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Swords to Plowshares:
The Church, The State and the
East German Peace Movement

by

Joyce Marie Mushaben

SWARDS TO PLOWSHARES: THE CHURCH,
THE STATE AND THE EAST GERMAN PEACE MOVEMENT

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They shall beat their swords into plowshares
and their spears into sickles;
nation shall not lift sword against nation
nor ever again be trained for war,
and each man shall dwell under his own vine,
under his own fig-tree, undisturbed.
For the Lord of Hosts himself has spoken.

--Book of Micah, 4:3

Since 1972, the chances of an exacerbation of political tensions resulting in a direct military confrontation between the two German states have declined dramatically. The likelihood that the German Federal Republic (FRG) and the German Democratic Republic (GDR) might one day serve as the center stage for a major military showdown between the superpowers nonetheless persists. The ratification of the Basic Treaty by the two Germanies in 1972 brought about a partial mitigation of East-West tensions, which contributed to a sense of domestic stability in both of the newly declared sovereign states. By the late 1970's, however, the proliferation of tactical nuclear weapons in the European theater reawakened fears that the two German zones could one day become a nuclear "ground zero" for reasons unrelated to their specific security needs.

Since 1979, the race to deploy ever more sophisticated weapons in Central Europe has begun to take its toll on the balance of socio-political forces internal to the East and West German states. While ostensibly rooted in an ongoing crisis of superpower relations, the long-term political significance of both the bloc-based arms race and the commensurate growth of national peace movements in the FRG and the GDR will may rest in their

contributions to a new chapter on German-German relations.

This essay traces the development of an autonomous peace movement in the German Democratic Republic, as a harbinger of changing attitudes towards dissent in a self-proclaimed socialist society. In contrast to a thirty year tradition of anti-armament protest in the Federal Republic, peace protest in the GDR is a relatively new phenomenon which has accorded a rare opportunity for political learning to citizens and party leaders alike. In a system which has yet to recognize the concept of a "loyal opposition," the Peace Movement has come to encompass a broader range of societal concerns, despite very limited opportunities for channeling and processing the political demands of critical activists and dissidents. Relying on an historical-chronological approach in Part One, this paper explores the system-immanent character of a rapidly spreading spirit of opposition in the GDR. It seeks to highlight the pivotal, mobilizational role ascribed to religious groups, in particular the Evangelical (Lutheran) Church, which appears to be forging a critical link between protest movements in the East and West. Part Two focuses on the particular attraction that the Peace Movement holds for an increasingly restive body of East German youth. The final section addresses likely connections between social protest movements in the FRG and GDR, raising what may well be the Gretchenfrage of postwar European history: namely, the question of German national identity and the issue of reunification.

Central to the paper is the argument that while peace initiatives in East Germany have benefited tremendously from the impulses provided by protests in the West, they cannot be construed as efforts to produce either a carbon copy or a mirror image of opposition movements in the FRG. East German activists have been careful to distinguish between the instrumental

value to be derived from Western support, and important, often overriding, substantive limitations. The author nevertheless advances the proposition that peace and protest movements of the magnitude now witnessed in both German states cannot be divorced from broader questions of political legitimacy, questions that are unlikely to remain unanswered long after the anticipated deployment of Pershing II and Ground-Launch Cruise Missiles, scheduled to begin at the end of 1983.

I. THE MILITARIZED SOCIETY AND ITS DISCONTENTS

A. State and Church Accommodation, 1945 to 1978.

When analyzing political trends in East European countries, it is unfair to assume that the strength of a protest movement lies in its numbers. Crowds of 700 to 7,000 attending peace events in the German Democratic Republic can only be compared with demonstrations of 30,000 to 300,000 in the Federal Republic when they are weighted to reflect the considerable personal-political risks involved for the individual participant. As a general rule, East German activists have worked to avoid creating a highly mobilized, mass based organization, the appearance of which would provoke a major crackdown by the regime against alleged enemies of the state. Developments over the last five years have nonetheless effected significant, qualitative changes in the pacifist movement, despite the low-keyed, highly decentralized nature of GDR protests. The movement can no longer be dismissed as a temporal phenomenon; rather, it is a political factor with which the Socialist Unity Party (SED) must learn to deal. The SED cannot get around recent waves of protest by expelling the leading dissidents: There are none. If the party opts for an iron-hand approach, it faces the risk of losing the hearts and minds of a whole generation of

socialist-style "post-materialist" youth.¹

Parallel to its role in the Federal Republic, the East German Lutheran Church has -- rather unintentionally -- become a major conduit for opposition to the arms race, as well as a chief mediator between a youth afflicted with existential Angst and a state which justifies its actions in the name of Realpolitik. Although the GDR does not have to contend with the presence of nuclear devices within its own borders, its proximity to the NATO deployment sites renders it as vulnerable to "ground zero" effects as the FRG. The anti-Pershing and cruise missile theme finds some expression in the pacifist movement, but to concentrate on a situation that a Warsaw Pact nation is powerless to change would waste valuable energies. Limited influence with respect to Soviet defense policies has also constrained activists in developing an anti-SS 20's theme. The topic that has come to dominate the protest agenda is one which most directly challenges the ideological legitimacy of the SED, namely, the protest against the increasing militarization of socialist society.

