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The Security Debate in the Evangelical Church of the GDR

by **Helmut Fritzsche**

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A. Introductory Remarks about the Social Functions of the Independent Church Security Debate in the GDR

In August 1986 the "Church and Society Committee" of the Federation of Evangelical Churches in the GDR published—for members of the church only—a study with the suggestive title, "New Thinking in the Nuclear Age."¹ Its first short section (pp. 3-10) impressively summarizes the church security debate from the mid-seventies until 1985 and culminated in the appeal: "Reflection of the attitude, logic, and practice of deterrence."

The other two chapters (pp. 10-26) refer to scientific, political and philosophical statements of "New Thinking" from the East. Prof. O. Reinhold's approach to a "politics of dialogue" (p. 16) is quoted as well as Gromyko's reception of security partnership (p. 14). But exceptional attention is given to Gorbachev. His reflections after Chernobyl (p. 24), his statements referring to the unilateral Soviet moratorium on nuclear testing (p. 25) were detailed and his August 18, 1986, speech was cited in which he appealed to ". . . new thinking which the world needs so much today. It is incompatible. . .with patronizing peoples' approaches to the world, may they be socialist, capitalist or others . . ."2

It is up to the reader of the above mentioned Church study to discover the relationship between the church statements and Gorbachev's rethinking approach to peace and security issues in a world marked by the rivalry of differing social systems. But the congeniality between the church and Gorbachev seems to be so impressive that the authors of the study felt the need to warn against the stupid self-complacency of those who say: we tackled these points a long time ago."³ Nevertheless, now in the mid-eighties the Evangelical Church in the GDR does not feel dissatisfied with its unique situation in the GDR-society,⁴ its acceptance as a partner of a beginning dialogue with the official philosophy,⁵ and its possible role as 'pace setter of New Thinking.'

On the other hand the widespread net of Christian peace, environmental, feminist or emancipation groups, gathering young people from inside and outside the churches meet the Federation of Evangelical Churches in the GDR with more or less distinct criticism because of a supposed lack of liability in the

churches' approach to political issues. They wish to change the Federation into of a classic peace church, to an unconditional renunciation of the practice of violence.

Today the tensions between the church and these groups are not as great as was expected several years ago.⁶ Nevertheless, challenges from the groups form a background of the church debate on security issues. On the whole the encounter is a fruitful tension rather than a hostile confrontation. Mass media of the West like to quote the groups when they issue spectacular statements like the "*Berliner Appeal*" of 1982 with its very controversial claims about GDR-politics. Much less attention is dedicated to the successful church efforts to deal with these groups, and to integrate their concern as a valuable challenge to the church and its social concern.⁷

To integrate groups is only one aspect of the social functions of the church security debate. In addition, the Evangelical churches have assumed a very special function in the GDR by serving as a forum where various perspectives, different from the official peace movement, as well as those who are more or less in conformity with it, may be discussed in a controversial way and with impact upon the public.

On October 22, 1984, the *Neues Deutschland*, the organ of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany printed on page 2, an important location, an open letter from the parish Dresden-Loschwitz to Erich Honecker dealing with the missiles-deployment issue. The letter gives⁸ an unconditional "No" to the deployment of new missiles in the West in autumn 1983 and denounces the threats coming from an eventual counter-measure deployment in the East too. The parish thanks Erich Honecker for his reception of the security partnership and—on the other hand—appeals to him not to respond measure by measure but to initiate unilateral first moves as the "only way to secure peace." According to the letter, it is an approach based upon the New Testament commandment to love one's enemies which is demanded by political rationale of our day as well.

The Loschwitz letter reveals some remarkable features of church peace witness in the GDR, its social functions, and in particular its outer and inner independence.

1. The letter is a document of grassroots peace work in parishes. Notwithstanding the fact of a sophisticated reflection of peace and security issues in the Evangelical synods and their theological braintrust, the grassroots level is the one with the most social-political impact. There is a very close connection between the base (i.e. grassroots level or parishes) and theological studies. Church grassroots peace work started with the "Swords to Plowshares" youth movement.⁹ It has influenced the opinion making process in parishes very much.

