

Spring 1976

Contrast and Continuity: Honecker's Policy toward the Federal Republic and West Berlin

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Recommended Citation

Bowers, Stephen R., "Contrast and Continuity: Honecker's Policy toward the Federal Republic and West Berlin" (1976). *Faculty Publications and Presentations*. 86.
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36. Mamatey, pp. 280-286.
37. *Ibid.*, pp. 342-343.
38. *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt*, Volume VIII (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954), p. 1364.
39. Robert Ferrell, "The United States and East Central Europe Before 1941," in Kertesz, *op. cit.*, p. 22.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 24.
41. William R. Caspary, "The 'Mood Theory': A Study of Public Opinion and Foreign Policy," *American Political Science Review* LXIV (June, 1970).
42. For discussion on this point see George Kennan, *American Diplomacy* (New York: Mentor Books, 1951); Walter Lippmann, *The Public Philosophy* (New York: Mentor Books, 1955).
43. Gaddis, p. 179.
44. Martin Weil, "Can the Blacks Do for Africa what the Jews Did for Israel?" *Foreign Policy* 15 (Summer, 1974), pp. 110-119.
45. *Ibid.*, p. 112.
46. For a very good treatment of Ostpolitik in particular and the foreign policy of the Federal Republic in general see Peter Merkl, *German Foreign Policies, West and East* (Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-Clion Press, 1974).
47. A provocative discussion of this issue can be found in Adam Ulam's *The Rivals* (New York: Viking Press, 1971).
48. Robert A. Divine, *Roosevelt and World War II* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1970), p. 92.
49. Ambrose, p. 113.
50. U.S., Department of State, *The Conferences at Malta and Yalta*, p. 669.

CONTRAST AND CONTINUITY: HONECKER'S POLICY TOWARD THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC AND WEST BERLIN

In May 1971, on the eve of the conference of the East German Socialist Unity Party (SED), Walter Ulbricht was replaced as First Secretary of the SED, a post which he had held for almost two decades. His replacement was a fifty-nine-year-old party functionary, Erich Honecker. In the period prior to his retirement, Ulbricht had apparently become increasingly reluctant to support Soviet efforts to achieve detente in Germany. Consequently, according to many observers, the USSR decided to replace him with Politburo member Erich Honecker, a man regarded as much more pliant and flexible than the aging Ulbricht.

In order to understand the necessity for Ulbricht's removal, one must consider the role that the German Democratic Republic (GDR) had begun to play in Eastern Europe during the last years of his rule. Ulbricht's remarks at the ceremony for the 19th anniversary of the founding of the GDR reflected the tone of his general orientation toward the West. In his toast Ulbricht declared that it was "necessary to be vigilant, to effectively counter and oppose the methods of psychological warfare, of economic warfare, and of anti-social activity" that characterized Western policy.¹ During these years, the GDR was portrayed in official literature as an embattled garrison reinforcing its defenses against a hostile and aggressive West. The prime exemplar of this assault on the GDR was said to be the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) which was condemned with increased fury and frequency after the introduction of Brandt's conciliatory *Ostpolitik*. *Neues Deutschland* editorialized that the "much vaunted 'accommodation' shown by the Federal Republic these days consists of a flood of more or less beautiful words and nothing else."²

While such an outlook was not inconsistent with East German policy of the previous two decades, it was becoming increasingly discordant in the atmosphere of new Soviet policy formulations. By 1970 Soviet-West German relations had advanced to a stage clearly unacceptable from Ulbricht's point of view. Not only

the Soviet Union but Poland and Rumania as well were pressuring the East Germans into bilateral talks with the Brandt government. The continuing East German hostility toward the FRG squarely contradicted the basic views expressed by the USSR in its negotiations on a renunciation of force agreement with Bonn. While the Soviet Union and Poland were making considerable progress in talks with West Germany, Ulbricht's SED was issuing a series of shrill denunciations of the West German policy which made such progress possible. As it became obvious that most of East Europe was following Moscow's lead in improving relations with the FRG, East German demands for recognition of the GDR as the price for normalization of relations with Bonn were seriously undermined. As Robin Alison Remington observed, "The long-standing East German nightmare of being isolated in the heart of Europe was, from Pankow's point of view, taking on an ugly daytime reality."³ As the SED's foreign policy had become more active, it had assumed an increasingly negative quality in relation to the policies pursued by the USSR and the other members of the Warsaw Pact. Consequently, the GDR was being alienated from its allies and the intransigent Ulbricht was becoming a liability. Honecker, with his safe conservative background and long record of service in the Party apparatus, provided a suitable and stable alternative to the aging Ulbricht.

Honecker's background does much to explain why his reaction to the development of detente differed from that of his predecessor. In analyzing the factions in the SED Politburo prior to Ulbricht's removal, Peter C. Ludz placed Honecker within the group he described as "perhaps the most important in the Politburo." Individuals in this faction are "flexible and diversified functionaries [who] range from conservative to dogmatic, without, however, being inflexible."⁴ Honecker's former associate, Heinz Lippmann, has provided additional insight into those elements of Honecker's outlook that make him inclined to accept Soviet policy shifts. Lippmann writes that Honecker is unconditionally loyal to the USSR and has demonstrated his loyalty countless times. Furthermore, Honecker has never maintained that the GDR occupies any special position and has urged his country to exhibit modesty in its relations with the USSR.⁵ Finally, the fact that Honecker was not too strong within the SED must have enhanced his attractiveness to the Soviet leadership as well as his dependence upon the Kremlin. An individual who was very weak within the party would have been a willing Soviet vassal, but might have lacked the capability to command his own organization. One who was too strong might have become independent from the USSR. Honecker, strong but not too strong, must have appeared to strike a favorable balance, exhibiting the strength to command the SED but not to shed his dependency on the Kremlin.

One need only contrast Honecker's qualities with Ulbricht's obvious arrogance in order to see the difference between the two men. Ulbricht's pretensions to omniscience and his compulsion to make pronouncements on everything from

architecture to athletics were reminiscent of Stalin and undoubtedly irksome to the Kremlin. Ulbricht never tired of reminding listeners that he had been a contemporary of Lenin and encouraged a cult of personality about himself unparalleled in Eastern Europe. It is hardly surprising that the didactic Ulbricht, many years senior to the Soviet leadership, was reluctant to accept shifts in policy which he personally saw as damaging to East German interests.

The Honecker policy toward West Germany has differed markedly from the Ulbricht policy in terms of actual progress on important issues such as West Berlin. One of the most notable examples, the Four Power Agreement on Berlin, came within a few months of Ulbricht's replacement. However, the rhetoric of the Honecker years has retained many characteristics of the Ulbricht era, suggesting elements of continuity in GDR foreign policy along with elements of change. The tone of the East German rhetoric toward the West in general and the Federal Republic of Germany and West Berlin in particular has been characterized by a concern over the allegedly negative qualities of the FRG, attacks on West German and West Berlin policies and personalities, continued emphasis on the Western military threat, and charges that West Berlin has permitted itself to be misused by the West.

The Negative Image of the West Modified

Shortly after the announcement of Ulbricht's resignation, Honecker himself, in his report on the Twenty-Fourth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, made explicit the East German view that West Germany had not changed. According to the new First Secretary, the CPSU and the SED were "agreed that nothing had changed as regards the reactionary and aggressive character of imperialism and the Federal Republic of Germany."⁶ An editorial in *Neues Deutschland* a few days later was consistent with Honecker's harsh theme in its condemnation of the current role of the FRG. According to the editorial, the FRG was to "assume the old function of the German Reich since the end of World War Two—that is to say, form the spearhead of the imperialist world system against socialism."⁷ While such statements must be balanced with subsequent positive developments, they do serve to establish a pattern of continuity between the Ulbricht and Honecker regimes in terms of the East German conception of what the FRG is supposed to represent. In this regard, the similarities outnumber the differences.

