or unimportant; in practice we know it is different. The bureaucratic politics approach, which has been primarily concerned with the higher leadership levels, has emphasized how the bureaucratic apparatus may be used by its leaders as an instrument in their struggle for political power. Others have pointed out, however, that this phenomenon may be partly a function of bureaucratic size and partly of political culture, as it seems to be especially prominent in the US setting. A governmental operation of a

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smaller scale, a different political culture, or a lower level of development may make for a different kind of environment for the high-level, individual decision-maker.

Taking this as our cue, we shall examine the case of Norway to explore some of the factors that work together to 'make people count' in bureaucratic-political settings. Specifically, we shall be looking at the way Norway's foreign-policy administration has evolved during the 1960s and 1970s, focusing on the period 1973-81. Most of our data are in the form of interviews with employees in the relevant ministries towards the end of that period.[1]

Briefly, our argument is that when counsellor Hansen succeeds his colleague Olsen somewhere in Norway's foreign policy administration, this is likely to make a difference in the organization's way of functioning and its output. This difference is probably greater today than it would have been only a couple of decades ago. The reasons for this are two:

1. A general reduction or relaxation of bureaucratic and other social constraints on individual initiative;
2. A growth of new international activity which has bypassed established patterns or constraints and has its own built-in incentives.

The latter is particularly important in our judgement. New issues in international affairs enter the foreign policy-making system as cases where the Ministry of Foreign Affairs either does not have a clear responsibility or where it has overlapping jurisdiction with other ministries. These may be considered cases of organizational suboptimality or malfunction in which the scope for personal activity may be quite large.[2] Hence the incentives.

The general relaxation of bureaucratic and other social constraints (point 1) refers inter alia to a decrease in the constraining effects of the bureaucratic norm of non-partisanship, the formality of administrative styles, and the predominant work ethic. These factors may interact with the growth-process of new international tasks (point 2), enhancing the impact of personal characteristics.

Finally, the style of leadership in a bureaucracy may — and in this case apparently did — have important consequences for the way the bureaucracy works and the way individuals function inside it. Basically, we are here referring to the degree of formality/informality of the leader himself in running his organization. Leadership style, itself a personal characteristic, may also interact with the other factors mentioned, to enhance or inhibit the leeway for individuals to have an impact on decisions.

The consequences of this dynamic for policy are not likely to be very visible or clearcut theoretically, and this study is not a conscious and systematic effort to specify them. Nevertheless, one consequence may be to produce increasing numbers of 'politicized bureaucrats' — people whose private political loyalties and inclinations tend to get into their work. Some of our interviews with high

officials of the Labor administration then in power brought this point out quite clearly and without solicitation. A few blatant cases have been brought out in the Norwegian media during recent years, on which more below.

Once civil servants become politicized, a further possible consequence is a reduction in the formal political control of policy. This implies reduced accountability in foreign policy, an accountability that is weak to begin with even in the best of democracies.

If such trends become stronger, this may also lead to instability and inconsistency of policy. We are not suggesting, however, that this has happened in the Norwegian case.

Theoretical Background

The focus is on the impact of personality on policy and the conditions under which this impact becomes noticeable and/or significant.[3] The conditions, in other words, are intervening variables, and some of the literature deals specifically with the way they come into play.[4] Many of them may be grouped under the heading *social constraints,* and foreign policy studies of personality factors have typically tended to focus on low-constraint settings, on the assumption that this is when personal characteristics have the greatest impact. Verba (1961, 105) raises the underlying question in his discussion of non-rationality. Rosenau (1971, 112n) builds a similar assumption into his 'pre-theory' of foreign policy.

Two types of studies of low-constraints settings are discernible. One is *the crisis situation,* with studies centred on how decision-makers perform under stress. (See, e.g., the work of Holsti, Zinnes, C.F. Hermann and others, as exemplified in C.F. Hermann (ed.) 1972; also Wiegele (1978 and 1979.) The other concentrates on *high policy-making levels* in general (e.g., Starr 1980), assuming that top political leaders have greater freedom of choice than career civil servants. In Greenstein's blunt phrase: 'It is ... a commonplace that actors in the middle and lower ranks of many bureaucracies are unable to accomplish much singly, since they are restrained or inhibited by others' (1969, 44). One of the most explicit and complete statements of this line of reasoning is found in the work of M. Hermann (esp. 1978).