The East German peace campaign lacks much of the intensity, breadth and depth associated with a thirty-year protest tradition in the neighboring state, but it is not a movement born yesterday.² Unlike the Federal Republic, the GDR has assumed little of the historical responsibility for the holocaust, though it has had its own problems mastering the legacy of Stalinism. In embracing Marxism-Leninism as "the peace concept par excellence," the SED used the immediate postwar period to profess the class character and the socio-economic roots of war in such a way that it was able to denounce pacifism as a vehicle for undermining the resistance of the masses to imperialist forces.³ In 1952 the SED undertook the first in a series of measures aimed at socializing its citizens into a state of

national alert, providing a target for subsequent, if sporadic, protests.

Responding to a "request" from the party-affiliated Free German Youth Organization (FDJ) in 1952, the SED established the Society for Sports and Technical Sciences (GST) for the purpose of promoting paramilitary physical-education. GST influence, for the most part, was limited to arranging sporting competitions and recreational activities for youth. In 1956 the FDJ enthusiastically welcomed the creation of the National People's Army, and following the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961, orchestrated an "enlistment appeal" to all males 18-25 years old, intended to safeguard the Socialist Republic against further alleged acts of Western sabotage. Falling far short of its voluntaristic recruitment goals, the SED resorted to universal conscription in 1962. The corresponding statute carried a penalty of three years in prison for men refusing induction, which the Lutheran Church interpreted as a violation of constitutionally guaranteed freedom of belief (Article 39, Article 19/2). In a 1963 document, "Ten Articles Concerning Peace and Service of the Church," the religious hierarchy recognized its obligation to provide legal protection for conscientious objectors and spiritual guidance for conscripts. Under pressure from the Church the SED introduced a special army division, the "construction units" (Baueinheiten) in September 1964, as a form of military service without weapons for religious objectors. The leadership nonetheless refused to consider a non-uniformed alternative service independent of military control. The Church countered in 1965 with an "Outreach" (Handreichung) memorandum outlining its criteria for meaningful spiritual assistance to conscripts on active duty; this document was to remain a source of considerable tension between Church and state for the next several years.⁴

From 1964-65 the state continued to expand the range of pre- and paramilitary training programs through the FDJ, the Young Pioneers and the Red Cross in the form of sports competitions, apprenticeships and work groups. Their general purpose was to foster a positive identification between children and the state as early as possible, to create emotional ties to the NVA and the Soviet Union based on heroic images, and to inculcate youth with the values of courage, endurance, decisiveness (!), "socialist alertness" regarding suspicious modes of peer behavior, unconditional loyalty and, last but not least, class consciousness.⁵ Between 1965 and 1969 the FDJ continued to function as a major vehicle in generating enthusiasm for the military, introducing its first "Recruitment Collectives" in the elite senior high schools. The principle of selecting-out in the ninth, eighth or as early as the fifth grade those students with military leadership potential was extended to the general polytechnical schools in 1973. Again, the response to FDJ efforts to attract many "friends of military careers" was less than overwhelming. It was the addition of a module for military training to the ninth and tenth grade curriculum and a twelve-day, obligatory (military or paramedic) intensive session for Abitur classes, however, that provoked the greatest public reaction and the most significant waves of parental and parish opposition.

The East German Evangelische Kirchenbund (EKB) was forced to undergo a formal separation from the West German Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland (EKD) in 1969. Shortly thereafter, the Theological Studies Division of the EKB announced its own proposal for a mandatory "peace education" course for the grade schools. Religious leaders created a Church Office for Peace Research, known after 1971 as the Study Group for Peace Questions, whose members made it their task to convey the results of scientific peace

research to ecumenical groups, as well as information about International Third World and Human Rights Conferences.