In evaluating West German policy initiatives toward the GDR, Honecker's regime continued a critical attitude. Many West German offers were simply dismissed as "verbal compromises" lacking in any real substance. In the summer of 1971 when the Bonn government rescinded official directives on avoiding the use of the term "GDR," the East Germans responded by declaring that this was no more than a "feeble and illogical adjustment to the force of reality and a way of yielding to the pressure of public opinion. It does not indicate a change of policy."⁸ Just as the East Germans frequently charged that the FRG wanted to believe the worst about the GDR, the GDR press seemed to insist on believing only the worst about West

German intentions. According to East German sources, the FRG had done nothing to improve relations with East Germany. In fact, Bonn was said to be engaging in an international diplomatic offensive against East Germany in order to block its membership in the United Nations and prevent other states from extending diplomatic recognition to the GDR.⁹ The official East German opinion was that the FRG was continuing to adhere to the sole representation doctrine and engaging in an ideological crusade against East Berlin.¹⁰

Individuals who were associated with such policies were frequently singled out for personal attacks by the East German news media. As FRG Minister of Interior, Hans-Dietrich Genscher was accused of lacking respect for Bonn's treaties with the USSR and Poland when he questioned East German frontier measures. Genscher, according to the GDR press, failed to recognize the existing frontiers of Europe, including those of East Germany.¹¹ In a similar fashion, FRG Minister Egon Bahr has been attacked for his alleged wish to cause the GDR "to disappear." In commenting on this, the East German radio program, "Voice of the GDR," charged that the Bahr statement was proof that the West German government had no real intention of renouncing its "revanchist" policies.¹² West Berlin's mayor Klaus Scheutz was branded as one of "those people who maintain that West Berlin was best governed during the days of the cold war." A *Neues Deutschland* editorial charged that Scheutz had no interest in normalization of relations with the GDR and was acting against the best interests of the West Berlin population.¹³ While Brandt himself was generally accorded reasonably restrained treatment by the GDR press during this time, he has also been subjected to occasional severe criticism. When Brandt made what the GDR authorities viewed as disparaging remarks about the attitude of East German officials in April 1973, the response was an East German attack in which the Chancellor was charged with hostility to the GDR and being blinded by Social Democratic anticommunism.¹⁴ The new West German chancellor, Helmut Schmidt, has been the subject of numerous attacks over the years. His work as Defense Minister attracted most of the criticism he received. In that capacity, according to Honecker, Schmidt carried on the "infamous work begun by Strauss" and won the praise of Nazi elements in West Germany.¹⁵

Since Honecker's assumption of power in May 1971 the GDR has continued to stress the military threat posed by West Germany and NATO. This theme is essentially a continuation of one started in the first years after the partition of Germany and was played upon in varying degrees during the 1950s and 1960s. The basic idea is that the military power of the West is directed against the East European states. The specter of a nuclear military force under the control of the Bonn government has been an element of this theme. *Neues Deutschland* editorialized in 1973:

In its military policy the FRG is at present in theory and practice pursuing the twofold aim of increasing the conventional strength of the Bundeswehr by arming itself and getting a hold on nuclear weapons by the presence of American forces in the FRG.¹⁶

Any efforts at upgrading the technical quality of the West German military have been portrayed as a violation of the spirit of detente. In commenting on West German military modernization plans in 1972, "Voice of the GDR" asked rhetorically how such plans could be compatible with the West German treaties with the USSR and Poland.¹⁷ Speaking on the same program in 1975, GDR commentator Guenter Engmann warned of the "intensified rearmament" taking place in the FRG. Not only was a new weapons system planned, but, Engmann charged, "atomic mines" were to be placed on the West German frontiers with the GDR and Czechoslovakia.¹⁸ This image of the "Western threat" is used as justification for East German military preparedness. In 1971 Defense Minister Heinz Hoffmann declared that peace in Europe had been preserved, not by a balance of power, but only by a clear and growing military superiority of the East. Hoffmann cited the alliance of the United States and the FRG as proof that continued efforts to guarantee military superiority of the WTO forces, including those of the GDR, were a necessity.¹⁹

The Honecker regime has continued to stress that West Berlin threatens the GDR. However, since early 1971, the rhetoric about the West Berlin threat has been considerably reduced from its previous level in terms of the intensity of the attacks and charges. The basic complaint has been that West Germany is attempting to extend its jurisdiction to West Berlin and govern it as though it were another Land of the FRG. The GDR has repeatedly charged that West Germany is attempting to govern the city through extensions of certain types of legislation, by drafting residents into the Bundeswehr, and by establishing offices of the government of the FRG in West Berlin. The West German plan put forward by Genscher as Minister of Interior in 1973 to establish a branch of the Federal Environmental Protection Office in West Berlin aroused considerable displeasure in SED circles. *Neues Deutschland* described this plan as "political environmental pollution" and a violation of the Four Power Agreement on Berlin.²⁰ This reaction was typical of the response to West German efforts to perpetuate a political presence in West Berlin. The same reaction has been accorded visits by West German officials to the city for performance of official duties during the Honecker years.

However, these years have also brought improvements in the political atmosphere surrounding the West Berlin issue. These developments clearly surpassed those of the Ulbricht regime. An indication of such improvements appeared in a speech by Honecker in 1972 in which he said that, while he was aware of the aggressive character of the FRG, he was also taking account, "especially from the point of view of foreign policy, of the positive aspect of the Brandt government."²¹ Ulbricht had been unwilling to make such concessions to the West German Social Democratic Party (SPD); Honecker emphasized the changes in 1973 when he announced that he could see a transition from the cold war in the direction of detente.²² The GDR contributed to this situation in a radio program in March 1975 when commentator Guenter Leuschner responded to the question of a listener who suggested that

the GDR had "put up with too much" by allowing Western violations of the Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin. In his restrained response to the obviously staged question, Leuschner insisted that, while "we could not expect the Agreement to solve all the problems," the GDR had no choice but "to use every opportunity for contractual settlements in the interest of peace." There would be, he acknowledged, "occasional attempts by the imperialist side" to violate treaties but "we do not put up with too much."²³

Negotiations since 1971

The most important evidence, however, of this change in the political climate can be seen in the record of proposals and negotiations during the first years of the Honecker era. The most conspicuous of the agreements during these years was the Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin in 1971. The East German Socialist Party (SED) press was effusive in its praise of the agreement, hailing it as "an important step towards detente in the heart of Europe." The party asserted that its leadership had been "fully informed" at all times by the Soviet Union regarding progress on the agreement and had made a "constructive contribution" itself to the successful conclusion of the agreement.²⁴ Expressing the USSR's appreciation of the GDR's role, CPSU (Communist Party of the Soviet Union) Politburo member Piotr Shelest agreed that the East German leadership did in fact play a "great constructive role."²⁵

The willingness of the SED to support the Soviet efforts to achieve detente was demonstrated by the prompt conclusion of the two agreements by East Germany with the Federal Republic and West Berlin on transit traffic to West Berlin.²⁶ It is significant that these agreements were concluded without official diplomatic recognition of the GDR by West Germany, a demand voiced by Ulbricht which previously barred such progress. Honecker seemed content in discussing the agreement with the Federal Republic of Germany to remark that by signing an agreement with the German Democratic Republic, West Germany had acknowledged East Germany as a "sovereign state." Honecker also commented that the documents represented an acceptance of the principal East German argument on West Berlin to the effect that the city is an independent political entity. The fact that Western demands for a Western-controlled corridor through the GDR's territory had been dropped was cited by Honecker as a major victory for East Germany. This, he argued, was a further "de facto" recognition of the GDR.²⁷

The desire for a further normalization of East Germany's relations with the FRG was satisfied by the successful conclusion of the Treaty on the Bases of Relations between the GDR and the FRG. While the treaty was initialed on November 8, 1972, after a long political wrangle in West Germany, it did not come into force until June 21, 1973. On the occasion of the signing of the treaty, Dr. Michael Kohl declared that the GDR viewed the treaty as a vehicle for "bringing about the replacement of the cold war by detente and co-operation."²⁸ As a logical continuation of this process, negotiations began on the establishment of permanent missions

for the two Germanies in their respective capitals. These negotiations bore fruit in May 1974 when permanent missions were established in Bonn and East Berlin.²⁹ The actual opening of the missions had been delayed for a short time as a result of the Guillaume spy case in West Germany. That the delay was no more than a few days is in itself remarkable. In an earlier time such an incident would have disrupted the entire process of normalization.

The Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin contained a reference to the possible exchange of territory in the case of enclaves such as Steinstücken and other small areas. The first exchange came as a result of an agreement in July 1972 between the GDR government and the West Berlin Senate. Under the agreement, a small piece of land near Potsdamer Platz was transferred to West Berlin for the price of thirty-one million Deutsche Marks.³⁰ A much more extensive territorial exchange was agreed to in 1974 involving land formerly under the control of the GDR Reichsbahn in the Anhalter section of West Berlin.³¹

Another important step in the process of normalization occurred with the establishment of the Boundary Commission in 1973. The purpose of the commission was to review and supplement the demarcation of the East-West German border, to prepare the necessary documents on the actual course of the boundary, and to regulate other problems connected with the border.³² Shortly after the establishment of the Boundary Commission, Bonn and East Berlin began talks on a public health agreement.³³ The result of this series of talks was a Health Services Agreement which was signed in East Berlin on April 25, 1974. The need for such an agreement had been mentioned in the Treaty on the Bases of Relations between the GDR and the FRG.³⁴ In September 1973 the GDR-FRG Frontier Agreements were signed. One dealt with caring for damage at the frontier and the other with the maintenance and development of the frontier waterways and the water engineering installations along the frontier. As a result of these agreements, provisions were implemented for reciprocal information at short notice regarding events such as fires, gale damage, landslides, and epidemics.³⁵ Meanwhile, work continued on a possible post and telecommunications agreement, a cultural agreement, and a judicial assistance agreement between the GDR and the FRG and a variety of agreements between the GDR and West Berlin. One of the most important of the latter is an accident assistance agreement on which talks began in 1973. This agreement would cover the rendering of prompt aid after an accident on the sector boundary in Berlin.

As a means of improving contacts among the GDR, the FRG, and West Berlin, negotiations continued in the area of telephone facilities, television programs, and press agreements. In July 1972 arrangements were made for increasing and improving telephone connections. As a result, thirty-two local exchanges in the Potsdam area could be reached from West Berlin by direct dialing. This measure was made possible by an agreement between the FRG Post Office and the GDR Postal Administration in 1971. Before that time no call could be placed from West Berlin to the GDR without going through an operator.³⁶ In 1975 provisions were made

for the opening of 240 self-dialing lines from West to East Berlin.³⁷ In 1973 the prospect of an exchange of television programs between the FRG and the GDR was raised by Max Walter Schultz, the vice president of the GDR Authors' Union. Schultz expressed his desire to show "as much as possible . . . a truly realistic picture of West German conditions—on the principle of reciprocity."³⁸ So far, however, there has been an absence of any higher official support for an exchange of television programs. The exchange of journalists between the GDR and the FRG and West Berlin, in contrast, did develop. By 1973 provisions were made for news coverage by GDR journalists in Bonn and FRG journalists in East Berlin. The German Press Agency (DPA) office in East Berlin, which opened in September 1973, was even equipped with a permanent teleprinter line connecting it with the DPA office in West Berlin.³⁹

The extent to which human contacts between East and West had improved in Germany could be seen by the statistics on travel to the GDR in 1973. During the year over 3,650,000 came from the Federal Republic and more than 3,461,000 from West Berlin.⁴⁰ The figures for 1972 are only slightly lower than these but in 1971, before the implementation of the transit agreement, only 3,000,000 residents of West Berlin and the Federal Republic entered the GDR.⁴¹ This increase continued into the first quarter of 1975 when inter-German travel rose considerably. During the first three months of the year 700,000 West Germans visited the GDR, compared with 220,000 during the same period in 1974.⁴² Telephone contacts also increased during this period. While in 1970 there were only 700,000 calls from the FRG and West Berlin to the GDR, in 1973 the number reached 5.8 million.⁴³

The prospect for better economic relations has also improved during Honecker's tenure as First Secretary. By May 1975 East German authorities were speaking of a "good objective basis for international division of labor within the framework of peaceful coexistence." Such statements, however, have been tempered with warnings against the "long-term ideological softening up of socialism" and the creation of a "web of interdependence that would land the Soviet Union and the other socialist states in a dependency on imperialism." Nor, we are assured, will economic cooperation "help stabilize imperialism."⁴⁴ The most significant features of East Germany's economic relations with the FRG and West Berlin after 1971 were the sharp increase in West German imports into the GDR and the decline in imports from West Berlin. (See Table I.) The decline in imports from West Berlin was coupled with a dramatic increase in exports to the city. When the overall, long-term trade picture is considered, the immediate results of the first full year of Honecker's administration are less decisive in appearance. (See Table II.) In 1973, talks between West Berlin and East Germany regarding the possible construction of an oil pipeline from the GDR to West Berlin were begun.⁴⁵ It is possible that the SED leadership may envision a situation in which West Berlin might become oriented economically toward the GDR, thus increasing East Germany's ability to control the city. However, no extensive results have yet come from the talks and East

Germany's full intentions regarding trade with West Germany and West Berlin remain unclear. An example of the sort of development most desirable from the East German point of view was the decision in May 1975 by the West German firm Hoechst to construct a 600 million mark chemical plant in East Germany.⁴⁶ The mere fact that economic talks have been in progress for some time does by itself signify a political change in East Germany, a change in the direction of increasing contacts with the FRG and West Berlin.

Table I

Imports and Exports with West Germany and
West Berlin, 1970-1972 (absolute amounts in millions of settlement marks)

export	1970	1971	1972
West Germany	1,514.9	1,794.6	1,708.2
West Berlin	373.5	347.1	495.7
import	1970	1971	1972
West Germany	1,913.7	1,913.1	2,434.3
West Berlin	247.9	239.8	189.5

Source: *Statistical Pocket Book of the GDR*, (Berlin, GDR: Staatsverlag der DDR, 1973)

The extent of the change in policy was revealed in 1973 by a meeting which Honecker held with the chairman of the FRG Social Democratic Party, Herbert Werhner, and the chairman of the SPD's coalition partner, the FDP.⁴⁷ Given the traditionally hostile East German view of the Social Democrats, such a meeting, simply for an "exchange of views" rather than to face a crisis, must be viewed as significant. The fact that Honecker himself, rather than some lower-ranking SED official, participated in the meeting further increases its meaning. Later, official East German hospitality was extended to the Social Democratic Premier of Hesse who visited Erfurt to discuss matters that might arise due to the proximity of Hesse to Erfurt.⁴⁸ Even more interesting, however, was the decision in 1974 to allow West Germany to help restore churches in the GDR. In November 1974 it was announced that the churches of West Germany would aid in the restoration of forty-four churches in thirty-five East German towns.⁴⁹

Table II

GDR Imports and Exports with West Germany
and West Berlin, 1957-1972 (as a percentage of total GDR trade)

	import	export
1957	11.38%	11.30%
1958	11.30	11.18
1959	11.40	10.83
1960	9.51	10.98
1961	8.86	9.67
1962	8.14	8.86
1963	8.46	8.95
1964	9.74	9.04
1965	9.38	9.58
1966	10.87	9.57
1967	9.35	8.60
1968	8.51	8.74
1969	11.28	8.80
1970	10.61	9.81
1971	10.33	10.05
1972	11.48	9.20

Source: United Nations *Yearbook of International Trade Statistics*, various years

Confrontations since 1971

Even though the overall record is one of positive achievement, the Honecker period has not been without negative developments. The most prominent dispute of the Honecker regime with West Berlin and the Federal Republic has centered around the alleged abuse of the transit routes to West Berlin. The first indication of this issue came in April 1972 following the temporary implementation of the

transit agreement by the GDR. After an estimated 300,000 West Berliners made use of the temporary facilities for visits to the East, GDR Foreign Minister Otto Winzer charged that "rightist extremist and revanchist forces" had attempted to misuse the GDR's "generous gesture of good will for evil purposes."⁵⁰ An editorial in *Neues Deutschland* in August 1973 signalled the beginning of an East German campaign against the "abuse" of the transit routes, with the primary concern being the activities of commercial escape assistance organizations operating from West Berlin and the FRG. According to the editorial,

There are forces at work to undermine the Transit Agreement and this is being done from the territory of the FRG and West Berlin, whose citizens derive direct advantage from the Agreement. The Transit Agreement, which is being implemented by the GDR authorities in spirit and in letter, has recently been increasingly misused by profiteers. From the FRG and West Berlin bands of criminals are at work who, for fees of DM 40,000 to DM 80,000, smuggle people across the border—people who hope for a life of luxury in the FRG or West Berlin; for instance, scientists, doctors, and other specialists are being promised such a life by official quarters.⁵¹

The editorial continued by denouncing the freedom of the commercial establishments to advertise their services in newspapers in West Berlin and the FRG and the apparent indifference, if not assistance, of the Western officials. It concluded with a demand that the authorities in West Berlin and West Germany do their part to aid implementation of the Transit Agreement by taking actions against those responsible for the escape activities.

