

MEMOIRES OF A
GERMAN REVOLUTIONARY



Ernst Niekisch

BERSERKER

BOOKS



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Introduction

I saw **Ernst** Niekisch for the last time about a year before his death. I went to see him in his Berlin flat because I wanted to ask him to speak into the microphone for a programme. Niekisch was already very ill; he was lying in bed and his voice was weak.

Nothing came of the recording because I had forgotten to set a lever on the device correctly. Carelessness saved me from the temptation to commit an indiscretion; it would have consisted of publishing a brief moment from this tape recording.

We had talked about the political situation. Niekisch was pessimistic, even despairing. He suffered for the German people and those who represented them. He was not sparing with bitter remarks. Finally, I asked him if he could not see anyone in the political scene who, in his opinion, was capable of mastering the situation. The question referred primarily to a divided Germany. Niekisch did not ponder for long; he said: Nobody. We never had a chance to discuss this brusque refusal. No sooner had Niekisch uttered it than he laid his head back in the pillows, exhausted. He sobbed briefly, tears streaming from his extinguished eyes. Ernst Niekisch, the patriot, wept for Germany. Mrs Anna beckoned him to leave.

We can only understand Ernst Niekisch if we know that he was, above all else, a patriot. He was, but he was a patriot in a confused time, the inner tensions and ambivalences of which we can hardly imagine. Things came crashing down on people with elemental force; what they experienced was all first-hand. Unlike the first twenty years after the Second World War, the two decades between the Russian October Revolution and Niekisch's *Verhaftung* in Germany were characterised by upheavals, bloody battles and intellectual turmoil. Not

The year 1945 is not the real turning point in German history, but rather the year 1918.

That sounds strange. Didn't the German Reich emerge relatively unscathed from the defeat of 1918, and didn't it retain its national unity? Couldn't one even have thought, given the change in some manifestations of public life in the 1920s - the emperor left, the generals stayed - that the transition from the 19th century to the 20th century was almost harmonious?

20th century? And during the brief phase of stabilisation, did it not seem as if the evolutionary path to a new age without further catastrophes was already firmly mapped out? In contrast, the external scene after 1945 was even more drastic. The empire was not only destroyed; it was also divided, as it very quickly turned out. Unlike after 1918, the public consciousness was also clearly! The German people were clearly to blame for the war and for a mass murder unrivalled in history. A process of social transformation seemed to result inexorably from the forced migration of peoples, which brought millions from the eastern territories of the Reich to the western zones and later to the Federal Republic. And the ideological confrontation with communism seemed to be unavoidable, even more so than in the years of the Weimar Republic, not only for reasons of a shift in power positions in Europe. And yet 1945 meant a sharper break in the general public's awareness of the past. At that time there was no recourse to one's own historical traditions, as there was after 1945, when people remembered the first German republic and its foundations. The links to the past had been broken, at least in tendency. Something new had to emerge, and it had to be given shape. Moreover, there were soon options again. The October Revolution as the significant event of the epoch, once again offered openings and thus internal conflicts. Within the concert of European powers, Germany was soon once again a factor that demanded decisions from a sovereign policy.

In contrast to this, after 1945 there were, to put it bluntly only facts to be recognised. They set insurmountable limits for action and, no less importantly, for thought. It was not until the later 1960s, when the indignation of young people articulated all over the world

It was only seemingly as a by-product of the unrest that the first generation of Germans began to realise the revolutionary events that had taken place or were about to take place in China, Africa, South East Asia and all over the world since 1945. The Hiroshima blast was only recognised - also in its consequences for the all-altering technological development - after a twenty-year grace period in which the Germans, caught up in self-debates, had surrounded themselves with a protective zone to the outside like a cocoon.

1945 sealed the actual turning point of 1918, but it took many years before we were able to overcome this process, which was also a process of cutting the cord from Weimar, and become aware of the confrontation with a new historical situation.

It characterises not only the man Ernst Niekisch, who, almost completely blind and half paralysed, was liberated from the Brandenburg-Görden prison by the Russians after eight years of imprisonment, but also the different basic state of mind of the two post-war eras, that the second volume of his memoirs, which deals with the years after 1945, seems in many respects like an echo of the first.

Here is the furious and complete outline of the life of a man who was sure of the struggle he was waging, even if it resulted in continual defeats and precisely because it led him to prison as a consequence of his outrageous challenge to Hitler. There is a sketchy reconstruction of a new attempt, divided into more than sixty chapters, in which the conviction can be seen from the outset that the historically powerful forces in which Niekisch believed, in the sense of Hegel, would pass over him to the order of the day.

When the first volume of the memoirs "Gewagtes Leben" was published in 1958, the publisher's blurb read: "Niekisch concludes his memoirs with the words: 'The freedom that had opened up to me again proved to be an almost impenetrable thicket of new, breath-taking constraints. They sound like an expression of deep political resignation. Whether they are indeed to be interpreted in this way would have to be explained in a subsequent volume.'" The answer to this question is now available. The answer is yes. In the last years of his life, Niekisch was surrounded by a shadow of deep

Resignation. He fought against it again and again. It would have been against his nature to give up. But not only were his energies largely consumed in an unprecedented, twelve-year dispute through all instances about his right to compensation, which his friend Joseph E. Drexel reported on in 1964 in a sensational, two-hundred-page brochure ' and which Niekisch also gives a bitter account of in this book. Niekisch resigned for two reasons, as far as can be ascertained from his writings and understood from his character.

One lay in the new power constellations after the Second World War, which had blocked Germany's path to becoming the subject of history and turned it into a pure, divided object. This also made the idea of an all-German, active orientation towards the East without a subjugating character, which Niekisch had always advocated against Stresemann and Locarno, obsolete.

In "Daring Life" it said: "Is there, one had to ask, a way to bring the best part of the Western-European heritage into the newly emerging Russian-Asian world? In the deepest sense, this was the question posed by the resistance movement. Old Prussia, which had never been fully absorbed into the West, seemed to be an instrument for transferring Western values to the Eastern world. If the entire German people understood this task, their existence could still gain historical meaning. *Hitler's failure was to shatter this possibility.*"² And Niekisch, referring to the situation after 1945, adds: "The western part of Germany remains on the path that Stresemann took and Hitler followed to the bitter end ... Eastern Germany, however, is too weak to be able to carry the Western heritage into the East on its own shoulders. Its fate in its isolation will be to sink completely into the East, to be absorbed by it."

In "Against the Current" it then says: "No world tendency demands that Germany be reunited and gain new strength and power. So the driving force is missing in the things themselves,

1 Cf. J. E. Drexel, Der Fall Niekisch - eine Dokumentation, Cologne-Berlin 1964

2 See E. Niekisch, Gewagtes Leben, Cologne-Berlin 1958, p. 149

by which Germany could be brought together again into unity."³ From which, incidentally, it can be concluded that Niekisch saw no world tendency within which Germany as a whole would fall to the hegemony of Soviet Russia after 1945. He saw the struggle between the two great world tendencies, the bourgeois-capitalist and the proletarian-Bolshevik. But within this struggle he saw something else. And this was the second reason for his resignation. He saw the emergence of "Clerkism", which he described in a festschrift for Joseph E. Drexel in 1965.

In it, he compared the manager in a capitalist society with the functionary in a socialist one. He did not equate them. The "manager does not appeal to the will of the masses, but to the logic of the cause ... " The functionary, on the other hand, must be understood as an "interpreter and executor of the will of the masses". Nevertheless, he sees in both exponents of their societies a comparable type as "the man of the future". One could say that "he is polished and honed like a piece of jewellery". The clerk is "the modern Fellache; he is the product into which the working man, be he of bourgeois or proletarian origin, is transformed in the scorching light of the technicist spirit."⁵ In this essay, as Friedrich Kabermann has noted, he speaks "for the first time explicitly of the 'nothingness' that is 'made palpable with uncanny strength' to modern man". Niekisch wrote this under the impression of the atomic bomb.

Niekisch, who himself emphasised the "protesting nature of his character", the Lutheran-German from the poorer classes of the people, the son of a Silesian master file cutter who ended up in Nördlingen in Bavaria, the man with the angular craftsman's head, "into whom the spirit has gone" (Kari Korn) - he was the head and motor of the multi-faceted movement that was known as the "Lutheran movement".

"National Bolschewism" has gone down in history. Prussians of the "Jacobin" variety, such as Clausewitz, Scilarnhorst and, to some extent, Freiherr vom Stein, historically known as the "national bolshevists".

3 Cf. Niekisch, *Against the current*, p. 8

4 Cf. E. Niekisch, *Der Clerk*, in "Politische Schriften", Cologne-Berlin 1963, pp. 289ff.

5 Cf. F. Kabermann, *Widerstand und Entscheidung eines deutschen Revolutionärs/Leben und Denken von Ernst Niekisch*, Cologne 1973, p. 260

schooled in Ranke, philosophically mainly in Hegel, Nietzsche and Spengler play a role - he was an unorthodox Marxist; he considered Lassalle, who always wanted a strong state because he considered it necessary in modern society, to be more relevant than Marxism.

In the network of coordinates of his thinking, which was as twisted as it was clairvoyant and, in any case, implacable, the socialist state of the future to be established was the "testament of Weimar and Königsberg". There is no mention of Trier. The death of the state was a foreign concept to him. Rather, the state as the expression of a political and moral idea had the function of advancing the development of the human race.

It is easy to use his own quotes to relegate the rebel Niekisch, with his deep-rooted resentment of the "citizen", whom he characterised as the "man who has been", to the authoritarian, anti-democratic front, to convict him of romantic notions and to label him as an enemy of the Republic of Weimar. Even in his 1932 pamphlet "Hitler ein deutsches Verhängnis" (Hitler, a German disaster), there are passages that seem to place him close to the man to whom all his hatred and all his struggle was focussed.

Much of what must seem misleading to us today is due to the confusion of the time itself, in which the entanglements of left and right positions were characteristic of German intellectual history. In his astonishing and strange journal "Widerstand" (Resistance), around which Niekisch repeatedly formed and activated circles throughout Germany, and in his brochures, he did not analyse this period with the intention of describing it in a distanced observer's role, but in order to influence the progress of history in a revolutionary way. Other things that confuse him today can be explained by his understanding of Hegel. It led - and seduced - him to speculatively strain the category of the historical and to transfer its patterns to the present in great dialectical turns.

The "imperial claim of the 'Idea of Potsdam'" was, it seems today, a historically outdated concept when Niekisch advocated it. His polemic against the "Roman" principle, as the modern incarnation of which he saw the United States, was deeply rooted in German history. But it was (for this reason alone) not free of resentment. The reverse is true of the

Germanic-Slavic counter-principle. As a global political speculation, Niekisch incorporated it into the realpolitik components of his demand for an eastward orientation of Germany and a restrained - not, as is often claimed, radical - opposition to the West directed against the Versailles system. But is it really all that far away? Semantic problems that arise from the fact that terms such as "Potsdam" or "germanic" are occupied by Hitler and his atrocities cannot prevent us from recognising that the principles themselves - mutatis mutandis. at a different level and now increasingly intertwined - continue to exist. Their revitalisation on German soil cannot be ignored. They could only be cancelled out by the convergences that force the technician age to recognise itself.

Niekisch failed as a politician. He possessed an ability to analyse that was unparalleled among the political minds of the century. He was also able to convince in personal dialogue, in small circles. But, subtle as he was, he lacked the talent for demagoguery that so disastrously characterised his opponent Hitler. His inner structure was that of a democrat; he could listen and nobly accepted the opinions of others. He could be brusque, but he detested anything autocratic.

He tried the SPD, which he joined in 1917. But when it let the great hour of the revolution pass and joined forces with the bourgeoisie, which had been the subject of his deepest suspicion and contempt since his youth and obviously fuelled by his youthful experiences, he threw his party membership card in the letterbox on his way to prison. He had been sentenced to two years because, as President of the Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Councils, he had played a decisive role in the revolutionary events in Bavaria. But when the Soviet Republic was proclaimed, he resigned from office and was succeeded by Ernst Toller. Niekisch had seen the chaos coming; he had the impression when the offices were distributed, which Tankred Dorst described in his "Toller" play based on Niekisch's descriptions, to witness "a grotesque".

Niekisch joined the USPD, whose parliamentary group in the Bavarian state parliament he led for a time. After their split, he could neither

He became youth secretary of the German Textile Workers' Association in Berlin, the second-largest trade union at the time, although he believed that young people had no place in politics because they were an element of emotionalisation and radicalisation. In 1926, he joined the "Altsozialistische Partei", a moderate splinter group that occasionally played the role of tongues in the Dresden state parliament. In the same year, he founded the magazine "Widerstand".

After the Hindenburg election in 1925, this was the time when Niekisch, desperate about the development of the republic, tried to spin threads in all directions. With the help of left-wing and conservative groups, including the Landvolk- bund des Bauern Heim, the Bund Oberland of Beppo Römer and the "Jungdo" Mahrauns, he was determined to awaken the revolutionary potential, to make up for what had been neglected in 1918 and to avert what he foresaw: the surrender of Germany to Hitler.

The connections extend as far as Schleicher and Seeckt. But that Niekisch's trip to the Soviet Union in the early 1930s, where he met Radek, was connected with Seeckt's secret orders is obviously a legend. Nevertheless, it is significant that it could arise. The attempt to mobilise the "Prussian instinct" and the "Resistance" slogan: "We are not communists, but we are capable of communism if the national interest demands it" belonged together.

What did Ernst Niekisch want back then? Sebastian Haffner described it vividly in a confrontation between Hitler and Niekisch: "They wanted the exact opposite in every detail: Hitler, the belated revenge on the 'November criminals', Niekisch, the belated victory of the November Revolution; Hitler, the fascist counter-revolution, Niekisch, the socialist revolution; Hitler, Vienna's anti-Bolshevik crusade and the colonialisation of Russia with the silent aid of the West, Niekisch, the alliance with the Bolshevik revolution against the West. Hitler thought in terms of race and space, Niekisch in terms of class and state. Hitler wanted to capture the masses for a capitalist-imperialist policy; Niekisch wanted to win over a new elite for a policy of Prussian-ascetic socialism. For all his 'socialist' phrase-mongering, Hitler had long since come to terms with the capitalist bourgeoisie; for

For Niekisch, the capitalist bourgeoisie was and remained the real enemy within. "* Niekisch failed. But history at least did not prove him wrong. How it would have turned out if he had succeeded is an idle question; it belongs to the realm of speculation.

It characterises Niekisch's assessment of the situation that arose after 1945 that his second volume of memoirs "Gegen den Strom" (Against the Current) deals "above all with developments that took place on the cultural level". And it continues to characterise his self-image that he was able to write in a completely unbiased manner:

"I never worked for the SED, nor did I have any political ambitions." And this despite the fact that he joined the SED after Klingelhöfer had unsuccessfully urged him to join the SPD and despite the fact that he was a member of the People's Chamber as a member of the Culture Bund faction. The contradiction is in fact only of a formal nature, which hardly seems understandable today and ultimately proved to be an illusion. But his formal membership of the SED and the People's Chamber at a time when the slogan "Germans at one table" was issued in the name of the "National Front" contributed decisively to the fact that he was denied reparation for so long, in contradiction "to the basic moral idea of our legal system" (Ferdinand Friedensburg).

Niekisch saw an "urgent need to keep an all-German cultural consciousness alive first and foremost", whereby he was still "imbued with the idea of carrying over the German-European cultural heritage" to the Bolshevik East. A strange thought, by the way, for a man who was used to thinking in terms of power politics and who was by no means alien to Marx's dialectic, even if he was **unable to** follow his anthropology of the human being as the "ensemble of social relations".

When Niekisch joined the SED, for him this was not just the fulfilment of the dream of united workers' parties, even if it only took place in one part of Germany. He also clung to the idea that such a party, once it had gained a foothold in the whole of Germany, would be inferior to the Soviet

6 Cf. S. Haffner, Ernst Niekisch, in "Preußische Portraits", ed. W. Venohr, Hamburg 1969

influence in view of the powers of control granted to the Soviets in Potsdam: "They should have operated cautiously. " We know today that all this and other things were illusions. And not only because the West-East conflict prevented such developments. Internal developments in the Soviet-occupied zone and later in the GDR also left little and temporary room for such ideas.

Niekisch experienced this first-hand. He was a largely undesirable writer: from his brilliant essay

He had to remove the last chapter of "Deutsche Daseinsverfehlung" because the Soviet control authorities considered it too pessimistic due to its view of the German future as that of another Switzerland. An account of German-Soviet relations that he had been commissioned to write, "Der Draht nach Ruß- lands" (The Wire to Russia), could not be published at all. His account of the Third Reich, "Das Reich der niederen Dämonen", written before he was arrested and miraculously saved, caused nothing but embarrassment; people read dangerous parallels to conditions in the GDR out of it; the print run was limited to 3,000 copies. His "Europäiische Bilanz" could only be published after Grotewohl intervened and a chapter on the significance of the Jews in German national history was removed. Wilhelm Girnus likened this work to the "American war heroes", and the editors refused to respond to this attack in the journal "Ein- heit". Niekisch also had difficulties as a professor at Humboldt University. For example, a research project on the sociology of refugees from the lost eastern territories was prohibited.

For today's readers in the Federal Republic, many of Niekisch's experiences and encounters in those years may seem almost ghostly: The role of the "Cultural Association for the Democratic Renewal of Germany", which did not, as the intellectuals who flocked to it believed, strengthen the influence of the mind on power, but rather the other way round, was - or rather became - a means of power to domesticate the mind. The dramatic "formalism" debate with the powerful of the state and the party in the "Möwe"; the narrow-minded reactions of Johannes R. Becher to Niekisch's defence of his friend Ernst Jünger. In addition, the poignant attempts, in conventicles

The Nauheim Circle and the coalescence of an imposing guard of intellectuals in Imshausen were attempts to maintain the pan-German feeling that Niekisch and others were concerned with. They were attempts, as the "resistance" circles once were, to stop the recognised but unrecognised course of history. And yet all these endeavours and debates were what made up real life at the time. The centrepiece of the volume of memoirs "Gegen den Strom" is a memorandum Niekisch wrote to the then High Commissioner Semyonov a few days before the revolutionary events of 17 June 1953. In many respects, it is an astonishing document which, beyond its content, testifies to Niekisch's unbroken courage in the face of all powers. Shortly after 17 June, he sent the document to its addressee.

If he had still believed in the "German road to socialism" proclaimed by Anton Ackermann in 1946 as the goal of the party and Soviet policy until June 1952, when the SED was transformed into a "new type of party" and became the actual bearer of state power, this was no longer the case after the transformation of the party. In his memorandum, he imploringly drew Semyonov's attention to the fact that the

"The average German today is a citizen by nature. He attaches importance "to civic ideals, the right of the individual, the value of personality, the guarantee of legal security, the rule of law, the inviolability of private property and, to a certain extent, civic freedom". This also applies to the worker. It could not be denied "that in the implementation of the new policy, the civic character of the East German population had also been completely lost sight of". One of the "most important and significant concerns of every policy" had to be "to make moral conquests. The moral conquests that the German Democratic Republic would have made would have easily benefited the Soviet Union as well. But this is precisely the weakest point of the German Democratic Republic's policy."

Astonishing words from the mouth of the constant advocate of an eastward orientation of German politics. Astonishing words, but by no means from the mouth of the moralist Niekisch. Did he make his peace with "the citizens" in his last years? That is probably the wrong question. It was based on

This presupposes that Niekisch's hostility to the Western capitalist bourgeoisie would have included a rejection of these very achievements of the bourgeois revolution. But that is not the case. Niekisch always upheld the rule of law, legal certainty and freedom of personal opinion, even in those passages of his writings in which he called for a strong state.

It goes without saying that Niekisch's view of post-war developments in Germany is characterised by his earlier ideas of a desirable German-Russian relationship. We cannot be indifferent to the opinions of such a man today, now that the era he outlined has passed. Not even if they are skewed or unjust or simply ignore some of the facts. He did not see many things because he obviously did not want to see them. For example, when he spoke of

"change of government" in Prague in 1948 is simply a euphemism for being blind to the real events of the time. There are many things that can be levelled against Adenauer, but it is absurd to accuse him of war-mongering. And whether it was part of the American conception to "smash the Soviet Union to pieces as the hotbed of anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism and to divide it up as colonial territory itself" is something that can be doubted with some justification, even during the years of the most intense Cold War. Niekisch's dictum that bourgeois society would "never again emerge from the fascist state" would at least require a definition of the term "fascism". The reader will find other questionable passages for himself. The book concludes with a comparison between Adenauer and Ulbricht, the two "leaders". Neither of them is treated favourably. This is followed by portraits of two artists, Horst Stempel and Gustav Seitz. Niekisch thus revisits the fundamental theme of his existence after the war, that of maintaining German cohesion, at least in the cultural sphere. The "Farewell to the SED" only serves as an affirmation.

Niekisch, the elementary school teacher from the people, the revolutionary, the penetrating spirit and indomitable man, has led a dialectical existence, the result of which is an unheard-of degree of perfection. His political writings will accompany us for a long time to come. The story is not over, although it sometimes seems so.

Ernst Niekisch

Current areas

Preliminary remark

German historians have often pointed out with some astonishment the violent falls that the course of German history has shown. The mighty empire of Otto the Great ended in weakness. The fall of the Hohenstaufen empire is viewed with deep shock. It ended with the execution of Conradin in Naples: the empire of the proud and arrogant Frederick Barbarossa sank into an interregnum. Centuries of German otherness and discord followed, during which the western nation states formed and prepared glorious epochs. At the end of the Middle Ages, another attempt was made to gather the political strength of the German people and create a politically viable entity. It happened under Charles V. The importance of this figure is generally underestimated. Here once again an emperor had emerged who seemed to have the potential to elevate Germany to a great historical position. He ultimately failed, just as the Ottonians and Hohenstaufen had failed before him. This figure reveals that the historical failure was not the fault of the leading personalities, but that it lay in the German things themselves, their circumstances and - let's just say it - in the German character traits. Charles V resigned; he had come to the gloomy realisation that there was nothing to be done politically with the German people. The political raw material, the German national substance was not enough to make great history. There followed centuries of powerlessness, of internal dissolution, indeed of dishonour; there followed Napoleon and the liquidation of the medieval empire in general, and finally the quagmire of the German Confederation. Out of this swamp rose a sub-region, the Land of Prussia, which was filled with the ambition to equal the western nation states in splendour and power. Already in Frederick the Great

it announced its claim to power. This monarch imbued his state with that tendency towards expansion which later led to an attempt to establish rule over the whole world via a united Germany.

Prussia had been lucky enough to find an unusual statesman who succeeded in 1871 in re-founding a strong, united Germany. German greatness seemed to have risen from the dust and to be secured for the future. But as proud as its founders and creators were of their work, and as self-confident as the citizens of this new empire were in enjoying their successes, it gave pause for thought that sharp-eyed minds, such as Friedrich Nietzsche, found the founding of this empire highly questionable from the outset. They felt uneasy in the face of this new entity. They questioned its meaning and found no exhaustive and satisfactory answer. This empire was there as a fact and yet only existed because of a special European constellation and a highly developed military power. There was no doubt about its factual existence. But what it was there for, what special historical mission it had: no one knew how to tell. To conserve feudalistic, authoritarian state residues was not a task that gave a great empire the right to live. The creator himself, the old Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, was haunted by such doubting concerns. He too did not trust the duration of his creation and predicted that it would barely survive him for twenty years. He was proved right in an almost uncanny way. He died in 1898, and by 1918 the glory of his empire was over.

The Weimar Republic was nothing more than a ruin that continued its pitiful existence. Once again, one could say desperately, the German people gathered all their strength and created the Third Reich with an unrivalled effort. Just as the German armies had flooded most of Europe after 1914, they now flooded almost the whole of Europe and even North Africa once again in 1939. But even these triumphs were quickly fleeting; in 1945 everything collapsed in ruins. Germany, the empire, had finally ceased to exist; it found itself in a situation similar to that of the old empire after the Thirty Years' War.

It is essential to address the question of how these terrible, sudden crashes can be explained. Overview

If one examines the course of history, one finds that every major period has special social and economic tasks to fulfil. These tasks constitute what may be called the historical or even world-historical leading tendencies. The peoples who adopt such a historical and contemporary tendency are successful; in them, to use Hegel's words, the world spirit is embodied. Unfortunately, the German people never knew how to harmonise themselves in time with a leading historical tendency. During the Hohenstaufen era, the European bourgeoisie became aware of its power and strength for the first time; above all in Italy it made its claims known. The Hohenstaufen had no eye for this; they felt themselves to be the custodians of traditional feudalism. Both Frederick Barbarossa and Frederick II were terrible to the rising cities, and it was in the tradition of the following German emperors that they were without understanding for the importance of the German Hanseatic League. By embodying the feudal principle, the German emperors favoured historical regression. Thus their cause had no future and was **basically** doomed from the outset. The French Revolution, which helped the bourgeois cause to victory, finally put an end to the medieval German Empire altogether.

But the new attempt that Prussia had undertaken also got off on the wrong foot right from the start. Prussia was Junker and feudalistic; it saw itself as the antithesis of the French Revolution. As a power of reaction, it rose to power and could therefore only survive as long as reaction was allowed a reprieve to gradually die out. The Bismarckian Empire also stood against the course of history. It tried to save as much of feudalism as could be saved from the encroaching superiority of the bourgeoisie. **If** this bourgeois supremacy continued to grow, which was inevitable, it could no longer exist as a compromise with feudalism and had to be wiped out historically.

It is as if the German people had an ineradicable tendency to act as a historical "delaying force par excellence", to act as a retarding force in history and thus always necessarily be doomed to failure. The last major attempt it made under Hitler was in the same direction. In 1917, a new historical principle was

had entered the world, the Bolshevik principle, and Russia had made itself its champion. Almost at the same time, the German people were already urging themselves to throw themselves in the way of this new historical principle; not only the German bourgeoisie, but also the German labour force became "anti-Bolshevik". The Hitler Reich rose to power as an anti-Bolshevik power, and as an anti-Bolshevik power it plunged into the Second World War. In its defeat and fall, world history became a world judgement for the German Reich. The German Reich was, one could say, rejected because it had once again fought for reaction against something new in world history.

The result is the depressing realisation that the German people have repeatedly and repeatedly "failed to exist". In 1945 a line was drawn under this failed existence. All the German historical highlights had only been episodes.

This realisation has unavoidable consequences for contemporary politics. If a political entity is meaningless, it is completely irrelevant whether it exists or not. The destruction of Germany and the division of Germany have no meaning whatsoever; they merely express the emptying of meaning from German historical existence. No world tendency demands that Germany be reunited and gain new strength and power. Thus the driving force by which Germany could be brought back to unity is missing in the things themselves. Two great tendencies fill the world today: the bourgeois-imperialist, which is embodied in America, and the proletarian-Bolshevik, which is embodied in Russia. These two world tendencies are in fierce conflict. Europe is the battlefield, and it is precisely for this reason that the existence of Europe has entered into an existential crisis. Western Europe is part of the American sphere of influence and can only exist as an integral part of it. Eastern Europe is included in the Russian sphere, has become part of it and can no longer stand on its own two feet. **If** an independent Europe **is** no longer possible **under** the given circumstances, then the preconditions for an independent Germany have vanished once and for all; Germany exists only as a field in which civil war is constantly raging. Here the two great world trends meet directly.

For the unforeseeable future, Germany is destined to be the ground on which the unresolved civil war rages. Berlin is a symbol: This place epitomises the German civil war situation in its most acute and concentrated form.

Germany had been defending its position of power against the internal necessity of things since 1871. It has also been defending itself against this since 1917. It has always stood on the front line in defence of outdated orders, a restoration, an "anti". But the pull of things is irresistible; its pressure cannot be stopped in the long run. Germany has nothing to oppose it but military force. Militarism can easily be understood to mean that one seeks to elude the flow of historical development exclusively by military means. Ultimately, however, military force must always capitulate to the advancing world trend. In order to evade capitulation, military force, in its despair, resorts to the most extreme, the most atrocious, the most inhuman means; it is not afraid to cross the line beyond which the crime begins. Thus the outcome of German political power in an unleashing of all criminal instincts and misdeeds was not accidental, but lay in German logic itself. America's renewed turn to a policy that makes exclusive use of military means indicates that it secretly considers its cause, the cause of bourgeois imperialism, to be a lost cause that has no future ahead of it and must rely entirely on brute force.

The extent to which German development was essentially linked to reaction and restoration, to the "anti", was particularly evident in German Social Democracy. Under the sign of the Communist Manifesto, it had begun as a "revolutionary" party, as a party that had been given the task of bringing something completely new into the world; however, it did not hold this position for long, but crossed over the bridge of reformism and revisionism into the camp of bourgeois society. After the outbreak of the First World War, it defended the last European feudal position alongside the bourgeois parties. After the defeat of 1918, its inner essence could be summarised in the name

"Noske" to summarise. It covered up the resurrection of German militarism and prepared the way for the Freikorps that were to follow.

SA and SS units. In the struggle against the Bolshevik Revolution, it joined the ranks of all those forces that kept Germany on the path of world reaction: feudalised heavy industry, the anti-progressive bourgeoisie, the military rulers. Even after the collapse of 1945, the Social Democrats, barely resurrected, found themselves in the phalanx of anti-revolutionary forces.

The deeper-seeing minds had long known that Germany was a country without hope; for this reason they were nihilists. German nihilism was a premonition of the German catastrophe of 1945, but at almost the same time an even more radical nihilism, a European nihilism, came to the fore. It expressed the premonition of Europe's collapse.

In 1945 I was already fully aware that from then on there would no longer be any real German politics. I saw the German West, which was occupied by the three victorious Western powers, as irredeemably doomed to the tendencies of world reaction. I wanted nothing to do with them. But I didn't hold out much hope for the German East either. I realised that the time of German resolutions, German planning and German self-determination was over here too. The only thing that seemed to have a future for me was the general cause of the Russian-Asian East itself, to which the German East was now definitively subsumed. Here, even if one thought everything was lost, there was still one last thing to do, which was also the most difficult: since I was imbued with the idea that the German-European cultural heritage had to be saved for the Bolshevik East, I saw an urgent necessity to keep alive an all-German cultural consciousness in order for the German people to be up to this task at all. I set to work with little confidence; I neither worked for the SED nor did I have any other political ambitions. So it is that this second volume of "Memories" is primarily concerned with developments that took place on a cultural level.

I knew from the start that there would only be a small harvest here too. But after all, life is about being active.

After the disaster

When the global political turmoil that Hitler had instigated was crushed in a terrible manner in 1945, a clean slate was created. Two truly great powers remained: the United States of America and the Soviet Union. As a matter of honour, the Empire, France and China were added to the ring of the chosen ones. But the baton was broken over Italy, Japan and Germany; dependence became their lot.

The number of Germans who were able to appreciate the full depth of Germany's sudden fall in 1945 was probably small.

Hans Kelsen, who had been a teacher of constitutional law in Cologne before **1933** and later taught at the University of California, wrote an essay in which he explored the questions that arose "whether one would embark on the work of a peace treaty with Germany. Germany had, he said, with radical determination, ceased to be a sovereign state through its complete defeat, the surrender of its armed forces and the elimination of its national government. As a result, it was no longer capable of concluding a treaty and therefore no peace treaty could be concluded with it. In view of past experience, it was also not advisable to negotiate such a treaty with Germany. We must remember how Germany disregarded its signature to the Versailles Peace Treaty after 1919 and ultimately even boldly denied it. Germany had to be founded anew by the victorious states; only the *German states* remained as political realities. The conditions under which the new Germany would be allowed to emerge would have to be laid down in the statute establishing the state. In this way, the terms of peace should simply be imposed on it. Germany's sovereignty would be in the hands of the commanders-in-chief of the occupying powers after its "debel- latio" (complete defeat and overpowering) by its opponents.

Germany was the subject of a condominium, just as a condominium had once been established over Egypt.

It was Soviet troops who had conquered Berlin and thus brought about the final collapse of the Third Reich. It was inevitable that the Soviet Union, after its military achievements, would have a strong say in shaping the destiny of Europe. It had thrown its weight into the balance at the Potsdam Conference; it was respected in the Potsdam resolutions.

The defeat of the German rebels had cost the West so much energy that it was forced to compromise with Soviet power in 1945. The Potsdam Decisions were this compromise, which recognised a balance of power between the West and the East.

The Potsdam Decisions were to a certain extent the first basic law according to which the collapsed Germany had to live for the time being. Sovereignty was vested in a "Control Council" made up of the commanders-in-chief of the four victorious powers. The German territory was divided into four occupation zones. Not one square metre of unoccupied German territory remained. Within the Soviet occupation zone, Berlin was a four-power city. Disarmament, denazification, the re-education of the German people, the destruction of corporations, the division of large estates, the destruction of heavy industry and armaments, dismantling and reparations were imposed on Germany; the territory on the other side of the Oder-Neisse line was handed over to Polish administration. Of course, the German people were still given one chance: German unity had not yet been broken up, even though Roosevelt, Churchill and de Gaulle had drawn up plans for the division of Germany during the war. For example, a map hung in the study of American President Roosevelt showing how the President envisaged the division of Germany. Nevertheless, according to the Potsdam Decisions, large economic sectors, transport and traffic were to remain uniformly organised, and various central authorities were envisaged. A German peace treaty was to be discussed by the "Council of Foreign Ministers" of the USA, Great Britain, the USSR and France.

With the culling of German heavy industry, the reunification of
The planting of entire industrial facilities in other countries

The livelihoods of millions of German industrial workers were jeopardised. Large armies of workers were suddenly without work and bread. Their existence hung in the air like that of the millions of refugees who were crammed from the lost eastern provinces, as well as from Czechoslovakia, Austria and Hungary, into a German area that had been so badly cut back. A population overpressure area was created that gave rise to the worst fears. These accumulated masses were far from being provided for in terms of food, housing and clothing. Since there was no possibility of earning a living, since initially the production process and economic life were barely able to get off the ground, and since there were no traces of foreign trade from the proceeds of which the import of food and raw materials could have been paid, a large part of the German people eked out their existence partly from gifts of grace from abroad and partly from loans, the future coverage of which remained a mystery and a puzzle. This meant that the German people led a truly lumpenproletarian existence. It paid attention to foreign will not primarily because it had the power of arms at its disposal, but rather because it was able to provide bread and meat. The curtailment and destruction of livelihoods on the one hand, and the forced population overpressure on the other, created an almost hopeless situation. There was no clear path ahead; it was an experience that was all the more shattering because it had suddenly befallen the German people. The German people had thought they were climbing to the highest peaks of world domination; they found themselves in desolate abysses.

They had been lured into a delusional belief in the greatness and splendour of their future, in a wonder-filled millennial kingdom. Faith shattered into shards, and the moment the people awoke from such belief, they had to realise that in truth they had little to hope for. Their whole past, which they looked back upon, they had to recognise as a historical aberration; those very beliefs which they had considered to be their best and most distinguishing, they had to perceive as questionable; that which they held in the highest esteem was completely devalued; the gods who had been the most sacred to them were revealed as malignant grimaces and lay shattered in the dust.

The Russian Revolution of March 1917 had sent me into a fever of excitement. I sensed something new that had come into the world. The October Revolution even confirmed this view. I followed the Russian events with burning interest; they could not, I believed, remain without influence on Germany. If I was now expecting the revolution in Germany too, it was because I was worried about whether Germany would be included in the "dawn of the new era". It should not remain "backward", lagging behind events and gambling away its future by remaining in the wake of history.

Throughout the years, this worry never left me. The Weimar Republic, I realised, was an event to protect Germany from revolution. With it, Germany had entered a development in which it would inevitably become an "enemy of the revolution", a harbour of reaction. Germany had evaded all the great revolutions of modern history. The fate of a "failure to exist" had thus been bestowed upon it. Should Germany now once again fail to exist? Lenin had been brought to Russia from Switzerland by the German General Staff and the German government. Large sums of German money had flowed to the Bolshevik leaders in the early days of the Bolshevik Revolution. Germany had thus become a driving force of the Bolshevik revolution. Ludendorff and Chancellor Bethmann Hollweg had indeed supported the Bolshevik revolution because they were in dire need of relief on the German eastern front. But in doing so, they had set in motion a historical development whose consequences they could not escape. It would have been logical for Germany to be drawn into the maelstrom of world revolutionary events in the end. It would hardly have been spared chaotic events, but it would ultimately have been able to reap the fruits of this revolution. It seems that Lenin thought along these lines. He did not trust the Russian peasantry to bring the outbreak of revolution to a victorious conclusion. He looked expectantly to Germany; only in co-operation with Germany could the revolutionary event, which had been triggered by Russia, be completed.

But Germany contained the revolution. Although it had paved the way for it, it lacked the courage and determination to draw the consequences. It had opened the gates to the revolution, but now weak-heartedly wanted to close them again. It switched from the revolution to the front of the counter-revolution.

He was not spared serious consequences. He did not escape the pressure of being pushed to the forefront of the counter-revolution: It happened under Hitler. In this function, it needed its strength. It failed and was left in shambles in 1945. The policy of the victorious powers was to put these shards back together again in a makeshift manner. The Americans did this in West Germany, the Soviets in East Germany. The resulting pots, the two German states, were pitiful patches in which no German soup could be cooked. They were only to be used for the benefit of their creators, America and the Soviet Union.

Hitler was not a mere episode; he was the culmination of a long German misguided development. His misdeeds confirmed and reinforced the fact that Germany's path must ultimately lead out of history; he destroyed, one could say, Germany as a historical existence. This is how I had seen and judged Hitler early on, and this is how the unbridled hatred with which I looked upon Hitler may be understood. My political conception during the Weimar period was an attempt to prevent Germany from falling into this abyss. Of course, this attempt harboured the presumptuous attempt to revolt against a great, sinister historical tendency. For this reason, this conception had no chance of prevailing from the very beginning.

First experiences

My wife had experienced the invasion of the Red Army in Belle Alliance Street, in the basement of a bombed-out house that belonged to the owner of the Bernard and Graefe publishing house, Major Bodo Graefe. Major Graefe had given my wife, who had been employed in his publishing house during my imprisonment, accommodation there. One of the major's domestic servants, a

Volga German, spoke Russian; this made life easier for the terrified women and saved them from some unpleasant experiences. Shortly after the Russians invaded, my wife had tracked down two rooms in Tempelhof to which she had moved. So I found temporary accommodation after my return from Brandenburg*. I energetically undertook my first strenuous attempts at walking. I had two sticks and made an effort to hold myself up and move around with their help. I made progress from day to day.

My wife and I were left with nothing. Due to the bombing of various flats, my wife had not only lost all her household goods, but also most of her clothes and linen. I brought no more back from Brandenburg than what I had on my body. For the time being we lived on my wife's savings, which we had to fear would soon run out. I had to try to get out of this predicament. One day, accompanied by my wife, I dragged myself to Tempelhof town hall to get my own flat with the help of the authorities, instructions on laundry and clothes and finally a job. We were sent "from pillar to post; all the offices that would have been suitable for me were occupied. The flats vacated by the Nazis already had new owners. Nobody felt able to provide us with laundry and clothes. Once I got as far as Mayor Nyaahl. He expressed his good will, but didn't know how to help us practically. It was on this occasion that I first discussed the idea of finding a job at the university.

Around this time, I was visited by a former fellow sufferer from Brandenburg, Walter Uhlmann. Uhlmann had been a co-driver on a lorry in Brandenburg. He had often travelled to Berlin in this capacity and had enjoyed far more freedom than other prisoners. After I got to know him better in hospital, he brought me letters from my wife. He was a man who could be completely relied upon. His brother-in-law was the later West German Communist deputy Kurt Müller, who one day, at the instigation of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, was sent to the German parliament.

- Brandenburg-Görden Prison

Uhlmann was arrested there and held in captivity for several years. Uhlmann was in close contact with the leadership of the Communist Party through his brother-in-law. Uhlmann told me that an organisation "Victims of Fascism" was to be founded. The founding meeting was being prepared at the radio station in Masurenallee. In the course of this meeting, a presidium was to be elected. He was instructed to ask me whether I would like to join this committee.

I had reservations and pointed out my frailty, which would not allow me to attend the inaugural meeting. Uhlmann brushed my objections aside; they would take me to the roundhouse in a car. So I gave in.

The following Sunday, I was indeed picked up by car as arranged. A tremendous hustle and bustle made even entering the house a strain for me. I was received warmly in the large hall and shown to a "place of honour".

The meeting was opened and chaired by a former Communist member of the Reichstag, Ottomar Geschke, who had spent a long time in a concentration camp. Various personalities gave speeches: those who had served time in prisons, suffered in concentration camps, spent time in emigration; the widow of a colonel executed after 20 July 1944 also had her say. The next step was the election of the presidium. Names were read from a list of communists, middle-class men and women and also surviving relatives of the victims of 20 July. My name was not among them.

I was later told that a few Communists who had also been in Brandenburg Prison had raised objections against me.

So the first rally of the victims of fascism, which was under communist leadership, was a serious insult to me.

Old friends

The first of my old acquaintances to discover me in Tempelhof was Friedrich Syben. He brought me good news: there was a vacant flat in the same building in Wilmersdorf,

in which he had rented a room. It was furnished, albeit poorly, which was a great relief for me. I managed to get permission to move to Wilmersdorf and to be admitted to the flat.

I had a long-standing relationship with Syben. He had an imaginative gift for combination, which he liked to live out in political speculation. In 1926, he joined the Old Social Democratic Party. In 1933 I took him on as editor of the weekly magazine "Entscheidung". During the war, he kept in touch with my wife and did her many favours. I interpreted the trouble he took to track me down as proof of his attachment to me.

Not long after Syben, my old friend Gustav Klinghöfer appeared. He had been involved in the Munich Soviet Republic in 1919 and had even been commander-in-chief of the Red Army in Dachau. He served a five-year sentence for high treason in the Niederschönenfeld detention centre. With the USPD, of which he was a member, he was accepted into the Social Democratic Party in 1922, to which he subsequently remained loyal. After his release from prison, he came to see me in Berlin. He told me at the time that he no longer wanted to get involved in any political adventures. He managed to get a job as economics editor of the "Vorwärts". After Hitler came to power in 1933, he turned up at my office again. He was half-Jewish, but had married an "Aryan" in March 1933 and thus escaped the Jewish legislation. During the days of my imprisonment, he maintained good, friendly relations with my family.

Initially, our views on the political situation coincided. He once said that he did not see why the Social Democratic Party should be re-established; it was a diversion; it would be better to become a Communist without further ado. However, he later preferred to join the Social Democratic Party. There he became a member of the main executive committee and was in charge of the economic editorial department of the party's organs. Once he handed me a memorandum calling for Germany to join the Soviet Union.

He used his connections to the radio to persuade them to invite me to give historical lectures. I prepared ten lectures, which the radio cancelled, of course, with the justification that I would not be able to give them.

The lectures were then published by me under the title: "Deutsche Daseinsverfehlung". The lectures were then published by me under the title: "Deutsche Daseinsverfehlung" ("German misconception of existence"). On several occasions, Klingelhöfer persuaded Grotewohl, the chairman of the Social Democratic Party of Germany, to visit me in my flat to discuss the political situation.

When the unification negotiations between the KPD and the SPD were initiated, Klingelhöfer initially went with Grotewohl. He then changed fronts and cancelled his relationship with me. He later rose to become a city councillor in the West Berlin city administration. Politically, he moved to the right wing of the party.

Parties

On 10 June 1945, the head of the Soviet military administration, Marshal Zhukov, issued his Order No. 2, which regulated the formation of parties and trade union **organisations** in the Soviet occupation zone. Parties were also authorised in the other zones at a later date. **However**, it **was** not yet permitted to form **parties** across the entire territory of the German Reich.

Initially, four basic types of parties emerged: a Christian Democratic People's Party, a Free Democratic Party, a Social Democratic Party and a **Communist** Party were licenced.

In accordance with the circumstances, the Communist Party was the first party in the Soviet occupation zone. Its leaders were **émigrés** who **had** returned to Germany **with** the Soviet **troops from** Moscow. On 19 June 1945, the Social Democrats expressed the idea of merging the two socialist parties. This proposal had been rejected by the Communists, probably at the instigation of the Soviets; Ulbricht justified his rejection by saying that the time had not yet come for this, as the two parties were still on different ideological ground for the time being. The Communists had missed a favourable opportunity here.

The Soviets were keen to use the former National Socialists for their politics; they also **wanted to take steps to win over**

to gain a foothold in the village. To this end, they organised the founding of two other parties. The National Democratic Party was calculated for the former National Socialists; the former Nazis had good chances if they showed zeal in building the new state. The leadership of the National Democratic Party was taken over by men from the circles of the former "National Committee of Free Germany", the organisation that had been founded in the Soviet Union during the war with the help of captured officers. General Vinzenz Müller and a lawyer, Dr Bolz, took the lead here. The Democratic Peasants' Party was intended to win over the peasants. As the policies of the Soviet occupying power were initially clearly in favour of a "German way", the civil parties in the Soviet occupation zone also had a certain amount of room for manoeuvre. The Soviets were keen to prevent the emergence of a divide between the aims of the various parties: this gave rise to so-called bloc politics. The representatives of the parties sat down together, exchanged their opinions and passed joint resolutions. It was in the nature of things that the bourgeois parties took shortcuts; they took account of the fact that the Soviets were the masters of the country. The Communist Party led, but it kept a low profile; it showed a great deal of consideration for bourgeois inhibitions; it endeavoured to achieve unanimity in its decisions. Some of the bourgeois politicians were naïve enough to regard this tolerable state of affairs as a permanent one. They thought they would be rewarded for showing so much common sense and voluntarily renouncing many things that they would never have allowed to happen in the past. They co-operated willingly; for example, the later Minister for All-German Affairs, Jakob Kaiser, as chairman of the East German CDU, signed the document proclaiming the division of the large estates and the dismantling of the conglomerates.

Because of my political leanings, I thought it was natural to join a party. But which party should it be? Since 1917, from the time I became involved in politics, I had been orientated towards the East. I had welcomed the Russian Revolution and was striving for co-operation between revolutionary Russia and a revolutionary

Germany, approved of the Rapallo policy, considered Germany's anti-Bolshevik policy to be pernicious, had fought Hitler not least because of his anti-Bolshevism, saw the outcome of the Second World War as confirmation of my earlier fears, had then been liberated from captivity by the Russians in 1945. This liberation had left a deep impression on me. I didn't want to do anything that might give the impression that I was breaking with the political line I had taken in the pre-war years. Social democracy, as I foresaw, would one day reorient itself towards the West because of its traditions. It was a matter of course that the bourgeois parties would feel more attracted to the West than to the East. So only the Communist Party remained for me.

Despite my orientation towards the East, I had not joined the Communist Party before 1933. I had had many reasons for not doing so. I had by no means forgotten these reasons. In addition, I had imagined co-operation with the Soviets to be different from what was now to be expected after the complete collapse of Germany. It was no longer possible to negotiate and deal with the Soviets on a basis of equality from power to power, as I had demanded. We were now in their hands and at their mercy. The situation had changed fundamentally compared to the time before 1933.

But was it not possible to test whether there might be a Soviet interest in helping Germany get back on its feet?

After Prussia's defeat at Jena in 1806, Napoleon wanted to wipe Prussia off the map. It was the Russian **Tsar** who saved the King of Prussia's land as far as the Elbe. He did not do this out of pure benevolence: it was in Russia's interest to extend a buffer zone between the Russian border and Napoleonic France. Couldn't the Soviet Union now also be of the opinion that Germany should be re-established as a buffer zone between the Soviet sphere of influence and the Western powers? This was a last **chance** for Germany. In a way, I considered it a German duty to test whether such an opportunity existed.

Wilmerdoif Adult Education Centre

Soon after the collapse, the adult education centre system in Berlin flourished surprisingly. This was related to the intentions of the allied powers to "re-educate" the German people. In England and America, there was an old, intensively cultivated folk high school movement: Both the British and the Americans wanted to use the newly founded folk high schools to infuse the German people with an Anglo-Saxon spirit. Volkshochschule education was adult education; through the Volkshochschule, they also wanted to reach adults in order to realise the planned re-education of the German people.

The Soviets also wanted to utilise the Volkshochschule as an instrument of intellectual influence. Communist ideas and points of view were to be disseminated among the German population through the Volkshochschule courses. The Volkshochschule movement was favoured by a strong current within the German population. National Socialism had gone bankrupt; its intellectual system had been rejected by history. The disappointed, intellectually active, young and old National Socialists sought to reorient themselves. They were left with nothing, both intellectually and politically, and looked around for pillars to cling to again.

In 1933, Berlin had a large central adult education centre, which the Social Democrat Dr Marquardt had commendably built up and managed. Now adult education centres were established in all districts, which were loosely grouped together and placed under municipal administration. The head of this municipal administration was a Communist: Walter Bartels. Bartels was an intelligent former labourer who was distinguished by his strong oratory skills and who had played a leading role in the Buchenwald concentration camp for several years. In his book "The SS State", Kogon talks about Bartels: "It was Bartels, above all, who had caused him a lot of trouble.

An adult education centre was also founded in Wilmerdorf. A former editor of the "Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung", Karl Willy Beer, was the director. He approached me with a request to give lectures; I suggested a lecture on the subject of "Nietzsche, the pre-fascist". Beer accepted.

At the beginning of August 1945, a harsh press attack appeared against Beer', in which passages from his earlier essays were quoted which showed how far Beer had adapted to National Socialism. As a result, he was forced to resign from office.

I thought about applying for the job, but didn't quite know how to go about it. That's when I came into contact with the second mayor of Wilmersdorf, Gerhard Fuchs, a former metalworker. The Soviets had probably encouraged him to found a "Club of Optimists", to which many intellectuals from the intellectual and artists' colony on Laubenheimer Platz belonged. The club was headed by Count Treuberg, who organised a weekly lecture, which was held in a beautiful, confiscated villa in Gruenewald. Allied officers, such as the Soviet lieutenant colonel Dymshitz, also attended the events of the "Club of Optimists". I once gave a talk at the club: "Revision of the German view of history". Fuchs got to know me at this club and agreed to my request to become the director of the Wilmersdorf adult education centre.

However, the head of the district office's adult education department, the Social Democrat Rieck, did not agree with this measure by his superior mayor. He wanted to appoint a lawyer, Dr Besecke, to head the adult education centre and had already made an appointment with him. Rieck had no idea about me and my past. My health had not yet improved significantly. I couldn't find my way around without my wife's company. I had visited Rieck several weeks earlier and offered my services. He had discussed the matter with his deputy, who had expressed the strange idea that I could possibly be used as a political expert by the police. Now Rieck fought tooth and nail against my appointment to the adult education centre. He decreed on his own initiative that I should take over a department of the adult education centre, with Besecke remaining in charge.

As agreed with Mayor Fuchs, I was due to take up my post on 15 August. I turned up at the office on that day. The adult education centre employed not only the learner

There were two department heads and a stenographer. One department, whose task it was to draw up the programme and sign up the teachers, was given to Paul Bourdin, the other department, which had to deal with the organisational work, to the Social Democrat Gerda Weyl. Bourdin was a former editor of the "Frankfurter Zeitung". I knew his name, he knew mine. Bourdin was an excellent journalist. He was charming, more of a bohemian than a civil servant. Mrs Weyl also knew about me; she was not very fond of me.

The office was small. It only had room for two desks and two cupboards. Some of the windows were covered with cardboard; it had not yet been possible to fit new panes. Bourdin and Mrs Weyl received me most ungraciously. Rieck had instructed them that I was not to be regarded as the director of the adult education centre. Bourdin pretended to be concerned about me. My health, he said, was endangered in a room with damaged windows. There was no way I could fulfil my duties in my condition. Furthermore, there was a lack of space; I could see that a third desk could not be put in. To these tactless insinuations I replied briefly that he should leave all this to my care. Then I took the mischievous pleasure of sitting down on a chair in a corner of the room, watching the two of them at work and waiting to see what happened next. Occasionally they would leave the room; I guessed that they were going to Rieck to report on me.

I decided to put an end to it, went home and let the adult education centre be an adult education centre. I didn't know what battle had been fought between the authorities in the meantime. In any case, a messenger from the district office arrived on 21 August with a letter stating that I had been appointed head of the adult education centre from 15 August and asking me to take up my post immediately. I did this on

22 August.

The management of the adult education centre left a lot to be desired. I tightened the reins, which of course Bourdin didn't really like. Although I appreciated him and our personal relationships were pleasant, he felt uncomfortable and was on the lookout for an editorial position. When the "Kurier" was founded, he took over as editor-in-chief.

Soon after I took over the management of the adult education centre

my lecture "Nietzsche, the pre-fascist" took place. I had been studying Nietzsche for years and was also familiar with the philosopher's published works. Alongside "Beyond Good and Evil", "The Will to Power" was the work in which I saw an intellectual preparation for national socialism. The image of Nietzsche that I developed in my lecture was along the same lines of thought that can also be found in my "European Balance Sheet" on Nietzsche.

The activities of the adult education centre took place exclusively in the evening classes. Each semester, around 8-10 courses were held on philosophical, literary, art historical, medical, economic, historical and scientific topics. The number of visitors was large. Every Wednesday, an individual lecture was organised by a well-known scientist or artist. The language courses attracted the highest number of visitors.

In the winters of 1945/46 and 1946/47, the Adult Education Centre's activities were extremely restricted. It was very cold. Neither the offices nor the schools were heated. In addition, the electricity supply was not yet in order; lessons were held by makeshift candlelight. You had to be very eager to learn to expose yourself to room temperatures below zero degrees. If Hiirer came anyway, it was perhaps not least because they also lacked fuel at home.

The teaching staff held out bravely during these cold months. I was lucky enough to find a number of capable teachers. Dr Hans Schwarz, a neurologist who was later appointed to the University of Greifswald, lectured on medicine. The Rilke scholar Bassermann spoke about literature. Philosophical lectures were given by Gerd Theunissen, a profound, if perhaps somewhat dark mind. Dr Corsing, who had been an advisor to Prussian Prime Minister Braun before 1933 and had only survived the Hitler era with great hardship, spoke on constitutional issues. One of the most interesting lecturers was Dr Imiela Gentimur. Gentimur was in his late 50s and came from a Mongolian family of landowners who had moved to Bessarabia from Turkey. He had embarked on a diplomatic career in Tsarist Rurland. In 1917, he turned his back on Russia, had himself naturalised in Germany and became a diplomat.

was employed in the German diplomatic service. He harboured no hostile feelings towards Bolshevik Russia and refrained from any action that could have been held against him in Moscow. He was assigned to the German Embassy in Moscow and used as chargé d'affaires in Chita in Siberia. His speciality was the history of the eastern peoples; he also knew Mongolia, China, India and the whole of the Near East from experience. He was intimately familiar with the ancient history of these peoples. As he was a captivating speaker, he always attracted a large audience. He was gripped by real enthusiasm when he spoke about Siberia. His German listeners found it hard to believe that only the north of Siberia was frozen in snow and ice, but that central and southern Siberia were characterised by magnificent landscapes. I maintained friendly relations with him for many years.

Every month, I held a conference for the teaching staff. I discussed the curriculum, the experiences the teachers had had, asked them to give me suggestions and express their wishes. A wonderful spirit of solidarity revitalised the teaching body.

Over time, the Wilmersdorf adult education centre achieved a certain special status; it maintained a high intellectual standard. I didn't allow myself to be talked into it by the head office. Just as I defended myself against the interference of the head office, I also had to constantly fight against the interference of Mayor Rieck. I reacted so violently that I gradually became notorious; they went round my office in a wide arc, leaving me unscathed, so that I lived and worked within the district office as if on an island.

This was only possible for me in the long term because the English occupying power offered me support.

As Wilmersdorf was in the British sector, the Wilmersdorf Adult Education Centre was supervised by British education officers. Around this time, the man in charge was a Major Lindsay. Lindsay was the son of an English lord who was a university professor of philosophy at Oxford, had written a book on Kant and had published an English translation of Dilthey's works. Major Lindsay was a pianist who regretted that he had been in the army for so long. His military service had alienated him from his art for so long. He displayed a great deal of English humour, was politically aligned with the Labour Party and tended to talk about

He was always quick to pass judgement on all things, even those he wasn't really familiar with. If something was beyond his horizon, he helped himself with a German expression that was not overly tasteful: "Ouatsch mit Sauce". He spoke excellent German, which of course did not prevent this casual expression from sounding somewhat comical in his mouth. My relationship with Lindsay was good, and he generally accommodated me in all official matters. Lindsay was aware of my conflicts with Rieck and took my side, at least in the early years. Later, when the differences between England and the **Soviet Union** intensified, he admittedly became colder towards me; I had made no secret of the fact that I was orientated towards the East. His successor was Mr Davies. Mr Davies came from a working-class family in Wales and was a school inspector. Politically he was on the left wing of the Labour Party. He was a modest, likeable and ambitious young man with whom I **had** a warm relationship until I left the college. **My** position within the district office became **more unpleasant** from year to year. **The** Social Democratic district administration took offence at me. I was victimised in various ways. As a result, I left the Wilmersdorf **Volkshochschule** on 31 March 1948.

From the SPD to the SED

My friend Klingelhöfer went to great lengths to persuade me to join the Social Democratic Party. He described to me in his enthusiastic way what tasks this party had to fulfil. There was a liberal spirit and the will to do fruitful, positive work. A man of intellectual ability could develop to the full here. The direction of the party had not yet been determined. There was a realisation that one had to work together with the Russians. Traditions from the time before 1933 were hardly binding.

I told him that he did not see things quite as they were. The basic orientation of the party was centred on Western European liberalism. Here there were compulsory frequencies that could not be avoided. Whether

Whether the party wanted to or not, it would inevitably slip into an anti-Soviet stance over time. The connection with the Social Democratic émigrés had not yet been established. Once these threads were re-established, the party would inevitably be directed from London and New York. Moreover, I was of the opinion that the party would not forgive me for my past. I had once been a member of the party and had left its ranks as a critic. I would have foreseen at an early stage that social democratic policies were pouring water on the mills of heavy industry and thus paving the way for the rise of Hitler and National Socialism. I may have been right in my criticism at the time, but the party would not recognise this. They would only remember that I had criticised them; their sense of self would not allow them to admit that they had been on the wrong track. I saw the party as one of the main culprits of Hitlerism; through its short-sightedness and inaction it had paved the way for Hitler. The close ties to the bourgeois parties were no accident; they had to be seen as an expression of how the Social Democratic Party had transformed itself into a radically petty-bourgeois party. As a man with an eastern orientation, which is what I was, I would only arouse mistrust of myself and would not be able to achieve any real effectiveness.

Klingelhöfer described the individual party executive committee members to me as personalities who saw beyond all prejudices, Grotewohl, a very intelligent man, was mentally agile; I could count on the greatest understanding from him. But the other board members were not narrow-minded either. The idea of uniting with the Communist Party was not too far from their minds.

These words did nothing to allay my suspicions. Some of Klingelhöfer's remarks showed me that he had often discussed me with members of **the party executive**. Occasionally he would ask me questions about events of the past few years that concerned me. I could see from these queries how anxious he was to dispel any objections his comrades might have had against me.

When Gustav Klingelhöfer brought Otto Crotewohl to my flat, we discussed the political situation, and it turned out that Grotewohl was a man of spirit. He had a certain mu-

I was a gifted speaker, spoke very well, had a good temperament and a calm, measured demeanour. If I'm not mistaken, Grotewohl - under Klingelhöfer's influence - was keen to utilise my ideas and thoughts in Social Democratic party politics. I always coolly rejected the publicity.

