ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: FROM RED TO GREEN IN THE ISLAND CITY:
                             THE *ALTERNATIVE LISTE WEST BERLIN* AND THE
                             EVOLUTION OF THE WEST GERMAN LEFT, 1945-
                             1990

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    In October 1978, diverse members of the West Berlin Left founded the

Alternative Liste für Demokratie und Umweltschutz (Alternative Ballot for

Democracy and Environmental Protection- AL). This new political organization

initially stood in fundamental opposition to the parliamentary system.

Nevertheless, within three years, the AL had won a significant presence in the

West Berlin Parliament, and in 1989, the party joined the Social Democrats in

governing West Berlin. This dissertation examines the origins and evolution of

this organization. It shows that, from the late 1970s through the end of the 1980s,

a significant segment of the radical West German Left grew to accept

parliamentary democracy.

    This occurred through the interplay of several different factors. First, the

AL's parliamentary participation had a moderating, integrative effect on the

party and its members. When the radical West Berlin Left decided to try to

harness the parliaments in service of their movement, the 5 percent barrier to

parliamentary representation forced disparate groups to abandon past

dogmatism and find common ground. Once the AL entered parliament, its

presence there meant that the issue of violence and its perception of democracy were constantly under debate.

Second, the rise of ecological concerns played an important role in the AL's evolution. Environmental issues proved key in keeping the new organization's diverse components together. In addition, the AL's involvement with West Germany's Green Party meant that the AL was under constant pressure to revise its stance on violence.

Finally, historical events, often focused in West Berlin, led the AL's members increasingly to renounce their radical beliefs. Over the course of the eighties, these events led AL members to distance themselves from violence and question their support for the GDR. The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 initially unleashed a flood of utopian hopes by the Left that the end of the GDR regime would mean radical changes in both East and West Germany. When these changes failed to materialize, the AL turned back to parliamentary democracy in a newly unified Germany. Its experiences over the last decade made this not only palatable, but desirable.

FROM RED TO GREEN IN THE ISLAND CITY:

THE *ALTERNATIVE LISTE WEST BERLIN* AND THE EVOLUTION OF THE

WEST GERMAN LEFT, 1945-1990

by

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABC	Atomic, Biological, and Chemical
AdAPO	Archiv der Ausserparlamentarischen Opposition (Archive of the Extraparliamentary Opposition)
AGG	Archiv Grünes Gedächtnis (Archive Green Memory)
AL	Alternative Liste für Demokratie und Umweltschutz (Alternative Ballot for Democracy and Environmental Protection)
APO	Ausserparlamentarische Opposition (Extraparliamentary Opposition)
APT	Archiv Papier Tiger (Archive Paper Tiger)
BI	Bürgerinitiative (Citizen's Initiative)
CDU	Christlich Demokratische Union
CSU	Christlich Soziale Union
DKP	Deutsche Kommunistische Partei (German Communist Party)
DR	Delegiertenrat (Council of Delegates)
FDP	Freie Demokratische Partei (Free Democratic Party)
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
GA	Geschäftsführender Ausschuss (Executive Committee)
GAZ	Grüne Aktion Zukunft (Green Action Future)
GDR	German Democratic Republic
IBP	Instandbesetzerpost (Housing Squatters' Mail)
KBW	Kommunistischer Bund Westdeutschlands (Communist Federation of West Germany)
KdA	Kampf dem Atomtod (Fight Against Nuclear Death)
KHG	Kommunistische Hochschulgruppe (Communist University Group)
KI	Kommune I (Commune I)
KPD	Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands (Communist Party of Germany)
KPD/ML	Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands- Marxisten Leninisten (Communist Party of Germany-Marxists Leninists)
KPD-Rote Fahne	Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands- Rote Fahne (Communist Party of Germany- Red Banner)
KSV	Kommunistischer Studentenverein (Communist Students' League)
LV	Landesverband (State Committee)
MDA	Matthias-Domaschk-Archiv (Matthias Domaschk Archive)
MRB	Mitgliederrundbrief (AL's Membership Circular)
MVV	Mitgliedervollversammlung (Members' Assembly)

NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NPD	Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands (National Democratic Party of Germany)
PAB	Plenarprotokolle des Abgeordnetenhauses von Berlin (Plenary minutes of the Berlin House of Delegates)
PDS	Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus (Party of Democratic Socialism)
RAF	Rote Armee Fraktion (Red Army Faction)
SB	Sozialistisches Büro (Socialist Office)
SDS	Sozialistischer Deutscher Studentenbund (Socialist German Students' League)
SED	Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands (Socialist Unity Party of Germany)
SEW	Sozialistische Einheitspartei Westdeutschlands (Socialist Unity Party of West Germany)
SHB	Sozialdemokratischer Hochschulbund (Social Democratic University League)
SPD	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (Socialdemocratic Party of Germany)
SPV	Sonstiger Politischer Verein (Miscellaneous Political Union)
Stasi	Ministerium für Staatssicherheit (Ministry for State Security of the German Democratic Republic)
TAZ	Tageszeitung (Daily newspaper of the far West German Left)
WUB	Wählergemeinschaft Unabhängige Bürger (Voter's League of Independent Citizens Zehlendorf)

Chapter One

The Left and Germany's Long Way West

In October 1978, members of the Maoist West German Communist Party,

housing squatters, representatives of feminist and gay rights organizations, and

some skeptical environmentalists founded the *Alternative Liste für Demokratie und*

Umweltschutz (Alternative Ballot for Democracy and Environmental Protection-

AL). This new political organization initially stood in fundamental opposition to

the parliamentary system. Nevertheless, within three years, the AL had won a

significant presence in the West Berlin Parliament, and in 1989, the party joined

the Social Democrats in governing West Berlin. This dissertation examines the

origins, activities, and evolution of this organization. It shows that, from the late

1970s through the end of the 1980s, a significant segment of the radical West

German Left came to accept and embrace parliamentary democracy.

This change occurred through the interplay of several different factors.

First, the AL's parliamentary participation had a moderating, integrative effect

on the party and its members. When the radical West Berlin Left decided to

harness the parliaments in service of their movement, the 5 percent minimum

vote required for representation forced disparate groups to abandon past

dogmatism and find common ground. Once the AL entered parliament, its

presence there meant that the issue of violence and its perception of democracy

were constantly under debate. Second, the rise of ecological concerns played an

important role in the AL's evolution. Environmental issues proved key in

keeping the new organization's diverse components together. In addition, the

AL's involvement with West Germany's national Green Party meant that the AL

was under constant pressure to revise its stance on violence. Finally, historical

events, often focused in West Berlin, led the AL's members increasingly to

renounce their radical beliefs. Over the course of the eighties, these events led

AL members to distance themselves from violence and question their support for

the GDR. The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 initially unleashed a flood of utopian

hopes by the Left that the end of the GDR regime would mean radical changes in

both East and West Germany. When these hopes failed to materialize, the AL

turned back to parliamentary democracy in a newly unified Germany. Its

experiences over the last decade made this possible.

    The process of accepting and embracing parliamentary democracy in turn

relates to a central problem in postwar German history. Heinrich August

Winkler's enormously influential history of Germany interprets the German past,

especially the last fifty years, as the story of a "long way West:" the gradual

embrace of the political, social, and cultural values and institutions associated

with Western Europe and the United States.[1] Similarly, Peter Graf

Kielmannsegg's history of divided Germany interprets postwar German history

as the story of Germany's finding "its place among the constitutional

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[1] Heinrich August Winkler, *Der Lange Weg nach Westen* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2000).

democracies of the Western tradition."[2] There are many indications that this interpretation will provide the new metanarrative for German history.[3]

But accepting postwar German history as a "long way West" necessarily raises numerous questions that historians must address. What accounts for the stability of the Federal Republic between 1949 and 1989, without which this metaphorical journey westward would have been unimaginable? What historical events and processes promoted this journey? How did memories of Germany's recent past hinder or advance this process? These are some of the questions driving three major historiographical issues for postwar West Germany: the discussion about the roots of West German stability; the debate about the significance and the legacy of the events known collectively, if misleadingly, as "1968"; and the discussion about *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, or coming to terms with the German past, and its implications for German identity and nationhood. These are the issues to which I attempt to contribute with this dissertation.

To make this contribution, I focus on the radical postwar Left in West Germany. Specifically, I examine the Left in West Berlin from 1945 to 1990, with

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[2] Die Bundesrepublik hat ihren Platz unter den demokratischen Verfassungsstaaten westlicher Tradition gefunden. Peter Graf Kielmansegg, *Nach der Katastrophe : eine Geschichte des geteilten Deutschland* (Berlin: Siedler, 2000), 629. All translations are mine.

[3] See the commentary on Winkler's book by Anselm Doering-Manteuffel, "Eine politische Nationalgeschichte für die Berliner Republik. Überlegungen zu Heinrich August Winkler's 'Der Lange Weg nach Westen.'" *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 27 (2001): 446-462.

particular emphasis on the years 1967-1990. The Left figured prominently in all three of the above debates. It was the radical Left that seemed to pose a serious threat to the stability of the Bonn Republic, both in the Left's hostility to parliamentary democracy and in the form of the terrorist violence of the *Rote Armee Fraktion* (Red Army Faction- RAF) and the *Bewegung 2. Juni* (June 2 Movement), among others. Furthermore, the Left was the driving force behind many of the social and cultural changes associated with "1968," changes that helped propel Germany into the ranks of modern Western nations. Finally, it was the radical Left that constantly condemned the Federal Republic for having failed to make a genuine break with the Nazi past, and whose rejection of the Bonn Republic as compromised by the past resulted in its ambivalence or outright hostility toward German unification in 1990. But the radical West German Left also underwent a profound transformation during the time period under examination here, as will be seen.

This conceptual emphasis on the radical West German Left makes this work's geographical focus on West Berlin a logical next step for several reasons. For one thing, West Berlin was arguably the center of the radical West German Left: most commentators agree that the impetus for the New Left and the student movement in West Germany came out of West Berlin.[4] Moreover, during the

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[4] Christoph Klessman asserts that several factors explain the student movement's origin in West Berlin, noting that the higher degree of politicization of West Berlin students, the geographical and political situation of West Berlin, and the near-monopoly of the Springer Press contributed to a confrontation between students, university administration, local government, and West

1970s, offshoots of the New Left in the form of extremely radical anti-

parliamentary cells known as K-groups thrived in the island city. West Berlin

was also the birthplace of several terrorist groups, including the RAF and the

June 2 Movement, which attacked the West German state using force of arms.

Finally, West Berlin's geopolitical position as an outpost in the Cold War also

meant that confrontations between East and West, between pro- and anti-

Communists, but also between Germans and Allied forces emerged with

particular intensity there.[5] This also meant West Berlin radicals were much more

aware of developments in the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc than their West

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Berlin's general population. Christoph Klessmann, "1968-Studentenrevolte oder Kulturrevolution," in *Revolution in Deutschland? 1789-1989*, ed. Manfred Hettling (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1991), 91. According to Thomas Fichter and Siegward Lönnendonker, "the Berlin students were the locomotive of the revolt" [Die Berliner Studenten waren die Lokomotive der Revolte.] Tilman Fichter and Siegward Lönnendonker, *Kleine Geschichte des SDS* (Berlin: Rotbuch Verlag, 1977), 85. For an examination of the central role played by West Berlin and especially the Free University as the place where the unrest began, see Ernst Richert, *Die Radikale Linke. Von 1945 bis zur Gegenwart* (Berlin: Colloquium Verlag, 1969), 108-112. This is not to downplay the importance of the Left in other West German cities, especially Frankfurt. There, the student movement and its legacy have been exceptionally well-documented in the volumes by Wolfgang Kraushaar. See Wolfgang Kraushaar, ed., *Frankfurter Schule und Studentenbewegung von der Flaschenpost zum Molotowcocktail 1946-1995*, 3 vols. (Hamburg: Rogner and Bernhard, 1998).

[5] These factors also helped make West Berlin into a center of the European alternative movement. See Roland Wünsch, *Das Ende der Alternative: Die Grünen in der Wiedervereinigung* (Bonn: Pahl-Rugenstein, 1995), 29 nn. 99.

German counterparts. As a result, they tended to reject Soviet-style Marxism in favor of Maoist forms of Marxism-Leninism.[6]

In many ways, then, West Berlin was a hothouse where political and social conflicts bred with special intensity. Yet the city was also the site of the most remarkable transformation of anti-parliamentary forces. During the time I examine here, West Berlin witnessed key developments in the West German Left's integration into the system of Western parliamentary democracy. This process exemplified larger trends. Accordingly, focusing on West Berlin allows historians to follow a particularly intense version of developments that happened elsewhere. In West Berlin, as in the rest of West Germany, the radical Left for years had failed to achieve any of its stated goals: it utterly failed to achieve its main goal, a proletarian revolution; it gained no parliamentary representation whatsoever that it could use to promote its agenda; it even failed to keep its own organizations from disintegrating.[7] In the late 1970s, with these organizations on the brink of extinction, leaders made a fateful decision to cooperate with other groups and participate in parliament. They justified this course of action by emphasizing that they planned to exploit the parliaments to

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[6] As Fichter and Lönnendonker phrased it, "The unsentimental glance of the Berliners soon led to an ideological confrontation with Soviet Marxism" [Der unsentimentale Blick der Berliner führte schon bald zur ideologischen Auseinandersetzung mit dem Sowjetmarxismus]. Tilman Fichter and Siegward Lönnendonker, *Macht und Ohnmacht der Studenten* (Hamburg: Rotbuch Verlag, 1998), 25-26.

[7] In retrospect, however, the Left has been credited with driving tremendous social changes. See below.

advance the goals of their respective movements. But the moment they

committed themselves to the parliamentary route, the stage was set for a

stunning reversal of fortune. Members of the radical Left had embarked on an

ideological journey that would transform them from frustrated revolutionaries

into effective reformers. They had begun the transition from a force attacking the

political system of the Federal Republic to one accepting and embracing Western

parliamentary democracy.

West Berlin also was the home of the organization that serves as the

central focus of this project, the AL. The AL's founders were adamant that the

organization was not a new political party, but rather a kind of anti-party formed

to serve as the parliamentary wing of the hundreds of various citizens' initiatives

and grassroots organizations then active in West Berlin. Initially, this new

political organization embraced radically anti-parliamentary views.

Furthermore, many of its supporters apparently wished to turn back the clock on

Western economic and social development, seeking a return to pre-modern

communal forms. Despite its staunch antiparliamentarianism, the AL entered

the West Berlin Parliament three years later, and its support continued to grow

throughout the 1980s. During this time, the organization increasingly embraced

the parliamentary process as the best way to enact changes and address

grievances. It attracted technocrats, especially in the realm of city planning and

mass transit, who helped reshape the city. Moreover, in a process initially born

of criticism of the established political parties for failing to adequately reflect the

composition of society, the AL sparked numerous changes in the makeup of parliament, bringing women, gays and lesbians, and foreigners into the West Berlin legislature. In 1989, the rise of the AL culminated when it joined the Social Democratic Party in governing West Berlin. An anti-parliamentary anti-party had evolved into a party that actively embraced the parliamentary path in pursuit of its goals.

West Berlin offers a wide variety of excellent and extensive sources for a study of the transformation of the Left. The dissertation draws on sources primarily gathered during a research year in Berlin from 2000-2001. These sources include campaign posters and song lyrics, as well as party correspondence, political programs, and pamphlets. These come from several largely untapped archives in Germany. The *Archiv Grünes Gedächtnis*, the Green Party's archive, includes an extensive collection pertaining to the AL. Moreover, the Green Party's comparative willingness to provide materials relating to recent events makes this archive an outstanding source of information regarding all areas of the AL's founding and evolution. The *Matthias-Domaschk-Archiv* holds documents relevant to the East German opposition and the activities of the East German secret police. These contain information regarding the AL's support of the East German opposition, as well as transcripts of meetings between AL spies and their Stasi handlers. The Free University's Archive of the Extra-Parliamentary Opposition hosts a rich collection of documents and newspapers pertaining to the 'K-groups,' the immediate predecessors of the AL and the

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political home for much of the radical West German Left in the 1970s. The West Berlin *Abgeordnetenhaus*, the parliamentary body responsible for governing the city, provides another important source of documentation.[8] The *Abgeordnetenhaus* has published transcripts of its proceedings since its founding in 1951. These transcripts are an excellent source regarding the parliamentary self-perception of the AL, as well as the AL's interactions with the other political parties in Berlin, in particular when debating issues such as relationships with the Western Allies, the symbolically charged adoption of West German law in West Berlin, and the oversight of the controversial governmental body responsible for protecting the constitution.

Despite these excellent resources and the potential to provide insights into larger historical and historiographical issues, the AL remains relatively little-researched, especially from a historical perspective. In many respects, this reflects the state of research on the Green Party, research on which has generally been conducted from within the disciplines of political science or sociology.

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[8] The AL's involvement in the West Berlin *Abgeordnetenhaus* would play an important role in integrating the Left and inculcating parliamentary values. Initially, the parliament's influence was restricted by its lack of credibility in the eyes of the AL: decades of scandals and the "*Berliner Filzokratie*" (the spoils system in city government) made the *Abgeordnetenhaus* an initially weak factor in the parliamentarization of the AL. As time went on, however, the *Abgeordnetenhaus* came to be an arena where a remarkable debate about democracy took place, with AL members at times striving to educate members of other parties about what they held to be the true meaning and place of democratic values. A full account of the nature of the *Abgeordnetenhaus*, its responsibilities and areas of competence is given in Horst Naubert, *Das Berliner Parlament: Struktur und Arbeitsweise des Abgeordnetenhauses von Berlin* (Berlin: Der Präsident des Abgeordnetenhauses von Berlin, 1986).

While some outstanding studies of the Greens have been produced, few have

delved into the historical roots and context of the Greens, aside from mentioning

in passing their links to the student protest movements of the 1960s.[9] The best

examination of the history of the German environmental movement ends in 1971,

and mentions the German Greens mainly to refute attempts to trace similarities

between Green and Nazi ideologies.[10]

The few full-length histories that exist have been written by people within

the Green Party itself, and while not uncritical of the Greens, show a clear

political bias.[11] Literature on the AL follows a similar pattern, although given the

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[9] Joachim Raschke's magisterial *Die Grünen: Wie sie wurden, was sie sind* (Cologne: Bund-Verlag, 1993) is an example of the best quality of work on this subject. It is extremely comprehensive, covering all local manifestations of the Greens and providing highly useful information on all aspects of the party, including the AL. Raschke provides what he terms "a history of the Greens"; however, it is presented as a chronology of important events in the history of the Greens, devoid of analysis. Andrei Markovits and Philip Gorski's pathbreaking study *The German Left: Red, Green and Beyond* examines the decline of the link between the Left and workers' movement through the rise of the Green Party. Andrei Markovits and Philip Gorski, *The German Left: Red, Green and Beyond* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 3.

[10] Raymond Dominick, *The Environmental Movement in Germany: Prophets and Pioneers 1871-1971* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 111-112. Anna Bramwell in *Blood and Soil: Richard Walther Darré* (Bourne End: Kensal, 1985) noted numerous alleged similarities between the Green Party's environmental policies and those of Walther Darré, Nazi Minister of Agriculture from 1933-1945. Dominick's refutation was devastating.

[11] Werner Hülsberg, *The German Greens: A Social and Political Profile* (London: Verso, 1988), and Hubert Kleinert, *Vom Protest zur Regierungspartei* (Frankfurt am Main: Eichborn, 1992) are the two histories of the Greens written by leaders within the party.

importance of the AL, its history remains surprisingly unexplored.[12] Two

historical studies of the AL have been undertaken, both by writers closely

connected to the party. The nearest thing to a complete history of the party, *Zehn*

Jahre Alternative Liste: Bilder und Geschichte(n), was assembled by various

members of the AL, and was published to celebrate the party's achievements in

its first decade of existence. This account ends in 1988, and consists mainly of a

chronology interspersed with personal comments by AL members themselves,

and is best viewed as a primary source.[13] The second, *Die Alternative Liste Berlin:*

Entstehung, Entwicklung, Positionen, provides a good overview of the AL's early

years. The work is particularly useful for the documents it publishes on the AL's

formative period. However, even its authors, most of whom were closely

associated with the AL, admit that their account is not objective.[14]

This dissertation therefore is the first archives-based exploration by a

historian of the origins and evolution of the AL. To my knowledge, it is also the

only historical study focusing on a specific geographical area that traces the

evolution of the West German Left from its radical anti-parliamentary origins to

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[12] Joachim Raschke's section on the AL, though full of very useful insights and structural information, gives more of a snapshot of the party at a particular time, and is based aside from interviews on only a few published works by AL members. See Raschke, *Die Grünen*, 274-283.

[13] Elkebarbara Mayer, Martina Schmolt, and Harald Wolf, *Zehn Jahre Alternative Liste: Bilder und Geschichte(n)* (Bremen: Steintor, 1988).

[14] Michael Bühnemann, Michael Wendt and Jürgen Wituschek, eds., *Die Alternative Liste Berlin: Entstehung, Entwicklung, Positionen* (Berlin: LitPol Verlagsgesellschaft, 1984).

the founding of the Green Party and its rise to a coalition partner accepting and embracing Western parliamentary democracy.[15] As such, it draws on new evidence to illuminate questions of interest to historians and social scientists focusing on postwar Germany. In particular, the dissertation addresses the sources of West German stability, the legacy of the events collectively labeled '1968,' and the process of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, or coming to terms with the Nazi past.

Consider first the issue of stability. At first glance, Western European and German history appears turbulent indeed. Revolutions, two devastating world wars followed closely by a Cold War with the potential to cause even more loss of life, and tremendous social, technological, and cultural changes left their mark on the continent. But the twentieth century in Europe contained also the seeds of stability. Post-World War II reconstruction, the creation of the European Union, and remarkable economic and political developments have also shaped the region. Much of European history for the post- World War II era, and especially West German history, must entail a search for the roots of this stability, a stability that provided the preconditions for Germany's 'long way West.'

Questions posed by the Western European and in particular the West German success story are therefore at least as important as the search for explanations for Western Europe's turbulence in the first half of the century. In

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[15] Andrei Markovits' and Philip Gorski's *The German Left* looks at general developments in all of West Germany. This dissertation is greatly indebted to this work.

this sense, this dissertation heeds Anselm Döring-Manteuffel's call for research

not only regarding the rise of the dictatorships of the twentieth century, but

above all "regarding the development and stabilization of free societies."[16] How

have radical movements in European and German history come to accept liberal

democratic norms? What has encouraged a deradicalization of fringe elements,

and how has this deradicalization taken place? What mix of political institutions

and cultural developments has fostered these changes? Specifically for the case

of West Germany, how did the Bonn Republic avoid the fate of the Weimar

Republic? This study of the Left in West Berlin attempts to provide some

answers to these important questions.

    Commentators have offered a number of explanations regarding

Germany's transition from a totalitarian state to a prosperous democracy. Many

authors, especially those writing in the post-unification era, have emphasized the

political as well as economic stability of the Bonn Republic.[17] Some of these

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[16] Hinsichtlich der Entstehung und Stabilisierung freier Gesellschaften.
Anselm Doering-Manteuffel, "Deutsche Zeitgeschichte nach 1945: Entwicklung
und Problemlagen der historischen Forschung der Nachkriegszeit,"
Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte 41, no. 1 (1993): 29.

[17] On the stability of the Federal Republic, see especially Manfred
Görtemaker, *Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland: Von der Gründung bis zur
Gegenwart* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1999), 13. Jeffrey Herf looks to "trends in political
culture and the nature of democratic institutions to account for the unexpected
resilience of West German democracy from 1977 to 1983." Jeffrey Herf, *War By
Other Means: Soviet Power, West German Resistance, and the Battle of the Euromissiles*
(New York: The Free Press, 1991), 2. For a useful review of several contributions
to understanding Germany's transformation, see Marc Morje Howard,
"Continuity and Change in Germany's Turbulent Twentieth Century,"*German
Politics and Society* 18, no. 3 (2000). Howard notes that "according to most

credit the political parties with helping contribute to this stability.[18] Still others

have gone so far as to label this stability a "political miracle" on a par with

Ludwig Erhard's "economic miracle."[19]

Roughly speaking, explanations as to the nature of the postwar German

"political miracle" can be broken down along the lines of "institutionalists"

versus "culturalists." Institutionalists hold that Germany's successful

transformation was rendered possible by strong institutions such as the Basic

Law, the parliaments, and the political parties. Culturalists on the other hand

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analyses, the political transformation of the postwar Federal Republic has been an undeniable success story." Howard, "Continuity and Change," 140. Furthermore, for Peter Baldwin, again, "Politically, the Federal Republic is a remarkable success story, even in comparison with her European neighbors and certainly with its predecessor regimes." Peter Baldwin, "Postwar Germany in the Longue Duree," *German Politics and Society* 16, no. 1 (1989): 7.

[18] Peter H. Merkl notes the power of the mainstream political parties to exclude extremist parties on the Left and the Right in "The German Response to the Challenge of Extremist Parties," in *The Postwar Transformation of Germany*, ed. John S. Brady, Beverly Crawford, and Sarah Elise Wiliarty (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999). Stephen Kalberg notes the role of the Green Party in integrating citizen activism into its party program and thus channeling it into the parliaments. See Stephen Kalberg, "The Federal Republic at Forty: A Burdened Democracy?" *German Politics and Society* 16, no. 1 (1989). For a general treatment of the role of the New Social Movements in democratizing West Germany, see Ruud Koopmans, *Democracy from Below* (Boulder, San Francisco, Oxford: Westview Press, 1995). For an interesting treatment of cities' contributions to democratization, including West Berlin, see Jutta A. Helm, "The Politics of German Cities: A Tale of Visions, Money and Democracy," in *The Federal Republic at Fifty*, ed. Peter H. Merkl (New York: New York University Press, 1999).

[19] See for example E. Gene Frankland, "The Green Party's Transformation: The New Politics Party Grows up," in *The Federal Republic of Germany at Fifty: The End of a Century of Turmoil*, ed. Peter H. Merkl (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 147.

look to historical and cultural factors to explain the West German transition. In this view, the total breakdown and discrediting of the Nazi government purged German culture and society of absolutist tendencies and allowed other cultural and historical trends to come to the fore. These influenced subsequent developments, including the development of political institutions.[20]

In its analysis of the transition from an extremist left-wing organization to a political party accepting and embracing parliamentary democracy, this dissertation touches on processes attributable to both institutional and cultural factors. But these concepts strike me as rather arbitrary and in their binary opposition to each other not reflective of the more complexly intertwined reality. In lieu of the concepts of institutional and cultural factors, this dissertation describes processes I have labeled parliamentarization and deradicalization. Though these correspond roughly to institutional and cultural factors respectively, I believe that they are more useful and less misleading than these other terms. Two sides of the same coin, these concepts capture the overlapping and intertwining nature of the processes I am attempting to describe.

My understanding of parliamentarization relates closely to that expressed by Winkler in his *Der lange Weg nach Westen*: that is, the growing acceptance of

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[20] For a recent discussion of the institutionalist/culturalist debate regarding developments in the Federal Republic of Germany, see Beverly Crawford, John S. Brady, and Sarah Elise Wiliarty, "Germany Transformed? A Framework for Analysis," in *The Postwar Transformation of Germany: Democracy, Prosperity, and Nationhood*, ed. John S. Brady, Beverly Crawford, and Sarah Elise Wiliarty (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999).

Western parliamentary democracy.[21] More specifically for the case of the AL, this

parliamentarization consisted of the renunciation of violence as a tool of political

protest and the growing conviction that the parliamentary arena was the best

forum in which to air grievances and to enact change. The story of the AL

illustrates another dimension to parliamentarization, however. As Ralf

Dahrendorf notes in his classic study of German political culture, "There is an

experimental attitude that allows anybody to propose new solutions, but rejects

any dogmatic claim to the truth…. There is a conception of liberty that holds that

man can be free only where an experimental attitude to knowledge, the

competition of social forces, and liberal political institutions are combined."[22]

Later in the same study, he asserts, "Liberal democracy is government by

conflict."[23] I show that, early in its development, the AL embraced a political

culture bearing a striking resemblance to that described by Ralf Dahrendorf in

his analysis of the 'German Question.' Though initially adopted by necessity as a

reaction against certain aspects of the K-groups and as a way to enable its

various constituent groups to work together, the AL's commitment to a culture

of debate and discussion and its renunciation of a "dogmatic claim to the truth"

became strong forces for the democratization of the party.

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[21] Winkler, *Der lange Weg*.

[22] Ralf Dahrendorf, *Society and Democracy in Germany* (New York: Norton, 1967), 16.

[23] Dahrendorf, *Society and Democracy*, 141.

Germany's Long Way West also entailed a phenomenon I call here deradicalization. I have borrowed this term from Jerry Muller, who applied the concept to explain why German intellectuals initially embraced, then subsequently rejected, the totalitarian forms of government and society they helped bring about in reaction to the changes of modernity.[24] In many ways, the West German Left followed a similar path. The small communist cells that were the immediate predecessors of the AL embraced a proletarian revolution, but were disillusioned with what they viewed as the imperialistic, revisionist policies of the Soviet Union. The death of Mao Tse Tung in 1976 and the reign of the Gang of Four in China sparked the Left to distance itself from its remaining ideal: it is no accident that parts of the West Berlin Left founded the AL shortly thereafter. In addition, many on the political left realized that the K-groups also provided no solution, instead producing only burnout and division. Some of these disillusioned members responded by forming the AL. Moreover, the methods and goals of the terrorist groups of the 1970s and 1980s such as the RAF and the June 2 Movement lost their appeal as their human costs became clear: significantly, the AL was formed in the immediate wake of the 'German Autumn' of 1977. Finally, during the course of the 1980s, the environmental and human rights abuses rampant in the GDR sparked the faction within the AL that still viewed that country positively to become increasingly disillusioned.

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[24] Jerry Muller, *The Other God That Failed: Hans Freyer and the Deradicalization of German Conservatism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 9.

Another source of deradicalization and parliamentarization in the 1980s derived from an increasing concern with environmental protection. In fact, the integration of the radical Left into the parliamentary system in the course of the 1980s through the Green Party could not have come about without the rise of the ecology paradigm beginning in the preceding decade.[25] This ecology paradigm was quite broadly and vaguely defined; however, as Manfred Görtemaker has noted, this ambiguity proved advantageous, as it provided room for interpretation and hence helped unite a variety of people and projects.[26]

Indeed, the new emphasis on ecology brought numerous disparate groups into the parliamentary system. Most significant for the present context were attempts to revivify socialism using ecological elements. The GDR émigré Rudolf Bahro perhaps best epitomized this approach. Bahro described his attitude to Marxism after the shift from Red to Green in a revealing way: "There are many particular elements in Marx that I still find useful, but the structure itself I have abandoned. For me Marxism is a quarry. After the fall of the Roman Empire ordinary people used the stones of the fallen temples to build their homes and their churches. This is productive use of material. There are also

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[25] On the revival of the ecology paradigm, see Anna Bramwell, *Ecology in the Twentieth Century. A History*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989). Bramwell argues that "the ecology movement" dates back to the mid-nineteenth century: the evident revival of ecology in the 1970s came about due to the simultaneous rise of the economics-related, "finite resources" root of ecology and the "biology" root, which emphasized the interconnectedness of man with nature. Bramwell, *Ecology*, 238.

[26] Görtemaker, *Geschichte*, 631.

structural elements that I use…. My whole Marxist background has, of course,

gone into this restructuring."[27] Less well known is the fact that student leader

Rudi Dutschke himself recognized the potential of socialism to be reconciled

with ecology. Just before his premature death in 1979, Dutschke helped found

the 'Green Ballot' in Bremen. In an interview after the Bremen election, in which

the party earned 5.1 percent to become the first green party to enter a state

parliament, Dutschke noted that the future survival of the human species was

uncertain, and that this threat of course transcended class interests. Marxism

could still contribute, however, as Marxist writings went beyond class to

emphasize "the liberation of the entire species."[28]

In the case of the AL, 'ecology' functioned in several ways to deradicalize

the organization. For one thing, 'Green' doctrines provided the ideological glue

that could be used to keep the diverse factions together enough so that the

organization could win the 5 percent of the vote required as a minimum in order

to gain parliamentary representation.[29] Green ideas also served as a means of

holding the organization together in times of crisis.[30]

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[27] Rudolf Bahro, *From Red to Green: Interviews with the New Left Review* (London: Verso, 1984), 219. See also Rudolf Bahro, *Elemente einer neuen Politik: zum Verhältnis von Ökologie und Sozialismus* (Berlin: Olle and Wolter, 1980).

[28] Die Befreiung der ganzen Gattung. Ulrich Chaussy, *Die drei Leben des Rudi Dutschke* (Darmstadt: Hermann Luchterhand, 1983), 333.

[29] Under the West German Basic Law, the so-called "five percent clause" was created in order to prevent a splintering of the parties as occurred in the Weimar Republic, with devastating consequences. See Peter Graf Kielmannsegg, "Parties and the Political System," in *West German Political Parties: CDU, CSU,*

Bringing in other groups interested in ecology helped moderate the views

of more radical individuals, as they were forced to find common ground, while

elements of the ecology paradigm still appealed to more radical groups. The

presence of modernizers and technocrats in the AL helped temper the anti-

modernist rhetoric embraced by many members. By the same token, radical

opponents of the Allied forces in Berlin found that they could use the rhetoric of

environmental protection to great effect in mobilizing opposition to the presence

of Allied troops in West Berlin, a long-standing grievance of the Left. This, too,

helped attract radicals from the K-groups to the AL. Furthermore, the AL's

opposition to nuclear power brought in still other veterans of the anti-nuclear

movement: even though West Berlin did not have a nuclear power plant, its

proximity to the GDR was enough cause for concern. Moreover, the social justice

FDP, SPD, the Greens, ed. Robert Gerald Livingston (Washington, DC: American Institute for Contemporary German Studies, 1986), 2. In the case of the AL, however, the five percent clause functioned to force disparate, often antagonistic groups to work together in order to meet and exceed the five percent threshold. The fractious K-groups, tired of meeting defeat after defeat at the polls, finally reached out to environmentalists, women's groups, and so on to form a new organization. Instead of dominating the new group, however, the K-groups were themselves dominated. Hence it could be argued that the five percent clause worked, though certainly not in the intended way.

[30] For this reason, this dissertation takes issue with Joachim Raschke's and others' downplaying of the importance of the "greenness" of the AL. Raschke may be correct in asserting that "Green is not [the AL's] first color," but I have found that Green ideas were far more important than previously assumed, both in holding the party together and in characterizing the ideology of the party. See Raschke, *Die Grünen*, 274.

component of this paradigm helped bring homosexuals, women, and other

minorities into the party, thus attracting their voices to the constitutional system.

An obvious effect of the rise of the ecology paradigm was the creation of

the West German Green Party. This in turn helped integrate radical leftists into

the parliamentary system. The example of Joschka Fischer, prominent Green and

Germany's Foreign Minister at the time of writing, illustrates this phenomenon.

In early 2001, revelations about Fischer's past as a militant street fighter in

Frankfurt sparked an unprecedented debate about the legacy of the 1968 student

revolt in West Germany and the violent decade of the 1970s.[31] Some have

questioned whether someone who once threw stones in street protests should

now represent Germany internationally. This controversy ignored the most

interesting aspect, however: what Daniel Cohn-Bendit called the passage "from

state-hater to state's representative."[32]

It is my assertion that the 1970s and 1980s witnessed a crucial

transformation of West German political culture that enabled such a transition.[33]

The Green Party helped bring such individuals as Fischer into the political

[31] For a good summary of the controversy, see M. Anne Sa'adah, "Ein
Staatsmann mit Geschichte: Joschka Fischer's German Past," *German Politics and
Society* 19, no. 3 (2001).

[32] Vom Staatshasser zum Staatsrepräsentanten. Daniel Cohn-Bendit, "Ein
Segen für dieses Land," interview. *Der Spiegel* 5 (29 January 2001), 86.

[33] For a sometimes hilarious account of this transformation, see Till Meyer,
Staatsfeind (Hamburg: Spiegel Buchverlag, 1996). Meyer describes the changes
that had occurred in the Left while he was in prison for terrorism: according to

institutions of the Federal Republic, thus making it possible for them to apply

their formidable talents and abilities to advancing rather than attacking

parliamentary democracy. Fischer is far from being the only prominent German

politician with roots in the student movement of the 1960s: many of his

colleagues in the Green Party (as well as a substantial number of Social

Democrats) share a similar biography.

The same was true of the AL: in fact, Otto Schily (currently Minister of the

Interior), Renate Künast (who served as Minister for Consumer Protection, Food

and Agriculture under the Red-Green Coalition), and Hans-Christian Ströbele

(prominent member of the German Bundestag, often critical of United States

policy) were all involved in the formation of the AL, and gained their first

parliamentary experience as AL delegates. Thus this dissertation uses the

example of the AL to show that the New Left's Long March did not necessarily

end in terrorism or the undermining of democracy, as contemporaries and later

observers feared and claimed. Far more often, the Long March brought

representatives of the New Left into the parliaments themselves, where they

helped strengthen German parliamentary democracy. The developments under

consideration in this dissertation help explain how this happened.

The relationship between the AL and the Green Party had a profound

impact on the AL's evolution into a political party working within constitutional

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Meyer, Joschka Fischer had replaced Karl Marx as the new icon of the Left.
Meyer, *Staatsfeind*, 447.

bounds. Of particular importance here were attitudes toward using violence as a

tool of political protest. In part because of West Berlin's unique situation, but

also because of the nature of the relationship between the Green Party and the

AL, the affiliation with the Green Party did not go as far in integrating the AL

into the parliamentary system as one might have expected. Nevertheless,

especially by exerting constant pressure on the AL to reconsider its stance on

violence, the Green Party in the end helped bring the radical Left in West Berlin

into the parliamentary fold.

The recent proliferation of analyses of the Federal Republic as a success

story can sometimes obscure the fact that, from its founding in 1949 to German

unification in 1990, historians, political scientists, and commentators of virtually

every political stripe worried that the Bonn Republic was fraught with the same

instabilities as the Weimar Republic had been.[34] The rise of the New Left in the

1960s merely increased these concerns. Many of the works on the New Left

either implicitly or explicitly expressed the concern that the Bonn Republic was

coming increasingly to resemble the ill-fated Weimar Republic. Richard

Löwenthal took up classic themes about the fall of Weimar and the rise of the

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[34] For an example of these concerns during the 1960s, see Klaus
Schönhoven, "Unbehagen an der Bonner Demokratie. Ein Rückblick auf die
politikwissenschaftliche Diskussion in den sechziger Jahren," in *Geschichte als
Möglichkeit: über die Chancen von Demokratie*, ed. Karsten Rudolph and Christl
Wickert (Essen: Klartext-Verlag, 1995). Early in the history of the Federal
Republic, these fears provoked an early attempt at a rebuttal with the title
directly inspired by the issue. See Fritz Rene Allemann, *Bonn ist nicht Weimar*
(Cologne: Kiepenheuer and Witsch, 1956).

Nazis when he diagnosed the violence of the student movement as a "romantic relapse," a return of the anti-Western, anti-liberal tendencies to which German intellectuals seemed especially prone.[35] Hermann Lübbe's tract asserting continuities between the student movement and the terrorist organizations of the 1970s argued that a lack of conviction in defending West German democracy against terrorists lay at the roots of the spread of terrorism. His arguments closely resembled those of historians blaming the demise of the Weimar Republic on a lack of committed democrats.[36] Zbigniew Brzezinski dismissed the violence and the revolutionary rhetoric of the New Left as a "farewell performance of the historically irrelevant."[37] In addition, the rise of the Green Party further increased fears that the postwar consensus was unraveling.[38] These worries haunted onlookers until the eve of German unification. For Stephen Kalberg, the Federal Republic at age forty in 1989 was "a burdened democracy." While generally successful in overcoming the problems that had plagued Germany in the past, the Federal Republic still could not feel secure in its accomplishments.

[35] Richard Löwenthal, *Romantischer Rückfall* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1970), 8.

[36] Hermann Lübbe, *Endstation Terror: Rückblick auf lange Märsche* (Stuttgart: Seewald, 1978).

[37] Eine Abschiedsvorstellung der historisch Irrelevanten. Zbigniew Brzezinski, "Revolution oder Konterrevolution- zum historischen Standort des Revolutionismus der 'Neuen Linken,'" in *Wiedertäufer der Wohlstandsgesellschaft*, ed. Erwin Scheuch (Cologne: Markus, 1968) , 222.

[38] Frankland, "Green Party's Transformation," 147.

It faced a number of new dilemmas that could potentially undermine the general trend toward a stable, participatory democracy.[39]

Part of the task of the historian of the Federal Republic therefore must be to explain why the predictions of doom regarding the Federal Republic's stability were mistaken. This dissertation examines developments in West Berlin from the mid-1960s to 1990 in order to help understand this phenomenon. There, anti-Western, anti-parliamentary elements became reconciled with modern Western parliamentary democracy. There, the new generation consigned to the ash heap of historical irrelevance by Brzezinski made itself relevant again. There, the West German parliamentary system demonstrated its ability to absorb and integrate challenges from the far Left.

As we have seen, one facet of the concerns about the stability of the Bonn Republic related to terrorism. Not only the acts of terror themselves represented a threat to the Federal Republic, however: contemporary observers were correct to point out that the state's response to these acts also could undermine democracy. Critics accused the West German state of both overreacting and applying a double standard in its fight against terror, suspending civil liberties in

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[39] In particular, Kalberg worried that structural components of the Basic Law such as the five percent clause had outlived their usefulness and would frustrate citizens and thus lead to instability. Kalberg, "Federal Republic," 34-38.

its zeal to track down left-wing terrorists while downplaying acts of terror from the Right.[40]

Left-wing intellectuals complained that the West German state tended to tar the legal opposition by alleging association with terrorists.[41] Writing in the foreword to a collection of letters from intellectuals protesting the BRD's response to terrorism, and especially the tendency to accuse intellectuals of complicity in the terrorist acts, Heinrich Böll, Freimut Duve, and Klaus Staeck asserted that one idea united the terrorists and those who used their acts as a means of advancing their own power: the view that the Federal Republic neither needed nor was capable of reform. According to the publishers, a contrasting idea united the letters included in their publication: the belief that ending terrorism required the recognition that German democracy both needed and was capable of reform.[42]

The story of the AL is also the story of precisely this recognition on the part of the radical Left. Jeremy Varon described the "eschatological impulse"

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[40] For an overt statement of the accusation that the BRD government had a double standard when it came to cracking down on left-wing as opposed to right-wing terror, see Hermann Vinke, *Mit zweierlei Mass: Die deutsche Reaktion auf den Terror von Rechts. Eine Dokumentation* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1981). Vinke explicitly compared this to the situation in the Weimar Republic when the government cracked down on the Left while ignoring the Right. Vinke, *Mit zweierlei Mass*, 8.

[41] Rolf Schroers, "Demokratie-Extremismus-Terrorismus," in *Extremismus im demokratischen Rechtstaat*, ed. Manfred Funke (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1978), 536.

[42] Freimut Duve, Heinrich Böll, and Klaus Staeck, eds., *Briefe zur Verteidigung der Republik* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1977), 9.

that motivated groups such as the RAF and that was rooted in the conviction "that the existing order was irredeemably corrupt and had to be destroyed; that its destruction would give birth to something radically new and better; and that the transcendent nature of this leap rendered the future into a largely blank or unrepresentable utopia."[43] When it entered the parliamentary system, the extreme Left in West Berlin distanced itself from this impulse. By accepting the rules of parliamentary democracy instead of making a fateful leap into the unknown, the AL in essence asserted its conviction that the Bonn Republic needed change, but also conceded that its political system made this change possible. In this way, members expended their energies in bolstering democracy rather than attacking it. The subsequent implications for Germany's stability cannot be overstated.

The AL did not, of course, arise out of nowhere: this dissertation interprets the AL in part as a product of the New Left of the 1960s. Foremost among the historians of the New Left has been Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey. Drawing on the work of social movement theorists Friedhelm Neidhart and Dieter Rucht, Gilcher-Holtey's scholarship has done much to advance historians' understanding of the New Left.[44]

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[43] Jeremy Varon, *Shadowboxing the Apocalypse: New Left Violence in the United States and Germany* (Ph.D. diss., Cornell University, 1998), 378.

[44] See especially Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey, ed., *Neunzehnhundertachtundsechzig (1968): Vom Ereignis zum Gegenstand der Geschichtswissenschaft* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1998). For a very good overview, see Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey, *68er Bewegung*. Gilcher-Holtey draws extensively on the work of

According to Gilcher-Holtey, the New Left differed from the traditional Left in five key aspects. First, the New Left re-interpreted Marx's theories to emphasize alienation of the individual more than class exploitation. Second, rather than concentrating exclusively on revolution in the spheres of industry and politics as a way of achieving socialism, the New Left also emphasized socialism's potential to alter and liberate the individual in his or her personal, familial, and sexual relationships. Third, New Leftists viewed cultural changes as preceding and helping pave the way for social and political revolution. Fourth, the New Left placed much more emphasis on action than on theory, and hoped to alter both spectators and participants through provocative forms of protest. Finally, the New Left marked a shift away from viewing the proletariat as the agent of revolution, instead looking to new educated workers, young intellectuals, and fringe groups.[45]

As Gilcher-Holtey reminds us, social movements cannot perpetually remain mobile, and they constantly face the threat of dissolution and decline. By their very nature, they are a temporary phenomenon. Indeed, demobilization is a key component of social movements. This demobilization typically comes about either through disintegration into sects and subcultures, through

Friedhelm Neidhart and Dieter Rucht, especially their "The Analysis of Social Movements: The State of the Art and Some Perspectives for Further Research," in *Research on Social Movements: The State of the Art in Western Europe and the USA*, ed. Dieter Rucht (Frankfurt: Campus, 1991).

[45] Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey, *Die 68er Bewegung. Deutschland Westeuropa USA* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2001), 15-16.

institutionalization as a party or association, or by transformation into a successor organization that takes up components of the social movement and advances them.[46]

In West Berlin, the New Left underwent similar processes of decay and rebuilding, and the AL was actually the result of two of these processes. First, the most important of the student organizations of the 1960s, the *Sozialistischer Deutscher Studentenbund* (League of Socialist German Students- SDS) disintegrated into numerous smaller groups with highly varying degrees of organization. Among these were the sects of the K-groups: this disintegration will be examined in the next chapter. Second, around a decade later, the K-groups and several other groups with roots in the SDS themselves merged into the AL: this will be explored in Chapter Four.[47]

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[46] Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey, "Mai 1968 in Frankreich," in Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey, ed., *Neunzehnhundertachtundsechzig (1968): Vom Ereignis zum Gegenstand der Geschichtswissenschaft* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1998), 12.

[47] Intellectual continuities may also be traced: for example, the work of Herbert Marcuse continued to be of crucial importance to the ideology of the AL. As Timothy Luke put it, Marcuse "anticipates virtually every critique made by contemporary radical ecology groups." Timothy W Luke, "Marcuse and Ecology," in *Marcuse: From the New Left to the Next Left*, ed. John Bokina and Timothy Lukes (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1994), 204. See in general *Marcuse: From the New Left to the Next Left* for an account of the importance of Marcuse's ideas and their relevance to the New Left as well as to ecology and post-modernism. On the importance of the ideas of Herbert Marcuse for the West German student movement, see Ingo Juchler, *Rebellische Subjektivität und Internationalismus* (Marburg: Verlag Arbeiterbewegung und Gesellschaftswissenschaft, 1989).

In emphasizing the continuities between the New Left and the AL, this dissertation supports and builds on the findings of Andrei Markovits and Philip Gorski, whose study *Red, Green, and Beyond* demonstrated conclusively the connections between the Green Party and the New Left.[48] From its affiliation with the student movement to its participation in the so-called K-groups to its final formal relationship with the Green Party, the experiences of the AL's membership embodied the New Left's 'Long March.' Thus this dissertation's examination of the prehistory, founding, and subsequent development of the AL contributes to the debate about the significance and legacy of the phenomenon often known simply, and misleadingly, as '1968'.[49] This serves as the second major area of emphasis of this dissertation.

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[48] Markovits and Gorski, *German Left*.

[49] In general, I have found that in West Berlin, the year 1967 is remembered as playing a much more significant role than 1968. Informal conversations with eyewitnesses indicate that 1967 was the key year in Berlin, not 1968. Only once a national and international perspective is adopted does 1968 become more significant. This occasionally leads to interesting mistakes in attributing certain historical events. Matthias Horx for instance delivers an unwitting example of the pull '1968' has on his generation: he incorrectly identifies 1968 rather than 1967 as the year in which Benno Ohnesorg was shot, thus confusing two events of momentous importance: the shooting of Benno Ohnesorg and that of Rudi Dutschke, which did occur in 1968. The fact that not only the author made this mistake, but that it clearly made it past numerous editors without being caught, is testament to the importance of '1968' in the popular imagination. See Matthias Horx, *Aufstand im Schlaraffenland. Selbsterkenntnisse einer rebellischen Generation* (Munich: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1989), 15. On the student movement and the importance of the year 1967, see Rainer Bieling, *Die Tränen der Revolution: die 68er Bewegung zwanzig Jahre danach* (Berlin: Siedler, 1988), 18.

'1968' has been widely cited as a source and time of important social and

cultural change.[50] The nature of this change, however, has been intensely

debated. What did the protest movement mean for West German society and

culture? Was it a force for modernization? Was it a revolution? What does the

AL tell us about the consequences of participation in the protest movement?

How did participants' involvement shape their subsequent political or

professional career? Their political outlook? Where did their Long March

through the institutions lead them?

Again, Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey has been at the forefront of attempts to

evaluate the meaning and significance of '1968.' As she notes, however, it is

difficult to determine the influence of social movements like the New Left. While

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[50] Readers interested in 1968 from an international perspective are referred
to the volume edited by Carole Fink, Philipp Gassert, and Detlef Junker, *1968:
The World Transformed* (Washington, DC: German Historical Institute and
Cambridge University Press, 1998). For an examination of 1968 and its historical
meaning in international comparative perspective, see the volume edited by
Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey, "*1968*."   For a comparison of the events of 1968 in
Germany and France which is exemplary in its systematic use of conceptual tools
for the analysis of social movements, thus facilitating cross-national
comparisons, see Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey, "1968 in Deutschland und Frankreich:
ein Vergleich," in *1968- Ein europäisches Jahr?*, ed. Etienne Francois and others
(Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 1997). Ronald Fraser et al provide
another example of recent attempts to study the 1968 revolts from an
international comparative perspective, "based on the memories of over three
hundred people who took part in the student movements." Ronald Fraser and
others, eds., *1968: A Student Generation in Revolt* (New York: Pantheon, 1988), 2.
Pavel Richter in "Die APO in der BRD," in *Neunzehnhundertachtundsechzig (1968):
Vom Ereignis zum Gegenstand der Geschichtswissenschaft*, ed. Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey
(Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1998), gives a succinct account of the
developments leading up to and culminating in the student protest of 1967-1968.
This is probably the best, most compact account of FRG-wide developments
written from a historical perspective.

social movements define new issues and bring them into public debate, other

actors, especially political parties, are needed to effect the changes demanded.

This makes it hard to evaluate the direct role of social movements in enacting

change and in driving political, social, and cultural developments.[51]

Nevertheless, as Gilcher-Holtey noted, observers have ascribed a variety

of effects to the protest movement, ranging from the emancipative to the

destructive.[52] According to Rainer Bieling, the 1968 revolt resulted in a new sense

of maturity and responsibility in West German society.[53] Daniel Cohn-Bendit

attributed a novel radical democratic tradition and a general expansion of

democracy to the protest movement, claiming that "a society which claimed to be

democratic was made to confront its authoritarian structures, the authoritarian

personality was challenged, society's smooth running profoundly shaken."[54]

Christoph Klessmann, far more careful and more scholarly in his assessment of

the social consequences of the protest movement, examined the question as to

whether the protest movement actually sparked a "lifestyle revolution" or

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[51] Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey, prologue to *Neunzehnhundertachtundsechzig (1968): Vom Ereignis zum Gegenstand der Geschichtswissenschaft* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1998), 9. On the difficulty of determining what can legitimately be seen as the legacy of the 1968 movement, see Gilcher-Holtey, *68er Bewegung*, 111-125.

[52] Gilcher-Holtey, *68er Bewegung*, 114.

[53] Bieling, *Tränen*, 120.

[54] Quoted in Fraser and others, *Student Generation,* 361.

whether it merely coincided with developments that were happening anyway.[55]

He concluded that the movement had more of an amplifying function for

tendencies already present in West German society, and its cultural-

revolutionary results should thus not be overestimated. Others have credited the

New Left with forcing a confrontation with the Nazi past and advancing debate

about the Holocaust. Klessmann addresses this question as well. Taking issue

with Hermann Lübbe, who claimed that the student movement actually

hindered the process of coming to terms with the past, Klessmann asserted that

the student movement forced and intensified the debate about the German past,

if occasionally through problematic means. But giving the student movement

credit for initiating the debate would also be inaccurate.[56]

On the other hand, its critics have blamed the New Left for everything

from terrorism to the decline of parliamentary democracy. Some commentators

have located in the protest movement of the 1960s the origins of the terrorist

violence of the 1970s and 1980s. *Hitler's Children*, Jillian Becker's famous

monograph on the RAF, traces the roots of the terrorist group directly to

developments in West Berlin, the student movement, the anti-Shah protest, and

the shooting of Benno Ohnesorg.[57] Hermann Lübbe claimed that terrorism was

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[55] Lebensstilrevolution. Klessmann, "1968," 99.

[56] Klessmann, "1968," 100.

[57] Jillian Becker, *Hitler's Children:The Story of the Baader-Meinhof Terrorist Gang.* (Philadelphia; New York: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1977).

the direct result of the 1960s protest movement.[58] Jeremy Varon's brilliant

comparative study of New Left violence in the United States and West Germany

draws a similar conclusion. While Varon is careful to distance himself from

those who view terrorism as a direct consequence of the protest movement,

Varon suggests that the terrorist violence of the RAF represented a purified form

of the New Left's nihilistic ideology.[59]

      Others emphasize the anti-parliamentary aspects of the New Left.

According to Franz Schneider, APO, the German acronym for extra-

parliamentary opposition, stood just as much for anti-parliamentary opposition.[60]

In his view, implicit in the New Left's program was a genuine hostility to

parliamentary democracy. For Bernd Guggenberger, the radical democratic

elements advocated by the New Left essentially renounced the crucial

components of West Germany's fragile parliamentary democracy, with

dangerous authoritarian implications.[61]

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[58] Lübbe, *Endstation Terror*.

[59] Varon, *Shadowboxing*, 378. For the results of a cooperative undertaking sponsored by the German federal government on the roots of terrorism, see the massive work by Fritz Sack and Heinz Steinert, eds., *Analysen zum Terrorismus*, 4 vols. (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1984).

[60] Ausserparlamentarische Opposition; antiparlamentarische Opposition. Franz Schneider, ed., *Dienstjubiläum einer Revolte: 1968 und 25 Jahre* (Munich: Hase and Koehler Verlag, 1993), 49.

[61] Bernd Guggenberger, *Wohin treibt die Protestbewegung? Junge Rebellen zwischen Subkultur und Parteikommunismus* (Freiburg i.B.:Herder, 1975), 97-101.

Thus reviews have been mixed regarding the legacy of the New Left, with many contemporaries seeing in the New Left the beginning of the end of the Bonn Republic. Despite all these predictions of doom, however, the Bonn Republic survived to provide the basic blueprint for the unified Berlin Republic, and the New Left did not succeed in tearing down West German society. Instead, in the minds of many, quite the opposite occurred. According to this view, the New Left helped usher in reforms and modernize and democratize German society. Gerd Koenen's account of the 'Red Decade' of the 1970s epitomizes the dilemma regarding the legacy of the New Left. To him, the New Left was quite clearly anti-parliamentary and anti-Western. He finds it thus all the more puzzling why the movement has been credited with advancing the very causes it originally opposed. Koenen expresses this paradox explicitly when he asks, "How can a movement that, until the early 1980s, had precisely the opposite inscribed on its banners, have advanced liberalism, democracy and westernization?"[62] Koenen addresses changes said to have occurred during the 1960s and 1970s, whereas I look to the 1980s for the source of these changes. To extend Koenen's metaphor, I assert that, during the course of the eighties, the Left rewrote its banners.

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[62] Wie kann aber eine Bewegung Liberalität, Demokratisierung und Verwestlichung vorangetrieben haben, die bis in die frühen 80er Jahre hinein das deutliche Gegenteil auf ihre Fahnen geschrieben hatte? Gerd Koenen, *Das Rote Jahrzehnt: Unsere kleine Kulturrevolution* (Cologne: Kiepenheuer and Witsch, 2001), 24.

As has already been seen, one of the debates about the legacy of the 1960s

concerns the protest movement's role in promoting a discussion about and a

coming to terms with the Nazi past. Whether or not the protest movement can

be credited with being the first to advance discussion in this area, there can be no

question that the New Left helped force a confrontation with the legacy of

National Socialism in West German society. But the Nazi past was significant for

the New Left in other ways as well. In fact, a key aspect of the history of the

New Left involves its own coming to terms with the German past. This process

of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* is the third major theme of this dissertation.

Analyses of the different ways the past has been understood and

interpreted in the two Germanys have added much to our understanding of the

political and intellectual cultures of the two German states.[63] In the post-war era,

the legacy of the German past presented serious obstacles to the Left's ability to

identify with the West. But experiences in the AL and events in West Berlin in

the 1980s helped overcome these obstacles. This, too, was a crucial aspect of

Germany's Long Way West.

A critical part of understanding the ideas and attitudes of the New Left

involves appreciating the implications of its self-understanding as 'anti-fascist.'

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[63] See especially Jeffrey Herf, *Divided Memory: The Nazi Past in the Two Germanys* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997). For a critical examination of several of the dominant theses regarding the varying interpretations of the Nazi past in the two Germanys, see Antonia Grunenberg, "Antitotalitarianism versus Antifascism- Two Legacies of the Past in Germany." *German Politics and Society* 15(2), 1997.

This anti-fascism had several consequences. For one thing, the Left's anti-fascism led to a remarkable and unfortunate blind spot when it came to understanding the nature of the Nazi past and the lessons to be applied to the present. A dogmatic and simplistic analysis of the rise of National Socialism that emphasized the fascist nature of the regime to the exclusion of other elements such as racism and anti-Semitism permitted the Left, which considered itself staunchly anti-Nazi, to occasionally perpetuate anti-Semitic rhetoric and images.[64]

This understanding of the Nazi past persisted to a large degree within the AL. As an outgrowth of the New Left, the AL continued to promote discussions about the legacy of National Socialism. But it also continued some of the problematic aspects of the New Left's approach to coming to terms with the past, especially regarding an undifferentiated discussion and analysis of fascism. This was still present on the Left in the 1980s, as I show in the section on the housing squatters in West Berlin. This dissertation also shows, however, that the AL confronted these attitudes and distanced itself from them in the course of the 1980s.

The anti-fascist ideology extended far beyond a condemnation of the Nazi past: it also entailed a rejection of the West. Like its predecessor in the Weimar

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[64] On anti-Semitism on the Left, see Martin Kloke, *Israel und die deutsche Linke* (Frankfurt: Haag and Herchen, 1994), and Henryk Broder, *Der ewige Antisemit* (Frankfurt: Fischer Taschenbuch, 1986).

Republic, this ideology equated capitalism and liberal democracy with fascism.[65] Already at the time of the student movement, this hindered identification with the West. As Antonia Grunenberg noted, the protest movement rejected the West on moral grounds because of the fascism allegedly rooted in its political and economic systems.[66]

Most fatefully for the Left, and potentially most threatening for Germany's position as a 'normal' Western nation, the radical Left rejected the Federal Republic for its alleged failure to break with the Nazi past. In fact, the attitude of the New Left toward the Federal Republic was in every way colored by the perception that the Federal Republic was a successor to the Nazi government.[67] The Left could in fact point to numerous examples of individuals who had played prominent roles in the Nazi era who continued to serve in high offices in the Federal Republic. Based on this compromised nature of the West German state, it became a moral imperative for the Left to resist the Federal Republic, rendering violent resistance to the state not only acceptable but admirable.[68]

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[65] Antonia Grunenberg, *Antifaschismus, ein deutscher Mythos*. (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1993), 145. On the undifferentiated use of the term "fascism" see Karl Dietrich Bracher, *Zeitgeschichtliche Kontroversen: Um Faschismus, Totalitarismus, Demokratie* (Munich: R. Piper, 1976), 13.

[66] Grunenberg, *Antifaschismus*, 162.

[67] Grunenberg, *Antifaschismus*, 161.

[68] Grunenberg, *Antifaschismus*, 156.

This has several interesting implications. It follows that when the AL debated the use of violence as a tool of protest, it in fact also debated the nature of the West German state. In distancing itself from violence, however gradually, the AL reconciled itself to the Federal Republic and to the West. Thus, this dissertation interprets the controversies over violence that erupted during the 1980s as the final stages of the New Left's coming to terms with the Federal Republic and the final chapter in the history of the troubled relationship between the Left and the West German state. In the course of the 1980s, in West Berlin, the rift between the Left and the West German state was gradually closed.

The three historiographical issues outlined at length above serve as thematic threads running throughout the dissertation rather than providing an organizational structure. The dissertation itself is organized chronologically, with Chapters Four through Seven covering periods corresponding to the legislative periods in West Berlin. It may be objected that adopting the legislative periods as caesuras automatically imposes an undue emphasis on the role of parliament in shaping the development of the AL. In fact, this was one of the interesting aspects of my research findings with broader implications involving radical movements in parliamentary democracies: I found that the electoral cycles imposed themselves upon the AL, influencing what was under debate, the nature of the debate, the timing of the issues the AL raised, and the general strategy of the party. In other words, parliament insinuated itself into the organization and began to control it, not the other way around.

This introduction serves as Chapter One. Chapter Two commences by briefly examining the Wandervogel and the bohemian movement as reactions to the problems of modernity. It turns quickly to the postwar era, emphasizing the exiling of the radical Left from the parliamentary arena. It then addresses the student movement in West Berlin, from the shooting of Benno Ohnesorg in 1967 to the anti-Springer Campaign and the attack on Rudi Dutschke. The chapter concludes with the dissolution of the SDS. Chapter Three focuses on West Berlin in the 1970s, paying particular attention to the KPD-Rote Fahne. The chapter explores this party's radical anti-parliamentary sentiments, and contrasts them with the attitudes it expressed at the end of the decade, when it participated in the creation and founding of the AL. Chapter Four addresses the first years of the AL. It examines the reasons for the decline of the K-groups and the implications for the AL, and analyzes its first program, formulated for the 1979 elections, when the AL entered several District Assemblies. The chapter looks briefly at the work in these assemblies. It then explores the AL's increased appeal to other segments of the radical Left that had earlier declined to work with the AL, and the reasons for this shift. Chapter Five examines the 1981 election, when the AL gained representation in the West Berlin *Abgeordnetenhaus*. In particular, it focuses on the AL's attitudes toward parliamentary participation and violent protest. Chapter Six begins with the 1985 election campaign, and looks at the attempts of the AL to balance the extra-parliamentary and the parliamentary arenas. It also looks at attitudes toward violence and parliament,

and turns increasingly to its activities in parliament for the insights these give as to the processes of parliamentarization and deradicalization. Chapter Seven turns to the 1989 election and its aftermath, when the AL joined the SPD to govern West Berlin. The momentous changes of 1989 released unexpected energies and impulses among the AL, which, once thwarted, turned back to the parliament. The changes also resulted in the end of the AL-SPD coalition. Chapter Eight presents conclusions about the material presented here, then provides a brief epilogue on the fate of the AL in a unified Germany and a unified Berlin.

The story of the AL related here then is part of a larger pattern. In its gradual acceptance of the rules of parliamentary democracy, in distancing itself from violence and terror, and in coming to terms with the legacy of the Nazi past, the AL was both part of and contributor to Germany's "Long Way West." But before we can examine the process of overcoming the gap between the state and the radical Left that was an important part of this journey, we turn first to an examination of when this gap opened the widest: the turbulent 1960s and the events leading up to them. This is the subject of Chapter Two.

Chapter Two

Setting the *Szene*:

Berlin, 1900-1970

Following Markovits and Gorski's findings on the Green Party as a whole,

this dissertation interprets the AL as the logical outcome of historical

developments relating to the extra-parliamentary opposition and the New Left.

This chapter examines developments affecting the West German Left,

emphasizing as a general theme the alienation and marginalization of the radical

Left from the SPD after the end of World War II. But the AL was also an

organization arising out of and at home in West Berlin, and the AL cannot be

understood apart from its geographical and historical context. This chapter

provides this context up to 1970, primarily focusing on the Left in Berlin after

1945, tracing its development up to the dissolution of the SDS in 1969. It

examines Berlin as a center for alternative movements and the location of

particularly intense conflicts between socialists and communists. Finally, the

chapter focuses on West Berlin in the postwar era, paying particular attention to

student protest and the role of the Free University of Berlin.

Berlin has historically been a center of radical and alternative movements

sparked by the urban environment and the contradictions of modernity. One

such movement with interesting parallels to the AL was the Wandervogel.[1] This

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[1] The history of the Wandervogel has been well documented. See for
example Gerhard Ziemer, ed., *Wandervogel und freideutsche Jugend* (Bad
Godesberg: Voggenreiter, 1961); Werner Helwig, *Die blaue Blume des*

back-to-nature movement grew rapidly and spread across Germany. From about

one hundred adherents in 1901, membership had reached over twenty-five

thousand by the outbreak of the First World War.

Historians have offered a variety of explanation for the origins of the

Wandervogel. The group had its origins in Steglitz, then a Prussian town on the

outskirts of Berlin. Berlin at the time was the center of the developments against

which the Wandervogel reacted. Urbanization, the decline of free space available

for youth, and stuffy and restrictive schools motivated these youths to escape the

city and wander about in the surrounding countryside.[2]

Another key contributor to the strength of the Wandervogel movement

was the large number of students in Steglitz. The student population in Prussia

increased dramatically in the second half of the nineteenth century, and the

number of pupils in Steglitz rose even more sharply since the town was

expanding so rapidly. A dense student population meant that Steglitz had the

right conditions for students to find others with similar interests. Also,

inhabitants and students in Steglitz were faced with particularly intense mobility

Wandervogels: vom Aufstieg, Glanz und Sinn einer Jugendbewegung (Gutersloh: S.
Mohn, 1960). For an extensive collection of documents relating to the
Wandervogel, see Werner Kindt, compiler, *Die Wandervogelzeit. Quellenschrift zur
deutschen Jugendbewegung 1896-1919* (Düsseldorf; Cologne: Eugen Diederichs,
1986). A comprehensive account of this history would be beyond the scope of
this account: instead, this chapter focuses as much as possible on developments
in Berlin.

[2] Gerhard Ille, "Schülernot und Jugendkult im deutschen Kaiserreich- zur
Situation der bürgerlichen Jugend um 1900," in *Der Wandervogel. Es begann in
Steglitz*, ed. Gerhard Ille and Günter Köhler (Berlin: Stapp Verlag, 1987), 52.

and population fluctuations, developments that were occurring throughout the Reich.[3] This growth had its impact in the form of an increasing regimentation of society, significantly impacting the lives of young people. This was seen in the seventy-eight police regulations passed from 1875 to 1909, "For the Maintenance of Safety, Comfort, Order, and Cleanliness in Steglitz."[4] In addition, the areas where children and students had played or enjoyed their own space were rapidly disappearing. Nature came increasingly under pressure by developers, and the green spaces that had previously served as playgrounds lost their wild character as the city of Steglitz converted them into manicured parks.[5] Expelled from their natural world as a result of industrialization, early adherents of the Wandervogel sought to recapture their space and their freedom by escaping into the comparatively undeveloped land outside of the cities.

Another group with certain parallels to the AL were the bohemians, a movement of artists and students that sprouted up in European cities in the nineteenth century.[6] While the 'capital' of the bohemian movement was Paris, the most famous centers of bohemian culture and activity in Germany were

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[3] Ille, "Schülernot," 49.

[4] Zur Aufrechterhaltung der Sicherheit, Bequemlichkeit, Ordnung, Ruhe und Reinlichkeit im Amtsbezirk Steglitz. Ille, "Schülernot," 49-50.

[5] Ille, "Schülernot," 50-52.

[6] For an extremely extensive, thoroughly researched examination of the bohemians as literary and historical figures in Germany and internationally, see Helmut Kreuzer, *Die Boheme. Beiträge zu ihrer Beschreibung* (Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler, 1968).

Berlin and Munich, the latter of which would become their most well known

center in Germany. The bohemians were small islands of counterculture with

only a few hundred members. These individuals were mostly middle-class

artists and students whose biggest commonality was opposition to the

bourgeoisie.[7] According to the scholar of the bohemian movement Helmut

Kreuzer, the word bohemian is most commonly applied to the groups of

"marginal artists and authors, their non-normative way of life, and their milieu."[8]

While these individuals often lived in poverty, it was not this poverty that

was distinctive to them, but the combination of the non-bourgeois way of life

with their anti-bourgeois attitudes. This was seen most clearly in their rejection

of conventional notions of employment. Bohemians viewed a normal career as

the antithesis and archenemy of their carefree approach to life. Indeed, a

bohemian's fondest ambition was to free himself from the confines of everyday,

bourgeois life and concentrate instead on the development of his own

individuality. So important was this escape from the ordinary that one

bohemian entitled his memoirs *Life Without the Everyday*. This author made clear

his disdain for ordinary, bourgeois work: "The expression 'the everyday' was the

most terrifying specter, and I imagined it embodied in long corridors lined with

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[7] Christoph Conti, *Abschied vom Bürgertum: alternative Bewegungen in Deutschland von 1890 bis heute* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1984), 11.

[8] Marginale Künstler und Autoren, deren 'abweichende' Lebensform und ihr Milieu. Kreuzer, *Boheme,* 42.

numbered doors, doors behind which care-laden, unhappy men sit and write figures in books."[9]

The biggest priority for bohemians centered on achieving the all-important intoxication. "For everything bohemian strove for *intoxication*. The intoxication of parties and of all-nighters, the intoxication of love and of alcohol and drugs, the intoxication of losing oneself in conversations."[10] Additionally, bohemians showed a remarkable preference and sympathy for the outsiders of society. The ugly, the lowly, and social outcasts including the sick, the alcoholic, and the prostitute, all found favor in bohemian circles, both in literature, reflected in Naturalism, and in real life ideology.[11]

The large city played a key role for bohemians:

> The relationship of bohemians to the city is ambivalent: the city both fascinates and repulses; this is of course not true only for the bohemians, but is particularly characteristic for them. The beginners and outsiders need the numerous chances offered by the city as compared to the province in the intellectual realm. But at

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[9] Aber von jeher war mir der Begriff des 'grauen Alltags' das schrecklichste Gespenst, das sich besonders gerne in langen Korridoren mit numerierten Türen zeigt, hinter denen sorgenvolle, unfrohe Männer sitzen und Zahlen in Bücher schreiben. Rolf von Hoerschelmann, *Leben ohne Alltag* (Berlin: Wedding-Verlag, 1947), 7.

[10] Denn alles in der Boheme erstrebt den *Rausch*. Rausch der Feste und der durchwachten Nächte, Rausch der Liebe und des Alkohols, Drogenrausch und Rausch der selbstvergessenen Gespräche. Conti, *Abschied*, 11. Emphasis in original.

[11] Kreuzer, *Boheme*, 52. This privileging of the underprivileged foreshadowed New Left theorists' emphasis on the role of fringe groups as a force for social revolution. See especially Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964), 256-257.

the same time, the coldness of economic struggle for existence is more threateningly felt in the city.[12]

Accordingly, Berlin was an important setting for bohemian culture. Cafes like the Schwarzes Ferkel and Cafe des Westens were important meeting places and centers for literary movements and discussions. Contemporaries noted the intense richness of intellectual contacts, impressions and concomitant excitement that life in Berlin offered, as they experienced with a "mighty gasp…the powerful potential for movement, the thrilling juggling-act of its pulsating thoughts and feelings."[13] Interestingly, however, a significant segment of the bohemian scene fled the city, meeting in the meadows of Friedrichshagen outside Berlin instead of in the cafes of the capital.[14]

World War I had a devastating impact on the bohemian scene, with adherents being called to fight or choosing emigration. The war resulted in both a political and a literary radicalization. The revolution of 1918 involved many bohemians, and many entered the realm of politics as members of the soldiers'

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[12] Das Verhältnis der Boheme zur Grossstadt ist zwiespältig; diese fasziniert und stösst ab; das gilt natürlich nicht nur für die Boheme, ist aber für sie wesentlich. Die Anfänger und Aussenseiter bedürfen der zahlreichen Chancen, die sie, mit der Provinz verglichen, den Intellektuellen bietet; dennoch lässt sie zugleich die Härte des wirtschaftlichen Existenzkampfes bedrohlicher spüren. Kreuzer, *Boheme*, 219.

[13] Der mächtige Atemschlag Berlins, die gewaltige Bewegungsmöglichkeit, der Austausch des spannenden Gaukelspiels seiner pulsierenden Gedenken und Gefühle. Else Lasker-Schüler, *Prosa und Schauspiele* (Munich: Kösel, 1962), 676; quoted in Helmut Kreuzer, *Die Boheme. Beiträge zu ihrer Beschreibung* (Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler, 1968), 219.

councils or other revolutionary bodies.[15] With the rise of the Weimar Republic,

the bohemians experienced a cultural resurgence, particularly in Berlin. The

young Bertolt Brecht is probably the most famous product of the bohemian scene

of 1920s Berlin, a scene that became increasingly influential and international

until the rise of the Nazis suppressed them.[16]

Hitler's ascension to power meant the gradual end of conditions fostering

a bohemian scene. Many bohemians went into exile, where some became

politically active. Others drank themselves to death. After the war, there was no

strong bourgeoisie against which the bohemians could react. Not until the 1950s,

the decade after currency reform and the beginnings of the 'economic miracle,'

did bourgeois society recover sufficiently for the bohemians to begin recreating

themselves. In the 1960s, bohemian society experienced a renaissance.

Significantly, there was a substantial degree of overlap between the bohemian

movement and the realm of student politics and alternative experiments such as

West Berlin's *Kommune I*.[17]

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[14] Julius Bab, *Die Berliner Boheme* (Berlin: H. Seeman Nachfolger, 1904), 33-37.

[15] Kreuzer, *Boheme*, 56.

[16] Kreuzer, *Boheme*, 58.

[17] Kreuzer, *Boheme*, 53-59. Kreuzer also notes, however, that the most important early postwar literary development, the 'Gruppe 47,' did not evolve along typically bohemian lines, but emphasized instead the loner in literature. Particularly noteworthy is Heinrich Böll's 1963 *Ansicht eines Clowns.* Heinrich Böll became a hero to those groups associated with the AL and the Green Party, and the political foundation of the Green Party is called the Heinrich Böll Stiftung.

As well as hosting these important cultural manifestations of protest against the modern world, Berlin was the center of working class activism. The city was the center of the workers' council movement in the immediate wake of defeat in the First World War, and it was the site of the two rival declarations of the Weimar Republic on 9 November 1918: tellingly, one by the centrist Social Democrat Philipp Scheidemann and the other by the radical communist Karl Liebknecht. It has also been the locus of the most severe crackdowns and divisions between the radical and centrist Left. It was there that *Freikorps* agents murdered the communist leaders Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht. The SPD's tacit acceptance of this act helped foster the animosity between the KPD and the SPD that haunted the Weimar Republic.[18]

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[18] Mary Fulbrook, *The Divided Nation: A History of Germany 1918-1990* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 28, 63. The idea that a united working class could have saved Weimar has been convincingly refuted. See Heinrich Winkler, *Weimar 1918-1933. Die Geschichte der ersten deutschen Demokratie* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1993), 595. Nevertheless, the KPD's continual attacks on parliamentary democracy in the belief that its demise would automatically lead to a proletarian state did not help matters. In addition, the KPD's very existence to the political left of the SPD made it more difficult for the SPD to cooperate with middle class parties. See E. J. Feuchtwanger, *From Weimar to Hitler: Germany, 1918-1933* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 323. So crucial was this cooperation to the survival of the Weimar Republic that Heinrich Winkler called it "the unwritten basic law of the Weimar Republic" (das unbeschriebene Grundgesetz der Weimarer Republik). Winkler, *Weimar*, 596. The differences that emerged between the revisionist and orthodox Marxists at the beginning of the twentieth century manifested themselves in the contrasting political philosophies of the two leftist Weimar parties. Whereas the KPD sought to achieve the violent overthrow of parliamentary democracy, the SPD rejected civil war and revolution. On the revisionist debates between Eduard Bernstein and Karl Kautsky, see Carl Schorske, *German Social Democracy 1905-1917: The Development of the Great Schism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1955), esp. 16-24. See also Peter Gay, *The Dilemma of Democratic Socialism: Eduard Bernstein's Challenge to*

At the end of World War II, Berlin and the left-wing and alternative movements it had spawned lay in ruins, destroyed by the consequences of the Nazi regime. Rebuilding the Left initially occurred far more quickly than reconstructing the devastated city. Thanks to its solidly anti-Nazi credentials, the Left in both its centrist and more radical versions in Germany seemed in good position to return to power. Against most people's expectations, however, it was not the Left that played a key role in the rebuilding of Germany, but the conservative, though this time staunchly democratic, Right under Konrad Adenauer. For its part, the Left met continual defeat in the postwar period. The KPD, once proud postwar successor to the KPD of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, was banned outright in West Germany in 1956. Moreover, the SPD met repeated defeats, both of its political priorities and at the polls. This led the SPD to move to the center, which alienated and marginalized its more radical fringes.

The SPD faced three major blows to its policy agenda in the period before 1960. Its efforts to achieve codetermination and socialization of the German economy collided with United States interests in a free market economy as a means of achieving a strong West Germany as a bulwark against the Soviet

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Marx (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952). Gay calls Bernstein's book, *Die Voraussetzungen des Sozialismus und die Aufgabe der Sozialdemokratie*, published in March 1899, "the Bible of revisionism." Gay, *Dilemma of Democratic Socialism*, 65. For an account focusing on Karl Kautsky's contribution, see Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey, *Das Mandat der Intellektuellen: Karl Kautsky und die Sozialdemokratie* (Berlin: Siedler, 1986).