2. The Loschwitz-letter, like many other church statements, is very concerned to stress its independence of judgement in peace and security issues. But it is not a freedom in the clouds or an

independence at the price of abstaining from political judgement. To the contrary, to state a frank and clear 'No' and a concrete 'Yes' is the obligation of the church debate.¹⁰ Heino Falcke wrote with regard to the missile deployment: "I think, we have to say No in the name of Jesus and on grounds of political reason. I said 'No' in the Federal Republic and I say the same 'No' here [in the GDR]. Faith and conscience are concerned about this point. I think the church of Jesus Christ is permitted neither to agree nor to participate"¹¹ in the deployment of missiles.

3. Issues of war-peace, security and disarmament are strongly separated in the church debate from a statement on the East-West rivalry. The competition between both social systems is evaluated as being relatively independent from the peace, deterrence and détente issues.¹² Therefore, church security debates on the whole refuse all attempts to ascribe the threat to world peace to only one of the two systems. Never was one side alone made responsible for East-West tensions. The ability to act with rational responsibility is required by both sides. On the other hand many statements do not doubt that changes will have to happen in both systems for the sake of peace and common security.¹³

4. The quoted letter argues from a biblically well grounded as well as politically rational approach to the issues of security. The Christian command to love enemies and the rational considerations of the political reality work in tandem. This tendency is essential to the church's argumentation that Christian identity and political reason are working together. The Biblical utopian view of a world free from weapons is evaluated as a forecast which is now for the sake of humanity's survival a very rational one. The utopian outlook will remain as an ideal which is greater than any imaginable, workable historical reality. Nevertheless, its function is to point in a distinct direction. In this way the utopian ideas are to be transformed into politically realizable measures. The demand to make Christian ideas *politikfähig* [capable of being implemented in politics] is stressed very much. *Politikfähigkeit*¹⁴ runs like a red thread through the security debate in the churches in the GDR.

Integration of different streams of Christian approaches inside and outside the church as an institution, and, making available a forum for discussion of points which diverge from the official doctrine, are two functions in which the church security debate is effective. It meets real needs of our society and helps the church achieve a new, distinct identity in socialism.

I am not so sure that the same is true with regard to the other possible function mentioned above, namely working as a 'pace-setter of New Thinking.' That remains a question to which we shall return later.

In any case, the strength and impact of church peace work depends on its independence. This great value of independence goes beyond the credibility which the formal separation of state and church can guarantee and the reliable subjective witness is working out. The independence of the church in its moral

political judgements depends on Christian spiritual identity in life and in word as well as on the care with which all the ramifications of the concrete political and social situation are being considered. Intellectual incorruptibility is to be a special contribution to the solution of non-military conflict issues which is a genuine challenge for the churches as they are working more or less as a 'moral institution' in a world marked by a deep lack of credibility in words and ideologies.¹⁵

Does the security debate in the Federation of Evangelical Churches in the GDR work as a real socially and politically relevant factor in which the peace movement crosses borders? Is it a competent partner in a dialogue with Marxism-Leninism? Does it have relevance for the socio-political developments in socialism? We will come back to these questions in the conclusions.

Next we have to deal with the question of competence of the church security debate. Are the judgments of the church really compelling in the political context? Are they helpful for the people at the base and the politicians in office? Are they helpful for the perception and solution of real conflicts? Our investigations will concentrate on one very essential issue, namely the reception of the Palme security concept by the churches in the context of the development in the state-church relationship in the decade from 1976 till 1986. Nearly all points may be tackled along this red thread .

B. The Reception of the Palme-Report in the Federation of Evangelical Churches in the GDR

The debate about issues of peace, security, conflict-resolution strategies, and other relevant points arose in the Federation of the Evangelical Churches in the middle of the 1970's. The initiating impulse did not come so much from the world situation abroad but rather from a development inside the GDR: the introduction of obligatory paramilitary instruction in the schools linked with the state goal of educating communist or socialist personalities.¹⁶

The church's answer was a widespread program of studies and action "Education for Peace," introduced into the churches in 1978 and continued since then. An *ad hoc* committee *Friedenserziehung* [Peace Education] made a study *Rahmenkonzept 'Erziehung zum Frieden'* [Key concept, "education for peace."]¹⁷