One day, Klingelhöfer urgently invited me to the Party House, the building of the former Dresdner Bank. I went to see him and was quite surprised at the opening he gave me. The party executive had decided to set up a secretary's post, which was to be filled by me. The room had already been furnished and would be a "princely" room. No specific duties would be imposed on me, I would merely be expected to make suggestions in a spirit of complete party loyalty. Even if I accepted this post, I would not be expected to join the party. Grote probably expected my visit. This visit was embarrassing for me because I had to turn Grotewohl down.

Some time later, at the instigation of Colonel Tulpanov, negotiations began on a unification of the two socialist parties. Grotewohl was inclined to fulfil the Soviet wish. The Social Democratic émigrés, such as Stampfer in New York and Ollenhauer in London, resolutely rejected the unification plan. Some of the Social Democratic émigrés were in close contact with the governments of the Western powers. Both the United States and England did not want unification; they feared that Soviet influence could be brought into their zones of occupation via a united German workers' party. At a decisive conference, to which the British government had Erich Ollenhauer travelled to Germany from London, the West German Social Democrats decided against unification. Nonetheless, unification continued within the Soviet occupation zone and was finally realised. Many old members of the Social Democratic Party of Germany were forced to join the Socialist Unity Party. As the Social Democratic Party was regarded as having been absorbed into the Socialist Unity Party, it was deprived of its licence to continue to exist as a separate party in the Soviet occupation zone. Klingelhöfer remained with the Social Democratic Party of Germany. Initially, he was also in favour of unification. When he received letters

He had received the support of Social Democratic emigrants, he suddenly fell from one day to the next. The unification apologist became an enemy of unification, Paul became Saul. It was not without consequences for our personal relationships.

The unification party conference was scheduled for the beginning of April 1946. Grotewohl visited me a few days before the party conference. He told me that he had to give the programme speech and that he didn't have enough time to prepare it. He asked me if I would prepare the speech for him. I agreed. Grotewohl then delivered it very effectively with very few changes. This secret did not remain completely hidden. Various friends from the Soviet occupation zone who had been delegated to the party congress had visited me on the eve of the congress. I explained my fundamental political views to them. After Grotewohl's speech the next day, they came to me and remarked with a mischievous smile that they had heard it all the day before, almost down to the wording. In my draft speech, I had taken the liberty of being mischievous. When the manuscript of my brochure "Deutsche Daseinsverfehlung" had been submitted to the Soviet censors, they had objected to the last chapter. With its pessimism, it was said to be unbearable. This rejected ninth chapter was now worked into the Grotewohl speech, so that the Unification Party Congress ended up applauding the ideas that had been rejected by the Soviet censors.

In many later speeches, Grotewohl repeatedly referred back to the phrases I had coined for his speech. So, contrary to my intentions, I came to have the reputation of being a kind of "grey eminence".

Grotewohl became Chairman of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany on an equal footing with Pieck. His special task was to represent the party. However, his practical influence was not great; perhaps he also lacked the clout that would have been needed if he had wanted to assert himself.

The German way

Germany had collapsed, foreign troops were in the country. The Soviets had the eastern part of the country firmly in their military hands. The question arose as to how the occupation

powers intended to exploit their victory. For the western occupation zones, there seemed to be no doubt that the domestic capitalist bourgeoisie would find support in them. But what was the situation in the Soviet occupation zone? There was no lack of voices pinning great hopes on the Soviets. The Soviet Union had declared itself against exploitation in principle; it wanted to be a power of liberation for all the oppressed. German communists had worked closely with the Soviet Union for many years; they had sat at the same table as Soviet representatives in the Communist International. During the Hitler Empire, they had emigrated to the Soviet Union, some of them had returned to Germany with the Soviet troops, had entered political office as Soviet confidants and implemented Soviet intentions and orders in German reality. Would the Soviet occupation zone now be completely remodelled along Soviet lines, unconditionally subjected to Soviet superiority?

While all this was still unclear, an essay by **Anton Ackermann** appeared in the communist press in March 1946: "Is there a special German path to socialism?" Ackermann had been a functionary of the German Textile Workers' Association between 1920 and 1930; I had met him briefly in Saxony. He had then risen in the hierarchy of the Communist Party and had attended training courses as an emigrant in the Soviet Union, from which he had benefited greatly with his natural intelligence and good sense. Now he had returned to his German homeland as one of the most authoritative Communist politicians. He was a member of the Politburo and above all supervised cultural-political affairs. His essay had to be taken very seriously, and indeed it was taken very seriously.

The purpose of the essay was to allay the fears that had been expressed. The population of the Soviet occupation zone should not live in fear that they would automatically be Sovietised. Insightful political statements by Lenin were quoted.

"All peoples will arrive at socialism, that is inevitable, but they will not arrive there in quite the same way."

Lenin had written this in his essay "A Caricature of Marxism" in October 1916, and Ackermann agreed with Lenin's view. He said explicitly: "In this sense, we must absolutely affirm a special German path to socialism." Ackermann described **the** conditions under which the Russian Revolution had taken place; the Russian economy was still backward at the time, which increased the difficulties of the new revolutionary state leadership. According to Ackermann, things were very different in Germany. "In Germany today, we are facing an even greater economic catastrophe, but the productivity of labour was already at a much higher level than in 1917 in Tsarist Russia, and this high level can be reached again quickly. May time," concluded Ackermann, "find us here at the height of our tasks! Then the special German path to socialism will be a relatively easy and peaceful one." There was no doubt that Ackermann had written in full agreement with the Soviets and that a binding promise had been made by the Soviets with the announcement of a special German path. Bourgeois circles also went to work with good courage; it was clear to everyone that a new constitution within the Soviet occupation zone would have strong socialist features, and everyone was willing to take this into account.

Travelling

The British were extremely interested in the development of the adult education movement within their area of occupation. They were dissatisfied with the state of this movement in their zone and took measures to promote the adult education system. Naturally, they considered the adult education movement in England to be exemplary. In England, many women were involved in adult education work. The management of the entire adult education system in the British zone was now in the hands of a woman, a young, likeable teacher.

In order to give new impetus to adult education work in the British occupied territory, the British organised an adult education conference in Hanover. Major Lindsay arranged for me to be invited. In his opinion, the adult education centre needed

I was regarded by Major Lindsay as a man who was able to "liven things up".

The issue of inter-zone passports for my wife and I caused difficulties; the papers had not yet been issued when the inter-zone train left. Major Lindsay then arranged for us both to fly to Bückeburg in a British military aeroplane; the return journey was again by air. From Bückeburg we were taken to Hanover in a Volkswagen. The driver was a German prisoner of war who found his service so bearable that he never took the opportunity to escape across the Elbe to the Eastern zone.

The West German adult education centres had previously been founded, supported and maintained by private associations. Well-off citizens had donated contributions, but in return had demanded that the spirit in which teaching took place should be in a respectable bourgeois mould, which for the most part was also a German-national mould. Heiner Lotze, a Social Democrat who had once belonged to the Hofgeismarkreis of the Young Socialists, was employed in Hanover's adult education department and was of the opinion that the adult education system should be nationalised and centralised - as was the case in Berlin and the Eastern zone. The British were opposed to the idea of nationalisation; they still had enough rich people who were able to maintain adult education centres out of their surplus. The directors of the West German adult education centres were mostly old student councillors who carried out their duties with great pedantry. The Berlin representation, to which Walter Bartels also belonged, had an almost revolutionary effect within this environment. My remarks about a revision of the German view of history bitterly offended the good German-national hearts, which, as could be observed, gave the English education officers present the greatest pleasure.

The next year, the adult education centre conference was convened in Bonn. I was asked to give a presentation on "The political task of the adult education centres"; it was later published. The lecture programme had been carefully drawn up; a number of ideological topics were planned, and intellectual men were to give important lectures on them. The English did not agree with this. They wanted to show the delegates what they thought a discussion should be like. On the way, so to speak

of a coup d'état, they dismissed the chair. An English officer took the chairman's chair and two other officers sat down next to him. He explained that everyone should speak whatever was on their mind and on their lips. Of course, no one was allowed to keep the floor for more than five minutes. After this time, he would ruthlessly cut off the speaker, his ringing signal was a reminder to finish.

You can imagine the confusion such a discussion caused. No-one stuck to the topic, the issues were shaken up like cabbage and turnips.

I travelled to Altena a third time at the request of the English. Ten professors from English universities and adult education centres were staying in a youth hostel. They wanted to hold discussions with German adult education centre directors. The meeting lasted three days. The British developed their system and gave the Germans all kinds of advice. One evening we sat in the garden; I had told them that I was dealing with education officers from all the occupying powers. The guests were interested, they wanted to know what judgement I had made about the individual nations. The most educated were the French, I replied, but the Russians also had highly educated personalities. The Americans, on the other hand, were not so good. This judgement amused the Englishmen immensely; it did them good to see the Americans judged so badly. They did not want to hear my opinion of the English themselves; they were obviously firmly convinced that they would do better than all the others.

We had used the inter-zone train, an American military train to which a carriage for German travellers had been attached. On the journey to Altena we sat in a full compartment. We noticed a tall, slim man who was constantly talking and boasting about his experiences in South America. The longer we travelled, the more he got on our nerves. During the journey we had avoided showing any interest in him or his stories.

To our horror, the same man got into our compartment on our return journey in Bad Oeynhausen, which was empty this time and remained empty on the onward journey. We rebuffed the man's repeated attempts to strike up a conversation with us. In the course of the conversation between my wife

and I heard the name Jünger. The man came to life and insistently asked if we meant Ernst Jünger. I briefly replied in the affirmative. He went on to say that although he didn't know Ernst Jünger, he was acquainted with his brother Wolfgang. We pricked up our ears, as my wife had lived in the same house as Wolfgang Jünger during the Hitler era. So he was also a good acquaintance of ours. He dared to make various disparaging remarks about them. Then he said that Wolfgang Jünger had a friend who lived in Wilmersdorf and was a very dangerous Communist chieftain. He was on his trail. The English had instructed him to shadow the man. He couldn't think of the man's name at the moment, but he would find out.

Of course, I realised straight away that he was talking about me. The coincidence at play here was strange enough. That was how I learnt that the English had me followed. I nudged my wife with my foot to warn her not to give herself away. Then I left the compartment for a short time. In my absence, the man took up the conversation with my wife and said that he had now remembered my name. When I returned to the compartment and the man noticed the sticks I was walking on, he suddenly became suspicious. The scales must have fallen from his eyes and he realised in a flash who he was looking at. He fell silent and didn't say another word.

Mr Davies met me at the station in Charlottenburg. I told him briefly about the experience. The next day he came to my flat and asked me to give him a detailed report. I did so. He was extremely upset.

In Bonn, I had made the acquaintance of the education officer who was in charge of the adult education centres in the American zone, the New York University professor Mr van der Vaal. He asked me if I would be prepared to speak at adult education centres in the American zone. The first lecture I was asked to give was at the Volkshochschule in Munich. Mr van der Vaal helped us both, my wife and I, to obtain travel orders which enabled us to use American military trains. We travelled to Bavaria at the end of July. I had accepted further invitations to Augsburg, Nuremberg, Tübingen, Heidelberg and Bamberg.

I used my stay in Bavaria to familiarise myself with the Tegernsee to relax. We found accommodation in Wiessee. The

The catering was poor, but the general conditions were conducive to regaining strength. There I tested whether my condition would allow me to try swimming. I succeeded, and it made me quite happy to be able to move almost better in the water than on land.

In Heidelberg, I spent a few hours at Mitscherlich's house, where we were guests, with Professor Alfred Weber, the brother of the late Max Weber. Alfred Weber, who, as a spoilt great academic authority, could only tolerate contradiction with difficulty, developed ideas about the Berlin situation that would not even have been forgivable in a servant girl. I corrected him and expressed my astonishment at how a man of his rank could take the most foolish rumours at face value. It was unavoidable that a serious disgruntlement should arise between us.

Cultural organisation for the democratic renewal of Germany

In the summer of 1945, Berlin's intellectuals, who were presumed to be "progressive", were summoned to the Rundfunkhaus on Masurenallee to take part in the founding of a "Cultural Association for the Democratic Renewal of Germany". Johannes R. Becher, who in the eyes of the Soviets had the advantage of being devoted to them with all his heart and soul, gave the keynote speech at the founding meeting and was elected president of the new association. A beautiful, well-furnished building in Schlüterstraße housed the association's office. Heinz Willmann, a bookseller by profession, who had emigrated with Becher to Moscow and had published a literary journal there, became Secretary General. Willmann, who had an unsurpassable ability to indulge in idiomatic expressions, obviously seemed to the Soviets to be able to deal well with German bourgeois intellectuals in particular. Soon a bureaucratic apparatus, not too small, had been created. A presidential council was founded, which consisted of 60 members and in which bourgeois intellectuals were given a special role. It included the mayor Dr Friedensburg, the former Reichstag deputy Ernst Lemmer, the pastor Dill-

schneider, the Catholic clergyman Tomberge, the university professors Stroux and Brugsch, the writer Birkenfeld and other personalities. The Soviets made an effort to win over the bourgeois intellectuals. There was still a severe shortage of food. The members of the Presidential Council received parcels of sausages, butter and spirits, and in winter coal notes. It so happened that the Soviet commander instructed the leadership of the Kulturbund to immediately gather the members of the Presidential Council in buses and take them to the Soviet headquarters in Karlshorst. There they were encouraged to be bearers of progressive ideas and then invited to a lavish banquet.

In the late autumn of 1945, a driver came into my office, brought me a parcel and explained that he had come on behalf of the president of the Kulturbund, Johannes R. Becher. A few days later I was invited to visit Becher in the Kulturbund's house in Schlüterstraße. General Secretary Heinz Willmann took me to see Becher. Becher told me that Georg Lukács and Anton Ackermann had advised him to secure my co-operation. I expressed my surprise that the Kulturbund had remembered me so late. Of course, I knew that before 1933 I had once been described as a fascist in a small communist magazine, the "Linkskurve", of which Becher was a co-editor, and that in another, the "Aufbruch", I had been characterised as a "Jesuslatscher". After some hesitation, I agreed.

Becher must have assumed that I would become a federal employee. But I had no desire to do that. I just wanted to become a freelancer so as not to be dependent on Becher and the organisation. Every day I had myself picked up by car from my office, which was in the Wilmersdorf district office, at around 1 pm and then spent about three to four hours at the Kulturbund. The Kulturbund management had the impression that the whole organisational activity was actually just idling away. I was supposed to deliver the content. I was assigned a capable secretary, Miss Schlesinger, with whom I got along excellently and who proved to be talented enough to replace me later. I set up a number of commissions for various scientific and artistic fields: for the fine arts, for music, for literature, for science, for education, for the humanities, for theatre. The commissions advised

events and at times organised them with great success.

The commissions for the fine arts and the humanities were the most active. The painters often had heated discussions about how the necessary materials could be procured and how the new art academy should be organised. Stylistic questions were also the subject of discussion. Karl Hofer and Max Pechstein sometimes clashed sharply. Hofer was a pessimist who saw the future of art in the darkest colours; Pechstein was an optimist who took everything in stride. He had many commissions from Americans, gave lessons to Americans and received more alcohol than was good for him.

The chairman of the scientific commission was Professor Stroux. Stroux was a solid, conscientious scholar with a fine, cultivated character and a lot of winning charm. Politically, he was a child.

I had once told Wülmann about my earlier plan to create a non-partisan club for the intelligentsia in Berlin. Willmann took up the plan and presented it to the Soviets. They immediately went along with it. The former gentlemen's club in Jägerstraße, which had suffered severe bomb damage, was chosen to be converted into the club for cultural workers. Building materials and glass were brought in. The parquet floor from Hitler's Reich Chancellery was torn out and brought to Jägerstraße. After some time, the club could be inaugurated. The Soviets supplied it with food and drink, so that the club members could be given vouchers which enabled them to receive fifteen lunches a month at an affordable price.

tlberhaupt, the Kulturbund was provided with ample resources. Its bureaucratic apparatus grew. The members enjoyed all kinds of advantages. For example, the Soviets assigned the Ahrenshoop spa to the Kulturbund. In Bad Saarow, the Kulturbund had the beautiful house "Eibenhof", a Schinkel building in which the owner, a doctor, had previously run a sanatorium. The Kulturbund wanted to organise the intelligentsia of the entire Eastern zone and did indeed succeed in setting up active local groups in the larger cities, such as Leipzig, Dresden, Weimar and Schwerin. In general, care was taken to make the Kulturbund appear non-partisan.

Although it was led by party men, care was taken not to alienate the middle-class members. The Presidential Council meetings were prepared with a certain amount of trepidation. Well-known personalities, such as Friedensburg and Lemmer, wanted to be serious about non-partisanship and protested against any attempt to push through one-sided positions. At times, lively and interesting debates took place, in the course of which Becher used a great deal of eloquence to blur the traces of party tendencies and, where they could be proven, to make them appear as mere misunderstandings.

Becher asked me to write a critical essay against Ernst Jünger in "Aufbau", the journal of the Kulturbund. I refused, which he deeply resented. Then he wanted to have Jünger slaughtered in the Commission for Literature. I had to organise the event and made sure that Becher didn't achieve his goal. Surprisingly, although there were numerous writers who wrote about Jünger, few had read him. I persuaded a writer, Ilse Langner, to take on the attack on Jünger. She got instructions from Becher; I also had to help her procure the literature. I appointed Karl Korn, who held Jünger in high esteem, as Jünger's defence counsel. I had sent invitations to about 15 writers, none of whom were suspected of sharing Becher's hatred of Jünger.

Ilse **Langner** was not up to her task. She accused Jünger of inhumanity, referred to his war books and "The Adventurous Heart" and left open the question of whether she was ultimately doing Jünger an injustice. Karl Korn defended Jünger with superior expertise and made an impression. Elisabeth **Langgässer**, who had come with prejudices against Jünger, advised caution in judgement. Weisenborn said that it was unacceptable for a woman in a green hunter's hat - as Ilse Langner had appeared - to come and shoot Jünger down. Nobody was asked to condemn Jünger. Becher left the room angrily.

In the summer of 1948, Becher and I had a public debate about Ernst Jünger. A training course for Kulturbund employees took place in Ahrenshoop; I gave lectures on the "Problem of Freedom" and on "New Philosophy". Paul Wiegler spoke about literature. After his **lecture**, he was asked about Ernst Jünger. Wiegler wanted to talk about

He said that I was responsible for the issue of 'Jünger'. A small delegation was sent to me with the request to come immediately. I lay on the beach, got dressed and went to the lecture room. For about half an hour I honoured Jünger's work: I also found good words about Jünger the man. Many members of the audience showed a secret willingness to engage with Jünger. Becher, who was in Ahrenshoop, was shy. He organised a public debate evening, to which he challenged me.

The intelligentsia of the eastern zone came to Ahrenshoop in search of relaxation. They saw the announced event as an attractive diversion. Professors Rienäcker and Gadamer, the painter Sandberg, the Schwerin cathedral provost Kleinschmidt, the theatre critic Herbert Ihering and many other prominent personalities had gathered. I introduced the evening. I emphatically testified that Jünger had never been a National Socialist. He was a seismograph who should not be held responsible for the fact that he announced the currents of the times in advance. His "Marble Cliffs" was a brave book. He should be recognised as a great writer and a noble man.

Becher came well prepared. He quoted passages from "The Adventurous Heart" and Jünger's war books to prove that Jünger was a monster, a teacher of barbarism. During the discussion, Provost Kleinschmidt claimed that he had not read the

"Marble Cliffs" was perceived as a national socialist book. Becher claimed that Jünger's personal proof had only anecdotal value; Thomas Mann's radio lectures from London should be valued more highly. When Kleinschmidt confirmed this, I replied whether the life of Jesus, as described in the Gospels, also only had anecdotal significance.

The debate did not lead to a decision; it only increased interest in Jünger against Becher's will.

Since then, Becher has openly shown me his hostility. In the meantime, I had resigned from my position in the Kulturbund. When Alexander Abusch, the former editor-in-chief of the "Rote Fahne", returned to Germany from Mexico, I was made to understand that I was superfluous; I was also stripped of one responsibility after another until I withdrew.

From 1947 onwards, relations between the Soviets and the three other occupying powers intensified. This had the effect of

This affected the civilian members of the Kulturbund. The Western occupying powers demanded that the Kulturbund, which had initially only been licensed by the Soviets, obtain its own licences from the Western occupying powers. On the advice of the Soviets, the Kulturbund refused to do so. As a result, his activities in Berlin's western sectors were prohibited; the British forced him to vacate his house in Schlüterstrasse. The Soviets provided him with a new house next to the club in Jägerstrasse, where he now moved his office.

Censorship

I did observe the lively interest that Soviet officers took in the activities of the Kulturbund, but for a long time I did not realise the full extent of the Kulturbund's dependence on the Soviet occupying power. Soviet cultural officers were in and out of the Kulturbund.

The editor-in-chief of "Aufbau", Klaus Gysi, had to have the magazine's banners checked and approved by Soviet officers every month. Only gradually did a cultural advisory board take over this function of censor. At the end of 1945 I gave Gysi a copy for the

"Aufbau" published the essay "Im Vorraum des Faschismus" (In the Antechamber of Fascism); it was taken from my manuscript "Europäische Bilanz" (European Balance Sheet) and dealt with Schopenhauer, Wagner and Nietzsche. The essay was accepted, but I soon realised that the editors were experiencing difficulties. One day a Soviet officer came to talk to me about my work.

The officer, obviously an educated man, said a few words of appreciation about the quality of the essay. However, he said, he had a few objections to make. I rejected Richard Wagner and even found rather harsh words against him. Wagner had once played a major role in Russia. The liberal opponents had adhered to him. Wagner, the former barricade fighter of 19resden, had always been valued and celebrated as a revolutionary in Tsarist Russia. I had to take that into account.

If Wagner is celebrated in Russia, I replied, as a revolutionary force, then this has its good historical reasons.

Reasons. However, I am not Russian. I judge Wagner by the role he played in Germany. Within Germany, he has acted as a reactionary force.

The officer became a little uncomfortable and broke off the conversation about Wagner. Even after this conversation, my essay did not appear. Klaus Gysi, a man with diplomatic talents who knew the art of evasion like the back of his hand, would not let me put him down. He always knew a new, holding answer. But then one day he told me that the music-loving officer who had championed Wagner's cause had been transferred and that his successor didn't care about Wagner at all. It was thanks to this circumstance that the essay appeared in the February 1946 issue of "Aufbau".

I had offered my manuscript "Deutsche Daseinsverfehlung" to Aufbau-Verlag. Paul Wiegler, the publisher's editor, looked it over and strongly recommended it for acceptance. Baid presented me with the first proofs. Of course, it turned out that there were still obstacles to overcome. Neither the publisher nor anyone else gave me any information about what objections there were. It was one of the most remarkable phenomena of the time that no one was prepared to speak frankly. Finally, I was again visited by a Soviet officer, who pulled out the proofs from his files. The manuscript contained nine chapters. The ninth chapter was a look into the future. This outlook was gloomy enough. I stated that Germany had ceased to exist as an independent state; it was now only a geographical concept. The German people would have to consider themselves lucky if they were allowed to constitute themselves in the politically neutral form of a large Switzerland. There was no longer any question of great power politics. This was all far too pessimistic, said Öer Offizier, I had to be more optimistic about the future. He did his best to convince me that there was no reason for political pessimism. I finally said angrily. I would not make any changes. The only thing I could concede was that I would remove the ninth chapter entirely. The officer agreed. Of course, he overlooked the fact that this would make the booklet even more pessimistic.

After the "Deutsche Daseinsverfehlung" appeared, it was published in the organ of the Kulturbund "Der Sonntags gemein-

Dr Steinberg discussed it together with Dr Abusch's book "Irrweg einer Nations", which was published at the same time. Dr Steinberg made many arguments against Abusch's book. He placed it qualitatively below "Deutsche Daseinsverfehlung", whose level of historical philosophy he praised. Later, Dr Steinberg told me that Johannes R. Becher had called him in and reproached him for having given priority to "Deutsche Daseinsverfehlung" over Abusch's book. Abusch had returned from Mexico and was beginning his work in the Kulturbund. It was necessary to create prestige for him and not to criticise him.

During this time, I had an argument in the context of Kulturround. I had been asked to speak in Zehlendorf on the subject of "The West and the East". The thoughts I presented here form the content of my brochure "East-West". After my presentation, a member of the audience spoke up to contradict me. I had spoken of a difference between Europe and Russia. The panellist was adamant in disputing the accuracy of my view. Russia had absorbed the same cultural elements that Europe had developed; Russia was Christian, had participated in antiquity, had its classical tradition, in short, there was no gap between Europe and Russia. To make this assertion was reactionary, fuelled European arrogance and was an argument for those imperialists who felt justified in subjugating Russia. Several weeks later, General Secretary Willmann told me that Professor Dr Steinitz had complained about me. The Kulturbund should not tolerate any anti-Soviet lectures. Becher was of the opinion that I should deal with Dr Steinitz. This argument initially gave the impression of being a court case against me. Becher was enthroned behind his huge desk, Gysi was the prosecutor, Dr Steinitz the witness. I made it clear that I would not allow myself to be forced into the role of defendant. I went on the attack against Dr Steinitz, claimed that he was blind to the facts, spoke of the lack of a stirring bourgeois revolution, of the absence of constitutional and individualistic concepts in Russia. Becher tried to come to Dr Steinitz's aid and convince me of the untenability of my point of view, but he failed.

There was no result. We parted without having decided anything. But I wasn't allowed to talk about the issue any more, The manuscript "Das Reich der niederen Dämonen" was still lying on my desk. The head of the Aufbau publishing house, Wilhelm, seized it with eagerness. Paul Wiegler was again the editor. His expert opinion was favourable to the manuscript, which he described as a classic analysis of the Hitler era. So the manuscript was accepted. I heard nothing more about it for a long time. I still didn't know that there was a "cultural advisory board". It was claimed that the cultural advisory board was not a censorship authority, but only examined the manuscripts to see whether it was worthwhile to provide paper for them from the scarce supplies. However, this was merely a whitewash. In fact, the cultural advisory board was a censorship authority. Some of the censors were woefully inadequate; they lacked education and intellect. In the meantime, the publisher Wilhelm was replaced by Erich Wendt. I went to Wendt and learnt that the manuscript still had to be edited. Above all, the quotations from Hitler's and Goebbels' speeches would have to be removed because they could give all National Socialists the pleasure of being able to read the words of their beloved Führer again. My objection that these quotations were linked to sociological analyses had little effect. Again, some time passed before I received the copy of my corrected manuscript. It not only contained extensive deletions, but also numerous additions and amendments to my judgements. The documentary character of the work in particular was mixed. The manuscript had fallen into the hands of the Gestapo in 1937, had been submitted to the People's Court and was the most important material of the People's Court in the trial against me; all the passages that had been objectionable to the Gestapo and the People's Judges were underlined in red; it was only by chance that this manuscript had returned to my hands. You will understand that I did not want to have the manuscript spoilt. Without further ado, I told Wendt that I was withdrawing my manuscript and did not want to see it published by Aufbau-Verlag. -

Fabian von Schlabrendorff visited me in the autumn of 1945. He told me in detail about his experiences in concentration camps and his liberation by Italian partisans. He had also been involved in the events of 20 July. General Tresckow, who had been one of the main driving forces behind the state strike and who had shot himself after its failure, was his uncle; Schlabrendorff had served with him as a lieutenant. In his book "Officers against Hitler", he talks about the assassination attempt he had planned against Hitler in 1943.

His close relationship with Mr von Kleist-Schmenzin had been discovered at the time and he had been arrested. He was already standing before the People's Court and the trial, presided over by the President of the People's Court, Dr Freisler, had begun. An air raid was signalled and everyone present sought shelter in the cellar. A bomb hit the building, destroying the entire Schlabrendorff file and killing Dr Freisler in the air raid shelter. Schlabrendorff thus escaped conviction, but was taken to the Flossenbürg concentration camp as a serious suspect. There he witnessed the assassination of Admiral Canaris and General Oster. When the Americans approached in 1945, the Flossenbürg camp was evacuated. The prisoners travelled on foot to Dachau. They spent a few days there. Among the prisoners was a French bishop who, like the other prisoners, had been sent to an evacuated SS brothel. According to Schlabrendorff, the bishop joked that it had taken Hitler to get him to see the inside of a brothel. Dachau was also evacuated. The prisoners marched across the Alps to northern Italy. It was an illustrious company: Reichsbank President Dr Schacht, Colonel General Halder and Pastor Niemöller were among them. In northern Italy, the SS escort team toyed with the idea of shooting the prisoners. Niemöller's energetic demeanour prevented this: the former submarine commander had retained a military tone in his clerical office. He whistled sharply at the SS crews and told them that they were gambling with their lives with such an act. The next day, the group had to surrender to Italian partisans. The partisans made war with the SS

men: they shot them. The liberated prisoners were now handed over to the advancing Allies. Some prominent figures, including Schlabrendorff, were presented to Field Marshal Lord Alexander. He ordered that they should be taken to Capri immediately to recuperate. They stayed there for several weeks and were then sent to Switzerland.

Schlabrendorff had been in contact with the English journalist Colvin for a long time. Colvin's father was already an authoritative journalist; Winston Churchill mentions him in his memoirs. It is likely that Colvin had been informed of the rebels' plans for 20 July by Schlabrendorff and Kleist-Schmenzin. Shortly before my trial in 1939, the Daily Chronicle published a long, imaginatively embellished essay about me. The article spoke of the extensive resistance work I had done, and my wife was also commemorated. Colvin referred to her as the "beautiful blonde" who had also been arrested. Colvin had written that 27 death sentences were to be expected in my trial.

With this article Colvin, whom I had never seen before, had done me a great service. The President of the People's Court, Dr Thierack, had been provoked by this article to prove to the public that the foreign press was lying and that the People's Court was not as inhuman as it was claimed to be. Not a single death sentence was passed.

Schlabrendorff had also brought together Baron Kunrat von Hammerstein with Colvin, who was a son of the well-known was the "Red General". Hammerstein had been wanted by the Gestapo after 20 July, but remained in hiding with a labourer near Szczecin railway station until the collapse in 1945. Hammerstein now became acquainted with me through Schlabrendorff's mediation. He now provided me with Colvin's essay, which I read with great amusement. Colvin's ingenuity had indeed been astonishing.

A closer relationship developed between him and me; he often came to see me and invited me to his house from time to time. Once he invited me and my wife to a large party. In addition to a number of high-ranking English officers, I met the widow of General von Hammerstein and her son. In the course of

That evening, Colvin asked me if I knew Jakob Kaiser. When I replied in the negative, he laughed and remarked that in England all notable political personalities socialised with each other, even if they differed widely in opinion. In Germany, however, it was so strange that a foreigner had to come along to make such acquaintances between Germans. He now introduced me to Jakob Kaiser. We sat together for over an hour and discussed the political situation. I told him emphatically,

"Bridge builders" between West and East are urgently needed in Germany. He has credit in the West. He still has credit in the East. He should take care not to lose this credit. That way, he could still fulfil a great mission. He replied eagerly that this was also his view. He would do everything in his power not to lose his credit in the East. He later took over the Ministry for All-German Affairs in Bonn, whose area of activity included organising propaganda against the German Democratic Republic.

Colvin once gave me an opportunity to admire his journalistic flair. During the Nuremberg trial against Göring, an assistant to his defence lawyer had constantly attended the meetings between Göring and the defence lawyer. After the discussions, the young man had taken notes and had since compiled them into a book:

"Goering's last words".

The manuscript had come into my hands via my friend Drexel. It showed Göring as a tomboy; of course, he had never said anything significant. At times his sadistic joy at the extermination of the Jews and similar atrocities broke through. The intellectual irrelevance that characterised him was expressed in banalities and trivialities. The only interesting thing about the book was that it was about Göring.

I had once spoken to Colvin about the book. He was electrified and wanted to know the author's name and address. He was thinking of translating the manuscript into English and making a sensation in his home country. I had no desire to lend my hand to the realisation of this plan; it was undesirable for me to see propaganda being made for Göring in any way. On the basis of hardly any evidence worth mentioning, which I had supplied to Colvin, he succeeded in discovering the author within a few months. He visited him and negotiated with him

on publication rights. Of course, the book was never translated. The book was too insignificant to be used for big business. Colvin once gave me the pleasure of an interesting gentlemen's evening. He had shot a roebuck from his car on the return journey from West Germany to Berlin. Members of the Allied powers were allowed to take such liberties with impunity in those days. He gave the roebuck to the owner of a restaurant known for its excellent cuisine. Together with a few friends, he wanted to eat the roebuck. He had invited a total of five gentlemen, including Privy Councillor Dr Sauerbruch and several leading men in the business. Dr Sauerbruch was encouraged to talk about his life. It was surprising to hear what Sauerbruch had to say about medicine. He explained that only surgery was of any use. The situation with the rest of medicine was very dubious. Doctors only lived from the fact that people placed trust in them that they did not deserve. Basically, it depended solely on the patient whether he had the will to recover or not. If prayer strengthened this will, then praying for recovery was entirely appropriate. The famous doctor's arguments were almost medieval in nature. Colvin returned to England around 1950. There he wrote a controversial book about Admiral Canaris.

Elisabeth Langgässer

Elisabeth Langgässer often appeared at the Kulturbund's Commission for Literature. At first I didn't notice her in any way; the only thing that surprised me was that she approached me with a certain benevolent confidentiality. On occasion she told me - and this explained her behaviour - that she was a close friend of the poet Wilhelm Lehmann, whose book of poems I had published "Answer of Silence" with the resistance publishing house. With her friendly feelings, she repaid me for the support I had given Lehmann, who was close to her and whom she held in high esteem. She rarely spoke up; when she did, she was not really witty, but what she said carried unmistakable weight. I learnt that she was in financial difficulties. She had several children from her first marriage and

was now married to a philosopher of existentialism, Wilhelm Hoffmann.

Sometimes we visited each other. The kitchen work in her household was done by her husband, who was particularly proud of a certain type of lard biscuit that he was excellent at making.

Because of my work in the Commission for Literature, I had several opportunities to recommend Elisabeth Langgässer and to encourage publishers to print her poems. She knew this and once asked me for a consultation. She complained to me about her economic worries. The Ministry of National Education had recently announced that it wanted to give a grant to some writers in need. I endeavoured to draw attention to her, but I cannot say whether she actually received such a grant.

Elisabeth Langgässer was a woman in her middle years, small in stature, black-haired with glowing eyes. You had to look into those eyes to realise what a demon she was. I only realised this when I read her novel "The Indelible Seal". The range and breadth of experience in this novel cannot be exhausted. Paradisiacal heights are scaled, but the deepest depths of hell are also traversed. Above all, a sharp intellectuality emerges. Passion and reason were present in this rare woman in a strange mixture. The range of her nature encompassed pure delicacy on the one hand and abysmal perversity on the other; in her lived a pure angel and a fierce, untamed she-devil. The great French neo-Catholic writers, such as Bloy and Bernanos, had influenced her. Perhaps she did not possess the rich fullness of that vitality by which Bernanos was distinguished; but at any rate she came near enough to this master. The world of cosmic elementality spoke in her poems. In conversation, one encountered solid foundations; she had thought through religious-philosophical problems and knew how to develop them clearly. In doing so, she did not show off, but always maintained a matter-of-fact seriousness. There was nothing pushy or boastful about her. She was well aware of her great talent, but rightly did not consider it necessary to emphasise it theatrically.

In 1948, her husband was finally offered a professorship at a university in the Rhineland-Palatinate. She moved there. Certainly was

The atmosphere in the eastern occupation zone was not suited to her Catholic nature and she felt liberated to be able to return to the West German atmosphere from which she came. However, even in her new environment, she did not really enjoy any great literary success. Her work was too important and too demanding to gain a large readership for the time being. In 1950 I read that she had died. There was great artistic promise in this woman. Her early death was a great loss to German literature.

The line to Russia

The managing editor of the daily newspaper's culture department "Tägliche Rundschau" (official Berlin daily newspaper published by the Soviets) was Major Scheines. He was a tall, extremely nervous man. His remarks betrayed extensive education. Later I heard that he was a dramatic poet.

One day he invited me to his house to develop a project for me. He suggested that I should write a brochure describing the foreign policy relations between Germany and Russia. The brochure should be about four to five sheets long. I agreed to do this work. As soon as I had drafted the outline, he suggested that I treat the subject matter as broadly as it deserved. I should not deal with a brochure, but with a book. The German people were contaminated by anti-Bolshevism. It would be useful to illustrate, on the basis of historical experience, what advantages they had gained from good German-Russian relations in the past. I replied that such an assignment would take time, all the more so as I could not read myself, but would have to have everything read out to me. He was full of impatience and assured me that he would pay for a secretary. I set to work. A few months went by, during which I literally collected and processed material with my wife day and night in the most strenuous manner. After four and a half months, the manuscript was ready in draft form. In the meantime, Major Scheines had repeatedly urged me to finish it soon.

To satisfy and reassure him, I gave him a copy of the draft. I enclosed a letter with the thick copy in which I emphasised that it was really only an unfinished manuscript that still needed to be thoroughly worked through in terms of both content and style. Major Scheines paid no attention to this enclosed letter, but gave the draft first to a Russian historian and then to Professor Alfred Meusel for his opinion. Contrary to my expectations, the Russian editor was in favour of printing the book despite the shortcomings, which had not remained completely hidden from him. Professor Meusel behaved quite differently. He noted the imperfections that naturally remained in the manuscript and came to the conclusion that the work was not suitable for printing. Meusel was merely stating what I myself had known from the outset.

In the meantime, Major Scheines had been discharged from the army and returned to Moscow. The manuscript remained in the editorial office of the "Tägliche Rundschau" and I heard nothing more about the matter.

Unexpectedly, it was in 1948, the editor-in-chief of the "Tägliche Rundschau", Colonel Kirsanov, to him. I already knew Kirsanov; he was a likeable man who obviously practised an intellectual profession in his home country. The head of the publishing house "Volk und Welt", Chesno, had come to the meeting. Chesno was a dynamic man who was always working on projects, developing an immense amount of publishing activity, but of course he was also heavily indebted to his publishing house. Kirsanov had my manuscript lying on the table in front of him. He said that I should revise it and then the publisher "Volk und Welt" would publish it. I emphasised again that the manuscript was only a draft. The revision would take a lot of time. I was again urged to get the work ready for print as quickly as possible.

Once again, busy days and weeks began. After six

I was able to hand over the work to the publisher after a month and a half. It was first presented to the Leipzig historian Markov. His opinion was favourable. But he said that the part of the book in which I had dealt with the Soviet Union's relations with the Reichswehr should be submitted to the Soviets for their opinion.

One Soviet editor actually took offence at this part of the book. The second Soviet editor challenged my biscuit picture. I never received any notification about my manuscript. The publisher remained silent towards me. The tendency of the work seemed to fail, and so it was left lying around.

Saving the books

The house of the Catholic priest at Brandenburg-Görden prison, Anton Scholz, had been confiscated by the Soviets immediately after the occupation of Brandenburg. I knew the pastor's exquisite library, from which I had drawn great benefit during my difficult years. The library seemed to be lost. At first the books were simply thrown into the garden, then some soldiers took pity on them and carried them to the ground under the roof. There they lay, in danger of being burnt during the cold winter. I told Major Scheines that I still had many books in Brandenburg that I would like to bring to Berlin because I could use them for my work. With the help of this ruse, I hoped to get the clergyman his books back. I managed to interest Major Scheines in the matter. He organised identification papers and a lorry to pick up the books and take them to Berlin. My son had to accompany the lorry. He set off one day, but then returned to Berlin without having achieved anything. The Soviet officers in Brandenburg-Görden were not impressed by the identity papers and refused to hand over the books. Major Scheines became angry and ordered that the journey to Brandenburg should be repeated the following week. This time he ordered a captain to accompany my son on the lorry. This Captain Bernstein, a highly sympathetic man, prevailed in Brandenburg. The books were released. The captain helped my son to carry the books from the ground onto the lorry. In the process, of course, he was littering. There were countless spiritual books and prayer books, and Bernstein couldn't understand why I needed these holy writings. But my son convinced him,

that these works were quite important, and Bernstein was generous enough to give in. Above all, I saved the pastor the large complete edition of the Church Fathers.

The car did not return to Berlin on the same day. It didn't arrive until the next day. My wife had become restless and finally persuaded me to call Major Scheines to make enquiries. Scheines didn't know anything either, but consoled me by saying that there might have been a mishap. That was indeed the case. The car was on the motorway. The repair took more than 24 hours. It finally arrived in front of my flat and the books were unloaded at my place. The owner picked them up from there later. He was overjoyed. When I met Major Scheines again some time later, he looked at me reproachfully and said: that's how the Germans are! Even I had mistrusted the Soviets and suspected them of having taken my son.

The newspaper industry

Soon after the collapse, I considered whether I should **publish** my **magazine** "Widerstand" **again**. I approached the British authorities who were responsible for me, but met with a very reserved attitude. In my endeavours, I also had to turn to a department that had been set up at the Berlin magistrate's office for **questions of this** kind. The officer I visited there was surprisingly well informed about my literary past. It turned out that he had read "Resistance", was familiar with my books and, above all, knew Ernst Jünger's writings well. He had once been a communist and had shown an interest in all Eastern-orientated movements. The man's name was Kukowka. He said that my "resistance" no longer fitted into the new situation because it was too nationally coloured. He probably gave me a negative opinion; in any case, I didn't reach my goal.

Like newspapers, magazines and books were also censored. In 1947, I still had to submit the manuscript of my booklet "Ost-West" to the British censors, who, **however**, made **no** difficulties but gave **t h e i r** permission.

All newspapers and magazines had fallen silent in the final days of the war. Where printing works were still intact, they were later confiscated by the occupying powers, and nobody could use the machines and equipment unless they were able to obtain special permission from the occupying powers. The first newspapers were published by the occupying powers themselves. They had former German citizens in their troops who were suitable as editors. These editors were joined by **officers** of the occupying forces, who had to ensure that nothing was written or published that could have been detrimental to the interests of the occupying powers. The Americans founded the "Neue Zeitung", headed by Hans Habe, a skilful journalist who had emigrated to America. In Hamburg, the English published "Die Welt". The Russians had founded the "Tägliche Rundschau", whose management was in the hands of educated German-speaking Russian officers.

Over time, the occupying powers switched to a different system. In the larger cities, they granted licences to publish newspapers to Germans they deemed trustworthy. Companies that had previously printed National Socialist publications were confiscated and handed over to these licensed newspapers. The British and Americans soon insisted that contracts be concluded with the former owners of the printing works, under which the businesses had to be leased to the new companies for eight years. In this way, they wanted to keep the principle of private property sacred, even for the National Socialists. As there was a ravenous appetite for newspapers among the population, these licensed newspapers sold like hot cakes.

Newspapers took on different characters in the various occupation zones. The Americans and British initially emphasised that newspapers should only disseminate news. It was only gradually that editorials and commentaries were honoured. In the Soviet zone, on the other hand, the newspapers developed along the lines of the Soviet papers. These papers were based on the idea that the worker was now more the hero of history and that his concerns, his problems and his glorification in particular should be the most prominent subject of journalism. The actual politi-

The news took a back seat. Conditions in the factories, competitions, assembly resolutions, workers' statements on political events filled the columns. For non-proletarians, the newspapers thus became completely uninteresting. They gave the impression of being mere propaganda vehicles for the political purposes of the labour movement.

While in the western zones it was possible to make critical statements about the occupation policy, this was not possible in the Soviet zone,

In the autumn of 1945 I read in the "Neue Zeitung", the organ of the American occupying power, that a newspaper had been licensed in Nuremberg, the "Nürnberger Nachrichten"; the licence holder was Joseph Drexel.

I had not yet made contact with Drexel at that time. It was many months before the thread between us was re-established. He told me what difficulties he had had. His life was scrutinised in the most precise and careful way according to American methods. My resistance movement seemed very puzzling to the Americans; the national-revolutionary colouring made them suspicious, and the Russian orientation was offensive to them. Drexel's situation was made more difficult by the fact that the Social Democrats were working against him.

Above all, Drexel had to deal with two American officers. One, the press officer, Mr Klier, was a likeable man. He was a professor at a small American university, socially open-minded and at that time still looked at Soviet Russia with understanding. The other, Mr Feiler, was an employee of the CIC. The CIC was in charge of cultural and intellectual matters. Mr Feiler was more suspicious than Mr Klier, all the more so because he, an Austrian emigrant, knew European conditions inside out.

In 1930, Widerstandsverlag had published a translation of an American book that contained a sharp attack on American democracy. The author was

H. Mencken. Widerstandsverlag gave the book the title "Democratic Mirror". Drexel had written a short introduction to this book. In the spirit of Mencken's book, Drexel had exposed democratic institutions. During a negotiation with a Mr Randal from the CIC

he suddenly pulled out the book and asked Drexel what he had to say about his introduction. Drexel quickly composed himself and, in his charming manner, knew how to justify his introduction by referring to the current situation.

After some time, the American press department asked Drexel to submit a proposal for a second licence holder. Drexel asked me if I would be interested in becoming this licence holder.

I was not entirely averse to the idea and travelled to Nuremberg. Negotiations took place with Klier and Feiler. Both seemed to favour me personally, but the Social Democrats soon began a fierce game of intrigue against me. The Americans also attended a public meeting I held in Nuremberg, and they obviously went home very impressed. However, when they learnt that I had party-political ties, they were frightened and broke off the negotiations.

Change of course

Hitler and his paladins had always had a vivid feeling for the crookedness of the situation in which they found themselves. They felt strongly and clearly that they belonged to the bourgeois-capitalist Western powers and that their struggle against them was unnatural. They also saw the **unnaturalness of** the alliance between the Western powers and the Soviet Union. Of course, this unnaturalness had also **been** recognised in the camp of the Western powers as well as in the Soviet Union; American deputies and senators expressed their displeasure more than once.

Even during the war, the American government had looked askance at the Soviet successes. In **1941**, Senator Truman, who later became President, had said that it was necessary to capitalise on the fact that Germany and the Soviet Union were tearing each other apart. In the end, America should come to the aid of whoever proved to be the weaker. In this case, the two dictatorial states would emerge from the war weakened and battered. In 1943, Thomas Mann wrote in his diary:

"Talking to friends about the poor relationship with Russia, the disagreement, the mistrust fuelled by the exchange

The fact that a real second front remains, the recall of Litvinov and Maisky. The impression is that it is hardly about this war, but about the preparations for the next one."

Throughout the war years, Stalin also looked upon his Western allies with the greatest mistrust. Only an excess of political folly and blindness could have created such a lopsided situation; Hitler had succeeded in the improbable.

But the closer defeat approached, the brighter Hitler's realisation of the absurdity of the position he was taking became. When his situation became desperate and he could only find consolation in hope, the realisation of the unnatural world political situation he had conjured up became the last straw to which he clung. He believed that his Western opponents must realise that they were fighting on the wrong front and that it was actually his destiny to be their tool against Bolshevik Russia. His thoughts kept wandering to England. Should England not realise how it was damaging its own interests by supporting the Soviet Union? He reckoned that the Western powers would tear up their ties with the Soviet Union and use the Germans against the advancing Soviet power.

We know how tensely he looked to Frederick II's example right up to his last moments. Frederick, too, had at times been close to ruin, but he defied the most difficult of fates. Even in moments when his doom seemed inescapably decided, he held his head high, and in the end he was lucky. The Russian war happened, the Russians left the grand coalition that had been formed against him; thus he saved himself and his state. Could not an English miracle now take place? Was it not possible that the English would turn away from the alliance with the Soviet Union and accept Germany as a comrade-in-arms against the threatening Soviet power advancing into Europe?

Those around Hitler - Goebbels, Himmler and Göring - shared Hitler's hope, and ultimately this hope was the last thing these men had left.

Now it cannot be denied that considerations of this kind were quite justified. The great world antagonism between the Western capitalist powers and the Bolshevik Soviet

union was undoubtedly present, and it was only because the Western powers needed the Russian armies that they closed their eyes to the gulf that separated them from Soviet Russia. They violently and convulsively reinterpreted Bolshevik Russia to such an extent that it seemed to fit into their democratic scheme. It required little foresight to foresee the moment when the enormous antagonism between the bourgeois West and the anti-bourgeois East would break out again. However, this moment could only come when the Hitler empire had been defeated. The Western peoples had been so psychologically mobilised against the Third Reich that a sudden change of course was practically impossible for their governments. The fight against Hitler had to be fought out, only then could they begin to prepare for the Soviet Union as the enemy of tomorrow. Hitler's hopes for a break between West and East were far ahead of the facts. He first had to fall as a victim of the lopsided situation that he himself had conjured up before it could be set right again.

Even the Potsdam Agreement was a result of this skewed situation.

The Potsdam resolutions marked the outermost limit to which Soviet influence in Europe had penetrated; at the same time, however, this limit also determined the maximum level of concessions that the Western powers could be brought to make at the time in view of the Soviet war effort. But no sooner had the Potsdam Agreement been signed than the Western powers began to feel violated by its provisions. They were keen to get away from this treaty. The Soviets had penetrated as far as the centre of Europe, the Balkans had fallen into their hands and they had the treaty right to interfere in the affairs of the Ruhr. The Western powers no longer wanted to continue their policy under the aspects that they had taken for granted during the war.

Soon after the Potsdam Agreement was signed, the policy of reinterpretations, distortions and intrigues began under the leadership of the United States of America, with the help of which the Western powers wanted to evade their Potsdam signature.

The position of the Soviet Union in Europe, in the Balkans ins-

The war, which had been won in the Soviet Union and in East Asia in particular, violated the bourgeois-capitalist interests of the Western powers. The time had come when it was no longer necessary to put up with these violations of interests. It was possible to shake off consideration for the Soviet Union and even to recognise it as an enemy.

Of course, this change of attitude could not be realised overnight. Many diplomatic tricks and ruses, many ingenious retreats and newly devised targets were necessary in order to adjust to the changed situation. England, which felt the Soviet rival pressing down on it in uncanny geographic proximity, began to speak out openly. It knew how much it was serving American interests. It was Winston Churchill who first openly signalled the new course. On 5 March 1946, he gave an alarming speech in Fulton in the USA; the American President Truman was among his audience. Churchill openly expressed his opposition to the Soviet Union and called for an international armed force that would serve the United Nations. There was no mistaking the fact that this international force was to be built up against the Soviet Union. Not long after, on 19 May 1946, The Times proposed that Britain should ratify the Potsdam Agreement: Britain should declare the Potsdam Agreement invalid and put an end to the zonal regime in Germany. It might become necessary to unite the three western zones into a West German federation or to administer them uniformly. We were approaching the point at which all attempts to regard Germany as a unit in accordance with the Potsdam Agreement would have to be abandoned as illusory. Churchill, who later repeated the ideas of Fulton's speech in Zurich, had spoken as a vanguard of American politics. It did not take long for American policy to show through its measures how radically it wanted to liquidate President Roosevelt's course.

On 25 May 1946, the American representative in the Control Council, General Clay, decreed that reparations deliveries from the American zone to the Soviet Union would have to be temporarily suspended. The British military governor agreed with this measure.

The Soviets had waived these reparations due to the Potsdam Agreement.

legal claim under the contract. The immense damage

The aim was to compensate to some extent for the damage caused to the Soviet production apparatus by the Germans. The measures taken by the American and British military governments were aimed at delaying the industrial recovery of the Soviet Union.

The idea of uniting the western occupation zones and thus creating a German area of interest that could be played off against the Soviet Union took root. On 30 July 1946, General Douglas, Commander-in-Chief of the British occupation forces, agreed to the proposal made by US General McNarney on 20 July for the economic unification of the American and British zones.

In fact, on 1 September 1946, the economic ministers of the countries in the American and British zones decided to form a bilateral economic council. As early as 5 September, this decision of the economic ministers was approved at a meeting attended by General Clay, General Robertson and Air Marshal Sir Sholio Douglas. These measures were along the same lines as the statement made by the American Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Byrnes, at the Paris Conference of Foreign Ministers (15 June to 12 July 1946).

At this conference, America was reluctant to grant the Soviets reparations from current production; the Americans were also embarrassed to grant the Soviets a right of co-determination over the fate of the Ruhr region via the Control Council: in a speech in Stuttgart on 6 September 1946, State Secretary Byrnes demanded that the Soviet Union should waive reparations from current production. Byrnes also demanded the free exchange of goods between the individual zones and that the zone borders should only be regarded as a marker for the areas occupied by the armed forces of the occupying powers for security reasons and not as a marker for self-contained economic or political units.

The German economic unity that Byrnes was offering here was the unity of a capitalist economic area; the Soviet-occupied zone was to become the hunting ground of American and British economic powers.

The division of the Bizone took place on 1 January 1947. This unification cost the British their decisive influence over the Ruhr area in their zone, where they were

was eliminated due to the American financial overweight. Similarly, the Americans had intended to economically weaken the Russians in their own occupied territory. Former American President Hoover's demand on 27 May 1947 for a special peace agreement with West Germany was revealing.

In line with the general tendency to bring the West German occupation zones firmly into American hands, the Economic Council was founded in Frankfurt am Main, which was decided by Generals Clay and Robertson on 29 May 1947 and then constituted on 25 June 1947.

John **Foster** Dulles, who, although a member of the Republican Party, worked together with the Democratic government, demanded a Three-Power Guarantee Treaty on 14 November 1947.

The French occupation zone had yet to join the Bizone. Since 1945, the French government had repeatedly insisted on the separation of the Saar region from Germany; it demanded the support of America and England to realise this annexation. On 16 December 1947, the American Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Marshall, and the French Foreign Minister, Bidault, negotiated the accession of the French zone to the already existing Bizone.

Due to the concessions that the American and British governments made to France on the Saar issue, the Trizone was later formed (1 August 1948). The western occupation area was under American leadership.

The Potsdam resolutions had provided for the establishment of central economic authorities. The Soviet Union would have kept its finger on the pulse of West German affairs via such all-German economic bodies; in particular, it would have had a say in Ruhr issues. But the Soviet Union was no longer to be involved in the Ruhr. The Western powers also wanted to evade the obligations they had assumed in the articles dealing with the division of large estates and the dissolution of corporations. The division of Germany was the most expedient way for them to undermine the Potsdam Agreement on these points. As strong as the interest of the Western powers was in the dismemberment of Germany, as strong

was the Soviet Union's interest in maintaining German unity. On the basis of the Potsdam resolutions, the continued existence of German unity guaranteed the Soviets the opportunity to influence West German conditions.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Marshall, had brutally said in a radio speech on 19 December 1947: "A unified Germany is unthinkable at the present time", and the "New York Herald Tribune" had written on 20 December 1947: "The age of Yalta is over. The division of Germany will give us a free hand to incorporate West Germany into a system of Western states."

The West German bourgeoisie, especially its heavily industrialised component, looked to the Potsdam resolutions with fear and trembling; it feared their implementation and did not hesitate for a moment to abandon the unity of Germany if the policies of the Western occupying powers saved the West German social constitution.

Several German state parliaments had dealt with the question of the dissolution of large estates and corporations and passed very lenient resolutions that circumvented rather than fulfilled the Potsdam demands. Hesse had made the boldest advances; it had adopted a socialisation law under Social Democratic leadership, but soon experienced the strongest resistance not only from the Hessian bourgeoisie, but also from the American occupying power. Those articles of the Potsdam Agreement that penalised the large landowners and corporations were soon abandoned as "Bolshevist" parts of the agreement and, as was also shown in the treatment of the Ruhr industry, were deliberately and resolutely ignored. In order to save themselves from "Bolshevik" measures, the destruction of German unity became the most urgent concern of the West German bourgeoisie.

The German citizen of the Trizone was lucky; his concerns were also those of the American government, and this worked in his favour.

Based on a speech in which the American Secretary of State Marshall developed an aid programme for the benefit of the war-exhausted European countries at Harvard University on 5 June 1947, an administration, the so-called Marshall Plan Administration, was established to decide on the distribution of the loans approved by the American House of Representatives.

had to decide. The Marshall Plan soon became - in Truman's words - the "centrepiece of American foreign policy". The Federal Republic of Germany was also included in the aid programme after it was founded. It was intended to prevent the economic disintegration of the European nations, in particular the economic disintegration of West Germany, from acting as a favourable breeding ground for the spread of communist ideas and thus also for Soviet power.

The consolidation of the western occupation zones was **strengthened** by the proclamation of a charter for the United Economic Area in Proclamation No. 7 on 9 February 1948. The Economic Council was reorganised, a Länder Council was set up alongside it, and an Administrative Council was created to oversee the economic administrations. A Chief Director was appointed to head the Administrative Council.

Understandably, the Soviet Union was opposed to a development that would lead to the division of Germany.

The Soviet Marshal Sokolowski protested more than once against the establishment of the Bizone. For example, on 30 July 1946, when the plan to establish the Bizone emerged, and later on 27 January 1947 in the Control Council. He said: "We have all agreed that the time will come when Germany can once again take a worthy place in the family of peace-loving peoples as an independent and peace-loving democratic state on common and equal foundations with other peoples. These are the goals of our common policy in Germany. Only on this basis, and not on the basis of the misguided view contained in the British-American two-zone agreement, can and must we realise in practice, without delay, the political and economic unity of Germany, which is an imperative necessity for guaranteeing lasting peace and security." The founding of the Bizone was thus characterised as a step towards the division of Germany.

The division of Germany by the Western powers was only one component of Western policy: at the same time, it amounted to the dismantling of friendly relations with the Soviet Union altogether and was about to unite all bourgeois states against the Soviet Union. Since the Soviet zone of occupation could not be blown out of the Soviet sphere of influence for the time being, Germany **had to** be divided into a bourgeois and a Soviet zone.

be broken up into a Soviet-determined part. America's march against the Soviet Union was in full swing and the dividing line between the American and Soviet spheres of power ran right through the centre of Germany.

The continued existence of the Control Council and the Conference of Foreign Ministers was no longer compatible with this policy in the long term. Both institutions were creations of the Potsdam Agreement. The Conference of Foreign Ministers had been given the explicit task of preparing the peace treaties; it had indeed brought about some peace treaties, most recently the one with Italy. But it failed in the task of drafting the peace treaty with Germany.

The German question was already on the agenda of the Paris Foreign Ministers' Conference, which took place from 15 June to 12 July 1944. On this occasion, the major conflicts of interest between the Anglo-Saxon powers on the one hand and the Soviet Union on the other already became apparent.

At the conference of foreign ministers in New York from 4 November to 11 December 1946, a conference of foreign ministers was set for March 1947 to discuss the peace treaty with Germany.

This conference then took place in Moscow from 10 March to 24 April 1947. The contrast of opinions clashed sharply here; Molotov, who proposed a German constitution modelled on the Weimar Constitution, was not approved. The topics discussed were the demilitarisation, denazification and democratisation of Germany, the prisoner of war issue, the preparation of the German peace treaty, the future political organisation of Germany, a four-power agreement for Germany for 40 years and the borders of Germany.

Molotov met with opposition when he proposed land reform throughout Germany, the expropriation of German monopolies and the transfer of their businesses to the German state in accordance with the Potsdam resolutions. He touched on the most sensitive point with his proposal for four-power control over the Ruhr area. Molotov resolutely rejected Bidault's plan, which called for the separation of the Rhineland and the Ruhr, i.e. the further dismemberment of Germany. No real decisions were made in Moscow; it was merely agreed that the Control Commission would draw up an agreement on the occupation of the Ruhr.

to work out a strategy for strengthening Germany. The continuation of the preparation of a peace treaty with Germany was assigned to the deputy foreign ministers.