The *Neues Deutschland* warning was followed by the implementation of much more rigid East German checks on traffic to and from West Berlin. The next month the SED repeated its demand for stricter controls to stop illegal crossings to the Federal Republic and West Berlin and attacked the idea of "freedom of movement" as a cover for those who simply want to escape prosecution for crimes against the GDR.⁵² Within a week, the East German news agency ADN reported that a number of citizens of West Berlin and West Germany had been taken into custody for violation of the Transit Agreement.⁵³ More arrests followed on a regular basis and, on October 30, the GDR government began a much publicized trial of several "traders in human lives" in East Berlin.⁵⁴ By February 1974 a total of 150 West Berliners and West Germans had been arrested by GDR authorities and charged as escape helpers. Forty of this number had been sentenced, many of them for up to ten years imprisonment.⁵⁵ While the arrests of Western escape helpers are used for maximum propaganda benefit, the trials of GDR citizens who have attempted to escape are kept secret. Every effort is made to avoid any publication of details of the efforts since this information might aid others desiring to escape later.⁵⁶ It is also desirable that the organizations assisting in escapes not be permitted to learn from their mistakes.

Meanwhile, the number of escapes from the GDR for 1973 rose by 16 percent over the previous year, according to figures released by the West Berlin-based 13th August Working Group. The total number of escapes in 1973 was 6,450. The increase was considered a result of escapes via the transit routes during the first half of the year, prior to the initiation of more stringent checks. However, the number of "barrier-breakers" was also up considerably, 49 percent over 1972, and that also contributed to the overall increase. Almost 1,600 of the escapees were "barrier-breakers" who required no assistance from outside individuals.⁵⁷ The next year, however, was less embarrassing to the GDR. In 1974 the number of escapes had dropped to 5,324, with only 969 of that number being "barrier-breakers." The number of frontier guards fleeing East Germany also dropped from 28 in 1973 to 22 in 1974.⁵⁸

A related controversy during this time centered around the matter of currency violations by Western visitors. Since 1964 visitors had been required to exchange a minimum of ten marks a day for overnight stays in the GDR and five marks a day for one-day visits to East Berlin. In November 1973 the GDR authorities doubled these amounts and applied the new regulations to previously exempt old-age pensioners. The official argument was that this action was necessary in order to discourage the illegal exchange of GDR currency in West Berlin or the FRG at approximately one-third of its face value. These exchanges, considered illegal by the GDR, were conducted openly at many Western banks and the rates were advertised in the Western press and in the windows of banks. The East German leadership viewed such exchanges and the illegal importation of the currency as an effort to return to the pre-Wall situation with its disruption of the GDR economy. These activities were seen as "deliberate damage" to the GDR and a "violation of its sovereign rights as well as interference in its domestic affairs."⁵⁹

While the East Germans objected to the sale of their currency in the West as well as its importation into the GDR, they were in no position to enforce prohibitions against the former, so they concentrated on attempting to prevent travelers from bringing Western-purchased GDR marks into East Germany. Over a period of about one year, more than 500,000 GDR marks were confiscated at border crossing points.⁶⁰ The doubling of the mandatory minimum exchange for tourists was intended to remove much of the incentive for bringing in such marks. Confiscation of more than a fraction of the illegal marks was obviously impossible. The introduction of the new regulations without warning and their application to old-age pensioners visiting relatives and friends in the GDR raised Western suspicions that the real intention of this action was to reduce the number of Western visitors coming to the GDR. Whether this intention motivated the action or not, it certainly did have that effect.

A survey of three checkpoints into the GDR in Lower Saxony over the weekend of November 30 to December 2 demonstrated the effect of the regulations. While on the previous weekend over 6,800 travelers had crossed into the East, only 1,300

made the journey that weekend.⁶¹ A count of the number of automobiles using all crossings into East Germany for the three days of the Christmas holiday demonstrated a similar result. At Christmastime, 1972, over 23,000 cars from West Germany and West Berlin crossed, but only 12,600 automobiles crossed during the 1973 holiday.⁶² Numerous protests from the West and several meetings of representatives from the West Berlin Senate with East German authorities failed to bring a return to the old regulations. However, by October 1974, a compromise was reached in which the GDR agreed to require the exchange of only 6.5 DM for one-day visits to East Berlin and 13 DM for longer stays in the GDR.⁶³ The absence of any public Soviet support for the SED's position may have been a decisive factor in the decision.

In early 1975 there was a serious dispute over the question of consular representation for Germans abroad when the GDR and Austria signed a consular agreement. The FRG Foreign Ministry insisted that the Austrian recognition of GDR citizenship would not affect the right of the West German consulate to look after East Germans fleeing into Austria. The GDR responded by charging that Bonn was resurrecting the Hallstein Doctrine with its claim to sole representation. In a protest note to the FRG, East Germany declared that the FRG was attempting to disrupt the GDR's relations with third states, flagrantly violating international law and the UN Charter, and ignoring the Treaty on the Bases of Relations between East and West Germany. Considering the "unambiguous legal situation," the note asserted, it was obvious that Bonn was deliberately and purposefully disturbing the "further normalization of East-West German relations."⁶⁴

At the same time, Honecker's regime saw additional evidence that the Federal Republic intended to treat West Berlin as one of its Lander. The first incident viewed as such was the decision to establish a European vocational training center in West Berlin. This decision of the European Economic Community was seen as an "unlawful expansion of the presence of the FRG in West Berlin." The attempt to incorporate West Berlin into the EEC was, according to *Neues Deutschland*, obviously inspired by the FRG.⁶⁵ The second incident occurred in March when West Berlin's Christian Democratic leader Peter Lorenz was kidnapped. Although initially the East Germans offered to help with the search, the search itself soon became a matter of controversy. The first East German objection was to the fact that 600 police from the Federal Republic were brought to West Berlin to assist with the police efforts. SED spokesmen implied that members of the FRG Bundeswehr were also involved. The Quadripartite Agreement, the SED charged, was being violated by these actions. The second objection was raised when West Berlin police began to carry out police measures on the GDR's Deutsche Reichsbahn and on West Berlin S-Bahn trains. Finally, the SED charged that the entire Lorenz affair was simply a campaign to make the West Berlin population insecure.⁶⁶

Several other less important disputes involving the GDR and West Berlin arose during this time. In 1973 the GDR began to question arrangements whereby West

Berlin pumped its sewage into the Teltow canal for processing by the East Berlin purification plant. The East Germans accused West Berlin of disregarding the interests of the GDR and warned that "serious consequences may stem from unilateral action by West Berlin authorities."⁶⁷ Agreement on the waste water disposal question was not reached until December 1974. West Berlin authorities denied charges that they were violating agreements with the GDR on the treatment of waste water, but did agree to a series of meetings on the question. Then in January the East Germans demanded higher prices for the removal of waste water from West Berlin.⁶⁸ The West Berliners rejected the East German demand and the issue remained unsettled in 1975.

In spite of these disputes Honecker has continued to insist on the feasibility of a complete normalization of relations between West Berlin and the GDR. Apparently such issues as discussed above are not intended to wreck the development of detente over West Berlin. In an interview with the Associated Press on May 30, 1974, Honecker explained with regard to West Berlin,

If problems and difficulties arise at times this should not be dramatized, considering the complex nature of things and the different interests which we take into account. As far as we are concerned we do not seek a "cooling off" but rather a warming up of the international climate in the interests of peace and the people.⁶⁹

An Era of Confrontation or Negotiation?

In order to make an assessment of the progress during these years toward achievement of detente between the two Germanies, a brief chronological summary might be helpful. The paramount events of 1971 were, of course, the Quadripartite Agreement by which the USSR set the tone of the period, the GDR's transit agreements with West Germany and West Berlin which showed East Berlin's willingness to follow the Soviet lead, and the removal of Ulbricht which facilitated these developments.

The next year was characterized by considerable progress offset by only one serious dispute. The most important product of negotiations was the Treaty on the Basis of Relations between the GDR and the FRG. This was followed by the exchange of property near Potsdamer Platz and the improvement in telephone connections with West Berlin. The principal dispute of the year was the controversy over the "abuse" of the transit arrangements in the spring.

