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**Note on the Discussion between Khrushchev and
Ulbricht in Moscow, 26 February 1962 (Excerpts)**

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... Comrade Ulbricht pointed out that everything that the German side proposed to discuss had been fixed in writing.

Comrade Khrushchev stated that the declaration on the future of Germany can be designated as good; the responsible divisions in the foreign ministry and central committee have studied this statement and have several minor remarks, which one can accept or not. He did not yet have time to read the other documents. It would be useful, however, to talk over the economic problems in Gosplan, work out a position, and then discuss it. The German side agreed.

Comrade Ulbricht then pointed out that the documents were prepared on the basis of the last plenum of the CC [Central Committee of the] SED.

Since then, Adenauer has brought up the question of a change in the GDR's government. That means that Bonn is realizing a decision reached a year ago. Adenauer is turning directly to the population of the GDR and calling for diversion and sabotage (radio). We have begun to do this as well, we are turning directly to the West German population with corresponding demands. It is, so to say, a period of unpeaceful coexistence. A campaign is being officially organized by Bonn for reunification through so-called free elections. The implication is that it would be possible to speak with the "Soviet zone" if it had a different government. In the last few days, it has been suggested that with such a change, help could be given to raise the standard of living [in the GDR], which is allegedly 20% lower than in West Germany.

The document before you about the historical role of the GDR, which was prepared by the appropriate authorities in the GDR, reflects the current situation. It shows with which forces an opening for the German nation can be found. It is to be approved at the congress of the National Front. One cannot fail to recognize that a certain difficulty has arisen due to the postponement of a peace treaty. In wide circles of the population the opinion has arisen that the Soviet Union and the GDR have overreached themselves in the struggle for a peace treaty. This is connected to a large campaign that is currently being organized in and through West Berlin. It also has to do with the mobilization of the revanchist organizations. The task stands before us to strengthen the GDR; the way has been worked out and certain circles of the workers are being won over to it. Currently, there is broad discussion of how even better results can be achieved in the mobilization of production [Produktionsaufgebot]. Now, the question arises of how to move forward with regard to a peace treaty and West Berlin.

In the Thompson-Gromyko talks, the respective standpoints are being tested. One has to see that the USA has raised its demands - e.g., with regard to controls on the autobahn. Kennedy is doing what Adenauer has proposed, but with more skillful methods.

It is a matter of clarifying prospects for the future. The document before you deals with the historical role of the GDR. It is of the greatest importance for the strengthening and future development of the GDR. It must be considered whether the GDR will make its own proposals regarding the problems of disarmament and the Geneva Conference. Perhaps with regard to the stance of the two German states towards disarmament. A broad campaign could be unfolded over what it means [to recognize] the results of the Second World War and gradually to eliminate its remnants. It must be examined, whether a conference of the consultative committee of the Warsaw Pact states or the foreign ministers with regard to changing the anomalous status of West Berlin would be useful, or whether a declaration should be published by both press bureaus.

Up to now, we have been silent on a number of questions because we do not want to

come under suspicion of seeking to disturb the talks that are being held at the highest level. We are in favor of a continuation of the talks between Thompson and Gromyko, but it must be weighed whether or not we should keep in sight the conclusion of a peace treaty near the end of summer. A commission would be necessary for this. What will come of it, if we go too fast? Crudely put, a bad peace treaty. That is, the questions of the borders and the capital would be regulated, and a number of the war's remnants would be eliminated. [The question of] air traffic would remain open, while the general traffic would remain as it has been. All of this would mean a strengthening of the German Democratic Republic. We are of the opinion that the USA would not have any formal reason to exacerbate the situation. One must consider the possibility of continuing to use the tactic used up to now of exploiting West Berlin as a means of pressure.

Hence, there is the proposal to conclude a peace treaty, including a protocol that expresses the matters in which the Soviet Union and the Western Powers stand in unanimity and that also states what still remains open.

In terms of strengthening the GDR, such a step would be greeted warmly; the conclusion of a peace treaty would be expedient for the elections to the Volkskammer. From Berlin, of course, one cannot perceive the entire situation, but simple propaganda for a peace treaty will not meet with the acceptance of the population.

