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**Fourth Session
of the Central Committee
of the Socialist
Unity Party
of Germany**

Berlin, 16 and 17 December 1971

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Communique

on the Fourth Session of the Central Committee of the SED

On 16 and 17 December 1971 the Central Committee of the SED met in Berlin.

Comrade Gerhard Schürer, Member of the Central Committee of the SED and Chairman of the State Planning Commission, reported on the first item on the agenda, "Draft of the 1971-1975 Five-Year Plan and the 1972 National Economic Plan".

Comrade Siegfried Böhm, Member of the Central Committee of the SED and Minister of Finances, spoke on the second item on the agenda, "Draft of the 1972 State Budget Plan".

During the discussion 19 Comrades spoke out on the subject matter.

Comrade Erich Honecker did the summing up.

The Central Committee confirmed the reports made by Comrade Gerhard Schürer and Siegfried Böhm and the summing-up of Comrade Erich Honecker.

The Central Committee gave its approval to the drafts of the law on the 1971-1975 Five-Year Economic Development Plan of the GDR, of the law on the 1972 National Economic Plan and the law on the 1972 State Budget Plan.

In addition it was decided on the basis of the party statutes as well as the election rules of the Central Committee to carry out the reports and fresh elections of the party group organizers, of the committees in the departmental party organizations and the committees of the basic organizations not subdivided into departmental party organizations during the period from 1 March to 30 April 1972.

Current Problems Posed by the Implementation of the Decisions Adopted at the Eighth Congress of the SED

Extract from the Concluding Address Made by Erich Honecker, First Secretary of the SED Central Committee

Comrades,

In summing up the results of the discussion on the drafts of the Five-Year Plan and the 1972 Economic Plan, I should like to point out the following: a great deal of work has been accomplished since the Eighth Party Congress and this work has borne fruit. At this session of the Central Committee the pending problems have been tackled in a matter-of-fact way, in an atmosphere of frankness and with determination to solve the tasks lying ahead.

To put it concisely, these last few days have been very exacting. And now we are called upon to take decisions which will have a great impact on the harmonious development of Socialist society in the German Democratic Republic. Guided by the main task defined at the Eighth Party Congress and by the objectives outlined in the Directives on the 1971–1975 Five-Year Plan, we have marked out more clearly the path to be followed in the years to come and clarified many of the problems encountered. Following this session of the Central Committee the drafts of the Five-Year Plan, the 1972 Economic Plan and the National Budget will be submitted to the People's Chamber for deliberation and adoption.

The keynote of the debate in the Central Committee has been the basic idea of the Eighth Party Congress, namely that the welfare and happiness of the people, the interests of the working class and of all working people are the very essence of Socialism and the prime concern of our Party's activity. It has become evident that the practical questions of everyday life and the problems facing a national economy oriented towards the future and a high level of performance are inextricably bound up with each other. By strictly observing the law of the planned and balanced development of the national economy it will be possible to ensure continu-

ous progress without any overexaggeration detrimental to the interests of the working people.

It is not our intention to present things in a brighter light than warranted by the facts. On the other hand, we shall not allow anybody to deny or belittle the national wealth accumulated over the past few years due to the concentrated effort of the population. It should be noted here that the production of industrial goods in the German Democratic Republic amounted to 173 billion marks in 1971. The GDR's solid foundations and the ensuing pattern of life of the working people enable us to fix ambitious, but realistic aims for the next five-year period.

In doing so we rely on the strength and on the skills of the working class, of the cooperative farmers and intellectuals, on the preparedness of everybody, whether young or old, to identify themselves with the goals of society and to join the Socialist emulation movement in order to help fulfil the main task, i.e. to promote the well-being of all. Led by its Central Committee, our Party is channelling all its political, ideological and organizational potential in this direction. Dear Comrades, this is a short definition of our political style after the Eighth Party Congress.

Proceeding from the historic decisions taken by the XXIVth Congress of the CPSU, our fraternal parties in the neighbouring Socialist countries are unswervingly following the same line under their own particular conditions. The delegation from our Republic which attended the Sixth Congress of the Polish United Workers' Party has found impressive confirmation of this in the Polish People's Republic.

Each country belonging to the community of Socialist states in Europe is aiming at exploiting all potential sources of wealth so as to improve the population's living standard as far as the existing possibilities allow and to make a contribution to the growing strength of the countries fraternally allied under the Warsaw Pact.

Our session has shown how we have been striving to satisfy the working people's material and cultural needs to an ever better extent, what economic and ideological prerequisites will have to be provided and what results will be achieved by this policy whose aim is to consolidate the position of Socialism and to comply with the interests of the broad masses of the population.

Nothing Will Halt the Advance of Socialism

Comrades,

If it approves the 1971–1975 Five-Year Plan today, the Central Committee will do so in the firm conviction that it will be implemented in a world constantly changing in our favour. The months that have elapsed since the XXIVth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and since our own Eighth Party Congress are eloquent proof that Socialism is irresistibly advancing, that the Socialist community is demonstrating its cohesion and strength in an impressive manner and is exerting an ever greater influence on the course of international political developments. There is no doubt that this tendency will become even more pronounced in the course of the years.

As Comrade Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev pointed out in his important address to the Sixth Congress of the Polish United Workers' Party the firmly allied Socialist countries are wielding an active and ever-growing influence on the course of international affairs. He said that the events of the day sometimes prevented us from realizing how far-reaching this influence has become. It is not only a matter of strength, there are other factors explaining why others must pay heed to us whether they wish to or not. One of these is the fundamental firmness and continuity of the foreign policy pursued by the Socialist community, a policy which the popular masses on all continents easily understand. To build Socialism and Communism we need peace, but all nations of the world need it as well.

Needless to say, we are not shutting our eyes to the wanton aggression launched by the imperialists against the peoples struggling for freedom or even their very existence. We are alarmed at the open fighting or smouldering crises in South East Asia, on the Indian subcontinent and in the Middle East, which call for our solidarity with the victims of imperialist arbitrariness. But even where rapacious imperialist forces are still successful in unleashing military conflicts, Socialism brings its influence to bear in order to end the bloodshed as soon as possible and to find political solutions to the conflicts involved. Special credit is due to the Soviet Union for exploiting all the possibilities of its Leninist diplomacy to attain this profoundly humane object.

Everyone should ask himself: What would our world be without the strength of the Soviet Union, without its uncompromising battle for the interests of the nations, against imperialism, the mortal enemy of mankind. An ever growing number of people all over the world are realizing ever better that Socialism and peace form a unity, that it is the political, economic and military potential of Socialism and notably that of the Soviet Union that is keeping imperialism in check.

As far as Europe is concerned, the aggressive imperialist quarters have for a long time now been unable to act as their whims directed them. Despite many attempts made by all kinds of reactionary circles to keep alive the "cold war" and to provoke another military confrontation on this continent, all onslaughts on European peace have come to nothing. For more than a quarter of a century there has been no armed conflict in Europe. This must certainly not be attributed to a change of mind among the imperialists. It is rather the greater strength of Socialism and the resulting modification in the constellation of forces that has prompted the aggressive imperialist forces to adapt themselves to the changing situation and to abandon certain untenable positions in what can only be described as an effort at self-preservation.

Neither must we overlook the role assumed by the people of the capitalist countries in Europe. Mindful of the lessons of many bloody conflicts in the past, they have come out in favour of the consistent policy of peace practised by the Soviet Union and the other Socialist countries, exerting considerable pressure on their respective governments. There is growing awareness of the idea that a policy of peaceful coexistence which presupposes a realistic approach to the political realities of our time will be beneficial to all nations of this continent.