Union. The Left's desire to preserve a unified, sovereign Germany after the fall

of Hitler ran aground on Adenauer's willingness to sacrifice a unified Germany

in favor of parliamentary democracy and integration in a Western military

alliance. Finally, the SPD was unable to prevent the CDU from carrying out

plans to station nuclear weapons in the Federal Republic.[19]

The SPD's efforts to thwart West German nuclear armament and its

subsequent defeat are of particular interest for the birth of the APO. In 1958, the

SPD established the *Kampf dem Atomtod* (Fight Against Nuclear Death- KdA) as

an information campaign. This from the outset "was conceived as a genuine

mass mobilization beyond the boundaries of the SPD and the established

channels of parliamentary politics."[20]

Through the KdA, the SPD was able to mobilize large demonstrations in

opposition to nuclear armament in cities across West Germany. Nevertheless,

the campaign was unsuccessful, which itself led to further frustrations. But a

number of significant characteristics marked the SPD's efforts that in retrospect

were more important than the campaign's success or failure. First, the unions

did not support the SPD's campaign: their priorities lay elsewhere. Second, the

way in which the KdA was dismantled after the failure of the campaign served

to alienate many. This amounted to the SPD abandoning "the concerns of

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[19] For an extensive discussion of these defeats and their implications for the SPD and the Left, see Markovits and Gorski, *German Left*, 35-45.

[20] Markovits and Gorski, *German Left*, 43.

middle-class radicals and independents in order to concentrate on the

achievable, material goals of the 'man in the street.'"[21] Finally, the nature of the

arguments used in the campaign was significant. Instead of arguing along

traditional class-based lines, campaigners had invoked ideas of all humanity's

struggle against "a detached, heteronymous and menacing bureaucratic force."[22]

This foreshadowed arguments pitting the interests of humanity as a whole

against impersonal, bureaucratic and technological forces seen later in the Green

Party and its forerunners.

Along with the KdA, the *Sozialistischer Deutscher Studentenbund* (Socialist

German Students' League- SDS) also had close links to the SPD, though it was

conceived as an independent organization. The SDS was formed in 1946 in

Hamburg, primarily by social democrats, but the founding members also

included small groups of independent, anti-fascist student groups, socialists and

communists critical of both the SPD and the KPD, as well as members and

sympathizers of the KPD. In spite of their differences, the group was held

together by the intensity of their experiences during the Nazi period.[23] In 1959,

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[21] Markovits and Gorski, *German Left*, 44.

[22] Markovits and Gorski, *German Left*, 44.

[23] Fichter and Lönnendonker, *Kleine Geschichte*, 14. Fichter and
Lönnendonker's extremely useful volume first appeared in 1977 and became a
bestseller. In 1998, they issued a completely revised and updated version under
the title *Macht und Ohnmacht der Studenten* (Hamburg: Rotbuch Verlag, 1998).
This version includes new interviews and newly available documents. The
second version also integrated many of the extensive footnotes into the text, as
well as toning down some of their polemicism. In the process, however, the

the SPD cut off support for the group in reaction to the participation of the SDS

in a Berlin congress where communists also were present, and in 1961, the SPD

declared membership in the SDS incompatible with membership in the SPD.[24]

Meanwhile, the Left continued to be stymied at the polls. Its anti-fascist

record did not count for much in the postwar, Cold War climate of Germany,

and Adenauer's CDU trounced the SPD regularly. These electoral defeats,

together with the series of disappointments for the SPD in its major priorities

outlined above, helped propel the SPD to make the momentous decision to

abandon the doctrine of proletarian revolution at the SPD conference in Bad

Godesberg in 1959.[25] With the Godesberg decision, the SPD became a mass party,

or *Volkspartei*, and committed itself to working within and upholding the

political, economic, and social system of the Federal Republic.

While the SPD's explicit acknowledgment of its commitment to the

Federal Republic's institutions was an important step in securing the Federal

Republic's stability, it by no means reflected the attitudes of the Left as a whole.

In fact, the Godesberg decision marked a further stage in the radical Left's

marginalization and alienation, as it rendered many on the Left politically

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other footnotes were also eliminated, meaning that the book contains no
documentation. This is in marked contrast to the extensively documented first
version, rendering the new version in my view by far the inferior of the two
editions.

[24] Markovits and Gorski, *German Left*, 49-50; Fichter and Lönnendonker,
Kleine Geschichte, 15.

[25] Markovits and Gorski, *German Left*, 34.

homeless. Markovits and Gorski note that the established Left "had become so firmly integrated into the social and political system of the Federal Republic by the early to mid-1960s that they could no longer represent or absorb the utopian aspirations of middle-class radicals. Instead the energies of this group found an outlet in the APO."[26]

One of the leaders of the APO to emerge in the mid-1960s was Rudi Dutschke, a leader within the SDS. As will be seen, Dutschke and his political goals were to play an important role in the development of both the protest movement in West Berlin and the development of the AL. The most famous formulation of Dutschke's political agenda was his exhortation for a 'long march through the institutions.' Many have interpreted these words as a call for gradual reformism and "a renunciation of illegality and violence."[27] According to Gerd Koenen, however, when one considers the context, it becomes clear that Dutschke was actually calling on the radical Left to infiltrate the institutions of the bourgeois state and use them to intensify the inherent contradictions in society, presumably thereby sparking a revolution.

Three additional developments at the national level served further to alienate and marginalize the radical Left from the Federal Republic and its political institutions. First, in November 1966, the *Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands* (National Democratic Party of Germany- NPD), a new right wing,

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[26] Markovits and Gorski, *German Left*, 47.

[27] Eine Absage an Illegalität und Gewalt. Koenen, *Das rote Jahrzehnt*, 58.

neo-fascist party, entered the state parliaments in Hesse and Bavaria. Nationalist

and anti-communist, the NPD embraced apologist views regarding the rise and

reign of Hitler. Second, the SPD and the CDU entered into the Grand Coalition

in December 1966, meaning that the very small FDP was the sole opposition

party in the *Bundestag*.[28]

The third development, the ratification of measures to provide for

emergency powers in the event of extreme threats to the Federal Republic, did

nothing to ease the fears of the Left that fascism was poised to reemerge in the

Federal Republic. Moreover, these measures' adoption with the support of the

SPP under the Grand Coalition in 1968 only confirmed the far Left's view of the

SPD. As Markovits and Gorski put it, "perhaps more than any other action by

the Social Democrats in the Bonn Republic, it was their ultimate consent to the

creation of the Emergency Laws that convinced many leftists of the SPD's total

conversion to becoming a faithful servant of the established capitalist order."[29]

Overall, the banning of the KPD in 1956, the SPD's defeats at the polls and

in the realm of policy, and its resultant compromise with the existing social and

economic order made at Godesberg meant that the far Left was exiled from the

political spectrum for decades to come. Furthermore, the rise of the Right, the

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[28] During the second half of the 1960s, left-wing intellectuals were certain
that the Federal Republic found itself in a pre-fascist phase as a result of the
Grand Coalition and the rise of the Right at the state level. See Reinhard
Schmöckel and Bruno Kaiser, *Die vergessene Regierung: die grosse Koalition 1966 bis
1969 und ihre langfristigen Wirkungen* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1991), 367.

[29] Markovits and Gorski, *German Left*, 54.

creation of the Grand Coalition, and the SPD's support for the Emergency Laws

served further to alienate the Left and to convince it that a return of Germany's

fascist past was imminent, and that the SPD was partially responsible.

Many of the consequences of this situation were found in Berlin. In the

immediate postwar era, the Left appeared well poised to return to its previous

power in Berlin. East-West confrontation in the city served to block this return,

however. Although the city in 1947 selected as its leader the former Communist

turned Social Democrat Ernst Reuter, Adenauer's slogan of 'no experiments'

captured the mood in the former capital of the Reich as well as in the rest of

western Germany. The 1948 Berlin blockade and the airlift were the most

tangible signs of the threatened status and security of Berlin at the hands of the

Soviets. Increasingly divided between Eastern and Western sectors, cut off from

the West, and facing constant harassment from Soviet troops, the Berlin populace

had little tolerance for alternative or protest politics.

In the immediate postwar era, however, events occurred that lay the

foundation for Berlin to regain its status as center of protest. One such event was

the founding of the Free University, the United States-sponsored response to the

virtual takeover of Berlin's historic and once-prestigious Humboldt University,

which lay in the eastern section of the city and thus fell under Soviet jurisdiction.

The Free University adopted a structure known as the "Berlin model" that gave

the students a voice in the university administration, supported student political

groups, and generally gave the students far more freedom than other German

universities. This progressive model, while well-intended, helped transform the

Free University into a hotbed of student political dissent. It also helped make the

city of West Berlin a center of student and leftist culture.[30] The fact that West

Berlin's unique status made its residents exempt from the military draft also

fostered this, as West Berlin increasingly attracted those rejecting military

service.

Even in the late 1940s, Berlin witnessed political events foreshadowing the

protests of the 1960s. The most famous of these, the 'Kunyists,' were the first

significant incident of student protest and clashes with police in postwar Berlin.

In the beginning of December 1949, a German cook employed by the British

army in Berlin named Jakob Kuny caused a scene on the streets of Berlin. In his

"artist's mane" reminiscent of the bohemians, Kuny declared himself a work of

art and called upon students of the Technical University to join his 'Kunyist'

movement.[31] Five hundred students gathered at the Zoo train station demanding

"Kunyology at all universities."[32] Police responded with clubs, arresting around

30 students. In its absurdist theatrical elements and in its direct, violent

confrontation with authority, the event foreshadowed elements of the coming

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[30] Gerhard Bauss, *Die Studentenbewegung der sechziger Jahre in der Bundesrepublik und Westberlin* (Cologne: Pahl-Rugenstein Verlag, 1977), 45. For an insider's rather bitter look at the failures to preserve the reforms carried out at the Free University, see Bernd Rabehl, *Am Ende der Utopie: Die politische Geschichte der Freien Universität Berlin* (Berlin: Argon, 1988).

[31] Künstlermähne. *Kleine Geschichte*, 175 nn. 136.

[32] Kunyologie an allen Universitäten. *Kleine Geschichte*, 175 nn. 136.

developments in West Berlin in the years of student protest. Fichter and

Lönnendonker appropriately labeled the Kuny demonstration an "anti-

authoritarian happening," and detected in it a "tendency toward intellectual

non-conformism" that would come to characterize the West Berlin student

movement.[33]

Berlin students first demonstrated their anti-fascist political leanings in a

demonstration against the neo-fascist Socialist Reich Party in July 1950. In

December of the same year, the students first began to flex their political muscle

when four thousand students broke through police barriers to prevent a

performance involving Werner Krauss, the actor who played the main role in

Veit Harlan's anti-Semitic film *Jud Süss*.[34]

West Berlin did not achieve its status as the center of the student protest

movement until the 1960s, however. The 1961 construction of the Berlin Wall

literally cemented West Berlin's separation from the Federal Republic. The

nearest West German border was more than one hundred miles away, and the

Island City was militarily indefensible. It also greatly contributed to that

particular mentality of those living in the city on the front of the Cold War, this

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[33] Anti-autoritäres Happening; eine Tendenz zum intellektuellen Nonkonformismus. Fichter and Lönnendonker, *Kleine Geschichte*, 85-86, 175 nn. 136.

[34] Fichter and Lönnendonker, *Kleine Geschichte*, 86. The authors point out in a footnote that in the wake of this action, the Allied commanders authorized the West Berlin police to use teargas against future demonstrators, representing something of a watershed. Fichter and Lönnendonker, *Kleine Geschichte*, 175 nn. 137.

"mix of fear, threat, stagnation, corruption, narrow-minded arrogance, and individual inhibition" described by Fichter and Lönnendonker as a contributing factor to what they label the "Berlin Syndrome."[35]

Indeed, Fichter and Lönnendonker ascribe a great deal of importance to West Berlin and its students in launching the student movement. In their phrase, "The Berlin students were the locomotive of the revolt."[36] The SDS and the Free University played a key role in this development. By the mid-1960s, the SDS was able to initiate and see through a drift to the Left in the universities, which had been dominated by the Right for more than a century.[37] In West Berlin, because of the factors mentioned above, this took a particularly intense course. But developments in West Berlin took a different path than in the Federal Republic for other reasons as well. Because of the direct proximity to East Berlin, West Berlin students could interact closely with students at the Humboldt University and partake of cultural and political activities in the East until the construction of the Wall in 1961.[38] Moreover, they witnessed and experienced the developments in the East far more intensely than did their counterparts in the Federal Republic. For this reason, the SDS in West Berlin was forced to confront and examine the

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[35] Ein Gemisch aus Angst, Bedrohung, Stagnation, Filzokratie, bornierter Arroganz und individueller Verklemmtheit; das Berlin-Syndrom. Fichter and Lönnendonker, *Kleine Geschichte*, 85-86.

[36] Die Berliner Studenten waren die Lokomotive der Revolte. Fichter and Lönnendonker, *Kleine Geschichte*, 85.

[37] Fichter and Lönnendonker, *Kleine Geschichte*, 4.

[38] Fichter and Lönnendonker, *Kleine Geschichte*, 86.

ideology of Soviet Marxism far earlier (and reached far less positive conclusions) in West Berlin than in West Germany.[39] This also helps explain why in West Berlin in the 1970s, K-groups emphasizing Maoist doctrines as opposed to Stalinism dominated the far-left scene. (See below, Chapter Three.)

These developments can be followed in the history of the Free University. In early 1963, the Right still held the majority in the Free University's student parliament, with Eberhard Diepgen, West Berlin's future mayor, being elected head of the student body in January 1963. In 1965, however, the Left gained more or less permanent control of the elected student parliament. This development was typical of German universities in the 1960s.[40]

The "Krippendorf Case" also was symptomatic of the changed university climate of 1965. In this incident, Ekkehart Krippendorf, an assistant in the Otto Suhr Institute, had falsely accused the Free University's rector of having refused to invite the philosopher and critic of the Federal Republic Karl Jaspers to speak on the twentieth anniversary of German capitulation. Although Krippendorf corrected the mistake and apologized to the rector, his contract was not renewed, which amounted to a dismissal. This sparked a large student protest and contributed significantly to the already tense atmosphere at the Free University.[41]

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[39] Fichter and Lönnendonker, *Macht und Ohnmacht*, 25-26.

[40] Fichter and Lönnendonker, *Kleine Geschichte*, 81-81.

[41] Richert, *Radikale Linke*, 108.

Much of the left-wing student agitation related to opposing the American involvement in Vietnam. During the winter semester 1965-1966, the student government supported a "Vietnam Semester" at the Free University that included exhibits, films, podium discussions, and demonstrations regarding the war.[42] On 5 February 1966, the anti-Vietnam protests crossed the line in the eyes of many West Berliners, when protesters hurled five eggs at the America House, symbol of American culture and American contributions to West Berlin's freedom. As Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey noted, this act "found more notice in the German public than all previous banners, appeals, and declarations."[43] The Berlin press responded with headlines such as "The Jesters from West Berlin," "SED Supports Student Demonstrations," "An Abomination for our Berlin," and "Shameful! Unthinkable! Shortsighted!"[44]

Besides the Free University, another unique West Berlin creation contributed to West Berlin's status as capital of the alternative movement and created a stir in its approach to political protest. *Kommune I* (Commune I- KI) was founded on 1 January 1967. One of KI's principal cofounders, Dieter Kunzelmann, would go on to help found the AL in 1978, and would be elected to

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[42] Fichter and Lönnendonker, *Kleine Geschichte*, 89.

[43] Es ist eine Aktion, die in der deutschen Öffentlichkeit mehr Aufmerksamkeit erringt als alle Transparente, Aufrufe und Erklärungen zuvor. Gilcher-Holtey, *68er Bewegung*, 38.

[44] Die Narren von West-Berlin; SED unterstützt Studenten-Demonstration; Eine Schande für unser Berlin; Beschämend! Undenkbar! Kurzsichtig!

the *Abgeordnetenhaus* as an AL delegate in 1981. A man with distinctly bohemian leanings, Kunzelmann was originally active in the Munich group *Subversive Aktion*. He moved to West Berlin in 1966 when he realized the potential media attention his particular brand of attention-grabbing political theater could attract.[45]

KI ostensibly aimed to shake up what its founders and fans saw as a repressed, prudish bourgeoisie. As such, it derived much of its shock value from its highly unconventional living arrangements, complete with partner swapping, orgies, and the like. Kunzelmann summarized the supposed political program of Kommune I in his infamous quote, "What do I care about the Vietnam War, as long as I have orgasm problems?"[46] Beneath the apolitical surface of this provocative statement lay a fundamental critique of West German society. According to an often-read body of work by Wilhelm Reich, sexual repression could lead to neuroses, deformations of character, cancer, and fascism. Other commentators have noted the strong influence of Herbert Marcuse, in particular his emphasis on the problem of isolation in modern society, as inspiration for the

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Headlines from unnamed West Berlin newspapers cited in Fichter and Lönnendonker, *Kleine Geschichte*, 92.

[45] Dieter Kunzelmann, *Leisten Sie keinen Widerstand! Bilder aus meinem Leben* (Berlin: Transit, 1998), 49.

[46] Was geht mich der Vietnam-Krieg an, solange ich Orgasmusschwierigkeiten habe! Reimut Reiche, "Sexuelle Revolution-Erinnerung an einen Mythos," in *Frankfurter Schule und Studentenbewegung,* vol. 3, *Aufsätze und Kommentare*, ed. Wolfgang Kraushaar (Hamburg: Rogner and Bernhard, 1998), 157.

founding and program of KI.[47] KI, and in particular Dieter Kunzelmann, were

quite gifted at inventing new, provocative forms of political demonstration,

injecting forms of street theater and theater of the absurd into street protest.[48]

Some contemporary observers saw in KI a far more threatening specter,

however. Gerd Koenen asserted that instead of sex, violence played a far more

important role for KI, and it is no accident that all three of its principal founders,

Kunzelmann, Fritz Teufel, and Rainer Langhans, were associated with terrorist

and extremist groups.[49] Early in the group's history, one particular attempt at a

political happening provoked an intense if rather embarrassing reaction by the

state. On the eve of a visit by United States Vice-President Hubert Humphrey,

KI and SDS members were arrested as they allegedly prepared bombs with

which to attack the vice president. The 'bombs' consisted of flour and pudding

in plastic bags.[50]

All of these incidents helped prepare the way for the floodgates of protest

to open only a few months later. At least in West Berlin, '1968' began in 1967.

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[47] Gilcher-Holtey, *68er Bewegung*, 55.

[48] For a recent analysis of the role of street protest in modern French and German history, see *Massenmedium Strasse: zur Kulturgeschichte der Demonstration*, ed. Bernd Warneken (Frankfurt; New York: Campus; Paris: Editions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme, 1991).

[49] Koenen, *Das rote Jahrzehnt*, 151. For the link between Dieter Kunzelmann, the West Berlin terror group Movement June 2, and the Red Army Faction (RAF), see Tobias Wunschik, *Baader-Meinhofs Kinder: die zweite Generation der RAF* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1997), 383.

[50] Bauss, *Studentenbewegung*, 49.

Konrad Jarausch put it unequivocally when he wrote, "The student rebellion began on June 2, 1967."[51] On this date, during a student protest against the Shah of Iran, a policeman shot and killed a student demonstrator named Benno Ohnesorg. The event proved to be the catalyst for the release of immense protest energy that took the form of hitherto unprecedentedly large demonstrations, and became the symbol for a generation. It also inspired the creation of a terrorist group named after the date of the event, the June 2 Movement, to which Kunzelmann had close ties.

On the evening of June 1, several thousand students had attended a presentation in the Free University's main auditorium where an Iranian exile spoke at length about the tortures, murders, and oppression under the Iranian Shah.[52] The next day, several thousand student protesters greeted the Shah with catcalls in front of West Berlin's City Hall. The students faced a large number of police, as well as pro-Shah demonstrators, who attacked the students with

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[51] Die Rebellion der Studenten begann am 2. Juni, 1967. Konrad Jarausch, *Deutsche Studenten: 1800-1970* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1984), 226. Dieter Kunzelmann was in full agreement with the eminent scholar of the German student movement, when he insisted in an interview that the true start of the student movement was 1967. *Nilpferd des höllischen Urwalds: Spuren in eine [sic] unbekannte Stadt: Situationisten Gruppe SPUR Kommune I*, ed. Wolfgang Dressen, Dieter Kunzelmann, and Eckhard Siepmann (Berlin: Werkbund Archiv; Giessen: Vertrieb, Anabas Verlag, 1991), 212-213.

[52] This account of the events is distilled from numerous sources, including Richter, "APO in der BRD;" "Erklärung von Rechtsanwalt Horst Mahler auf der Pressekonferenz am 4. Juni 1967," Archiv der Ausserparlamentarischen Opposition (AdAPO): Berlin FU Allgemein 1.-9..6.67; Frank Koslowski, conversation with author, 10 July 2001 in Berlin-Spandau.

boards and steel rods. Angry at the lack of response by the police, thousands of

demonstrators gathered later that evening outside the German Opera, where the

Shah and his wife were to attend a performance. Once the performance had

begun, authorities gave the order to charge the protesters. A group of the

demonstrators fled into the Krumme Strasse, which runs perpendicular to the

Bismarckstrasse, near the site of the German Opera.

According to eyewitness accounts, police took some of the captured

demonstrators into the fenced open-air courtyard below an apartment building

on the Krumme Strasse, where they allegedly beat them.[53] In the heat of the

battle, two shots were fired, and afterward, the student protester Benno

Ohnesorg lay dead. The fact that Heinrich Albertz, the Social Democratic

Governing Mayor of West Berlin at the time of the shooting, had approved the

tactics and immediately after the shooting vociferously defended the actions of

the police, certainly did not help heal the growing wound between the SPD and

the far Left in West Germany and West Berlin.[54]

As well as triggering further demonstrations, the shooting of Benno

Ohnesorg and the events surrounding it, including the attacks on demonstrators

by police, were widely held to be a preview of what West German society would

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[53] See Figure 1.

[54] For a sympathetic look at Albertz's role in and reaction to the shooting
of Ohnesorg, see Jacques Schuster, *Heinrich Albertz- der Mann, der mehrere Leben
lebte* (Berlin: Alexander Fest Verlag, 1997), 199-226. Schuster also describes
Albertz's conversion to an ally and "Father Confessor" of the West Berlin
alternative movement. See Schuster, *Heinrich Albertz*, 14-19.

be like under the Emergency Laws. Thus the Left interpreted the police reaction as evidence of the decline of democracy in the Federal Republic. As Gilcher-Holtey phrased it, "The shots in front of the German Opera were viewed as the high point of a policy that tried to eliminate minorities and non-conformity."[55] After Ohnesorg's death, blocking the Emergency Laws shifted from being an end in itself to being viewed as a stage in the re-democratization of the Republic. Thus in the wake of the events of 2 June 1967, the students channeled their political energy into an attempt to stop the Emergency Laws.[56]

This reaction also pushed Rudi Dutschke to sharpen his rhetoric and the intensity of his attacks against the Emergency Laws. In arguing for the establishment of action centers against the laws in universities across Germany, Dutschke insisted, "that the established rules of the game of this unreasonable democracy are not our rules, that the point of departure for the politicization of the student body must be the intentional breaking of these unreasonable rules."[57] It was this statement that sparked Jürgen Habermas to express his concern that Dutschke was advocating a left-wing fascism.

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[55] Die Schüsse vor der Deutschen Oper wurden als Höhepunkt einer Politik angesehen, die Minderheiten und Nonkonformismus auszuschalten versuchte. Gilcher-Holtey, *68er Bewegung*, 67.

[56] Richter, "APO in der BRD," 48.

[57] …dass die etablierten Spielregeln dieser unvernünfigten Demokratie nicht unsere Spielregeln sind, dass Augangspunkt der Politisierung der Studentenschaft die bewusste Durchbrechung dieser unvernünftigen Spielregeln durch uns sein muss. Gilcher-Holtey, *68er Bewegung*, 67.

Relationships between the general West Berlin populace and West Berlin's students deteriorated significantly as a result of the June events. In particular, the newspapers and magazines owned by Axel Springer attacked the students, who responded in kind with calls for boycotts and with demands for the expropriation of Springer's media empire.[58] Those attending the university articulated their depression in light of the "aggressive mood of the populace toward the students," and described the "smoldering deterioration" in relations and the "serious conflicts" with the West Berlin general public in the wake of the shooting.[59]

Another shooting brought the conflict between the students and the Springer press to a climax. On 11 April 1968, Rudi Dutschke, by then a leading light of the SDS, was shot in the head and critically wounded by Joseph Bachmann, a deranged worker who traveled to West Berlin from the West in order to carry out the shooting.[60] The SDS explicitly blamed the Springer press for the attack. In particular, the SDS accused Springer's media empire of dehumanizing the student movement's participants and inciting violent acts

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[58] Gilcher-Holtey, *68er Bewegung*, 68.

[59] Die aggressive Stimmung der Bevölkerung den Studenten gegenüber; schwelende Verschlechterung; schwerwiegende Auseinandersetzungen. Editorial by Dirk Schneider, Peter Taube, and Tobias Strunk, apparently written for the first issue of "A: Die Kritische Zeitung," January 1967. AdAPO: FU Flugblätter, 1967 June-July.

[60] See Fichter and Lönnendonker, *Kleine Geschichte*, 126-127. While Dutschke survived, he never fully recovered, and died in late 1979, drowning in the bathtub as a result of complications of his injuries.

against its members. As a result, the day after the shooting, the radical Left

renewed calls to boycott the Springer press, and across the Federal Republic and

in West Berlin, protesters attempted to block the delivery of BILD and related

papers.[61] Students paraded to the Kochstrasse in West Berlin where Axel

Springer's publishing house stood. The students smashed windows, damaged

printing presses, and, allegedly as the result of the machinations of an agent

provocateur employed by the West Berlin Office for Constitutional Protection,

set delivery vehicles on fire.[62] Increasingly violent confrontations with the police

were the only tangible result.

On the surface, the student movement and the SDS seemed in May 1968 to

be very strong, with large demonstrations in West Berlin and the Federal

Republic mobilizing thousands. The events of 1968 that by some accounts

"transformed the world" have been well documented and need not be explored

in greater depth here.[63] One more event of particular relevance to subsequent

developments in West Berlin must be mentioned briefly, however: the 4

November 1968 'Battle at Tegeler Way.' A group of protesters gathered at the

State Court on Tegeler Way to protest the upcoming disciplinary action against

Horst Mahler, the attorney who had defended Free University students facing

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[61] Bauss, *Studentenbewegung*, 96-104.

[62] Fichter and Lönnendonker, *Kleine Geschichte*, 127.

[63] See Fink, Gassert, and Junker, eds., *World Transformed*, for a global, comparative approach to the events of 1968; also, Gilcher-Holtey, ed., *Ereignis zum Gegenstand*.

charges as a result of their participation in protests. Mahler stood accused of violating professional codes by participating in the actions against the Springer organization after Dutschke's shooting. The protesters attacked the group of police in front of the courthouse with paving stones. In the ensuing melee, 130 police officers and 21 students were injured.[64]

This event had double significance for the Left in West Berlin. First, it marked the birth of the so-called *Gewaltfrage*, the 'question regarding violence.' The day after the 'Battle at Tegeler Way,' a prominent Free University professor raised the question of violence in the Free University's main auditorium, asserting, "only for fascists is violence not a problem."[65] This was the opening salvo in the debate over violence that occupied the Left and its critics for the next twenty years.

Second, Fichter and Lönnendonker assert that the Battle at Tegeler Way marked a watershed for the SDS, and by implication, a watershed for the development of the AL and the Greens. In the immediate wake of the attack on the police, the SDS believed that the next time protesters attacked police, the police would respond in kind, initiating a civil war. The SDS could only hope to continue its policy of confrontation in cooperation with the working class. This alliance with the working class did not come about, however, and as a result, the

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[64] Fichter and Lönnendonker, *Kleine Geschichte*, 136.

[65] Nur für Faschisten sei die Gewalt kein Problem. Fichter and Lönnendonker, *Kleine Geschichte*, 136.

SDS dissolved itself.[66] This event thus highlighted the declining link between the Left and the workers' movement crucial to the theses of Markovits and Gorski regarding the rise of the Green Party.[67]

After the SDS dissolved itself at a conference in Frankfurt in 1970, its members and followers sought a new 'political homeland.' They found these in one of four areas: the attempts to attract a mass following in preparation for a socialist revolution, as epitomized by the K-groups; the turn to violence to provoke the state into a harsh reaction, thus triggering a revolutionary counter-stroke by the masses, as embodied by the terrorist groups like the RAF and the June 2 Movement; the 'drop-out', countercultural response found in the alternative scene in West Berlin and eventually in the housing squatters' movement; and the radical reformism of those who attempted to transform political parties, especially the SPD.[68] The initial three of these four responses were critical to the history of the AL, and will be examined in the next chapter.

As I have shown in this chapter, Germany, and especially Berlin, was since the beginning of the twentieth century the home of important developments foreshadowing the development of the AL. The Wandervogel began as a reaction against the apparent superficiality and greed of Wilhelmine middle-class society and one of its consequences: the limitations on freedoms of

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[66] Fichter and Lönnendonker, *Kleine Geschichte*, 136.

[67] Markovits and Gorski, *German Left*, 3.

[68] Markovits and Gorski, *German Left*, 57-58.

young people and the stifling environments that confronted them, both at school

and at home. In the case of the bohemians, they too reacted against the middle

class. Importantly, while the city remained crucial to their movement, a

significant part of their reaction to modernization consisted in abandoning the

city and returning to unspoiled nature, and numerous strains of their work

targeted the modern world, especially the world of work, for criticism.[69]

Besides developments relating specifically to Berlin, this chapter has

traced the processes of alienation and marginalization of the Left at both the

West German and West Berlin levels. Frustrated at the polls, meeting defeat

after defeat in its ambitious political agenda, the SPD renounced the doctrine of

revolution in favor of becoming a 'people's party.' As a result, the spectrum

dissatisfied with this course was left without a political homeland. It recreated

this homeland in the APO. At the same time, in West Berlin, a series of events

occurred that served to further intensify this alienation and exclusion, especially

involving the West Berlin student movement and SDS. The SDS could not

translate its superficial power to real political gains, however, and the

organization fragmented. As Fritz Sack noted, "While the SDS as an

organization disappeared, the alienation from and abandonment of established

politics on the part of large segments of the academic and non-academic youth

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[69] See Bab, *Berliner Boheme*.

remained and massively increased."[70] When the SDS officially dissolved itself,

the West Berlin chapter did not bother to send a delegation; its former members

were already busy founding new groups. The next chapter examines several of

these groups in detail.

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[70] Der SDS ist zwar als Organisation verschwunden- geblieben ist jedoch und hat sich massenhaft fortgeschrieben die in diesem Zulauf zum SDS nach dem 2. Juni manifest gewordene Entfremdung und Abwendung grosser Teile der akademischen und nichtakademischen Jugend von der etablierten Politik. Fritz Sack, "Die Reaktion von Gesellschaft, Politik und Staat auf die Studentenbewegung," in *Analysen zum Terrorismus*, ed. Fritz Sack and Heinz Steinert, vol. 4, pt. 2, *Protest und Reaktion* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1984), 206.

Chapter Three

The Red Decade in the Island City

Alexandra Richie has likened the West Berlin of the 1970s to a "quiet

backwater."[1] When examined more closely, however, one sees that the pool was

stagnant, with dangerous and sometimes violent undercurrents simmering

beneath the surface.

Geopolitically speaking, the Cold War crisis had been at least partially

tamed, with Brandt's *Ostpolitik* helping prepare the ground for the Quadripartite

Agreement on Berlin, which went into effect in June 1972. The agreement

regulated the relations between the two Germanys, with the Federal Republic

renouncing the claim to solely represent Germany on the world stage (the so-

called *Alleinvertretungsanspruch*), while travel to East Berlin and East Germany

was eased for West Berliners. This agreement formalized the status quo of the

divided Germany cemented in 1961 with the construction of the Berlin Wall. A.

J. Nicholls described the post-agreement situation in very optimistic terms:

"West Berlin became more and more of a privileged island, cocooned in a cozy

web of western subsidies and special privileges, not the least of which was

exemption from military service."[2]

In real life, things were not so cozy. West Berliners caught carrying

kitchen knives could still theoretically receive a death sentence under occupation

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[1] Alexandra Richie, *Faust's Metropolis: A History of Berlin* (New York: Carroll and Graf, 1998), 775.

law.[3] Moreover, the danger of nuclear annihilation had by no means vanished: Western Europe was increasingly threatened by Soviet mid-range nuclear missiles, the SS-20s, deployed beginning in 1974. NATO's "double-track decision," the *Doppelbeschluss* of 1979, responded to this threat by trying to persuade the Soviet Union to remove its SS-20s while announcing the planned deployment of its own mid-range nuclear forces if the Soviet Union refused. This decision set the stage for extensive debates in the 1980s, and helped the Greens to power.[4]

Domestically, the SPD remained firmly in control in West Berlin throughout the 1970s. It occupied all Senate seats until 1975, when the SPD shared power in a coalition with the FDP. Klaus Schütz was Governing Mayor of Berlin from 1967 to 1977, when he was replaced by Dietrich Stobbe, also of the SPD. Not until 1981 did the CDU win control of the West Berlin parliament. None of these SPD mayors could come close to rivaling the power or prestige of their predecessors Willi Brandt or even Heinrich Albertz, and a great deal of the discontent of the West Berlin Left can be traced to disillusionment with the SPD in running the city.

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[2] Nicholls, *Bonn Republic,* 234.

[3] Richie, *Faust's Metropolis*, 774.

[4] Dennis Bark and David Gress, *A History of West Germany*, vol. 2, *Democracy and its Discontents* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 308-309. On the double-track decision in general, see Herf, *War*.

Economically, too, the Quadripartite Agreement could not solve all

problems. West Berlin was basically on life support, sustained by massive

economic infusions from the Federal Republic. These subsidies could not

compensate for the problems caused by West Berlin's unique status, and the

drastic rise in oil prices beginning in 1973 only exacerbated matters. Between

1970 and 1980, West Berlin lost over one hundred thousand jobs. Industries

traditionally strong in West Berlin such as the electronics firms Siemens and AEG

were far from immune from these losses. Federal jobs provided a critical source

of employment: 20 percent of all jobs were in the federal sector, approximately

twice as many as in the Federal Republic, and the federal government was the

second-largest employer in the half-city.[5] A declining population due in part to

'Wall Fever'- a term describing the psychological consequences of being shut in

the Island City for too long with the ever-present possibility of invasion by

Eastern Bloc forces hanging over one's head- would have sunk further if not for

an influx of foreign workers: in 1968 there were less than nineteen thousand such

workers, at the beginning of the 1970s there were over eighty thousand, and by

1980, the number had reached ninety-four thousand.[6]

Architecturally, urban blight seemed to particularly affect West Berlin: the

destruction of landmarks and the construction of ugly, often massive buildings

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[5] Hansjoachim Hoffman, *Berlin: Eine politische Landkunde* (Berlin:
Landeszentrale für politische Bildungsarbeit, 1998), 156-157.

[6] Richie, *Faust's Metropolis*, 777; Hoffman, *Berlin,* 15.

in their stead continued. West Berlin was certainly a diverse city, with a large

Turkish population, especially in Kreuzberg. But the economic downturn and

the general *tristesse* of the city took their toll: the drug dealers, prostitutes and

general derelicts endemic around West German train stations seemed to have

found their Mecca in the *Bahnhof Zoo*.[7]

Beneath this stagnant surface churned dangerous and violent

undercurrents. The first shots of the 1970s in West Germany's struggle with

terrorism were fired in the West Berlin district of Dahlem, when Andreas Baader

was forcibly liberated while ostensibly assisting in research for a book under

police guard in an archive near the Free University. Baader and the individuals

who freed him formed the nucleus of the *Rote Armee Fraktion* (Red Army Faction-

RAF), otherwise known as the Baader-Meinhof gang.[8]

In December 1971 Georg von Rauch, the alleged head of another terrorist

group, was shot in an exchange of gunfire with the West Berlin police. His

group, the *Bewegung 2. Juni*, named after the date on which Benno Ohnesorg was

fatally shot after the student protest against the Shah turned violent, had close

ties with *Kommune I*: Dieter Kunzelmann, who later became one of the AL's

delegates to the West Berlin Parliament, was good friends with both the group's

main leaders, Ralf Reinders and Fritz Teufel, whom he knew from *Kommune I*.

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[7] See Christiane F., *Wir Kinder vom Bahnhof Zoo* (Hamburg: Gruner und Jahr, 1979) for an account of this scene from the late 1970s.

[8] The best account of the history of the RAF is found in Stefan Aust, *Der Baader-Meinhof-Komplex* (Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1997).

This group carried out the only 'successful' bloodless action in the history of West German terrorism, when the *Bewegung 2. Juni* abducted Peter Lorenz, the CDU's candidate for mayor, in March 1975. The group released Lorenz after police released a number of political prisoners. This action was widely admired by the Left both for its success in achieving the release of prisoners and for its peaceful outcome; however, recent research has shown how close the event came to becoming a bloodbath.[9]

The squatters' movement sparked by West Berlin's housing shortage as well as the activities of numerous left-wing extremist groups gave impetus to a variety of alternative artistic projects. They also provided plenty of inspiration for an alternative musical scene: if there had been a soundtrack playing in the background in the 1970s West Berlin counterculture, most of the music would have been written and performed by the band *Ton Steine Scherben*. Their lyrics reflect the concerns and ideals of the thousands of young people who came to West Berlin to avoid mandatory military service, to attend the Free University, to make their living selling arts and crafts or drugs or both, or just to enjoy the alternative lifestyle that had by then become famous.

Ton Steine Scherben's 1972 album *Keine Macht für Niemand* (No power for nobody) teems with songs reflecting the vigorous West Berlin counterculture and

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[9] Koenen, *Das rote Jahrzehnt*, 375. Kunzelmann's role in the abduction or the exact nature of his association with the Movement June 2 has never been conclusively demonstrated, but this did not render him immune to accusations of guilt by association.

references to West Berlin politicians and political developments, mostly concerning housing squatters and their battles with police and politicians. Their music provides evidence of a grassroots, left-wing nationalism, as well as a strong undercurrent of anti-Americanism that increasingly came to characterize the West German Left. The ballad "Der Traum ist aus" (The Dream Is Over) describes a leftist utopia in terms reminiscent of the Book of Genesis: of a "paradise" filled with sunshine, where animals and man lived in peace, in a world without war, weapons, or prisons. Asking whether there is such a place on earth, the lyrics only answer that West Germany is certainly not it. While the dream remains only a dream for the present, this will not last long: "Prepare yourself for the fight for paradise! We have nothing to lose but our fear, it is our future and our country."[10] The song ends with a musical quote from Handel's *Judas Maccabeus*.[11]

The "Rauch House Song" contrasts sharply with "Der Traum ist aus" in theme and style. Repeatedly singled out in informal conversations with contemporaries as particularly important to the West Berlin countercultural scene, the song refers to the Von Rauch House, a squatted house on the

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[10] Mach dich bereit für den Kampf um's Paradies! Wir haben nichts zu verlieren ausser unserer Angst, es ist unsere Zukunft, unser Land. Ton Steine Scherben, "Der Traum ist aus," *Keine Macht für Niemand,* David Volksmund LC3773, 1972, compact disc.

[11] Judas Maccabeus, or Judah Maccabee, was the Jewish military leader who waged a guerrilla war against Syrian rule in Jerusalem and reconsecrated the Temple in 165 B.C.

Mariannenplatz in Berlin-Kreuzberg named after Georg von Rauch, the leader of the Bewegung 2. Juni killed in a gunfight with police in 1971. Scheduled to be razed, demolition was put off until police allegedly found bomb-making material in the house. The lyrics claim that this material consisted of ten empty wine bottles. The refrain calls for prominent West Berlin politicians and housing speculators to be tossed out of Kreuzberg. More interestingly, in the original version of the song, the second refrain noted, "if you are looking for bomb-setters, toss the Amis out."[12]

If stagnation and an undercurrent of violence plagued West Berlin, fragmentation beleaguered the West German Left. The 1970s were characterized by what Gerd Koenen has termed a "founding fever," the frenzied rush to form political organizations in the wake of the dissolution of the SDS.[13] Indeed, scholars investigating the left-wing political scene in the 1970s confront an imposing tangle of similarly-named groups, all claiming to be the genuine successor to the venerable *Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands* (Communist Party of Germany- KPD) of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht. In East Germany, this KPD was forcibly merged with other parties and became the *Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands* (Socialist Unity Party of Germany- SED). But in the

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[12] Das ist unser Haus- wenn ihr Bombenleger sucht, schmeisst doch die Amis raus. "Amis" is the half-affectionate, half-deprecatory German term for Americans. Ton Steine Scherben, "Rauch-Haus Song," *Keine Macht für Niemand*, David Volksmund LC3773, 1972, compact disc. Note on original refrain from http://www.riolyrics.de/macht72.html.

[13] Gründungsfieber. Koenen, *Das rote Jahrzehnt*, 183.

West, the KPD persisted, before it was banned in 1956. The situation gets even more complicated, as the *Deutsche Kommunistische Partei* (German Communist Party- DKP) emerged in 1968, two-thirds of whose members came from the former KPD outlawed in 1956. This party was constantly at war with the *Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands-Rote Fahne* (Communist Party of Germany-Red Banner- KPD-Rote Fahne).[14] The KPD-Rote Fahne should not be confused with the *Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands- Marxisten Leninisten* (Communist Party of Germany-Marxists Leninists- KPD-ML), which, incidentally, changed its name to 'KPD' in 1980 after the dissolution of one of its competitors. A relative late-comer, the *Kommunistischer Bund Westdeutschlands* (Communist Federation of West Germany- KBW) was formed in 1973 after a series of meetings of various groups across West Germany comprised of communist-oriented groups wishing to overcome the splintered nature of the groups and to come together at a national level.[15] The confusion resulting from this jumble of similar names and

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[14] I refer to this particular group as the KPD-Rote Fahne, after its main newspaper, in an effort to (slightly) lessen potential confusion with other groups. Other scholars refer to the KPD-Rote Fahne as the KPD-Maoisten, which in my view does not clarify matters sufficiently, as the KPD/ML was also Maoist, and the designation KPD-AO would only have been accurate for part of the group's history.

[15] Robert Hofmann, *Geschichte der Deutschen Parteien: Von der Kaiserzeit bis zur Gegenwart* (Munich: Piper, 1993), 270-281; see also Gerd Langguth, *Protestbewegung: Entwicklung Niedergang Renaissance. Die Neue Linke seit 1968* (Cologne: Wissenschaft und Politik, 1983).

acronyms could partially explain why these groups have not been examined more closely or accurately.[16]

The phrase "founding fever" could also be applied to the countercultural sphere. Alternative, communal living arrangements known as *Wohngemeinschaften*, artists' studios, entrepreneurial efforts such as health food stores, independent cafes and pubs, and alternative day-care centers all sprang up in West Berlin during the 1970s.[17] As the alternative scene in West Berlin grew, its reputation spread, and it attracted even more individuals from the West who wished to escape the somewhat stuffy, 'bourgeois' society of West Germany.

This mushrooming of countercultural organizations, as well as the formation of the numerous small political organizations in an initial attempt to gather support to spearhead a violent revolution, were responses to the demise of the SDS.[18] With the sudden collapse of this student organization, thousands of committed individuals lost their political homeland. Many found it again in

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[16] The pitfall these groups represent for the researcher is epitomized in Richie's otherwise good chapter on the West Berlin of this era. Despite a fairly extensive examination of the RAF and the beginnings of the AL, the K-groups receive one sentence which lumps them into the same category as the *Autonome*, "Marxist-Leninist Maoist groups whose members advocated random violence and resistance to all forms of authority." She then concludes that they were financed by the East German government. At best this oversimplifies, however, and merely combines numerous groups, many of which detested the GDR, into one unrecognizable amalgam. Richie, *Faust's Metropolis*, 782.

[17] Richie, *Faust's Metropolis*, 784.

one of the K-groups during what Gerd Koenen labeled the "Red Decade" of the

1970s.[19] These K-groups too represented a reaction to the failure of the New Left

of the 1960s, as epitomized by the dissolution of the SDS. Thus, the K-groups

were a return to orthodox Marxism-Leninism.[20] Marxism-Leninism emphasized

the role of a small vanguard party. This highly-organized, central organization

would play the leading role in beginning the violent revolution that would bring

about a socialist society.

Two of these K-groups, the KPD-Rote Fahne and the KBW, played an

especially important role in West Berlin. Because members of the former group

actively participated in the founding of the AL, this chapter concentrates on the

history and ideology of the KPD-Rote Fahne.[21] By taking a closer look at the

ideology of the KPD-Rote Fahne, this chapter will set the stage for an assessment

of the degree to which it influenced the AL and the extent to which certain

organizational and programmatic aspects carried over into the AL. For other

reasons, too, it is worth examining the KPD-Rote Fahne in more detail. For one

thing, the KPD-Rote Fahne (as well as the other K-groups) was extremely radical,

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[18] On the varying responses to the collapse of the SDS, see Markovits and
Gorski, *German Left*, 57-58.

[19] K-Gruppen. "K" comes from the German word *Kommunisten*, meaning
Communists. See Koenen, *Das Rote Jahrzehnt*, for the groundbreaking account of
these groups.

[20] Markovits and Gorski, *German Left*, 59.

[21] The KBW, which embraced a very similar ideology, played a significant
role somewhat later in the history of the AL. It will be addressed in the next
chapter.

aiming to overthrow the bourgeoisie and to establish a proletarian dictatorship.

The KPD-Rote Fahne's radicalism serves to highlight the AL's role as a bridge for

the far Left to enter the constitutional system of parliamentary democracy.[22] By

examining the KPD-Rote Fahne's ideology, especially its attitudes toward

parliament and the notion of class warfare, it becomes clear just how

extraordinary it was when its members elected to support the AL- a decision that

in the end amounted to an unspoken, gradual Godesberg for the far Left.[23]

Moreover, much evidence indicates that the KPD-Rote Fahne viewed the

AL as a kind of Trojan horse with which it could infiltrate and exploit parliament

(See below, Chapter Four). While it is clear that certain elements of the structure

and ideology of the K-groups persisted and found their way into the AL,

however, it is important to emphasize that the K-groups were by no means

identical to the AL. The point is not that the AL was the continuation of the

KPD-Rote Fahne in another guise, as many politicians and journalists claimed at

the time: to claim this would be to oversimplify.[24] As will be seen in the next

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[22] As will be seen, the West German parliamentary system also was able to cope with challenges from the Right, the process of which in fact played an important role in the cementing and integration of the AL within the parliamentary system.

[23] Bad Godesberg is the village just outside Bonn where the SPD met in 1959 to reform their program. At this meeting, the SPD consciously elected to forego the notion of class struggle and dictatorship by the proletariat and thus became a mass party.

[24] If one were inclined to ascribe to conspiracy theories, one could note the full name of the AL, the "Alternative ballot for democracy and environmental protection," then point out that the KPD-Rote Fahne viewed the dictatorship of

chapter, the AL was both a reaction against the K-groups and a continuation of certain of their elements.

The KPD-Rote Fahne was founded in West Berlin in 1971 by SDS veterans Jürgen Horlemann and Christian Semler, who initially called it the KPD-AO (for *Aufbauorganisation*, an organization intended to "build up" the future KPD). In an act of self-criticism typifying the K-groups, the leaders soon acknowledged that the AO-suffix had been a mistake and dropped it, since the party from the beginning had supposedly upheld its revolutionary responsibility to the working class. As was so often the case in the climate of this era, self-criticism converted readily to self-congratulation and self-delusion.[25]

The KPD-Rote Fahne was avowedly Maoist. Maoists emphasize mass cultural transformation, whereas Marxist-Leninists emphasize the central role of "a vanguard-type party in the process of progressive transformation."[26] Most Maoist organizations of the Cold War era were anti-Soviet Union, which they saw as a force against the spread of global progressive politics, and the KPD-Rote Fahne clearly fell into this category. Maoists harshly criticized the path of communism under the Soviet Union as being revisionist and social imperialist. Instead of the course chosen by the Soviet Union, the KPD-Rote Fahne idealized

the proletariat as "the highest form of democracy." *Statut der Kommunistischen Partei Deutschlands* (Cologne: Verlag Rote Fahne, 1974), Point I.

[25] See Helmut Bilstein et al, *Organisierter Kommunismus in der BRD* (Opladen: Leske und Budrich, 1977), 79.

[26] Markovits and Gorski, *German Left,* 60, 63.

China and the path forged by Mao Zedong. Strongly influenced by Mao's

writings, these young revolutionaries glorified Chinese communism, sometimes

with comical slavishness, as will be seen below.[27]

In many ways the KPD-Rote Fahne, founded in February 1970, can be seen

as a reaction against the student movement, which while numerically large was

inefficiently organized and ineffective. It also turned away from the Critical

Theory of the Frankfurt School, which annoyed Marxists by denying a significant

role for the working class as a force for revolution. Instead of sitting around

theorizing in philosophical seminars, some veterans of the West Berlin SDS

decided to abandon theory for practical experience within the workers'

movement. The result was the KPD-Rote Fahne.[28]

Jürgen Bacia, one of the few scholars to attempt to sort out the K-groups,

divides the historical developments within the KPD-Rote Fahne into three main

stages. During the first stage, from 1970-1974, the group idealized the KPD of the

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[27] Mao Zedong's essays "Über die Praxis" and "Über den Widerspruch" were particularly important, and were published in German translation in 1968. The latter essay addresses, among other things, the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, between city and country, and between nature and society, the resolution of which comes from unleashing productive forces under socialism. Mao Zedong, *Ausgewählte Werke- Band I* (Peking: Verlag für fremdsprachige Literatur, 1968).

[28] Alexander von Plato, "Einige Thesen zur Vergangenheit, Gegenwart und Perspektive unserer Organisation," in *Zur Bilanz und Perspektive der KPD. Beiträge zur Diskussion "Über die Kommunistische Partei"* (Cologne: Zentralkomitee der KPD, 1980), vol. 1, 102-103. Quoted in Jürgen Bacia, "Die Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands (Maoisten)," in *Parteienhandbuch. Die Parteien in der BRD*, ed. Richard Stöss (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1984), vol. 2, 1810.

Weimar Republic. It also criticized the 'social imperialism' of the Soviet Union as well as the alleged unadulterated imperialism of the United States, and rejected the DKP, the would-be successor to the KPD, as revisionist. The notion of 'social fascism' so popular in the Weimar Republic returned to play an important role in attacks on the SPD: KPD-Rote Fahne members were convinced that this particular brand of fascism advocated by the bourgeois SPD was about to take over in the Federal Republic.[29]

Bacia calls the second stage, from 1975 to 1978, the "antihegemonic democratic people's movement."[30] This stage was dominated by the introduction in China of notions of the theory of the Three Worlds, which in turn led Marxists to seek out the primary enemy of socialism in Germany. The answer was not hard to find for the KPD-Rote Fahne: it viewed both the USSR and the United States as part of the "First World" as the enemies of the world's peoples. An important corollary of this notion was the idea that the dictatorship of the proletariat could not be achieved until both superpowers were driven out of Germany and the nation reunited: this notion would continue to dominate the thinking and the propaganda of the party throughout the 1970s. As a resolution

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[29] Bacia, "Kommunistische Partei", 1814.

[30] Die antihegemonisch-demokratische Volksbewegung. Bacia, "Kommunistische Partei," 1814.

passed at the party convention in 1977 put it, "the struggle for national

independence and unity is part of the struggle for the proletarian revolution."[31]

Bacia labels the third stage, beginning in 1979, "the connection between

the workers' movement and the democratic people's movement."[32] Attempts to

overcome internal divisions by dumping ideological ballast characterized this

phase. While the moves failed to save the party, the discussions about the

party's future opened the way to cooperation with the newly coalescing ecology

and alternative movement.[33]

The KPD-Rote Fahne was highly structured. The party statute of 1974

describes the structure as follows: "The organizational principle of the party is

democratic centralism. The entire party subjects itself to unified discipline:

subordination of the individual below the party, subordination of the minority to

the majority, subordination of the lower levels to the higher ones, subordination

of the entire party under the Central Committee."[34] The party consisted of two

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[31] Der Kampf um nationale Unabhängigkeit und Einheit ist Bestandteil des Kampfes um die proletarische Revolution. *Resolutionen, Kommunique und Grussadressen des II. Parteitags der KPD 28-31 Juli 1977* (Cologne, no publisher given, 1977), 12. Cited in Bacia, "Kommunistische Partei," 1815.

[32] Die Verbindung von Arbeiterbewegung und demokratischer Volksbewegung. Bacia, "Kommunistische Partei," 1816.

[33] Bacia, "Kommunistische Partei," 1816. This chapter examines this last stage in much greater detail below.

[34] Das organisatorische Prinzip der Partei ist der demokratische Zentralismus. Die gesamte Partei fügt sich der einheitlichen Disziplin: Unterordnung der Minderheit unter die Mehrheit, Unterordnung der unterne Ebenen unter die höheren, Unterordnung der gesamten Partei unter das Zentralkomitee. *Statut der KPD*, 1974, point 4.

major bodies: the Party Assembly (*Parteitag*) and the Central Committee. The

Party Assembly was the highest level of the KPD-Rote Fahne. It determined the

general line of the party, decided on the statute and the program and elected the

Central Committee. The Party Assembly consisted of delegates from local

membership assemblies, was required to meet at least once every two years, and

was convened by the Central Committee.[35]

The Central Committee was regarded as the leading core of the party. It

"consists of experienced comrades who possess political vision and a large

measure of ideological firmness and who have proven their absolute devotion to

the cause of proletarian revolution."[36] The Central Committee elected the

Politburo, which led the party between sessions of the Central Committee. In

turn, between sessions of the Politburo, power was held by the Standing

Committee of the Politburo comprised of members of the Politburo appointed by

the Central Committee. The picture that emerges is clearly of an obsessively

well-organized, highly-structured party apparatus harking back to orthodox

Marxism-Leninism.

Statistics regarding the number of members of the KPD-Rote Fahne are

hard to come by. The German Office for Constitutional Protection placed the

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[35] *Statut der KPD*, 1974, point 5.

[36] [Das Zentralkomitee] besteht aus erfahrenen Genossen, die politische
Weitsicht und ein hohes Mass an ideologischer Festigkeit besitzen und ihre
absolute Ergebenheit für die Sache der proletarischen Revolution im Kampf
bewiesen haben. *Statut der KPD*, 1974, point 5.

membership at around 900 at its peak in 1975, and at around 550 by 1978.[37]   If

funding levels are any indication, the membership in West Berlin was by far the

largest: in 1976, of the six regional committees, West Berlin's took in more than

three times as much money as any other district. Numerically, the

Kommunistische Studentenverband (Communist Students' League- KSV) was

probably the most important sub-organization of the KPD-Rote Fahne. Its

members were largely recruited from student radicals, especially at the Free

University of Berlin. Attempts to ban some seminars of the Free University's

German Studies department helped recruiting efforts, as activists mounted a

large campaign in protest. Partly as a result, membership figures of the KSV

actually exceeded those of its parent organization, reaching 1,100 in 1974, but this

figure plummeted quickly, and by 1978 membership was down to 400, most of

which was in West Berlin.[38]

The ideological reach of the KPD-Rote Fahne far exceeded the central core

of its members. Circulation figures for its newspaper, which at the

organization's zenith appeared weekly but went to a bi-weekly publication as

members and money became scarcer, give a rough idea of their influence. The

German Federal Minister of the Interior estimated the circulation of Rote Fahne

to have been twenty-five thousand in 1972, sixteen thousand in 1974, and

fourteen thousand five hundred in 1976. The group's own estimates regarding

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[37] Bacia, "Kommunistische Partei,"1821.

[38] Bacia, "Kommunistische Partei," 1822.

the number of newspapers actually sold are perhaps more instructive, though still almost certainly inflated: sixteen thousand in January 1974 and nine thousand in July 1979.[39]

Data regarding the composition of the party in terms of education, income, class, and so on are also very sketchy. By the party's own admission, the middle-class dominated and workers formed only a minority.[40] Indeed, most members were affiliated with a university or were university-educated. Here again, the Free University of Berlin served as a central location for organization and recruitment. "Red cells," especially at the Free University, already existed, and threw their support behind the activities of the KPD-Rote Fahne. The university was of course the very milieu out of which the party hoped to break, but again, the leaders of the party were forced to rely on their ties to active student radicalism to form and support their party.

The electoral fortunes of the KPD-Rote Fahne were less than rosy. In fact, they were organizationally only able to take part in the elections in 1974-75, and the results were pathetic. Their strongest area of support was in West Berlin, where they polled 0.7 percent in 1975. According to Bacia, it is not known what types of voters supported the KPD-Rote Fahne.[41]

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[39] Bacia, "Kommunistische Partei," 1829.

[40] Bacia, "Kommunistische Partei," 1826.

[41] Bacia, "Kommunistische Partei," 1819.

To say that the KPD-Rote Fahne viewed parliaments with contempt would be a gross understatement. Given the hostility with which the group viewed parliament as a general institution and the Berlin Parliament in particular, its subsequent decision to participate in the parliamentary system is all the more astonishing.

The KPD-Rote Fahne's main statement of its program leaves no doubt that the group aimed to achieve the dictatorship of the proletariat through violence. As Point One of its statute notes, "The basic mission of the KPD is to lead the working class and the other exploited and repressed classes in the struggle against the bourgeoisie, to overthrow the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, and to build the dictatorship of the proletariat."[42]

From the perspective of the KPD-Rote Fahne, parliament was only a means to this end. The party program asserts, "The KPD combats the parliament as an instrument the bourgeoisie uses to betray the masses. But it participates in elections and uses these as well as parliament itself as platforms for class struggle."[43] Furthermore, the party would work within bourgeois institutions,

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[42] Das grundlegende Programm der KPD besteht darin, die Arbeiterklasse und die anderen ausgebeuteten und unterdrückten Schichten des Volkes in den Kampf gegen die Bourgeoisie zu führen, die Diktatur der Bourgeoisie zu stürzen und die Diktatur des Proletariats zu errichten. *Statut der KPD*, point 1.

[43] Die KPD bekämpft das Parlament als Instrument der Bourgeoisie, die Massen zu betrügen. Sie beteiligt sich jedoch an den Wahlen und nutzt diese wie das Parlament selbst als Tribüne des Klassenkampfs. *Programm und Aktionsprogramm der Kommunistischen Partei Deutschlands* (Dortmund: Verlag Rote Fahne, 1974), 57.

including parliament, to advance the idea that the working class could only free itself by achieving the fall of the bourgeoisie and establishing a communist government: "[The KPD-Rote Fahne's] struggle for seat and voice in parliament is carried out with the declared purpose of using every possibility to promote the proletarian cause. The KPD is not a bourgeois electoral party. Its parliamentary struggle is free of any illusion regarding the possibility of achieving a new order of society by means of an electoral majority."[44] Instead, this would only come about through the violent overthrow of the bourgeois state: "The ruling class will not make way voluntarily for the assault of the proletariat. In light of the repressive violence of the bourgeois state, the revolutionary violence of the masses is necessary and unavoidable. The dissolution of the bourgeois state through the proletarian state is not possible without violence."[45]

Once the working class held power, it would disarm the bourgeoisie and dissolve parliament, constructing unified representative bodies with the power to both make and enforce the laws. Additionally, it would nationalize all

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[44] Ihr Kampf um Sitz und Stimme im Parlament wird mit der erklärten Absicht geführt, jede gebotene Möglichkeit zu nutzen, die der Propagierung der proletarischen Sache dienlich ist. Die Kommunistische Partei ist keine bürgerliche Wahlpartei. Ihr parlamentarischer Kampf ist frei von jedweder Illusion über die Möglichkeit, vermittels einer Stimmenmehrheit zu einer neuen Ordnung der Gesellschaft zu gelangen. *Programm und Aktionsprogramm der KPD*, 40.

[45] Die herrschende Klasse wird dem Ansturm des Proletariats nicht freiwillig weichen. Der Repressionsgewalt des bürgerlichen Staates gegenüber ist die revolutionäre Gewalt der Massen notwendig und unvermeidlich. Die Ablösung des bürgerlichen Staates durch den proletarischen ist ohne Gewalt nicht möglich. *Programm und Aktionsprogramm der KPD*, 42.

factories, banks, insurance companies, transit authorities, and the media. It would end all membership in "imperialistic military alliances," and would dissolve all military bases of foreign powers in Germany as well as German bases in other nations.[46]

Articles in the party's newspaper *Rote Fahne* and pamphlets issued throughout the 1970s show that these were not sentiments to be hidden away in a political program and then forgotten. Indeed, some of the documents reveal that hatred of parliamentary institutions exceeded even that which was reflected in the party's political program. Commenting on the elections in West Berlin in 1971, an article in *Rote Fahne* noted: "[The bourgeois parties] still manage to throw sand in the eyes of the working masses and have them believe that their interests are represented through the ruling SPD in the *Abgeordnetenhaus*. The anti-communist propaganda of the SPD and CDU leadership still succeeds in binding the masses to bourgeois parliamentarianism."[47]

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[46] Imperialistische Militärbündnisse. *Programm und Aktionsprogramm der KPD*, 42-43.

[47] Es gelingt [den bürgerlichen Parteien] jedoch immer noch grossen Teile [sic] der werktätigen Massen Sand in die Augen zu streuen und in dem Glauben zu wiegen, im Abgeordnetenhaus und durch die Herrschaft der SPD-Führung würden ihre Interessen weitgehend vertreten. Noch immer gelingt es der antikommunistischen Propaganda von SPD-Führung und CDU, die Massen an den bürgerlichen Parlamentarismus zu binden. "Zu den Wahlen in West Berlin," *Rote Fahne* 2, no. 14 (February 1971), 8. The *Abgeordnetenhaus* is the lower representative body in the Berlin parliamentary system. The upper house is known as the *Senat*.

The same article went on to note that the main task of the KPD-Rote Fahne for the current election was to unveil the reactionary policy of the SPD and to fight against the illusion of parliament perpetuated by the SEW. Not in the position organizationally to contest the 1971 election, the KPD-Rote Fahne advised "all workers, democrats and socialists" not to give their vote to any of the parties in the election, as they all represented to a various extent "the reactionary interests of West German monopoly capitalism and the US-imperialists."[48] Voter participation reached 88.9 percent that year, up from 86.2 percent in 1967, indicating the degree of response the call to boycott received. Finally, the KPD-Rote Fahne criticized the SEW for participating in the 1971 election, and in the process made clear its own feelings regarding parliament: "The SEW is again taking part in the elections to the *Abgeordnetenhaus*. But its motive in so doing is not in order to use the parliamentary stage as a means of revealing the class character of the bourgeois parliament and state, in other words it is not participating in parliament in order to destroy it, but is spreading the illusion among the masses that the parliament could implement decisive improvements for the working masses."[49] Thus the KPD-Rote Fahne criticized

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[48] Die KPD-Aufbauorganisation rät allen Arbeitern, Demokraten und Sozialisten, keine [sic] der sich an den Wahlen beteiligenden Parteien ihre Stimme zu geben. Alle bürgerlichen Parteien betreiben unterschiedlich in Westberlin die reaktionären Interessen des westdeutschen Monopolkapitals und der US-Imperialisten. "Zu den Wahlen in West Berlin," *Rote Fahne* 2, no. 14 (February 1971), 9.

[49] Die SEW beteiligt sich wieder massiert an den Abgeordnetenhauswahlen. Sie sieht ihre Aufgabe jedoch nicht darin, die

the SEW, the West German branch of East Germany's Socialist Unity Party, for excessive adherence to the principles of democracy and parliamentarianism, and condemned it for not using parliament to destroy parliamentary institutions.

The pamphlet issued in 1974 setting down the electoral program of the KPD-Rote Fahne for the 1975 election in West Berlin is also instructive regarding its view of parliament. "THE BOURGEOIS PARLIAMENT IS A DEEP SWAMP OF DECEPTION AND CORRUPTION," the program trumpeted, and it called for supporters to "USE PARLIAMENT AS A PLATFORM FOR CLASS STRUGGLE." In the tradition of its role models Bebel, Luxemburg, Liebknecht, Zetkin and Thälmann, KPD delegates would use parliament to preach class struggle: "They will mercilessly attack the crimes of the bourgeoisie and corrupt parliamentarianism, represent the demands of working people, and use the platform of parliament, too, to mobilize the masses for the revolutionary class struggle and against this parliamentarianism."[50]

Parlamentstribüne als eines der Mittel zur Entlarvung des Klassencharakters der bürgerlichen Parlamente und Staatsapparate zu benutzen, d.h. sie beteiligt sich nicht am Parlament, um es zu vernichten, sondern verbreitet unter den Massen die Illusion, im Parlament könnten entscheidende Verbesserungen für die werktätigen Massen durchgesetzt werden. "Zu den Wahlen in West Berlin," *Rote Fahne* 2, no. 14 (February 1971), 9.

[50] DAS BÜRGERLICHE PARLAMENT IST EIN TIEFER SUMPF VON VERLOGENHEIT UND KORRUPTION…DAS PARLAMENT ALS TRIBÜNE DES KLASSENKAMPFES NUTZEN…Wie unsere grossen Vorbilder August Bebel, Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Liebknecht, Clara Zetkin und Ernst Thälman werden die Abgeordneten der KPD trotz aller Anfeindungen der bürgerlichen Scharfmacher das Parlament zur Tribüne des Klassenkampfs machen, sie werden die Verbrechen der Bourgeoisie und den korrupten Parlamentarismus schonunglos anprangern, die Forderungen des werktätigen Volkes vertreten und

Clearly, then, the KPD-Rote Fahne embraced extreme anti-parliamentary attitudes, viewing the parliaments at best as platforms from which to preach the gospel of class struggle and at worst as corrupt institutions of bourgeois oppression fit only to be destroyed. But this is not especially surprising- it is fairly obvious that Marxist groups meant the parliaments no good. More remarkable is the shift toward working within the parliaments that occurred in the late 1970s. In part, this shift was made possible by the presence of other, lesser-known ideological strains. These issues included support for women's rights, especially regarding Article 218; criticism of the Soviet Union and the GDR, with corresponding support for the opposition in Eastern Europe; a critical stance regarding the Western Allies and NATO; concern with the protection of nature; and opposition to nuclear power. The presence of these elements in the ideology of the KPD-Rote Fahne enabled it to cooperate with 'bourgeois' environmental groups and citizens' initiatives, and at the same time rendered it more palatable and appealing as a partner to these other organizations.

The issue of women's rights, especially opposition to Article 218 of the penal code restricting women's access to safe and legal abortions, had firm support within the KPD-Rote Fahne. In political programs, in demonstrations, and in leaflets, the KPD-Rote Fahne supported the cause of women's rights.

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auch von dieser Tribüne aus für den revolutionären Klassenkampf, gegen diesen Parlamentarismus die Massen mobilisieren. *KPD Liste 5 Wahlprogramm* (Berlin: Regionalkomitee Westberlin der KPD, 1974), 3-4. Emphasis in original.

Furthermore, the KPD-Rote Fahne gave women a chance to participate in the political arena.

The political program of the KPD-Rote Fahne called for complete equal rights for women before the law. The program also promised to end enslavement of women in the household, economic exploitation of women, and women's political repression.[51]

The political program for the 1975 West Berlin elections gives more information regarding attempts of the KPD-Rote Fahne to appeal to women. Despite the fact that politicians had declared 1975 'the year of the woman,' the program claimed that nothing would change under existing leadership. "The terrible double burden of the working woman through career, household, and raising children will not be changed by those who profit by it," the program asserted. Instead, real changes would only come about through the struggle for socialism: "[The struggle for socialism] will create the preconditions for women's participation in leading production and the state, and will enable her to fully apply her creative abilities. Your household and the upbringing of the children is then not your private affair, but will be recognized as a useful social activity and above all not as your work, but as the social work of all."[52] The program

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[51] *Programm und Aktionsprogramm der KPD*, 51, 57.

[52] Die ungeheure Doppelbelastung der werktätigen Frau und Mutter durch Beruf, Haushalt, und die Kindererziehung werden die nicht ändern, die gerade daraus ihren Profit schlagen…. Er wird die Voraussetzungen dafür schaffen, dass die Frau umfassend an der Leitung der Produktion und des Staates sich beteiligt und ihre schöpferischen Fähigkeiten voll einsetzen kann.

then exhorted women to fight for equal wages for men and women, for better

working conditions for pregnant women, for eight weeks leave before and

twelve weeks leave after delivery, and for release from work of fathers or

mothers when their child was ill.[53]

The KPD also at least attempted to involve women as candidates of the

party. For example, twenty-four of the KPD's eighty candidates (30 percent) for

the 1975 West Berlin election were women, with women occupying the top slot

on the ballot in three of the twelve districts.[54]

The KPD-Rote Fahne also supported the opposition in Eastern Europe.

Much of this support was born of anti-Soviet views. As a Maoist political party,

the KPD-Rote Fahne was openly critical of the path taken by the Soviet Union

and the Eastern European Soviet satellite states. The KPD-Rote Fahne criticized

the USSR as revisionist and social imperialist, common themes in its publications

and pamphlets. Its program made this clear: "Today, the formerly socialist

Soviet Union has become the center of modern Revisionism, the bulwark of the

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Euer Haushalt und die Erziehung der Kinder ist dann nicht eure Privatsache, sie wird als vollwertige nutzbringende gesellschaftliche Tätigkeit anerkannt und vor allem nicht eure, sondern die gesellschaftliche Arbeit aller sein. *KPD Liste 5 Wahlprogramm*, 14.

[53] *KPD Liste 5 Wahlprogramm*, 14-15.

[54] West German elections operated on the principle of ballot lists assembled by the respective political party. Depending on how many votes that particular party received, the party sent a certain number of candidates from their list to the representative body. So if the KPD had managed to earn any seats in a particular district, that would have meant that a woman would have been the top choice as delegate in three of the twelve districts.

proletarian world revolution has become a new imperialist state. It brought the

nations of Eastern Europe under its rule, plundered their riches, and hinders

their independent economic development."[55]

Part of the KPD-Rote Fahne's resentment of the USSR stemmed from its

role in the division of Germany and political oppression in the East. Christian

Semler, head of the KPD-Rote Fahne, at an event sponsored by the "Committee

against political oppression in both parts of Germany" in Frankfurt on 31 March

1978, specifically laid most of the blame for German division at the Soviets' feet:

"[We are marching] toward the building of a united people's movement for

independence, freedom and unity of both German states, which is primarily

directed against political oppression and those who are responsible for

Germany's national enslavement, and those are- you can't beat around the bush

here- both the superpowers, the bourgeoisie in both German states, and today

above all Soviet social imperialism."[56] Describing the situation in the GDR, a

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[55] Heute ist aus der ehemals sozialistischen Sowjetunion das Zentrum des modernen Revionismus, aus dem Bollwerk der proletarischen Weltrevolution ein neuer imperialistischer Staat geworden. Sie brachte die Länder Osteuropas unter ihre Herrschaft, plündert deren Reichtümer und verhindert deren selbstständige wirtschaftliche Entwicklung. *Programm und Aktionsprogramm der KPD*, 17.

[56] [Wir marschieren] hin zum Aufbau einer Volksbewegung für Unabhängigkeit, Freiheit und Einheit beider deutscher Staaten, die ihren Hauptschlag gegen diejenigen richtet, die für die politische Unterdrückung und die nationale Knechtung Deutschlands verantwortlich sind, und das sind- darum könnt Ihr nicht herummanövrieren- die beiden Supermächte, die Bourgeoisien in beiden deutschen Staaten, vor allem aber heute der sowjetische Sozialimperialismus! "Solidarität mit der Opposition in der DDR. Dokumentation der Veranstaltung des Komitees gegen die politische

KPD-Rote Fahne pamphlet noted: "Today a new bourgeoisie gets fat at the cost

of the workers, who, themselves robbed of all bourgeois democratic freedoms,

are constantly being driven to higher work performance. The guarantor of this

oppressive status quo is the Soviet Union- whose power is based not least upon

its tanks."[57]

The KPD-Rote Fahne thus naturally came to support those forces that

fought against what they perceived as Soviet imperialism. For example, the KPD

idolized the workers in Gdansk in 1970 for their readiness "to fight against the

dominance of Soviet social imperialism, against the social fascist dictatorship of

the revisionists' clique."[58] The KPD-Rote Fahne also saw a hero in Rudolf Bahro,

an outspoken critic of the GDR, especially for his criticism of the imperialist

policy of the Soviet Union and the oppression of its people. They concluded, in a

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Unterdrückung in beiden Teilen Deutschlands." *Rote Fahne* 9, no. 15 (12 April
1978), 14.

[57] Heute mästet sich eine neue Bourgeoisie auf Kosten der Arbeiter und
Werktätigen, die beraubt selbst aller bürgerlich-demokratischen Freiheiten zu
immer höherer Arbeitsleistung getrieben werden. Garant dieses erdrückenden
Status quo ist die Sowjetunion- nicht zuletzt mit ihren Panzern. "30 Jahre BRD-
30 Jahre DDR Kein Grund zum Feiern," 1979. AdAPO: Ordner KPD Berlin.

[58] …gegen die Herrschaft der sowjetischen Sozialimperialisten, gegen die
sozialfaschistische Diktatur der Revisionistenclique zu kämpfen. "Dezember
1970: Heldenhafter Kampf der polnischen Arbeiter," December, 1975. AdAPO:
Ordner KPD Berlin.

phrase that could later have been the credo of the AL and the Green Party: "Only

he who advocates democratic freedoms in East and West is credible!"[59]

The KPD-Rote Fahne certainly did not spare West Germany's eastern

neighbor from criticism. While a KPD-Rote Fahne publication on the event of the

thirtieth anniversary of the GDR and the Federal Republic noted that in the GDR

a more progressive path could be initially pursued, the GDR hardly represented

the picture of an unbroken democratic and socialist tradition. Moreover, the

supposedly socialist USSR was not the "unbreakable guarantor of peace and

progress" that it claimed to be.[60] The brochure then pointed to the events of 17

June 1953; the construction of the Berlin Wall beginning in August 1961; the use

of soldiers of the National People's Army of the GDR to quell the 1968 revolution

in Czechoslovakia; and the punishments affecting oppositional artists, including

expulsions and prohibitions on the pursuit of their careers. The brochure even

went on to claim that the "rabble-rousing propaganda" against the GDR

perpetrated by the West came increasingly to reflect actual developments in the

GDR, developments that found their climax in the 1961 construction of the Berlin

Wall. In its reaction to Wolf Biermann's expulsion from the GDR, the KPD called

the decision a "new act of political oppression by the fascist dictatorship in the

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[59] Glaubwürdig ist nur der, der sich für demokratische Freiheiten in Ost und West einsetzt! "8 Jahre Haft für Rudolf Bahro," 1978. AdAPO: Ordner KPD Berlin.

[60] Der unverbrüchliche Garant für Frieden und Fortschritt. "30 Jahre BRD-30 Jahre DDR Kein Grund zum Feiern," 1979. AdAPO: Ordner KPD Berlin.

GDR."[61] Remarking on the fate of other opposition figures in the GDR, the KPD-Rote Fahne noted: "Nine years prison for the university lecturer Rolf Mainz, eight years detention for Rudolf Bahro, five years for the East Berlin conscientious objector Nico Hübner: these sentences of the GDR judiciary are testaments to the antidemocratic, oppressive character of the social system in the GDR."[62]

Interestingly, the KPD-Rote Fahne advocated German unification, and insisted that it would be a mistake to leave ideas of national unification to the political Right. In a pamphlet attacking the commemorations of the thirtieth anniversary of the GDR and the Federal Republic, the KPD-Rote Fahne noted: "Due to the rabble-rousing propaganda in Cold War style, the division of Germany was for years a subject reserved for the bourgeoisie. Today however, the national question, the development and division of Germany, has again become the subject of a debate within the Left."[63]

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[61] Hetzpropaganda; ein neuer Akt politischer Unterdrückung der faschistischen Diktatur in der DDR. "Neuer Willkürakt der DDR: Biermann ausgewiesen," November 1976. AdAPO: Ordner KPD Berlin.

[62] 9 Jahre Gefängnis für den Lektor Rolf Mainz, 8 Jahre Haft für Rudolph Bahro, 5 Jahre für den ostberliner Wehrdienstverweigerer Nico Hübner- diese Urteile der DDR-Justiz sind Lehrstücke des antidemokratischen, unterdrückerischen Charakters des gesellschaftlichen Systems in der DDR. "Solidarität mit der demokratischen und sozialistischen Opposition in der DDR," no date. AdAPO: Ordner KPD Berlin.

[63] Bedingt durch die Hetzpropaganda nach "Kalter Kriegs" Manier, war jahrelang die Spaltung Deutschlands ein Thema der Bourgeoisie. Heute jedoch, ist die nationale Frage, die Entwicklung und Spaltung Deutschlands wieder zum

Early in its history, the KPD-Rote Fahne had pushed for legal recognition of the GDR, not unification. The first issue of *Rote Fahne* called for recognition of the GDR under international law.[64]   Soon, however, the KPD-Rote Fahne altered its viewpoint, directing its efforts and propaganda "for a unified Berlin in an independent unified socialist Germany!"[65] The KPD-Rote Fahne placed German unification quite high on its list of priorities, with the KPD-Rote Fahne printing slogans calling for a unified Berlin in a unified socialist Germany on the cover of its electoral program it issued for the 1975 West Berlin elections.[66]

In its view, Berlin played a special role for the German nation, especially in postwar divided Germany:

> West Berlin is neither part of the Federal Republic nor the GDR: it lies on German territory and is part of all of Germany. The four powers agreement sets down the power political claims of the US and the USSR, it is an Occupiers' Statute and was decided over the heads of Berliners. The federal government's policy of détente means for West Berliners a worsening of working and living conditions, and an increasing dependence on the GDR; and thus they are subject to blackmail. A progressive Berlin policy must take into consideration the interests of the populace.[67]

Gegenstand der Auseinandersetzung in der Linken geworden. "30 Jahre BRD-30 Jahre DDR Kein Grund zum Feiern," 1979. AdAPO: Ordner KPD Berlin.

[64] Printed as a slogan in *Rote Fahne* 1, no. 1 (April/May 1970), 4.

[65] Für ein vereintes Berlin in einem unabhängigen, vereinten sozialistischen Deutschland! "200 Jahre USA: Nieder mit dem USA-Imperialismus! Es lebe die Freundschaft zwischen dem Deutschen und Amerikanischen Volk," 1976. AdAPO: Ordner KPD Berlin.

[66] *KPD Liste 5 Wahlprogramm*, cover.