Perhaps as a means of improving its image abroad, and in an effort to afford Christians an opportunity for a more positive identification with the East German state, the SED moved to improve relations with the divided but not conquered Lutheran Church as a formal institution.⁶ A less obvious but not inconceivable motive was the desire to drive a further, quasi-national wedge between the East and West German Church federations. The party tolerated the sense of "special community" that clearly existed between the two, but coupled this with pressures for EKB (Kirchenbund) engagement in "socialist ecumenism," i.e. through closer ties with the Russian Orthodox Church. The SED maintained an intentionally ambivalent stance regarding specific religious issues, so that Christians would not feel compelled to choose between church and state. That it met with some success is attested to by the fact that the 1971 Eisenacher Synod announced: "We do not want to be the Church against, nor the Church next to, but rather the Church in Socialism."⁷

The period of rapprochement 1972-1973 corresponded with the high point of Ostpolitik negotiations, which might suggest that good SED-EKB relations serve as a barometer for the level of German-German tensions. Perhaps one could argue that the Basic Treaty reinforced the sovereign character of the East German state, enhancing its legitimacy and thereby providing the time and confidence needed to negotiate with its own social protagonists. Alternatively, the loss of an external threat may have led communist officials to realize that their old justifications for demanding unquestioned loyalty to the regime were no longer valid and would have to be replaced by more cooperative relationships. The party leadership soon

discovered that permitting more extensive contacts between the West and East German protestant communities also brought in welcome hard currency during a period of rising import costs. The state's willingness to provide capital assistance for new church and hospital construction, to recognize the EKB's role as a coordinator for charitable, cultural and youth work, as well as to engage in discussions on abortion and the Helsinki accords, still had not resulted in noticeable improvements for individual practicing Christians, however. School-aged youths, in particular, were subject to considerable ideological pressure. A decision to become a "construction soldier" almost automatically precluded access to higher education and other career opportunities, repeated protests by the religious hierarchy notwithstanding.

Because any effort to establish a formal organization of conscientious objectors would immediately be outlawed as inimical to the state, the Church has been called upon by growing numbers of individuals to function as a de facto institutional base. Out of a total population of 16.8 million, an estimated 7 million are reported to maintain an affiliation with the Evangelical community, while another 1.2 million have ties to the Catholic Church, despite exposure to almost three decades' worth of active anti-religion campaigns directed by the state.⁸ For practicing Christians the problem has been not only that pacifist alternatives are limited either to military-related construction duties or to work in special police or state security units; it is also the case that the existing legal options are not publicized. It is up to the candidate to search out and abide by formal requirements. Since 1964, some 5,000 males have nevertheless refused regular induction, involving 18 months of active and two years of reserve duty for those between the ages 18-50. This does not include the "total resisters," i.e. Jehovah's Witnesses, who face ever stiffer prison sentences

ranging from three to ten years. About 250-280 youth are drafted into the construction ranks at 18 month intervals; an estimated 500, mostly theology students, have managed to escape being called into service at all.⁹ In 1975 a reorganization of the construction units precipitated an initiative among young men lobbying for alternative service. As a clever albeit subversive means of raising consciousness, the Bausoldaten committed themselves to a nineteenth month of voluntary service in charitable or church-affiliated institutions in order to demonstrate their idea of a truly alternative service. The SED has refused to consider the "social peace service" option under any circumstances.

The EKB has done its bit by organizing regular regional meetings as a way of facilitating contacts between former and future resisters. Still, the Church suffers from a case of organizational schizophrenia, in that it continues to make gains as an institution, but is relatively powerless in cases when there is a need to protect the individuals who look to it for moral leadership. The self-immolation of Pastor Brüsewitz in August, 1976 delivered a major jolt to Church consciousness with respect to the inherent dangers of its accommodationist strategy.

The years 1975-77 were marked by growing unrest among East German intellectuals who were said to have contracted the "Helsinki fever," and among youth who clashed with police over the intensified regimentation of free time, i.e., the ban on rock concerts in East Berlin, Wittenberge and Erfurt. The state began to see certain advantages in upholding the Church as a credible, yet responsible forum for limited socio-political "competition." Soviet protests against the neutron bomb and NATO modernization plans opened the door for Church attacks on the arms race precipitated by the West (a revolving door, it was not). GDR officials nevertheless attempted to

maintain distance between the organized Church and intellectual dissidents, reacting allergically when poet-musician Wolf Bierman was invited to perform on church property, for example, or when author Stefan Heym staged public readings.

Good relations between the Kirchenbund and the SED reached their peak with the March 6, 1978 summit meeting between the Lutheran primate Bishop Albrecht Schönherr and General Secretary Erich Honecker. The party granted more concessions, again in relation to the Church's institutional standing, approving joint preparations for the 500th anniversary of Luther's birth, offering expanded discussions on economic and environmental problems and the like. In all probability, these additional concessions would have made it ever more difficult for the religious hierarchy to convince the parish faithful that it represented an autonomous moral force, had the political leadership not introduced new measures in 1978 further infringing upon individual conscience.

B. Peace With or Without Weapons? 1978 to Present

In June 1978, the East German Minister of Education, Margot Honecker, announced a plan to introduce obligatory military education into the ninth and tenth grade curricula, a plan that had been in the making for two years. The Conference of Evangelical Church Directorates (KEK) called a special meeting in East Berlin to protest its exclusion from any discussion of the proposed changes and to formulate a letter to all parishes opposing the intensified militarization of East German society through the schools.

