CHAPTER 5. Phase I: Between Internal Consolidation and International Recognition

The following section contends with the GDR's policy in Phase I, from 1945-49 to 1971-72. The phase can be divided into two sub-phases, before and after 1955, when the GDR, at least officially, was granted more autonomy in its foreign affairs. The early years of the GDR have to be considered of little relevance with regard to its international presence, as the Soviet Union exerted full control over the GDR's foreign relations. However, to understand the social and political transformation from the former "German Reich" to the GDR and thus the socialist state- and nation-building process there, this period is briefly sketched out, with a focus on the role of the Soviet Union.

1. The Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact: In the Beginning there was Moscow

In the beginning there was Moscow. Without doubt, this was just as true for foreign policy as for any other policy field in the East German state. After Stalin had given up his hopes for an expansion of its Soviet system over all occupied zones, the full and final integration of the new partial state in the Soviet Occupied Zone (SBZ)[1] became Moscow's new primary objective, including the full control over the city of Berlin. Apart from numerous strategies toward the Western powers, Moscow applied extensive policies to ensure its control over the SBZ, and later on, the GDR. Wentker identifies three central policies: Direct military control, political and economic integration, and the policy of "Sovietization."[2]

The policy of "Sovietization" can be subdivided into the "Sovietization" of society and of the "Sovietisation" political system, in which the latter was directed not only by Soviet functionaries but also by Germans on behalf of the Soviets: The new leadership in the SBZ had just returned from political exile in Moscow. These

1 | German: Sowjetisch Besetzte Zone.

2 | Wentker, 2007, 3; Applebaum, 2013, Introduction.

so-called "Moscow cadres" of the Communist Party (KPD),[3] a term introduced by Peter Erler,[4] were formed by exiled communists who had fled persecution by the National Socialist (NS) regime in Germany during the 1930s. During their exile, the politically well-connected "Moscow group" successfully seized and kept their leadership role among the other German communist exiles.[5] Back in Germany after the war, the "Moscow cadres" had to face competition from others who had also convincingly opposed the NS regime, but were much more popular among the population. In particular, the Social Democrats, the traditionally more moderate leftist adversary of the Communists, emerged as a serious problem for future Communist leadership. With Soviet support, however, the Communist cadres were finally able to overcome their minority position through the forced merger of the Communist Party of Germany and the Social Democratic Party, the SPD, in 1946.[6] The result of the merger was the Socialist Unity Party,[7] a "new type of party" based on principles formulated by Stalin. It took several more years to eliminate or silence dissidents within the new Marxist-Leninist party, the SED: Blackmailing, threats and military trials subverted any opposition from not only the former Social Democrats, but also from within the Communist wing itself against the strict new leadership backed by Moscow.

The political system established with the founding of the GDR in October 1949 left room enough to accommodate a future transformation of the GDR towards the Soviet model. Furthermore, the loyal elites ensured that its accompanying values would be further entrenched into the political system and society of the GDR. The population of the SBZ did not have any choice when it came to embracing these new values transported by "Sovietisation." According to Schroeder, this imposition of Soviet values upon the East German population created the fatal gap between state and society with which the GDR would struggle throughout its existence.[8] The radical measures implemented with this policy also removed from power the traditional elites. This was justified by the goal of "denazification", of which the disempowerment of former NS elites by the occupying force and the new regime was a side effect. The Soviet occupiers first of all aimed to prevent any former elites, including democratic actors connected to the Weimar Republic, from becoming a threat to the new functionary elites of the SED.

3 | Communist Party of Germany, German: Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands (KPD).

4 | Erler, in: Wilke (ed), 1998, 253.

5 | Schroeder, 1999, 9f; Wettig, 1999, 90. In the Soviet Union these German communists again suffered political purges, this time by Stalin's state apparatus. Those who survived only were able to do so through a sufficiently convincing political adaptation to the Soviet model.