Favourable conditions have arisen in Europe for relations of peaceful coexistence between states with differing social systems. It goes without saying that such relations will not bridge the gulf between Socialism and capitalism. But the inevitable class battle between the order of the future and the system of the past, which characterizes our epoch as one of transition from capitalism to Socialism, is not to be fought out militarily. The pivotal point of Soviet foreign policy is to provide the best possible external con-

ditions for the construction of a new society and to save mankind from the scourge of a nuclear holocaust. With unfaltering step we are carrying on along this line. This line which has been defined in the Peace Programme of the XXIVth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and in the Five-Point Plan adopted by our Eighth Party Congress is being successfully put into practice.

The time has now really come to speak of the post-war period drawing to its close. Developments in the past few years and months suggest that Europe is approaching a new historical phase which could be one of peaceful coexistence, of mutually advantageous cooperation as Comrade Leonid Brezhnev, general secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, declared in Warsaw. It is chiefly the initiative launched by the USSR that has made such a turning-point possible.

As is well known, the foreign policy of the Soviet Union and of its allies is aimed at preserving peace and security in Europe. In the past there were times when even well-meaning people warned that such a policy, for all its positive aspects, was doomed to failure. We replied that it was in line with the general trend of development in the balance of forces and would turn out to be successful. We did not depart from our constructive policy of detente and peaceful coexistence. We did not allow ourselves to be provoked into some inconsiderate action, but neither did we allow ourselves to be lulled into a false sense of security. Today it is obvious that our attitude was the right one. The cause of European security, of peaceful coexistence is gathering way.

It is, however, imperative that the frontiers which arose as a result of the Second World War and of post-war developments, including the frontier between the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany, be recognized, that they become the unshakeable cornerstone of coexistence between the European peoples, that the sovereign equality of all European states be guaranteed on this basis and that the threat or use of force be prohibited. This also includes total compliance with the Czechoslovak people's just demand that the enforced Munich Agreement be annulled once and for all. These are essential principles of peaceful coexistence which have to be strictly adhered to if the vital interests of the European nations are to be safeguarded effectively.

It is a characteristic feature of the changed world in which we

live and of the time when we are tackling our new Five-Year Plan that more and more governments in Western Europe take notice or even approve of these principles. An ever increasing number of politicians are taking up more realistic positions in the face of international political developments. Evidence of this is provided by the Principles of Cooperation between the USSR and France signed by Comrade Brezhnev and the French President during the former's visit to France as well as by the treaties concluded between the Soviet Union and the Polish People's Republic on the one hand and the Federal Republic of Germany on the other. There is a growing preparedness in Western Europe and in the Scandinavian countries to hold a European security conference and to go ahead with its preparation on a multilateral basis.

The GDR has Strengthened Its Position

Comrades,

One aspect of the changing world to which we can justly refer because of the increased strength of Socialism is the fact that our German Democratic Republic has consolidated its position. Politicians and propagandists in the West have left no stone unturned to halt or undo the continuous process of consolidation in the GDR. All their attempts have failed. Nothing has remained of the fictitious "all-German" interests or "inner-German" ties. To make this clear it will suffice to recall the situation at the beginning of the last Five-Year Plan period. At that time the government of the Federal Republic of Germany missed no occasion to clamour for the restoration of the Reich within its 1937 frontiers. With regard to the German Democratic Republic, which was usually referred to in Bonn as the Soviet-occupied zone, the then Federal Chancellor predicted that there would be no negotiations. Whenever the German Democratic Republic approached the Bonn government with some proposal to reach an understanding on a practical question, Bonn would issue a statement saying that it had not even bothered to read the letter, considering this to be an expression of political wisdom and shrewdness.

Certain arrangements with West Berlin came about only after the West Berlin city government had tried to affirm the "non-

existence" of the German Democratic Republic in a special clause. This was at the beginning of the last Five-Year Plan period. Even then we told politicians in the West that they would be unable to cling to such an unrealistic position and this is exactly what has happened. Those who described our Socialist state as a non-existent "phenomenon" have learned to call it by its real name. The German Democratic Republic is being widely recognized. This is partly done reluctantly or gradually, but it is done because there is no other choice.

The international status of the German Democratic Republic differs today from that of five years ago and it will have further changed in five years' time. This is underlined by the changes going on in the Federal Republic of Germany. In the foreign policy field we have noticed an ever stronger tendency to take account of the real situation, which is a positive aspect of the Brandt government. Faithful to the motto: "Politics is the art of achieving what is possible", more West German politicians seem to share our view that a relaxation of tension, cooperation and security in Europe are not feasible without mutual efforts by both East and West.

Our government maintains at present full diplomatic relations with thirty countries, and the further development of our international links will be favoured by the changing situation. True enough, certain quarters in the FRG and in NATO are still putting up stubborn resistance to the extension of our relations with other states, notably by resorting to the so-called Scheel doctrine. But here again our prognosis is that they will not succeed in the long run. The German imperialists have, after all, always failed with their "last-ditch" policies. In the course of the next Five-Year Plan period the government of the German Democratic Republic will establish diplomatic links with more states. The setting-up of new embassies of the German Democratic Republic abroad and of corresponding buildings in our capital must be provided for in the plan.

All this, dear Comrades, is impressive evidence of the fact that the policy of strengthening the German Democratic Republic as a sovereign Socialist state in the centre of Europe, which was explained and laid down at the Eighth Party Congress is correct and has borne its fruit. The growing differentiation between

Socialism and imperialism is an objective process resulting from antagonistic class positions. This cannot be changed even if certain quarters in the West argue that the reverse will be the case as soon as there is an easing of international tension. It is, however, not very difficult to see through this manoeuvre. Everybody here knows that the relationship of two countries does not depend on whether one has an aunt, uncle or other relative abroad, e. g. in Switzerland, in the Federal Republic, in Austria, France or in the United States. Things are as simple as that: we live in the Socialist German Democratic Republic, while others live in capitalist countries. It is not the degree of kinship of a particular citizen, but the nature of the state's social system that settles the matter. It is a question of political realities, of Socialism or capitalism.

It is evident today that the integration of the German Democratic Republic in the Socialist community, its close alliance with the Soviet Union, with the Polish People's Republic and the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic has enabled us to make a contribution to a successful policy of peaceful coexistence and has lent this policy considerable weight and even more, that this alliance has been the decisive condition for it.

The agreements and arrangements which our German Democratic Republic has concluded with the government of the Federal Republic of Germany and with the West Berlin city government must be seen in the context of the changes going on in our time, of a policy of security and cooperation on this continent. In this way we have consistently acted in the spirit of our peace programme which we regard as a constructive contribution to European security and which says: The German Democratic Republic continues to advocate the establishment of normal relations governed by international law with the Federal Republic of Germany as with other states.

In this connection we must reject all attempts that are being made to label the relations between the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany as "specifically inner-German". This would not be conducive but detrimental to the normalization of relations between the GDR and the FRG and to European security. Any attempt to prevent normal links between two independent sovereign states with differing social

systems under the pretext of fictitious "inner-German" ties is undertaken with the sole aim of not applying the standards of international law to the relations between the two German states. Of course, such an attitude has always been and always will be unacceptable. After all, the times have changed.

At the Eighth Party Congress the Central Committee reaffirmed this stand with the statement that history had already decided on the national question. It has been and remains the historic accomplishment of the working class of the German Democratic Republic to have conquered political power and to have irrevocably embarked upon the road to Socialism under the leadership of our Party and in alliance with all working people. Political practice has shown that this policy was successful.