The SED refused to hear a direct appeal by the Conference urging it to reconsider. It justified its actions by arguing that these measures were not to be judged in isolation, but only in the context of the government's

general "peace policy." Military education and defense preparedness added credibility to the GDR's pursuit of peace, made for good pedagogy and promoted physical development, officials held. The SED stressed that participation in actual weapons training for boys was entirely voluntary, although 100 percent participation would naturally be desirable. The irony here, of course, is that the system that places so much ideological emphasis on classlessness and equal opportunity went out of its way to separate male from female defense obligations. While training in the proper use of small caliber weapons was advertised in light of its character-building function for boys, girls were limited to civil defense and first aid instruction -- reinforcing sex stereotypes at a relatively tender age. Clergy and parents objected that military education for school children would contribute to an atmosphere of anxiety, would foster a hatred of the "enemy" contradictory to Christian teachings, and instill in impressionable youth the belief that military action was an acceptable behavioral norm for conflict resolution.¹⁰ The military education requirements phased in during September 1978 and 1979 spawned a number of loosely coordinated "Peace Education" initiatives at parish and regional levels.

The events of 1980 brought a new quality to the East German pacifist movement. Eight regional spring and fall synods adopted peace as their discussion theme, and a series of German-German Church consultations on questions of peace took place with SED approval in East Berlin. The party became less tolerant of discussions between the Evangelical patriarchs and the Dutch IKV, when the EKB showed signs of adopting the Dutch "self-disarmament" model.¹¹ On the basis of this interaction, the East German Lutherans grew more reluctant to restrict themselves to critiques of

NATO.

The Church qua Institution formally joined the ranks of the opposition by sponsoring its first "peace decade" from November 9-19, 1980, when it declared the traditional Advent Repentence Day a "Disarmament Day." Peace activists adopted the motto gaining popularity in the West -- Frieden Schaffen Ohne Waffen. The slogan "Create Peace Without Weapons" was introduced as the theme of an FRG-wide peace week, also held in November, organized by Action Reconciliation/Peace Services -- a wing of the Western Lutheran community established in 1958. To avoid allegations of Western infiltration, organizers simultaneously designed a sew-on badge, replicating the Soviet memorial statue at the United Nations that depicted a muscular male figure pounding his sword into a plowshare. The badge became an instant best-seller among adolescents. The "decade" was staged partially in response to the GDR sanctions imposed due to the Polish crisis and produced an appeal for better relations between the Lutherans and the Polish Catholic Church which had been far from cordial.¹² A second nation-wide "decade" took place November 8-18, 1981.

By the autumn of 1981, it was the SED's turn to face up to the accommodationist's dilemma. Since 1979, the official party daily, Neues Deutschland, has carried enthusiastic reports of anti-NATO protests in the West. But the more extensive these reports have become, the more difficult it has been for the state to repress comparable mobilizations within its own borders. Conversely, the more glowing the reports on Eastern developments that appear in the Western media, the harder it has become for GDR activists to maneuver within an already restrictive political environment.

The Dresden Forum of February 13, 1982 can be considered the East German analog to the Evangelical Congress that drew over 150,000

participants to Hamburg in June, 1981. As a formally sponsored Church event, the Forum also signals a severing of ties between the official and unofficial peace movements. The meeting commemorating the thirty-seventh anniversary of the Dresden bombings attracted 5,000 East German youth, despite official efforts to suppress publication of the event, delay trains, etc. Discussion topics ranged from the significance of the "Berlin Appeal" put into circulation by dissident Rainer Eppelmann in January, to the sanctions being imposed at school and workplace against those displaying the "Swords to Plowshares" badges. The Forum message quickly spread to the provinces, as crowds of 2,000-7,000 assembled at synods from Jena to Brandenburg. Less than six months later, the Lutheran church publicly took its leave of the government's position on disarmament. In July, 1982, the Conference of Church Directorates proclaimed the production, development, testing and deployment of nuclear weapons "a moral evil." It held that nuclear deployments "regardless of where and by whom" ought to be abjured by all religions, thereby calling for a complete freeze and a moratorium on inimical rhetoric.¹³

Like its counterpart in the Federal Republic, the Catholic Church in the GDR has remained conspicuously passive over the last two decades. It has largely produced memos for internal consumption, in which it continues to uphold the "just war thesis," while asserting the right of military conscripts to practice their faith. In 1968 diocesan youth offices instigated a discussion series titled "Peace is Possible;" but in 1978 there was little open debate among Catholics concerning parental rights and military education in the schools. While the centralized nature of the Catholic Church could, in theory, enable it to play an important coordinating role within the movement, the size of its constituency no doubt

dictates a greater show of political caution, as does its Vatican connection in light of recent events in Poland.