[67] Westberlin ist weder Teil der BRD noch der DDR, es liegt auf deutschem Territorium und ist Teil ganz Deutschlands. Das Viermächte-Abkommen schreibt die machtpolitischen Ansprüche fest. Es ist Besatzerstatut und über die

As good Marxists, they viewed the question of unification too from the

perspective of class struggle, and asserted that this struggle itself would bring

back the unity of the German working class and people. Their program noted

that "[the proletarian state] will secure the alliance with the working class of the

GDR and thus create the preconditions for the unification of Germany along

revolutionary lines."[68] It went on to assert:

> [D]espite the varying conditions of the struggle, the unity of the
> entire German working class and people shall be restored through
> class struggle. The reunification of the FRG, West Berlin, and the
> GDR will only bring historical progress when it occurs under the
> sign of proletarian revolution and of socialism. The struggle for the
> reunification of Germany on the basis of revolution is therefore
> simultaneously the struggle against every form of the imperialist
> solution to the national question, be it through the annexation of
> the GDR through FRG-imperialism, be it through a balancing of the
> West German bourgeois monopoly and the new bourgeoisie of the
> GDR.[69]

Köpfe der Berliner hinweg beschlossen. Die Entspannungspolitik der
Bundesregierung bedeutet für die Westberliner Verschlechterung der Arbeits-
und Lebensbedingungen. Sie bedeutet zunehmende Abhängigkeit von der DDR
und damit Erpressbarkeit. Eine fortschrittliche Berlinpolitik muss ihren
Standpunkt nach den Interessen der Bevölkerung bestimmen. "30 Jahre BRD-30
Jahre DDR Kein Grund zum Feiern," 1979. AdAPO: Ordner KPD Berlin.

[68] [Der proletarische Staat...] wird das Bündnis mit der Arbeiterklasse der
DDR festigen und so die Voraussetzung für die Wiedervereinigung
Deutschlands auf revolutionäre Grundlage schaffen. *Programm und
Aktionsprogramm der KPD*, 52.

[69] Trotz der unterschiedlichen Kampfbedingungen wird durch den
Klassenkampf selbst die Einheit der gesamten deutschen Arbeiterklasse und des
Volkes wiederhergestellt. Die Wiedervereinigung der BRD, Westberlin und der
DDR wird nur dann einen historischen Fortschritt bringen, wenn sie unter dem
Zeichen der proletarischen Revolution und des Sozialismus erfolgt. Der Kampf
für die Wiedervereinigung Deutschlands auf revolutionärer Grundlage ist
deshalb zugleich Kampf gegen jede Form der imperialistischen Lösung der

In many respects, the KPD-Rote Fahne's view of the Western Allies was colored by the Allies' alleged support for continued German division. To further the cause of German unification, the Program and Action Program demanded the "withdrawal of all foreign troops from the Federal Republic and the GDR" and called for both the Federal Republic and the GDR to quit NATO and the Warsaw Pact respectively.[70] In case the reader had not gotten the point the first time, the program repeated its demand two pages later: "Down with US imperialism and Soviet social imperialism!… Withdrawal of all US troops from Europe! Withdrawal of all Soviet troops from Eastern European lands! Dissolution of NATO and the Warsaw Pact!"[71] The KPD-Rote Fahne also questioned the status of the United States forces in West Berlin, writing in a leaflet, "The superpower USA is not a protective power, but is an imperialist superpower that has committed mass murder in the name of its interests."[72]

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nationalen Frage, sei es durch die Annexion der DDR durch den BRD-Imperialismus, sei es durch einen Ausgleich zwischen der westdeutschen Monopolbourgeoisie und der neuen Bourgeoisie der DDR. *Programm und Aktionsprogramm der KPD*, 27.

[70] Abzug aller ausländischen Truppen aus der BRD und der DDR.

[71] Nieder mit dem USA Imperialismus und dem sowjetischen Sozialimperialismus!… Abzug aller USA-Truppen aus Europa! Abzug aller sowjetischen Truppen aus den Ländern Osteuropas! Auflösung der NATO und des Warschauer Paktes! *Programm und Aktionsprogramm der KPD*, 65, 67 AdAPO: Ordner KPD Berlin.

[72] Die Supermacht USA ist keine "Schutzmacht," sie ist eine imperialistische Supermacht, die um ihrer Interessen willen Völkermord begangen hat. "Nieder mit dem KSZE Schwindel! Stärkt die Einheitsfront gegen die beiden Supermächte!" August 1, 1975. AdAPO: Ordner KPD Berlin

The KPD-Rote Fahne used any excuse to attack United States imperialism

and its role in the division of Germany: In the program of the KPD, one reads:

> The victory over the fascist Wehrmacht was primarily the
> achievement of the Red Army under Stalin's leadership. When the
> Nazi criminals evaded the court of the peoples and their own
> exploited and enslaved working class, then only with the help of
> US imperialism. After the Second World War the USA supplanted
> German, Italian and Japanese fascism. The US-imperialists divided
> Germany and in the western part was the driving force behind the
> reestablishment of the class rule of the monopolistic bourgeoisie.[73]

Another pamphlet asserted: "The division of Germany by the USA imperialists

with the help of the reactionary Adenauer government had the goal of putting

the Federal Republic of Germany under [the US imperialists'] control." Again, it

concluded with a call, "Superpowers out of Germany! For a unified Berlin in an

independent unified socialist Germany!"[74]

Anti-United States and anti-capitalist sentiments had an unfortunate link

to a surprising left-wing anti-Semitism as well. Dan Diner has argued that a

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[73] Der Sieg über die faschistische Wehrmacht war in erster Linie das Verdienst der Roten Armee unter Führung Stalins. Wenn die Nazi Verbrecher dem Gericht der Völker und der eigenen ausgebeuteten und geknebelten Arbeiterklasse entgingen, so nur mit Hilfe des USA-Imperialismus. Nach dem zweiten Weltkrieg trat der USA-Imperialismus an die Stelle des deutschen, italienischen und japanischen Faschismus. Die USA-Imperialisten spalteten Deutschland und betrieben im westlichen Teil die Wiedererrichtung der Klassenherrschaft der Monopolbourgeoisie. *Programm und Aktionsprogramm der KPD*, 22.

[74] Die Spaltung Deutschlands durch die USA-Imperialisten mit Hilfe der reaktionären Adenauer Regierung hatte zum Ziel, die BRD ihrer Kontrolle zu unterwerfen….Supermächte raus aus Deutschland! Für ein vereintes Berlin in einem unabhängigen, vereinten sozialistischen Deutschland! "200 Jahre USA: Nieder mit dem USA-Imperialismus! Es lebe die Freundschaft zwischen dem Deutschen und Amerikanischen Volk!" 1976. AdAPO: Ordner KPD Berlin.

great deal of the anti-American sentiment on the part of the German Left was

actually thinly-veiled anti-Semitism.[75] Indeed, in the KPD-Rote Fahne's

publications, anti-capitalism sometimes veered into anti-Semitism. For example,

a cartoon in *Rote Fahne* depicted an injured German worker going to visit a

doctor who resembled some of the anti-Semitic caricatures straight out of Nazi

publications and propaganda. Complete with hooked nose, bleeding scalpel

behind his humped back, and ape-like hands and pointed toes emphasizing his

sub-humanity, the doctor assured the patient, "We'll get you taken care of,"

while thinking to himself, "Saving the foot is not economical."[76]

The position of the KPD-Rote Fahne regarding nature and the

environment was an ambivalent one. At points in its political program and other

publications, it appeared to support certain issues that could be labeled

environmentalist. At other points, however, it clearly rejected environmental

ideas outright, such as in its criticism of the Club of Rome report. Occasionally,

the slavish and uncritical admiration of China reached comical proportions. But

even in its early history, the KPD demonstrated some concern for the

environment.

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[75] Dan Diner, *Verkehrte Welten: Anti-Amerikanismus in Deutschland* (Frankfurt: Eichhorn, 1993).

[76] *Rote Fahne* 2, no. 27 (8 October 1971). See Figure 2. Rather than evidence of a racialist anti-Semitism, these kinds of images, which would recur in the context of the housing squatters, reflect a lack of a coming-to-terms with certain aspects of the Nazi past, with the tendency to lump Nazism with fascism and thus to ignore other aspects such as racist images which contributed to the climate in a society in which the Holocaust was possible.

The political program noted the role of the capitalists in the "systematic exploitation of the earth."[77] But it did this primarily with a view to the impact upon the worker, and mostly approved of the conquest of nature and the environment by man as long as workers benefited. Machinery- and hence modernity- was depicted as a neutral force: whether it oppressed or liberated depended on the system in which it operated. The KPD-Rote Fahne program carefully distinguished between the machinery itself, which made work easier, and machinery functioning within the capitalist system: "Capital changes all means for the development of human life into the means for developing its enslavement, for means of increasing its exploitation."[78] In and of itself, the great machinery looked like "a victory of man over nature," but employed under capitalism, made the worker only partly human and a part of the machine.[79] Again: "Seen in itself, the great machinery makes work easier; applied under capitalism, it increases the pressure to work and the torment associated with labor, and leads in the hand of the capitalist to a systematic worsening of the

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[77] …die systematische Ausbeutung der Erde. *Programm und Aktionsprogramm der KPD*, 11.

[78] Das Kapital verwandelt alle Mittel zur Entwicklung des menschlichen Lebens in Mittel zur Entwicklung seiner Herrschaft, in Mittel zur Steigerung der Ausbeutung. *Programm und Aktionsprogramm der KPD*, 11.

[79] Ein Sieg des Menschen über die Natur.

worker's living conditions during worktime: machinery robs him of space, air, and light, and exposes him to health- and life-threatening working conditions."[80]

A publication of the *Kommunistische Studentenverband* (Communist Students' League- KSV), the KPD-Rote Fahne's student organization, reveals much about KPD-Rote Fahne attitudes toward the environment. The pamphlet claimed that "the energy crisis is in reality the crisis of imperialism!" and thus "the crisis of imperialism and social imperialism is also the crisis of bourgeois and revisionist science!"[81] The same publication attacked the 1974 findings of the Club of Rome regarding "the limits to growth."[82] The KSV publication joined many others when it called into question the very notion of an energy crisis or a shortage of resources, and called the authors of the report "the scientific agents of

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[80] An sich betrachtet, erleichtert sie [die grosse Maschinerie] die Arbeit, kapitalistisch angewandt, steigert sie Arbeitshetze und Arbeitsqual und führt in der Hand des Kapitals zur systematischen Verschlechterung der Lebensbedingungen des Arbeiters während der Arbeitszeit: sie raubt ihm Raum, Luft, Licht und setzt ihn gesundheits-und lebesgefährdenden Produktionsbedingungen aus. *Programm und Aktionsprogramm der KPD*, 11.

[81] Die 'Energiekrise' ist in Wirklichkeit die Krise des Imperialismus!…Die Krise des Imperialismus und Sozialimperialismus ist auch die Krise der bürgerlichen und revisionistischen Wissenschaft! Chapter headings in *Atomenergie im Kapitalismus- eine Gefahr für die Massen!* Kommunistischer Studentenverband, 1975. AdAPO: KPD KSV Zentral.

[82] Donella H. Meadows and others, *The Limits to Growth: A Report for the Club of Rome's Project on the Predicament of Mankind* (New York: Universe Books, 1974).

the two superpowers, who invoke the world crisis in order to prepare their intervention and the world war."[83]

The report also praised Stalin's 1948 massive undertaking "for the reshaping of nature," and noted how the 'Chinese Miracle' could only be understood by seeing that the workers were the "masters of society, the factories, and of nature."[84] In an article called "The Solution of the Energy Question Through the Proletarian Dictatorship," the anonymous author claimed to show how "after the destruction of the capitalist state machinery and the conquest of political power, the working class will reform all of society and nature in its image and place it in its service... Nature can only be conquered when the bourgeoisie has been pulled down. Only then will the field be clear for the creative use of the Marxist dialectic in the area of nature."[85]

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[83] Die wissenschaftlichen Agenten der beiden Supermächte, die die Weltkrise beschwören, um ihre Intervention und den Weltkrieg vorzubereiten. *Atomenergie im Kapitalismus*, 29. One suspects that the KSV was also wary of the Club of Rome's solidly bourgeois and even patrician background, which for other audiences contributed to the authors' credibility and made the report so significant.

[84] Stalins Plan zur Umgestaltung der Natur; Dort, wo wie in der VR China die Revolution fortgeführt wird und dem Revisonismus der Weg zur Macht versperrt wird, sind die Arbeiter die Herren der Gessellschaft, der Fabriken und der Natur; nur so lässt sich das 'chinesische Wunder' erklären. *Atomenergie im Kapitalismus,* 77, 82.

[85] Die Lösung der Energiefrage durch die Diktatur des Proletariats; Im folgenden Abschnitt wird dargelegt, wie die Arbeiterklasse nach der Zerschlagung der kapitalistischen Staatsmaschine und der Eroberung der politischen Macht dargangeht, die ganze Gesellschaft und die Natur nach ihrem Vorbild umformt und in ihren Dienst stellt…,die Natur nur erobert werden konnte, wenn die Bourgeoisie niederungen wurde. Erst dann war das Feld frei

On the other hand, though, the Program and Action Program included a laundry list of environmental improvements. Its demands were extensive:

> [An] end to the contamination of air, water, and earth! No location of industry in the recreational and residential areas of the workers! Construction of comprehensive environmental protection equipment by the capitalists! Opposition to the destruction of forest and flora through the construction of troop maneuver areas and military airports! Preservation and enlargement of recreational areas with free access for all! Seizure of all private property on lakeshore properties and in recreational parks. Supervision through inspections by workers and residents. Extension of the transit network into the areas where the workers live! Unified tariffs for all local transit systems![86]

This list of demands foreshadows many of the main concerns of the AL. Overall, the alteration of one word in the party program's concern about "the exploitation of man by man" to the exploitation of nature by man describes the paradigm shift made in the course of the 1970s, the shift that made the AL conceivable.[87]

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für die schöpferische Anwendung der marxistischen Dialektik auf das Gebiet der Natur und für die schrankenlose Entfaltung der Produtivkräfte. *Atomenergie im Kapitalismus*, 77.

[86] Schluss mit der Verseuchung von Luft, Wasser und Erde! Keine Ansiedlung von Industrie in den Erholungs- und Wohngebieten der Werktätigen! Einrichtung umfassender Umweltschutzanlagen durch die Kapitalisten! Gegen die Zerstörung von Wald und Flur durch die Anlage von Truppenübungsplätzen und Militärflughäfen! Erhalt und Ausbau der Erholungsgebiete, freier Zugang für alle! Enteignung allen Privatbesitzes an Seegrundstücken und Erholungsparks! Kontrolle durch Arbeiter- und Wohngebietsinspektionen! Ausbau des Verkehrsnetzes in die Wohnviertel der Werktätigen! Einheitstarif bei allen Nahverkehrsmitteln! *Programm und Aktionsprogramm der KPD*, 60.

[87] Die Ausbeutung des Menschen durch den Menschen. *Programm und Aktionsprogramm der KPD*, 28.

Nuclear power plants posed an especially interesting issue for the K-groups, one that continued to play an important role for the Left in the course of the 1980s. In fact, it often seemed that the AL's clientele provided the foot soldiers for various anti-nuclear demonstrations throughout the Federal Republic. The opposition to nuclear power plants became another extremely important issue for the K-groups, and helps explain the AL's continued emphasis on nuclear power despite the absence of nuclear plants in West Berlin.

Nuclear power was so critical an issue because it bound together so many different concerns and priorities of the K-groups: it related to issues of sovereignty and independence in terms of reliance on the Soviet Union or the United States for energy supplies; it fed into concern about and solidarity with the Third World; and perhaps most importantly, opposition to nuclear power attracted large numbers of demonstrators, often coming from a broad social background, who clashed with police. In West Berlin, the crusade against nuclear power plants was an important first stage in the shift "from red to green."[88]

The link between nuclear power and the concern about national sovereignty can clearly be discerned in a pamphlet of the KSV. "To be dependent on one or the other of the superpowers in the energy sector today means strengthening of the immediate intervention and control on the part of the

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[88] Rudolf Bahro, *From Red to Green: Interviews with the New Left Review* (London: Versa, 1984).

superpower, it means an undermining of national sovereignty, it means

subservience and enslavement."[89] The pamphlet went on to assert that a nuclear

plant would not lessen dependence on the superpowers, but rather increase it, as

the enriched uranium necessary for the plant would come either from the United

States or above all from the USSR.[90] The alternative would be cooperation and

dialogue with the Third World nations, which had raw materials, especially oil.

This would lead to the rise of the Third World and foster its economic

independence from the superpowers, ending their hegemony.[91]

Curiously, however, in this utopia, atomic energy had not been ruled out.

Here the slavish admiration and uncritical idealization of China became very

clear. In a section entitled "The People's Republic Masters All Problems," the

authors note that currently China did not need atomic power, as it had rich

supplies of other kinds of energy.[92] But China was also researching the use of

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[89] Auf dem Energiesektor von einer der beiden Supermächte abhängig sein heisst heute, Verstärkung der unmittelbaren Einmischung und Kontrolle seitens der Supermächte, heisst Untergrabung der nationalen Unabhängigkeit, heisst Unterjochung und Versklavung. *Atomenergie im Kapitalismus*, 3. In this context it is interesting to note the work's complete title, which is itself quite telling: "Atomic Energy in Capitalism: A Danger for the Masses. For an energy policy independent from the superpowers, in cooperation with the Third World." The title manages to tie atomic energy to two issues of great importance to the KPD-Rote Fahne: liberation from the yoke of the superpowers and concerns for the Third World.

[90] *Atomenergie im Kapitalismus*, 39.

[91] *Atomenergie im Kapitalismus,* 70-71. Kommunistischer Studentenverband, 1975. AdAPO: KPD KSV Zentral.

[92] Die Volksrepublik China meistert alle Probleme.

atomic energy, exploring the use of nuclear fusion and the fast-breeder reactor. These did not pose a threat, however, as "in research and in politics all decisions are made only from the viewpoint of the working class, and the working class will have the leadership of the creative solution of the energy question."[93]

The KPD-Rote Fahne also became increasingly aware of the ability of the fight against nuclear power to attract large numbers of fairly diverse demonstrators. It noted the success of a demonstration in the Wilster Marsh, despite major tactical errors on the part of some participants.[94] In the wake of another demonstration, the KPD-Rote Fahne declared its solidarity with those arrested, calling the arrests an excuse for the state "to begin a new stage in the criminalization of the anti-nuclear power movement."[95]

The KPD-Rote Fahne apparently saw the anti-nuclear movement as an opportunity to widen its base. For instance, one analysis noted that "the farmers and vintners from Kaiserstuhl must learn from the experiences of the working class that their struggle is not over when the nuclear power plant in Wyhl has been stopped. The common enemy of the worker as of the farmer and the whole

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[93] Aber in der Forschung und in der Politik werden alle Schritte nur vom Standpunkt der Arbeiterklasse aus bestimmt. die Arbeiterklasse wird die Führung innehaben in der schöpferischen Lösung der Energiefrage.… *Atomenergie im Kapitalismus*, 88.

[94] "Trotz KDP KB und KBW: 35,000 demonstrieren in der Wilster Marsch," no date. AdAPO: Ordner KPD Berlin.

[95] …eine neue Stufe der Kriminalisierung der Anti-AKW-Bewegung einzuleiten. "Grohnde-Prozess: Solidarität mit den AKW-Gegnern." *Rote Fahne* 9, no. 4 (25 January 1978), 6.

working people is monopoly capitalism, the bourgeoisie, the ruling class and its state."[96] Indeed, by all accounts, there was room in the political spectrum to the left of the SPD due to anger over its support for the nuclear industry. One pamphlet shows that the KPD-Rote Fahne hoped to harness the disillusionment with the SPD for its atomic program in the late 1970s: it noted that even the left wing of the SPD had failed to advocate the hoped-for immediate and complete closure of all atomic facilities.[97] *Rote Fahne* also published an article on the founding of an organization in West Berlin called "Action Circle Life," composed of union members who opposed the German League of Unions' support of the nuclear power industry.[98] In particular, "Action Circle Life" took issue with the assertion of the German League of Unions that nuclear power plants secured jobs, but would also address restrictions on democratic rights within the unions and career restrictions. This relatively broad spectrum of issues was particularly appealing to the KPD-Rote Fahne, which noted that whereas in some questions the KPD-Rote Fahne disagreed with the stance of the Action Circle Life, it was

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[96] Die Bauern und Winzer vom Kaiserstuhl müssen von den Erfahrungen der Arbeiterklasse lernen, dass ihr Kampf nicht zu Ende ist wenn das Kernkraftwerk in Wyhl verhindert ist. Der gemeinsame Feind der Arbeiter wie auch der Bauern und des ganzen werktätigen Volkes ist das Monopolkapital, die Bourgeoisie, die herrschende Klasse samt ihrem Staatsapparat. A*tomenergie im Kapitalismus*, 1.

[97] "Bundesparteitag der SPD: Todsicher in die 80er Jahre," December 1979. AdAPO: Ordner KPD Berlin.

[98] Aktionskreis Leben.

determined to take part all the more intensely in discussions.[99] This same

openness to cooperation stood it in good stead when the time came to work

together with other groups to form the AL.

In the waning days of its history, the KPD-Rote Fahne threw its support

behind efforts to bring together a broad coalition of groups to contest the 1979

elections in West Berlin. Its involvement is documented in a series of pamphlets

and articles issued to inform its members and the interested public about these

efforts.

An important aspect of the process was the desire to avoid splitting into

factions, as this had plagued the K-groups throughout the 1970s. The KPD-Rote

Fahne noted with approval that at a gathering of individuals interested in

creating an alternative electoral slate, those present overwhelmingly approved a

resolution that emphasized that the group welcomed all who consistently

supported democracy and environmental protection. According to this

statement, the party explicitly rejected decrees rendering the membership in the

group incompatible with membership in another political party. As the KPD-

Rote Fahne put it, "all attempts to split [the movement] failed, and the way was

cleared" to discuss electoral themes.[100]

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[99] "Westberlin: 'Aktionskreis Leben' gegründet." *Rote Fahne* 9, no. 29 (19 July 1978).

[100] Damit ist allen Spaltungsversuchen eine Absage erteilt worden und der Weg frei dafür, über die Themen zu diskutieren…."Abgeordnetenhauswahlen im März 1979: Für eine Wehrt Euch Liste in Westberlin," 1979. AdAPO: Ordner KPD Berlin.

Clearly, however, the KPD-Rote Fahne still employed traditional socialist themes, emphasizing the role the AL would play in supporting workers' interests. It also took a critical stance regarding parliaments, dwelling on the negative experiences that participating grassroots groups had had with 'bourgeois parties' and 'bourgeois parliamentarianism.' The brochure noted that "[In Parliament], their interests are not represented, but are talked to death and trampled upon."[101] In the flyer, the KPD-Rote Fahne revealed its motivations for working to form this new broad-based group: "Such a ballot that does not let itself be divided but that brings together as many as possible would be a great strengthening of the progressive democratic movement in West Berlin. That is why the KPD is supporting such an alternative ballot for the *Abgeordnetenhaus* elections in 1979."[102] It went on to list a number of issues that in its view the AL should address:

> The KPD is of the view that an alternative ballot must take up the
> most important and pressing problems in West Berlin. This goes
> beyond environmental protection and includes the following
> matters: unemployment, especially among young people and
> women, the destruction of jobs, and the economic and subsidy
> policies of the bourgeoisie; to the decline of democratic rights

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[101] Dort wurden ihre Interessen nicht vertreten, sondern zerredet und zertreten. "Abgeordnetenhauswahlen im März 1979: Für eine Wehrt Euch Liste in Westberlin," 1979. AdAPO: Ordner KPD Berlin.

[102] Eine solche Liste, die sich nicht spalten lässt, sondern möglichst viele in sich vereinigt, wäre eine grosse Stärkung der fortschrittlichen, demokratischen Bewegung in Westberlin- deshalb tritt die KPD für eine solche alternative Liste zu den Abgeordnetenhauswahlen 1979 ein. "Abgeordnetenhauswahlen im März 1979: Für eine Wehrt Euch Liste in Westberlin," 1979. AdAPO: Ordner KPD Berlin.

involving restrictions on employment…; regarding political repression in the GDR, such as the terror sentences against Rudolf Bahro or Rolf Mainz; and regarding the extension of connections of the population in West Berlin with the people in the GDR and the Federal Republic, regarding the freedom of movement and travel between East and West, in all of Germany.[103]

The KPD-Rote Fahne also apparently hoped that work in parliament would force the diverse protest groups to focus on what they had in common rather than competing with one another, and speculated that "representation in Parliament would place our commonalities in the foreground and support our struggle."[104] A pamphlet printed in 1979 calls for members and friends of the SEW to vote for the AL: "The AL is for us a correct step in order to unite as many as possible of those who want to promote democracy, environmental protection, and the living conditions of the workers." It concludes with a call "FOR AN

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[103] Die KPD ist der Auffassung, dass eine Alternative Liste die wichtigsten und drängenden Probleme in Westberlin aufgreifen muss, d.h. über Forderungen zum Umweltschutz z.B. zu folgenden Fragen Stellung nehmen muss: zur Arbeitslosigkeit, besonders der Jugendlichen und Frauen, zur Vernichtung von Arbeitsplätzen und der Wirtschafts- und Subventionspolitik der Bourgeoisie, zum Abbau demokratischer Rechte mit Berufsverboten…zur politischen Unterdrückung in der DDR, wie in den Terrorurteilen gegen Rudolph Bahro oder Rolf Mainz, zur Erweiterung der Verbindungen der Bevölkerung in Westberlin mit der Bevölkerung in der DDR und der BRD, zur Freizügigkeit und zu freiem Reiseverkehr zwischen Ost und West, in ganz Deutschland. "Abgeordnetenhauswahlen im März 1979: Für eine Wehrt Euch Liste in Westberlin," 1979. AdAPO: Ordner KPD Berlin.

[104] Eine Vertretung im Parlament würde die Gemeinsamkeiten in den Vordergrund stellen und unseren Kampf unterstützen. "Für ein fortschrittliches Wahlbündnis," 1978. AdAPO: Ordner KPD Berlin.

INDEPENDENT, UNIFIED, AND SOCIALIST GERMANY!"[105] Similarly, a

document addressing various issues that should be brought up in future

meetings regarding the establishment of an alternative ballot noted that women's

groups, citizens' initiatives, unions, and so on had been successful in the past at

placing entrepreneurs and administrators on the defensive through their

protests. "How much more successful will we be," the authors asked, "when we

manage to bring the diverse forms of resistance together, with equal rights and

all placed on an equal footing? One has to conclude that such a step toward

unity will create more strength than the sum of its parts, that it will make the five

fingers into a fist."[106]

Yet the enthusiasm for parliamentary institutions remained lukewarm at

best:

> The majority of those who support a genuinely alternative ballot
> have no illusions about their chances in parliament. We all know
> from experience that the parliament is mostly there in order to
> cover up the real views of the bourgeois parties and to give

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[105] Die AL ist für uns ein richtiger Schritt, um möglichst viele zu vereinen, die sich für Demokratie, Umweltschutz und die Lebensbedingungen der Arbeiter und Werktätigen einsetzen wollen. FÜR EIN UNABHÄNGIGES, VEREINTES UND SOZIALISTISCHES DEUTSCHLAND. "Keine Stimme der SEW. Wählt die Alternative Liste für Demokratie und Umweltschutz," no date. AdAPO: Ordner KPD Berlin. Emphasis in original.

[106] Um wieviel mehr wird dies der Fall sein, wenn es gelingt, die vielfältigen Formen des Widerstands gleichberechtigt auf einer gemeinsamen Ebene zusammenzuschliessen. Der Schluss, dass ein solcher Schritt zur Einheit mehr Kraft schafft als die Summe der Teile, dass er die fünf Finger zur Faust macht, ist zwingend. "Stellungnahme der KPD zu den Diskussionen über eine gemeinsame Wahlbeteiligung bei den Abgeordnetenhaus-Wahlen im März 1979," March 1979. AdAPO: Ordner KPD Berlin.

themselves the illusion of representing the people. The decisions
are made in the halls of factories and in the government palaces,
without and against the will of the populace. A genuine opposition
in parliament can reveal this fraud and the interests that lie behind
it and bring clarity into the house of lies. But decisions in the
interests of the majority of the populace cannot be reached there. [107]

The KPD-Rote Fahne was quick to dismiss those who placed their faith only in
increased parliamentary controls, insisting that it was also necessary to continue
the struggle outside of parliament, in the factory and on the street. The
organization continued to express cynicism regarding parliaments and to
condemn those who would rely on parliaments alone for addressing workers'
grievances.[108]

In fact, the KPD-Rote Fahne intended to use participation in the Berlin
Parliament as the parliamentary arm of its activities:

We believe that both participation in the election as well as possibly
working in parliament would primarily serve to support and
expand the existing activities of resistance, and that one should not
limit oneself to attacking graft and calling for improved
parliamentary supervision. It's not about a 'renewal' or a ridding
of the parliament from the spoils system, but rather using the

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[107] Die Mehrheit der Unterstützer einer wirklich alternativen Liste macht
sich wenig Illusionen über die Möglichkeiten im Parlament. Aus Erfahrung
wissen wir alle, dass das Parlament hauptsächlich dazu da ist, die wirklichen
Ansichten der bürgerlichen Parteien zu vertuschen und sich den Anschein von
Volksvertretern zu geben. Die Entscheidungen werden in den Konzernetagen
und den Regierungspalästen gefällt, ohne und gegen Willen der Bevölkerung.
Eine wirkliche Opposition im Parlament kann diesen Betrug und die Interessen,
die dahinter stehen, zwar aufzeigen und Klarheit in das Lügengebäude bringen.
Entscheidungen im Sinne der Mehrheit der Bevölkerung werden dort nicht
erzielt werden können. "Für ein fortschrittliches Wahlbündnis."

[108] "Für ein fortschrittliches Wahlbündnis."

election and possible positions in parliament for the numerous struggles outside of parliament.[109]

The KPD-Rote Fahne also outlined points it would like to see in the political program of the party it was in the process of creating. It is interesting to note that these included environmental protection, though only in the context of opposition to the downsizing of programs at the cost of the populace, such as city and energy planning, housing construction, public transportation, and school and university policy. The authors argued that top priority should be assigned to fighting for unrestricted democratic rights and opposing all attempts to limit and restrict these rights. The KPD-Rote Fahne also insisted that the alternative ballot should not remain silent regarding political oppression in the GDR, but should address issues that immediately affected the West Berlin populace, such as the shootings at the Wall. If progressive forces did not take up these issues, the authors argued, then they would be left for reactionary demagogues to address.[110]

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[109] Wir meinen, dass sowohl die Wahlbeteiligung als auch eine eventuelle Arbeit im Parlament in erster Linie zur Unterstützung der bestehenden Ansätze des Widerstands und zur Verbreitung des Widerstands dienen soll und man sich nicht auf Forderungen gegen die Filzokratie und für bessere parlamentarische Kontrolle beschränken darf. Es geht nicht um eine Erneuerung oder eine Säuberung des Parlaments von "Filzen," sondern um die Nutzung der Wahlen und eventueller Positionen im Parlament für die zahlreichen Kämpfe ausserhalb des Parlaments. "Stellungnahme der KPD zu den Diskussionen über eine gemeinsame Wahlbeteiligung bei den Abgeordnetenhaus-Wahlen im März 1979," March 1979.

[110] "Stellungnahme der KPD zu den Diskussionen über eine gemeinsame Wahlbeteiligung bei den Abgeordnetenhaus-Wahlen im März 1979," March 1979.

Two pictures further illustrate the attitude toward parliaments held by the

KPD-Rote Fahne, and simultaneously demonstrate the importance of context

when interpreting historical materials. The cover of a flyer printed by the KPD

calling for voters to support the AL features a picture of a crane with a wrecking

ball smashing against a building labeled 'Parliaments.' The building is

beginning to crumble where the wrecking ball hit. A man in a sleeping cap peers

angrily out the window at the crane operator, who comments with a shrug,

"Surely one is allowed to knock.…" The crane is labeled "AL."[111] A nearly

identical sketch appeared in the first issue of the AL's membership circular,

Mitgliederrundbrief, also dating from 1979. The only difference is that the crane is

labeled "The Greens."[112] Seen in the context of the electoral gains already scored

by the Greens in West Germany, the sketch in the *Mitgliederrundbrief* is a

relatively benign commentary on the strength of the Greens' advances and the

changes they had made, shaking up the electoral system. But in light of the

KPD-Rote Fahne's past violent opposition to parliamentary institutions, and with

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AdAPO: Ordner KPD Berlin. The skeleton of the AL's political program is found
in this document, as will be seen in the next chapter.

[111] "Die KPD ruft auf: Wählt die Alternative Liste für Demokratie und
Umweltschutz Liste 6," 12 August 1979. AdAPO: Ordner KPD Berlin. See
Figure 3.

[112] *Mitgliederrundbrief* 1, no. 1 (1979), 1. See Figure 4.

the crane labeled "AL," the sketch can only be understood as advocating an assault on parliamentary institutions.[113]

As a result of participating in discussions regarding forming an alternative ballot, the KPD-Rote Fahne found itself defending the idea of parliamentary participation in the face of attacks from its rival, the KBW. The KBW had recently accused the KPD-Rote Fahne of opportunism, saying that it was "only after seats in parliament," and insisting that the only reason to participate in elections was to reveal parliament "as a place where just a lot of talking goes on" and as a podium to use in advancing the class struggle.[114] The KPD-Rote Fahne author then posed the question: "Is not the democratic struggle of the people against capital and bourgeois government a righteous struggle? Why should it not be possible to create a broad alliance that will make the numerous and important social and democratic demands from the bourgeois parties in power on behalf of workers and other people?"[115] Still, however, the

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[113] It is probably not possible to know which version of the picture is the original. But this kind of borrowing of materials was common for the time: it was almost a matter of pride when leftist organizations stole materials and artwork from the press and other leftist organizations.

[114] Dass es ihr nur um 'Parlamentssessel' gehe; als Schwatzbude zu entlarven. "Westberlin: KBW gegen Wehrt Euch Bündnis," *Rote Fahne* 9, no. 29 (19 July 1978).

[115] Ist der demokratische Kampf der Volksmassen gegen Kapital und bürgerliche Regierung kein gerechter und notwendiger Kampf? Warum soll es nicht möglich sein, zur Westberliner Abgeordnetenhauswahl ein breites Bündnis zu schaffen, das sehr viele und wichtige Forderungen der Arbeiter, der Werktätigen und anderer Teile des Volkes- soziale und demokratische- gegen die

activities outside of parliament held primary importance: "Today it is possible to forge a progressive electoral alliance, to form a progressive alternative for the elections, an alliance that will use a possible position in parliament for the extra-parliamentary struggle."[116]

More evidence of an ambivalent attitude toward parliament and Western democratic forms in general is found in another *Rote Fahne* article. Updating readers on the status of discussions on forming an alternative ballot, the author asserted:

> We also are of the view that all means at one's disposal in parliament must be used to advance the interests of workers, in other words not just disclosures but also enquiries, propositions, legislative initiatives. Cooperation with delegates of other parties must be sought out in such questions in order to exploit contradictions to the maximum extent possible. But the point of departure of this work is the extra-parliamentary struggle, which must remain our focus. The just demands and claims of the masses must be the guiding principle of such initiatives. A possible alliance with other delegates cannot necessitate giving up significant positions of the grassroots; otherwise you end up performing pure parliamentary calculation. This would also betray radical democratic assumptions of an alternative ballot: for the rejection of bourgeois parliamentarianism as undemocratic, as something that gives no possibility of representing the interests of the people- this too is the point of departure when creating such a ballot.[117]

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staatstragenden bürgerlichen Parteien erhebt? "Westberlin: KBW gegen Wehrt Euch Bündnis," *Rote Fahne* 9, no. 29 (19 July 1978).

[116] [Es ist heute möglich], ein fortschrittliches Wahlbündnis zu schliessen, eine fortschrittliche Alternative zu den Wahlen zu bilden, ein Wahlbündnis, das eine eventuelle Position im Parlament für den Kampf ausserhalb des Parlaments nutzt. "Westberlin: KBW gegen Wehrt Euch Bündnis."

[117] Wir sind ebenfalls der Auffassung, dass alle zur Verfügung stehenden Mittel im Parlament genutzt werden müssen, um für die Interessen der Arbeiter

The article also explained the debate about the question of working within

a certain constitutional framework. A group within the coalition forming the AL

had been discussing to what degree one should rely upon the constitutional

guarantees under basic democratic rights. If one did not call upon these rights in

support of the cause, it argued, one risked losing ground to the bourgeois

democratic movement:

> The background to this debate is of course a differing assessment of
> the Basic Law. We of course don't want to fall behind the
> bourgeois-democratic parties, in fact we want to go beyond them
> and demand more democratic rights. But we are against forcing
> ourselves into the same narrow framework of the catalog of the
> Basic Law, but are in favor of comprehensively advocating
> democratic rights from the standpoint of the needs of workers.[118]

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und Werktätigen einzutreten, also nicht nur Enthüllungen, sondern auch
Anfragen, Anträge, Gesetzesinitiativen. Die Zusammenarbeit mit Abgeordneten
anderer Fraktionen bei solchen Fragen muss gesucht werden, um die
Widersprüche maximal auszunutzen. Aber der Ausgangspunkt dieser Arbeit ist
der ausserparlamentarische Kampf, der weiter Schwerpunkt bleiben muss. Die
gerechten Forderungen und Ansprüche der Volksmassen müssen Richtschnur
solcher Initiativen sein. Für einen möglichen Zusammenschluss mit anderen
Abgeordeneten dürfen keine wesentlichen Positionen der Basisbewegungen
aufgegeben werden, sonst gerät man ins rein parlamentarische Kalkül. Dies
wäre auch Verrat am radikaldemokratischen Ansatz einer Alternativen Liste.
Denn die Ablehnung des bürgerlichen Parlamentarismus als undemokatisch, der
keine Möglichkeit zur Vertretung der Bevölkerungsinteressen bietet, ist ja
ebenfalls Ausgangspunkt der Bildung einer solchen Liste. "Stand der Diskussion
um eine Alternative Liste," *Rote Fahne* 9, no. 37 (13 September 1978), 12.

[118] Der Hintergrund der Auseinandersetzung ist natürlich eine
unterschiedliche Beurteilung des Grundgesetzes. Wir sind gleichfalls nicht
dafür, hinter bürgerlich-demokratische Positionen zurückzugehen. Wir sind im
Gegenteil dafür, darüberhinauszugehen, mehr demokratische Rechte zu fordern.
Wir sind aber dagegen, uns im Kampf für demokratische Recte noch selber in
den engen Rahmen des Grundrechtekatalogs im Grundgesetz zu zwängen,
sondern dafür, ausgehend von den Bedürfnissen der Arbeiter und Werktätigen,

The documents cited above clearly reflect an ambivalence regarding parliament that still persisted within the KPD-Rote Fahne. At times, it appears that the KPD-Rote Fahne was trying to convince itself that participation in parliament was acceptable, as if it had to overcome its own inhibitions. The picture of the wrecking ball for example probably was intended to rationalize the participation of the KPD-Rote Fahne in the founding of the AL to the grassroots by making it seem more compatible with the KPD-Rote Fahne's anti-parliamentary stance. Similarly, the repeated plan to use a possible position in parliament to support the struggle outside of Parliament can be seen as a way of helping to justify the decision to run for parliament. After all, just five years earlier, the KPD-Rote Fahne had called for the violent destruction of the bourgeois state and had condemned any sort of parliamentary activities.

As this chapter has shown, West Berlin in the 1970s was a city of contradictions. An increasingly stagnant isolated backwater, the island city nevertheless was the perfect breeding ground for a counterculture of protest: the numerous K-groups were only the most visible result. At the end of the decade, however, the Left found itself at a crossroads: the 'German Autumn' of 1977 and the group suicide of the most prominent of the RAF prisoners symbolized the approaching apotheosis. In West Berlin, the K-groups were burning themselves out, and the membership in the K-groups had begun to decline and fragment.

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umfassend für demokratische Rechte einzutreten. "Stand der Diskussion um eine Alternative Liste."

The leaders of the KPD-Rote Fahne made a decision to work with other groups to form a new organization to contest the 1979 election. The KPD-Rote Fahne played a critical role in providing political experience and committed members to this group. This new group, the AL, was to be successful beyond anyone's expectations. By the time the AL entered the West Berlin Parliament, the radical Left had already begun an important stage in its Long Way West. In West Berlin, when the KPD-Rote Fahne and others formed the AL in 1978, the Red Decade had already ended: the Green Decade was about to begin.

Chapter Four

Crisis and Opportunity:

The West Berlin Left, 1978-1981

This chapter explores developments from 1978-1981 in West Berlin, from the creation of the AL in October 1978 through its representation in the local assemblies to the beginning of its second election campaign in 1981. During this time, the radical West Berlin Left took a momentous stride toward accepting and embracing parliamentary democracy when it founded the AL. Ironically, the Left apparently took this step with the opposite goal in mind. The KPD-Rote Fahne, the single largest group among the organizations that met to discuss forming an alternative ballot and a primary advocate of the AL, apparently viewed the AL as a Trojan horse to be used to infiltrate parliament. In order for it to gain enough support to enter parliament under West Berlin electoral law, however, the KPD-Rote Fahne toned down its dogmatism and claimed to adopt a culture of debate and dialogue. The result was successful beyond expectations, and the AL attracted large levels of support. Not only did the AL attract voters, however; it also successfully ushered in a new era for the Left. Developments explored in this chapter help explain why the New Left did not end in terrorism, but rather led to parliamentary representation. This shows the ability of the parliamentary system to attract the Left and to absorb the challenge posed by extreme left-wing parties, and thus helps to understand the Federal Republic's political stability.

By the summer of 1978, a number of factors converged to spark the Left to

try a new approach to its political aims. A sense of general disgust with the

moderate course taken by SPD Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, whose domestic and

especially nuclear policies angered the left wing of his own party, permeated the

Left. In addition, the radical Left had recently witnessed events that led to a

reexamination of another potential course: that of terrorism. In 1977, the series of

violent terrorist attacks against prominent Federal Republic representatives of

the government and industry peaked. In the mid-1970s, the Left seems to have

shown an alarming amount of sympathy for terrorism. In 1976, four thousand

West Berliners attended the funeral of Ulrike Meinhof, a leading figure in the

RAF who committed suicide in prison.[1] In a phrase that was to become

infamous, an anonymous pamphleteer in April of 1977 described his

"clandestine joy" upon hearing of the murder of Siegfried Buback, the Federal

Attorney General, at the hands of RAF terrorists.[2] As summer turned to autumn,

however, the deaths continued to mount. On 30 July, Jürgen Ponto, chief

executive of the Dresdner Bank, was murdered in a failed kidnapping attempt.

On 5 September came the abduction of Hans Martin Schleyer, head of the

German Employers' League and the League of German Industry. He was found

dead in a car trunk just over one month later. Finally, in October, convicted RAF

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[1] Richie, *Faust's Metropolis*, 783. For the history of the RAF, see Aust, *Der Baader-Meinhof Komplex.*

[2] Nicholls, *Bonn Republic*, 257.

leaders Andreas Baader, Jan-Karl Raspe, and Gudrun Ensslin committed suicide in Stammheim prison after a hijacking scheme failed. This violent denouement sparked the Left to reconsider its stance regarding the route chosen by the RAF. While some still insisted on taking the fateful leap into the unknown, the consequences and costs of terror led many to step back from the brink after 1977 and to search for alternatives.[3]

The Left found one such alternative in other developments peaking in the summer of 1978. Herbert Grühl's defection from the CDU to form the *Grüne Aktion Zukunft* (Green Action Future- GAZ) in July 1978 attracted national attention. His initial success recalled the experiences earlier in the 1970s with the anti-nuclear movement, when diverse groups of farmers, concerned local townspeople, and radical activists united to protest plans for nuclear power plants in Wyhl and Brokdorf. The West German Left was beginning to recognize the potential of ecological ideas to give it new life. For example, the Socialist Bureau in autumn 1978 sponsored a meeting inspired by the writings of Ernst Bloch. Bloch's writings emphasized that humanity could be liberated only when it adopted a relationship with nature that did not view the natural world as something to be subjugated. As the opening speaker noted, however, this "demanded the revolutionary, radical change of this capitalist society."[4] These

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[3] For an examination of this "fateful leap," see Varon, *Shadowboxing*, 378.

[4] Fordert die revolutionäre Umwälzung dieser kapitalistischen Gesellschaftsformation. *Marxismus und Naturbeherrschung. Beiträge zu den ersten Ernst-Bloch-Tagen* (Offenbach: Verlag 2000, 1979), 10.

were early developments in the rise of a new critique of Western industrial society that would become the Green movement. The radical Left would take this opportunity to hitch itself to this trend, which founding AL member Cordula Schulz called the "Green Train."[5]

Developments in West Berlin also contributed to the confluence of events culminating in the founding of the AL. Several of the primary responses to the dissolution of the SDS a decade earlier had by now run their course. The K-groups were burning out, their members exhausting themselves in a hopeless quest to beat their rivals by .1 percent, never coming close to the 5 percent of the vote needed to enter parliament. The terrorist response too had been dealt a serious blow in the 'German Autumn.' West Berlin's 'native' terrorist group, the June 2 Movement, disbanded in 1980. One legacy of the end of the APO was still thriving, however; a large and diverse counterculture remained in West Berlin. By one estimate, by 1980, one hundred thousand people lived in West Berlin's alternative scene.[6] Large proportions of predominately Turkish guest workers, especially in Kreuzberg, served further to enrich West Berlin's culture, but also led to conflicts and resentment.

Against this backdrop, in 1978, a diverse group of communists, housing squatters, feminists, lesbian and gay rights activists, and environmentalists came

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[5] Der grüne Zug. Cordula Schulz, "Nie waren sie wertvoller als heute...," in *Perspektiven der Grünen, Bunten und Alternativen* (Berlin: Alternative Liste, 1980), 86.

[6] Richie, *Faust's Metropolis*, 787.

together to discuss forming a new organization to run in the upcoming March

1979 elections. Of these groups, by far the largest was the KPD-Rote Fahne. The

evidence indicates that the KPD-Rote Fahne initially sought to use the AL as a

kind of Trojan horse in order to enter the parliament and exploit it, in a path akin

to Dutschke's Long March.[7] In order to attract enough allies for this plan to

work, however, the KPD-Rote Fahne dropped its dogmatism and embraced an

ideology emphasizing an experimental approach to the truth and emphasis on

conflict and debate. This ideology shared some elements of the requirements for

a democratic system outlined by Ralf Dahrendorf.[8] The organization also

initially claimed to be concerned with democracy and environmental protection,

but especially the former concern was a minor point, as its program reveals (see

below). Even at this early phase, however, this dictum took on a life of its own,

and the AL began to believe it was what it said it was. In addition, it soon

discovered the benefits of parliamentary participation

　　　　Before turning to the founding of the AL, it is first necessary to consider

the fate of the K-groups. By the late 1970s, these radical groups found

themselves in increasing trouble, losing members with increasing rapidity, and

the KPD-Rote Fahne dissolved itself in March 1980. The AL was to be the main

beneficiary of their decline, as the K-groups and the KPD-Rote Fahne in

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[7] For this interpretation of Dutschke, see Koenen, *Das rote Jahrzehnt*, 58.

[8] See Dahrendorf, *Society and Democracy*, 16.

particular provided crucial support for the AL in terms of numbers and organizational experience.

Why did the K-groups collapse? Looking at the personal experiences of some K-group members helps understand this phenomenon, and gives an appreciation of the degree of motivation and commitment of these individuals that the AL was later able to tap. Several published sources document the experiences of participants in the K-groups. These include *Wir warn die stärkste der Partein* [sic] and *Partei Kaputt*. Rank and file members of several of the K-groups wrote the former, while former leaders within the KPD-Rote Fahne authored the latter work.[9]

One probable explanation for the decline of the K-groups is simply burnout. Indeed, membership in the K-groups took a tremendous physical and psychological toll, and heavily impacted members' personal and professional lives. K-group members had a blistering schedule. A former member of the *Kommunistische Hochschulgruppe* (Communist University Group- KHG), the university affiliate of the *Kommunistischer Bund Westdeutschlands* (Communist League of West Germany- KBW), recounted in his contribution the hours taken up by committee meetings, training, and discussion sessions. In addition, the anonymous author noted, members were expected to distribute leaflets at tables set up in the university at the various departments and in front of the dining hall,

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[9] *Wir warn die stärkste der Partein. Erfahrungsberichte aus der Welt der K-Gruppen* (Berlin: Rotbuch Verlag, 1977); *Partei kaputt. Das Scheitern der KPD und die Krise der Linken* (Berlin: Olle and Wolter, 1981).

and to hang up posters in town. On top of this, they were expected to sell

newspapers at least once a week for two to three hours in the early morning,

often facing the hostility of the very factory workers they were trying to attract,

as well as to serve as volunteer office help for the organization, typing up

membership letters late into the night. Vacations provided no break from the

class struggle: the organization required its members to bring along propaganda

materials for distribution wherever they traveled.[10] The author described the

personal consequences of involvement in the following passage:

> In the end the total absorption of the individual through the
> organization makes it impossible to pursue other interests that
> could bring a higher degree of self-realization. One was often no
> longer capable of going to the movies or reading anything else
> besides the required texts. One could just rest up for the next
> mission.... And you just became progressively removed from your
> studies- when you went to classes at all, then only to say something
> in order to provoke a political discussion.[11]

Another account comes from a veteran of the KPD-Rote Fahne. This

activist noted that he generally had only one evening free of meetings, and he

had to be excused from them if he could not attend. "If I was lucky, I could go

home after work, but often I had appointments straight through until 11:00

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[10] *Wir warn*, 60.

[11] Schliesslich macht es die totale Absorption des Einzelnen durch die
Organisation unmöglich, anderen Interessen nachzugehen, die einen höheren
Grad an Selbstverwirklichung bringen könnte. Man war oft nicht mal mehr in
der Lage, ins Kino zu gehen oder andere als die vorgegebene Pflichtlektüre zu
lesen. Man konnte sich gerade für den nächsten Einsatz erholen…Als Student
wird nun durch die ständige Arbeit für die Organisation zusehends entrückt,
man besuchte Lehrveranstaltungen- wenn überhaupt- nur noch, um was
anzusagen und politische Diskussionen vom Zaune zu brechen. *Wir warn*, 61-62.

PM."[12] This was especially difficult, as his job began at 7:00AM, and he

performed heavy work. The combination took a toll on his health, especially his

nerves. When he was put in charge of organizing a May Day event (the

European Day of Labor celebrated on May 1), his schedule became even more

unbearable.[13]

In addition, his family life suffered. He noted how his political

involvement caused problems with his wife and son, whom he rarely saw,

writing, "I hardly had a relationship with [my wife] any longer. We just

happened to be married and living in the same apartment."[14] He increasingly

spent more time with the organization, and had less time for old friends,

colleagues, and relatives. Moreover, he came to see his family and friends solely

as political objects to be converted.[15]

Added to these factors came a growing disillusionment with the party

itself. Appointed co-organizer of a May Day committee, he found himself having

to do most of the work himself, as his colleague was swamped with

appointments. He worked around the clock on preparations, and he narrowly

escaped having several serious workplace accidents due to fatigue. Despite all

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[12] Wenn ich Glück hatte, konnte ich nach der Arbeit gleich nach Hause, oft ging es mit Terminen aber gleich durch bis 23 Uhr. *Wir warn*, 25.

[13] *Wir warn*, 32.

[14] Zu [meiner Frau] hatte ich faktisch keine Beziehung mehr, wir waren eben verheiratet und wohnten in einer Wohnung. *Wir warn*, 28.

[15] *Wir warn*, 27.

these efforts, only one construction worker came to the event he had put

together. This failure was both very embarrassing at the time and resulted in

heavy criticism from his superiors in the party. Moreover, his work behind the

scenes also showed him for the first time how events were manipulated and the

facts distorted: the party bragged in public about the success of his event, then

subsequently criticized him for the event's failure. His position also allowed him

to see how the events had failed citywide, despite the party's proclamations of

success. In addition, the distortions and manipulations of the Rote Fahne,

especially its exaggerated claims of the success of membership campaigns,

became increasingly apparent.[16] The final blow came at an event just before the

May Day holiday: "When I experienced the hysterical atmosphere at an event on

the eve of May Day and heard the great, hollow words from the stage, I finally

just ran out, got drunk, and didn't show up at any more meetings."[17]

The rigid hierarchy of the party also caused problems. Formally the party

was quite rigidly organized, as seen in the previous chapter. But one author

noted how the informal structure, too, was both rigid and galling: at each level of

the pyramid, those with proletarian roots were viewed as superior, "more

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[16] *Wir warn*, 32-33.

[17] Als ich die hysterische Stimmung auf einer Veranstaltung am Vorabend
zum 1. Mai erlebte, die grossen, hohlen Worte von der Bühne hörte, da bin ich
schliesslich hinausgerannt, habe mich besoffen und bin zu keinem Termin mehr
hingegangen. *Wir warn*, 33.

important, more significant, better comrades or buddies."[18] The "Sympis," or

sympathizers, and students always ranked at the bottom. Recounting his

experiences as a recruit, one author questioned the value of his political training.

He noted that during instruction in Marxist dialectics and political economy, the

students rarely understood their lessons, but could not admit to not having

grasped the concepts, as this would have called into question the whole method

of instruction.[19] Another member explained his frustration with party practices

and noted the absurdity of some of the speeches and slogans: "I just didn't know

if this was the right line: 'we are for one mark more per hour and for the world

revolution.'"[20] The severity of this syndrome is perhaps best exemplified in a

declaration issued by ten members of the KBW upon leaving the party in disgust.

Besides a lack of connection between theory and practice, the authors noted,

"We, too, have failed to provide answers to certain basic questions of the

revolutionary movement, such as for example the question as to whether the

dictatorship of the proletariat is right or not."[21]

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[18] …wichtigere, bedeutendere, bessere Genossen oder Kumpels. *Wir warn*, 30.

[19] *Wir warn*, 25.

[20] Ich wusste nicht, ob dies gerade die richtige Linie sein kann: wir sind für eine Mark mehr in der Stunde und für die Weltrevolution! *Wir warn*, 116-117.

[21] Auch wir haben keine Antworten auf bestimmte Grundfragen der revolutionäre Bewegung entwickelt, wie z.B. auf die Frage, ob das Konzept der Diktatur des Proletariats richtig ist oder nicht. "Gemeinsame Austrittserklärung," 18 June 1982. AdAPO: KBW Nord C1 Flugblätter.

Membership in a K-group brought with it frustration, exhaustion, and possible restrictions on practicing one's career (*Berufsverbot*). What made matters worse was a growing conviction that all these sacrifices were for naught. Participation in the Berlin elections did not bring the organizations anywhere close to the 5 percent needed under West Berlin electoral law to enter parliament. One anonymous author put it this way: "Besides around .1 percent [of the vote], participating in the election brought the KBW numerous dismissals and career restrictions for the comrades who campaigned."[22] Another described a common syndrome among K-group veterans: "Through the experience of having one's entire existence end in a political blind alley, many felt victims of a past that they suppressed like a school teacher suppresses the lower body: you don't talk about it…."[23]

 Yet there is another striking aspect of the K-groups that is at least as important for understanding the origins of the AL: despite their frustration and their extreme exhaustion, members were determined to continue their political involvement, often being quite committed to at least certain aspects of the ideology that had brought them to the party. Committed individuals did not

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[22] Dem KBW brachte die Wahlbeteiligung nebst etwa 0,1% der Stimmen, etliche Entlassungen und Berufsverbote für die kandidierenden Genossen. *Wir warn*, 58.

[23] Durch das Erlebnis, mit seiner ganzen Existenz in eine politische Sackgasse geraten zu sein, fühlten sich viele als Opfer einer Vergangenheit, die sie verdrängten wie der Oberlehrer den Unterleib: darüber spricht man nicht…*Wir warn*, 5.

wish to give up this political involvement. This same tendency perhaps helped

keep members in the K-groups beyond the point where they ordinarily would

have given up and left the party or protested against its rigid, sectarian nature.

One K-group member expressed this fear: "Back then I was scared of being

expelled, I was afraid of losing my political homeland."[24] Indeed, notions of

'political homeland' provide a recurring theme in the accounts of the K-groups.[25]

Another 'survivor' noted why he hesitated before leaving: "Politically…there

was just no other alternative there. I wouldn't have known where else to go.

The alternative to leaving the KPD was not doing anything anymore. And the

prospect of not doing anything anymore was what scared me, because I had this

moral need to be a political person, a communist."[26] Not until the founding of

the AL in West Berlin in 1978 and other Green groups at about the same time did

such committed people find a new outlet for their political energies. Work

within the AL offered these individuals the chance to continue their political

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[24] Und damals hatte ich Angst vor einem Ausschluss, vor dem Verlust meiner politischen Heimat. *Wir warn*, 30.

[25] See Karl Schlögel's regrets about the lack of a new political homeland in his account of leaving the KPD. Karl Schlögel, "Was ich einem Linken über die Auflösung der KPD sagen würde," in *Partei kaputt. Das Scheitern der KPD und die Krise der Linken* (Berlin: Olle and Wolter, 1981), 27.

[26] …politisch… war einfach keine Alternative da. Ich hätte nicht gewusst, wohin sonst. Die Alternative zu "aus der KPD raus" war "nichts mehr machen." Und vor diesem "nichts mehr machen" bin ich eben zurückgeschreckt, weil ich diesen moralischen Anspruch hatte, ein politischer Mensh, ein Kommunist zu sein. *Wir warn*, 122.

involvement, while holding out the potential of a successful end to their quest for power. The AL provided the new political homeland for these radical leftists.

The contributors to *Wir warn die stärkste der Partein* give another interesting hint regarding another role that the AL played for veterans of the K-groups. According to contemporary accounts of experiences in the K-groups, cell leaders used tired language consisting of catchphrases and clichés. One author notes that this pattern of speech, which sounded to them like the rote recitation of texts and a slavish imitation of prominent leaders' phrases, made its way into the everyday language of the group and into its political propaganda. Members variously termed this a "language code" and a "deformation of language."[27] The problem was that this jargon was incomprehensible to outsiders, thus limiting the appeal of the K-groups.[28] As well as providing K-group veterans with a new political homeland left of the SPD, the AL's environmental component gave them a new vocabulary to replace the worn-out language used by the cadre, and the increasing concern for issues of ecology and environmental protection enriched the lexicon of political protest and involvement. It certainly gave activists new ammunition in the struggle against the Western Allies: on numerous occasions, AL members used environmental impacts of the military presence, especially noise and the felling of trees to construct firing ranges and landing fields, as arguments with which to criticize

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[27] Sprachcode; Sprachdeformation.

[28] *Wir warn*, 54-56.

the Allies. The new ecology paradigm was flexible enough to lend itself to use in

this way.[29]

Finally, work in the K-groups tied up a lot of political potential. Once this

involvement was over, individuals had a chance to turn their energies into

something positive. As one K-group veteran wrote, "The constant pressure to

produce political results was gone- this set free a lot of positive energy."[30] In

West Berlin, much of this energy was applied to creating and working within the

AL.

While the KPD-Rote Fahne and the other K-groups were losing members

and generally declining in influence, other developments were underway in

which the K-groups participated but that would eventually render them

irrelevant. In January 1978, citizens' initiatives and voters' leagues held a series

of meetings where these organizations declared their intention to make more of

an impact on political decisions. They adopted as a model the *Wählergemeinschaft*

unabhängiger Bürger Zehlendorf (Voter's League of Independent Citizens

Zehlendorf- WUB), an organization active since 1975 in Zehlendorf, a solidly

middle-class neighborhood in West Berlin near Dahlem, the home of the Free

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[29] Historians [see Görtemaker, *Geschichte*] have only recently noted how
the relative vagueness of the term "ecology" helped disparate groups find
common ground for cooperation. The history of the AL is a textbook example of
this phenomenon. See below for a more detailed examination of the role of
ecology in holding the AL together.

[30] Der ständige Druck, politische Leistung zu erbringen, war weg, dass
machte viel positive Energie frei. *Wir warn*, 33.

University. Around the same time, a meeting was held between environmental

and tenants' groups as well as groups from the organized political Left in Berlin,

including the *Sozialistisches Büro*, the *Kommunistisches Büro*, and the KPD-Rote

Fahne. Attendees here, too, declared their intention to run in the upcoming

elections, at least at the local level.[31]

Further discussions centered around Otto Schily and Christian Ströbele,

two attorneys famous for their roles as defenders of RAF members. In the

context of these discussions, Schily set down some of his thoughts regarding

what the role of an "alternative ballot" should be and what it might hope to

achieve: "Even if an alternative ballot would achieve nothing more than

supplying prompt and comprehensive information to the public regarding

certain plans of the Senate… that would be a political benefit not to be

underestimated."[32] Furthermore, Schily speculated, "It is not out of the question

that an Alternative Ballot may be used in part: a), to keep tabs on decisions of the

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[31] Burkhard Schaper, "Die Entstehungsgeschichte der AL," in *Die Alternative Liste Berlin. Entstehung, Entwicklung, Positionen*, ed. Michael Bühnemann, Michael Wendt, and Jürgen Wituschek (Berlin: LitPol, 1984), 55.

[32] Selbst wenn eine Alternative Liste nicht mehr erreichen würde, als eine rechtzeitige und umfassende Information der Öffentlichkeit über bestimmte Vorhaben der Senatsverwaltung…, wäre das ein nicht gering zu schätzender politischer Gewinn. Otto Schily, "Überlegungen zu einer Beteiligung an der Abgeordnetenhauswahl im Frühjahr 1979 mit einer 'Bunten/ Grünen/ Alternativen... Liste," Document 1 in *Die Alternative Liste Berlin. Entstehung, Entwicklung, Positionen*, ed. Michael Bühnemann, Michael Wendt, and Jürgen Wituschek (Berlin: LitPol, 1984), 69.

Senate and to influence these decisions, and b), to promote initiatives that reflect the political ideals of the AL by providing them with money and information."[33]

As tentative and qualified as Schily's words were, they exceeded the parliamentary expectations of the majority of those who would work in the AL in its early phase, and Schily's initial decision not to work within the AL as a result of its failure to distance itself from communist groups meant that the AL was deprived of Schily's thoughts regarding what could be achieved in parliament for several years. His words later in the same address were more typical in characterizing subsequent developments: "Participation in the election and possible parliamentary work of an alternative ballot cannot and should not replace the work of citizens' initiatives. On the contrary: an alternative ballot is dependent on the cooperation and close ties with the citizens' initiatives and other groups."[34] Overall, Schily's ideas epitomized the Left's view of parliaments as a source of information and an early warning system for the citizen's

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[33] Ausserdem ist die Erwartung nicht völlig wirklichkeitsfern, es sei möglich, über eine Alternative Liste im Abgeordnetenhaus wenigstens ansatzweise
a) eine Kontrolle über Entscheidungen der Senatsverwaltung auszuüben und auf diese Entscheidungen Einfluss zu nehmen,
b) Initiativen, die den politischen Zielvorstellungen der Alternativen Liste entsprechen, durch finanzielle Zuwendungen und Informationen zu fördern. Schily, "Überlegungen," 69.

[34] Die Wahlbeteiligung und eine eventuelle Parlamentsarbeit einer Alternativen Liste kann und soll die Arbeit in Bürgerinitiativen nicht ersetzen. Im Gegenteil: Eine Alternative Liste ist auf die Zusammenarbeit und enge Verbindung mit den Bürgerinitiativen und anderen Gruppierungen angewiesen. Schily, "Überlegungen," 69.

initiatives about pending projects. This perspective would continue within the

AL. His words at this juncture also revealed and reflected a certain degree of

rather typical cynicism regarding parliaments: he maintained that the struggles

carried out in parliament were merely illusory, and asserted that the real

decisions were made outside of parliament. The AL could expose this illusion,

thus winning leverage over the decision-making process.[35] This bears a strong

resemblance to the arguments made by the KPD-Rote Fahne asserting that, once

in parliament, a genuine opposition party could reveal parliament's

contradictions and thus effect (presumably revolutionary) changes.[36]

The extent of ideological and personnel overlap between the AL and the

K-groups begs the question as to the degree of their influence. Scholars of

political parties in Germany have in the past been less than clear regarding the

role of the K-groups in the founding and development of the AL. The few

authors examining the AL have noted in passing the presence of members of the

K-groups within the party. According to Gerd Langguth, the KBW expanded the

ranks of the AL as the KBW declined, and he notes that the German Office for the

Protection of the Constitution estimated that the KPD-Rote Fahne provided

about one-fourth of the AL's members at the time of its founding.[37] Robert

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[35] Schily, "Überlegungen," 70.

[36] See above, Chapter 3.

[37] Gerd Langguth, *Protestbewegung: Entwicklung, Niedergang, Renaissance. Die Neue Linke Seit 1968* (Cologne: Wissenschaft und Politik, 1983), 264.

Hofmann writes only that Maoists dominated the AL.[38] Jürgen Bacia emphasizes

that the KPD-Rote Fahne played an important role in the AL, more so than in any

other Green Party affiliate.[39] Joachim Raschke asserts that the AL emerged from

the collapse of the K-groups and the KPD-Rote Fahne's self-dissolution in 1980,

and describes in a footnote the surprise expressed by some members of the AL

that the KPD-Rote Fahne did not swallow up the AL, but that the opposite

occurred instead. He also mentions the claim by the German Right that the

Greens were infiltrated by the K-groups.[40]

In fact, the K-groups are more important to understanding the AL than

has been appreciated in the past. Ernst Hoplitschek, a cofounder of the AL and

its press spokesperson in the mid-1980s, noted in a recent interview the critical

importance of the KPD-Rote Fahne in founding the AL: "The AL marked the end

of the political sects of the seventies. But without the old, classical left blocs of

those years, without the programmatic, personnel, and organizational

framework of the Maoist KPD, self-critically speaking, the AL would not have

existed."[41]

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[38] Hofmann, *Geschichte*, 282-283.

[39] Bacia, "Kommunistische Partei," 1819.

[40] Raschke, *Die Grünen,* 275, 471-480.

[41] Die AL markierte das Ende der politischen Sekten der siebziger Jahre. Aber ohne die alten, klassischen linken Blöcke jener Jahre, ohne das programmatische, personelle und organisatorische Gerüst der maoistischen KPD, das muss man selbstkritisch sagen, hätte es die AL nicht gegeben. Ernst Hoplitschek, "Bei Null anfangen, das wäre die Devise," interview by Benedict Maria Mülder, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 6 June 2001, Berliner Seiten, 1.

Frank Koslowski, another veteran of the AL from the beginning, was even

more specific regarding the pivotal role played by the KPD-Rote Fahne.

Koslowski noted:

> Precisely these K-groups all went into the AL, especially the former
> KPD with the leading figures such as Semler and Horlemann…. In
> the founding phase of the AL, they essentially renamed themselves
> overnight. It was the case that over there, where the Green's office
> was, there was the League Against Imperialism…. Thus there were
> suddenly very firm green structures there, which actually still
> functioned according to the principles of the K-groups.[42]

Indeed, already at this juncture, the strong presence of members of the

KPD-Rote Fahne posed a serious problem for many interested in the future of the

AL, Schily included. These early critics feared a reprise of the situation in

Hamburg, where a communist group was able to dominate an alternative ballot.

Groups such as the WUB Zehlendorf proposed the complete exclusion of

communists in the AL and advocated so-called 'declarations of incompatibility,'

or *Unvereinbarkeitsbeschlüsse*, with communist groups, while others, including

Schily, wanted to solve the problem by banning all dual memberships. A

meeting in late July 1978 rejected a declaration of incompatibility, and created a

committee to come up with suggestions for the structure and program for the

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[42] Eben diese ganzen K-Gruppen alle in die sich gründende AL hinein
sind, insbesondere die damalige KPD, mit sozusagen den Leitfiguren Semler,
Horlemann… haben sich de facto in der Gründungsphase der AL von einem Tag
auf den anderen umbenannt. Es war so, dass da drüben, war ursprünglich mal
das grüne Büro vorher, war das der Laden der Liga gegen den Imperialismus….
Damit waren auch sozusagen plötzlich sehr feste grüne Strukturen da, die
eigentlich im Anfang noch nach dem K-Gruppen Prinzip funktionierten. Frank
Koslowski, conversation with author, 10 July 2001, Berlin-Spandau. The League
Against Imperialism was a subgroup of the KPD-Rote Fahne.

AL. Certain citizens' initiatives remained skeptical, however. In part, they were

daunted by the prospect of drafting a comprehensive political platform. The

citizens' initiatives were accustomed to dealing with single, specific issues, and

they worried that the necessity of setting down a comprehensive political

program would leave them dependent on individuals with broader political

experience, thus increasing the risk of being dominated by a communist

organization. This was especially important to the WUB Zehlendorf, which

worried, in their case probably correctly given the demographics of Zehlendorf,

that any presence of communists in the organization would frighten voters

away.[43]

On 5 October 1978, the organization was officially founded. Not

surprisingly, the role of the communists in the organization became the biggest

issue at the founding meeting. A compromise suggested by the KPD-Rote Fahne

was finally adopted: the measure rejected declarations of incompatibility but

noted that the AL "is supported by its individual members. Parties or party-like

groups…cannot be members or supporters of the AL."[44] Thus dual memberships

were not prohibited, but parties or party-like organizations could not be part of

the ballot as a bloc. This makes sense when one recalls that the AL perceived

itself initially not as a political party, but as an alternative ballot, as a kind of

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[43] Schaper, "Entstehungsgeschichte," 57.

[44] Die AL wird von ihren Mitgliedern getragen. Parteien oder
parteiähnliche Gruppen … können nicht Träger oder Mitglieder der AL sein.
Schaper, "Entstehungsgeschichte," 58.

voter's league comprised of those disgusted with the established parties and intended as an alternative to them.

In every respect, the structure and grassroots democratic principles of the AL reflected its origins as a gathering of diverse groups with varied political views. Initially, the structure aimed to provide as many groups as possible with the feeling that they had a voice within the organization.[45] According to one account, "all bodies of the AL... were nearly always evaluated from this standpoint…." This was an explicit reaction against the divisiveness of the K-groups.[46]

The AL consisted of three main bodies: the *Mitgliedervollversammlung* (General Members' Assembly- MVV), the *Delegiertenrat* (Council of Delegates- DR) and the *Geschäftsführender Ausschuss* (Executive Committee- GA). The General Members' Assembly was the highest-ranking organ, and every member of the party had a chance to attend and to vote on policy and program and elect delegates. Especially in the early phase of the AL, the Members' Assemblies helped forge compromises between clearly discernible trends within the group.[47]

The Council of Delegates was responsible for decisions between meetings of the General Members' Assembly, and was accountable to it. The Executive

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[45] Eventually, structures evolved to try to prevent the dominance of a particular political tendency. See below.

[46] Alle Gremien der AL…wurden fast immer unter diesem Gesichtspunkt bewertet. Bühnemann, Wendt, and Wituschek, *Alternative Liste*, 88.

[47] Bühnemann, Wendt, and Wituschek, *Alternative Liste*, 93.

Committee had a dual role. It was the body where those AL members with a high degree of public recognition could bring publicity to the AL. Also, it gave a voice to those representing political trends in the AL not receiving seats on the Council of Delegates. This three-pronged structure, while it was unwieldy at producing results, played a key role in the earliest phases of the party, when it was critical to keep the various political trends and organizations intact and to make all participants feel that their needs were represented.

The most important grassroots democratic principle of the AL at this juncture was the principle of consensus. This quite anti-democratic provision stipulated that no "relevant minorities" could be voted down.[48] This related directly back to the early history of the AL: as a collection of citizen's movements and unsuccessful political organizations rather than a clearly identifiable party, decisions made over the head of a "relevant minority" could result in splitting the organization. "Relevant minority" applied to identifiable political trends within the group, rather than representing any specific number. The Left was clearly still haunted by its experiences with division and infighting during the 1970s, and chose this unwieldy strategy as a means of preventing further fragmentation. It could also be interpreted as a way for the KPD-Rote Fahne, still numerically a minority though the largest bloc within the AL, comprising

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[48] Relevante Minderheiten. Bühnemann, Wendt, and Wituschek, *Alternative Liste*, 90-91.

somewhat less than one-third of the members, to hold a disproportionate degree of influence.

Immediately after those attending the founding meeting rejected the Declarations of Incompatibility, prominent groups and individuals involved in the formation of the AL announced they would not join. Otto Schily and the WUB Zehlendorf created a public sensation by withdrawing their support for the organization on the same night that the AL was officially created. Schily expressed his frustration shortly thereafter, linking his decision directly to the role of the KPD-Rote Fahne: "That the founding meeting of the AL on 5 October 1978 did not even produce a resolution that the AL differs in structure and program from the KPD is an unmistakable warning signal that the AL will become a failure. For without distinguishing itself from the KPD, the AL will not receive any support from the numerous citizens' initiatives."[49]

Other organizations cited different reasons for not getting involved. For example, the *BI Westtangente* (Citizens' Initiative West Tangent), formed to oppose the construction of a highway in the northwest part of Berlin, viewed

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[49] Dass die Gründungsversammlung der AL am 5. Oktober 1978 nicht einmal eine Entschliessung zustandegebracht hat, die feststellt (Antrag Roland Vogt), dass sich die AL in Struktur und Programm von der KPD unterscheidet, ist ein unüberhörbares Warnsignal, dass die AL zu einem Misserfolg wird. Denn ohne Abgrenzung von der KPD wird die AL keine Unterstützung von den zahlreichen Bürgerinitiativen erhalten. Otto Schily, "Alternative Liste mit oder ohne KPD," Document 5 in *Die Alternative Liste Berlin. Entstehung, Entwicklung, Positionen*, ed. Michael Bühnemann, Michael Wendt, and Jürgen Wituschek (Berlin: LitPol, 1984), 78.

parliamentary work as incompatible with the very principle of citizen's

initiatives:

> When we say that we must enter the parliaments in order then to 'do it better,' we are saying that the problem lies with the parliamentarians, and not with their roles in a bogged-down system. Citizens' initiatives not only originated out of a conflict with parliamentarianism, but due to the lack of success using parliamentary means [they] have from the beginning clearly been active in the extraparliamentary realm. With our participation, the ineffectiveness of the parliaments, especially of the district parliaments vis a vis the central administration, can only be hushed up, not done away with.[50]

Furthermore, the *BI Westtangente* disagreed with the assumption that parliaments

could be used to gather information:

> Participation in the parliaments would not change the structure of decision-making. Because we, too, constantly experienced the powerlessness of the parliaments during our citizens' initiative work, it is for us a contradiction to seek parliamentary seats now. We also hold that it is a delusion to conclude that participation in parliaments can provide more access to information. Not the parliaments, but rather the government administrations are the bearers of information, and it is in the administrations where most of the politically relevant decisions are made.[51]

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[50] Wenn wir meinen, dass wir in die Parlamente müssen, um es dann 'besser zu machen,' sprechen wir damit aus, dass es an den Parlamentarien liegt, nicht aber an deren Rollen in einem festgefahrenen System. Bürgerinitiativen sind nicht nur im Konflikt zum Parlamentarismus entstanden, sondern haben sich wegen der Erfolglosigkeit parlamentarischer Wege von Anfang an deutlich im ausserparlamentarischen Bereich bewegt. Die Wirkungslosigkeit der Parlamente, besonders der Bezirksparlamente gegenüber den zentralen Verwaltungen können wir mit unserer Mitarbeit nur vertuschen, aber nicht aufheben. "Diskussionspapier der Bürgerinitiative Westtangente," Document 4 in *Die Alternative Liste Berlin. Entstehung, Entwicklung, Positionen*, ed. Michael Bühnemann, Michael Wendt, and Jürgen Wituschek (Berlin: LitPol, 1984), 75.

[51] Eine Mitarbeit in den Parlamenten würde die Struktur, wie Entscheidungen zustandekommen, nicht verändern. Da auch wir die Ohnmacht

With the public withdrawal of prominent supporters of the AL, the AL

went into the 1979 elections substantially weakened. To the surprise of many,

however, 'Project AL' did not collapse, but was actually sustained by the very

group many perceived as being responsible for the AL's early difficulties. The

KPD-Rote Fahne played an important role in continuing to hold the AL together.

The energy and commitment of its members as well as their political experience

helped keep the AL afloat during the next several years.

A song written shortly after the AL's creation reveals much about the

plans the AL held for parliamentary participation. Interestingly, the song began

by gloating over the fact that the AL was "permitted."[52] Asking what the AL

wanted from parliamentary participation, the text continued: "Posing questions

openly, always probing, getting all the info for the extraparliamentary struggle,

for it must win!"[53]

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der Parlamente während unserer Bürgerinitiativenarbeit ständig erfahren haben, ist es für uns ein Widerspruch, nun nach Parlamentssitzen zu streben. Wir meinen auch, dass es ein Trugschluss ist, durch die Mitwirkung in den Parlamenten mehr Informationen nach aussen tragen zu können. Nicht die Parlamente, sondern die Verwaltungen sind die wesentlichen Informationsträger, und in den Verwaltungen findet auch der grösste Teil der politisch relevanten Entscheidungen statt. "Diskussionspapier der BI Westtangente," 75.

[52] Zugelassen.

[53] Fragen öffentlich stellen, ständig bohren, alle Infos kriegen für den ausserparlamentarischen Kampf, denn der muss siegen! "Gemeinsam in der Alternativen Liste," song lyrics. Archiv Papier Tiger (APT): AL bis 1983.