At the London Conference from 25 November to 15 December 1947, Molotov presented a five-point programme for the preparation of a peace treaty with Germany on 27 November.

Molotov harshly rejected the intention of the three Western powers to merge the three Western occupation zones; he characterised this plan as an attempt to divide Germany. The Western powers were uncomfortable with Molotov's proposals; they did not wish to see their policy of division openly denounced. As a result, the American Secretary of State Marshall considered it expedient to cancel the conference; it was postponed indefinitely.

This paved the way for the Western powers to initiate a special policy with their three merged German occupation zones. The aim was to unite the three western occupation zones into a single state. The solidarity of common bourgeois interests could be the basis for such a state formation.

From then on, German unification efforts took on the colouring of being an outgrowth of Soviet anti-bourgeois politics; they were thus defamed and rendered ineffective. The division of Germany, on the other hand, which was in the interests of the West German bourgeoisie, was veiledly characterised and implemented as a policy appropriate to the German people.

People's Congress Movement

When it became clear that America was working towards a division of Germany, the Soviets tried to get a popular movement going in favour of maintaining German unity. Under their influence, a so-called

"People's Congress Movement" came into being. Men from all walks of life were brought together to declare their support for German unity and to express their will to oppose the division of Germany. Committees were formed in every town in the eastern zone to support this unity movement.

trend should be. Great importance was attached to the People's Congress movement also gaining a foothold in West Germany. A People's Congress was held in Berlin on 6/7 December 1947, which was also attended by delegates from West Germany. The government of the Eastern zone generously financed this congress. The delegates received free accommodation, free meals and free travel.

I was sent to this People's Congress as a representative of the Kulturbund. I had previously been instructed to travel to southern Germany to speak there on behalf of the People's Congress movement and to organise committees. I was very successful in many cities.

The second People's Congress was convened in Berlin on 17/18 March 1948. The endeavour to make the People's Congress the direct bearer of the will of the German people became apparent. The nomination of delegates by party bodies was to be regarded as an act of election. The People's Congress elected a People's Council consisting of 400 members who were to meet from time to time. This People's Council was intended as a German substitute parliament; about 70 delegates from West Germany, whose names were kept secret, belonged to it.

The People's Council was headed by a presidium under the leadership of Wühelm Pieck. At the same time, an extensive bureaucratic apparatus was created, which was based in the former Reich Propaganda Ministry. Wilhelm Koenen became First Secretary, who was practically in charge of all business and acted according to the directives he received from the Central Committee of the SED. Wilhelm Koenen was an old communist who had spent part of his emigration time in England. His son, who had been taken by plane from the Soviet Union to work illegally in Germany during the war, ended his young life on the scaffold as a member of the so-called "Red Chapel". Koenen was a skilful functionary who had acquired a certain diplomatic dexterity in a variety of business dealings.

The People's Council appeared to engage in a wide range of domestic and foreign policy activities. It formed a number of committees, such as a committee for the peace treaty, a constitutional committee, an economic committee, a judicial committee, a cultural committee and a social policy committee.

politics. I was assigned to the Constitutional Committee, which began working on a future constitution. For the time being, the business of the Soviet occupation zone was still being handled by central administrations; these were administrative bodies with responsibilities that usually fell to ministries. The committees of the People's Council dealt with the various business areas of these **central administrations**.

The principles for a peace treaty were worked out. Appeals were made to the German population in favour of a peace treaty and an all-German constitution. Protests were made against the measures of the Western occupying powers, such as the dismemberment of Germany. A declaration was published stating that, as the appointed representatives of the German people, they would do everything in their power to preserve German unity and lay the foundations for the establishment of an all-German democratic republic. On closer inspection, however, the People's Council's activity was more propagandistic than truly legislative in nature.

Blockade of West Berlin

In September 1944, an agreement was reached between the Soviets and their allies regarding Berlin. Berlin was to become a four-sector city, a symbol of the joint victory and joint rule of the victorious nations over Germany. Only very vague regulations were made regarding access to Berlin, which led through the Soviet occupation zone. The Allies were later allowed to use the Helmstedt-Berlin motorway and the Helmstedt-Berlin railway. Furthermore, three air corridors were identified, each of which was to be 30 kilometres wide. One led to Hamburg, the other to Hanover and the third to the south, to Munich.

Berlin had been hard-fought in the last days of April and the first days of May 1945. When the city had finally been overwhelmed, it had initially been occupied by the Soviets alone. The Soviets had had the ambition to conquer Berlin; they wanted to disprove Goebbels and Hitler, who in 1941 had dismissed as madness the idea that the Soviets could ever march into Berlin. The Soviets hurried to organise the administration. In doing so, they took care to keep all key positions

with communists, mostly emigrants. Left-wing bourgeois circles were also brought in to help. The main concern in the early days was the food supply; the water, gas and electricity supply also had to be put in order. The greatest emphasis was placed on "debris clearance" was tackled; men and women were ruthlessly ordered to carry out this work. At the head of the city administration and the district offices were men on whom the Soviets could rely.

At the beginning of June, the Americans, British and French moved into the city to take possession of their sectors. For the time being, there was no change in the occupation of offices, even though the Western occupying troops made arrangements to give their trusted men access to the administrations. The four military commanders, who held supreme authority, worked together collegially in the Inter-Allied Commandant's Office. The common concern for the fate of the half-destroyed and half-starved city united the men who had taken responsibility for it.

In October 1946, elections were held for the city council. The SED, which felt that it had done its best for the good of the city, looked forward to these elections with great confidence. It was convinced that it had won 50-60 per cent of the electorate in its favour. I was far less optimistic. When I told the second mayor of Wil- mersdorf, who had asked me for my opinion, that I expected a maximum of 25 per cent of the vote for the SED, this was received very badly. The gloomy forecast was interpreted as if it had the power to thwart a favourable election outcome; the prophet of doom was seen as the culprit, who was taking a disfavourable view of the party's hopeful outlook.

The elections yielded 20 per cent for the SED. Western officers had eagerly provided electoral support for the bourgeois parties and the Social Democrats.

The low electoral success of the SED was interpreted as a Soviet defeat; as the influence of the SED was pushed back, Soviet influence in the city was also weakened.

The city council initially worked undisturbed. Legislative measures were passed that were in line with most of the Potsdam resolutions, including a school law that reflected the spirit of the Potsdam resolutions.

of the political left came about. The Social Democrat Dr Ostrowski became Lord Mayor. Dr Ostrowski was a well-meaning man who showed a serious desire to work amicably and peacefully with all four occupying authorities; as a diplomat, he wanted to overcome the difficulties that the city administration was increasingly encountering.

Relations between the Western commanders and the Soviet commander were already coming to a head. From day to day, the bourgeois parties and the Social Democrats felt more and more like organs of the Western occupying powers; they were in cahoots with them against the Soviets and the SED. The Cold War was on the horizon.

The division of Germany was practically initiated with the establishment of the Bizone and its later expansion into the Trizone, and finally with the implementation of the currency reform on 20 June 1948 in West Germany. The Soviet Union was invited to adopt this currency reform for its zone as well. However, for understandable reasons, the Soviet Union was unable to accept this proposal. The currency bank, which was to assume responsibility for the currency reform, would have been entirely under the control of the capitalist Western powers, especially America; America would have had the power to make far-reaching economic inroads into the Soviet sphere of influence. Economically, the Eastern zone would have fallen into the American sphere of influence; it would have been the beginning of a severe political loss for the Soviet Union in its own political sphere of power.

A special complication arose for Berlin. Which currency should prevail in Berlin? Initially, it was considered to leave it with the Eastern currency; the Western military commanders had even given assurances that the Western currency would not be introduced in West Berlin. However, the Americans realised what a powerful instrument of their policy they could find in Berlin if they introduced the Western currency within their three sectors. Berlin's unity was thus also shattered; however, the Western powers did not hesitate to accept this. On 23 June 1948, the Western currency also became authoritative for West Berlin. The city was now faced with the problem of coping with the two currencies. It took a long time for a reasonably stable value ratio to develop between the two currencies. The Soviets were faced with

The introduction of the West German currency in West Berlin in the centre of their zone not only challenged them, but actually damaged them. They responded with a series of measures that led first to the complete dismemberment of Berlin and then to the blockade of the western part of the city. Goods traffic with West Berlin and the three western zones was interrupted; West Berlin had to fear being economically paralysed and starved. The Western powers were obliged to help their creation for reasons of prestige. The American military governor, General Clay, had temporarily entertained the crazy idea of making a military advance into West Berlin; he wanted to break into the Soviet **zone** with tanks in order to establish and secure the land connection with West Berlin. The government in Washington was not prepared for this; it called off the enterprising general. Instead, the three Western powers organised the so-called airlift. Day and night, loaded aeroplanes thundered through the air corridor at intervals of just a few minutes and landed at West Berlin's Tempelhof Airport. The Western powers did not shy away from the huge costs involved in maintaining the airlift.

Berlin citizens who were employed in the eastern sector but lived in one of the western sectors found themselves in an embarrassing situation. West Berlin had introduced wage exchange for these citizens. They were able to exchange part of their East German income for West German marks at a ratio of 1:1 and thus cover the most necessary expenses with West German marks. Now East Berlin, in order not to be accused of inhumanity, asked West Berliners to buy their food in the East. Many West Berliners, who feared for their jobs in the East, shopped in the East. The West Berlin magistrate gave the assurance that no one in this emergency situation would be harmed.

Contradictory measures were taken, especially after separate elections had been held in West Berlin on 5 December 1948, meaning that West Berlin had created its own special city council. It became a "front city" against the Eastern zone. Relations between the two parts of the city were exacerbated by the personality of its mayor, Ernst Reuter, who now held office in West Berlin.

Ernst Reuter had been a communist in 1918. He had fought in favour of the Eastern Soviet revolution in Russia. After returning from Russia, he joined the Social Democratic Party. Under the name "Reuter-Friesland" he became editor of the "Vorwärts", head of the transport department, Lord Mayor of Magdeburg. In 1933 he went to Turkey, but did not live there as an emigrant, but insisted on having a proper German passport; Mr von Papen provided him with one. He returned to Berlin from Ankara in 1946. Reuter managed to be elected Lord Mayor of Berlin. However, the Soviets did not recognise him; he was only able to assume the office of Lord Mayor in West Berlin after the separation of the city. His politics were decidedly anti-Soviet. The position he held would have suited a cautious and prudent diplomat; Reuter felt like a front-line fighter in the civil war against the Eastern zone. The Americans invited him to America; as a propaganda speaker against the Soviets, he travelled the country and tried to raise dollars for his city.

When the blockade of West Berlin was lifted in 1949, the West Berlin city administration took revenge on those who had shopped in East Berlin. The term "border crossers" was coined; those border crossers who had done their shopping in East Berlin during the boycott had their wages cancelled. They had to help themselves with their Ostmark and accept paying their rents and taxes in West Berlin with four to five times the amount in East German money. It became increasingly clear how this Berlin had become a dynamite barrel that could explode at any time and unleash a war. After the blockade was lifted, West Berlin reached the level of the Federal Republic in terms of standard of living and goods; it stood out seductively and temptingly against the simpler and poorer conditions of East Berlin. Of course, it could not exist without receiving large subsidies from West Germany. The Western powers wanted to maintain West Berlin as a centre of disruption within the Soviet zone. Under the pretext of wanting to protect West Berlin against Soviet claims, West Berlin developed into an instrument that could be used to set in motion a variety of disruptive influences on the Soviet zone.

Imshausen

In the spring of 1948, Dr Küttemeyer asked me if I would like to talk about the East-West problem within the framework of a society called the "Imshausen Society". This society had been founded by Mr von Machui in association with Mr Trott zu Solz and Dr Küttemeyer. Mr Machui, who belonged to the Social Democratic Party, came from Silesia and was employed as head of department in the agricultural department of the Economic Council in Frankfurt/Main. He was inspired by the idea of building bridges between East and West. Wilhelm Küttemeyer, whom I had met in 1932 as Alfred Baeumler's assistant in Dresden, was a Kierkegaardian. Together with his friend, Trott zu Solz, he published a monthly magazine which, in the spirit of Kierkegaard, bore the attractive title: "The Swamp". The essays were of a respectable standard, but the content was so extravagant that the readership remained more than meagre. After a short time, the magazine went out of business again. Küttemeyer went into medicine and later became an internist in Heidelberg. Trott zu Solz was the brother of the diplomat who died in the course of the

was executed on 20 July 1944. The Trott zu Solz family had an estate near Hersfeld, very close to the Soviet zone border. It was remote, but enjoyed beautiful surroundings. Trott zu Solz, Küttemeyer's friend, came up with the idea of using the estate for training courses and lectures. The "Imshausen Society" was founded for this purpose.

The "Imshausen Society" was made up of well-meaning civic politicians of various orientations. Dr Eugen Kogon, the editor of the "Frankfurter Hefte" and author of the book "Der SS-Staat", played a certain role in it. I agreed to come to Imshausen. The publicist Dr Kantorowicz was to appear from the East. When I arrived in Imshausen, I found a company of about 60 people. I had arranged for my friends Dr Drexel and Dr Korn to be invited as well. Notable figures were Dr Spieker from the Centre Party, later a minister in North Rhine-Westphalia; Mrs Helene Wessel, later a comrade-in-arms of Dr Heinemann; Dr Tillmann, a member of the board of the Berlin Christian Democratic Union. The guests also included Walter Dirks, the second editor of the "Frankfurter Hefte", a deeply felt

the religious spirit, and Heinrich Mertens, who had been Lord Mayor of Jena and had fled to the West for fear of possible arrest. Mr Biel's participation in the event was revealing. Mr Biel's real name was Bielschowsky. He played an important role in the American military administration. Biel was a counsellor in German affairs. His presence indicated that the whole event was financed by Americans. Professor Heymann, who had previously worked as a sociologist at the University of Hamburg and had acquired American citizenship after fleeing from Hitler, had also come from America. He was a well-groomed, very distinguished gentleman; he repeatedly emphasised that he was an American. Eberhard Schütz, the BBC reporter, was also among the guests.

A West-East dialogue was on the agenda. I had been given the task of representing the East. Dr Kantorowicz was to assist me.

Eugen Kogon was chosen as my counter-speaker. I had never met Kogon in person. He arrived in Imshausen shortly after me. He was a dark-haired man of obvious Romani origin. It was easy for him to talk, he was quick-witted and had spirit.

The importance attached to this event was evident from the fact that a French cultural attaché from Baden-Baden had also arrived, with whom I had some interesting conversations.

In my presentation, I sought to promote understanding for the East. I spoke about the necessity of Germany's orientation towards the East, analysed the peculiarities of Russian culture and Russia's historical past, described the decay of values and the cultural rot of the West. I used Burckhardt, Nietzsche, Renan and Kierkegaard as crown jewels. The East had to be seen as the soil on which a new culture was growing. The Soviet occupation zone was a military glacis in the face of American intentions to attack. Here, people naturally lived under exceptional conditions. The lower standard of living in the East corresponded to the economic and political truth: after such an unhealthy defeat as the German people had suffered, they were simply not entitled to a life of luxury. The East wanted to

The new structure of the Eastern zone was to be interpreted as an attempt to eliminate those large industrial and young classes that had already caused two catastrophes in Germany. The new structure of the Eastern zone was to be interpreted as an attempt to eliminate those large industrial and young classes that had already brought two catastrophes upon Germany.

Kogon spoke after my presentation. Kogon was clever enough to refrain from trying to invalidate my criticism of culture. He agreed with me and found that the great ideals had become devalued and powerless. He blamed this on capitalism, which he attacked and condemned. So he also wrote socialism on his banner. But what kind of socialism was that! It was Christian solidarism, which wanted to cure the economy by appealing to noble and human feelings. As has happened again and again for almost two millennia, he pinned his hopes for improvement and conversion on the renewal of Christianity. He polemicised sharply against Bolshevism, which he saw as a threat to human rights, personal freedom and the rule of law.

Kogon had spoken in a surprisingly dull manner. One had the impression that he was defending a weak cause and that he himself felt that in the face of harsh realities, beautiful sentiments and well-meaning incantations were ineffective.

A lively discussion developed after the two presentations. Mertens, who had gained a great deal of experience within the Eastern zone, addressed a large number of specific questions to me, which dealt with events whose reality could not be disputed. However, as he did not ask maliciously, he listened attentively and with interest to my replies, which were based above all on the fact that East Germany was in the midst of a social and political revolution. Dr Tillmann from Berlin was somewhat malicious; I endeavoured to take the sting out of his attacks. Dr Strauß, who was employed in the Frankfurt Economic Council, was good enough German to regret the withering away of trade between the German West and the German East. Above all, I had **made** a strong impression with the argument **that** the West's standard of living was based solely on American money, which would one day have to be repaid with interest and compound interest. It was precisely at that time that the Marshall Plan was launched. In particular, I emphasised that this Marshall Plan was nothing more than an attempt to make the West German economy more competitive.

The time would come when the West German youth would be called under the flag for American purposes. It was characteristic of the receptiveness that still existed in the German West in those days that all these statements were listened to with attention and good will and that they were still able to stir up people's minds.

In interjections, Kogon emphasised several times that he did not want a restoration of capitalism and demanded that the Marshall Plan should not be detrimental to socialisation tendencies.

But then an unexpected misfortune befell him. Professor Heymann stood up and explained that it was necessary to prevent all illusions. The Marshall Plan would of course strengthen West German capitalism and put an irrevocable end to all socialist hopes.

When Heymann had finished, I stood up and asked Kogon in English what he had to say about it. Kogon was agitated; he declared that all this was unbearable and that he was leaving.

The further progress of the debate was agonised from then on. The participants in the event correctly felt that Kogon's withdrawal had shaken their entire position of principle. The representatives of the American military government who were present must also have felt this. Mr Biel openly expressed his dissatisfaction.

The attitude of the representative of the French military government was the opposite. During a walk with him, he let it slip that the panellists from the West appeared to him to be surviving ghosts and that he had enjoyed their defeat.

The "Imshausen Society" did not survive this event for long. The West German participants no longer hoped for any more East-West talks; they no longer wanted to be shaken in the self-assurance of their easier existence.

Foundation of the Federal Republic of Germany

At a conference of the Western powers in London, recommendations were drawn up on the basis of which a parliamentary council was to be formed in West Germany with the task of

was to discuss and adopt a constitution, the basic outlines of which were also drawn up by the London Conference. The Parliamentary Council was made up of selected members of the various state parliaments; it met in Bonn under the leadership of Dr Adenauer, who enjoyed the greatest confidence of the Americans, formed committees and produced a draft constitution. However, the Western powers were not entirely in agreement with this draft constitution; they summarised their concerns in a memorandum containing demands that the Parliamentary Council had to take into account.

The publication of the memorandum, which the Liaison Officers had presented to the Chairman of the Parliamentary Council, Dr Adenauer, on 22 November 1948, was no small embarrassment for the bourgeois and Social Democratic politicians in the western zones. Ever since the London recommendations in July 1948, it had been known that the entire constitutional work of the Parliamentary Council consisted of nothing more than a political sham. According to the Western powers, Germany was only to be organised as an impotent bundle of selfish, divergent and foreign-affiliated individual states; the Parliamentary Council had the task of carrying out this dubious and suspicious work in such a way that it falsely appeared to be a free act of German self-determination and independence. The Western powers felt so sure of their Bonn creatures that it seemed superfluous for them to facilitate their misleading manoeuvres through understanding consideration. The bourgeois and social-democratic constitutional work could not have been more cruelly and terribly exposed than by the publication of that memorandum. The Parliamentary Council was made clearly and precisely aware of the points on which it had to obey the Western powers; seven demands were made. They amounted to limiting the power of the future Federal Government to the utmost.

In the Council of Elders of the Parliamentary Council, Carlo Schmid suggested that the main committee should merely state that the Parliamentary Council was moving on to the agenda via the memorandum. Adenauer objected that such a statement could not be made to the public for reasons of foreign policy. The Main Committee then adopted a motion by the Social Democratic

Minister Dr Menzel, according to which% the memorandum should only be regarded as a clarification of the so-called Document No. 1 of the London Recommendations. The approval of this motion had no other purpose than to desperately close one's eyes to the facts, to frantically pretend to be blind and to try to impress the watching electorate by burying one's head in the sand.

The Parliamentary Council deliberated for many months and only made slow progress. On 12 May 1949, the blockade in Berlin was ended; a conference of foreign ministers was to meet in Paris to attempt to end the cold war. At this moment, the Parliamentary Council accelerated its work and quickly passed the Basic Law.

The hasty adoption of the Bonn Basic Law was intended as a cudgel to be thrown between the legs of the forthcoming Paris Conference. Since the founding of the separate German West German state was so compliant in providing the bone on which the forthcoming Paris Foreign Ministers' Conference was to gnash its teeth, the allied governors were expected to look the other way if Soviet Russia was unconcernedly provoked by the decision to include West Berlin as the twelfth federal state in the separate West German state.

Dr Adenauer, Carlo Schmid and Jakob Kaiser unashamedly praised their constitutional work as a weapon against the East; they felt themselves to be "Saviour of the West".

The Bonn politicians had to be instructed once again that they were regarded and treated by the governors as mere assistants. The Bonn reporter of the "Manchester Guardian" was even harsher with the Bonn parliamentarians; he testified to them that they were only political bunglers. Bonn, he wrote in his paper, had taught two things: firstly, that the Allies lacked diplomatic tact, and secondly, that the Germans lacked all common sense. The political immaturity of the West German politicians, none of whom had the stature of a real statesman, had been the factor that had had the most inhibiting effect in Bonn from the very beginning. The intransigence of the German parties was as absolute as ever. The party apparatus was far more important than the principles and political commitment of the parties.

tion. The tactlessness of German politicians has not changed. A sign of the times was the all too familiar push to the right. It was no coincidence that every new German party was to the right of all existing parties authorised by the Allies.

Following the adoption of the Basic Law by the Parliamentary Council, general elections were called for 14 August 1949; a parliament was to be elected to establish and confirm the "Federal Republic of Germany". This took place on 7 September 1949.

Adenauer received a majority when he was elected Federal Chancellor.

The interview he gave to the Daily Mail already revealed what he was up to. "The time is not yet ripe," Adenauer said, "to involve German troops in the defence of the West." Adenauer reckoned that the time would come during his chancellorship.

The German western state had been founded; once again one of those new disastrous and momentous evil facts had been created in which German history is so rich. German unity was torn apart; Germans themselves offered a hand.

National Front

The Constitutional Committee of the People's Council, of which I was a member, was chaired by Otto Grotewohl. Grotewohl proved to be a skilful negotiator who was always able to reconcile all kinds of opinions when differences arose. Naturally, he had his directives. Nuschke and Dertinger from the CDU and Dieckmann from the LDP were presumably also aware of these. They played into Grotewohl's hands and prevented any dissent. The aim was to avoid any fighting vote and to make every decision appear to be the result of a compromise that satisfied everyone.

The People's Council followed the activities of the Parliamentary Council with feverish attention and constantly found new propagandistic events to thwart them. On 29/30 May 1949, the Third People's Congress was convened, which elected a new, freshly legitimised People's Council of

330 members, deputies from parties and mass organisations. On 7 October 1949, the People's Council assumed the function of a provisional People's Chamber, and I became a member of the People's Chamber. This founded the German Democratic Republic on the same day.

On 7 January 1950, the People's Congress Movement was renamed the National Front. The National Council was constituted in February as the leading body of the National **Front**. From 25 to

The First German National Congress convened in Berlin on 26 August.

Even before the conference took place, I had written a brochure at Koenen's request: "East-West Talks. Here I summarised the ideas that I used to develop in my lectures in southern Germany. When I had finished the manuscript, some passages were criticised by leading party members. One "Comrade Müller" thought that I was not quite clear on the question of the Oder-Neisse line and that I had not appreciated Soviet policy unreservedly enough. I refused to change anything and said that I agreed not to publish the manuscript at all. But that was not what they wanted; they printed it in the form I had chosen.

The elections, which took place on 15 October 1950, were led by the National Front, in which the mass organisations and all parties were united in a bloc; it nominated the candidates. In the period that followed, it was able to withdraw delegates and fill vacant seats; in a sense, it was regarded as the bearer of popular sovereignty, overseeing the activities of the People's Chamber in the name of the people and as their direct voice. The National Front set up information centres in the towns and municipalities, in which the population was to be propagandised and agitated.

The bureaucratic apparatus of the Secretariat of the National Front swelled immensely. It was a ministry in its own right, just as Koenen held the rank of state secretary. It could not be overlooked that this enormous apparatus was basically running on empty.

Historical delayers

Nietzsche once called the Germans the historical delayers par excellence. I followed this thought in my "German failure to exist". He finds confirmation in the fact that there has never been a great German revolution. The German people, it can rightly be said, have no relationship to the phenomenon of revolution; revolutionary impulses find no echo in them. It has a tendency to avoid revolution in situations that would actually require it. The revolutionary risk is shied away from: people try to get round it with the help of half-measures. The Renaissance era had set a revolutionary task; the Reformation was the half-solution that was used to circumvent the revolution. The great French Revolution also called on the German people to put an end to feudalism. The Stein-Hardenberg reforms and the restoration that followed them were the way out to escape the dictates of the hour. The revolution of 1848 was a miserable spectacle that ended pitifully. Its conclusion was drawn by the Prussian Junker Bismarck, who, as a "conservative revolutionary, saved the conservative cause by posing as a revolutionary. The Russian October Revolution of 1917 once again demanded a response from the German people. It was again a retarding response; the German people did not want to get involved in a revolutionary endeavour under any circumstances. Just as it had opted for restoration, or even reaction, after 1789, it also opted for both after 1917. If we look at German development from 1917 onwards, it emerges as a uniform, continuous line of countermovement against the Russian revolutionary event. The Weimar Republic was the preparatory period for Hitlerism; the Federal Republic continued the essential tendencies of Hitlerism in a cautious form.

This decision against the revolution that was due has repeatedly led to the greatest catastrophes. By trying to stop the course of events, the German people caused a build-up of living forces that could not be killed off. By resisting unstoppable change, by repeatedly trying to halt the course of events, this accumulation of living forces led to enormous tensions.

The war was an explosion of this kind. The Thirty Years' War was one such explosion. The collapse of the old German Empire under the onslaught of Napoleon was a second explosion. In the First World War, backward Germany was brought back to the level of the French Revolution of 1789. The collapse of 1945 was the first sign that Germany had evaded the demands of the historical situation in 1917.

Of course, the German people have not yet learnt the lessons from the experiences of the last two explosions. It continues to insist on the course it has taken from one catastrophe to another.

People subjectively perceive historically justified and unavoidable changes as progress. By interpreting them as progress, they make themselves accessible to them and make them seem worth striving for. In the same way that the results of the French Revolution were once interpreted as progress, the results of the Russian Revolution can now be interpreted as progress. It was now characteristic of Germany that the "progress" of the French Revolution was once made disreputable in Germany. They were seen as purely French in origin; those who opened themselves up to them were criticised as "bad German" was a bad reputation. The reliable German turned away from such progress in disgust. A man like Georg Forster still bears the stigma of treason to this day.

Now, as a result of the end of the war, part of the German territory came under the control of the great revolutionary power, the Soviet Union. It was inevitable that the revolutionary tendencies which had been victorious there would come to the fore in the occupied territory. However, it was immediately apparent that there was not the slightest receptivity to the revolutionary tendencies within the German population itself. The new revolutionary organisational structure that had been established in the Russian occupied area could not claim any original German revolutionary impulse of its own. It had to rely exclusively on foreign impulses and orders. The revolutionary reorganisations in the Soviet-occupied territory appeared solely as alienation measures, as symptoms of reluctantly endured

foreign rule. They did not find any kind of approval within the population itself. Just as liberalism was once rejected and abhorred on German soil as a French phenomenon of alienation, Bolshevism is now rejected and abhorred as a Russian phenomenon of alienation. By being restorative and reactionary, one believes oneself to be completely and genuinely German, and even more, one feels oneself to be a champion of freedom. The situation is so reversed that one thinks one is in harmony with the spirit of the world by throwing up dams against the tide of time.

The cold war

The prerequisites for a genuine German policy had fallen away. The German politician had to submit to the supremacy of America in the West and to the supremacy of the Soviet Union in the East. He had to be content with being a mere recipient of orders and only allowed to act on the authority of his foreign patron. For those for whom such a role went against their taste and national conscience, the only option was to withdraw completely from politics and abstain from all politics. The option of going underground and undermining foreign supremacy in the very long term was not very appealing.

Relations between America and the Soviet Union intensified from day to day; they became so hostile that they could justifiably be described as a "cold war". More than once this cold war approached the point where it threatened to turn into a hot war. America developed an extensive system to break up the Soviet Union; the embargo to which it subjected the Soviet Union, the establishment of the Atlantic Pact, the Balkan, Baghdad and SEATO pacts were calculated to encircle the Soviet Union from all sides, to cut off its lifebreath. The Soviet Union's policy had to be limited to counteracting the effects of the American constriction measures. American policy aimed to bring about the collapse of the internal order of the Soviet Union, to favour rebellions by the Soviet population, to reverse the Bolshevik revolution if at all possible.

The policy of the Soviet Union and its Eastern European allies can only be properly understood if it is seen as a desperate defence against American encirclement. The Soviet Union and the entire Eastern Bloc were plunged into extreme distress by the way in which America waged the Cold War; they were forced to prepare themselves to live as if "in a military camp". The subterranean warfare to which they were exposed had to stretch all their defences. They had to organise themselves tightly and thoroughly in such a defence. The Soviet power could only continue to exist if it organised itself internally with the utmost vigilance and strictest discipline; it did not live in an atmosphere in which the principles of freedom and law could have flourished unrestricted. In fact, for the Soviet Union, this cold war was a matter of to be or not to be. The American conception was to smash the Soviet Union to pieces as the centre of anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism and to divide it up itself as a colonial territory. This cold war also raged on German soil. The demarcation line between West and East Germany was also the line on which the hostile global political fronts collided. The Federal Republic of Germany organised its relations with the German Democratic Republic entirely along the lines of the Cold War, and the German Democratic Republic, which suffered severely from the consequences of this Cold War, had to exert all its strength to be able to assert itself under the weight of these consequences. The "showcases" with which the Federal Republic of Germany intended to literally crush the German Democratic Republic morally were events that had been carefully planned by the "American general staff" of the Cold War. To a certain extent, the population of the German Democratic Republic was to be tempted to run away from their authorities and leaders, to leave them in the lurch, to refuse to obey them.

In this atmosphere of the Cold War, it was of course an illusion to be able to achieve German reunification. The demand for reunification was a mere propaganda slogan in the eyes of the German government. Although it outwardly declared its support for reunification by peaceful means, its concrete steps and measures left no doubt about this,

that they, trusting in the American backing, believed in a violent same reconquest.

It can be said that the whole point of the Cold War was to harden and deepen the division of Germany; thus the division of Germany became an irrevocable fact.

Political position

After the collapse in 1945, I had no illusions about the political possibilities of the German people. The way I saw things, there was really no point in getting involved in politics; it was obvious that in future German politics would be made by the victorious allied powers. But I was reluctant to stand idly by and watch the disaster that had befallen Germany come to fruition. There was one question in particular that preoccupied me. Germany was divided into occupation zones. It was to be feared that it would be torn apart for all time according to the borders of these occupation zones. Maintaining at least the German will for unity among the population was a task that did not seem completely hopeless.

Initially, the Soviets exercised a pleasant restraint. They had brought German émigrés with them, whom they entrusted with political affairs in the Soviet occupation zone and who they hoped would defend German interests against Soviet claims. It was auspicious that the Soviets had made the plan to merge the two socialist parties, the Social Democratic Party and the Communist Party, into a single party for the entire Reich. The result would have been a large all-German workers' party, which could have formed a powerful unifying force to hold the entire German people together. Such an all-German workers' party would certainly have brought Soviet influence to the western zones; above all, this Soviet influence could have been exerted in the Ruhr area. But at the same time, this all-German labour party would also have set limits to Soviet influence. Within the western occupation zones, the groups of the all-German labour party there would have been able to

The Soviet Labour Party could have found support from the Americans, British and French if the Soviet pressure on the party had become too strong. In order to prevent the entire party from collapsing, the Soviets would have had to operate cautiously and exercise far-reaching political restraint towards the German population. It was said at the time that the Soviets would be satisfied with a "pink" Germany if an all-German workers' party could guarantee them that anti-Bolshevik tendencies would not re-emerge among the German people.

There were Social Democrats at the time who had a sense of what was at stake for Germany. One could be of the opinion that the slogan that the Communist Party issued, namely the slogan of a "German way", was more than a tactical move, it was a serious political programme. In fact, the gain that the Soviets would have gained from the emergence of an all-German workers' party would have been great enough to make them pay the price of renouncing the pronounced Sovietisation of their zone. The Soviets would have had their hands in West Germany, and they would have had to concede as fair that the Western powers also had their hands in the zone they occupied.

The division of the large estates and the dismantling of the corporations need not have been interpreted as a fundamental decision on the structure of the social order. They could be seen as the effects of the Potsdam resolutions. However, it would become important in the future whether the Western zones also adhered to the provisions of the Potsdam resolutions. If they carried out social reform on the basis of the Potsdam resolutions, then a largely similar social and economic structure would emerge in both the West and the East; Germany would have been spared the divide that later arose between the Eastern zone and the Western zones.

However, the course of events took a disastrous turn. The plan for an all-German labour party failed. As has often happened in history, Social Democracy failed at a crucial moment. Social Democratic emigrants who had found refuge in England and America worked with their German comrades to thwart the merger. They did so, whether consciously or unconsciously, as the custodians of capitalist interests,

American and British interests. The Socialist Unity Party of Germany remained confined to the Soviet zone; within this restriction it did not have enough weight of its own to be able to act in any way as an opponent to the Soviets. By withdrawing from unification, the social democracy of the western zones deprived the labour movement of the leverage with which it could have asserted itself as an independent political force within the eastern zone; the workers lost the great opportunity to become the real brace of the unity of the German people.

America immediately capitalised on the mistake made by social democracy. It stopped social and economic reform in West Germany from the ground up. The Potsdam resolutions were not implemented, the Junkers and the heavy industrialists of West Germany were spared, West Germany was to appear to all the propertied classes of Germany as a protective umbrella under which, with America's help, the traditional order of ownership was to be secured. Now the gulf between the German West and East was torn open; the social structure of the Eastern zone appeared to be socialist, even Bolshevist, while the social structure of the West hardened provocatively into capitalist and imperialist forms. The founding of the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic was the inevitable consequence. Everything seemed to be lost for Germany.

In his papers left behind, Hopkins recounts how the question of the division of Germany was discussed in a conversation between President Roosevelt and the British Foreign Secretary Eden. As a democrat, Roosevelt had reservations about enforcing it by force. Eden had comforted him and told him that German history taught him that the German people tended to divide themselves if only enough discord was skilfully sown.

Such a recipe had now been followed. By complying with the London recommendations, German politicians had offered their hand to **create** a West German state. In response, East German politicians, taking their cue from the Soviets, set up their own East German state. Both did so, even though it was obvious that these state formations were without real sovereignty and lived only by the grace **of their** protecting powers. As intensely as

the Federal Republic sought to integrate into the West, Europe "integration", it pushed just as hard for the German Democratic Republic to be incorporated into the Soviet-led bloc.

However, it has to be said that the Federal Republic pushed ahead with its western policy without regard for East German interests and the fate of East Germany. The choice of the capital, the choice of Bonn, already spoke a clear language. The Federal Republic wanted to be a purely Western state: Catholic, capitalist, bourgeois. Its chancellor Adenauer completely ignored the fact that Bonn, the Pfaffengasse, could not be the centre of the German East. It would not be wrong to assume that Adenauer secretly did not want to hold on to the East, this Protestant, once Prussian East, which had made the Rhineland uncomfortable for years. However, Adenauer was not allowed to openly admit this secret renunciation of the German East; occasionally he had to make speeches in favour of reunification. What remained decisive, however, was that he drastically shattered all possibilities of such a reunification through his western policy; his political actions were aimed at perpetuating the German division which, in his words, he wanted to overcome.

Just as the West German Social Democrats had surrendered the East German labour movement to the Soviets, Adenauer's West German policy had surrendered the entire East German population to the Soviets. Although everything seemed hopeless to me, I did not resist the last attempts that were still being made to counter the final division of Germany. The formation of the National Front and the National Council in the East could be interpreted as the last twitches of a German will for unity. All my efforts were directed towards keeping the idea of German unity alive in the West German population; my lectures in various cities of the Federal Republic, my radio broadcasts to West Germany, my magazine articles, my brochure

"East-West talks all served this purpose. One could get the impression that the Soviets would have wanted an understanding with America and that they would agree to German unification if America renounced the full inclusion of the Federal Republic in the Western Pacts. Thus the unification policy of the National Front

was not completely up in the air; a Soviet interest was satisfied if the Federal Republic was not developed as an American deployment and recruitment area against the Soviets.

However, the Soviets had obviously already factored in the possibility that the negotiations with America would fail. So they took steps to draw their occupation zone very closely and indissolubly to themselves and to reorganise it according to their own model. The

The "German way" was explicitly rejected as a political goal; the SED became a new type of party based on the Soviet model; the gap between the German West and the German East was increasingly deepened and widened. When I realised that all efforts to restore German unity were in vain, I withdrew from politics.

Painfully, I now followed the events that followed.

Encirclement

In 1946, US President Truman adopted the term "cordon sanitaire", which had to be drawn around the Soviet Union. The programme of encircling the Soviet Union was thus proclaimed. The Marshall Plan, which was proclaimed by the American Secretary of State the following year, intensified this policy of encirclement and moulded it into vicious forms. The nations that joined the American policy of encirclement were to receive American money. They could use some of this money to buy everyday necessities, but it was primarily intended to revitalise industries that could one day be turned into armaments industries. Without a second thought, the Federal Republic seized the opportunity to make money. West German heavy industry saw silver linings on the horizon; it had no doubt that, if it entered into close economic ties with America, it would be guarded and protected by America against any social upheaval.

There were illusionists and utopians who were of the opinion that America only gave its money out of humanitarian intentions and consideration. It soon became apparent, however, that America had questionable

had plans in mind. It did not expect the money spent to be repaid in cash, but it wanted a price for these sums. Around this time, an American journalist visited me. We discussed the meaning of the Marshall Plan. She emphasised that America did not want to insist on repayment of the money. But America, I replied, was expecting repayment of a completely different kind. It would demand the blood of German soldiers in due course. The journalist replied that America was demanding soldiers for its dollars. The rearmament in other Marshall countries was boosted. Just as England had once subsidised its mainland troops, those Western European powers whose military power was to be used against the Soviet Union for American interests now received financial subsidies. It was a political deal on a grand scale that America initiated with the Marshall Plan. It bought entire nations, it even bought proud Albion and ambitious France. How would West Germany not have been up for grabs as well!

The German soldiers who had been defeated and humiliated in 1945 were suddenly coveted commodities again. They had not been able to establish German world power; the Prussian tradition had been destroyed: If they wanted to make a comeback - and they wanted to for various reasons - they could only do so as Landsknechte, as mercenaries, as travellers in American service.

In the Volkskammer

In the Volkskammer, I joined the parliamentary group of the Kulturbund. There was no lack of events to make the position of a member of parliament appear meaningful. A strong sense of self was to be developed in the Chamber of Deputies, the deputy was to fully and emphatically display the awareness of being a representative of the people.

The actual position of the deputy did not correspond to this appearance at all. The laws were drafted by the Central Committee of the SED; the task of the People's Chamber was merely to give its approval. The parliamentary groups usually received the bills shortly before the plenary sessions. A parliamentary group meeting rarely lasted longer than one hour.

hour; there was no time to familiarise oneself with the text of the bill. One MP was appointed to speak for 15 minutes as spokesperson for the parliamentary group to express the group's agreement with the new law. There was no serious debate on the subject either in the parliamentary group meeting or in plenary. As a former member of the Bavarian state parliament, I had become familiar with the style of Dürgerlich parliaments. Faced with the proceedings of the Volkskammer, I felt extremely uncomfortable. I felt I was in an awkward position: the criticism I felt compelled to make had no air of life in this environment, but the role to which the deputy was condemned here seemed unworthy. So I usually left the session of the People's Chamber in the first hour.

There were other MPs who may have been moved by similar feelings to mine. To prevent the meetings from taking place in front of empty benches, moral pressure was exerted on the deputies. They spoke of the high standing of the deputy; he owed it to the people to take part in the negotiations with seriousness, and there was a secret undertone of a threat to deprive the tardy representative of his mandate.

When, at the parliamentary group meeting, intellectuals were once again heavily criticised for leaving the proceedings before time, the poet Arnold Zweig defended the accusation of disinterest by emphasising that he was an old man with little time left to create. He had resolved to write five more novels before he died. To do this, he had to economise on his strength and his time. His time would be better utilised if he used it to work on his work than if he spent his hours sitting idly in the Volkskammer. He would not lose anything, as he would receive full reports on the content of the proceedings in the newspapers of the German Democratic Republic the other day. Professor Theodor Brugsch echoed these comments on his own behalf. However, such apologies were rejected with indignation and outrage by the workers' deputies. The poet Kuba, a young poet from the proletariat, was the most agitated, vehement and implacable.

The extra existence that the members of parliament led killed the in-

ner interest of the MPs in their work. Means were devised to fulfil this useless existence with some salary. Precise plans were drawn up regulating how often and in which places the MPs were to give an account of their work. In addition, they were to hold frequent office hours during which their constituents could express their wishes and concerns. The MPs were to promise to take the complaints to the relevant ministries; remedial action was promised. When a member of parliament intervened in a specific case, a note was made in the ministries, but practical measures to remedy the situation were usually not taken.

The first elections to the Volkskammer took place on 15 October 1950. According to the constitution, they were to be universal, free and secret. The SED feared that the bourgeois parties could become overpowering for opposition reasons alone and far outstrip the SED. For this reason, the bourgeois party leaders were quietly persuaded to agree to unity lists. The unity lists put the united bourgeois parties in the minority; the SED, together with the trade unions, the Democratic Women's Association, the Free German Youth and the Cultural Association, retained the slight majority.

At election meetings, candidates should present their CVs

They were supposed to answer questions when a member of the assembly demanded an account of the candidate's life. This comedy was performed in many assemblies. It was supposed to prove how close the connection between the people and the members of parliament was and that only men who had not shied away from being put through their paces would be sent to the People's Chamber. I resisted this procedure and managed to avoid being subjected to it.

European balance sheet

As I have already mentioned, since the beginning of my imprisonment I had been busy mobilising the knowledge that I had acquired throughout my life. * I e n d e a v o u r e d strenuously to

* Cf. E. Niekisch, *Daring Life*, Cologne-Berlin 1958, p. 289

to rethink problems that had preoccupied the human mind over the course of time. This is how I spent my days and some of my nights during my time in the Nuremberg Gestapo, this is how I worked during my pre-trial detention, and this is also how I spent my years in Brandenburg. As a result, my memory was well practised. It was amazing how the problems presented themselves to me in a completely new light.

After my liberation, I began to write down everything I had dealt with over the past few years. The transcript turned into the manuscript of a book: "European Balance Sheet".

At the end of 1947, I met Dr Riemerschmidt, the head of the publishing house Rütten & Loening. Dr Riemerschmidt was looking for authors and new manuscripts. He was convinced from the outset that my manuscript was suitable for him and signed a contract with me even before he had checked it. Before he was allowed to go ahead with the production of the work, he had to submit it to the "Cultural Council". My manuscript caused the gentlemen of the "Cultural Advisory Board" some headaches. The editors dealt with it. The first, M. Lange, was a knowledgeable and witty man whom I had come to appreciate as a philosophically educated literary historian. He said that my work did not really stand up to the standards of "scientific socialism", but that it was witty and brilliantly formulated; it was quite suitable for bourgeois readers. He therefore recommended its publication. He was joined by the second editor, who had once been a member of my resistance movement as a young bookseller. However, as the majority of the members of the advisory board were against publication, he requested that the manuscript be submitted to the Central Committee of the SED in order to prevent a rejection. Unaware of this situation, the publisher allowed the typesetting work to begin. This was completed by the end of 1948 and I had already read the corrections. But then suddenly the production came to a halt. The publisher did not give me any clear information, he evaded all my questions with stalling answers. I learnt from another source that the manuscript had been passed on to several other editors for review. A budding historian. Obermann, had rejected the manuscript on the grounds that he was not a philosopher but a historian. By chance, I heard that a young philosopher, Dr Klaus Schrickel, was working on the manuscript. During my follow-up

During my research I discovered that a leading member of the Central Committee, Fred Oelßner, had commissioned the young Dr Schrickel to prepare an expert opinion on the manuscript. On one occasion I met Fred Oelßner and asked him why the production work had been stopped and the printing licence had been withdrawn again. Oelßner claimed that this was not the case. I told this to the publisher, who told me confidentially that I had been misinformed. I contacted Oelßner again, who then invited me to visit him in his office. Dr Schrickel's report was there. It was full of petty objections and misgivings. The young man didn't like my view of history and, in Schrickel's opinion, my Marxism was no good. The expert opinion concluded strictly and categorically that publication of the book in its present form was out of the question.

In my dialogue with Oelßner, I met a man with a narrow mind. Oelßner had gone to Moscow around 1925, attended university there and had been thoroughly schooled in Leninism. He had returned to Germany for a short time **in 1931**. However, he then returned to the Soviet Union, where he lived as an émigré after 1933 and became a lecturer in Marxism-Leninism at the university. He was filled with a sense of infallibility; he knew Lenin's and Stalin's writings inside out and considered himself a clever mind because he was practised in interpreting these writings in line with the party.

During the whole argument, I had a stack of galley proofs of my work in front of me, which Oelßner and Schrickel had been able to see. I packed this whole batch of galley proofs into my briefcase, even though I wasn't actually entitled to them, and said goodbye. When I leafed through it at home, I was surprised to find a few letters. Oelßner had, as I could now read, withdrawn the publisher's printing licence. I sent these letters back to Oelßner, who replied sweetly and sourly that it meant nothing that I knew about these internal matters, that they were no secret.

I had also approached the Prime Minister Otto Grotewohl with an account of these events. He intervened. I was ordered to remove a chapter from the manuscript in which the importance of Jews in the intellectual community was emphasised.

history, and released the printing of the work. This meant that the work "European Balance Sheet", which had been planned for publication in 1949 on my 60th birthday, could be published at the end of 1950. was published at the end of 1950.

The "Europäische Bilanz" was well received in various West German newspapers and magazines. The print run, which totalled 5000 copies, was quickly sold in the German Democratic Republic. Above all, students at the various universities picked it up. A very favourable assessment of the work appeared in "Aufbau", the journal of the Kulturbund. This was only noted with disapproval by the Central Committee of the SED. They were of the opinion that something had to be done about the book's effect on young people in particular; the "ideological errors" contained in the book should not go unchallenged.

In a note about book criticism in general, which was published in the "Neues Deutschlands", the review that the "Aufbau" had published about my book was criticised. This indicated that something was going on against me.

In the May 1952 issue of "Einheit", the academic organ of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, the bombshell finally exploded. Wilhelm Girnus published a long, sharp article against the book.

I had got to know Girnus when he was deputy director of Berlin Radio. An intelligent member of the radio staff, Dr Demel, had invited me to give a lecture on Goethe's conversations with the historian Luden. I had allowed Goethe's sceptical remarks about the science of history to take full effect in my manuscript. Then Girnus asked me for a visit and demanded that I include a criticism of Goethe's views. I laughed at Girnus and said that I would become a comic figure if I allowed myself to be a know-it-all to Goethe. Goethe as a know-it-all. The radio lecture was broadcast, but some important passages had been deleted.

So Girnus attacked me, as I learnt later, in agreement with Ulbricht. There was no good thread left in the "European Balance". It was un-Marxist, idealistic, it lacked the requisite understanding of Goethe; I was advised to have Soviet scholars teach me about Goethe. My value judgements were consistently declared to be wrong. But then came

the heavy artillery: according to Girnus, I was close to the "American warmonger" and would have given reason to suspect that I was an opponent of the Soviet Union. This essay by Girnus was in any case an impertinence, but it gave me to understand that I had been written off. If I did not repent publicly now, I had played my hand.

However, I was by no means prepared to do so. I wrote a short reply in which I refused to engage with Girnus and in which I expressed my astonishment at Girnus' completely unfounded accusations. The editors of "Einheit" refused to publish my reply.

I was later told that even the text on the book flap, which had been written by Dr Maus, had caused offence. It said: "Ernst Niekisch is one of the most independent minds in Germany ... This distinguishes him from the busy-ness with which the recent past has been interpreted since 1945." In some editions, this text on the book flap had to disappear and was replaced by adverts for books by Johannes R. Becher.

The party's attitude towards the book soon had a profound effect on me.

University

I have already reported that I took steps to be appointed to the university immediately after my release from Brandenburg in 1945. Dr Wüsing, who was then in charge of the university at the Central Administration for National Education, received my "third imperial figure" so that he could get an idea of my abilities. Wüsing soon left his post, however, and so the whole thing was up in the air. For the time being, I took over as director of the Wilmersdorf adult education centre, but that didn't mean I had buried my plans. The first person to reopen the university was Professor Eduard Spranger. All I knew about Spranger, whose most famous book "Psychology of the Youth Years" I had read, was that he had become a little weak-kneed at the beginning of the Third Reich; only much later did I learn that he belonged to the Wednesday Society, which included Ambassador von Hassel as well as Colonel General Beck. My visit to Spranger was cool and formal. He

said that I had to apply and that my letter of application would then be added to the large pile of applications that had already arrived. He then asked me which type of sociology I wanted to specialise in: philosophical or empirical sociology.

Sometimes I went to the Office for National Education, which was headed by Paul Wandel. Wandel was an old communist. He gave the impression of a calm and sedate man, was not without education and revealed that he was basically a soft nature. For reasons unknown to me, he did not favour me. So I could hardly expect to be supported by him. The university department had been taken over by the physician Professor Dr Brugsch, the physicist Dr Robert Rompe and the mathematician Dr Naas. I sometimes talked to them and had the impression that I couldn't expect much from them either. Of course, my physical condition was still not encouraging.

During this time, I got to know a highly educated Soviet officer, Major Patent. Patent supervised "Aufbau" and the activities of the Kulturbund zur demokratischen Erneuerung Deutschlands. I once invited him to a philosophical discussion in Wilmersdorf. The discussion showed how deeply familiar he was with German philosophy and knew the Neo-Kantians, Rickert, Bauch and Dilthey better than the German panellists. I once invited him to give a lecture at the Wilmersdorf adult education centre.

It was this major patent that persuaded the university advisors to initiate my appointment to the university. The difficulty now lay in getting the Faculty of Philosophy to allow me to be appointed.

Wandel was reluctant - and here I was in complete agreement with him - to force me on the faculty.

The Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy was Professor Dr Meusel, who had been Professor of Sociology at the Technical University in Aachen before 1933. As a student, he had joined the Independent Social Democratic Party in Kiel in 1918. Later, in Aachen, he became a communist. He was a member of the working group studying the Russian planned economy and knew my "resistance". In 1933 he emigrated to England and set up a series of training courses for German emigrants. He was a reserved, unassuming person and very sensitive.

In 1946, a full professorship for "Political and Social Problems of the Present" was established at Berlin University. The intention was to introduce the large number of bourgeois students to Marxist thought and to familiarise them with the Marxist approach. Two hours a week were scheduled and attendance was compulsory.

Alfred Meusel, who had returned to Germany in 1946, was appointed to this chair. His young friend Heinz Kamnitzer returned with him, whom he employed and sponsored as his student and assistant.

The Soviets had indicated that this chair would not be permanent. It was only intended to be a transition to more intensive social training. So Meusel endeavoured to move away from this chair. In 1947, he suggested to the faculty that I be given a teaching assignment for

"Political and Social Problems of the Present". As he represented party points of view **with tact** and caution and obviously had influence on important government bodies, he had won the trust of the faculty, which at that time still consisted almost entirely of bourgeois professors. I was given the teaching assignment and lectured at the Faculty of Economics for three semesters.

After Meusel had taken over the chair for "Modern History" in 1948, the government wanted to fill the chair for "Political and Social Problems of the Present". In March 1948, Meusel proposed me to the faculty. Although I was an outsider, there was no objection; I was accepted as a professor with a full teaching assignment, a position that corresponded to the former Extraordinary Professor. This made me a member of the faculty. In autumn 1949, I was then appointed professor with a chair, i.e. full professor. Various bourgeois professors knew me from my previous work.

The number of party members within the faculty grew only slowly. The faculty still included the sociologist Vierkanndt, the English scholar Spieß, the Greek scholar Schadewald, the German scholars Kunisch, Simon and Wissmann, the Romance scholar Neupert, the Orientalist Hartmann, the historians Hartung and Röhrig, men of great academic renown. The discussions in the faculty were usually lively; there was often opposition to the government's **plans. It was only** in the course of 1949 that some

Several of these men left the university. Spieß, Hartung, Röhrig and Hartmann retired; Schadewald went to Tübingen, Neupert and Kunisch were appointed to the Free University in West Berlin. They were replaced by party members, and the faculty gradually acquired a majority of SED professors.

I gave my main lecture "Political and Social Problems of the Present" twice a week. The students had not yet got used to the new style of university study; they disliked being obliged to attend a lecture and revolted against it. However, I was lucky enough not to displease them. I generally presented the material that later formed the content of the "European Balance Sheet".

Once, unbeknown to me, a reporter from the West Berlin newspaper "Kurier" attended one of my lectures. In his report, he said that because of the heavy scientific armoury I was using, the listeners didn't even notice how they were slowly and gradually being seduced into Marxism. Some time later I made the personal acquaintance of this journalist; he told me that he had also listened to lectures by bourgeois professors, but had to say that I was the only one who was truly

"liberal man" who teaches at the university. I never enjoyed this Iro- with the pleasure it deserved.

I was once invited by the Ministry of Education to give a lecture on the "19th century historians". My audience consisted of history teachers from secondary schools in the German Democratic Republic. The historian Professor Meusel was sitting in the front row. After the lecture, he asked me to give a three-hour lecture for him on the "History of historical theories". The subject matter suited me, so I complied with his request.

In addition to these two lectures, I had a third one on "Politics", which was well attended. A two-hour exercise dealt with political literature, a two-hour seminar with the resistance movement.

An institute for political and social problems had been founded for me. I appointed Dr Heinz Maus as my assistant. I knew Maus from the time before 1933, when he studied under Hugo Fischer in Leipzig and was a well-read man with bizarre idiosyncrasies. He often came up with the most bizarre constructions. The sociologist Leopold von Wiese called him

recommended to the faculty; it was expected that he would habilitate in sociology. Our personal relationship developed quite amicably.

An assistant, Werner Richter, was a keen functionary of the Socialist Unity Party. I supported him to the best of my ability. He belonged to the generation that grew up under Hitler and was mentally ill-equipped as a result. He was used to the blinkers from the Hitler era. In the meantime, his world of thought had become completely centred on Leninism and Stalinism; he didn't really know what to do with Marx. In his naivety, he once labelled Marx a "charlatan", without realising how he was exposing himself intellectually with this statement. Unfortunately, he allowed himself to be abused into making reports about me. Occasionally he came to me to interpellate me about political issues of the day; as I had become suspicious, I exercised a great deal of restraint.

My assistant Dr Maus lacked this restraint. I warned him several times, but the warnings were of no avail. I later learnt that he had been accused of "Trotskyism" by Richter; without ever consulting him, he was registered as a Trotskyist. In autumn 1949 Maus applied to become a candidate for the party. I recommended him and an examination day was scheduled. I thought everything was in good order and refrained from going to the examination. The so-called basic organisation, however, was very ill-disposed towards him, probably because of Richter's reports. Even Professor Meusel took it upon himself to corner Maus. At a sociology conference in West Germany, it was after 1945, Maus had suggested that the topic of "terror" should be discussed. He was thinking of analysing national socialist terror. Dr Eugen Kogon was appointed as the speaker. When Kogon dealt with the topic at the next sociology conference, he did not do so without making reference to the German Democratic Republic. Maus was completely innocent of this. Meusel, however, insinuated that Maus had wanted to organise a hooliganism against the German Democratic Republic. Maus became nervous, operated clumsily in the inquisitorial question-and-answer game, was not always quick-witted, and so it happened that he was rejected as a candidate. This hit him hard. He did not get over it for a **long** time.

At the end of 1949, various signs indicated that a different course was being taken with regard to university policy.

should become. A new head of department, Halle, was appointed to the ministry. He had previously worked in the Ministry of Education of Saxony-Anhalt in the city of Halle. He told me what amusing misunderstandings had been caused by the fact that his surname coincided with the name of his place of residence.

When he was appointed to Berlin, the government had harboured the expectation that he would remodel the universities of the German Democratic Republic according to the Soviet model, without having said so in detail. Halle had no real idea of the Soviet model and had obviously not fully understood his mission. His first attempts at university reform met with opposition from the professors, he did not follow through, but was deterred and left everything as it was. This earned him the government's disfavour; at the end of 1950, he was dismissed from one day to the next. An independent State Secretariat for Higher Education was set up; Dr Harig, Professor of Materialist Dialectics at the University of Leipzig, was appointed State Secretary. Harig had previously read natural sciences at the Technical University in Aachen, so he had once been a colleague of Meusel. However, he had not emigrated to England in 1933, but to the Soviet Union, where he had learnt Russian and brought a precise picture of the structure of Soviet universities with him to Germany. He now seemed to be the right man in the right place.

No sooner had he taken office than I was made to feel that they were not completely satisfied with me either.

The way in which I dealt with political and social problems was not in the interests of the Central Committee of the SED. For me, Marxism was a method with which I approached all historical phenomena and development processes. The students came with surprisingly narrow horizons. During the Third Reich, they had been unaware of some periods of history; their view of historical events was squeezed into a meagre scheme, and the students lacked a clear overview of the development of European civilisation. I wanted to broaden their horizons and familiarise them with all the essential problems. This was what attracted many students. Students from the Free German Youth, on the other hand, were

did not agree with me. They wanted to hear strict dogmatic Marxism and Leninism; anything that went beyond that disturbed them. They even agreed to avoid my lectures because I was an "Objectivist". A campaign against Objectivism had been underway for some time. Scientists were required to strictly take sides with the viewpoints and interests of the proletariat; presenting scientific subjects objectively was interpreted as a veiled partisanship for the bourgeois class enemy. Objectivism thus appeared as a veiled form of bourgeois allegiance.

Some students thought it was permissible to denounce; they didn't show much intelligence in doing so. In two cases I discovered what was going on behind my back.

In a lecture on politics, I talked about the concept of "intervention". I emphasised that it is always a dangerous thing for a state to intervene in another country. Under certain circumstances, this could lead to serious foreign policy complications. For this reason, Hitler had not intervened in Spain after 1936, he had only sent in "volunteers". But, I continued, the Chinese were just as clever as Hitler. They did not intervene in Korea, but only sent "volunteers".

One student, who was presumably there to listen to my lectures, reported indignantly that I had lumped the Chinese together with Hitler. Nobody spoke to me about the matter, but I soon realised that I was being looked down upon and categorised as politically "weak". My seminar on the resistance movement was attended by an SED man, Guhr; I was struck by his laziness. He later became chairman of the party group. As such, he came to me one day to be examined. He failed in everything and anything. Instead of failing him outright, I called him in again and squeezed some knowledge out of him. As a result, I let him pass. However, he himself was so deeply convinced of his inadequacy that he claimed he had failed. He shouted this everywhere in a tone of indignation. He even got as far as the State Secretariat. The matter was not clarified there. I was only criticised once for failing group chairmen.