Despite what now appears to be a unified pro-freeze stance on the part of the Evangelical Church, the unofficial East German peace movement is likely to continue developing along regional-parish lines. At this level activist groups will continue their efforts to bring about the creation of a "social-peace" or civilian service option for conscientious objectors, a purging of school texts of glorified military images and the elimination of "war toys" from schools and day-care centers. Instead of merging protest issues, religious elements are attempting to present their causes as criticisms of specific policies, and not as an assault on the political regime per se.

II. PEACE, PROTEST AND CHURCH-YOUTH RELATIONS

The SED's troubled reaction to a set of conditions it has in part helped to create are reflected in a comment by a representative of the "official" peace movement, embodied in the East German Peace Council: "Why do you want to mobilize on your own? That will only undermine our national movement."¹⁴ The leadership has attempted to counter this form of extra-party opposition -- ironically -- by expanding the organizational base of the movement, rallying its own troops in support of the official "peace policy." The FDJ has been pushed to center stage, in light of the regime's particular concern with growing youth unrest. Communist youth organizers have adopted the themes Gegen NATO Waffen, Frieden Schaffen (Make Peace Against NATO Weapons) and "Peace Must Be Defended, Peace Must Be Armed." The FDJ has in its turn adopted clever but subversive tactics, emulating the headbands, badges and T-shirts of the other movement, and also scheduling

officially-sanctioned-rock concerts and candlelight marches "like in Bonn."¹⁵ That officially sponsored rallies for peace attract youth from the unofficial movement says less about the persuasive rhetoric of the regime than it does about changing attitudes among East German youth as a whole, however.

In youth circles, there is a growing feeling of alienation towards the system which finds its parallels in the FRG. Politicians and psychologists on both sides of the border are witnessing the development of a "second culture," a pattern of "internal emigration" based on a rejection of establishment values, whether they be capitalist or socialist. The large numbers of adolescents flocking to ecclesiastical synods do not necessarily signify that a major religious revival is in the making. Rather, it is the Church's century-old tradition of providing sanctuary that has attracted so many displaced flower-children. They see the Church as a place where they are free to ask questions and where they can find a sense of belonging among others who share their fears. As the beneficiaries of more years of compulsory education and regular exposure to West German media, GDR adolescents are conscious, and critical, of inconsistencies between official propaganda and government policies. Commenting on the sanctions used against individuals wearing the "Swords to Plowshares" badge, a former conscript summarized:

Wouldn't they have to tear down the monument in New York in order to be consistent? . . . I was in the Army and I will do my time in the Reserves. We in the GDR are now tied to the Warsaw Pact, as you are to NATO. I know that. The badge for me meant no more and no less than the profession of a wonderful dream. Is it really so

treasonous to the state and anti-socialist to dream?¹⁶

Youth's resistance to a further militarization of East German society owes partly to the fact that the conditions to which recruits are subjected bear little resemblance to the heroic textbook images. The food is bad, the discipline harsh, the hours long, the pay low, and the haircuts very short -- at a time when personal appearance and peer identification is very, very important. According to interviews, few emerge as spirited or contented as they entered.¹⁷ In stark contrast to disgruntled youth in the FRG, however, the majority of those resisting military induction and chanting for peace in the GDR tend to be manual or semi-skilled workers and apprentices, not university students. Upwardly mobile Abitur-students are much less inclined to jeopardize their chances for university admission and professional careers, but they constitute a minority among secondary school graduates, under ten percent.¹⁵ The educational system is a source of enormous "pressure to achieve," yet the opportunities for entering more glamorous professions have not kept pace with the baby boom and the rhetoric of equal opportunity. The regimentation of free time further frustrates East German youth in their efforts to develop their own "culture," albeit with limited resources, in emulation of their Western counterparts. Those who seek a sense of personal belonging in religious or peace groups are likely to become aware of the life-long political consequences of their search -- after it is too late. As one visitor to Dresden exclaimed: "I am only 19 and already have nothing more to lose."¹⁸

For want of a more creative alternative, the Party has allowed the Church to play the role of de facto mediator.¹⁹ Concessions have come in conjunction with SED efforts to maintain institutional support for its policies now that the Evangelical Community has been featured as "the Church

In Socialism." In view of its legal-financial dependence upon the state, the Church can be utilized as an escape valve for social unrest, the opening and closing of which still permits a degree of party control.

