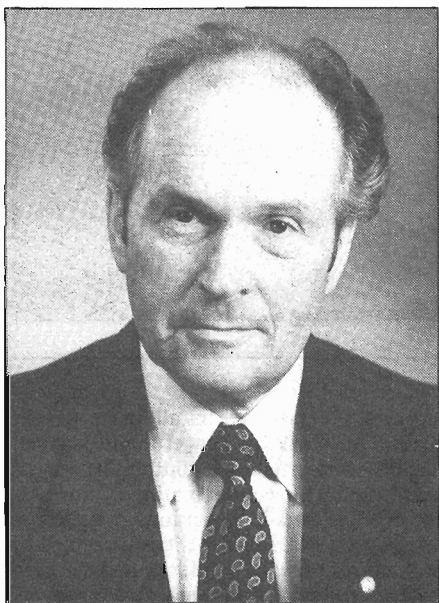


# The Struggle For Peace and Avoiding Nuclear War

Always aware of the dangers of international military confrontation, the G.D.R. has consistently

followed a policy of promoting peace throughout the world and lessening international tensions. Today, such a policy means doing everything possible to avert an atomic inferno.

By Oskar Fischer, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the German Democratic Republic



**M**ore than one hundred years ago, Karl Marx said that, "in contrast to the old society with its economic misery and political lunacy, a new society will develop, the international principle of which will be peace, since every nation is guided by the same principle—labour!"

"We want to be a government of labour," Otto Grotewohl, the G.D.R.'s first Prime Minister, said on October 10, 1949, during the solemn presentation of the functions of the Soviet military administration to the Provisional Government of the G.D.R. "Our work is to serve the improvement of the living conditions of our people and the building of society. To accomplish these tasks our people need peace, and thus it is our lofty task to work for peace."

Unity of peace and socialism—this is the basis on which our peace policy is developing regularly. It also reliably guarantees that peace will in future, too, be the prime concern of our state. Putting an end to the exploitation of our state. Putting an end to the exploitation of man by man, laying the political, social and economic foundations of socialism, means at the same time to exhaust the hotbeds of war and aggression

for all time. This is being done by the G.D.R.

Socialism needs and creates peace. Today, socialist peace policy means doing everything possible to preserve peoples from a nuclear inferno, to encourage them in the struggle against this danger. Socialist peace policy means working to use the sources of intellectual and material wealth for the benefit of the people and not for armament, profiteering and eventual self-destruction of civilization. Hence, socialist peace policy is also the supreme form of solidarity with all peoples of the world, and material and intellectual support for the people's struggle for international and social liberation.

The responsibility for doing everything to prevent a war from ever being launched again from German soil continues to be one of the maxims deeply marking the G.D.R. policy. It is a result of the bitter teachings of the history of German imperialism and became a binding obligation in the decisions of the Anti-Hitler Coalition, particularly in the Potsdam Agreement. This met the interests and hopes of the working class and all other working people and was in line with the anti-fascist internationalist and humanist traditions of the best forces of the German people. From the very first day these dictates of history have been state doctrine of the young anti-fascist German peace state. In his reply to the Soviet message of greetings, in which J.W. Stalin described the foundation of the G.D.R. as a turning-point in the history of Europe, Wilhelm Pieck, first President of the G.D.R., reaffirmed the commitment to the obligations of the Potsdam Agreement and to a policy aimed at preserving peace and security.

One of the results of the deep political change to which the existence of our young state and its consistent policy of implementing the Potsdam Agreement in Europe have contributed, is the indestructible friendship with the Soviet people and the neighbouring peoples upon whom German imperialism and fascism had inflicted untold suffering. The Goerlitz Agreement of July 6, 1950, says of the Oder/Neisse border between the G.D.R. and the Polish People's Republic, "that the agreed and existing border is the inviolable peace and friendship border, which does not separate, but unites the two

peoples." In its first agreement with Czechoslovakia the G.D.R. condemned the Munich Diktat with all its consequences.

Wilhelm Pieck's statement that the G.D.R. will never allow a war ever to be waged again against the French people by a German state was in line with the will expressed in the government manifesto of October 12, 1949, to establish friendly and peaceful relations with all states ready to live in peace and friendship. Since its foundation, the G.D.R. has been working for a stable peace order in Europe by reaffirming the realities which had developed in Europe, by resolutely struggling against all forms of revanchism and militarism and by consistently opposing hatred among nations and racism.