The present paper takes a different tack. It queries Greenstein's 'commonplace' and focuses on *routine* decision-making at *intermediate and higher* administrative levels. Like most of the authors just cited, we are also concerned with low-constraint settings, but the constraints that are 'low' in this case are of a different nature. To demonstrate this we will discuss first the general bureaucratic and other social constraints in Norwegian central administration, with special reference to foreign affairs; second, the leadership style of the Foreign Minister; and finally, the role of individuals in the 'interministerial' sector.

Factor 1: General Bureaucratic and Other Social Constraints

Variables are often not adequately discussed due to a failure to note relevant constants. In the present case there are at least two constants, both of them more fully described by East (1981).

Overall Size

The small size of the Norwegian central administration has always given special importance to individuals in key positions. In this sense we are not dealing with a new phenomenon at all. Even after a period of substantial growth, the entire administrative apparatus today does not contain more than about 100 persons at the level of Director General, as was emphasized by one of them. Only a handful of these would be concerned with any given issue area. Salomonsen (1981, 70) points out that the group of decision-makers from different ministries covering most policy areas in international affairs usually counts less than ten. These people have often studied together and may even be personal friends as well — or at least have a good notion of each others' political sympathies. Under such circumstances, the impact of face-to-face interaction, quick phone calls, and personal connections may be considerable.

Rotation

Diplomatic personnel are subject to the principle of rotation, and this also includes the professional staff of the Foreign Ministry (*Utenriksdepartementet,* 'UD' for short). Recruitment to the Norwegian Foreign Service is strongly professional. The service has a separate admissions and training system. Personnel for other ministries is also professionally recruited. Political appointments are only made to a few (2 or 3) top positions in each ministry.

The rotation principle implies that most UD personnel can look forward to another tour of duty at a mission abroad before too long. Hence, the opportunity of any UD employee to build up expertise and influence is necessarily limited. This lack of continuity and domestic experience of the personnel also restricts the influence of UD as an entity in the national political system (East 1981). The latter aspect differentiates UD in important ways from those other ministries that have become active in international affairs more recently.

Norm of Impartiality

So much for constants. One potentially important variable is the effect of bureaucratic norms. In a bureaucracy established by Weberian principles, the role of personal factors is deliberately restrained. Historically Norway has been

no exception to this rule. By tradition the bureaucracy has accepted the ideal of merit and non-involvement in politics, as may be seen in the recruitment norms:

> The merit principle has not met any serious challenges as a *norm* of recruitment in the history of Norwegian public administration (*Maktutredningen. Sluttrapport,* 1982, p. 46. (Our translation).

This tradition has, over the years, most certainly counteracted the personalizing effects of smallness.

In the area of foreign affairs, another de-personalizing factor has been the principle of rotating personnel just referred to, as well as the generally more formal tone of diplomatic intercourse. These elements together provided for a situation 20-25 years ago in which personal factors probably played a more limited role in the Norwegian case. The relative formality of Norwegian public affairs at that time, still a part of the established bourgeois culture of Northern Europe, added its own restraint. Formality was normal, and nothing was more formal in Norwegian public administration than UD and the Foreign Service. With practically all of the country's international relations channeled through UD, the significance of this tendency was further enhanced.

Loosening of Constraints

More recently there has been a gradual and partial erosion of these de-personalizing elements in Norwegian foreign relations. There was perhaps a small beginning during the long postwar reign of the Labor Party (1945-65), since longevity in office tends eventually to produce pressures on administrative appointments. But there was not much concern or awareness. The idea that public administrators may play political roles became gradually more familiar during the early 1960s. There was, first, a 1961 EEC protest action which included some prominent civil servants; then a 1963 cabinet crisis over mis-management of state-owned industry. Still, many Norwegians did not really find out what the phrase 'politicized civil servants' meant until 1972, the year of the great EEC referendum.

In the vigorous campaign preceding that vote, numerous high level civil servants were utilized on a volunteer basis by the government as 'circuit lecturers' to inform the public of government policy. Many of them came to be seen as direct participants in the political battle and as spokesmen for Norwegian membership.[5] The campaign itself was long and bitter. In retrospect the government's involvement of self-selected civil servants in the process may also have cleared away a good many inhibitions against political commitment on the part of other civil servants.