A particular joke was that it was later established that Guhr

had been a Nazi officer. As a result, he had to interrupt his studies for a year.

One day I received a letter in which I was surprised to read that the ministry had decided to award me an honorary pension for my scientific merits. An honorary pension? I didn't really know what I had done to deserve it; besides, I wasn't yet of pensionable age. I interpreted the letter to mean that they intended to retire me.

In January 1951, right after the lectures began, students who were party functionaries spread rumours that my institute would soon come to an end. I also realised that people were being warned against attending my lectures. My lecture on the "History of Historical Theories" was no longer authorised.

In February, I was told that my chair and my institute would be closed from the coming summer semester onwards. His rooms would be occupied by a "consultation office" run by students. Dr Maus was dismissed at short notice. All the measures that were now taken were offensive and insulting to me. Some students moved into my rooms and made themselves at home there. I protested against this informality; the State Secretariat apologised for the rush of business, and finally an agreement was reached that could be interpreted as a small retreat by the State Secretariat, but at least it sealed my cold position. I was given two rooms in my previous institute. There I was then to

"Seminar-- about the resistance movement. I didn't have to give lectures. The secretary was left at my personal disposal and an assistant was assigned to me, but she played an ambiguous role towards me so as not to spoil her career,

The Consultation Office, which I never found out what it was actually doing, had occupied the rooms in which the largest part of my institute library was housed. At Whitsun there was a large youth meeting in Berlin, and it was to be expected that members of the Free German Youth would turn up in the rooms of the Consultation Office. This set Dr Schrickel, who had written the silly report on the "European Balance Sheet", in motion. He was in the Volksbil-

I was employed by the Ministry of Education in a position that ensured that all unauthorised literature was removed. Without informing me and without my permission, he broke into the library room twice, once even at night, to clean out the library.

During this time, the party had organised a review of its members. A separate review commission had been formed for the university professors. I refused to appear before this commission and wrote a long letter in which I described and characterised all the recent events. I also ignored a second request to appear before the commission.

During these days, examinations had been scheduled to check the students' "sociological maturity". Strange things happened here too. A senior examination board was set up, headed by the young Wolfgang Harich. I was supposed to be an examiner, but refused to act as one until it had been expressly stated that Harich was not to interfere with me. This was conceded to me. When the day of the examination arrived, two male and one female student appeared in my room and told me that they were part of the examination board. One of the students, a twenty-one-year-old man, told me that the State Secretariat had appointed him as the actual examiner and that I was only an observer, so to speak, and didn't even have to be present at all times. He should show me this in writing, I replied. He didn't have a document, he said. Then, I said, what he had told me was not authoritative for me. I was the examiner and would only allow him to ask a few more questions when I had finished. He grumbled, but complied.

One student had submitted a very oppositional written paper. He had dared to question whether the Oder-Neisse line was a real peace border. This could be claimed, but it could not be proven. The three students sitting in front of me had prepared to pounce on this victim and hunt him down. When this student sat in front of me, I didn't recognise him immediately because of my impaired eyesight. Unfortunately, I asked him a question that fuelled his oppositional mind and he openly and honestly acknowledged his dissenting opinion. I now responded to him and managed to loosen the tension in his mind.

which this young man obviously found himself in. When his case was then discussed in the "commission", the student assessors demanded that the student should fail. I was not prepared to make such a judgement. I told my assessors that it could not be denied that the young man had many misgivings about the German Democratic Republic, but they should realise that if they let him fail, he would only be strengthened in his hostility. He would say, as he had expected, that the test was not about knowledge, but only about attitude. He would certainly be very surprised if he was allowed to pass.

The three young people were impressed by my words, and in the end they even agreed with me. In fact, the candidate's eyes widened when I congratulated him on passing his exam afterwards.

Following these examinations, I was asked to see the State Secretary in person. He told me that I would be given a new "Chair for the Study of Imperialism" was created. I was also to be given another institute with the same name.

Of course, this did little to change the isolation I had fallen into in the meantime. I didn't go to any meetings, wasn't favoured or honoured in any way, but I was left completely in peace, which was the most valuable thing to me. Any requests I made were usually granted immediately. Obviously they didn't want any open conflict with me.

It had been my intention to carry out some research. I thought it might be of sociological interest to investigate the former social situation of the refugees on the other side of the Oder-Neisse line and compare it with their current situation. My assistant, Dr Maus, took on the task with great enthusiasm. Some students were also interested and Dr Maus went with this group to several villages to talk to refugees and record his findings. However, he encountered great difficulties. Some mayors pointed out to him that he needed to obtain a licence from the Ministry of the Interior for his enterprise; if he did not obtain this licence, he would be suspected of spying.

I turned to the Minister of the Interior, Dr Steinhoff. He promised

However, I didn't hear from him for a long time. I met him at a reception and asked him about the status of the matter. He showed a certain reluctance and said that I should discuss the matter with State Secretary Warnke. Warnke himself was standing nearby; the minister called him over. Warnke told his boss, the minister, that this matter was of no interest and could possibly be exploited against the German Democratic Republic. The minister asked Warnke to talk to me. He was obviously embarrassed by the matter.

My discussion with Warnke was only brief. He repeated that he was not in favour of the proposed work. So I had no choice but to abandon this sociological research.

Soon after my appointment to the University in 1949, I prepared everything to clarify the problem of resistance during the Hitler era. I set up a seminar in which I intended to recruit co-workers for the research tasks that had to be carried out. There were about ten to twelve students in this seminar. I drew up a memorandum for the State Secretariat in which I proposed founding and financing an institute for the question of resistance which, in contrast to the Munich Institute for Contemporary History, should above all also shed light on the resistance that had been carried out from the ranks of the working class. I pointed out the enormous amount of file material that had fallen into the hands of the Soviets and the government after the collapse and which had been kept completely unutilised. I suggested that I should be allowed to go through this material together with my colleagues and expressed the hope that this would yield valuable results. I received no reply to my memorandum.

I knew that the former émigrés Dahlem and Matern in particular had access to these files at the Central Committee. When the opportunity arose, I spoke to both of them personally. Dahlem said that this work should be tackled by a "cadre department", but that he wanted to discuss the matter with Ulbricht. Matern promised to look into the matter and inform me. Once again, I received no reply.

State Secretary Harig now pursued the "university reform"

with high pressure. The old academic freedom was abolished; it had been a privilege of the wealthy bourgeois youth that seemed to have no *raison d'être* under the new circumstances. The semester system was replaced by the ten-month academic year. New curricula were drawn up that were as compulsory as the curricula of higher education institutions used to be. Students were monitored to ensure that they attended the compulsory lectures. The compulsory lectures, which were quite numerous, also included the social sciences: dialectical materialism, political economy, history of the labour movement. As there were not nearly enough sufficiently qualified lecturers for the social sciences, older students and candidates who had just passed their exams were used. The result was that these lectures often petered out into dilettantism. A critique of the important book by Ernst Bloch

"Subject-objects symptomatic. Bloch's book dealt with Hegel's philosophy. The official party critic said that it was no longer necessary to deal with Hegel; if Bloch claimed that dialectics could not be understood at all without an understanding of Hegel, this was wrong. Anyone who relied on Marx and, above all, Lenin and Stalin, would be perfectly able to cope with dialectics.

With several hours of sports and shooting practice, the students had 40-50 compulsory lessons a week. They had neither the time nor the energy to attend any optional lectures. The necessary consequence was a catastrophic narrowing of horizons. Since an extensive scholarship system had been introduced, but the scholarships **were linked** to examination results, the students **worked** hard. The structure of the universities in the German Democratic Republic deviated more and more obviously from the type of West German and Western European universities.

The "Nauheim Circle"

At the beginning of 1949, the Würzburg historian Ulrich Noack made a name for himself. He had gathered a number of men and women around him. Together with him, they were to campaign for a political idea with a tendency to oppose the official

foreign policy of the Federal Republic and in particular against Konrad Adenauer. The Federal Republic should renounce great political ambition, not chase after the idea of rearmament and political revenge. If the Federal Republic sought to neutralise Germany, it would create a precondition for the reunification of Germany. An understanding with the Soviet Union, recognition of the Oder-Neisse line and a better relationship with the German Democratic Republic were also in line with this idea.

The programme of the "Nauheimer Kreis" of 10 September 1950 stated: "However, we want this West Germany to see its internal consolidation not as the creation of a 'bulwark against the East', but as the creation of a country between West and East that is sufficiently filled with internal forces and is sure of itself. "

Entry into NATO was rejected, as were all declamatory policies of any kind. The "Nauheim Circle" advocated a peaceful little Europe and propagated conscientious objection to military service.

The "Nauheim Circle", in which Noack's friends organised themselves, attracted considerable attention for some time. He was frequently mentioned in the newspapers. As his political programme came into conflict with the politics of Bonn, Noack was not only opposed by its supporters, but - in keeping with Dr Adenauer's style - was also unabashedly slandered as being loyal to the Soviet Union.

In July 1949, I visited the city of Würzburg on a lecture tour. I visited Professor Noack, who had a small flat in the Leopold Hospital. He received me with great interest and we drank coffee, which was hospitably prepared by his secretary, who was also his active colleague. He explained his political views to me in detail. I asked questions, raised objections and in the end we parted on the best of terms.

Noack, a tall man, gave the impression of a skilful man of the world. Apparently, he was more interested in politics than science. Science - he was a historian - offered him, it seemed, arguments in favour of his politics. It was remarkable how, alongside him, his secretary proved to be the driving force behind his political activities and how he allowed her to indulge in her bubbling activity. His cultivated nature was a source of inspiration for him; his political activity was of course the result of his own personal interests.

This is obviously due less to his vitality and temperament than to his spirituality.

It was due to my influence on the leadership of the "Nationale Front" that Noack received an invitation for the last days of August to Weimar, where the newly created National Prize was to be awarded for the first time in connection with a Goethe celebration. Noack came to Weimar and made the acquaintance of various political personalities. Ulbricht asked me to organise a debate and preside over it. I did so, and this led to an argument in this circle, particularly between Ulbricht himself and Noack. Ulbricht polemicised against the bourgeois-ideological elements of the "Nauheim Circle" programme and wanted to persuade Noack to accept the foreign policy programme of the German Democratic Republic. Noack defended himself and insisted on the peculiarities of his programmatic views.

Following the Weimar Conference, Noack was given permission to give lectures in various cities of the German Democratic Republic; this happened in several Thuringian cities, including Leipzig. In the discussions that followed his lectures, it was unavoidable that here and there and now and then he spoke out against too close a tie to the Soviet Union and emphasised pacifism more emphatically than was acceptable to the SED. The SED made it clear that it had reservations about continuing to protect Noack. Noack himself was also keen to distance himself from the GDR in order to avoid the fierce accusations that were piling up against him in West German newspapers.

The next year, 1950, I came back to Würzburg. A public discussion had started there between Noack and myself. Noack had completely broken off his relations with the German Democratic Republic and had begun to polemicise against it in his newsletters. I endeavoured to point out possibilities for friendly cooperation between Noack and the German Democratic Republic. However, I was misunderstood by Noack. He had come to the public debate on the assumption that I was his opponent and, in order to fend off some of my objections, he allowed himself to be carried away by spiteful anti-Bolshevik remarks of the kind used in the polemics of the Bonn parties against the German Democratic Republic.

East were common. It was clear that he wanted to destroy the basis of a common understanding

Noack was later accused of having accepted money from the German Democratic Republic or even the Soviet Union. He brought a libel suit against the slanderers, in which he prevailed. He could have called me as a witness, as I had established the links between him and the GDR and was familiar with the development of his relationship with the German Democratic Republic. However, as he wrongly counted me as one of his opponents, he decided not to summon me to the trial.

In the years that followed, Noack fell silent; the "Nauheim Circle" may have continued to exist, but it no longer played a role.

Sixtieth birthday

There were several signs from which I could see that my 60th birthday should not pass unnoticed. As it approached, various newspapers and magazines took note of it and brought kind wishes and greetings. My friend Drexel had travelled from Nuremberg to spend the day with me. The Kulturbund had organised a reception, which was attended by various important personalities, especially professors. The birthday speech was given by the President of the Academy of Sciences, Professor Dr Stroux. He handled his task with enchanting charm. At one point in his speech, he said that it was characteristic of me to have my own head and to go my own way. He assumed that I would hardly change. Impulsively, I interjected that he could be sure of that.

Among the guests were Minister Wandel, Professor Dr Theodor Brugsch, the respected **doctor**, the philosopher Lieselotte Richter, the Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy, Professor Meusel, the dramaturge Ihering, but also my former comrade-in-arms, the President of the Saxon State Parliament, Otto Buchwitz. * My friend Dr Drexel gave a beautiful, pithy speech filled with memories of the militant past. He flashed back to the past and emphasised in this circle how the

• Cf. Niekisch, op. cit. p. 358 f.

resistance movement had once rendered outstanding services in its fight against Hitler. Count Stenbock-Fermor then took the floor and paid tribute to the role that my former magazine "Widerstand" had played.

Buchwitz also spoke. He talked about how we had shared a cell in the Brandenburg prison hospital for three quarters of a year. I had a lot of books brought in back then and it was his job to read them to me. He had to cope with heavy philosophical literature. If he occasionally rebelled, I would have agreed to a novel every now and then. But before he knew it, I was back with philosophical tomes and he had no choice but to struggle with them. Buchwitz had chatted humorously about these past events and thus deepened the warm, cosy, human atmosphere of beautiful communication.

In my acceptance speech, I took a look at the past and the political demands of the present.

Professor Brugsch told me years later that that reception was one of the best that the Kulturbund had organised. He spoke to Wandei after the reception. Wandel had said that everything was fine, but my political line gave cause for concern. So all the signs that suggested that I was causing offence and, as a result, driving me towards new conflicts were already appearing again.

The National Prize

In 1949, the government of the German Democratic Republic introduced a national prize. The intelligentsia was to be encouraged and rewarded, but the working class and its activists were also to be included in the circle of those who were honoured with a resounding reward. The National Prize provided for three prize levels: the first prize was worth 100,000 marks, the second 50000 marks and the third 25,000 marks.

The National Prize was supposed to be a big deal. In addition to the sum of money awarded, the National Prize winners also received special passes that guaranteed them the same benefits as the members of the People's Chamber. "National Prize winners"

was added to the name as an honourable title. The prize could also be distributed collectively, so that a collective of actors, workers or engineers could come into possession of the prize money and distribute it among themselves.

A commission was set up to select the candidates who could be considered for the award. However, the decision did not lie with this commission, but with the Central Committee of the SED.

The first award ceremony took place after the Goethe celebration on

28 August 1949 in Weimar. A list of the most accomplished artists, scientists and technicians of the German Democratic Republic had been compiled.

Only one award ceremony provoked a heated discussion. The question had arisen as to which poet rightly deserved the 100,000 mark prize. Bertolt Brecht had returned from emigration and settled in the German Democratic Republic. Although he had acquired Austrian citizenship, he chose to live in East Berlin. All those of insight and judgement agreed that he was first and foremost the poet worthy of this prize.

The party had a different opinion. It had decided in favour of Johannes R. Becher. Becher did not take offence at being preferred to Brecht. It was said that Brecht was very bitter. The fact that Brecht had been placed behind Becher damaged the reputation of the whole organisation from the outset. In a way, it had become apparent that the awarding of the prize was less about the quality of the performance than about the merits for the party.

There were honourees who were already secretly considering leaving the German Democratic Republic at this time. They were greatly embarrassed by the award. Rumour had it that the general music director Keilberth from Dresden had deliberately lost his prize of 100,000 marks. An actress had not even turned up for the first award ceremony.

Subsequently, the award ceremony was linked to the birthday of the German Democratic Republic, 7 October. It was not possible to elevate the day of the award ceremony to a "big day".

Soviet Union again

On 29 October 1949, it was a Saturday, a secretary of the Society for German-Soviet Friendship paid me an unexpected visit and told me that a German delegation was travelling to Moscow on Monday evening, 31 October. I was supposed to be part of this delegation. This announcement came as a surprise to me, but the

Russians usually marched their invited guests off in such a sudden manner. I objected that I was unable to travel alone; I could only undertake the journey accompanied by my wife. The secretary replied that she did not have an invitation for my wife. I shrugged my shoulders and said that I would just have to refrain from travelling. The secretary promised to make enquiries. Early on Monday morning I received a call to say that the invitation had

been extended to my wife. At eight o'clock in the evening, the delegation met at the House of German-Soviet Friendship. It comprised about 22 people, including the President of the People's Chamber, Dr Dieckmann, the Rector of the Freiberg Mining Academy, Professor Diepschlag, the later Minister of Justice, Hilde Benjamin, the Thuringian Minister President Eggerath, the theatre director Hellberg, various activists and "heroes of labour". Sindermann, a functionary of the central executive committee of the SED, was appointed leader of the delegation. Various instructions were given for the journey. After a small snack, the travelling party drove to Schönefeld airfield. The accommodation there was luxurious. My wife and I were given a flat with two rooms and a bathroom. At around nine o'clock the next day, two aeroplanes were ready for the delegation. The day was marvellous, there was no wind and it was sunny; the course was straight to Moscow. After a six-hour flight, we landed at Moscow airport. A group of people came up to us and welcomed us. The **leader** of the welcoming group was a smart and good-

looking woman of about thirty, who was in charge of our delegation during our stay in the Soviet Union. She was the wife of a Soviet diplomat, Tamara Soloviev, spoke excellent German and once told me that she had worked as an interpreter during the Nuremberg war crimes trials. Passport and baggage control was quickly completed. A light rain fell over the city. We travelled in the car

to the huge Hotel Metropol. Even on this journey through the city, I realised how great the changes were that had taken place since my visit to Moscow in 1932. The streets were filled with a sea of lights and a huge amount of traffic.

The Hotel Metropol hosted delegations from almost every nation in the world. There were Chinese, Koreans, Indians, Persians, Turks and Negroes, as well as Englishmen and Frenchmen.

A period of sumptuous meals began. The members of the delegation grew in stature from day to day. The women's clothes soon no longer fitted. On the second day of our stay in Moscow, the programme was developed. It took place on the premises of VOKS, the organisation for the cultivation of cultural relations abroad. The director of this organisation was Professor Denisov. In the course of the conversation, he praised the new conditions in the Soviet Union: he had once been a locksmith, but now he was a professor of jurisprudence. This statement had serious consequences. The Thuringian Prime Minister Eggerath spoke up and proudly declared that he too had once been a locksmith. This tickled the ambition of director Hellberg. He announced that he too had learnt the locksmith's trade in his youth. Professor Denisov was probably afraid that a whole series of other delegates might dig into their past and discover a connection to locksmithing. He asked that these confessions be cancelled. Professor Diepschlag asked me guiltily across the table whether it was very bad not to have been a locksmith.

Our wishes were largely taken into account when drawing up the programme. There were visits in the mornings and afternoons. We went to the picture gallery, Lenin's mausoleum, the Kremlin, we talked to lawyers and officials from the ecclesiastical department of the Ministry of the Interior. We travelled to the countryside and visited a sanatorium, and in the evenings we had tickets for the opera and various theatres. The impressions they received were strong and positive.

The people of Moscow were well dressed and well fed. The shops were well stocked with goods and foodstuffs. The many street vendors were striking, but they all wore white underwear and their goods were protected from the dust of the street in glass cases. Where we, as Germans, experienced

We were treated with attention and friendliness. The discipline of the people at the bus stops was remarkable; nobody pushed their way in, everyone queued patiently. The behaviour in the dressing rooms of the theatres was similarly calm and orderly. It was almost embarrassing for us that we were immediately allowed to go first. The cleanliness of the underground was striking. The people seemed to be proud of this technical achievement. A special architect had lavished his imagination on each underground station. The stations looked like underground fairy palaces full of oriental splendour.

It was planned that the delegation would take part in the 7th anniversary celebrations.

November. It was a cold, beautiful November day, with huge crowds of people on their feet. Seats were reserved for us in the stands on the Kremlin wall. The Soviet dignitaries stood on the roof of the Lenin Mausoleum. The speeches were also held from there. The military march past lasted about an hour; foot troops, artillery, tanks and cavalry regiments marched past the government men. Jet fighters flashed across the square. Then followed the march past of the workers, the farmers and the soldiers. It was endless and lasted late into the evening. There were some delightful observations to be made in the stands. A senior officer in uniform was standing next to us with a little boy. The boy was being fed chocolate, smearing his face in the process. This became annoying for him; he wanted to get rid of the sticky mass and began to cry desperately. Without further ado, the father took him in his arms and kissed all the paste off his mouth and cheeks.

It was difficult to get back to our hotel through the congested streets. Although Red Square was only about ten minutes away from the hotel, it took us over two hours to get back there. Men and women were dancing in every free space.

After the two public holidays, we were allowed to visit the Stalin Works. They almost form a small town with green spaces and avenues. On the assembly line we witnessed the production of a lorry in a very short time. We saw the practical effects of equal rights for women. In the heat-filled foundries, in front of the enormous steam hammers, women did the same work as men. Naturally, they were in the same position.

The employees are authorised to participate in the management of the company with equal rights.

Another visit that was important to me took me to the university. We sat with professors and asked for information about the organisation and academic work at the university. I was involved in an interesting and lively special discussion with the history professors Tarlé and Jerussalimski. Differences of opinion arose between us about the figure of Bismarck. The two Russians accused Bismarck of active malicious enmity against the Tsarist Empire; he had wanted to destroy Russia completely. I denied this and claimed that for Bismarck Russia was just as much a political card in the game as England and France. He had only asked where and when Russia could benefit him and where it could harm him; he had organised his policy towards Russia accordingly. Students turned up and wanted to put the German delegation under fire. A small group gathered around me, headed by a highly intelligent and very knowledgeable student who spoke excellent German. It turned out that she had her firm views on Germany, which she held on to tenaciously, even when I tried to correct her. Many students spoke German; we also had students assigned to us as guides who wanted to perfect their German language skills.

Naturally, we had no Russian money. In a rather tactful way, we were given the opportunity to obtain some. We were invited to speak on Moscow radio for a fee. I was once invited to do such a programme. We used the money to buy Russian specialities.

Near Moscow there was a beautiful little castle that a boyar had once had built and furnished by his serfs. It was a jewellery box that had been carefully preserved. In general, even in the Kremlin, it was noticeable how carefully the traditional historical memories were preserved. The Bolshevik Revolution had destroyed little here. While we were visiting the small palace, a German said he didn't understand why it wasn't being used for social purposes. Mrs Tamara looked at him with wide eyes and told him that his historical traditions should be respected and honoured. A small argument developed.

The meeting concluded with an agreement to continue the discussion in the evening. The writer Alfred Kurella also attended this discussion. Kurella had come to the Soviet Union as a German engineer, while his wife worked there as a doctor. Both assured that they felt very happy in the Soviet Union.

In the debate, Mrs Tamara insisted that a nation must cultivate its traditions. The Germans objected as to what they should do with Frederick the Great and similar figures. I said that the Soviet Union was already so firmly established that it could afford to honour Ivan the Terrible and Peter the Great objectively. The German Democratic Republic was not yet so firmly established. The memories of Bismarck and Frederick could serve as a weapon for a reactionary movement. (Later, from 1952 onwards, the memory of Prussian war deeds and war heroes was also revived in the German Democratic Republic).

Our delegation had expressed the wish to be allowed to visit the Kaukasus as well. Several days passed, during which it was uncertain whether aircraft could be made available. We were repeatedly told that the flying weather was bad and that the Soviet government did not want to take the risk of endangering the delegates. Finally it was announced that the journey to the Caucasus would be made by railway. The D train departed punctually from one of the Moscow railway stations. It was a long train to which two carriages had been attached for our delegation. Each of us had a place to sleep in them. The carriages were kept scrupulously clean during the journey by Komsomol girls. When we went into the dining car, we came into friendly and cheerful contact with the passengers. Even when we travelled through the destroyed Ukraine, there was no sign of any resentment towards us Germans. Incidentally, we could see that reconstruction work was underway everywhere.

After we had crossed the Don, the train approached the Sea of Azov. It travelled very close to its shore. Finally, it reached the Black Sea. The majestic mountains of the Caucasus rose up on the left. The sea stretched out to the right, with only a narrow coastal strip where numerous towns had settled on the slopes and along the road. The weather was cloudy and rough as far as Rostov.

Now, in the second half of November, it **was getting** really warm. The warm clothes became a real nuisance. Palm trees and other tropical plants grew on the coastal strip. The Caucasus mountains were covered in dense forests. We had a longer stay in Sochi. The delegates got out, bought oranges and mandarins, had their photos taken under palm trees and enjoyed this landscape, which was reminiscent of the Riviera in every respect.

In the southern part of the Caucasus, the devastation of the forest had terrible consequences. There, the wind had blown the humus soil away from the mountains. The mountain ridges stared up at the sky, not just completely bare, but completely devoid of vegetation. It was a chaotic primeval landscape, so to speak.

The train turned off the Black Sea coast and travelled east; the destination was Tbilisi. We arrived there after a 69-hour journey. Cars were waiting at the railway station to take us to a posh hotel. Tbilisi had also become a large modern city, stretching along both sides of the Kura River on Abhiingen. After **dinner**, we were picked up to refresh ourselves in the spa with its hot sulphur springs. The doctor in charge was a charming Georgian who endeavoured to answer all medical questions competently. Then we went to a cultural centre where lessons were being held, even though it was Sunday. We noticed a girl of about fifteen wearing a gold medal on her chest. We were told that the girl had developed 15 different types of tea as a practical biologist and had been honoured for it. In a classroom, we heard 16-17-year-old boys giving lectures on physics and maths problems. That night we travelled from Tbilisi to a station near which there were collective farms that we were to be shown. In the central building of a collective farm we listened to a lecture on collective farming.

Tea and various citrus fruits, especially mandarins, were grown on these collective farms. The kolkhoz farmers all seemed to be wealthy; many owned cars. The mountain farmers, who drove their own cars, were daring fellows. They took the heights and bends at top speed; they passed dangerous precipices at lightning speed. At one point, they stopped briefly at a height; the brakes failed on one of the carriages. It began to roll backwards, towards the edge of a **precipice**. The passengers feared falling into the abyss.

The driver stopped his efforts to stop the vehicle and crossed himself. Someone had jumped in and managed to bring the car to a halt at the last moment.

Some of the farmers lived in large wooden houses surrounded by dense tangerine groves. We were invited to help ourselves; it was a pleasure to refresh ourselves with the seedless ripe mandarins. The lunch was sumptuous; the hospitality of the Georgians is famous. In the late afternoon we were invited to a big party on a col- chose. The tables bent again under the weight of the food. The kolkhoz chairman laid down the law that every guest was obliged to empty a huge ox horn filled with wine in one go for the benefit of the international community. It didn't stop at one horn, one after the other came. It is understandable that most of the participants were totally drunk. The position of the women was striking. An echo of oriental customs could still be observed. Women, even housewives, did not sit at the table. They stood in the centre of the room and supervised the course of the meal. If they were given a drink, they responded with restraint, without, of course, helping themselves to an alcoholic beverage.

That night we got back into the cars and drove to the station from which we had started our expedition. From there, we travelled to Gori on a night train. In Gori we were to visit Stalin's birthplace. This birthplace is a poor wooden hut, which is now covered and protected by a magnificent marble building. From Gori we returned to Tbilisi by car.

We drove for several hours on a beautiful motorway through the valley of the Kura. The Caucasus mountains rose to the left of the river, and on the other side a vast hilly landscape stretched out. After some sightseeing in Tbilisi, we boarded the D train back to Moscow.

We had now been in the Soviet Union for over four weeks andÖ started our journey home. We used the train because of the bad weather. During the whole trip everything had gone perfectly; the programme had run without any incidents. At the end, however, there was a small mishap. The Soviets had overlooked issuing us with a transit visa through Poland.

care. When entering Polish territory, this was not noticed by passport control. It was only noticed at the border station, just before Frankfurt (Oder). The Polish official refrained from ordering us out of the carriage, but he did not allow the scheduled train to continue until the matter had been clarified. We phoned Warsaw, and only after two hours of endeavour were we allowed to leave Poland.

On the question of emigration

Emigration has an ancient history; the judgement it has received is varied. Antiquity has handed down to us the names of men who had to leave their homeland or their home town if they wanted to save their lives. Political differences of opinion and social differences were the cause of such emigrations. The Greek city states were familiar with forced emigration in the form of exile: an **unwelcome fellow citizen** was condemned to shake the dust of his homeland off his feet.

The contrast between democracy and aristocracy lay at the heart of voluntary or forced emigration in ancient Greece. Patricians who felt disenfranchised in Athens were happy to emigrate to aristocratic Sparta, where they saw their social paradise. In those days, there was nothing wrong with an emigrant entering the service of the enemy of his native city. Emigration had only brought to light the fact that he was an enemy of his native city, and so it was considered quite all right for him to act as such. Sometimes the emigrant was allowed to return and forgiven for the hostile activities he had carried out from afar. Both Themistocles and Alcibiades enjoyed such forgiveness.

The emigration of Italian city states in the Middle Ages was also of this kind. Democrats and aristocrats also fought for power in the Italian city-states; the democrats fought as Guelphs for the Pope, the aristocrats as ghibellines for the German Emperor. It was not uncommon for bloody battles to take place between the two parties in the cities; the leading men of the defeated party usually had to leave the city after their defeat. The most famous emigrant of those

It was Dante who, as a Ghibelline, had to flee Florence; he learnt how bitter the bread of a foreign land tastes. Only in the Ghibelline-minded Ravenna did he find some peace and finally his grave. When the French monarchy fought against feudalism, with which Protestantism had allied itself, many aristocrats and Protestants left the country - this was the Huguenot emigration.

In the age of the bourgeois revolution, emigration became widespread. Under the pressure of Spanish rule in the Netherlands, there was Dutch emigration; these were citizens who rebelled against the Spanish crown. At the time of the Cromwell Revolution, the monarchists travelled to **France** and intrigued against parliamentary England from there. After the restoration of English royalty, many Cromwellians fled to Holland; the English Puritans who emigrated to America must be seen as emigrants who did not want to submit to the coercion of the restored English monarchy. There was a broad monarchical emigration during the French Revolution. As in antiquity and the Middle Ages, these emigrants considered it their right to mobilise military forces abroad in order to regain their lost social positions.

Since the victory of the French Revolution, the problem of emigration has gradually taken on a new, clearly defined importance. Europe is divided into two camps: on the one hand, the camp of the bourgeois revolution, whose supremacy is France, and on the other, the camp of feudal absolutist restoration, which is constituted in the Holy Alliance. Liberal England also defended itself against this camp of the Holy Alliance, the longer the more clearly it did so. The typical emigrant of the 19th century is the liberal or democratic citizen who has no means of existence within the Central and Eastern European powers, who is silenced, persecuted and imprisoned there, but who does not want to capitulate. He goes to **Paris**, Brussels, Amsterdam or England, sometimes even to America. Silvio Pellico, Mazzini, Karl Marx, Alexander Herzen, Carl Schurz were such emigrants. There the emigrant does not proceed as the emigrant of antiquity or the Middle Ages did: he does not seek to persuade the government that has granted him admittance to wage war against his fatherland; only in very rare cases does the emigrant go to the United States.

He has no relationship at all with the foreign government. He has completely different possibilities of influence and makes use of these possibilities.

He is usually an educated citizen, often gifted in writing, such as Herzen, Mazzini or Heine. He felt himself to be an exponent of the bourgeoisie of his fatherland struggling for freedom. The struggle for freedom within the restorative power united in the Holy Alliance was organised only by a thin layer of high-ranking, rich, liberal, bourgeois dignitaries. It is important to encourage this class of notables not to become paralysed in their struggle against monarchs and aristocrats. The great ideas of the bourgeois revolutions must be recalled again and again, the backward conditions at home must be illuminated and criticised from the point of view of revolutionary ideas. The emigrants write pamphlets, write brochures, have them printed abroad, smuggle them into their homeland, which is still relatively easy to do because the borders are poorly sealed and the number of police remains limited. The inspiring pamphlets from afar are distributed at home, they are read with an open heart and the cause of the bourgeois revolution continues to gain new supporters and fighters. The emigrant is

- The position of Mazzini and Alexander Herzen was of this kind - the revolutionary strategist who leads the revolutionary movement of his homeland from the outside; he is in close spiritual contact with the leading revolutionary bourgeois strata of his fatherland; he has a great task. For over a century, the struggle for ideas was the only form in which the Central and Eastern European bourgeoisie could organise itself and make progress. The émigré as the bearer and promulgator of ideas, who hurled the fires from abroad into the homeland, was quite justified when he took refuge and pushed forward his work of subversion from across the border.

The glamour that surrounded the emigrant system for a long time stemmed from the circumstances in which the bourgeois emigrant fulfilled his high function.

The position and function of a socialist emigrant were initially of the same nature as the position and function of the bourgeois emigrant had been.

There was still a long way to go before a proletarian mass movement was created.

The socialist ideas were only alive in a few minds. To a certain extent, a body of socialist leaders and apostles had to be created, active personalities had to be won over to socialism, who then went among the workers to organise them. The books and pamphlets that Marx and Engels wrote in Paris, Brussels and London were originally aimed at the intelligentsia, just as the books and pamphlets of the liberal émigrés had been aimed at the intelligentsia. In the early days, social agitation was still very much within the liberal sphere. It was already a big deal to smuggle socialist ideas across the border from abroad in printed form and spread them in the homeland. Being a socialist émigré also served its purpose when it was limited to spreading ideas. You were at the forefront of the revolutionary movement if you contributed to it as an emigrant.

Lenin had also been an émigré in this sense between 1905 and 1917. A Russian proletarian revolutionary mass party did not exist; it had yet to be created. Lenin reckoned with an elite class that was to be enlightened and whose task it was to bring the masses behind them. He spoke explicitly of the group of professional revolutionaries, the avant-garde, which was to be educated and trained. They hungered for ideas and printed matter that proclaimed such ideas. Under these circumstances, it even made sense for Lenin to write leaflets in invisible ink in Zurich and smuggle them into Russia.

Lenin's good fortune in world history was to encounter a situation in which a large state and an entire social order had come apart at the seams as a result of the First World War. Masses were set free due to a tremendous socio-political collapse and fell anarchically out of any kind of order.

At this moment, Lenin was on the spot and, with the help of his professional revolutionaries, gave a head to this unleashed mass. His slogans won him the confidence of the leaderless workers and peasants overnight, and thus he got them into his hands.

a revolutionary leader: he went from being a proclaimer of ideas to a founder of order. Lenin's greatness lay in the fact that he recognised and seized the opportunity presented by the situation. Thus Lenin became the founder of a new state and the founder of a new order. But by seizing his hour as the most successful type of traditional émigré, Lenin closed the epoch in which this type of émigré still had meaning and the right to exist. The world had changed: here, in Western and Central Europe, liberal-democratic, capitalist states were rising; there, in Eastern Europe, a proletarian-dictatorial state had emerged. These two different worlds of order were hostile to each other.

Since the October Revolution of 1917, the problem of emigration has taken on a whole new dimension. Russian emigration flooded the world. It was made up of fugitive officers, landowners, industrialists, aristocrats, bourgeois, intellectuals; they were exiles who did not fit into the new Bolshevik order, who wanted to restore the old conditions under which they had fared so well. From the point of view of the Bolshevik regime, they were "former human beings", social refuse that had outlived its usefulness. They were of the kind of French aristocratic emigrants who had spread out after 1789, especially along the Rhine, in and near Koblenz, and who were perceived as vermin by the German population. Like them, they wanted to set the world on fire to satisfy their self-interest. The Russian emigrants, the emigration of the "White Russians" was an international hotbed of intrigue, of incitement against Bolshevik Russia; in these White Russians the Western and Central Powers always found willing creatures when they wanted to carry out an attack on the Soviet Union. These emigrants were no avant-gardists, no pioneers of the future; they belonged to those miserable fools who did not want to stop turning back the wheel of history. These emigrants are always only conspirators against the inexorable course of events; they want to make up for their personal misfortune by subordinating historical necessity to their personal command. They presume to be able to roll historical avalanches that have gone disastrously downhill back up the slope. They are ghosts who take no cognisance of the present and stubbornly regard the shadows of the past as the

The anti-Bolshevik movement was their lifeblood, they thrived in it, and with its failure they were also bankrupt. They did not serve progress; their goal was the restoration of the old conditions.

The rise of fascism and above all the victory of National Socialism created a new, special emigration. It was not unified in itself; it included liberal elements on the one hand and communist elements on the other. The liberal elements were merely the historical rearguard; in liberal Europe as a whole, liberalism had lost some of its positions; the occupation had to give chase and retreat to the liberal mainstream - to liberal foreign countries - if it did not want to capitulate. There they could wait and see whether the lost ground could be regained. These liberal elements were defenders of a cause whose last hour had not yet come, even if it was on the decline. They belonged to the great liberal movement of the 19th century, except that it had now moved from its aggressive stage to its defensive one.

The situation was quite different for the communist revolutionaries. The Central European communists were foreign positioners, "fifth columns of the Bolshevik Soviet Union", they were soldiers of the world revolution, they had a mission which obliged them to attack tirelessly. This mission made demands on them - even after the victory of fascism; indeed, only now had the moment arrived when they had to show what they were made of.

In Central Europe, the labour movement had long since swelled into a mass movement; large mass organisations had been created and many years of educational work had been carried out **among** the workers. The workers' battalions, regiments, brigades and divisions were in place. Spreading ideas was superfluous here, outdated, mere busyness. Now commanders were needed to reassemble the workers' cadres that had been shattered by fascism, to regroup the battalions that had been blown apart and to mobilise a partisan war without a break. Propaganda and agitation from abroad were all the more idle here, as they did not reach the working class at home in the face of the totalitarian state machinery, and this working class with its tradition was not

was no longer to be reconnoitred, but to be put into action. Those who escaped abroad fled from the battlefield; they no longer fought, but fled to safety. They left their positions to the fascist enemy. Communist emigration had no justification in principle; at best, the maintenance of a small general staff on the other side of the border was permitted. There was only room for communist fighters in the operations and in the "underground"; their emigration was desertion.

Constellation winner

The position of the government of the Federal Republic of Germany in the general interplay of forces showed at times what constellations mean in world politics. The Federal Republic was in itself a state of hardly any considerable weight. Nevertheless, France had been jealous of the Federal Republic for some time. It was not only in Paris that the Federal Republic was well on the way to becoming a more important power than France was. Even if not yet formally, after the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950 it was indeed time for the Federal Republic to be considered as an ally of the United States of America. It was treated with respect and consideration, which it had not been used to for a long time, and it could already allow itself to make claims and demands. How could this be explained?

It was exclusively related to what was called the "cold war". Relations between the USA and the Soviet Union were extremely tense. England and France had become extremely dependent on the USA. The USA's policy of encirclement against Soviet Russia continued to make progress. The Americans wanted European soldiers to pull their chestnuts out of the fire against the Soviets in the event of war. In this respect, the Germans were extremely important to them. Despite all the treaties, both the British and the French made it clear how little they wanted to be sent into the fire for American interests. They put the brakes on, they ignored American wishes. Dr Adenauer now saw a political opportunity here. If the Americans needed European soldiers: well, he was prepared to provide them. He

had generals and non-commissioned officers, and also had infantrymen and armoured soldiers to supply in large numbers. But of course he only gave these goods if he was offered something in return. The delays in concluding the European Pact, however impatiently he sometimes behaved, could not have been too unpleasant for him: The longer the Americans had to wait to get their German soldiers, the more precious they became, and the more willing the Americans had to be to meet Bonn's increased price demands. As a result of the Cold War, the Bonn government had risen to become a considerable political power factor.

In order to achieve his goal, Adenauer had to do everything in his power to prevent the end of the Cold War, to guarantee its continuation and to exacerbate global political tensions. He avoided any reconciliation with the Soviet Union and, on the contrary, did everything he could to aggravate German-Soviet relations and increase the discord between the West and Moscow. In order to avoid any suspicion of having made contact with the Soviets underhand, he became increasingly bold in announcing German claims to the territory on the other side of the Oder-Neisse line. As the Americans needed him, they were lenient and, although they had promised these territories to the Poles at Yalta, began to encourage Adenauer in his hopes. Adenauer's policy heated German tempers; they had to be all the more passionate soldiers against the East. The Cold War: this was Adenauer's great situation, in it and through it he rose to the heights. If peace had been concluded, the significance of the Federal Republic would have fallen back to nothing in one fell swoop.

The role of the Federal Republic was similar to that played by Poland between 1920 and 1935. At that time, Poland exploited the West-East divide in a similar way to how Adenauer is doing now. For a time, the Polish voice was listened to, but the constellation-related nature of Poland's position was immediately revealed when the constellation from which Poland had benefited came to an end. Poland's inner weakness became visible, there was nothing left of it, it became clear that it had not achieved prestige through its own strength, but only because of the function it played for others.

Ackermann's essay "The German Way" seemed to indicate that the Soviets felt they were facing a particular problem. The question arose in 1945: What plans do the Soviets have for their occupied territory? Did they in fact have special plans, or did they want to leave the German conditions as untouched as possible? Since the Soviets had originally pursued the idea of world revolution, it seemed possible that they had the intention of drawing the German eastern territories into the world revolutionary upheaval. It is true that the provisions of the Potsdam resolutions that the large estates were to be dissolved and the industrial concerns smashed were not directly intended as Bolshevik measures; nevertheless, they could be interpreted and implemented as such. For a long time, the Soviets seemed to waver. They did not lack the feeling that the German people had been touched by the spirit of the French Revolution, that they thought in terms of civil rights, that they held the rights of the individual, human rights in general, and the rights of freedom sacred. Here was a great difference between the thinking and feeling of the German people and that of the Russian people.

The Russian people suffered the pressure of despotism for centuries. There was no respect for human dignity and personality. The instinct of self-determination was undeveloped. Self-activity had not been cultivated. The prerequisites for a bourgeois constitutional state were lacking, all the more so as the bourgeois class in Russia was still small in number in 1917. The Kerensky Revolution of March 1917 could only have held its own if the Western powers had come to the aid of this bourgeois government with money and probably also with bayonets. Russia would inevitably have been divided into zones of influence and Russia's independence would have been destroyed.

The counter-attack of the October Revolution in 1917 saved the independence and unity of the Russian Empire. But if the revolution was to succeed, it had to reckon with the historically moulded nature of the Russian population. There were still millions of illiterate people who were used to

were blindly obeying the authorities. The Russian village was backward in both intellectual and economic terms. The formation of parties, election campaigns and elections would have given influential money-men and clerics, reactionaries of all kinds, broad opportunities to operate. The Bolshevik leaders had to establish a dictatorship if they did not want the large masses of the population to fall prey to restorative movements. Russia was no soil for parliamentary democracy; this would have led to the disintegration of the Russian people and the Russian country. The Bolshevik dictatorship continued the tsarist despotism. If the Bolshevik leaders meant well for the Russian people, they had to tackle and carry out their task as an educational task. They undoubtedly did this in the beginning with full consciousness.

Their dictatorship was all the more securely established if they were able to show progress in the external existence of the Russian people. Although for many years the industrialisation and armament of the country hampered the development of the consumer goods industry, it could not be denied that the situation of the Russian peasant and probably also that of the Russian worker improved in many respects. Cultural stimuli were carried out into the flat countryside, and they also proved fruitful in the factories. One could speak of progress and advancement, which the Russian people owed to the Bolshevik Revolution. It was precisely this experience of progress and advancement that bound the Russian people to the Bolshevik revolution and the Bolshevik leaders.

The German people had a different tradition and a different history. Despotism had been overcome here; it was no longer a habit, people were happy to be rid of it. The time of the Hitler regime had been perceived as an unfortunate episode, a break with tradition. A Russian-style system of government, which in turn had despotic traits, appeared to be a return of the absolutist police state or the Hitler era. The planned economy, as it was now introduced in the Eastern zone, had to suffer from childhood diseases for a long time; it was inevitable that it was detrimental to the production of goods. In connection with the effects of the lost war and the required reparations deliveries, it was inevitable that the standard of living of the German population in the East would fall.

had to fall. But if the Bolshevik system in one part of Germany brought about a reduction in the standard of living, it provoked criticism and inevitably met with widespread rejection by the population.

The Russians had to reckon with such difficulties, and only reluctantly did they take the path of "Bolshevisation", which at the same time had to be a path of Russification. The returning German emigrants, who felt a great debt of gratitude to Russia for its hospitality during the Hitler era and who had also become deeply alienated from German conditions during their emigration, were **inclined to** accommodate Russian wishes from the outset. They occupied all political posts within the Soviet occupation zone and were eager not to disappoint or enrage the Russians. Their willingness to serve encouraged the Russians to increase their demands on the German people. While on the whole the Russians exercised caution until 1949, towards the end of the year they began to systematically and emphatically press ahead with the Bolshevisation and russification of their occupation zone. The transformation of the SED into a "new type of party", i.e. its reorganisation along the lines of the Soviet Communist Party, was a clear symptom of this. The SED was not to become a German party, it was to become a party modelled on the Soviet model and function exclusively as an apparatus that fulfilled Soviet wishes.

The implementation of the Potsdam resolutions had certainly led to a change in the traditional economic structure. But since this change in the economic structure now served as a bridge to the establishment of state-owned enterprises, a gulf was opened up between the economy of the German East and that of the German West.

Writers' Congress

Elsewhere it was reported how in 1932 the syndic of West German heavy industry, Kruckenbergl, endeavoured to buy the German intelligentsia. It was, as it turned out

- Cf. Niekisch, op. cit. p. 209 f.

The behaviour of Kolbenheyer and others showed that he was quite prepared to be bought. Hitler's seizure of power had saved heavy industry from having to spend money to take the mind into its service; Hitler himself took care of the business of making the intelligentsia suitable for heavy industrial purposes.

It is fair to assume that heavy industry was inspired by the American model. In his novel "Money Writes", Upton Sinclair tells the story of how American high finance knew how to put the pen at its service.

Now the Americans were on German soil themselves, and they set about assuring themselves of the writing German intelligentsia.

In 1947, a German writers' congress had convened in Berlin, at which West and East German writers had come together in unity. Generally speaking, they had refrained from discussing any sensitive issues, but the problem of freedom could not be avoided. More or less provocatively, it was occasionally suggested that the state of freedom as a writer in the Soviet occupation zone was precarious. The veiled attacks, which were made more than once, irritated me. I also took the floor. As Ortega y Gasset had already been referred to more than once, I picked up on this. I explained how the contempt for the masses that emerged in the book "The Revolt of the Masses" clearly showed how Ortega y Gasset only took into account the needs of the educated and propertied bourgeoisie when he spoke of freedom; he valued the masses far too little to worry about their claim to freedom. Basically, Ortega y Gasset only represented a variety of fascism.

I was then angrily attacked by Mrs Birkenfeld, the wife of the writer Birkenfeld, who later played a not insignificant role in the radio station of the American sector (RIAS).

Melwin J. Lasky sought an open dispute. Lasky was born in Krakow, but had emigrated to America and ostentatiously presented himself as an American. He was hateful towards the Soviet Union and never missed an opportunity to aggressively display this hatred. He had founded the magazine "Der Monat" and

had become its editor. There was no doubt that "Der Monat" was a magazine of a high calibre. Lasky paid high fees, so it was easy for him to recruit the most brilliant publicists as contributors. He had American money at his disposal.

Lasky attempted to break up the writers' congress with a hate-fuelled speech. The Soviet writer Fadeyev, who took the floor after Lasky, said that he had been very lucky; he had always longed to see a real warmonger made of flesh and blood. This wish had been fulfilled at the sight of Lasky.

Lasky now acted as the convener of the congress of Western intellectuals that met in Berlin in July 1950. This congress declared war on the East German intelligentsia. Renegades like Arthur Koestler led the discussion and gave it its character. More moderate minds, such as Adolf Grimme, tried to distance themselves from Koestler by labelling him a convert. Even men like Eugen Kogon felt uncomfortable in the atmosphere surrounding this congress.

Some East German intellectuals, university professors and writers, accepted the challenge posed by that congress. They wanted to enter into a discussion with congress participants and rented a room in a hotel near the zoo where the debate was to take place. Around 50 intellectuals from the East, including various professors from Humboldt University, took part in this "battle of wits". However, they were bitterly disappointed: of all the participants at the congress, only one turned up, the journalist Erich Kuby from Munich. The purpose of the event was defeated, even if the discussion with the lively Kuby was quite lively and even fruitful.

Professors Hollitscher and Havemann lingered in the pub after everyone else had left disappointed. Lasky and the American professor Sidney Hook arrived **late**. Instead of apologising for their absence, they behaved rudely; for example, Lasky ironically asked Havemann, a professor of chemistry, what he thought of Stalin as a chemist. There was no mistaking it: The Congress of the Western Intelligentsia aimed to sow discord between the German intellectuals and also to divide their ranks irreconcilably.

Political situation

During the long years of the war, the capitalist powers America and England had worked closely with the Bolshevik Soviet Union; their enmity against Hitler's Germany had forged them together. There was no lack of differences between the allies, but these differences never came to an open outburst. Admittedly, they could give an indication of underlying differences of interest, which might one day, when the necessities of war no longer proved their unifying force, be able to drift towards an open outburst. Hitler and Himmler had speculated on the opportunity that seemed to present itself to them here. But the idea that they considered towards the end of the war of marching together with America and England against the Soviet Union seemed fantastic in those days just before the collapse of Germany.

It is true, however, that almost on the day of the collapse itself, both the American President Truman and the British Prime Minister Winston Churchill realised their opposition to the Soviet Union and immediately set about introducing a policy that was motivated by the feeling of this opposition. The Soviet Union had - with their help - gained a foothold in Central Europe. This contradicted Anglo-Saxon interests, which did not want to allow most of Europe to slip out of their sphere of influence. Anglo-Saxon power needs were opposed to the expansion of Soviet power. This conflict, which emerged as an open question of power, was intensified and aggravated for social reasons. The Soviet Union, the embodiment of the Bolshevik Revolution, had smashed the capitalist positions of power and institutions within its borders, had wiped out the capitalist class, and its basic tendencies were geared towards destroying capitalism in the rest of the world as well. America and England, however, were the most pronounced capitalist world powers. The Second World War had been waged under the slogan: here humanism, here fascism, here civilisation - here barbarism. With generous tolerance, the Soviet Union was counted as part of the front of humanism and civilisation, since its support was needed. After the fall of Hitler's empire, the old battle slogan had lost its power. A new slogan emerged,

the slogan - here imperialism, here Bolshevism. It was not really new; Hitler had already risen to power under its banner. However, to the extent that he became dangerous to the imperialist powers, the imperialist powers moved away from him and even pushed their opposition to Bolshevism into the background. They could derive no benefit from Hitler's fighting position against Bolshevism; for the moment, Hitler's fascism seemed more dangerous to them than Bolshevism. So they were prepared to build the bridge that connected them with Bolshevism for a few years. But after Hitler had disappeared from the scene, they once again became fully aware of their opposition to Bolshevism, and a new front line developed overnight. If America and England, as imperialist states, saw their enemy in the Bolshevik Soviet Union, it was obvious for them to examine to what extent the disempowered Germany, which was stirred to the core by anti-Bolshevik instincts, could become a new friend. It was even advisable to carefully help this shattered Germany back on its feet, if only it maintained its anti-Bolshevik course. The alliance of America, England and Russia against Germany could be transformed into an alliance of America, England and Germany against Russia. Just as the coalition of England, Austria, Russia against France had collapsed at the Congress of Vienna in 1815 and been replaced by the other coalition of England, Austria, France against Russia, the Potsdam Conference in 1945 signalled a profound change in the constellation of power.

Stalin had never trusted his imperialist allies; he was always filled with mistrust of them and saw them as the presumptive enemy of tomorrow. But even he could not have expected that the change would take place as quickly as it did.

Even the American and British military and administrative apparatuses were obviously not prepared for such a sudden change. Initially, they were still working in a direction that was geared towards co-operation with Russia and enmity with Germany. The re-education of the German people and the toleration of the newly formed Communist Party in Germany by the American and British authorities corresponded to the customary relationship that had been established in the past.

had previously been cultivated with the Soviet Union. It took time for these intentions to filter through from the top to the lower ranks of the apparatus. Once this had happened, there was no more hesitation: American and British co-operation with bourgeois Germany against the Soviet Union became more and more pronounced.

The German bourgeoisie seized the opportunity that presented itself with a keen eye. The west and south of Germany were occupied by America and England, and space had been made for the French occupation in the originally Anglo-Saxon area. The German bourgeoisie threw itself impetuously into the arms of the Anglo-Saxon powers; it saw its salvation and salvation in this new friendly relationship. It could not be in any doubt about the price it would have to pay. The American-Soviet antagonism included the possibility of war as its ultimate consequence. According to the old custom of great empires, America sought to supply itself with soldiers for such a coming war. Germany had proved to be a good country for soldiers: If America made a pact with the German bourgeoisie, it was only on the condition that Germany would supply soldiers for American purposes when the hour was ripe.

The German bourgeoisie agreed to this deal without any resistance. When America and England were convinced of the docility of the German bourgeoisie, they gave instructions to found a German state, the Federal Republic of Germany, which offered them the guarantee of becoming an unconditionally obedient instrument of Western imperialist policy. This German constituent state was fully integrated into the American-English sphere of power; its position and prestige were strengthened by treating it under international law as the representative of Germany, as the real Germany.

However, the policy of the two Anglo-Saxon powers still faced an obstacle that it was unable to overcome. The eastern part of Germany was occupied by the Soviet Union, which showed no inclination to vacate the land it had taken into its custody. It took note of the change in the policy of its former war allies only with displeasure; its political moves had to be reactions and responses to the hostile policy of its old friends. Even the Greens

The Federal Republic of Germany demanded a response. This consisted in the establishment of the German Democratic Republic. But while the numerous capitalist countries subsidised by America had no qualms about diplomatically recognising the Federal Republic, the entire Western world, directed by America, refused to grant recognition to the GDR, the Soviet protégé. The German Democratic Republic was included in the Soviet Russian sphere of influence; it inevitably became a victim of the hostile measures and actions that the imperialist powers initiated against the Soviet Union. Relations between the imperialist powers and the Soviet Union came to a head to the brink of war; the American Secretary of State Dulles openly admitted that he was pursuing a policy against the Soviet Union that was constantly on the brink of the abyss. A "cold war" broke out in 1948 between America and its sphere of influence on the one side and the Soviet Union and its sphere of power on the other. No grenades were fired, but the Soviet Union was showered with a hail of moral-psychological poison darts. The press, the radio, agents and spies were eager to dislocate the Soviet sphere of power from within; to bring down the Soviet system of power was the declared aim of Dulles' world policy.

Germany became a favoured theatre of this "cold war". The Federal Republic, of which America began to feel secure, was lavishly supplied with loans, "Marshall Plan money", consumer goods and credit. The Soviet Union had been largely devastated by the effects of war, by the misdeeds of the German armies, had difficulty recovering from such war devastation and was consequently unable to be as splendid towards the German Democratic Republic as America was towards the Federal Republic. While the Federal Republic, thanks to American support, presented an image of prosperity, the German Democratic Republic presented an image of poverty. There was, of course, a deliberate intention to make the Federal Republic appear enticing; the inhabitants of the German Democratic Republic were to be made aware of how worthwhile it was to be under American tutelage. The Western organisers of the "cold war"

reckoned that the population of the German Democratic Republic might one day rise up against the Soviet occupying power in order to unite with their "German brothers" under American patronage; 17 June 1953 was an undertaking prepared with this in mind. Of course, the goal was not achieved, as the Soviet forces were on their guard and set limits to the uprising in good time.

Two German states had emerged; each claimed to be "sovereign". In fact, however, these were unrecognisably mere fictitious sovereignties. Under the mask of these sham sovereignties, Germany was in fact divided between America and the Soviet Union. The desire for German reunification was diluted to a vague illusion. Under American instruction, the Federal Republic did everything it could to block real reunification. It joined the Atlantic Pact, thereby demonstrating that it was part of the American alliance against the Soviet Union. But since reunification under these circumstances would have meant that the German Democratic Republic would also have had to join this fighting alliance, it was impossible for the Soviets to weaken their own power by surrendering a glacis - for this was in fact the German Democratic Republic - to the American enemy. German Chancellor Dr Adenauer irresponsibly and sacrilegiously played the American game, which aimed to let the coming reckoning between America and the Soviet Union take place on German soil.

In this situation, Berlin now had its own role to play. In a show of confidence in its wartime allies, the Soviet Union had agreed to a joint occupation of Berlin. The city had been divided into four occupation zones, nothing had been explicitly agreed about the access routes themselves; no thought was given to the possibility of disputes arising between the occupying powers. Once the two constituent states had been established, the city of Berlin was also affected by the division. The city fell apart into two municipal administrations; in West Berlin, America set the tone, while East Berlin was orientated towards the Soviet Union. The division in the city soon became as deep as the division of the German country itself. Even two currencies were introduced in the city. Soon the cramped and artificial nature of this Berlin exi

stence in appearance. West Berlin felt that it belonged to the Federal Republic. It obeyed its political intentions and felt itself to be entirely an organ of American policy. It took up the psychological battle against East Berlin, the German Democratic Republic, even the Soviet Union itself, and countless secret services and spy organisations set up shop with official acquiescence. The poaching of skilled workers from the German Democratic Republic was organised on a large scale from West Berlin; and the movement of refugees from the German Democratic Republic to West Berlin was fuelled as much as possible. It disturbed the economy and the political calm of the entire Soviet bloc; it sat like a poisonous splinter in the flesh of the Soviet sphere of power. It deliberately avoided any diplomatic consideration of the vulnerability of its position. It constantly provoked conflicts with cheeky arrogance. It was like a fuse that could be used to blow up the entire globe; it proudly enjoyed its ability to ignite a terrible world conflagration at any time.

Could the Soviet Union accept this function of West Berlin in the long term? Could it allow West Berlin to be supplied with fuel and materials for its provocative mission through and via the territory of the German Democratic Republic?

The declaration of the "cold war" with the Soviet Union had already been prepared in the Stuttgart September speech by the American Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Byrnes. In this speech, America clearly distanced itself from the Soviet Union and indicated its desire to move closer to bourgeois Germany. American President Truman openly announced the declaration of war when he proclaimed the thesis of the containment of Bolshevik expansion. This thesis was formulated as if it was a defensive measure, as if it was necessary to defend oneself against Soviet expansionist tendencies. In fact, it had been Russia's endeavour for decades to incorporate the entire Balkans into the Russian sphere of influence; since the Balkans lay outside the borders of the Russian Empire, it was in Russia's vital interest to keep the other great powers away from this area. England, however, had repeatedly attempted to gain a foothold in the Balkans, and even during the Second World War, Churchill wanted to launch the great offensive on the Atlantic coast instead of the Mediterranean.

the Balkan coast of Greece. Because of the great blood sacrifices the Soviet Union had made, it now felt entitled to realise the old Pan-Slavic ideal of uniting all Slavs - the Balkans were also populated by Slavs - in one great empire. If the Soviet Union wanted to take precautions to prevent the English, French or Americans from spreading into the Balkans in the future, this precaution was entirely legitimate.

America itself soon threw off the veil of defence that lay over the formulation of containment, openly proclaiming "rollback" as its new objective. The offensive character of American policy became bluntly apparent.