Looking at the platform drafted for the 1979 West Berlin elections reveals much about the state of the AL at the time, and gives numerous insights into the AL's early views regarding parliamentary democracy. In the preamble, the AL introduced itself to potential voters for the first time. Judging from this self-portrait, it is clear that the AL defined itself almost entirely negatively. The first section provided general information about the various groups comprising the organization and their reasons for coming together:

> We are an amalgamation of members of citizens' initiatives, unions, factory and personnel councils, women's groups, tenant and youth groups, democratic committees, student groups, grassroots initiatives and many who are tired of the fact that in our country, policies are made according to the economic interest of a determining minority. We are taking part in the elections in order to give all those who see that the established parties CDU, SPD, and FDP do not or no longer represent their interests the chance to support their demands for a fundamental alternative with their vote as well. The AL is independent of parties and party-like organizations. We strive for a new form of citizen participation in political and parliamentary planning and decision-making processes. Self-determination and grassroots democratic structures are obligatory for the way in which decisions are made in the AL. *The parties of City Hall are neither willing nor able to represent our interests.*[54]

[54] Wir sind ein Zusammenschluss von Mitgliedern aus Bürgerinitiativen, Gewerkschaften, Betriebs- und Personalräten, Frauengruppen, Mieter- und Jugendgruppen, demokratischen Kommitees, Studentengruppen, Basisinitiativen und vielen, die es leid sind, dass in unserem Land Politik nach den wirtschaftlichen Interessen einer bestimmenden Mehrheit gemacht wird. Wir beteiligen uns an den Wahlen, um all denen, die ihre Interessen von den etablierten Parteien CDU, SPD und FDP nicht oder nicht mehr vertreten sehen, die Möglichkeit zu geben, ihre Forderungen nach einer grundsätzlichen Alternative auch durch ihre Wählerstimme zu unterstützen. Die Alternative Liste ist eigenständig gegenüber Parteien und parteiähnliche Organisationen. Wir streben eine neue Form der Beteiligung der Bürger an politischen und parlamentarischen Planungs- und Entscheidungsprozessen an. Selbstbestimmung und basisdemokratischen Strukturen sind für die Art, wie in

The AL emphasized in its program that it tried to encourage a culture of debate and discussion. Anyone could speak at assemblies, make proposals, or propose initiatives, whether or not they were members: "Everyone who wants to work to promote democracy and environmental protection and to improve working and living conditions can and should work with us, whether organized or independent, independently from his world view. There are no declarations of incompatibility."[55] This tolerance had its limits, as the program asserted, "Those who promote fascist and neofascist world views have no place with us, however."[56]

The rest of the lengthy 'self-description' provides a textbook example of negative definition. This is not surprising, given the AL's nature as an organization with quite diverse groups of constituent organizations and affiliations as yet untried in governing and unable to point to any record of achievements. Indeed, it perfectly reflected the one commonality of all of the

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der Alternativen Liste Entscheidungen getrofffen werden, verbindlich. *Die Rathausparteien sind weder willens noch im Stande, unsere Interessen zu vertreten. Programm zu den Wahlen im März 1979* (Berlin: Alternative Liste, n.d.), 1. Emphasis in the original.

[55] Jeder kann und soll mitarbeiten, unabhängig von seiner Weltanschauung, ob organisiert oder unorganisiert, der sich für Demokratie und Umweltschutz und die Verbesserung der Arbeits- und Lebensbedingungen einsetzen will. Es gibt keine Unvereinbarkeitsbeschlüsse. *Wahlprogramm 1979*, 2.

[56] Befürworter faschistischer und neofaschistischer Weltanschauung haben bei uns jedoch keinen Platz. *Wahlprogramm 1979*, 2.

constituent organizations: opposition to the so-called established parties and their policies.

The self-description listed at length the group's criticisms of West Berlin's major parties. Many of these grievances involved a perceived decline of democratic rights: the established parties spoke of freedom of opinion, yet they had defamed critical voices and increased press censorship. They spoke of "more democracy" but had increased exclusions from civil service careers as a result of political beliefs.[57] Moreover, the AL viewed this perceived decay of basic rights through the prism of German history: "The dark and bloody chapter of German fascism, only one generation removed, obliges us to the utmost watchfulness in the face of attacks on democratic freedoms."[58] But the program also attacked the environmental policies of the established parties from the beginning, thus reflecting the twin concerns of democracy and environmental protection enshrined in the AL's full name. The program condemned the established parties for talking of environmental protection while they constructed new power plants and permitted the poisoning of water and air.

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[57] Mehr Demokratie. *Wahlprogramm 1979*, 1.

[58] Das düstere und blutige Kapitel des deutschen Faschismus, das erst eine Generation zurückliegt, verpflichtet uns zu äusserster Wachsamkeit gegenüber Angriffen auf die demokratischen Freiheiten. *Wahlprogramm 1979*, 1.

The AL's solution reflected its Marxist roots: "The use of nature may not be

directed according to the profits of a ruling minority."[59]

Only later in the program did the AL set down its goals and expectations

clearly, in the process revealing its view of parliaments as institutions to be

exploited:

> We have no illusions about the meaning of parliamentary elections,
> especially under the current circumstances. The goal of our
> parliamentary work is to use motions, criticism, and inquiries to
> force the Senate to take a position, thus making it harder to deceive
> voters…. In this sense we will use our work in parliament so that
> democratic rights will not be further restricted, but will be
> broadened. Real improvements can be achieved only through our
> activities *outside* of parliament. This will also be the case in the
> future.[60]

The AL's 1979 electoral program may have defined the AL in opposition

to the established parties and their politics. But the program also contained

specific and positive programmatic demands, though these often closely

resembled a grab bag of diverse points rather than a coherent and unified

program. The platform itself focused on several main areas: policies relating to

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[59] Die Nutzung der Natur darf sich nicht nach den Profiten einer herrschenden Minderheit richten. *Wahlprogramm 1979*, 1.

[60] Wir machen uns keine Illusionen über die Bedeutung von Parlamentswahlen, zumal unter den gegenwärtigen Verhältnissen. Das Ziel unserer Parlamentsarbeit ist es, durch Anträge, Kritik und Anfragen den Senat zu zwingen, Stellung zu nehmen, und so zu erreichen, dass der Betrug am Wähler schwieriger wird. In diesem Sinne werden wir unsere Arbeit im Parlament so nutzen, dass die demokratischen Rechte nicht weiter eingeschränkt, sondern erweitert werden. Wirkliche Verbesserungen können wir nur durch unsere Aktivitäten *ausserhalb* des Parlaments erreichen. Dies wird auch in Zukunft so sein. *Wahlprogramm 1979*, 2. Emphasis in the original.

Berlin; the decline of democratic rights; nature and environmental protection; nuclear power; energy policy; jobs and working conditions; the situation of women; housing; transportation; culture; sport; children and youth; universities; foreigners; aging and senior citizens; and general health issues.

The primary position of and the amount of space devoted to policies regarding Berlin indicate the degree of importance assigned by the AL to this issue. In a two-pronged central message, the program insisted that the current situation of Berlin must be recognized and accepted as reality, like it or not. But that recognition did not require that the AL be satisfied with the status quo over the long term. Indeed, "Berlin's special situation should continually inspire us to develop ideas for a peace policy in Europe that opens solutions to these questions that serve the interests of the peoples of Europe and that open a genuine perspective for the future in Berlin."[61] To achieve this, the AL advocated expanding economic relations between West Berlin and the Federal Republic, the GDR, the European Union, COMECON, and the Third World. In order not to endanger peaceful developments in West Berlin, the West Berlin government and the Western Allies should avoid certain provocations. These included what the AL viewed as excessive emphasis on the political connections to the Federal Republic, as well as military parades and troop maneuvers. The program also

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[61] Die besondere Lage Berlins sollte uns immer wieder inspirieren, Ideen für eine Friedenspolitik in Europa zu entwickeln, die der Lösung dieser Fragen im Interesse der Völker Europas dient und für Berlin eine wirkliche Zukunftsperspektive eröffnet. *Wahlprogramm 1979*, 3.

criticized the lack of rights held by Berliners when it came to conflicts with the occupying forces, mentioning specifically the construction of apartments for the families of United States personnel on the Düppeler Field and the right of the Allies to forbid political demonstrations.[62] Significantly, the AL also emphasized that it would condemn with equal fervor political repression and a lack of democratic rights wherever they were found. It specifically extended this to the GDR, stating that it viewed it as its duty to support the democratic and socialist opposition there and to be the advocates of all people who claimed the right of free expression of opinion. The AL also called for improvements in the issuing of visas and general travel conditions, including allowing GDR citizens to travel to the West.[63]

Regarding policies toward Berlin, however, the AL defined itself again in opposition to the so-called established parties. The points receiving the most emphasis- they are printed in bold in the program text- involved the visions of the established political parties for Berlin. The program attacked these parties' plans to make West Berlin into a center for conventions, service, culture, and entertainment. In an act akin to treason in the eyes of many Berliners, the AL explicitly opposed the Law for the Promotion of Berlin, "because this state tax policy measure has the populace paying additional profits to industry, and it is

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[62] *Wahlprogramm 1979*, 3.

[63] *Wahlprogramm 1979*, 3.

the foundation of legal tax evasion."[64] Furthermore, the AL noted that it opposed

any attempts to make West Berlin the site of armaments construction or nuclear

facilities.[65]

The AL 's electoral program for 1979 contained a large section on the

decline of democratic rights, and a number of the issues important to the New

Left appeared under this rubric. The platform asserted that the West German

government had used the fight against terrorists to justify undermining

democratic rights. Taking up a key grievance of the New Left, the program

demanded an end to the practice of excluding individuals from the civil service

due to their political leanings, as well as the government's "snooping around in

order to find out people's political leanings."[66] In fact, the style of this part of the

program suddenly becomes reminiscent of the electoral programs of the KPD-

Rote Fahne, with its lengthy lists of slogans better lending themselves to being

shouted shrilly than being rendered into print.

The brief section on environmental protection is in many ways telling. In

part, this reflected the concerns of an urban environment, where conventional

theories of ecosystems would have had little relevance. In addition, however,

the section's brevity is indicative of the lack of genuine commitment to this issue

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[64] Berlinförderungsgesetz; weil dieses Mittel staatlicher Steuerpolitik die Bevölkerung zusätzliche Profite an die Konzerne zahlen lässt und die Grundlage legaler Steuerhinterziehung ist. *Wahlprogramm 1979*, 3.

[65] *Wahlprogramm 1979*, 3.

[66] Gesinnungsschnüffelei. *Wahlprogramm 1979*, 4.

at this stage, and is symptomatic of the AL's attempt to harness environmental concerns as a way of gaining votes without quite knowing what it was getting into. Only over time did the AL flesh out its environmental program, and the group was able to attract top experts in environmental policy.

First, the program distinguished between environmental protection and the protection of nature. "Environmental protection" as used in the platform applies more to the level of ecosystems, whereas the drafters of the program used the term "protection of nature" to refer to the specific conditions pertaining in West Berlin- an unusual distinction to make given the AL's full name. Laying out the AL's views of urban ecology, the program stated: "From our fundamental beliefs it follows that the protection of nature has its place not only in remote natural landscapes, but also and especially there where numerous people live and work- in the large city."[67] In the island city of West Berlin, special conditions applied- the urban landscape, characterized by vacant lots, unused rail beds, canals, and thickets, contained numerous, diverse areas of a nature that was unshaped. Children seemed instinctively to seek out such untamed spaces: in a passage evocative of the *Wandervogel*, the platform described these spots: "If possible, [children] play there where plants and animals are left to themselves."[68]

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[67] Aus unserer Grundeinstellung folgt, dass Naturschutz nicht nur in entlegenen naturnahen Landschaften, sondern auch und gerade da, wo zahlreiche Menschen leben und arbeiten- in der Grossstadt-, seinen Platz hat. *Wahlprogramm 1979*, 6.

[68] Wenn möglich, spielen sie dort, wo Pflanzen und Tiere sich selbst überlassen sind. *Wahlprogramm 1979*, 6.

These bastions of biological anarchy were threatened with destruction or, worse

still from the perspective of the AL, a kind of "artificial greening" by the state or

by construction firms, a process of urban homogenization with not very subtle

fascist overtones.[69] In fact, the AL cast its ideas of nature protection in a kind of

anti-fascist framework: "We place the individual development of nature

adapting to itself against the will to order of the authorities, to whom every wild

growth of plant is a thorn in their side."[70]

The section of the platform opposing nuclear energy is also revealing. The

objections here were two-fold, and related directly to the two primary concerns

given in the AL's full name. The platform attacked nuclear power for being

environmentally damaging and unsustainable, as well as for being intimately

tied to the much-feared police state. To bolster this claim, the AL pointed to the

enormous police presence needed to secure nuclear power plants and to protect

the transportation of waste materials. Instead of nuclear power, the AL

advocated exploring alternatives such as solar power and energy efficient

technologies.[71]

The electoral program also included an extensive section regarding the

situation of women in West Berlin, accusing the established parties of only

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[69] Begrünung. *Wahlprogramm 1979*, 6.

[70] Gegen den Ordnungswillen der Behörden, denen z.B. jeder Wildwuchs von Pflanzen ein Dorn im Auge ist, stellen wir die Entwicklung der sich selbst anpassenden Natur. *Wahlprogramm 1979*, 6.

[71] *Wahlprogramm 1979*, 9.

discovering women's issues during the election campaign and ignoring their concerns the rest of the time. As in the program of the KPD-Rote Fahne, the electoral platform demanded that Section 218 of the West German penal code limiting women's rights to an abortion be stricken, arguing that existing laws restricted women's self-determination. Interestingly for a party that seemed at that time to disapprove of just about everything American, the AL cited comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation passed in Great Britain and the United States as exemplary.[72]

The 1979 program addressed issues important to the housing squatters, although the elections were held before the squatters' movement reached its peak.[73] Nevertheless, already at this point the AL established itself as a leader on this issue, criticizing the established parties for perpetuating West Berlin's acute housing shortage and letting older buildings decay until they could be replaced by unaffordable luxury apartments that were far more profitable for landlords. They condemned the decisions and past practices of the established parties for focusing on profits rather than on the need for affordable housing.[74]

In the area of transportation, the AL was able to present a number of specific proposals, aiming to lessen dependence on automobiles and make alternatives such as walking, bicycling but above all public transportation more

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[72] *Wahlprogramm 1979*, 13.

[73] See Chapter Five for a more in-depth account of the housing squatters' movement.

appealing by making them safer, faster, more affordable, and generally more pleasant. Two things are worth noting here. First, the program asserted that, whereas before World War II, Berlin had had an exemplary public transportation system, after the war city planners attempted to make the American Dream of an automobile-oriented city a reality, and made decisions accordingly. Second, however, rather than advocating an anti-modern (because anti-car) system, the AL promoted solutions relying heavily on technology, including modern trains and subways, more frequent buses operating in conjunction with specially-timed traffic signals, and better conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists through engineering solutions such as extended lights and safer overpasses. The AL was able to develop this part of its program so fully and specifically as a result of its cooperation with citizens' groups. The section on transportation concluded: "We relied on the results of the work of citizens' initiatives in developing this part of the program, and we see our future in cooperation with them!"[75]

After examining the program of the AL, especially in comparison to the program of the KPD-Rote Fahne, one thing stands out clearly- there is virtually no trace of the language of class struggle, Marxism, or revolution that permeated the KPD-Rote Fahne's program nearly to the point of driving out specific programmatic demands. In fact, in this regard, the AL's program is nearly the

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[74] *Wahlprogramm 1979*, 16.

[75] Wir haben uns bei der Ausarbeitung dieses Programmteils auf die Arbeitsergebnisse der Bürgerinitiativen gestützt und sehe unsere weitere Perspektive in Zusammenarbeit mit ihnen! *Wahlprogramm 1979*, 17.

opposite of that of the KPD-Rote Fahne. The KPD-Rote Fahne's program and

action program consisted mainly of the rhetoric of class revolution, with the

obvious implication that all would be well once the proletariat overthrew the

bourgeoisie. Until then, parliaments should be used to attack the established

parties and preach the gospel of proletarian revolution. By contrast, the AL's

program consisted of virtually no rhetoric of class struggle, and provides

evidence of a clear shift in the thinking of the Left away from working to

overthrow the old order, parliaments and all, and toward a reformist approach

that made its partial peace with the current system, concentrating on improving

it rather than overthrowing it. Underlying the program, however, the anti-

capitalism of the Left continued. The ecological paradigm merely provided the

Left with new ways to criticize capitalism. Overall, as the 1979 election program

reveals, the AL was in the first stage of its gradual transition to a parliamentary

party as the March 1979 election approached.

Economic malaise in West Berlin, increasing conflicts in certain sections of

the city with foreign workers, and housing shortages provided the domestic

backdrop for this West Berlin election. In terms of international relations, shortly

before the election, Schmidt responded to increased threats posed by Soviet

nuclear arms via the two-track policy. This laid out a course preparing for the

stationing of modernized medium-range United States nuclear missiles while at

the same time trying to negotiate a reduction in the total number of missiles

deployed by NATO and the Warsaw Pact nations.[76] This was to play a much

more important role in the 1981 election, and the issue was not mentioned in the

AL's 1979 political program.

A song written for the AL's 1979 campaign revealed the mood within the

organization just before the 1979 election.[77] Largely targeting the other parties,

the lyrics expressed dissatisfaction with representative politics in general and

their consequences for West Berlin in particular. The refrain left no doubt that

the AL was above all a party of protest: "We won't elect the Socialists, the

Liberals, the CDU!!! Alternative, that's the name of our ballot, the others won't

get our vote!!"[78] The song was consistent with the programmatic demands of the

AL, emphasizing disillusionment with the political system, and singling out the

dangers of nuclear power, the problems of environmental destruction, and the

consequences of sex discrimination. Overall, the song called for groups feeling

disenfranchised and disillusioned to take their own fate in their hands by

supporting the AL at the polls: in the last verse, the lyrics noted, "We won't leave

it up to others any longer."[79]

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[76] Nicholls, *Bonn Republic*, 265.

[77] "Solidaritätslied für die Alternative-Liste in Berlin," song lyrics. APT: AL bis 1983.

[78] Die Sozialen, die Liberalen, die CDU wählen wir nicht!!! Alternative, so heisst unsere Liste, die Ander'n kriegen unsere Stimme nicht!

[79] Überlassen woll'n wir's nicht mehr Ander'n.

The AL performed better in the March 1979 elections than most people had expected, especially given its recent appearance on the political scene. The slightly less than forty-eight thousand votes it received put the AL somewhat short of the 5 percent needed to make it into the West Berlin Parliament, but the AL did win a total of ten seats in four of West Berlin's twelve district assemblies.

The mass-circulation daily BILD, one of Axel Springer's numerous tabloids, called the success of the AL the "biggest surprise" of the election.[80] At least for BILD's editors, the AL did come out of nowhere: the AL's founding in 1978 went uncommented in BILD, and articles in the 8 March 1979 issue on the upcoming elections making predictions regarding their outcome did not mention the AL. Now that the AL had suddenly appeared on the electoral scene, BILD's reaction was surprisingly objective and accurate, if typically superficial: it described the AL as a collection of citizens' initiatives and Maoist communists, and emphasized the role of the AL in helping bring about a devastating loss for the Moscow-loyal Socialist Unity Party of West Berlin.[81] The *Tageszeitung*, or TAZ, at the opposite end of the political spectrum, focused on the upcoming work in the district parliaments and the potential challenge posed by the strong presence of the KPD-Rote Fahne in the organization.[82] The *Tagesspiegel* concentrated on the implications of the election results for the political system,

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[80] Grösste Überraschung. BILD, 19 March 1979.

[81] BILD, 19 March 1979.

[82] TAZ, 22 March 1979, 5.

noting that the AL did the best in districts with the worst problems, Kreuzberg,

Schöneberg, and Tiergarten, where the established parties had little appeal. The

article explicitly invoked concerns about the ramifications of this for the

"established parties," worrying that the AL's success meant that the other parties

were losing their integrative force on the electorate.[83] It concluded by invoking

fears of a return to the Weimar system, drawing comparisons between the

derogatory phrase "established parties" with the "parties of the system" that

suffered much scorn under the Weimar system.[84] It called on the parties to work

against this trend.[85] The surprisingly good results of the AL attracted national

coverage in the German weekly *Der Spiegel*, with a short article emphasizing the

diversity of the groups cooperating to form the AL. The article also commented

on the fact that the AL was proud to work with communist groups to achieve

parliamentary representation.[86]

In the wake of the electoral "victory" of the AL in the 1979 elections, the

KPD-Rote Fahne expressed nearly boundless enthusiasm for the newly-formed

organization. A party pamphlet hailed the results as the "great success of the

Alternative Liste: 47,543 votes for democracy and environmental protection,"

and noted that the results showed that the bourgeois parties had not succeeded

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[83] Die etablierten Parteien.

[84] Systemparteien.

[85] *Tagesspiegel*, 20 March 1979, 1.

[86] "Igel am Wall," *Der Spiegel*, 26 March 1979, 55.

in claiming for themselves concern with environmental degradation.[87] This

shows that the Left was beginning to realize the potential of environmental

issues as a weapon with which to attack the political establishment. Even more

tellingly, however, the KPD-Rote Fahne felt that the results confirmed the AL

strategy of not *limiting* the election campaign to matters of environmental

protection and instead also addressing the defense of democratic rights and

problems affecting working people. It also encouraged its members "not to rely

on the bourgeois parties, but instead to rely on our own strength."[88]

Furthermore, the success "confirms the view of our party that today the common

struggle of democrats, socialists, protectors of the environment, and communists

is necessary and possible."[89] Their initial experiment with the parliamentary

process had proven positive. Moreover, reaching out to cooperate with other

groups and in the process abandoning some rhetoric of class revolution and

adopting a political culture favoring debate and discussion had paid off. In West

Berlin, the radical Left had taken a critical next step in changing its attitude

toward the Western system of parliamentary democracy.

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[87] Grosser Erfolg der Alternativen Liste. 47543 Stimmen für Demokratie und Umweltschutz. "Grosser Erfolg der Alternativen Liste," n.d. AdAPO: Ordner KPD Berlin.

[88] … nicht auf die bürgerlichen Parteien, sondern auf die eigene Kraft zu vertrauen. "Grosser Erfolg der AL."

[89] Der Erfolg der Alternativen Liste, hat die Auffassung unser Partei bestätigt das heute der gemeinsame Kampf von Demokraten, Sozialisten, Umweltschützern und Kommunisten nötig und möglich ist [sic]. "Grosser Erfolg der AL."

Much of the work between the 1979 and the 1981 elections involved searching for common ground and for ways to integrate and unify the diverse groups constituting the AL. Several different factors contributed to this. One was the rise of the ecology paradigm and associated efforts to launch the federal Green Party. The opportunity to help develop the fledgling Green Party made a big difference and provided numerous individuals with an incentive to maintain their affiliation with the AL, especially early on. This process will be examined in more detail below.

The creative use of the green hedgehog as the symbol of the organization played an important role in helping the AL's diverse constituent groups see themselves as part of the larger whole. The hedgehog, which very early on became a kind of mascot for the AL, was such a success as a symbol because each group could relate to it in some way. The *Mitgliederrundbrief* featured a cartoon with identical hedgehogs bearing diverse symbols of various component groups: emblems of the housing squatters, the communists, gay and lesbian organizations, pacifists, and the German flag all appeared. The cartoon bears the caption "unity in diversity."[90] Environmentalists saw an appealing but endangered animal, threatened by the realities of life in a large city, including automobiles and the destruction of remaining wild places that the hedgehogs needed for shelter. The hedgehog was beloved by bourgeois gardeners because hedgehogs eat snails and insects that otherwise would devour flowers and

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[90] "Einheit in der Vielfalt," MRB 16, 1981.

plants. The quills of the hedgehog were important to those who did not wish to appear helpless: pacifists admired the hedgehog because it was peace loving but did not lack the ability to defend itself. This found reflection in Wilhelm Busch's classic poem "Armed Peace," about a hedgehog that defied a fox's orders to dispose of its quills until the fox disposed of its teeth. To reinforce this, the poem was reprinted in an early issue of the AL's central publication *Mitgliederrundbrief*.[91]

Another possible source of appeal came from the fact that male and female hedgehogs are notoriously difficult to tell apart. In the German version of the 'Tortoise and the Hare,' the hero is a hedgehog instead of a tortoise. The story's punch line comes when the hedgehog's wife pops up at the finish line and, impersonating her husband, tells the incredulous hare, "I'm already here!"[92] To emphasize this aspect of the hedgehog, an early issue of the *Mitgliederrundbrief* reprinted this story.[93] On a metaphorical level the hedgehog thus became an appeal for equality between the sexes. The element of trickery and deception in the story also probably appealed to those in the AL who saw the organization at least in part as a Trojan horse for the infiltration of parliament.

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[91] Wilhelm Busch, "Bewaffneter Friede." Reprinted in *Mitgliederrundbrief* (MRB) 6 (1979), 37.

[92] Ick bün all hier.

[93] "Der Hase und der Igel," reprinted in MRB 3 (1979), 4.

Furthermore, the stylized hedgehog logo used by the AL was highly reminiscent of the sun symbol of the anti-nuclear power movement. According to a founding member of the AL, this was the original reason for the choice of the hedgehog. Initially, however, the hedgehog was supposed to be red, not green. In order to be able to distinguish the AL's symbol from the sun symbol, the mascot's color was altered from red to green.[94]

Humor was also used both to place one's own past in perspective and to keep certain groups in their place, and played an important part in keeping the fledgling movement together. A caricature printed in the third edition of the *Mitgliederrundbrief* helps illustrate this point. Five men desperately trying to look intellectual with their goatees and John Lennon glasses stand in a horse-drawn wagon labeled 'KPD.' The driver holds a horsewhip and the reins ready, but there is no horse, and the wagon stands motionless. On the rear of the wagon is the slogan "forward with the KPD." The cartoon was a multifaceted caricature of the KPD. It clearly expressed disappointment about the immobility of the party: nothing drew it forward. Worse still, the leaders neither noticed this nor were in a position to do anything about it: they were too busy trying to look as if they were in charge. And the old-fashioned horse-drawn wagon was of course a commentary on the dated nature of the party.[95]

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[94] Michael Wendt, conversation with author, 16 July 2001, Berlin.

[95] "Vorwärts mit der KPD," MRB 3, 1979, 15.

Another, somewhat unsophisticated example of AL members' making

light of the KPD's past (and thus for many their own) comes in the form of a

poem reprinted in the same edition of the *Mitgliederrundbrief*:

> The farmer with the tractor
> is spreading manure on the field.
> His son, who studies in the city,
> is reading Mao Zedong.
>
> The farmer, quite stupidly,
> does not know who Mao is.
> He says, "what's all this about Mao Ze Dung,
> I'll stick with horse manure.[96]

While the AL was in the process of consolidating itself in West Berlin,

another similar organization was being formed at the national level: the Green

Party. The relationship between the AL and the Green Party was to have an

important effect on the AL. Here and in the chapters that follow, it will be

necessary to trace developments in this relationship with a view to

understanding the AL's gradual metamorphosis. The relationship contributed in

part to the processes of integration, retention, and moderation that helped bring

the radical German Left into the fold of parliamentary democracy. Overall, the

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[96] Der Bauer, mit dem Traktor
fährt auf den Acker Dung.
Sein Sohn, der in der Stadt studiert,
Der liest Mao Tse Tung.

Der Bauer, der sehr dümmlich,
Weiss nicht, wer Mao ist.
Er sagt: Was soll Maotse-Dung,
Ich bleib bei Pferdemist.
MRB 3 (1979), 4.

sometimes bizarre twists in the process through which the AL eventually became

the Green Party's sole representative in West Berlin in the long run helped move

the AL in the direction of a political party embracing the tenets of Western

parliamentary democracy.

The AL was by no means identical with the Green Party: in fact the

founding of the AL predated that of the Green Party by several years, and

members of the AL participated in the founding process. Though it cooperated

with the Green Party, sometimes closely, and was considered by most to be the

West Berlin branch of the Green Party, it actually did not officially become part

of the Green Party until 1990, in the wake of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the

opening of the border with East Germany, and in the course of German

unification. This fact helps explain a number of differences between the AL and

the Green Party. Joachim Raschke accurately summarizes the relationship

between the AL and the Green Party by noting, "the AL was different from the

Green Party in more than name alone, and it was always proud of the

difference."[97] Nevertheless, the relationship between the AL and the Green Party

was an important force on the AL that helped integrate the group into the

parliamentary system.

The Green Party also played a role in helping to modify the AL's stance on

violence. After all, the Green Party had incorporated nonviolence as one of the

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[97] Die AL ist nicht nur dem Namen nach etwas anderes als die Grünen, sie war auf die Differenz auch immer stolz. Raschke, *Die Grünen*, 278.

four fundamental pillars of its program. Despite this situation, however, it

should be made clear at the outset that the relationship between the Green Party

and the AL was not in itself enough to move the AL to embrace parliamentary

democracy or even to renounce violence. Again, this related to the specific

situation in West Berlin. West Berlin was the gathering place of some of the most

radical critics of the West; it was the site of some of the most violent protests in

postwar Germany, and the shooting of Benno Ohnesorg in 1967 was still fresh in

the memories of many residents of West Berlin and members of the AL, some of

whom had witnessed the events first-hand. From the perspective of the AL,

nonviolent protest had also recently met with utter failure: as far as the Left was

concerned, the attempts to stop the clearing of trees for the expansion of Gatow

Airfield using nonviolent means had been "brutally clubbed down by the

police."[98] These two events alone made nonviolence unappealing to the West

Berlin Left.

　　　During this critical early stage of the AL's history, the relationship

between the AL and the Green Party brought leftists and moderates together,

and involvement with the founding of the Green Party helped keep the diverse

wings of the party together, as the various factions cooperated in bringing about

the birth of the Greens. Since the creation of the *Sonstiger Politischer Verein*

(Miscellaneous Political Union- SPV), the early forerunner of the Green Party

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[98] Von der Polizei brutal zusammengeknüppelt. Schulz, "Nie waren sie wertvoller," 88.

founded in order to contest the 1979 European elections, the AL viewed efforts to form an ecology-based party with a mixture of interest and alarm. At least at first, AL members were primarily concerned about the implications for their own territory and potential effects on their organization. From early in the AL's history, some evidence exists that the AL felt threatened by the potential founding of a state committee of the Green Party in West Berlin. At a meeting held in November 1979, AL leaders apparently considered advocating that AL members join the Greens in order to have the majority in a potential local organization. The AL members would then attend congresses held for the purpose of establishing a local Green Party affiliate in order to defeat any motions for founding the local affiliate. Leaders also proposed writing a letter to the federal Greens making it clear that the AL would view the founding of a West Berlin affiliate as a measure intended to divide the organization. The radical Left's experiences in the course of the 1970s made it crucial to avoid this division. Giving the rationale behind this suggestion, the minutes of the meeting warned against the negative impact of a split between the AL and the Greens in West Berlin. The minutes quote Peter Sellin, an early leader within the AL and one of its first parliamentary delegates, as asserting that it was necessary to prevent the founding of a Green Party affiliate in West Berlin, reasoning that by blocking a local chapter of the Green Party, the AL would benefit.[99]

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[99] Protokoll AL-Delegiertenrat 7.11.79 für die AL-Bezirksgruppe Tiergarten, 7 November 1979. Archiv Grünes Gedächtnis (AGG): B.I.1.744. Some caution must be used in evaluating this source, as the authenticity of this

Not only did the Green Party threaten to split the alternative movement in West Berlin, but observers worried it would have the same effect at the national level. A cartoon published in the AL's membership circular expressed this fear. In the cartoon, an overwhelming jumble of posters exhort voters to cast their votes for one of more than a dozen green groups. In the foreground, a voter holds his head in disgust.[100]

In late 1979, despite its early reservations, the AL declared its intent to participate in the formation of a new political party to run in the 1980 federal elections.[101] The declaration revealed much about the AL's motivations in working to help found the Green Party. According to the declaration of intent, ten years of the social-liberal coalition at the federal level had resulted in a tremendous amount of negative experiences and a great deal of resistance among grass-roots movements. A "progressive alternative" in the federal elections should reflect and express this discontent.[102] Deciding between the SPD moderate Helmut Schmidt or the CSU's archconservative Franz-Josef Strauss would not solve the ecological or economic crisis, or ease the threat of military

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document is not certain. It appears to be part of a packet put together later by the rival local chapter of the Green Party assembling evidence of a concerted effort on the part of the AL to hinder the founding of that chapter. My attempts to locate another copy elsewhere in the Green Party archive were unsuccessful.

[100] No title, cartoon published in MRB 6 (1979), 36.

[101] "Absichtserklärung der AL, sich für eine eigenständige, fortschrittliche Alternative zu den Bundestagswahlen einzusetzen," MRB 6 (1979), 44.

[102] Eine fortschrittliche Alternative.

catastrophe in Europe, and progressive voters should not be forced to choose between the "lesser of two evils."[103] Having a broad-based alternative in the federal elections was important to grassroots organizations supporting environmental protection, democratic rights, and the rights of women, and the progressive alternative could advance these causes together and become an important factor for change. The declaration asserted that the AL would retain its emphasis on its work in West Berlin. The declaration then asserted that the AL recognized "that progressive politics in West Berlin cannot neglect the fact that the federal elections have an impact on West Berlin, in other words that policies regarding Berlin are made which the AL campaigns against in the West Berlin elections."[104] This rather extraordinary statement was the next link in the chain running from a concern for local politics to the recognition of the necessity and value of participation at the national level, and helps explain the AL's original involvement with the Green Party.

In preparation for the founding meeting of the Green Party held in January 1980 in Karlsruhe, the AL sent delegates to a commission charged with

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[103] Die Wahl eines kleineren Übels.

[104] Dass fortschrittliche Politik in Westberlin nicht ausser Acht lassen kann, dass durch die Bundestagswahlen und die Regierungspolitik in Bonn Rückwirkungen auf Westberlin, d.h. eine Berlinpolitik bestimmt wird, gegen die die Alternative Liste bei den Wahlen in Westberlin angetreten ist. "Absichtserklärung der AL," 44.

developing the future Green Party's program and statute.[105] The contributions of

AL delegates to these meetings also give insights regarding the priorities of the

AL and its thoughts regarding the potential benefits of a Green Party. As they

already had had considerable experience in forging a similar group that predated

the Greens, AL delegates to the Program Commission shared their experiences

with the Greens in their proposal for the preamble of the Green Party's program.

Their contributions reflected their historical experiences: they advocated

establishing a new kind of alliance that would be characterized by "unity in goals

and diversity in basic perspectives" and that would express differences openly

rather than trying to suppress them as in the 'established parties.'[106] They upheld

their own group as a model, asserting, not without a certain amount of self-

flattery, that it was "characterized by ecologists, democrats, Christians, socialists,

communists and persons without party affiliation coming together as equals to

work for mutual goals."[107] The AL's reaction to initial drafts of the program

reflected its priorities and historical experiences. Its main concern was to

overcome division: "Our assembly shows one common interest: in light of the

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[105] Peter Sellin, "Die AL und die Bundesgrünen," in *Die Alternative Liste Berlin: Entstehung, Entwicklung, Positionen*, ed. Michael Bühnemann, Michael Wendt and Jürgen Wituschek (Berlin: LitPol Verlagsgesellschaft, 1984), 122.

[106] Einheit in gemeinsamen Zielen und Vielfalt in den Grundanschauungen.

[107] Unsere Alternative zeichnet sich auch dadurch aus, dass sich in ihr gleichberechtigt Ökologen, Demokraten, Christen, Sozialisten, Kommunisten und Parteilose über Differenzen hinweg für gemeinsame Ziele

deep-seated ecological, economic, social, and political problems, we need a

fundamental alternative to the established parties. And we need *one* alternative,

which leads the various oppositional tendencies away from division und

opposition and points them in one direction."[108]

But the AL objected to concrete aspects of the draft program as well. The

AL delegates criticized the preamble of the program for paying insufficient

attention to democratic and human rights. In particular, they felt that the

program did not adequately criticize the Federal Republic for undermining these

rights. Even more negative was the AL's reaction to the program's stance on

violence. This objection foreshadowed a major point of disagreement that later

plagued the relationship between the AL and the Greens. According to the AL,

the state employed violence on a daily basis to suppress legitimate protests

against the nuclear power program or other movements. The AL insisted that

those affected by the policies of the Federal Republic should be free to formulate

their own forms of protest. This freedom was a direct product of the European

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zusammenschliessen. "Zusatzantrag zur Präambel der Programmkommission," MRB 6 (1979), 43.

[108] Unser Kongress zeigt ein gemeinsames Interesse: wir brauchen angesichts der tiefgreifenden ökologischen, ökonomischen, sozialen und politischen Probleme eine grundlegende Alternative zu den etablierten Parteien. Und wir brauchen *eine* Alternative , die weg von Zersplitterung und Gegeneinander die verschiedenen oppositionellen Strömungen in eine Richtung zusammenführt. "Erklärung der Alternativen Liste Berlin zu dem in Offenbach vorgelegten Präambel Entwurf," MRB 6 (1979), 43. Emphasis in original.

democratic tradition, which should not be suppressed, especially not in Germany.[109]

The AL also sent a large delegation to the meetings held in Karlsruhe in January 1980 for the purpose of founding the Green Party. Approximately 600 of the AL's 1600 members joined the Green Party in order to have a voice in shaping the fledgling organization. The AL's initial experiences with the Green Party were far from positive, however, and the AL's involvement with the Green Party nearly ended before it began. Just as was the case at the founding meeting of the AL, controversy erupted over the issue of 'Declarations of Incompatibility,' measures that would have made it impossible for Green Party members to simultaneously belong to another political party. Because the AL owed its existence to the rejection of such measures, delegates were understandably upset. The Green Party eventually carved out a specific exception for the AL; nevertheless, members viewed this solution as temporary, and were simply unwilling entirely to renounce their other political affiliations- in many cases, with one of the K-groups.[110]

One contributor to the AL's monthly membership circular summed up these concerns by asking if it would be possible for the AL with its historical roots to work within a party that relied on declarations of incompatibility as the

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[109] "Erklärung der Alternativen Liste Berlin zu dem in Offenbach vorgelegten Präambel Entwurf," 44.

[110] Sellin, "Die AL und die Bundesgrünen," 123.

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basis for its identity.[111] Other AL members found the Green Party's commitment

to work within the framework prescribed by West Germany's constitution hard

to swallow. "What do they mean, 'in the framework of the constitution?'" asked

AL member 'Ulli from Steglitz' bitterly. "Whose laws are these? Hasn't every

one of us had plenty of bad experiences with these laws?"[112]

Johanna Mayr and Wolfgang Kaiser, who had been leaders in the West

Berlin KPD-Rote Fahne and who at the time of the founding of the national

Green Party were dual members of the AL and the KPD-Rote Fahne, wrote an

extensive analysis of the implications of the founding of the Green Party for the

West Berlin Left in general and the AL in particular.[113] Their article gives unique

insights into the perceptions of the Left at this important juncture.

Mayr and Kaiser's article suggests that, at least initially, the KPD-Rote

Fahne was involved with forming the Greens out of a desire to assess the Green

Party's potential to serve as another Trojan horse for the radical Left. But the

Left's disguise was already taking on a life of its own, and it was beginning to

adopt the characteristics it had been pretending to possess. According to Mayr

and Kaiser, the time had passed for a purely tactical consideration of working

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[111] "Kritische Frage zum Verhältnis AL-Grüne Partei," MRB 7 (1980), 30.

[112] Was heisst denn hier, 'im Rahmen des Grundgesetzes?' Wessen Gesetze sind denn das? Hat nicht schon jeder von uns schon reichlich schlechte Erfahrungen mit diesen Gesetzen gemacht? "Betrifft Karlsruhe," MRB 7 (1980), 33.

[113] Johanna Mayr and Wolfgang Kaiser, "Stellungnahmen zu Karlsruhe," MRB 7 (1980), 21.

with the Green Party, and the moment had come when the Left had to decide

what positive contributions it could make to the Greens if the Left decided in

favor of cooperating with them. If the Greens could gain more than 5 percent of

the vote, this would have far-reaching implications for the West German political

scene: thus it was important that the Left take a good look at the long-term

consequences of their decision whether or not to cooperate.[114] The authors also

posed the question as to how the AL could benefit from a possible affiliation

with the Greens, raising the possibility of broadening the appeal of the AL

without alienating other AL members who found the Greens unappealing at

best.[115]

According to Mayr and Kaiser, one very positive aspect of potential work

with the Green Party would be the chance to work with new groups:

"Cooperation with the Greens gives us the chance to work together with newly

politicized youths and young adults, with repoliticized but scattered Leftists,

with older people from the environmental movement, and various parts of the

Left."[116] The increased environmental consciousness of recent years and the

success of the green and alternative movements were evidence of changes in

West Germany's political structure and values in the post-war period. These

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[114] Mayr and Kaiser, "Stellungnahmen," 21.

[115] Mayr and Kaiser, "Stellungnahmen," 21.

[116] Die Mitarbeit in den Grünen gibt die Chance, mit neu politisierten
Jugendlichen und jüngeren Erwachsenen, mit repolitisierten versprengten

changes would not automatically work in favor of the Left, however; this rendered the participation of the Left even more important.[117]

Mayr and Kaiser sounded a cautionary note about potential cooperation with the Greens, however, holding that it would be irresponsible to work with them unless the Left had a clear idea as to what it was getting into.[118] Moreover, they recognized the implications of the environmental ideology of the Greens, and cautioned against attempts to work with the Green Party without recognizing the genuine importance of ecological problems.[119] As for themselves, they conceded that the questions raised by ecological problems were real, and were not adequately recognized by Marxism. But they insisted that a Marxist could not see things solely from an ecological point of view, either.[120] For them, the key was to achieve a balance between left-wing and purely ecological perspectives. To do otherwise would be to encourage division within the Left, something that must at all costs be avoided: "The Left cannot place all their bets on the Greens and only be politically active within them. That would be a

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Linken, mit Älteren aus der Umweltschutzbewegung und verschiedenen Teilen der Linken zusammenzuarbeiten. Mayr and Kaiser, "Stellungnahmen," 21.

[117] Mayr and Kaiser, "Stellungnahmen," 21.

[118] Mayr and Kaiser, "Stellungnahmen," 22.

[119] Mayr and Kaiser, "Stellungnahmen," 23.

[120] Mayr and Kaiser, "Stellungnahmen," 23.

renewal of the sectarianism [of the K-groups]."[121] But at the same time, the

authors asserted, because the concerns of the Left went beyond ecology, leftists

had something to contribute to the Green Party. Working on an equal footing

with all Greens, they could help address ecological problems. And because these

problems were associated with capitalism, leftists and Marxists in the Greens

tried to bring these aspects to other elements of their critique of capitalism. In

this way, they hoped to ensure that the environmental movement would be a

left-wing rather than a right-wing movement.[122] Again, however, Mayr and

Kaiser cautioned against division, noting that an arrangement where either

Greens or leftists dominated would amount to nothing, as it would bring only

further fragmentation. Instead, mutual interests had to remain in the

foreground, and all participants had to focus on what positive contributions they

could bring to the movement.[123]

In their article, Mayr and Kaiser made recommendations for the course of

action they felt the AL should pursue based on their assessment of developments

at the Karlsruhe meeting. While it was too soon to make a final decision before

the final program had been issued, the AL should by all means cooperate with

the Greens until then. Should the AL decide to continue its relationship with the

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[121] Die Linke kann nicht allein auf die Grünen setzen und in ihnen Politik machen. Dies wäre eine Zweitauflage des Sektierertums. Mayr and Kaiser, "Stellungnahmen," 23.

[122] Mayr and Kaiser, "Stellungnahmen," 23.

[123] Mayr and Kaiser, "Stellungnahmen," 25.

Greens, options ranged from joining en masse to supporting the Greens in elections but maintaining a critical attitude toward the party. Mayr and Kaiser counseled against the first option, asserting that the point was not to gain a majority in the party but rather to achieve a balance among the different political tendencies in the Greens, with all sides making concessions.[124] Mayr and Kaiser strongly advised against taking a stand against the Greens and trying to compete with them. But they also argued that it would be a mistake for the AL to rely exclusively on the Greens: conditions in West Berlin necessitated finding a solution that would broaden the AL's appeal, especially toward the center of the political spectrum, and to prevent divisions at the local level. This also involved doing everything possible to prevent the loss of AL members who opposed the Greens and did not wish to have the AL cooperate with them.[125]

An early look at the AL by one of its founders and a member of its Executive Committee gives insights into the reasons the AL remained separate from the Greens. Cordula Schulz advocated a middle position that would formalize the relationship with the Greens without sacrificing the individuality of the AL. The group should cooperate with the Green Party periodically as circumstances dictated.[126] The article shows that at least some within the AL consciously advocated a path between continued independence from the Green

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[124] Mayr and Kaiser, "Stellungnahmen," 25.

[125] Mayr and Kaiser, "Stellungnahmen," 25.

[126] Schulz, "Nie waren sie wertvoller," 86.

Party, which would preserve the AL's autonomy but risked isolating it, and dissolution of the AL through fusion with the Green Party, which would bring the West Berlin Left a voice in parliament but would sacrifice its individuality, local control, and potential coalition partners, especially those not accepting the Green Party's stance on violence. Schulz's article also demonstrates the extent to which the Left was attempting to capitalize on the increased concern with environmental issues, harnessing the stalled wagon of the Left to this new impulse. As has been seen, Schulz likened the new paradigm to a "green train," which the Left nearly missed.

Despite the value of this contribution, however, Schulz insisted that the Green Party could not take the place of the alternative ballots.[127] Elaborating, she asserted that only the AL was recognized by the independent Left and various citizens' initiatives as a worthwhile partner. Cooperation between these groups was progressing smoothly, and should continue to be developed. Those who wanted to fuse the Greens and the AL risked sacrificing or damaging this cooperation. Instead, the AL should continue to work independently, but should occasionally cooperate with the Greens, entering into temporary alliances ranging across a broad political spectrum. Schulz concluded that "neither the AL nor the Greens would be capable of going it alone."[128] In addition, Schulz warned

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[127] Schulz, "Nie waren sie wertvoller," 86.

[128] Weder die Alternative Liste noch die Grünen wären dazu allein in der Lage. Schulz, "Nie waren sie wertvoller," 90.

about another potential problem involved in moving closer to the Green Party

that directly related to attitudes toward parliamentary democracy and Berliners'

experiences with nonviolent protest. She feared that the Greens would awaken

false hopes that demands could be met "without conflict, in other words, without

violence. The nonviolent protest in Gatow against the felling of 30,000 trees,

clubbed down brutally by the police, demonstrates to what massive resignation

that can lead."[129]

Schulz also identified an alleged difference in the role parliaments played

in the strategy of the AL and the Greens, and used this as an argument against a

direct affiliation with the Green Party. For her, the Green Party placed too much

faith in the parliamentary system. Schulz claimed that, whereas the Green Party

had one leg in protest movements and the other leg in parliaments, the AL had

both legs outside parliaments, and used parliament as a "walking-stick."[130]

Whereas the extraparliamentary struggle was important for both the AL and the

Greens, the Greens depended on the parliaments for 'support,' while for the AL,

the parliaments were merely an aid, a tool to be used for fostering the more

important activities that went on outside of parliament.

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[129] Zum anderen erweckt die Seriosität der Grünen die Hoffnung, dass Forderungen konfliktfrei, sprich: Gewaltfrei, durchsetzbar sind. Zu welch massiver Resignation das führen kann, hat u.a. der gewaltfreie Widerstand in Gatow zur Verhinderung der Fällung von 30,000 Bäume gezeigt, der von der Polizei brutal zusammengeknüppelt wurde. Schulz, "Nie waren sie wertvoller," 88.

[130] Spazierstock. Schulz, "Nie waren sie wertvoller," 88.

Another danger of the Greens related more closely to ideas about the importance of political involvement in building a political consciousness. Schulz worried that the prospect of having one's demands resolved by parliamentary means alone would result in people never getting involved in citizens' initiatives in the first place. Thus they would never accumulate political experience themselves, and would instead rely on the parliamentarians to take care of things.[131] The result would be the much-vilified *Stellvertreterpolitik*, or 'politics by representation,' which violated the AL's grassroots political understanding.

Schulz ended her discussion on a note that represented a dramatic move away from the dogmatism of the K-group era. She asserted that "the times of the claim to be the sole representatives of a party and of the discussion 'only we do everything right' are over!"[132] This attitude was born of necessity, and arose out of the desire to avoid further fragmentation and the need to reach out to potential partners in order to exceed the 5 percent hurdle. It nevertheless constituted a major step in the evolution of the radical Left into a democratic party, as it highlighted the radical Left's newly adopted willingness to relinquish its claim to have a monopoly on the truth.[133] It also points to an unexpected effect of the 5 percent rule: intended to prevent a multitude of single-issue parties from

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[131] Schulz, "Nie waren sie wertvoller," 88.

[132] Die Zeiten des Alleinvertretungsanspruchs einer Partei und der Diskussion 'nur wir machen alles richtig' sind vorbei! Schulz, "Nie waren sie wertvoller," 90.

[133] Dahrendorf, *Society and Democracy*, 16.

entering the parliamentary system as in Weimar, in this case, it provided the incentive for single-issue groups to work together to forge a new party. Overall, Schulz advocated occupying the middle ground between the poles of the Green party and autonomous but isolated radical group. As it happens, this arrangement also managed to attract many of the most radical individuals of West Berlin, and once in the AL, to integrate them into the constitutional system of parliamentary democracy through the effects of parliamentary participation and through the increasingly strong role of the Green Party.

The Green Party also influenced the AL through the AL's competition with the federal Green Party's West Berlin affiliate. Shortly after the founding in Karlsruhe of the national Green Party, the State Committee of the Greens, or *Landesverband*, was founded in West Berlin. Some of its founders included members of the AL who wished to have an impact on the development of the national Green Party: in order to have a vote at the assemblies debating and discussing the program and statute of the Green Party, individuals had to become members at the local level. Some of these members then tried to use the existence of the State Committee as a way to pressure the AL into adopting a more exclusively ecology-oriented stance. The State Committee became a haven for those AL members who felt that the AL was not "green" enough. Some also tried to use the parallel organization to try to move the AL into a stance more in line with the Green Party's views regarding violence. According to Peter Sellin, the *Landesverband* also included two other camps: a conservative-reactionary

group around the Green Ballot Spandau, as well as some individuals Sellin asserts belonged to the New Right; and the so-called *Mittelgruppe*, or 'middle group,' consisting of individuals such as Martin Jänicke, Otto Schily, and Eva Quistorp.[134]

Developments centering around the West Berlin State Committee of the Green Party quickly died down, however, as interest in the national Greens waned. Electorally speaking, the new Green Party was a big disappointment, polling only 1.5 percent in the election of 1980. Furthermore, in West Berlin, attention focused on a local political battle, as scandals in the city forced new elections to be held in 1981. The *Landesverband* was essentially put on hold shortly after its formation, and the AL was able to lure away leaders such as Martin Jänicke, Ursula Schaar, and even Otto Schily to run on its open ballots. Later, however, the West Berlin State Committee of the Greens played an important role in attempts to pressure the AL to move closer to the Green Party and to distance itself from violent protest: this will be addressed in later chapters.

During the period 1979-1981, from the AL's entry into the District Assemblies up to the new elections of May 1981, the AL concentrated both on its work of keeping the party together and on making the best of its gains. This task proved to be a sobering experience for the new organization. The assemblies had very limited powers: they had no power to make laws or to determine how

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[134] Sellin, "Die AL und die Bundesgrünen," 123.

money was to be spent, and they were restricted to making recommendations to the Senate and overseeing the local administration.[135]

Because conditions and problems in the four districts in which the AL was represented varied greatly, it is not easy to draw general conclusions about the actual work in the district assemblies, nor is it useful to look at the work in detail. Generally, political scientist Burkhard Schaper's assertion that work in the District Assemblies provided valuable experience for applying new political forms and content seems reasonable.[136] Nevertheless, it is important to examine this era briefly. Already in this phase, the AL confronted crucial questions relating directly to the West German Left's changing views of Western parliamentary democracy. Were the AL representatives merely the parliamentary arm of the grassroots movement, or should they develop their own independent policies and strategies? Was the AL exclusively an opposition party, or was occasional cooperation with other parties permissible when it could prove advantageous?

One episode from this phase of the AL's development both illustrates the AL's confrontation with the above questions and reveals the AL's early views regarding the role of parliaments. In 1979, a controversy erupted in the Tiergarten district over the AL's cooperation with the liberal FDP in order to preserve a local park. The AL had filed a joint motion with the FDP promoting

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[135] Schaper, "Entstehungsgeschichte," 60.

[136] Schaper, "Entstehungsgeschichte," 61.

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its vision for the future of the park and calling on local authorities not to proceed

with plans to pave it. This act was enough to spark a debate concerning the

circumstances under which the AL should cooperate with another political party,

as well as about the AL's relationship to the citizens' initiatives. One side

advocated a very close relationship with the citizens' groups, and insisted that all

proposals and complaints be submitted to the assemblies for consideration, no

matter how trivial. Selecting certain issues brought to the AL by the citizens'

groups for enquiries or criticism and rejecting others amounted to a screening

process that contradicted the AL's ideals. The other side insisted that this was

not efficient, and would end up burying representatives and councils in matters

that stood little chance of resolution. This would take resources away from work

outside of parliaments. In what would become typical for the AL, the two sides

could only agree to disagree, and published their debate in the AL's membership

circular.[137]

Thus, at this early stage, the AL already confronted the dilemma of

whether it was more important to achieve a smoothly functioning party

apparatus or whether it should maintain its close relationship to grassroots and

citizens' initiatives. In essence, this was a conflict between "legitimacy and

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[137] "BVV Diskussion anlässlich der Tiergartener Schwierigkeiten," MRB 3
(1979), 2-4.

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efficiency."[138] But the debate is also interesting for what was *not* at issue. Neither side questioned the primacy of extra-parliamentary work: clearly, both sides viewed the work in the local assemblies as secondary. The debate was about means, not ends: it was about how best to serve the extra-parliamentary work of the AL.

In addition, both sides accepted the premise that working within the parliaments served to reveal the contradictions between what the established parties said and what they did, and to emphasize the parties' inability to represent the real interests of the people. This, of course, was a basic strategy of the KPD-Rote Fahne, which had used this argument as one of its primary justifications for entering parliament. Again, the debate in Tiergarten was about which means would best achieve this end. One side insisted that working with the FDP would reveal the contradictions between what individual FDP politicians promised and what they actually delivered, and thus would lead to public disillusionment with that party. The other side feared that working with the FDP delegates would have the opposite effect, and would give a false impression of the efficacy of the parliaments, perhaps because of the credibility that working with the AL as representatives of the citizens' initiatives would bring them.[139]

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[138] Legitimität und Effizienz. Raschke, *Die Grünen*, 33. See Raschke, *Die Grünen*, 33-36, for a discussion of this problem applied to the Green Party as a whole.

[139] "BVV Diskussion anlässlich der Tiergartener Schwierigkeiten," 4.

Overall, the AL became increasingly frustrated by its experiences in the District Assemblies, and morale quickly deteriorated. Again, however, it was the KPD-Rote Fahne members whose energy and determination to maintain their opportunity for meaningful political involvement kept the AL afloat. Ernst Hoplitschek explained the crucial role of the KPD-Rote Fahne in this capacity: "It was precisely this 'handful' of KPD members who lent their strength to the AL-organization…. Everyone who was present then will confirm it: if it had not been for the KPD-cadre in the party administration, in the interest groups and in the districts, the AL would certainly not have survived."[140]

The AL also received a boost by the fact that elections in West Berlin were moved up to 1981 as a result of the political scandal known as the Garski affair. Dietrich Garski, a prominent and well-connected West German architect, had lost funds to the tune of 160 million DM in bankrupt housing projects in Saudi Arabia. The failure of these schemes should have been evident when the Berlin Bank, and hence the city of West Berlin, extended the credit in 1978. Thanks to party cronies, however, he received the loans anyway, and in the process, those involved circumvented rules for issuing such credit. The West Berlin Senators

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[140] [Es waren] die 'Handvoll' KPD-Kader, die ihre Kraft weiterhin loyal der AL-Organisation widmeten….Jeder, der damals dabei war wird bestätigen: Hätte es jene KPD-Kader im Apparat, in den Bereichen und Bezirken nicht gegeben-die AL hätte mit Sicherheit nicht überlebt. Ernst Hoplitschek, in *Die Grünen*, ed. J. R. Mettke (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1982), 85 ff, quoted in *Die Alternative Liste Berlin: Entstehung, Entwicklung, Positionen*, ed. Michael Bühnemann, Michael Wendt, and Jürgen Wituschek (Berlin: LitPol Verlagsgesellschaft, 1984), 60.

for Finance and Economics were implicated in improperly issuing the credit, and their subsequent resignation helped propel the early elections.

The Garski scandal had a clear impact on the AL's development. Not only did the scandal precipitate early elections, but it also provided the impetus for the AL's entrance into the *Abgeordnetenhaus* in another way. It produced the perfect climate in which a party that appeared to be an alternative, outside force untainted by corruption and scandal could make significant gains. For the 1981 election, the AL portrayed itself in precisely these terms. In the first part of its 1981 electoral program, it attacked the infamous Berlin spoils system: "This is not the venality of a few people. This system is comprised of the structures of organized corruption, the one 'party friend' makes a request, the next 'party friend' approves it, the third is supposed to keep an eye on things, and all three help each other out- and help themselves to the taxpayer's money."[141]

The impact of the changed political climate due to the Garski scandal can also be seen in the adoption of some structural reforms by the AL. A few months before the elections, the *Mitgliedervollversammlung* approved structural changes to the AL with far-reaching implications. These changes reflected both the continuing concern about the potential domination of the KPD-Rote Fahne (and

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[141] Der Filz, das ist ja nicht die Bestechlichkeit einiger weniger Leute. Der Filz in West-Berlin, das sind die Strukturen der organisierten Korruption: der eine "Parteifreund" beantragt, der nächste Parteifreund "genehmigt", der dritte soll "kontrollieren", und alle greifen sich gegenseitig ordentlich unter die Arme und dem Steuerzahler in die Taschen. *Wahlbroschüre zu den Neuwahlen am 10. Mai 1981*, 3.

the public's reaction to this domination) and the AL's desire to portray itself as a political outsider. At the General Members' Assembly, AL members made AL representatives subject to seat rotation, the "fixed mandate," and prohibitions on holding multiple offices.[142] The principle of rotation stipulated that office-holders must leave their positions after a set number of years, while the fixed mandate required the AL delegates to the *Abgeordnetenhaus* to vote according to the decisions of the General Members' Assembly, not according to their own conscience. These changes placed obvious limits on the powers of individual members or sub-groups within the party.[143]

Also, at about this time, the AL began to exert a great deal of attraction on the rest of the West Berlin Left. This was certainly due in part to the AL's seeming so well poised to enter the *Abgeordnetenhaus* in the 1981 elections. Many groups, including those who had opposed the AL's 1979 bid for parliamentary seats and run on their own, with disastrous results, wished to back the right horse this time. These groups attempted to explain their change of position, in the process giving interesting insights into the thinking of the Left. The account of Siegfried Heimann, Bodo Zeuner, and Christel Neusüss, three members of the *Sozialistisches Büro* (Socialist Office- SB), a left-wing group centered in Offenbach but also active in West Berlin, exemplifies the shift that occurred between 1979

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[142] Imperatives Mandat.

[143] The original decision of the Members' Assembly is given in "Beschlussprotokoll der Mitgliedervollversammlung der AL am 7.3.1981," AGG: B.I.1.748.

and 1981. These individuals distanced themselves from the AL shortly after its

founding, but when the election of 1981 rolled around, they worked within the

AL:

> What caused us to keep our skeptical distance from the AL in
> 1979 was the fear, reinforced by individual experiences, that this
> political organization would not be genuinely representative of all
> different tendencies of the alternative and undogmatic left-wing
> movement, but would be dominated or even controlled from afar
> by a specific sectarian group, the Maoist-Stalinist KPD….
> Meanwhile, the KPD has dissolved itself in a remarkable process of
> self-recognition. The former members of the group continue to be
> active in the AL, objectively and partly subjectively freed of the
> pressure to carry out the orders of a centralistic cadre organization
> and 'reformed' regarding…the adoption of Chinese models.[144]

Summarizing their experiences, they noted further:

> Back then, we feared that the KPD would swallow up the AL- in
> reality, the AL swallowed up the KPD. To be more precise, the AL
> created political forms in which an intra-Left pluralism can develop
> productively, in which it is possible for groups with different
> assumptions to learn from each other and develop commonalities,
> and where they don't sweep their differences under the rug, but

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[144] Was uns dennoch zu skeptischer Distanz gegenüber der AL veranlasst
hat, war die durch einzelne Erfahrungen untermauerte Befürchtung, dass diese
politische Organisation keine wirkliche Repräsentanz aller verschiedenen
Strömungen der alternativen und undogmatisch-linken Bewegung sein würde,
sondern in Wirklichkeit von einer bestimmten sektiererischen Gruppe, der
maoistisch-stalinistischen 'KPD' dominiert, ja ferngesteuert würde….Inzwischen
hat die Partei 'KPD' sich in einem bemerkenswerten Prozess der Selbsterkenntnis
selber aufgelöst. Die ehemaligen Mitglieder der Gruppe wirken weiterhin in der
AL mit, objektiv und zum Teil auch subjektiv befreit von dem Druck, die
Parteiaufträge einer zentralistischen Kaderorganisation ausführen zu müssen,
und 'geläutert' in bezug auf…die Übernahme chinesischer Modelle. Siegfried
Heimann, Bodo Zeuner, Christel Neusüss, "Organisator produktiver
Lernprozesse," Document 10 in *Die Alternative Liste Berlin. Entstehung,
Entwicklung, Positionen*, ed. Michael Bühnemann, Michael Wendt, and Jürgen
Wituschek (Berlin: LitPol, 1984), 85.

deal with them. We underestimated this positive chance two years ago.[145]

These political forms involved renouncing a dogmatic claim to have a monopoly on the truth and a commitment to a culture of debate and discussion as a way of arriving at solutions. While the KPD-Rote Fahne adopted this attitude out of necessity, it nevertheless contributed to a democratization of the group, and bears a resemblance to the components of liberty outlined by Ralf Dahrendorf.[146]

At the same time that these individuals rationalized their shift of opinion regarding working within the AL, they revealed their views of parliamentary democracy and the role it should play for their organization in meeting its grievances, as well as their motives for participating in parliament: "Two years ago, we thought electoral participation of the leftist and alternative groups was necessary. We were of the opinion then and are of the opinion now that a movement that sees itself as political and wants to change the forms and content of the state's actions cannot do without participation in elections and parliamentary work as a means of exerting pressure."[147] This pressure resulted

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[145] Wir haben damals befürchtet, dass die KPD die AL schlucken würde- in Wirklichkeit hat die AL die KPD geschluckt. Genauer: Die AL hat Politikformen erzeugt, in denen es möglich ist, dass Gruppen mit unterschiedlichen Ansätzen voneinander lernen, Gemeinsamkeiten herauszuarbeiten, Differenzen nicht unter den Teppich kehren, sondern austragen. Diese positive Möglichkeit haben wir vor zwei Jahren unterschätzt. Heimann, Zeuner, and Neusüss, "Organisator," 85.

[146] Dahrendorf, *Society and Democracy*, 16.

[147] Schon vor zwei Jahren hielten wir eine Wahlbeteiligung der linken und alternativen Gruppen für notwendig. Wir meinten damals und wir meinen

from the fact that parliamentary elections decided the distribution of offices and power. Therefore, "threatening to take away votes from these parties, hence lowering their chances of occupying offices, is among the most effective means of exerting pressure an opposition movement possesses."[148] Moreover, they too viewed parliaments as entities to be used as a means of gathering and disseminating information.[149] This last point was, of course, identical to a key aspect of the KPD-Rote Fahne's strategy regarding the parliaments. Summing up their revised views of the AL's achievements, the authors concluded: "A political organization as the organizer of productive learning processes- after a decade of left-wing sectarianism in Berlin, this is more than a hope, it is an achievement worth preserving and defending."[150]

In addition to the SB, another group of the radical Left altered its view of the AL at this juncture. The KBW, another K-group very similar in program and structure to its bitter rival, the KPD-Rote Fahne, had resisted involvement with

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heute, dass eine sich als politisch verstehende Bewegung, die Formen und Inhalte staatlichen Handelns verändern will, auf die Wahlbeteiligung und die parlamentarische Arbeit als Mittel, Druck auszuüben, nicht verzichten kann. Heimann, Zeuner, and Neusüss, "Organisator," 84.

[148] Daher gehört die Drohung, diesen Parteien Wählerstimmen zu entziehen und damit ihre Ämterbesetzungschancen zu mindern, zu den effektivsten Druckmitteln, über die eine oppositionelle Bewegung verfügt. Heimann, Zeuner, and Neusüss, "Organisator," 84.

[149] Heimann, Zeuner, and Neusüss, "Organisator," 84-85.

[150] Eine politische Organisation als Organisator produktiver Lernprozesse- dies ist nach einem Jahrzehnt linken Sektierertums in Berlin heute schon mehr als eine Hoffnung, es ist schon ein Stück weit erhaltens- und verteidigenswerte Errungenschaft. Heimann, Zeuner, and Neusüss, "Organisator," 86.

the AL in 1979. It now changed its position, and called on its supporters and members to cast their votes for the AL in the 1981 election. The KBW printed a brochure in which it explained its position and its reasons for reversing its past views.[151] Most prominently, the brochure noted the electoral successes of the AL, especially compared to its own record. In the 1979 election, the KBW garnered only around thirteen thousand votes, whereas the AL received more than fifty thousand, and in the upcoming election, the AL seemed poised to be even more successful.[152] The brochure also revealed its perception of the AL's attitude toward parliaments. According to this interpretation, "the AL has been able to strengthen its influence in this election campaign, and for the first time since the outlawing of the old KPD, a political power that sets itself against all bourgeois parties and parliamentarianism has a realistic chance of winning seats in a state parliament."[153] The KBW was determined not to miss the boat this time.

Nevertheless, the KBW struggled to reconcile its decision with its program. On the one hand, like the KPD-Rote Fahne, its program rested on the

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[151] "Die Stellung des KBW zu den Wahlen am 10. Mai. Stimmen für die AL sind Stimmen für die demokratische Bewegung- Wählt Alternative Liste!" AdAPO: KBW Nord- C1 Flugblätter.

[152] Here, perhaps in its desire to make the AL even more attractive, the KBW was overgenerous in its assessment of the AL's successes in 1979: the AL actually gained less than forty-eight thousand votes.

[153] Die AL hat in diesem Wahlkampf ihren Einfluss stärken können und das erste Mal seit dem Verbot der alten KPD hat eine politische Kraft, die sich gegen alle bürgerlichen Parteien und den Parlamentarismus stellt, berechtigte Aussicht, Parlamentssitze in einem Landesparlament zu erreichen. "Stellung des KBW," 1. The "old KPD" was outlawed in West Germany in 1956.

assumption that parliamentary elections would never bring about the end of capitalist rule. On the other hand, the KBW had now come to embrace the view that not participating in the "bourgeois parliamentary elections" would allow these elections to be used against "the independent struggles that are materializing or have already materialized."[154] The KBW also hoped that the elections would help unify the alternative movement. It calculated that the electoral campaign would help create the conditions under which the KBW could "build up a unified front in which the working class had the leadership and that had the goal of the fall of capitalism."[155]

As for the AL, the KBW saw it as "a democratic coalition that defended itself against the policies of the bourgeois state."[156] In a remarkable shift, the KBW argued that working within parliament, the AL could achieve some gains for workers: "The candidacy of the AL makes it possible that the multifaceted resistance of the workers' movement and the democratic movement against

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[154] Überlassen wir aber das Feld der bürgerlichen Parlamentswahlen den bürgerlichen Parteien, so werden diese Wahlen zu einem Instrument gegen die bereits herausgebildeten und sich herausbildenden selbständigen Kämpfe. "Stellung des KBW," 3.

[155] [Wir wollen die programmatischen Positionen weiterentwickeln], um eine Einheitsfront aufzubauen, in der die Arbeiterklasse die Führung hat und deren Ziel der Sturz des Kapitalismus ist. "Stellung des KBW," 4.

[156] Wir verstehen die Alternative Liste als demokratisches Bündnis, das sich gegen die Politik des bürgerlichen Staates zur Wehr setzt. "Stellung des KBW," 4.

Senate policy will achieve representation also within parliament."[157] The KBW

also invoked arguments similar to those expressed in the debate in the Tiergarten

district of Berlin about the purpose of work in the District Assemblies. The KBW

hoped that the AL would be better able to point out contradictions between

rhetoric and reality, especially within the SPD. This would enable the AL to

force the government to make concessions, and would make it more difficult for

the government to pass "reactionary measures" while making it easier to

uncover and resist "parliamentary maneuvers of the bourgeoisie."[158]

The KBW's contribution reveals that the AL was able to overcome the

divisions between the K-groups that had haunted the Left throughout the 1970s.

A crucial component of the new approach to intra-Left cooperation was the

abandonment of the dogmatic claim to the truth and to a commitment to the

process of debate and discussion as ways of reaching the truth. The fact that

KBW members could work together with their archrivals from the KPD-Rote

Fahne indicates that this strategy worked, as does the fact that Otto Schily

showed himself willing to work with the AL at this juncture. Moreover, the

reward of parliamentary participation exercised great attraction for this former

archrival of the KPD-Rote Fahne. But its intentions regarding parliamentary

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[157] Durch die Kandidatur der Alternativen Liste ergibt sich die Möglichkeit, dass der vielfältige Widerstand der Arbeiterbewegung gegen die Senatspolitik auch innerhalb des Parlaments vertreten wird. "Stellung des KBW," 4.

[158] Reaktionäre Massnahmen; parlamentarische Manöver der Bourgeoisie. "Stellung des KBW," 4.

participation were the same as those of its former enemy, and boiled down to a simple plan for exploiting the parliaments as sources of information and as a platform for spreading class struggle.

Overall, the years 1978 to 1981 were important ones for the radical West Berlin Left, and were a time of significant changes in its attitudes toward parliamentary democracy. Burnout and frustration among the K-groups, frustration with parliamentary politics, and a determination to fend for oneself politically combined with the rise of the environmental paradigm to lead to the creation of a new organization, the AL. Much evidence indicates that the AL was a Trojan horse for the KPD-Rote Fahne, or at least was viewed by this radical K-group as such. Nevertheless, as a result of an attempt to at least feign a retreat from dogmatism and a partially sincere commitment to a political culture of debate and discussion, the KPD-Rote Fahne attracted enough allies to enter the *Bezirksparlamente.* In these local assemblies, the KPD-Rote Fahne held the new organization together through the strength of its members' determination to maintain a place where they could remain politically active, as a way of retaining their all-important political homeland. Party structures evolved that made other groups much more comfortable working within the AL, as they tended to prevent any one group becoming dominant. Moreover, the AL members began to take their newly adopted ideology seriously, and began already to develop into what they originally claimed to be- a group dedicated to spreading democracy and committed to environmental protection. Finally, the new

elections came at the perfect time and involved ideal issues that favored an

outsider party. The AL began to attract groups and individuals who had

previously rejected it due to the strong position of the KPD-Rote Fahne within

the group.

The Green Party also began to play a role in the AL's parliamentarization

and deradicalization at this juncture. In its struggle to stay united and to attract

allies in order to preserve the opportunity to maintain its political involvement,

the radical Left in West Berlin seized the opportunity to become active in the

Greens. The rise of the ecological paradigm enabled this, as 'green' issues were

flexible enough to allow for new coalitions and provided scope for new areas of

cooperation. The Left actively took advantage of this. Furthermore, the

founding of the Green party aided attempts on the part of the alternative ballots

to develop new ways to communicate and organize, as it elevated discussion by

providing the Left with a new integrative element: ecological ideas. The

phenomenon I call the 'green-alternative synthesis'- the fusion of environmental

ideas with concerns about human rights, feminism, affordable housing,

international peace, and economic exploitation- was already beginning to take

shape.

Despite these changes, though, the AL's attitude toward parliament

remained fundamentally ambivalent. After the 1981 election, one writer looked

back at the AL's paradoxical stance as an anti-parliamentary party campaigning

for office and neatly summarized the AL's views: "TO HELL WITH

PARLIAMENT- WE WANT IN!"[159] The next chapter examines the AL's fight to

enter parliament and its early experiences there, when the organization's

members faced the next stage in the evolution of their ideas regarding

parliamentary democracy.

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[159] SCHEISS AUFS PARLAMENT- WIR WOLLEN REIN! "Wohin gehst du, AL?" MRB 14 (1981), 13. Emphasis in the original.

Chapter Five

The APO in Parliament

When the AL entered the West Berlin *Abgeordnetenhaus* in 1981, the West

Berlin political scene was confronted with a paradoxical situation: the APO had

entered parliament. This was true for both interpretations of the acronym: for

the AL as part of the 'extra-parliamentary opposition,' in the sense that the AL

had many of the characteristics of the opposition movements that worked

outside of parliaments from the 1950s through the 1970s; and for the AL as an

'anti-parliamentary opposition,' with the AL's fundamentally negative attitude

toward parliament and parliamentary institutions.[1]

This chapter focuses on the period most marked by this paradox and its

consequences, 1981-1985. During this time, the AL continued the course of

radical opposition it had begun in the early years of its founding. Propelled into

parliament to a large degree by the controversies surrounding West Berlin's

housing policies, the AL's presence in the West Berlin parliament brought it

increased visibility and greater resources with which to develop and articulate its

alternative proposals. In its attitudes toward parliament expressed in acts in the

Abgeordnetenhaus and in its intra-party debates and publications, in its stance on

violent protest and terrorism, in its attitudes toward the Federal Republic and the

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[1] Recall that Franz Schneider claimed that "APO," the German acronym for "extra-parliamentary opposition," *ausserparlamentarische Opposition*, stood just as much for "anti-parliamentary opposition," *antiparlamentarische Opposition*. See Schneider, *Dienstjubiläum*, 49.

GDR, in its views of the Western Allies, and in its views of the national question, the AL continued to express and build upon the ideology of the radical Left. Even in this early phase of parliamentary representation, however, important signs of deradicalization and parliamentarization may be found beneath the surface of apparent uncompromising radicalism. Moreover, certain developments during this period helped nudge the AL slowly in the direction of accepting and embracing parliamentary democracy.

Though West Berlin was still an 'island city,' developments at the national and international level during this period also played a role, if mostly as developments to be reacted *against*. Recent electoral triumphs of laissez-faire neo-conservatism embodied by Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan foreshadowed the end of the social-liberal coalition in West Germany, when the CDU-CSU defeated the SPD and Helmut Kohl replaced Helmut Schmidt as West German Chancellor in 1982. This *Wende*, or turning-point, in West German politics was at least as much a result of the malaise of the SPD as it was about the rise of the popularity of the CDU-CSU, as the founding and rise in popularity of the West German Green Party attests.[2] Moreover, the Cold War, which in the past seemed to have been tamed through the process of détente, appeared to be intensifying again. Reagan in the United States and Brezhnev and Andropov (as of 1982) in the USSR seemed to be stepping up the rhetoric of international

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[2] Nicholls, *Bonn Republic*, 283. In 1983, the West German Greens became the first new political party since 1953 to enter the Bundestag.

conflict. In West Germany, the politics of bloc confrontation reached their peak

with the so-called *Doppelbeschluss*, or two-track decision, which in 1983 was

implemented by stationing modernized medium-range nuclear missiles on West

German soil. This decision was highly controversial in West Germany, and

divided the Left.[3]

The two-track decision also provided the focal point for West Germany's

peace movement. During the first half of the eighties, this movement

"represented the crowning glory of postwar peace protest."[4] Concern over the

stationing of missiles united a remarkably broad spectrum of groups that cut

across confessional and political divides to form "by far the largest social

movement West Germany had ever seen."[5] In 1980 and 1981, public awareness

and discussion of the two-track decision were intensifying. In one week during

October 1983, immediately before the *Bundestag* was due to make its final

decision regarding the missiles, between two and four million people took part

in protests. Once the stationing had been approved, demonstrators attempted to

physically block its implementation.[6] The West Berlin election was held during

the early phase of this campaign, and the degree to which the issue had

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[3] For an in-depth examination of the controversies surrounding the two-track decision and the insights these provided into West German political culture, see Herf, *War*.

[4] Alice Holmes Cooper, *Paradoxes of Peace: German Peace Movements since 1945* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), 209-210.

[5] Cooper, *Paradoxes*, 151.

[6] Cooper, *Paradoxes*, 208-209.

permeated the public's consciousness no doubt contributed to the AL's electoral success in 1981.

Though all of these factors had an impact on West Berlin, still, local concerns dominated West Berlin politics in the early 1980s. The growing sense of crisis in the housing situation in West Berlin particularly influenced the election of 1981. As was seen in the last chapter, the scandal that forced the government to move the elections forward was sparked in part by housing speculation. Moreover, the election campaign itself played out against the backdrop of a new social movement that focused on the housing issue. Examining this movement more closely provides context for the 1981 elections and gives key insights into an important clientele of the AL. The housing issue emerged as critical to the historical development of the AL. In fact, the coalition with the SPD ended over the issue of housing squatters, as will be seen in Chapter Seven. Overall, the AL cannot be understood without a closer examination of the housing squatters' movement.

The housing squatters do not seem at first glance to be related to the New Left, and appear on the surface to have been a single-issue fringe phenomenon. When examined more closely and in historical context, however, it becomes clear that the squatters were part of the counter-cultural response to the dissolution of the SDS, examined in Chapter Two. What seemed merely to have been about affordable housing and a criticism of housing politics turns out to have been far more complicated. Just beneath the surface of the housing debates lurked many

other issues, about historic preservation, about capitalism, about the problems of

modernity, and even about the relationship to the Allies and the legacy of

Germany's lost wars. The movement brought ecologically-minded persons into

the fold due to the undercurrents of aversion to modern life in West Berlin.

Furthermore, the energies released by the housing squatters' movement brought

other issues close to the West German Left bubbling to the surface, including the

anti-Springer campaign and prison reform. Overall, the housing issue of the

early 1980s became the rallying point of numerous opposition groups concerned

about the direction in which West German society seemed to be moving.

The housing squatters were linked closely to the AL. As an early advocate

of affordable housing and as an outsider party untainted by past scandals, the

AL was able to harness the squatters' energy and electoral potential and use

them as a springboard into parliament in the 1981 election. The AL did the best

in the 1981 elections in districts such as Kreuzberg, where the housing squatters

were the strongest: in 1981, the AL polled at 14 percent in Kreuzberg, the center

of the squatters' movement.[7] And 1981, the year in which the AL swept into the

West Berlin Parliament, marked the high point of the squatters' phenomenon.

The AL capitalized on the housing squatters' movement, tapping into its

members for support. In the process, however, the K-group veterans, who still

represented the largest group within the AL, found themselves overwhelmed by

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[7] Statistisches Landesamt Berlin, 2001. The AL received more votes in Kreuzberg than in any other district in West Berlin.

newcomers, who boosted the electoral strength of the AL but further diluted the KPD-Rote Fahne's ability to dominate as a bloc. This organization dissolved itself in 1980, and by the election of 1981, it was no longer apparent that the AL had been its direct successor.