6 | On the founding of the SED see: Malycha, 2009, 16ff; Wettig, 1999, 97-107.

7 | German: Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands (SED).

8 | Schroeder, 2006, 86.

The long-term goal of "Sovietisation" and of the other early Soviet strategies was the integration of the new state into its sphere of control on the one hand and the successful development of "Socialism in one country"[9] on the other. In 1924 Stalin had presented his argument for the possibility of the development of "Socialism in one country" as an intermediate step before worldwide socialism and communism. When in 1952 the "planned development of Socialism,"[10] the official development program of the GDR, was announced, it clearly built on Stalin's approach and was developed according to Moscow's will. At the time, the existence of the SED and its claim to power fully depended on Soviet guarantees. Moscow had secured the SED's loyalty and gradually transferred responsibilities for the "development of socialism" to the new party's functionaries.

However, the GDR's population at the time did not submit to its new regime unconditionally. People had not yet internalized the new values of the policy system. In June 1953, Soviet tanks had to forcefully end a popular uprising which had spread all over the country. The economic shift towards heavy industry combined with a collectivization of agriculture and the halting of production of consumer goods had led to a supply shortfall in early 1953. When in May the SED raised the central production target, the first workers went on strike. Protests spread from Berlin all over the GDR and the SED felt that it was not able to keep the uprisings under control. This internal insecurities coincided with vagaries in the Soviet Union. Stalin died in March 1953 with no clear plan for succession.[11] When Soviet tanks finally crushed[12] the "popular uprising,"[13] the SED's existential dependence on Soviet political and military support could no longer be denied. And while the SED regime felt assured that the Soviet Union was still willing and able to guarantee the survival of regime and state, the former "Moscow cadres" were fully aware how much their dictatorship depended on the "big brother" in Moscow.

To secure the SED's leadership of the GDR, the regime integrated the state politically and economically into the Eastern Bloc. The economy was integrated by implementing the Soviet economic system based on central planning,[14] accompanied by an intensification of heavy industry that increased dependence

9 | Kapitel 6: Die Frage des Sozialismus in einem Lande, in: Stalin, 1946 (1924).

10 | German: planmäßiger Aufbau des Sozialismus. See: Schroeder, 2013, 110ff.

11 | Wettig, 2011, 6, 62 and Wettig, 1999, 365.

12 | Order by the Military Commander of the Soviet Sector in Berlin, June 17th 1953, in: Judt, 1998, 512.

13 | German: Volksaufstand. While the SED regime kept talking about a workers' uprising initiated by infiltrated enemies of the GDR, current research argues that the 17th of June had been nothing less than a nationwide uprising on the brink to revolution. See for example: Fricke/Steinbach/Tuchel, 2002, 322ff; Neubert, 2000, 80ff; Schroeder, 1999, 83.

14 | Ritter, in: Hoffmann/Schwartz/Wentker, 2008, 22f; Steiner, 2004.

on imported raw materials from the Eastern Bloc and especially the Soviet Union. Foreign trade relations were artificially focused on the "socialist" world. The economic transplantation of this supposedly new German state into the Soviet satellite system was sealed when the GDR joined the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance of the Eastern Bloc (Comecon) in 1950.[15] Political integration was promoted through the alliance of the militaries of the Eastern Bloc. In March 1954, after the Conference of Foreign Ministers of the victorious powers again failed to produce any results, the Soviet government announced the recognition of the GDR as a sovereign state. East Germany was now supposed to decide on its national and international affairs "on its own discretion."[16] Meanwhile, Bonn had signed the "General Treaty"[17] of the Western Allied Forces in May 1952, which came into effect in 1955. The treaty terminated the Occupation Statute and sealed Bonn's NATO membership. The corresponding step on the other side of the "Iron Curtain" was the GDR joining the Warsaw Pact.[18] This move ultimately limited the GDR's sovereignty to a significantly larger extent than Bonn's NATO membership, as the Warsaw Pact did not include any provisions for the case of retirement. Article 7 of the Pact denied the signatories the ability to become a member of any other alliance. There did not exist any mechanism of arbitration within the Pact except for the "exclusive [Soviet] monopoly of interpretation"[19] and decision. Thus, even after 1954, the "reserved rights" of Soviet Union with regard to the GDR's international affairs remained complex and muddled.

