

**THE GERMAN
DEMOCRATIC
REPUBLIC ACTS
IN THE INTERESTS OF
THE GERMAN NATION**

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in the Interests of the German Nation



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Declaration by Walter Ulbricht, Chairman
of the Council of State of the GDR,
on GDR Television on 13 March 1968



VERLAG ZEIT IM BILD DRESDEN

The fate and the future of the German nation are dear to the hearts of us all. Those who have studied the draft of the new Constitution of our German Democratic Republic will find, there too, confirmation of this. This Constitution explicitly defines, as a national concern of the German Democratic Republic, the establishment and cultivation of normal relations and cooperation between the two German states on the basis of equality. The German Democratic Republic and its citizens, the draft Constitution continues, strive in addition to overcome the division of Germany imposed upon the German nation by imperialism, and support the step-by-step rapprochement between the two German states until the time of their unification on the basis of democracy and socialism. This is the national task which our Constitution presents to the People's Chamber, the Council of State, the Government and each individual citizen.

On Monday the Bonn Chancellor Kiesinger replied to the speeches held in the People's Chamber and to the draft of the socialist Constitution of the German Democratic Republic. He claimed that his government declaration, which he called a Report on the State of the Nation, was addressed to the whole German people; but there was nothing about the interests of the nation in his report.

Herr Kiesinger found it necessary to emphasise that this was the first time in 23 years that a Report on the State of the Nation had been delivered in West Germany. This was a harsh verdict on the parties which rule in West Germany, the Christian Democratic Union, the Christian Social Union, the Social Democratic Party and also the Free Democratic Party. It is a remarkable confession of poverty when a West German Government only places the state of the German nation on the parliamentary agenda for the first time 23 years after the end of the Second World War. This is particularly evident when we recall that in the German Democratic Republic the state of the nation has been dealt with

in a responsible fashion repeatedly, first in 1945/46 by the Communist Party of Germany and later by the Socialist Unity Party of Germany and all the other antifascist democratic parties and organisations. In these 23 years we have not only spoken about the state of the nation; we have also acted in the interests of the nation.

Herr Kiesinger claims that the nation was divided without the German people being consulted. This is not true. In 1946 we submitted proposals for the unity of all anti-fascist democratic forces in Germany, and in November 1946 we published the draft for the Constitution of the German Democratic Republic. These proposals were aimed at the unity of the working class and the unity of the whole people, so that we might emerge from the catastrophe into which Hitler had plunged Germany, and take the road in common, the new road towards a new Germany.

On this basis a plebiscite was held in the eastern part of Germany, in what was then the Soviet Occupation Zone. In West Germany, on the other hand, such a plebiscite on an anti-fascist democratic social order was prevented by the leading parties, the Christian Democratic Union and the Social Democratic Party, together with the three occupation powers.

The Lessons of History

After the frightful catastrophe into which the German people had been plunged by Hitler's rule, what was needed was that all Germans should draw their conclusions from the two world wars, and that they should uproot nazism and militarism and the domination of arms capital, in the interest of life and the future of the nation. In accordance with the agreement reached by the Anti-Hitlerite Coalition and the Potsdam Agreement signatories, we took the road of the anti-fascist democratic

order, which coincides with the interests of the nation; at that time the whole German people in all four occupation zones could and should have taken this road.

When we opened the discussion on the first Constitution for a German Democratic Republic in 1946, this step was also welcomed in West Germany by wide sections of the population. This draft for the first Constitution based itself upon the necessity of drawing the conclusions of the two world wars in the whole of Germany, and thus ensuring for the nation a just peace and a good future, on the basis of an anti-fascist democratic order. It is a matter of historical fact that the party to which Herr Kiesinger belongs, and the other parties to which the ministers in his government belong, insisted upon the division of Germany, in order to conserve and restore the domination of the capitalist monopolies and militarism at least in the western occupation zones.

Herr Kiesinger says that steps must be taken to ensure that the Soviet Union does not win influence over the whole of Germany. But it is a fact that the Soviet Union was the only great power which supported the wish of the democratic forces of the German people for the establishment of Germany, that rejected the partitioning proposals made by the USA; and which always supported all anti-fascist democratic measures proposed and implemented by the democratic forces in the eastern part of Germany. That is to say that it was precisely the Soviet Union which supported the national interests of the German people.