In 1973 there was a series of important steps in the direction of detente: the establishment of the boundary commission, the frontier agreements, the beginning of talks on accident assistance, the opening of the DPA press office in East Berlin and of the ADN office in Bonn, and Honecker's precedent-breaking meeting with the SPD leaders. On the negative side, the disputes over "abuse" of the transit routes intensified and there were numerous arrests of Western escape helpers. There was also a controversy over new currency exchange regulations, sewage disposal by

West Berlin, and the effort to establish a branch of the FRG environmental office in West Berlin.

In 1974 permanent missions were exchanged by East Berlin and Bonn, a health services agreement was concluded, and there was an important exchange of territory in the Anhalter district of Berlin. The most serious dispute was a charge of traffic delays by East German authorities on the Autobahn. The disagreement over the increased price of lignite briquettes was relatively minor.

Finally, in 1975 there was a further improvement in telephone communications as 240 self-dialing lines were opened between East and West Berlin. However, serious confrontations occurred over several issues: the question of consular representation of Germans abroad, the opening of a European Community (EC) vocational training center in West Berlin, and the use of West German police in West Berlin during the Lorenz affair.

The rise in the number of visitors going from East to West Germany and the improvement in economic relations covered the entire period. Both of these developments are significant departures from the era of confrontation characteristic of the Ulbricht regime.

In evaluating these developments, it becomes apparent that the successful negotiations are more significant than the confrontations. The former have done much to alter the belief that the German problem was beyond resolution. More importantly, they have related to substantial political, economic, and human problems. The confrontations, by contrast, have often involved little more than disagreements about the implementation of measures resulting from the negotiations, such as the transit agreements. Others—for example, the sewage disposal and the briquette disputes—have been no more than petty bickering. However, the issue of the FRG's relations with West Berlin and the matter of consular representation have been more serious and could conceivably disrupt the process of detente in Germany. The key point about these issues is that they have called into question the basic interpretation of many of the agreements relating to relations among the GDR, the FRG, and West Berlin.

The Honecker Policy and the USSR

Completion of this review of the outlines of Honecker's policies pertaining to the West Berlin issue and related matters permits some observations and generalizations at this point. While the GDR's domestic policy has not been radically altered since Ulbricht's resignation, the East German foreign policy has undergone a considerable change in emphasis since 1971. According to one prominent authority on East German affairs, many of the positions taken by Ulbricht during his last years were viewed by the Soviet leadership as irksome and disturbing. In an article in 1972 Peter C. Ludz ventured the observation regarding Ulbricht that

... In a certain sense he was projecting himself as a potential rival of Moscow in its claim to ideological leadership; beyond that, by stressing the GDR's independent achievements, he was obviously trying to strengthen its position and influence the international political arena.⁷⁰

The emphasis since Honecker's selection to replace Ulbricht has been very different. Honecker has repeatedly stressed both the closeness of the GDR's positions to those of the Soviet Union as well as East Germany's unflinching support of the USSR as the leader of the "socialist community of nations." Honecker's recognition of a debt to the Soviet Union permeates discussions of the development of the GDR. In 1974 he declared that the successful development of a socialist state in East Germany was possible only because its leadership "chose the right side in the great class battles of our time, the side of the Soviet Union and its battle tested party. . . ."⁷¹ Discussing the position of the GDR today, Honecker was able to declare on May 12, 1974, regarding his country's relationship with the Soviet Union,

Today relations between the GDR and the USSR have reached such a stage that our close cooperation penetrates practically every important sphere of society. . . . We agree on all political, ideological, and basic theoretical questions of social development.⁷²

This absolute devotion to the guidance of the USSR is in sharp contrast with Ulbricht's talk about the independent achievements of the GDR, East Germany's unique road to socialism, and his independent proposals. Ulbricht's 1968 proposal, independent of any Soviet initiative, that the GDR and the FRG conclude a treaty on the renunciation of force and begin talks on the complete disarmament of both states illustrates the extent of his independence.⁷³ Honecker has avoided any such displays of arrogance. In his GDR-Soviet Friendship Day speech in May 1974 Honecker made explicit the SED's stand regarding the Soviet Union's authoritative position when he asserted that "every step we are taking today" is determined by the faith that only through a firm alliance with the USSR could East Germany's efforts succeed. This alliance was described as the key to the GDR's achievements in both economic and foreign affairs. Even the West, Honecker insisted, was aware of this and was therefore trying to "malign our alleged impairment of the sovereignty of our Republic." What the Western states fail to realize, he continued, is that the GDR's alliance with the USSR is of a "different quality from . . . [alliances] . . . of capitalist countries."

The East German-Soviet alliance, in Honecker's view, is based on a community of ideology, social system, and goals. The Soviet and SED leaderships share what Honecker describes as a common objective, namely, the benefit of the working class.⁷⁴ His position is that such an alliance is both unique and unshakable. Enthusiastic reaffirmations of this position have been liberally sprinkled through

Honecker's policy statements, illustrating the most important instance of discontinuity with the last years of the Ulbricht regime.

While Honecker's declarations of fealty to the USSR are the most obvious new trends in GDR foreign policy since 1971, the stress on Bloc cooperation clearly constitutes the second most important pattern in this period. In this respect, the Honecker statements more closely resemble those of Ulbricht. The first concern regarding Bloc cooperation centers around the defense of the GDR. The position of the SED leadership is that cooperation with the Bloc provides a valuable protective shield for the GDR. Honecker forcefully expressed this view in his report to the Eighth SED Congress in June 1971. In his speech Honecker explained that the alliance with the "community of socialist states" was necessary because

... through the collective defense of the armed forces of the Warsaw Treaty Organization, especially by the military shield of the Soviet Army, peace and security for the people of the German Democratic Republic are reliably protected.⁷⁵

By way of further invoking Bloc support, the East German leadership has gone so far as to describe the defense of the GDR as the "test for the East" in facing up to Western imperialism.⁷⁶

A second concern involving cooperation with the Bloc is an Eastward social orientation. East Germany's leadership is concerned about the development of social patterns that are congruent with those of its allies. In a speech to the SED's Central Committee in 1972 Politburo member Kurt Hager discussed the cultural policy of the SED. While explaining the need for a policy embracing the entire Socialist community, Hager said,

The Socialist culture of the GDR occupies a firm place in the cultural development of the Socialist countries. We consider it one of our most important cultural tasks to actively promote the mutual approach and fertilization of Socialist cultures.⁷⁷

The East German government under both Honecker and Ulbricht has encouraged such "fertilization" through provision of ample opportunities for contacts between its citizens and those of its allies. One of the most important opportunities has been travel. According to figures released by the GDR Travel Bureau near the end of 1973, almost one million East Germans availed themselves of the opportunity to visit the GDR's Warsaw Pact neighbors in 1973.⁷⁸

A third concern in the GDR's stress on Bloc cooperation is coordination of the foreign policies of the Warsaw Pact states. As previously mentioned, Honecker describes relations between the USSR and the GDR as being dictated by common interests and ideology. The same is considered true of the USSR's relations with other East European states. Therefore, predictably, the East German leadership denies that the Brezhnev Doctrine can properly be regarded as evidence of

coercion within the Bloc. An example of such a denial was a 1973 "Voice of the GDR" broadcast in which Professor Joachim Raabe proclaimed the international duty of communists to defend socialism as a principal determinant of the behavior of Bloc members, the GDR included.⁷⁹ From this, one can easily infer the necessity, from the SED's view, of a coordination of Eastern policies, especially those regarding noncommunist states. Thus, the SED has sought support from its allies in the matter of West Germany's relations with West Berlin.