A separate but concurrent politicizing factor is probably linked to the use of political appointments, especially when appointees are recruited from the 'inside'. The number of politically recruited positions on top of the various

ministries (such as state secretaries and personal secretaries) expanded considerably during the late 1960s and into the 1970s to satisfy the political needs of a 4-party non-socialist coalition government (NOU 1974: 18). Moreover, personnel for these slots were to an increasing extent 'borrowed' from the civil service itself, meaning that political appointees had to head back to the administration after their completed 'tour of duty'. For this reason, the number of people who were politically 'identifiable' was gradually increasing in many (and probably most) ministries at the time the Second Bratteli Cabinet was formed in 1973 (headed by the then Labor Party Chairman, the late Trygve Bratteli).

Subsequent debates on foreign policy issues in Norway, among them the question of Norwegian membership in the IEA (International Energy Agency) and a succession of security policy issues towards the end of the decade, seemed to have more participation by civil servants than previously, thus giving evidence of such a trend.

Illustrative Example

The political initiatives and statements over the years by Ambassador Jens Evensen are a case in point. A well-known international legal expert, Mr. Evensen negotiated Norway's agreement on the North Sea continental shelf with the UK in the 1960s and Norway's trade agreement with the European Community in 1973 after membership had been rejected. From 1973-79 Jens Evensen was a member of the Cabinet, first as Minister of Trade and Shipping, subsequently as Minister for Law of the Seas Affairs.

During the late 1970s and into the 1980s, after he had returned to his former position in the Foreign Ministry, Ambassador Evensen began to express publicly his views on security policy. Those views were strongly at variance with the policies of the still ruling Labor government (his former colleagues) and rather quickly became a delicate problem for them.

The situation came to a head when Ambassador Evensen in 1980 made public his own private proposal for a Nordic nuclear-free zone. The timing, from the government's perspective, could hardly have been worse. For two decades, Norway had repeatedly rejected such proposals, which had been promoted by the Finnish government. As Ambassador Evensen delivered the speech presenting his proposal, the King of Norway happened to be in Helsinki on a state visit, accompanied by the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Foreign Minister Frydenlund's public reaction was restrained. Although he was clearly upset, Mr. Frydenlund limited his response to a mild rebuke, not because of the views the ambassador had expressed — as he explained later — but because it was done without properly informing his superior in advance. When a new Conservative government took over about a year later, Ambassador Evensen was relieved of the vital task of negotiating the division of territorial waters and continental shelf with the Russians.

A Representative Picture?

This example is more dramatic than the average case. Some might claim it is not representative. The final report of the most intensive and exhaustive study to date of power in Norwegian society, *Maktutredningen,* apparently takes a view that differs somewhat from ours on this issue.

The power study holds, on the one hand, that politicizing has long been a well-known phenomenon[6] in Norway's civil service (Maktutredningens sluttrapport, p. 34). On the other hand, it also makes the observation, quoted earlier, that the merit principle has not been seriously challenged as a basis for recruitment. While we agree with the latter point, it must be said that anything else would have been a drastic departure from the European norm.

The former statement appears to contradict our main argument that something new is happening in the field of foreign affairs administration.[7] However, it is not clear that we are speaking about the same phenomenon. The power study, in citing the tradition of politicization, apparently refers to the 19th century political system. It is well established that the upper-level civil service in Norway was a strong force, perhaps the dominating force, in the political system of the 19th century. This is often held to be a prime example of an administrative elite playing a political role.

Undoubtedly, Norwegian 19th century administrators had a fairly widely shared view of the kind of state and society they wanted to realize. However, it was not a partisan view in the sense that it favored a specific power group (parties did not yet exist) over another, only in the sense that it favored the bourgeois liberal state over an aristocratic state or a 'proletarian' one.

In contrast, since the 1950s growing but still limited segments of the Norwegian bureaucracy, including that for foreign affairs, have become identified by partisan political sympathy and affiliation, and some of the more active ones are also commonly believed to perform their jobs in broad accordance with their sympathies.[8]

Effects of Leadership Style in the 1970s

The way a ministry functions can reflect the personal style of its leader. The administrative style may change as foreign ministers change. The organization is used to this and adapts. Often, therefore, such changes are more cosmetic than real, although occasional exceptions are found. The Norwegian case offers an interesting illustration in Foreign Minister Knut Frydenlund, whose personal working style left its stamp on the ministry for most of the 1970s. (Mr. Frydenlund has recounted some of his experiences and reflections in book form, unfortunately only in Norwegian. Frydenlund 1982).