America developed a whole system of offensive measures against the Soviet Union. The encirclement of the Soviet Union by NATO and the American base policy were of a directly military nature. Of a moral-psychological nature was the expansion of countless stations grouped around the borders of the Soviet Union, from which the Soviet population was called upon to revolt. America organised Russian emigrant groups and encouraged them to exert subversive influences on their homeland. As a result, at times Dulles was almost allowed to announce the overthrow of the Bolshevik regime.

It was a veritable barrage of psychological, moral, diplomatic, propagandistic, political and military interventions with the help of which America wanted to bring about a revolution in the Soviet Union.

However, these "cold war" measures also affected the Soviet Union's allies, the People's Democracies and the German Democratic Republic. The change of government in Prague in 1948 and the Russian intervention in Hungary in 1956 were defence measures by the Soviet Union against American attempts to overthrow it.

Both Soviet policy and the policy of the Eastern Bloc states, as well as the policy of the German Democratic Republic in particular, were under constant pressure from America's continued offensive actions. In view of the uninterrupted "cold war", the Eastern states lived in a constant state of emergency; from day to day they had to face the insidious, subterranean, burrowing

They were never able to resist the aggression of American-inspired policies and never emerged from the state of war. They had no choice but to draw the domestic political consequences.

Orientation towards the East

Bismarck's policy was completely focussed on the European horizon, and only within this horizon could it achieve the successes it enjoyed. Germany, the land of the middle, rose to become a great power; but the continued existence of this great power presupposed that the European neighbours, by whom Germany was surrounded and who pressed on the German borders, kept themselves in check. These neighbours had to keep each other in check; they were never allowed to join forces to take joint action against the centre of Europe, against the great power Germany. German policy could not be simple; there was no clear recipe to which it could adhere that would always be effective under all circumstances. Bismarck played with five balls; when this game became too complicated for his successors and they simplified it as a result, Germany as a great power came to an end. However, Germany's great power policy was bound to one basic necessity. Frederick the Great had already pointed this out in his political testaments. Frederick's advice to his successors was that Prussia should always ensure good relations with Russia. Bismarck considered this advice so important that he also utilised it for his empire. Relations with St Petersburg could not be broken if Germany's position of power was not to be shaken. The Russian card could be played against England, France and Austria at any time if a closed ring around Germany had to be prevented. When the Russian card slipped out of German hands, when the Dual Alliance was formed and even the Triple Alliance came into being, the German situation had become hopeless. The ring around Germany had been forged, and in August 1914 the allies began to exert the pressure on Germany's borders to which the Great Power Germany would inevitably succumb.

The Weimar Republic was no longer merely placed on the European horizon like the Hohenzollern Empire. Completely new

Problems in world politics had arisen when America and Japan had emerged as great powers and Russia had constituted itself as a dynamic revolutionary power. Germany had been able to become a great power within the framework of the European horizon. The Weimar Republic, however, had to reckon with constellations of a completely different and new kind. Within the framework of the world horizon, it was no longer possible for the German Reich to be strong in isolation; it had to ally itself with a world power. Once again it was obvious to look to Russia.

Of course, this revolutionary Russia was still weak in the years after 1920. But it did not take much political foresight to recognise that this state was striving for the heights and that it harboured enough preconditions to actually be able to reach the heights. If the Weimar Republic approached this Russia, then it had linked the fate of Germany with an upward trend; hand in hand with Russia, the German Republic could look forward to a great future.

However, circumstances in the Weimar Republic prevented it from seizing its opportunities. It became apparent that the bourgeois man and the bourgeois order were to be Germany's undoing. For reasons of bourgeois self-preservation and bourgeois social anxiety, the Weimar Republic kept its distance from Russia and avoided an alliance with it. The entire German political and historical future was sacrificed in order to preserve the bourgeois order on German soil. Of course, this did not go entirely smoothly: the struggle for foreign policy orientation on German soil did not cease for a decade.

In the end, however, the decision was finally made in favour of a western orientation. Stresemann had prepared this decision in Locarno: it was then taken by Hitler.

How contrary to nature it was for Germany became frighteningly apparent in the fact that it also became completely pointless. National Socialist Germany threw down the gauntlet to Russia and adopted the anti-Russian, anti-Bolshevik position without at the same time securing the support of the West, which it had decided in favour of in principle. Even more, it brought about the improbable, for which, however, German policy between 1900 and 1914 had already provided a model, the

The aim was to unite the Western powers with their fundamental opponent Russia in one front. Anti-Bolshevik Germany was not only fighting against Russia, but also against its fundamental enemies England, France and America. This was the height of madness, revealing the mental aberration into which the German people had fallen. In the vortex of such madness, Germany was bound to perish inexorably. After 1945 it could not avoid the fate of being divided up by the two great world powers. All preconditions for an independent policy had vanished. West Germany drew the consequences of the Weimar Republic's bourgeois orientation towards the West. It threw itself unreservedly into the arms of the West; it wanted to place itself under American protection, it wanted to remain occupied by Western groups. It consciously renounced German patriotism and wanted to replace it with a "European patriotism". The impulses of a German policy were completely strangled; they no longer wanted a German policy.

The fundamental concern of German politics would have been, first and foremost, the reunification of Germany. German citizenship had also written off a unified Germany in its heart. The policy pursued by the Federal Republic of Germany in agreement with and in favour of the Western powers built one dam after another against German **reunification**. The West German bourgeoisie appeased its conscience by claiming that it wanted to renew the old Carolingian Empire, that it wanted to awaken the "Abendland", for which the territories east of the Elbe were only insignificant colonial land, to a new bloom.

In my earlier political endeavours and drafts I had always assumed that Germany would enter into friendly relations with Russia as an equal and equally weighted power. How completely different this has become since 1945! All the global political opportunities that Germany would have had on Russia's side had been squandered and wasted by Hitler. Germany was no longer an equal partner for Russia, and even the German Democratic Republic was, with the best will in the world, nothing more than a poor wretch living on the mercy of Russia.

But precisely by doing so, she was saved from the fate of falling prey to America. From the circle of the American

There was no longer any escape from this power, and in the security of prosperity that beckoned there, the will for a separate German existence died out. The population of the German Democratic Republic, on the other hand, was, as a result of its inner rejection of Russian alienation, immune to merging with the Eastern protecting power. Admittedly, it also seemed tempting for them to disappear into the spell of American power, like the West German population. However, without her realising it, her attitude to life and her values had been so moulded and shaped by the social and political institutions of the German Democratic Republic that she would have found the American way of life alien and inappropriate if she had suddenly been drawn into it. This was not the case, as she would have had to admit to herself what she was actually looking for. There were no longer any hardened bourgeois and peasant classes in the German Democratic Republic - they had long since migrated to West Germany, but the Americanised social order of the West was no home for the workers and petty bourgeoisie. It can easily be interpreted that a secret, previously hidden Prussian protest had stirred again in the hearts of these people.

It would have been the beginning of a long and difficult road - let's make no mistake - but a beginning, a hope.

The path alongside America, on the other hand, was a temporary relief, but it had no future; it led to a historical end for Germany.

All the more so since 1945, the West has been the fatal temptation for Germany to give up on itself; the East is the sacrificial test of self-assertion. The German West has already succumbed to the temptation. The anxious question arises as to whether the German East will pass its test. The many fugitives from the republic are citizens who have escaped the test; they were not up to it.

Training

The Russian people had lagged far behind Europe in terms of education; illiteracy was widespread; the number of those who could read and write was relatively small. It

is the great success of the Bolshevik Revolution in overcoming illiteracy; the whole nation was gripped by an unrivalled passion for education. The Bolshevik leaders even made a bold attempt to introduce world-class literary works to a population that had had no access to literature for centuries. The great Russian writers such as Pushkin, Gogol and Tolstoy were printed in huge editions and distributed among the people; but German, French and other foreign classics were also translated and published in popular editions.

The passion for education also spread to the field of social science. The only educational material for the people had previously been of a religious and ecclesiastical nature. The common people were familiarised with the Bible and the catechism; otherwise they had no access to the spiritual world. This religious and ecclesiastical educational material was now considered obsolete. It was supplanted by the socio-scientific material through which the ruling regime legitimised itself. Marx and Engels, Lenin and later Stalin took over the role previously played by Moses and the prophets, the evangelists and church fathers. They were popularised and were to fill the minds and hearts of the entire people.

Socio-scientific training courses were organised everywhere, in factories and offices, in communities, towns and villages. The fundamentals and basic teachings of Marxism-Leninism were presented, and training manuals, which resembled catechisms in their **form**, were handed out to course participants so that they could prepare for the lessons. Examinations were even introduced, for which the subject matter was divided into questions that made it easier to organise and memorise the material.

The Russian model was also to be imitated in the German Democratic Republic. However, there was a big difference between the population of the German Democratic Republic and the Russian people. Here there was no illiteracy to overcome, here even the simplest people had been given a certain **access** to the intellectual world in a richly organised school system. However, the population was educated in the bourgeoisie and imbued with bourgeois thinking. Thus, the introduction of the school system could be justified by the fact that it was also necessary to take steps here,

to familiarise people with Marxist-Leninist ideas.

Accordingly, social science training was also introduced in the companies and offices of the German Democratic Republic in 1950. Two hours a week, usually on Wednesdays, were set aside for this purpose. During this time, the offices were closed and work was suspended.

In addition to these courses, there were also higher-level teaching programmes. Evening schools developed on a municipal, district and centralised basis; evening universities were founded in the university towns. Officials or candidates for office were obliged to attend these courses. Only high-ranking functionaries were admitted to the evening university, middle-ranking functionaries were referred to the district training courses and lower-ranking functionaries to the district or municipal training courses. Examinations were also held at the end of these training courses; certificates were issued for successful completion.

Of course, all this training work suffered from one unfortunate circumstance. There was a lack of adequate teaching staff. Some employees were entrusted with leading the course. People who had attended party schools. Trade union officials and employees of consumer associations were initially brought in, but they were not enough either. Course participants were assigned in turn to give lessons. Newspaper articles were read out and were the starting point for often rather poor discussions. Finally, topics were set for each training day. But none of this could prevent the lessons from taking on a highly boring and amateurish character. The lack of teaching staff even made itself felt at the evening universities. High-ranking party functionaries gave lectures which, however, in no way corresponded to the level of the sometimes more sophisticatedly educated audience. In view of these circumstances, it was unavoidable that the most comical incidents often occurred. The cleaning ladies were also included in the training course at my institute. A teacher once raised the problem of the shortage of important raw materials within the German Democratic Republic. She asked one of the cleaning ladies in a harsh tone what important raw materials were needed.

the German Democratic Republic. The poor woman searched desperately for an answer to this unexpected question. Then an idea flashed through her mind. She answered proudly and confidently: "Coffee beans". The teacher hissed at her indignantly:

"Wolfram is what's missing."

This training programme was discontinued again in 1953. The loss of so many working hours, which resulted from the loss of two working hours a week throughout the German Democratic Republic, seemed to be gradually becoming unbearable.

The review

At the end of 1949, there was talk of the need to reorganise the party into a "new type of party". The "new type of party" was designed to make the party bureaucracy all-powerful and to curtail the democratic self-determination of its members. The party became the supreme authority; it was said that it knew everything and that blind obedience was owed to it. Of course, this party was then basically the Central Committee, the Politburo, the highest layer of party functionaries.

In 1950, a review of party members was ordered. The purpose of this review was to determine whether the party members had some knowledge of Lenin's and Stalin's writings and whether they could be expected to conform to the strict authoritarian spirit of Stalin's theory. In particular, it was to be investigated whether old members of the Communist Party did not belong to communist splinter groups against which there was a particular aversion.

The review began in February 1951 and special commissions were formed before which the party members had to appear. The review was to take place in a certain ceremonial manner. Pictures of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin were hung up and writings by these men lay on a table. At another table sat the members of the commission, who had the task of examining the consciences and putting the candidates through their paces.

A special commission had been formed for university professors, which included the wife of the State Secretary for the

Mrs Harig, a member of the university staff. Mrs Harig had been in the Soviet Union for a long time and had worked there as a teacher.

For me, it was a foregone conclusion that I would not submit to the corn mission. I found the very idea of being investigated in this way humiliating, and I looked with a certain disdain at those professors who took no offence at appearing before the commission. I was given an appointment. I replied in a detailed letter in which I stated that I had the impression that the party did not care much for me. I then listed the facts that had given me this impression, made complaints and said that it made no sense for me to submit to the examination.

A few days later, I received a brief message that the inspection could not be waived; I would be given a new date.

I replied that the situation had not changed; my decision not to appear still stood.

I was convinced that I would be struck off the party lists and waited to be informed of this fact. One day I got a phone call from a party member, Kar!Sauer. I had become acquainted with this Sauer during my work in the Wilmersdorf district office. He had been head of the art department there. During the Hitler Reich, he, a moderate painter, had emigrated to the Soviet Union. He had once slipped through the German battle lines and carried out some kind of mission in Munich. He had made his way back to the Soviet Union unharmed. He was certainly a good-natured but at the same time quite naive person. He was unconditionally devoted to the Soviets and his party. He was a man who carried out orders ruthlessly and without hesitation. To my surprise, I now learnt that Sauer was on the party's Central Committee and had an important function there. He told me that he had something important to talk to me about and that I should visit him in the next few days. He received me in his office room. He was accompanied by a secretary and a second secretary.

Sauer asked me whether I thought I had done the right thing in explaining my complaints and my reasons for not attending the review. He wanted to know whether I

I still read the writings of Lenin and Stalin. I replied that this was within the scope of my teaching duties. He enquired, almost shyly, whether I still felt like a socialist. I replied that I had given no reason to doubt this.

During this conversation, the secretary wrote on the notepad machine. Now, to my surprise, I learnt that the conversation I had just had with Sauer had been my review. As it turned out, Sauer was the head of the vetting department.

A few months later, I was given the new party document.

Dr Eugen Schiffes

I made the acquaintance of Dr Eugen **Schifter** at the initiative of my friend, the ministerial director Dr Gentz, around 1950.

Schiffer had been Reich Minister, Excellency, in the German Empire; during the Weimar Republic he was a leading figure in the Democratic Party and also served as a minister on several occasions. In the days of the Kapp Putsch, he remained in Berlin as the only minister of the Reich government and helped to liquidate the coup d'état. Although a Jew, he survived the Hitler regime. He apparently enjoyed some kind of higher protection that I am not aware of. After 1945, he took over the judiciary within the Soviet occupation zone; after the founding of the German Democratic Republic, he became Minister of Justice.

It was precisely his political past that recommended him to the Russians. However, when he took steps to defend the principles of the rule of law, he became uncomfortable and retired.

When I met him for the first time, he was approaching his 90th birthday. He was still in good physical condition. Mentally, he was almost marvellously fresh. His memory was unusual; as a causeur he still dazzled, as he might have done in the past. His sight was impaired, but his hearing was excellent. His skull sometimes twitched nervously. As I was well acquainted with the history of recent times, we had a platform from which we could approach each other in conversation. It seemed that he regarded me as a sympathetic listener as well as a fertile

I valued him as a dialogue partner. He took a lively interest in political events, and for the most part we were in broad agreement in our assessment of events. He was still a member of the Volkskammer. He was appointed chairman of the constitutional committee. I was his deputy. At the constituent committee meeting, he caused offence with his pro- grammatical remarks. He said that he wanted the committee to become a real guardian of the constitution; he announced that he would seriously investigate every constitutional complaint. The Socialist Unity Party was shocked and prevented the committee from meeting again. Schiffer was no longer a candidate in the next Volkskammer elections.

Despite his advanced age, he still wrote a short memoir book. In it, he proved himself to be an amusing chatterbox who once again presented his political past in an appealing way.

I visited him about every month. Sometimes he also came to see me accompanied by his daughter, who sacrificed herself touchingly for her elderly father. He was harshly critical of the political parties in the Federal Republic. He resented the fact that, under American influence, they were driving the German Democratic Republic more and more into the arms of the Soviet Union. His former party friends, however, did not forgive him for having worked for some time in the Soviet occupation zone and for having temporarily held the office of Minister of Justice. They cast doubt on his character, a doubt that he did not serve. He had such a vivid understanding of the unfortunate situation in which Germany found itself that he considered it necessary to resort to even the most unusual means to try to bring about the reunification of Germany. In time, he resigned himself and gave way to the fear that the division of Germany was final.

It was during one of my visits that I developed the plan for a "confederation" for the first time. In view of the fact that America was interested in the continued existence of the Federal Republic and the Soviet Union in the continued existence of the German Democratic Republic, one had to be extremely modest when considering German reunification. If this reunification were to take place by peaceful means, there should be no thought of the German Democratic Republic simply becoming a free country.

elections to the order of the Federal Republic of Germany. Even the establishment of a German federal state was more than could be expected for the time being. Only a very loose confederation of states would be achievable in the extreme. One had to think back to the Congress of Vienna, which had brought the "German Confederation" into being in 1815. Within the framework of the German Confederation, Prussia had orientated itself towards Russia, Hanover towards England, Bavaria and Württemberg towards France, and Austria-Hungary also towards England. The internal relations of the federal states had largely escaped the intervention of the central authority of the Bundestag. If the Federal Republic and the German Democratic Republic could be brought together within the framework of a confederation, then this would be a first step towards rekindling the idea of unity for the distant future. A closer growing together of the two entities could be hoped for and strived for.

Dr Schiffer thought about it for a long time, then agreed to the idea. We kept coming back to this plan during our subsequent meetings. In the end, Schiffer was completely won over.

When I later presented this concept to my friend Drexel, it immediately made sense to him. Initially, he believed that the atmosphere in the Federal Republic would not allow the idea to be published in his newspaper. At the turn of 1954/55, he thought the time had come to set it out in an essay.

When the Soviet Union and the German Democratic Republic came up with the concept of confederation in 1957, it was of course not because of Drexel's suggestion in the "Nürnberger Nachrichten". The idea of confederation was in the air, the political balance of power was in favour of it; the situation of the matter and the circumstances themselves made it an obvious choice.

In the summer of 1954, Schiffer fell into a state of weakness that he was no longer able to overcome. He did not actually fall ill. Slowly and gradually he faded away.

Before the funeral service - Schiffer was cremated - the representative of the Protestant Church to the government of the German Democratic Republic, Provost Grü-ber, approached me and said in a sorrowful tone: the wisest man of this time had passed away. He, the provost, had often sought out skippers when he was in need of advice.

The seagull

For several years, State President Wilhelm Pieck and Prime Minister Otto Grotewohl invited a number of writers, artists and scientists who were close to the SED to discussions in the "Möwe". The "Möwe" had been founded as a club pub around 1946; only artists were allowed in. At a time when food was in short supply, the "Möwe" provided them with sufficient and not too expensive food without a label. Coffee, cake and spirits were served at the events organised by Pieck and Grotewohl. Current problems were discussed. The assembled intellectuals were able to present their particular concerns, talk about their needs and ask for information. Pieck and Grotewohl emphasised the importance of appearing like equals among equals and establishing warm human contact with the guests. It was here that they first discussed the draft of the ordinance which was intended to establish the preferential promotion of the intelligentsia by law. Occasionally there were discussions about **art** issues. I myself once gave a report on the meeting in Imshausen.

On two occasions, however, it became apparent that intellectuals were not only given gifts, but that something was also demanded of them.

The first time it happened was during the period of the struggle that was launched against "formalism". The article had just been published in the

"Tägliche Rundschau", which was drawn with "Orlow", was actually written by a certain Magritz.

It was in the air that this essay would be debated in the "Möwe". More than 100 personalities may have attended, the entire intellectual prominence of East Berlin was present. As usual, Grotewohl was in charge of the discussion. Pieck was seated next to him. At first, trivial matters were discussed. The actress Helene Weigel, who was sitting next to me, asked me indignantly whether anyone had the courage to address the burning issue of the day. She didn't have to wait long. The chairman of the painting section of the Academy of Arts, Otto Nagel, had come from a meeting in which the artists had expressed their disappointment and bitterness about Magritz's essay. He had been commissioned to present the artists' concerns to President Pieck. He did so in a very

He spoke of the paralysing effects of the newspaper article, attacked the author of the article, doubted his understanding of art, refused to have painters like Theo Otto condemned, ironised the demand to paint only in bright, optimistic colours. The applause he received was unusual; it expressed an unequivocal protest against the art policy that wanted to prevail. Magritz himself took the floor without, of course, acknowledging his authorship of the article. In general, he repeated the content of the article that had caused the unrest. Helene Weigel declared that she would have to return to the style of the court theatre on the stage if, as had happened, Feuerbach was set up as a guideline for painting. Most of the speakers spoke lovingly in favour of the essay. Only a few opposed it. They pointed out that form was a manifestation of spirit. The fight against formalism could also be seen as a fight against the power of the mind. Chemist Professor Heinrich Franck emphasised that his father had been a leading impressionist. He could not accept without objection that Impressionism was being cancelled. Nagel announced that the artists would make a public **statement** against the "Tägliche Rundschau". President Pieck stood up and said emphatically, even threateningly, that this must not happen under any circumstances. If it did, the government would have to take effective measures against the public protesters.

He was understood and recognised the limits that were also imposed on the creative artist. The opposition fell silent. The public debate continued for some time; on the whole, however, only the opponents of formalism had their say. Not a single truly knowledgeable and superior defender of formalism appeared on the intellectual battlefield.

A second discussion of a similar nature developed in "The Seagull" after the first performance of Bertolt Brecht's opera "The Interrogation of Lucullus" with music by Paul Dessau. Strange events took place before this opera was performed. The inner spirit of the opera is thoroughly pacifist. The water is dug out of hero worship. War is condemned in the strongest terms. Lucullus cannot stand up before the court of the dead. The judgement is hurled at him:

"To nowhere with him."

The text was criticised by the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party. Did it not also leave the "Soviet Union's X'aterland war" open to condemnation? If hero worship was rejected in principle, had not all honours paid to the leaders of the Bolshevik Revolution also become questionable? A rehearsal performance was organised. Members of the Free German Youth, the People's Police and the trade unions, who had been instructed to express their outrage at the play, were invited. However, things turned out differently than expected. The audience was so deeply moved by the play that instead of whistling, they applauded enthusiastically. I had been invited to the dress rehearsal and found both the text and the music excellent. The public performance of the opera in this form was banned. In view of the reverence in which Bertolt Brecht and the composer Paul Dessau were held, this ban caused a great stir. The ruling men of the German Democratic Republic were embarrassed. A council of ministers convened; Brecht, Dessau and various artists were invited to attend. After lengthy discussions, Brecht agreed to make some changes. As I discovered at a later performance, these consisted of making a distinction between a war of aggression and a war of defence. Lucullus was thrown into the void because he had waged wars of aggression; the court of the dead honoured a despotic king by raising him from his seat because he had stood his **ground** in a defensive war against Lucullus. The corrections Brecht made detracted from the value of his work.

When the case was to be discussed in the "Möwe", there was, of course, no in-depth discussion. Even now, Professor Franck had spoken up and provocatively announced that he had enjoyed the opera. Most of the other guests agreed. For this very reason, Pieck cut off all further statements. He announced the outcome of the discussions in the Council of Ministers. Brecht had promised a change. The best thing to do now was to remain silent and wait and see. He warned brusquely against breaking the silence about the handling of the matter in the "Möwe": the events in the "Möwe" had been cancelled.

"Möwe" would otherwise be discontinued.

There was nothing left to do but comply. But there was no two

tion that most of those present were in favour of the original version of "Lucullus".

This was the last meeting in the "Möwe" that I attended.

PEN Centre

The German PEN Centre originally included East German writers as well as West German writers; notable among the latter were Bertolt Brecht, Arnold Zweig, Anna Seghers, Friedrich Wolf and Johannes R. Becher. Ever since Germany had broken into two parts, there were West German writers who found it embarrassing to have to work together with their East German colleagues in one organisation. They would have preferred to exclude the East German writers, claiming that they would necessarily have to violate the basic provisions of the PEN Club's charter in the German Democratic Republic.

At a PEN conference in Düsseldorf, the East German writers were present in greater numbers than the West German writers; as a result, they were able to push through a resolution that caused offence among the West German writers. It gave them an opportunity to split up the German PEN Club. Based on this majority decision, the East German writers felt empowered to constitute themselves as the "PEN Centre of Germany". They were all the more self-confident when a number of West German writers, such as Günther Weisenborn and Hans Henny Jahn, joined their group. One of the first measures taken by the PEN Centre Germany was to admit writers from East and West Germany with similar views. I was one of these new members.

The West German group, which had only become a minority in Düsseldorf because that event had been poorly attended by its members, was not satisfied with the new situation. They rebelled at the Executive Committee of the International PEN Club in London and insisted that, contrary to the statutes, two PEN centres be permitted in Germany, one for West Germany, the other for East Germany. A PEN Club meeting in London decided in favour of this. The German PEN group, which was reorganised after the Düsseldorf conference under

The PEN Centre of the East had to change its name; furthermore, it was no longer allowed to call itself the PEN Centre Germany, but had to adopt the name PEN Centre East and West. No relations were cultivated between the two groups; they faced each other as hostile brothers. In May 1953 - it was still before the PEN conference in London

- a general assembly of the "PEN Centre of Germany" was held in Berlin. Originally it was to be convened in Munich. President Johannes Tralow had contacted Bonn and received assurances that members from the German Democratic Republic would not face any difficulties. This assurance was ignored by the Social Democratic Bavarian Minister President Hoegner. He did not ban the general assembly; the police state was not yet sufficiently developed to be allowed to override all basic rights and constitutionally guaranteed freedoms in this way. But the Bavarian Minister of the Interior stipulated that the General Assembly had to be held without the guests from the GDR. As more than half of the members came from the German Democratic Republic, this effectively meant that the General Assembly could not take place.

Just over 20 members may have attended the general meeting, which had been moved to West Berlin. After the chairman's report, the question of a possible reunification with the West PEN Club was discussed. All of the speakers in the debate declared themselves in favour of holding on to the unity of German literature and doing everything possible to overcome its fragmentation. The very existence of two PEN centres in Germany, it was stated, would contradict the PEN Charter. One PEN Centre in Germany was fine, a PEN Centre in the Federal Republic of Germany was the expression of a politicisation that was fundamentally rejected by the PEN Charter. The discussion turned to personal matters; it was pointed out that there were men in the western group of PEN who hated everything eastern.

The matter was all the worse because this western group was officially financed, as it was rumoured. This dependence on the federal government also contradicted the PEN statutes.

The question was raised during the debate,

why Weisenborn no longer belonged to the PEN Centre Germany. It was stated that he had never resigned, but was only passive because Becher was president. It was also reported with regard to other West German personalities that Becher was a bone of contention for them. Becher explained that the West could not dictate by whom the East wanted to be represented. However, he intended not to stand for re-election.

In the election, Bertolt Brecht became president instead of Becher. The opinion was expressed that the attacks of both Western and international PEN had to fall silent before Brecht; in any case, no PEN member in West Germany could compete with Brecht in importance.

At the next general assembly of the PEN Centre Germany, which had now been renamed the PEN Centre East and West, in March 1954, a resolution was passed condemning all breaches of contract committed against writers. Governments and parliaments that favoured such breaches of contract were also accused of inhumanity.

Brecht objected to this wording. He became very agitated as he spoke, even banging his hands on the table. He said that we should remember how almost the entire German people had been Nazi in 1945. A Nazi majority could come about again. We must not submit to it; on the contrary, we must suppress it by force. He certainly approved of violent measures against Nazi-coloured literature.

It was a statement which, in my opinion, would certainly have done Brecht a lot of harm if it had become known in wider circles. The text of the resolution was amended so that it could not be played off against the practices of the German Democratic Republic.

Professor Theodor Brugsch

An important representative of the intelligentsia, who gave the system great prestige through his personality without at the same time surrendering himself to it for better or worse, was

the great physician Theodor Brugsch. His medical books were widely distributed and his medical journal was highly regarded. A characteristic head sat atop his tall figure; his profile was "Hohenzollern". It was reminiscent of that of Frederick the Great. His father, Brugsch Pasha, was a famous agyptologist. He had familiarised his son with the air of the great world. Brugsch was a man of many talents. He was fascinated by literary, philosophical and aesthetic interests; despite his intensive professional work, he still found the time to immerse himself in curiosities. In his behaviour, he was a sovereign grand seigneur and at the same time a fascinating causeur.

The Hitler regime had set him back. It was a reproach to him that his marriage was not completely unchallengeable before the racial laws. So after 1945, when he was made a big offer, he immediately allowed himself to be found. He reorganised the university system in Berlin and was a very knowledgeable assistant to the Minister of National Education, Wandel. He became deputy chairman of the Kulturbund alongside Becher. When the Club of Creative Artists was founded, Brugsch became its head. Wherever it was necessary to represent the cultural life of the German Democratic Republic in a worthy and impressive manner, Brugsch was called upon, and he never failed. He was given a leading role in the National Front and was also a member of the People's Chamber. It was natural that he was awarded all honours and prizes over the years.

I received medical treatment from him for several years. He was always kindly available when I asked him to look after me. In personal dialogue, he was thoroughly critical of the system; he was not blind to its shortcomings and did not shy away from harsh words. He unreservedly condemned the fight against formalism, objectivism and cosmopolitanism. In public, however, he made no mention of his reservations. There he showed solidarity with the system without reservation. Internally and in private, he retained his freedom of thought; he was broad-minded enough to take public responsibility for conditions that went against his inner taste and better judgement. He was a gentleman of over seventy years of age who could not be expected to appear as a fighter and play the role of martyr.

to play. He ceded some of the glamour of his personality to the system and was satisfied to be given the opportunity to lead a grand and prestigious existence.

First Cultural Congress

The German Cultural Congress, which took place in Leipzig in May 1951, was attended by around 1200 guests. Over 200 participants arrived from West Germany. Only a few West German visitors had received the necessary identity papers from the West German authorities; the majority crossed the border "in the black" - often under adventurous circumstances. People in the German West still felt connected to the German East; this participation rate showed that West Germans were still drawn to the East. West German authorities considered it necessary to take measures to stop this migration to the East. West German writers appeared, even though they felt under no little moral pressure in the Federal Republic. They read in their local newspapers that all "travellers to the East" were to be regarded as Bolshevik agents, that their names - it was threatened - would be remembered.

Careful preparations had been made in Leipzig to welcome and accommodate the guests.

Of course, the congress management was not spared one disappointment. The most prominent writers from West Germany had all stayed away. There were letters of apology in which invited writers stated that they would not be able to publish another line in a West German newspaper or magazine, that they would be condemned to starvation if they dared to travel to Leipzig. Publishers feared for the sales of their books, artists for the fate of their works. There was no lack of sarcasm from these terrorised people about West German "freedom". The declarations of sympathy received from those who had stayed away were, of course, only a weak substitute for the cancelled personal presence.

The congress, which was opened by the writer Bodo Uhse, **began** with a speech by Johannes R. Becher. At the centre of Becher's speech was the call for an all-German dialogue, which should include the restoration of the German

unity and the securing of peace. The condemnatory judgement by which Becher rejected the works of Kafka and Graham Greene was heard with some unease. Becher's speech came across as dull; it was also a disadvantage that it was read out in an abundantly preceptorial manner.

Arnold Zweig spoke first in the discussion. Unfortunately, he disappointed. One loved the lively, witty aperçus with which he usually knew how to make his remarks delicate. Now he outlined the nature of the soldier type, too didactically, although undoubtedly thoughtfully; he spoke as a politician, for which he had no talent - not as an artist. Bertolt Brecht, who was admittedly without the gift of speech, read out a beautiful essay on the threat posed by the war to the theatre and the art of the stage.

An actual discussion did not materialise as the event progressed. The speakers entered the lectern with carefully prepared manuscripts. We know that a speech should not be a script. The spark was missing, the unifying atmosphere was missing. The monologue prevented the development of moments of tension.

The second day was more lively. A number of guests from the West expressed critical reservations; they declared that they did not want to be tied down to a particular world view, dialectical materialism. They were replied that worldview differences had little meaning in view of the great concerns of peacekeeping and the reunification of Germany.

The discussions in the individual congress commissions became more intimate. The Literature Commission criticised the low esteem in which Johannes R. Becher held Franz Kafka.

The composer Hanns Eisler gave an important presentation to the Music Commission. It was remarkable that he explicitly stated that the working class could not judge the quality of a composition after a first hearing; their ears had to be trained gradually.

The Theatre Commission took a critical look at the "Lukuß", which had also made waves in the West German press. Bertolt Brecht gave a detailed answer. The government of the German Democratic Republic had spent 400,000 marks on the performance of "Lukullus". The general

my criticism, which had centred around "LukuIIus", was to be welcomed. He had learnt a lot from it. Where is there a country where the cabinet debates with a playwright in a long session? He had not changed anything, he had only added to it in order to prevent any misinterpretation of his work. Soon "LukuIIus" would be performed again. He and his colleagues, he emphasised, received the strongest support from the government.

Sharp critical debates were fought out in the "Fine Arts" commission. West German artists raised objections to the art creations of the German Democratic Republic and criticised the fight against formalism in many ways.

All of the commissions decided to found pan-German journals in their specialist fields; the determination with which this intention was realised was a fine testimony to the pan-German will that was still alive at that time.

An expression of this all-German will was also the decision to cultivate west-eastern co-operation through a coordination committee and to bring about an all-German cultural congress in the Federal Republic. Telegrams were sent to the governments in Berlin and Bonn asking them to support the plan for a second congress.

However, this second all-German cultural congress did not materialise; the government of the Federal Republic of Germany drove it out.

Looking back on the course of the cultural congress, it must be said that no real dialogue developed. There was a friendly atmosphere, as people behaved considerately and politely towards each other. There was good accommodation and plenty to eat, which always creates a warm atmosphere. On the first day, people were almost longing for a little scandal, and some were already considering how to organise one. The scandal didn't materialise, but everyone was happy about a few small grumbles that harmlessly disturbed the deadly unanimity.

However, the main defect of the congress could hardly be concealed. No authoritative West German intelligentsia had **come**; no prominent person had stood behind the "Iron Curtain".

hang". This meant that the conditions for discussion in the West were lacking. The East only spoke with a "dummy" of the West - not much could come of it. The dummy sounded hollow and flat. The good will of the organisers of the conference was commendable.

Bertolt Brecht

In November 1919, a slight and delicate man wearing the uniform of a medical orderly sat on the Augsburg Workers' and Soldiers' Council. He did not take part in the negotiations of the Workers' and Soldiers' Council, but he showed great interest in the events of those days. Soon afterwards, this young man caused a sensation with a dramatic poem which was performed at the Augsburg City Theatre and was a great success. This success was strange enough for the bourgeois city. The young man's name was Bertolt Brecht and his poem "Drums in the Night".

Around 1924, I sometimes organised cultural events for the trade union youth in Berlin. At lecture evenings, the actor Alfred Baierle quoted Brecht's tantalising poems with great passion and dedication. The youth enthusiastically took up "Das Lied vom toten Soldaten" or pieces from "Baal". The revolutionary verve of these verses, their pro- vocant cynicism, moved these young people. Something of the mood that Brecht had expressed was alive in them.

It may have been in 1925 when my friend Ernst Toller took me to an orgiastic publishing party organised by the enterprising publisher Gustav Kiepenheuer in Potsdam. I met Bertolt Brecht again at this publishing party. He enjoyed the pleasures that Kiepenheuer had to offer and proved to be a tireless dancer. Brecht was regarded as a revolutionary firebrand. The feeling was alive that he was a very special man and that we could expect great things from him.

Shortly afterwards, he captivated the public with his "Three Penny Opera". There was no place for this man in the Third Reich. As an émigré, he lived in Denmark, the Soviet Union and finally in America. When he returned to Germany in 1947, he opted for the eastern zone and moved to Berlin.

which he noticeably distanced himself from his new homeland. During the Hitler era, he too had naturally been expatriated. Now he did not reapply for German citizenship; he had himself naturalised in Austria. As his wife, Helene Weigel, an outstanding actress, was Austrian by birth, she managed to obtain her husband's naturalisation in the Danube state through her connections, especially in Salzburg. It was also remarkable that Brecht did not join the Socialist Unity Party. Through numerous rallies he left no doubt that he was close to it, but he always avoided identifying with it.

The German Democratic Republic was aware of how much it had gained from Bertolt Brecht. He enjoyed many privileges. He was given his own theatre, the Berliner Ensemble, and it was financed. Every wish he expressed was granted.

Nevertheless, he was not spared many difficulties. The SED had committed itself to an art programme; "socialist realism" was to be cultivated, through which the worker was to be placed at the centre as a hero and proletarian values were to shine in the brightest light with three-star partisanship. Art was to place itself entirely at the service of the party. The artists were to pay for the honours and income that were generously bestowed upon them by proving themselves as hallelujah singers. Bertolt Brecht was not suited to this role. He was not a party man and refused to be spiritually raped. From the very beginning, he had chosen his place in the age-old struggle between the poor and the rich; he wanted to be, and was, an advocate for the cause of the poor, the oppressed, the "humiliated and insulted". He exercised unrelenting judgement on the rich, the full, the oppressors and extortionists. He tore apart the splendour in which they loved to present themselves with his cynicism without any mercy:

"For some are in the dark and others
are in the light.
And you see those in the light,
you don't see those in the dark."

Brecht fought his battle on the side of the poor without allowing himself to be forced into a party mould; for him it was a matter of pure, deep humanity. Brecht's poems revealed that they did not belong to committed art. They let,

The formalist art, however, was anathema to the judgement of the functionaries, who lacked partisanship.

As a result, for several years Brecht's plays were not performed at all in the German Democratic Republic, even though Brecht was the director of a theatre. An open conflict seemed to be on the horizon when the State Opera was preparing to close the to perform "The Interrogation of Lucullus". As I have already mentioned, Brecht finally came to a compromise.

In 1950, Brecht was in the Baltic seaside resort of Ahrenshoop when I was also there. I paid him a visit with my friend Drexel. In the course of the conversation, Brecht emphasised emphatically how much he agreed with the government and how he had no intention of standing by the opponents, the rioters and decomposers. We also talked about the Bavarian Soviet Republic. I was surprised by Brecht's assessment of this event. The Bavarian Soviet Republic, he said, was one of the most important historical events of the century. It heralded a great revolution that was necessary for Germany. He refused to trivialise the Soviet Republic and wanted to emphasise its historical significance.

Bertolt Brecht had been elected president of the PEN Centre East and West. I often met him at events organised by this centre. Each time he expressed his political thoughts with unambiguous precision; he scrupulously avoided any blurring or blurriness.

Bertolt Brecht had decided on a peculiar haircut; he also insisted on a very characteristic simplicity in his clothing. Brecht's outward appearance was also intended to show at first glance that he was a striking figure. He lived as a genius according to his own law. As long as he was still active, West Germany was eager to evade the power of his genius. After his untimely death, however, this genius inexorably spread to the West. The uneducated simplicity of Foreign Minister von Brentano, who had dared to mention the name Brecht in the same breath as Horst Wesel, soon shamed the whole of West Germany. But even beyond the borders of West Germany, the spirit of the dead man celebrated triumphs in England, in France, in the entire cultural world.

Semyonov

On some festive occasion, I became personally acquainted with Semyonov, who at that time held the position of advisor to General Chuikov, the commander-in-chief of the Soviet armed forces in the German Democratic Republic. The conversation was limited to a few conventional words.

In January 1951, I was invited to a reception with President Pieck. The rooms in the Niederschönhauser Schlößchen, where Pieck resided, were limited; they could barely accommodate the number of people present. The guests stood closely packed together in groups; it took some effort to change places. Then my attention was drawn to the fact that a group had formed next to me, including Semyonov and General Chuikov. Semyonov recognised me and approached me. Shortly before, the Grotewohl government had again sent a request for joint negotiations to the Bonn government. Semyonov asked me what I thought about the prospects of this political step. I shrugged my shoulders doubtfully, which prompted Semyonov to remark that I didn't seem to believe it would be successful. That was certainly true, I thought. He asked me why I was so sceptical. Without imposing any further restraint on myself, I said that people within the German Democratic Republic were making a completely wrong judgement of the situation in the Federal Republic. Semyonov wanted to know how I could justify this. Within the population of the Federal Republic, I said, there was undoubtedly an aversion to war and a strong desire to maintain peace. The population of the Federal Republic would also like to see German unity restored as soon as possible. But this in no way meant that the West German population sympathised with the GDR government. This population was private-capitalist and bourgeois-minded; the socialist basic structure of the GDR contradicted their interests and worried them. She viewed all attempts at rapprochement with which the GDR approached her with suspicion; she feared that the GDR system would be imposed on her.

In the meantime, General Chuikov had become aware of our conversation, turned away from his group and approached us

both. Semyonov objected that much **more favourable reports** about the Federal Republic of Germany.

Yes, I remarked, there was a cancer here. Representatives of the German Democratic Republic travelled to West Germany who were not at all suited to their mission. They repelled the West German population much more by professing their world view and by their whitewashing of conditions in the German Democratic Republic than by gaining supporters for them. I had often experienced how West German acquaintances, whom I had brought to a positive assessment of the German Democratic Republic, were later made suspicious and then dissuaded by propaganda agents. Every now and then these emissaries would come across a person who would willingly listen to them and agree with them for the moment. Then it is immediately reported that they have had great success and have made inroads into the West German population. This gives a completely false picture. If the government of the German Democratic Republic were to base its actions on false images of this kind, then it would necessarily be misguided. The West German population was accustomed to the ideas of the rule of law and individual freedom; it believed that these ideas were not shared in the GDR, and it took this view against the German Democratic Republic.

Semyonov did not seem pleased by my remarks. He was silent for a short time, then said that he had the impression that I was looking too black after all, and said goodbye with a number of unambiguous words.

Semyonov was certainly an educated and diplomatically skilful man. He spoke good German, was reserved and obviously put every word on the scales.

Discitrsion

The discussion by no means presupposes a common fundamental platform, as is sometimes claimed. Its climate is tolerance in intellectual terms, a mutual willingness to understand and respond to the other. Opponents whose different points of view are completely irreconcilable can, if they are capable of toleration, enter into the most interesting debates.

tensions: It is precisely in their situation that it is possible for the spirit to sparkle and sparks to fly. Only where fanaticism has a hand in it does the discussion stop. You can see that discussion only thrives in the liberal air. In the liberal countries of England and France, minds whose positions were far removed from each other were capable of entrancing, often grandiose discussion. In Germany, the discussion was less heated; here one often encountered an intolerance that did not want to grasp, but rather to condemn.

It was only in the years between 1918 and 1930 that the discussion also blossomed on German soil. This period encompassed the freest years that ever existed on German soil in an intellectual sense. To the extent that the National Socialists rose to power, the discussion was first restricted and then violently stifled. No opponent was allowed to speak in the National Socialist meetings; he had to fear for his health, even for his life, if he dared to speak out of turn. An unparalleled terror of opinion was rampant; to have a particular opinion was already a crime.

After the collapse of 1945, it seemed for a moment as if discussion could once again be given free rein in Germany. It was hoped that a man with his own views would no longer have to fear being heretised and discredited. People in the Soviet occupation zone also believed they could indulge in such expectations.

The Kulturbund zur demokratischen Erneuerung Deutschlands (Cultural Association for the Democratic Renewal of Germany) was set up precisely to bring together the most diverse intellectual currents and give them a forum in which they could measure themselves against each other. The only prerequisite was a progressive attitude; only the National Socialist mindset was to be excluded. The Kulturbund did indeed initially fulfil such a function. The later West German Federal President Heuss had his say in the Kulturbund. The bourgeois parties should also not have the feeling that they were being raped. All problems were discussed jointly by the parties in the block. Strict attention was paid to ensuring that no party felt outvoted; a free consensus was sought. It was in this spirit and with this attitude that the constitution of the German Democratic Republic was finally discussed and adopted.

Gradually, however, the situation changed - almost imperceptibly. It began with the fact that it became a concern of the chairmen of both the Kulturbund and the Block to placate or deceive the presumed opponents of any cause or proposal. How do I make it palatable for the opponents? - These chairmen, all of whom were members of the SED, asked themselves this question in many cases. Opposition should not be silenced, but it should only be allowed to move within very narrow limits. never be of a fundamental nature and should only be expressed very mildly. The longer it went on, the more pronounced the endeavours to cut off the air to dissenting views came to light.

"Incorrigible opposition elles" drew the consequences; they left the bourgeois party offices or resigned from the Kul- turbund. In the end, there was no longer any real discussion. In the People's Chamber, such a discussion never took place. It was immediately clear from the introductory words of the party leaders or the authoritative rapporteurs which plan was to be realised, which view was to be brought to power. One had the uncomfortable feeling that it was not altogether safe to disagree here. Under such circumstances, some were comfortable with unconditional agreement, others became accustomed to silence, and others left the meetings before the vote. The discussion faded away completely, the unanimous opinion was always that which had been put forward from the board table. If an unforeseen objection arose, everyone was not only surprised, but often horrified, because they foresaw that the opponent would be taken for a ride and one day be finished off. The term "criticism and self-criticism" came up. However, "criticism" was only ever criticism that was desired and authorised from above. Any real discussion would inevitably have had to immediately cast doubt on the foundations of the entire system and challenge them. With the disappearance of the liberal spirit, discussion had also died out.

Looking back, I can say that I felt uncomfortable in all the committees I was on. I had the feeling that I was breathing in an atmosphere that wasn't appropriate for me, that constricted me. One came up against unwritten laws that everyone tacitly observed, one lived under the pressure of encountering a fable convenue that one could not touch.

were allowed, one saw oneself surrounded by taboos that one had to honour and uphold. If you took the floor, you were immediately subject to the constraint of having to follow prescribed paths, use well-trodden tracks, pay homage to naturalised values and take a stand in line with the "authoritative authorities". If you criticised something, you were only allowed to do so in passing. You had to show a guilty conscience and a willingness to be proven wrong in good faith.

One was never allowed to stick to the language of the facts. The colouring alone, in which the facts had been placed by the highest authorities, was important and decisive. The critic had to see them in the same light. Inconvenient facts had to be faced with silence; they simply had to be ignored and, above all, passed over in silence. Fictitious facts that had been proclaimed as meaningful had to be recognised; all in all, one moved in a world of fictions and shadows and was banished from the world of facts, of realities.

Darkly, I sensed that if I took the floor, I would evoke a catastrophe. With just a few sentences I would shatter the entire foundations and assumptions of the discussion. It would come to light that I did not share the sanctioned basic attitudes, that I put aside the fictions, that I cultivated a completely different set of values, that I did not belong in the circle of this "sworn community". If I took part in the discussion under such circumstances, every word I said would inevitably be a blow. Without me intending it, my contribution would be a declaration of war, a declaration of war.

Since I was not interested in opening a state of war, I preferred silence. Of course, I could not prevent this silence from being correctly understood: it was an eloquent silence. It was clear to everyone that I was distancing myself with this silence.

I practised such silence not only in the Presidential Council of the Cultural Council, in the Presidium of the National Front, in the People's Chamber, in numerous meetings. The pressure of the obligation to conform was also on the faculty meetings.

Bavaria trip

In the summer of 1951, my friend Drexel invited me and my family to Bavaria. We stayed in Nuremberg for a week. From there, I went on an excursion to Swabia together with Drexel. We travelled via Ulm to Wilflingen, a remote village in Hohenzollern. Ernst Jünger had retreated there, as if he wanted to practise the recipe he had prescribed for himself in his book "Waldgang". Wilflingen was the home of Count Stauffenberg, a close relative of the man who had carried out the assassination attempt on Hitler. Directly opposite the manor house was the old head forester's house. Jünger, favoured by Stauffenberg, had taken up residence there.

Dr Armin Mohler did some secretarial work for Jünger as a devoted admirer. Mohler, a Swiss citizen, had joined Ernst Jünger and - when he was editor of the Heliopolis publishing house - had placed Ernst Jünger's novel "Heliopolis" there.

*In the meantime, Count Stauffenberg had entrusted him with administrative duties in Wilflingen. to provide Ernst Jünger with an intellectual assistant. As thoroughly as Mohler had studied German nationalism, he had found it difficult to immerse himself in its peculiar spirit. In a booklet: "Die konservative Revolution in Deutschland 1918- 1932" he had categorised me as a revolutionary conservative; this was the only way he could explain the friendship between Jünger and me. He believed he recognised the basis of this friendship in conservatism.

First we went to the anteroom of Jünger's study on the first floor. Jünger's aristocratism, his turning away from political reality, must have felt far removed from my political situation. I had to try to teach him to understand much of what he viewed and judged entirely through the eyes of the West.

In his seclusion, Jünger was stuck in some strange ways of looking at things. Occultist, even astrological tendencies emerged in him; he also believed that the Federal Republic had the possibility of rising again as a force of its own as soon as it had weapons at its disposal. He didn't judge the extent and consequences of the German defeat of 1945 as heavily as I did.

We continued the conversation with his family over a small snack on the lower floor. Here Mrs Greta, her husband's excellent housewife and carer, became quite aggressive politically. She raised the issue of prisoners of war and pointed out the legal uncertainty of the German Democratic Republic. When I tried to set the record straight objectively, Jünger would always confirm my response by saying: "That's right. " Gradually, the ice melted and relations warmed up. After about an hour, we set off and drove through the evening forests of the Swabian Alb to Reutlingen. The next day we returned to Nuremberg via Stuttgart. Drexel had rented rooms in Seebruck on Lake Chiemsee, where we planned to spend 14 days together. From Seebruck, we took our car on excursions into the mountains. Once we chose Berchtesgaden as our destination. It was flooded by Americans. We didn't go on the trip to Königssee because we expected to be checked by American guards there. Instead, we went to Obersalzberg. The monstrous control events that Hitler had once organised there had been destroyed. The walls of the SS barracks, the huge guest house, his villa and the homes of Göring and Bormann were still standing. One had the impression of being in the middle of a fortified robbers' nest; like burnt-out robber castles, the remains of these houses looked out over the Salzburg countryside. Immediately in front of the entrance to Hitler's living room lay a large cow patty; cows spread out in the vestibule of the I-au- ses, where Hitler had once received his guests. The entire splendour of the Third Reich had been destroyed, just as the German Reich itself had sunk into ruins. I had always found the fate of the Reich Chancellery in Berlin symptomatic: Bismarck's former official residence, the small, low palace in Wilhelmstrasse, had been swept away. Swept away was Brüning's annex, the Reich Chancellery of the Weimar Republic. Only a pile of rubble remained where Hitler's magnificent palace had stood. That was how thoroughly Hitler had cleaned up the Bismarck Reich, the Weimar Republic and the Third Reich.

The field of ruins on the Ober- salzberg seemed to me to be similarly symbolic. This "leader of the German people" really did a great job, his work was total annihilation.

On the way back to Chiemsee, we touched the former concentration camp where the poor people who had to haul stones up the steep Obersalzberg and build the buildings had been crammed.

Joseph Drexel

My friend Joseph Drexel is a man of many gifts. After surviving the First World War as an air force officer, he studied economics with Max Weber. Initially, however, he believed that he was not born to be an economist. He discovered the writer in himself, and there are indeed works of his that testify to the fact that he was a true poet. Literature meant more to him than his science. For some time he gave in to the inclination to live the life of a "free spirit"; he appeared in a Munich cabaret not without success as an emcee. In fact, he also had a strong talent for acting.

In the course of his life, however, he proved to be a prudent, skilful and clever businessman. Before **1933**, he was in-house counsel for various industrial companies and finally an authorised signatory of a large insurance company.

I've already told you how I came into contact with him. * In 1926 he had approached my resistance group. In this group lived the feeling for the political lawfulness of German existence: it was imbued with the realisation of how much the German people was always threatened by the danger of going astray. The great seducer had already appeared on the scene in the form of Adolf Hitler.

In **1933**, despite all warnings, the German people surrendered to their corrupter Hitler.

Drexel faced difficult years of testing. He firmly and steadfastly withstood the pressure exerted by the Third Reich on all those who found its atrocities abhorrent. What's more, he was one of the small number of daring individuals who, from the very first day of the Third Reich's foundation, sought to prepare for its overthrow. The inhumanities of the Third Reich filled him with passionate indignation; with them

* Cf. E. Niekisch, op. cit. p. 59 (385).

He did not resign himself to this, for him there was only an irreconcilable struggle against its perpetrators. Of course, he was aware that the fight against the Third Reich could only be a tough battle that would have to last for many years. He did not avoid it, he bravely took it on, no matter how hopeless it seemed. Drexel was one of those rare people who did not for a moment compromise with the Hitler Reich, who did not adapt, who never blurred the dividing line they had drawn against National Socialism.

He came to the attention of the Gestapo and was arrested on 22 March 1937 along with many of his political friends. In prison he was subjected to terrible maltreatment which, however, did not break his courage. In January 1939, he stood before the People's Court together with me and was sentenced to four years in prison for preparation for high treason. He served his sentence in Amberg. After his release from prison, he was immediately taken back into Gestapo custody and then expelled from Bavaria. He initially lived with friends in Innsbruck until he was expelled from there as well. He finally took up residence in Stuttgart, where he lived under difficult police conditions until his second arrest.

After 20 July 1944, he was arrested again and taken to the Mauthausen concentration camp near Linz. His identity papers bore the note: "R. u." - Return undesirable. The note labelled him as a death candidate. His cell was right next to the crematorium where the bodies of the murdered were burned. He was physically beaten in the most gruesome way; the aim was to slowly ruin him.

Friends managed to establish an influential connection and make it work for the endangered man. He was transferred from Mauthausen to the Flossenbürg concentration camp and unexpectedly released to Nuremberg in January 1945.

After the collapse, publicists with a clean past were a rarity. He was granted a licence to found a new daily newspaper in Nuremberg. Now the right man was in the right place. The journalist had been trained in those days when he was a contributor to my monthly magazine "Widerstand"; his essays forbade a light pen at the time and possessed that effervescence that tends to betray a man of spirit.

With superior economic prudence, he managed the publishing business, which caused countless difficulties in those days. C'ewiß initially enjoyed a monopoly position with his newspaper, but it was to his credit that he made far-sighted use of the opportunity that had fallen into his lap. After a few years, his company stood on its own two feet.

Alongside the successful businessman stood the successful publisher and publicist. In his essays, which he wrote for his and other newspapers, he rose to the level of great cosmopolitan and worldly journalism in his best achievements. His newspaper became one of the most respected daily papers in southern Germany; its political stance stood out due to its independent judgement and lack of influence.

This is how Drexel came to realise the position that opened up to him in 1945

and which he developed extensively with skill and inventiveness, became an opportunity to richly develop the gifts of his nature that had been bestowed upon him. In his responsible business endeavours, however, the artistic element of his nature did not atrophy. His love of literature remained alive and, above all, his appreciation of the fine arts developed. His publishing house and, above all, his enchanting residence in Stauf became a collection centre for valuable works of contemporary art.

A cheerful, creative humanity seems to live out in this man in an uninhibited and original way. He developed a captivating gift for drawing other people under the spell of cheerful conviviality. But it cannot be overlooked that this cheerfulness arises from a deep melancholy. This melancholy is not just an echo of the terrible suffering inflicted on him by the Third Reich; it points to a secret inadequacy hidden in the ultimate reasons for his **existence**.

The rich forces of this nature are dominated by the longing for artistic condensation in a round and complete work; only in such a work would they have seen their true destiny. Since he always carries an unsatisfied longing in his heart, he is never at the end, he is never at his goal, he is never saturated. From this never-ending longing flows an unbroken vigour, an inexhaustible courage, often a true boldness for ever new beginnings.

But by pouring these secret powers of his inner self into social communications and 'wasting themselves there, flashing and sparkling, they spread an atmosphere of joyful amusement, which communicates itself to the environment and in the end is a salutary consolation for himself.

This far-sighted open-mindedness for spiritual and artistic **values**, this willingness to help people in need, this gift of humour, this reliable seriousness, indeed this pedantry in the execution of his business and the things he has decided to do, this prudence and foresight with which he approaches everything he is responsible for, this sensitivity with which everything human touches him: All this makes Joseph Drexel a personality that elevates him far beyond his immediate sphere of activity. His natural modesty prevents him from putting himself in the limelight or allowing himself to be put in the limelight.

In the long years of our relationship, with its difficult experiences and trials, he was always a loyal, devoted and sacrificial friend. This friendship was never clouded or disturbed by moods or misunderstandings. We were in constant correspondence, exchanging our thoughts and opinions in writing several times a week. If ever one could speak of a close and tested friendship, this was it.

Wiesbaden

The German judiciary was so shockingly tainted during the Third Reich that it will not be able to wash itself clean of the stain it has brought upon itself in a century. This is especially true of political justice. The political judgements had nothing to do with justice and the law, they were all crimes worthy of punishment, although they have not yet been atoned for to this day.

Most of the judges who had been in favour of Hitler were taken over by the Federal Republic. Nobody can get out of his skin, and people do not improve; accordingly, the judiciary of the Federal Republic retained its fascist character by and large; judgements that would be unheard of in a real constitutional state were the order of the day. The Nazi criminals received astonishing leniency.

The acquittal of Huppenkothen, the multiple murderer of Flossenbürg, before the Munich jury court remains unforgotten. If the international court in Nuremberg had not convicted Hitler's henchmen, Göring, Keitel and the others, they would certainly have been treated lightly in a German court. The German courts even went so far as to recognise the farce of summary courts as legal; in a trial in Würzburg, this was expressly stated by the presiding judge.

In contrast, the courts were relentless against Nazi victims, as the Munich trial against Auerbach showed. For this reason, it became customary in the German Democratic Republic not to provide legal assistance to the judicial authorities of the Federal Republic in political proceedings. One experience I had confirmed my pessimistic and sceptical view of the West German judiciary.

In December 1951, I received a summons from the Wiesbaden District Court to appear as a witness in the trial against "Marx and Comrades" for aiding and abetting murder. I made enquiries and informed myself about the subject of this trial.

In 1942, the Reich Ministry of Justice issued an order on the basis of which "Gypsies, Jews, asocial elements and political criminals sentenced to more than six years" were handed over to the Gestapo. - Extradition meant death for those concerned. In various camps, the SS carried out their murderous work on the prisoners. I was also one of those who were earmarked for extradition. I have already described how I was spared this fate in the first volume of my memoirs "Daring Life". Many thousands of people perished in this way as victims of the Gestapo.

The officials of the Reich Ministry of Justice responsible for the decree now stood before the Wiesbaden jury court. Among the defendants was also a government councillor from the Reich Chancellery, who had once selected those who were to be put to death. On 10 January 1952, I was heard as a witness before the Wiesbaden jury court. My wife had accompanied me and sat in the courtroom as a listener. The presiding judge made a conciliatory impression; an assessor al-

- Cf. Niekisch, op. cit. p. 354

However, it could be surmised that he was inwardly on the side of the accused.

stand.

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I described my hostility towards Hitler, my experiences during my years in Brandenburg and told him how I had also had to fill in a questionnaire "for political criminals". The Catholic priest then came to see me and I immediately told him that he had been instructed to examine me to see whether I should be considered an "asocial element". The priest had given vent to his troubled heart, had himself expressed his disgust at the action in which he had to participate, and in the end had parted from me as my friend. Then I relived the incident in my cell, when I was informed of the visit of an official and how the doctor and the warden successfully endeavoured to keep him away from me.

At this point, the chairman interrupted the hearing and addressed the accused government counsellor with the words:

"And that bailiff, that was you?" The interviewee admitted meekly.

To make it clear that the priest was well aware of the purpose of handing the prisoners over to the Gestapo, I suggested to the court that my wife, who was present, should also be questioned. The court agreed to my suggestion and my wife had to leave the courtroom until she was questioned. Thereupon I explained how the chief constables knew the meaning of the action and even confessed their remorse to me. If these officers had been aware of the purpose of the action, then the officers of the Reich Ministry of Justice could not have been in any doubt about it.