The point the church peace-education study (which includes the target group of adults), wishes to make is that some threats to peace come from one's own cultural traditions. There are very entrenched behavior patterns of conflict-resolution by means of oppression on the one hand and traditions of friend-enemy-dichotomy on the other. Whether oppression works by physical force or psychological, sociological, or moral force is not decisive. The fields of conflicts mentioned in the study are all-embracing, from family-life to behavior in groups to the issues of social and political conflicts and their

special feature of violence. The alternative is conflict resolution by the means of discourse, exchange of ideas, identifying with the other, guarantee of confidence, first unilateral measures, etc.¹⁸

Theological background of the peace education study is the Christian hope in the influence of the 'Holy Spirit' working inside and outside the churches, in Christianity and in other humanism, enabling humans to new, more humane and adequate approaches to conflict-resolution management. The thousands of years of cultural tradition of hostile conflict-resolution should not be regarded as an invincible obstacle against changing human behavior. The social function is obvious: aspects of conflict management with regard to the internal issues of the GDR-society are much less discussed in public than are the issues of military conflict resolution.

In August 1982, several month after the first publication of the so-called "Palme"-report¹⁹ a 15 page excerpt was published for members of the church by the *Theologische Studien Abteil* in Berlin. Some weeks later the Synod in Halle declared: The Federal Synod takes the concept of common security "as its own"²⁰ and "considers the concept's realization the most important political task in the 1980's, and supports in this manner all attempts striving for peaceful political alternatives to the military deterrence."²¹

Now the reference to common security or security partnership is nearly omnipresent in the church debate. The principle, "that both sides must achieve security, not from the opposing, but common security must replace the present expedient of deterrence through armaments" (Palme Commission). This point is paralleled exactly in the church statements: "Common security instead deterrence."²²

With regard to concrete political proposals the churches reflect the views of the Palme Commission too; nuclear freeze, establishment of a zone free of tactical nuclear forces in Central Europe, small unilateral first moves . . . to get an otherwise impossible process started . . . and other confidence building measures recommended in the report are tackled also in the church demands.²³ A similar point is the concern to strengthen the authority of the UN and the obligation of international law. With reference to the WCC Assembly in Vancouver 1983 the Federal Synod pleaded for ". . . an international legal instrument which would outlaw as a crime against humanity the possession as well as the use of nuclear arms."

The weak point in the Palme-report is the question of motivation. What kind of factors would really force politicians and nations to value common security higher than their own superiority? What are the compelling mechanisms which urge one to the ideology of superiority? Will fear of mutual destruction - the point in the Palme-Commission - really work and constitute a security partnership?²⁴

On the question of motivation the church's conception of common security seems to be a broader and a more realistic approach. It does not see the question of arms race and deterrence as an isolated

phenomenon but rather in its whole social and psychological context, which at the same time considers the profound differences between both social systems. The competition between East and West, focussed often more on aspects of materialistic than moral values, is fertile soil for a mentality of deterrence. According to the church debate, the common security concept will not work without a deep rethinking or, in other words, without changes not only in the weapons but in the approach to the world.

The original achievement of the church security debate is a combination of common security and the ideas of peace education. The result is a conception called "Renunciation of the attitude, logic, and practice of deterrence" [*Absage an Geist, Logik und Praxis der Abschreckung*]. In this conception²⁵ common security serves to formulate an alternative not only to deterrence as the principle of militarism but to the traditional approach in which societies and individuals took care of their interests.

An impressive feature is the confrontation of the "logic" of deterrence and common security. Here, the church debate points to the mechanisms producing enemy or partner perceptions:

The deterrence function of the threat of mass destruction depends on the readiness to use them, at least in a second strike. But any use of mass destruction weapons is a suicidal one. Only monsters seem to be able to use them in forecast of an all-embracing omnicide. The logic of deterrence produces an ever growing perception of those enemy postures, which seem to justify, a further striving for security through deterrence.

The logic of common security faces quite opposite aspects in perception of its other side, namely its own interest in survival, its own responsibility and ability to forge a peaceful togetherness. First moves in this direction will provide an ever growing perception of real security partnership. This dynamic of common security is stressed throughout the church debate.