Honecker enjoyed considerable success in 1973 as evidenced by the lack of progress for a time in talks between Czechoslovakia and the Federal Republic. The dispute arose from Bonn's effort to secure the right to represent not only West Berlin residents but also the city's institutions and associations abroad. The Czech leadership supported the GDR and branded the FRG's efforts a "gross provocation not only against the sovereignty of the GDR but also against the other socialist countries."⁸⁰ The East Germans also viewed this as an effort to secure from the GDR's allies what the SED was unwilling to give and thus play the East European states off against each other. Accordingly, they issued a call for Eastern unity in the face of West German "pressure."⁸¹

The East German drive for a more effective coordination of Bloc policies culminated with the call for an international communist meeting. In May 1974 after a meeting in East Berlin with the General Secretary of the U.S. Communist Party, Gus Hall, Honecker noted that the tendency toward detente was now predominant in world developments and that the international balance of power was increasingly altering in favor of the Soviet Union and its allies. Yet, he continued, the opponents of detente were still trying to revive the cold war so there was a need for all the world's "peace forces" to work harder in the joint struggle for "international detente, security, and peace." The positive achievements the world is enjoying today, Honecker insisted with Hall's concurrence, were largely a product of the program formulated at the 1969 international meeting of communist and workers' parties in Moscow. Therefore, both Honecker and Hall concluded, the appropriate thing would be the convocation of a new international consultation by the same parties in order to develop a plan to secure the benefits of detente. As Honecker explained,

The point now is how to make the progress of detente irreversible, in defiance of all its adversaries. At the same time we are working for the further strengthening of the unity and cohesion of the world Communist movement.⁸²

Only a series of bilateral and multilateral exchanges between all the parties could facilitate the development of such a program, according to the SED First Secretary. By taking the initiative in issuing such a call, the SED effectively demonstrated the extent of its enthusiasm for the USSR's authority in the world communist movement and did much to contribute to the belief that East Germany can once more be considered the Kremlin's most faithful ally.

A final important SED concern relating to its position with the Bloc is shown by the stress placed on economic cooperation. Economic integration has been a major theme of the SED under both Ulbricht and Honecker. Planning in the Comecon states has been one manifestation of this policy and the current policy calls for emphasis on long-range and complex planning among the member nations. The GDR has been especially active in the development of mathematical models to guide Comecon planning.⁸³ Since the formulation of Comecon's "Comprehensive Program," the creation of joint enterprises and institutes has been an additional manifestation of the SED's economic policy. By 1974 there were thirty-two examples of "socialist integration in action" in East Germany.⁸⁴ Such an accomplishment clearly revealed the GDR's enthusiastic response to the Comecon program. During negotiations for the program, the less developed East European states were reluctant to support integration efforts. Rumania was the most vocal spokesman for the less developed nations, but other states were also alarmed by features of the plan. Czechoslovakia, one of the most advanced nations, was fearful that excessive integration would restrict its trade with West Europe. By contrast, East Germany—though wishing to retain its back-door entrance to the EC by its special relationship to the FRG economy—had much less to fear from the new program than its neighbors. In fact, the GDR, which had always been anxious for close economic relations with the USSR and was already its most important trading partner, stood to gain by implementation of the program.⁸⁵

East German attacks on Red China during the time of Honecker's control of the SED have advanced the GDR's status as an enthusiastic proponent of Soviet domination of the international communist movement. East German officials and publications have continually denounced China's international activities in general as well as the character of Peking's relations with Moscow. In August 1971, for example, the East Berlin daily *Berliner Zeitung* criticized Chinese activities in the Balkans, charging that such activities were being conducted with the active support of the United States. The Chinese leadership, according to the account, was guilty of big power chauvinism and was behaving in a manner hostile to world peace.⁸⁶ East German charges have concentrated on Chinese-American relations, especially since the improvement in those relations. As the time for President Nixon's trip to China neared, the attacks intensified. Not only was China depicted as an ally of imperialism, but, according to *Neues Deutschland*, it had actually begun "coordinated collusion with the chief force of reaction in the world. . . ." The result could only be described as a "monstrous" situation in which the Chinese were seeking "to anticipate every wish of the Nixon government."⁸⁷ In this respect, the Honecker policy differs greatly from that of Ulbricht who refused to join in the Bloc attacks on Red China during his last years.

Attacks on Red China have frequently been linked with criticism of West Germany. In October 1972 a "Voice of the GDR" commentary charged that the

improvement in West German-Chinese relations meant that there was an alliance between Bonn and Peking for the purpose of securing Chinese markets for the FRG. China, for its part, was depicted as attempting to join with forces in the Federal Republic seeking to disrupt detente. Chinese leaders were said to have a particularly strong affinity with the "archreactionary" Strauss.⁸⁸ The FRG's establishment of diplomatic relations with China was viewed as absolute proof of Chinese treachery.

Finally, Honecker's call for a new international communist meeting was coupled with an attack on the Chinese. Declaring the need for fighting against distortions of Marxism-Leninism, Honecker described Maoism as the open enemy of the world communist movement and the national liberation cause. The Chinese, he continued, had made common cause with the most reactionary forces in their efforts to oppose detente. A new world conference could be used in the continuing Soviet effort to secure a formal condemnation of the Red Chinese. The GDR's assistance in this effort would undoubtedly endear Honecker and his associates to the Kremlin. If the conference should materialize and be successful, it is reasonable to conclude that the GDR would gain credit from the USSR which it might hope to apply toward its more pressing international problems in the future.

The Basic Tension in Soviet-East German Relations

It requires little imagination to anticipate what use the GDR might wish to make of any credit it might build up with the Kremlin. Its ability actually to use the credit for the desired purpose could be another and more difficult matter. Nonetheless, it is not unreasonable to conclude that the GDR's position is uncomfortable in the era of detente. The origins and development of the East German regime have contributed to a political heritage which makes acceptance of detente difficult for the SED. In discussing the development of totalitarian systems, Friedrich A. Hayek, writing in 1944, commented that an enemy is an indispensable requisite of a totalitarian system.⁸⁹ While the traditional concept of totalitarianism has been subject to some skepticism in recent years, its applicability to the GDR of the 1950s is beyond question. The fact that the citizens of East Germany passed directly from the Hitler dictatorship into a communist dictatorship makes the totalitarian concept especially relevant to their case. Their experience with constant harangues about enemies, internal and external, can be traced back to 1933. Under Hitler the enemy was the international Jew. With the creation of the Soviet Zone in 1945, the theme was continued with a new enemy, Western imperialism, which had been a frequent target of Hitler's discourses as well. The personification of the enemy was West Germany primarily.

The communist regime in East Germany became accustomed to tension from its first years. While the emphasis on tension is not nearly as great under Honecker as under Ulbricht, it remains an element of SED rhetoric. In the absence of a

sense of national identity, confrontation served a unifying purpose and helped stabilize the regime. The SED found security through confrontation and the need for confrontation continues today. Detente has a potentially destabilizing effect by virtue of the expectations that it encourages. It leads people to anticipate change after years of indoctrination against change. East Germany is not alone in the Bloc in its vulnerability to detente. Even the Soviet Union itself has had to face this uncertainty regarding the new policy. The Kremlin has sought to develop the ideological and institutional structures that could neutralize the politically dangerous psychological effect that could result from detente and cooperation between East and West.⁹⁰ However, East German vulnerability is much greater than the USSR's. The SED's repeated reaffirmations of the need for a closed frontier illustrate this. The point was effectively made in 1972 by the SED newspaper *Leipziger Volkszeitung* which printed a commentary warning against illusions that the frontier with the FRG could be opened because of detente. The suggestion of open frontiers was described as "far removed from political reality."⁹¹ In a speech in 1975 GDR Minister of State Security Erich Mielke emphasized the continuing threats to East German security by warning of the "hostile plans, intentions, and machinations" of the GDR's enemies. The security services, he said, were still uncovering a "large number" of attempts by "hostile centers and forces" to harm the GDR. West Berlin and the FRG were identified as the bases for most of these efforts.⁹² The East German news media have also stressed the large number of border incidents taking place on the GDR-FRG frontier while also playing on the theme of the danger of ideological disarmament.

In short, the enemy is still there, according to the SED. The fact that the SED so obviously feels a need for an enemy demonstrates the insecurity and instability of the regime. This is not to deny the existence of a very real rival in the Federal Republic. The point is that the hostility and aggression that the SED attributes to its rival are exaggerated. Security, however, as seen by the SED requires such exaggeration and dictates that the SED oppose detente, as Ulbricht successfully did for some time. The alliance with the USSR, on the other hand, now calls for support of detente in view of current Soviet policy. The USSR obviously prevailed and Honecker replaced Ulbricht. The GDR's policy became more favorable to detente and included West Germany as an object of that policy. However, East Germany's instability remains and the SED can be expected to offer its Soviet ally a considerable amount of very cautious advice on how to proceed with detente, especially where it concerns the FRG.