Mr. Frydenlund enjoyed working in a non-bureaucratic, outward-seeking fashion and tried to avoid excessive formality. He was also personally committed to making the UD system as a whole more open to dissenting views. One thing

in particular must have worked in his favor; he knew the organization from the inside. A former foreign service officer, he had previously been personal secretary to Foreign Minister Halvard Lange. In the Foreign Ministry, he knew the people involved, and they liked him. By all accounts he was a popular boss. Mr. Frydenlund's preference was to run a 'friendly shop', where fights were resolved if possible or eased over. Although some would say that a firmer style might have served the organization better, on the whole this approach may have enhanced the staff's loyalty to the organization and its leader, and reduced divisiveness among them.

Informality, due to smallness and to the other factors we have mentioned, was thus enhanced when Mr. Frydenlund took office. His term began in October 1973, coinciding with the Yom Kippur War and the 'oil crisis', a fundamental turning point which strongly signalled the end of many old truths and the need for new approaches. Mr. Frydenlund's personal predilections fitted in well with the needs of the day. Over the next two years reorganization occurred within UD. New divisions for *planning* and for *development,*[9] and new *special adviser* positions at the ambassadorial level were created. Priorities were redefined: North-South relations in particular would receive substantially increased attention and resources.

These trends continued in subsequent years, during which UD's relations with the Ministry of Trade and Shipping were fundamentally restructured, relieving UD of the concern for Norway's routine foreign trade and her merchant marine. Instead, UD was to devote more time and effort to the broader issues of international economics, and to launch new efforts in other areas, such as arms control and disarmament.

At the top of the Ministry there was a certain division of labor, keeping the new issues from completely crowding out the old. The Foreign Minister (by his own account) spent much of his time on 'the Northern Issues' (security/strategic), while the New International Economic Order (NIEO) was left to the State Secretaries.

The Ministry's contact with research institutes in international relations was concurrently stepped up, and this provided channels for the input of new ideas. Various kinds of idealistic groups as well found that the door was no longer closed at UD. The political leadership was eagerly and sincerely listening, searching for better solutions by examining unorthodox ideas and alternative ways of thinking.

These new trends at the top could hardly avoid having some effects on the foreign policy-making system. To many within the system the change may have come as a breath of fresh air, a liberating and inspiring experience. To all concerned it illustrated that where there's a will (even if only at the top), there's a way (even deep down in an organization as traditional and formal as UD).

Mr. Frydenlund enjoyed drawing on his knowledge of the Ministry's personnel resources to select UD people for special assignments, a somewhat

unorthodox procedure which may have had important implications by introducing new incentives. For instance, the new approach demonstrated that interesting and challenging jobs and tasks which were out of the ordinary for UD were available to the 'right' persons. We are not suggesting, however, that this was a matter of people being picked according to their party preference, and Mr. Frydenlund evidently took some care to show this through the actual assignments. Nevertheless, it became important in the new system to try to be the 'right' and out-of-the-ordinary person. Exposing one's 'personal profile' may have been perceived as the way to achieve that goal.

The analysis shows that Mr. Frydenlund's style appears to have encouraged somewhat more personal image-building in the Foreign Service, a way of performing one's formal role which accentuated personal characteristics. Thus his reforms seem to have increased the role of personality factors.

But individuals may gain influence in many ways — even if they are not serving as Foreign Minister. According to one high-level official in that administration:

> People are lazy, you know ... In most places like this there are only a handful of people who do the real job and pull the load ... Then, of course, they exercise an inordinate amount of personal influence in the process.

Their motives may vary, but regardless of that, people who are willing to work hard can create a sizable field of maneuver for themselves.

In our view, this is particularly true of a small ministry such as UD. Is this a Norwegian peculiarity? Although the phenomenon is surely a general one, one wonders whether the Scandinavian life style and work ethic are not such that the difference between top performance and average performance in a work place is greater than in most other parts of the world. Family life and leisure time receive high priority. Hence, the slack that may be picked up by the odd ambitious person is likely to be quite substantial.