Security partnership faced by the church debate is not so much grounded in economic ambitions as Immanuel Kant did. As is known, he postulated that the *Handelsgeist* together with international law will guide to the *ewigen Frieden* [eternal peace]. The church debate focusses more on the moral and psychological challenges. Consequences of the current politics of mutual deterrence for the so-called Third World and for environmental issues have been emphasized in the debate.²⁶

The security debate in the Evangelical churches is a broad one and very difficult to survey. There are many statements, bulletins, commission reports and theological studies, mostly only for church members. Nevertheless, some features which are essential for the debate as a whole may be given in brief:

1. The concrete political proposals particularly those referring to questions of arms reduction, are scarcely original. They are more or less picked up from the Palme Commission and the ongoing current discussion. The churches are not to be criticized for this 'lack' of originality. On the contrary, dilettantism

in politics is a very dangerous approach.²⁷ At times church statements gave the impression of being more original than political proposals on the above mentioned subject. That is not as helpful as to recognize that real church originality lies primarily in other fields.

2. The subjective factor stands in the center of the church security debate: people's failure or insufficiency in managing the coming threats from the ambivalence of the nuclear age as well as from the West-East competition and the North-South problems of rich-poor antagonism.

3. Human insufficiency is twofold. Lagging in responsibility for challenges of nuclear energy, the East-West and North-South problems is one aspect of the problem of subjectivity. Mistrust, feelings of weakness, friend-enemy dichotomy are other, very dangerous threats stemming from the subjective factor. With regard to the subjective factor the church debate brings forth the challenge of the Gospel applied to a radical rethinking of the conception of enemies as well as in the self-concept and the goals for humanity.

4. Unilateral and multilateral moves are to be made in regard to subjective factors too. Renunciation of hostile propaganda, more meetings between individuals of both German states, more conflict solution on the grassroots level, in education as well as in the public and church life are often mentioned as ways to change societies in East and West in the direction of strengthening the desire for peace.²⁸

5. The churches support conscientious objectors and recommend conscientious objection as the "clearer witness" [*das deutlichere Zeichen*] in comparison with people manifesting their desire to peace in combination with military service.²⁹

C. Conclusions

1. Results of the Security Debate

Was the security debate in the Federation of Evangelical Churches in the GDR an effective way to promote peace? This question can be answered affirmatively in at least three aspects:

a. With its special version of common security the church provides a means to recognize that the causes pointed out in the church debate are special ones, since they deal with the subjective factor. The same is true in respect to the solutions. Notwithstanding the fact that a special concern is guiding the debate, the church process of opinion making has enabled people to deal better with peace issues. The debate provides the language for a broader horizon than is used in the discussion outside the churches in the GDR. The debate was helpful to people at all levels of the church, from grassroots to administrators.

b. The debate has helped to rationalize a field of real conflicts between people who are more or less used to blame one side only for the threat to peace or to point to other monocausal reasons, may they

be sociological or mental ones. With its reference to a broad cultural background of hostility and friend-enemy dichotomy the security debate provided a language for a better way to perceive oneself and the enemy. Thereby the debate gave people a greater degree of competence in the perception and solution of conflicts. On this point the groups are relevant in so far as they deal not only with the theory but also with the practice of managing conflicts.

c. The debate has helped to deal with the multiplicity of the threats to peace. The interdependence of foreign and domestic politics, the antagonism between socialism and capitalism, North-South social justice issues, and environmental challenges is often pointed in the debate. The statements are accompanied by more or less symbolic first moves in a real participation in Third-World-issues and in the direction of a lifestyle which is more compatible with the ecological situation. In this regard the groups are an important result of the debate's vitality. Theory and practice together are enabling people to be more competent in handling the interdependence or multiplicity of the threat to peace, and in overcoming the syndrom of helplessness not only intellectually but also emotionally.

All three aspects were working in three social contexts. The first one is the Evangelical Church in the GDR. The common security provides a means for a better communication between base and the leadership and proved to be a key notion to promote Christian identity in social-political issues. There is scarcely another term and concept similarly suitable to apply Christian ethics to the social context.³⁰

The second social context in which the Church common security concept has been working, is the ecumenical movement. The idea of common security, very popular in both German states and their churches, has not gained similar publicity in churches outside of Europe. Common security is relatively marginal in the statement of the United Methodist bishops in the USA³¹ and barely mentioned in the letter of the Catholic bishops of the USA.³² The special contribution of the GDR-church delegation to the VIth Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Vancouver in 1983 was the proposal to convoke a universal Christian peace council for 1990. The proposal refers to the concept of common security as a help to bridge over the deep trenches between the social systems.³³ Because of its relatively high level of acceptance in West and East the concept of common security is uniquely qualified for such a function in the Christian ecumene.