## *For Peaceful Coexistence*

The G.D.R.'s political and geographical situation on the borderline between the two social systems and their military alliance brings about its close involvement in all important developments of the international situation entailing a considerable degree of co-responsibility for the situation in Europe. For peace and the political climate in Europe, it is more than important whether the state of affairs on this sensitive line is marked by peaceful coexistence or by confrontation, by efforts for arms limitation and disarmament or by further expanding armament potentials as a result of the imperialist striving for military superiority.

The G.D.R. expressed its will to contribute to peaceful and fruitful cooperation among the European states even in the hour of its foundation. In his speech on transforming the German People's Chamber on October 7, 1949, Wilhelm Pieck declared: "The prime question is to contribute to solving the decisive task of developing relations between East and West and to performing all tasks serving economic development and the safeguarding of peace." Proceeding from the appeal launched in March 1969 at the Budapest meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty member states, the G.D.R. did everything in its power to bring about a conference on security and cooperation in Europe. With its constructive role in bring-



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A mammoth peace festival in Leipzig

ing about the Quadripartite Agreement on West Berlin of September 3, 1971, with the Basic Relations Treaty between the G.D.R. and the Federal Republic of Germany (F.R.G.) of December 21, 1972, and several other treaties and agreements, our state actively contributed to creating the European treaty system that paved the way for a multilateral settling of European problems within the scope of the process of European security and cooperation. In his speech during the final stage of the European security conference in Helsinki, G.D.R. party and state leader Erich Honecker declared, "An inseparable part of the socialist community, the German Democratic Republic has contributed to bringing about the European treaty system and thus to a successful end of the security conference. At every stage of this process, which was not free from contradictions, the German Democratic Republic has shown that it is guided in its actions by its interest in peace and détente and that it is acting as a stabilizing factor for peace in Europe."

The positive impact emanating from the beginning of international détente in the relations of European states in the Seventies can still be felt today in a most acute international situation. For this reason, it is the urgent duty of states to deal carefully with what has been accomplished, and, in addition, on the basis of the obligations they have undertaken in the European treaty system and the Helsinki Final Act, to work for calming dangerous international relations. The recognition of the political and territorial realities which developed in Europe as a result

of the Second World War and post-war development, and the strict respect for the sovereignty of states, are the bases on which relations between the European states rest. These realities include, once and for all, the existence of two German states with antagonistic social orders and memberships in opposing alliances. Any attempt to change this is an attack on the peace-preserving balance of forces. In the Basic Relations Treaty, the G.D.R. and the F.R.G. have committed themselves to mutual respect for sovereignty and non-interference in the internal and foreign affairs of the other state. The relations between the G.D.R. and the F.R.G. will normalize and contribute to healing the international situation to the same extent as that to which the F.R.G. government is willing strictly to respect the post-war European order with all its consequences, including important questions such as: fixing the almost 100 kilometre-long border on the river Elbe, unqualified respect for G.D.R. citizenship, stopping the anti-G.D.R. activity of the Salzgitter registration office and transformation of the permanent representations into embassies.

The G.D.R. acts its line with the principles of peaceful coexistence and its obligations undertaken. Its policy is consistent, since it takes into account realities. Military tensions and conflicts in today's world are threatening not only the peoples in the immediate region, but international security as a whole. The dangers emanating from the policy of confrontation and arms build-up are being increased many times over by the imperialist policy of fomenting tensions and

conflicts everywhere, in all parts of the world. Our work for peaceful and just settlements of international conflicts by way of negotiations, the condemnation of imperialist violence and intervention—whether in Africa, Asia or Latin America—is guided by both anti-imperialist solidarity and the need for preserving and safeguarding peace all over the world.

The obligation to do everything to prevent a war from ever being launched again from German soil is of fresh, burning topicality since, with the deployment of U.S. first-strike nuclear weapons in Western Europe for the first time since World War Two, a danger to the Soviet Union and the other socialist states is again emanating from German soil by the U.S. missiles stationed on the territory of the F.R.G. With its approval of the deployment of these weapons on its soil the F.R.G. government has burdened itself with a heavy responsibility. For this reason, the safeguarding of peace is now more than ever the key question in developing relations between the G.D.R. and the F.R.G.