By signing the Moscow Treaty, the Federal Republic of Germany has recognized our state frontiers as inviolable. Now the government of the Federal Republic of Germany has for the first time concluded a direct agreement valid under international law with the government of the German Democratic Republic, in which it had to recognize the frontiers of the German Democratic Republic once more. In the shape of the Quadripartite Agreement the three Western Powers have also for the first time signed an agreement valid under international law, in which the German Democratic Republic is respected as a sovereign state and its territory and frontiers are regarded as incontestable realities. It is for the first time that the Four Powers have concluded an agreement on West Berlin. It states that West Berlin is an entity within its own frontiers surrounded by the German Democratic Republic including its capital. Consequently, the arrangements agreed upon between the government of the GDR and the West Berlin city government take into consideration that Berlin is the capital of the German Democratic Republic.

Something else should also be noted here. The spectre of a "corridor" leading through the German Democratic Republic under western control has vanished into thin air. Instead the government of the GDR and the government of the FRG, anxious to make a contribution to the relaxation of tension in Europe, have arrived at an agreement making it possible for the transit traffic between the Federal Republic of Germany and the western sectors of Berlin across the sovereign territory of the German Democratic

Republic to be dealt with in accordance with internationally accepted practices. This is, for example, borne out by the fact that the transit agreement takes into account the territorial rights of the German Democratic Republic as is customary with sovereign states. It has thus been shown that the Federal Republic of Germany had to fully respect the sovereign rights of the German Democratic Republic and found itself obliged, in the light of the real situation, to accept the frontiers of the German Democratic Republic in the terms of international law for the third time within a short period.

Naturally, the German Democratic Republic has been very accommodating, and this fact is acknowledged throughout the world as a constructive contribution to the preservation of peace. Everybody knows that it was our side who constantly submitted proposals for normalizing relations with capitalist countries including the Federal Republic of Germany. While abandoning none of our sovereign rights, we were willing to come to an understanding and adopted a very accommodating position whenever questions of human interest were involved. The world knows that it was always the other side who tried to disrupt the agreements and arrangements negotiated. Fresh attempts were repeatedly made to save untenable positions inherited from a time marked by the cold war and the attempt to bring the German Democratic Republic under tutelage by using all sorts of vague and empty phrases.

This is what happened during the negotiations with the West Berlin city government. The course of events in the last few days is well known to most people. What remains is the following: The overriding principle must be that West Berlin does not form part of the FRG and must not be governed by it. It is on this basis that we are settling our relations with West Berlin. If unilateral gestures of good-will made by the German Democratic Republic with regard to the West Berliners have not become effective before the end of this year, the latter will have those to thank who tried up to the very last moment to obstruct the negotiated arrangements.

Joint Active Peace Policy with the USSR and Other Fraternal Countries

Dear Comrades,

As in each phase of the past period, we are conscious of the fact that we are promoting the process of recovery and detente in Europe by making our constructive contribution. Once more, we express our readiness to participate, as equals and unconditionally, in a European security conference, to establish relations binding in international law with all states, and to become a member of the United Nations and its specialized agencies.

The agreements and arrangements concluded by the government of the German Democratic Republic will no doubt also exert a favourable influence on the ratification of treaties previously mentioned between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Poland respectively and the Federal Republic of Germany. In addition they create the conditions for the Quadripartite Agreement to come into force. Finally, they facilitate the preparations of a European security conference.

Of course, all this has yet to become practically effective. Many details are still in the course of development, resistance still has to be overcome. In spite of all this, it can be stated that the period during which imperialist policy was based on the illusion that the situation resulting from the Second World War could only be considered as being temporary has indeed come to a close.

In summarizing, I would like to say:

- If we can today speak of the beginning of a new phase in European development, then this results from the strength of Socialism, the successful foreign policy of the Soviet Union and the whole Socialist community of states.
- The imperialists had lined up ready to revise the results of the Second World War. Instead they had to concede that these results of the Second World War form the only possible basis for relations of peaceful coexistence between the states with contrasting social orders in Europe.
- The Socialist German Democratic Republic was to be "brought home" to the imperialist German Reich. What has crystallized is a stable and modern Socialist German state in the centre of Europe, a state which on account of its internal stability and its

integration in the Socialist community of states led by the Soviet Union is in the position of making an active contribution to peace and detente.

Our supreme principle has always been the fraternal alliance with the Soviet Union and the other Socialist countries and it will always remain so. At the same time, the possibility arises from this fact for us to carry out an active and flexible policy of peaceful coexistence in common with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the other fraternal Socialist countries and for closely coordinating our foreign policy with these states.

We have never practised our constructive policy of peaceful coexistence on the basis of having any illusions whatsoever about imperialism. Speeches in another tone and political tactics of a different nature have not altered anything in the system and in the inhuman character of imperialism but result from the situation in the world which, as already mentioned in detail at the beginning, has changed in favour of the forces of Socialism and peace. We pay close attention to all new developments. We promote everything which could be of benefit to European security without neglecting our political, ideological and military vigilance for a single moment. We know very well that sufficient influential counterforces exist which want to obstruct any progress in Europe and throw our continent back into the cold war period. These forces—no matter whether acting openly or in a disguised manner—will continue to do everything in their power to obstruct the path to positive development on our continent in the interests of big capital.

We welcome the decision on foreign policy taken at the last session of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union which meets with our full approval and is in conformity with our own experience. This decision explicitly stresses the necessity of raising the level and the effectiveness of our ideological activities and of actively defending the interests of Socialism and the whole Communist movement in the struggle against the enemies of Marxism-Leninism. The Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union expressly underlined that in the international arena the role of the ideological struggle is steadily growing. In the ideological struggle with imperialism as well as with all forms of right-wing and "left-wing" opportunism

there can be no suspension of hostilities. We will never forget the pertinent evaluation of the 24th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union that there is and always will be an unrelenting and permanent ideological war between Socialism and imperialism. Illusions are out of place; our vigilance and our preparedness for defence must remain on the appropriate level as in previous years.

We are in complete agreement with the Soviet Communists when they say that our total international activity will have the greatest effect if we concentrate all efforts on raising our internal strength, thus contributing to the further expansion of the positions of Socialism. It is necessary to understand the great political significance of the Five-Year Plan dealt with in such detail from this point of view.

The Citizens of Socialist States Live Together in a New Way

Simultaneously with this development—many people may not yet have recognized this—a new milestone has been reached in the relations of the German Democratic Republic with its Socialist environment. In the course of gradual Socialist economic integration the relations between the Socialist states attain a new quality.

This also finds direct expression in the agreements with the Polish People's Republic of September and with the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic of November this year. These agreements heralded a new phase in the way the citizens of our countries live together. There cannot be a policy of open borders with imperialism, but now there are open borders with our Socialist neighbours and brothers. The issue in this case is not mainly of further gearing our national economies—although this is very important—but above all of bringing our Socialist countries, linked together fraternally with the Soviet Union, even closer together, namely the German Democratic Republic, the Polish People's Republic and the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, and to promote human contacts to the greatest possible extent.

This decision is particularly welcomed by young people and also creates favourable conditions for comradely meetings between the staff of enterprises of our countries. Our young people

are lucky enough not only to think in greater dimensions but also to hike and travel in our neighbouring Socialist countries. From the Bohemian Forests, from westwards of the rivers Werra and Elbe up to the Mazurian forests and lakes, from the Baltic up to the Carpathian mountains the people of our countries will be able to meet together as from January 1972 without the need of passport and visa.