Honecker, of course, lacks the seniority that Ulbricht enjoyed and can certainly not wield the influence that his successor must have been able to exercise in dealings with the Kremlin. Yet, it is possible that Honecker might try to use whatever credit he can gain with the Soviet leadership in order either to sabotage or at least slow down detente. The USSR can generally be expected to push the GDR into line when it appears on the verge of straying too far afield. Possibly the

enthusiastic support of detente being voiced by the GDR in May 1974, which contrasted with the much weaker support in April, may have resulted from Soviet pressure in the wake of the Guillaume affair. With the exposure of Brandt's close personal aide, Gunter Guillaume, as an East German spy, it became known that the GDR's State Security Service had been sending considerable numbers of agents into the FRG since the early 1950s in an effort to infiltrate the West German government. Guillaume, who was only one of several such "deep cover plants" in fairly important positions in the Bonn government, had evidently been aiding the GDR's agents in an attempt to blackmail Brandt about an affair he had with an East German woman.⁹³

The Kremlin may have feared that detente in Germany could suffer as a result of the exposure of the GDR's intensive espionage efforts in the FRG unless Honecker adopted a particularly accommodating attitude in the wake of the affair. The Soviets may have suspected that the East Germans were trying to sabotage detente by the activities of their Security Service. The question of the increased minimum exchange quota for persons visiting the GDR illustrated the extent of the SED's shift. Until early in the spring of 1974 East Germany assumed an uncompromising stance on the issue, making its refusal to alter the rates very clear to West Berlin negotiators. However, in an interview on May 30, Honecker said that the requisite decisions "will be taken by our side," clearly implying that the issue was not closed yet as GDR spokesmen had been stressing earlier.⁹⁴ Before the end of the year, a compromise had been reached. This, coupled with the GDR's new and very optimistic comments on detente, could be evidence of Soviet pressure on the East Germans to prove their goodwill after the exposure of their espionage efforts in West Germany.

Does the selection of Honecker seem to have benefited the Soviet Union? As far as events up to this time are concerned, the answer must be an unqualified "yes." The East German press and the new First Secretary have given strong public support to detente with West Germany and West Berlin. The GDR's support of Moscow's authority within the world communist movement, support which has been illustrated by Honecker's call for an international meeting, is further evidence of the wisdom of the USSR's support for Honecker. The changed emphasis in the SED newspaper *Neues Deutschland* provides further evidence of the wisdom of the Soviet move. Whereas, under Ulbricht the paper had become preoccupied with enumerating the sins of West Germany and devoted most of its foreign news coverage to stories about the FRG, after Ulbricht *Neues Deutschland* began to stress news about the Soviet Union and to ignore the Federal Republic. The absence of any claims of uniqueness for the East German path to communism and the initiation of polemics against Maoism must also please Moscow. The SED under Honecker has also improved relations with Yugoslavia, something which Ulbricht had been reluctant to do in spite of the USSR's rapprochement

with Tito. As mentioned earlier, the GDR has become the most faithful of Moscow's allies once again. The substitution of Honecker for Ulbricht certainly helped make this possible and thereby strengthened the USSR's East European position.

Yet the future remains somewhat doubtful. The disputes over the misuse of the transit routes and the sale of GDR currency in the Western banks could easily disrupt the process of detente if the SED was in a position to sabotage Soviet policies toward the West. Disputes over the GDR's handling of traffic to West Berlin were continuing through the fall of 1974 as East German officials delayed transit traffic up to thirty hours.⁹⁵ These incidents and others could erupt into major confrontations given the proper circumstances. Disagreements over the German translation of the Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin could serve as a pretext for a confrontation between East and West Berlin. The issue of the nature of the FRG's ties to West Berlin could also cause an incident. The exact nature of those ties has yet to be determined. The English version of "ties" implied social as well as communication ties while the Russian word for "ties" implied only the latter. Though some Western scholars believe that the issue has been clarified enough that the USSR will accept social and communication links,⁹⁶ it seems most likely that the issue will be resolved through practice rather than further agreements or clarifications. And determination through practice can be an extremely disruptive process. The absence of specific guidelines for establishing what is considered proper West Berlin-FRG ties makes the prospects for disagreement and confrontation particularly good.

The controversy over alleged "witch hunting" by West Germany could also provide fuel for future disputes. The SED has already commented on the ability of this "contemptible campaign" to disturb the normalization of relations with the FRG.⁹⁷ This theme was amplified by a "Voice of the GDR" commentary in November 1974 charging that "anti-GDR propaganda on FRG radio and television has been stepped up since the Basic Treaty came into force." Such "ideological subversion" was said to be proof that the "ruling forces" in the Federal Republic still hoped for the downfall of the GDR.⁹⁸ Furthermore, a change of power in the Kremlin might enable Honecker to improve his status and thereby his ability to veto moves toward detente affecting the GDR's policy toward the FRG and West Berlin. In this event, the SED might easily disrupt Soviet policy.

In sum, while the Soviet Union can take a considerable amount of satisfaction in developments since Honecker's elevation to First Secretary, the future is by no means secure. While the Soviet Union would likely desire a more stable and secure East German regime, the development of such a regime could encourage Honecker to become more independent. Ironically, the dependence that is a product of the GDR's instability also contributes to the maintenance of the GDR as a more malleable Soviet ally. In any event, the GDR could not indefinitely cripple Soviet efforts at maintaining detente with West Germany and West Berlin. However, the

East Germans might make the maintenance of Soviet policies toward the FRG and West Berlin much more difficult and costly in terms of concessions the Soviets might have to make toward East Germany. In this event, those elements of continuity between the Honecker and Ulbricht policies might overshadow those of contrast.

Notes

1. *Neues Deutschland*, October 7, 1968, p. 2.
2. *Ibid.*, March 7, 1970, p. 1.
3. Robin Alison Remington, *The Warsaw Pact: Case Studies in Conflict Resolution*, (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1971), p. 160.
4. Peter C. Ludz, *The GDR from the Sixties to the Seventies* (Cambridge: Harvard University Center for International Affairs, 1970), p. 49.
5. Heinz Lippman, *Honecker and the New Politics of Europe* (New York: Macmillan, 1972), pp. 218-221.
6. *Neues Deutschland*, May 4, 1971, p. 1.
7. *Ibid.*, May 8, 1971, p. 1.
8. *Ibid.*, July 15, 1971, p. 2.
9. *Ibid.*, October 16, 1971, pp. 1-2.
10. According to *Neues Deutschland* on January 4, 1972, there had been a massive and alarming increase in anticommunist propaganda in the FRG. The campaign was declared to be especially dangerous in that it was now conducted by "differentiated and selective methods" rather than by the outdated, obvious, and less effective approaches.
11. When members of the West German Federal Frontier Guard boarded an East German vessel in the Kiel Canal and took the captain into custody for several hours, the East German press portrayed the incident as one of major proportions. No one should be surprised, it declared, that this "act of piracy" met with the public approval of Genscher who was said to be on record as favoring "interference in the internal affairs of the GDR." *Junge Welt* (Berlin, GDR), January 12, 1972, p. 2.
12. *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, April 16, 1974, EE/4575/A1/1.
13. *Neues Deutschland*, November 7, 1973, p. 1.
14. *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, April 13, 1973, p. 1.
15. *Neues Deutschland*, January 7, 1972, p. 2.
16. *Ibid.*, July 25, 1973, p. 1.
17. *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, January 19, 1972, EE/3892/A1/1.
18. *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, January 9, 1975, EE/4799/A1/6. Military exercises, such as are very common within the Warsaw Pact states, including the GDR, are also cited by the East German authorities as a contradiction of Bonn's expressions of peaceful intentions toward the East. The NATO exercises in 1974 were heralded by *Neues Deutschland* as "proof of the unabated aggressiveness" of NATO. According to the SED newspaper, fewer and fewer people in the West believe that there is a "threat from the East" as the "anti-Communist fairy tales" assert, so the only reason for the Western military maneuvers must be to prepare for aggression. *Neues Deutschland*, May 7, 1974, p. 1.
19. *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, May 13, 1971, EE/3682/B/4.
20. *Neues Deutschland*, August 31, 1973, p. 2.
21. *Ibid.*, January 7, 1972, p. 2. East German awareness of the "positive aspect" of the Brandt government was reflected in a variety of ways. The return of a West German soldier who had defected to the East, along with his army jeep, by the East Germans to West German authorities reflected the change. The reduction in the East-West German propaganda war in July 1972 was additional evidence of East Germany's recognition that the SPD government

did possess some good characteristics. What this propaganda "cease-fire" amounted to was an end to the display of posters at the Berlin Wall directed at GDR border guards, the termination of the East German "Soldatensender" propaganda broadcasts to Bundeswehr soliders, and the sending of Communist magazines to Bundeswehr soldiers. *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, July 14, 1972, EE/4040/A1/3.