In his answer to the question of how the situation, which was changed by NATO's starting of deployment, will develop and what is necessary, Erich Honecker said at the 7th meeting of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED), "The struggle for preventing a nuclear world war and for halting the arms race will now be continued even more actively. The obligation to do everything for the safeguarding of peace is now all the greater, and we will live up to it." The G.D.R. takes this stance

in the conviction that the present negative trend in international events is reversible and that international relations can return to normal and become predictable again. "Everything depends on the concerted and determined action of those who honestly want peace," Erich Honecker said. The possibilities for a broad coalition of reason, which is able to stop the dangerous course of arms build-up, have grown. The G.D.R. is willing, together with its allies and friends, to cooperate in such a coalition with all forces who are convinced that an atomic inferno has been prevented and that there is no sensible alternative to peaceful coexistence and to peaceful dialogue. The experience of history reveals that it is necessary to combat war before it has begun!

Partners in such a coalition are the Asian, African and Latin American countries, as well as the alarmed public in the capitalist countries, including the NATO states. The socialist states strengthen this coalition of reason through their peace initiatives. They are willing to examine thoroughly any other proposal, and even to adopt it, if it is directed towards lessening the nuclear dangers and to stopping the arms race. The G.D.R., now as before, is ready to have its entire territory included in a corridor in Central Europe that is free from battlefield nuclear weapons with the principle of equality and equal security being observed. This is our answer to the corresponding Swedish proposal.

The approximate military parity between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. and between the Warsaw Treaty and NATO at present proves to be the most important bulwark against military adventurism and against imperialism's attempts to change the international balance of forces. This balance is one of the most important historic achievements of socialism. Due to this balance Europe has been living in peace for 40 years since the end of the Second World War. The Soviet Union and the other socialist states have never attempted to gain military superiority. In view of the danger to the security of all peoples, they can, however, not allow imperialism to win military superiority.

The beginning of the deployment of new U.S. first-strike weapons in Western Europe urgently required counter-measures by the Soviet Union and the other socialist states. These measures will be revoked if the U.S.A. and NATO halt the deployment of their first-strike weapons and dismantle the systems already installed. This is the only way to reduce the nuclear threat and to create the preconditions for the return to peaceful and fruitful cooperation between states.

The states of the socialist community have submitted their relevant proposals, formulated in the documents of the Warsaw Treaty member states, the Prague Declaration, the Joint Declaration of the highest representatives of socialist states of June 28, 1983, and in the Declaration of the Council for Mutual

Economic Assistance (CMEA) member countries on "The preservation of peace and international economic cooperation," which was adopted recently. Extraordinary importance is being attached to the proposals of the Soviet Union. They emphasize the Soviet Union's firm readiness for honest and serious negotiations aimed at reaching agreement and taking into account the security interests of all countries and peoples.

### *Concrete Proposals*

The most important proposals include:

- following the example of the Soviet Union and pledging not to be the first to use nuclear weapons, this renunciation should be binding under international law;

- a treaty on the non-use of military force and on maintaining peaceful relations between the Warsaw Treaty and NATO states, including interested neutral and non-aligned states;

- a freeze on nuclear weapon stocks;
- creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones or corridors in various parts of Europe;

- elimination of chemical weapons in Europe as an important step towards their global ban and destruction;

- a freeze on, and reduction of, military budgets: the proposal submitted on September 25, 1973, by the U.S.S.R. in the UN to all permanent members of the UN Security Council and to militarily important states to reduce military expenditure by 10 percent and to give part of the funds saved to the developing countries, has gained significance

in view of the enormously stepped-up arms race;

- complementing and extending the confidence-building measures stipulated by the Helsinki Final Act, with the aim of reducing states' military activities and the danger of a surprise attack.

This programme is realistic, since it takes into account the legitimate security interests of all sides on the basis of respect for equality and equal security. It includes both concrete proposals for averting acute dangers emanating from the increasingly tense international situation and measures stabilizing international relations in the long run. It combines proposals for arms limitation and disarmament which would reduce the material basis for military confrontation through political measures to create a climate of confidence.

The responsibility to do everything possible for the preservation of peace is today greater than ever. The G.D.R. is willing to meet these dictates of the times actively. It looks back on 35 years of persistent struggle against war and imperialist policies of force, against revanchism, boycott and imperialist blackmail, and for disarmament and détente, for peace safeguarded by peaceful international cooperation.

The development we have undergone has not been easy. It has been a time of hardest class struggle. In three-and-a-half decades our state, led by the SED, has developed into a state of peace and socialism in the heart of Europe. This state can also be relied on in the future in the efforts to spare mankind the scourge of war, a nuclear inferno.

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