Nonetheless, the SED's fear that they would be "sold by Moscow"[20] due to strategic considerations remained high – especially when the Soviet Union established diplomatic relations with the Federal Republic of Germany in 1955.[21] The bilateral "Treaties of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance" can be considered the legal basis for the Soviet sphere of influence. And even though such a "Treaty of Friendship" in 1964 confirmed Soviet support of the SED regime,[22] the regime still considered it necessary to overemphasize its loyalty toward its "big brother" via preemptive obedience. In 1968, a reformist movement led by the Czech regime and its figurehead, Alexander Dubček, First Secretary of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (ČSSR), had swept over the country.[23] To force the ČSSR back in line, Moscow sent tanks to end the upheavals of the

15 | Hoffmann/Schwartz/Wentker, Einleitung, 2008, 11.

16 | Scholtyseck, 2003, 14.

17 | German: "Deutschlandvertrag."

18 | President of the GDR Otto Grothewohl signs the Warshaw Pact on May 15 1955, Picture: Beitritt der DDR zum Warschauer Pakt, in: Quelle: BArch Va 75468.

19 | Grewe, Wilhelm, in: Hacker, 1989, 77.

20 | Fricke, 1997, in: Scholtyseck, 2003, 90.

21 | Görtemaker, 2004, 336.

22 | Bahr, 1991, 45; Kleines Politisches Wörterbuch, 1973, 893.

23 | Karner, 2008.

"Prague Spring." The GDR proved itself a reliable "ally" and deployed troops of the national army, the "Nationale Volksarmee" (NVA), to the GDR-Czechoslovakian border.[24] This intervention was a posteriori justified by the so-called "Brezhnev Doctrine," which de facto declared the limitation of sovereignty of Warsaw Pact members.[25] Disagreements among researchers about Ulbricht possibly having a positive attitude toward the reform movement in Prague, while Honecker had already opted for a "hard line", may just be mentioned in passing as they are of little importance here:[26] The SED regime clearly decided to stick closely to the Soviet path. The incident in Prague had triggered old fears within the SED leadership of national revolt and reminded them of their political dependence.[27] From now on, a consistent fear of reformist movements in the neighboring countries of the Eastern Bloc that could undermine the SED's autocracy settled in the minds of the functionaries. The latent mutual interdependence between the internal political developments in the GDR and its relationship with the USSR became an unwritten law.

The GDR had proven its loyalty during the "Prague Spring" and began to establish itself as Moscow's international "junior partner."[28] Also, within less than two decades, the GDR had been able to emerge as the second industrial power after Moscow and in the process developed a new self-confidence.[29] In the words of Egon Bahr: "Being just a satellite probably isn't the most pleasant condition."[30] On several occasions the GDR led by Walter Ulbricht[31] seemed to have some voice in decisions concerning the GDR and even Berlin. An example of this new self-confidence is Ulbricht's active role during the Berlin Crisis of 1958,[32] as he urged the Kremlin to close the border. However, when this wish finally was granted in 1961, it was as a political calculation and not as a reaction to Ulbricht's engagement. Emigration and brain drain after the revolt of 1953 threw into question the existence of the GDR, forcing Moscow to act.[33] Nonetheless, and in spite of the GDR's obvious dependence on Moscow's protection and goodwill, Ulbricht demanded that the GDR be acknowledged as the model of a socialist industrialized nation and made it clear that he envisioned the GDR as

24 | Wentker, 2007, 269.