My friend, the ministerial director Dr Gentz, had told me that one of the accused, who had even been in charge of carrying out the operation, had been his neighbour. He had once warned this man that he should be on his guard; he was in danger of being called to account for the crimes committed here. I also informed the court of this.

The prosecution was led by two public prosecutors who showed the defendants outrageous leniency. A lawyer tried to invalidate my statements by asking whether I was a professor at the "Humboldt University". I answered in the affirmative and then turned to the chairman with the

Remark, I hoped this question was not asked to discredit my statement.

My wife testified how the Catholic priest had been depressed during a visit she had once paid to him; he could no longer sleep peacefully and kept asking himself whether it was so easy to label someone as an "anti-social element".

The court's favourable attitude towards the defendants was already evident in the fact that all the defendants were released despite the serious charges. The verdict was accordingly favourable. It was "acquittal for lack of evidence". The defendants had claimed to have known nothing about the purpose of the prisoners' extradition to the Gestapo. It was a lame excuse, but the court endeavoured to believe it.

17 June 1953

The day of the unforeseen demonstrations in the German Democratic Republic, the much-vaunted 17 June, has its prehistory. Above all, it was prepared by the resolutions of the second party conference of the SED, which took place from 9 to 12 June 1952. At that time, a major shift in policy was initiated. While the special German peculiarities had been largely taken into account and the construction of a socialist and collective order had been approached only timidly and shyly, this was now to change rapidly. **The Socialist Unity Party had declared that** it wanted to become a new type of party. What did this new type consist of? Until then, it had generally still been organised according to the principles of old party formations. The leadership emerged from elections, however much these elections may have been controlled. Criticism could be levelled at the general meetings. Dissatisfaction could be voiced, and at least there was still the impression that the members had some say. That changed now. The party leadership became authoritarian. It regarded itself as an infallible authority whose decisions were to be respected as dogma and whose orders could not be contradicted. The party became a kind of militant body in whose ranks unconditional obedience was to be expected.

had to rule. It was an honour to be admitted to the party; there was to be no more voluntary resignation. One could only be excluded. This new type of party was the actual bearer of state power; its leadership took all state power into its own hands.

This new type of party claimed to be formed in the spirit of Lenin. It was the "revolutionary advance party", the revolutionary storm troop, literally, which was to put an end to the capitalist order and begin to build the socialist order.

For this task, an intelligentsia had to be provided that was prepared to work in a reliable socialist spirit. The Central Committee of the SED drew up the guidelines according to which, from then on, scientists were to research, philosophers were to think, composers were to compose and artists were to paint and create. The scientist was required to be biased; objectivism was discredited. In the face of every fact and circumstance, the scientist had to examine whether it was beneficial to socialist development. Just as the National Socialists once spoke of a "fighting science", now there was talk of a "partisan science". Partisanship was not a mistake; partisan science was a sharp weapon that had to mentally finish off the bourgeois opponents. Objectivism became a vice by which the scientist who cultivated it was branded.

This mental attunement was calculated to make the practical measures that were to be implemented, presumably at Soviet request, palatable. Walter Ulbricht loudly and solemnly proclaimed the "construction of socialism". From now on, the economy of the German Democratic Republic was to be collectivised systematically. This was to be tackled with energy in the villages first. Individual farms were to be dismantled and grouped into production co-operatives. As resistance from the larger farmers was anticipated, a vicious campaign was immediately launched against them. They spoke spitefully of the "big farmers", implying that they deserved the fate that had once befallen the kulaks in the Soviet Union. Emphasis was placed on a "class struggle in the village", which was to be fought with rigour and determination.

willing to fight. Although it was said that joining the production co-operatives was voluntary, efforts were made to stamp farmers who refused to join as class enemies and to ruin them. They increased the delivery target of the recalcitrant, scrutinised their books, established tax arrears and, if the target was not met, assumed intentions of sabotage worthy of punishment. Farmers were arrested in droves and sentenced to three or more years in prison by compliant courts. Such prison sentences were always linked to expropriation. The wives and children of those sentenced were thrown out onto the streets, their furniture, clothes and clothing confiscated.

Similar action was taken against tradespeople. They were also forced to form production co-operatives. Tax arrears were also easily discovered among them, which were then also penalised with prison sentences and expropriation.

Special measures were taken against owners of tourist pensions on the Baltic Sea and in the low mountain ranges, i.e. in **places** where the trade unions intended to accommodate their members for **recreation**. These pension holders were also accused of being in arrears with their taxes. They were also arrested and punished with expropriation as well as imprisonment. It was a veritable campaign of extermination against all those who still had any kind of independent existence. But the labour force was also put under pressure. The "construction of socialism" included the accelerated expansion of heavy industry. The consumer goods industry lay idle and the supply of consumer goods to the population was consequently completely inadequate. The rapid expansion of heavy industry placed high demands on the labour force. Their labour standards were raised, which meant that wages were cut. In order to raise cash for the development of heavy industry, the prices of the trade organisation were increased, so that in practice the standard of living of the working population was severely reduced. The trade unions were shameless enough to pass off the price increases as

"Improvement of the standard of living". The consequence in the large factories was a fierce dissatisfaction of the labour force against the government, a dissatisfaction that here and there increased to undisguised hostility. This hostility was exacerbated by the fact that the supply of food from

week left more and more to be desired. The farmers began to leave their homes and farms. They fled the Republic, just as tradespeople had been doing for some time. On some days there were over 2000 people who abandoned their belongings and sought refuge in West Berlin. Things went on like this for weeks without the government of the German Democratic Republic doing anything. It did not see how this mass exodus was destroying both agriculture and industry and how the German Democratic Republic was losing all its prestige in the process. The German Democratic Republic seemed to be in the process of disintegration.

This may have prompted the Soviets to order a change of course. After all, a change of course had taken place in the Soviet Union itself. After Stalin's death, Jewish doctors who had been arrested were released and the measures taken by the NKVD were heavily criticised. The Soviet government had announced that it would continue to ensure strict legality. On 9 June, the effects of Moscow's change of course were also felt in the German Democratic Republic. After the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party had first met, the government of the German Democratic Republic issued decrees that gave the Central Committee's proposals the force of law. The five-year plan was to be amended; heavy industry was no longer to be pushed as it had been in the past. The consumer goods industry was to be given greater rights. Farmers should no longer be forced to join production co-operatives.

The tradesmen were promised that the collectivisation would end and they could once again go about their business as independent tradesmen. Tax arrears were cancelled and convicts who had received sentences of up to three years were set free. The expropriations of farms and businesses were cancelled. Scientists and artists were to be able to breathe and create more freely in future.

This was a new programme. The construction of socialism was not only stopped, but what had been built up in the last period was to be dismantled again. The government went so far as to accuse itself of many mistakes. It would have been natural

It would have been appropriate for the government, which ruefully admitted such failures and recognised the failure of its policies, to resign and make way for a new government to take new action. This did not happen. The authors of all the difficulties and failures wanted to stay and demanded confidence that they would do everything better in the future than they had done in the past.

No matter how much the government reversed, one thing was to remain untouched: the increase in labour standards, because the better supply of goods to the population and the rise in the standard of living required not only an undisturbed continuation of production, but also an increase in it. Many workers found themselves overworked; they felt that too much was being demanded of them. The weakening of government authority, which had been caused by the government putting on its penitent's shirt, gave workers the courage to fight back against what they perceived as an unreasonable increase in standards. On 16 June, a group of construction workers marched from Stalinallee to the government building. They wanted to demand a reduction in standards. It was certainly unusual for workers to decide to demonstrate against the government, but when they set out on the march they were hardly motivated by any real political intentions. On their march, however, they were joined by other groups of workers, passers-by also joined their march, and political demands suddenly became loud. The People's Police held back, it is not known whether this was due to an order. Several thousand demonstrators gathered in front of the government building; a government spokesman, the Minister for Mining and Metallurgy. Selbmann, who tried to calm things down, was shouted down. Grotewohl and Ulbricht did not turn up.

That same evening, West Berlin broadcasters announced that the demonstrations would continue the following day. A West Berlin trade union leader added fuel to the fire; he named Strausberger Platz as a rallying point for demonstrators. This was a mobilisation of West Berlin elements, a call to them to take action in East Berlin. Inexplicably, the government of the German Democratic Republic took no steps to stem the influx of West Berliners. As early as 17 June, large numbers of people from West Berlin came to East Berlin to take part in the

demonstrations and giving them a twist that turned them into open riots. Many dubious characters roamed the streets of East Berlin, inciting the masses that had started to move, setting fires, looting shops, tearing up banners and posters and distributing prepared leaflets. People's Police went over to the demonstrators, but the People's Police did not take any effective measures against the demonstrators.

In the meantime, the Soviet occupying forces had been alerted. Armoured divisions moved into East Berlin. A strange thing happened: the demonstrators refused to believe that the situation was serious. The fact that no effective defence had yet been mounted against them led them to the erroneous conclusion that they were in control of the situation and that their revolutionary excitement was stronger than their weapons. Demonstrators threw stones at the Soviet tanks, tore aerials from them, insulted and abused the Soviet soldiers. The red flag was taken down from the Brandenburg Gate in front of Soviet soldiers. British and American officers in civilian clothes had gathered near the Brandenburg Gate and observed the events. West Berlin photographers took pictures of the uprising.

All challenges were calmly accepted by the Soviets. At 1 pm, the Soviet commander declared a state of emergency. The roads to West Berlin were sealed off and no more than three people were allowed to stand together anywhere. From 9 p.m. in the evening until 4 a.m. in the morning, no one was allowed to be seen on the streets. But the streets were still full of demonstrators. They refused to be persuaded to break up their marches and stop their demonstrations. The demonstrators continued to attack both the Soviets and the People's Policemen, and in the end both the soldiers and the People's Policemen were forced to use their weapons. Dead and wounded remained on the streets. Nevertheless, in the end it had to be recognised that both the Soviets and the People's Policemen had exercised the utmost restraint. A West Berlin worker, an open provocateur, was seized by the Soviets, tried before a summary court, sentenced to death and shot.

When the news of the Berlin events spread to the towns and villages of the German Democratic Republic, the

The population there was gripped by the flames of revolt. Workers left their factories, demonstrations were organised against the government, demands were made for its resignation and, of course, demands were made for the standards to be dismantled. In some cities, prisons were stormed and rather shady elements were set free. Here, too, a state of emergency was declared.

The imposition of a state of emergency meant that the demonstrations on 18 June came to a halt. However, it took several days before the labour force calmed down again. Small strikes flared up here and there and heated discussions took place in the factories. The government remained strangely silent. It was as if the reins had slipped from its hands.

A few days after 17 June, Justice Minister Fechner declared in an interview that the strike was constitutional and that the strike leaders should not be arrested if they had not taken part in any riots. This view was brusquely rejected by Walter Ulbricht; Ulbricht believed that in a socialist state, the workers were cutting themselves in two if they resorted to the weapon of the strike.

The events of 17 June were a world sensation. In the Federal Republic and in America, people were extremely excited. It was claimed that the workers of the German Democratic Republic had begun the fight for their freedom, that workers had died for freedom and at the same time had revolted against the Soviet occupying power. The government of the German Democratic Republic, on the other hand, portrayed the events in a completely different light. Although it could not deny that workers had taken part in the demonstrations, it claimed that it was Western provocateurs and agents who had started the uprising in order to please the Americans. As one-sidedly as the West portrayed the events as a pure act of labour, the German Democratic Republic blamed all events on provocateurs. There was no doubt that the events of 17 June not only exposed the government of the German Democratic Republic, but also meant a loss of prestige for the Soviet Union.

The Americans had already invested many millions in propaganda against the German Democratic Republic. Their psy-

chological warfare operated according to a precisely devised system. The eastern offices of the West German parties had bases everywhere in the German Democratic Republic: one could undoubtedly speak of an "underground movement" within the German Democratic Republic. The impulsive elementary movement of 16 June had probably come too early for the directors of this underground movement. But they could not and would not stand aside, and so they did not achieve the great goal they had had in mind: the general overthrow of the German Democratic Republic.

But just how deeply they were committed to this process became clear

afterwards, when they started to coin it. Wherever the dollar rolled, the men of 17 June were celebrated as great freedom heroes. The dead and injured were martyrs. Federal President Heuss spoke sentimentally here, Dr Suhr pastorally and pathetically there, and Adenauer even came to West Berlin in person to testify how much he cared about freedom and the unity of Germany and how much sympathy he felt for those who had been shot. The Social Democrats were also on hand with their honest indignation, having forgotten all memories of 1918/19 and the "bloodhound" Noske, who as a labour leader had raged against rebellious workers. 17 June was described as a day of world-historical significance; the Federal Republic declared it a bank holiday. So much money had been invested in the endeavour that they wanted to secure at least some moral successes. The world was probably on the brink of World War III on 17 June. There were daring adventurers who reckoned that the entire population of the German Democratic Republic would rise up, that the People's Police and the Soviets would fail, that the government of the German Democratic Republic would be chased out, that the Americans would invade the German Democratic Republic and that the German Democratic Republic would be liquidated in this way. The Soviets' stand foiled all these plans and thus saved world peace.

But at least the German Democratic Republic had been caught in a fit of weakness. The population of the German Democratic Republic had experienced that the dictatorship had lost its grip; it was thus

and encouraged her to no longer put up with everything in silence and without resistance. It was good for her to have opposed, even rebelled. They were no longer the submissive, all-accepting masses they had been up to then. Both the Socialist Unity Party and the government were unable to cope with this situation. The mild course was maintained, but everything that followed bore the stamp of half-measures.

This in turn was a welcome opportunity for the enemies of the German Democratic Republic to launch new operations of psychological warfare. The population of the German Democratic Republic was invited to pick up food free of charge in West Berlin. It was outright claimed that there was a famine in the German Democratic Republic. People are usually immediately set in motion when they are tempted by a free gift of any kind. "Free beer", a piece of bread, a pound of fat arouse his greed; simply because something is given to him here, he comes running. And so it was in this case. Hundreds of thousands streamed from East Berlin and the German Democratic Republic to West Berlin, were registered there in order to be included in the register of the discontented, who could later be supplied with inflammatory leaflets, waited for hours for clearance, endured hardships and did not look forward to appearing in the role of beggar. This great hike after the lard packet was also a protest action against the government and the party, both of which they wanted to be rid of.

The government of the German Democratic Republic was helpless in the face of this large opposition demonstration. If it harassed the parcel collectors, it increased the population's aversion to hatred; both the Americans and the West German political leaders achieved their goal. But if the government of the German Democratic Republic refrained from such harassment, then the whole world was made aware that the government of the German Democratic Republic no longer had a mass base and could only hold on to power with the help of Soviet bayonets.

Memorandum on 17 July 1953

The events of 17 June had severely shaken the rule of the SED. The self-confidence of the ruling class was shaken. Promises were made to loosen the reins and measures were taken to appease the agitated labour force. The intelligentsia was also presented with bait. At that time, there was an unusual increase in the salaries of intellectual professions.

Admittedly, if the demand had been made during the agitated days: "The goatee must go", it was not fulfilled. Ulbricht was the man on whom the Soviets could most reliably rely.

I feared the worst from the public discontent against Ulbricht and the government. I set out my fears in a memorandum that I had drafted for the Soviet High Commissioner Semyonov on 5 June 1953. The letter, which I sent after 17 June, read:

"I am addressing you, Mr High Commissioner, because I have long foreseen the outbreak of discontent that took place on 16 and 17 June 1953. On 5 June, I had completed a memorandum which I wanted to send to you and in which I dealt with all the points which, in my opinion, were likely to cause an explosion within the labour force of the German Democratic Republic. The memorandum has been overtaken by events. Nevertheless, it still seems necessary to me to share some of my thoughts and experiences with you. I recognise the great loss of prestige which the German Democratic Republic has suffered and which, in one way or another, cannot leave the Soviet Union completely untouched. It is my concern for the fate of the German Democratic Republic that prompts me to come forward and ask you to consider what I have to say.

Let me say from the outset, frankly and sincerely, that I regard it as a cancer that there are people in leading positions in the German Democratic Republic who, from a political point of view, are utopians, illusionists and doctrinaires who lack both political instinct and realistic sense.

The starting point for an unbiased view of the **things** must reflect the nature of the population within the German

Democratic Republic. Although the German people have never actively fought through an actual bourgeois revolution, in the course of the 19th and 20th centuries they have been deeply captured and permeated by the bourgeois spirit. The average German today is by nature a citizen who emphasises civic ideals, the rights of the individual, the value of personality, the guarantee of legal security, the rule of law, the inviolability of private property and, to a certain extent, civic freedom. Even if he differs in some respects from the Western European citizen because of his traditions, this does not alter the fact that he feels that he belongs to the bourgeois world. This also applies to the worker. The reason why Social Democracy is still such a large and strong party today is that it has transformed itself into a left-wing petty-bourgeois party; the German worker does not so much want a fundamentally new order as he strives to become a petty bourgeois himself. He does not feel like a proletarian who can store everything he has in his handkerchief; he is seduced by the parlour, the vertigo, his own home and the little garden around his little house. If the Communist Party had grown so powerful in Germany before 1933, this in no way meant that millions of German workers had abandoned their basic bourgeois orientation; the Communist Party at that time merely brought together the opponents of the bourgeois form of statehood, which had become increasingly pronounced in the context of the Weimar Republic.

The overall bourgeois consciousness of the German working class was revitalised after 1945 in the face of the direct encounter with the Bolshevik ideas of society and order that had made their conspicuous appearance in the eastern part of Germany. As dissatisfied as the West German worker may be with the development of the West German Federal Republic, he by no means wants to smash it; he clings to the form of bourgeois parliamentary democracy and inwardly desperately resists replacing it with proletarian democracy. This is the only way to understand why the Communist Party is unable to achieve any success in the West German Federal Republic and is increasingly regressing.

In view of its basic bourgeois character, the population can be

The political and economic system of the Federal Republic of Germany seems to be more suited to her than the system of the German Democratic Republic. She looks longingly towards West Germany; the political and economic system of the West German Federal Republic seems to be more in keeping with her than the system of the German Democratic Republic.

This situation is exacerbated by the existence of West Berlin. West Berlin is a completely bourgeois island in the heart of the German Democratic Republic; here the population of the German Democratic Republic directly encounters the Western bourgeois way of life. This Western bourgeois way of life exerts a tremendously seductive effect on the population of the German Democratic Republic; it is the goal of their secret longing.

If one were to vote today according to the principles of bourgeois formal parliamentary democracy in the German Democratic Republic, the parties that are regarded as the pillars of the political and economic system of the German Democratic Republic would probably not achieve much more than 10 per cent, although this estimate can still be regarded as rather optimistic. This is not a fact that can be eliminated by ignoring it.

Now it must be expressly noted that the economic reorganisation based on the Potsdam resolutions, the division of the large estates and the dismantling of the farms, by no means aroused the aversion of the population of the German Democratic Republic. The division of the large estates certainly met with the approval of the population on the whole, and only a tiny fraction of the population found the dismantling of the farms offensive. The population easily came to terms with the social and economic structural changes brought about by these two measures.

In 1947, 1948 and 1949, I was frequently in West Germany on behalf of the National Front, spoke to many of my acquaintances, gave lectures and was often involved in passionate public discussions. Again and again I found that the West German population was not aware of the conditions in the Eastern zone, that they had not yet formed their final judgement about it, that they were eager to be enlightened about its conditions. A dislike or even a

There was no hostility towards the Eastern zone. In some respects, West Germans were sympathetic to the economic and social developments taking place in the Eastern zone. It was conceded that it was questionable to become too deeply indebted to America; it was felt that the population of the Eastern zone 'lived more honourably' after the lost war and that it was more worthy to 'starve themselves back to health' than to be fed by the Americans. They also foresaw that the American dollars were not given in vain, but that one day they would have to pay for them with German blood. Inwardly, they resisted the idea of ever having to do national service for America.

However, some points were repeatedly raised as objections to the eastern zone. These points were: the organisation of the People's Police, the penal camps, the prisoner of war question, the question of the Oder-Neisse border, the problem of intellectual freedom. It was remarkable, however, that all these objections could be allayed and refuted with some skill. It was not denied that American intentions to attack were recognised, against which the Eastern zone had to prepare itself. It was also **understood** that former Nazis were still being held in camps. Under no circumstances did they want to provoke a new war through the dispute over the Oder-Neisse line; an understanding with Poland was considered possible and was prepared to do so. It was conceded that the collapse of 1945 would have to have an impact on art and literature. There was a willingness to take the special circumstances of the Eastern zone into account in intellectual matters. I was in Munich at a press conference when the news was announced that the Soviet Union intended to release the prisoners of war. The effect was tremendous; it was said that the 'agitation' against the East had to be stopped.

Thus it can be said that until the end of 1950 there was still a strong willingness to unite within the West German population and that people were internally resisting the hostile propaganda of leading politicians in the Western zones.

This changed after there was talk of the transformation of the SED into a new type of party in the now established German Democratic Republic and when it became clear that the reorganisation of the social

and economic structure within the German Democratic Republic was tackled with ruthless determination. Now the susceptibility to American propaganda against the German Democratic Republic became more effective in West Germany from day to day.

It cannot be denied that the bourgeois character of the East German population was completely overlooked in the implementation of the new policy. As a result, the population resisted many measures and left the German Democratic Republic in their thousands. Since there was a growing feeling that the leading men of the German Democratic Republic had lost touch with the real conditions and circumstances, and since it was observed that many plans that had been proclaimed had failed, the view also arose that numerous functionaries at the lower, middle and upper levels were 'dilettantes' who were not up to their tasks. As a result, antipathy towards the German Democratic Republic increased, both within the East German population and even more so in West Germany.

Even the West German agitation organised by the German Democratic Republic could do little to change this. The propagandists sent to West Germany were also generally unskilful; they had no understanding of the bourgeois psychology of the West German population. They behaved as if they were only dealing with communists, or at least with people who were already inwardly ready to become communists. If any bourgeois outsider listened to them, they triumphed and celebrated their success. They wrongly took this outsider as a symptom from which they could draw conclusions about the mood of broad sections of the population. This was always a false conclusion that was bound to lead to great disappointment. The reports of most Western propagandists coloured things, they developed wishful images that had no basis in the real conditions of the West. Both the Central Committee of the SED and the government of the German Democratic Republic adhered to these misleading representations; as a rule, they misjudged Western conditions, and when they acted on the basis of these misconceptions, they were wrong. They were also completely wrong in their assessment of the resonance,

which their political and economic measures triggered in the German West.

The fact that the majority of the population of the GDR had remained bourgeois at heart and therefore secretly resisted many of the government's measures challenged the government to enforce its will with more or less pressure. The government claimed that it had to fight the "class enemy", destroy the saboteurs and punish the enemies of the state. The laws became tougher, the level of punishment exceeded the usual.

It had always caused serious offence that arrests were carried out without judicial arrest warrants and without the relatives being able to learn anything about the fate of those arrested. The fact that people suddenly disappear and are held indefinitely, that they lose their freedom without a controlled legal procedure being carried out against them, that their fate is left in the dark in the face of their relatives, these are events that offend the European citizen. It was precisely such events that had once outraged him against princely absolutism; to put an end to them, he had made revolution; to be protected from them in the future, he had created the constitutional state. In such processes he sees the expression of disregard, even **contempt** for man; to him they are intolerable and unforgivable offences against humanity. On this point, civil man reacts with vehemence.

The view that arbitrariness and lawlessness prevailed within the German Democratic Republic was reinforced by the fact that little respect was shown for the constitution. Basic constitutional rights were continually violated: Censorship was introduced in contravention of the constitution, freedom of expression, freedom of the press and freedom of assembly were suppressed against the constitution, even members of parliament whose immunity is constitutionally protected were arrested against the constitution. It was dismaying to see that the authorities themselves disregarded the constitution. How was the citizen to be educated to respect the constitution?

An important aspect must be considered here. Hitler had once quite consciously imitated a number of state forms of rule and administration as well as institutions that had proved their worth in the Soviet Union. There they were the

circumstances and conditions and were entirely justified. Under the completely different German circumstances, these forms and institutions were perceived as alien. The German population grew tired of these forms and institutions during the Hitler era and was happy to have been liberated from them in 1945.

The returning emigrants, some of whom took over the government of the German Democratic Republic, did not have the experience of that tiberdruss; they set to work without having learnt any lessons from their experiences during the Third Reich and resorted to those forms and institutions that had been severely compromised during the Hitler era.

It was precisely those who sympathised with the Soviet Union who suffered most painfully from the countless abuses of the political leadership.

The question can be raised as to whether it would not have been the task of the German political leaders to govern in such a way that the population's aversion to the German Democratic Republic simply could not have arisen.

One of the most important and significant concerns of any policy must be to make moral conquests. The moral conquests that the German Democratic Republic would have made would have easily benefited the Soviet Union as well. But this is precisely the weakest point of the German Democratic Republic's policy. Within the population of the German Democratic Republic, there is no question of the government having achieved moral conquests; it goes without saying that the government of the German Democratic Republic did not know how to make moral conquests vis-à-vis the bourgeois circles of West Germany either. But the fact that it also failed to have any effect on the workers of West Germany is a fact that must give rise to the most serious thoughts. The decline of the Communist vote in West Germany indicates that the West German working class inwardly rejects the policy of the German Democratic Republic. After 1917, the Soviet Union was regarded as the true fatherland of the proletariat in the broadest German working-class circles, including the social-democratic ones. The Soviet Union derived the greatest political benefit from this. It would be natural that within the all-German borders the

German Democratic Republic would be perceived as the true fatherland of the German proletariat. However, there can be no question of this; it has not even won over its own labour force.

This characterises the situation that the policy of the Socialist Unity Party no longer has any real support among the masses. The political leadership is floating in the air. All the events which it organises and which are supposed to prove its connection with the masses do not come about through the voluntary participation of the masses; workers and employees only take part in the events through coercion.

This fact must be properly recognised in its full scope. The Republikflucht revealed how inadequate the policy of the German Democratic Republic really was.

As a result, parts of the population of the German Democratic Republic felt closer to the Americans than to the Soviets or their own government. They wished for the downfall of their system of government. These were the people who gladly and willingly made themselves available for 'agent, espionage and sabotage servicesii'. Some of them were desperate people who believed that any means were permissible in their fight against the government of the German Democratic Republic. Since this willingness to use agents, spies and sabotage grew out of the circumstances themselves, little could be done about it; even the harshest judgements of violence were no deterrent.

In this situation, the German Democratic

Republic continued to support the idea of German reunification. It is one of the most shocking experiences that it was unable to achieve any effect with all the declarations of support for German reunification. But there were understandable reasons for this. The economic and social policy of the German Democratic Republic was indeed aimed at a socialist order, i.e. a change in social structure. As the economic and social constitution of the German Democratic Republic moved closer to the Soviet model, the gap between West and East Germany widened and deepened. As the German Democratic Republic pursued structural change with the utmost intensity, it was believed that its

assurances that she was aiming for the reunification of Germany. Their actions contradicted their words. But the deeds spoke a very clear language: no West German citizen felt the desire to support a Soviet-like system. The consequence of the social and economic policy of the German Democratic Republic was that it actually repelled the West German population more and more. The national slogans issued by the German Democratic Republic were regarded as hollow and empty phrases and were ignored.

It goes without saying that the Soviet Union attaches great importance to having trustworthy administrators at the head of the German Democratic Republic. But such administrators must not only enjoy the trust of the Soviet Union, they must also enjoy the trust of the people of the German Democratic Republic. In addition, they must be skilful in leading the cause entrusted to them well and successfully.

In this respect, some well-known representatives of the German Democratic Republic have failed completely. They are responsible for the destruction of agriculture, for the flight from the Republic, for the distrust that the population has for the administration of justice and many administrative measures of the government. If the position of these personalities, exposed by their failures, remains unshaken, the German Democratic Republic will lose all political credit and all political prestige. Moreover, the reputation of the present government of the German Democratic Republic has been so badly damaged in the eyes of the West that it is no longer taken seriously or given any weight at all and, if Bonn refuses to sit down at the same table with it, it will also win the applause of well-meaning and well-intentioned sections of the West German population. For the sake of the cause, it is unavoidable to push those personalities compromised by their failures into the background.

The food distribution carried out by West Berlin was certainly an insult, indeed a challenge to the German Democratic Republic. However, it was an indisputable success. Hundreds of thousands of GDR citizens flocked to West Berlin to receive their lard parcel. The collection of this gift was a demonstration against the government of the German Democratic Republic and

at the same time a demonstration of sympathy for the West German Federal Republic. This is where the policy of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany had led citizens, farmers and workers to unabashedly and provocatively reject the government of the German Democratic Republic in an unmistakable and obvious manner. It can even be said that the internal dissolution of the German Democratic Republic was in flux; it became clear that the government of the German Democratic Republic no longer had a mass base, no support among the people.

The relationship with the intelligentsia was rather unfortunate.

It has been recognised that a society cannot exist without the help of the intelligentsia. The task of the intelligentsia is to create the intellectual legitimisation of a social order, to make it appear reasonable and necessary, to win the minds for it.

Now the majority of the German intelligentsia, like the majority of the German population in general, is of bourgeois origin and has a bourgeois attitude. It was not to be expected that this intelligentsia would turn to socialism from within overnight. It was also necessary to proceed with extreme caution towards the intelligentsia, to give them the time to familiarise themselves with the new ideas, to convince them of their correctness and timeliness. It must be said openly that the means used to win over the intelligentsia were sometimes rather crude and clumsy. They tried to make an impression on them with the help of better food and pay, i.e. with material privileges. But it was precisely in that which is most important to them that they were insulted and lost.

The atmosphere that is solely conducive to intelligence is the atmosphere of spiritual freedom. The creative mind can only think and produce artistically if it is able to do so in total freedom. This in no way implies intellectual freedom in general. Every thinker and artist is part of a certain social order. He must belong to it and feel that he belongs to it. Thus he has the closest connection with the inner laws of life and the most secret essence of this social order. What he thinks and artistically creates here, he thinks and creates from the

The social order is based on the compelling necessity of its existence. As a result, it thinks more deeply and creates more compulsively than any other member of this social order could have thought and created. If, however, the creative spirit is bound to mandatory rules, it not only feels violated, but the work it creates in this way must become flat, phrase-like, inauthentic. The creative spirit is precisely what it is because it sees more deeply and feels more genuinely than the average person. This is precisely why one can say that the creative spirit has something visionary about it.

Even if not every intellectual is a creative spirit, something of this need for freedom of creation usually stirs within him. If this freedom of creation is impaired, he feels unhappy and disturbed to the core. It is quite impossible, for instance, for the Central Committee of a party to draw up rules and instructions prescribing how thought and art should be organised. If Lenin had been subject to the decision of such a Central Committee in 1902, he would never have been able to write and publish his pamphlet 'What to Do'. The members of the Central Committee are neither experts in spiritual matters, nor are they creative spirits. They are not competent to have a say in intellectual and artistic matters, however much they may be in political and economic matters. Their decisions in the cultural field are an overstepping of their competences and practically mean a subjugation of the creative intelligentsia. But no creative spirit can stand this.

Now, of course, one can ask whether one should allow thinkers and artists who are not yet in a living inner connection with the socialist order? Even if they are still connected to bourgeois society by an umbilical cord, they can still drive the process of decomposition of the bourgeois order forward. They should not be disturbed in this, because in this function they are debris clearers who clear the field and level the ground on which the socialist-bound intelligentsia can one day create.

The truly creative spirits will leave the republic if you want to give them orders.

The treatment of the Protestant Church was without any understanding of the real political situation. In terms of its internal tendencies, the Federal Republic of Germany can be described as a Catholic

The East should be characterised as a state. It is no exaggeration to claim that Adenauer renounced the German East because it contained too many Protestants. He did not want a Germany with a Protestant majority. He also recognises that German Protestantism within the German Federal Republic, if cut off from East German Protestantism, must degenerate into a sect and become corrupt. Men like Niemöller have felt this for years. The Protestant Church would have been a natural companion of the German Democratic Republic. At times it also seemed as if this alliance would come about. The bitterest enemies of the German Democratic Republic could harbour no more fervent wish than to create a conflict between the German Democratic Republic and the Protestant Church. For this would mean that the German Democratic Republic would lose its domestic allies and the sounding board within the borders of the German Federal Republic that had sprung from the circumstances themselves. That dearest wish of the enemies of the German Democratic Republic has now been fulfilled. The dispute between the German Democratic Republic and the Protestant Church has broken out. It is quite possible that the cunning, completely western-orientated and German nationalist-minded Bishop Dibelius was working towards this battle. But the German Democratic Republic, if he had such intentions, made it easy for him to achieve his goal. I would like to emphasise with all certainty that I consider myself an opponent of the capitalist order and a champion of a socialist order. But I am of the opinion that socialism is compromised if it is attempted to be imposed by force under unfavourable circumstances and by inappropriate means. As right as the expropriation of large estates and corporations was, the acceleration of the pace of the transformation of the small and medium-sized private economy into a collective economy was alarming. The damage caused by this hasty pace was immeasurable; it was of no benefit whatsoever. It took its revenge that the social and economic reorganisation of the German Democratic Republic was not undertaken on the basis of an elementary revolution, but from above by administrative means. If this reorganisation had been a matter for the revolutionary masses, it would have been a matter of the heart.

The masses of the labouring masses (as is the case in the Soviet Union) must not be rooted in it. But as a matter for the state bureaucracy it has no winning power; the 17th of June even proved that it has a large part of the working masses virtually against it.

In a population with a bourgeois mindset, progress can only be made if the transition to a collective economy, to rural or industrial production co-operatives, is left to voluntary decisions. This would certainly be a path that would require time and patience, but it would be a successful path. Nor is it of any use for political leaders to use words and proclamations that fly in the face of the facts to claim the existence of an enthusiasm that does not actually exist. One often has the impression that these political leaders are intoxicated by illusions and fictions that are far removed from reality. In fact, their policies went bankrupt the moment the 'New Course' was announced. Presumably the workers would not have fallen for the West German provocateurs on 17 June if they had not had the impression that they were at the mercy of a leadership of bankrupts.

Anyone who is serious about socialism and the GDR must endeavour to implement a policy that sticks to the facts and moves strictly and unwaveringly on the ground of reality."

Immediately before 17 June, a rumour had surfaced that the Soviets were planning to drop Ulbricht and to soften the coercive regime altogether. If such intentions had ever existed, they were now abandoned. Ulbricht had to be kept in order to save Soviet prestige. His departure would have been interpreted as an obvious capitulation of Soviet power. If Ulbricht stayed on and even strengthened his position, this was a demonstration to the world of the unshakeable continued existence of Soviet power in Germany. There were certainly changes in the cabinet, but they were more a symptom of Ulbricht's strengthened position than of its weakening. This was most noticeable in the change of leadership of the Ministry of Justice. Fechner was dismissed; Hilde Benjamin took his place. She was the representative of a hard line and a relentless justice system. The trials that

were initiated after the uprising of 17 June were filled with their compassionless spirit.

The 17th of June had also left its mark on the individual organisations. Criticism of the system arose; men spoke out who openly condemned the mistakes that had been made and demanded a change in the situation.

The Presidential Council of the Kulturbund also discussed the events of the

17 June was discussed. A resolution was on the agenda, the purpose of which was to harmonise the activities of the Kulturbund with the new political course. The Kulturbund admitted that it had not achieved its goal of encompassing the entire intelligentsia of the German Democratic Republic as a "non-partisan organisation". He admitted that the interference of administrative bodies in cultural affairs had been harmful. Becher gave a short introductory speech in which he announced that he had learnt of the Berlin events in Budapest. He had immediately realised that it had been a provocation instigated by the Americans. He immediately realised the parallels with the events in Korea. The task of the Kulturbund was to win new confidence for the good and great cause of the German Democratic Republic. The discussion that then unfolded was extensive and consistently toned down to the tone of criticism. Most of the speakers were university professors. Professor Brugsch was very moved and said that he had been longing for the "New Course" for a long time. The University of Berlin had become a "Russian university", completely inadequate lecturers had been appointed in the social sciences, while capable men had been put out of work.

On this occasion, I thought it appropriate to intervene in the debate once again. I stated roughly the following: The picture now being painted of the events of 17 June was based on a misleading, indeed downright dangerous interpretation. Of course it was right to remember Syngman Rhee, of course provocateurs also played a sinister role. But one should not lose sight of the fact that an elementary outbreak took place within the working class. The ruling circles had lost all contact with the population. A senior state functionary once proudly told me a long time ago that he had never been in contact with the population since 1945.

ever travelled by train again. Another man who had been sent to the West had complained to me that his realistic reports on West Germany had only caused displeasure. The leading parties and government circles no longer bore any relation to the real facts. They had also failed to realise that the

"basic state of mind" of most people in the German Democratic Republic was fear. Kafka was also topical. Everyone here felt constantly guilty. This constant fear was linked to legal uncertainty. It was intolerable that people were arrested without their relatives ever finding out about the arrested person. I myself had experienced what the lack of legal certainty meant with two friends who had proved themselves in the fight against Hitler. Even the constitution was being disregarded. I had been on the constitutional committee and had worked on the constitution. I was horrified to see how easily even the authorities disregarded the constitution. For example, it had happened that members of parliament who were protected by immunity had been arrested without their immunity having been lifted first. Censorship is also practised contrary to the provisions of the constitution; I myself am one of its victims. I do not share the faithful belief in the People's Chamber; I would only hope that the People's Chamber will carry more weight than it has so far.

In a few words, I said, I would also like to touch on the specific spiritual problem. If you look at many essays in the

"Neues Deutschland" about artistic and literary issues, one would grab one's head in despair. One could see that the people who expressed themselves here had no idea of the nature and needs of intellectual and creative activity. I know what a ticklish question I would be raising if I were to address the problem of formalism in a few words. There is certainly a formalism that justifies rejecting it. But we must not forget that in the polarity of form and substance, form is the spiritual principle. The fight against formalism often gave the impression of being a fight against the spirit in general. Horst Stempel was one of the most talented artists in the German Democratic Republic, and his life was made so difficult by accusations about his formalism that in the end he was also seized by fear and left for West Berlin. That was

Conditions against which the Kulturbund must fight with all its strength. With regard to the university, it was certainly true that the Russian model was imitated much more than was appropriate to German sentiment. With regard to the social sciences, it was necessary to proceed with delicacy. lame people without superiority and without expertise were appointed as lecturers; this could only lead to disaster. It was also intolerable that FDJ members warned against attending the lectures of a professor who was seen as not entirely loyal to the line.

One must be completely imbued with the realisation that spiritual and creative activity is only fruitful in the element of spiritual freedom.

Pastor Kleinschmidt presented facts that showed the disaster caused by the will of the lower administrative authorities and the misguided administration of justice. A pastor had said to him that the fear was probably gone now, but the hatred was still effective. The leading forces would have to become much more closely connected with the masses.

Professor Rienäcker emphasised that it was not enough if violations of the law and the constitution had been established. Those who had violated the laws and the constitution had to be punished, and not too lightly. This was a demand from broad sections of the population.

A worker from Hennigsdorf was a member of the presidial council of the Kulturbund. He reported on how work had been stopped impulsively in Hennigsdorf, but this had been done under trade union slogans. For about a quarter of a year, 22 workers had been smuggled into the plant who had not yet made their presence felt. Now they had suddenly become active and had taken advantage of the workers' excitement by shouting slogans, such as overthrow the government, which the workers had not previously thought of. He had regarded these 22 as agents; they had also been arrested.

In his brief closing statement, Becher attacked me because I had spoken of an "elementary outburst". I told him that I had also spoken of the provocateurs and that I was sorry for his insinuation.

The secretaries of the Kulturbund remained silent during the entire proceedings. They were probably instructed to keep a close eye on the course of the debate and not to interfere. The

Resolution, which was finally adopted, another point was added calling for the establishment of legal certainty.

Fascism and Bolshevism

In recent years it has not infrequently happened that Bolshevism has been brought into a certain connection with fascism, as if the two were essentially similar phenomena. They were based on external forms and overlooked the fundamental difference underlying them. People had allowed themselves to be misled by the similarity of the outward forms, even though both had proved to be the fiercest and most irreconcilable enemies in the concrete encounter. For National Socialism, Bolshevism was the enemy; the battle that raged between National Socialism and Bolshevism was a fight to the death. The majority of the victims of National Socialism were communists; most of the heads that National Socialism "rolled" were communist heads.

This similarity in outward forms was not in the least due to the fact that National Socialism had consciously adopted communist methods of struggle, but had then given them a completely different twist, a completely different content and finally also an unusual addition of fanaticism.

It is peculiar to Bolshevism to be orientated towards the construction of a new social order; it wants to destroy the bourgeois capitalist order and pave the way for a collective economic order. This tendency towards a collective economic order is based - superficially - on socio-political considerations. The old social antithesis of rich and poor is echoed here; it appears in the image of the struggle between socialism and capitalism; poverty is to be made to disappear through collective property, an end is to be put to the opulence and exuberance of wealth. The workers, the proletarians, as the poor, "enter the last stand against the capitalists, the rich. It was in this sense that Bertolt Brecht saw himself as a Bolshevik. By interpreting the revolutionary movement of socialism in this way, he believes that

In the belief that it has the highest ethical values on its side, it even sees itself in the fortunate position of being able to invoke the basic teachings of the Gospels. In truth, however, this modern tendency towards collective order is based on something much more effective and irresistible. The development of technology leads to the concentration of the masses, to the extinction of individuality; the enormous technical apparatus organises people into comprehensive orders, instructions, commands and laws, the machinery leaves no room for individuality; man does not control the machine, but he operates it, and by operating it, it subjects him to itself and its rules. Within the modern industrial economy, man becomes a cog in the wheel, subject to a pervasive and irresistible plannedness.

To the degree to which the worker of such regularity is subjugated, a thin layer emerges that draws up the plans, controls the apparatus, the machinery. In the framework of the old capitalist world, these masters of the plan and the apparatus are private individuals endowed with omnipotence. The revolutionary sense of the socialist movement now consists in replacing these masters, these monopolists and corporate kings, with functionaries, professional revolutionaries who have risen from the working class and can invoke the will of this working class.

The functionaries are struggling to bring the entire industrial apparatus under their control. The power they need for this is to be provided by the support of the working class, the proletarian masses. They want to appear as mouthpieces, as trustees of these proletarian masses; they want to legitimise themselves through their approval.

In doing so, however, they encounter a major difficulty. Broad strata of workers within the states with a capitalist-bourgeois order are also under its spell and think and feel in a bourgeois way. The thesis of the functionaries is that these bourgeois-capitalist thinking and feeling strata of labour have not yet become bourgeois.

"Class consciousness" awakens. They see it as their task to awaken those labour strata to class consciousness. Their aim must be to seize the industrial apparatus and the position of political leadership. Once this has happened, they have to fight on two fronts. With all haste they must endeavour to bring about the awakening to class consciousness.

to educate the still "backward working masses" and to convince them that their true WoN lies in the care of the functionaries. To the extent that the educational work makes progress, the "mass base" of the functionaries is strengthened. As the mass base is strengthened, the self-confidence and self-assurance of the functionary class increases.

The second and much more important enemy front for the functionaries is the front of the defenders of the bourgeois-capitalist order. This is where the decisive battle is to be fought. Here the battle is not fought with declamations, with the proclamation of ethical principles and demands; here it is for better or worse, here the question of being and not being is raised. The power struggle being waged here must show no weakness, must be conducted ruthlessly and can only end in victory or defeat. In this power struggle, the forms and methods that characterise Bolshevism are developed. They are harsh, cruel and relentless; any means is acceptable and approved of. The aim is to conquer the entire production apparatus, the entire production machinery for the functional class.

Of course, in the course of the conflict, the harsh methods of struggle are also directed against those working-class circles that are still under the spell of the bourgeois-capitalist order and act against the functionaries' view of the world and order in their "backwardness". They too are "brought to their senses" with a terrible fist. However, the harsh, relentless forms and methods of struggle are not an end in themselves. They are promised to be alleviated as soon as the

"Victory has been won". The dominant fiction remains alive that the functionary class only acts on behalf of the entire labour force, that it only functions as an organ of the proletariat. In any case, the birth of a new social order is in question here; the pain it causes is regarded as the labour pains of a new society. The pains receive their justification precisely from the fact that they can identify themselves as such.

However, the violent regime of fascism is quite different. This regime is not aimed at the birth of a new social order. It is a defence of the old bourgeois-capitalist order. The old bourgeois world fights for its existence with the courage of despair and shies away from

no means of asserting it. The methods of Bolshevism are imitated and adopted in order to cope with the attack of the new collective social order. The monopolists and corporate kings cannot claim to be authorised by the "proletarian masseur to direct the machinery of production. Through feints and deceptive manoeuvres they must try to make it credible that the proletarian masses would also get their money's worth under their leadership. The awakening of a "false consciousness" among the proletarian masses is one of the most urgent Maynahnies in this war of defence waged by the bourgeois-capitalist order. This creates the hypocritical and mendacious atmosphere within which the fascist struggle takes place.

The truth applies here more than ever and more than anywhere else: if two people do the same thing, it is not the same thing. Since the collective social order lies in the course of the mechanisation of the production apparatus, it has the circumstances and the objective needs for itself; it can claim to be "progress". The fascist defence, however, is directed against the "Train of time", it champions the cause of regression. Now it is human nature to always endow the cause of "progress" with moral pathos, but to burden the cause of regression with a guilty conscience. For this reason, Boischewism is placed in the position of being able to display a good conscience before "world history" and "humanity".

Fascism emerged as an emergency constitution of bourgeois society. Since a turnaround in this emergency has not yet occurred and can probably never occur again, bourgeois society will never emerge from the fascist state. Since 1945, there has been a period of disguised, democratically camouflaged fascism; under the leadership of the United States of North America, however, all bourgeois states have since been seized by the process of fascisation.

Since bourgeois society had come into existence with the slogan of freedom, which is objectively incompatible with the fascist state, an atmosphere of hypocrisy and mendacity has been hanging over bourgeois society ever since. The liberal pretence is still to be maintained. and never has bourgeois society spoken more spasmodically and frequently of **freedom**.

The world has spoken more about the future than it has since it was seized by the cancer of fascism.

This is what distinguishes fascism from Bolshevism, that the latter is spared having to present itself in a hypocritical light. At the beginning of the socialist movement stands the idea of the "dictatorship of the proletariat". Here the liberal idea is rejected flatly and outright; the goal is proclaimed: a genuine strict dictatorship. We know from the outset what is at stake and where things are heading. Social democracy has always been uneasy about this state of affairs and has repeatedly tried to trivialise the idea of the "dictatorship of the proletariat". Finally, it has openly rejected this idea, in other words, it has completely distanced itself from Karl Marx. The Russian Bolsheviks continued to adhere to Marx. Thus things are perfectly clear to them, and no one can accuse them of being unfaithful to the teachings of the master they have professed for years.

Otto John

On the evening of 20 July 1954, Count Hardenberg, the administrator of the Hohenzollern estate, told me about the celebrations that had been held during the day in honour of the bereaved and relatives of the "victims of fascism" of 20 July 1944. He remarked that Prince Louis Ferdinand had also appeared in this circle. He then asked me if I would be happy to meet the Prince. He said he wanted to arrange for the Prince to pay me a visit.

I interrupted the conversation to listen to the latest news on the radio. The very first news item was a sensation. It announced that the President of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, Otto John, had defected to the German Democratic Republic.

Just a few hours earlier, Count Hardenberg had been with John in the circle of the victims of 20 July. There had been no indication of John's intentions. As John was also one of the Prince's acquaintances, the plan to bring the Prince together with me had to be abandoned; the Prince should not be exposed to any misinterpretation. I shared this opinion.

Several months later, on 9 May 1955, I became personally acquainted with Otto John at the Schiller celebration in Weimar. It was the evening of the same day on which Thomas Mann had delivered his astonishing memorial speech on Friedrich Schiller. John made a relaxed impression; he seemed to feel at ease in his surroundings. We agreed to meet in Berlin.

John and I subsequently met regularly at weekly intervals. They took place in the press club at Friedrichstraße station.

According to my observations, the rulers of the German Democratic Republic did not really appreciate what kind of bird had got into their hair. They did not lack for events in which John attacked the Federal Republic and made public accusations against the revival of fascism in the German West. However, they ignored the fact that John's ambition was not satisfied with being used as a pro- pagandist from time to time. Nor was it enough for him to voice his complaints against the Federal Republic at public meetings and works conferences. He also found himself only marginally employed when a newspaper correspondent was founded, which appeared once a week and for which he was responsible. He was rarely called upon; no special achievements were expected of him. He had a large income for his inactivity. He told me once that he had never had as much money as in those days. So he was usually free of all obligations at lunchtime and went to the press club to spend the rest of his time in a bad way. He always found company there, East and West Germans, even foreign journalists came to hear him out, listen to his views and talk to him about his plans.

I soon found myself disappointed in my personal relationship with John. He was a strongly emotional person, a fuzzy head with imprecise views and romanticised ideas. His sense of reality was poorly developed; his convictions and judgements were decisively determined by his wishful thinking. I was surprised that John had been able to hold on to the post of President of the Office for the Protection of the Constitution for so long. He had got there through the influence of his political friends and, above all, the English, who

did not forget the services he had rendered to British politics towards the end of the war. After 20 July 1944, he had managed to escape arrest by fleeing to Spain on a Lufthansa aircraft, of which he was a director. From Spain, he travelled to England, where he became close to Sefton Delmer. Wheeler-Bennet had received some of the material he used in his book "The Nemesis of Power" from John. Chancellor Adenauer did not appreciate John and was obviously keen to get rid of him. John sensed the unfriendly attitude that the Chancellor harboured towards him, and one is probably not wrong in assuming that John's decision to join the German Democratic Republic was prompted, among other reasons, by his concern that he might one day be sent into the desert by Adenauer.

John was accommodated in a beautiful country house near Zeuthen. He had been provided with a car and was always accompanied by two men for his protection. When he was at the press club, these two companions would wait in the car park for his return. So it cannot be said that he was watched at every turn; he was completely undisturbed during his meetings with journalists and other personalities.

Once I visited him in his home. I don't think I was mistaken when I noticed a certain familiarity in our conversation. He told me the story of his conversion. For a long time, he said, he had taken offence at the influence that former National Socialists had regained in offices in the Federal Republic. Everywhere you turn, you come across former party members. They had even crept into events organised by the victims of fascism. At the celebration of 20 July 1954, he said, he "burst his collar" - former National Socialists had also spread out there. On impulse, he decided to go to the German Democratic Republic.

He never claimed that he had been forcibly abducted and kept back in the German Democratic Republic under pressure. He made his escape to the German Democratic Republic appear to be an act of his own free will.

I soon made it clear to him what critical reservations I had about

German Democratic Republic were alive in me. At his request, I had given him my book "European Balance Sheet". He read it eagerly and repeatedly emphasised how closely he felt his views were related to those in my book. Girnus, whose press attack on the "European Balance Sheet" had prevented the book from being distributed in the German Democratic Republic, was the very functionary who had to look after Otto John.

One day, John surprised me by telling me that he had lent my "European Balance Sheet" to a gentleman at the Soviet embassy to read. He considered it important that the Russians should be familiarised with views of this kind. I was interested to learn from John's remark that he also had relations with the Soviet embassy.

I felt sorry for Otto John; I thought the position he held was unworthy of him. He had studied constitutional law. I encouraged him to endeavour to get a lectureship in constitutional law at Humboldt University. He did indeed take steps to achieve this goal.

A Danish journalist, Bonde-Hendriksen, was often present during my meetings with John at the press club. The relationship between John and Bonde-Hendriksen seemed to be quite close and dated back to around 1944. Bonde-Hendriksen professed to be a monarchist, particularly a supporter of the Hohenzollerns. In fact, Bonde-Hendriksen was later honoured by Prince Louis Ferdinand with the Cross of the Hohenzollern House Order.

The question of what fate John would have to expect if he returned to West Germany was discussed several times in this circle. There were lawyers who were of the opinion that nothing would happen to John. No treason proceedings had been initiated against him, no warrant had been issued against him. I myself did not share this optimistic opinion, but expressed my doubts as to whether John would get off so lightly if he returned. His move had caused the greatest sensation in the whole world; there was something highly embarrassing in it for Bonn. I would be very much mistaken if they missed the opportunity to take advantage of him.

John never hinted to me that he had already discussed with Bonde-Hendriksen the plan to leave the German Democratic Republic. Did he want to do this?

so his journey was not hindered by any serious difficulty. It took him little effort to reach Friedrichstraße station unaccompanied by the press club, board the train and travel to West Berlin. If he used a carriage, he did not have to fear the superficial check at the Brandenburg Gate. If Bonde-Hendriksen later portrayed John's journey to the West as an adventure, this was an unfair exaggeration. In any case, John suddenly turned up in West Berlin, protected by Bonde-Hendriksen, and flew back to Bonn from there.

It turned out as I had surmised: John was brought before the Federal Court of Justice. There, with foolish obstinacy, he defended the thesis that he had been forcibly abducted to the East, a thesis that he still held to later in the trial against his former friend Dr Wolfgang Wohlgemuth. His entire defence was inept and had weak **foundations**. The great opportunity John had to appear before the Federal Court of Justice as an eloquent and passionate accuser against the renazification of the Federal Republic of Germany was **regrettably** missed.

John was sentenced to four years in prison, but was pardoned after two years by Federal President Heuss. He made desperate efforts to have his case retried and to find credence for his thesis that he had been deported to East Berlin against his will.

Reparation

The victims of National Socialism of all political persuasions had still organised themselves in the summer of 1945. Over the years, however, this organisation split; some of the social democrats and bourgeoisie went their own way and believed that they could no longer maintain the community with the communists. The purpose of the organisations was above all to initiate reparations. Many of the victims were completely impoverished or in poor health. For many years they had been deprived of their freedom in concentration camps, prisons and penitentiaries and subjected to terrible abuse by the secret state police and the SS. It was therefore understandable that they sought reparation.

pushed. In many cases, their existence was completely shattered; they wanted to get their feet back on solid ground.

The authorities generally recognised the obligation to make reparations. In accordance with the federal character of Germany in the first years after the war, a variety of laws were enacted. The procedure was regulated differently in the British zone than in the American and French zones; in the Soviet occupation zone, no actual reparation was made. Although pensions were granted here, compensation payments were not awarded.

After the founding of the Federal Republic of Germany, negotiations were held between the states of the former trizone in order to achieve a standardised regulation of the restitution process within its framework. The result was the Federal Compensation Act of 20 March 1950, which determined who was to be recognised as a persecutee of National Socialism; in addition to those persecuted on political grounds, those persecuted on religious or racial grounds were also recognised. The compensation offices had to examine the applications submitted. The examination was carried out on the basis of completed questionnaires, which had to be submitted. If an application was rejected, it was originally possible to lodge a complaint with a conciliation authority. If you were also rejected there, you could then go to the regional court, then to the higher regional court - in Berlin to the Court of Appeal - and finally, in special cases, to the Federal Supreme Court. Special chambers were set up at all of these courts to deal with compensation cases.

The compensation offices were under the influence of the finance ministries. The tax offices tended to pay out as little money as possible to the persecuted. In response to their pressure, the compensation offices developed harassing practices. The applicants not only had to provide documents of all kinds - which was often hardly possible in view of the confiscations by the Gestapo and the destruction of the war - and not only had to provide evidence down to the smallest detail, but were often forced into the position of annoying petitioners or even defendants.

There was an article in the Compensation Act, Article 2, Paragraph 1, Number 4, which provided the means to reject many of the injured parties. Those who were excluded from compensation were

who had fought against the free democratic basic order and who had "abetted tyranny". This was not intended to target former National Socialists; they were excluded by a special paragraph of the same article. Communists or persons who were close to the Communists were meant here. Belonging to the Communist Party or an organisation close to the Communists was interpreted as aiding and abetting tyranny. In practice, this meant that communist sentiments were punished. This application of the law indisputably violated provisions of the Basic Law. However, this did not bother the judges much; the examination of the constitutionality of a law was beyond their competence. The political **opponent** of the ruling power could not count on enjoying the protection of the constitution in the Federal Republic. The only criterion for "abetting tyranny" was communist ideology. Thus, the Federal Republic began to persecute the political views of dissidents. Over time, the way in which this was done took on civil war-like characteristics. There was double justice. Rosa Luxemburg coined the phrase "Freedom is always the freedom of those who think differently". In this sense, there was no freedom in the Federal Republic. The Compensation Office in Berlin tracked down dissidents and dissenters with unparalleled spitefulness in order to deprive them of their right to compensation. It attached a supplementary questionnaire to the statutory questionnaire in which the applicant had to state which organisations he had belonged to after 1952. If he confessed to belonging to the Communist Party or one of its so-called "front organisations", he was excluded from compensation without much ado. Confessing to belonging to such an organisation meant that you were placed in a category that put you hors la loi, outside the law. The hunt for convictions was reminiscent of the spirit and conditions of the Third Reich.

The state authorities' reluctance to pay certainly played a major role in the delay of reparations. At times it could almost be argued that the proceedings themselves, with their formalities, procedures and objections, were merely a way of giving the state excuses to get rid of its obligation to pay compensation. Many of the

Officials who had to be called upon in the course of the proceedings were former National Socialists or had sympathised with National Socialism. It was only with inner reluctance that they co-operated in bringing satisfaction to the victims of National Socialism. They even still saw communists as enemies; the anti-communist complex that Hitler had instilled in them lived on in them. On 2 November 1951, I filed an application for compensation with the Berlin Compensation Office. My application for compensation was rejected on 3 February 1953. The reason given was:

"Pursuant to § 2 para. 1 no. 4 of the Compensation Act, persons who, as supporters of a totalitarian system, oppose the democratic form of government are excluded from compensation. According to the supplementary questionnaire completed by the applicant, he is a member of

of the Socialist Unity Party
of the Kulturbund for the for the Democratic
Renewal of Germany
of the People's
Congress of the
People's Council
of the Society for German-Soviet Friendship of the
Association of Persecutees of the Nazi Regime
and the National Front.

There is no doubt that the applicant must be regarded today as an important advocate and teacher of Eastern ideology. Within the scope of his memberships, he exercises leading functions in the Soviet regime, so that the requirements of § 2 para. 1 no. 4 of the Compensation Act apply to him. The application was therefore to be rejected."

An appeal against the rejection could be lodged with the conciliation authority. I contacted Dr Bergold, a lawyer I knew from Nuremberg. He played a leading role in an association that had set itself the goal of protecting civil rights. Dr Bergold drew up a document in support of my objection. In this objection I denied the allegation that I was a supporter of a totalitarian system and that I had fought or was fighting against democracy. I offered proof that the claim of the Compensation Office was factually incorrect. I had not committed any act from which it could be concluded that I had fought against democracy.

would have. At best, my membership of an organisation would allow a conclusion to be drawn about my views. However, a conclusion as to a corresponding attitude could not justify my disenfranchisement; the constitution expressly states that no one may be discriminated against because of his political views.

The assertion that I must be regarded today as a significant advocate and teacher of Eastern ideology is not true.

After I had described all the injustice that had been inflicted on me by the Third Reich, I declared: "At the same time, however, I realise that I am now to be subjected to similarly intolerant injustice, injustice and - in view of the ignoring of my serious health problems - new inhumanity because of the dismissive decision of the Berlin compensation office solely because of my views (not because of actions that have taken place)."