The governments of the imperialist western powers, however, and in particular of the USA, made every effort to prevent the formation of a united, peace-loving and democratic Germany. They regarded West Germany not simply as a barrier to social progress, but also as an instrument for the implementation of the policy of J. F. Dulles, at that time US Secretary of State, the policy which he described as rolling back socialism in Europe. When Herr Kiesinger stated in his parliamentary

speech that laws and regulations from the nineteenth century were still valid in West Germany, and when he said that these laws had hindered progressive developments, then he was simply confirming how far West Germany has lagged behind as a result of its ties with US imperialism and West German militarism. This is shown in particular in the backwardness of the West German educational system.

Strictly speaking, Herr Kiesinger did not really deal with the state of the nation in his speech at all. He made no single proposal as to how the nazi and militarist past and the re-nazification of the present should be overcome in West Germany. Instead he outlined a programme as to how the power positions of finance capital and other reactionary forces could be stabilised and extended in West Germany, and how things could be done rather more cleverly this time than they were done after 1933.

West Germany—Politically Reactionary State

The speech of the West German Federal Chancellor confirmed once again that West German monopoly capital is no longer able to overcome the growing internal contradictions without mobilising state power against the interests of the people. West German monopoly capital intends to utilise the massive intervention of state power in order to deal with the internal contradictions on the one hand, and on the other hand to create in the West German Federal Republic the conditions which it holds necessary in order to attempt to change the status quo in Europe.

The economic crisis of 1966/67 has sharpened the internal contradictions in West Germany and speeded up this process. Herr Kiesinger and his government have been set the task of bringing the West German

population to heel, so that they will patiently bear the increased burdens which will result from this policy.

Since the men who run West German monopoly capital do not themselves believe that the CDU/CSU will be able to master this task alone, Social Democratic ministers were included in the cabinet.

In his government declaration Herr Kiesinger left no doubt that the structural changes to be made in the West German economy in the interests of monopoly capital will be carried out without the co-determination of the workers and their trade unions, and at their cost. He sketched basic principles of financial reform and financial planning which showed the intention of placing the full burden on the working people. At the same time he announced considerable limitations in the rights of local authorities to control their own budgets. According to Herr Kiesinger these so-called municipal reforms and finance reforms should be pushed through by 1970.

His remarks on the peasant question made particularly clear the way in which the policies of Kiesinger's government are directed against the working people. Herr Kiesinger admitted that in the past 20 years two million peasants and agricultural workers had had to leave agriculture in West Germany. He promises federal financial help for the large landowners, but emphasises at the same time that small and medium peasant farms will have to increase their income by "extra and outside earnings", or if this is not sufficient, they will have to leave agriculture. This means that in the next few years the peasants of the West German Federal Republic will be faced with a new wave of peasant dispossession in the interests of the profits of the industrial and banking monopolies and their policy of armament. Tens of thousands of further peasants should become semi-proletarians or proletarians. The path which is being taken in agriculture in West Germany is the typical capitalist path.

In the interests of what is called the "formed society", Herr Kiesinger announces that the Emergency Laws will be forced through, resulting in a further demontage of democracy. He obviously believes that the manipulation of the masses carried up by such opinion-factories as the Springer Trust is not sufficient; for this reason an Emergency Decree dictatorship is necessary in order to implement the plans of West German finance capital.

In addition there is the announcement that there should be stronger efforts to make reactionary changes in the electoral system in order to guarantee the authoritarian rule of the leaders of the CDU/CSU. This means that the Kiesinger Government is to a certain extent a transitional government, which should push through, with the help of the Social Democratic ministers, all the unpopular measures designed to stabilise and strengthen the power of finance capital. When this has been done, the so-called electoral reform should be used to guarantee the authoritarian rule of the leaders of the CDU. The Social Democratic leaders will then be allowed to regard their task as a sort of sham opposition.

Kiesinger indicated with obvious pleasure how far this process has gone already, stating that large controversies had almost entirely disappeared from West German politics, and that the political parties represented in the Bonn Bundestag—that is to say mainly the CDU, the CSU and the Social Democrats—had come closer to one another in their programmes. This is confirmed if you compare their programmes.

If any proof were still needed that the West German state is a state of the monopolies and political reactionaries, this proof was given by Herr Kiesinger in his declaration.

Everything is going to be provided for the monopolies, for the militarists, for armaments, and for expansion; but nothing is going to be provided for peace, for the peaceful life of the West German working people, nothing for the workers, nothing for the office employees, noth-

ing for the peasants, nothing for the craftsmen and the other honest working people, nothing for family welfare. On the other hand Herr Kiesinger made a point of assuring the neo-nazi party that it need not fear state measures. All this takes place at a time when honest democrats are being persecuted in West Germany, and when there are even pogroms against honest democrats and opponents of the US war against Vietnam.