25 | Malycha/Winters, 2009, 184f; Wirsching, in: Wengst/Wentker, 2008, 366.

26 | Wentker, 2007, 267f.

27 | Schroeder, 1999, 98.

28 | Gasteyger, 1976, 38.

29 | Scholtyseck, 2003, 23.

30 | Interview with Egon Bahr February 3 2009, in: Müller, 2009.

31 | From 1950 to 1971 Walter Ulbricht was General Secretary of the Central Committee of the SED, and General Secretary of the SED, Müller-Enbergs/Wielgohs/Hoffmann (Hrsg.), 2000, 868f.

32 | Stöver, 2007, 129; Scholtyseck, 2003, 18; Lemke, 2000, in: Scholytseck, 2003, 95.

33 | Lemke, 1995, 277.

a truly sovereign state – though remaining shoulder-to-shoulder with Moscow in the near future.

Obviously, Ulbricht not only overestimated the GDR's economic but also his own political capacities. His attitude led to "growing Soviet misgivings that the GDR's foreign policy might leave its predefined path."[34] The Kremlin did not intend to take chances with its volatile "ally" Ulbricht. Moscow's primary interest was not to secure a GDR led by Ulbricht, but rather a socialist GDR led by cadres loyal to the Kremlin.[35] The President of the United States summarized the GDR's importance to Moscow at the time: "When East Germany is lost, Poland is lost, and all of Eastern Europe is lost [to Khrushchev]."[36] Consequently, the Soviet Union never intended to fully drop the reins on the GDR's national politics and never hesitated to emphasize its presence: "We [the SU] have our troops deployed with them [the GDR]. This is a good thing and we'll leave it at that"[37]. When in 1970 Ulbricht pointed out that "We are no Soviet state – only true cooperation!"[38] his fate had already been decided. An internal putsch supported the Kremlin conspired to get rid of Ulbricht: On March 1971, thirteen members and candidates of the SED Politbüro sent a letter to its Soviet counterpart, the CPSU, stating that Ulbricht endangered unity on the international level.[39] The USSR disposed of its insecure ally Ulbricht and replaced their former political locomotive with the younger and apparently more obedient Erich Honecker.[40]

2. Bonn: A Permanent Benchmark? The GDR's Attempt to Promote Itself as the "Alternative Germany"

Apart from the close ties to the Eastern Bloc, it was mainly the GDR's relationship with the "other Germany" that determined East Berlin's scope of action both outside and inside its borders. This was also true for the GDR's guarantor of existence, the Soviet Union and its Eastern Bloc: Due to the GDR's international isolation, its position within the Comecon and Warsaw Pact was vital for its survival. At any time East Berlin could have fallen victim to a change of plans in Soviet foreign policy and been sacrificed as a pawn in the Cold War game. This special role of the FRG for the GDR and its foreign policy is explored in the following sub-section.

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34 | McAdams, 1993, in: Scholtyseck, 102.

35 | "The existence of the GDR is of interest for us, for all Socialist states." in: Brezhnev, Leonid on August 20th 1970, in: BArch, SAPMO DY 30 Büro Honecker Nr.441656, in: Judt, 2008, 516.

36 | Görtemaker, 2004, 364.

37 | Brezhnev, Leonid on August 20th 1970, in: BArch, SAPMO DY 30 Büro Honecker Nr.441656, in: Judt, 2008, 516.

38 | Ulbricht, 1970, in: Siebs, 1999, 113.

39 | Scholtyseck, 2003, 31.

40 | Schroeder/Staadt, 143f, in: Courtois, 2010.