In developing Socialist society the peoples will grow ever closer together and in not so very many years to come it will be seen that a new historic phase was initiated during our time in the fraternal relations between the German Democratic Republic, the Polish People's Republic and the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic.

We have consciously undertaken these steps, fully aware of the fact that one or the other difficulty may still arise in their implementation. But both the Polish United Workers' Party under the leadership of Comrade Edward Gierk and the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia under the leadership of Comrade Gustav Husak agree with us that we shall attain a new quality in the relations between our countries, encouraged by the prospects for the future outlined by the 24th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, a future in which the Socialist world system is a harmonious family of nations which jointly construct and defend the new world, enrich each other by an exchange of experience and knowledge—a closely linked and strong family which the people of the whole world recognize to be the model of the future world community of free peoples.

These are the grand goals which we bear particularly in mind when tackling the solution of our national economic tasks in this Five-Year Plan period with energy and enthusiasm.

Our Plans—the Program of Steady and Certain Upswing

The strategic aims of our Eighth Party Congress run right through the drafts of the 1972 Plan and the Five-Year Plan. They determine our whole discussion. The long-term, steady and certain upswing decided upon by the supreme body of our party last summer, has now been transformed into concrete plan tasks.

Thus, the decisive steps have also been fixed by which we shall continue on the road of the Eighth Party Congress. No doubt, this is a valuable advance.

Our discussion has once more confirmed that our economy is not just one of the many sectors of our activity. It is the main field of struggle. It provides the material means for the Socialist progress in our country and for the development of all spheres of our social life. In the economy the daily work of the majority of our people takes place. That is why the most important problems of intellectual life also have their roots here. The strongest influences on the growth of the working class and all working people, on the development of the human beings and their Socialist relations originate from here. The Central Committee has dealt with the economic problems in their many-sided live interrelations. Starting out from the plan, our session has thus also drawn conclusions for the further practical work on developed Socialism in our Republic under the aspect of society as a whole.

The discussion gave expression to the substantial degree of experience in struggle and life and of union with the people which the collective leadership of our party possesses. But at the same time it showed the high degree to which the decisions of the Party Congress have become the cause of the working class and all citizens of the German Democratic Republic, because the discussion was permeated and enriched by the deliberations, ideas and proposals of the working people in the factories and agricultural production cooperatives, in the scientific institutes and cultural institutions. They all contributed their share to the good result now at hand.

The plan documents are determined by the main task decided upon for this Five-Year Plan period by the Party Congress, that is the further raising of the material and cultural standards of life of the people on the basis of a high rate of development of Socialist production, an increase in effectiveness, in scientific and technological progress and a growth in the productivity of labour. The plan also predetermines how the requirements of the people will gradually be satisfied in an ever better way. In this respect we have concentrated our efforts on those issues which are considered particularly important for the improvement of the living conditions by the majority of the population. The joint decision that the retail

trade prices are not to be allowed to increase from now until 1975 is also part of the implementation of this policy.

Comrade Halbritter has spoken on the decision regarding the stability of consumer prices. In accordance with the decisions taken by the Eighth Party Congress the stability of the consumer prices is a great political and social task for us. Therefore, the following principles have to be adhered to in the course of implementing the 1972 plan and the Five-Year-Plan:

1. In the period of the Five-Year Plan 1971/75 no consumer prices are to be allowed to increase.
2. The supply of the population with commodities in the low and medium price groups is to be guaranteed in the respective quantities, assortments and qualities. This is to be mainly achieved by the appropriate use of traditional raw materials and respective mixing of fibres.
3. With regard to the assortments in which the share of the higher price groups will particularly increase in the coming years on account of the increasing use of synthetic fibres, the consumer prices are to be corrected by means of lowering the costs, the production levy to the budget and the trade margin.

The commodity funds available for supply to the population will increase each year by 4.1 per cent up to 1975. Within the scope of these rates of growth substantial efforts are to be made in order to overcome certain instabilities and disproportions in supplies which are still a cause for aggravation. Great efforts are required for the construction, modernization and reconstruction of 500,000 flats. Housing construction is the investment program of our state with the fastest rates of growth. This is in conformity with its significance for the living conditions of the people. The third task I would finally like to mention is the stipulation that the prerequisites must be created in the coming years which make it possible, by higher results in production, to calculate the old pensions as from 1973 according to the principles of the new pension regulations of 1968 and increase the minimum pensions depending upon the number of years worked. I stress this here once more in order to underline that we consider taking care of our elderly citizens who have contributed a great deal to the construction of our country a permanent humanist obligation.

Generally speaking, our plans make it clear that the welfare of the people is the supreme doctrine of the state in our Republic. They comprise a remarkable program of social progress.

Great creative work was done in the course of the elaboration of the plan. On the other hand it also became obvious—I say this quite frankly—that some cadres in the economy have had to learn a great deal as regards applying the principal position of the Party Congress on the main task in their sphere of activity. Comrade Krolikowski said here yesterday that only he is able to be a proper manager who gains an understanding of the essence and all the depth of the content of the Congress decisions. That is exactly the crucial point.

This important ideological process has not been concluded. The documents as they now lie before us will help us in continuing it. They state quite clearly that the main task is not tactical, but a fundamental and long-term orientation deduced from the basic economic law of Socialism. Indeed the Socialist economy has to serve as a means to an end to better the life of the people. The needs of the people are not item 2, 3 or 4 of planning but item one. They are the decisive starting point for planning. Let me underline once more, that this is the basis for understanding the economic policy of the Eighth Party Congress.

Naturally the question comes up as to the way in which the aims set for the development of the material and cultural living standards can be fulfilled. They can be fulfilled by the planned rise in productivity of labour. The main task of the Five-Year Plan is based on the unity of aims and the economic prerequisites for their fulfilment. As is stated in the Report of the Central Committee to the Eighth Party Congress we can only consume what has been previously produced. That is why the rise in the productivity of labour is the main link in the chain. This is the point on which the attention of the whole party has to be centred. We have to develop a broad movement of the working class and all working people on this task. The decisive instrument is Socialist emulation. Comrade Beyreuther spoke on this issue here. Emulation must be directed towards the intensification of social production in particular by means of Socialist rationalization. At the same time this determines the central task of the trade unions. Their main aim must be to utilize the present trade union elections

to include every member in the great upswing in labour initiative. The enterprise collective agreements to be elaborated anew further raise the role of the trade unions in the enterprises and will help in this respect.

Important prerequisites for raising the living standard will not only be attained by increasing the quantity but to a decisive degree by a better quality of production. That is why the Central Committee agrees with those work collectives who act according to the proven slogan: I stand up for the quality of my product! This slogan is as correct as ever.

According to the decision of the People's Chamber we shall have plans in hand which are calculated in greater detail, whose tasks will correspond more realistically to our actual economic capacity than has sometimes been the case in the past. The responsibility of each production collective, in fact each working person for the whole of society is thus shown reliably and clearly. The further prosperity of our economy and our country depends to a high degree on how this responsibility is set into practice everywhere.

The drafts of the plan must of course also reflect the stresses and strains to be found in our economy. Unfavourable weather conditions have brought about substantial losses in our harvests in the past three years which we have had to make up by making additional means available for imports.

In addition at the Eighth Party Congress we also discussed certain disproportions some of which can only be overcome in the course of several years.