On the other hand, the same source emphasized, to be well run a ministry *needs* to have exceptional people at the top. Leadership will falter if those in charge are unable to keep up with the flow of documents and events. Delegating responsibility is a technique with limitations. Somebody near the top needs a full view of what's going on, which also implies an exceptional working capacity. This, it was claimed, is crucial to the political control of the Ministry's activity and to the coordination of policy with other ministries. According to this view, then, exceptional concentrations of personal influence are not merely to be anticipated; they are required.

Factor 2: Growth of Interministerial Activity and New Coordination Problems

Theoretically, the greater the control from the top, the smaller the leeway for personal impact by civil servants. A strict division of labor may or may not reduce central control and may or may not reduce control at lower levels; it may even increase it. A more haphazard development of multi-centered activities, on the other hand, could lead to a rapid erosion of control. What, then, has been happening in Norway?

Over the most recent decades, foreign affairs administration in Norway has been gradually branching out to cover new tasks, becoming divided — perhaps even fragmented — by the internationalization of public administration in the OECD area. Early signs of this process are depicted in Ørvik et al. (1972). The role of the IGO network has subsequently been studied by Egeberg (1974). By 1979 the 'non-foreign' ministries in Norway were engaged in roughly the same amount of international work as the Foreign Ministry.[10]

The 'official' response of the latter has been that it is helpful when the specialized ministries take on as much international business as possible, as long as UD is kept informed. This is critical because UD must be informed in order to know when to step in to exercise its ultimate authority, in accordance with Cabinet regulations, as coordinator of the country's foreign policy. This places the burden of coordination on individual decision-makers in other ministries.

As has been shown in a series of studies (East 1981 and 1984, Efjestad 1980, Salomonsen 1981, East & Salomonsen 1981), reality may be a bit more complex than the UD view seems to suggest.

Varieties of Coordination

The task of Norwegian foreign policy coordination is performed by a variety of means, the most important of which may be listed as follows:

a. general rules and regulations
b. procedures and institutional arrangements.
c. ad hoc contact between agencies; negotiation and bargaining;
d. tacit coordination.

Much coordination is carried out by the application of simple, straightforward rules, such as:

> The Ministry of Trade and Shipping has the responsibility for EFTA matters. Questions concerning EFTA's external relations and important amendments, additions, etc. to the Convention are to be submitted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (Innst. S. no. 327, 1977-78).

Regulations of this kind govern most of the relations between UD and the Ministry of Trade.

In some areas interministerial coordination committees are set up and even function as intended, for instance in relations between UD and the Ministry of Fisheries. But generally, this kind of committee is not regarded as a useful instrument of coordination, according to East's (first round) respondents (East 1981). A different example of the procedural kind would be the standing order to consult UD when in doubt about possible foreign policy implications of an international matter. Yet another type is the *special adviser* position in UD, some of which have mainly coordinating functions, such as the special adviser for oil and energy.

Some areas are less thoroughly regulated. Security policy seems to be one of these. Direct personal contact at all levels appears to be the preferred mode of coordination between UD and the Ministry of Defense. These two ministries have long experience in working together — a consequence, perhaps, of wartime collaboration (1940-45) and subsequently Norway's NATO membership. Before World War II, however, this relationship was not a good one (Riste 1982).

Other ministries are relative newcomers in international affairs, and several have gone through a period of institutional adjustment during the 1970s. Judging from interviews, as well as the studies by Efjestad and Salomonsen, policy disagreements with UD are fairly frequent. When such problems arise, they must be handled by ad hoc discussions which in some cases can evolve into more serious inter-ministerial negotiations. This also happens when problems arise in the application and interpretation of rules or in the work of coordinating committees. As small conflicts become serious, they are relegated to higher levels. The Cabinet itself in informal session may end up handling cases like this. Others are sorted out directly between the ministers concerned. Many are taken care of at the State Secretary level, since in Norway these second-ranking political officials are relatively independent of their ministries and are expected to be an effective problem solving level. According to an official study of the actual practices of State Secretaries (NOU 1974, 18), 'interdepartmental tasks are generally considered to be an important part of the(ir) work' (p. 16).