> "West Germany was a giant. We, the GDR, were a dwarf. That's something our folks from time to time tended to forget – until the very end."[41]
>
> (Wolfgang Bator, member of Section IV of the CC of the SED, Ambassador of the GDR to Tripoli and Teheran)

As early as October 1949, the newly installed SED government had staked out the field of its aspirations for the GDR's foreign relations:[42] It was the GDR's declared goal to prevent "German imperialism" from regaining strength by establishing peaceful relations with all other nations as the "German alternative" to the Federal Republic in the West. For the next two decades, the GDR had to navigate within this narrow scope of action in the international realm to become an equal member of the international community - at first by focusing on the neighboring states in the Warsaw Pact and then on the Global South.[43]

In one way or another, both German states claimed to be the legitimate representative of the German people. In September 1949, GDR Prime Minister Otto Grothewohl declared: "The Soviet Occupation Zone has to be considered the real Germany. Accordingly, [the founding of the GDR...] means the creation of a government for the whole of Germany."[44] FRG chancellor Konrad Adenauer replied in even more concrete terms: "The Federal Republic of Germany remains the only legitimate representation of the German people until the day of German reunification."[45] In the end, only the FRG was able to use this claim as political leverage. Based on the argument that the government in East Berlin had not been formed by free elections and thus did not have any political legitimacy, Bonn considered itself the only legitimate German government and offered citizenship to all Germans, East and West. As soon as Bonn had regained partial sovereignty,[46] the narrative of the lack of political legitimacy of the "other Germany" was translated into the international realm. The so-called "Hallstein Doctrine"[47]

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41 | Interview with Wolfgang Bator May 27 2011.

42 | First foreign policy declaration by the government of the GDR on October 24 1949 by Georg Dertinger, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the GDR, in: Neues Deutschland, Vol.4, No.250, October 25 1949.

43 | In 1957 the GDR already had signed 71 international treaties, in: Muth, 2001, 38.

44 | Grothewohl, Otto, Governmental Declaration of September 8th 1949, in: SAPMO BArch NY 4036, No. 768, Pg.2, in: Judt, 1998, 493.

45 | "Die Bundesrepublik Deutschland ist [...] bis zur Erreichung der deutschen Einheit insgesamt die alleinige legitimierte staatliche Organisation des deutschen Volkes." Konrad Adenauer speaking on October 21 1949 at the Parliament in Bonn, in: Hacker, 1989, 46. The West "German people had acted on behalf of those Germans who were denied involvement," in: Präambel, Grundgesetz für die BRD (constitution) of May 23 1949.

46 | After the "German Treaty" of 1952 had come into force.

47 | The name is not fully correct as "Hallstein Doctrine" had been introduced Wilhelm Grewe. Görtemarker, 2004, 338.

of 1955 became a stumbling block for the GDR's foreign policy until the 1970s. According to the doctrine, the FRG intended to terminate diplomatic relations with any state that established relations of this kind with the GDR. Naturally, at first no state was willing to risk its good relations with West Germany and its strong economy. Not even after the GDR's Eastern Bloc allies had recognized its statehood in 1949-50 did the list of East German diplomatic relations get much longer, as only Mongolia, Yugoslavia and Cuba did so. However, things gradually began to change in the mid-1960s when the Hallstein Doctrine gradually lost its deterring effect on developing countries. Even countries in the "West" considered recognizing East Germany, mostly to improve relations with Moscow.[48] This change is regularly attributed to the international atmosphere of détente after the Cuban Missile Crisis. However, this development was also rooted in various other dynamics, such as the growing self-confidence of the Global South, the emergence of the non-alignment movement, and the inner consolidation of the GDR after it had erected the de facto symbol of its continued existence, the Berlin Wall.