Young People Take a Stand Against the Bonn Policy

Herr Kiesinger had to admit that the young people do not understand the state order and the social order in West Germany, and that they are becoming increasingly clear about the anti-democratic character of the state power in Bonn; but Herr Kiesinger wants to draw them once again into the adventurist policy of West German imperialism. Why does a considerable section of West German youth today reject developments in the West German Federal Republic? Because nobody has told these young people in West Germany the truth about the lessons of German history, there are now clashes between the young people and the Bonn Government. The young people had to find out for themselves, and they have done this, and today a large part of the youth are opposing, publicly and actively, the reactionary course steered by Bonn. The young people want to overcome the reactionary past, and also to overcome the reactionary present in West Germany.

Here in the German Democratic Republic we began by telling the young people the whole truth back in 1945. We gave them all opportunities for development, and we have given them our trust. This was the most important factor, to trust the young people. We did not ask them what opinions they formerly had, or what their teachers had formerly

told them. Instead we told them that the time had come for a new start, that the lessons of history must be learned, and that we had confidence that they would join in with a will and help to shape the new Germany. For this reason we can rely fully on the young people today, knowing that they will march successfully along our road.

The militarisation of life in West Germany is unmasked by Kiesinger's announcement that in future the training of high-ranking civil servants shall take a similar form to the methods used today in the "Leadership Academy of the Bundeswehr". He even spoke of a reorganisation of the management of the Federal Government in line with the methods of the Bundeswehr leadership. This means that the authoritarian rule, which existed under Herr Adenauer, should now be extended in accordance with the leadership methods of the Hitlerite generals.

The coalition government in Bonn cannot seriously believe that rapprochement between the two German states can be served by the reactionary programme expounded by Kiesinger, by the measures for militarisation and the support for renazification. Or does Herr Kiesinger perhaps believe that his policy could awaken sympathies for West German late capitalism amongst the people of the German Democratic Republic?

Herr Kiesinger has learned no lessons from the past, and does not wish to learn such lessons. He is taking the old road of German imperialism; the only difference is that he tries not to use quite such crude methods as Hitler and others. But everything that Kiesinger announced in his speech serves the power policy of West German armament capital, and is a blow against rapprochement and understanding between the two German states.

Non-Proliferation Treaty: The Touchstone

The very first question which Herr Kiesinger will have to answer, the question which every citizen of the German Democratic Republic asks, is the following: What is the attitude of the Bonn Government to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, to the creation of a denuclearised zone in central Europe, and to disarmament? In other words: What is the attitude of the Kiesinger Government to the cause of peace and security?

What is Herr Kiesinger's answer to this question?

The West German Federal Chancellor explained the memorandum which his government addressed to the Eighteen-State Conference in Geneva, the memorandum in which Bonn tried to torpedo the draft tabled by the Soviet Union and by the USA for a treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

We believe that the vital interests of all Germans demand most urgently the conclusion of an international treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. But it is precisely this national concern which is rudely ignored by the government of the West German Federal Republic. For years it has been trying to torpedo the conclusion of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The fact alone that the Bonn Government submitted this memorandum seven days before the date set for the conclusion of negotiations in Geneva shows that it was intended to consign the whole thing to the never-never land. During the past few days influential Bonn politicians have stepped up their attacks on the present draft treaty, which has a unique chance of acceptance at the moment. For instance Herr Strauss, the firebrand of the Bonn Government, declared recently that what was at stake in connection with the Non-Proliferation Treaty was the basic problem of power and nuclear arms. Herr Hallstein, the exponent of Bonn's expansionist policy in Europe, and like Herr Strauss an energetic

supporter of the European Nuclear Force, is polemising against the treaty since it would bar West German imperialism from obtaining nuclear weapons via such a nuclear force.

The GDR for Speedy Conclusion

The German Democratic Republic, as the first socialist state of workers and farmers in German history, regards it as both its greatest international duty and as its national mission to see to it that war can never again start from German soil. In this struggle a leading place is occupied at the moment by the conclusion of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. We shall devote all our energies to ensure that the Non-Proliferation Treaty shall become reality as quickly as possible; we shall do this in the spirit of the Sofia meeting of the Political Advisory Committee of the Warsaw Pact States, and in particular in accordance with the declaration on this subject made by six socialist states.

The anti-peace policy of the Kiesinger Government was expressed even more brutally in his remarks on the aggressive war of the USA against Vietnam. Many West German citizens probably hoped that the Federal Chancellor of their country would give expression to their own repulsion at the barbarous war of aggression being waged by the Johnson Government against the people of Vietnam. Whether socialists or non-socialists, whether Christians or atheists, the great majority of the West German people are united in their condemnation of the American aggressors, who are attacking a peaceful and liberty-minded people with bombs, toxic gas, and napalm.