Squatting houses is a widespread phenomenon in European cities, but the situation in Berlin was especially acute, partly due to the destruction of World War II but also as a result of policies favoring the practice of purchasing old flats and letting them deteriorate so that landlords could tear them down and construct more profitable luxury apartments and businesses.[8] As a result, West Berliners faced a crucial shortage of affordable housing- one estimate is that around eighty thousand Berliners were searching for a place to live in 1980.[9] Some responded by moving into neglected, highly deteriorated vacant buildings awaiting the wrecking ball. This put them in direct conflict with both landlords and police, who occasionally would try forcibly to evict the squatters, setting the stage for the increasingly violent confrontations between the squatters and the police that haunted West Berlin, particularly in the early eighties.

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[8] Richie, *Faust's Metropolis*, 785. For a Europe-wide perspective on the housing squatters, see *Wer sind die Instandbesetzer*, ed. Volkhard Brandes and Bernhard Schön (Bensheim : Paed. Extra Buchverlag, 1981). The publication of the early 1980s *Instandbesetzerpost* (IBP) provides critical insights into the West Berlin housing squatter scene. The library of the Free University Berlin has a nearly complete collection of this source. Note that as a home-grown publication, the pagination of the IBP is very irregular: page numbers are given whenever possible.

[9] Richie, *Faust's Metropolis*, 785.

It would be difficult to overestimate the importance of the squatters'

movement to West Berlin politics in the early 1980s. Indeed, the movement

received an extraordinary degree of public support, sometimes coming from

unlikely sources. For example, Heinrich Albertz, the Governing Mayor of West

Berlin at the time of the shooting of Benno Ohnesorg and formerly the mortal

enemy of the West Berlin Left, publicly and vocally supported the squatters, and

an interview with him appeared in the semi-official journal of the movement, the

Instandbesetzerpost.[10]

The central idea of the movement, often forgotten, was not only to occupy

houses, but also to renovate them. By occupying the houses, the squatters

followed in the footsteps of student demonstrators, who occupied classrooms

and other university buildings in sit-ins, teach-ins, and so on. The renovation

component was new, however. This emphasis on renovation served a dual

purpose: it eased the housing shortage, thus providing housing for only the cost

of the materials it would take to make them livable, and it brought attention to

the policies of neglect allegedly followed by the landlords and the Berlin Senate.

The full name of the movement reflects this, but is difficult to translate into

English. *Instandbesetzer*, the German word for the squatters, is a pun describing

their activities: "Instandbesetzen" is an amalgam of two words, "instandsetzen,"

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[10] IBP 26 (October 1981), 12-13. Interestingly, the interview emphasized
Albertz's conflicts with the Occupying Powers in 1949 in his capacity as Minister
for Refugees. See Schuster, *Heinrich Albertz*, 14-19 for a brief description of
Albertz's conversion to an ally and a father confessor to the West Berlin
alternative movement.

to renovate or restore, and "besetzen," to occupy. Thus the word *Instandbesetzer*

literally means "squatter-renovator." Articles in the movement's main

publication, the *Instandbesetzer Post* (IBP), gave advice as to how to restore and

renovate dilapidated houses, and showed how to tap into electricity illegally.

This advice was implicitly and sometimes explicitly linked with the ideology of

the movements associated with the Left. One issue featured a picture of a coping

saw with the slogan, "handwork creates consciousness!"[11]

The importance assigned to renovation is in fact key to understanding the

movement and its historical context. Through its emphasis on renovation, the

squatters' movement became a springboard for a renaissance of a back-to-nature,

do-it-yourself counterculture. An organization with strong ties to the squatter-

renovators in Kreuzberg, the movement's unofficial capital, was called

"KOSMOS- Kiez Organisation Selber Machen Oder Sterben"- Kiez organization do it

yourself or die.[12] The newsletter carried advertisements clearly reflecting the

back-to-nature movement, promoting products such as homespun wool and a

sixteen-year long walk across the continent and a "return to the nomadic

lifestyle" of old.[13] Housing squatters even sponsored their own cinemas.[14]

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[11] Handarbeit schafft bewusstsein! IBP 14 (12 June 1981), 25.

[12] IBP 21 (4 September 1981), 37.

[13] IBP 21 (4 September 1981), 4; Die Rückkehr zum Nomadenleben. IBP 22 (11 September 1981), 23.

[14] IBP 21 (4 September 1981), 30.

The drive for self-reliance also extended into medicine and policing, realms normally left to the state. This related both to the mistrust of officials and the justice system and the importance of protest to the squatter-renovators. The squatter-renovators set up surveillance systems including night watches, a telephone chain, and radio contacts in order to guard against theft, police raids, and attacks by right-wing gangs.[15] They also established independent medics for the purpose of giving first aid to those injured in street riots. The IBP printed a suggested list of contents for first aid kits designed to treat injuries sustained during street battles, as well as triage instructions.[16]

Other images reveal the anti-modern tendencies of the squatter-renovators, especially in their images of a utopian Berlin. The squatter-renovators' Spring Festival of 1981 provided inspiration for one such bucolic scene. A man bearing the insignia of the squatter-renovators and holding a pitchfork stands next to a woman with a hay rake. Around them are a sheep, a goat, a farm dog, a cow, and assorted poultry, while in the background, the roofs of Kreuzberg and East Berlin's television tower can be seen.[17] A cartoon on the history of the squatters' movement features a group of squatters who look much more like sturdy German peasants than urban dwellers.[18]

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[15] IBP 14 (12 June 1981), 7.

[16] IBP 16 (9 July 1981), 10-13.

[17] IBP 2 (17 March 1981). See Figure 5.

[18] IBP 14 (12 June 1981). See Figure 6.

In many ways, the back-to-nature, do-it-yourself thrust of the squatters'

movement was a continuation of the "romantic relapse" identified by Richard

Löwenthal in connection with the student movement. According to Löwenthal,

the violence of the student movement resulted from a "romantic despair"

stemming from a generation's unwillingness to accept the conditions of modern

industrial society dominated by technology.[19] Similarly, the housing squatters

rejected aspects of modern society ranging from mass-produced goods to basic

services such as hospitals and police.

Elements of the anti-Springer campaign also were to be found among the

squatter-renovators, and attacks on Axel Springer and his newspapers were

common. One author claimed that as a child, Springer's favorite pastime was "to

smear everything with feces."[20] In order not to have to give up this hobby, Axel

grew up to become a publisher and created the Berlin tabloid *BZ*. Squatter-

renovators also accused Springer's papers of running classified ads promoting

the services of groups specializing in expelling squatters from private property.[21]

The links between the ideological concerns of the squatter-renovators and

issues associated with the New Left became especially clear in the context of the

organization of the so-called "TUWAT conference." This international event,

held in 1981 in West Berlin, was in part a reaction against an event held three

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[19] Romantische Verzweiflung. Löwenthal, *Romantischer Rückfall*, 5.

[20] Alles mit Scheisse zu beschmieren. IBP 4 (1 April 1981), 3.

[21] IBP 1 (11 March 1981), 3.

years earlier- the "TUNIX" conference. Activists criticized the attendees of this

first meeting of the alternative scene for theorizing instead of acting, and sought

to cast their own event in a new light. Instead of doing nothing, their conference

would be characterized by action- they would do something about the problems

facing the movement and the city.[22] Moreover, this activism was by no means

limited to the concerns of the housing squatters. The "Tuwat Song," the German

lyrics of which are only slightly less stilted than the English translation,

illustrates this well:

> In the beginning for me it was mostly about the house,
> I wanted to live together and get out of my little room.
> But when I see what kind of crap goes on,
> I know for sure that it's not just about the housing fight.
> I'm doing something now…

The song also incorporated the anti-nuclear movement:

> Soon in Gorleben they'll build a storage site,
> a radioactive block that fouls up the environment.
> Man, what good will my little home be when the storage site threatens
> to maybe blow up, then I'll be dead soon!
> I'm doing something now…[23]

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[22] *Tunix* is German slang meaning 'to do nothing,'while *Tuwat* is Berlin dialect for 'do something.'

[23] Am Anfang ging's mir zum grossen Teil ums Haus,
wollt zusamm'n leben und aus meiner Bude raus.
Doch wenn ich sehe, was für Scheisse vor sich geht
weiss ich sicher, dass es nicht nur um Häuserkampf geht.
Ich tu jetzt wat ich tu jetzt wat...
In Gorleben wird bald ein Lager gebaut
ein radioaktiver Klotz, der die Umwelt versaut
Mensch, was nützt mir denn mein Häusli wenn das Zwischenlager droht,
dass das Ding vielleicht doch hochgeht und dann bin ich bald tot!
Ich tu jetzt wat, ich tu jetzt wat….
IBP 20 (25 August 1981), 4.

This was not the only evidence of an environmental consciousness. In the weekly section giving construction tips, the section on painting urged squatter-renovators not to use spray paint cans for painting rooms because of their deleterious effect on the ozone layer. Their use should be reserved for spraying graffiti "in action on the front" in the housing battle.[24] One writer suggested that squatter-renovators plant more trees along the streets in the '*Kiez*', the local neighborhood.[25] Ecologically-oriented bookstores advertised in the IBP.[26] One initiative of the squatter-renovators involved "greening the Kiez" by distributing homegrown plants that could survive the winters, together with watering cans and soil.[27] Activists also attempted to draw parallels between earlier environmental movements such as the protest against the power plant at Oberjägerweg in Spandau, with commentators calling this campaign Berlin's largest squatting action before the squatter-renovators.[28] Similarly, the IBP covered actions of the 'Citizens' Initiative Tegeler Forest' on several occasions, keeping readers updated on the fight against construction of a highway through a West Berlin forest.[29]

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[24] Spraydosen nur für den Einsatz an der Front! IBP 14 (12 June 1981), 25.

[25] IBP 2 (17 March 1981), 2.

[26] IBP 5 (9 March 1981), 11.

[27] IBP 12 (29 May 1981), 11.

[28] IBP 16 (9 July 1981), 19.

[29] IBP 29 (7 November 1981), 11; IBP 31 (4 December 1981), 12.

The RAF prisoners carrying out hunger strikes also received attention, and the squatter-renovators viewed their plight sympathetically. Organizers attempted to enlist the squatters in the protest against the conditions under which RAF prisoners were confined, and to mobilize this issue's protest potential. This included attempts to equate the squatter-renovators' plight with that of the prisoners. The squatter-renovators were "all threatened with jail, [they] also stand in the tradition of those who risked something back then...and now are fighting for survival against solitary confinement and special treatment-June 2 Movement, RAF, those who occupied the Amerika-Haus and others."[30] Another commentator drew an explicit parallel between the policies of the state toward housing and urban development and those of prison: "This state does its best to strangle everything human in concrete- whether in the *Märkisches Viertel* or in Moabit prison."[31]

Two slogans central to the movement help characterize the mentality of the squatter-renovators. One of the slogans, "Just watch out!" was used frequently by the squatter-renovators.[32] The other slogan, "Too bad concrete

[30] Alle irgendwie von Knast bedroht, irgendwie auch in der Tradition deren stehend, die damals schon was riskierten…und jetzt ums Überleben kämpfen, gegen Isoknast und Sonderbehandlung- 2. Juni, RAF, Amerika-Haus-Besetzer und andere. IBP 1 (11 March 1981), 3.

[31] Dieser Staat tut sein Möglichstes, um alles Menschliche in Beton zu ersticken- ob es nun im Märkischen Viertel oder im Moabiter Gefängnis ist. IBP 4 (1 April 1981), 15. The Märkisches Viertel was a part of West Berlin near Kreuzberg

[32] Passt bloss auf! At its most defiant, IBP 17 (18 July 1981), cover.

doesn't burn!" was often employed by squatters throughout West Germany.[33]

Both slogans clearly expressed threats of violent protest. "Just watch out!" was a

challenge to general authority, and was also used by the AL to shake up the so-

called established parties.[34] "Too bad concrete doesn't burn" was of course a

much less veiled threat against property, and also contained an inherent critique

of the urban policies of the parties in power and their tendency 'to pave over

everything.'

Squatter-renovators frequently put these threats into action. When the

police stormed a squatted house, violent clashes regularly ensued, sometimes

spilling over into the main part of the city. Targets of this violence were

revealing: banks, department stores, and grocery store chains, all symbols of

capitalism. One rioter described a typical reaction to police actions in a most

revealing way: "Due to the hopelessness of the situation about 150 to 200 people

marched from the Chamisoplatz…. We expressed our anger against banks (the

real wire-pullers behind all politics) and against Hertie [a super-market chain],

which has nothing better to do than to wrest the bitterly earned money from out

of the pockets of us, the little people."[35] Conflicts with the police became so

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[33] Schade, dass Beton nicht brennt! IBP 21 (4 September 1981), 30.

[34] The slogan appeared on a banner celebrating the AL's entry into the *Abgeordnetenhaus* in 1981. See Mayer, Schmolt, and Wolf, *Zehn Jahre Alternative Liste*, 55. Also used in a self-ironic way, MRB 58 (September 1989), cover.

[35] Aufgrund der Hoffnungslosigkeit der Lage zogen 150 bis 200 Leute vom Chamisoplatz aus…. Unsere Wut entlud sich gegen Banken (die eigentlichen Drahtzieher jeder Politik) und gegen Hertie, der auch nichts anderes tut, als uns

intense that the protesters sardonically asked the "protective powers" for

protection from the West German "beating police."[36]

Most of the time, however, the squatter-renovators were not asking for

help from the protective powers, however ironically, but were busy criticizing

them, if only obliquely. There were strong undertones of reaction against the

presence of Allied troops in West Berlin among the publications of the squatter-

renovators. Evidence even indicates that at least some of the squatters viewed

themselves as guerilla warriors struggling against an occupying army. In their

perspective, the West German police were collaborating with the conquerors,

from whom they thought they were liberating territory for themselves. An

article on a police raid in Kreuzberg was headlined "Enemy troops in KO 36."[37]

The front page featured pictures of tanks (actually armored police vehicles)

doctored to feature SS runes on the front rolling down the streets of Kreuzberg.

Thus the squatters managed to think of themselves both as anti-fascist and as

continuing their struggle against the occupiers. The language used to describe

this struggle was at times remarkable. At the end of one demonstration, a

"kleinen" Leuten das sauer verdiente Geld aus der Tasche zu ziehen. IBP 1 (11 March 1981), 3.

[36] Besetzer an Besatzer: 'Wir ersuchen die Allierten Schutzmächte um Schutz vor der dt. Prügelpolizei.' IBP 1 (11 March 1981), 12.

[37] KO 36 was the old postal code for Kreuzberg, and was often used proudly by Kreuzbergers to emphasize their unique identity. When I was doing research in 2001 in Kreuzberg, I witnessed native Kreuzbergers still defiantly referring to their district as KO 36 in speech and in writing, despite the fact that the postal codes had been reformed for decades.

participant noted, "We have shown that we will not give up without a fight that which we have taken, that we won't let our conquered living spaces be taken from us and that there are ever more who are ready to fight for this."[38]

As was the case with the K-groups, the anti-capitalism of the squatter-renovators spilled over into something that, while not overt anti-Semitism, certainly appears to have been a xenophobic racism. In imagining the capitalist enemy and in striving to express their fear and hatred of capitalism, the squatter-renovators employed imagery reminiscent of caricatures used under National Socialism. There is the image of the capitalist as blood-sucking vampire and life-consuming zombie, and of the capitalist as menacing foreigner controlling the greedy, corrupt, and violent police force.[39] Similarly, the housing speculator made an appearance as the sinister foreigner who extorted his living by charging Germans to rent their homes, and as a monster luring innocent blonde German women to their doom.[40]

The squatter-renovators in West Berlin thus included many more issues than merely the scarcity of housing. It became something of a catchall movement

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[38] Wir haben gezeigt, dass wir nicht widerstandslos aufgeben, war wir uns genommen haben, uns unsere eroberten Lebensräume nicht einfach wegnehmen lassen und dass es immer mehr werden, die bereit sind, dafür zu kämpfen. "Wer ist eigentlich unser Feind, der Staat oder die Mülltonne," flyer reprinted in IBP 17 (18 July 1981), 2.

[39] IBP 4 (1 April 1981), cover. See Figure 7; IBP 2 (17 March 1981), 16. See Figure 8.

[40] IBP 4 (1 April 1981), 19. See Figure 9; IBP 21 (4 September 1981). See Figure 10.

itself, representing a continuity to many aspects of the New Left. The ability of the environmental movement to bring diverse groups together has already been mentioned. The squatters' movement was able to appeal to so many groups for similar reasons. On a metaphorical level, ecologists saw the practice of letting houses decay in the interest of profit as analogous to the plundering of the planet. Groups from the anti-nuclear movement were also involved, as the TUWAT song makes clear. Communists saw the speculators as a prime example of capitalist abuse, putting money first and ignoring the needs of people. Those inclined to embrace the peculiar nationalism of the Left saw the housing squatters as involved in a larger struggle against the occupiers imposing the division of Germany and propping up the capitalist order. Some also saw themselves as defending territory liberated from the invading capitalist armies of the Allies, or, even worse, the German capitalists themselves, backed up by the politicians and the police. By harnessing itself to this movement, the AL gained a tremendous amount of electoral potential. It also inherited some problems, however. These problems related especially to the issue of trying to represent and protect a movement with highly ambivalent views of the state and especially of the role of violence in political protest.

Against the backdrop of the housing squatters, the West Berlin political parties waged their 1981 election campaign. In the weeks leading up to the election, the AL attracted increased media attention. The weekly newsmagazine *Der Spiegel* surveyed AL voters and members and concluded that "the Greens are

red," as AL voters classified themselves as far to the left in the political

spectrum.[41] The article also noted that AL voters were much younger than those

voting for other parties. Almost all were under 30 years old, and almost none

were over 50. AL supporters also tended to be better educated and more widely

traveled than supporters of other parties. Finally, the survey found that the AL

had relatively little support from the working class, and relatively high support

among officials and white-collar workers. The patterns of support for the AL

were thus quite consistent with Markovits and Gorski's assertion about the link

between the rise of the Green Party and the weakening link between the Left and

the workers' movement.[42]

Another *Spiegel* article focused on the radical nature of the AL and its

potential to disrupt the West Berlin electoral scene. According to Tilman Fichter,

a political scientist and expert on the West Berlin Left, the AL was an "omnibus:

every single-issue movement can climb aboard as long as it accepts the

ideological dominance of the driver."[43] The article also noted the presence of two

former June 2 Movement members on the ballot: Peter Paul Zahl and Gerd

Klöpper had places on the AL's electoral list, though their chances of election

were virtually nil due to their low position on the ballot. Nevertheless, this

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[41] "Die Grünen sind rot," *Der Spiegel* 35, no. 15 (6 April 1981), 35.

[42] Markovits and Gorski, *German Left*, 3.

[43] Die AL ist ein Omnibus: jede Einpunktbewegung kann zusteigen, solange sie die prinzipielle ideologische Herrschaft des Chauffeurs akzeptiert.

revealed a disturbing attitude toward parliament: one discussion participant

derided parliament as a "crappy joint."[44] The article worried that the AL could

block the formation of a government in West Berlin if the electoral forecasts

proved true. The article also gave the perceptions of the AL from the perspective

of the other West Berlin parties. The SPD had the most to lose from the AL's rise:

accordingly, the SPD warned that the AL was "a party dominated by dogmatic

leftist forces."[45] The FDP, which could potentially fall below the 5 percent

threshold, tarred the AL as "in domestic policy, anarchists, and in foreign policy,

gamblers."[46] The CDU's mayoral hope Richard von Weizsäcker called the AL

"indescribable," at best just "a conglomeration of opinions."[47]

The AL's 1981 electoral platform was remarkable in many ways. First,

whereas it began with attacks on the established parties, its self-definition was no

longer negative: unlike the program from 1979, it gave a fairly clear definition of

what it stood *for* rather than against. It also shows that the AL increasingly

defined itself in terms of fighting for the rights of women and encouraging

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"Berlin: Blockade durch die Alternativen?" *Der Spiegel* 35, no. 19 (4 May 1981), 44.

[44] Beschissener Laden. "Blockade durch die Alternativen," 50.

[45] Eine von linksdogmatischen Kräften beherrschte Partei. "Blockade durch die Alternativen," 37.

[46] Innenpolitische Chaoten und aussenpolitische Hasardeure. "Blockade durch die Alternativen," 37.

[47] Unbescreiblich; ein Konglomerat von Stimmungen. "Blockade durch die Alternativen," 37.

women to participate in parliament. Nevertheless, the program retained the

doctrine of the primacy of the extra-parliamentary. It insisted, "Grass roots

movements and citizens' initiatives are more important to us than parliamentary

debates and voting on laws. We have selected our candidates for the Berlin

legislature and the district councils accordingly."[48]

Unsurprisingly, housing policy received a prominent place in the AL's

1981 electoral program: among the issues addressed with concrete proposals,

housing policy came first. The program demanded improved rights for renter's

organizations and initiatives "as bearers of collective resistance;" it pledged the

AL's commitment to the rights of individual tenants; and it promised to work to

decentralize decision making regarding housing policy.[49] It committed the AL to

work to legalize the practice of squatting houses in order to renovate them, and

to achieve amnesty for those arrested in connection with the squatter-renovators

movement. The AL pledged to try to prevent the destruction of apartment

buildings, and announced that it would work to prosecute those carrying out this

destruction; and it called for immediate renovation of those flats currently

empty, as well as the reintroduction of rent control. Finally, the program

demanded that politicians dismantle the incentive system for modernization and

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[48] Basisbewegungen und Bürgerinitiativen sind uns wichtiger als Parlamentsdebatten und Gesetzesabstimmungen. Danach haben wir auch unsere Kandidaten für das Abgeordnetenhaus und die Bezirksverordnetenversammlungen ausgesucht. *Wahlbroschüre 1981*, 11.

[49] Träger des kollektiven Widerstandes.

construction of new buildings, which the AL held responsible for the housing

crisis, and called for the return of publicly subsidized housing.[50]

In the program, it now introduced to the public the important structural

changes adopted a few months earlier. In particular, the fixed mandate helped

the AL portray itself as a genuine political outsider untainted by corruption.

From the perspective of the AL, delegates answering to their own conscience

were merely able to be bought.[51]

The program laid out the AL's plans for the *Abgeordnetenhaus*. Rather than

attending to the formalities of law making, the AL made it clear that "if

necessary, we will kick up a fuss in Parliament."[52] But it also intended to serve as

a source of hope for those who believed in a more progressive politics, as well as

those who wished to shake up the political establishment.

Like that of 1979, the 1981 electoral program was clearly directed against

this political establishment: the electoral program enjoined voters to work

together to "thwart the plans of all the established parties!"[53] But the rhetoric had

shifted: instead of directing its anger at parliaments and the parliamentary

system in general, the anger focused against the "established parties" and the

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[50] *Wahlbroschüre 1981*, 15.

[51] *Wahlbroschüre 1981*, 11.

[52] Wenn es not tut, werden wir im Abgeordnetenhaus mal auf den Putz
hauen. *Wahlbroschüre 1981*, 12.

[53] Machen wir allen etablierten Parteien einen Strich durch die Rechnung!
Wahlbroschüre 1981, 9.

spoils system with which they were allegedly intimately connected. Moreover,

the program linked this spoils system directly to the pressing problems of West

Berlin. Under the established parties, the city merely continued to decay.

Environmental problems plagued the city: the brochure asked, "Who wants their

children to grow up without knowing what a real meadow and a real forest are,

or that they only experience it when on vacation? Who wants always to be sick,

because the air is so bad that even the children get bronchitis? Who wants to live

between building ruins or between highway access roads or between cement

silos without tree or bush?"[54]

Rather than portraying West Berlin's problems in terms of the problems

and failures of capitalism, however, the program set them squarely in the context

of the city's geopolitical position: "But the main problem lies deeper! This city

has no chance as an independent factor in any matter, it cannot solve any

problem itself if it cannot rid itself of its role as whipping boy between East and

West."[55] Thus, to a certain degree, the answer to West Berlin's problems lay in

the resolution of East-West conflicts, which the program advocated solving

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[54] Wer will schon, dass seine Kinder aufwachsen, ohne zu wissen, was eine richtige Wiese und ein richtiger Wald sind oder dass sie es nur im Urlaub erfahren? Wer will schon dauernd krank sein, weil die Luft so schlecht ist, dass schon die Kinder Bronchitis bekommen? Wer will schon zwischen Häuserruinen wohnen oder zwischen Autobahnzubringern oder zwischen Betonsilos ohne Baum und Strauch? *Wahlbroschüre 1981*, 9-10.

[55] Doch das hauptsächliche Problem liegt tiefer! Diese Stadt hat keine Chance als selbstständiger Faktor, auf welchem Gebiet auch immer, sie kann kein einziges Problem selbst lösen, wenn sie die Rolle des Prügelknaben zwischen Ost und West nicht los wird. *Wahlbroschüre 1981*, 10.

through a European peace settlement that would also involve the dissolution of the East and West blocs.

The political program did not distance the AL from violence. In fact, the question of the acceptability of political violence would continue to haunt the AL throughout the 1980s. It was a particularly controversial issue for the AL because of the violence associated with the protests and rallies accompanying the housing squatters' movement. Far from renouncing violence, the AL blamed the policies of the established parties using what boiled down to a 'they started it' argument: "The established parties now rail against violence. We ask: has anyone delivered a better justification for violence than the established parties themselves, who for years didn't give a damn about tenants' social misery and indignation, but who now pose as problem-solvers since the conflicts began. We did not invent the violence, it was already there."[56]

The program reflected similar motivations for participating in parliament that arose in the course of the Tiergarten debate discussed above. The AL wished to enter Parliament in May "in order to make it more difficult to deceive voters."[57] And the primacy of the extra-parliamentary work remained in place.

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[56] Die Etablierten wettern jetzt gegen Gewalt. Wir fragen: Hat jemand eine bessere Rechtfertigung geliefert für Gewalt als die Etablierten selbst, die sich jahrelang einen Dreck scherten um das soziale Elend der Menschen in ihren Wohnungen und um ihre Empörung, sich aber jetzt als Problemlöser aufspielen, seit die Auseinandersetzungen eskaliert sind. Wir haben die Gewalt nicht erfunden, sondern vorgefunden. *Wahlbroschüre 1981*, 14.

[57] Um den Betrug am Bürger schwerer zu machen. *Wahlbroschüre 1981*, 11.

"What is decisive is that which happens outside of parliaments, at the grassroots level- everywhere, where people fight for their rights, their environment, their living conditions."[58]

Specific programmatic demands of note included opposition to nuclear energy or construction of large power plants that would further degrade Berlin's air quality, and the promotion of renewable energy and more efficient use of energy resources; improved transit systems and traffic planning; improved employment programs; and an improved social policy. The program devoted a great deal of attention to the plight of women in West Berlin, and demanded equal rights and improved treatment of sexual minorities, as well as better treatment of West Berlin's *Gastarbeiter*. The program also devoted a large section to the dangers of a police state. Opposition to *Berufsverbote* and strands of anti-Springer rhetoric were also to be found.[59]

A remarkably large section of the program addressed policies regarding Berlin. Rather than insisting that Berlin could only serve its function as city of peace and freedom if it could handle its urban problems, the AL blamed West Berlin's "unnatural geopolitical situation."[60] Whereas other parties allegedly ignored the long-term perspectives for Berlin, the AL saw itself as obliged "to put

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[58] Entscheidend ist, was ausserhalb des Parlaments geschieht, an der "Basis"- überall dort, wo Menschen um ihr Recht, um ihre Umwelt, um ihre Lebensbedingungen kämpfen. *Wahlbroschüre 1981*, 12.

[59] *Wahlbroschüre 1981*, 32.

its finger on this sore."[61] It noted, "the continuing occupied status of Berlin shows that the formation of military blocs in Europe under the leadership of the United States and the Soviet Union carries unresolved problems with it. Through resolving the German question and ending the confrontation of the blocs in Europe, Berlin could gain a future perspective."[62] The AL thus saw itself as an advocate of German unity, but was adamant that this unity not involve "a central Prussian state." Instead, it advocated unity "on a historical, cultural, economic, social, and humane level."[63] The forms this might take should be left open. But it viewed as its task combating the lack of rights for Berliners imposed by the presence of foreign troops, as seen in the conflict of the Düppeler Field and the Gatower Heide.

The program also continued to emphasize support for the democratic and socialist opposition in the GDR. The AL advocated free reporting in East and West and the unlimited exchange of books and newspapers across the intra-German border. It wished to ease travel between East and West by advocating

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[60] Die unnatürliche geographisch-politische Situation West-Berlins. *Wahlbroschüre 1981*, 33.

[61] Den Finger auf diese Wunde legen. *Wahlbroschüre 1981*, 33.

[62] Der andauernde Besatzungszustand Berlins zeigt, dass die militärische Blockbildung in Europa unter Führung von USA und Sowjetunion und die Teilung Deutschlands ungelöste Probleme in sich bergen. Durch die Lösung der deutschen Frage und die Auflösung der europäischen Blockkonfrontation kann Berlin eine Zukunftsperspektive gewinnen. *Wahlbroschüre 1981*, 33.

[63] Ein preussischer Zentralstaat; Uns geht es v.a. um eine Einheit auf historisch gewachsener, kultureller, wirtschaftlicher, sozialer und menschlicher Ebene. *Wahlbroschüre 1981*, 33.

the end of observation of travelers, as well as the elimination of the mandatory

currency exchange. It advocated free travel for all in both blocs.[64]

Finally, its plans for Berlin held that Berlin should become a center of

peace. This involved freeing Europe of atomic weapons and dissolving both

NATO and the Warsaw pact, as well as ending the arms race in East and West.[65]

Years earlier, the KPD-Rote Fahne had advocated exactly these measures. In fact,

many of the demands and concerns advanced by the KPD-Rote Fahne

reappeared in both the 1979 and 1981 election platforms. But the attitude toward

parliament and the means by which these demands were to be achieved had

shifted significantly.

Its election campaign bore fruit for the AL, and its vote share represented

a significant increase over the 1979 results. The AL received 7.2 percent of the

vote, more than enough to enter the West Berlin parliament, even supplanting

the FDP as the third strongest party in the city. Press reaction to the victory of

the AL and its entry into the West Berlin *Abgeordnetenhaus*, like press coverage of

the AL during the election campaign, focused on the implications of the AL for

the political scene in West Berlin. The Springer-owned daily *BILD* stirred up

fears that the AL posed a threat for West Berlin's security: it noted that the AL

would be represented in all committees in the parliament, and would thus have

access to confidential police documents and Allied records relevant to West

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[64] *Wahlbroschüre 1981*, 36-37.

[65] *Wahlbroschüre 1981*, 38-39.

Berlin's security. It also noted that one of the Lorenz kidnappers had been

elected to a district assembly: Gerald Klöpper had been elected on the AL ticket

as a representative to the District Assembly in Tiergarten. The article also noted

however that the AL promised "not to burn down City Hall."[66] The much more

reputable (if less widely-read) *Tagesspiegel* called the AL victory a "warning

signal" for the established parties, "signaling a loss of trust in all of them."[67]

According to this article, the AL's victory resulted from the other parties' lack of

transparency. This had allowed voters to form the impression that politicians

were not out to serve the common good, but rather had exploited their political

positions and connections to enrich themselves.

The AL's entry into the West Berlin parliament also sparked a variety of

reactions within the AL itself. When reporting the three hundred thousand

deutschmark debt incurred by the AL as a result of its election campaign, the

unnamed financial officer captured the mood of many in the party by asking,

"What are three hundred thousand DM compared to a historic moment?"[68]

Others reacted more soberly. In the immediate wake of the 1981 elections, an

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[66] Wir werden das Rathaus nicht anzünden. BILD, 13 May 1981.

[67] Warnungszeichen; Es signalisiert ein Vertrauensverlust für alle von ihnen. *Der Tagesspiegel*, 12 May 1981.

[68] Was sind 300,000 DM gegen einen historischen Augenblick? "Wahlkampfkosten der AL," 1 June 1981. AGG:B.I.1.752.

article in the members' circular posed the question "Where are you heading, AL?"[69]

In May 1981, leading figures from three different factions within the party came together to try to answer this question by devising the AL's post-election political strategy. The backgrounds of these figures testify demonstrate the diverse nature of the groups comprising the AL, as well as the pragmatism of these leaders in attempting to forge a strategy that would continue to allow these groups to cooperate. Ernst Hoplitschek, representing the ecological strand, Wolfgang Kaiser, a KPD-Rote Fahne member, and Dieter Kunzelmann, the former *Kommune I* member representing a direct link to West Berlin's radical alternative culture, drafted this reaction to the AL's electoral breakthrough. For these authors, "the electoral success of the AL involves a qualitative leap in terms of new possibilities for political influence; we must recognize and exploit this, this is part of the responsibility that the AL was given by the 7.2 percent [who voted for the AL] and the support of the many grassroots movements during the election."[70] This new situation, which represented both opportunity and responsibility, required that a political offensive be conducted in the parliament.

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[69] Axel Mahler, "Wohin gehst Du, AL?" MRB 14 (1981), 12.

[70] Der Wahlerfolg der AL bedeutet einen qualitativen Sprung, neue Möglichkeiten der politischen Einflussnahme; dies müssen wir erkennen und ausschöpfen, dies ist ein Teil der Verantwortung, die der AL durch die 7,2% und die Unterstützung von vielen aus Basisbewegungen während des Wahlkampfes auferlegt ist. Ernst Hoplitschek, Wolfgang Kaiser, and Dieter Kunzelmann, "Diskussionsvorlage für den Delegiertenrat der AL zur nach den Wahlen einzuschlagenden Politik der Alternativen Liste," 13 May 1981. AGG:B.I.1.749

According to the authors, the party's primary goal should be to prevent Ernst

von Weizsäcker from heading the West Berlin government.[71] The second prong

of their strategy was more significant. In order to prevent the other parties from

being able to tar the AL as naysayers and political incompetents, the piece

recommended taking a positive political initiative immediately. This would help

the AL increase its electoral support instead of surrendering it back to

disgruntled SPD and FDP voters, from whom they realized much of the AL's

support came. At the same time, they recommended consulting with the

grassroots initiatives to coordinate adopting their political goals. These steps

would involve both extra-parliamentary activities and legislative initiatives.[72]

A few isolated voices even advocated limited cooperation with the SPD.

In the aftermath of the AL's electoral successes in 1981, Jürgen Wachsmuth, one

of the AL's first delegates to the West Berlin parliament, recommended that the

AL tolerate an SPD-minority Senate.[73] In reality, though, its position as part of

the opposition was clear from the beginning: the AL voted to oppose any

involvement in a coalition, and members of the FDP faction defied the will of

their state organization by voting to tolerate a minority CDU Senate. Richard

von Weizsäcker, the Federal Republic's future President, was elected Governing

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[71] The AL immediately failed to achieve this goal: one of the first orders of business in the new session of the *Abgeordnetenhaus* was to elect von Weizsäcker Governing Mayor of West Berlin.

[72] Hoplitschek, Kaiser, and Kunzelmann, "Diskussionsvorlage."

[73] Jürgen Wachsmuth, "Minderheiten-Senat," 12 May 1981, AGG:B.I.1.749.

Mayor of West Berlin, setting the stage for intense confrontations with the AL delegation to the *Abgeordnetenhaus*.

During the first two years of its existence, the AL had pursued an anti-parliamentary, anti-party course, defining itself in opposition to the political establishment. In the time period between the 1981 and 1985 elections, the AL continued to play the role of the radical opposition, with one key difference: it was able to perform this role from within the *Abgeordnetenhaus*. It thus commanded greatly expanded resources, not least of which was media attention. From the outset, its strategy seemed clear: to continue its role of an anti-party party, and to use the parliament and its parliamentary position to support the extra-parliamentary organizations it saw as its main task to promote and defend. Thus, whereas it could occasionally use the parliamentary field to fight for the causes advocated by the grassroots movements operating outside of parliament, it viewed the extra-parliamentary sphere as the place where most of its work took place. AL members frequently invoked the analogy of the "*Spielbein*," or kicking-leg, of parliament and the "*Standbein*," or support leg, of its extra-parliamentary activities, to describe this approach.[74]

With the election results of 1981, the AL sent nine representatives to the *Abgeordnetenhaus*. From the beginning of its time in the Berlin legislature, the AL

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[74] In sports, the *Spielbein* is the leg used for play, e.g. kicking, while the *Standbein* supports the weight of the player, the pivot leg. In art, the *Spielbein* is the free, unburdened leg, while the *Standbein* is the leg which supports the figure's weight.

seemed to try everything to cement its role as radical opposition. The kinds of

delegates it sent set it apart from the established parties: they were somewhat

younger, with an average age of 38, and they were more likely to have been born

in Berlin. Primarily, however, the AL differed from the other factions in the

proportion of women in the delegation. This was far higher than in the other

factions, with 27.8 percent of the AL's delegates being women.[75] Certainly in this

case, the AL's actions were consistent with its ideology.

Party	Percent Women's Representation	Percent born in Berlin	Average Age[76]
AL	27.8	56	38.1
CDU	6.3	50.6	43.6
FDP	0	50	48.9
SPD	11.9	45.8	46.9

Table 1: **Breakdown of *Abgeordnetenhaus* delegations by sex, place of birth, and average age, ninth electoral period.[77]**

The initial actions of the AL left little doubt that the AL faction in the

Abgeordnetenhaus intended to stir up trouble. During the first session, AL

delegate Peter Finger announced that the AL would not vote to recognize the

rules of order approved by the previous assembly. Traditionally, the

Abgeordnetenhaus had adopted these temporarily until new ones had been

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[75] Data compiled from *Handbuch II des Abgeordnetenhauses von Berlin* (Berlin: Abgeordnetenhaus von Berlin, 1984).

[76] As of 31 December 1981.

[77] The fact that the AL rotated its faction somewhat complicated the analysis of these data. I based these figures on all individuals serving in a given parliamentary period.

approved. But Finger noted that the political situation had changed significantly since the last meeting of the *Abgeordnetenhaus*, and the AL had not been represented during the past session. Moreover, the AL disagreed with the old rules on principle. The AL primarily objected to the lack of opportunity to react "directly and spontaneously" to current issues under debate, and the hierarchical nature of the rules and regulations, "which serves to maintain power rather than foster democratic ways of working."[78] For both these reasons, Finger asserted that the AL would not vote to accept the old rules.

The next conflict came when the three other parties proposed changing the rules of order involving a controversial and important symbolic proceeding of the *Abgeordnetenhaus*. Due to West Berlin's special status and because of the rights reserved for the Allies, federal laws did not automatically apply to West Berlin, but had to be adopted by the parliament. This typically was done in the form of the so-called *Übernahmegesetze*, literally "takeover laws," which combined several such laws. The past practice in the *Abgeordnetenhaus* had been to combine the first and second readings of such laws, thus circumventing the need to discuss the laws in committee. Technically, a political faction or the West Berlin Senate could request that the laws be sent to committee for discussion; however, this right had never been exercised.

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[78] Direkt und spontan; Hierarchische Strukturen dienen der Machterhaltung und nicht der Entwicklung demokratische Arbeitsweisen. *Plenarprotokolle des Abgeordnetenhauses von Berlin* (Berlin: Abgeordnetenhaus von Berlin, 1981), 9. Wahlperiode, 1. Sitzung (11 June 1981), 4.

Now, however, with the arrival of the AL on the political scene, the other

parties clearly worried that the AL would use this option to delay approval,

which had to happen within one month of the law's publication, or otherwise

sabotage things. In their view, any discussion of the laws would weaken the link

between West Berlin and the Federal Republic. Thus the CDU, SPD, and FDP

introduced a measure that would require a decision of the entire

Abgeordnetenhaus to refer such laws to committee for discussion.

This did not sit well with the AL, which viewed it as an attempt to quell

discussion and to remove political and democratic rights from the AL. Peter

Sellin put it simply: "We view this as a restriction on democracy."[79] The AL also

voted against adopting the federal budget in December 1981.[80] As time went on,

however, the AL took increasing pains to emphasize that it objected to what it

viewed as the pro forma adoption of the laws without any debate as a sign of the

lack of democracy in the body, and did not wish to symbolically question the

relationship between the city and the Federal Republic.[81]

During the first phase of its time in the West Berlin legislature, the AL still

approached the parliament with a partial view toward exploitation, reflecting

attitudes carrying over from the K-group and District Assembly phases. It

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[79] Wir halten ihn für eine Einschränkung der Demokratie. *Plenarprotokolle des Abgeordnetenhauses von Berlin* (PAB) 9/1 (11 June 1981), 4.

[80] PAB 9/13 (19 December 1981), 734-735.

[81] This was the case when Cordula Schulz opposed taking over laws relating to abortion and counseling in 1984. PAB 9/72 (14 July 1984), 4379.

viewed the parliaments as an information source and as a way to promote

citizens' initiatives, and occasionally used the parliament in non-traditional and

provocative ways. It also strove to maintain an arm's length relationship to

parliamentary institutions through humor and satire. The AL delivered on its

initial promise to use the parliament as an information source to aid the citizens'

initiatives, such as when Jänicke and Sellin posed questions to the Minister for

the Environment regarding plans for highway construction in the western

suburbs of the city (the so-called *Westtangente*).[82] The AL initially did not hesitate

to employ non-parliamentary techniques on the floor of the *Abgeordnetenhaus*, on

occasion bringing extra-parliamentary forms of protest into the parliament.

These included the use of attention-grabbing props as well as placards and silent

protest. In a protest against what the AL viewed as the inadequate measures

taken by the other parties against *Waldsterben*, a dead pine tree took center stage,

brought in by AL delegates.[83] During von Weizsäcker's speech on the eve of

President Reagan's visit, the AL delegation staged a brief protest, filing to the

front bench bearing anti-Reagan signs such as "Disarm Reagan" and "The

borders of the US are the Atlantic and Pacific coasts."[84] The AL also employed

absurdist elements to make light of its parliamentary role: upon the rotation of its

delegates in 1983, the AL appointed its youngest delegate, Cordula Schulz, to the

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[82] PAB 9/18 (11 March 1982), 999.

[83] PAB 9/49 (13 October 1983), 2872-2874.

Council of Elders, and the perennial rebel, lawbreaker, and anarchist Dieter

Kunzelmann was sent to represent the AL on the Committee for the Interior,

Security, and Order.[85]

The AL's non-conventional parliamentary activities did not stem from a

lack of experience or knowledge of the workings and rules of parliament,

however. There was a method to their madness, at least so claimed AL member

and parliamentarian Martin Jänicke, who tried to justify the use of satire in

parliament. According to Jänicke, satire helped counteract the tendency for

alternative factions to become part of the political establishment. Properly done,

absurdist elements could have an educational effect, and could also help attract

media attention for the organization and its causes.[86]

In fact, even in the first legislative session, the AL faction displayed an

ability and willingness to use parliamentary procedures and rules to advance its

agenda. For example, Peter Sellin was able to quote chapter and verse from the

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[84] Entwaffnet Reagan; Die Grenzen der USA sind die Küsten des Atlantik und des Pazifik. PAB 9/24 (10 June 1982), 1465.

[85] *Handbuch II des Abgeordnetenhauses (9. Wahlperiode).* Schulz's appointment to the Council of Elders was more of a verbal joke than an actual one: the average age of committee members as of December 31, 1981 was only forty-four, and nothing stipulated that the committee be comprised of only elder statesmen. Still, Schulz at twenty-five was the AL's youngest delegate and by far the youngest on the committee, the next youngest being Gabriele Wiechatzek of the CDU at age thirty-three.

[86] "Bericht der Abgeordnetenhausfraktion über die Arbeit von Mai 1981- Mai 1982," 8. Document retained by the Landesverband Bündnis 90/ Die Grünen, Berlin.

rules of order in arguing for an immediate vote on mass-transit issues.[87]

Kommune I veteran Dieter Kunzelmann seemed to have more trouble, at times

speaking out of turn and refusing to obey the rules of order. However, it is likely

that his rule violations were intentional, as they fit his persona, and he, too,

proved quite able to invoke parliamentary procedure when it suited his

purposes.[88]

In 1982, after one year's participation in the *Abgeordnetenhaus*, the AL's

leadership took stock of its experiences. Even at this early juncture, the contrast

to previous attitudes toward parliament is striking. Klaus-Jürgen Schmidt, one

of the AL's first deputies to the *Abgeordnetenhaus* and a former member of the

KPD-Rote Fahne, provides a case in point.[89] Schmidt noted that the AL had used

the *Abgeordnetenhaus* to work against public defamation of the alternative

movement and to slow down the rise of the reactionary CDU. He also pointed to

the AL's ability to provoke public debates about troop military parades and

rearmament.[90] Summarizing the work of the AL faction in its first year of

parliamentary representation, he wrote:

> OUR WORK IN THE *ABGEORDNETENHAUS* PRIMARILY
> SERVED TO CREATE PUBLICITY FOR THE RADICAL
> DEMOCRACY MOVEMENT, TO INTRODUCE ITS VIEWS AND

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[87] PAB 9/1 (11 June 1981), 20.

[88] PAB 9/48 (22 September 1983), 2794-2795; PAB 9/49 (13 October 1983), 2863.

[89] See MRB 6 (1979), 14 for Schmidt's self-declared KPD membership.

[90] "Bericht der Abgeordnetenhausfraktion 1981-1982," 7.

TO COUNTERACT REACTIONARY CONCEPTS. IT ALSO LED
TO A BROADENING OF OUR GRASSROOTS SUPPORT AND TO
BECOMING A CENTER FOR NEW GRASSROOTS MOVEMENTS
AND PROGRESSIVE PEOPLE.[91]

These were astonishing words coming from a member of a party that just eight years earlier had condemned the parliaments as "A DEEP SWAMP OF DECEPTION AND CORRUPTION."[92]

Martin Jänicke also gave an account of his first parliamentary year, in which he tried to explain and justify the alternative spectrum's "borrowing" of the parliament.[93] First, a parliamentary presence helped overcome the news embargo that the AL felt had been imposed on the alternative movement by the commercial press. Second, work within parliament helped force the party system to take up themes that it would rather ignore. Third, parliamentary participation brought greatly improved working conditions and infrastructure to underfinanced groups, giving them access to office space and equipment, for example. Most importantly, the presence of an alternative party in parliament

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[91] UNSERE ARBEIT IM ABGEORDNETENHAUS HAT HAUPTSÄCHLICH DAZU GENUTZT, ÖFFENTLICHKEIT FÜR DIE RADIKALDEMOKRATIE BEWEGUNG ZU SCHAFFEN, IHRE INHALTE VORZUSTELLEN UND REAKTIONÄREN KONZEPTEN ENTGEGENZUTRETEN. SIE HAT AUCH DAZU GEFÜHRT, UNSERE BASIS ZU VERBREITERN UND ZUM ANSPRECHPUNKT FÜR NEUE BASISBEWEGUNGEN UND FORTSCHRITTLICHE MENSCHEN ZU WERDEN. "Bericht der Abgeordnetenhausfraktion 1981-1982," 7. Emphasis in the original.

[92] EIN TIEFER SUMPF VON VERLOGENHEIT UND KORRUPTION. *KPD Liste 5 Wahlprogramm*, 3-4, emphasis in the original. See above, Chapter Three for more details on the KPD-Rote Fahne's views of parliament.

[93] Mitbenutzung.

gave citizens the chance to articulate political protest through voting. Jänicke also worried, however, that staying in power could become more important to alternative parties than achieving the goals motivating their initial entry into parliament. Moreover, according to Jänicke, the alternative movement received its impetus from people's dissatisfaction with the fact that "in parliaments, hardly anything is decided anymore."[94] Parliamentary participation on the part of the alternative movement must not disguise this fact, as this would remove from the political system any pressure for change.

Over the course of the eighties, both the AL's growth and its work in the parliament also forced the AL to streamline and eventually abandon many of its radical-democratic structures. This was the case as soon as the AL entered the *Abgeordnetenhaus*, and the so-called 'structure debate' raged during the early 1980s. For one thing, the AL appears to have increased in overall membership numbers at the price of its members' degree of activity in the party: its members were no longer able to participate in the General Members' Assemblies with the same degree of commitment or level of information.[95] Writing in the AL's Members' Circular, Wolfgang Gukelberger warned that the Green and Alternative movements' participation in parliament was accompanied by the danger of an excessive willingness to compromise, especially with the SPD.

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[94] Im Parlament [wird] kaum noch etwas entschieden. "Bericht der Abgeordnetenhausfraktion 1981-1982," 7.

[95] Albi Ehlert, "Nieder mit der Basisdemokratie?" MRB 21 (1983), 3.

Weakening the fixed mandate and ending rotation would be the next steps in this compromise, which would make the AL little better than the SPD.[96]

Those in favor of streamlining and reform tried to counter the fears of those wishing to retain the radical democratic aspects of the party. Matthias Bergmann, Frank Kapek, and Renate Künast, at the time all members of the AL's Executive Committee, argued that the party should not count on structures to compensate for a lack of a political theory.[97] Volker Schröder, an early AL member and the individual then responsible for the AL's finances, insisted that "The person is more important than the structure," and counseled the party to "Remember: ten years ago we were fragmented… [Today] we have power and money. We have opportunities the likes of which no opposition movement has had for a long time."[98] These opportunities should not be squandered by a conflict about party structure.

The rotation of the first AL parliamentarians in June 1983 gave them the chance to reflect further on their time in parliament. For Peter Sellin,

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[96] Wolfgang Gukelberger, "Rein in die Parlamente und dann?" MRB 20 (1982), 9-10. Gukelberger was formerly a member of the GDR ruling party's arm in the West, the *Sozialistische Einheitspartei Westberlins (SEW)*. See "Der Unaufhaltsame Aufstieg," MRB 27 (July-August 1984), 31.

[97] Matthias Bergmann, Frank Kapek, and Renate Künast, "Strukturen der AL, oder Der Versuch durch neue Strukturen den Mangel an politischer Theorie auszugleichen," MRB 22-23 (1983), 42-43..

[98] Erinnern wir uns: vor gut zehn Jahren waren wir zersplittert….[Heute] verfügen wir über Macht und Geld. Wir haben Möglichkeiten, wie sie lange keine oppositionellle Bewegung hatte. Volker Schröder, "Der Mensch ist wichtiger als die Struktur," MRB 22-23 (1983), 45.

parliamentary work had opened up numerous information channels to the citizens' initiatives. Significantly, however, Sellin placed more emphasis on the information parliamentary work provided- information that the AL itself could use to formulate future programs and to modify past approaches.[99] This self-perpetuating process facilitating the AL's work was an unexpected benefit of parliamentary participation. Michael Wendt, the AL's first member, also attempted to characterize the experiences of the first AL faction in parliament.[100] The AL's success could not be judged in terms of how many of its proposals had been adopted, as the AL was far too small. The AL could not report any measurable success in ending the rule of the conservative CDU; nor had it developed an answer to the question of what would happen if and when the AL achieved this goal. The AL had managed to divide the SPD, however, and was able to reveal the gap between the SPD's propaganda and its actual voting practices. Thus in this respect, Wendt's analysis related more closely to the approach favored by the KPD-Rote Fahne earlier. But for Wendt, the greatest success of the first years of AL parliamentary involvement had been the securing of the AL on West Berlin's political scene. Thus both Sellin and Wendt articulated the desirability of a parliamentary presence.

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[99] "Arbeitsbericht der Fraktion der AL im Abgeordnetenhaus von Berlin (Juni 1982 bis Juni 1983)," June 1983, 1. AGG:CNRWLaVo/LGSt01 268(1).

[100] "Arbeitsbericht der AL 1982-1983," 2.

The extent to which the AL had come to appreciate the parliamentary arena for addressing grievances is also illustrated by the debate about women's representation and quotas in the party and in parliament. Initially driven by the desire to increase women's representation in the AL's own internal governing bodies, the discussion quickly turned to the question of ensuring that women's voices be heard and their concerns addressed from within the Berlin legislature.[101] A June 1984 meeting to which all women in the AL were invited discussed the issue of what women hoped to achieve in the AL and in parliament. At this meeting, attendees discussed the possibility of sending an all-female delegation to the West Berlin legislature. The discussion involved a two-fold argument. First, such a move would be a provocative way to send a message about the alternative nature of the AL. Second, such a delegation would bring women's issues into all committees of the parliament, ensuring that women's voices and concerns would be heard and addressed in parliament. On the negative side, some participants voiced the concern that the AL and Greens had increased the attractiveness of parliament, which had led women to have too

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[101] See the extensive debate on women's representation in the party's governing bodies in Jochen Esser, "Mühsam ernährt sich der Igel," MRB 25 (May 1984), 15; Sabine Fischer, "Frauen GA pro und contra," MRB 25 (May 1984) 15; Michael Wendt, "Eine leichte Sache, die schwer zu machen ist," MRB 25 (May 1984), 18-19; Elke A. Richardsen, "Den Männern Feuer unter den Hintern machen," MRB 26 (June 1984), 11. On 18 May 1984, the AL elected an all-female Executive Committee.

many illusions about the potential for parliamentary work to bring about change.[102]

In an article published in the AL's membership circular, three members of the Socialist Women's League argued strongly in favor of increasing women's representation in parliaments. They asserted that it would benefit all women to have more women in parliament, as this would radically alter society. The article cited several examples of women leaders in the Federal Republic with governmental positions who had worked to benefit women's lives in concrete ways, and asserted that green and alternative parties offered the best chance for increasing this representation.[103] Overall, the debate about women's representation in parliament again involved arguments based on the logic of representation, and thus worked to promote a positive view of parliamentary democracy within the party.

In fact, one of the earliest examples of cooperation between the SPD and AL involved women's issues, when the SPD sponsored a Parliamentary Question into the employment situation of women in West Berlin in tandem with the AL's proposal to establish a commission on equal rights for women.[104] In general, during this period, the AL and the SPD displayed some signs of a willingness to

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[102] Gabriele Guttstadt, "Frauenliste ins Abgeordnetenhaus?" MRB 27 (July-August 1984), 5.

[103] Hannelore May, Barbara Gröschke, Sabine Bohle, "Wie können viele Frauen ins Parlament kommen?" MRB 29 (November 1984), 7-8.

[104] PAB 9/52 (10 November 1983), 3134.

work together on certain issues. Historically speaking, this was significant largely by comparison to the inability to heal the split between the SPD and the KPD during the Weimar Republic, often cited as a factor in the demise of Germany's first parliamentary democracy.[105] In the postwar context, this was further evidence that Bonn was not Weimar.

In Kreuzberg, an early attempt at an AL-SPD coalition had met with some success, in particular in the realm of housing policy: the AL and SPD were able to convince nearly all landlords to agree to postpone imminent evictions. According to Werner Orlowsky, an AL delegate to the Kreuzberg District Council, the "fundamental opposition" to which the AL had earlier pledged itself did not meet Kreuzberg's needs.[106] Furthermore, in a confidential SPD paper obtained and published by *Der Spiegel*, the SPD summed up its experiences with the AL in the West Berlin parliament by noting a "very interesting about-face" in the AL's behavior.[107] Gerhard Schneider, an SPD delegate to the *Abgeordnetenhaus*, noted that the AL had generally committed no spectacular acts in the parliament, but had accepted the rules of order. The AL representatives

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[105] See for example Fulbrook, *Divided Nation*, 63; Feuchtwanger, *From Weimar to Hitler*, 323.

[106] Fundamentalopposition. "Druffhalten, bloss nicht rechtfertigen," *Der Spiegel* 36, no. 20 (17 May 1982), 101.

[107] "Grüne- sehr interessante Kehrtwendung," *Der Spiegel* 36, no. 26 (28 June 1982), 56.

demonstrated an "increasing tendency to adapt" in their manner of dressing.[108]

Moreover, its desire to be a party of the fundamental opposition was gradually

receding. Nevertheless, according to Schneider's assessment, the AL did not

represent an automatic coalition partner for the SPD, but shared a certain amount

in common with the conservative CDU: both the AL and CDU advocated

increasing personal freedom and reducing the state's influence. Schneider went

so far as to predict that once socially and economically established, the AL voter

would share more in common with the CDU voter than with the typical SPD

voter. Generally, however, Klaus-Jürgen Schmidt's assessment of the

relationship between the social democrats and the alternatives speaks volumes.

As this AL member, KPD-Rote Fahne veteran, and early delegate to the

Abgeordnetenhaus put it, "Now as before, both sides lack the political common

ground" needed for a mutual strategy of opposition.[109]

Another indication of the AL's evolution into a mainstream and accepted

political presence in Berlin came with the May 1984 decision of Jürgen Kunze, the

left-leaning former head of the West Berlin FDP, to take a seat among the AL

faction in the *Abgeordnetenhaus*. This change of allegiance brought the AL a

tremendous amount of media attention and a considerable degree of credibility.

As Rebekka Schmidt of the Federal Green Party noted, his move demonstrated

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[108] Zunehmend Anpassungstendenzen. "Grüne- sehr interessante Kehrtwendung," 56.

[109] [Es] fehlt von beiden Seiten noch wie vor eine gemeinsame politische Grundlage. "Bericht der Abgeordnetenhausfraktion 1981-1982," 7.

the attractiveness and the integrative ability of the Green and alternative movement.[110] It also boosted the confidence of the AL as the elections of 1985 approached.[111]

Thus the period of the AL's initial parliamentary representation witnessed the AL's growing acceptance of the parliamentary system. It also saw the AL increasingly flesh out the environmental component of its program. Some have raised the valid question of the actual 'greenness' of the AL: Joachim Raschke, for example, noted that "green is not its first color."[112] Raschke was correct in the sense that the AL had its origins in the radical, red Left, rather than in the more conservative, nature-oriented green groups of the late 1970s as was the case with other Green Party local affiliates. Nevertheless, this assessment tends to underestimate and downplay the importance of environmental issues to the AL, both in terms of holding the group together, as has been seen, as well as in terms of providing a new paradigm for critics of West German society.

Judging by its activities in the *Abgeordnetenhaus*, there can be no doubt that environmental issues were a top priority for the AL. The AL introduced

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[110] TAZ, 21 May 1984.

[111] For the AL's reaction to Kunze's joining the AL see Erwin Meyer, "Editorial," MRB 25 (June 1984), 3. The membership circular in 1984 commented on the "unstoppable ascent" of the AL, as the party became more accepted and attracted new people from other parties, most notably Wolfgang Gukelberger from the SEW and Jürgen Kunze from the FDP. "Der Unaufhaltsame Aufstieg," MRB 27 (July-August 1984), 31.

[112] Grün ist jedenfalls nicht ihre erste Farbe. Raschke, *Die Grünen*, 274.

legislation to make the Tegel Forest off-limits to future road construction.[113] It

sponsored legislation to improve air quality in Berlin, and proposed to allow free

use of Berlin's public transit system during smog alarms.[114] Its environmental

expert, Martin Jänicke, worked to support the citizens' initiative known as *BI*

Westtangente, arguing against the construction of a highway in the western

suburbs, and attacked proposed measures against *Waldsterben* as inadequate.[115]

In a rare, early example of cooperation between the SPD and the AL, the

environment helped the two parties find common ground, as the AL supported

an SPD measure to help Berlin's Grunewald.[116] Mostly, however, the AL found

little to its liking in the other parties' approach to environmental issues,

repeatedly claiming that they did nothing concrete, but merely sent issues to the

Berlin Senate for further study or paid lip service to environmental protection.[117]

On occasion, the new environmental paradigm helped the AL deflect

criticism of its own ideology, especially relating to violence. During a debate in

which the other parties attacked the AL as being responsible for incidents of

violence during Reagan's visit to West Berlin, the AL's environmental expert

Martin Jänicke went on the offensive, accusing the other parties of committing

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[113] PAB 9/23 (27 May 1982), 1435.

[114] PAB 9/84 (31 January 1985), 5322.

[115] PAB 9/3 (2 July 1981), 133; PAB 9/45 (2 June 1983), 2634.

[116] PAB 9/58 (19 January 1984), 3598.

[117] PAB 9/15 (28 January 1982), 813; PAB 9/69 (14 June 1984), 4198.

violence against Berlin's environment.[118] On another occasion, the AL tied issues

of the environment to the debate about violence, asserting that the forest was not

dying, but was being "systematically murdered."[119]

The new ecological paradigm continued to prove useful in another way as

well. The Left continued to use concerns about environmental issues as a tool for

attacking the presence of the Allied troops, as it had done since discovering the

convenient overlap of the issue in the late 1970s. In the *Abgeordnetenhaus*, the AL

sponsored a debate on current issues regarding the environmental impacts,

particularly noise, of military maneuvers by the Western Allies.[120] The AL also

ran a fundraising campaign to support complaints against the Western Allies

relating to noise and environmental degradation in Gatow. In the administrative

structure of the AL, the campaign fell under the rubric of nature protection,

again demonstrating the ability of environmental issues to support and unify

protest.[121] From the floor of the West Berlin parliament, AL delegate Klaus

Freudenthal used the issue of the Gatow firing range as a weapon with which to

attack both the Western Allies and the other political parties, asserting that, by

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[118] PAB 9/25 (24 June 1982), 1524.

[119] Systematisch umgebracht. PAB 9/79 (22 November 1984), 4913.

[120] PAB 9/38 (10 February 1983), 2323.

[121] MRB 26 (June 1984), 30.

tolerating the use of the firing range, the other parties put the needs of the Allies over the needs of their own people.[122]

The AL's relationship with the Green Party also impacted its views of parliament. As seen in the previous chapter, the relationship between the AL and the Greens played an important role in the AL's early steps toward deradicalization and parliamentarization. This continued to be the case between 1981 and 1985, and in certain areas, this process intensified. During its first years in the West Berlin legislature, the AL continued its relationship with the Green Party. Yet the AL zealously guarded its autonomy, choosing a means of cooperation with the Green Party that would alienate as few members as possible. As a result, most radical leftists continued to work within the AL and thus continued in the journey toward Western parliamentary democracy.

During the period of the AL's first parliamentary representation in the *Abgeordnetenhaus*, the AL began to appreciate the advantages of affiliation with the Green Party in new ways. This appreciation also helped move the AL to embrace parliamentary democracy. AL members in a sense were doubly disenfranchised: not only did they feel that the established parties did not represent their views, but as West Berlin citizens, they also could not vote in federal elections. The realization that decisions made in Bonn affected the situation in West Berlin, and that therefore the AL needed a voice in Bonn that only the Green Party could provide, was part of a chain of thinking involving the

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[122] PAB 9/58 (19 January 1984), 3604.

recognition of the importance of the electoral process and the legitimacy of parliamentary representation.

The potential for the Green Party to provide AL members with a voice at the federal level was realized when, in the federal elections held 6 March 1983, the Green Party received 5.6 percent and made it into the Bundestag. The AL sent one representative to Bonn.[123] Even though West Berlin's delegates to the Bundestag had only limited voting rights, this unprecedented new access to parliamentary participation at the national level made the Green Party even more appealing to the AL.

As a result, the Council of Delegates selected a group to negotiate with the Green Party about the nature of their relationship. In August 1983, the Executive Committee of the Federal Green Party and these AL delegates convened in Bremen to discuss the best means of cementing this relationship. In the course of these discussions, the AL argued that the fact that the Green Party and the AL made it into the *Bundestag* demonstrated that the green-alternative movement must be taken seriously. While it was true that the Green Party's presence in the West German parliament boosted the AL's own public profile, the AL asserted that it was mainly interested in the Greens for their increased importance as an extra-parliamentary force. Explicitly acknowledging the forces pulling them into the constitutional system, however, the AL delegates asserted that the political

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[123] As it happened, this representative was the Stasi IM Dirk Schneider, until he was rotated out and replaced by current Minister of the Interior Otto Schily.

structure of the Federal Republic necessitated work at the federal level, "in order truly to have an influence in the sense of producing change."[124] With another nod at the forces motivating their participation in parliamentary democracy at the national level, the AL noted how the special position of West Berlin between East and West and the politics forged at the federal level, which directly affected the situation in West Berlin, made it especially important to be affiliated at the federal level of the Green Party.[125] In a variation of the slogan for the environmental movement of the 1980s, which exhorted people to 'think global act local,' the AL was 'thinking local' and 'acting national.' Moreover, it did so within parliamentary channels.

Thus it is clear that the AL's attitudes toward parliamentary democracy were affected by both its parliamentary participation and its link to the national Green Party. The same is true regarding the AL's attitude toward political violence. During the first phase of the AL's involvement in the *Abgeordnetenhaus*, the debate about the acceptability of violence as a tool of political protest continued and intensified. While the AL was constantly under attack from within parliament for its stance on violence, the AL attempted to deflect these arguments by invoking Norwegian peace researcher Johan Galtung's concept of

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[124] …um tatsächlich Einfluss im Sinne von Veränderung nehmen zu können. "Argumente für einen Anschluss zwischen den Grünen und der AL Berlin im Wege des Vertrages," 4 August 1983. AGG: B.I.1.744.

[125] "Argumente für einen Anschluss zwischen den Grünen und der AL Berlin im Wege des Vertrages."

'structural violence,' which equated social injustice with violence.[126]

Nevertheless, the AL's presence in parliament kept the issue alive and under debate. This continued to be a factor in the matter of the relationship between the AL and the other parties, and was to have particular importance when the AL and the SPD forged a coalition in West Berlin in 1989. But the pressure from the presence in the *Abgeordnetenhaus* alone was also not enough to cause it to renounce violence as a political tool.

Political protests, often involving violent clashes between police and demonstrators, were nothing new on the political scene in West Berlin- the most memorable example was the 1967 anti-Shah demonstration culminating in the shooting of Benno Ohnesorg (See Chapter Two). These clashes continued in the early 1980s: for instance, the 1980 visit by Alexander Haig sparked violent protests.

The period immediately following the AL's entry into the West Berlin parliament was characterized by a qualitatively different kind of protest, however. Three actions sponsored and organized in part by the AL exemplified the new dimension of political protest, and drew unexpectedly sharp criticism from the public and from within the Berlin parliament. Though these reactions

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[126] Johan Galtung, "Violence, peace, and peace research," *Journal of Peace Research* 3 (1969), 167-191. According to Galtung, "Violence is present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations" (168). Galtung's definition of violence does not require an actor: this is key to structural, or indirect violence. "The violence is built into the structure and shows up as unequal power and consequently as unequal life chances" (170-171).

caused some in the AL to reconsider their tactics, generally, the AL remained

unrepentant regarding violent protest at this stage.

The first incident occurred on 25 June 1981, when a crowd of

demonstrators paraded to the Schöneberg Rathaus, where the West Berlin

parliament was debating an AL-sponsored motion to give amnesty to

individuals arrested for squatting houses. When the protest became violent, the

AL moved to end the parliamentary session so that the other parties could get a

sense of what was happening in front of the Rathaus. Though the AL denied

responsibility for the violent turn to the protest, it was clear that it had had a role

in bringing the demonstration to the steps of the *Abgeordnetenhaus* as a means of

exerting pressure on the other parties. As one AL leader put it, "we want to

make it clear to those in parliament that not only we nine AL representatives

support the amnesty, but that outside, thousands also share our demands. That

is completely legitimate."[127]

Representatives from other parties strongly disagreed, and expressed this

from the floor of the *Abgeordnetenhaus.* Dr. Karl-Heinz Schmitz of the CDU

asserted that the AL's cooperation with "anarchists, criminals, but also the

overly-committed" raised questions about the democratic nature of the AL, and

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[127] Wir wollen deutlich machen, dass da, im Parlament, nicht nur 9 AL-Abgeordnete für die Amnestie sind, sondern dass Tausende draussen deren Forderung teilen. Das ist völlig legitim. "Wir lassen sie nicht zur Ruhe kommen," *Der Spiegel* 35, no. 31 (27 July 1981), 56. The interview was with Matthias Claus, AL press representative, Michael Wendt, AL delegate to the *Abgeordnetenhaus*, and Klaus-Jürgen Schmidt, also AL delegate to the *Abgeordnetenhaus.* The article does not attribute quotes to specific interviewees.

he demanded to know whether the AL distanced itself from violence.[128]

Unrepentant, the AL's Klaus-Jürgen Schmidt replied by demanding that the CDU distance itself from the housing speculators. Gerhard Schneider of the SPD took a somewhat milder tone, noting that the SPD did not subscribe to theories according to which the AL was the "wire-puller" behind the demonstrations.[129] Nevertheless, unless it distanced itself from the violent demonstrators, the AL risked being blamed for the acts of violence.[130] The FDP criticized the AL for taking for granted the necessity for violence, and accused it of accepting the premises voiced by AL-delegate Rita Kantemir one week earlier. Kantemir had declared that "stones can be arguments" when those in power refused to address people's grievances.[131] According to FDP-delegate Edgar Swinne, however, "stones thrown at objects and persons destroy dialogue. The political opponent becomes the personal enemy."[132]

In response, Martin Jänicke from the AL took the floor. He first emphasized his own contempt for all forms of violence. But Jänicke objected to what he claimed was the selective definition of violence employed by the

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[128] Chaoten, Kriminellen, aber auch Überengagierten. PAB 9/3 (2 July 1981), 109.

[129] Drahtzieher.

[130] PAB 9/3 (2 July 1981), 109.

[131] Steine können Argumente sein.

[132] Steine gegen Sachen und Personen geworfen, zerstören den Dialog, zerstören das Gespräch. Der politische Gegner wird zum persönlichen Feind. PAB 9/3 (2 July 1981), 110.

governing parties, which allowed them to condemn the violent demonstrators while themselves perpetrating acts on a much larger scale that Jänicke and the AL considered 'violent.' Jänicke used arguments derived from the idea of structural violence to question the consistency of those who were upset by violent actions of the housing squatters while carrying out violence against persons and property by evicting them and destroying their homes in the name of modernization.[133]

The second incident occurred only a few weeks later. In the so-called "Sunday Stroll" on 12 July 1981, approximately six thousand people marched to the posh West Berlin neighborhood of Grunewald to demonstrate against twenty-one owners and landlords of flats in Kreuzberg. The demonstration aimed to show the contrast between the squalid conditions in Kreuzberg and the luxurious Grunewald villas. The demonstration proceeded largely without violence, with only a few windows broken. Nevertheless, in its singling out of individuals as targets for protest, the demonstration was unprecedented. Critics labeled it variously as "rabble-rousing," "psycho-terror," "a pillory," and "a pogrom."[134]

Despite this criticism, the AL noted that it would repeat these tactics in the future, which it viewed as merely bringing together parliamentary and extra-

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[133] PAB 9/3 (2 July 1981), 115.

[134] Hetze; Psychoterror; Pranger; Pogrom. "Wir lassen sie nicht zur Ruhe kommen," *Der Spiegel* 35, no. 31 (27 July 1981), 50.

parliamentary efforts. Its stance regarding the role of parliament was still quite ambivalent: while insisting that the AL did not view its parliamentary presence as a "necessary evil," it labeled it somewhat ominously as "very useful."[135] As one unnamed AL interviewee told a reporter from *Der Spiegel*, "Parliamentary democracy is certainly better than no democracy at all. But it is no secret that for us, parliamentary democracy is not exactly the thing most worth striving for, the happiest, the best thing that one can imagine."[136] Instead, the AL would prefer a system under which those affected by decisions could participate directly in making those decisions.

These protests and the public reactions to them were dwarfed by the events around the 11 June 1982 visit by United States President Ronald Reagan to the island city. Almost exactly one year to the day after the AL entered parliament for the first time, it found itself at the center of a heated controversy resulting in part from its attempt to represent and protect the city's independent radical Left.

Clearly concerned not only to avoid violence but also to avoid embarrassment, West Berlin authorities banned a protest planned for the day of Reagan's actual visit. Accordingly, most of the groups planning protests moved

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[135] Ein notwendiges Übel; sehr nützlich.

[136] Die parlamentarische Demokratie ist sicherlich besser als gar keine Demokratie. Es ist aber kein Geheimnis, dass für uns die parlamentarische Demokratie nicht gerade das Erstrebenswerteste, Glücklichste, Schönste ist, das man sich vorstellen kann. "Wir lassen sie nicht zur Ruhe kommen," *Der Spiegel* 35, no. 31 (27 July 1981), 56.

the events up by one day. The AL, too, moved its official plans to 10 June. But

the AL Council of Delegates voted to defy the ban to protest what it viewed as an

attack on the basic right to hold political demonstrations. It called for

cooperation with the groups of *Autonomen*, independent radicals who rejected

political channels of protest and generally tended to embrace anarchy.

The demonstrations on 10 June proceeded peacefully. This was not the

case the following day, however. Demonstrators who heeded the call to meet at

Nollendorfplatz the next morning in defiance of the ban found themselves swept

up in a vast police action. Police quickly erected barbed wire barriers around the

demonstrators, trying to contain them and prevent them from marching to

Charlottenburg Palace, where Reagan was to speak.

The result was a disaster. Demonstrators built barricades, set fire to cars

parked in the area, threw stones at police, and torched and plundered stores in

the area. At times, the intensity of the flying stones hurled by protesters

prevented firefighters from extinguishing the blazes. Hundreds of anarchists

repeatedly charged the police lines, seeking to break out of the barriers. Some

statistics give an idea of the scope of the riots: police made 271 arrests, 87 police

officers were wounded in the melee, 40 demonstrators had to be hospitalized,

and more than 200 injured were treated at the scene. Things did not begin

calming down until after 4:00 PM. A masked participant boasted to a reporter, "We've stolen the show from Reagan!"[137]

Public reaction to the violence was vitriolic. As the only organization that had defied the ban and publicly supported the *Autonomen*, the AL found itself at the heart of the firestorm. Heinrich Lummer, West Berlin's CDU Senator for the Interior, held the AL publicly responsible for the riots because it had ignored the ban on the demonstration and followed through with plans for the unauthorized rally. According to leaders in the FDP, the AL had revealed itself as an "enemy of democracy" and had violated the rule of law through its involvement in the riots.[138]

Criticism was not limited to the press. Within the West Berlin parliament, too, the AL faced harsh words. The violent events around the Reagan visit sparked an *Aktuelle Stunde*, a time reserved for the discussion of current affairs in the *Abgeordnetenhaus*, during which the AL found itself once again under heavy fire for its alleged role in the violence.[139] The FDP claimed that the AL's initial mistake was to defy the ban on the demonstration, and insisted that the AL must recognize the state's monopoly on the use of force. The CDU joined the FDP in this point, and added that despite its protestations, the AL did not genuinely renounce violence. Instead, it tried to justify it by using the 'structural violence'

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[137] Dem Reagan haben wir die Schau gestohlen. *Der Tagesspiegel*, 12 June 1982.

[138] Feind der Demokratie. *Der Tagesspiegel*, 12 June 1982.

argument. Nor was the AL consistent in its declarations regarding violence. On the one hand its representatives claimed that 'stones can be arguments,' while on the other hand it claimed to deplore violence. The whole issue, moreover, showed that the democratic self-understanding of the AL was not complete. In its emphasis on the extra-parliamentary realm, it relied on violence and protest and thus did not follow the rules of democracy. The SPD interpreted the violence as a sad result of failed *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* in the schools and in society as a whole. Violent protest showed that Germans had failed to learn the lessons of the Weimar Republic. The AL should clearly distance itself from violence: otherwise, it risked alienating its supporters and discrediting its cause.[140]

For its part, the AL admitted to having made a mistake in permitting the demonstrations to erupt into violence. Instead, it should have had ready techniques of passive resistance and should have insisted that these be employed. However, the AL also insisted that conflicts resulted from structural violence surrounding the demonstrators. Building on Jänicke's earlier arguments, the AL insisted that those who perpetuated these conditions should not be so quick to criticize the demonstrators. Furthermore, the violence had also been a reaction to police tactics and armaments, especially the encirclement of demonstrators. Nonviolence took more courage than throwing stones, but

[139] PAB 9/25 (24 June 1982), 1522.

[140] PAB 9/25 (24 June 1982), 1522-1524.

throwing stones was a more natural reaction to aggressive police behavior. It required even more courage to wrest the stone from the hand of fellow demonstrators and convince them that violence was not the answer. In the future, the AL would endeavor to do this.[141]

Moreover, reactions were not limited to condemnation in the press and parliament. The Berlin Senate considered holding the AL financially responsible for the damage to the city to the tune of one hundred thousand DM. Furthermore, the State's Attorney considered holding some AL parliamentarians criminally responsible. Finally, in the night of 12 June, unknown arsonists firebombed the AL's main offices and pub in the Wilmersdorferstrasse. Both the office and the pub, which had become an important gathering place for AL members and sympathizers, were completely destroyed.[142]

The net effect of the events around 11 June was a dramatic intensification of the debate about the role of violence in political protest. In an interview published in *Der Spiegel*, Otto Schily worried that the violence surrounding Reagan's visit was overshadowing the fact that the AL had in the past sponsored many peaceful demonstrations. To counteract this, the AL should unconditionally condemn acts of violence of any kind. Addressing the question of violence would also improve the AL's image and prevent the established parties from using the issue to divert attention away from the city's real

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[141] PAB 9/25 (24 June 1982), 1524-1530.

[142] "Nur friedlich," *Der Spiegel* 36, no. 25 (21 June 1982), 30.

problems.[143] Even Dieter Kunzelmann, *Kommune I* veteran and *enfant terrible* of the Left-wing scene, recommended that "the peacemakers must become more courageous, and the militants must become more reasonable" in order to defuse the crisis.[144]

In addition, the AL formed a commission to study the events and to draw lessons from them. This commission was remarkable not only for the conclusions it reached but also for the groups represented on it. Members included Klaus-Jürgen Schmidt, former member of the KPD-Rote Fahne, Martin Jänicke, representing the pacifist-ecological strand in the party, "Green Panther" Peter Lohauss, representing the more moderate faction advocating cooperation with the SPD, and Michael Wendt, the AL's first member, representing the more radical, fundamentalist position within the AL.

The group published its conclusions in the 'Commission Report on 11 June.'[145] The report was highly critical of those who condemned the AL for violence when they themselves perpetrated what the AL viewed as violence in other forms. Again employing arguments of structural violence, the authors cited problems such as unemployment, the destruction of cities, damage to the environment, and the perpetuation of hunger in the Third World. They

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[143] "Wir dürfen nicht die Krankenhäuser füllen," *Der Spiegel* 36, no. 25 (21 June 1982), 32.

[144] Die Friedfertigen müssen mutiger und die Militanten müssen vernünftiger werden. "Nur friedlich," 30.

especially condemned the pending two-track decision. But the report also

criticized those who would use these factors in order to justify their own

destructive impulses. In the words of the report, those who responded to "the

arrogance of power with the arrogance of anti-power" were guilty of stooping to

the level of those they were criticizing.[146] Moreover, the report continued,

violence caused problems of credibility. It made little sense to use violent means

to demonstrate against violence, or to try to be the "advocates of the little guy"

by destroying his property, such as occurred during the protest on

Winterfeldtplatz on 11 June.[147] The AL should criticize, but not exclude, those

who use this approach. The AL still supported the idea that it was necessary to

be able to defend oneself. While most observers blamed the anarchists for the

destruction and violence of the protest, the AL looked to social causes, seeing the

roots of violence in the structural violence of society, especially unemployment

and poverty in the face of increasing and flaunted wealth. The AL viewed

staged, intentional battles as useless, and it rejected them and criticized those

groups that advocated them. But the AL would still support demonstrations

declared illegal if the AL viewed them as legitimate- this included occupying

houses and construction sites as well as peaceful street protests.