Whether the GDR's change of strategy to attain international recognition in 1959 was among these causes or a mere reaction to them is debatable:[49] The East German strategy of "Recognition" moved somewhat outside "classic foreign policy."[50] Instead of aiming at the final goal of full diplomatic recognition, including permanent embassies, the SED regime intended to achieve progress through more modest but persistent steps by either initiating contacts below the governmental level or pushing for the establishment of commercial agencies. The early achievements of this policy were put to the test six weeks before the first conference of the non-aligned countries in September 1961, when the "Politbüro" decided to become active with regard to diplomatic recognition. When considering the GDR's limited scope of action, this foreign policy maneuver has to be considered a success: The lion's share of leading non-aligned states, such as India, Indonesia, Ghana, and Egypt, referred to "two German states" in their speeches. But East German endeavors did not result in the expected outcome: Despite this promising development, Yugoslavia's proposal for joint recognition of the GDR by all non-aligned countries was rejected. Furthermore, this East German move in the end led to a significant setback. Bonn felt threatened by the near-recognition of the GDR by the leading non-aligned states. West Germany decided to intensify the Hallstein Doctrine and extended diplomatic consequences for any state recognizing the GDR by cutting loss of developmental assistance and aid. As soon as East Berlin's new strategy showed its first successes, Bonn again intensified its doctrine by making clear that the establishment of relations with the GDR on a consular level could lead to the reduction of financial aid by the Federal

48 | E.g. the GDR singed the Test Ban Treaty in 1963 - despite the FRG's misgivings.

49 | Engel/Schleicher, 1997, 183f.

50 | Wippel, 1996, 12.

Republic: "Depending on their intensity, any official contacts of third countries to Pankow [meaning East Berlin] will be answered with a reduction of our economic assistance."[51] Despite these steps taken and their success with regard to preventing countries from fully recognizing the other Germany, the government of West Germany was not able to stop the Hallstein Doctrine from disintegrating afterwards.[52] The GDR's government continued on its new path and created in 1963 a strategy to finally overcome the Hallstein Doctrine.

Due to a limited budged, the GDR had to concentrate its strategy on a small number of selected countries in the developing world. Among those initial countries were two of the nine states from the wider Middle East, Algeria and Egypt. In both countries, East Berlin hoped to be successful with its strategy, and also that the two would have an impact on other countries in the region. While this initial design had no specific focus on the Arab world, only a few years later it seemed obvious that the key to overcoming international isolation lay in the Arab countries: "There were General Consulates in several countries [in the Middle East] which merely needed an upgrade [to become an embassy], for example in Syria, in Egypt. In addition to that we had commercial agencies in most Arab countries."[53]

On behalf of Willy Stoph, Head of the Council of Ministers,[54] and drafted by the MfAA, the new "strategy of small steps" was complemented by a "resolution" in 1965 to support the African and Arab people in their struggles for liberation with "non-civilian materials."[55] Thus the strategy officially acquired a regional focus. Bonn's response, more or less, was the "Peace Note"[56] of 1966, which can be seen as West Germany's last attempt to save the Hallstein Doctrine and its policy of legitimate representation. Erwin Wickert, a diplomat with the foreign office and author of the "Peace Note," retrospectively phrased the motive for this diplomatic move as "the wish [...] to compound with the states of Eastern Europe."[57] When the Federal Republic sent the note in 1966 to all states but the GDR, this meant nothing less than a threat to the GDR's position within the Eastern Bloc. In the case that the Eastern Bloc states would have accepted Bonn's offer to agree to renounce the use of force and establish

51 | Carstens, Karl. Runderlass, June 18 1964, in: AAPD 1964. Doc. 171. 688-690.

52 | Gerlach, 2006, 65ff.

53 | Interview with Fritz Balke May 23rd 2011.

54 | Head of the Council of Ministers: German: Ministerratsvorsitzender, in: Müller-Enbergs/Wielgohs/Hoffmann (Ed.), 2000, Stoph, Willy, 829f.

55 | Otto Winzer an Willy Stoph, May 28 1965, in: BArch, DC 20/13001, Bl.28-33; Storckmann, 2012, 108.

56 | German: Friedensnote. Friedensnote der Bundesregierung, 7.3.1966; Abdruck in: Dokumente zur Deutschlandpolitik (DzD), 1966, hrsg. vom Bundesministerium für innerdeutsche Beziehungen, Reihe IV/Bd.12,1. 1981, 381-385.