Personal Characteristics

As for the role of person-related factors in this connection, one notes first of all that most of the 'non-foreign' ministries appear to be less formal in their decision-making procedures than UD, even though this difference is becoming smaller as UD takes on a more 'modern' style. More important, as mentioned above, is the fact that international issues are still fairly new to the specialized ministries, and although any bureaucracy has its routines, a new field of activity must necessarily be entered with flexibility and a 'trial-and-error' attitude. The scope for personal impact is likely to be greater under such circumstances.[11] In

terms of our list of approaches to coordination it seems that person-related factors would have greatest impact in cases of (c) ad hoc contact, negotiation and bargaining and (d) tacit coordination. This latter approach — tacit coordination — involves the issue of 'invisible' international activity between the specialized ministries and the world outside.

This issue was raised in our second round of interviews: How much of the unobserved activity ought to have been handled by UD or at least to have passed through their hands? Does invisible 'traffic' present a problem? If it does, how should it be tackled?

In fact, it is often up to the individual decision-maker in the 'non-foreign' ministry to decide what to do in concrete cases. Not surprisingly our interviews yielded a variety of responses to these questions both inside and outside UD. First, there was a general tendency in UD to play down the significance of invisible traffic because it was assumed to be largely technical or of little 'real' political consequence.

On the whole, people in UD expressed trust in the 'good foreign-policy horse sense' of decision-makers in other ministries. There was considerable confidence that Norwegian civil servants would not take steps that might be criticized on formal grounds or that might compromise the government. 'They always call to ask our advice', seemed to be a common view in UD; and those in other ministries often corroborated that. Furthermore, a UD man said, 'what opportunities do they get to make truly important mistakes? It is practically all concentrated in the multilateral field, and there we keep checking the agendas every day for items which might lead to trouble'.

Nevertheless, one top decision-maker took a different and somewhat pessimistic view of UD's ability to stay in control of things. Moreover, he pointed out that it is often former UD employees who are able to operate the most independent international bureaus from new positions in other ministries. They know the ropes and the rules, including just how far they can go vis-à-vis the UD.

We attempted to follow up a bit on that 'foreign-policy horse sense' in a limited round of extra interviews, to assess the consistency of viewpoints as between ministries. What did civil servants think of as 'foreign policy'?

UD Responses

Whether out of diplomatic guile or professional ambiguity, UD people themselves were more reluctant than others to give a working definition of 'foreign policy'. Still, a Director General at UD did come up with the following: the hallmark of foreign policy proper is *national commitment;* low-commitment foreign dealings are not 'foreign policy', just 'international affairs'. Foreign policy also means taking a *holistic* view of relations with a particular country; it is the *sum total* of relations with that country. The Director General felt that this conception might serve as a practical rule of thumb to determine when a problem should be left to UD to handle.

Responses from Specialized Ministries

In the other Ministries — Defense, Trade & Shipping, and Oil & Energy — responses varied considerably. The different viewpoints seemed to reflect first the substantive nature of the issues they were working with and second the rank of the respondent.

At Defense, an intermediate-level civil servant stressed the importance of rules and guidelines, which he felt solved nearly all his problems of coordination with UD, although he also emphasized the role of personal contact with his opposite number at UD. As a simple rule of thumb, NATO seemed to be the crucial dividing line — anything concerning Norway's relations with non-members of NATO would be a case where UD would take part. One of his superiors, however, expressed a quite different view. He regarded the area of overlap between Defense and UD as a quite difficult matter requiring constant attention and almost continuous contact with his colleague at UD. He felt there were no hard-and-fast rules and no routines or procedures to replace that close, personal working relationship.

It is unlikely that either person has misled the interviewer. Both of them probably described their situation accurately. The difference may be accounted for by the disparity of administrative rank and by the attendant difference of tasks, reflected in almost classical form.

Between UD and the Ministry of Trade & Shipping, the question of who gets to do what has been fought several times. Relations have been patched up by explicit agreements. The basic outlook at the Trade Ministry seems to be that they claim for themselves all cases where Norwegian economic interests constitute the main decision criterion.