All our experience tells us that such disproportions act as a brake on economic development. It is, therefore, first of all necessary to overcome the disproportion between the energy basis and the requirements of the national economy to a further degree and at the same time to close the gap between supply industry and final production to a decisive extent in order to create realistic and stable conditions for respective growth rates. That is why we have provided for a phase of further consolidation enabling us to speed up the growth rate in order to attain the pace stipulated in the Directive of the Eighth Party Congress. This logic of our economic policy is expressed to a special degree in the relation between the 1972 Plan and the aims for the

following years. Thus we do justice to the orientation of the Eighth Party Congress which to a certain extent designated the set tasks as an economic program for high stability and assured progress.

For the Well-being of Us All

Dear Comrades,

This well thought-out advance which is in line with our capabilities also shows the basis on which we build our plans for the future. We make these plans in the knowledge that we can count on the diligence, the rich resource of knowledge that we can count on the diligence, the rich resource of knowledge and experience of the workers and farmers, of the scientists and technicians, of the numerous working people in our Republic. The wealth of machines and installations at the disposal of our national economy is considerable; even in 1970 this machinery was worth over 270 thousand million marks. Every one of our policies which aims at securing a greater and lasting economic growth must first of all make sure that the prerequisites for such a development are already there, that the working people are able to utilize the means of production for rapid and continuous production.

In order to guarantee this we must also make full use of our foreign trade. In accordance with our needs we must of course make sure that we do not cancel imports which are vital for our production if this is going to have an adverse effect on production as a whole.

It has been demonstrated a thousand times over—through diligence, discipline and energy—that the working people in our Republic want to work. Talking with them one always feels that for most of them order, vitality and good results at work are some of the most important things to them in their every-day life. It is the workers themselves who will primarily participate in the fight to remove faults in production.

During the Eighth Party Congress we said quite plainly that in making our program we are counting on the initiatives of the working people to make it a success. Thus we must make plans

to greatly increase the material conditions which allow these initiatives from the masses to be more effective.

From this point of view the relationship of our own performance to the possibilities in the field of imports can be understood more clearly. We do of course make use of the possibilities in this field as well. But imports must be paid for with exports and a one-percent increase in goods production in 1971 corresponds to as much as approximately 1.7 thousand million marks. These are the decisive figures on the grand scale and this is also true of population supply.

We have imported large amounts of consumer goods and it is our intention to continue to expand the number of goods on offer by importing a certain amount of products from the Socialist fraternal states and also from capitalist countries. The most important point however is that the quality, quantity and choice of goods produced by the consumer goods industry in the German Democratic Republic must be systematically raised to a level which fulfils the justified requirements of the population. This is something which we dare not and will not let fall by the road-side. Our wide range of consumer goods displayed at the Leipzig Trade Fair, which are of a quality to be proud of must also be made available to the home market.

The solution of the social and economic aims set by the Eighth Party Congress hinges on increasing the efficiency of our own national economy on the basis of further Socialist integration as spelled out by the Aggregate Program of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. This must be made clear once and for all.

This is however, as you will appreciate, a process and not something to be accomplished at one go. Even during the coming winter we will still not be able to cover the energy requirements of the whole national economy. We will not be able to solve the problems posed by the delivery of fabricating parts overnight but the plan lights the way towards proportioning and balancing the production fairly and with the end aim in view. We will obtain stability step by step but this will require a lot of changes in the way of thinking in many of the authoritative institutions, at the top level as well as the bottom. The most important point to remember is that—in accordance with the dimensions set by the Eighth Party Congress—all these measures must be aimed at fulfilling all the

requirements of the individual as the central concern of all our efforts. This is what is meant by fulfilling the main task of the plan laid down by the Eighth Party Congress. That problems can be solved when everyone is prepared to get to grips with them and do something effective is proved conclusively by the fact that the measures introduced by party and government in the population supply field are already starting to have a positive effect.

In accordance with the decisions of the Central Committee—especially since the 14th Plenary Session and, of course, the Eighth Party Congress—several important measures have been introduced to ensure better supplies to the population, consumer goods production increased, additional imports of consumer goods arranged and new imports of raw materials for consumer goods agreed upon.

The latest measures of this kind have meant that goods to the value of two thousand million marks which contribute to better supplies for the population are now in circulation. Despite many problems still existing it can be seen that—especially in the second half of 1971—there has been a noticeable improvement in the choice of consumer goods on offer in important fields as compared with the previous year. These measures and results once more reflect the consistency of our course which is aimed at realizing the main task spelled out by the Eighth Party Congress in accordance with the possibilities we have.

The drafts for the 1972 Plan and the Five-Year Plan doubtlessly contain aims which are by no means modest. We have gone to great pains to discuss in detail those problems connected with mastering these tasks. In this connection the following problems are of special significance:

- the results up till now of the work carried out after the Party Congress and the conclusions drawn
- making the course taken by the Party Congress more widely and more clearly understood and
- continuous qualification of management and planning.

Party Congress Course Proves Itself in Practice

First of all, the economic results in the first year of the Five-Year Plan are on the whole good. The plan for the industrial goods production was fulfilled with 101.1 per cent in the past eleven months. Thus we are ahead of the plan and this means an extra one thousand million marks. The back-log of unfulfilled contracts was reduced in November by 140 million marks to 1.3 thousand million marks. In contrast to this there are at the present time advance deliveries to the value of 2.1 thousand million marks.

The remaining disturbances in production are by no means viewed lightly. On the contrary, it is most important that we analyze them and learn our lessons from them to prepare for the next plan year. Our first investigations revealed for the most part the unfulfilled contracts—between 30 and 40 per cent—could be traced back to lack of deliveries of fabricating parts. It is also noticeable that a large part of these failures had other, to a large extent subjective causes. For example 20 to 30 per cent were caused by loss of capacity due to belated commissioning of new installations or by failure to reach the planned parameters. These processes must be mastered decisively better. On the other hand it is our opinion that we should be more realistic about things and not include new plants fully in the plan at the beginning.

We have not forgotten that many enterprises have not reached the aims set by the plan. This is not caused by lack of good will or diligence on the part of the staff, the workers, the employees, the scientists and all other working people. No one will be allowed to say such a thing. In many cases this has been caused by the disproportions which we are energetically trying to limit and overcome. Or the reason was simply that tasks were imposed on the plants which they had no hope of fulfilling. We must also learn our lesson from this too.

On the whole one can say that some economic processes are running better and more smoothly than was the case some months ago. The innovators' movement is developing steadily. Everywhere in our country one can sense a great upswing in our nation's work.

I have already dealt with the results of population supply. In addition to this there have been by no means insignificant develop-

ments in the incomes of the working people in certain social fields. Even as early as the preparation stage for the Party Congress the minimum wage was raised, as is known, to 350 marks and working people earning from between 350 to 435 marks received a differential wage increase.

Finally there was a wage increase for those working in the transport field, public health service, postal and communications service, for teachers and instructors as well as for others. In compliance with the decisions taken by the Party Congress it has been decided that wage bonuses are to be systematically introduced by 1972 for foremen in industry. The wages of workers in the brown coal plants, in power plants and foundries as well as for dental technicians are to be raised. The average annual bonus paid out rose from 200 marks in 1970 to over 500 marks in 1971. As already mentioned it was decided to calculate the old pensions in 1973 in accordance with the principles of the new pension law. Even before the Party Congress the minimum pension for all citizens who can prove that they have worked for more than 15 years was increased to 170 marks. The voluntary additional pensions insurance scheme which was introduced at the same time is now being contributed to by 45 per cent of all working people with an income of more than 600 marks.

In the first nine months of 1971, 4,600 more flats and 5,000 more kindergarten places were created than during the same period in the previous year. The supplies of building materials to the population were noticeably improved.