The third social context is the relationship between Marxists and Christians. The security debate has provided a better and deeper understanding of the church's concern for social and political issues. Now, not only political practice but philosophical questions are also coming into the scope of a new dialogue.³⁴ The Christian assessment that destructive forces working inside all social systems on the one hand and the affirmation that constructive influences come out of religion are still controversial for Marxists.

Nevertheless the social functions of religion, the values in the Christian approach to humanity, and the meaning of the Christian language system for dealing with the issues of responsibility in a vulnerable world are themes in a dialogue which began in the GDR with the Luther-jubilee. Common security is a concern and a concept which has helped to promote this dialogue.

2. A Dilemma of the Security Debate

With its rejection of nuclear war, and war in general as a 'measure to continue politics with other means', and its claim to outlaw the possession of nuclear weapons as well as other means of destruction, the Federal Synods went far in unconditionally saying "No" against the real threat of the arms race in which all of us live now.

On all these points a very broad consensus was formed in the Churches. But what about the real consequences for the individuals, groups and parishes? A deep dilemma arises similarly to the one which has occurred in the West. The claims for a viable peace witness take on a very controversial look; a really consistent peace church, like the Quakers, has to turn away from individuals and institutions who directly or indirectly support armament. The argument for an attitude of integrity is countered by the argument that the church would jeopardize its function which is also essentially working for peace.³⁵ Furthermore there are greatly differing assessments of the effect, which would take place in case the churches would pursue the path of such an authentic witness. The churches are hoping for further clarifications in their ecumenical contacts.³⁶ I think the dilemma will continue.

3. Open Questions

We started with the question: did the church peace debate work as the pace setter of the "New Thinking?" Indeed, the churches in the GDR pleaded for tolerance earlier than philosophical or political authorities. A fair handling of people with divergent humane lifestyles or with other opinions in political and social questions, is a demand raised in the Federal Synods from their beginnings in 1969. More opportunities to travel East and West, not only for the sake of charity but also as a means to promote peace between peoples living in conflicting social systems, and deficiencies in the GDR society, for example the real inequality of men and women in everyday life in which women have a double role as mother and employee, are some other issues pointed out by the church debate.³⁷

Now the political reality in the GDR is going to increasingly face these demands. Does the church's role as forerunner arise more from its special sensibility of its situation as a strange minority in a very secular GDR-society or is it more an outcome of the church's essential message?

A truly satisfactory answer is not easy to provide. A fair evaluation will be possible only in the future. For now the development and openings in the socialist system are the challenge to the churches to

prove their competence in dealing with new and promising outlooks. A crucial point in the developments of the GDR-society and its acceptance by the citizens is a satisfying combination of both socialist values: social justice and social freedom. World peace, the freedom from the burden of armament is the first and primary condition. The other one is the strengthening of the subjective factor. Here the church is challenged to prove itself either as the forerunner or as a late-comer.

Endnotes:

1. *Neus Denken im Atomzeitalter. Arbeitspapier für die Gemeinden. Zusammengestellt im Auftrag der Konferenz der Evangelischen Kirchenleitungen in der DDR vom Ausschuss "Kirche und Gesellschaft."*
2. *Ibid.*, p. 25,26.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 2.
4. See Manfred Becker: "Und so bietet sich mir das Bild der Kirche am Ende des Jahres 1984:...— ihrer ehemaligen Privilegien beraubt, ist sie sich ihrer immerhin vorhandenen gesellschaftspolitischen Einmaligkeit bewusst und nicht unzufrieden mit ihrer Rolle..." Kirche des Jahres 1985. In *Kirche im Sozialismus*, No. 1 (1986) p. 24.
5. Details in Helmut Fritzsche, "Christian-Marxist Cooperation in the GDR since 1945." *Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe*, Vol. VII, No. 3, (1987) pp. 1-13.
6. With regard to the church-groups relations the "Bericht der Kirchenleitung" at the 1986 Federal Synod in Erfurt declared: "Eine Polarisierung, wie sie noch 1985 als möglich erschien, ist nicht eingetreten." Bericht der Kirchenleitung, p. 15.
7. An example of efforts in the direction of a fair deal with these groups is given by Heino Falcke, Moderator of the Federal Committee "Church and Society" and, so to say, theological advisor of the groups. He questions; "Könnte es sein, dass hier die Berufung der Gruppen liegt, unseren Kirchen weiterzuhelfen, auf die Sprünge zu helfen, auf dem Wege zur Kirche des Schalom?" Unsere Kirche und ihre Gruppen," *Kirche im Sozialismus*, No. 4, (1985), p. 147. A concrete case of conflict is tackled in "Friedenswerkstatt. Offener Brief an die Friedenskreise und Friedensgruppen in Berlin. Berlin 20. September, 1986," *Kirche im Sozialismus*, No. 6, (1986), p. 238.
8. "...Die Vorstellung erfüllt uns mit Entsetzen, dass bei der von uns allen verurteilten Stationierung der amerikanischen Atomraketen in Westdeutschland auch auf unserem Territorium entsprechende Gegenmassnahmen eingeleitet werden, und wir und unsere Kinder unmittelbar mit Atomraketen leben müssen . . . Sie haben auch den Begriff der Sicherheitspartnerschaft aufgenommen . . . Uns scheint, die mit dem Vertrauen verbundene Bereitschaft zu einseitigen Vorleistungen, d.h. nicht Gleiches mit Gleichem vergelten zu wollen, könnte heute die einzige Möglichkeit der Friedenssicherung sein. Diese Überzeugung erwächst für uns aus dem Neuen Testament, insbesondere aus der Botschaft Jesu. Wir wissen, dass die Gedanken Jesu, vor allem im Blick auf die Nächsten- und Feindesliebe bisher für politisch undurchführbar, ja, für unvernünftig gehalten worden sind. Im Angesicht einer tödlichen Rüstungsspirale jedoch könnte in ihnen ein Impuls der Befreiung entdeckt werden: Vertrauen zu schaffen durch Massnahmen, die einer einseitigen Vorleistung gleichkommen, damit der tödliche Automatismus durchbrochen wird..." *Neues Deutschland*, 22, 23, October, 1983, p. 2.
9. The "Swords to Plowshares" movement in the early 1980s was a very spontaneous movement which surprised both church and state authorities. Young people gathered and demonstrated in churches, schools, and other places for a world without military deterrence. Peace church services brought together thousands of young people, members and nonmembers of the churches. They opposed the planned deployment of the cruise missiles and Pershing II in the West but also the SS 20 missiles in the GDR and other Warsaw Pact countries. The Swords to Plowshares movement was a broad one with many different groups, mostly motivated by emotional rather than rational concepts. In the very beginnings of this movement there were fears of returning to a state-church confrontation like in the 1960s and mistakes were made on both sides.
10. "Wir müssen jeweils prüfen, wer (und welche Handlung) eine besondere Gefährdung des Friedens darstellt und durch welche Massnahmen Frieden gefördert werden kann. Es ist nicht vertretbar, 'auf

dem Felde christlicher Verantwortung die Schuld gleichmässig in alle Richtungen' (Halle 1982) zu verteilen." *Neues Denken*, p. 8.

11. Heino Falcke, "Frieden schaffen aus der Kraft der Schwachen," *Theologische Studien Abteilung*, 1984, p. 6.

12. The same is being said now in regard to the New Thinking by the Marxist philosopher Rolf Reissig: "Die Systemauseinandersetzung ist heute auf das engste verbunden . . . mit . . . der Verhinderung eines nuklearen Weltkrieges . . . mit der weiteren Gestaltung der entwickelten sozialistischen Gesellschaft . . . mit der Gesamtheit des revolutionären Weltprozesses. Zugleich besitzt die Systemauseinandersetzung als reale Erscheinung unserer Epoche relative Eigenständigkeit . . .," *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie*, No. 4 (1986), p. 309.

13. E.g. Heino Falcke: "Ich bin heute der Meinung, dass es darum geht, die Verantwortung für das Morgen jeweils an dem Ort wahrzunehmen, an dem man lebt. Das ist für uns diese sozialistische Gesellschaft, die anders werden muss, wenn sie sich den Herausforderungen der heutigen Welt wirklich stellt. Genauso wie die westlichen Gesellschaften anders werden müssen, wenn sie diese Verantwortung wirklich wahrnehmen." "Kirche für andere in der DDR." in *Kirche im Sozialismus*, No. 2 (86), p. 61.