The hearing before the conciliation authority took place on 23 April 1953 and was chaired by a District Court Judge Ionen. He was a remarkably benevolent man. The representative of the Senate proved to be a narrow-minded, fanatical man who was under the secret influence of a complex against the German Democratic Republic and the victims of National Socialism. I had agreed with my representative, Dr Bergold, that he need not appear at the hearing, but that I would conduct my case myself.

The hearing began with the chairman giving a brief summary of the content of the letter from the lawyer Dr Bergold. This summary primitivised the statements in the pleading.

The chairman emphasised that, according to the decisions of the Court of Appeal, I had little chance of success.

The conciliation authority could not override the decisions of the court of appeal. If I took up the legal fight for my rights, I would certainly not be financially successful, but perhaps, he added curiously, morally. He recognised that my case was special, but he could not deviate from the general line. The trial would therefore have to be considered a failure.

On 15 May 1953, the lawyer Dr Bergold lodged an appeal with the Berlin Regional Court against the decision of the compensation court.

the public prosecutor's office. The battle in the courts began. At the heart of it all was only one question: was my membership of the SED, was my membership of the People's Chamber resounding proof that I was a supporter of a totalitarian system, that I was fighting against the basic democratic order, that I had abetted a regime of violence? All court instances answered this question in the affirmative. They did not address the question of whether such a decision would not violate the constitution, which forbids discriminating against citizens on the basis of their political views. The judges bent the provisions of Article 3 of the Constitution so that they could be reconciled with my exclusion from reparation. A serious discussion of the constitutional question was avoided.

In the grounds of his objection, the lawyer started from the accusation of the Compensation Office that I had been "an important advocate and teacher of Eastern ideology". "There is no need to say," said Dr Bergold, "that such an unsubstantiated, merely decreeing allegation is the most serious breach of the duty of justice that can be made, indeed in its very nature it must be regarded as the hallmark of authoritarian state and legal thinking." Bergold cited numerous documents from which the independence of my political position and my political path emerged. He also quoted the notes in which I had given an account of my political decision after 1945.

Dr Bergold then examined the question of what acts of fighting against democracy I could be accused of. He came to the conclusion that I could not be accused of any such acts of war.

Bergold asked: "Should only those who conform to the respective (and yet changing) opinions of the ruling parties really be given justice in Germany? Should law be equated with conformism? Then the totalitarian world view would also have triumphed in the West."

Bergold then dealt in detail with the constitutional question and declared his opinion that the exclusion paragraph of the Compensation Act was unconstitutional.

On 15 September 1953, the hearing took place before the district court. I appeared with the lawyer Dr Bergold.

The trial before the Regional Court was a pure farce. The chairman of the court stated from the outset that he felt bound by the decision of the Court of Appeal, which held that mere membership of the SED was proof of active support for totalitarianism and opposition to democracy. As a result, there was little point in proving the unconstitutionality of the Compensation Office's negative decision or in demonstrating that the Chamber Court's interpretation of Article 2 of the Compensation Act was wrong and contradicted the spirit of the Basic Law. Actually, further proceedings were unnecessary after I had confirmed that I belonged to all organisations described by the West as communist.

In accordance with the facts of the case, the defence counsel made no attempt to prove the unconstitutionality of Article 2 or to justify the abusive interpretation of this Article 2. Indeed, before this instance, there was no point in any legal discussion or argumentation.

The Regional Court rejected my complaint. It conceded that I had suffered serious harm in the fight against the Third Reich, but then declared: "Nevertheless, the applicant must be denied compensation because he is excluded from compensation under § 2 para. 1, no. 4, Berl.EG. The applicant has not been able to prove that, despite his membership of a number of political organisations whose aim is to establish a totalitarian system, he is not fighting for the democratic form of government as one of their supporters."

At the same time, the grounds for the judgement claimed that the Regional Court's decision did not violate the Constitution's principle of equality.

My defence lawyer, Dr Bergold, was an unusual person. He told me that he had never wanted to become a lawyer, but that he had been brought into the legal profession by a trick of his father, a successful lawyer.

I had changed lawyers for the appeal to the Court of Appeal. As it had turned out that the discussion of the question of the extent to which the Compensation Act was unconstitutional had become the centre of the entire proceedings, I wanted to change my lawyer.

I had a representative who was strong in legal deductions. I was represented by the lawyer Dr Karl. He carefully prepared the appeal hearing. His appeal brief showed acumen and dealt with the problem with great expertise. The date for the appeal was set for 16 December 1953.

Immediately after the opening of the hearing, I had an unpleasant impression when I saw the presiding judge. The President of the Senate, who showed a strong need to speak, seemed to be in the old National Socialist mentality; one of the two assessors was of the same type. The rapporteur, a Jew, was more pleasant.

The chairman's statements breathed bias, even hatred, against the advocates of their right to reparations; his opinions about the East were the opinions of American radio.

This political philistinism, presented with an arrogant, self-satisfied sense of official authority, made it difficult for me to control myself. It was terrible to see how the feeling for the German destiny as a whole had died out, how the sense of responsibility for Germany as a whole had died. In addition, the chairman seemed to have no idea of the political events and political personalities of the past. For a long time he dealt with Otto Strasser; you could hear the resentment of a former Hitlerist against Otto Strasser in his words. The irresponsibility of his behaviour was evident from the fact that he claimed that Mr von Kleist-Schmenzin had been in contact with Strasser.

The purpose of this in-depth examination of Strasser was to find out whether I even belong to the group of people who should be compensated in accordance with Article 2, Paragraph 1, Number 1 of the Compensation Act, which excluded former National Socialists from compensation.

After the arguments on this point, the chairman moved on to Article 2, paragraph 1, number 4. Here he seemed to assume from the outset that I should be excluded from the ranks of those to be compensated on the basis of this point, since democracy could not give money to anyone who wanted to "overthrow it by force".

As an appellate court, the chairman said, the

The Court of Appeal should restrict itself to dealing with questions of law and no longer discuss questions of fact. With regard to questions of law, he said, it was necessary to examine the extent to which the concept of "abetting" was being applied; it could be narrowly defined, but it could also be extended very broadly. Being a member of Eastern organisations could, under certain circumstances, already mean abetting. Moreover, the victims of fascism have no legal claim. It was entirely up to the legislator to determine who should receive compensation and who should not. As a result, the constitutional question was not affected by the Compensation Act. The principle of equality was not violated by the exclusion of a group of former victims of fascism; since there was no entitlement to compensation, those who were denied compensation were not deprived of anything.

More than once the question was raised with me as to why I had not resigned from the organisations. My defence lawyer pointed out that this was a political question that had nothing to do with the legal problem. The organisations in question were not banned, so I had the constitutional right to belong to them. My defence lawyer's tactic was to argue that I was a special case. On one of the few occasions that the presiding judge allowed me to speak, I emphasised that the political conception I had in mind prompted me to remain in contact with the East in the interests of Germany as a whole. The judges were completely uncomprehending of such a point of view.

When I assured the court that I had never been told what to say in my lectures in the German Democratic Republic, my defence lawyer remarked afterwards in a personal conversation with me that the court would probably interpret my statement to mean that I was considered so safe in the East that I did not need to be told what to say. The opening of such a possible interpretation of my words really shocked me; I was obviously still naïve enough to assume that with judges of the Court of Appeal I was dealing with personalities with whom one need not be concerned about infamy.

The representative of the Senate was a fugitive who had previously been a public prosecutor in Magdeburg. He literally oozed vengeance from every pore. As the chairman was clearly intent on adjourning the hearing, this representative of the Senate of the City of Berlin did not get to speak at length.

My defence lawyer did excellently. He endeavoured to remain entirely within the framework of legal argumentation, rejected the presiding judge's encroachments into the political sphere, more than once pointed out to the presiding judge that he had made completely unjuridical statements, and tenaciously disputed the constitutionality of the previous case law of the court. At the same time, he always remained calm and authoritative, so that despite his factual differences with the opinions of the presiding judge, he avoided any conflict and did not provoke any animosity against himself.

My wife, who attended the trial, claimed that I initially gave the impression for a long time that I was completely speechless in the face of the court's atmosphere. In fact, this court reminded me of my experiences before the People's Court. The presiding judge lacked any trace of the respect I thought I was entitled to because of my past.

Dei Yor chairman asked me to submit some of my writings and books. He wanted to include several issues of "Resistance", my book "The Realm of the Lower Demons", my writing "Hitler - A German Understanding", also take a look at the manuscript of some of my lectures.

My lawyer had offered my friends Drexel and Fabian von Schlabrendorff as witnesses to the fact that I was not in favour of a violent regime. The presiding judge ordered that these two personalities be asked to make written expert statements.

The second hearing before the Court of Appeal was on 17 February 1954.

On entering the hearing, it was noticeable that a slight change had taken place in the court's attitude towards me. The books and documents I had presented had probably made an impression. Contrary to his original intention, Senate President Naumann wanted to clarify the factual basis of the entire proceedings, an undertaking that was actually already the responsibility of the district court.

would have. He discussed my political career since 1917 with me, and it was clear from this discussion that he would have been all too happy to expose any traces of an anti-democratic attitude. He also criticised the brochure "Hitler - A German Disaster". He seemed to have no real idea of the whole atmosphere of the Weimar period.

Despite my conviction by the People's Court, he enquired whether I had in fact been critical of National Socialism after 1933. I had to explain to him how I had opposed the Hitler regime in circular letters, in secret meetings and in my correspondence on a sort of daily basis. Then he tried to find out about the progress of my trial before the People's Court. In any case, all of this revealed the intention of gaining a picture of my past activities.

To my surprise, he only touched on the period after 1945 very briefly. He admitted several times that I probably occupied a special position, that I could not easily be identified with the policies of the German Democratic Republic and that he had no doubts about my concern for the reunification of Germany. This clarification of the facts took three hours.

The Chairman then returned to the purely legal field. He indulged in lengthy reflections on Article 1 of the Compensation Act. The circle of those entitled to compensation was very narrow, he said. Anyone who had been persecuted merely because of their beliefs or their race had no claim. Nor were those who had violated laws that were customary in any decent state entitled to compensation. So **anyone who** had committed murder or been involved in murder plans was excluded, because murder was punishable in all countries. Here he made the incidental, highly curious and revealing remark that the men of 20 July 1944 should actually also fall under this exclusion. Those who had been punished excessively because a criminal aspect had played a part in determining the level of punishment were also excluded. At this point, the presiding judge wanted to know how my severe punishment of life imprisonment had come about. He was obviously endeavouring to discover an incrimination through an assassination plan that would have given reason to eliminate me. I explained to him that I was one of the most dangerous

the Third Reich and treated as the most important decomposers of the Third Reich
been.

The chairman said at one point: "Nobody decides more than they have to." In this context, he implied that it would have serious consequences if the Court of Appeal were to grant me compensation. He said that he would probably allow an appeal to the Federal Court of Justice, where the whole question could then be clarified and decided in principle and for all further cases. My case would not come to a final conclusion after all, because the Berlin Senate would certainly appeal to the Federal Court of Justice if the Court of Appeal ruled in my favour. The Berlin Senate representative affirmed this. Neither my lawyer nor the representative of the Berlin Senate were asked to make pleadings. On 14 July 1954, the Court of Appeal ruled, without having previously scheduled an oral hearing. "the plaintiff's appeal against the decision of the Berlin Regional Court of 15 September 1953 is dismissed".

In its reasoning, the Court of **A p p e a l** said that the plaintiff was not entitled to compensation on the basis of the exclusion paragraph "because after the collapse of the national socialist tyranny he was subjected to another tyranny,
The SED regime, which ruled the Soviet-occupied zone, has provided and continues to provide a boost.

"If the plaintiff, as a university professor, publicist and well-known political personality, is a member of such organisations, is actively involved in the Cultural Association for the Democratic Renewal of Germany and is a member of the Presidential Council of this organisation, then his membership carries special weight and promotes the goals of these organisations, which are intended to strengthen the SED regime, to an outstanding degree." The court came to the conclusion: "The plaintiff has thus participated to the greatest possible extent in the establishment of the tyranny existing in the Soviet-occupied zone and still supports this tyranny today through his participation in the institutions serving to maintain this system." The allegation that I had fought against the basic democratic order was also discussed in detail; my membership of the Volkskammer was seen as proof of this.

"As a member of the Volkskammer, the plaintiff takes part in the

The formation of the same and thus participate in the fight against the liberal-democratic basic order."

The constitutional considerations emphasised the idea that the compensation claim was "not a genuine claim for damages against the state". The Compensation Act "does not grant a claim for damages to all those who were harmed by National Socialism, but only grants compensation to a certain, narrowly defined group of people, limited in terms of reason and amount. The legislator only provides fair compensation to the injured parties, as not all injustices that have occurred can be made good. However, if this is the purpose of the Compensation Act, the legislator must have the power to determine to whom it grants the limited funds."

The court also refused to accept that the principle of equality had been violated. It said: "Nor is the principle of equality before the law violated. This provision simply states that what is equal is to be regulated equally, and what is different is to be regulated according to its own nature. It only contains a prohibition of arbitrariness."

The Court of Appeal had allowed an appeal to the Federal Court of Justice. My friend Fabian von Schlabrendorff offered to take my case to the Federal Court of Justice.

On 10 November 1954, he submitted his notice of appeal to the Federal Court of Justice. The appeal no longer dealt with the facts of the case; only legal aspects could be put forward. Here, all efforts had to be focussed on proving the unconstitutionality of the exclusion from restitution. Schlabrendorff had undertaken this task with great acumen.

The hearing before the Federal Court of Justice was scheduled for 20 April 1955. A large audience had gathered. Newspapers and correspondence offices had sent their representatives; various former members of my resistance movement had also turned up. The large audience that had gathered had caused quite a stir among the judges. After the opening of the trial, Schlabrendorff presented the contents of his appeal.

The Berlin Senate's case was brought by a lawyer from Karlsruhe, who made it extremely easy for himself; in a few sentences he claimed that I had been an advocate of a regime of violence and therefore I was not entitled to compensation.

The chairman of the court began with a discussion of the legal situation. He asked a question that immediately gave me a clue as to what the Senate was aiming for. He asked whether I was still a member of the People's Chamber. The way he asked this question suggested that he considered this membership to be a decisive burden.

A certain role was played by my friend Drexel's documentary statement about my declaration to the presidium of the Kulturbund after 17 June 1953. My declaration had been a sharp criticism of the system of the German Democratic Republic. But this side of the statement was completely ignored. It was only taken into consideration as proof that I had been clear about the nature of the regime.

As a rule, only lawyers are allowed to speak before the Federal Court of Justice. To everyone's surprise, however, the presiding judge asked me to speak on the matter. I referred to a lecture I had given to West German adult education centre directors in Bonn in 1948, which had been printed under the title "The political task of the adult education centre". In the lecture I had clearly declared my support for constitutional state principles. I said that I had been elected to the Volkskammer as an independent personality. At the time, six independent personalities with no party affiliations had been nominated for the elections to the People's Chamber. In the Volkskammer itself, I would not have joined any political party, but rather the Kulturbund faction. Since 1945, my entire political activity had been focussed on serving German reunification. The Volkskammer was not to blame for the division of Germany. The real perpetrators of the division of Germany were the foreign powers, the victorious powers. The Volkskammer had to carry out the will of the Soviet Union just as the Bundestag had to carry out the will of the Western powers. I would have seen it as my task to do what could be done for the German interest under the pressure of the Soviet occupation zone under the existing circumstances.

The court's deliberations lasted over four hours. Schlabrendorff claimed that this indicated that a fierce dispute was being fought.

The decision was then announced: The appeal is dismissed.

In a lengthy statement of reasons, it was argued that the refusal of compensation was in accordance with the constitution. Above all, it was remarkable that the Federal Court of Justice misused the **statement** I had made to the Cultural Association after 17 June 1953 for its own purposes. It quoted its decisive passages and concluded that I had known the nature of the system and had still co-operated with it.

Rearguard action

The Federal Supreme Court's decision was by no means the end of the legal process. I was determined to see it through to the end. The Federal Constitutional Court had authorised the individual action. This gave me the opportunity to submit a constitutional complaint to it. Fabian von Schlabrendorff, who had not yet got over his defeat at the Federal Court of Justice, was fired up to take my case to the Federal Constitutional Court as well.

On 4 July 1955, he filed a constitutional complaint with the Federal Constitutional Court.

The Federal Constitutional Court was overburdened by individual complaints. It took years before it settled the constitutional complaints. The Berlin Senate was asked to comment; its statement was received in Karlsruhe on 23 April 1956. As usual, the Senate slandered me as a supporter of tyranny. I was somewhat intrigued by the fact that two Social Democrats had signed the Senate's expert opinion: the Governing Mayor Dr Suhr and the Senator of the Interior Lipschitz. I knew Dr Suhr personally; he had visited me when I was still working at the Wilmersdorf adult education centre and expressed his appreciation.

The Federal Ministry of Finance was also prompted by the Constitutional Court to make a statement. Although it concurred with the legal opinion of the Berlin Senate, it pointed out that the Bundestag was in the process of passing a new compensation law and raised the question of whether I did not want to initiate new proceedings under the conditions of the new law.

A new version of the Federal Compensation Act came into force on 29 June 1956. In September 1957, a judge recommended

of the Federal Constitutional Court asked my lawyer to withdraw the constitutional complaint. My lawyer did so in October 1957, after which he submitted a new application for compensation to the Berlin Compensation Office on my behalf on the basis of the new Federal Compensation Act.

As the matter was likely to be dealt with at length by the Constitutional Court, a lawyer I knew, Dr Wilhelm R. Beyer, advised me - as late as 1955 - to lodge a complaint with the European Commission of Human Rights at the Council of Europe in Strasbourg. Beyer, advised me to lodge a complaint with the European Commission of Human Rights at the Council of Europe in Strasbourg.

When the Council of Europe was founded, it was envisaged that a European Court of Justice would be set up to ensure that human rights were respected within the Council of Europe. As long as this Court had not been constituted, its business was to be conducted by a "Human Rights Commission". Of course, this commission could not make any binding decisions, but had to content itself with making recommendations to the defendant governments.

Dr Beyer's strength lay in the theoretical field; he was a prolific philosopher of law. His philosophical foundation was Hegelian philosophy. He worked at the prestigious "Neue Juristische Wochenschrift" and had published several important books.

His effervescent temperament drove him to conduct scientific experiments. He drafted the letter of complaint and tirelessly assisted me when I had to answer questions from the Human Rights Commission.

My complaint was lodged in Strasbourg on **14 June** 1955. The General Secretariat of the Council of Europe sent the complaint to the Federal Foreign Office in Bonn. In a lengthy memorandum, the latter dealt with the question of whether I had already exhausted the legal process. This had to be exhausted before the Human Rights Commission had jurisdiction. The Foreign Office denied that the Commission had jurisdiction at this stage of the matter.

In response to this reply from the Federal Foreign Office, Dr Beyer drafted a detailed and comprehensive expert opinion entitled "Doppelgleisigkeit des Grundrechtsschutzes bei gleichzeitiger Erhebung der Verfassungsbeschwerde nach §§ 90ff. BVerfGG and the individual complaint under Article 25 et

seq. of the European Convention on the

Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of 4 November 1950 (Rome Convention)".

On 27 December 1955, I submitted this expert opinion to the Human Rights Commission. The Foreign Office responded in detail to this opinion of 16 February 1956, disputed its legal opinion and maintained its position that the Human Rights Commission was not responsible because I had not yet exhausted the legal process. The Commission's decision was made on 14 June 1956, finding "that at this stage the petition should be dismissed in application of Article 27, § 3 of the agreements would have to be rejected due to non-exhaustion of the internal complaints procedure".

Interior Senator Lipschitz

The experiences I had during my fight for my rights before the courts of the Federal Republic had filled me with the deepest doubts about the rule of law in the Federal Republic. This pessimistic view was reinforced in me by an event that took place after the conclusion of the legal proceedings. On 17 August 1955, I received the following letter from the Berlin Compensation Office:

"In your lawsuit against us, you have lost all the way to the Federal Court of Justice. According to the judgement of the Federal Court of Justice of
20 April 1955, you were ordered to pay the extrajudicial costs of the appeal. These amount to DM 1695.98 according to the attached bill of costs from the lawyer Dr Krille. As we have already paid this amount to our lawyer, we would ask you to pay this amount within one week to the Landeshauptkasse Berlin - postal cheque account no. 58 at the Postscheckamt Berlin-West, and to put the following note on the post office stub: Posting reference: B0500/133 Chargeback: Litigation costs in the Niekisch ./.. Berlin case (Compensation Office). If the amount is not paid on time, we would unfortunately be forced to have the costs determined by the court and to collect them from you by way of compulsory enforcement, which would only result in unnecessary, very considerable additional costs for you.
On behalf of: sign. Schlüter"

I replied on 20 August 1955:

"I confirm receipt of your letter dated 17 August.

55 As an emeritus professor, I receive my pension, which is not too high, in Ostmarks. I don't have a salary exchange. My Western income is insignificant. My state of health, caused by the Nazi regime, is such that I am in need of care. The requirement to pay the hefty sum of DM 95.98 in West German money as a recipient of East German gold is undoubtedly an unbearable hardship in view of the fact that I am a victim of Nazism who is in poor health. I can only meet the compensation office's demand in very moderate instalments. I ask the Compensation Office to grant me such an instalment."

I received no reply to my request for payment by instalments. I was so outraged by the compensation office's demand that I thought it advisable to contact the Social Democratic Senator of the Interior, Lipschitz, personally. This was done in a letter dated 20 August 1955:

" On the occasion of the 20th July celebrations, you found warm and understanding words for those persecuted by the Nazis. This encourages me to turn to you in my personal matter.

My name will probably not be completely unfamiliar to you. During the Nazi era, I was one of Hitler's most irreconcilable fighters. I wrote my brochure back in 1931:

Hitler - a German disaster' and the manuscript of my book 'Das Reich der niederen Dämonen', published by Rowohlt in 1953, were written in 1935/1936. I had already taken up the fight against Hitler at a time when the majority of the German people were still running after Hitler and the civil servants and judges, who are once again serving to a considerable extent today, were still 'abetting his reign of violence'. While I am recognised and appreciated in domestic and foreign journalism for my determined resistance to Hitler (see

z. B. Wheeler-Bennett, Die Nemesis der Nacht, Part 3, Chapter III, Section I), the Berlin Compensation Office, the Berlin courts and the Federal Court of Justice took no notice of this at all. During my imprisonment, I lost my eyesight as a result of poisoning by the Gestapo (I am no longer a prisoner due to an investigation arranged by the social welfare office).

I was declared 100% blind and in need of care). My wife and son were imprisoned at the same time as me and our economic existence was completely destroyed.

My claim for compensation was rejected by the Berlin Compensation Office as well as by all subsequent instances, the Berlin Regional Court, the Berlin Court of Appeal and finally by the Federal Court of Justice in Karlsruhe. I consider these decisions to be 'inhumane'; they continue the treatment inflicted on me under Hitler. In dealing with my case, the Berlin compensation office showed an almost fanatical eagerness to prevent compensation for the health and economic damage inflicted on me by Hitler. Naturally, I do not recognise the decisions made as being right. Even the National Socialist laws did not transform Hitler's inhumanities, which could be interpreted as the application of the law, into justice before the moral conscience.

But all the adversity I experienced was crowned by a Letter from the Berlin Compensation Office GeschZ. 11/21, Reg. No. 24910 dated 17 Aug. 55, a copy of which I enclose. The tone of this letter is probably unbecoming of an authority whose task it should be to make amends for injustice done. Hitler ruined my health and my economy. Measures taken by the compensation office are aimed at ruining me economically again. As a professor emeritus at Humboldt University, who had been retired from politics for years, I only received my old-age pension in East German marks and was excluded from the exchange by the West Berlin Senate - my health, which was still badly shattered by eight years in prison, did not allow me to endure any particular hardship during the blockade, I only have a negligible income in West Berlin and as a result have to fight hard to maintain my existence in West Berlin, the demand to raise 1700 West Marks (= 8500 East Marks) in the course of a week is an economic catastrophe for me. Allow me. Mr Senator, I would like to ask you whether you approve of this procedure?

On this occasion, I would like to mention one more thing

to bring up. The Berlin Regional Court also rejected my wife's claim for compensation (a copy of the judgement is enclosed). Like me, my wife was a staunch opponent of National Socialism. Her party friend, Mr Gustav Klingelhöfer, who regularly visited us in the years 1933-1937 and befriended my wife during my imprisonment, can testify to this. Not only was she responsible as publisher for the brochure 'Hitler - A German Doom', she also copied secret circulars until her arrest, wrote the manuscript of the book 'Das Reich der niederen Dämonen' (The Realm of the Lower Demons), and approved of my giving the persecuted and later executed Mr von Kleist-Schmenzin shelter in our flat. To cover for her, I told the examining magistrate that she had acted out of sympathy for me. She also made use of this tactic. I find it outrageous that the Berlin District Court used this defence against her and made not the slightest attempt to establish the true facts of the case. From West Berlin alone I can produce five witnesses who came and went from our house in the years 1933 until our arrest in 1937 and who can confirm that she, like me, fought against Hitler with full conviction. In my book 'Das Reich der niederen Dämonen' (The Realm of the Lower Demons), I denied that the German people had a natural sense of justice, a relationship to justice at all, based on my view of the Hitler era. My experiences in the fight for my morally well-founded claims for redress have made me doubt whether this sense of justice has come alive in Germany in the meantime. Perhaps I may hope that you, Mr Senator, will not pass over my statements in silence."

I had been unaware that one month earlier, on 19 July 1955, Fabian von Schlabrendorff had spoken to Lipschitz about my case. Schlabrendorff had emphasised the dubious nature of the court's decision and asked whether the Berlin Compensation Office might consider granting me compensation by way of clemency. Lipschitz had shown himself unresponsive to this suggestion.

Referring to the personal conversation that Schlabrendorff had had with Lipschitz on 19 July 1955, Schlabrendorff wrote to Lipschitz again. Lipschitz was naughty enough not to reply directly to my letter of 20 August. He replied to Schlabrendorff and took the opportunity to respond to my letter of 20 August 1955. Lipschitz wrote:

" In reply to your letter of 25 August 1955, I can assure you that I do remember our conversation of 19 July 1955 and that I already made it quite clear at that time that I have no reason to make any kind of concession to Mr Niekisch. I therefore regret that I do not see myself in a position to comply with the wish now expressed by your client, since ultimately it cannot be represented by the Berlin Compensation Office if Mr Niekisch has taken a matter which from the outset had no prospect of success to the Federal Court of Justice in appeal and revision proceedings.

In support of my position, I would like to say the following in response to Mr Niekisch's letter to me dated 20 August 1955, without going into detail:

It is - to put it mildly - impertinent for Mr Niekisch to accuse the Compensation Office of behaving inhumanely towards him and continuing the treatment that Hitler inflicted on him. We must refrain from such accusations coming from the mouth of a man who, with his name and his person, has served a system that is no better than National Socialism right up to recent times. Mr Niekisch was a member of the People's Chamber, a 'people's representative body' formed along Hitlerian lines, he was a leading member of organisations whose aims were just as criminal as those of the Nazi organisations, and he played a decisive role in serving a system whose political ideals included secret police, concentration camps and opinion snooping. We would be doing an extremely disservice to the idea of reparation if we were to grant compensation payments to applicants of this kind. When Mr Niekisch concludes

If I have to tell him that the Compensation Office is aiming to ruin him financially, then he must be reminded that it obviously did not bother him to have acted as a propagandist in 1943 and 1945 on the side of those who set themselves the goal of not only ruining innocent people, the sick, the elderly and children financially through an inhumane blockade, but also physically damaging them, if not destroying them.

I'm sure you won't blame me for my frank words, but knowing your proud political past, dear Counsellor, I'm sure you'll agree with me when I say that opponents of freedom and democracy have no right to participate in benefits such as reparations.

For the sake of simplicity, I have forwarded a copy of my letter to you in reply to Mr Niekisch's letter to me."

Schlabrendorff replied to Lipschitz's letter as follows:

" In the above-mentioned matter, I hereby acknowledge receipt of your letter of 2 September 1955.

Allow me to make the following comment on your statements:

- (1) According to my legal conviction, the decision was and is I consider Professor Ernst Niekisch's claim for compensation to be anything but a hopeless cause. I consider the provisions of the Compensation Act, which exclude a certain group of people from the benefits of this law because of their political views, to be unconstitutional, because Article 3 of the Basic Law expressly prohibits anyone from being disadvantaged because of their political views. For this reason, I have also lodged a constitutional complaint with the Federal Constitutional Court against the decision of the Federal Court of Justice in the case of Professor Ernst Niekisch. It remains to be seen how the Federal Constitutional Court will decide I will not fail to inform you about this.
- (2) I have known Professor Ernst Niekisch for many years. Neither in the past nor today have I agreed with him on all points" But I have met few people whose uncompromising firmness of character has given me so much pleasure.

respect, as is still the case with Professor Niekisch today.

The attitude and behaviour of Professor Ernst Niekisch flows from honest sources. This is a certainty I have known for many years.

- (3) Personally, I am anything but a supporter of the system that is being embodied in the German Democratic Republic. However, I believe that the goal of reunification that all Germans are striving for will one day be realised. The path to this will lead through recognition of the current state entities. As difficult as this will be for both the West and the East: When that day comes, we in the West will remember all personalities from the East with gratitude and joy, provided that these personalities had no other goal than the preservation of Germanness with the aim of uniting West and East. I am convinced that one such personality is Professor Ernst Niekisch.

I am not writing to you to ask you to review your decision of 2 September 1955, but to let you know that I am convinced that in Professor Ernst Niekisch I have represented and will represent a worthy and not an unworthy person."

Without **receiving** any further notification from the compensation office, the bailiff appeared in my absence on 24 October 1955. I phoned the compensation office and complained that my request for payment by instalments had not been dealt with. The official replied indignantly that I had contacted the Council of Europe and therefore did not deserve any special consideration.

The next day the bailiff turned up at my house again; in the meantime I had managed to raise the large sum, so that the whole procedure came to a swift end.

Making amends once again

In 1957, the Bonn Bundestag passed a new version of the Federal Compensation Act. It was notable for an amendment to the paragraph which excluded a number of victims from compensation.

had been passed. In the old version of the law, compensation was to be withheld from all those who had aided and abetted a totalitarian regime. The new version only wanted to disenfranchise those who had fought against the liberal-democratic order. Even in the new version, the monstrosity that victims of fascism should be penalised because they were not of the same mind as the Federal Republic of Germany had not been removed.

As I had been rejected by the courts every time in the first instance because I had allegedly promoted a totalitarian system, my lawyer was of the opinion that I should file my compensation claims again under the second version of the law. I had been confirmed in this opinion by the Constitutional Court in Karlsruhe. The Constitutional Court had not yet settled my appeal against the decision of the Federal Court of Justice. Now, in a letter signed by Constitutional Court Judge Heiland, he advised me to withdraw the complaint and to submit a new application for compensation under the changed circumstances.

My lawyer, Fabian von Schlabrendorff, thought it advisable to contact the Governing Mayor of Berlin, Willy Brandt, personally before submitting the new application. He presented the facts of the case to the Governing Mayor. He recommended that the new application be submitted to him personally; he would then take it through official channels. My lawyer suggested that the matter be settled by way of compromise. The Governing Mayor took up the idea and scheduled a meeting for 28 August 1959. He chaired the meeting himself and invited the former Senate Director Albertz, the Senator for Internal Affairs Lipschitz, a representative of the Senator for Finance and my lawyer. The mayor presented the case. The Senate Director Albertz said that if the Indemnification Act applied to anyone, it was me. The representative of the Senator for Finance raised no objections. Senator Lipschitz, on the other hand, was vehemently opposed to the settlement plan. Since 1952, Senator Lipschitz has proved to be my enemy. All of the accusations against me were far-fetched and made up out of thin air. Lipschitz was almost fanatical in blaming me for all the measures taken by the GDR. I felt that the justifications with which

the Berlin compensation office under his authority had rejected my applications each time, as spiteful slander. He also used the same slander on this occasion.

He did not succeed in getting his listeners to listen to him. The Governing Mayor spoke to him amicably; when Lipschitz insisted on his position, Brandt said he wanted to take the matter to the Senate. Lipschitz stubbornly denied that the Mayor was authorised to refer the matter to the Senate. The Senate's involvement in such matters lay solely with the Senator of the Interior. After he declared that he wanted to reconsider the matter, the conference broke up without result.

Just a few days later, I received the rejection letter from the compensation office. Lipschitz's reasoning had been to rehash the old slander.

Now there was nothing left to do but to resort to the courts once again. The trial took place on 23 March 1960 at the Berlin Regional Court. In an excellent plea, Fabian von Schlabrendorff emphasised that the accusation of fighting against the free democratic basic order had to be proven by the compensation office. He also emphasised that throughout my life I had been a maverick who could not be put into any kind of mould. I had fought the Third Reich fearlessly and had suffered serious damage to my health as a result. He also offered witnesses who could prove my independent opinion.

The lawyer's expert explanations drew attention to the Court made little impression. The court did not respond to the lawyer's offer of evidence. It concluded the hearing by stating that it would announce its decision later.

After a short time, the district court rejected my claims for compensation. In its reasoning, it did not even address the difference between fighting against the basic democratic order and promoting a totalitarian system; only the fact that I had been active in the GDR had decided that I had also fought against the basic liberal democratic order.

An appeal to the Court of Appeal was now open. On 3 November 1960, the trial took place before the Berlin Court of Appeal. Right at the beginning, the presiding judge gave my lawyer

to consider whether I should not withdraw my appeal, because otherwise I might have to pay the court costs. This statement showed from the outset how little I had to hope for from the Court of Appeal. Again, von Schlabrendorff presented my case to the court with effective explanations; again, the answer from the representative of the compensation office was downright pitiful; again, as before the regional court, I was not heard on the merits. The decision of the Court of Appeal exceeded my worst expectations. I was dismissed with my lawsuit. In addition, I was charged the court costs of the trial because my appeal was clearly unfounded. I was expressly denied an appeal before the Federal Court of Justice.

The decision of the Court of Appeal made waves in the public arena. The press voiced reservations about it. The Berlin newspaper "Der Tagesspiegel" took up the case and advised the Senate to enter into a settlement with me. The decision of the Court of Appeal caused all the more excitement as it became known at the same time that the Deputy Minister of Justice during the Third Reich, Schlegelbergcr, had been granted a high pension entitlement. In a performance that took place in the Werkstattbühne (a side theatre of the Schiller Theatre in Berlin), an actor performed a couplet in which my case was placed alongside the Schlegelberg case:

"Those who have served Germany don't get a pension, but those who have disgraced us do.

It is denied to the man of the spirit, but successfully claimed by the enemy of the state.

This is an indication of the rule of law, which relies on the free judiciary,

that's how you turn our face into a bum,

well, there's a problem. well, there's a problem. well, there's a problem where..." In letters, numerous leading parliamentarians, such as Dr Dehler and Dr Arndt, expressed their regret at the decision of the Court of Appeal. Writers who had come to a congress in Berlin drafted a resolution opposing the Kammergericht and standing up for me.

The public furore did not leave the Court of Appeal unscathed.

over. The judicial press office came forward with a statement in which it was explained that the court could not have decided otherwise on the basis of the law, but that it referred to a paragraph of the Compensation Act which allowed compensation "for good reason".

What was to be done now? The appeal on points of law had not been authorised, but the appeal on points of law remained. The appeal on points of law had to be submitted to the Court of Appeal and was then passed on to the Federal Court of Justice. The Federal Court of Justice then had to decide whether it wanted to allow the appeal after all.

The appeal on points of law has been filed.

On 26 April 1961, the IV. Civil Senate of the Federal Court of Justice: - The appeal against the judgement of the 17th Civil Senate of the Court of Appeal in Berlin of 3 November 1960 is permitted because the concept of combating the free democratic basic order within the meaning of Section 6 (1) No. 2 BEG requires further clarification." My lawyer breathed a sigh of relief. He was convinced that the appeal now had the best prospects.

On 15 November, the Federal Court of Justice in Karls-

The Senate was silent on the appeal. The proceedings were entirely objective, but it was surprising that the Senate made no attempt to clarify the concept of fighting against the liberal constitution. The Berlin Senate was represented by a lawyer, who rehearsed all the slanders that the Compensation Office had used against me so far.

The court's decision was, in the words of my lawyer, "devastating". Not a word more about clarifying the concept of fighting. Not the slightest attempt had been made to clarify the facts of the case, and furthermore, the Federal Court of Justice had resorted to assertions that could not be factually substantiated in any way, such as that I was an opponent of the Compensation Act: "The disputed exclusion provision is justified by the consideration that an attack on the free and democratic basic order of the Federal Republic is at the same time an attack on the foundations of the task of reparation imposed on it by Article 'J4 No. 9 of the Basic Law". The Federal Court of Justice imaginatively concluded further: "Anyone who undertakes to destroy the free and democratic basic order in the Federal Republic of Germany is at the same time jeopardising the re-establishment of the freedom of religion.

the work of reparation." If I received compensation, I could use the money to support the Communist Party. "For all its willingness to make amends, as far as possible, for the injustice committed by the National Socialist rulers in the name of the German people under Hitler's rule, the German Federal Republic - especially in view of its responsibility for the realisation of this project - cannot be expected to support a persecutor who has violated the foundations of its reparation policy - for example in the service of a tyranny, which rejects any reparation for its sphere of power and abuses the political freedom granted to it in the Federal Republic - and is possibly determined to also use the compensation payments granted to it in whole or in part in the service of such endeavours, to be taken into account in the compensation in the same way as those persecuted persons whose political behaviour is not in conflict with the spirit of reparation." Even my book "Das Reich der niederen Dämonen" (The Realm of the Lower Demons) was used alongside the other, "Europäische Bilanz" (European Balance Sheet), to incriminate me. These books showed that I was in favour of a political orientation towards the East. The decision of the Federal Court of Justice states: "According to the facts of the contested judgement, the plaintiff himself has argued that his political activities form a unified whole. Since 1917, he had already held the view that a German foreign policy must seek understanding with Russia, including with a communist Russia."

The Federal Court of Justice held my entire global political conception, which I had represented in the "resistance", against me:

"Moreover, the plaintiff did not only advocate the idea of a foreign policy understanding with Soviet Russia. Rather, his entire political thinking and actions were determined by the idea that the liberal bourgeois order of the West no longer had a future, but was to be compared to a moribund organism. Instead, the future belonged to 'the spirit of cohesion and order', which had organised itself under Soviet leadership in the East. Accordingly, he repeatedly recognises and glorifies the political order of the communist East, while always judging the order of the West disparagingly (cf. B.

'Das Reich der niederen Dämonen', p. 272; 'Europäische Bilanz', S. 388)."

My lawyer had presented some decisions of the Federal Constitutional Court that were in my favour. The Federal Court of Justice simply swept these decisions under the carpet by announcing that the Federal Constitutional Court had no jurisdiction over West Berlin. The only concession that the Federal Court of Justice made to me was to cancel the costs order that the Court of Appeal had issued against me.

The decision of the Federal Court of Justice was far worse than the decision of the Federal Court of Justice in the first instance, Senator Alberto had in the meantime succeeded the late Lipschitz as Senator of the Interior. Schlabrendorff had been in contact with him for some time in order to reach an agreement on my compensation after all. After the Senator of the Interior had received the decision of the Federal Court of Justice, he abruptly broke off contact with Schlabrendorff and declared the matter to be finally decided in my favour.

The question now was whether anything could happen at all. I was no longer interested in it myself. I had long since resigned myself to the rejections I was constantly receiving; I saw them as a necessary expression of the fact that the inner nature of the Federal Republic of Germany was still National Socialist. But my lawyer did not want to capitulate yet. He decided to lodge a complaint with the Human Rights Commission in Strasbourg and also with the Federal Constitutional Court.

On 10 March 1962, my lawyer submitted the constitutional complaint to the Federal Constitutional Court in Karlsruhe. It criticised the violation of fundamental rights in my case. At first it was uncertain whether the Constitutional Court would accept and deal with the constitutional complaint at all. It had to pass through a small committee, which had to decide whether my constitutional complaint could be brought before the recognising senate. This committee could not agree on a rejection of the constitutional complaint; the First Senate of the Federal Constitutional Court therefore had to take another position on the question of admissibility, taking into account the appellant's statements.

My constitutional complaint required the Constitutional Court to clarify a number of precarious questions, in particular the extent to which the Constitutional Court had jurisdiction over West Berlin. The Constitutional Court would have gladly avoided this clarification. To this end, the President of the Constitutional Court, Dr Gebhard Müller, sent a letter to the Governing Mayor of Berlin, Willy Brandt, on 9 May 1963, in which he wrote the following, among other things: "In my opinion, the problem of both the question of admissibility and the question of the justifiability of the constitutional complaint, but also the fate and the person of the complainant, suggest that it should be examined whether a comparative settlement appears possible. The authorised representative of the complainant has indicated that he would be prepared to reach a settlement."

The highest judge in the Federal Republic had thus called on the West Berlin Senate to come to a peaceful agreement with me. The Berlin Senate wavered for a long time. Some members of the House of Representatives, who had heard about the letter from the President of the Constitutional Court, urged me to reach a settlement with them. The Senate decided otherwise. On 11 June, it informed the Constitutional Court that it would not accept the settlement proposal for reasons of principle.

The Federal Constitutional Court now called on the Berlin Senate, the Bundestag, the Bundesrat and the Federal Government to comment on my case and set a deadline of 31 December 1963. This deadline could not be met and was extended to 30 April 1964. Before the deadline expired, I prepared a statement in which I took issue with the position of the West Berlin Senate:

When the daring adventure of the German people to rise to the position of world power had failed, when the audacious German policy had been revealed as an outright crime, Germany lay shattered and crushed at the feet of the victorious powers. Even if it was difficult to continue to openly adhere to the bankrupt and confused ideas of National Socialism, it was still possible to conceal them for the time being. Overnight, this nation of Jew murderers and concentration camps was transformed.

!ager, dear blood-drinker and man-slayer, of robbers and plunderers and "steel-hard" tyrants into a nation of democrats. After the swastika ideals had led to disaster

The aim was to try to work their way out of the chaos with democratic ideas.

It was the occupying powers who first conceived the idea of compensating the **victims** of National Socialism, who had suffered unspeakably under Hitler. The individual German states initially obeyed the orders of their occupying power as if it were an unpleasant duty.

In 1949, the Bundestag convened in Bonn. Even more urgent to the Bundestag than compensating the victims of fascism was providing for those civil servants who had obeyed the brown rulers too willingly during the Third Reich and had been driven out of office by the victorious powers as a result. They were quickly rescued by a law under Article 131 of the Basic Law; they were temporarily relieved of their most urgent need.

Under pressure from the occupying powers and at the same time in an endeavour to maintain a humanitarian appearance, the Bundestag finally also took the step of enacting a compensation law for the victims of fascism: by and large, **all the** provisions found in the laws passed by the occupying powers were incorporated into this **law**. The special achievement of the Bundestag, however, was the exclusion paragraph that was worked into the law. All victims of fascism who had "aided and abetted the emergence of a totalitarian regime" after the founding of the Federal Republic of Germany were to be denied compensation for their suffering. In practical terms, this meant that members of the Communist Party were not to receive compensation. The fight against National Socialism had nothing whatsoever to do with political activity after 1949. To burden membership of the Communist Party with such severe consequences meant nothing other than punishing dissenting political opinion in the Federal Republic in the same way as it had been persecuted and punished by the National Socialists. The exclusion paragraph expressed the same anti-Bolshevik attitude that National Socialism had displayed. Hidden beneath the democratic shell of the Bundestag was the National Socialist core of days gone by.

If the Compensation Act had already given the non-conformists hostile a t t i t u d e towards the company, the courts did the rest.

If the rejected injured party turned to the courts seeking justice, he was usually rejected by the courts. The jurisdiction of the courts was uniform right up to the Federal Court of Justice and showed that the Federal Court of Justice, like all courts, was filled with a hidden fascist spirit.

Free West

Some of the experiences I had to endure around the same time confirmed the scepticism with which I viewed the Federal Republic's insistent commitment to liberal principles.

From around 1950, the so-called "Darmstadt Talks" were organised in Darmstadt by leading cultural figures under the patronage of the city council. A central theme was always announced and a number of outstanding men were invited to discuss it, who were expected to have something significant to say on the subject. Guests were also given the opportunity to take part in the discussion. The

"Darmstäidter Gesprächen had already achieved a certain reputation after a short time. They were recognised as cultural events of importance. Men such as the philosopher Heidegger took part in these talks.

The fourth "Darmstadt Dialogue" in 1953 was to address the topic of

"Individual and organisation". On 17 July 1953, I received a letter with the following content:

"Your name has been mentioned to us for the 'Darmstädter Gespräch' and we would be interested to know whether you would be interested in participating."

My response to this invitation was:

"They have informed me that my name is for the 'Darmstadt dialogue'. I am interested in the topic of 'the individual and organisation', which you will be discussing in your next talk. As I see the situation at the moment, I could probably arrange to take part in this discussion."

Some time passed; I was determined to take part in the "Darmstadt dialogue". I received the following letter on 17 September 1953:

"Today we will come back to your letter from 22 July. This year, there are so many requests for participation in the 'Darmstadt Dialogue' that we unfortunately cannot ask you to take part, as we are running out of time anyway. We hope to be able to invite you one day in the next few years."

That was an unequivocal disinvitation. Obviously, forces must have feared that I might disturb the harmony of the debate; they seemed to have taken offence at the fact that I, who was regarded as a man of the East, looked bad in this illustrious company. Which forces it was that had interfered in this way has remained a mystery to me to this day.

My answer was:

"I received your letter of 17 September, which disinvited me from your 'conversation'. Presumably I had only received your invitation because you were unaware of my identity. In the meantime, you have, I assume, been informed of this, and you now considered it expedient to ensure that your circle of participants remained conformist in principle.

Since I am liberal enough not to shy away from any discussion and to listen attentively to anyone who defends his point of view in a qualitatively adequate manner, I decided at the time to accept your invitation. It is not without charm for me to realise that I, the man who belongs to the circle of the German East, surpass the organisers of the 'Darmstädter Gespräch' in liberality of spirit. I even have enough tolerance to understand your self-protective measures and not to take offence at them. Of course, you have the right to make sure that no-one who falls outside your intellectual framework causes tension in your circle which, although factually inherent in your problem, would be greater than you intended."

Naturally, I stayed away from the "Darmstädter Gespräche"; I understandably formed my own opinion about the "freedom of the mind" in the Federal Republic.

This notion was reinforced by an experience I had with the television department of North West German Radio at the beginning of 1954. This department was considering

In 1953, I decided to introduce a "book series"; the author of a selected book was to discuss his book with a designated journalist in front of the camera and deal with objections. This "book series" was to begin with my book "The Realm of the Lower Demons".

The editor-in-chief of NWDR television, Klaus Besser, invited me to this planned event at the end of 1953. Unsuspectingly, I accepted. On 20 January 1954, I was to appear on the television screen together with Rüdiger Proske.

On 20 January 1954, I flew to Hamburg accompanied by my wife. After my arrival, I phoned Rüdiger Proske to arrange a meeting with him. I found it rather strange that he was obviously avoiding me. He was very busy with a works council meeting, but hoped to be in the television studio in the evening. I had agreed to be at the television studio around 6 pm. I had to wait for some time in Klaus Besser's anteroom; I encountered a conspicuously cool atmosphere.

After I had taken a seat in Besser's room, he told me with some embarrassment in a halting tone that he had something "terrible" to tell me. Mr Proske felt unable to take part in the interview for health reasons and a replacement could not be found due to the nature of the matter. The programme would therefore have to be cancelled, although it was scheduled in the published programme plan.

I realised immediately that Besser was making excuses and that his words were not to be believed. My suspicion was that some agency had interfered to thwart the programme. Later, this suspicion was indeed confirmed. One of my acquaintances had gone to Sender Freies Berlin that evening to watch the programme. Without a programme change being announced, a dance event appeared on the screen. My friend expressed his astonishment. He was then told that people in Berlin were surprised that I had been invited to Hamburg.

Klaus Besser had not felt the need to apologise for this course of events. On the contrary, I even had some difficulty getting my expenses reimbursed. That same evening, I met with the publisher Ernst Rowohlt and Günther Weisenborn. Rowohlt was struggling with health problems, but endeavoured not to let them be noticed.

sen. His bubbling vitality did not take the incident that had happened to me very seriously; he also had no doubt that an official position had interfered.

As early as 22 January 1954, I addressed a complaint to the General Director of Northwest German Broadcasting, Dr Adolf Grimme.

Grimme did not reply to my letter until 24 May. He assured me that he had not thought it right to invite me at all, and then continued:

"But I make no secret of the fact that, regardless of your interlocutor's indisposition, I consider it a regrettable occurrence when someone who has been invited, has made all the preparations and has taken on a journey that is particularly difficult for him, is cancelled at the last minute. However valid the reason may be. The action is bound to cause displeasure.

I must fear that you will not be convinced by the other fundamental points I make in my letter to Mr Wünsch. And this then perhaps not because the tragedy of our generation is that a boundary of understanding has been erected between people of the same honest will and search. I, for one, used to understand Ernst Niekisch, but no longer do. May the time come when this nightmare will appear to you, as it did to me, as a historical prop!"

Grimme had enclosed a copy of a letter with this letter, which he had addressed to my cousin, the Marburg theology professor Georg Wünsch. Wünsch had complained to him about the treatment I had received. Grimme explained in the letter of reply:

"It doesn't get to the heart of the matter when you say that the interview was cancelled at the time because NWDR refused to 'deal with this interesting work'. A book review, why not? But it is a completely different question whether you also think it is a responsible task for Westdeutscher Rundfunk to make this instrument of free journalism available for free use to an outspoken advocate of this system of unfreedom. Aren't the consequences of this unintentional

The Weimar example should have opened our eyes to the fact that tolerance also means the suicide of freedom in the face of intolerance. Surely the Weimar example should have opened our eyes to the fact that tolerance, even in the face of intolerance, means the suicide of freedom."

The picture that Grimme drew of me here did not reflect the real facts. I only appeared in such a light in the files of the West Berlin authorities, which at that time were supplied exclusively by the sinister secret services. These secret services did not take slander very seriously.

The dark shadow

Since 1945, the image I had of German things and their development had always been immersed in the dark shadows of the memory of the Third Reich. I did not regard the Hitler era as a mere episode, as a historical misstep, I saw it as inherent in the German essence, in the foundations of German nature; it only took a certain situation to bring to light the evil and evil that the German people harboured within them. The Third Reich was not merely based on the excesses of individuals; almost the entire **nation** - at least 80 per cent - was burdened with them. Its unfortunates had created a German collective guilt.

How horrible it had all been! Plundering, torture, cruelty, robbery and murder had also been committed by other peoples at certain times in a state of great passion. However, this ice-cold, calculated human cruelty, this pedantic, ingenious system of human extermination is unrivalled in history. Genghis Khan, Tamerlan and the Turks also carried out genocide without compassion, but they did not do so with the almost scientific thoroughness and objectivity with which the German Reich killed, shot, poisoned and gassed Jews and Slavs, "hosed", burnt, strangled, strangled, hanged, beheaded, in short "liquidated". Never before had human dignity and human worth been so callously trampled underfoot.

Hitler's "po1itics" was a single coherent, unified and

This year's unprecedented and boundless crime: it gave free rein to all the evil instincts that lay dormant in the German people and then brought them under a unified direction. The animal in man was incited to let off steam without restraint. Never before had humanity been so violated as it was under Hitler, the acclaimed leader of the German people. Officials who served this blood-soaked empire were accomplices, judges degenerated into executioners, soldiers who waged his wars became mass butchers. Never again will the German people wash away this abysmal dishonour; it is marked for all time times.

The collapse of 1945 was deserved; world history would truly have lost its meaning if Germany had not emerged shattered from the war it had started.

How did the German people survive this shattering and how did they try to re-establish themselves in the world, burdened with immeasurable guilt?

Frightened by a guilty conscience, it initially cowered before the triumphant victors and seemed prepared to let anything happen to it. In its defence, it pleaded miserably that it had known nothing of the acts of violence and disgrace which it had approved, in which it had participated and which it had tolerated without objection. Then it turned its attention to democracy and Christianity. Finally, it brazenly recommended itself for the task of being the guardian and defender of freedom and human rights.

We know the theory that there is only a narrow, barely perceptible line between genius and insanity. No less narrow is the line that separates politics and soldiering on the one hand from crime on the other. Hitler's misdeeds had blurred, even erased this boundary. The criminal nature of politics and soldiering had become unveiled; the politicians had been recognised as "Criminals" who expose soldiers as murder burners. In the future, too, German politicians and soldiers will be seen in a bad light unless they show particular caution and restraint. German politics and German soldiery hardly have any moral credit left to moralise; their ethos is no longer believed. Soon after the collapse, one could recognise an impulsive

The "victims of fascism" were not the victims of fascism; if they had not "grumbled", one could hear them say, nothing would have happened to them.

Nazism was not dead - how could it be; it had only hidden itself away, and only now and then did it carelessly venture into the light. Nobody openly wanted to be a Nazi, everyone acted as a secret opponent of the Nazis. The victors enforced denazification proceedings. However, the judges appointed for this purpose had previously been at least secretly in love with the Nazis themselves; they were all too willing to use their excuses, their character witnesses,

"They only imposed atonement measures on defendants where there was no other option in view of the obvious facts. If the war criminals had not been brought before the International Court of Justice in Nuremberg, they would all have got off very cheaply.

When the Federal Republic was founded and approved by the former Nazi voters and supporters disguised as democrats and Christians, the old Nazi officials reappeared in all offices; in the courts, blood-stained judges served the scales of justice. For those civil servants and judges who had been placed on the pavement by the victors themselves, a law was finally created - the infamous law on Article 131 of the Basic Law - on the basis of which they were granted waiting allowances until the path to the authorities opened up for them again. Renazification began partly **openly**, partly secretly by stealth. The author of the commentary on the Nuremberg Laws, the guide to the extermination of the Jews. Globke, became the right-hand man of Federal Chancellor Adenauer.

Reluctantly, yielding only to pressure from the victorious powers The Federal Republic of Germany approached the problem of reparation, compensation for the innocent loss of freedom and Nazi injustice. It found a small measure of satisfaction in continuing Hitler's anti-communist course, at least by penalising communists or withholding compensation from them altogether.

In the meantime, American policy had realised that the evil German instincts and life-destroying instincts could be harnessed for American goals. All it took was their gentle nudge to get the Germans to rearm.

No sooner had they tasted blood again than they turned their attention to the terrible means of destruction of the present. Here, this time under American cover, the old murderer's trade could be practised even more thoroughly than it had been under Hitler and Himmler.

As soon as the Federal Republic got its own weapons in its hands, its self-confidence swelled. It dreamed of a policy of strength, treated its one-sided victims, Poland and Czechoslovakia, arrogantly and presumptuously and used bold and imperious language against the Soviet Union, even threatening to wipe it out as far as the Urals. Having not yet been allowed to wage the hot war, she felt that the cold war was the right element for her; she felt all the more comfortable in it as it prepared the war of revenge, which she was driving towards, both psychologically and militarily, and brought all kinds of political advantage. She behaved as if the Eastern states were defeated and as if victory had fallen to her. It felt entitled to adopt this tone because it believed it was entitled to perceive the American support and the American loans as a reward for its former brutalisation of the Eastern peoples and as encouragement to take new 'guesses' of this kind. In the background, however, German heavy industry was observed - as in Hitler's time - forging adventurous plans against German workers and foreign peoples and exerting its power over the responsible politicians.

By contrast, the entire burden of the lost war rested on the shoulders of the population east of the Elbe-Werra line, which later became the German Democratic Republic. They lived under conditions that forbade a relapse into the old German "Großmanns- sucht"; their lifestyle was poor and meagre, as befitted a people who had brought the Second World War upon the world. No American-fuelled economic miracle confused the standards here. There was no ground here for that sacrilegious policy of wanting to head overconfidently towards a new war. The Federal Republic existed in a state of hubris; it was comfortable in the mud of past crimes and atrocities and only flirted almost cynically "with its unresolved past". The German Democratic Republic, on the other hand, had to atone for its past misdeeds and thus possibly acquired the right to show Germany a path to new politics in the future.

Meeting at the State Secretariat

On 27 January 1954, I was invited by telephone to meet the main advisor at the State Secretariat for Higher Education, Königer. Königer was the person in charge of the "History" department at Humboldt University.

Most of the lecturers and principal lecturers at the State Secretariat were young people who had passed their exams about a year or two ago. Some of them had the ambition to pursue an academic career, worked at the State Secretariat for a year or two and then left again to do a PhD or habilitation. At the meeting, Königer called in a man of about twenty-five who was apparently already being groomed as his successor.

Königer told me that a visiting Soviet professor had arrived and would begin his lectures next Wednesday. This visiting professor wanted to read about "All-igious history since 1917", the same topic I was discussing.

With a certain brusqueness, I replied: "I understand. So you want me to stop my lecture."

Königer said that the students were very overloaded, lacked time and could hardly be induced to listen to a parallel lecture. Of course, the guest professor had to be assigned the obligatory lecture; there was no other way.

The only obligatory lecture I was still giving at Humboldt University was to be cancelled in favour of a Soviet professor.

A short time later, I was informed about the motives behind the State Secretariat. In a lecture I had described the Munich Soviet Republic of 1919. I had remarked that only a moderate number of workers had got involved in this endeavour and supported it.

This statement had displeased some SED students. They asked me to raise this point again in the next lecture and have objections to it presented. I complied with this request. Some students claimed that the entire Munich labour force had been revolutionary; that the Soviet Republic had collapsed was solely the fault of the SPD leaders.

I countered this assertion with my experience. People are generally mistaken, I said, about the number of workers who are urged to take direct action. Such an error also existed, for example, about the number of workers who had opposed the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. At that time, a wave of irresistible enthusiasm for the war had also swept through the ranks of the Social Democratic labour movement. Social Democratic leaders who dared to oppose the general enthusiasm for war were swept away.

Such an account of historical events contradicted the legend that the SED cultivated about the role of labour. The SED students who had taken part in the debate reported to the party's Central Committee, which ordered my lecture to be cancelled. The State Secretariat obeyed this order immediately.

Wolfgang Harich

When I took over the management of the Wilmersdorf Adult Education Centre in August 1945, I came across a number of proposals and drafts for lecture series. One of these outlined a weekly two-hour lecture on Immanuel Kant. I scrutinised the draft and found it immature. My predecessor had accepted this lecture, which was to run for one semester. I could not accept this decision and decided to return the plan to the sender. In a friendly letter, I asked him to resign and offered him a sufficient fee for the work he had done on the draft.

Soon afterwards, a young man **of** about twenty-two, his hair flying and his eyes blazing, rushed into my office and, as soon as he had entered, showered me with the strongest reproaches. He would not, he shouted, put up with this treatment; he rebelled against the ingrained rule of the

"little Hitler". He wanted to fight for his cause and insisted on being allowed to give his lectures on Kant. I tried to calm the agitated man, it was Wolfgang Harich. He had opposed the Hitler regime with some students and felt he was fighting against National Socialism. Then

he claimed and wanted to be especially respected. When I insisted on my refusal, he continued with **accusations** and insults. Finally, he even began to threaten that he wanted to force his way into a lecture theatre at the adult education centre for his lectures, accompanied by a British officer. My patience ran out. I showed him the door. He left, snorting with rage.