To illustrate the difficulty of drawing a line, however, examples were given of cases that had been dealt with by Trade because they were 'mainly technical', but which had subtle foreign-policy overtones and thus were handled with restraint, i.e., not pushing for maximum commercial advantage: Finland's association agreement with EFTA in 1961 and trade agreements with Portugal after Salazar. (Citing those examples, the official of the Ministry of Trade sought to make the point that *his* ministry, too, is able to 'be diplomatic' and to see political implications when that is important.) Otherwise, the rule of thumb at Trade is that 'business is business' and that OECD activities particularly should ordinarily be handled by specialized ministries rather than by foreign-affairs ministries. (This rule is ordinarily adhered to by virtually all OECD members.)

At the Ministry of Oil and Energy there was a similar sense that 'politics' (and hence UD) enters the picture as distances increase beyond one's circle of near collaborators. With regard to oil matters, North Sea states seem to be regarded as almost as close collaborators as the Nordic states in other issue areas and would be dealt with by Oil & Energy. Contacts with more remote nations would be left to UD. UD provides Oil & Energy with important expertise on international legal matters, although it was stressed that this expertise resides in specific

persons. When international border issues arise, they are seen as UD matters unless drilling and exploitation actually straddle the line, as is the case with Britain in some places.

There was an interesting asymmetry between the two ministries' perspectives. At Oil & Energy everything pertaining to the Norwegian continental shelf — the actual exploitation of oil and gas resources as well as related exports — were seen as *their* business, whereas they seemed more open to UD involvement in international oil issues of other kinds. UD did not appear to dispute this. However, from the UD perspective, other nations' perceptions and interest focus on what is happening on the Norwegian shelf (e.g., what companies get concessions, how much is produced, where it is sold, etc.), which tends to make that the most interesting area to UD. The Oil Ministry's 'international diplomacy' in the late 1970s, however, was seen as less consequential. (After a highly visible international profile under Mr. Gjerde's leadership, the Oil Ministry has later assumed a more modest role on the international scene.)

Ministerial Variety in Perspective

In sum, there are 'local' views of 'what is foreign policy' and 'what's our turf' that differ from ministry to ministry. There are overlaps, inconsistencies and 'gray areas'. The resulting overall ambiguity gives leeway for individual initiative.

But as we have also seen, the leeway is not unlimited. It is subject to various checks on the part of the 'local' ministerial leadership, who like to maintain control over what their organization is doing, and who also have to tend to relationships to UD, the Prime Minister and the Cabinet as a whole.

Coordination at the Cabinet Level

The view expressed in both rounds of interviews was that more of the coordination process is played by the ear than by the book. There are substantial areas of disagreement and conflicts of interest that are fought out rather than resolved peacefully. Indeed, the Cabinet did not consciously decided to allocate issues to this ministry or that — foreign trade being a major exception. Rather, the division of labor appears to have been determined haphazardly or by the coincidence of many factors. To our knowledge, the general question of the interministerial division of labor in foreign and international affairs was never discussed in the Cabinet during the years 1973-81.[12]

At the same time, there is ample evidence that the key participants, and notably Mr. Frydenlund, were aware that coordination was becoming a problem. From the first days of his leadership, UD tried to assess the magnitude of the problem, inter alia by means of a questionnaire to all other ministries.[13] Mr. Frydenlund subsequently initiated a round of meetings with heads of other ministries, one at a time, to discuss the matter further. This latter approach, however, was interrupted after a few meetings and never resumed, due to the rapidly increasing workload at UD. Only the Ministries of Finance and Justice

were actually consulted.[14]

What, then, was the true role of the Cabinet? Because of incomplete information, we can really only guess. Still, it seems that the Cabinet from 1973-1981 was a passive observer more than an active player in the determination of administrative turf. This meant that the leeway of personal impact lower down in the hierarchy was not constrained at this point.

Concluding Remarks

This paper has considered several contextual factors that may determine the impact of personal characteristics on foreign policy. We have highlighted the dynamics of these factors in the case of Norwegian foreign policy-making in the mid- and late 1970s. We point out that the smallness of a bureaucracy apparently tends to lead to an enhanced role for individuals. Then we show how this factor coincides with a general relaxation of formal bureaucratic constraints, including the use of internally recruited political appointments, and the growth of non-traditional international public affairs. Adding to this the catalyst of the Foreign Minister's leadership style, an environment was created in which middle-to-upper level administrative leaders and political appointees may have had greater opportunity to garner influence and make it felt.