22. *Ibid.*, October 27, 1973, p. 2.
23. *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, March 3, 1975, EE/4844/A1/2.
24. *Ibid.*, August 27, 1971, p. 1.
25. *Ibid.*, October 6, 1971, p. 3.
26. The agreement with West Germany was signed on December 17, 1971, by Dr. Michael Kohl for the GDR. At the time of the signing, Dr. Kohl declared that the agreement was significant for more than its material contents because it was actually a "useful contribution to detente" which could help encourage the further normalization of relations between the GDR and the FRG. Three days later an agreement with West Berlin was signed, with State Secretary Guenter Kohrt acting on behalf of the GDR. Just as Kohl expressed the hope that the agreement with West Germany would lead to further normalization, Kohrt declared his hope for the resolution of other issues in relations between West Berlin and the GDR. *The Berlin Settlement* (Bonn: Press and Information Office of the FRG, 1972), pp. 59, 72.
27. *Neues Deutschland*, December 18, 1971, p. 2.
28. *Ibid.*, June 21, 1973, p. 1.
29. *Ibid.*, May 3, 1974, p. 1.
30. *Ibid.*, July 20, 1972, p. 4.
31. *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, February 23, 1974, EE/4534/A1/4.
32. *Neues Deutschland*, January 31, 1973, p. 2.
33. *Ibid.*, May 24, 1973, p. 7.
34. *Ibid.*, April 26, 1974, p. 2.
35. *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, September 22, 1973, EE/4405/A1/2.
36. *Neues Deutschland*, July 25, 1972, p. 7.
37. *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, April 15, 1975, EE/4878/A1/3.
38. *Ibid.*, April 26, 1973, EE/4279/A1/10.
39. *Neues Deutschland*, September 26, 1973, p. 7.
40. *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, January 5, 1974, EE/4492/A1/6.
41. *Ibid.*, December 23, 1972, EE/4178/A1/6.
42. *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, May 10, 1975, p. 3.
43. *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, April 20, 1974, EE/4579/A1/5.
44. *Horizont*, No. 21, 1975, pp. 8-9.
45. *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, July 20, 1973, EE/4351/A1/5.
46. *Berliner Morgenpost*, May 8, 1975, p. 15.
47. *Neues Deutschland*, June 2, 1973, p. 2.
48. *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, March 22, 1975, EE/4861/A1/1.
49. *Ibid.*, November 5, 1974, EE/4747/A1/7.
50. *Neues Deutschland*, April 6, 1972, p. 2.
51. *Ibid.*, August 10, 1973, p. 1.
52. *Ibid.*, September 31, 1973, p. 1.
53. *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, October 2, 1973, EE/4413/A1/8.
54. *Neues Deutschland*, November 1, 1973, p. 2. Western journalists were even invited to attend the proceedings, a very unique action in the GDR. During the course of the trial, the GDR charged that West Berlin and West German firms were actually paying the expenses for the escapes of individuals who were needed in their industries. Officials of West Berlin and the FRG were also said to be party to the operations of the "criminal smugglers." Members of the United States Army stationed in West Berlin were also charged with complicity.
55. *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, February 14, 1974, EE/4526/A1/2.
56. *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, July 15, 1974, p. 5.
57. *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, January 2, 1974, EE/4489/A1/1.
58. *Ibid.*, February 17, 1975, EE/4832/A1/6.
59. *Neues Deutschland*, November 8, 1973, p. 1.
60. *Ibid.*, November 6, 1973, p. 2.

61. *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, December 13, 1973, EE/4475/A1/9.
62. *New York Times*, December 28, 1973, p. 5.
63. *Berliner Morgenpost*, October 27, 1974, p. 1.
64. *Neues Deutschland*, February 6, 1975, pp. 1-2.
65. *Ibid.*, February 22, 1975, p. 3.
66. *Ibid.*, March 11, 1975, p. 3.
67. *Berliner Zeitung*, August 7, 1973, p. 2.
68. *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, January 25, 1974, EE/4509/A1/5. An additional dispute appeared in January 1974 when the East Germans demanded an increase in the price of the lignite briquettes that they had been selling to West Berlin for the past twenty years. Citing Western inflation as justification, the GDR raised its prices on the briquettes from 79 marks per ton to 92 marks. Rather than meet the East German demand, West Berlin simply halted its purchases and prepared to endure the winter without the briquettes. *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, January 10, 1974, EE/4496/A1/1.
69. "Interview Granted by Erich Honecker to the US News Agency Associated Press," *Political Documents of the GDR*, No. 3, 1974, p. 9.
70. Peter C. Ludz, "Continuity and Change since Ulbricht," *Problems of Communism*, March-April, 1972, p. 57.
71. *Neues Deutschland*, May 30, 1974, p. 2.
72. *Ibid.*, May 13, 1974, p. 2.
73. *Ibid.*, January 1, 1968, pp. 1-2.
74. *Ibid.*, May 13, 1974, p. 2.
75. Erich Honecker, *Unter dem Banner des Internationalismus* (Berlin, GDR: Dietz Verlag, 1972), p. 117.
76. *Neues Deutschland*, May 8, 1971, p. 1.
77. Kurt Hager, *Socialist Cultural Policy* (Dresden: Verlag Zeit im Bild, 1972), p. 53.
78. *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, December 20, 1973, EE/4481/B/3. The Tenth World Youth Festival which was held in East Berlin in the summer of 1973 was another important step in promoting East German contacts with those who shared the SED's official outlook. According to the SED, the festival was "a great manifestation of democratic and socialist culture and illustrated the living power of the ideas of internationalism." *Neues Deutschland*, August 22, 1973, p. 4.
79. *Ibid.*, October 5, 1973, EE/4481/B/3.
80. *Ibid.*, August 21, 1973, EE/4378/A1/3.
81. *Neues Deutschland*, September 7, 1973, p. 1.
82. *Ibid.*, May 23, 1974, p. 1.
83. *Wirtschaftswissenschaft*, No. 8, 1973, pp. 1176-1189. Quoted in *ABSEES*, Vol. V, No. 1, 1974, pp. 155-156.
84. *Horizont*, No. 41, 1974, p. 9.
85. Z.M. Fallenbuchl, "Comecon Integration," *Problems of Communism*, Vol. 22, March-April, 1973, pp. 34-37.
86. *Berliner Zeitung*, August 20, 1971, p. 1.
87. *Neues Deutschland*, January 22, 1972, p. 3. Speaking in Leipzig on March 10, 1972, Honecker added to the charges by declaring that Peking shared responsibility for the increased American bombing attacks on North Vietnam because of its refusal to issue a strong condemnation of the action. Honecker, p. 308.
88. *Horizont*, No. 46, 1975, p. 8.
89. Friedrich A. Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1944), p. 139.
90. Gerhard Wettig, "Soviet Policy toward Western Europe," *Osteuropa*, No. 7, 1974, pp. 852-853.
91. *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, March 8, 1972, EE/3934/A1/4.
92. *Ibid.*, January 20, 1975, EE/4808/A1/5. Those occurring in Berlin have received special attention, as the incident in February 1975 when a GDR border guard was injured by a Western attempt to bomb the Wall. According to "Voice of the GDR," these "assaults are fostered by the fact that the West Berlin Senate is failing to stop activity against detente." *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, February 26, 1975, EE/4840/A1/2.

93. *Berliner Morgenpost*, October 20, 1974, p. 1.
94. "Interview Granted by Erich Honecker to the US News Agency Associated Press," p. 9.
95. *Berliner Morgenpost*, October 20, 1974, p. 1.
96. Gunther Doeker, Klaus Melsheimer, and Dieter Schroder, "Berlin and the Quadripartite Agreement of 1971," *American Journal of International Law*, Vol. 67, No. 1, 1973, p. 59.
97. *Neues Deutschland*, May 2, 1974, p. 2.
98. *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, December 3, 1974, EE/4771/A1/4.