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[145] "Bericht der Kommission 11. Juni."   Excerpted in "Dokumentation über die Gewaltdiskussion in der Alternativen Liste Berlin," AGG: B.II.1.5029.

[146] Die Arroganz der Macht mit der Arroganz der Gegenmacht.

[147] Anwalt der kleinen Leute.

Nevertheless, overall, the report rejected violence. The commission justified its position using three primary arguments. First, violence isolated a militant minority from the majority, which wished to use a variety of methods to promote social change. Second, a fixation on violent confrontation with the state impoverished the methods of the APO, weakening new techniques of civil disobedience and reducing the power and appeal of alternative means of protest and living. Finally, because the political conditions of the Federal Republic rested on the consent of the majority of the population, every attempt of a radical minority to bring about violent confrontation only resulted in a clash with the majority and promoted a reaction by the state, which was bound to win. This would only increase violence and repression. Overall, as a consequence of 11 June, the commission recommended that the AL in the future emphasize the necessity of nonviolent protest, and that it do everything possible at the preparation stage of the demonstration to prevent protesters from resorting to violence.

This report was far from the final word regarding violent protest, however. Its recommendations were not well received within the AL, and its findings were widely criticized for not representing the consensus of the AL as a whole.[148] Critics responded in the form of another position paper, the awkwardly titled 'Programmatic Declaration Regarding the Basic Democratic Right of

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[148] "AL und der 11. Juni- wie geht es weiter?" MRB 19 (1982), 9-10.

Resistance Against the Violence of the Reigning Conditions.'[149] Its authors

prepared this document for consideration and adoption at a General Members'

Assembly. As was the case of the 'Commission Report on 11 June,' this

document was at least as remarkable for its authors as for its content. Of

particular interest was the presence and role of Dieter Kunzelmann, as was that

of Christiane Zieger, formerly of the KBW. These joined forces with the pro-

Green, pacifist strain represented by Helmut Horst and Ursula Schaar, as well as

the advocate of democratic rights and former attorney for RAF members

Christian Ströbele.

Their report noted that the AL viewed the development and securing of

individual rights through a centralized state with a monopoly on the use of force

as a positive historical development. But state power only derived its legitimacy

when it secured the political rights and working and living conditions of the

people. Moreover, it was not enough for state power to operate in the

framework of law and order- this had been the case under Hitler, but this

obviously had not been legitimate. The implications for the present were clear.

To the degree state power invoked its monopoly on the use of force to uphold its

interests against the wishes of the majority and terrorized those who were non-

conformists in thought or deed, the AL would assert the right to resist. The

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[149] "Programmatische Erklärung zum demokratischen Grundrecht auf
Widerstand gegen die Gewalt der herrschenden Verhältnisse," in
"Dokumentation über die Gewaltdiskussion in der Alternativen Liste Berlin,"
AGG: B.II.1.5029.

authors summed up their position by declaring, "When the state monopoly on the use of force does not guarantee all citizens their rights, peace, and equality, we will not recognize it as a guideline for our actions."[150] Nevertheless, the report proposed programmatic changes recognizing nonviolent resistance as the appropriate form for the AL's political activities.

According to the document's authors, all of these assertions stemmed from the AL's view of the German constitution. This was affected by the idea of the inalienability of fundamental human rights. These superseded the Basic Law, in which they were mentioned, but which undermined them through other articles and laws. These rights, however, were essential for citizens' abilities to represent and defend their interests: "Without the maintenance and broadening of these fundamental rights, citizens cannot stand up against the atomic threat, the ecological crisis and for the improvement of working and living conditions."[151] Thus resistance was necessary for survival, and was a natural right. The ruling parties saw their measures as the only correct way to achieve things: the AL must convince people otherwise. Part of this could be done in parliament, but when parliamentary majorities and legal decisions rejected their

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[150] Wenn das staatliche Gewaltmonopol gerade nicht Recht, Frieden und Gleichheit aller Bürger gewährleistet, werden wir es nicht als Richtschnur unseres Handelns anerkennen. "Programmatische Erklärung."

[151] Ohne den Erhalt und die Erweiterung dieser Grundrechte können die Bürgerinnen und Bürger gegen die atomare Bedrohung, die ökologische Krise und für die Verbesserung der Arbeits- und Lebensbedingungen nicht konsequent eintreten. "Programmatische Erklärung."

ideas, the AL would not stand idly by. Legitimacy of actions, not their legality, would determine the AL's course. Moreover, those affected by policies had the right to determine the form of their resistance to these policies. But the AL did not view advocating physical violence as appropriate or effective.

Late in the course of an already poorly-attended General Members' Assembly in May 1983, the suggested programmatic changes came up for debate. The results revealed that the suggestions still went too far for some AL members. Dieter Kunzelmann tried to downplay the document's renunciation of violence, insisting, "We have not written a tract on nonviolence. My name is attached, after all."[152] But his radical critics accused him of having put his own past too far behind him.

In the end, the proposed changes were defeated, and instead, the General Members' Assembly adopted language stating that, in light of the structural violence being perpetrated locally and internationally, the AL would not distance itself from violence. Furthermore, the General Members' Assembly voted to end debate on the issue, stating that it did not wish to waste its energy in a discussion about violence. All in the party opposed violence, it asserted, and AL members did not need to reassure each other of this through more resolutions and declarations. But the resolution ended on a note of defiance: "To those who mock our dreams and hopes, our plans and desires, to those who

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[152] Wir haben doch kein Gewaltfreiheitspapier geschrieben, da steht doch immerhin mein Name drunter. *Die Zeit*, 6 May 1983.

want to encase them in concrete and destroy them, to those who in their greed

for profit destroy our country, who arrogantly sit on their monopoly on the use

of force and point at us because we supposedly have an unclear position

regarding violence- to them there is no reason whatsoever to express our view

regarding the question of violence."[153]

Shortly thereafter, on 10 August 1983, the Council of Delegates, which had

begun the whole crisis initially by calling for the AL to ignore the ban on the

Reagan demonstration, showed its defiance once again. It voted unanimously to

adopt a resolution stating that, while the AL would prepare nonviolent protests

for the coming autumn, when the NATO two-track decision was due, it would

not distance itself from other groups that had developed other forms of

resistance. Moreover, it encouraged those involved with the peace movement to

discuss all possible forms of resistance. The declaration concluded: "Our goal is

the prevention of rearmament. We must remain unpredictable!"[154]

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[153] Denjenigen gegenüber, die unsere Träume und Hoffnungen, unsere Pläne und Sehnsüchte lächerlich machen, einbetonieren und kaputtmachen wollen, die mit Profitgier unser Land zerstören, die arrogant auf ihrem Gewaltmonopol sitzen und mit dem Finger auf uns zeigen, weil wir angeblich ein unklares Verhältnis zur Gewalt haben, denen gegenüber gibt es keinerlei Veranlassung, sich zur Gewaltfrage zu äussern. "Schluss der Debatte," Document 28 in *Die Alternative Liste Berlin. Entstehung, Entwicklung, Positionen*, ed. Michael Bühnemann, Michael Wendt, and Jürgen Wituschek (Berlin: LitPol, 1984), 169.

[154] Unser Ziel ist die Verhinderung der Nachrüstung. Wir müssen unberechenbar bleiben! "Erklärung des Delegiertenrates der Alternativen Liste Berlin," 10 August 1983. AGG: B.II.1.5029.

Helping to counteract the radical and vocal minority that refused to distance itself from violence was the relationship with the Green Party. The Green Party's emphasis on nonviolence had a moderating influence on the AL, many of whose members had not distanced themselves from violence as a tool of political protest. Moreover, the AL's cooperation with the federal Greens helped ensure that the acceptability of violence as a tool of protest was always at least being discussed and debated. The special arrangement between the AL and the Green Party meant that this remained a source of conflict, even after the issue had supposedly been resolved as some have claimed in 1983, when the AL 'agreed to disagree' on the issue and end debate.[155] Nevertheless, it is worth reiterating the fact that, in part due to the particularities of West Berlin's history, the relationship between the AL and the Green Party itself was not enough to induce the AL to renounce violence altogether, despite the Green Party's having nonviolence as one of its four programmatic pillars.

Because of the unique situation that developed in West Berlin during the 1980s, part of the story of the relationship between the AL and the Green Party and the effects of this relationship on the AL's stance on violence involved conflicts and interaction with a competing organization, the West Berlin State Committee (*Landesverband*) of the Green Party. The *Landesverband*, created shortly after the January 1980 founding of the national Green Party, exerted continual pressure on the AL to move to the environmental pole and to move

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[155] Raschke, *Die Grünen*, 275.

closer to the Green Party, solidifying and clarifying its relationship to the national Greens. As events unfolded, the parallel existence of the two organizations became a way for certain individuals to try to pressure the AL to renounce violence by accepting all four pillars of the Green Party's political program.

As shown in the last chapter, the national Green Party's poor showing in the 1980 West German election dampened enthusiasm for the West Berlin State Committee, a trend reinforced by the early West Berlin elections. The AL's 1981 electoral breakthrough sparked the AL further to turn away from national politics, as it was busy taking stock of its victory and consolidating itself politically. Those AL members who dealt with national politics did so generally within the Green Party's West Berlin *Landesverband*. Meanwhile, the AL's good showing at the polls and its new position in the West Berlin Parliament meant that it had become an important political factor with which to be reckoned. In short, the national Greens could not afford to ignore the AL, especially in preparation for the next elections at the federal level, coming up in March 1983.[156] By contrast, and partially as a result of these developments, the State Committee had essentially been put on ice.

By the autumn of 1982, however, the State Committee started to show new signs of life. Many AL members of the *Landesverband* were only passive members- they had presumably joined the Green Party in order to have a vote at

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[156] Sellin, "Die AL und die Bundesgrünen," 125.

the Green Party's founding conference in Karlsruhe, and many had never paid

their membership dues. The *Landesverband* now removed these individuals from

its membership rolls, in effect expelling them from the Green Party. This

provoked an intense reaction, and the AL began to fear competition from the

Landesverband.[157] Meanwhile, other developments involving the electoral

successes of several of the Green Party's other state committees, together with

the approaching national elections, increased pressure to clarify the nature of the

AL's relationship to the Federal Green Party.[158] Helmut Horst, a dual member of

the AL and the West Berlin Greens, was one of the most vocal critics of the AL's

preference for the status quo, which allowed the AL to be affiliated with the

Green Party without recognizing the Four Pillars of its platform. In a paper

circulated for discussion in October 1982, Horst explicitly tied the issue of the

AL's relationship with the Federal Greens to the issue of violent protest. Noting

the parallel existence of the two organizations in West Berlin, he asserted that

most of the "progressive" Greens had joined the AL as opposed to the more

conservative *Landesverband*, consciously foregoing activities in an official Green

organization for the good of the green-alternative movement.[159] Increasingly,

however, these Greens were "asking themselves if they were in the right

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[157] Sellin, "Die AL und die Bundesgrünen," 126.

[158] Sellin, "Die AL und die Bundesgrünen," 126.

[159] Fortschrittlich.

organization."[160] These doubts sprang especially from the failure of the AL to

take a clear stance renouncing violence as a tool of protest, in contrast to the

Landesverband.

At the height of the controversy over the violence of the Reagan protests,

on 4 December 1982, a General Members' Assembly was held for the purpose of

settling the relationship with the Federal Green Party. Members chose from

three possible outcomes. Under the first alternative, the AL would replace the

current *Landesverband* to officially become the West Berlin State Committee of the

Green Party. The second option stipulated that the AL cooperate with the Green

Party, especially for elections, and work together with them to iron out

differences in their programs in preparation for an organizational fusion. Third,

the so-called *Vertragslösung*, or "contractual solution," would enable the AL to

cooperate with the Green Party and participate in its decision-making with full

and equal voting rights while preserving its autonomy by concluding a contract

with the Green Party.

This third option received a majority of 65 percent of the votes, but only

because different groups with various motives supported it. Indeed, the

proponents of this option came from highly diverse groups within the AL,

ranging from advocates of nonviolence like Helmut Horst and Ursula Schaar to

former KPD-Rote Fahne member Johanna Mayr to the epitome of the West Berlin

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[160] …sich fragen, ob sie in der richtigen Organisation sind. Helmut Horst, "Zur Diskussion: Sind die Berliner Grünen auch durch Grüne zu vertreten?" October 12, 1982. AGG: B.I.1.744.

rebel Dieter Kunzelmann. As Peter Sellin observed, the only thing common to

these groups was the conviction that the AL must be active in federal politics.[161]

This decision still did not resolve the issue, however. At the end of this

General Members' Assembly, the AL's Executive Committee resigned *en bloc* to

protest what it viewed as a violation of the AL's all-important principle of

consensus, which aimed to protect minority views in the AL.[162] This related

directly to the Green Party's stance renouncing violence as a political tool: the

Executive Committee wished to uphold the interests of the wing of the party

composed of those unwilling to renounce violence as a form of protest.[163]

Several days later, a special meeting of the AL's Council of Delegates

suspended the contractual solution approved by the General Members'

Assembly. Meanwhile, two groups within the *Landesverband* were reacting to

these developments. One group, centering around Ernst Hoplitschek, wished to

breathe new life into the Green Party's West Berlin State Committee.

Hoplitschek planned to introduce a motion at a General Members' Assembly

according to which the AL would agree to become the West Berlin *Landesverband*.

He expected the motion to fail and thus spark a reaction resulting in the

rejuvenation of the State Committee in competition with the AL. At the same

time, a group around Ursula Schaar and Helmut Horst, both advocates of the

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[161] Sellin, "Die AL und die Bundesgrünen," 126.

[162] Recall the discussion of the *Konsensprinzip* in Chapter 4.

[163] Sellin, "Die AL und die Bundesgrünen," 127.

original contractual solution, were hatching similar plans. In order to increase

pressure on the AL to embrace nonviolence, Schaar and Horst had renounced the

contractual solution in favor of a proposal that the AL become the *Landesverband*

outright.

In mid-February 1983, things came to a head at another General Members'

Assembly, where a number of new proposals were introduced relating to the

relationship between the AL and the federal Green Party. Schaar and Horst

introduced a motion according to which the AL would recognize the 'four

pillars' of the Green Party, one of which explicitly renounced violent protest.

The AL would then become the Green Party's West Berlin State Committee. But

the General Members' Assembly instead opted to pursue the contractual

solution, and thus chose the middle ground between going it alone and

assimilation by the Green Party, a solution that, significantly, would allow it to

avoid renouncing violence.[164]

This decision provoked immediate public fallout. On 23 February 1983,

Ursula Schaar and Ernst Hoplitschek held a press conference where they

announced their resignations, and Schaar laid down her mandate as one of the

AL's representatives in the West Berlin *Abgeordnetenhaus*. She linked her

resignation explicitly and publicly to the issue of violent protest, stating that she

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[164] Sellin, "Die AL und die Bundesgrünen," 128.

now saw "no basis for the principle of nonviolence in the AL."[165] Hoplitschek,

too, left the party, but linked his resignation to the dominance of the radical Left

in the AL. He viewed the defeat of the motion that the AL become the West

Berlin State Committee of the Green Party as "the final defeat of the ecologists in

the party at the hands of traditional, subjective Leftists who still hold on to

outdated solutions and for whom 'ecology' comes at best second or third."[166]

Despite these controversies, the AL continued to negotiate with the

federal Green Party. In autumn 1983, a commission drafted a text of a

cooperation contract for approval by the AL's General Members' Assembly in

West Berlin and by the federal Green Party's Congress of Delegates. The contract

would have given the AL full and equal representation in all decision-making

bodies of the federal Green Party for a period of two years.[167] But the contractual

solution faced one more hurdle mounted from the AL side, even if the hurdle

was largely symbolic. On 11 October 1983, when the General Members'

Assembly met to vote on the agreement, Michael Wendt, the first member of the

AL, introduced a competing motion according to which the AL would seek to

make its relationship with the national Green Party analogous to that between

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[165] …für das Prinzip der Gewaltfreiheit- keine Basis in der AL. Sellin, "Die AL und die Bundesgrünen," 128.

[166] …die besiegelte Niederlage der Ökologieströmung gegen traditionelle, subjektive 'Linke', die immer noch veralteten Lösungsmodellen anhängen und für die 'Ökologie' nur sekundär bzw. tertiär steht. Sellin, "Die AL und die Bundesgrünen," 128.

[167] Sellin, "Die AL und die Bundesgrünen," 132.

the Christian Democratic Union and the Bavarian Christian Social Union, which

allowed maximum autonomy to both organizations while allowing them to

cooperate in elections. The motion was apparently a symbolic gesture on behalf

of those AL members who placed a premium on the organization's autonomy as

an integral part of its identity.[168]

Through this, Wendt seems to have been trying to demarcate a point of no

return that made it clear to all AL members the consequences of pursuing a

relationship with the Green Party. The section of the motion giving the rationale

behind Wendt's action indeed made it clear that the AL was crossing the Rubicon

by taking the contractual path. Wendt's text warned that by moving closer to the

Green Party, "the AL is in the process of losing those who have defied the overall

trend and who have retained certain political utopias, who wish to preserve at

least a whiff of the 'storming of the Winter Palace'…. The work in parliament,

professionalization, newspaper advertisements instead of leaflets, etc.- this

fosters the development of the AL to a 'normal' party."[169] Nevertheless, the

General Members' Assembly approved the contractual solution by a large

margin. In the agreement, the two organizations agreed to "remove or clear up

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[168] Selling, ""Die AL und die Bundesgrünen," 132.

[169] Die AL ist dabei, diejenigen zu verlieren, die sich gegen den
Gesamttrend betimmte politische Utopien bewahrt haben, zumindest einen
'Hauch von Sturm aufs Winterpalais' erhalten wollen…Die Arbeit im Parlament,
Professionalisierung, Zeitungsanzeigen statt Flugblätter usw.- dies fördert die
Entwicklung der AL zu einer 'normalen' Partei. Sellin, "Die AL und die
Bundesgrünen," 132.

supposed or existing differences."[170] This was the only part of the contract that hinted at the issue of violent protest.

As has been seen, parliamentary participation and the relationship with the Green Party helped drive the processes of parliamentarization and deradicalization within the AL. Changes are also discernible in other areas besides attitudes toward parliament and violence. The next section examines the AL's attitudes toward terrorism, the GDR, and the Western Allies as further barometers of the AL's deradicalization.

Political violence perpetrated in the course of demonstrations was not the only kind of violence haunting the Federal Republic. Terrorist violence such as that perpetrated by the RAF also posed a threat to West Germany throughout the 1970s and well into the 1980s. New terrorist attacks in early 1985 in Gauting near Munich reinvigorated the debate about the goals and methods of the RAF. Groups within the AL had long been active in prison reform, studying the problem generated by the practice of isolating RAF prisoners. But the Munich attacks brought the issue of terrorism to the fore again.

The AL's response indicates the degree to which it distanced itself from terrorism. In the wake of the attacks, the AL's Executive Committee issued a press release calling for an end to the "human-destroying high-security prison

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[170] Vermeintliche oder bestehende Differenzen auszuräumen oder zu klären. "Vereinbarung zwischen der AL Berlin und dem Bundesverband der Grünen," Document 22 in *Die Alternative Liste Berlin. Entstehung, Entwicklung, Positionen*, ed. Michael Bühnemann, Michael Wendt, and Jürgen Wituschek (Berlin: LitPol, 1984), 140.

wings," referring to the RAF prisoners as "political prisoners" and calling for

them to be put together in groups as they demanded, putting these demands in

the context of international human rights organizations such as Amnesty

International.[171] But the press release also clearly distanced the AL from the goals

and methods of the RAF, emphasizing the irreconcilability of political murder

and bomb attacks with demands for better prison conditions, and insisting that

the AL's support for such improved conditions must not be misunderstood as

solidarity with acts of violence. The traditionally more radical Council of

Delegates echoed these statements, condemning the acts as "deeply

contemptuous of humanity that cannot be justified," adding that the attack in the

end would only cause the state to increase its repressive powers.[172] In fact, the

RAF hoped to provoke just this reaction on the part of the West German state in

order to reveal its allegedly fascist nature and thus provoke an uprising, the

fateful leap into the unknown addressed by Varon. That the AL rejected this

speaks volumes for the extent to which the RAF's strategy was failing to appeal

to the Left. By no means all AL members were ready to distance themselves

completely from the RAF: Dirk Schneider, in a piece entitled "Fire and Flame for

the State," complained that the AL had gone too far in condemning RAF

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[171] Menschenzerstörende Hochsicherheitstrakte; politische Gefangene. Telex copy of press release, "Hungerstreik und Gewaltaktionen," 2 February 1985. AGG: B.I.1.227.

[172] Zutiefst menschenverachtend und mit nichts zu rechtfertigen. "Entschliessung des Delegiertenrates der AL zur RAF," reprinted in *Der Stachel*, 2 March 1985.

violence.[173] Nevertheless, the fact that the AL's two leading executive bodies

distanced the AL from terrorist violence is evidence of considerable

deradicalization.

The early to mid-1980s were also a time of changing attitudes and

responses of the Left to the German question, that is, the legacy of the Second

World War, the peace settlement, German division, and occupation. In this area,

the AL demonstrated numerous continuities to the 1970s, calling for West

Germany to leave NATO, as well as calling on foreign troops to leave Germany.

At this phase, between 1981 and 1985, the far Left as represented by the AL still

viewed the Federal Republic by and large as imperialist and tainted by its fascist

past. The AL viewed the Allies as occupiers responsible for noise, environmental

degradation, and destruction of democratic rights. Moreover, the AL felt that the

Allies threatened the peace with provocative military parades and the stationing

of nuclear missiles.

The AL's views toward the GDR were considerably more complex. On

the one hand, the AL's charter stipulated that the organization support the

environmental, pacifist, and human rights opposition in the GDR. On the other

hand, it is quite clear that many AL members viewed the GDR with at least a

certain degree of sympathy, if only for the counterbalance it provided for what

the AL viewed as the crass Western imperialist world, and the anti-capitalism of

the AL led many members to sympathize with the socialist state surrounding

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[173] "Feuer und Flamme für den Staat," 24 Febrary 1985. AGG: B.I.1.135.

West Berlin. The days of the KPD-Rote Fahne's dominance had long passed, and

with it faded the group's hatred for the revisionist socialism of the GDR.[174] Here,

the actions of the Stasi must also be considered. As will be seen, the Stasi had a

number of paid informants and agents provocateurs working within the AL who

consistently worked to promote the GDR's interests.

One particular incident dating from this period of initial representation in

the West Berlin parliament shows the AL beginning to support the opposition in

the GDR. It also demonstrates the degree to which the GDR feared the potential

embarrassment sparked by public protests and acts of the AL and the Greens.

On 31 October 1983, a delegation of the Greens, including several AL members,

met with East German leader Erich Honecker. After the meeting, the delegation

unfolded banners with slogans supporting the Swords to Plowshares peace

movement in the GDR and calling on the East German nation to disarm. The

Stasi report noted that the demonstration was taped by camera teams for the

West German television networks ARD and ZDF. The banners were shown at a

press conference held later that day.[175]

A Stasi report a few days later addressed plans to hold another protest in

the GDR on 4 November 1983. The ZDF press correspondent had already been

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[174] In part, this continued in the Working Group on Policies affecting Berlin and Germany (AG-Berlin- und Deutschlandpolitik). See Raschke, *Die Grünen*, 277 nn. 24.

[175] "Hinweise zum Aufenthalt der Delegation der Grünen in der Hauptstadt der DDR am 31.10.83.," 1 November 1983. Matthias-Domaschk-Archiv (MDA/MfS): Heft Grüne/AL.

informed about the upcoming event. Members of the AL planned to form a

chain between the United States and the Soviet embassies in East Berlin and to

hand over petitions to these embassies. According to the Stasi, the action was

especially supported by those "who wish to express an anti-GDR opinion."[176]

Apparently still stinging from the embarrassment of the last public event, the

SED's reaction was drastic. The GDR refused entry to all known members and

sympathizers of the Greens and the AL, as well as all leftist groups known to

have supported the East German peace movement in the past. Moreover, the

GDR undertook various actions against 118 of its own citizens before anything

had taken place. As of midnight on 3 November 1983, ninety-two arrests were

planned, with four already carried out: the opposition leaders Bärbel Bohley,

Martin Böttger, Gerd Poppe, and Wolfgang Templin had been taken into

custody.[177] Clearly, the East German government viewed the activities of the AL

as a threat.

These travel restrictions and crackdowns certainly did not help the GDR's

image within the AL: in a report on the situation to the Federal Chair of the

Green Party, AL member Rebekka Schmidt condemned them as "a violation of

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[176] …eine anti-DDR Stimmung zum Ausdruck bringen wollen. "Information über die geplante Aktion am 4.11.83.," 4 November 1983. MDA/MfS: Heft Grüne/AL.

[177] "Information über die geplante Aktion am 4.11.83."

basic human rights of freedom of movement and self-determination."[178]

Developments such as the refusal of the GDR to allow the friends of the peace

activist and GDR opposition leader Robert Havemann enter the country to

attend his funeral also negatively impacted the GDR's image within the AL and

the Green Party as a whole.[179]

At this stage, the AL's support extended to opposition groups in other

Eastern European nations as well, including the Solidarity movement in Poland.

The Soviet crackdown sparked the AL to declare its support for Solidarity and to

commit itself to work toward lifting martial law in Poland.[180] Moreover, the AL

faction in the *Abgeordnetenhaus* donated an astonishing 25 percent of its 1981

budget to a fund set up by the AL for humanitarian aid to Poland: the AL's total

donation was 128,956 DM.[181]

The AL's programmatic and material support for the opposition groups in

Eastern Europe was not lost on the East German government. In fact,

throughout the 1980s, the *Ministerium für Staatssicherheit* (Ministry for State

Security- Stasi) of the GDR kept a close watch on the activities of the various

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[178] Ein Verstoss gegen elementare Menschenrechte wie Freizügigkeit, persönliche Entfaltung. Rebekka Schmidt, "Zur Entwicklung unseres Verhältnisses zur DDR," 6 January 1984. AGG: 1999/D5 Bibliothekbestand.

[179] Lukas Beckmann, "Begräbnis von Robert Havemann." Press release, 16 April 1982. AGG: 1999/D4 Bibliothekbestand.

[180] "Entschliessung der Alternativen Liste Berlin zu der politischen Entwicklung in Polen und Konsequenzen für uns," MRB 17 (1982), 3.

[181] "Bericht der Abgeordnetenhausfraktion 1981-1982," 20.

branches of the West German Green Party.[182] The AL was no exception. In fact, the Stasi assigned greater importance to the AL than to any other regional branch of the party, and the AL played a prominent role in the strategy of the SED.[183] This was due in part to the geographical proximity of the AL to the capital of the GDR, but also because the AL's ideology made the AL both a danger and an opportunity for the GDR. Support for both the opposition and the East German government became more than intellectual, with the AL donating money and equipment to the GDR opposition, while some AL members acted as spies for the Stasi, keeping it well informed of these efforts.

The Stasi was quite conscious of the danger that the AL's proximity to the capital of the GDR represented: it made it that much easier for certain members of the party to support so-called underground activities of the opposition.[184] It therefore kept itself well informed about efforts on the part of members of the AL to support the environmental and social justice opposition in the GDR.

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[182] Carlo Jordan, Armin Mitter, and Stefan Wolle, "Die Grünen der Bundesrepublik in der politischen Strategie der SED-Führung (Zwischenbericht)," 9 March 1994. AGG: 1999 D6 Bibliothekbestand; Hubertus Knabe, *Die Unterwanderte Republik* (Berlin: Ullstein, 1999), 71-73, 100-103.

[183] Ludwig Einicke and Hans-Ulrich Mühlbauer, "Die Grünen im politischen System der BRD und ihre Positionen zu den Grundfragen der Gegenwart. Politische und politisch-operativ bedeutsame Differenzierungsprozesse und Tendenzen," 20 February 1989. MDA/MfS: Stasi Diss. This dissertation was completed at the *Ministerium für Staatssicherheit Hochschule* less than a year before the fall of the Wall and German unification rendered this doctoral degree less than useful.

[184] "Die Grünen im politischen System der BRD."

The AL's potential to publicly embarrass the GDR clearly concerned the SED, as the arrests described above demonstrate. As a result, the Stasi was quite interested in being kept abreast of upcoming events involving anything that might embarrass the GDR. In setting down the procedure to follow when prominent members of the Green Party and the AL entered the GDR, the head of the Stasi, Erich Mielke, declared the goals of the Stasi in following the activities of the AL to be "to determine all activities involving the organization of political underground activities in the GDR and above all to prevent public appearances aiming to achieve publicity."[185] This frequently revolved around a desire to avoid negative media attention, often and increasingly involving environmental issues.

The Stasi's thirst for information regarding the activities of the AL cannot be overstated. The Stasi agents who coordinated their information-gathering activities repeatedly requested the informers that they handled to provide them with general information regarding the activities of the AL. They were especially interested in developments in the AL groups that concerned themselves with developing policy toward the GDR, as well as efforts to support the GDR opposition. But the Stasi hoped to gain other information from the AL as well.

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[185] …alle Aktivitäten zur Organisierung einer politischen Untergrundtätigkeit in der DDR…festzustellen und vor allem öffentlichkeitswirksames provokatorisches Auftreten vorbeugend zu verhindern." Erich Mielke to Unit Leaders, "Einreisen von Mitgleidern und politischen Fuehrungskraeften der Partei Die Grünen der BRD und der ALWestberlins in die DDR," 1 November 1983. MDA/MfS: Heft Grüne/AL.

This included, but was not limited to, information regarding upcoming events and protests; information on current and prospective leaders, both in the AL and in the Green Party; information on plans for making contacts to top-level officials in the GDR; information on the activities and positions of the Greens in the Bundestag; and additional information not directly related to the AL or the Green Party but of interest to the SED or its allies for various reasons.

But the Stasi was not content merely to gather information on the AL and the Green Party: it also actively sought to influence the AL's policies and its members' attitudes toward the GDR, recruiting numerous agents to work within the AL to advance the GDR's interests. The best known of these is Dirk Schneider, a founding member of the AL who became its representative to the *Bundestag* in 1983. It would be well beyond the scope of this dissertation to try to assess comprehensively the degree to which Schneider influenced the AL: the true extent of his impact may never be known.[186] But any attempt to address the AL's views toward the GDR must be seen in this context and understood with this in mind. Based on a preliminary reading and assessment of Schneider's work in the AL, it is possible to make a few tentative conclusions.[187] First, in

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[186] For an overview, see Knabe, *Unterwanderte Republik*, 73-77.

[187] For an account by a former colleague of Schneider's, see the article by Elisabeth Weber, "Stasi-Einflussagent mit Einfluss bei den Grünen?" *Kommune* 10, no. 2 (February 1992): 35. Weber assesses Schneider's impact on the formulation of the Green Party's policies regarding unification, and blames him for the Green Party's lack of preparation for the events of Autumn 1989.

everything he wrote, Schneider consistently promoted the interests of the GDR.[188]

He also defended the GDR from criticism from within the AL and the Greens,

often counterattacking by accusing the offender of fascist or imperialist

tendencies.[189] Finally, together with several other AL members, he also kept the

Stasi well informed of AL efforts to support the East German opposition groups,

and provided the Stasi with reports on the acts of GDR opposition figures as

well.

In general, it will probably never be possible to determine the extent to

which the Stasi influenced the AL's stance on the GDR. Furthermore, it would

be premature and not reflective of the historical record to ascribe to the Stasi all

or even most of the pro-GDR stance and policies of the AL. Nevertheless, the

AL's position regarding the GDR must always be evaluated against a

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[188] Schneider's most infamous work from this period may be the article entitled "Berlin- is it worth it?" published in the AL's membership circular in 1984. Dirk Schneider, "Berlin-lohnt sich das?" MRB 28 (September 1984), 4. Schneider also attempted to influence the formulation of Green Party policy: at a meeting of leading Greens in the Bundestag for example, Schneider pushed for the unconditional recognition of the GDR. Minutes of meeting of AG Deutschlandpolitik der Grünen, Bonn, 7 July 1984. AGG: 1999/D5 Bibliothekbestand.

[189] Dirk Schneider, open letter to the AL Council of Delegates, "Feuer und Flamme für den Staat," 24 February 1985. AGG: B.I.1.135. For reaction to Dirk Schneider's comments regarding the GDR and refugees given in an interview, in which Schneider called GDR citizens fleeing to the West "luxury refugees" [Luxusflüchtlinge], see Volker Schröder, "Schweine und Lügner," MRB 27 (July-August 1984), 4. Schneider's views on policies toward Berlin and Germany led to a bitter controversy between himself and the AL's Working Group on Berlin and Germany Policy. Peter Sellin, "Aussagen zur Kontroverse in der Berlin- und Deutschlandpolitik," MRB 28 (September 1984), 16.

background of manipulation, spying, and infiltration. Overall, the attitude toward the GDR at this time in the AL's development may be described as an important counter-balance to vulgar Western capitalism. The AL also tended to view the GDR as a necessary negotiating partner in solving West Berlin's problems. These two concerns characterized and influenced the position and policies the AL pursued between 1981 and 1985. As such, and as part of its attempts to be part of the international peace movement, the AL promoted a series of policies quite compatible with the GDR's aims, including the recognition of GDR citizenship, the end of the Salzgitter station registering human rights violations of the GDR, and unilateral West German disarmament.[190] The AL did, however, criticize the military buildup of the GDR, which had allowed it to become a pillar of Soviet hegemony. More threateningly from the point of view of East Germany were the AL's calls for freedom of travel between East and West and its demands that the GDR lift travel restrictions it had imposed on Green Party and AL members. In fact, during this phase, the only times the AL directly criticized the GDR with anything like unanimity regarded travel restrictions, which it condemned as a violation of minimum standards of individual political rights.[191]

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[190] See *Wahlprogramm der Alternativen Liste 1985* (Berlin: Alternative Liste, 1985).

[191] *Wahlprogramm der AL 1985*, 323.

The 'German question' also involved attitudes toward the Western Allies.

At this stage, the AL viewed the Western troops, especially the American

soldiers, as occupiers responsible for generating excessive noise, degrading the

environment, and restricting democratic rights. The AL did not hesitate to

violate the taboo against criticizing the Western Allies: in a debate calling into

question police measures taken against demonstrators at a troop parade, the AL

condemned the presence of the Allied "occupiers," and the AL reacted strongly

against the claim by the other parties that the status of the Allies could not be the

subject of debate in the *Abgeordnetenhaus*.[192] They viewed the Allied presence,

especially military parades and the two-track decision, not as a force for peace,

but as a provocation, and the AL introduced legislation to end the parades.[193]

During its first period of representation in the West Berlin city parliament, the

AL continued to use environmental arguments to argue against the Western

Allies' presence. Moreover, the AL's new position of power within the

Abgeordnetenhaus and, as of 1983, within the *Bundestag*, gave the AL a new arena

in which to express its opposition to NATO and the Western Allies.

Unsurprisingly, United States policy was a frequent target, with the AL

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[192] Besatzer. PAB 9/23 (27 May 1982), 1367; PAB 9/19 (24 March 1982), 1081.

[193] PAB 9/19 (24 March 1982), 1080.

promoting protests against United States policy in El Salvador and condemning

its actions in Grenada from the floor of the West Berlin parliament.[194]

The role of NATO and the Western allies was also a recurring source of

debate within the party. In this phase, clear ideological carryovers from the K-

groups regarding this issue can still be discerned. In March of 1984, members of

the AL's interest group devoted to peace issues published a paper that took up

many of the KPD-Rote Fahne's demands.[195] The article attacked NATO for its

"imperialist war preparations."[196] As a way to combat NATO's plans, the authors

advocated cooperation between workers and the peace movement, which should

work toward "an active general strike as a lever for a fundamental revolution in

social conditions."[197] Parliament was a tool to be exploited to this end:

"Parliamentary participation as a means of propaganda and the considered

acceptance of certain progressive aspects of the bourgeois parties must not stand

in contradiction to our principal oppositional and anti-imperialist goals."[198] The

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[194] MRB 17 (1982), 9; PAB 9/52 (10 November 1983), 3191.

[195] Horst Eckert, Friedhelm Tielesch, Andreas Beck, and Udo Kriegsmann, "Kein Frieden mit der NATO! Für eine antiimperialistische Zielsetzung der Friedensbewegung," MRB 24 (March 1984), 27.

[196] Die imperialistischen Kriegsvorbereitungen.

[197] Ein aktiver Generalstreik als Hebel grundlegender Revolutionierung der gesellschaftlichen Verhältnisse.

[198] Hierbei muss parlamentarisches Auftreten als Mittel der Propaganda und überlegtes Eingehen auf eventuelle fortschrittliche Aspekte bürgerlicher Parteien nicht in Widerspruch zu unserer prinzipiell oppositionellen und antiimperialistischen Zielsetzung stehen.

paper demanded a reversal of the two-track decision, the creation of an ABC-weapons free zone comprising the entire Federal Republic, total disarmament of conventional weapons, the Federal Republic's withdrawal from NATO, and the expulsion of NATO troops.

A rebuttal coming from within the ranks of the AL demonstrates that even at this early stage, the AL had begun showing signs of acceptance of the Allies. This was closely linked to disillusionment with the Soviet Union and the GDR. Thomas Sonnenschein, a member of the AL's Working Group on Democratic Rights, together with AL members Jens Müller and Thomas Holm, published an article in the next membership newsletter.[199] Their critique attacked the earlier article for its failure to recognize the repressive nature of the Soviets, who "came as even less of a liberator than did the US."[200] It asked if the 90 percent of those who according to pollsters supported NATO "were really all stupid or stirred up by the Springer press…?"[201] Or was their favorable view of NATO a result of the fact "that they see no life perspective in real Socialism and besides feel threatened by the Soviet Union's moving closer? And for good reason!"[202] Furthermore, the solution proposed in the earlier article lacked any basis in

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[199] Thomas Sonnenschein, Jens Müller, and Thomas Holm, "Kein Frieden mit der Dummheit," MRB 25 (May 1984), 31.

[200] Noch weniger als Befreier aufgetreten ist als die USA.

[201] Sind die denn wirklich alle doof oder von Springer augehetzt?

[202] Dass sie im realen Sozialismus keine Lebensperspektive sehen und sich ausserdem von der näher geruckten Sowjetunion bedroht fühlten? Und zwar aus gutem Grund!

reality: it was far better to plan for European integration and alternative forms of defense and to prevent war than "to wait patiently for exploitive capitalism to be overcome by revolution."[203]

As this chapter has made clear, the year 1981 marked a watershed in West Berlin's history. Against the backdrop and with the assistance of the housing squatters movement, an anti-parliamentary anti-party with clear ideological and personnel links to the radical Left had easily cleared the 5 percent hurdle and entered the West Berlin parliament. The AL brought numerous techniques of the extra-parliamentary opposition into the parliament. Contrary to expectations, however, the AL did not create chaos or undermine the parliamentary system, and the parliament proved surprisingly able to absorb the challenge. Even at this early juncture, the AL showed signs of parliamentarization and deradicalization. It continued to embrace and inculcate a political culture that emphasized debate and discussion as ways of arriving at truth. It carried out a debate on the role of violence in political protest, both as a result of its presence in parliament and due to its relationship with the Green Party. It began to show early signs of a disillusionment with the GDR and the Soviet Union, with terrorism, and with violent protest. Moreover, it began to see parliaments as the place for bringing about change, rather than relying on the extra-parliamentary realm. Over the course of the period examined in this chapter, for the AL, the parliaments were

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[203] Geduldiges Warten auf die 'revolutionäre Überwindung kapitalisticher Ausbeutungsverhältnisse.'

gradually replacing the extra-parliamentary realm as the main sphere of its activities and its main emphasis- in its terms, its 'Standbein,' or standing-leg. In short, by the end of 1985 at the latest, the AL had shifted its weight until it had reached an equilibrium between parliament and extra-parliamentary institutions. Its attempts to maintain this balance serve as the theme for the next chapter.

Chapter Six

Striving for Balance:

The AL in Parliament, 1985-1988

In December 1988, a student leader wrote a letter to the AL complaining about the "mental own-goal" of the AL's *Abgeordnetenhaus* representative Günter Seiler.[1] According to the letter, a group of university students had filled the steps of the city hall in Schöneberg, where the West Berlin parliament convened. The students demanded that Eberhard Diepgen, West Berlin's Governing Mayor, come down to them to hear their complaints. Instead, Diepgen offered to receive five students. The students rejected this overture, and refused to disperse. Diepgen then offered to receive ten students. As the student leader ironically phrased it, "This was Günter Seiler's grand moment."[2] Seiler offered to provide students with access to the press office and "advised [the students] to accept Diepgen's 'generous offer.' The consequence was uncertainty among the students, and their energy disappeared."[3] Three times, administrators demanded that the students leave the building, "but did not dare to call the police to clear the building. Instead of allowing us to bring the situation to a

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[1] Klaus Sprengel to Delegiertenrat, "Geistiges Eigentor des Abgn. Günter Seiler," 8 December 1988. Reprinted in DR-Info, 14 December 1988. AGG: B.I.1.748.

[2] Das war die grosse Stunde Günter Seiler's [sic].

[3] …er riet uns sogar dieses 'grosszügige' Angebot anzunehmen. Die Folge war eine Verunsicherung der Studis und der Pepp war weg.

head, Seiler betrayed us, and supported Diepgen in a cheap election maneuver called 'Diepgen listens to the problems of the students.'"[4]

This incident illustrates in miniature the strategy pursued by the AL during its second period of participation in the West Berlin legislature. Essentially, Seiler had used the means at his disposal to de-escalate and defuse the situation. Instead of letting the students provoke a confrontation, he encouraged the students to follow the course of dialogue and publicity. The negative reaction of the students also shows the perils of this strategy: the students felt betrayed and disappointed.

In the period between 1985 and 1989, the AL tried a similar approach. This chapter examines developments during this interval. In its original conception of the relative weight of the parliamentary and extra-parliamentary realms, the AL had emphasized the extra-parliamentary arena, its *Standbein*, while it sought occasionally to aid this extra-parliamentary struggle through its activities in parliament, its *Spielbein*. Through its attempt to mediate between the extra-parliamentary movements in West Berlin and the West German political establishment, the AL hoped to be able to span both worlds and to maintain a balance between its parliamentary *Spielbein* and its extra-parliamentary *Standbein*. As the above event illustrates, however, it found it difficult to

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[4] …trauten sich aber nicht, die Polizei zur Räumung einzusetzen. Anstatt uns die Situation auf die Spitze treiben zu lassen, fiel uns Seiler faktisch in den Rücken und unterstützte Diepgen bei einem billigen Wahlkampfmanöver nach dem Motto: Diepgen hört sich die Probleme der StudentenInnen an.

maintain this balance. In the end, events in this time period saw a gradual

reversal of the relative 'weight' emphasized repeatedly since the AL's creation.

Thanks to developments in this period, parliament became its *Standbein*, while

the extra-parliamentary arena became its *Spielbein*. This culminated with the

AL's entrance into power as a coalition partner in 1989.

Furthermore, 1985 to 1989 marked a time of particularly intense changes

within the organization. Important developments can be seen in its attitudes

toward parliament; its stance on violence; its relationship with the Green Party;

its relationship and views of the GDR; and its relationship with the Western

Allies. This chapter turns increasingly to the AL's attitudes regarding these

issues as a barometer of the party's parliamentarization and deradicalization.

By 1985 at the latest, the AL could no longer rely on its novelty to attract

attention and support. The 1985 election campaign reveals the degree to which

some of the AL's main programmatic thrusts had become mainstream. In an

article published shortly before the election, BILD compared the proposals of the

four principal parties regarding the environment, which it called "one of the

most important themes of the election."[5] According to BILD, the CDU wanted to

promote clean energy, the SPD wanted to toughen rules regulating smog, the

FDP wished to require all cars to have catalytic converters, and the AL proposed

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[5] Unsere Umwelt ist eines der wichtigsten Themen des Wahlkampfes. BILD, 6 March 1985.

banning all private cars from the city.[6] Other parties attempted to claim

ecological themes as their own. In an interview with BILD, Eberhard Diepgen,

the CDU's candidate for Governing Mayor, attacked the degree of the AL's

commitment to ecology, emphasizing instead the AL's plans to expel the

Western Allies from Berlin.[7] On the surface, this is consistent with Anna

Bramwell's argument that established political parties would incorporate

environmental issues into their own programs, thereby weakening the Greens.[8]

In the case of the AL, however, the acceptance of ecological arguments actually

seems to have helped the AL, at least in the short term, by making the AL seem

less frightening to voters.

In the AL's 1985 campaign, the environment certainly played an

important role. The thick, professional-looking electoral program published by

the AL for the 1985 campaign featured an extensive section on environmental

policy.[9] In the program, the AL presented a long list of environmental woes in

West Berlin. The program attacked the other parties for their past environmental

practices, but also proposed detailed and science-based solutions. Here, the AL's

ability to draw on the talent and expertise of its extra-parliamentary partners can

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[6] BILD, 6 March 1985.

[7] BILD, 18 February 1985.

[8] Anna Bramwell, *The Fading of the Greens: The Decline of Environmental Politics in the West* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1994), 203.

[9] *Wahlprogramm der AL 1985*, 93-116. The section on environmental protection was the second-longest section, behind only science and education policies.

clearly be discerned. The program addressed energy and clean air;

environmental toxins; the causes and consequences of water pollution;

environmental protection and preservation of the landscape; animal welfare; and

transportation issues.[10]

One of the AL's proposals from this last category proved highly

controversial. In an effort to reduce air pollution, the AL proposed phasing out

cars from the central city of West Berlin and relying instead on public

transportation and bicycles. This last suggestion received perhaps the most

heated criticism from the electorate. The AL reprinted in its membership circular

a letter purportedly from "Berlin workers" advising those concocting such a

scheme to "get out of Berlin as soon as possible before workers' fists bust your

heads in!"[11] Whether or not the letter truly was from Berlin workers, the piece

demonstrated the unpopularity of the idea among some segments of West

Berlin's population. The AL demonstrated its sensitivity to such criticism: in the

same Members' Circular, proponents published a list of talking points intended

to emphasize that the AL did not wish to ban cars outright, but to render them

increasingly unnecessary over a ten-year period by improving mass transit.[12]

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[10] *Wahlprogramm der AL 1985*, 93-128.

[11] …verschwindet so schnell wie möglich hier aus Berlin, ehe
Arbeiterfäuste euer Gehirn einschlagen! Letter from 'Berliner Arbeiter' to AL-
Zentral-Büro, 6 November 1984. Printed in MRB 30 (January 1985), 15.

[12] Burkhardt Müller-Schoenau, "Kleine Argumentationshilfe für die
'Autofreie Stadt,'" MRB 30 (January 1985), 17.

The AL's playful, iconoclastic mural campaign in the West Berlin subway also featured a variety of murals with an ecological theme. In the weeks before the election, dozens of different large hand-painted advertisements decorated the walls of the subway platforms in Berlin. The murals used humor and satire to emphasize the AL's anti-establishment character and to communicate its most important programmatic points.[13] Many of these illustrations featured environmental issues, including especially Berlin's polluted air, and posters depicted cityscapes where buildings and highways dominated at the expense of humans and animals. Public transportation also was a common theme. One mural featured a man covered in snow standing at a bus station looking at his watch. Only his eyes and his nose are to be seen: the rest is a big heap of snow. The caption reads: "At the bus stop at 12:30 AM. More often would be better."[14]

Several murals lampooned the sensationalist Springer press and what the AL viewed (with some justification) as the one-sided, pro-CDU coverage of the paper. One such picture depicted a magazine page with the same typeset and masthead of Springer's BILD, featuring the cover story "Watch out Berlin! The AL wants to ban spring! That is their cynical plan: Rain! Rain! Rain!"[15] The accompanying sketch was of an AL-candidate looking like a deranged terrorist,

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[13] See the poster collection reprinted in *Berlin tut gut* (Berlin: Elefanten, 1985).

[14] An der Haltestelle nachts um halb eins: Öfter wäre besser. *Berlin tut gut*, no page number.

complete with wild beard and crazed eyes.[16] Another poster poked fun at the

CDU's electoral slogan for the 1985 election, "Berlin is back," while others

targeted the SPD and the FDP for their links to recent alleged incidents of

corruption and bribery, a reference to the infamous Berlin Graft.[17]

Another effect of the upcoming 1985 elections was to reinvigorate the

debate about the nature of the relationship between the AL and the other parties,

especially the SPD. In 1984, while the election strategy was being planned, the

AL's finance expert Volker Schröder argued in the monthly members' circular

that the question as to whether the AL should cooperate with the SPD boiled

down to a crucial decision about the AL's nature. Did the AL wish to be "sand in

the gearbox," obstructing every policy in radical uncompromising opposition, or

did it wish to be the "architect of a new society?"[18] Schröder argued against

working exclusively with the SPD, suggesting instead that the AL cooperate with

any party on individual issues if it supported the AL. While the ideological

distance between the AL and the SPD was certainly less than that between the

AL and the CDU, the SPD was far from the AL's "natural partner."[19] His paper

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[15] Berlin pass auf! AL: Frühling abschaffen! Das ist ihr zynischer Plan: Regen! Regen! Regen!

[16] *Berlin tut gut*, no page number.

[17] Berlin ist wieder da! *Berlin tut gut*, no page number.

[18] Volker Schröder, "Sand im Getriebe oder Architekt einer neuen Gesellschaft?" MRB 24 (March 1984), 6.

[19] Natürlicher Verbündeter.

advocated a pragmatic approach to cooperation: the AL should work with other parties as long as this brought it closer to its overall goal of changing society. Such cooperation need not and should not entail surrendering its ideals.

Other AL members argued against a coalition with the SPD for historical and contemporary reasons. In the view of some contributors to the AL membership circular, the SPD was far too intimately connected with the West Berlin political establishment and with what the AL viewed as the SPD's disastrous past policies. Any efforts by the SPD to court the AL were merely strategic calculations, as the SPD sought to use the AL to return to power.[20] According to AL member Peter Kaufmann, the AL smelled power in the upcoming election and in the potential to form a coalition with the SPD. The AL was tempted to change in order to appeal to voters, but its goal should be to win the voters over, not to be changed by them. Kaufmann emphasized the lack of programmatic agreement between the SPD and the AL, as well as fundamental differences in visions of the kind of society they wished to achieve. He recommended presenting the SPD with a set of programmatic demands for a coalition that the AL knew the SPD would never agree to, so that the AL could safely enter four more years of opposition.[21]

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[20] Assi Geese and Winni Villwock, "Sekt oder Selters," MRB 24 (March 1984), 10.

[21] Peter Kaufmann, "Genug ist nicht genug," MRB 24 (March 1984), 13.

The full membership of the AL was first given the opportunity to voice its views regarding cooperation with the SPD at a General Members' Assembly in November 1984. The outcome demonstrated one of the pitfalls of the AL's grassroots democratic structure: attendance at the assembly was low, meaning those that did attend were highly committed, and tended to embrace more radical views.[22] The resolution passed at this meeting broadly condemned the SPD, and ruled out any cooperation between the AL and the SPD that could help the SPD to power. It concluded, "The political and programmatic visions of the AL cannot be achieved with this SPD."[23] A closer look at the language of the resolution is enlightening, however. The resolution condemned the SPD for being too close to the problems of Berlin, and condemned it for not having been an active enough opposition party within the parliament, complaining that it had missed parliamentary opportunities to improve the situation in Berlin. Instead, it had either interfered with the AL's attempts to pursue an oppositional course, or had been merely half-hearted in its own efforts. Language condemning the SPD for alleged revisionism or social imperialism was entirely absent. Hence even a declaration passed by a fairly radical segment of the AL concentrated on the parliamentary failings of the SPD rather than taking up more traditional left-wing criticisms of the SPD.

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[22] Raschke, *Die Grünen*, 276-277.

[23] Die politischen und programmatischen Vorstellungen der AL sind mit dieser SPD nicht durchsetzbar. "Beschluss der AL-Mitgliedervollversammlung zur Zusammenarbeit mit der SPD." Reprinted in MRB 30 (January 1985), 10.

Still, the debate about working with the SPD remained very much open. In part, this was due to the feeling that the poor attendance at the November General Members' Assembly meant that its rejection of cooperation did not represent the consensus of the party. In addition, many were concerned that the AL's apparent determination to oppose any cooperation with the SPD would make it responsible for four more years of CDU government. In January, just over one month before the upcoming election, the General Members' Assembly met again to vote on the same question. This time, it was unable to reach any clear decision.[24] At this point, the radical Left in West Berlin was simply not ready to be reconciled with the SPD. Its criteria for judging the SPD and for making such a decision had changed in important ways, however. Instead of condemning the SPD for selling out at Godesberg and forsaking the class struggle, the far Left criticized the SPD's failure to serve as a strong enough parliamentary opposition.

The results of the 1985 election seemed to confirm the AL's apparently permanent place in the opposition. Once again the AL improved on its last performance, increasing its share of the vote by nearly 3.5 percent to receive 10.6 percent of the overall vote, qualifying it to receive 15 seats in the *Abgeordnetenhaus*.[25] The AL thus retained its position as West Berlin's third largest party, again surpassing the FDP. Surprisingly, the FDP improved to 8.5

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[24] Horst Eckert, "Unentschieden," MRB 31 (March 1985), 5.

[25] In Kreuzberg, the AL polled a remarkable 25.6 percent.

percent, while the CDU dropped slightly by about the same amount of the FDP's

gain, though the CDU still received a comfortable 46.4 percent to make it easily

the winner. The big loser on the other hand was the SPD, which dropped by

nearly 6 percent from 1981's results to garner 32.4 percent, its worst results in the

postwar era.[26]

The press reaction to the 1985 election results was mixed. The West Berlin

daily *Tagesspiegel* voiced its concerns about the SPD's lost ability to integrate

various strands of voters on the far left and right of the political spectrum, and its

reaction to the elections was tinged with mourning over the fall of a party that in

its view had played such a crucial role in the democratic development of the

city.[27] The left-leaning daily *TAZ* predicted "four hard years" for the AL in

opposition, and noted that the AL had failed to receive the 14 to 16 percent of the

vote as had been projected.[28] The Springer-tabloid BILD also emphasized the

AL's failure to achieve the expected share of the vote. It gave credit to West

Berlin's Governing Mayor Diepgen, and claimed that the vote was an explicit

rejection of a possible red-green coalition, which it described as the SPD's "flirt

with alternatives and anti-American dreamers."[29]

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[26] All election results, Statistisches Landesamt Berlin, 2001.

[27] *Der Tagesspiegel,* 12 March 1985.

[28] Vier harte Jahre. *TAZ*, 12 March 1985.

[29] Flirt mit Alternativen und antiamerikanischen Traumtänzern. BILD, 11 March 1985.

The years 1985 to 1989 marked a time of significant changes for the AL's

activities in the West Berlin *Abgeordnetenhaus*. The composition of the AL

delegation to the *Abgeordnetenhaus* altered the complexion of the institution. In

the AL's parliamentary activities, processes of parliamentarization and

deradicalization continued, as the AL moderated its stance regarding the

Western Allies and the adoption of federal laws for West Berlin. Parliament for

the AL also developed into a site of new areas of emphasis, including most

notably the use of parliaments to promote a confrontation with the German past.

Furthermore, this period saw an intensification of the AL's environmental

initiatives. Scandals revolving around the West Berlin State Office for

Constitutional Protection provided new focus for the AL's reformist thought,

and fit in well with the AL's emphasis on governmental transparency.

Throughout, but especially toward the end of the legislative period, the AL and

the SPD increasingly found common ground. In fact, in many ways, the years in

mutual opposition were a rehearsal for the SPD-AL coalition. The AL's views of

the SPD shifted from seeing the SPD as the party that represented much of what

the AL had been founded in opposition to, to viewing the SPD as a party with

certain common interests, and hence a prospective coalition partner.

As was the case in 1981, the AL's delegation to the *Abgeordnetenhaus* also

differed significantly from those of the three other parties in more than political

outlook. For one thing, they were much younger than the other parties'

delegates. The average age of the AL delegates was thirty-six, around ten years

younger than the other parties' representatives. This meant that the average AL

delegate would have been around seventeen years old at the time of the 1968

student uprisings- probably too young to participate actively, but a prime

candidate for the 1968 revolt to have left a lasting imprint.

Even more extraordinary than the age difference was the gender factor: 55

percent of the AL delegates to serve in the tenth electoral period were female.

Even the relatively progressive SPD had only 19 percent of its delegation

composed of women, while the CDU and FDP lagged far behind, with 5 and 8

percent respectively.[30] About half of the AL's delegates were born in Berlin; this

did not vary significantly from the other parties. The data can be summarized as

follows:

Party	Percent Women's Representation	Percent Born in Berlin	Average Age[31]
AL	55	52	36
CDU	5	59	46
FDP	8	31	47
SPD	19	49	46

Table 2: Breakdown of *Abgeordnetenhaus* delegations by sex, place of birth, and average age, tenth electoral period.[32]

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[30] Data compiled from *Handbuch II des Abgeordnetenhauses von Berlin* (Berlin: Abgeordnetenhaus von Berlin, 1988). The eight percent figure is somewhat misleading, as only one woman from the FDP served in its small delegation.

[31] As of 31 December 1985.

[32] I followed the same procedure as in the ninth electoral period to arrive at these figures.

During the tenth legislative period, the AL continued the political Left's struggles against the presence of the Western Allies; this was a major point of programmatic emphasis going back to the 1970s, and it continued to find expression during the ninth legislative period, as has been seen. Beginning in the tenth legislative period, the AL began seeking a parliamentary redress of these grievances. Two specific practices particularly nettled the Left: the ability of the Western Allies to overrule German law through the system of rights reserved to the Allies, especially regarding the death penalty; and the military parades. During the tenth legislative period, from 1985 to 1989, the AL made one of its legislative priorities the reform of the rules governing the presence and conduct of the Western Allies. Both the parliamentary nature of the attempt and the debate about the proposal reveal just how far the AL had changed in its attitude toward the Western Allies.

In a September 1985 debate, AL delegate Wolfgang Schenk expressed his gratitude for the role that the Western Allies had played in preserving the status of West Berlin, and acknowledged their contribution in maintaining West Berlin's self-determination in the face of the Soviet threat. He explained that the AL merely was asking that the Allies apply their own democratic values to the conditions in Berlin. In his words, " We call upon the Allies to work together with us to remove undemocratic conditions, which by their own values must be

considered undemocratic. You can't get any more American than that!"[33] Schenk

also objected to the practices of certain West Berlin politicians, who allegedly

used the special privileges of the Allies to justify their dirty work, work that they

would not normally have done as it would not have been acceptable to public

opinion. As an example, Schenk cited the last Reagan visit, when police cracked

down on demonstrators and enforced limitations on free speech, claiming they

were following Allied directives that the AL asserted never existed.[34]

Similarly, the AL's delegate Renate Künast emphasized the modest nature

of her party's proposals. In an October 1985 debate on an AL-sponsored bill to

reform the occupation statutes, Künast derided the other parties for what she

viewed as the alarmist rhetoric about the intentions of the AL in addressing the

issues of occupation reforms.[35] She denied that the AL was attempting to

undermine West Berlin's security or change its status. Instead, she emphasized

that the AL wished only to enter into conversations with the Allies about the

rules governing occupation, with a view to increasing West Berlin's self-

determination, so that under normal conditions, the Allies would refrain from

exercising their powers and intervening directly in West Berlin affairs.

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[33] Wir berufen uns auf die Alliierten, um mit ihnen gemeinsam undemokratische Verhältnisse abzuschaffen, die von ihrer eigenen Wertvorstellung her als undemokratisch benannt werden müssen. 'Amerikanischer' kann man eigentlich nicht mehr sein! PAB 10/10 (26 September 1985), 450.

[34] PAB 10/10 (26 September 1985), 449-450.

[35] PAB 10/12 (24 October 1985), 593-594.

Significantly, all four *Abgeordnetenhaus* parties agreed on language calling on the Allies to work with them to purge Allied law of certain objectionable elements and to make it more consistent with developments in West German law, especially regarding capital punishment. The proposal, which originally had been sponsored by the AL but had been modified slightly, passed unanimously. Künast stated that the AL still objected to elements of the West German laws with which Allied law was to be harmonized, and warned that this was not the last word from the AL on the subject of legal reform. But she also noted that the AL had agreed to the changes because they represented a way of achieving change for the better.[36]

The AL elaborated on its aims regarding the Western Allies in a publication issued a year later intended to document its attempts to modify the occupation statute.[37] In the publication, the AL took a somewhat harder line, reacting to the increased visibility and activities of the Allies in the wake of the La Belle disco terrorist bombing (see below). Notably, some of the more contradictory elements of the AL's ideology came to the fore. The AL again denied that it was raising the issue of occupation in an effort to undermine the status and security of West Berlin. At the same time, however, the publication questioned the necessity of the Allied forces in West Berlin, as the city could not

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[36] PAB 10/12 (24 October 1985),596-597.

[37] *Besatzungsrecht in Berlin (West)* (Berlin: Fraktion der Alternativen Liste im Abgeordnetenhaus von Berlin, 1986).

be defended militarily. Nevertheless, the AL took a moderate stance in terms of methods, reiterating its desire to establish negotiations with the Allies with the goal of having the Allies guarantee the status of West Berlin without intervening in the daily business of administering the city. It also repeated its idea that West Berlin residents should enjoy the same rights as the French, British, Americans, and for that matter the West Germans, and again accused the other parties of using Allied law to justify acting in their own interests.

This period also witnessed the reappearance of complaints about Allied military parades, another long-standing grievance of the Left. The difference was that the AL now articulated its grievances within parliamentary channels. For example, the AL proposed legislation that would have banned the West Berlin police from participating in the military parades. The AL objected that this practice represented an attempt to portray the military parade as something positive, lending them a festive, carnival-like atmosphere. At the same time, the practice supposedly led to an association of the police with the military, and hence a militarization of the police force.[38] In another case, the AL proposed the "disarmament" of the Allied parades.[39] This somewhat preposterous proposal can only have been intended as a publicity stunt, as the *Abgeordnetenhaus* lacked the authority to make such a decision. Nevertheless, the incident revealed the AL's practice of focusing public attention on the problems posed by the Allied

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[38] PAB 10/31 (12 June 1986), 1794-1795.

[39] Entwaffnung. PAB 10/76 (9 June 1988), 4572-4573.

presence, as well as casting itself as the party that dared to address such a taboo issue. The bill asserted that the point of military parades was to demonstrate one's capacity to make war. This was not compatible with recent strides in détente, but instead had the opposite effect, and was a provocation. The bill also demanded that the restriction on demonstrations within a certain distance of the parade be lifted, as it must be possible to protest against a military parade. Finally, the AL again employed the weapon of ecology to argue against the Allied presence, citing the damage military maneuvers caused to forests and habitats, as well as the negative impacts on local residents of such installations as the Gatow shooting range.

Regarding the issue of occupation law then, it is possible to discern the outlines of the AL's changed strategy. On the one hand, the AL continued earlier attempts to exploit parliament, to use it as a pulpit from which to draw attention to problems posed by the Allied presence. This was a carryover from the K-group approach of using parliament as a platform from which to spread the gospel of class warfare. The AL also enlisted ecological issues and concern with free speech and abuse of power in order to focus attention on the Allied presence. Simultaneously, however, the AL was trying to establish a dialogue with the Western Allies regarding its grievances. This reflected the AL's growing belief in the power of discussion and negotiation to achieve results, and also related to the AL's attempts to strike a balance between the possibilities afforded by its parliamentary representation and its extra-parliamentary

clientele. It also foreshadowed the approach the AL would take when it became

a coalition partner in 1989.

Similarly, the AL moderated its stance regarding adopting federal law in

West Berlin. In the past, the AL had refused to go along with the practice of

automatically taking over federal laws for application in West Berlin in a

procedure necessitated by West Berlin's special status under German law and

Allied statute. The SPD, CDU, and FDP viewed this as purely a formality: in

their view, to act otherwise would be to question the close link between West

Berlin and the Federal Republic. From the time that it entered the

Abgeordnetenhaus, the AL had made it clear that it did not share this view, and

objected to the ritualistic nature of the process. In the tenth legislative session,

the AL continued its practice of opposing the adoption of some federal laws,

while also more frequently and vociferously protesting that it did not wish to

question the link between West Berlin and the Federal Republic.[40]

In one instance, the AL was able to sharpen its criticism of the ritualistic

approach and what it viewed as the cavalier attitude of the other parties

regarding this issue. In the summer of 1988, a bill appeared before the

Abgeordnetenhaus for the adoption of the controversial tax reform laws that the

Kohl government had pushed through over the strong opposition of the Social

Democrats and the Greens. During debate in parliament, the AL announced that

it would not vote in favor of the tax reform. Shortly thereafter, another AL

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[40] For example, PAB 10/3 (9 May 1985), 125.

delegate issued a quorum call. The parliamentary body was unable to reach

quorum, as only 59 of the 144 delegates were present, and the *Abgeordnetenhaus*

was forced to adjourn without having adopted the federal laws. The rest of the

representatives had apparently already left for summer vacation.[41] This act was

calculated to call public attention to what the AL viewed as the delegates' failure

to take this part of their duties seriously, and related to its old complaint about

the ritualized voting for the adoption of federal laws. Although the other parties

heavily criticized the AL for what the CDU called "an unreasonable act of

hypocritical appeal to the rules of order," the leftist daily TAZ's assessment that,

in this case, the AL delegates "revealed themselves, as so often, as the better

parliamentarians," seems accurate.[42]

The parliamentary activities of the AL during the period 1985 to 1989 also

were marked by a new area of emphasis: the use of parliament as the source of

initiatives promoting *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, or a coming to terms with the

German past. During the tenth legislative session, the AL sponsored a number

of initiatives to document and combat what it viewed as an incomplete process

of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* in the Federal Republic, but especially in West

Berlin. In this instance, an organization with direct ties to the student movement,

as well as close connections to groups that had themselves demonstrated a

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[41] PAB 10/78 (9 July 1988), 4680-4681.

[42] Akt der Unvernunft unter heuchlerischem Berufen auf die Geschäftsordnung ; entpuppten sich- wie schon häufig- als die besseren Parlamentarier. TAZ, 11 July 1988.

questionable degree of coming to terms with the Nazi past, actively promoted *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, both publicly and within its own organization.

In particular, the AL objected to what it saw as the tendency to forget and suppress evidence of the German past. The AL sponsored a parliamentary question for debate in the Berlin legislature on forgotten and ignored victims of fascism in Berlin.[43] These forgotten groups included homosexuals, the forcibly sterilized, Sinti and Roma ('Gypsies'), and Jehovah's Witnesses. The debate sought to focus attention on these persons and on the city's failure to provide them with the same compensation given to bomb victims, refugees from the East, and the war injured. The AL tried to exert pressure on the bureaucracy set up to take care of the victims of Nazism to address these groups' needs. Directly linking the issue to processing the past, the AL called on the Senate to provide financial and political support to those individuals and organizations performing research on the Nazi regime and its post-1945 reception. The AL also submitted a written question to the Senate regarding the treatment of homosexuals during the Nazi and post-war era. The AL demanded to know why homosexual men who were placed in Nazi concentration camps were not recognized as victims of persecution, and asked the Senate to consider ways of stimulating memory and increasing knowledge about the treatment of gays and lesbians at the hands of the Nazis.[44]

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[43] PAB 10/4 (23 May 1985), 164.

[44] "Zur unbewältigten NS-Geschichte Berlins," MRB 33 (June 1985), 32.

Another example was the AL's efforts to draw attention to plans to spruce up the site of the former *Reichssicherheitshauptamt* for the 750th anniversary of Berlin in what the AL viewed as a sterile manner.[45] In a parliamentary question it sponsored in September 1985, the AL asserted that the plans for the former headquarters were symptomatic of the general treatment of the Nazi past in West Berlin during the postwar era. According to the AL, this treatment was characterized by the attitude that anything that reminded Germans of their past should be torn down and forgotten about. Its response linked failed *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* with West Germany's consumerist society: as the AL's Christiana Zieseke put it, "all that would cause us to think back is gradually replaced in city planning by cheap entertainment facilities."[46] To counteract this, the AL called for the creation of an "active museum" to serve as "a kind of workshop for the confrontation with the Nazi past."[47] In place of passive forgetting, the property should become the site of active remembering. In Zieseke's words, "The site of terror and repression would become a place of memory and communication."[48]

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[45] This is now the site of the open-air museum "Topographie des Terrors."

[46] Das, was uns zum Nachdenken bringen könnte, wird nach und nach ersetzt durch billige Unterhaltungsware in der Stadtgestaltung. PAB 10/9 (12 September 1985), 376.

[47] Aktives Museum; eine Art Werkstatt für die Auseinandersetzung mit der Nazivergangenheit.

[48] Aus dem Ort des Terrors und der Verdrängung würde ein Ort der Erinnerung und der Kommunikation. PAB 10/9 (12 September 1985), 376.

Similar efforts to spark a more active approach to confronting the Nazi past came in the form of the AL-sponsored proposal to establish and fund a documentation and research center on the Nazi judicial system. Such a center would help address the inadequacy of past efforts to commemorate the past, and could help force Germans to come to terms with it. Renate Künast asserted, "Our proposal would like to make an attempt at such a new, forthright, honest, and also critical confrontation with the era of National Socialism, and the later failure to work through it."[49]

The sudden attention paid by the AL to processing the Nazi past raises the question as to whether the AL had discovered in the issue a new weapon with which to attack the other political parties, or whether it was seriously interested in advancing the process of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*. The question is a valid one; after all, many of the AL's initiatives regarding the Nazi past came in the wake of President Reagan's widely criticized visit to the military cemetery at Bitburg on 5 May 1985.[50] Moreover, the AL and the Green Party published a brochure shortly thereafter listing the efforts on the part of the AL and the Green

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[49] Unser Antrag möchte den Versuch machen für eine solche neue, offene, ehrliche und auch kritische Auseinandersetzung mit der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus und der nicht stattgefundenen Aufarbeitung später. PAB 10/44 (22 November 1987), 2719.

[50] Scandal developed when it was revealed that the bodies of Waffen-SS soldiers also were buried at this location. This infamous incident sparked the so-called *Historikerstreit*. On this episode, see Charles Maier, *The Unmasterable Past* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997).

Party to recognize and compensate victims of the Nazis.[51] Thus the timing of the

AL's new interest in the issue may be considered suspect. Nevertheless, the

evidence suggests that the AL was motivated by a genuine concern for coming to

terms with the past. For one thing, the AL's interest in the issue predated the

Bitburg scandal. At the beginning of April 1985, the AL in a press release praised

efforts on the part of the federal government to make it easier for the German

judicial system to investigate and prosecute cases of Nazi persecution of Jews.

But the AL strongly objected to the compromise language of the bill, which the

AL held equated the expulsion of Germans from the east with the murder of the

European Jews. The AL expressed its concern that this would tend to trivialize

these actions "carried out by Germans in Germany's name."[52]

 Moreover, the AL strove as much to educate its own members about the

Nazi past as it did the general public. The AL reprinted in its membership

circular information about the Nazi past, and it actively condemned several

instances of anti-Semitism in West Berlin.[53] The AL also printed in its

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[51] "Anerkennung und Versorgung aller Opfer nationalsozialistischer Verfolgung," 1986. AGG:PKA 324(2).

[52] …was im namen deutschjlands [sic] durch deutsche geschah. "Stellungnahme der AL zum Gesetzentwurf 'Auschwitz Luege.'" Press release, 4 April 1985. AGG:B.I.1.227.

[53] Norbert Kampe, "Vor 50 Jahren: Reichskristallnacht," MRB 53 (November 1988), 26. The AL wrote a letter to Berlin's soccer club Hertha condemning the anti-Semitic cheers of some fans, and sponsored a written parliamentary question regarding the same incident. Hans-Jürgen Kuhn to President of Hertha BSC, 12 November 1988; Kleine Anfrage betr.

membership circular information relating to the postwar reinstallation of judges who were compromised by their Nazi party membership, as well as on the effect of the Nazi period in stifling knowledge about the achievements of women during the Weimar Republic.[54] Thus this successor to the student movement can be seen as continuing the process started in the late 1960s of forcing a confrontation with the legacy of the German past and the failure of West German postwar society to come to terms with the crimes of the Nazis.

In fact, the AL's drastically increased interest in the Nazi past can also be related to the entry of one woman in particular into the West Berlin parliament as an AL delegate. Dr. Hilde Schramm appears to have been the driving force behind many of these efforts, and she edited or co-authored many of the brochures and articles published by the AL on this topic and sponsored most of the bills calling for increased attention to the Nazi past. Her involvement demonstrates another important aspect of the role of the green-alternative movement for integrating a postwar generation into the parliaments.

Schramm's biography accounts for her interest in the legacy of the German past. Born in Berlin in 1936, she attended *Gymnasium* in Heidelberg and spent a year in the United States in 1952 through the American Field Service. The desire to live in a large city "in the presence of the ruins of German history"

Rechtsradikales Verhalten von Hertha Fans. Both in DR-Info, 23 November 1988. AGG: B.I.1.748.

[54] "Zur unbewältigten NS-Geschichte Berlins," MRB 33 (June 1985) 31.

and her desire to leave Heidelberg "to go to a city where one believed that the problems of the time were being addressed" brought her back to Berlin in the postwar era.[55] There, she studied German language and literature at the Free University. During her time as a university student, she rejected the dogmatism of the various radical student groups. She participated in various demonstrations in West Berlin, but her first organized political activity came when she joined the AL in the early 1980s. Schramm was attracted to the party by Petra Kelly and her candidacy for the *Bundestag*. By her own account, she had never wished to belong to a party: "It would have been unthinkable. I would never have joined a party, I can't imagine having done so if it hadn't been for the Greens. My conceptions about how politics should be conducted were so far removed from those of the other parties, including the SPD."[56]

Schramm's reticence regarding political parties, her rejection of the dogmatism of the radical groups of the sixties and seventies, and her obvious concern for the failure to work through the German past all perhaps stemmed from one other biographical detail: She was the daughter of Albert Speer, Hitler's chief architect and armaments minister. Thus in Schramm's case, it was a

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[55] In der Präsenz der kaputten deutschen Geschichte; um in eine Stadt zu gehen, wo man meinte, dass die Probleme der Zeit verhandelt werden. Hilde Schramm, conversation with author, Berlin, 27 July 2001.

[56] Es wäre ganz undenkbar gewesen, ich wäre nie in eine Partei gegangen, ich kann es mir nicht vorstellen, wenn nicht die Grünen gegeben hätte. Meine Vorstellungen, wie Politik gemacht werden soll, war so weit weg von den anderen Parteien, einschliesslich der SPD…. Hilde Schramm, conversation with author, Berlin, 27 July 2001.

personal confrontation with the sins of the father that motivated her intense

commitment to promoting a confrontation with the past. But her interest fell on

fertile ground in the AL. Schramm found in the AL a political and intellectual

climate in which she could articulate her own concerns. In so doing, she helped

push the AL to promote initiatives that helped promote

Vergangenheitsbewältigung. She thus also helped shift this strand of New Left

ideology into political channels. This is particularly significant in light of

scholarship on postwar Germany that posits a direct link between the Nazi past

and terrorist organizations such as the RAF.[57] According to this view, many

members of the New Left viewed terrorism as a means of righting the wrongs

committed by their parents' generation. Hilde Schramm provides an example of

someone turning to parliamentary representation as a way to address the sins of

the parents.

As well as witnessing a time of intensified interest in the legacy of the

German past, the tenth legislative period also saw increased efforts on the part of

the AL to enact legislation relating to environmental protection. As has been

noted above, Joachim Raschke has pointed out that in the AL, "Green was not its

first color."[58] In the time period examined here, however, environmental

concerns were becoming progressively more important to the AL.

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[57] See in general Becker, *Hitler's Children*; Varon, *Shadowboxing*, esp. 315.

[58] Raschke, *Die Grünen*, 274.

Increasingly, the AL was becoming what it had initially claimed to be: an organization devoted to environmental protection. In a single parliamentary session, the AL introduced multiple proposals for nature protection. These included six measures relating to clean water and environmental protection.[59] The AL also proposed a bill to allocate five million DM to promote research in the field of environmental protection.[60]

Environmental issues also of course provided ammunition to attack the other parties. In the opening session of the legislature, the AL's delegate Stefan Klinski lambasted the CDU for its alleged responsibility for West Berlin's environmental problems.[61] The AL attacked the solid-waste disposal policy of the CDU-FDP Senate. The AL delegate Gabriele Vonnekold blasted existing practices of the city administration from the floor of the *Abgeordnetenhaus*. Instead of waste reduction and recycling, Vonnekold claimed that the West Berlin government was solving the waste problem "in a simple and, as we see it, very brutal manner- by burdening its neighbor with its garbage."[62] The result was that the garbage dumps in the GDR were polluting East German ground water with West German trash. In doing so, Vonnekold asserted, the West Berlin

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[59] PAB 10/5 (13 June 1985), 227.

[60] PAB 10/52, 14 May 1987, 3151.

[61] PAB 10/1 (18 April 1988), 15.

[62] …wird das Problem auf einfache und- wie wir finden- sehr brutale Art dadurch gelöst, dass man seinen Müll dem Nachbarn aufbürdet. PAB 10/68, 12 January 1988, 4040.

Senate was exploiting the fact that GDR citizens did not have access to the same environmental safeguards or opportunities for protest as their Western counterparts. Vonnekold claimed that "here, the Senate seems to find the oft-bemoaned lack of self determination of our brothers and sisters in the East no longer so terrible, and can exploit it quite nicely."[63] In addition, the AL sponsored a parliamentary question for debate in session regarding *Waldsterben* in Berlin and air quality in the city, in which it attacked the other parties for their past environmental policies.[64]

If environmental issues provided a convenient weapon with which to attack the political opposition, they also continued to play a crucial role in holding the party together. One incident illustrates this process particularly well. In autumn 1987, the AL passed through a series of crises. Internal critics of the party bemoaned its "dreadful political climate," condemned its lack of a consistent social and ecological policy, and deplored its failure to resolve the question of violence satisfactorily.[65] The crises had sparked a number of prominent AL members to leave the party. While the number was small, their prominence led some to talk of a wave of people leaving a party that was

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[63] Hier plötzlich scheint der Senat das sonst doch immer so oft und vollmundig beklagte Fehlen der Selbstbestimmungsrecht der Brüder und Schwestern im Osten nicht mehr so schlimm zu finden und hervorragend ausnutzen zu können. PAB 10/68, 12 January 1988, 4040.