Many of the changes that produced such effects in Norway may have taken place in other countries as well, at least in Western Europe. To what extent similar effects appeared is unclear. Further studies are probably required and will need to explore better ways of gaining access to such hidden and highly sensitive areas of political activity.

NOTES

1. One round of interviews, by far the larger, was undertaken by East in 1978-79 and covered persons at the intermediate and higher levels, including the Minister of Foreign Affairs. A subsequent, smaller round was conducted by Knudsen in 1981, 1982 and 1983 and covered chiefly personnel at the upper levels, among them the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Oil & Energy.
2. An ambiguous division of labor between ministries would not *necessarily* entail greater freedom of action for individuals within those organizations. Superiors may want to control what goes on, especially if there is keen competition between ministries to gain the upper hand in a given policy area.
3. Regarding questions of inference and design in studies of personality effects on politics, see (e.g.) Greenstein (1969) and George (1979).
4. In addition to the references cited in the text, see M.G. Hermann (1976a) for a precise discussion. Broader treatment of the same issues is found inter alia in Robinson & Snyder (1965), de Rivera (1968), and the works referred to in the text. Other relevant material will be found in the volumes edited by Kelman (1965), M.G. Hermann (1976b), Falkowski (1979) and Hopple (1982).
5. See Gleditsch et al. (1974). See also the parliamentary question April 19, 1972 by Storting Representative Gunnar Garbo to the Minister of Foreign Affairs concerning the Ministry's use of civil servants in its information campaign; the reply by Foreign Minister Andreas Cappelen, and the extensive debate which followed. (*Stortingstidende*, 1971-72, vol. 7c, pp. 2713-2732.) The issue continues to be a topic of fairly heated debate in Norway, cf. articles on the Evensen case in

Dagbladet in November 1981, esp. by Ulf Torgersen (Nov. 13) and by Nils Petter Gleditsch (Nov. 26). Professor Torgersen seems to reject the interpretation of the EEC campaign which we have endorsed above, although he does appear to admit that there 'has been a certain slippage' here.

6. This accords with the school of Norwegian history which interprets the politics of the 19th century as 'the reign of the civil servant', cf. Seip 1974. It may be argued that that particular conclusion, and thus possibly also that of the power study, is based on a broader conception of a political role than that employed in the present study.
7. A more complete discussion of these questions is found in the power study report by Lægreid & Olsen, 1978, pp. 144ff.
8. Specifically, one of our key top-level interviewes, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, held this view. (The others were not asked about this.) There seems to be fairly broad agreement in the Norwegian political press that civil servants are often somewhat politically biased; disagreement tends to turn on whether they are mostly left-leaning or mostly right-leaning, a question which does not concern us here.
9. The new divisions in UD had already been proposed by earlier administrations. However, the importance of a quick effectuation of these plans was probably strongly suggested by the events of 1973-74. The Ministry subsequently put much work into solving the question of increasing its flexibility and had several internal committees at work. (See the Ministry's comments to the budgetary proposals for 1975 and 1976, *Stortingsproposisjon* no. 1, 1974-75, and 1975-76, ch. 100.) The actual budgetary proposal for the first new positions as special adviser was not, however, formally launched until the budget for 1977.
10. According to the Government's own internal study. See Colding (1980).
11. On the other hand, one UD official claimed that in his experience the 'non-foreign' ministries had a habit of letting documents on international affairs go unusually high up for signature. We do not know whether his impression was based on just those documents that were transmitted to UD, in which case the law of anticipated reactions might be involved, or whether this was actually the normal procedure in the other ministries.
12. A member of the Cabinet, Mr. Gjerde, in an interview with Knudsen (February 23, 1981) was asked how often it was necessary to coordinate or settle disputes of this kind at the cabinet level. His response was 'Never', though he added that there had been an exception, in the form of a dispute over travel money for the Oil Ministry. This issue had been raised not by UD, but by the Ministry of Finance who felt that international travelling should primarily be the responsibility of UD personnel. Another member of that Cabinet, Mr. Frydenlund, in a personal communication to Knudsen (January 4, 1983) stated that he 'could not remember this ever having been discussed in the Cabinet'.
13. The results of this investigation were reported in an internal UD document, *Rapportene fra arbeidsgruppen for utredning om utenrikstjenestens organisasjon m.v.,* September 1976.
14. Personal communication to Knudsen, January 4, 1983.

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