

Appendix C

**Mr Franke's memorandum to
Associate Professor Knuefermann,
11 May 1998**

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The
University
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Te Whare Wānanga
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Hamilton 11/5/98

Dear Volker,

I understand Hans J. Kupka is intending to apply to be admitted as a D.Phil. candidate in our department. I am very concerned about this development for two reasons: Firstly, because I am not convinced that the candidate meets the academic standards required for such an undertaking. Secondly, I have serious doubts about his intellectual capacity and moral maturity as a D.Phil student despite his actual age. In my opinion either of these concerns would debar him from D.Phil candidature. Although I have raised my concerns at various sectional meetings, I am not yet satisfied that my concerns have been addressed. Therefore I now request your written responses to the following questions.

i) I understand that H.J. Kupka's grades in 500-level courses enable him to satisfy one of the minimum criteria for D.Phil candidature as laid down in the University Calendar, pp. 175,177. Given that he is a native speaker of German and hence has many advantages over non-native speakers, do you really think that his application satisfies the spirit of the University's regulations? I have spoken to several colleagues who have taught H.J. Kupka in recent years. All of them (including yourself) have repeatedly pointed out severe deficiencies in his ability to write good academic prose. Colleagues in Palmerston North to whom I spoke and who taught H.J. Kupka come to the same conclusion. I would be grateful for your comments on this point.

ii) No doubt you are well aware that H.J. Kupka has, for many years, publicly advocated ideas which can only be described as extremely right wing. These include making disparaging remarks against minority groups whose members have been murdered by the German National Socialists. I provide examples from only two of many contributions to Internet Newsgroups:

1) "Eli Wiesel ist ein Revanchist übelster Sorte", "... für diesen Hetzer, der die Deutschen bis ins zehnte Glied verfolgen und haftbar machen will, faellt mir kein anderes Wort ein".

2) (In connection with the holocaust) "Die Behauptung der Einmaligkeit der deutschen Schuld kann meines Erachtens heute, zumindest soweit es die Zahlengroesse angeht, nicht mehr aufrecht erhalten werden. ... Wer es dennoch tut, der tut es wider besseres Wissen. ... Ich stuft ihn daher als böswillig ein.... Dieses Verhalten mancher Alliierten, aber auch von Verbündeten in der NATO, EU-Partnern, Freunden in Übersee, Juden, Zigeunern und wer sich sonst noch berufen fühlen mag, ist der Dreh- und Angelpunkt einer meiner Meinung nach 'berechtigten' Kritik der Deutschen an den Vorgenannten"

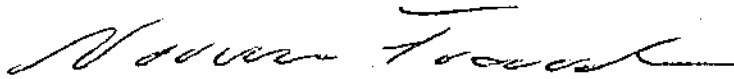
Given that our university has a commitment to bi-culturalism and international cooperation, can you, in your function as the Chairperson of the European and Hispanic Studies Department tell me whether statements such as the above are consistent with these University commitments and whether or not a person who holds such views would be a suitable candidate for a higher degree in our department.

iii) You informed me that H.J. Kupka's proposed D.Phil topic will involve an analysis of the German language in Aotearoa. Can you, as a proposed supervisor, guarantee that the candidate will proceed with the necessary independence and fairness?

We should not forget that both the present and the past have seen an outstanding contribution by German-speaking Jews and Czechs to the German language in New Zealand and thus, as you know, the topic has dimensions that go far beyond the empirical. (You may be aware that when Kupka was a student at Massey, colleagues there rejected his proposal to write a paper about the German neo-fascist party led by the former SS-officer Schönhuber.)

iv) In his political propaganda Kupka refers to his status as a "Germanist". ("Ich bin Germanist ..., masse mir daher ... eine gewisse Kenntnis der deutschen Seele an.") Can you exclude the possibility that he may, in the future, use his University of Waikato D.Phil. to give his questionable utterances more credibility?

I emphasize that if Kupka were merely an academically border-line candidate I would be still very concerned about his application. Moreover, given the public political profile of this man, I can only warn our Department that to enter into a D.Phil commitment may damage its reputation as well as that of the School of Humanities and the University as a whole. I look forward to your detailed written response to these concerns. Sincerely yours



(Norman P. Franke)

cc - Prof. Peter Oettli, Dean, School of Humanities
- Dr. Anne Mc Kim, School of Humanities' Representative, Higher Degrees Committee