But the government in Bonn did not even find its way to a simple humanitarian gesture. Herr Kiesinger and his government did not even

give support to the international demand for an end to the US bombing attacks on the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

Bonn Supports the US Aggressors

If you examine the core of what Herr Kiesinger said, you will see that this spokesman for the Bonn Government expressed his solidarity with the excesses of the US murderers and arsonists in Vietnam; and he received the shameful applause of part of the Bundestag. In view of the pictures and reports from Vietnam, which continually shock us, it must be asked how Herr Kiesinger can possibly appeal to the West German people to show understanding for what he described as the unavoidable hardships inflicted upon the "civilian population" in Vietnam.

It is very regrettable that the Social Democratic ministers in the Bonn Government give their support to this shameful policy. In any case there have been no reports that even one Social Democratic minister stood up to protest against the unspeakable statements made by Herr Kiesinger. This can only mean that Herr Kiesinger cleared his inhuman statements in advance with his Social Democratic ministers.

The inhuman attitude of the Kiesinger Government towards US aggression in Vietnam is a reflection of the expansionist policy of West German imperialism. After all, the Bonn Government also helped to prepare the imperialist attack on the Arab countries, and praised it. We know that the majority of the West German people are revolted by the atrocities committed by the US aggressors in Vietnam; but the Kiesinger Government, in opposition to the majority of West Germans, declares its solidarity with the aggressors, the murderers and arsonists.

With almost insurpassable cynicism, Herr Kiesinger places the Bonn

sole representation claim, together with the Hallstein Doctrine and other auxiliaries, at the service of his own reactionary domestic policy and the imperialist global strategy of the USA. Herr Kiesinger's Government thinks that this reactionary policy should be the policy of a future Germany, a united Germany. Every West German citizen with judgement understands that no citizen of the German Democratic Republic could ever agree to this Bonn policy.

It must be clear that this is not the way. There are two German states. There is one German state, the German Democratic Republic, which is a German peace state as a result of its history and its Constitution. And there is another German state, that represented by Herr Kiesinger. This West German state continues the traditions and the policies of German imperialism.

Extension of West German Revanchist Policy

If Herr Kiesinger had really wished to deal seriously with the question of the nation, then he would have had to take a stand on the basis of reality. He would have had to think about these realities and he would have had to explain how the two German states with contrasting social systems could attain a normal relationship with each other. Unfortunately the West German Chancellor did not do this. He further strengthened and confirmed everything which makes the division deeper. He did not remove a single barrier. He is developing the ambition to demonstrate that he has more regard for the NATO, the shameful Paris Treaties and the counter-revolutionary global strategy of the USA than for the interests of the nation.

Herr Kiesinger took particular pains to reinforce the positions of revanchist policy. With words reminiscent of the infamous nazi slogan

about "people without living space" he demonstrated that his government clings to the unrealistic goal of the frontiers of 1937. In this connection he emphatically rejected the status quo in Europe. He called it an unbearable state of affairs. He left no doubt that his policy was aimed at the abolition of the status quo; this undoubtedly endangers peace in Europe.

Herr Kiesinger emphatically refused to abandon the sterile and revanchist sole representation claim of the Bonn Government vis-à-vis the German Democratic Republic; this is a potential declaration of war against the GDR. Speaking in the name of the Bonn coalition, he once again rejected the normalisation of relations between the two German states on the basis of equality.

Is it not high time for the Bonn Government to grasp that the prerequisite for any normalisation of relations between the two German states must be a normal and valid treaty relationship between their governments? A majority of the population of the West German Federal Republic already understand this. Do Herr Kiesinger and his ministers insist on being the very last people in West Germany who can recognise this fact?

West Berlin is None of Bonn's Business

Herr Kiesinger made it plain that the Bonn Government is clinging to its totally unrealistic intention of annexing West Berlin. In this connection I must declare once again that West Berlin has never belonged to the West German Federal Republic, and will never form a part of the West German Federal Republic. West Berlin is a special political unit. It is high time for the Bonn Government to abandon its adventurist policy with regard to West Berlin. Apart from anything else it would be a dis-

aster for the West Berliners if an attempt were made to transfer the West German Emergency Laws and other reactionary laws to West Berlin, thus further sharpening the situation. No West German minister has the right to exercise official duties in West Berlin. The same applies to all West German civil servants and all West German official offices. The Government of the West German Federal Republic and also officers of the West German Bundeswehr have no business in West Berlin.