I believe that such a list shows impressively that we are moving forward in the direction pointed out to us by the Eighth Party Congress.

What can we deduce from all this? The results of the past months give justified cause for optimism. Of course despite a realistic attitude to the conditions for development in our country, the plans we have made are still not able to fulfil every aspect of our wishes. A number of Comrades, for example Comrades Grüneberg, Junker, Wunderlich and Walde, have had something to say on this subject.

We will have to take great pains in analyzing the concrete economic processes in 1972 in order to come to conclusions beneficial for the coming years.

However this much has been proved as the new year swiftly approaches: the course taken by the Eighth Party Congress will be realized in real life through direct action and with success under the firm leadership of the Central Committee. The foundation of trust among the working people and the whole people on which the Central Committee can count for support has grown even more firm and wider. And the vociferous agreement with which our policy was greeted by the workers' collectives in particular in the large plants and factories, i.e. by the most important bulwark of Socialism, is confirmation for us all that what we are doing is right and acts as an even greater impetus to continue on our course.

Secondly, the next problem stems directly from experiences gained in the not so distant past. Wherever things were moving forward very slowly and with difficulty we found that the policy of the Eighth Party Congress had not been understood to its full extent. This is also true for certain questions of planning and prices. One of the important prerequisites in the future for rapid practical progress is the systematic extension of peoples' comprehension of the Party Congress course and also the overcoming of the inclination existing in many places to only go half way in thinking over the consequences of this course.

Party and government have taken pains again and again to express their decisions clearly and formulate them so that they, too, support this ideological process in an effective way, to put them in such a way as to provide clear signs to help all those responsible to understand the extent and comprehensiveness of the conclusions resulting from the main task, and how seriously we all take this. I would only mention here the decision regarding the handing-over of some of our best Interhotels to the FDGB and the publication of the decision on the stability of consumer prices.

We are also going to great troubles to implement the attitude expressed at the second plenum that internal trade may no longer remain the stepchild of our economic upswing.

And also in the counties and districts our comrades should always be asking themselves:

How clearly do the people grasp the fact that the improvement of their lives is our foremost concern?

How clearly do they realize that we wish to think over and solve all the problems with them and their help?

How clear is it to them that we value their deliberations and suggestions very highly indeed?

This is a very important point and it is also important that there be clarity everywhere regarding what exactly the decisive prerequisite is for fulfilling the needs of the working people to an ever greater extent.

The cut-backs necessary in aims which were too ambitious and beyond the capabilities of our country were also applied in the scientific field including the training of scientific personnel. Now some people are saying that these decisions taken by the Eighth Party Congress have relegated science to a lower position than before. This is of course not true at all.

Whenever the means for fulfilling the main task of the plan are listed, the means for obtaining a higher standard of living, then scientific and technical progress is always assured of an important place in the list. This is a clear indication of its value to society. However there are some phenomena which do go against this.

We must admit that the scientific and technical aims set were very often unsatisfactorily directed towards solving the most important economic tasks. It is of course true that our industry and agriculture always need scientifically well trained personnel and this even more so at a time when we are trying to interconnect the scientific and technical revolution with the advantages of the Socialist economic system. In many areas we desperately need to catch up. It is false and not in line with our requirements for managers of VVBs, combines and industrial ministries to attempt schematically to reduce, upon their own initiative, the research themes stipulated by contract and also the number of people coming from colleges or technical schools to take up employment. It should be examined whether or not it is possible for certain basic research themes to be financed not by the combines themselves but out of the national budget.

At the Eighth Party Congress we formulated our fundamental attitude to the scientific and technical revolution as follows: as Marxist-Leninists we have the same attitude towards this process as we have towards the other basic social facts and processes.

We study thoroughly its laws and utilize them for the good of the people. For these revolutionary processes naturally occur within the field of productive forces and it is only natural that important decisions are made there on the level of labour productivity. Thus we cannot ignore these basic facts. We neither neglect the great advantages which result from wide-reaching qualitative scientific and technical developments, nor do we underrate the importance of improving existing equipment and processes, the normal scientific and technical progress.

Our path of intensification of social reproduction processes and Socialist rationalization is aimed at making use of all these possibilities including full and partial automation. Of course projects which do not have a firm foundation are of no use to us. Neither does juggling with formulations uselessly help us to advance further. Concrete work must be the main theme running through all our deliberations; concrete work for the development of basic research in cooperation with the Soviet Union, for the systematic development of new products and their inclusion in production, for the elaboration and mastering of new technological processes and last but not least for the utilization of all reserves to renew those production funds in some spheres of our economy, which have become obsolete.

If we get on with the job in this manner then we will see that all those who believed that the course adopted by the Eighth Party Congress would lead to a slowing-down in the rate of the scientific and technical revolution were greatly mistaken. On the contrary, the very opposite is the case. The stubborn struggle for the fulfilment of concrete and solvable problems leads to success; empty declarations cannot do this. This is the stand taken by the great majority of our scientists. For this we owe them respect and recognition. We greatly value our Socialist intellectuals—I would like to stress this once more in the name of the Central Committee—as important allies of the ruling class, the working class, on our further Socialist road.

Strict Management to Encourage Initiatives of Working People

And now I would like to deal with the third problem: the alpha and omega of good plan implementation is strict management with clear aims. At the Eighth Party Congress we laid down the decisive direction which scientific management is to follow: it must always encourage and utilize more comprehensively and more effectively the initiatives of the working people.

Comrades working for the Central Committee, thanks to information from the district party organization in Magdeburg, investigated the effects of a paper-war in the heavy engineering combine there which had for the most part been instigated by the Ministry for Heavy Engineering and Plant Construction. The combine was given advice on how to proceed which would have amounted to seventy pages for only one part of the 1972 Plan. Similarly a list of indices was worked out for just one part of the plan and then passed on for checking which would have made the calculation of 2,278 data necessary. I do not think I need say any more. I am not even concerned here in the first place with the overstrained situation as regards paper wastage. But practices such as this do not help any in orienting the management of the combine and consequently that of the individual plants and factories to the development of the initiatives of the people but has the exactly opposite effect. This is the decisive point.

In order for there to be central management of the main processes there must of course be the necessary amount of up-to-date information at its disposal. The Comrades in Magdeburg realize that this is so, but they doubt, and rightly so, whether such a mountain of paper as existed in this particular case can be ever read in the Ministry let alone processed. It is not records in reporting that we need but rather records in the planned production. All requirements must be decided upon objectively. This is in line with the general need for matter-of-factness and acquaintance with the practical side in management work.

But let us go on further: it has often been the case lately that we have read about too much interference by the ministries in the management of the combines and plants. This is of course not only a question of the relations between this one ministry and

this particular works in Magdeburg. The economic system of Socialism is based on a balanced relationship between central state management and planning and the responsibility of the combines and plants themselves. Of course this basic principle must be applied in accordance with the varying concrete conditions and is also influenced by the present economic strain. This means that the need for central management is more wide-spread but the responsibility of the combines and plants themselves must never be ignored. I think it would be of value to think over these problems.

During the discussion Comrades Albrecht, Krolkowski, Schumann, Tisch, Wunderlich and others pointed out, in my opinion rightly so, the need to overcome certain administrative obstacles which are in the way of advance for our national economy and also to rethink afresh some economic regulations which are no longer in keeping with the requirements of economic practices. In compliance with the decisions taken by the Eighth Party Congress one of our main concerns in this field must be to make management more effective. This also means that care must be taken to see that all measures and incentives work together in better agreement with one another to increase economic effectiveness as a whole.

