

6.7.2.2 Focused influence processes

In the definition of Eichhorn's model, the joint *press conference* held by *Hereditary Prince Alois von und zu Liechtenstein and Deputy Prime Minister Klaus Tschütscher* on 19 February 2008 was a focused influence process, which – probably because it was the first public statement by the Liechtenstein leadership and because it was unexpectedly blunt – was reported widely and prominently in the German media. According to long-serving local journalists, there had never been as much media presence at a press conference or similar event in Liechtenstein. The purpose of the press conference was to present Liechtenstein's official position to an audience that was as broad as possible, especially in Germany, and to make Liechtenstein's interests clear to German political actors, as well as to give a forceful signal domestically – to the Liechtenstein people, who were outraged because of the German conduct and many of whom saw themselves as victims or as David versus Goliath – that the State leadership would defend the sovereignty of the small State and would not meet what had occurred with inaction.

This intent was successfully implemented – from the perspective of the actors in Liechtenstein – even though from another perspective the mood was further heated up (see Chapter 6.6.2 "The choice of words in the dispute"). For instance, dpa-AFX cited the Government of Liechtenstein on the same day as saying "German authorities apply draconian methods inimical to the rule of law." On 19.2.2008, dpa-AFX quotes Justice Minister Tschütscher as follows: "We are currently undertaking legal inquiries with respect to the bank data illegally obtained in Liechtenstein." And with regard to the statements by German tax investigators that "nobody can clean house so thoroughly that we can't find anything", which Bild had prominently published on the morning of the press conference (Bild, 19.2.2008, 2), Tschütscher said: "This jargon reminds me of my childhood when the tank-busters said something similar. But we're here in Liechtenstein, not in Duckburg." (Die Welt, 20.2.2008, 19). The next quote published in FTD on 25 February (p. 25) is also a clear statement directed at Germany, but also at Liechtenstein's own financial center: "The Germans are telling us to take our product off the market. But we will resist."

One cannot try to influence an issue structure in a more focused way than Hereditary Prince Alois did with his statements at the press conference: "Germany cannot solve the problem with its taxpayers by launching an attack on Liechtenstein. [...] Germany should instead invest its tax revenue in improving its tax system rather than spending millions on data whose legal usability is in doubt. [...] We will review legal steps to protect our citizens and also investors who trust us from such investigative methods, which are not covered by law in Liechtenstein." (Handelsblatt, 20.2.2008, 4). With these statements, Hereditary Prince Alois expressed the emotions of much of the Liechtenstein population and garnered praise within the country: "The strong speech of the Hereditary Prince was well-received by the people in Liechtenstein." (Mario Frick, former Prime Minister, FTD, 22.2.2008, 12). With the statement that "It is certainly a crisis when one is attacked by a major State" (SZ, 20.2.2008, 1), the events were placed in a greater contemporary historical context from the perspective of Liechtenstein and drew attention to the vulnerability of the small State.

A clear, focused influence process also took place *within Germany between the tax investigators and German taxpayers*: "Everyone should still have enough time to turn themselves in." (Bild, 19.2.2008, 2). The following statements by tax investigators appear