14. See the summary of the debate in "Bulletin of the ad hoc Committee 'Friedensfragen,' given at the Federal Synod Erfurt 1986. Enclosure II, "Politikfähige Konzepte der Friedenssicherung."

15. Today a new debate is taking place about the decline of membership in the GDR churches (see: Manfred Becker *op.cit.*, p. 23). The question often discussed is whether 20 % or less of the population who are church members is a realistic assessment for the 1990s. My thesis is that the political impact particularly in regard to the actual peace and security issues is extensive and probably independent of the number of church members. By the way, in former times a huge majority of church members were only sporadically active in the church. Today non-members are sporadically active in the churches. Sporadic relationship, however, is influential. Nevertheless, the impact in the 1980s did not go via a church mass movement but via striking ideas witnessed by small groups and individuals.

16. Two further impulses are to be mentioned too, the Final Act of Helsinki, 1975, and the World Assemblies of The World Council of Churches, particularly the 5th Assembly in Nairobi 1975.

17. Published in *Kirche als Lerngemeinschaft*, ed. by the Secretary of the Federation of Evangelical Churches in the GDR, (Berlin, 1981), pp. 266-275.

18. "Erziehung zum Frieden ist eine Erziehung, die befähigt, ermutigt und anleitet
—zur Austragung und Bewältigung von Streit mit Mitteln des Gesprächs, der Verständigung und des Kompromisses,
—zur kritischen Gewaltkontrolle und zum Gewaltverzicht und zum Gewaltverzicht (Druck, Zwang, körperliche Züchtigung) im zwischenmenschlichen Bereich,
—zur Bereitschaft, in einem Konflikt den ersten Schritt zur Lösung zu tun,
—zur Gewährung von Vertrauen und zu vertrauensbildenden Schritten im Zusammenleben . . .
—zur Mitverantwortung für öffentliche, kommunale, betriebliche, schulische Angelegenheiten,
—zur Mitverantwortung für eine gesunde Umwelt,
—zur kritischen Auseinandersetzung mit ausschliesslich militärischen Sicherheitsvorstellungen und -konzepten, die persönliche Entscheidung in der Frage des Waffendienstes eingeschlossen." Rahmenkonzept Friedenserziehung. *op. cit.*, p. 274

19. The "Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues" introduced its Bulletin "Common Security. A Blueprint for Survival" in Stockholm on April 25, 1982.