It is only natural in our Socialist national economy for a manager to be judged by the way in which he fulfils the plan. But this also includes making sure that each worker knows what he is working for, i. e. developing his Socialist consciousness. Both of these are only possible when the manager has a proper, understanding and sensitive relationship with the workers and with all his colleagues. This is true for the plant manager as well as for the general directors and ministers.

Dear Comrades,

A number of problems encountered in the development of the economic system of Socialism which were posed by the Eighth Party Congress must be got to grips with and solved. These problems include for example, questions regarding the further increase in the quality of planning and balancing of accounts and in this connection we must not neglect to evaluate the doubtlessly valuable experiences gained recently. The completion of the plans

is the most suitable time for once more underlining the statement made by the Party Congress that the economic system of Socialism is also subject to the changing times, that we must develop its positive characteristics and do away with its obsolete features and enrich it with modern and up-to-date knowledge and ideas.

One of the fundamental questions is the further perfecting of our economic accounting with stress being laid in particular on reducing costs, for this is one of the main methods of increasing profits which is entirely in line with the national economic interests. An important role is also played by the further development of industrial prices.

It is also of utmost importance that we look into the effectiveness of the work of the industrial combines. There was a lot of trouble and irritation because of the exaggerated length of the names strung together for some plants and factories during the initial stages. There are also problems of development. But none of this can change the fact that the formation of the combines is entirely in line with the objective process of production concentration. In this as in all other economic questions we base our actions on the objective economic laws of Socialism.

One significant prerequisite for successfully mastering the Five-Year Plan is the solution of several such problems in management in a scientific and practical way.

Thus you can see, dear Comrades, that we are setting about the economic questions in a thorough manner and with a wide view into the future.

Comrades,

During the discussion Comrades Grüneberg and Thoma pointed out, and rightly so, that agriculture is a full component part in the national economic reproduction process. Thus it is necessary to speak once more in our ideological work about the fundamental significance and content of the alliance between workers and farmers under the leadership of the working class and its party. Under the present conditions this alliance is no less important than it was immediately after 1945 or during the period of Socialist reorganization in agriculture. Why? Because the path of Socialist intensification and the transition to industrial production methods can only be followed under the leadership of the working class.

The working class is the largest class and has the widest political experience. It is linked with the large-scale industrial production and manages, plans, organizes and checks the daily industrial production processes. To produce industrially means more and up-to-date production equipment, machines, chemical products, spraying units, industrial fodder etc. An agricultural system which is industrialized is dependent to a great extent on industrial advances and achievements. There is a real difference between, for example, a simple combined reaper and binder of 15 years ago breaking down during the grain harvest and one of today's modern E 512 combine harvesters which work together with whole machine systems breaking down.

The first duty of the cooperative farmers, arising from this alliance is to make the most effective use of the modern production equipment which they receive from the working class in order to supply the population with foodstuffs and industry with raw materials.

On Wednesday Neues Deutschland published a typical example in its exchange of experiences column "Live and Learn" which demonstrates how important it is to keep on discussing the principles of our alliance policy with the cooperative farmers. Last week a cooperative farmer had asked the question: why cooperation? The LPG (agricultural production cooperative) in which he worked had developed for the best and could be proud of what it had achieved. He argued that it could manage on its own without any cooperation, it was even prepared to help others. A member of the party executive in a LPG in the county of Rostock gave the necessary answer to this question. He wrote that if the LPG was doing well on its own then this was only due to our Socialist order. But, he continued, it is not enough nowadays for one individual enterprise to do well, all must do better, for better is more than just well. This means a more rapid increase in production with less expenditure of social labour. And this can only be achieved through cooperative collaboration. If the state does everything to ensure the well-being of each LPG then we farmers must also do everything within our power to strengthen the state, was the conclusion of this comrade. By this he meant that it is not enough to think only about our LPG or ourselves. It should always be remembered that there is a larger consideration, that of the GDR, the Socialist community of states.

I would like to make one more suggestion as regards the problems encountered in further developing Socialist agriculture. In his contribution to the discussion Comrade Gerhard Grüneberg dealt with a series of fundamental questions. I believe that the time has come to hold a Farmers' Congress next year to further implement the decisions of the Eighth Party Congress made with regard to agriculture.

Comrades,

With our policy we are marching constantly and resolutely along the road of Socialist economic integration as laid down for a long time to come in the Aggregate Program of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. When our countries join their resources in science, technology and production together to such a great extent, when they solve decisive national economic tasks together, then everyone will see by how much Socialism has grown stronger. We are using its advantages on a wide international basis, and by joining together increase its fruits as well as create new and rich possibilities for its development. This development is of great significance for the fulfilment of the main task of our Five-Year Plan, for building up Socialism in the German Democratic Republic during the coming years. It has an effect on society as a whole and on our work, on the life of every single working person.

During the Eighth Party Congress we stressed that we shall in particular cooperate more and more closely with the Soviet Union in a fraternal way. Without its help what we have achieved up till now would have been unthinkable, the future would not seem as secure as it does, we would not be able to set ourselves the aims which were adopted by our Party Congress. The fraternal bonds and cooperation with the Soviet Union are the key to solving our most vital problems and this will always be so.

The 9th Five-Year Plan of the USSR which was elaborated according to the directives issued by the Twenty-fourth Party Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and recently made law by the Supreme Soviet shows clearly the enormous growth of the Soviet Union's economic power in its further advance to Communism. With the re-distribution of its social reserves and with important structural changes in its economy the USSR has managed to link important social aims. The realization of this

program will at the same time have a beneficial effect on the co-operation between our two countries. We too will reap advantages from this—in the stable development of our national economy, in the increase in the living standards of the people. And thus it becomes even more clear why it is of utmost importance that we fulfil all our export contracts with the Soviet Union on time and with products of a high quality. This is our responsibility, faithful to proletarian internationalism. This demands our class duty.

The agreements which I have already dealt with in detail, that is those which we concluded with our Polish and Czechoslovak Comrades help to increase the power and authority of Socialism in the struggle against imperialism. In this way we provide proof of the political weight of Socialist economic integration. Imperialism divided our peoples and repeatedly threw them against each other in wars of aggression. Socialism unities them, brings them peace and security.

Well Organized and Politically Shrewd Party Work Everywhere

Dear Comrades,

One can say with certainty that since the Eighth Party Congress we have made good progress and with regard to the great amount of work which we still have before us, we can be optimistic. As shown by the elections to the People's Chamber and county assemblies the working class, the cooperative farmers, the intellectuals and all working people have complete faith in the policy of our party. They approach their daily tasks with initiative, energy and vitality for they know that what they achieve is for their own well-being. This is what we have decided to do and this is what we shall do.

When it is repeated over and over again in the talks held before the elections that the strength of our party and the correctness of its policy lie in exact analysis, realistic planning and objective work than this is a great obligation for us all. Energetic political management, in continuous contact between the leadership and the party members, between our comrades and all other working people, the agreement of our policy with the interests of the people are the decisive prerequisites for success. By not using arm-chair

planning methods or considering theory to be an end in itself but by applying it directly to practical matters, including it in practical aspects, checking over our new knowledge there, enriching it and putting it into practice more effectively, we are making a constructive contribution in the true Leninist sense.

Our party organizations should make good use of the experiences in political leadership, in particular those gained during the election campaign, for solving the tasks which the Five-Year Plan has defined in all social fields. We have come to the conclusion during the third meeting of the Central Committee that it is of vital importance to raise the fighting strength of the party even more and to mobilize all intellectual and material reserves of strength to implement the decisions taken by the Eighth Party Congress. Thus we need to have party activity which is well organized and led with political shrewdness.