Wolfgang Harich was the son of an East Prussian writer, worked as Johannes R. Becher's secretary for a short time after 1945, but was far too self-confident to be able to keep up with him in the long term. His talent was beyond question. He grasped things quickly, was bold enough to form a judgement about everything and express it, and also had undoubted talent as a writer.

In that argument, he expressed that he was an opponent of socialism. My predecessor had suggested that he look at Kant from a Marxist point of view. He had firmly rejected this.

Paul Bourdin was an olive witness in my dispute with Harich. Not long after Bourdin had left the Volkshochschule and taken up his post as editor-in-chief at "Kuriere", he took on the young Harich as his editor.

It was a good move. Harich became a theatre critic at a time when the stage was just beginning to recover. Harich went about his business with a fresh, unhesitating approach. **His** reviews were cool, often unabashed and stood out from the boring reviews of his colleagues. The young Harich achieved a certain fame that nourished his self-esteem unhealthily. He occasionally tried his hand at parody: he imitated the style of well-known writers, such as Ernst Jünger, and undoubtedly did so skilfully and successfully.

Harich frequented the "Müwe", the favoured pub that had been set up for artists and writers with the help of the Russians. It was here that he met the Soviet lieutenant colonel Dymschitz, who was a university professor in Leningrad in his civilian job. Dymschitz took a liking to the young **man** and spent weeks discussing Marxist problems with him. Eventually, he succeeded in winning Harich over to the Marxist cause. Harich left the "Kuriere", moved to East Berlin and joined the editorial team of the "Tiigliche Rundschiau", the newspaper

of the Soviet occupying power, as a theatre and art critic in.

Here, too, Harich's critiques were heeded, so that he lost none of his fresh fame. He loved sharp formulations and not infrequently caused offence among the actors and actresses. One day, the actress Käthe Dorsch took it upon herself to avenge her mistreated colleagues: After a not undeservedly bad review of her play, a

"Verrisses," she sought him out and vented her anger in two powerful slaps, which Harich swatted with Chevalieresque decency. He was paid an unusually high salary and was generally pampered by the Russians. In a course organised by the Russians for the employees of the "Tägliche Rundschau", he gave lectures on philosophy. In all discussions at public events in which he was present, he believed he had something to say and something to say.

When Harich was about 26 years old, he gave up the business of theatre criticism and turned to academia. He managed to obtain a teaching position in philosophy at the Humboldt University's Faculty of Education. He undoubtedly undertook serious philosophical studies and focussed in particular on the writings of Herder. He wrote his dissertation on Herder, became editor of a series of philosophical writings published by Aufbau-Verlag, became its deputy head editor, was now offered a teaching position at the Faculty of Philosophy, became deputy director of the Philosophy Department and was awarded the title of professor, although he had not yet habilitated properly.

In my opinion, he was an agile talent, but without any real creative depth. He was devoted to the party and had no difficulty in adapting his philosophy and his view of history to the needs of party ideology. He gave the speech at the opening of the Lessing Museum in Kamenz; he managed to celebrate Lessing as a forerunner of the SED.

But Harich was clever enough to realise over time that the conditions in the German Democratic Republic were not in order. The theory did not prove itself in practice; almost nowhere did the calculations work out. Plans were made over and over again, but the plans did not lead to an increase in the number of jobs.

increase in prosperity. The standard of living declined to some extent; nowhere did it work out. Materialism was the basis of the theory; but anyone who looked at reality had to realise that material conditions were deteriorating noticeably. Under circumstances in which the material situation is constantly deteriorating, the materialistic interpretation of the world loses all its power; it is incapable of raising hopes and winning hearts. On 17 June 1953, this policy of failure was given its first reward. At this point in time, Harich was already ready to openly voice his critical concerns. He did not yet scrutinise the entire policy of the German Democratic Republic; he limited himself to his special field, cultural policy.

This was met with disapproval in the leading positions of the party. Despite this, he continued to be ostentatiously favoured by the party, but Harich's career was noticeably slowed down. He was not given the philosophical chair for which he would have been qualified and was relegated to a marginalised area. His work at Aufbau-Verlag, however, was fruitful; if this publishing house developed into one of the best German publishing houses of all, Harich had no small part to play in this. In addition to his editorial work, he was entrusted with the editorship of the "Zeitschrift für Philosophie"; there was no one else who could have done this job better.

The Polish and Hungarian events were an impetus for Harich to actively intervene in politics. He had come to the realisation that there was no man in the German Democratic Republic who could take up the fight against the disastrous Stalinist regime. Gomutka had gained a strong symbolic value for Poland through his suffering, and Nagy was not without it. Merker, Dahlem and Ackermann had exposed themselves far too little to achieve such symbolic value. Ackermann probably once had the slogan of the "German way", but then capitulated and did not stand up for his programme. There was no one to step up to the plate. This was temptation enough for Harich to build on himself and plant the flag for which the hour seemed ripe.

Harich summarised the critical reactions he was concerned about in a memorandum. The policy of the German Democratic Republic was scrutinised in it.

and developed reform proposals. The political line he recommended was closer to that of the Social Democrats. He did not hesitate to enter into relations with West German social democratic circles. He also forged links with the Gomulka rebellion in Poland.

He presented his memorandum to several friends; the head of the Aufbau publishing house, Janka, was also inaugurated. He believed he had the support of men such as the philosopher Ernst Bloch and the Hungarian literary historian Georg Lukács. He saw the reform movement he was trying to initiate⁵ as being closely linked to the endeavours of the Hungarian Petöfi circle and the Polish Gomulki rebellion. Although he still lacked a large following, he did not doubt that time would work in his favour and that he would sooner or later receive the support of a large following.

Harich did not want to be a renegade; he wanted to remain a Marxist. In his memorandum, he assured that he did not want to become a renegade like Arthur Koestler. If he wanted to consult Rosa Luxemburg, Kautzky, Trotsky, Ruth Fischer and Sternberg in addition to Marx and **Lenin**, he sought confirmation and deepening of his theories.

Harich's memorandum wanted to re-establish the "German way". He endeavoured to avoid the appearance that he was motivated by "illegal" intentions; he did not want to be suspected of being a sinister conspirator. He openly wanted to take the Central Committee of the SED into his confidence. He knocked on the door of **Fred** Oelßner, Paul Wandel and Kurt Hager to present his programme to them, but was turned away in the anterooms; the comrades did not want to hear him. He then went to the Soviet ambassador Pushkin, handed him his memorandum and gave him a four-hour lecture. Pushkin was to plead his case to the Central Committee. But Pushkin couldn't take a joke; he gave a signal to paralyse this dangerous fellow. When Harich learnt how inaccessible Ulbricht was to his reform plans, he considered influencing the German Democratic Republic from Poland and West Germany. He hoped that the events in Poland and Hungary would also set things in motion in the German Democratic Republic.

His speculations and his plans seemed highly dangerous to Ulbricht, and that was when Harich's fate was decided. Since the Hungarian

After the events that followed, the intelligentsia in the German Democratic Republic was no longer at peace. Although many attempts were made to appease them, students and scientists were too agitated to be completely calmed down. If Harich managed to come into contact with the agitated intelligentsia, to make himself their mouthpiece, the consequences were unforeseeable. In defence of his position, Ulbricht decided to make Harich feel his power. So Harich was brought before the Supreme Court. On a piece of paper that was later found on his desk, Harich had noted that "the party is in danger". He saw the entire German Democratic Republic as being in grave danger and presumed to want to save it.

The hearing was restricted to the public. Only delegations from companies and selected writers **such as Anna Seghers, Bodo Uhse, Willi Bredel** and students were allowed to attend. Above all, the Western press was kept away, as it was not to be given the opportunity to capitalise on the matter. Workers made up the majority of the audience, they were the people before whom an intellectual was called to account, humiliated and punished. These workers were indignant, outraged at the guilty party, they approved of the judgement. The voice of the people rejected the intellectual's cause. It was a warning to the intelligentsia. They should learn their lesson from this trial: The horizon of the worker must become their own horizon, it delimits the space of their freedom. Therein lay the symbolic significance of the Harich trial. The intellectual who thinks and strives beyond the horizon of the worker will fall.

Wolfgang Harich was condemned because his mind and his insight could not be measured by the yardstick of the loyal labourer.

Wolfgang Harich was sentenced to ten years in prison.

Ernst Bloch

Ernst Bloch returned from American emigration in 1949 and was soon appointed Professor of Philosophy at Leipzig University. He had already joined the Communist Party in the 1920s. Of course, the party was

never completely agreed with him. In his books "Thomas Münzer" and "Spirit of Utopia", he had advocated an intellectual conception that was thoroughly idealistic in its basic nature. The party preferred to adhere to Friedrich Engels' "From Utopia to Science". With the work of Karl Marx, the time of utopias - the party doctrine - had come to an end. People no longer dreamed of a brighter future, they no longer indulged in mere socialist fantasies, but rather they obeyed the laws of social and political development. By understanding these laws and knowing how to handle them correctly, the socialist future was built in a real and tangible way. Socialism was no longer just a vague hope, but the anticipatory image of a near future. It had ceased to be a child of faith; it had become a scientifically founded, precise idea of an approaching reality.

Ernst Bloch did not really fit into this scheme. He was allowed to stay, but did not refrain from occasionally distancing himself from him.

Many years had passed since then. The Hitler era had passed over the world. It had not gone unnoticed that Ernst Bloch had endeavoured to adapt his philosophy to communist needs; it wanted to shed its idealistic character and base itself on a materialistic view.

Ernst Bloch took up his post, the Leipzig Chair, in 1949. The rulers of the German Democratic Republic were very pleased to have gained this intellectual power. Ernst Bloch was unmistakably an extraordinary mind who was accorded the esteem to which he was entitled. Students of philosophy flocked to him; Bloch's **influence** on the young intelligentsia was immense. A large circle gathered around him, honouring him as their teacher and leader. This influence was further strengthened when the "Zeitschrift für Philosophies" appeared under Bloch's editorship. Ernst Bloch consciously endeavoured to assert himself as the Eastern antithesis of Western decadent philosophy. He contrasted the pessimistic, nihilistic philosophers Martin Heidegger and Karl Jasper with his optimistic, positive philosophy. If the Western world had every reason to despair, to fear nothingness and the abyss, he wanted to demonstrate this,

how the Eastern world was authorised to look to the future with faith and trust. In the Soviet Union, he saw the beginnings of a utopia that could be realised. The German Democratic Republic also appeared to him in such a light. In 1956, Bloch was still at the centre of an event organised by the German Academy of Sciences; he gave the central lecture "The Problem of Freedom in the Light of Scientific Socialism", which was discussed at a three-day conference. In his speech, he made the astonishing statement that one's attitude towards the problem of freedom is expressed in one's attitude towards the Soviet Union.

In Ernst Bloch lived the awareness of being a prophet. The tall, handsome man with the expressive, distinguished countenance had an unmistakably fascinating effect. He was a tangible expression of his sense of authority. Even in bodies such as the Presidential Council of the Kulturbund, to which he had been admitted, he made it clear when he raised his voice that he had said the "decisive word".

Gradually, however, opposition began to stir against him. Initially, it only expressed itself very quietly and secretly. Ernst Bloch had brought back an extensive manuscript from his emigration: "Subject and Objects, an interpretation of Hegel. In it, the powerful effect Hegel had had on him came to light. Bloch's thesis was that one could not really understand Marx if one had not first studied Hegel's philosophy in depth. This thesis was thought to be a veiled statement in favour of idealism against materialism. The rulers of the German Democratic Republic were of the opinion that those who had absorbed Marx no longer needed to worry about Hegel's philosophy. Marx had put Hegel, who to a certain extent stood on his head, on his feet; it was questionable to turn back to standing on his head. Jealous colleagues of Ernst Bloch supported such criticism; they believed they could consolidate their position by undermining Ernst Bloch's reputation.

The first volume of Bloch's work "The Principle of Hope" was published in 1954. For some time it had been considered whether this book should be printed at all in the German Democratic Republic. Bloch had to fight hard for permission to print it. In the end, however, he succeeded in overcoming the resistance. The second volume was published the following year

of the work, which was calculated for three volumes. This work was likely to strengthen the objections against Bloch. The question arose as to whether this was scientific socialism. Some young philosophy professors and above all party functionaries denied it. Socialism appeared in the light of a mere hope. Its proclamation was a message of salvation in a religious sense, a new messianism seemed to have arisen. This is how bourgeois utopians had once tried to fob off the proletariat with hope and lull them to sleep. Even if Bloch tried to interpret hope as a creative force, the mistrust of such an interpretation was not silent. Bloch's socialism came under suspicion of being merely a form of religion. The accusation was levelled that Bloch's philosophy was basically just a bourgeois philosophy.

Bloch was left empty-handed when the annual national prizes were awarded. His students and friends were astonished to see this outstanding philosopher, who had rendered such brilliant services to the scientific and philosophical prestige of the German Democratic Republic, being visibly set back. It was thanks to their persistent efforts that the resistance of the party functionaries against Bloch could finally be overcome in 1955; in that year the philosopher was honoured with the National Prize.

One of Bloch's most active students, who campaigned tirelessly in this cause, was Wolfgang Harich.

Harich was arrested in December 1956. Now Ernst Bloch's opponents and enemies were also stirring. Harich's "high treason": was this not a fruit of Bloch's philosophy? Bloch himself came under suspicion of having been involved in the Harich conspiracy. It was indisputable that several of Bloch's students had been deeply shaken by the Hungarian events. They were susceptible to the counter-revolution, and this susceptibility was linked to Bloch's philosophy. The innermost counter-revolutionary tendency of Bloch's philosophy had been revealed by rebellious students and by Harich.

All of a sudden, Ernst Bloch was unacceptable at a university in the German Democratic Republic. Although he was not touched, the respect for him was still too great. Meanwhile, his retirement was decided. Bloch was forced to watch as his students were suspected, persecuted, expelled from the university, and then dismissed.

were chased away, forced into industrial labour in companies and even arrested. He was not allowed to stand up for the discredited; he had to watch it all in silence. Only a few people realised the grotesque nature of the situation that lay in Ernst Bloch's fate.

In the summer of 1961, Ernst Bloch's philosophy unleashed lively discussions at universities. The problem of whether Bloch's philosophy was idealistic or materialistic was debated and there was a tendency to regard it as a variant of idealism. Despite the attacks that were levelled against Bloch, he was in no danger. He had gained such a high reputation as a philosopher that he had become unassailable in the eyes of the state authorities.

When the Berlin Wall was erected in August 1961, Bloch was relaxing at Lake Chiemsee. He wrestled with the question of whether he should return to Leipzig, his place of residence, or whether it would be more advisable for him to stay in West Germany. As long as he worked in Leipzig, he had enjoyed all the advantages that the German Democratic Republic had to offer. He had striven for the National Prize and had indeed received it. He had exerted an influence on numerous students, had filled them with his thoughts and thus plunged them into many difficulties. He also had to seriously ask himself whether the content of his philosophy did not oblige him to remain loyal to the GDR. Anyone who has chosen the principle of hope as the object of his philosophy and thus also champions the cause of utopia must know that the realisation of every social utopia imprints a fixed form on the social body. Society cannot be allowed to develop as its inner elementary instincts dictate. Elementary growths must be curtailed, certain forms imposed on the social structure. Bloch had regarded the German Democratic Republic as the growth stage of a realising utopia.

Such considerations may have influenced Bloch's decision to create the German

Democratic Republic was difficult. But in the end he decided to break away from the German Democratic Republic. The West saw his decision not to return to the German Democratic Republic as sensational. The press celebrated him as the man who had told the story of the freedom of the West.

He was too old to lay claim to a chair in West Germany. The University of Tübingen opened a lecture theatre to him for guest lectures. Various other universities invited him to lecture at their institutions.

Publishing negotiations

In 1952, I offered the manuscript "Das Reich der niederen Dämonen" to Rowohlt Verlag in Hamburg. It gave the publisher quite a headache. His editor wrote to me that it was the sharpest reckoning yet with Hitler and the Third Reich. Rowohlt considered whether the circumstances were favourable for the book. When two of the editors recommended that the book be accepted, Rowohlt consulted his very successful author Ernst von Salomon for a review; he also decided in favour of the manuscript. Rowohlt then dared to publish it.

Rowohlt had, of course, correctly anticipated that the German people would show little interest in their recent terrible past. They did not want to be reminded of it. Although the book reviews were mostly excellent, the number of buyers left much to be desired.

Finally, in 1957, the publishing house Rütten & Loening in the German Democratic Republic was persuaded to take over my book "Das Reich der niederen Dämonen" as a licensed edition for the German Democratic Republic.

In June 1957, the publisher invited me to a consultation about the book. I was received by three young gentlemen, two of whom told me that they had been my students at university. It was easy to see that they were in an agitated state; there were clear signs of embarrassment. After some back and forth, they came out: they wanted to talk to me about a few little things. I braced myself for the worst. However, it was far less serious than I had expected. At one point in the "Demon Book" I had remarked that "the large workers' organisations had 'voluntarily' cleared the battlefield in 1933 under the pressure of circumstances". They had taken offence at this word "voluntarily"; the Communist Party should not appear so inglorious. It was a small matter; I explained myself

were prepared to delete the word "voluntary". At another point, it seemed to them that I was only talking about the work of

"I also conceded the existence of daring organisers of resistance groups. The men of 20 July were the only ones I had recognised as being very effective. My fellow speakers agreed with my insertion of the word "public" effectiveness.

They brought up the former relations between the Reichswehr and the Soviet Union. I referred to the documentary material and my personal experiences and declared that I would not be talked to on this point. They readily backed down and refused to make any changes.

Basically, these were really trivial changes; I couldn't understand how anyone could make a fuss about them. I seemed to have the odour of a man who should only be touched with ice-cream gloves. The few tiny concessions I had made obviously filled the lecturers with satisfaction; they had prepared themselves for fiercer resistance.

Lewy, whom I visited afterwards, was relieved when I told him that I had reached an agreement with his employees.

Lewy was naïve enough to consider it a merit to be able to disseminate his sharp analysis of the Third Reich in the German Democratic Republic as well. He did not quite understand the reasons why the authorities of the German Democratic Republic limited the print run to 3,000 copies from the outset.

"Reich der niederen Dämonen" was published at Christmas 1957, and a few weeks later it was almost completely out of print. Many readers made connections between the conditions described in the Third Reich and those in the German Democratic Republic. This came to the attention of the Central Committee of the SED, which believed it had to intervene immediately. At the beginning of February 1958, the books still available in bookshops were confiscated.

At the end of February 1958, I was back at Rütten & Loening Verlag for an agreed meeting with Hermann Lewy. The chief editor for history, Knoock, was invited to this meeting.

was contracted. Lewy was very depressed. I learnt that the "Demon Book" had caused him great embarrassment. He was later reproached. He explained that he had read and accepted the book as an unconditionally anti-fascist book. However, he had subsequently had all kinds of misgivings. Some points had confused young readers in particular, and it had not been easy to dispel this confusion. For example, I argued that the only really effective resistance group was that of 20 July. I would have glossed over the entire laborious and sacrificial activity of the Communist Party and the labour movement. I also talked about the fact that when the war against the Soviet Union broke out, Hitler had encountered strong feelings of friendly collaboration in the Ukraine. The former collaboration of the German Reichswehr with the Soviet Union had never been discussed in the German Democratic Republic; the reference to it in my book had had a disturbing effect on young people. I had spoken of Dimitroff as a "demonic" person; Dimitroff had been cast **in** a dubious light because the title of the book was "The Realm of the Lower **Demons**". About Hitler I would have said that in him, apart from Hobbes, Rousseau and Machiavelli, a Leninist variant had also come to the fore. It was quite unforgivable that he, Lewy, had completely overlooked the implications of the last sentence of the book. In this sentence it was said that the chaos caused by the National Socialists had devoured the entire future of the German people. This negated the hopeful creation of the German Democratic Republic.

I pointed out that the book was written in 1936, was documentary and spoke entirely from the atmosphere of the Third Reich. If today's readers reacted so strangely, I couldn't take that into consideration; the reactions of political illiterates were no yardstick for a writer. If some readers are shocked today by facts that they were unaware of, it is the fault of the party that has concealed these facts up to now.

The way Lewy replied was shocking. Originally he had agreed with me; because of the accusations that

had been made to him, he had changed his mind. He now considers these criticisms to be correct and justified.

Some time ago, I handed over "Gesammelte Aufsätze" to the publisher. In the June meeting I enquired about the fate of the manuscript. Lewy had the manuscript brought to him and read me the expert opinion written by a young historian. I was quite surprised by the report. All my publications, it said, bore the stamp of originality; they contained new and surprising ideas; everything was brilliantly formulated; all phrases and worn-out points of view were missing.

Nevertheless, the editor did not recommend accepting the manuscript. Historical essays stood next to philosophical essays; as a result, the whole was not a cohesive unit and promised little success.

Lewy pulled himself out of the noose by saying that he wanted to obtain another expert opinion.

In December 1957, I spoke to Hermann Lewy again. In its book production, Rütten & Loening Verlag had also developed that culture of taste which, strangely enough, characterised all the leading publishers in the German Democratic Republic. The publishing house placed particular emphasis on historical publications, which were its speciality.

I wanted to find out whether Rütten & Loening Verlag would publish my "Memories". When I asked Lewy about the "Erinnerungen", he first literally gasped for breath and then uttered an agonised "no". He replied that the publishing house had not been criticised at the SED's cultural conference and no accusations had been levelled against its publications. But he had to understand the guidelines of the cultural conference as meaning that they did not expect a retrospective view of the past, but expected books that dealt with questions of the future. The "memoirs", however, naturally looked to the past, in which one was not particularly interested. After some hesitation, he went on to say that the editor had, of course, also raised a number of objections. This editor was Fritz Klein, a son of the former editor-in-chief of the "Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung", Fritz Klein. The young Fritz Klein had studied history and was currently preparing for university teaching.

career. He was a student of Alfréd Meusel and had done his doctorate with him on German-Russian relations. I had read through the dissertation afterwards and it had deeply disappointed me. Important events and procedures, such as the relations between the German Reichswehr and the Soviet government, had been shamefully omitted, whereas party congress resolutions and speeches by Stalin had been used to a great extent. The work gave the impression that German-Russian relations had to be considered exclusively from the point of view of statements by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Fritz Klein had now taken a critical look at my "memories". The Ministry of Culture had also given an expert opinion on the "Memories". This reviewer approached the manuscript without any sense of the political weight of my opposition. He was merciless in his criticism of passages that he believed might offend the Socialist Unity Party. The chapter on Ernst Jünger, for example, seemed unacceptable to him. He also disagreed with the section on General Ludendorff. Ernst Jünger was harshly rejected within the German Democratic Republic: Johannes R. Becher regarded and treated him almost as his enemy. The friendly manner in which I commented on Ernst Jünger should not be expected of the readership of the German Democratic Republic.

During our conversation, we were joined by Knook, the chief editor for history. Knook had previously listened to me and, as the conversation revealed, still remembered many of my earlier remarks. He didn't feel very comfortable when he was now supposed to defend the official expert's objections. But of course the party directive was also decisive for him. The "memories" didn't quite fit the party mould, and so they were unacceptable.

The publisher wanted to know if I had any unpublished manuscripts on my desk. I spoke of a larger manuscript "Global Class War" and a smaller pamphlet "Mit ruhig festem Tritt". The publisher asked me to hand these works over to him; he was very interested in them. He thought I had done myself a bitter injustice after so many years of not publishing anything of mine; he was very happy about it,

to have now published "The Realm of the Lower Demons". He should not be deceived, I replied; these two manuscripts were also full of subjective points of view and judgements. They would hardly be suitable for the publisher Rütten & Loening after the "Memories" had also failed to find favour.

In this debate, the oppressive consequences of heads with narrow horizons dominating the cultural life of the German Democratic Republic became apparent once again. Anything that did not fit into these horizons was rejected. The general lowering of cultural standards was inevitable.

A month later, I went back to Rütten & Loening Verlag and discussed the publisher's rejection of "Erinnerungen" with the editors for history: Knook and Hauschke. Knook had promised me that he would submit Fritz Klein's review. In fact, he stood by his word and brought it to my attention.

Klein began with a detailed and respectful appraisal of my personality and also my "memories". They were extremely interesting and not lacking in importance. Stylistically, they did not have the brilliance of my other publications, but the sobriety was appropriate to the subject matter of the memoirs. As a rule, the memoirist overestimated the importance of his person. Franz did not avoid this in my "Erinnerungen" either, but I was moderate in this respect.

This positive appraisal was followed by critical comments. Klein said that I had underestimated the role of the labour force. My work had focussed on the role of intellectuals, and I had overlooked the fact that the actual historical force was the working class.

My statement to Mussolini that an alliance between Germany, Italy, Japan and the Soviet Union, i.e. the proletarian nations, was to be striven for was evidence of my misjudgement of foreign policy. (Klein doubted the possibility of an alliance between Bolshevism and Fascism. The indisputable fact, however, was the alliance that had come about between Stalin and Hitler in 1939). The reader cannot be expected to accept my favourable assessment of Radek. I was on the wrong track when I criticised the Soviet

"barbarism" and assigning Germany the task of bringing the Western heritage to the Soviet Union. My view that the German Democratic Republic alone was too weak to accomplish this task as a result of the division of Germany also had to be rejected.

My sceptical attitude towards the Bavarian Soviet Republic deserves criticism. The Soviet Republic should be taken much more seriously than I take it. My disparaging judgement of it was likely to confuse the working class.

In his conclusion, Fritz Klein argued in favour of publishing the "Memoirs", provided that I made a few corrections and additions. I would have to admit that national Bolshevism had failed; at the same time, an analysis of the reasons for this failure would have to be made.

As Lewy told me after his escape to the West, the rejection of the manuscript was based on the guidelines that had been decided at the SED's cultural conference in October 1957. The cultural conference had demanded strict supervision of publishing work; only literature that was in line with socialist views was to be promoted. The "Erinnerungen" deviated far from this line, so they could not count on favour.

Lewy's negative decision made it easy for me to sign the publishing contract offered to me by Dr Witsch from the publishing house Kiepenheuer & Witsch in Cologne.

Alfred Kantorowicz

The flight of university professor Alfred Kantorowicz to West Berlin on 22 August 1957 was an event that dealt a severe blow to the reputation of the German Democratic Republic. Before 1933, Kantorowicz had been the Paris representative of the "Berliner Tageblatt"; in 1931 he had joined the Communist Party. After Hitler came to power, the Gestapo searched for him; Friedrich Hielscher was honoured to have stood by the persecuted man, given him shelter and then helped him to flee abroad. Kantorowicz had travelled to Paris, where he became secretary of the Association of Emigrating Jews.

He was a German writer, was involved in the founding of an archive that collected the published books, magazines and newspapers, went to Spain to join the revolutionary troops at the front and finally moved to North America. In America he came into close contact with the two Mann brothers: in particular, he became friends with Heinrich Mann. He returned to Germany in 1947 and chose to live in the Soviet occupation zone. His heart was filled with enthusiasm for helping to build the German Democratic Republic.

He had put a lot of effort into bringing an "East-West" magazine to life. It was to be an intellectual bridge between East and West; poems by French, Spanish, English and Americans alternated with those by Russians, Poles, Czechoslovaks, Hungarians and Romanians. Kantorowicz regarded the magazine as the crowning achievement of his life's work.

It hit him all the harder when he realised that Walter Ulbricht disliked the magazine. It was easy for Ulbricht to blow out the magazine's lights: He cut off its financial support. Kantorowicz was bitter and never quite got over the offence he felt at the demise of "Ost-West".

He described his Spanish experiences in various books published by Aufbau-Verlag.

He took part in the conference in Imshausen alongside me as the voice of the East. He took the floor a few times during the discussion and also gave a short presentation. I noticed his unusual nervousness, his face was twitching, his hands were shaking and he spoke in a rush.

He focussed his work on Heinrich Mann's life's work and gained a reputation as a man who knew his way around literature. It seemed natural to draw him to the university to read about literary history. Several Germanists of distinction left Humboldt University, and Kantorowicz soon became the leading Germanist at Berlin's Humboldt University. He dealt with the latest literature, immersed himself in Heinrich Mann's estate after his death and also administered the Thomas Mann Archive. He was tolerated and was also forgiven for his obvious disdain for the poetry of "social realism". He let the intrusive "proletarian" poet Kuba

and understandably incurred his wrath.

I don't know what particular experiences contributed to his belief that he had been set back even in the great position he had attained. In any case, he felt extremely unhappy. He made no secret of his criticism of the policies of the German Democratic Republic and loved to tell a Chinese fairy tale in intimate company. The tale went something like this: a farmer lived near a river. Across the river, a terrible dragon was up to mischief. One day, as the farmer was tilling his field, he noticed the dragon on the far bank. Seized by fear, he mounted his horse to flee home. On the way, he came across a child. Pale with terror, he warned the child of the disaster he was about to escape. He took the child to get it away from the monster and put it on the horse behind him. He soon felt uneasy about the little guest behind his back. He glanced back and, gripped by horror, realised that the dragon was sitting on the horse behind him.

He had escaped fascism, Kantorowicz wanted to say with this fairy tale, but to his horror he now found himself in the German Democratic Republic, jumping from the frying pan into the fire. I rarely met him in person. When I became isolated within the German Democratic Republic, I had the impression that Kantorowicz was also withdrawing from me. I never had the feeling that I was in an unequivocal agreement with him, but of course I could not look into his heart.

He was deeply shaken by the Hungarian revolution. He had formed fruitful relationships with Georg Lukács and Wolfgang Harich and sympathised with the Petöfi Circle. The catastrophe of Harich and the publisher Janka made him doubt whether the German Democratic Republic was his true home. When he was asked to sign a declaration by writers condemning the Hungarian revolution, he refused to do so. Little fuss was made of this refusal, but it was acknowledged by no longer electing him to the board of the Writers' Association.

The party leadership soon felt it necessary to express its displeasure with him. At a meeting of the plenum

of the Central Committee, he was fiercely attacked. Mr Kuba complained that Kantorowicz was not worthy of him and encouraged the plenum to "fire a shot across the bow" at writers of this kind. Kantorowicz saw that he had been noticed. However, it was not yet time to consider taking action against him or to feel threatened. He decided to make his escape in good time. He prudently began to prepare his escape. He persuaded his family to seek rest in Venice and retired to his country house in Bansin for a few weeks. After returning to Berlin, he took the step of asking for asylum in West Berlin.

The German government received the refugee with obvious satisfaction and satisfaction. He was given the opportunity to make a well-balanced statement to the people of the German Democratic Republic on the radio. It was a sharp rejection of the rulers of the German Democratic Republic.

He said accusingly: "We really meant people's rule with **our** struggle and found ourselves entangled in the radio dictatorship. The People's Chamber was a chamber of functionaries. The welfare of the people was the welfare of functionaries. The state-owned enterprises are functionary-owned enterprises in which the workers have forfeited their basic rights, for which they have fought and suffered for a century, and are whipped up by functionary bosses into ever new extra shifts, overtime and high performance in half serfdom."

kantorowicz had a good press in the Federal Republic; for a few days he was almost a "celebrated man". People marvelled at him as a great scholar; the newspapers carried his picture, which showed an intellectual man.

Kantorowicz may have had reasons to leave the German Democratic Republic. However, it was questionable whether he could find the freedom he missed in the German Democratic Republic in the Federal Republic.

Otto Grotewohl

Grotewohl was not a man of action. He did not set anything in motion and did not put his stamp on things. But he knew how to represent well. He was a man of façades, just as it was on

had been Federal President Heuss in his own way. It is curious how the two Germans came up with two figures at the same time who knew how to give an inadequate cause a nice coat of paint. Trained as a printer, Grotewohl had already been a minister in Brunswick during his political career before 1933; the best manners had become second nature to him. His calm demeanour was all the more impressive as he had obviously put a lot of effort into acquiring a well-rounded education. He was a good speaker; in personal conversation as well as in public speaking, his sentences all sounded maturely considered and well-crafted. What he said was solid and well-founded; although he did not dazzle with witty farces and humourful ideas, it was the reliable and deliberate speech of a man who inspires confidence.

The discussions with intellectuals in the "Möwe" were usually chaired by Prime Minister Grotewohl. In his dealings with artists and scientists, it was unmistakable that he was an artistic person; it was said that he painted in his free hours. His good formulations were captivating, and he seemed to have a warm understanding for all the problems, pains and worries of creative people. There was certainly a lot of routine hidden behind the appearance of sympathy and willingness to help, but as a **rule** the complainant went away comforted and felt uplifted because he had found the Prime Minister's ear. The encounter had left him with a quiet hope.

Grotewohl conducted his business with great skilfulness. He carefully studied the subject matter he had to deal with; wherever he took the floor on a matter, one immediately sensed that he was knowledgeable. He was an exemplary negotiator. He held the constitutional deliberations firmly in his hand; he was fully equal to all constitutional discussions. He held the office of Prime Minister for many years with measured dignity, which he also maintained in public debates and events.

In all of this, however, it could not be concealed that a firm will, which could have been guided by his own idea of the cause, was not at work in Grotewohl. He was not carried up because he was committed to a cause for better or for worse, but rather because he had committed himself to a cause because he expected it to be his own.

that she would carry him up. He was merely a trustee for the cause he championed, which did not really belong to his heart, but for which he did his best because trusteeship gave him satisfaction.

Grotewohl was a soft man at heart. As a former Social Democrat, he had been appointed to the office of Prime Minister by the Russians and Communists and had been tolerated in it for many years because he was compliant and reliably obedient to the power he knew to be over him. When he "fought" for a cause, he did so according to the signals he was given. In the face of the robust Ulbricht, he had no desire to get his own way. If he had ever wanted to insist on his own head, he would have gambled away his office, and perhaps even himself; he refused to accept that. That's why he sailed with the wind and the current of the party and only made sure that he sailed beautifully. He was never a driving force. He had no influence on the real course of events. Grotewohl had no misdeed on his conscience, any misdeed was far from his mind; in his heart he always meant well in every case. But he could not prevent himself from having to cover up every act of violence that occurred, every injustice committed, by remaining silent or refusing to object.

The Soviet occupying power was represented by an extremely energetic man, Colonel Tulpanov. Tulpanov was well-disposed towards the Germans. The Soviet occupying power was not in a hurry to implement Bolshevism in the economic and cultural fields. The Bolshevik attempts were cautious. They were careful not to upset or agitate the population. At the beginning of 1946, the Soviet occupying power undertook a highly political attempt. The Soviet occupation zone was not to appear as the beginning of a division of Germany; on the contrary, it wanted to give the impression that it was intent on creating a unified Germany. Of course, it could only realise its intentions with the means at its disposal. The Soviets took offence at the division of the German labour movement. They were keen to unite the two labour parties. The fact that German labour had split into the Social Democratic Party and the Communist Party was seen as one of the main causes of Hitler's victory. According to so-

In Soviet terms, there was no surer means of thwarting the resurgence of fascism in Germany than to merge the two workers' parties into one. Colonel Tulpanov had to realise this idea. He presented it to Grotewohl. The latter was far too German for the idea of a unified Germany not to have taken hold of him. He tried to promote the idea of the unity of the German labour movement among the Berlin Social Democrats.

Schumacher, however, managed to turn the entire West German Social Democracy as well as the Social Democratic Party of West **Berlin** against the unification. * Only the Social Democrats of East Berlin and the Soviet zone followed Grotewohl and agreed to the unification of the two parties. The Social Democrats denied themselves the grand idea of founding a united Germany under the leadership of the entire working class. It was complicit in the division of Germany by shirking the historical task it was offered at the time.

If Grotewohl had fully realised the deep historical meaning of the unification of the two parties at that time, he would not have failed to make the Social Democrats understand that they had completely failed in a great moment of their historical existence. But Grotewohl had to accept the unification of the two parties as a mere party affair. The parties in West Germany had an interest in devaluing Grotewohl's behaviour and never allowing them to realise what the German people had let slip out of their hands that day. Grotewohl's various attempts to establish relations with Bonn failed each time. Konrad Adenauer was keen to make Otto Grotewohl appear as nothing more than a Communist party supporter. The Social Democratic Party, which had not grasped the call of the hour, tried to get rid of the guilty conscience that it could not quite silence by avoiding any contact with the Communist Party from then on. Even in 1918, she had not understood how to render the services to the future of Germany that history had demanded of her. At that time, the idea of a German council state was in the air; instead, it decided in favour of the parliamentary system.

- Cf. p. 31-34

democracy and approved of the murder of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, the two pioneers of the idea of soviets. She never realised how, by helping the idea of parliamentary democracy achieve a breakthrough, she was in fact paving the way for Hitler to rise to power.

The situation in the German Democratic Republic

The politics and economy of the German Democratic Republic cannot be understood without being aware of the complicated situation in which it finds itself. Above it hovers an unspoken basic law that cannot be touched, that is its taboo. This basic law reads: The German Democratic Republic must be and remain part of the Soviet sphere of power under all circumstances. The many difficulties and entanglements into which the German Democratic Republic has always been caught up for years arise from the effectiveness of this unbreakable Basic Law. The German Democratic Republic is that part of German territory on which the Soviet Union has laid its hands, just as the Federal Republic is that other part of German territory which the United States of America has claimed. The German Democratic Republic functions as that Soviet-Russian glacis which covers and shields the great Asian-Slavic world empire against the West. The strategic task assigned to the German Democratic Republic cannot be overestimated in its importance. It exists for the sake of this task, and it must organise itself for this task.

From the very beginning, the German Democratic Republic was burdened by the fact that the global political function it had to fulfil imposed heavy sacrifices on the population. The Soviet Union had suffered greatly during the war. After the end of the war, it was under pressure to recover from the war damage as quickly as possible in order to cope with American superiority. The dismantling that the population of the Soviet occupation zone had to endure was disruptive and threw their entire economy into confusion. It had to pay for large reparation claims, and all the more so as the West German population had to pay its share of the reparations with American labour.

support that had been rightfully granted to the Soviet Union in the Potsdam resolutions.

The Soviet Union had to make the greatest efforts to develop its own technical production apparatus in such a way that it was able to catch up with the West. The Soviet Union did not have the means to help the population of its occupation zone, the later German Democratic Republic, in the same way that America helped the West German population with the Marshall Plan. The population of the German Democratic Republic not only had to bear the costs of rebuilding their own economy, the costs of renewing and expanding their industrial apparatus and their destroyed agriculture, they also had to make large payments to the Soviet Union. While the standard of living of the West German population rose, that of the German Democratic Republic fell. For the West German population, American alienation meant an abundant supply of consumer goods, prosperity and economic prosperity; for the population of the German Democratic Republic, on the other hand, Soviet alienation meant a lowering of living standards, a primitivisation of the standard of living, sacrifice and deprivation.

This had serious consequences for the inner attitude of the population of the German Democratic Republic towards their occupying power. While the West German population, who were happily enjoying their prosperity, felt that their fate was well protected in American hands, the population of the German Democratic Republic regarded the Soviet occupying power as an enemy that made their existence more difficult.

Both occupying powers, America and the Soviet Union, soon began to take themselves out of the firing line, so to speak. They set up governments that took care of government business in their name for their own benefit. The government apparatus of the Federal Republic of Germany was in American service, the government apparatus of the German Democratic Republic in Soviet service. In form, these two governments were declared sovereign; it increased their prestige in the eyes of their own populations if they were allowed to present themselves in the splendour of their sovereignty. In fact, however, they were only "sham sovereigns".

It was inevitable that the position of the government of the German Democratic Republic vis-à-vis its own people would soon be different from that of the federal government. The German people are a thoroughly bourgeois people due to tradition and the social development of the past years. The Federal Republic was established as a decidedly bourgeois state; the West German citizen did not perceive the American as an opponent, but as his equal. They felt that their bourgeois order was protected by the American guardianship. He shared the same principles, the same legal views, the same values, the same interests with the American citizen. It was not difficult for him to feel comfortable and secure within the American tutelage. He was quite satisfied with his government, which bowed to American supremacy; by obeying American directives, it also took care of his own civic concerns and needs. It had not remained hidden from him that his own welfare was nowhere better off than under American patronage; so he had no reason to be critical of his government, the recipient of American orders, and to rebel against it. Things were quite different in the German Democratic Republic. The government of the German Democratic Republic was not allowed to fall back on Soviet loans. It was responsible for organising the poverty and destitution. It was not compensated by Soviet aid money for having to appear as a Soviet instrument. Dependence on the foreign power was not sweetened by being allowed to lead a comfortable life. The supply of consumer goods and food was inadequate, and the population saw no reason to be patient in the face of shortcomings. They rebelled against their government, and this also meant against the Soviet Union.

Their government then had a heavy duty to counter this rebellion with rigour. In the background stood the Soviet power; it was one of the indispensable duties of the government to maintain peace and order in the country. The Soviets could not tolerate an uprising; the government had to prove its ownership by preventing it or, if it broke out, liquidating it. This was not an atmosphere in which liberal freedoms could flourish. To the extent that the

population lived in a state of internal rebellion, freedoms had to be restricted, dictatorial power had to be exercised. This situation of the government of the German Democratic Republic was now exacerbated by the fact that the internal development of the German Democratic Republic was being watched with malicious eyes from America. America had an interest in disrupting the position of the Soviet Union in Central Europe. If the people of the German Democratic Republic rebelled in their hearts against their regime, this tempted America to pour oil on the fire, to deepen the general discontent, to incite against the "oppressors", to overthrow the government of the German Democratic Republic in an open outrage and to oust the Soviet power from eastern Germany. On the other hand, this Soviet power and, on its behalf, the government of the German Democratic Republic had to take precautionary measures; it was inevitable that the pressure of the regime would intensify. One wedge drove the other.

This situation was exacerbated by the fact that the population of the German Democratic Republic also originally lived in bourgeois traditions. The resistance that arose among the population for bourgeois reasons could possibly be broken if the bourgeois institutions were disrupted, if the ground was pulled from under the feet of the bourgeois way of life. The German Democratic Republic was to be socially adapted to the Soviet system, was to be "Bolshevised". "Socialism" was proclaimed as the goal. This goal aimed to uproot the population socially; by de-civilising it, it was to be weakened, rendered incapable of resistance and defenceless. It was inevitable that the struggle between the government and the population would become increasingly fierce. The basis on which the government stood was becoming ever narrower. In practice, its support rested exclusively on the bayonets of Soviet power.

The population reacted by fleeing to an alarming extent. The Republikflucht spread uncannily. This was gleefully pursued and favoured by the Federal Republic and America.

In the interests of Germany as a whole, however, what was happening was monstrous. Parts of the German people left the soil of their fathers, abandoned it and retreated from the East to

back to the West. The fugitive from the republic is, probably without realising it, a kind of surrenderer and deserter who abandons the German cause; he shows that in the hour of greatest danger he is no longer able to withstand the pressure exerted on his German existence. That is the fate of all borderlanders, that more is demanded of them than of people from the interior. They are in a tough position and have the task of defending the cause of their country and people in an endangered situation. Every fugitive from the Republic must be criticised for having failed the test to which he was subjected.

Two "leaders"

The hostility that had developed between the two Germanys over the course of time was shocking. In mutual defence they influenced each other profoundly; the measures taken by one Germany were calculated to set itself apart from the other, and in doing so the other Germany was also encouraged to consolidate its deviant nature. In the Ahlen Programme of 1946, the CDU had committed itself to moderate socialism. Soon, however, it abandoned all socialist approaches and attempts; precisely in deliberate contrast to the German Democratic Republic, the Federal Republic under the leadership of the CDU became more and more of a bourgeois capitalist state from year to year. Capitalism was the face of politics and the social structure of the Federal Republic. In contrast, the German Democratic Republic felt driven to follow the path of Bolshevism more and more exclusively, to see its salvation in the collective system. When the state-owned enterprises had taken firm root in the German Democratic Republic, the Bonn Bundestag decided to privatise the state-owned enterprises and companies. By joining NATO, the Federal Republic encouraged the German Democratic Republic to align itself closely with the Warsaw Pact bloc. Every step taken by one Germany triggered a counter-step by the other, with the result that both grew increasingly distant from each other. There was talk of reunification and at the same time the existing gulf deepened beyond repair. The system of spies and agents

was practised with bitter consistency in both Germanys; the secret services on both sides were fanatically active in attacks of mutual subversion and subversion. The jurisdiction of each of the two parts classified a citizen's relations with the other Germany as treason and punished this offence relentlessly. Each of the two Germanys called on foreign countries for help against the other Germany: the Federal Republic of America, the German Democratic Republic the Soviet Union.

The contrast between the two Germanys finally came to a head in two leading personalities, here in Dr Konrad Adenauer, there in Walter Ulbricht. This opposition was so sharp that one could rightly say that Dr Adenauer supported Ulbricht's position and Ulbricht supported Dr Adenauer's position. Precisely because both were so fiercely in love with each other, one kept the other in his position. It was an uncanny situation.

It cannot be denied: Adenauer's policy was based on an overall concept. This conception was neither subtle nor profound; it was neither complicated nor imaginative. Quite the opposite: it was of an alarming primitiveness. Soon after 1945, Adenauer realised the coming American-Soviet conflict. His bourgeois instinct told him that this opposition was irreconcilable and that Germany could benefit from it if it joined the American front. Anti-Bolshevism, in turn, offered itself as a principled ideological declaration of war on the Soviet Union. Adenauer simply picked up the old Hitlerian thread of anti-Bolshevism and took it further.

Adenauer could not be in any doubt that the aggravation of US-Soviet relations would one day have to end in a new war. This war of the future seemed to him to be a great German opportunity. The German rearmament, which Adenauer had offered America in his memorandum of August 1950, was initiated; it happened against the resistance of almost the entire German people. Step by step, Adenauer used his legislation to weave the nets in which the German people were to become entangled. Compulsory military service was introduced. America supplied weapons, built up a system of bases and stored the sinister atom-are equipment in Germany. Unreasonable German politicians dreamed of an advance as far as the Urals.

In order to persuade the German population to willingly tolerate these armament measures, they were tirelessly led to believe that the Soviet Union was planning to attack. The armament was only calculated to be able to defend German land. The bourgeois order equated itself with the very existence of Germany; because the bourgeois order feared for its existence, the hearts of the entire German people were to be filled with hatred against the Soviet Union. Soviet Union.

America was a world power and had many considerations to take into account; it was in no hurry to let the war break out openly any time soon. Adenauer, however, was hungry for success with his policy. The London disarmament talks were certainly only intended to gain time and delay the outbreak of war. Fearing that America could be cunningly persuaded into an act of peacekeeping, Adenauer tried several times to disrupt the disarmament negotiations.

In their desperation, Hitler, Goebbels and Himmler had clung to the idea that America and England would abandon their Soviet ally at the last hour and recognise him as their real enemy. With a sudden turn of events, they dreamed, the Anglo-Saxon armies would reorganise the shattered German armies in order to join them shoulder to shoulder in the crusade against Bolshevism, chase the Soviets from German soil and break deep into Russian territory together with the swastika flag. What was the last hope for the lost National Socialist leaders now became the policy for Adenauer that was to bring a new glorious rise. He wanted to capitalise on the Hitler-Goebbels-Himmler legacy; what had proved to be an insane illusion for them would prove to be tangible realpolitik for him.

Adenauer seized on Hitler's idea, which had burst like a soap bubble in the spring of 1945, as a universal recipe according to which he orientated his foreign policy: he left the fate of the German people entirely to the effectiveness of this recipe.

Adenauer's global political concept had confessional accents. The Europe that was to be created in order to be effective as an instrument of America against the Soviet Union also needed its ideology. The ideology of the West offered itself to him: the memory of Charlemagne's empire could be

of the Great, who subjugated the East to his Christian mission with fire and sword. The Catholic-coloured parties of the Federal Republic, France and Italy found it difficult to form a Christian-Catholic bloc that was preparing for a "crusade" against the Soviet Union. The industrial and financial powers had already had good experiences with a Catholic-clerical coloured fascism in Austria and Spain. This European Catholic fascism had the Pope's blessing from the outset. The pro- testant pastor Niemöller had realised early on that the German Federal Republic had been "conceived in the Vatican". It was clear that the Federal Republic of Germany was not the air in which German Protestantism could flourish. From the outset, Protestantism was a rebellion against the Roman idea of Europe; it was fuelled by forces from the anti-Roman East.

The Federal Republic of Germany is on its way to becoming part of the American empire. The "German unruliness", the "German stubbornness", the "German defiance", the Protestant "vices", which have so often erupted unpredictably over the centuries, must be silenced. By subjecting the German to Catholic ideology, he is tamed. The education of the German people to Catholic conformism has a deep political meaning.

It would be wrong to regard Walter Ulbricht as a monster, a demonic man of violence, a man with criminal instincts; one overestimates him if one sees him in such a light. His private life is irreproachable, he is not shrouded in an atmosphere of scandal.

Marxist theory is his spiritual world; of course, he is not a creative thinker, he has adopted it as a sacred dogma. It is embodied for him in the leaders of the Soviet Union; they are the authorities with whom one must always be in full harmony. Thus he is an ideal recipient of orders, who carries out Soviet orders with conscientiousness and reliability. For him, the order is an inviolable commandment, which he enforces with strict rigour when necessary. With the matter-of-fact impassivity of a bureaucrat, he disregards human emotions and points of view.

During the Third Reich, he spent most of his time in the Soviet Union.

union. When Stalin had concluded the infamous pact with Hitler, he attacked the belligerent powers, England and France, in a Stockholm newspaper, saying that they were - vis-à-vis Hitler - imperialist powers. As soon as Hitler had invaded the Soviet Union, he quickly changed positions; he pushed himself into the front line of the fighters against fascism. In the Soviet Union, he kept the German emigrants under strict control. He left the representation of the German Democratic Republic to Grotewohl; he reserved power for himself.

However, this was only true to a limited extent; the actual ruler was the Soviet government: it only authorised him. It could not have found a better trustee. It was claimed that Ulbricht had become a Soviet citizen. Every time, he went about his business as if he had actually been one. He felt, thought and acted as a Soviet citizen; he organised and managed German affairs as Soviet needs demanded.

In meetings, he used to listen to the proceedings in silence at first. Now and then he would intervene; he would express his opinion in a mild and calm manner. Before the decision, however, he became fierce and passionate towards opponents; he mercilessly put forward Marxist principles and proved that only his point of view was in line with these principles. His vigour was so great that no one contradicted him. It was clear to everyone that Ulbricht always had means in the background to enforce his views and that it was advisable to submit to them.

He seems to have been firmly convinced that he was the only man capable of thoroughly protecting Soviet interests on German soil. He was adamant that he would have to atone for any attack on his position because he had a mission to defend at all costs. A sense of proud, independent sovereignty was alien to Ulbricht; to the core, his being was imbued with the feeling that he had to be an executor of Soviet will, and his ambition was to be worthy of trust with every fibre of his being. He was entirely a functionary; because the Russians knew that they could not find anyone more capable, they held on to him unshakably.

Both Adenauer and Ulbricht were among those people who lacked the prerequisites to ever enter into a relationship with the spirit.

to be able to. Ulbricht's Marxist-Leninist faith was just as primitive as Adenauer's Catholic-church piety.

Two artists

In the years after 1952, I largely withdrew from society and politics. In Berlin, my socialising was ultimately limited to a small circle of people, including the painter Horst Stempel and the sculptor Gustav Seitz.

Horst Stempel had crossed my path when I was head of the Wilmersdorf adult education centre. His simple disposition, his uncomplicated intellectuality reminded me strongly of my friend A. Paul Weber. When I became acquainted with Stempel, he had not yet found his true style; he was still struggling to find it. During the Third Reich, he had first been in Paris, but then returned to Germany. He joined the Communist Party early on. In Paris he had socialised with Masereel and Braque; their influence on his art could not be denied. The things that met his eye preoccupied him deeply; he wrestled with problems. He once said to me that every painting of his was a battlefield on which some issue was being fought out.

He painted my portrait in 1947. It was a powerful work. When he was working on my portrait, he was still living in Wilmersdorf. I often came across how he felt tempted to move to East Berlin. At the time, artists there received prudent support, commissions and were heavily courted. I occasionally voiced my reservations about his relocation plans, but could not expect to make a strong impression on him. One day I learnt that he had settled in Pankow. It went well at first. He was given a professorship at the art school in Berlin-Weißensee. He played an important role in the artists' association. He came to the attention of Prime Minister Grotewohl. When the Friedrichstraße railway station was rebuilt, the government decided to decorate the hall with a mural. Stempel had a reputation for being an excellent fresco painter. He received the commission and made

set to work. In the foreground of the painting was a muscular worker; his 'labour fanaticism was visible. He was the impetuous champion of the new socialist society. Of course, it could be argued that the muscles were too strong and the passion of the labourer too theatrical. In fact, Stempel had probably unconsciously revealed the true content of the time, the pompousness of the boastful drive, all too sensuously. The praise of the activists was sung loudly; the musclemen reaped rich fame. The convulsive nature of society's condition was obvious when you looked at the picture. One felt that this image of labour did not bear witness to true strength, it was not genuine, it was merely a spectacle.

His patrons were not happy about this painting. They felt that they had been exposed more mercilessly than they would have liked. The Arbeitern themselves were offended by the activist role they were expected to play in the painting. Criticism of the picture grew louder and stiffer from week to week. Party instances and even the government expressed their dissatisfaction. When the discussions about the picture continued, Stempel made a quick decision. He offered to paint it over with his own hand. His offer was accepted, and one day the painting was gone again.

Horst Stempel made a real effort for some time to paint in the spirit of the socialist realism demanded by the Central Committee. I met him in his studio as he struggled to produce pictures that corresponded to the party's demands. The success was small; what Stempel painted was not much good; his productive power, his creative ability waned. He was sharply attacked in discussions with party functionaries. He was accused of being a formalist, and in the end he even thought he heard **threats**. He felt his freedom was being jeopardised. He came to me on the last day of the year and confessed that he had fled East Berlin. *He* had left his clothes, most of his laundry and a lot of his work behind in his flat. He had become a "refugee".

The job he found in West Berlin was not good. He had been an immigrant and was seen as a beneficiary of the SED regime. As it happened, he was introduced to various secret services, whose job it was to scout him out. He refused to become a denunciator, and so was

He was considered obdurate. He was not officially recognised as a refugee; he received no papers and had to rely on the meagre social welfare benefits. He contested this decision, but was rejected several times. He had the impression that the authorities treated him with contempt. He struggled to keep his head above water.

He managed to interest a journalist in his work. In the "Kurier" published an article in which Strempel's work was honoured. Around the same time, I managed to get an article published in the

"Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung", whose features editor, Dr Karl Korn, was a friend of mine, published a reproduction of one of Strempel's works and at the same time an article about the artist. The attention of the West Berlin culture editor was drawn to Strempel. Discussions were held about giving Strempel a teaching position for fine arts at the Technical University. This failed due to the stubborn resistance of the bureaucratic apparatus. However, it was still possible to persuade a housing office to allocate Strempel a flat properly. He also had to do without official support in the future. It was thanks to his artistic achievements that he was able to establish a position for himself. Despite all the difficulties, Strempel was never despondent. He sometimes expressed his happiness at being able to work completely freely and not having to take any official interference into consideration. His creative drive unfolded anew and uninhibitedly. Friends paved the way for him to be admitted to exhibitions in various German cities.

I met the sculptor Gustav Seitz for the first time in the presidential council of the Kulturbund. People praised his artistic power and counted him among the first sculptors not only in the German Democratic Republic, but in Germany as a whole. My friend Willi Puff spoke enthusiastically about his works of art and gave me the idea of having Seitz paint my portrait. When I made the suggestion to Seitz, he readily agreed. During the ten sessions I had in his studio, it became clear that we got on well. Close personal relationships developed in the following years; he often visited me in the company of his wife, who had previously worked as an architect for the well-known and respected architect Scharoun.

Seitz was also a relatively simply structured person;

He was built right-angled in body and soul. Deceitfulness, cunning and ambiguity were contrary to his nature. Although he was never a member of the SED, he was at times showered with great honours. It was made easier for him to travel to the Federal Republic and abroad. He was given a masterclass at the Academy of Arts.

But he did not adapt to the style of socialist realism either. He openly admitted that he could only work creatively in his own way and did not allow himself to be influenced by occasional reproaches. In 1957 he was commissioned by the Academy of Arts to create a memorial to Käthe Kollwitz. He approached this work with great inner joy.

At the end of 1957, he received an appointment to the Academy of Art in Hamburg. Something quite disgusting then happened. West German artists envied his reputation. A notice appeared in the West Berlin newspaper "Der Tagesspiegel" in which Seitz was denounced as a "man of the East". Hamburg was asked to reconsider the appointment. Seitz was expected to make a demonstrative rejection of the German Democratic Republic. Seitz refused to do so. Hamburg was noble enough to insist on Seitz's appointment anyway. While the appointment was still pending, the city of Düsseldorf awarded him the "Cornelius Prize". Now, of course, Seitz found himself in some embarrassment vis-à-vis the German Democratic Republic. In the course of time, the German Democratic Republic had come to the conclusion that the acceptance of an appointment of artists and scientists to the Federal Republic was "treason". The "Republikflucht" had been declared a crime.

Seitz had no intention of becoming a "fugitive from the republic". He wanted to openly declare his acceptance of the appointment, wanted to leave the German Democratic Republic peacefully, wanted to remain a member of the Academy of Arts of the German Democratic Republic and wanted to fulfil the state commission for a memorial to Käthe Kollwitz.

In meetings, party functionaries expressed strong reservations about Seitz even considering moving to Hamburg. They also disapproved of his acceptance of the "Cornelius Prize". For a long time, Seitz was unable to overcome the inner turmoil into which his situation had plunged him. I told him that there were situations that were inevitably linked to complications.

are. He found himself in such a situation. He could hardly expect everything to go smoothly. All difficulties were eventually overcome. In January 1959, he began working at the Hamburg Art Academy. The German Democratic Republic let him go in peace.

Farewell to the SED

In March 1958, a member of the Wilmersdorf district leadership of the SED visited me. He said that the SED group at Humboldt University, to which I had previously belonged, had referred me to Wilmersdorf.

I expressed my astonishment at still being considered a member of the party. Since 1950, for example, I had aroused the dissatisfaction of the party. My lectures had been objected to, students who were members of the SED had been warned against attending my lectures. My books had been banned and no newspaper or magazine had published any of my work. In 1954, one of my assistants informed the party treasurer to provide me with contribution stamps. I would have stuck my last contribution stamp in 1955. After that, no one came to remind me of my obligation to pay contributions. I assumed that I had been tacitly removed from the party's membership list. I thought I had no longer been a member of the party since 1955. I would have welcomed leaving the party in such an inconspicuous, tacit manner.

The man said that wasn't the case. He didn't know anything about the party's intention to cancel me.

Party membership could be resumed; it could be agreed how the back payment of past contributions should be organised.

I replied that I was not interested in renewing my membership. My state of health prohibited me from being active. Again and again, the party expressed the expectation that every member had a duty to be active; a constant battle was being waged against passive members. I would not even consider attending any events or meetings. Not the slightest party work could be expected of me. After the experiences of the last few years

I would have completely resigned politically. I no longer wanted to go public in any way. The party could not benefit from such a member.

The man replied cautiously that I and my condition could be taken into consideration.

I objected that I wanted to clear the air. After my recent experiences, I could not imagine that the party would attach any importance to me. After the treatment I had received, it seemed to me that, for reasons of cleanliness, my resignation from the party should be regarded as final.

He promised to discuss the whole matter with the party leadership. He took my membership book because it was the "property of the party". I willingly gave it to him and interpreted this demand for the party book as recognition of my resignation.

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