With potentially one half of its Lutheran affiliated citizens and a major segment of the "successor generation" engaging in various forms of passive resistance, the SED has its hands full, above and beyond the barrage of energy and economic problems with which it has to contend. A third wing of the pacifist movement, composed of dissident intellectuals, poses an additional -- if unintentional -- political threat to the East German leadership. On the surface at least, the major issues raised by this group run parallel to questions posed by the Green and Alternative Parties in the West regarding the status of Germany in the disarmament process. Implicit in the criticisms and deliberations advanced by these dissidents is a recognition that it may be time to reopen the Pandora's box of German nationalism.

III. NEUTRO-NATIONALISM "MADE IN GERMANY"

For the two German states, the special political significance of the peace movements must be ascribed to the security dilemma presented by their respective geostrategic locations. The security policies of both countries are strictly delimited by their mutual dependence on another major power. This dependence has become a critical element in the self-image of these states and has significantly influenced their definitions of power with respect to foreign policy.

Article 5 of the 1972 Basic Treaty commits the FRG and GDR to a search for measures to bring about arms reductions in Europe and a mutual support of efforts to place the remainder under effective international control. Yet

neither side has seen fit to exploit opportunities made possible by a general improvement in German-German relations for the purpose of establishing "confidence-building" measures. Instead, "many West German policy makers... have gladly used international complications surrounding the German question as a way of reducing their responsibility for (irrational) relations with the other German state," according to former FRG representative to the GDR, Günter Gaus.²⁰ The converse no doubt holds true for the East German leadership.

But the more strained the relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union becomes, the greater the inclination among some disarmament proponents to move the question of inter-German relations to the center stage. It would be overstating the case to argue for all demonstrators that "in light of world political developments over the last two years, the German question has permeated our consciousness as the key to European peace."²¹ A unique meeting of the minds in East Berlin during December of 1981, on the one-hand, and a bevy of media reports on neutro-nationalism, national-neutralism, crypto-nationalism and "German patriotism," on the other, indicate a significant degree of interest in the topic on both sides of the border nonetheless.

Some 100 writers, artists and scholars from East and West attended an officially sanctioned conference at the "Hotel Stadt Berlin" on December 13-14, 1981, at the same time Schmidt and Honecker were engaged in a summit meeting at Wehrbellin (both disrupted by the imposition of martial law in Poland). For East Germans the meeting was particularly significant in that it provided an official forum for known critics of the regime, in contrast to the heavy-handed expulsion tactics used against intellectual dissidents in the 1970's. For the West Germans it was an opportunity to hear Eastern

Intellectuals address the peace question in their own terms, devoid of the ideological defensiveness characteristic of other gatherings.²²

The December Berliner Begegnung does not represent the first call for an intensified German-German dialogue to have grown out of the peace movement. Nor, fittingly, has it been the first appeal to come from Berlin. What is more surprising, however, is the fact that the subject of German nationalism is generating a lot of positive interest among the political Left. One would expect to hear praise for "German patriotism" coming from Otto von Bismarck, but not from Heinrich Böll.²³ In fact, West-Berlin's Alternative List Party has devoted time and platform space to the Deutschlandfrage ever since its 1981 electoral campaign.

The reunification they have in mind, however, "would not resemble the centralized Prussian-national state of Bismarck . . . It would be neither a camouflaged FRG nor an overextended GDR."²⁴ The object is to substitute a new Heimat-Gefühl for a thirty year old "hostage consciousness". The system parties find this proposal to "open old wounds" very unsettling.

The "Berlin Appeal," mentioned earlier as a topic finding resonance among youth at the Dresden Forum, is equally disconcerting to East German authorities, who have never been partial to the idea of reunification. The petition which was signed by 2,000 GDR citizens in less than three months in 1982 not only calls for a peace treaty and withdrawal of foreign troops, greater freedom of political expression, as well as an end to military parades and civil defense exercises. It moreover pleads for direct negotiations between the two Germanies regarding the creation of their own nuclear free zone.

The appeal to German-German survival instincts implicit in this document is unlikely to provoke a positive response from the superpowers.

But it does emphasize that no state has a monopoly on the desire for peace. At this point, German reunification is a highly unlikely proposition. Perhaps the disarmament movement arouses memories of the anti-rearmament days of the fifties when reunification was a dream kept very much alive by Adenauer's conservative government. One may wish to discount the reunification proposals as little more than an exercise in radical-romanticism. The question of German national identity, however, can not be so quickly dismissed.

I would like to suggest that the German states are only now confronting the full-fledged political effects connected with the "missing generation" phenomenon. Demographic polarization in the FRG and the GDR has been a major factor in youth's strong attraction to the peace movement in both systems. First of all, a majority of the peace activists are too young to have experienced fascism directly; they are tired of the national guilt complex imposed on them for atrocities they never committed. They have witnessed a different kind of destruction of the environment in their own lifetime, however, whose costs they shall also have to pay: Hence, the connection between the anti-nuclear energy and anti-armaments movements.