57 | Blasius, 1995, 544.

diplomatic relations, the GDR's international isolation would have been complete.[58] The immediate political reaction by the states of the Eastern Bloc though was the so-called "Ulbricht Doctrine', a "Reversed Hallstein Doctrine": Any move towards the offer of the "Peace Note" had to be preceded by Bonn's diplomatic recognition of the GDR as well as the acceptance of the Oder-Neisse Line.[59] The "Ulbricht-Doctrine" was backed fulsomely by Poland, indicating some success for East Berlin's policy of integration in the Eastern Bloc through rapprochement towards its neighbours. Not surprisingly, the major driving force behind this countermeasure against the West German policy was no one less than the Soviet Union itself.

Under the protective wings of Moscow, the GDR had survived the first decade of its existence. The "Soviet hegemony with regard to questions of foreign policy,"[60] meaning the integration into the Soviet bloc system, was regularly reaffirmed by the SED leadership.[61] Reconsidering the two major determinants of East Berlin's foreign affairs during the first phase of foreign policy, it becomes apparent that both of them significantly shaped the GDR's foreign policy inputs and outputs. On the one hand, Moscow clearly exercised an active role and thus can be considered a directive determinant. Bonn on the other hand, remained at most a mirror for comparison, as there did not exist immediate political contacts between the two German states beyond agreements of practical relevance like issues concerning West Berlin.[62] Bonn's policy and actions, though highly influential on East Berlin's foreign policy decision-making, were only indirectly a reactive determinant.

3. On the "Road to Recognition": The Turning Point of East German Foreign Policy

Attaining full diplomatic recognition as an equal member of the international community was the most pressing issue of East Germany's foreign policy from the very beginning, as it would secure the GDR's survival as a state and thus of the SED regime. Naturally doing so would require overcoming West Germany's Hallstein Doctrine of 1955. Meanwhile, pressure on Bonn to change its diplomatic course towards the GDR was rising. Due to the thaw in Cold War relations during the late 1960s, the FRG's allies at first urged Bonn to adjust and finally give up its

58 | Haftendorn, 2001, 156.

59 | Weidenfeld/Korte, 1999, 588.

60 | Klessmann, 1988, 431 and Judt, 2008, 500.

61 | Extracts of the GDR's First Treaty of Friendship with the USSR of September 20 1955 in: Judt, 2008, 549.

62 | Judt, 2008, 503f; Weidenfeld/Korte, 1999, 413.

Doctrine.[63] Furthermore, Bonn could not afford to endanger its relations with a rising number of developing states that decided to recognize the GDR.

In his personal notes, Egon Bahr, architect of the "New Eastern Policy"[64] and a confidant of West German Chancellor Willy Brandt, analyzed the situation in July 1969:

> "With the establishment of diplomatic relations in Cambodia, Iraq, Sudan, Syria, and South Yemen over the previous weeks [between April and June], the GDR successfully thwarted our policy of non-recognition."[65]

Even though Bahr relativizes the GDR's progress due to the "progressive" and "instable" nature of these countries, he recognizes how much the situation has changed: "[T]he GDR had been able to establish relations with non-Communist states for the very first time." Bahr warns of the possibility of the rest of the Arab world following these radical states to avoid being the last in line for the economic and political benefits offered by the Soviet Union in what he calls a "follow-up effect." According to Bahr, the strategy of "non-recognition" could be upheld no longer when the benefits of the strategy failed to outweigh the damage done "due to terminated or diminished presence in these countries."[66] The "Hallstein Doctrine" had finally lost its last teeth: When Cambodia recognized the GDR,[67] Bonn did not terminate diplomatic relations, but merely froze them,[68] while still upholding valid agreements. Bonn's reaction to Aden's establishment of diplomatic relations with the GDR was quite similar: While ongoing negotiations were interrupted, the West German ambassador stayed in Aden.