The confidential talks between our Comrades and the other working people, the continuous exchange of thoughts and ideas regarding fundamental problems of our policy and current events, the friendly guidance and advice must not be allowed to wane. They should always be a part of the activity of the party organizations—of course not in the formal sense—but considering the questions which life itself sets and which it is important to answer in order to develop the Socialist consciousness of the people, to encourage them to give their active cooperation and to join in solving the social problems. This means knowing what it is that moves the working people, always being prepared to listen to their ideas, critical hints and valuable suggestions, treating them with respect and convincing them, above all by one's own attitude and example.

From all this we deduce that it is very important to explain the decisions of the Central Committee in detail in the basic organizations, to share and spread the most beneficial experiences and it is equally important that as many as possible Comrades take part in discussions on understanding and solving the tasks. They should be at the centre of every members' meeting so that each party member is in a position to acquaint himself with the party policy at any time and to make a valuable contribution to its realization.

Part of the Main Task Is also to Raise the Cultural Level

Dear Comrades,

Our Five-Year Plan covers all the areas of our social life. We can only realize our aims set in the interest of the people if we recognize that its main task also comprises a further rise in the cultural standard of living of the people, in conjunction with a rise in the material standard of living. With good reason we stated at our Eighth Party Congress that we are acting in accordance with the main task when we greatly encourage the development of literature and art to meet the growing cultural demands of millions of working people as an important part of our Socialist way of life.

Since the Party Congress, many working people's collectives have expressed their cultural interest in plans for culture and training. Many of them enrich cultural life through their own activities. But there is a greater number of those who enjoy cultural experiences in the theatre, concert hall or by reading a book. This is particularly true of works of art and literature which portray the problems of the working class and the working class itself in an interesting and gripping manner. In this respect the writers and artists in our republic are creating new works for television and film screen as well as new books and plays.

We welcome the fact that our Comrades of the television service received the critical comments of the Eighth Party Congress in a positive way. Now management and party organization in television have presented the secretariat of the Central Committee with a long-term plan for developing an even more effective political presentation of news, for offering the viewer all types of dramatic art rich in experience as well as transmitting a more widely based program of light entertainment. Our Comrades from the television service will always achieve success if they measure the results of their work by the requirements of the millions of viewers in our country.

We would also like to draw particular attention to the ideas expressed by many writers and artists in their associations and party organizations as well as Neues Deutschland after the Eighth Party Congress. If one starts from the anchor position of Socialism then in my opinion there cannot be any areas of art or literature

which are taboo. This is true for the questions of arrangement of content as well as style—to put it concisely: the question of what one calls artistic accomplishment.

The Five-Year Economic Development Plan, the realization of which depends to a great extent on developing the creativity of the workers and all working people, offers those engaged in art and culture great possibilities for active participation.

Our party and our state are interested in finding the solutions to our large social tasks in close cooperation with our artists. We are happy to hear of authors who have once more deepened their relations with the life of the working class and who have not been content to repeat experiences of long ago. It seems to me that in many activities pursued by the Free German Youth, for example, one can see particularly clearly the formation of Socialist morals in young people under crucial test conditions in the whole range of their complexity. And there are many examples in all fields of life of people's destinies which reflect the greatness and dynamism of our time.

The statements made by numerous cultural workers show again and again the firm faith which they have in the party of the working class. The most hotly talked about point in the different discussions was and is the question of how the artist can penetrate deeper into the intellectual life of the working people with his novels and films, theatre and television plays, songs and paintings. We welcome such an open, objective and creative exchange of opinions and hope that it will develop and become even more lively. This will have a beneficial effect on the high quality and effectiveness of our Socialist literature and art.

As regards the content of the discussions between our writers and artists I consider it to be worth noting that many are searching for ways of really portraying the face of the working class in our country convincingly. The painfully critical examination of that achieved so far in this field will be of great value.

If I speak here mainly of the portrayal of the working class in our literature and art this does not mean to say that there are no other important themes worthy of portrayal.

All these questions should increasingly be the subject for an objective and creative exchange of opinions in the artists' associations than has been the case up till now. To put it in a few

words, the main point is how the writers and artists can contribute to solving the problems in our time. As already stated in the report of the Central Committee to the Eighth Party Congress we wish to orientate the artists with the whole rich resources of their writings and modes of expression towards the wealth of expressions of life in our time.

In doing this we do not overlook the fact that a corresponding measure of support in advice and action is necessary for our artists from the organs set up for this purpose. As we all know there is no place in our society for practices which have an adverse effect on the creative activity of our artists. To be a partner of an artist's creations one must of course go to great pains to penetrate and understand the content and essence of a work of art which lies before one for judgement. Here, too, our principle reigns that the largest degree of sensitiveness towards the working people in this field takes pride of place. This does not mean making concessions to ideologies which are in direct opposition to ours. But it is intended to encourage and help all those works which are in line with our path into the future.

Dear Comrades,

In order to achieve artistic accomplishment we must be clear in our minds as regards the role played by art in the intellectual struggles of our present times—from the anchor position of Socialism and the unrelenting ideological class struggle with imperialism. Raising the cultural standard of living of the people demands, above all, that this be done in a manner which befits the intellectual superiority of the GDR citizen and thus makes all the reactionary ideas with which our enemies try to infect us ineffective.

The majority of artists in our republic are quite clearly conscious of the great responsibility which they carry for their creative work. Such great representatives of the artistic intellectuals, as for example, Anna Seghers, Fritz Cremer, Paul Dessau, Helmut Baierl, Hermann Kant, Ernst Hermann Meyer, Erik Neutsch, Helmut Sakowski, Ekkehard Schall, Peter Schreier, Bernhard Seeger, Erwin Strittmatter, Manfred Wekwerth, Benito Wogatzki, Konrad Wolf and many others in the GDR have once more confirmed this unequivocally by expressing their political support for the workers'

and farmers' power when speaking on the occasion of the general elections.

We wish our writers and artists every possible success for their creative activity in the interest of our people.

Each Year Has Seen an Increase in the Experience in Struggle and Maturity of Our Party

Comrades,

We have behind us a significant discussion held in the Central Committee. The economic developments and necessities in the next few years were carefully weighed up and checked. We have been involved in a lot of objective work. And yet a discussion of this kind kept on bringing out the revolutionary imagination in us which Lenin valued so highly. Our eyes could see the picture of our Socialist homeland as it will be at the end of this five-year period, changed and formed in accordance with our decisions and plans by the work of the working people.

For more than 25 years now the Socialist Unity Party of Germany has successfully withstood ever new historical trials. This has meant that each year we have gained more experience from these struggles and thus become more mature. Many people who, west of our borders, try to predict our chances for the future forget to take the strength of our firm alliance into account. They have failed to grasp the most important point.

We are fully conscious of this strength. We are fully conscious of the fact that nothing can defeat our Marxist-Leninist ideology. We are fully conscious of the strength of our party—wherever there is a Comrade at work.

We say with complete conviction: what the Eighth Party Congress has decided upon, shall become reality. Our firm alliance has carried the new offensive of Socialist work resulting from this Party Congress throughout the whole of our republic. It will continue to do this unrelentingly and with success.

We are approaching a time of intensive work, a time in which our Socialist German Democratic Republic will become even stronger and the balance of power will continue to change in favour of Socialism and peace.

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World communism in the 20th
century.

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