20. Bulletin of the *ad hoc* Committee "Friedensfragen" at the Synod in Erfurt 1986. Enclosure II, p. 1.

21. Neues Denken im Atomzeitalter, p. 6.
22. In "Bericht der Konferenz der Kirchenleitung (KKL)." Federal Synod Erfurt, 1986, p. 25 and in many other places.
23. A complete survey of the church demands is given in Bulletin of the *ad hoc* Committee "Friedensfragen," Enclosure II. pp. 5-6, Erfurt, 1986.
24. Berthold Meyer and Peter Schlotter in a comment to the Palmereport: "The relations between two blocs bristling with arms cannot be characterized as a security partnership if each party hesitates to attack the other only for fear of destroying itself. This is Cold War. Fear of mutual destruction does not constitute a security partnership. This is why a model should be developed that would go beyond the postulate of 'common security' in the narrow understanding of the Palme Commission." "Common Security between East and West," in: *Bulletin of Peace Proposals*, Vol. 14, No. 3 (1983), p. 220.
25. The concept has been worked out in detail in the debates of the Federal Synods since 1982 in Halle (the word 'practice' was added 1983 in Potsdam) and, among others, in the following studies: "Sicherheitspartnerschaft in Europa," 1983; "Möglichkeit und Unmöglichkeit einseitiger Abrüstung," 1984; (both from the Theol.Stud.Abt), and in the statement: "Unsere Kirchen auf dem Wege zum Bekenntnis in der Friedensfrage," Bulletin of the *ad hoc* Committee "Friedensfragen." Synod Erfurt, 1986.
26. One example among many others is "Die Aufrüstung geht unvermindert weiter . . . Dabei werden Mittel durch die Rüstung verbraucht, die ausreichen würden, das Elend der armen Länder zu beseitigen. Vierzig Millionen Menschen sterben jährlich an unterlassener Hilfeleistung reicher Länder. Indem sie weiterrüsten und ihre Kräfte für die Selbstzerstörung ansammeln, unterlassen sie weiterrüsten und ihre Kräfte für die Selbstzerstörung ansammeln, unterlassen sie dringende Nothilfe." "Bericht der Konferenz der Kirchenleitung," Federal Synod Erfurt, 1986, p. 25.
27. Some statements divergent from the church debate are made by groups outside and inside the church. One example is the "Berliner Appell" from 1982 pleading for "Wiedervereinigung Deutschlands" [Reuniting of Germany] and a relatively strong confrontation with the foreign policy of the GDR. Another example is the "Initiative für Blockfreiheit in Europa.-Aufruf an den Kongress der USA, 1985" [Initiative for a blockfree Europe: A Call To the Congress of the U.S.A.], signed among other by General Superintendent G. Krusche (Text in *Kirche im Sozialismus*, No. 4 (1985), p. 162. There was no broad echo in the political and church public.
28. "Der Gedanke der gemeinsamen Sicherheit muss deshalb in der Friedenserziehung Gestalt gewinnen. Das bedeutet unter anderem: —innerhalb der politischen Bildung und Erziehung für gewaltfreie Konfliktlösungen einzutreten und sie einzuüben... —Kontakte zwischen Einzelnen und Gemeinden aus den beiden politischen Systemen zu unterstützen, —die besondere Friedensverpflichtung der Deutschen in Ost und West bewusst zu machen.. "Neues Denken," p. 7 (Federal Synod Potsdam 1983)
29. Tensions between state and church arose in 1961 with introduction of compulsory military service in the GDR. A first move to a conflict solution emerged in 1964 by the introduction of service as "Bausoldat," [Building Soldier]: It is a legal way of non-weapon carrying service for conscientious objectors. In the question of conscientious objection declared the Federal Synod 1986 in Erfurt: "Der Frieden der Welt wächst mit der Friedensgesinnung vieler einzelner, und der Frieden der Welt braucht die Zeichen der Friedensgesinnung einzelner. Auch weiterhin wird Friedensgesinnung im Verhalten Wehrpflichtiger bezeugt werden. Das geschieht in der Verweigerung jedes militärischen Dienstes. Das geschieht im waffenlosen Dienst in den Baueinheiten. Um dieses Zeugnis bemühen sich auch Wehrpflichtige, die Dienst in bewaffneten Einheiten leisten." Bericht der Konferenz der Kirchenleitungen, p. 27.

30. "Sicherheitspartnerschaft erscheint mir als ein vernünftiges Gleichnis der Feindesliebe, die in der Liebe Gottes begründet ist. "Karl Heinz Dejung. Theologische Überlegungen angesichts der Herausforderung zu einer Sicherheitspartnerschaft. Theologische Studien.Abeil Referat Friedensfragen. Berlin 1985.

31. *Defense of Creation: The Nuclear Crisis and a Just Peace*, 1986, p. 78.

32. *Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response*, 1983.

33. "Wir bitten die Christen, christlichen Kirchen und Gruppen, ihre Brückenfunktion im Spannungsfeld verfeindeter Völker und Staaten wahrzunehmen und sich einzusetzen für das friedenspolitische Konzept der 'gemeinsamen Sicherheit'..." Vancouver 1983. Beiheft zur Ökumenischen Rundschau 48.ed. by Lothar Coenen and Wolfgang Traumüller, p. 205.

34. Footnote 5

35. At the Federal Synod in 1986 in Erfurt it was said: "Die Gliedkirchen des Bundes haben trotz des Minimierungsprozesses volkskirchlichen Charakter behalten und halten die darin eingeschlossene Pluralität und Offenheit bewusst fest. Darum weckt die Herausforderung, in der Frage des Wehrdienstes verbindlich und eindeutig in die Richtung gewaltfreien Friedensdienstes zu weisen, die Sorge, gesetzlich zu werden und einen Teil ihrer Glieder faktisch auszuschliessen und zu verlieren." "Unsere Kirchen auf dem Wege zum Bekenntnis in der Friedensfrage. Ad hoc Committee Friedensfragen," Enclosure I, p. 7.

36. cit. p. 8

37. An example is the Federal Synod Bulletin, 1985. EPD Dokumentation 43/1985: Bericht der Konferenz der Kirchenleitungen, p. 5.