[64] PAB 10/39 (27 November 1986), 2313.

[65] Grauenhafte politische Kultur. TAZ, 1 October 1987.

"clinically dead."[66] The crisis attracted national attention, with an article in *Der Spiegel* prophesying "the beginning of the end" for the party.[67]

The November 1987 issue of the membership circular explored this crisis and its roots in detail. In his editorial introducing this issue, Jochen Esser noted that the crisis stemmed from a new debate about the direction the party should go, a debate that threatened to split the Left.[68] The AL's response demonstrates that the Left had learned its lesson from the 1970s, when its divisiveness had translated into political impotence: the next *Mitgliederrundbrief* focused almost entirely on environmental issues. This time, Esser's editorial noted the crucial role the AL could play regarding environmental protection. Elaborating, he emphasized that while that month's issue was perhaps not as interesting as the crisis within the Left, it should make one thing clear: "The AL is urgently needed and must multiply its efforts if the destruction of nature is to be stopped and a better quality of life can be brought to our city."[69] Thus that month's members' circular attempted to invoke the preservation of the environment as the cause around which nearly all members could rally.

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[66] Klinisch tot. TAZ, 1 October 1987.

[67] "Anfang vom Ende," *Der Spiegel* 41, no. 37 (7 September 1987), 87.

[68] Jochen Esser, "Editorial," MRB 47 (November 1987), 3.

[69] Die AL wird dringend gebraucht und muss ihre Anstrengungen verfielfachen, wenn die Naturzerstörung gestoppt und mehr Lebensqualität in unserer Stadt ermöglicht werden soll. Jochen Esser, "Editorial," MRB 48 (January 1988), 3.

Overall then, environmental issues came to play an increasingly important role during the 1985 to 1989 time frame. In general, the AL proposed a large number of environmental initiatives. But environmental issues both served as a weapon with which to attack the parties in power and as the glue holding the party together. If Joachim Raschke was correct in his assertion that green was not the AL's primary color, in the time 1985 to 1989, it certainly ran a close second.

Another area of emphasis for the AL opened upon the publication of an article in West Germany's leading news weekly *Der Spiegel* in September 1986 involving actions of dubious legality on the part of West Berlin's Office of Constitutional Protection.[70] The scandal related to a murder case dating back to 1974, when Ulrich Schmücker, a student and a former member of the West Berlin terrorist group 'June 2 Movement,' was found mortally injured from a gunshot wound in the Grunewald. Shortly after the murder, the group 'Black June Commando' claimed responsibility, asserting that it was in revenge for the victim's providing information on the organization to the Office for Constitutional Protection. Twelve years and twelve million DM later, the case still had not been closed. In particular, the question of the involvement of the Office for Constitutional Protection remained unclear: allegedly, the Office for Constitutional Protection had disappeared the murder weapon in order to cover up its role in the murder.

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[70] "Spitzel aus der Tarantel," *Der Spiegel* 40, no. 40 (28 September 1986), 63.

The case was particularly scandalous because the Office for Constitutional Protection had been operating since 1981 with no parliamentary supervision. In order to prevent the AL from having access to secret information, the Berlin Parliament's Security Committee was dissolved shortly after the AL entered the *Abgeordnetenhaus* in 1981.[71] The September 1986 article in *Der Spiegel* breaking the story prompted efforts to reestablish this parliamentary control. The *Abgeordnetenhaus* established the Parliamentary Control Commission with the task of overseeing future activities of the Office for Constitutional Protection. From the AL's point of view, this response was inadequate: Renate Künast sarcastically labeled it "a textbook example of parliaments' ability to regulate espionage agencies."[72] Instead of trying to investigate, the AL asserted that the established parties attempted to apply a democratic veneer to the organization. Künast labeled the Parliamentary Control Commission a "cover-up commission" that in the event of future scandals would "lead the public to believe that the legislature is keeping tabs on things."[73] The other parties' deliberate exclusion of the AL from the commission only made matters worse. Its exclusion certainly did not help counteract Künast's sentiments that "little success could be expected

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[71] "Trojanische Kavallerie," *Der Spiegel* 41, no. 51 (14 December 1987), 90.

[72] Ein Lehrbeispiel parlamentarischer Bewältigung von Geheimdienstarbeit. *Verfassungsschutz und Demokratie- vereinbar?* (Berlin: Fraktion der Alternativen Liste im Abgeordnetenhaus von Berlin, 1987), 4.

[73] Vertuschungskommission ; der Öffentlichkeit vorzugaukeln, [es] würde eine Kontrolle durch die Legislative stattfinden. *Verfassungsschutz und Demokratie*, 4

from parliamentary initiatives, and [sic] these do not call into question the work of espionage agencies."[74] Despite this anti-parliamentary rhetoric, however, the AL by no means abandoned parliamentary avenues in seeking to address this grievance. The AL announced that it would work together with the SPD to establish a separate committee to investigate the Office for Constitutional Protection. In contrast to the Parliamentary Control Commission, the details of whose meetings were secret, this committee would meet publicly, and would publish its results. Thus the AL conceded that parliament could play a role in monitoring this secretive state agency after all.[75]

An article in the leftist daily *TAZ* appearing in late autumn of 1987 reopened the issue of constitutional protection in a dramatic way. According to the article, the AL itself had been the target of extensive investigations of the Office for Constitutional Protection since the early 1980s. The article accused the office of comprehensive investigations of the AL, including evaluating individual members' loyalty to the constitution and monitoring all activities of the AL, including Members' Assemblies.[76] In the same issue, *TAZ* printed an interview

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[74] Von parlamentarischen Initiativen von vornherein wenig Erfolg zu erwarten war und diese die Arbeit der Geheimdienste nicht grundsätzlich in Frage stellen. *Verfassungsschutz und Demokratie*, 4.

[75] *Verfassungsschutz und Demokratie*, 4; PAB 10/49 (12 March 1987), 2915.

[76] TAZ, 30 November 1987.

with Wolfgang Wieland, chair of the AL's parliamentary delegation, in which he responded to the allegations.[77]

The CDU reacted quickly to the stories. In a press release, it sought both to attack the credibility of the article's author and to justify the activities of the state office. It noted that it was revealing that the author, Till Meyer, himself belonged to the radical Left fringe: he had served time for his involvement in the Lorenz kidnapping in the 1970s.[78] Furthermore, the press release asserted that "no democratic party is safe from infiltration by enemies of the constitution- least of all the AL."[79] Thus it was in the interest of all true democrats to investigate the slightest suspicion of extremism and to support the work of the Office for Constitutional Protection. Finally, the CDU tried to threaten the members of the AL with their own history, calling on the Minister for the Interior to "name names" of AL members with an extremist past.[80] According to the CDU, "citizens have the right to know whether the representatives that they elect to parliament are at least loyal to the constitution."[81]

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[77] TAZ, 30 November 1987.

[78] See Chapter Three.

[79] Keine demokratische Partei ist davor sicher, von Verfassungsfeinden unterwandert zu werden- am allerwenigsten die AL. Press release by CDU, 2 December 1987, printed in DR-Info 9 December 1987. AGG:B.I.1.749.

[80] Namen nennen.

[81] Die Bürger hätten ein Anrecht darauf zu erfahren, ob die Abgeordneten, die sie ins Parlament wählen, wenigstens verfassungstreu sind. Press release by CDU, 2 December 1987, printed in DR-Info 9 December 1987. AGG:B.I.1.749.

In a letter to Wolfgang Wieland written the same day responding to the *TAZ* interview, the CDU's Senator for the Interior Wilhelm Kewenig was both more candid in refuting the charges raised by Wieland in the interview and more revealing about the nature of the AL. Kewenig insisted to Wieland, "your claim is neither new nor accurate."[82] Individual AL members had "a broken or at least ambivalent relationship" to constitutional principles.[83] Since its founding, the AL had been a target for left wing parties and groups. In the elections of 1979, 1981, and 1985, the AL gave left wing extremists the opportunity to stand for election. Furthermore, the AL was itself responsible for the fact that it attracted the attention of the Office for Constitutional Protection, which was doing its legally mandated job. Assessments done up to now by the Office for Constitutional Protection left no doubt that the AL itself as well as its affiliates did not pursue goals inconsistent with the constitution. Nevertheless, left-wing extremists were "offered a political homeland in the AL."[84] Thus the Office for Constitutional Protection must continue to monitor the AL. Finally, he called on the AL "to at last end its undeniable deceitfulness regarding its stance on violence."[85] He called upon non-extremists within the AL to create conditions in the party so that

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[82] Ihre Behauptung ist weder neu noch richtig. Wilhelm Kewenig, Senator für Inneres, to Wolfgang Wieland, Vorsitzender der AL-Fraktion, 2 December 1987, printed in DR-Info 9 December 1987. AGG:B.I.1.749.

[83] Ein gebrochenes oder zumindest zwiespältiges Verhältnis.

[84] In der AL eine politische Heimat geboten wird.

[85] Mit ihrer unleugbaren Doppelzüngigkeit namentlich in der Gewaltfrage endlich Schluss zu machen.

it would no longer be necessary to continue to observe the AL. An article in *Der Spiegel* published in early December 1987 painted a somewhat different picture: according to this article, Heinrich Lummer, Senator for the Interior in 1981 when the AL entered parliament, had at the time viewed the AL as "clearly and intentionally hostile to the constitution."[86] The Office for Constitutional Protection had been assigned to keep a close eye on the AL due to its stance on violence and its cooperation with extremist groups.

The AL continued to attack the State Office for Constitutional Protection throughout the tenth legislative period. Just one month before the 1989 election, the AL sponsored legislation that would have disbanded the agency. The AL asserted that parliamentarians were unable to regulate it effectively, but also attacked the efficiency of the agency itself, arguing, "any news clipping service works with more precision and with better results."[87]

The fact that the state agency was snooping around the personal histories of AL members was certainly a factor in the AL's crusade against the agency. However, it is unlikely that this was its major objection. For one thing, the AL had made no secret of its radical past, and some individuals seemed determined to flaunt it: Dieter Kunzelmann was certainly one case in point. Overall, the AL

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[86] Eindeutig und bewusst verfassungsfeindlich. "Trojanische Kavallerie," 91.

[87] Jeder Zeitungsausschnittsdienst arbeitet genauer und mit besserem Ergebnis. "Dringlichkeitsantrag der AL über Auflösung des Landesamtes für Verfassungsschutz," 7 December 1988, printed in DR-Info 14 December 1988. AGG: B.I.1.748.

objected to the State Office for Constitutional Protection for the same reasons that

it opposed nuclear power. In the State Office for Constitutional Protection, the

AL saw the same sort of phenomenon that the nuclear power plants represented:

a secretive, highly bureaucratic agency beyond ordinary citizens' control. In its

attempts to shut down the office, the AL mobilized the more libertarian aspects

of its ideology, including ideas about freedom from state interference, emphasis

on transparency and accountability, and the importance of citizens' participation

in decision making. In the end, moreover, the AL's mistrust of parliament's

ability to regulate the agency proved superficial: after all, the AL left the door

open for a parliamentary monitoring of the agency through holding open

parliamentary meetings in cooperation with the SPD, again consistent with its

ideological emphasis on transparency.

The issue of the Office for Constitutional Protection played one other

critical role: it marked a significant area in parliament where the AL and SPD

could find common ground. For instance, the SPD strenuously objected to

successful efforts of the CDU-FDP coalition to exclude the AL from the

Parliamentary Control Commission. It condemned the inclusion of the FDP, the

smallest parliamentary faction, and the simultaneous exclusion of the AL, with

two more seats than the FDP, as "endangering democracy."[88] The SPD even

refused to legitimize the existence of the commission by sending representatives

to it. This support was not lost on the AL: AL delegate Wieland expressed his

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[88] Demokratiegefährdend. PAB 10/50 (29 April 1987), 3059.

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appreciation for the SPD's support in the fight against what he labeled as a "criminal pretense at parliamentary control" over the agency.[89]

The AL and SPD also found common ground regarding the need to combat right wing extremism in West Berlin, as well as in the belief that longtime residents of West Berlin who were not German citizens should have the right to vote at the district level.[90] This is significant partly because the AL owed its existence to a large degree to disillusionment at the SPD's abandonment of revolutionary Marxism at Godesberg. In a way then, the *Abgeordnetenhaus* was the site of healing of the rift between the AL and the SPD. Without this period of cooperation in opposition and opportunity to discover common ground, the coalition that was to follow would have been unthinkable. On a more abstract level, it also illustrates a key difference between the Bonn Republic and the Weimar Republic: under the conditions of the Federal Republic, the SPD and the far Left were able to find common ground and work with each other to overcome differences instead of fighting each other as occurred in Germany's first parliamentary democracy.

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[89] Delikt der Vortäuschung einer parlamentarischen Kontrolle. PAB 10/50 (29 April 1987), 3060. For more evidence of cooperation between the AL and SPD on the issue of *Verfassungsschutz*, see PAB 10/69 (11 February 1988), 4152-4154.

[90] See "Grosse Anfrage der SPD über Bekämpfung rechtsradikaler militaristischer und neonazistischer Tendenzen," PAB 10/68 (21 January 1988), 4063; "Kampagne zum kommunalen Wahlrechte für Ausländer," DR-Info 14 October 1987. AGG:B.I.1.749.

Thus in the period examined here, the AL underwent significant changes as a result of its parliamentary participation. Toward the end of this legislative period, several prominent AL leaders tried to take stock of these changes. Assi Geese, Birgit Arkenstette, and Harald Wolf, then all members of the AL's Executive Committee, bemoaned the AL's shift "from the grand desire to the petty parliamentary question."[91] The authors noted a few positive aspects of the AL's parliamentary experiences. For one thing, they acknowledged that the predicted increase of publicity for alternative projects had indeed materialized. Moreover, the authors noted that the other political parties had devoted increased attention to projects of the alternative scene: due to their fear of losing potential voters, the other parties embraced some of their demands.

Their overall assessment was negative in some revealing ways, however. They bemoaned the fact that in their view, the Greens and the AL "have promoted the delusion about the meaning of parliaments, the view that [the parliaments are] the locus of decision-making."[92] By focusing on parliamentary work, the party had begun to focus on the art of the possible within the parliaments. Parliamentarians came under pressure to be responsible for everything, and would get lost in the details of parliamentary work. This,

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[91] Assi Geese, Birgit Arkenstette, and Harald Wolf, "Von der grossen Sehnsucht zur kleinen Anfrage," MRB 52 (September 1988), 7.

[92] Die Illusion über die Bedeutung der Parlamente gefördert, die Einschätzung, hier sei der Ort der Entscheidungen. "Von der grossen Sehnsucht," 8.

together with the pressure to compromise, meant that efforts at reform became a

matter of enacting reforms within the parliamentary system, rather than

changing the political system itself. If the AL continued moving in this direction

and was unable to resist the forces of parliamentarization, commentators worried

that this would mean the end, if not of the AL, then the end of the AL as the

party of radical opposition.[93] Embodying the ambivalence felt by the Left at this

point toward parliament, the article concluded by suggesting a satirical slogan

for the AL: "Down with parliamentarianism! Forward into the next legislative

session!"[94]

In fact, these leaders had put their finger on exactly the processes

occurring within the AL. Only a few months after these prominent AL leaders

penned this article, the AL left the opposition to join the SPD in a government

coalition in the West Berlin parliament. This serves further to highlight the

changes that parliamentary participation had helped induce. But while the

experiences of the AL in the tenth legislative period were indeed crucial to the

processes of deradicalization and parliamentarization examined here, the

parliament was not the only site of this change. The relationship with the Green

Party also played an important role, especially regarding the question of

violence, as had been the case in the past.

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[93] "Von der grossen Sehnsucht," 9.

[94] Nieder mit dem Parlamentarismus! Vorwärts in die nächste
Legislaturperiode! "Von der grossen Sehnsucht," 9.

In part, the relationship to the Federal Greens was impacted by the

activities of the competing West Berlin State Committee. Despite the fact that the

contractual agreement between the AL and the national Greens had been

concluded, the *Landesverband* continued to make trouble for the AL. The small

group of Greens, which had earlier promised not to campaign against the AL in

the upcoming 1985 elections, seemed to be retreating from its earlier

commitment. The federal Green Party clearly preferred the single candidacy of

the AL: expressing the views of the chair of the federal Green Party, Rainer

Trampert of the West German Greens noted, "It is politically absurd that, next to

the AL with its 3,000 members and a level of support in Berlin that brought it

into the *Abgeordnetenhaus*, there is a little green rival organization with 160

members flailing about."[95]

Other voices within the Green Party's West Berlin State Committee still

insisted on campaigning against the AL, however. State Committee member

Michael Breuer argued that the *Landesverband* should contest the 1985 elections,

first and foremost because of the AL's position on violence. According to Breuer,

the AL was too strongly left-wing oriented for ecological policies to have taken

root in the organization. Invoking the Green Party's 'Four Pillars,' he concluded

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[95] Es ist politisch unsinnig, dass neben der AL mit ihren 3,000 Mitgliedern und einer Unterstützung in Berlin, die sie ins Abgeordnetenhaus brachte, ein kleiner Grüner Konkurrenzverband mit 160 Mitgliedern herumrudert. Declaration by Rainer Trampert, 7 November 1983. AGG: B.I.1.744.

that "ecological, social, nonviolent, and grass-roots democratic politics in Berlin

need the candidacy of the Greens, because the AL alone doesn't do it…"[96]

In the end, despite intense pressure from the national Green Party not to

run against the AL in the March 1985 elections, the West Berlin State Committee

of the Greens went ahead with its plans, with predictably abysmal results,

polling at around .5 percent in its electoral 'stronghold' of Schöneberg. Its chair

continued to harangue the AL even after the election, however, lambasting it for

its left-wing views and for scaring off voters with its concepts of an auto-free city

and its supposedly intentional, provocative attempt to portray itself as the

"citizens' terror."[97]

Desertions of prominent leaders due to its decision to contest the election

anyway, together with its miserable election results, helped further weaken the

small party. Moreover, in a bizarre turn of events, right-wing groups had

apparently successfully taken over the West Berlin state committee of the Greens

in late 1984.[98] The Federal Green Party, now confronted with a public relations

disaster, had reached the limits of its patience, and it decided to dissolve the local

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[96] Ökologische, soziale, gewaltfreie und basisdemokratische Politik in Berlin braucht den Wahlantritt der Grünen, denn: die AL alleine macht's nicht…Michael Breuer, "Argumente für einen Wahlantritt der Grünen Berlin", 24 November 1984. AGG: B.I.1.744.

[97] Bürgerschreck. Hubert Bjarsch, "Bemerkungen nach den Berliner Märzwahlen '85", 22 March 1985. AGG: B.I.1.743.

[98] "Protokoll der Sitzung des Landesvorstandes Die Grünen am 29.12.84 in Berlin." AGG: B.II.1.2526.

organization.[99] By the weeks after the election, the *Landesverband* was leading a

shadow existence, and its days were clearly numbered. In a last-ditch effort to

avoid dissolution, the *Landesverband* issued a court challenge to the decision by

the Federal Green Party dissolving the State Committee, and it sent delegates to

the Federal Green Party's national meeting in June of 1985, where the national

party promptly denied them voting rights.[100] At this meeting, a two-thirds

majority of the Greens confirmed the decision of the Federal Committee

dissolving the State Committee "for serious violations of program and statute of

the party."[101] The *Landesverband* had finally been dealt a deathblow.

For the AL, the disappearance of the *Landesverband* from the political scene

had important consequences. The *Landesverband* was no longer a continuous

thorn in the side of the AL, constantly nagging it to become part of the federal

Green Party while accusing it of embracing violence and being excessively left-

wing. This thus marked the end of failed attempts to use the existence of the

Landesverband to pull the AL into the Green Party and have the group accept all

four pillars, including that of nonviolence. The AL's 1985 electoral program

reflected this, as it conspicuously, even defiantly omitted the 'nonviolence' pillar

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[99] "Auflösung des LV-Berlin," Freiburg, 26 January 1985. AGG: B.I.1.746.

[100] "Die Grünen Bundesverband ausserordentliche Bundesversammlung 22./23.6.85 in Hagen. Entscheidung der Mandatsprüfungskommission." AGG: B.I.1.746.

[101] …bei schwerwiegenden Verstössen gegen Programm (Grundsätze) und Satzung (Ordnung) der Partei. Protokoll der ausserordentlichen Bundesversammlung vom 22./23.6.1985 in Hagen. AGG: B.II.1.2526.

of the Green Party: the program quoted three of the four pillars verbatim, but did

not mention nonviolence.[102] In addition, the demise of the *Landesverband* also

meant that there was nowhere for ecologically minded activists disillusioned

with the SPD to go besides the AL. From now on, moderates worked within the

AL alone. This also meant that the AL now increasingly could attract

environmental experts it could draw on for its program and proposals.

Moreover, the *Landesverband* was no longer there to give the AL an excuse for not

becoming an official part of the Green Party. Thus the AL actually came under

increased pressure to fill the void left by the *Landesverband*.

Accordingly, AL leaders sped up the process of becoming the official

Green Party for West Berlin. On 11 May 1985, the AL's Council of Delegates had

passed a declaration in which it stated its intention to become the West Berlin

State Committee of the Green Party. The declaration mentioned that differences,

real or imagined, would be discussed before any final decision was made,

mentioning specifically the differences of opinion regarding the renunciation of

violence.[103] Indicating the degree to which the disappearance of the

Landesverband had caught the AL off guard, as well as suggesting that the AL had

in the past been only half-serious about becoming the Green Party's West Berlin

State Committee, the AL only now began to investigate the legal and electoral

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[102] *Wahlprogramm der AL 1985*.

[103] "Willenserklärung der AL, Mitglied im LV Die Grünen zu werden,"
printed in MRB 34 (September/October 1985), 50.

implications of becoming the West Berlin Green Party. A letter to electoral

authorities requesting information on the legal implications of a potential name

change reflected the priorities of the matured organization. These included

concerns about the reimbursement of election costs, as well as worries that the

AL would no longer qualify for television and radio time in proportion to its

strength.[104]

As it happens, these concerns about the legal ramifications of becoming

part of the Green Party seem to have been justified.[105] As a result, the AL

concluded another contractual agreement with the Federal Greens, which

established the AL as the sole representative of the Federal Green Party in West

Berlin.[106] With this decision, the relationship between the AL and the Greens was

finally settled until German unification. The AL and the Green Party then

entered into another phase in their relationship, in which the AL managed to

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[104] Letter to Federal Elections Coordinator from Johann Müller-Gazurek, Berlin, 8 July 1985. AGG: B.I.1.746. This financial aspect of the relationship between the AL and the Green Party should not be ignored. In November 1988, the AL's financial assets exceeded one million DM for the first time. Of this amount, 376,000 DM came as a donation from the Green Party. Under the terms of the contract between the AL and the Greens, the AL was given a share of the money the Green Party received from the West German state for federal election campaigns. In 1987, this amounted to 18.8 million DM. "AL-Vermögen per 31.12.1987 über 1 Mio. Mark," MRB 53 (November 1988), 16.

[105] Prof. Herberger, Bundeswahlleiter, to AL, Wiesbaden, 7 August 1985. AGG: B.I.1.743.

[106] Minutes of the 8. Ordentliche Bundesversammlung, "Vereinbarung zwischen dem Bundesverband die Grünen und der Alternativen Liste für Demokratie und Umweltschutz Berlin- Die Grünen Berlin," Offenburg, 13-15 December 1985. AGG: B.I.1.743.

maintain its identity in a way that ensured that the moderating aspects of the Federal Greens did not alienate the extreme Left within the party. Again, the form of the agreement gave the AL enough autonomy to prevent a mass exodus from the party and to keep the radical Left on board.

In this phase, the AL occasionally criticized the Green party quite sharply, especially about issues it felt were its own bailiwick. The criticism the AL voiced regarding the activities of the Federal Green Party was most clearly exemplified by the controversy surrounding a proposed trip to Kreuzberg by a delegation of federal Greens. The episode demonstrates the importance of the AL's autonomy to certain groups within the AL, and reveals the degree of buried antagonism toward the Greens.

In July 1987, members of the Federal Green Party's Working Group on Social Policy wrote to the AL delegation in the Kreuzberg District Assembly informing them of plans to send a delegation from the Federal Green Party to Kreuzberg that September in order to discuss local conditions and problems. The letter enclosed a list of participants and a proposed agenda, which involved a reception at Kreuzberg's City Hall, as well as visits to various self-help projects and other community initiatives. The letter asked the local Kreuzberg AL members for assistance in logistical arrangements.[107]

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[107] Margherita Zander to Volker Härtig and Dirk Jordan, Bonn, 21 July 1987, printed in MRB 46 (September 1987), 52-53.

This seemingly routine request sparked a vitriolic reply from the

Kreuzberg AL. It is worth sampling some of the Kreuzberg group's response,

reprinted in the membership circular:

> Perhaps it would be more appropriate...if you would sit down first
> (in case your busy schedule and your numerous travel
> commitments allow this) and consider what you all want here,
> what your business here is, or, put more politely, what good is your
> trip, what you want to achieve with your press conferences and
> your threatened theses regarding the situation in Kreuzberg.... Our
> time is too valuable to spend it attending your performance of
> 'How Little Fritz From the Federal Green Party Imagines That He
> Can Solve Kreuzberg's Problems.' Perhaps it would not have hurt
> to ask in advance those on site if your visit was even desired, and if
> so, what it should involve.[108]

Instead of the planned reception at City Hall and a meal in the canteen, the AL-

Kreuzberg recommended a swim in the polluted *Landwehrkanal*, as well as a

number of less pleasant activities.

The tone and content of this response document a number of pent-up

resentments. Clearly, Kreuzbergers did not appreciate having been presented

with what they saw as a *fait accompli*, nor did they wish to serve as window

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[108] Vielleicht wäre es angebrachter, dass Ihr Euch ersteinmal in Ruhe hinsetzt (falls Eure Vielbeschäftigung und die zahlreichen Reiseverpflichtungen das erlauben) und Euch ein paar Gedanken dazu macht, was Ihr überhaupt hier wollt, was Ihr hier zu suchen habt oder, höflicher ausgedrückt: wozu Eure Reise gut sein soll, was Ihr mit Eurer Pressekonferenz und Euren angedrohten Thesen zur 'Situation in Kreuzberg' erreichen wollt…. Für den Besuch einer Aufführung des Stückes 'Wie Klein-Fritzchen von den Bundesgrünen sich vorstellt, die Kreuzberger Probleme lösen zu können' ist uns unsere Zeit- mit Verlaub- zu schade. Vielleicht hätte es ja zumindest nicht schaden können, vorher vor Ort anzufragen, ob Eure Aufwartung überhaupt erwünscht ist, und wenn ja, wie sie dann aussehen sollte. Volker Härtig and Werner Orlowsky to Die Grünen im Bundestag. Berlin, 23 July 1987. AGG: B.II.1.4650.

dressing for politicians from Bonn. Primarily, however, it seems likely that they resisted being treated as a subsidiary of the party, and their letter was a way of demonstrating their autonomy.

Significantly, the resolution of this conflict revealed a willingness to cooperate with the Greens on equal terms. A few months later, at the beginning of September, leaders within the AL-Kreuzberg, including Volker Härtig, a delegate to the West Berlin *Abgeordnetenhaus*, wrote back to the Federal Green Party, this time using a much more conciliatory tone.[109] This letter noted that, whereas the earlier correspondence was perceived by both sides to have been "arrogant," enough time had passed that the controversy was subsiding and the issue could be discussed rationally.[110] The letter noted that the AL was of course prepared to answer questions from a Green Party delegation or organize a tour of Kreuzberg, but suggested that the trip be postponed. The letter then emphasized that Kreuzberg posed issues that would soon be encountered in other parts of the Federal Republic. Many of the responses in Kreuzberg could serve as models for dealing with such problems, and Kreuzbergers were often proud to show off some of these solutions. Instead of either version of the tours proposed in the earlier correspondence, Härtig proposed visiting some of the

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[109] Volker Härtig to Die Grünen im Bundestag and Margharita Zander, Berlin, 1 September 1987. AGG: B.II.1.4650.

[110] Überheblich.

places where these solutions had been implemented in order to see how they might help solve or give insights into similar problems elsewhere.

Demonstrating the leadership's attempt to balance the concerns of the local group and those of the Greens, the letter also reestablished an equal relationship between the Green Party and the AL. Härtig emphasized that the idea was to render mutual assistance: "We propose helping each other: you can help the AL and its local urban policies, and we can help you by extending the concrete case of Kreuzberg to abstract social, youth, and financial policies. Perhaps in the end we all can benefit, not least of all the people and the cause we care about."[111] The Working Circle on Social Policy postponed its trip as requested.[112] This episode again demonstrates the AL's position as mediator between poles, in this case, between highly independent-minded Kreuzbergers resentful of any outside interference and well-meaning but naïve and perhaps overbearing Green Party politicians from the national organization.

On several occasions, the AL continued to assert its autonomy from the national Green Party regarding the issue of violence and its use as a tool of protest. For example, the AL's Executive Committee issued a declaration

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[111] Wir denken, uns so gegenseitig helfen zu können: Ihr der AL und ihrer Kommunalpolitik, wir Euch, indem man vom konkreten Kreuzberg zur abstrakten Sozial-, Jugend-, Finanzpolitik aufsteigt…Vielleicht haben wir am Ende alle was davon, nicht zuletzt die Menschen und die Sache, um die es uns geht. Volker Härtig to Die Grünen im Bundestag and Margharita Zander, Berlin, 1 September 1987. AGG: B.II.1.4650;

[112] Margherita Zander to the members of the Arbeitskreis Sozialpolitik, Bonn, 8 September 1987. AGG: B.II.1.4650.

criticizing plans of the federal Greens to hold a discussion on nonviolence on the twentieth anniversary of the shooting of Benno Ohnesorg. The declaration acknowledged the internal and external pressure to renounce all forms of violence. West Berlin's unique experiences with the police and political protest justified the AL's refusal to do so, however, and the AL would view it as "cynical" if on this date those in power received the unambiguous renunciation of violent protest they demanded: "Particularly in West Berlin, we are quite conscious of the reasons why we decline to be used as referees to decide which forms of political resistance are legitimate."[113] The letter also objected to the planned visit by the *Bundestag* faction of the Greens on 17 June 1987 to the Reichstag building in West Berlin to participate in a discussion on policies affecting Germany. According to the letter, this planned trip and the symbolism of its choice of date and venue meant that the Green Party was joining the ranks of the other parties to condemn the GDR, despite the Greens' acceptance of the two-state policy. The Greens canceled this trip as well.[114]

Some of those AL members who had worked within the *Landesverband* to bring the AL into conformity with the Federal Green Party's stance on

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[113] Zynisch; Gerade in West Berlin sind wir uns sehr deutlich bewusst, warum wir es ablehnen, uns bei jeder Gelegenheit zur Schiedsrichterin darüber umfunktionieren zu lassen, welche Formen des politischen Widerstandes legitim sein sollen. Open letter from Birgit Arkenstette, printed in DR-Info, 10 June 1987. AGG: B.I.1.749.

[114] Protokoll der Sitzung vom 11.06.87, Rat der Bereichs- und Bezirksdelegierten der AL Berlin, printed in DR-Info 24 June 1987. AGG: B.I.1.749.

nonviolence continued to do so within the AL. Peter Sellin was probably the

most active example of this. In 1988, as the AL's delegate to the Bundestag, Sellin

published an article in the AL's monthly membership newsletter in which he

argued for a renunciation of violence against persons, but left open the question

of violence against property under certain conditions.[115] In this piece, Sellin tried

to chart out a middle ground, using a new definition of nonviolence that was

consistent with that of the Green Party but was radical enough for the AL to

accept.

As has been seen, the nature of the AL's relationship to the Green Party,

while still asserting some pressure on the AL to renounce violence, was such that

it also was not enough to force the AL to renounce violence or even take a clear

stand on the issue. One thing is clear, however: far from dropping the debate

about violence by 'agreeing to disagree,' as Raschke asserted, the issue continued

to be a source of contention within the party. During the time period 1985 to

1989, however, certain events occurred that revealed the AL's stance on violence.

These events include the terrorist attacks on the La Belle disco in Berlin; the

second Reagan visit; the fatal shooting of a police officer during the

demonstration against the expansion of the Frankfurt airport; and the

demonstrations against the International Monetary Fund meetings held in West

Berlin. While the AL had not officially renounced violence, its reactions to these

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[115] Peter Sellin, "Gewaltfreiheit versus Gewaltmonopol des Staates," MRB 50 (May 1988), 20-23.

events revealed that it had significantly moderated compared to past years. In all of these instances, the AL actively attempted to assert a moderating role, trying to defuse difficult situations and to prevent violence. Though it did not always explicitly articulate this shift in policy, its actions reveal an important difference nonetheless.

One incident of violence hit close to home in West Berlin. On 5 April 1986, a bomb exploded in the La Belle disco in West Berlin, killing an American soldier and a young Turkish woman and wounding over 230 others. The AL did not mince words in condemning this terrorist attack, articulating its "deepest disgust in the face of this crime" from the floor of the Berlin Parliament.[116] Reimund Helms, an AL parliamentarian, emphasized that the AL condemned the violence regardless of motives and regardless of the perpetrator. There was no sense of 'clandestine joy' on the Left here, as Helms asserted, "there can be no justification for this crime."[117] Foreshadowing the Left's reaction to future events, however, the AL warned the other parties not to use the event as an excuse to further restrict civil liberties, and condemned the United States for accusing the USSR and the GDR of providing the logistical support for this alleged act of Libyan state-sponsored terror. When the United States bombed Libya in retaliation shortly thereafter, the AL condemned the bombing as an "unjustifiable act of

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[116] Abgrundtiefe Abscheu gegenüber diesem Verbrechen. PAB 10/26 (9 April 1986), 1412.

[117] Für dieses Verbrechen kann es keine Rechtfertigung geben. PAB 10/26 (9 April 1986), 1412.

state terror," and asserted that by harming innocent civilians, the United States

placed itself at the same level as the terrorists.[118] The AL advocated a peaceful

solution brought about by European-led negotiations rather than United States

missiles, and worried that the measures adopted in the wake of the La Belle

bombing would not fight terror, but would instead merely serve to contribute to

fear and prejudice regarding people of Arab descent.

The United States provided another test for the AL's changed stance

regarding violence. In June 1987, as part of the 750th anniversary celebrations of

Berlin's founding, President Ronald Reagan visited West Berlin in a reprise of his

visit exactly five years earlier. His previous visit had triggered enormous

protests and violence, and the AL had come under heavy criticism for its links to

these violent protests. This time, however, the AL pursued a different course. It

strove to play the role of mediator between the extra-parliamentary groups,

including the *Autonomen*, the violence-prone anarchist groups, and the state. The

AL made it clear that it did not welcome Reagan's second visit; in fact, it viewed

his invitation by the Berlin Senate to visit Berlin as a "provocation."[119] The AL-

issued flyer publicizing the demonstration organized by the AL portrayed

Reagan's visit as a propaganda act intended to distract attention from domestic

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[118] Ein durch nichts zu rechtfertigen staatsterroristischer Akt. AL verurteilt Bombardierung Libyens. Press release, 15 April 1986. AGG:B.I.1.227.

[119] Provokation. Presseerklärung des GA der Alternativen Liste zum Besuch des Präsidenten Reagan in Berlin, n.d. Printed in DR-Info 24 June 1987. AGG: B.I.1.749.

scandals plaguing the Reagan administration. The flyer noted that the city's

establishment planned to entertain Reagan with "obsequious expressions of

obedience."[120] The demonstration was intended as a way for the rest of West

Berlin to make its feelings known by taking to the streets. Taken as a whole, the

flyer was not a call for violence, but neither was it an appeal for restraint.

Five years to the day after Reagan's last visit sparked massive riots, West

Berlin again witnessed violent clashes between police and autonomous groups.

Between thirty thousand and sixty-five thousand demonstrators participated in

the protest against Reagan's presence. The demonstration began peacefully, with

a large but restrained police presence keeping an eye on things. Then, in an

apparent reaction to word that the end point of the demonstration had been

changed, approximately two thousand *Autonomen* began throwing stones and

firecrackers at buildings. Demonstrators smashed windows and looted shops

between Wittenbergplatz and Uraniastrasse.[121]

Internal AL documents reveal the AL's attitude in the aftermath of the

violence. Most notably, the AL's response to the events was marked by a sense

of trying to determine what went wrong. This was very different from the

unrepentant attitude bordering on defiance expressed by the AL's leadership

after the last Reagan visit, which put the AL on the defensive, but where the AL

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[120] Devote Unterwürfigkeitserklärungen. Alternative Liste Berlin: Mr.
President proudly presents Berlin, n.d. Printed in DR-Info 10 June 1987.
AGG:B.I.1.749.

[121] *Der Tagesspiegel*, 12 June 1987.

offered no real apologies for the violence that ensued in the course of the demonstration. The minutes of the AL Executive Committee meeting held the evening after the violence surrounding the second Reagan visit show that the meeting was an attempt on the part of the AL leadership to find out what had sparked the rioting and how to avoid it in the future. Those attending cited logistical and planning problems that made it impossible for the AL to lead the crowd away from Wittenbergplatz, the center of the violence. In addition, some held that the demonstration itself had been too boring, and speculated that perhaps this, too, was partially responsible for the violence. By its own admission, in order to avoid any "self-flagellation," the AL leadership decided to put on a brave face and hail the demo as a "huge success," and emphasized the police's failure to show restraint as promised as the source of the violence.[122]

In another internal paper, Peter Sellin, a member of the AL's parliamentary delegation during the previous legislative period, also tried to analyze the causes of the violence. According to Sellin, the organizers of the demonstration had tried to create a political climate that made it clear that they wanted demonstrators to conduct themselves peacefully. Nevertheless, events got out of control, with unacceptable consequences. He particularly condemned the damage to persons and property resulting from the riots: as well as the random smashing of windows along the demonstration route, non-participants

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[122] Selbstzerfleischung; Riesenerfolg. Protokoll der GA-Sitzung am 11.6.87 nach der Reagan Demo, printed in DR-Info 24 June 1987. AGG:B.I.1.749.

and innocent passers-by had been injured, both by rioters and by police. He

blamed the *Autonomen* for the violence, but suspected that there might be

political factions within the AL that had an interest in allowing these groups to

be violent. He advocated actively combating certain political strategies and

actions by these autonomous groups. His paper also speculated on the role of

boredom in sparking the riots and fostering violence, and cited the

romanticization of violent acts in what many seemed to view as a kind of "game

of 'cops and robbers.'"[123] This had very undesirable consequences for the Left

and the city in general, however, as it justified the city's efforts to arm police and

equip them in what demonstrators interpreted as a provocative way. In short,

Sellin worried that violent protests pushed political change in a direction

undesirable to the AL.

Thus one aspect of the AL's response to the violence was to try to figure

out what had gone wrong and to study ways of avoiding it in the future. But

another means of response was just as revealing. In the immediate wake of the

Reagan visit, the AL requested a special session of the *Abgeordnetenhaus*. The

session would focus exclusively on Reagan's visit and its consequences for

political developments in the city. The AL also planned to try to hold Wilhelm

Kewenig, Berlin's Senator for the Interior whom the AL blamed for the actions of

the police, politically accountable by attempting a vote of no confidence in the

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[123] Räuber und Gendarm-Spiel. Discussion paper by Peter Sellin, 14 June
1987, printed in DR-Info 24 June 1987. AGG:B.I.1.749.

minister.[124] In this way, the AL pursued a parliamentary path for the solution of its grievances.

The AL also attempted to fulfill its newfound role as mediator in the wake of the shootings during the Frankfurt airport protests. On 2 November 1987, six years to the day after police had expelled demonstrators from the shanties where the demonstrations against the expansion of the Frankfurt airport had begun, two policemen were shot and killed and two others wounded. This marked the first time in the history of the Federal Republic where demonstrators had shot police.[125] As was the case at the time of the La Belle disco bombing, the AL quickly denounced the attack. In elaborating, the AL revealed how far it had changed its attitude toward the West German state as symbolized by the police force. The AL condemned the image of the police as an "object of hate or dehumanized agent of state repression."[126] It also voiced its concern that the expected escalation of violence in the wake of the shootings threatened to destroy any possibility of shaping politics in a positive way. The AL therefore announced that it would work to ensure that the coming conflict would proceed peacefully, and it called on all participants, both those acting on behalf of the

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[124] AL press release, n.d., printed in DR-Info 24 June 1987. AGG:B.I.1.749.

[125] "Wir machen Rambo auf links," *Der Spiegel* 41, no. 46 (9 November 1987), 17.

[126] …Hassobjekt oder als entmenschtes Organ staatlicher Repression. AL press release, n.d., printed in DR-Info 11 November 1987. AGG:B.I.1.749.

state and those advocating a strategy of militant, violent action, to take steps to ensure that violence would at least be reduced.

The AL's new role as mediator between radical groups and the parliamentary political system can also be discerned in its approach to the protests surrounding the meeting of the IMF in West Berlin in autumn 1988. This event produced the AL's least ambiguous statement to date regarding its changed stance on violence. On the eve of the meeting, the Executive Committee declared that it was absurd to assert that the AL promoted violence in any way in order to promote its policies. Then followed the statement that both internal and external critics of the AL's stance on violence had been waiting for: the declaration asserted that "for the AL, violence is no means of conducting politics."[127] Still, however, the AL refused to distance itself from left-wing groups, including those using violence, but would continue to work with them. If necessary, the AL would discuss, debate, and conflict with other groups about their means of articulating protest, but it would not exclude them. Moreover, the existing political order still required reform, and peaceful, orderly demonstrations often did not get any attention. The declaration concluded, "It is sad but not to be overlooked that again and again, the establishment reacts only

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[127] Gewalt ist für die AL kein Mittel der Politik. Erklärung des GAs zu Aktionstage IWF, n.d., printed in DR-Info 28 September 1988. AGG:B.I.1.748.

to violence."[128] That the AL renounced violent means while refusing to distance

itself completely from groups who utilized violent protest was a crucial

component of the AL's unspoken strategy of mediation and de-escalation. If the

AL had ceased working with all groups that promoted violence, its role as

mediator, its ability to defuse potentially violent situations, and its ability to

bring the radical Left into the parliamentary system would have been lost.

Similarly, the AL strove to achieve a balance between its evident

sympathy for certain aspects of the GDR and its clear disapproval of other facets

of its ideology. This involved attempting to steer a course between GDR leaders

and those of the Federal Republic, and to strike a balance between supporting the

GDR government and the GDR opposition. It expressed this desire in its 1985

election program, when it declared, "We no longer wish to be loyal to East or

West, but rather to each other."[129] In the event, however, the AL's support for the

GDR gradually eroded, and support for the opposition gradually increased. A

growing sense of disillusionment with the GDR can be discerned in this time

period, both in terms of the GDR's environmental and human rights record and

in terms of one of the strongest sources of its legitimacy and appeal in the eyes of

the AL- East Germany's own degree of coming to terms with the German past.

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[128] Es ist traurig aber nicht zu übersehen, die Etablierten reagieren immer wieder erst auf Gewalt. Erklärung des GAs zu Aktionstage IWF, n.d., printed in DR-Info 28 September 1988. AGG:B.I.1.748.

[129] Wir wollen nicht mehr gegenüber dem 'Westen' oder gegenüber dem 'Osten', sondern untereinander loyal sein. *Wahlprogramm der AL 1985*, 306.

The AL was in the unusual position of being the most consistent advocate of the GDR's official positions while at the same time attracting some of its most vehement critics. The AL acted in many ways to support the interests of the GDR government. The AL, as well as the Federal Green Party, supported the GDR's demands that the Federal Republic recognize East German citizenship, among other key issues. The role of the Stasi has already been partially explored in the previous chapter. In the time period examined here, these efforts continued. Unfortunately, it will probably never be clear to what extent the AL's stance on the GDR was shaped by infiltrators like Dirk Schneider, who continued to play leading roles in positions impacting the development and articulation of AL policy toward the GDR. In this context, however, it is important to note three things. First, the Stasi infiltration alone cannot explain the AL's support for the GDR, and the words of Schneider and his cronies fell on fertile ground. Second, the AL was not the only West Berlin political party to fall prey to infiltration; in fact, all of the major West Berlin parties hosted Stasi infiltrators.[130] Third, whether or not the Stasi's systematic attempts to infiltrate and influence the AL were responsible, in the mid-1980s, the attitude of the AL toward the GDR was significantly different from what it had been at the time of the AL's founding. Then, the AL's largest group, the KPD-Rote Fahne, had been clearly contemptuous of the GDR. This group had gradually been squeezed out of influence by those embracing a more pro-GDR stance. A group that had

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[130] See Knabe, *Unterwanderte Republik*, 88-103.

previously mocked the GDR now called for immediate recognition of GDR citizenship, and supported a host of other demands quite to East Berlin's liking. By the mid-eighties, the AL's loyalty and support was East Germany's to lose. For revealing reasons, it did lose it, as will be seen.

While it is difficult to evaluate the influence of the Stasi, the two most prominent informers working within the AL, Dirk Schneider and Klaus Croissant, were closely involved in every position paper and lobbying effort that tried to move the AL closer to an unquestioning acceptance of the GDR party line. One of the most important position papers to come out of the pro- East Germany faction within the AL, "On Linking Questions of Peace and Human Rights," was authored in part by these two Stasi agents.[131] The article appeared in both the AL's membership circular and in *Kommune*, a monthly publication of the far Left.[132] The article attacked the idea that states violating human rights could not develop and pursue a peaceful international policy. Furthermore, the authors asserted that those in the West had no right to view their human rights situation as superior. In their view, linking matters of peace and human rights stemmed from Western arrogance.

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[131] One of the other five authors, Angela Schäfers, was a member of the AL's Executive Committee, and the paper received an endorsement by several other party leaders, including the *Abgeordnetenhaus* delegates Annette Ahme, Brigitte Apel, and Raimund Helms.

[132] Klaus Croissant, Benno Hofmann, Barbara Lütkecosmann, Angela Schaefers, and Dirk Schneider, "Zur Verknüpfung von Friedens- und Menschenrechtsfragen," MRB 38 (May 1986), 51. Also published in *Kommune* (May 1986), 82.

Croissant and Schneider also helped draft another important piece that attempted to influence the AL's policy toward the East bloc. The article "Twenty Theses Regarding West Berlin" explicitly embraced many of the key demands of the GDR government.[133] Asserting that Berlin had no claim to be the capital of all Germans, the authors recommended that West Berlin politicians abandon this hope and focus instead on taking advantage of West Berlin's unique status as a bridge between East and West. West Berlin should work toward more autonomy from the Federal Republic, and work to improve relations with the GDR, thus solving many of the city's problems. The paper called for an end to the special rules governing the Allied presence in West Berlin, and recommended that the Western military presence be reduced to purely symbolic levels. It insisted that the Federal Republic should relinquish its claim to represent all Germans on the international stage (the so-called *Alleinvertretungsanspruch*), and recommended that West Berlin work to become a "city of peace" and the place of mediation between East and West.[134] The paper also asserted that normal relations with the GDR were impossible as long as the West demonized it and tried to mobilize East German citizens against their own government. The theses did include an important caveat, however, stating that this did not mean that the Left should

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[133] Brigitte Apel and others, "20 Thesen zu Westberlin," *Kommune* (December 1986), 51.

[134] Friedensstadt.

not criticize the East German political system. Nor should it refrain from efforts at solidarity with victims of persecution.

Both these papers sparked discussions inside and outside the party. The essay questioning the linkage between human rights and international peace provoked the strongest reaction, leading to a response by several prominent Greens, including Petra Kelly, also published in *Kommune*.[135] The rebuttal tarred the earlier article as a unilateral attempt to revise a basic consensus of the Greens in the realm of East-West relations, the idea that domestic and foreign peace belonged together. It also condemned the piece for attempting to restrict relations between East and West to the level of official contacts. Moreover, the accusation leveled by Croissant, Schneider and others that the Greens were not critical enough of Western human rights violations could only stem from a lack of knowledge of the Green Party's efforts in this field. The reaction to the "Twenty Theses Regarding West Berlin" was more muted, but came from within the AL itself. The AL attempted to distance itself from the piece, issuing a press release stating that the article was not an official AL paper, and was not approved or discussed within the AL, but rather represented the views of the thirteen individual AL members who had signed it.[136] Nevertheless, the

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[135] Uli Fischer and others, "Was soll das Geholze?" *Kommune* (June 1986), 58.

[136] "20 Thesen kein offizielles AL-Papier," AL press release, 27 November 1986. AGG:B.I.1.227.

prominence of the authors reveals the extent to which pro-GDR sentiments pervaded the party at the time.

The AL also showed its commitment to official contact in the GDR by participating in the 750th anniversary celebrations of Berlin as the only delegate from the West. Other invitees from the West Berlin political establishment declined their invitations under pressure from their own parties and from the Western Allies, who viewed visits to the 'capital of the GDR' as undermining West Berlin's independent status.[137]

Nevertheless, during this period, a growing sense of disillusionment with the GDR can be discerned on the part of AL members. This problem related especially to the GDR's treatment of its opposition, its restrictions in allowing entry visas to many members of the AL, and its own coming to terms with the past.

One obvious area where the AL could not help being exposed to the blatant, oppressive character of the regime was in the area of human rights violations, the most obvious of these being the Berlin Wall and the shootings at the border. The AL did not hesitate to condemn these acts. When a shooting at the Wall sparked a proposal to condemn the order to shoot fugitives who tried to cross the border illegally, the AL representative Wolfgang Schenk spoke for the faction in condemning "such inhumane acts of state violence" in shooting a refugee who was trying to exercise a basic human right in deciding where to

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[137] TAZ, 22 October 1987.

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live.[138] Schenk called on the GDR to rescind the order to shoot at the border, and

to grant its citizens basic human rights, including freedom of travel. Not all AL

members agreed, however. The degree to which the relationship to the GDR

divided the AL can be seen by the AL–representative Dagmar Birkelbach's

announcement that she would abstain from voting to condemn the order to shoot

fugitives at the border.[139] Birkelbach based her objections on two points. First,

she held that the proposal gave a misleading impression that the

Abgeordnetenhaus always supported human rights. Second, she argued that the

proposal placed too much pressure on the GDR to change by making revoking

the order to shoot a prerequisite for the process of détente. In her view, no

preconditions for détente should exist. Birkelbach's stance also perhaps reflected

the fruits of Schneider's efforts: Birkelbach was one of the signers of the

statement condemning the linkage of human rights and matters of international

peace discussed above.[140]

Arrests of some GDR opposition figures also hurt the image of the GDR

among the AL. Periodically, the AL called on the GDR to release members of

opposition groups who had been detained by the East German government.

This practice continued even when Dirk Schneider was press spokesperson for

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[138] Solche unmenschlichen staatlichen Gewaltakte. PAB 10/39 (27 November 1986), 2293.

[139] PAB 10/39 (27 November 1986), 2294.

[140] See Klaus Croissant and others, "Zur Verknüpfung von Friedens- und Menschenrechtsfragen," above.

the AL. A 1988 press release bearing Schneider's name called for the release of imprisoned opposition figures, and articulated the AL's bafflement that the GDR would criminalize the activities of critics who protested against restrictions on democratic rights in both East and West Germany. The press release also insisted that dialogue could only occur when it was not disrupted by restrictions on entry into the GDR, criminal charges, and arrests.[141]

These travel restrictions particularly vexed the AL. The East German government prohibited numerous members of the AL from crossing the border as a result of protests and scattered incidents of support for GDR opposition groups starting in the mid-1980s. This proved a decisive hindrance for the GDR's attempts to establish contacts with AL leaders, especially those in the *Abgeordnetenhaus*, which the GDR hoped would boost its credibility. In this matter, too, however, the AL resisted being used. When the GDR refused entry to AL members Renate Künast (then an AL delegate to the *Abgeordnetenhaus*) and Michael Wendt (then member of the AL's Executive Committee) a few weeks before they were to lead an AL delegation to meet with East German officials, the AL simply cancelled the scheduled meetings. The Executive Committee cited this as further evidence that the GDR wished to allow official visits while trying to prevent AL members from making contact with those citizens in the East who were critical of their government. While the AL still viewed the talks at the

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[141] "AL erneuert Forderung nach Freilassung von DDR-Oppositionellen," AL press release, n.d.,printed in DR-Info 17 February 1988. AGG: B.I.1.748.

official level in the GDR as necessary, the AL emphasized that it would not

sacrifice its contacts with critical East German citizens as the price for these

talks.[142]

A further sign of disillusionment with the GDR became the crucial area of

coming to terms with the past. As has been seen, the GDR derived a great deal

of its legitimacy among the Left from its alleged anti-fascism and its supposedly

complete break with the National Socialist past. During 1985 to 1989, however,

the GDR suffered some chinks in its anti-fascist armor that indicated that the AL

was recognizing this increasingly for what it was: propaganda. In May 1985,

East German officials prevented the AL-*Abgeordnetenhaus* delegation from

traveling to Sachsenhausen, a concentration camp site on the outskirts of Berlin.

The AL delegation had planned the trip to observe the fortieth anniversary of

German capitulation. Instead, due to restrictions on entry impacting AL

members, the AL lashed out against the GDR's own coming to terms with the

past. Preventing the AL from visiting the former concentration camp revealed

that "obviously the other German state also has significant problems coming to

terms with the German past."[143] This was particularly damaging for a state that

sought to portray itself as anti-fascist. Obviously, the statement concluded, the

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[142] "AL fährt nicht in die DDR," AL press release, 21 November 1986, printed in DR-Info 26 November 1986. AGG: B.I.1.749.

[143] Offensichtlich hat auch der andere deutsche Staat erhebliche Schwierigkeiten mit der Bewältigung der deutschen Vergangenheit. "AL Fraktion darf nicht nach Sachsenhausen," AL press release, 8 May 1985. AGG:B.I.1.227.

only kind of anti-fascism that was allowed was that which was compatible with the Soviet liberators and "leaves out every critical question regarding the German past."[144] Also, as part of the fortieth anniversary commemoration of German capitulation, the AL released a packet intended for high-school students and teachers in West Berlin regarding coming to terms with the past. The packet included essays by historians on the German past, a statement by the Jewish community in West Berlin, and texts by Günter Grass, Stefan Heym, and Heinrich Böll. The package also contained documents about the official line regarding coming to terms with the past in the GDR, which, according to the AL, "also renders many questions taboo."[145]

Clearly, then, the GDR's anti-fascist robes were beginning to tatter in the sight of the West Berlin Left. The reasons for this are revealing, and relate to the nature of the East German regime. Despite its extensive attempts to infiltrate and influence the AL, only a small part of which is detailed above, the GDR government never gained the unqualified support of the AL, but instead squandered its existing sympathies. The GDR reacted to the AL in the only way it knew how: by placing restrictions on travel and free speech; by undertaking smear campaigns, including some against some AL members; by causing

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[144] Jede kritische Frage an die deutsche Geschichte unterlässt. "AL Fraktion darf nicht nach Sachsenhausen."

[145] Die ebenfalls viele Fragen tabuisiert. "AL legt Dokumentation zur Auseinandersetzung um den 8. Mai vor," AL press release, 20 May 1985. AGG: B.I.1.227.

massive pollution, then declaring environmental data secret; and by arresting opposition leaders. This approach, essentially the antithesis of that favored by the AL by this time, served only to alienate a group that was otherwise well disposed toward the East German state. In many respects, the AL leadership's sympathy was the GDR's to lose. Thanks largely to the paranoid and restrictive nature of the regime, it lost it.

During the AL's second period of parliamentary representation at the state level, the AL underwent important changes. Its attempts to balance the extra-parliamentary and the parliamentary realms did not succeed, and by the end of the electoral period, its emphasis was changing from the extra-parliamentary to the parliamentary realm. In the parliament, the AL discovered some commonalities with its erstwhile enemy, the SPD, and revealed it had moderated its early stance regarding the Western Allies in the city. It also discovered the appeal of the parliaments as a place where the problematic German past could be confronted, and the AL used its parliamentary resources to educate both the general public and its own members about the German past. Controversies surrounding the State Committee for Constitutional Protection gave the AL new ammunition to use against the state. In the end, though, its response revealed its parliamentarization. It harnessed liberal arguments about freedom from state interference, and even reluctantly conceded a role for the parliaments in monitoring and regulating the organization.

Its stance on violence changed as well, in part conditioned by its experiences in the *Abgeordnetenhaus*, in part due to its affiliation with the national Greens. This can best be seen in the contrast in its reaction to the violence around the second Reagan visit compared to that of his first visit exactly five years earlier. Attitudes the AL expressed toward terrorist attacks, attacks on police in Frankfurt, and the anti-IMF demonstrations also reveal a changed stance on violence. Finally, the AL resisted extensive efforts on the part of the Stasi to infiltrate and influence the AL, demonstrating deradicalization stemming in part from a growing disillusionment with the GDR 's paranoid and repressive policies.

Overall, then, parliamentarization and deradicalization continued apace during the years examined in this chapter. This helped set the stage for what seemed to be the final stage in the AL's evolution: its participation with the SPD in governing Berlin. This serves as the subject for the next chapter.

Chapter Seven

Embracing Power, Embracing Parliament

This chapter examines the AL's experiences in the crucial interval from 1989 to 1990. During these years, the processes of parliamentarization and deradicalization explored throughout this dissertation climaxed. This period represented the final phase in the AL's transformation from an anti-parliamentary organization to a coalition partner accepting and embracing parliamentary democracy. Moreover, by 1989, the AL had fully become what it had originally claimed to be: an organization working to promote democracy and protect the environment.

In part, frustration with the balancing act it had attempted during the last electoral period led it to commit fully to parliamentary participation. It expressed this commitment by becoming a coalition partner sharing power with the SPD. Furthermore, by 1989, the AL had renounced violence: in the 1989 electoral program the AL explicitly embraced all four of the Green Party 'pillars,' including that of nonviolence, for the first time. Finally, the AL continued to embrace a culture of debate and discussion as ways of arriving at truth, identified by Ralf Dahrendorf as a key component of a democratic culture.

These years also witnessed extraordinary historical developments that changed the context in which the AL operated. The revolution in the GDR and the fall of the Wall seemed to awaken hopes among the West Berlin Left for revolutionary changes in Western society, hopes that had gone dormant as a

result of its concentration on parliamentary participation. The fall of the Wall and the momentous changes in 1989-1990 finally purged the radical Left of these millenarian ambitions. Once these hopes had been dashed, little remained for the radical Left to do but to return to its parliamentary course, sadder but wiser for the experience.

The AL's transformation can be seen in part in its campaign for the 1989 election in West Berlin. Generally speaking, a number of factors influenced this contest. At the federal level, the CDU was losing support, especially due to its health policies and rising patient costs. The corruption scandal surrounding the Charlottenburg city councilman and CDU Representative Wolfgang Antes, accused of bribery and improper donations, dominated the local political campaign. Controversy regarding the activities of the West Berlin Office for Constitutional Protection, accused of observing opposition politicians and journalists, also played a role in the election, as did the planned end to rent control and increased housing prices. The presence of the right-wing *Republikaner*, campaigning for the first time on the West Berlin political scene, provoked debate and counter-demonstrations. Generally, however, the 1989 election campaign was lackluster: one observer called it "an election without issues."[1]

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[1] Ein Wahlkampf ohne Themen. Horst Schmollinger, "Die Wahl zum Abgeordnetenhaus von Berlin am 29. Januar 1989," *Zeitschrift für Parlamentsfragen* 20 (March 1989): 312.

For its part, the AL was showing signs of becoming an established player on the West Berlin political scene. The AL's program for the 1989 election tried to counteract this by emphasizing continuity with the past, billing itself as a supplement to the 1985 program.[2] Nevertheless, looking in depth at the 1989 version reveals just how far the AL had moved to embrace parliamentary democracy.

For one thing, the AL had altered its view of the role of parliaments in an important way. Past programs had downplayed the potential for parliaments to effect change, insisting that the real force for change was to be found in the extra-parliamentary realm. At the most, parliaments could occasionally be used to support the extra-parliamentary movements. By contrast, the authors of the AL's 1989 program found it necessary to remind readers that parliamentary participation alone was not enough: real change needed the *support* of extra-parliamentary organizations. In a small but significant shift, the AL now viewed the extra-parliamentary realm as its *Spielbein*, whereas the parliaments had become its *Standbein*.[3]

Still, the AL insisted that its view of parliaments would continue to differ from that of the other parties. The AL saw parliaments as the place where it could present alternative views of social development. Instead of pursuing

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[2] *Das Wahlprogramm der Alternativen Liste 1989* (Berlin: Alternative Liste, 1989).

[3] *Wahlprogramm der AL 1989*, 3.

Stellvertreterpolitik, or 'politics of representation,' the AL sought to democratize

local government by involving the populace in decisions. This would take the

form of a "radical decentralization of decision-making" ranging from soliciting

input from citizens' initiatives to referendums.[4]

Significantly, the AL's program revealed that it supported an alliance

between itself and the SPD, even before such an alliance seemed possible or

realistic. The program emphasized that the CDU-FDP Senate must be defeated,

but the AL would not be able to do this alone: this would only be possible with

the SPD, and the AL should not stand in the way by being shy about embracing

power. In fact, the group tried to overcome the ambivalence many still felt

regarding parliamentary power by downplaying the question of cooperation

with the SPD and cloaking it in pragmatism: "What's important to us is not

governmental participation in itself, but rather practical successes of a policy that

consistently gives ecology top priority, that leads to a democratization of society,

to more rights for citizens, to equal rights for immigrants and refugees, to social

conditions that render possible a life fit for human beings."[5]

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[4] Eine radikale Dezentralisierung von Entscheidungen. *Wahlprogramm der AL 1989*, 3.

[5] Dabei kommt es uns nicht auf die Teilhabe am Regierungsgeschäft an, sondern auf praktische Erfolge einer Politik, die der Ökologie konsequent Vorrang einräumt, die zu einer Demokratisierung der Gesellschaft führt, zu mehr Rechten der BürgerInnen gegenüber dem Staat, zu gleichen Rechten für ImmigrantInnen und Flüchtlinge, zu sozialen Verhältnissen, die ein menschenwürdiges Leben überhaupt erst ermöglichen. *Wahlprogramm der AL 1989*, 5.

Ecological issues continued to play a key role in the party program. For example, environmental concerns dominated the programmatic section on the issue of West Berlin and the GDR, revealing the degree to which the AL's view of East Germany had become colored by that state's ecological problems. The location of West Berlin meant that West Berlin was constantly at risk of air pollution from brown coal and risky nuclear power plants in the GDR. But West Berlin also burdened its surroundings, for example, with great quantities of garbage, some of which was quite toxic.[6] A credible cross-border environmental policy must begin with a readiness not to burden one's own neighbor with one's trash. The right to a clean environment must exist on both sides of the border. This necessitated that all environmental data be made public, whereas in the GDR, this was treated as a state secret. The program called for free contact between environmental organizations on both sides of the border, and the AL emphasized that its own experiences had taught it the importance of citizens' initiatives and public discussions about ecological problems. Hence the AL promised its "unlimited support" for environmental groups in West or East

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[6] On this issue and its link to the opposition in the GDR, see Erhart Neubert, *Geschichte der Opposition in der DDR 1949-1989* (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 1997), 746.

Germany.[7] The AL also expressly criticized "the attempts of the GDR leadership

to stifle and mute individual voices."[8]

In terms of environmental policy for West Berlin, the AL took up a cause

of the squatters by advocating that the city "green up courtyards" by planting

trees and vines to cover roofs and building facades.[9] It also proposed to reduce

traffic and improve quality of life by bringing living areas, business districts, and

recreation areas closer together.[10] It pledged to work for a person-friendly

instead of a car-friendly city, and would work to give priority for pedestrians,

bicyclists, buses, and trains.[11] Over long distances, mass transit would receive

priority over individual automobile traffic. Moreover, the AL claimed that these

suggestions were affordable and would create jobs.[12]

The program also advanced a policy in which civil liberties would be

strengthened against the encroachments of the state. The AL emphasized

increasing decision-making at the local level, giving foreigners the right to vote

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[7] Uneingeschränkte Unterstützung.

[8] Die Versuche der DDR-Führung, unabhängige Stimmen abzuwürgen
und mundtot zu machen. *Wahlprogramm der AL 1989*, 13.

[9] Hofbegrünung.

[10] *Wahlprogramm der AL 1989*, 14.

[11] *Wahlprogramm der AL 1989*, 15.

[12] *Wahlprogramm der AL 1989*, 18-19.

in local elections, and incorporating plebiscitary elements into the election process.[13]

Regarding education policy, the AL sought to portray educational institutions as the seedbeds of democracy. According to the program, the AL viewed democratizing schools as a way to democratize society.[14] Universities played an even more important role: according to the program, "society needs the criticism from the universities for its development."[15] This emphasis also reflected the connections between the AL and the student movement of the 1960s.

The AL outlined its utopian vision of a West Berlin as a "model of a civil society" which in its view would have geopolitical ramifications.[16] As such, the city would need no military, no Allied listening posts, and no armed police force. It would also help improve East-West relations: "The city will contribute to overcoming the power blocs and the Wall through its peace policies, its science and cultural policies, and its environmental and economic policies."[17] West

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[13] *Wahlprogramm der AL 1989*, 23.

[14] *Wahlprogramm der AL 1989*, 32.

[15] Die Gesellschaft braucht in ihrer Entwicklung die Kritik der Hochschule. *Wahlprogramm der AL 1989*, 34.

[16] West-Berlin wird Modell einer zivilen Gesellschaft. *Wahlprogramm der AL 1989*, 35.

[17] Die Stadt trägt durch ihre Friedenspolitik, ihre Wissenschafts- und Kulturpolitik, ihre Umwelt- und Wirtschaftspolitik dazu bei, dass die Machtblöcke und die Mauer überwunden werden. *Wahlprogramm der AL 1989*, 35.

Berlin's disarmed and demilitarized society would also have an impact on the Allied presence, which should be reduced to a symbolic level.[18]

Regarding violence, the AL program articulated the AL's desire "to take the democratic path to achieve our ecological, social, and peaceful reconstruction."[19] But the AL and the extra-parliamentary groups agreed that voting and electoral representation alone were not enough to achieve an ecological, social, and nonviolent society. Other means such as demonstrations, civil disobedience, strikes, occupations, boycotts, and so on were also necessary. In planning these, the AL would try to guarantee the safety of political opponents, non-participants, and themselves. But these actions led to confrontations with police. To exclude this risk would be to end these actions altogether. This would surrender control to the establishment, and the alternative movement would lose its only means of resistance. At this point, the AL drew on an explicit historical lesson in justifying its insistence on maintaining certain forms of resistance: "Resistance comes too late when democracy has been suspended or there is already war."[20] In contrast to many politicians and journalists, the AL did not consider acts of civil disobedience to be forms of violence. According to the program, however, violent means corrupted the idea

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[18] *Wahlprogramm der AL 1989*, 41.

[19] Wir wollen unseren ökologischen, sozialen und friedenspolitichen Umbau auf demokratischem Wege erreichen. *Wahlprogramm der AL 1989*, 45.

of a humane society, and injured those using the violence as well as those against

whom the violence was directed. The AL then cast itself in the role of the

revolutionaries of 1848: "An evaluation of violence and nonviolence that is

independent of time and place is not possible when one considers history. Also

the Liberals in 1848, men and women, built barricades and fired shots."[21]

The program then assessed the different positions in the AL regarding

violence: many believed that the stones that were thrown at the time of the

squatters' movement were legitimate arguments that were necessary to wake up

public opinion and politicians. Many others believed that every riot distracted

from the cause for which the AL was actually fighting, as the media reported

about the violence instead of about its underlying causes.[22]

The program at this point conceded that one formula could not cover all

positions on violence within the AL. Instead, the AL issued guidelines for future

actions and demonstrations in Berlin. The AL would not rule out working with

groups not explicitly renouncing violence or guaranteeing nonviolent behavior.

In fact, the AL emphasized that it intended actively to continue working with

these groups. The AL did not wish to give up this cooperation, and wished to

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[20] Widerstand kommt zu spät, wenn die Demokratie bereits ausser Kraft
gesetzt ist oder wenn ein Krieg bereits begonnen hat. *Wahlprogramm der AL 1989*,
46.

[21] Eine von Zeit und Ort unabhängige Bewertung von Gewalt und
Gewaltfreiheit verbietet sich aber allein schon im Blick auf die Geschichte. Auch
die Liberalen bauten 1848 Barrikaden, und es schossen Männer wie Frauen.
Wahlprogramm der AL 1989, 46.

live up to its credo that "those affected must determine the forms of their own resistance and protest."[23] But the AL nevertheless wished to avoid the perception that it took a laissez-faire attitude toward those groups, or that it avoided conflict regarding these groups' understanding of radicalism and militancy. In fact, the AL stated that it would resist the tendency to avoid conflict and actively pursue discussion with these groups: "In the future and as appropriate, we will take counter-positions in internal and public debates."[24] Again, the AL emphasized a culture of debate and discussion, and it increasingly strove to bring this culture to other organizations as well. This arguably helped instill in these other groups the virtues of debate and discussion as ways of getting at the truth, thus contributing toward a democratization of the Left that transcended the boundaries of the AL. The AL was careful not to alienate these groups: it emphasized in the program that if on occasion the AL condemned certain forms of action, this should not be interpreted to mean that it sought to exclude these groups or individuals from left-wing solidarity. Still, the AL would work to help others renounce violence: invoking the phrase "Berlin disarms," the AL

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[22] *Wahlprogramm der AL 1989*, 47.

[23] Die Betroffenen bestimmen die Formen ihres Widerstandes und Protestes selbst. *Wahlprogramm der AL 1989*, 47.

[24] Wir werden in Zukunft gegebenenfalls in internen und öffentlichen Streitgesprächen Gegenpositionen beziehen. *Wahlprogramm der AL 1989*, 47.

emphasized that it would apply this to work with other groups to attempt to break the spiral of violence.[25]

The AL also incorporated a number of other emancipative elements: it vowed to fight for "a society without oppression of women," to fight the double discrimination female immigrants faced, and to campaign for a free choice of lifestyle and partner for homosexual couples.[26] It took up the old issue of affordable housing, calling for making affordable housing a basic right, calling for protection for tenants, and explicitly bringing in ecological elements by advocating so-called "green construction."[27]

The AL also criticized West Berlin's government and society for failing to come to terms fully with the German past. It interpreted construction policies, street names, research, care for victims, as well as government statements and lack of attention to the German past as symptoms of failed *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*. To counteract this, West Berlin should become a center of scientific, political, and cultural confrontation with German fascism and its consequences.[28] Here, the AL cast its entire program as lessons learned from the German past. Its protests against restrictions on asylum seekers as well as its fight against racism and the rise of right-wing extremism all followed from the

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[25] Berlin rüstet ab. *Wahlprogramm der AL 1989*, 47.

[26] Eine Gesellschaft ohne Frauenunterdrückung. *Wahlprogramm der AL 1989*, 48, 54-55.

[27] Grünes Bauen. Wahlprogramm *der AL 1989*, 69-72.

[28] *Wahlprogramm der AL 1989*, 83.

memory of the Nazi era. As the program phrased it, "In conscious memory of the past, the AL works for a society in which openness to the world, tolerance, and solidarity can be lived."[29]

The program reserved the bombshells for the end. In the summary, it noted that the AL saw itself as combating purely materialistic, undemocratic forms of rule. It wished to supplant these with other principles: ecology, nonviolence, social responsibility, and collective self-determination.[30] The AL then noted that, while capitalist society contradicted the society its members wished to achieve in the long run, nevertheless, "a large part of our program can be realized within the framework of an industrial capitalist society."[31] In making this statement, the AL echoed Eduard Bernstein's revisionist arguments made nearly a century earlier.[32]

The program's closing sentences contained the most explicit statement so far regarding the critical nature of debate and discussion for the AL: "The strength of the AL rests not only in its electoral vote, but also on the debate about its policies and its visions. We therefore wish ourselves not only many voters,

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[29] In bewusster Erinnerung an die Vergangenheit arbeitet die Alternative Liste für eine Gesellschaft, in der Weltoffenheit, Toleranz und Solidarität gelebt werden können. *Wahlprogramm der AL 1989*, 85.

[30] *Wahlprogramm der AL 1989*, 86.

[31] Ein grosser Teil unserer Programmatik ist jedoch im Rahmen einer kapitalistischen Industriegesellschaft realisierbar. *Wahlprogramm der AL 1989*, 86.

[32] Donald Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism: the West European Left in the Twentieth Century* (New York: The New Press, 1996), 26.

but also many committed persons. Only thus and only then will the chances and hopes of our politics be realized."[33] This final section of its 1989 program shows just how extensive the processes of deradicalization and parliamentarization had been. First, the AL now embraced principles deriving directly from all of the Green Party's Four Pillars, for the first time including nonviolence. Second, the AL revealed that it had largely made its peace with a reformist path to socialism. Finally, through its endorsement and emphasis on this distinctly Dahrendorfian, liberal ideology, the AL revealed the extent of its genuine democratization.

With its program, the AL had apparently struck the right tone with voters. The AL achieved 11.8 percent of the vote in the West Berlin elections held on 29 January 1989, its best result to date. It managed to improve its excellent showing of four years earlier by just over 1 percent. But the 1989 West Berlin election was remarkable for several other reasons as well. First, the electoral math meant that the figures were there for either a coalition government between the AL and the SPD or a so-called Grand Coalition between the SPD and the CDU. Accordingly, the SPD began negotiations with both the AL and the CDU to establish the next West Berlin Senate. Second, in a much more disturbing development, the 1989 elections marked the entrance of an extreme right-wing party, the *Republikaner*,

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[33] Die Stärke oder auch die Kraft der AL beruht nicht nur auf WählerInnenstimmen, sondern auch auf der Auseinandersetzung mit ihrer Politik und ihren Vorstellungen. Wir wünschen uns nicht nur viele WählerInnen, sondern noch viel mehr engagierte Menschen. Nur so und auch nur dann entwickeln sich die Chancen und Hoffnungen unserer Politik. *Wahlprogramm der AL 1989*, 86.

onto the political scene. With 7.5 percent of the vote, the *Republikaner* appeared

to have come out of nowhere, capitalizing on growing anti-immigrant sentiments

in West Berlin to easily make it into parliament. Third, for the first time in ten

years, the SPD was able to increase its share of the vote, polling at 37.3 percent,

just behind the CDU, which had continued to lose ground slightly, with 37.7

percent. Fourth, a fixture of the political landscape for decades, the FDP, which

had consistently polled at around 6 percent, suddenly disappeared from the

scene as it failed to make the 5 percent hurdle. The 1989 election was indeed "a

surprising shift in [Berlin's] party system."[34]

The West Berlin daily *Der Tagesspiegel* reacted with concern to the outcome

of the election. The editorial giving its reaction was headlined "Between

Extremes," invoking fears of a Weimar-like end to democracy.[35] The paper

termed the electoral results "the break-in of the irrational into Berlin politics,"

noting that while some support for the AL as a protest vote had come to be

expected, the degree of support for the *Republikaner* had come as a surprise.[36]

Again invoking Weimar, the paper noted "the weakening of the rational

democratic center in favor of the powers on the fringe of the democratic

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[34] Ein überraschender Wandel im Parteiensystem. Schmollinger, "Wahl zum Abgeordnetenhaus," 309.

[35] Zwischen den Extremen. *Der Tagesspiegel*, 31 January 1989.

[36] Der Einbruch der Irrationalen in die Berliner Politik.

spectrum."[37] Moreover, as under Weimar, in places where the AL had done well

before, it was now face to face with a strong *Republikaner* party. The parties

formerly governing West Berlin were not blameless, however. The article

accused the CDU and FDP of overconfidence and arrogance in avoiding real

issues in the election campaign. In addition, the *Tagesspiegel* worried about the

implications of the election for West Berlin, especially the economic

consequences for the city if people lost confidence in the city's governability.

Finally, the article speculated that the results would be felt in Bonn, too: Kohl

had thought that West Berlin was safe and could be counted on to support the

CDU, but the West Berlin elections could be a foretaste of developments to

come.[38]

Ironically, the much-despised nemesis of the Left, the Springer-owned

mass-circulation daily BILD, reacted to the election results more soberly, taking

the triumph of the AL in stride. In fact, 1989 marked the first year that BILD

treated the AL like a normal party: this year, for the first time, BILD included the

AL in its daily coverage of the election.[39] Moreover, at least one issue

championed by the AL had become even more mainstream by 1989 than in 1985:

environmental concerns. For example, BILD ran a daily series in 1989 called

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[37] Es ist fast nach dem bösen Exempel von Weimar die vernünftige demokratische Mitte zugunsten der Kräfte an den Rändern des politischen Spektrums geschwächt worden. *Der Tagesspiegel*, 31 January 1989.

[38] *Der Tagesspiegel*, 31 January 1989.

[39] See BILD, January 1989.

"Advice and Help for Your Environment," giving practical if rather superficial tips for avoiding pollution, and advocating that schools include environmental protection as a required subject.[40] But BILD also noted the strengthening of the extremes at the expense of the parties of the Center. It too asked, "Can Berlin now be governed?" and noted that, since Berlin's problems seemed to foreshadow developments in West Germany as a whole, the parties faced challenges ahead.[41] The results should force the parties to ask themselves if they knew the concerns of the people, and while the parties had grown larger and stronger, they had begun to lose their appeal to ordinary citizens.

Even before it entered governmental responsibility, the AL faced the dilemma of how it should respond to the presence of the right-wing *Republikaner* in the West Berlin parliament. Both the timing and nature of its response indicate the extent to which the AL now accepted and embraced the rules of parliamentary democracy, even as it strove to maintain vestiges of its radical roots.

Notably, the AL had begun to plan its reaction to the *Republikaner* as soon as it became clear that the right-wing party had gained enough votes to enter the parliament, before the AL had decided to enter the coalition with the SPD. As a memo printed in the Council of Delegates bulletin of 22 February 1989 shows,

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[40] Rat und Hilfe für Deine Umwelt; See also for example "Umwelt: Kinder machen mit!" BILD, 1 February 1989.