Second, a German baby-boom delayed by the imperatives of reconstruction has reached employable age, just as worsening economic conditions dictate dramatic cutbacks in educational and career opportunities, construction of housing and recreational facilities, and other services important to youth -- in the East as well as in the West. Arms expenditures have become a significant source of resentment towards the system and towards the superpowers who stand behind them.

Finally, for many of the 1980's protesters a world divided into ideological spheres of influence is an historical given, and not a

particularly useful one at that. They have on occasion sought to channel their demands through the established institutions, for which they have been rebuffed, vilified, black-listed (Berufsverbot) and even imprisoned. Anti-nuclear protesters have attempted to add important items to the political agenda. They have found greater personal satisfaction and a sense of community in grass-roots involvement. Neither governments in the West nor East have lived up to their respective promises to "dare more democracy" and to provide for "each according to his or her need."

For these reasons, the peace movements in the Federal Republic and the German Democratic Republic have become an important vehicle for political expression. Their significance will not be measurable in terms of how many Pershing II and cruise missiles are actually deployed at the end of 1983. The hundreds of thousand, if not millions, of people mobilized in opposition to further military build-ups are unlikely to settle for a peace defined as "no war."

On the other hand, the concept of reunification would appear to pose a greater threat to GDR leaders than to the Bonn government, to the extent that the East has yet to overcome much of its inferiority complex vis-à-vis the West. The mechanisms upon which the SED has long relied for the purpose of repressing political dissent have contributed significantly to a lack of innovation and spontaneity and have fostered a kind of national schizophrenia regarding the regime's accomplishments.

In principle, the Socialist Unity Party could go a long way in promoting its own legitimacy by continuing to recognize the Evangelical Church as a conduit for restricted, albeit responsible opposition to the regime. With respect to alienated youth, the best policy would be one focusing on conciliation rather than control. The decision to expel

dissident intellectuals after 1975 has proved effective in diffusing opposition in the short run, but in the long run it could constitute a slow-motion version of the pre-1961 "brain drain."

As recently expelled East German writer Thomas Brasch reflected at the December, 1981 gathering of intellectuals: "The 'peace' I have lived through for the last twenty years was a horrendous experience, devoid of productivity and creativity."²⁵ Of course, the alternative could be much worse, if German peace activists fail to convince the superpowers of the need to turn nuclear swords into plowshares. For the GDR, the political alternative may well lie in learning to make peace without weapons -- in relation to its own citizens.

FOOTNOTES

1. Basic premises for the "post-materialist" debate are outlined in two articles by Ronald Inglehart, "Post-materialism In an Environment of Insecurity," American Political Science Review 75, No. 4 (1981): 880-899, and "The Silent Revolution In Europe: Intergenerational Change In Post-Industrial Societies," American Political Science Review 65, No. 4 (1971): 991-1017. A general discussion of the post-materialism phenomenon as manifested in the GDR appears in Timothy Garton Ash, Und Willst Du Nicht Mein Bruder Sein -- Die DDR Heute (Reinbeck bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1981). A more focused discussion is offered by Wolfgang Mieczkowski, "In Search of the Forbidden Nation: Opposition by the Young Generation In the GDR," Government and Opposition 18, No. 2 (1983): 175-193.
2. Jutta A. Helm, "Protest and Political Change In West Germany: Evidence from Three Decades." Paper presented at the 1979 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, D.C., September 1, 1979.
3. Harald Kleinschmid, "'Ein Weg Ohne Ende' -- Zur Reaktion der DDR auf 'Holocaust'," Deutschland Archiv 12, No. 3 (March 1979): 225-228. Further, Peter Wenslerski, "Zwischen Pazifismus und Militarismus," Deutschland Archiv 15, No. 5 (May 1982): 449-52; and Karl Wilhelm Fricke, "Die Pazifismus-Kritik der SED," Deutschland Archiv 14, No. 10 (October 1981): 1026-29.
4. Wolfgang Büscher, Peter Wenslerski and Klaus Wolschner, Hrsg., Friedensbewegung In der DDR, Texte 1978-1982 (Hattingen: Scandica Verlag, 1982).