After earning initial recognition in 1969, East Berlin participated in the CSCE[69] in Helsinki in 1975 as an equal member and thus an internationally recognized sovereign state.[70] Striking a swift agreement with the GDR about the future of

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63 | One of the transitional stages towards the dissolution of the Hallstein Doctrine was a modified version, also called Scheel Doctrine, that declared the regulation of the inner-German dispute an injunction for the FDG's non-action in case of the recognition of the GDR by third countries. This version was prolonged at least for the NATO-states until both German states joined the UN in 1973. Conversation Bahr, Verner, and Winzer. in: Dok zur DP 1973 bis 1974, 2005, 713f.

64 | German: Neue Ostpolitik.

65 | Aufz. des Ministerialdirektors Bahr, July 1 1969, in: AzAP-BRD 1969 Vol.1, 751f.

66 | Ibid.

67 | On the role of Cambodia in the GDR's Policy of Recognition: Interview with Heinz-Dieter Winter on July 3 2012.

68 | Kupper, 1971, 82.

69 | Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

70 | Müller, 2010.

"inner-German relations,"[71] including a de facto recognition of the GDR, had become inevitable for Bonn to prevent further international marginalization of the FRG. Based on the notion that "there existed an alternative to the elimination of communist regimes: to change them,"[72] the socialist-liberal coalition adapted its policy towards the GDR and the Eastern Bloc according to its Western allies' policy of détente. In doing so, the new government in Bonn hoped to expand its scope of action toward its Western allies by a changing its policy towards "the East."[73] Bonn's agreement with East Berlin, the "Grundlagenvertrag," was considered the core of a catalogue of treaties that redefined West Germany's relations with its Eastern neighbours as well as the Soviet Union.[74] The treaty was based on "the existence of two German states in Germany."[75] By including the support of the Allied powers, Willy Brandt was hoping to keep the door open for a unified Germany – regardless of the implicit and explicit recognition of the GDR as a state. For the same reason, however, West Germany refrained from a full diplomatic recognition: From Bonn's point of view, the relationship of the two German states would always be of a "special nature."[76]

The "Grundlagenvertrag" finally supplanted both the "Hallstein Doctrine" and its weak counterpart the "Ulbricht Doctrine." The GDR could finally hope to become a "fully respected partner" in the international sphere. Until the final years of this "Phase of Recognition" the GDR's foreign policy not only had highly depended on the Kremlin's guidance and affirmation, but also on the Soviet Union's active support as a foreign policy proxy for East Berlin whenever the GDR wasn't able to act itself.[77] Apart from its "de facto recognition" by Bonn, the most important outcome of the "Grundlagenvertrag" for East Berlin was the installation of the "direct line"[78] between the two Germanys. Until then any contact between the two had been directed by Moscow and "in accordance with [the Kremlin's own] interests."[79] From then on, the GDR at least was able to try to realize its own policies without depending on the Soviet's pre-acceptance of every East German move in the international realm.

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71 | According to the official policy of the FRG, the GDR was not considered a foreign state. This was expressed through the term "inner-German," whereas East Berlin consistently spoke of "German-German relations" to emphasize its position about "normal diplomatic relations" between the two German states. Winters, in: Weidenfeld/Korte, 1999, 442-453.

72 | Schulze, 1996, 256.

73 | Haftendorn, 1989, 41.

74 | Haftendorn, 2001, 200.

75 | Wentker, 2007, 320.

76 | "Beziehungen von besonderer Art." in: Gespräch des Min.pr. der DDR Stoph mit BK Willy Brandt, Erfurt 19.März 1970, in: Dok zur DP, 21. Okt. 1969 bis 31. Dez. 1970, Bd. 1 (2002), 405.

77 | Judt, 2008, 501.

78 | Wentker, 2007, 371ff and 413ff.

79 | Bahr, in: Die zweite gesamtdeutsche Demokratie, 2001, 192.