[41] Ist Berlin jetzt regierbar? BILD, 30 January 1989.

the AL was keenly aware that parliamentary rules would make the opening

session of the *Abgeordnetenhaus* particularly controversial because the rules of

order stipulated that the Elder President lead the session together with the four

youngest members present. This would include three AL members and one

delegate from the *Republikaner*. The AL then discussed ways to "observe the

minimal formal rules" regarding their conduct in the *Abgeordnetenhaus*, but went

on to state that the AL could not fail to protest the enhancement of status that the

Republikaner would experience as a result of their parliamentary presence.[42] The

AL would consider what steps to take at the opening of the parliamentary

session to demonstrate against the *Republikaner*, "without calling into question

the opening of the parliamentary session itself."[43] The fact that this concern

predated the AL's status as coalition partner shows that the AL was not

motivated by a concern about losing face as a governing party, nor was it

mandated by a commitment to the SPD to uphold the *Abgeordnetenhaus* and its

traditions. Instead, it stemmed from a genuine desire not to undermine the

legitimacy of parliament.

In the end, the protest itself was rather mild, though it did represent a

carryover from attempts to use parliament as a forum for protest. Albert Eckert,

one of the AL's representatives and one of the first openly gay representatives of

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[42] Die minimalen formalen Regeln beachten. DR-Info 22 February 1989. AGG: B.I.1.751.

[43] Ohne damit die Eröffnung selbst in Frage zu stellen. DR-Info 22 February 1989. AGG: B.I.1.751.

the West Berlin parliament, refused to sit next to the *Republikaner* delegate

Carsten Pagel during the ceremony. After repeated warnings, Ernst-August

Poritz, the Elder President of the body, had Eckert escorted from the podium

under protest and replaced with the next youngest member, this time a delegate

from the CDU faction.[44] Somewhat later in the proceedings, during a speech by

the head of the *Republikaner* faction, the AL delegates proceeded to the entrance-

side of the chamber, each bearing one letter of the anti-fascist slogan "Nip these

things in the bud!"[45] They then filed out of the chamber. It is noteworthy that

the AL staged this protest during a parliamentary question it had sponsored on

the dangers of political extremism for parliamentary democracy.[46] Thus the AL

combined parliamentary with extra-parliamentary techniques to protest against

right-wing extremism.

In addition to coping with the sudden appearance of a radical right-wing

party, West Berlin faced the question of what parties would provide the next

ruling coalition for the city. This issue dominated political discussions in the

immediate aftermath of the election. Just two days after the vote, BILD noted

that the AL was interested in a coalition with the SPD. It quoted AL leaders

Christian Ströbele and Renate Künast downplaying the differences between the

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[44] PAB 11/1 (2 March 1989), 4.

[45] Wehret den Anfängen! PAB 11/1 (2 March 1989), 10.

[46] The AL had requested an *Aktuelle Stunde* with the subject "Politischer Extremismus: Gefahr für die parlamentarische Demokratie?" PAB 11/1 (2 March 1989), 9.

parties.[47] The SPD and the AL had not planned on a coalition, however; in fact,

right up to the eve of the election, the SPD leader Walter Momper had declared

his opposition to working with the AL, and had denied that this was even an

option. In a phone interview with BILD readers, Momper vehemently rejected

the possibility of an SPD-AL coalition, insisting that such a coalition would be

"over in a week."[48] Momper went on to list the reasons he predicted such a

coalition would be short-lived: he noted doubts about the reliability of the AL,

and asserted that a coalition would end the moment a controversial federal law

reached the *Abgeordnetenhaus* for approval and the AL voted against it. Finally,

as long as the AL did not clearly and unambiguously renounce violence as a

political method- and in the eyes of the West Berlin political establishment, the

AL had not yet done this, since it still worked with groups that used violent

means of protest- the SPD could not work with it.

    Nevertheless, once the election figures came back favoring either a Red-

Green or a Grand Coalition, the SPD began negotiations. The manner in which

these negotiations came about is also indicative of a certain drift away from

radical grassroots democratic values on the part of the AL. Representatives from

the SPD approached the AL's Bernd Köppl, a member of the pro-coalition Green

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[47] BILD, 31 January 1989.

[48] Schon nach einer Woche zu Ende. BILD, 25 January 1989. In fact, Momper revealed in this conversation two of the three main objections to working with the AL, the third being the AL's attitude toward the presence of the Western allies.

Panther faction within the AL, and asked him to set things in motion for negotiating a possible coalition. Köppl then assembled a small group of AL leaders representing diverse strands within the party, including Harald Wolf from the coalition-hostile Left Forum and Renate Künast, a moderate integrative figure.[49] In contrast to usual practice, which would have involved first calling a General Members' Assembly for discussion, this group met informally and privately with the SPD representatives. This group of AL members then informed the Council of Delegates about the talks.[50]

The controversial nature of these negotiations and the proposed Red-Green coalition are difficult to imagine in retrospect. At the time negotiations began, however, even some AL members did not think that the Western Allies, who had broad leeway in intervening in internal West Berlin political affairs, would permit a Red-Green coalition.[51] Indeed, news of a possible Red-Green coalition triggered a harsh reaction from the Springer Press, which emphasized Momper's course reversal regarding cooperation with the AL. BILD noted that just eleven days after Momper promised not to coalesce with the AL, "today he and his democratic comrades are holding meetings with the radical Leftists, the

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[49] Gudrun Heinrich, *Rot-Grün in Berlin: die Alternative Liste in der Regierungsverantwortung* (Marburg: Schüren, 1993), 29.

[50] Heinrich, *Rot-Grün in Berlin*, 29. Whether the group met with the SPD before or after this consultation with the Council of Delegates is a disputed but significant point.

[51] Heinrich, *Rot-Grün in Berlin*, 19.

political group that among other things has yet to clearly distance itself from violent actions and psycho-terror against individuals."[52]

For the SPD, however, it was clear that its preference was to work with the AL, and it viewed the prospect of a Grand Coalition only as a last resort.[53] The SPD therefore seized the initiative with the AL. Knowing full well the controversial nature of its prospective partner, the SPD presented the AL with a sine qua non: a list of three points to which the AL had to agree as a basis for cooperation. These points, which became known as the 'Three Essentials,' aimed at the heart of the AL's radical politics. First, they required that the AL recognize the status of West Berlin and accept the presence of the Allies in the city. Second, the Essentials required that the AL recognize the unity of West Berlin with the Federal Republic and automatically accept federal laws when they came before the *Abgeordnetenhaus* for a vote. Third, the AL had to agree to accept the state's monopoly on the use of force, which meant finally and unambiguously renouncing violence as a tool of political protest.[54]

The AL's reaction to the Three Essentials speaks volumes regarding the degree to which the party had been parliamentarized and deradicalized over the past decade. Early on in the negotiations with the AL, it became clear that

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[52] Heute treffen sich Momper und seine demokratischen Genossen mit den radikalen Linken. Jene politische Gruppierung, die u.a. sich von Gewaltaktionen und Psycho-Terror gegen einzelne Personen nicht eindeutig distanziert. BILD, 2 February 1989.

[53] Schmollinger, "Wahl zum Abgeordnetenhaus," 320.

recognition of the Three Essentials would not represent a stumbling block for the coalition, and on 2 February 1989, in full knowledge of the preconditions, the generally radical Council of Delegates unanimously approved continuing negotiations with the SPD.[55] These negotiations continued throughout February and into March. A few weeks before the AL's *Mitgliedervollversammlung* met to decide whether or not to approve the coalition, former RAF attorney and AL parliamentarian Christian Ströbele labeled the prospect of a coalition with the SPD "the chance of a century."[56] Apparently most of the AL agreed: at a General Members' Assembly on 11-12 March 1989, 80 percent of those members attending voted to accept the Three Essentials and enter the coalition.

Motivations for accepting the Three Essentials were numerous and diverse. In fact, there were probably as many motivations as there were AL members. For some, especially those who earlier had been active in the rival State Committee of the Green Party, work with the SPD meant a further chance to reform the AL from within, sparking the AL to further distance itself from groups utilizing violence. Many others hoped to be able to reverse certain CDU-FDP projects through participating in governmental power. Furthermore, nearly all hoped that parliamentary participation would finally give the AL the chance

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[54] Heinrich, *Rot-Grün in Berlin*, 31.

[55] Schmollinger, "Wahl zum Abgeordnetenhaus," 320.

[56] Die Jahrhundertchance. "Der Graue Panther der Alternativen," *Der Spiegel* 43, no. 11 (13 March 1989), 14.

to see at least certain aspects of its agenda realized.[57] On the other hand, many apparently feared that if the AL did not embrace power and work in a constructive way, but instead continued to pursue an obstructionist, opposition role, this would amount to "political suicide."[58]

The coalition agreement itself was an ambitious, comprehensive, and progressive program laying out what its authors hoped would be a new direction for West Berlin.[59] Heading the agreement were points relating to policies regarding Berlin and Germany. The agreement noted the crucial nature of the Western Allied presence, the attachment of West Berlin to the Federal Republic, and its membership in the European Community. This should serve as the secure basis for the development of closer contacts to the GDR and the East Bloc. Moreover, the future of West Berlin depended on overcoming the division of Europe. In the foreseeable future, this would take place in the context of the existence of two German states that did not mutually question each other's right to exist. The signatories agreed to strive for cooperation between the two states. While borders should not be changed, they should lose their "divisive character."[60]

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[57] Heinrich, *Rot-Grün in Berlin*, 33-34.

[58] Politischer Selbstmord. Heinrich, *Rot-Grün in Berlin*, 37.

[59] *Berliner Koalitionsvereinbarung zwischen SPD und AL vom 13. März 1989* (Berlin: SPD Berlin, 1989).

[60] Ihren trennenden Charakter*. Berliner Koalitionsvereinbarung*, 13.

In the realm of finance, the parties agreed to fight unemployment, poverty, and environmental destruction.[61] The agreement asserted that future environmental policy was crucial to securing the livability of Berlin.[62] The parties pledged to adopt an efficient and sustainable energy policy, to preserve green spaces, to reduce solid waste, and to work with the GDR to reduce pollution.[63] Transportation policy would give priority to pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit over automobiles, and the parties pledged to double the budget to expand Berlin's commuter trains and subways.[64] In the politically charged area of housing policy, the parties promised to construct seven thousand new flats to fight the housing shortage, to preserve green spaces and the environment, and to reinstitute rent control.[65]

The agreement also pledged to enact reforms to the city's government, striving to make it smaller, friendlier, more locally oriented, and less bureaucratic. It was to be committed to customer service and to the openness of information.[66] The agreement also committed the parties to a new course in domestic policy in which they would combat the causes of violence and aim to

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[61] *Berliner Koalitionsvereinbarung*, 16.

[62] *Berliner Koalitionsvereinbarung*, 20.

[63] *Berliner Koalitionsvereinbarung*, 20-23.

[64] *Berliner Koalitionsvereinbarung*, 24

[65] *Berliner Koalitionsvereinbarung*, 26-29.

[66] *Berliner Koalitionsvereinbarung*, 36.

find political solutions to social problems.[67] They pledged to reform, not

eliminate, the State Office for Protection of the Constitution and end its abuses, to

restrict the data that could be collected on individuals, and to allow people to see

their files.[68] Regarding foreigners, the signatories pledged to work for a multi-

cultural society without putting foreigners under pressure to assimilate. They

would fight hostility toward foreigners, and work to grant non-Germans the

right to vote in local elections.[69] In the realm of law and justice, the agreement

called on the Senate to begin negotiations with the Western Allies to reform

Allied Law and to purge it of outdated elements, especially regarding the death

penalty. It also called for a general reform in sentencing.[70]

Regarding women's rights, the agreement cast efforts to achieve equality

between men and women as a key aspect of developing a democratic society,

and the signatories pledged to end sexual discrimination.[71] In education and

research, the partners pledged to strengthen the autonomy of the universities

and reduce their dependence on the state. They promised to work to

democratize the decision-making process at the universities, called for more

interdisciplinary work at institutions of higher learning, and pledged to increase

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[67] *Berliner Koalitionsvereinbarung*, 37.

[68] *Berliner Koalitionsvereinbarung*, 38.

[69] *Berliner Koalitionsvereinbarung*, 39.

[70] *Berliner Koalitionsvereinbarung*, 41-43.

[71] *Berliner Koalitionsvereinbarung*, 44.

support of research dealing with social and ecological issues.[72] School policy

aimed to reduce bureaucracy and to democratize decision-making. In addition,

the agreement stipulated that administrators should combat the actions of right-

wing groups in the schools through debate and argument regarding the goals of

such groups.[73] Thus the AL applied its ideological emphasis on debate and

discussion to this controversial issue as well.

Culture received particular consideration in the agreement, which viewed

culture as playing a special role in promoting cooperation and an exchange of

experiences in an increasingly multi-ethnic West Berlin. The agreement

implicitly criticized West German society's consumerism even as it spoke its

language: Art and culture should help enable people to "set self-determination

and activity against uncritical consumption and passivity," and supporting

culture was "an investment in the future."[74] Cultural policy should be as free

from state interference as possible. But modern German history should receive

special attention and support.

The agreement pledged to open and expand opportunities for the elderly,

the handicapped, and the economically disadvantaged.[75] It emphasized disease

prevention as a part of social and ecological efforts to renew health policy. The

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[72] *Berliner Koalitionsvereinbarung*, 48-52.

[73] *Berliner Koalitionsvereinbarung*, 53-54.

[74] Selbstbestimmung und Aktivität gegen kritiklosen Konsum und Passivität zu setzen; eine Zukunftsinvestition. *Berliner Koalitionsvereinbarung*, 12.

[75] *Berliner Koalitionsvereinbarung*, 67-68.

coalition partners pledged to try to shift away from high-tech health centers in favor of a less centralized approach.[76] They also pledged to mainstream handicapped and non-handicapped children in the schools, increase the number of places in day care, and step up work involving youth and culture.[77]

Finally, the signatories pledged to reform the parliamentary system. They based this promise on their view that the democratic state under the rule of law became endangered when the role of the representative body became weakened in the public's eye or lost ground to the bureaucracy. The AL and SPD pledged to work for reforms that strengthened parliament while preventing inappropriate means of influence. Again demonstrating commitment to debate and discussion as ways of arriving at truth, they pledged to strengthen the opposition's position in parliament by granting opposition parties increased personnel resources, time for speeches, and physical space. They also committed themselves to make public the incomes of elected representatives, to crack down on bribery and nepotism, and to make all political donations a matter of public record.[78]

Overall, the coalition agreement was perfectly compatible with and reflected the green-alternative synthesis, and could easily be reconciled with the Green Party's Four Pillars. It reflected the AL's concerns with environmental

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[76] *Berliner Koalitionsvereinbarung*, 71-72.

[77] *Berliner Koalitionsvereinbarung*, 73-74.

[78] *Berliner Koalitionsvereinbarung*, 75.

protection, social responsibility, nonviolence, and grassroots political

involvement. It took up an old cause of the Left by seeking to modify the rights

of the Allies in West Berlin, but did so in a way thoroughly compatible with the

rules of parliamentary democracy, and couched it in an appeal to modernization.

In its pledge to assist the opposition by placing more resources at its disposal, it

revealed its commitment and faith in the process of parliament and its conviction

that parliament was the best place for grievances to be addressed and resolved.

By agreeing to this point, the Left also implicitly stated its belief that the

parliamentary system of the Federal Republic both needed and was capable of

reform.

The Red-Green government officially began on 15 March 1989. The AL

received three seats in the Senate, which it filled with three women who were not

members of the AL but under party rules could nevertheless serve. In fact, the

Red-Green Senate formed under Momper with the SPD and AL marked the first

time in German history that women held the majority in a government: the SPD

sent five men and five women to the Senate, for a total of eight female and five

male Senators.[79] The delegates sent to the *Abgeordnetenhaus* also reflected a

greatly increased presence of women as a proportion of the delegates. In the

eleventh electoral period, women comprised 47 percent of those serving for the

AL: this was actually down slightly from 55 percent during the previous period.

Of those serving for the CDU, 14 percent were women, up from only 5 percent in

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[79] "Revolutionäre Geduld," *Der Spiegel* 43, no. 17 (20 March 1989), 27.

the tenth legislative period, while of the SPD delegates to serve, 37 percent were women, up from 19 percent in the last legislative period. There were no female delegates from the *Republikaner*.[80] It seems reasonable to attribute at least part of the growing presence of women in the delegations of the two mainstream parties to the influence and success of the AL over the last decade.

Party	Percent Women's Representation	Percent Born in Berlin	Average Age[81]
AL	47	24	39.4
CDU	14	59	47.8
Republikaner	0.0	82	44.3
SPD	37	54	47.6

Table 3: Breakdown of *Abgeordnetenhaus* delegations by sex, place of birth, and average age, eleventh electoral period.

Reactions to the formation of the Red-Green coalition were on the whole surprisingly muted. Several factors can account for this. First, the AL had been on the West Berlin political stage for ten years now, and it seemed quite well entrenched, even 'established.'[82] Second, the environmental issues that were one of the AL's main areas of emphasis and competence had generally become quite well accepted in West Berlin by this time. Finally, the conservatives' desire to scare voters away from the AL was perhaps tempered by long-term calculations

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[80] Data compiled from *Handbuch II des Abgeordnetenhauses von Berlin* (Berlin: Abgeordnetenhaus von Berlin, 1989).

[81] As of 31 December 1989.

[82] Recall that the Springer-owned daily tabloid BILD started including the AL in its coverage of the West Berlin political parties' preparations for election campaigns for the first time in 1989.

that once Red-Green had been in power for a while, the dreadful consequences would drive the voters to the CDU in droves.

Gudrun Heinrich, who has analyzed this particular phase of the AL's history in depth from the point of view of political science, divided the period of the AL's cooperation with the SPD into three phases. According to her analysis, the first phase was characterized by euphoria on the part of the AL, which quickly faded as the limits of coalition government became clear.[83] From the beginning of this phase, the AL was confronted with problems affecting its former *Standbein*, the extra-parliamentary realm. Immediately upon entering the coalition, the AL had to defuse a crisis that related directly to the AL's left-wing identity. The *Autonomen*, independent groups for which the AL viewed itself as responsible, greeted the formation of the Red-Green government by defiantly occupying houses in Kreuzberg. The AL senators promptly ordered their expulsion. Thanks to a dual strategy pursued by the AL, this decision did not have the grave consequences that might have been expected. The squatters were occupying houses that were only temporarily vacant so that they could be legally renovated- they were not the object of speculation. Thus the AL senators announced that they would expel the squatters, but emphasized that the condition of the buildings justified their vacancy pending renovation. At the same time that they evicted the squatters, the senators declared that the Berlin

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[83] Heinrich, *Rot-Grün in Berlin*, 39.

government would crack down on housing speculation that resulted in vacant buildings.[84]

Similarly, the AL effectively applied a dual strategy in dealing with the traditional May Day protests. Despite the AL's efforts to reduce violent protests by limiting the police presence and the actions of demonstrators, protest on 1 May 1989 turned violent. The AL criticized the violent demonstrations, while at the same time emphasizing that it would combat what it viewed as the roots of this violence.[85] Also, the AL was able to claim credit for one early victory that increased its credibility considerably: against all expectations, the Western Allies lifted the death penalty in West Berlin. Renate Künast hailed this move as "an initial success for Red-Green."[86]

The decision to enter the Red-Green coalition paid off handsomely for the AL in another aspect as well: its membership numbers expanded dramatically. The bulletin of the Council of Delegates reported in April 1989 "the highest number of members in the history of the AL."[87] According to the bulletin, total membership of the party had now reached 3,200: this represented a 10 percent increase since November of 1988. The three districts with the greatest number of

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[84] Heinrich, *Rot-Grün in Berlin*, 40.

[85] Heinrich, *Rot-Grün in Berlin*, 40.

[86] Ein erster Erfolg für Rot-Grün. *TAZ*, 16 March 1989.

[87] Höchster Mitgliederstand in der Geschichte der AL. DR-Info 5 April 1989. AGG: B.I.1.751.

members were Kreuzberg, Schöneberg, and Charlottenburg, with 563, 517, and 401 members respectively.

Nevertheless, the first phase was also increasingly marked by disappointment. Not only was the AL unable to see its legislative priorities passed; it was also unable to block several older CDU-FDP sponsored projects it had long opposed and which it had hoped to be able to end once in power. For example, the AL was forced to accept completion of the renovation and construction of the Rudolf Virchow clinic. Similarly, despite serious environmental concerns, the border crossing at Schichauer Way was expanded and renovated, and an initiative to lower the speed limit on a stretch of the autobahn running through West Berlin also failed due to financial pressure from the federal government. The results were increasing tension between the grassroots and the party and a growing sense of frustration.[88] For its part, the SPD began to show hints of impatience with its coalition partner as well, with Governing Mayor Walter Momper calling on the AL to reform its structures to make decision-making easier.[89]

Compared to the second phase of the AL's first experience in power, however, the first one hundred days of Red-Green were a honeymoon. Heinrich characterizes this second phase as a time of disappointment and frustration at the fact that it was more difficult than expected for the AL to get its way and to

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[88] Heinrich, *Rot-Grün in Berlin*, 40-41.

[89] Heinrich, *Rot-Grün in Berlin*, 42.

see its legislative priorities passed.[90] During this phase, Joachim Raschke's classic

designation of the Green Party's central dilemma, the conflict between legitimacy

and efficiency, most affected the AL.[91] Moreover, in the midst of this growing

frustration came developments that radically changed the conditions facing the

coalition.

The first challenge in this second phase of the AL's participation in

government related directly to the AL's grassroots democratic structure. This

structure worked well when the AL was in the opposition, as it could effectively

mobilize resistance and responses to policies it opposed. The situation was very

different when the AL was in power and the General Members' Assembly had to

come up with positive legislative initiatives or make painful decisions. For

example, upon accepting governmental responsibility as a member of the ruling

coalition, the AL had agreed to the binding nature of the contracts concluded by

the previous government. However, the General Members' Assembly voted to

reverse a contract for a power line construction project that had been widely

condemned for its environmental impact. The resolution demanded that the AL

senators revoke the contract and block construction of the power lines.

Moreover, it phrased the decision in a way that made compromise virtually

impossible. The AL senators knew that voting against the construction project

would have meant the end of the coalition. They refused to end the project,

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[90] Heinrich, *Rot-Grün in Berlin*, 46

[91] See Raschke, *Die Grünen*, 33-36.

violating the principle of the fixed mandate, though their decision met with no consequences from the AL's governing body.[92]

Another area of conflict between the two coalition partners revolved around extending voting rights in local elections to non-German residents of West Berlin. Long an AL priority, the AL had hoped that participating in government would finally enable it to achieve this goal, especially since the SPD had in the past supported the AL on this issue. Conflict now arose because the AL felt that the SPD was catering to its right wing and was delaying bringing the issue up for a vote jointly with the AL as stipulated in the coalition agreement. In this case, the AL introduced the legislation alone, violating another part of the coalition agreement committing the parties to introduce legislation jointly.[93]

By far the most significant issue to arise during the second phase of the Red-Green Coalition concerned German unification. Even before the wave of protest in the East began in the summer of 1989, unification became a hotly disputed topic, on the Berlin political scene, between the coalition partners, and within the AL itself.

The controversial nature of German unification is illustrated well by an incident in the West Berlin *Abgeordnetenhaus* just before the fateful summer of 1989. Before the opening of each session of the Berlin parliament, the presiding

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[92] Heinrich, *Rot-Grün in Berlin*, 43.

[93] Heinrich, *Rot-Grün in Berlin*, 43-44.

officer would speak what became known as the 'Exhortation for Reunification.'[94]

This practice dated back to 1955, when then-Governing Mayor Willi Brandt acted

at the request of a group called the Committee for an Indivisible Germany to

incorporate the phrase into the ceremony.[95] The formula underwent several

permutations over the decades, for instance, to reflect the construction of the

Berlin Wall. In 1989, it read, "I hereby open this session of the Berlin

Abgeordnetenhaus and express our unshakeable will that the Wall must fall and

that Germany with its capital Berlin must be reunified in peace and freedom."[96]

Over time, the formula seemed to many to have become an anachronism.

Lawmakers tried in 1982 to replace it with language more acceptable to all that

was more reflective of the geopolitical situation, but the attempt failed.[97]

The issue erupted again in late May 1989, when AL delegate Hilde

Schramm, in opening the *Abgeordnetenhaus* session in her capacity as vice

president, refused to deliver the exhortation of unification, instead asking the

president to do so. The reaction was chaotic beyond anticipation, and was also

heavily polarized. According to the minutes, the CDU and *Republikaner* reacted

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[94] Mahnworte zur Wiedervereinigung.

[95] PAB 2/22 (21 October 1955), 506.

[96] Wir bekunden unseren unbeugsamen Willen, dass die Mauer fallen und
dass Deutschland mit seiner Hauptstadt Berlin in Frieden und Freiheit
wiedervereinigt werden muss. See Naubert, *Berliner Parlament*, 140. According
to Naubert, the repetitive and ritualistic nature of the formula was an intentional
attempt to invoke the tradition of Cato's repeated utterance in the Roman Senate
that "Carthage must be destroyed."

[97] Naubert, *Berliner Parlament*, 140.

with "consternation," whereas the SPD and AL erupted in spontaneous applause.[98] Explaining her action before parliament, Schramm asserted that in her view, the tradition contradicted day-to-day politics that had now come to be based on the acceptance of the continued existence of two German states. She could not in good conscience speak the phrase, which she viewed as a relic of the Cold War, and still hope for détente's success.[99]

Reactions by the party delegations again demonstrated the divisiveness of the issue. Eberhard Diepgen of the CDU branded the act as an "affront to the entire Berlin *Abgeordnetenhaus*."[100] Bernhard Andres of the *Republikaner* claimed that Schramm's act was a slap in the face of all Berliners and demonstrated that the AL was incapable of behaving democratically. He called on Schramm to resign to make room "for someone with their feet rooted in this democracy."[101] The SPD's Gerd Löffler responded much more sympathetically. He noted past and present efforts on the part of the SPD to find a formulation that was more appropriate and better reflective of the times. Any such formulation should emphasize "self-determination," and should reject language calling for

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[98] Bestürzung. PAB 11/7 (25 May 1989), 210.

[99] PAB 11/7 (25 May 1989), 210.

[100] Eine Brüskierung des gesamten Abgeordnetenhauses von Berlin. PAB 11/7 (25 May 1989), 210.

[101] Für jemanden, der auf dem Boden dieser Demokratie steht. PAB 11/7 (25 May 1989), 213.

"reunification" in favor of advocating "unity within a European framework."[102] Albert Statz of the AL asserted that Schramm had broken a hollow convention stemming from a consensus that no longer existed, and that she was correct to refuse to read the formula. Statz related the decision and problem directly to what he asserted was the AL's version of the German question. This was not the question as to whether or not there would be unification of states. Instead, Statz emphasized, "the German question is the question our neighbors ask of us. It is our question regarding the working through of our own history."[103]

In making this assertion, Statz identified the underlying motive behind the AL's policies regarding Germany. Unification was not problematic only because it would rule out a utopian possibility, nor did it solely relate to the concern of Germany's neighbors about the consequences of a strong, unified Germany and its possibilities for hegemony in Europe. Even more important were concerns that Germans had not yet worked through their past, that *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* had not yet run its course. The presence of the *Republikaner* in the parliament served only to highlight these concerns.

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[102] Selbstbestimmung; Wiedervereinigung; Einigung in einem europäischen Rahmen. PAB 11/7 (25 May 1989), 211.

[103] Die deutsche Frage, das ist die Frage der Nachbarn an uns, das sind unsere Fragen an unsere eigene Geschichte und ihre Verarbeitung. PAB 11/7 (25 May 1989), 212.

Much has been made of the 'generation gap' in postwar German history, the conflict between the perpetrators and the perpetrators' children.[104] Indeed, this episode seemed to epitomize this phenomenon. By all indications, Schramm's refusal to deliver the 'Exhortation for Unification' was a spontaneous act motivated by deep mistrust of the consequences of a unified Germany. This mistrust can be better understood when one recalls Schramm's family background. As the daughter of Albert Speer, Hitler's chief architect and Armaments Minister, Schramm had good reason to mistrust and fear a united Germany.

The AL's position on nationalism was closely linked to that of the federal Green Party. This can be seen in other episodes as well. The AL and the Green Party issued a joint statement on 15 June 1989 regarding the celebration of 17 June as a national holiday, calling it a "relic of the Cold War."[105] The press release asserted that this 'Day of German Unity' did not promote German unity, but instead harnessed the workers' uprising for anti-communist purposes. In lieu of using this divisive date to promote unification, the AL and the Green Party suggested instead that both the Federal Republic and the GDR celebrate 18

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[104] See Becker, *Hitler's Children* for the most extreme manifestation of this thesis.

[105] "17. Juni als Relikt des kalten Krieges," AL and Green Party press release, 15 June 1989. AGG:B.I.1.753. 17 June commemorated the 1953 workers' uprising in East Berlin.

March to commemorate the revolution of 1848, which they called "a European movement for democratic rights, freedom, and friendship among peoples."[106]

Not all within the AL opposed a united Germany, however. In September 1989, a group of AL members printed a flyer calling "For a Berlin without walls in a Germany without tanks in a Europe without borders."[107] In the flyer, the signers expressed their disagreement with the AL leadership's emphasis on preserving two German states. Far from advocating the takeover of the Federal Republic by the GDR, however, these AL members promoted a different solution. They declared their desire to "develop utopias instead of cementing realities."[108] Asserting, "We want one GDR," defiantly written in lower-case letters, these members asserted that insisting on two German states was to "fight the wheel of history."[109] They decried the two-state model as the "blind alley" in which the two Germanys were stuck: as the flyer put it, the AL and the Greens "should be satisfied with neither real existing capitalism nor real existing socialism."[110] Nor could China offer a model: the Tiananmen Square massacre on

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[106] Eine europäische Bewegung für demokratische Rechte, Freiheit und Völkerfreundschaft. "17. Juni als Relikt des kalten Krieges."

[107] "Für ein Berlin ohne Mauern in einem Deutschland ohne Panzer in einem Europa ohne Grenzen," September 1989. AGG:B.II.1.2330.

[108] Utopien entwickeln statt Realitäten festschreiben.

[109] Wir wollen eine deutsche demokratische Republik; sich gegen das Rad der Geschichte stemmen.

[110] Sackgasse; Sie dürfen sich weder mit dem real existierenden Kapitalismus noch mit dem real existierenden Sozialismus abfinden. "Für ein Berlin ohne Mauern."

4 June 1989 showed that the Chinese leadership was nothing more than "dreadful old men."[111]

The flyer also explicitly linked the issue of German unification to Germany's troubled past, but with a different emphasis. The signers asserted that, in the realm of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, the participation of both Germanys in setting right old historical wrongs was necessary for Germany to be credible. They criticized both German states, decrying the Federal Republic's consumerism as socially irresponsible, while lashing out at the GDR as a police state with travel restrictions and a generally repressive system. Their utopia would be "one german [sic] democratic republic in which social justice rules, pluralism exists, democratic rights are fulfilled, and ecological policies are pursued."[112] Finally, it took up an old concern of the Working Group on Berlin and German policy, stating that "negation and suppression of the national question has devastating consequences," and the national question must not be surrendered to the right wing.[113]

This document was significant for several reasons. First, it shows the persistence of ideas explored in the Working Group on Berlin and German policy, even though it had dissolved itself in 1988. For example, the Working

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[111] Die grausamen Greise.

[112] Wir wollen eine deutsche demokratische Republik, in der soziale Gerechtigkeit herrscht, Pluralismus existiert, demokratische Rechte erfüllt sind und eine ökologische Politik betrieben wird. "Für ein Berlin ohne Mauern."

Group had expressed concern about the effects of suppressing ideas about national identity, and asserted that this should not be ceded to the Right. As was seen in Chapter Three, such nationalist ideas can be traced back at least as far as the KPD-Rote Fahne. Second, it demonstrates the diversity of viewpoints still present at this fairly late date in the AL's history. Again, the capacity of the 'Green-alternative synthesis' to unite groups with dramatically opposing views regarding some issues proved remarkable. It also refutes the view that the Left was uniformly anti-nationalist, while supporting the idea that the Left called for a working through of the German past. In fact, both opponents and advocates of a united Germany shared the goal of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*; they merely differed regarding how to realize this goal. Finally, these ideas were later available for the AL to draw upon once it became clear that unification was inevitable. The existence of this viewpoint arguably made unification more acceptable to the Left when it finally did come about.

Events beginning at the Hungarian-Austrian border in the summer of 1989 ensured that the issue of German unification would not remain purely an academic question. Beginning in May, Hungary stopped controlling its border with Austria, in effect opening up an easy route to the West. The sudden permeability of the Cold War border began a chain of events that had massive repercussions. Streams of refugees fled to the West, and East Germany

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[113] Das Negieren und Verdrängung der 'Nationalen Frage' hat verheerende Auswirkungen.

witnessed unprecedented levels of protest, culminating when the Berlin Wall was opened on 9 November 1989.

The AL interpreted the protests sweeping East Germany in a manner that reveals its concerns and priorities, as well as its self-perception. An AL press release dated 4 November 1989 reacting to the mass demonstrations in East Germany outlined the policies the AL would pursue over the next months.[114] Projecting its own concerns with self-determination and grassroots democracy onto the East German opposition movement, the AL interpreted the demonstrations as signs that citizens were taking control of power themselves, rather than striving to replace current leaders with a new elite. This attempt to determine its own destiny meant that the movement could "surpass the Western understanding of democracy without having to catch up."[115] Hence the East German populace needed no advice from the West. Moreover, the press release asserted that the demonstrators carried no banners and shouted no slogans regarding unification. This indicated that GDR citizens wanted to pursue their own path toward socialism, and their demands therefore could not be incorporated into the political and social system of the Federal Republic. The press release also made two additional recommendations that would become the cornerstones of the AL's policy regarding the momentous changes in the East.

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[114] "Demokratiebewegung lässt sich nicht mehr bevormunden," AL press release, 4 November 1989. AGG:B.II.1.2330.

[115] Das im Westen herrschende Demokratieverständnis überholen ohne einzuholen.

First, the AL called upon the Federal Republic to recognize East German

citizenship without condition. Second, the AL claimed that the developments

sweeping the GDR should induce West German citizens to push through radical

demands for democratization and environmental protection in the Federal

Republic.

Once the border had been opened and the Berlin Wall breached,

developments accelerated at a dizzying pace. The initial reaction of the AL was a

curious mixture of idealism and realpolitik. The AL delegation in the

Abgeordnetenhaus issued a list of "immediate measures" to take in light of the

border opening.[116] The delegation first cited the need for West Berliners and

West Germans to use the new opportunities for contacts to find ways "to be

infected by the democratization movement in the GDR."[117] In other words, the

AL hoped that the momentous changes would jump the Wall and spark similarly

far-reaching developments in the Federal Republic. Turning quickly pragmatic,

the announcement used the opening of the border to argue against the

completion of several projects it had tried thus far to block unsuccessfully within

the *Abgeordnetenhaus*. It used the new situation to argue against the completion

of the controversial renovation of the border crossing at Schichauer Way, and

argued that the new situation rendered the long-contested German Historical

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[116] "Sofortmassnahmen angesichts der Öffnung der Grenzen," n.d.
AGG:B.II.1.2330.

[117] Von der Demokratisierungsbewegung in der DDR anstecken zu lassen.

Museum, conceived as a counterpart to the museums in East Berlin, no longer

necessary. The list also emphasized the new significance of mass transit projects

for Berlin, calling for normalization of travel between East and West and

demanding improvements to mass transit connections. A new mass transit

system and the use of train travel over long distances should help reduce the

smog danger facing Berlin.

Even the ordinarily radical residents of Kreuzberg expressed their "joy

and excitement" in the face of the opening of the borders.[118] Again, however, this

excitement stemmed in large part from their hope that the revolution in the East

would trigger similarly sweeping changes in the West. The district group for

Kreuzberg noted that if the GDR could develop "a convincing socialist

alternative to real existing capitalism," this would greatly aid the struggle in the

West for a more just society.[119] In an announcement of a discussion about the fall

of the Berlin Wall involving representatives of the AL and the SPD, the AL

echoed these sentiments.[120] Successful reform of socialism in the East would

mean new chances for reform in the West, and would involve a shift toward a

society that was more ecologically-minded, socially responsible, and grassroots

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[118] Freude und Spannung. Antrag der AL-Bezirksgruppe Kreuzberg an den
Delegiertenrat, 15 November 1989, printed in DR-Info 6 December 1989.
AGG:B.I.1.751.

[119] Eine überzeugende sozialistische Alternative zum real existierenden
Sozialismus.

democratically oriented. The announcement called for an independent way "beyond capitalism and bureaucratic real existing socialism" in both East and West Germany.[121]

A few days later, the AL and the Green Party issued a joint declaration regarding the fall of the Berlin Wall in which they reiterated and elaborated on their demands in light of developments. The Greens and the AL welcomed and supported the movement for the renewal of the GDR and Eastern Europe. They called for the Federal Republic to drastically reduce its armaments, and predicted that both NATO and the Warsaw pact would have no place in Europe. In order to achieve the desired changes, West Germany should recognize the GDR as a sovereign state. Reunification would only bring an annexationist move by the Federal Republic against East Germany. Instead of striving for German unification, Europe should adopt policies that would help make national borders meaningless. Finally, the Federal Republic should not force its economy and consumption patterns onto the GDR.[122]

A decision by the AL's Council of Delegates elaborated on the AL's post-Wall aims. Again denying any pro-unification sentiment on the part of the demonstrators, the AL insisted that the demonstrators were instead making

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[120] "Umbruch in der DDR- im Westen nichts Neues?" Flyer announcing discussion session with AL and SPD to be held 16 November 1989, printed in DR-Info 6 December 1989. AGG:B.I.1.751.

[121] Jenseits von Kapitalismus und bürokratischem Realsozialismus.

demands for self-determination for citizens, democratic collaboration, a healthy

environment, and for an environmentally and socially responsible economic

order. It condemned attempts to use the revolutionary changes in the GDR to

portray capitalism as particularly successful and to promote it as a solution to

East Germany's problems. It insisted that "the bureaucratic, undemocratic, and

environmentally destructive mistakes of 'real socialism' were and are no reason

to turn a blind eye to the millionfold misery, poverty, repression, and

environmental destruction that have been the consequences of the capitalist

world order, both here and above all in the exploited nations of the so-called

Third World."[123] The developments leading to the opening of the inner-German

border led to new concrete possibilities for alternative politics in Berlin. These

were to emphasize effective environmental protection, new energy and

transportation policies, and a car-free city. The programs would involve

extensive economic assistance for the GDR, and should involve no preconditions.

Immediately following this statement came the preconditions. The programs

should be environmentally oriented; they should improve energy conservation;

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[122] "Gemeinsame Erklärung der Grünen und der AL," 19 November 1989, printed in DR-Info 6 December 1989. AGG:B.I.1.751.

[123] Die bürokratische, undemokratische, umweltzerstörende Fehlentwicklung des 'realen Sozialismus' war und ist kein Grund, die Augen zu verschliessen vor dem millionenfachen Elend, der sozialen Not, der Repression und Umweltzerstörung, die die kapitalistische Wirtschaftsordnung bei uns und vor allem in den ausgebeuteten Ländern der sogenannten Dritten Welt zur Folge hatte. "Beschluss des Delegiertenrats der Alternativen Liste am 22.11.89 zu den Alternativen nach der Öffnung der Mauer und den Umwälzungen in der DDR," AL press release, 22 November 1989. AGG:B.II.1.2330.

should enable a shift away from nuclear power; they should expand the rail networks; should promote clean air and water; and should reduce solid waste. The new policies also would have geopolitical consequences: the Council of Delegates advocated the immediate withdrawal of all Allied soldiers from Berlin except for small symbolic levels appropriate to the status of the city. This would reflect reforms in the East that would allegedly make their presence unnecessary. Reducing the level of Allied troops would also contribute to peace, and would benefit the Berlin population by providing newly vacant flats and new green spaces. At the federal level, this would free up financial resources that could then be used for ecological and social initiatives.[124]

As time went on, the AL began to increasingly react against the plans of the other political parties regarding unification. Albert Statz of the AL's *Abgeordnetenhaus* delegation and Harald Wolf of the AL's Executive Committee at the end of November 1989 issued a press release reacting to plans expressed in the *Bundestag* by the CDU, SPD, and FDP for a confederation between the two German states. Statz and Wolf lambasted the parties for their support of Kohl's plans, calling them nationalistic, and asserting that they were merely "the overture to the incorporation of the GDR into the Federal Republic."[125] Attaching

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[124] "Beschluss des Delegiertenrats der Alternativen Liste am 22.11.89."

[125] Die Ouvertüre zur Einverleibung der DDR in die Bundesrepublik. "Grosse Koalition zur Verkohlung der DDR," AL press release, 29 November 1989. AGG:B.II.1.2330. On the so-called Ten-Point Plan, see Konrad Jarausch, *The Rush to German Unity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 67-68.

political and economic preconditions to offers of economic help showed that

Kohl wished to extend the Federal Republic's political and economic system to

the East in what the AL called an "annexation born of poverty."[126]

Trends toward greater nationalism and increased restrictions on

foreigners further strengthened AL concerns. In a flyer printed by the AL's

parliamentary faction, the party warned against the racism of the *Republikaner*

and by extension the CDU, especially in the wake of the increased nationalism

that seemed to follow on the heels of the fall of the Berlin Wall.[127] As an

alternative, the AL held up a vision of a Berlin that was truly a "city without

walls," either between Germans or between Germans and foreigners.[128] If Berlin

aspired to be a "world city," then foreigners must feel welcome there.[129]

According to the flyer, one way to work toward this would be to adopt voting

rights for foreigners at the local level. This was a remarkably progressive

programmatic point consistent with the AL's emphasis on upholding and

expanding the rights of those affected most acutely by state policies.

Unification and the fall of the Wall inevitably had an impact on the AL-

SPD coalition. By early December 1989, the split between the coalition partners

regarding unification became increasingly apparent. Whereas the SPD reacted

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[126] Anschluss aus Armut.

[127] "Berlin: Stadt der offenen Grenzen," n.d. Flyer printed by the AL-Abgeordnetenhausfraktion. AGG:B.I.1.922.

[128] Stadt ohne Mauern.

[129] Weltstadt.

favorably to Kohl's Ten-Point Proposal regarding the path to German unity, the AL rejected Kohl's proposals because they failed to recognize unconditionally the GDR. Furthermore, the AL felt that unification amounted to an annexationist settlement and an eastward expansion of NATO and the European Economic Community. In view of the significant disagreement between the SPD and AL regarding Kohl's plans, the AL requested that the coalition committee meet in order to discuss the differences in opinion regarding unification.[130] The fact that, in light of significant disagreements, the AL pursued channels laid out in the coalition agreement to resolve these differences, testifies as to the degree to which the AL had internalized the workings of parliamentary democracy. A commitment to parliamentary participation as a coalition member, not anti-parliamentarianism, characterized the AL's reaction. It also reflects the degree to which the AL, once it had entered the coalition, felt obliged to stay the course and exercise the 'voice' option for as long as possible before settling finally for 'exit.'[131]

Early December 1989 also marked a qualitative turning point in the AL's policy toward the momentous events in East Germany. At this juncture, the AL stopped merely reacting against events, trying to apply the brakes to the process of unification, and began to attempt to influence the course of events and shape

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[130] "Eine Klärung der Deutschlandpolitik zwischen SPD und AL ist nötig," AL press release, 5 December 1989. AGG:B.II.1.2330.

[131] On 'exit' and 'voice,' see Albert Hirschman, *Exit Voice and Loyalty* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970).

developments in a more positive way. The first sign of this came with the formation of the "Solidarity Office- Renewal GDR."[132] The AL created the organization in part in an attempt to take the pressure off the Executive Committee, the *Abgeordnetenhaus* delegation, and the AL's press office, the capacities of which were already overtaxed simply due to being part of a governing coalition. The office served as a center for organizing activities, evaluating press coverage, and coordinating activities with other groups for all issues regarding the fall of the Wall. It attempted to provide a left-wing oriented counterbalance to what the AL viewed as the federal government's and the Right's attempts "to harness the events in the GDR for their own dark purposes."[133] The office would support the democratic movement in the GDR, while also addressing the problems associated with capitalism; it would broaden and intensify the AL's contacts with groups engaged in initiatives within East Germany; and it would organize events and discussions about current events and problems for participants in East and West. The organization was to be located in the AL's main offices, and was sponsored, administered, and funded by the AL.

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[132] Solidaritätsbüro- Erneuerung DDR.

[133] Die Ereignisse in der DDR für ihre dunklen Zwecke zu vereinnahmen. Open letter from Volker Ratzmann, Vera Vordenbäumen, and Udo Wolf announcing the creation of the Solidaritätsbüro, n.d., printed in DR-Info 6 December 1989. AGG:B.I.1.751.

While the Solidarity Office represented an attempt to take an active hand in order to influence the course of events, it still operated under the assumption that the two-state model was the only way in which to address its aims. It became clear at last to the AL that this option was no longer viable. At a February 1990 retreat for the AL's *Abgeordnetenhaus* delegation, the AL developed a new position.[134] Whereas the AL had in the past based its policies on the two-state model, "the historical situation has changed."[135] The AL recognized that the majority in the GDR wanted German unification, and economic and political decline there would only perpetuate this. As a result, the AL would have to focus its practical policies on integrating the two states. The AL's desire to slow down and even halt developments in the direction of a unified state was understandable, but it ran the risk of being overtaken by the process of unification. Alternatively, the AL could have an active impact in shaping unification. The AL delegation then assessed the situation, and gave a sobering conclusion and series of recommendations. The AL's arguments against a unified Germany had not lost their relevance, and the AL should continue to voice its skepticism. But instead of merely being a naysayer, the AL should bring its democratic, social, and ecological goals and concerns to bear in the present

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[134] "Die deutsche Notvereinigung," paper drafted at AL Fraktions-Klausurtag, Bad-Bevensen, 10 February 1990. AGG:B.II.1.2330.

[135] Die historische Situation hat sich verändert.

process and thus have the chance to influence it.[136] The AL would pay special attention to several main concerns about future developments. The AL was wary about the formation of a new power center and its potentially disruptive effect on European peace. It worried that unification would weaken and isolate the USSR, and it predicted that the potential economic and social problems associated with unification would trigger increased hostility toward foreigners. The AL also was concerned that due to its sheer size and concentration of power, a united Germany would interfere with the necessary processes of democratization, decentralization, and regionalization of politics. Prophetically, it worried that a unified state under which the GDR ceded its power to the Federal Republic would cause GDR citizens to doubt their own abilities and lead to a crisis of confidence.[137]

In part, the AL directed its criticism against the approach used by the other, pro-unification parties. In its view, holding up the magic word 'unity' as a panacea was irresponsible and misleading, and set the stage for later disappointments and a potentially dangerous nationalism. The AL worried that the 'established parties' were trying to hasten the process of unification out of a concern for electoral gain. This could only intensify problems: East Germany thus risked mass unemployment, a decline of living standards, and a loss of its social safety net. In order to counteract this, the AL now proposed an

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[136] "Deutsche Notvereinigung."

[137] "Deutsche Notvereinigung."

"equalization of burdens," which should come from drastic cuts to the military

budget, not from cutbacks affecting the already disadvantaged.[138] Summing up

its recommendations, the paper assigned to the AL a difficult role: "We see as

our task educating about foreseeable difficulties and contributing to a national

sobering up."[139]

Three weeks later, the AL parlayed these suggestions into official action,

when on 3 March 1990 the AL General Members' Assembly adopted a resolution

calling for a new approach to the AL's policies toward unification.[140] Justifying

its past approach, the declaration noted that the AL had hoped to use the

continued existence of two German states in order to prevent the creation of a

central European state with political, cultural, and economic hegemony. German

division had been viewed as a guarantee against German chauvinism,

nationalism, and hegemony. The resolution noted that the two-state model had

clearly been overtaken by developments. Moreover, the statement rationalized,

it had been adopted before East German citizens had had a chance to articulate

their will. Holding on to the concept of two states had led to an inability to act

politically; instead of repeating the desire to maintain two states, or merely

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[138] Lastenausgleich.

[139] Wir sehen es als unsere Aufgabe an, über vorhersehbare
Schwierigkeiten aufzuklären und zur nationalen Ernüchterung beizutragen.
"Deutsche Notvereinigung." Subsequent events were to show how unpopular
this approach was. Events even further down the road would prove the AL
bitterly correct in this regard.

defining itself negatively as a stumbling block or someone forever applying the brakes, the resolution called on the AL to take active steps in order to point developments in a positive direction.

What is the overall assessment of the AL's policies toward unification and its reaction to the revolution that swept the old order from power in the East? Many have condemned the AL and the Greens for foot-dragging. Several, most notably Elisabeth Weber, blamed the influence of the Stasi for a lack of a coherent policy toward Germany at the time of unification.[141] But neither of these objections holds up to closer scrutiny. Instead of being paralyzed by inaction or influenced by infiltration, the AL's actions were entirely consistent with its program. Furthermore, in upholding the idea of two independent states, the AL acted in support and agreement with the GDR opposition and the Green party. One major impetus behind a two state solution was the concern to avoid a repetition of the Nazi past. Acutely aware of its neighbors' concerns about the consequences of a united Germany, the AL acted to prevent this, and looked to the classic two-state model to block this outcome. Moreover, some of the AL's members had personal experiences with the consequences of a united Germany, as the example of Hilde Schramm makes clear. Notably absent in the AL's late treatment of the problems posed by German unification was concern for its

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[140] "Beschluss der AL vom 3.3.1990," printed in DR-Info 21 March 1990. AGG:B.I.1.751.

[141] Weber, "Stasi-Einflussagent," 35-38.

implications for the process of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*. It appears that the arguments of those AL members who argued that unification could actually help Germans come to terms with their past had enabled the majority of the AL to make its peace with this aspect of unification at least.

The AL also took a pragmatic stance regarding developments in the East, as it sought to use them to end unpopular projects and to achieve disarmament and apply the dividends to support social and ecological projects. Again, all of this was entirely consistent with its program. The AL also hoped that a reformed socialism in the GDR would end opposition to democratic reforms in the West. The AL initially refused to recognize that the demonstrations were about unification, and instead chose to support the determination of its partners in the East German opposition to go their own way without Western interference. When it could no longer ignore the East German majority's desire for unification, the AL shifted its approach, consistent with its democratic principles. In the end, the AL and the Greens chose a rather sobering and unpopular stance. Many of their fears regarding the consequences of unification proved correct.

Clearly, the disagreements over unification took their toll on the coalition between the SPD and the AL. Relations between the coalition partners were further strained by disputes over domestic policy. For example, the AL defied its coalition partner and supported a strike by daycare workers. The AL's General Members' Assembly insisted that the workers be given new contracts, again

delivering its senators an ultimatum with no room for compromise.[142] In late

March 1990, partly as a result of this specific situation, but also due to frustration

and disappointment with the general course of the coalition, Heidi Bischoff-

Pflanz, an important integrative figure for the left wing of the AL, resigned her

seat in the *Abgeordnetenhaus*.[143] Her resignation marked the end of what Heinrich

designated the second phase of the AL's experiment in governmental

responsibility.

The final stage of the coalition between the AL and the SPD was

characterized by mutual distrust between coalition partners and constant debate

about ending the coalition. Appropriately, Potsdamer Platz, formerly the

thriving center of Berlin but in West Berlin a desolate plain on the edge of no-

man's land, played a prominent role in the drama. This property had been sold

to Daimler-Benz at a very low price in what amounted to a back room deal by

Governing Mayor Momper, without consulting the AL, or for that matter

Momper's own party. Both the low price and the new role of Potsdamer Platz

became highly controversial: in the wake of the fall of the Wall and preparations

to bring the divided city together, Potsdamer Platz was transformed from a not

particularly desirable property on the fringe of town just meters away from the

ugly Berlin Wall to a prime piece of real estate and the new center of the city.

AL-Senator Michaela Schreyer balked at approving the sale, and the AL

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[142] Heinrich, *Rot-Grün in Berlin*, 45.

[143] Heinrich, *Rot-Grün in Berlin*, 46.

delegation in the *Abgeordnetenhaus* refused to support it as well. The sale was

pushed through by an SPD-CDU vote that expressly violated the coalition

agreement and circumvented the responsibility of an AL-controlled post, City

Planning and Environment.[144]

Despite these developments, the General Members' Assembly voted in

June 1990 to continue the Red-Green Coalition, asserting that it saw "no political

alternative" but to remain a coalition partner.[145] Nonetheless, July 1990 saw

another controversy, when the AL senator in charge of reactor safety refused to

grant a permit for the continued operation of the research reactor at the Hahn

Meitner Institute. As a result, the SPD threatened to remove this responsibility

from her portfolio.[146]

Clearly, frustration was building to the breaking point. In August 1990,

prominent left-leaning AL members signed a declaration stating, "We're entering

the opposition to the majority in the AL."[147] These individuals voiced their

frustration with the coalition, and warned that continuing the coalition against

the will of the majority of the active members of the AL would lead to the self-

destruction of the party. Many of these leftists were then leaving the AL for the

Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus (Party of Democratic Socialism- PDS),

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[144] Heinrich, *Rot-Grün in Berlin*, 47.

[145] Keine politische Alternative. Heinrich, *Rot-Grün in Berlin*, 48.

[146] Heinrich, *Rot-Grün in Berlin*, 49-50.

[147] Wir gehen in Opposition zur Mehrheit der AL. Heinrich, *Rot-Grün in Berlin*, 49.

seeking in the PDS a political homeland that they felt they had lost when the AL

surrendered its innocence through governmental participation and

compromise.[148]

On 15 November 1990, just over a year after the fall of the Wall and after

twenty months as part of the governing coalition in Berlin, the AL left the

coalition. The incident that precipitated this move related to a key component of

the AL's self-image. In the eastern part of the now-united city, police raided

squatted houses in Lichtenberg, Friedrichshain, and Prenzlauer Berg, leading to

violent confrontations. Burning barricades, masked rioters slinging steel balls

and throwing Molotov cocktails, and automobiles and streetcars in flames again

were seen on the streets of Berlin, this time in the East. According to *Der Spiegel*,

law enforcement confronted "a brutality toward police revealing a contempt for

humankind never before seen in our city."[149] On the first night of the riots alone,

137 police were injured. Notably, most of the rioters were apparently from the

western part of the city. Judging from the rioters' equipment, organization,

tactics, and weapons, police concluded that squatters well versed in the housing

battle were at work in the East.[150] In deciding to evict the squatters, the SPD had

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[148] Heinrich, *Rot-Grün in Berlin*, 50. The PDS was the allegedly reformed successor to the East German Socialist Unity Party, which was then establishing itself in West Berlin and West Germany and attracted many Greens.

[149] Eine in unserer Stadt noch nie erkennbare menschenverachtende Brutalität gegenüber Polizisten. "Der mittelenglische Umgang," *Der Spiegel* 44, no. 47 (19 November 1990), 131.

[150] "Der mittelenglische Umgang," 131.

again left the AL 'out of the loop' in an area clearly under its authority. This

proved to be the "straw that broke the camel's back," as observers put it, and

served as a welcome excuse to leave a now much-despised coalition.[151]

Interestingly, the decision to leave the coalition was made by the

Executive Committee and the AL delegation in the *Abgeordnetenhaus*, and was

not brought before the General Members' Assembly. It was also opposed by the

AL senators, who nevertheless resigned out of loyalty to the party.[152]

It was clearly much more than the housing squatters' expulsion that led

the AL to end the coalition, however. The AL was the product of very specific

conditions found only in West Berlin. When the Wall fell, the coalition suddenly

found itself confronted with new challenges, and the symbolic value and very

nature of the city had changed radically. This took a much greater toll on the AL

than on the SPD, which had a history and experience long predating West Berlin.

When the Wall fell, the unique environment that had produced and nurtured the

AL vanished forever, literally overnight. Had the AL still been in the opposition,

it would have faced a major process of adaptation. That it was simultaneously

faced with another significant challenge, that of participating in government in

cooperation with the very political party in opposition to which it had originally

been founded, simply proved too much. The drain on the AL of individuals

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[151] Der Tropfen, der das Fass zum Überlaufen brachte. Heinrich, *Rot-Grün in Berlin*, 51.

[152] Heinrich, *Rot-Grün in Berlin*, 52.

leaving the party to join the PDS was merely another symptom of the problem. In the wake of unification, and in the loss of the environment that spawned and nurtured it, the AL turned to the Green Party for support and the East German opposition for hope. The fact that the Red-Green coalition lasted for over a year after the fall of the Berlin Wall testifies to the AL's commitment to change through parliamentary means, change that it realized only its status as a coalition member helping actively to shape policy could bring about.

Remarkably, after it ended the coalition, despite all the frustration and bad blood between the AL and SPD, and despite the disillusionment with its experiences sharing governmental responsibility, the AL did not rule out another Red-Green coalition. The AL reiterated its willingness to enter a coalition during the 1990 election campaign.[153] The AL thus had come full circle, and made the journey from attempting to undermine parliamentary democracy to a partner within it. It had seen its hopes dashed repeatedly. But the power of parliamentarization had been so great that it not only resolved to continue its parliamentary presence, but also declared its willingness to do so as a coalition partner again.

In the period between 1989-1990 examined in this chapter, the AL embarked on the final stage in its journey toward becoming a parliamentary party. Even before it accepted power as a coalition partner, processes of parliamentarization and deradicalization had transformed the AL into a party

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[153] Heinrich, *Rot-Grün in Berlin*, 52.

accepting and embracing parliamentary democracy and rejecting violence and GDR-style socialism. With the decision to enter a coalition with the SPD, it appeared that the AL's journey was complete. But the momentous events of autumn 1989 intervened: the hothouse environment of West Berlin that had created the AL had been forever breached. Moreover, the chain of events released a final stream of utopian energies, when most AL members hoped that the revolution in the GDR would help usher in similarly sweeping changes in the West. When it was no longer deniable that the majority of East Germans wished to abandon the course of a reformed socialism in favor of unity on Western terms, the AL's last revolutionary hopes were dashed. Its more radical members finally abandoned 'voice' and opted for the 'exit' option, leaving the party for the PDS. Little was left for those remaining but to continue within the parliaments. Moreover, despite growing frustration with the SPD-AL coalition, which finally led the AL to leave the coalition, those remaining in the party expressed a willingness to return to power as a coalition partner if new election results allowed it. Its history over the past twenty years, and the Left's experiences with parliamentary democracy, made this not only palatable, but desirable.

Chapter Eight

Conclusion and Epilogue

Daniel Cohn-Bendit recently called Joschka Fischer's transformation from stone-throwing radical to Germany's foreign minister "the greatest possible…that our generation could experience- I would say worldwide."[1] This has been a study of a related and similarly dramatic transformation- that of a segment of the West German Left from vehement opponents of the constitutional order to adherents and advocates of Western parliamentary democracy. It has attempted to show how and why a radical anti-parliamentary movement evolved into a political party operating within the framework of the constitutional system. To do this, this dissertation has identified and tracked processes I label parliamentarization and deradicalization. I applied these concepts to show that, through the interaction of their experiences in the AL and key developments in German history centering in Berlin, a significant segment of the radical West German Left came to accept and embrace parliamentary democracy.

During the time period analyzed here, the radical Left underwent several metamorphoses. In the immediate postwar period, it fully expected to play a leading role in rebuilding Germany along socialist lines, only to see its hopes

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[1] Joschka Fischer [hat] die grösstmögliche Entwicklung durchgemacht, die unsere Generation- ich würde sagen: weltweit- durchleben konnte. Cohn-Bendit, "Segen für dieses Land," 86.

dashed in the Cold War era. Alienated from the SPD and for a while virtually

exiled from the parliamentary political spectrum, the radical Left found a

temporary home in the APO. In the 1960s, the radical Left, embodied by the SDS

and the student movement, came into increasing conflict with the state and with

the West German populace in general. Its inability to find support among the

working class sparked a severe crisis, epitomized by the self-destruction of the

SDS at what seemed to be the height of its influence.

During the 1970s, the radical Left was fragmented and weak, spending

more energy in infighting and rivalry than in working to achieve its agenda. Its

political program was avowedly anti-parliamentary, and aimed to achieve the

dictatorship of the proletariat through violent revolution. In the late 1970s,

however, things changed. Apparently in an attempt to follow through on

Dutschke's program of infiltration and exploitation of political institutions,

several groups from the radical West Berlin Left, in particular the KPD-Rote

Fahne, formed the AL. In its organization and political culture, the AL was in

many ways a reaction against the K-groups. In place of the rigidly organized,

top-down hierarchy and dogmatism of the K-groups, the AL adopted a

decentralized, grassroots democratic structure and a political culture

emphasizing debate and discussion. But in its attitudes toward parliament,

capitalism, democracy, and in most other matters of ideology, the AL continued

many aspects of the K-groups. While the AL at the time claimed to be a party

working toward environmental protection and democracy, many of its members

apparently viewed it as a Trojan horse, a vehicle in which the radical Left could enter parliament. Once in parliament, the Left hoped to exploit it by gathering information and spreading the doctrine of class struggle. In order to surmount the 5 percent hurdle, however, the KPD-Rote Fahne, the radically anti-parliamentary communist group comprising the largest bloc in the new organization, reached out to more moderate groups. Crucially, it abandoned its dogmatism, at least superficially, and claimed to concede that it did not have a monopoly on the truth, but rather that the truth could be arrived at only through open debate and discussion. In so doing, the KPD-Rote Fahne initially made a virtue of necessity. But eventually, even it came to believe its own claim. The AL increasingly embraced a political culture that encouraged debate and discussion as ways of arriving at the truth. This shift in approach and its gradual permeation of the AL's political culture represented an enormous stride forward in embracing democratic values of the kind identified by Ralf Dahrendorf. This view combined with an increasing emphasis on environmental issues to forge the green-alternative synthesis that characterized the AL and allowed diverse groups to work together.

As a result, the next decade was the radical Left's gradual Godesberg, in which, like the SPD at Bad Godesberg decades earlier, it relinquished the ideology of class struggle as a route to achieving socialism. This began with a name: the Alternative Ballot for Democracy and Environmental Protection seems initially to have genuinely stood for neither of these things. In a sense, the AL's

name became its destiny. Through its experiences in parliament and in West Berlin, the AL gradually metamorphosed into that which it had initially claimed to be: an organization sincerely committed to democracy and environmental protection. Increasingly distancing itself from violence, the AL also came to embrace parliament as the best place to achieve its aims. Its view of parliament changed from walking stick to *Spielbein* to *Standbein*, the arena that it viewed as its main center of activity and the place where genuine change could be brought about.

In 1989, the AL took what seemed to be the final step in its journey from anti-parliamentary anti-party to parliamentary party, when it entered into a coalition with the SPD. Through work in the coalition, the AL hoped to achieve its aims using parliamentary means. Shortly thereafter, however, the East German protest movement and the fall of the Berlin Wall changed the circumstances under which the coalition operated. The AL reacted with excitement to the sweeping changes in the East, but initially, these changes released pent-up utopian hopes for radical renewals in the West as well. When it became clear that this was not to happen, however, the AL adapted accordingly, and, crucially, remained committed to parliamentary democracy. Furthermore, despite its agonizing experiences as a coalition partner, the AL did not rule out returning as part of a coalition. It did not give up on parliamentary democracy, but repeated its commitment to the parliaments.

The story of the AL presented here contains clues to three crucial issues in postwar West German historiography. The first issue concerns the sources of stability: despite worries about the Green Party's and the alternative movements' effects on the stability of the political system, the case of the AL indicates that in the end, they actually may have helped stabilize the Federal Republic. Zbigniew Brzezinski has argued that the violence and revolutionary rhetoric of the New Left were "nothing more than the farewell performance of the historically irrelevant."[2] It is possible to turn this thesis around to demonstrate the effects of parliamentary participation on the Left. Once the Left became historically relevant again, the violence and revolutionary rhetoric of its adherents faded away. The Green and alternative parties were the vehicle through which they regained their historical role: parliament did its job. If violence and revolutionary rhetoric resulted from feelings of historical irrelevance as Brzezinski argued, then the AL made a crucial contribution to Germany's Long Way West. By bringing successors of the New Left into parliament, the green-alternative movement defused a critical situation in which people resorted to violence as a result of feeling themselves disenfranchised. Their parliamentary involvement provided an outlet for their protest energies and channeled them in a positive, constructive direction.

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[2] Nichts weiter als eine Abschiedsvorstellung von historisch Irrelevanten. Brzezinski, "Revolution oder Konterrevolution," 222

Furthermore, part of the overall story of the AL's experiences in parliament involved the chance for the AL and SPD to work together in opposition and to discover common ground. This helped them overcome their differences to form the AL-SPD coalition in 1989. That they were able to do this, especially when confronted by the rise of a party of the radical Right, serves further to point out the contrast between Bonn and Weimar. The developments traced here also clearly support Jeffrey Herf's thesis about the rise of a political culture in which the "political boundary between the moderate and the hard Left had blurred," however.[3] Interestingly, in the case of West Berlin at least, this blurring worked in both directions, with the radical Left gradually adopting the moderate Left's parliamentary orientation. Not only were the Federal Republic's parliamentary system and political culture able to block a potential threat posed by a party of the radical Left, but they also worked to transform the party into a group accepting, embracing, and even promoting parliamentary democracy.

This finding has further implications concerning proportional representation. Opponents of proportional representation often argue that it has a paralyzing effect on governments, and merely leads to increased fragmentation and conflict among factions.[4] The case of the AL demonstrates otherwise. Besides giving groups the chance to be heard, the research presented here shows

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[3] Herf, *War*, 79.

[4] Hanna Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967), 64.

that proportional representation, together with a 5 percent hurdle, can have a profoundly integrative effect on marginal groups, even on vehemently anti-parliamentary parties. Judging from the case of the AL, the true crisis of a parliamentary system may come not when critical voices enter it, but rather when they reject it entirely and do not participate.

The second issue regards the legacy of 1968. Many commentators viewed '1968' as anti-democratic, even leading to terrorism. The example of the AL shows that the 'Long March through the institutions' ended not in murders and kidnappings, but in political moderation born of parliamentary participation. In his classic work on the student movement, Richard Löwenthal laid out what he viewed as disturbing continuities between the left-leaning intellectual establishment of the 1960s and the Nazi criminals against which they reacted so strongly. Löwenthal claimed that left-leaning intellectuals were no better than their predecessors at coping with the "basic facts of a faithless industrial society."[5] Löwenthal was especially concerned that these intellectuals, again like their predecessors, would look to extremist solutions, and would refuse "to invest their responsibility and energy in improving and humanizing this society and its institutions, including its lackluster democratic state."[6] Through their

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[5] [Die] Grundtatsachen einer glaubenslosen Industriegesellschaft. Löwenthal, *Romantischer Rückfall*, 14.

[6] Ihre Verantwortung und ihre Energie in der Verbesserung und Vermenschlichung dieser Gesellschaft und ihrer Institutionen einschliesslich ihres glanzlosen demokratischen Staates zu investieren. Löwenthal, *Romantischer Rückfall*, 14.

involvement with the AL and the Green Party, West German intellectuals and activists overcame this refusal. Candide-like, members of the radical West German Left had ceased looking for El Dorado, the best of all possible worlds, and had reconciled themselves to cultivating their garden- trying to make the best of the world they had been given and improving it one problem at a time.

The third issue relates to coming to terms with the troubled German past. Because it rejected the West German state for its perceived failure to break with the Nazi past, the radical Left throughout the 1960s and 1970s viewed violence directed against the state in a favorable light. In the course of its debates on violent protest during the eighties, the radical Left as embodied by the AL distanced itself from violence, and thus reconciled itself with the Federal Republic and its place in the West. Furthermore, the Left has been condemned for thwarting the process of working through the Nazi past. Again, however, in the case of the AL, the Left helped push through a confrontation with the past, both in the general public and, crucially, among its own members. Moreover, the 'Children of Hitler' pointed to by many as the source of the West German terrorist impulse found in the parliaments a viable place to promote and pursue *Vergangenheitsbewältigung.*

The crucial nature of green ideas for the processes of parliamentarization and deradicalization explored here also suggests a new way of conceiving of the Greens. The Green Party has often been compared to a watermelon, that is, green on the outside, but a vibrant, socialist red in the middle. The

developments charted here suggest that a more fitting comparison may be to a fruit Jell-O mold. From its creation, the AL consisted of pieces of other movements, especially those rendered politically homeless through the dissolution of the SDS and the K-groups, but also citizens' initiatives, countercultural groups, and so on. These can be compared to pieces of fruit held together by Jell-O. What started out as a conglomeration of bits and pieces of movements supported loosely in a green framework became over time increasingly homogeneous, as ideological overlaps became clear and interconnections were fleshed out to form the green-alternative synthesis. Part of the task of this dissertation has been to analyze this mixture to determine the origins of its constituent ingredients by tracing their developments in time.

In the course of such an analysis, issues of continuities and discontinuities inevitably arise. The AL in many respects represented a profound break with the political forms and ideologies of the radical Left. The AL renounced the highly centralized and rigidly structured political forms of orthodox Marxism-Leninism. Moreover, like the SPD at Bad Godesberg, the AL renounced revolution in favor of parliamentary routes to socialism. Adopting a longer-term view, the history of the AL represents another victory of revisionism, harking back to Bernstein's ideas renouncing the doctrine that socialism must be achieved through revolution in favor of a reformist approach. For the AL, green ideas played a key role in these changes. This suggests a new periodization for the time considered here. Gerd Koenen offers a label for one distinct time in postwar German

history. According to Koenen, the 1967 shots in West Berlin (Ohnesorg) and the 1977 shots in Stammheim (RAF) provide the terminal points for a distinct era in West German history, and he calls this era the "Red Decade."[7] If events in West Berlin examined in this dissertation are any indication, much can be said for calling the period 1978-1989 the "Green Decade" in postwar West German history. However, as important as the Left's rethinking of its opposition to the parliamentary system was, and as much as the AL represented a caesura in postwar West German history, elements of continuity also were present. Most significantly, the Left retained its fundamental opposition to the capitalist system. This opposition came to be the radical Left's defining characteristic. Still, Green ideas proved perfectly compatible with this critique, and even enhanced it.

In a sense, too, the story presented in the previous chapters is an incomplete one. German unification ushered in a new chapter in the Left's evolution and in its acceptance of Germany and the West that is ongoing, as the debates about military interventions in Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq make clear. As for the AL, after unification, when its hopes for similarly sweeping- though emphatically emancipative- changes in the West were dashed, it turned back to the parliaments, sadder but wiser. Initially, the party faced electoral setbacks in the first all-Berlin election of 1990, when it ran as a full-fledged

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[7] Koenen, *Das rote Jahrzehnt*, 9.

representative of the Green Party, slipping to 9.4 percent. But the Berlin Greens came back in 1995 to earn 13.2 percent, their best-ever results.

When it became the official Berlin State Committee of the Green Party, the organization surrendered much of its autonomy. Certain reminders of its unique history persist: it still uses its green hedgehog emblem instead of the Green Party's sunflower, and its members, including especially Christian Ströbele, now a delegate to the *Bundestag*, tend to be the harshest critics of United States policy. While I was in Berlin completing the research for this dissertation in 2000-2001, another political scandal led the SPD and the Greens to form another coalition, and the Greens had entered the Berlin parliament as a ruling party again.

Other things were forever changed, however. This time, the *Abgeordnetenhaus* sessions were held in the magnificently restored Prussian Landtag building in the vicinity of the nearly completed shopping and entertainment complex at Potsdamer Platz, and the impressive *Rotes Rathaus* near Alexanderplatz served as the seat of government. The coalition with the SPD proved short-lived: despite electoral successes of the Greens, this time, the SPD forged a coalition with the PDS, the 'reformed' successor organization to the East German Socialist Unity Party.

Moreover, the political fortunes of the former AL, renamed the Berlin State Committee of the Federal Green Party, are now much more linked to the fate of its national organization. The Green Party, as part of a national coalition with the Social Democrats, is in turn dependent on the political fortunes of the

SPD. On the one hand, Joschka Fischer, the brilliant autodidact and former street fighter integrated into the parliamentary system through the Green Party, continues to be Germany's most popular politician. On the other hand, economic malaise, continued high unemployment, especially in the former East, and controversy over the veracity of economic data presented to the electorate just before the elections, pose a continuing strain on the coalition.

Finally, another result of the developments in 1989 was the irreversible alteration of the unique ecosystem that had fostered the development of the AL. As a result, it was much easier for the AL to surrender its autonomy and a part of its identity in favor of affiliation at the national level. But the former AL and the other parties also now face the presence of a fifth major party on the city's political scene, the PDS. Nevertheless, the Berlin Green Party's vote hovers at around 9 percent. Clearly, the electorate feels that the Greens still have something to contribute.

The nature of this contribution has changed forever too, however. In the course of the eighties, the Greens served as the vehicle bringing the radical Left safely into the parliamentary fold until German unification and the dissolution of the USSR altered the conditions in which the Left operated, as well as the threat the Left posed. The party no longer needs to perform this integrative function. Its contribution is now limited to providing alternative visions of development that incorporate environmental and social concerns. This is of course an important contribution that should not be understated. But as Germany has

moved metaphorically westward, the processes of parliamentarization and deradicalization have moved physically eastward, to the former GDR and, by extension, the nations of the former East Bloc. In Berlin, and in the former East Germany, the PDS, the 'reformed' East German Socialist Unity Party, continues to do very well. It will be interesting to observe both the continued evolution of this party and its electoral clientele in the future, and the ability of the German parliamentary system to channel conflicts and settle disputes. If developments in West Berlin during the Green Decade are any indication, Germany, and the system of Western parliamentary democracy it came to embrace, will do fine.
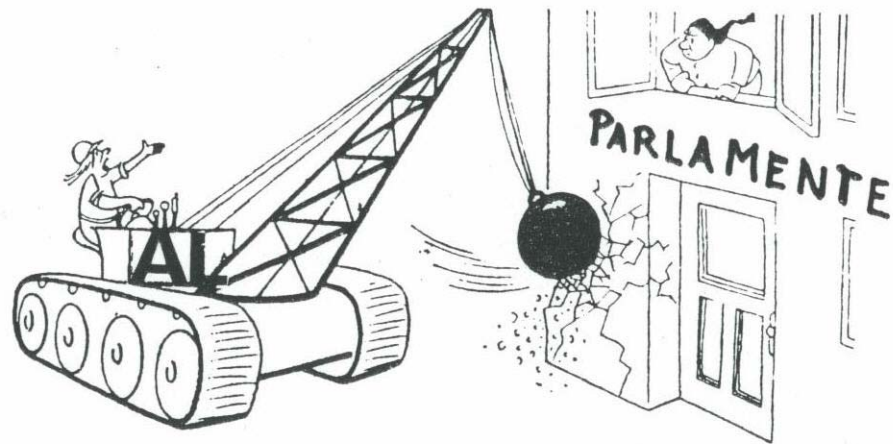
Figure 1. The courtyard in the Krumme Strasse where Benno Ohnesorg was shot. (Photo by Eva Olsson.)

Figure 2. "We'll get you taken care of. (Saving the foot is not economical.)" (Rote Fahne 2, no. 27, 1971.)

Figure 3. "Surely one is allowed to knock…" (AdAPO: Ordner KPD Berlin.)

Figure 4. "Surely one is allowed to knock…" (MRB 1 (1979), 1.)

Figure 5. Spring Festival in rural Kreuzberg. (IPB 2, 17 March 1981.)

Figure 6. "Get out of my house! This is our house." (IBP 14, 12 June 1981.)

Figure 7. Capitalists as vampires and zombies. (IBP 4, 1 April 1981, cover.)

Figure 8. The corrupt and violent police force under the control of the menacing foreigner. (IBP 2, 17 March 1981.)
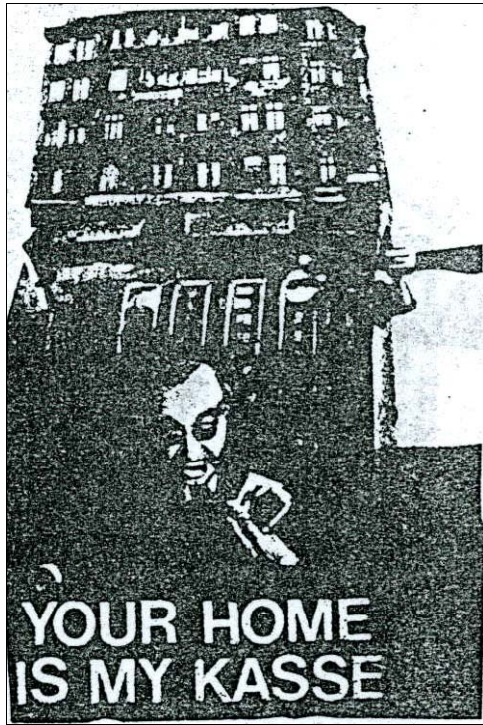
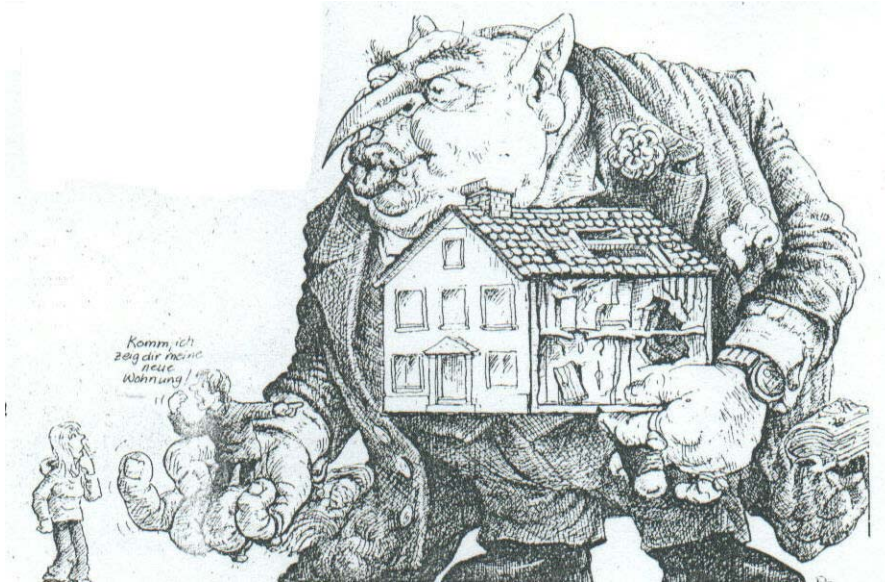**Figure 9. Your home is my cash register. (IBP 4, 1 April 1981.)**

Figure 10. "Come on, I'll show you my new apartment!" (IBP21, 4 September 1981.

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