5. Arnim Brux and Ulrike Brux, "Wehrpropaganda und vormilitarische Erziehung," Deutschland Archiv 16. No. 1 (January 1983): 106-8; Joachim-Rüdiger Groth, "Wehrerziehung in der DDR durch Kinderbücher," Deutschland Archiv 14, No. 12 (December 1981): 1266-75; Arnim Brux, "Wehrerziehung im Bildungssystem der DDR," Deutschland Archiv 13, No. 10 (October 1980): 1097-99; Gisela Helwig, "Als Held wird man nicht geboren," Deutschland Archiv 12, No. 3 (March 1979): 233-35.
6. Gisela Helwig, "'Zeichen der Hoffnung' -- zum Dialog Zwischen Staat und Kirche in der DDR," Deutschland Archiv 11, No. 4 (April 1978): 351-55; and "Der Dialog zwischen Staat und Kirche geht weiter," Deutschland Archiv 14, No. 11 (November 1981): 1121-22. Robert F. Goeckel, "Zehn Jahre Kirchenpolitik unter Honecker," Deutschland Archiv 14, No. 9 (September 1981): 940-47.
7. Helwig, "'Zeichen der Hoffnung'," ibid., p. 352.
8. Klaus Ehring and Martin Dallwitz, Schwerter zu Pflugscharen - Friedensbewegung in der DDR (Reinbeck bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1982): 34.
9. Klemens Richter, "Kirchen und Wehrdienstverweigerung in der DDR," Deutschland Archiv 12, No. 1 (January 1979): 41. Also, Ehring and Dallwitz, loc. cit., pp. 118-137; and Gunter Holzweissig, "Bausoldaten stören Heldenerziehung," Deutschland Archiv 12, No. 8 (August 1979): 881-83.
10. Hans - Jürgen Roder, "Fragwürdige Friedenspolitik - Zur Einführung von obligatorischem Wehrunterricht in der DDR," Deutschland Archiv 11, No. 8 (August 1978): 800-05; "Wehrunterricht in den Schulen der DDR," Deutschland Archiv 11, No. 8 (August 1978): 890-96. Klemens Richter, "Das Friedensengagement der Evangelischen Christen in der DDR," Deutschland Archiv 14, No. 11 (November 1981): 1123-29.

11. The Dutch Inter-Church Peace Council organized an initiative in 1977 under the motto, "rid the earth of weapons, begin with the Netherlands," constituting one of the most significant appeals for unilateral disarmament on the Continent. This is reported by Volkmar Delle, Hrsg., Bonn, 10. 10. 81. Friedensdemonstration für Abrüstung und Entspannung in Europa (Bornheim: Laumuv Verlag, 1981).
12. Büscher et al., op. cit., pp. 122-24, pp. 235-37.
13. "Evangelischer Kirchenbund in der DDR verurteilt Atomwaffen," Der Tagesspiegel (Berlin), July 7, 1982.
14. Hans-Peter Wensierski, "Sie lassen sich nicht mundtot machen," Die Zeit, No. 6, February 11, 1983.
15. Marlies Menge, "'Jeder hat doch seine Träume' - Sie sind in der FDJ und haben trotzdem Ihre eigene Meinung," Die Zeit, No. 22, May 28, 1982.
16. Marlies Menge, "Wo Schöne Träume Verboten Werden," Die Zeit, No. 14, April 9, 1982.
17. Ehring and Dallwitz, op. cit.
18. Büscher et al, op. cit., p. 280.
19. Lutz Dietze, "Der Ausbruch aus dem Plan," Die Zeit, No. 51, December 18, 1981. Peter Wensierski, "Die Kirche Wirbt für Dialog mit der Jugend," Deutschland Archiv 15, No. 3 (March 1982): 230-234.
20. Günter Gaus, "Ohne Schlaumeier und Schwarmgeister - Plädoyer für eine rationale deutsch-deutsche Politik," Die Zeit, No. 23, June 4, 1982; and, "Wir Machten die DDR zu unserer Ersatz-KP," Die Zeit, No. 38, September 18, 1981. For the GDR perspective, see Dettmar Cramer, "Deutsch-Deutsche Beziehungen an der Jahreswende, 1977/1978," Deutschland Archiv 11, No. 1 (January 1978): 1-4; Wilhelm Bruns, "Die Position der DDR zur Abrüstung," Deutschland Archiv 12, No. 9 (September

- 1979): 938-50, and "Ohne Vertrauen Keine Abrüstung," Deutschland Archiv 15, No. 6 (June 1982): 596-605.
21. Herbert Ammon and Peter Brandt, "Die Aktualität der deutschen Frage für den Frieden in Europa," in Hans A. Pestalozzi, Ralf Schlegel, Adolf Bachmann, Hrsg., Frieden in Deutschland. Die Friedensbewegung: Wie sie wurde, was sie ist, was sie werden kann (München: Wilhelm Goldmann, 1982): 321.
22. Harald Kleinschmid, "Ich habe mir einen Traum erfüllt," Deutschland Archiv 15, No. 1 (January 1982): 5-9; "Berliner Begegnung zur Friedensförderung," Deutschland Archiv 15, No. 3 (March 1982): 313-36.
23. Karl-Heinz Janssen, "Deutsche aus der Front?" Die Zeit, No. 47, November 20, 1981.
24. Ibid.
25. "Berliner Begegnung zur Friedensförderung," loc. cit., p. 335.