Since Herr Kiesinger has awakened the impression that he wishes to reach a compromise with us regarding the renunciation of force in relations between the two German states, I would like to ask him this question: How can there be an honest and binding renunciation of force between the two German states when the Government of the West German Federal Republic refuses to recognise the treaty partner—the German Democratic Republic—and even denies that it exists in international law?

Binding Renunciation of Force Instead of Idle Talk

The time has come for Bonn to show its true colours. We, the representatives of the German Democratic Republic, have defined our position clearly and unmistakably on this question, too. We favour an agreed renunciation of force laid down in treaty form, which would coincide with the interests of the people of the German Democratic Republic and the people of West Germany. We have repeatedly submitted the relevant concrete proposals to the Bonn Government; until now we have not received a clear and correct reply.

Herr Kiesinger's Government has also not replied, up to the present, to the clearly formulated proposals made by the Government of the Soviet Union. In this connection I must make something clear to Herr

Kiesinger: The renunciation of force is a very serious and important subject, and it is not permissible just to chatter about it non-committally, thus trying to deceive the people and European public opinion about one's real intentions. After all, it is a question of peace or war, a question of the future of the German nation.

We were astonished suddenly to hear from Herr Kiesinger how much he cares about the prosperity of the German Democratic Republic, and how highly he regards our successes, both economically and otherwise. But Herr Kiesinger knows full well that our successes would be considerably greater if we had not been systematically robbed by the Bonn Government, and damaged to the tune of some dozens of thousands of millions of marks. Herr Kiesinger and all previous Bonn Governments did everything they could to inflict material damage upon the German Democratic Republic and to discriminate against its citizens in all respects. This Bonn "help" ranged from sabotage to the theft of the gold medals of our winter sports competitors. If the Bonn Government should intend to have a change of heart, then this should first be shown by Bonn paying the debts which it owes to the German Democratic Republic. This would undoubtedly be a step forward; it would not escape our notice.

After the very unfruitful speech delivered by Herr Kiesinger, which showed no way out, this question is still open: What is the future between the two German states? Kiesinger's path leads the people of West Germany into disaster. We have to guard ourselves against this. For our part, the matter is quite clear: We shall proceed consistently along our good path, and will complete the socialist society in the German Democratic Republic. This is a task to the advantage of our people and our German Democratic Republic and the whole nation. With regard to the future of the nation, we strive for the unification of the two German states on the basis of democracy and socialism. We shall be nearer to

this goal when the working people in West German too take their future in their own hands.

Normal Relations—The Only Realistic Path

Our tasks for the future do not mean that we forget the necessity of normalising the relations between the two German states today. For this, realism and good sense are needed; but this is just what is missing in Bonn. The fact is that there are two German states, and if there is not mutual recognition and complete equality of rights, the division will grow ever deeper. There must finally be an end to the Hallstein Doctrine and to all other attempts to discriminate against the German Democratic Republic and its citizens.

The Bonn Government has been in possession for months of the draft of a treaty "On the Establishment and Maintenance of Normal Relations between the German Democratic Republic and the German Federal Republic". This draft was sent to Herr Kiesinger, the West German Federal Chancellor, by Comrade Willi Stoph, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the German Democratic Republic; but the Bonn Government rejected this draft.

To refresh memories, I should like to quote just some of the very useful and necessary proposals made in this draft treaty. In Article 1 we propose: "The German Democratic Republic and the German Federal Republic shall establish normal relations." Article 2 states: "The governments of the two German states reach an agreement on the renunciation of force."

It should be clear that the implementation of these proposals would foster peaceful life side-by-side and coexistence between the two German states.

Authorised government delegations from both German states, meeting on a basis of equal rights, could begin negotiations tomorrow on this treaty. This would mean not simply talking about the state of the nation, but really doing something to normalise relations between the two German states, thus improving the situation of the nation and at the same time doing something for European peace. Bonn can obviously not continue to demand from us, as a prerequisite for negotiation, that we should deny our own existence as a socialist state, and accept the sole representation claim of the Bonn Government.

Once normal treaty relations have been established between the two German states, which will naturally be relations under international law, and when at the same time the renunciation of the use of force in mutual relations has been established on a treaty basis, then the time will have come for us to discuss various other subjects in the relations between the German states; it will then certainly be easier to find suitable solutions.

This is the only realistic road, and it is a good road.

The citizens of the German Democratic Republic stride confidently along the road of peace and socialism, the road laid out in the draft for our new socialist Constitution. This is, at the same time, the road towards the future of the entire German nation.

The lively and creative free discussion so far on the new socialist Constitution shows that the citizens of the German Democratic Republic have learned the lessons of German history and are marching forward together shoulder to shoulder along the road of a really new Germany, a Germany of peace and socialism.



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