In recent weeks, the enemy has greatly strengthened its attack. Many of the measures taken by the Soviet Union have been exploited against the GDR because they were carried out without any political justification - e.g., the trip of the Soviet garrison commander to West Berlin, the exercises by Soviet planes in the air corridors.

Comrade Khrushchev: One must see things the way they are. We are disturbing the USA's air traffic. It has to defend itself. The imperialist forces will always be against us. One must see that West Berlin is not in Adenauer's hands. On August 13, we achieved the maximum of what was possible. I have the same impression as before that the conclusion of a peace treaty with the GDR need not lead to war. But one must consider the situation realistically. You want to give your signature and we are supposed to give economic [support], because one must see the possibility that after the conclusion of a peace treaty, there will be an economic boycott. Adenauer will carry out an economic boycott, and we will have to give [the GDR] everything that is lacking. I am proceeding on the basis of the interests of my country and from the interests of the entire socialist camp. One should not assume that the West has it easy. Why does it want guarantees for access? Because the West does not trust the people of West Berlin. They believe that West Berlin cannot hold out for more than ten years.

The signing of a peace treaty would lead to the normalization of the situation in West Berlin. The main question, however, is not the peace treaty, but a consolidation of the economic situation. That is what we have to concentrate on. I say once again with regard to a peace treaty, that I believe there would be no war, but who can guarantee that? What is pushing us to a peace treaty? Nothing. Until August 13, we were racking our brains over how to move forward. Now, the borders are closed. One must always proceed from the idea that the conclusion of a peace treaty must serve us, that we will conclude it when we need it. The measures worked out by Comrade Ulbricht are correct. Of course the German people are affected by Western propaganda. It affects us less. We support the GDR's measures, but we do not agree that it is absolutely necessary to use the peace treaty as a slogan for the elections to the Volkskammer.

Comrade Ulbricht: The economic questions are naturally the most important. For us, they do not necessarily coincide with our political tasks. In previous years, we

campaigns for the conclusion of a peace treaty, but then came the withdrawal of the deadline, and the impressions from that are still present in the population. It is necessary to conduct the propaganda about a peace treaty more carefully. Our population sometimes thinks differently. It links the peace treaty to national illusions.

The document before you is, so to speak, the expression of a new phase in our politics. We have thoroughly discussed it with the other parties, and it is correct that with regard to a peace treaty, one must be more careful.

Comrade Khrushchev returned to the peace treaty. What do we see? The Thompson-Gromyko talks are a step backwards in comparison to the earlier talks. The USA wants to raise its price. We have said openly that these are no foundation for negotiations. Previously, Kennedy presented his standpoint on the borders of Poland and the CSSR. Of course he cannot ratify the German border between the GDR and West Germany. One cannot expect that of him. He is trying to reach an agreement - for example, on an international [border] control. In one interview, he posed the question himself of what one can do and to whom one can turn if, for example, Ulbricht infringes upon the [existing] order regarding access routes to Berlin. To whom can one turn in such a situation? One has to see that on August 13, we disturbed the stability of West Berlin. The GDR must be made invulnerable in economic terms. One must also discuss this with the Poles and the Czechoslovaks. The Albanians and the Chinese criticize us with regard to the peace treaty and West Berlin. What are they doing themselves? (Portuguese colonies in India, Hong Kong, etc.) I think that our policy is correct, nothing disturbs us, and as long as imperialism exists, we will have to operate in this fashion.

Comrade Ulbricht interjected that the EEC [European Economic Community] is also becoming effective.

Comrade Khrushchev referred to the relations between Japan and the Soviet Union and started to speak in this regard about agricultural matters.

Comrade Ulbricht referred to the GDR's economic situation. The preparations for the 1962 plan foresee a 7% increase in investments, and the growth in production will amount to around 6%. Overall, the standard of living remains the same as it was. Wage increases of around 1% will follow.

We want to try to carry out a mobilization of production for the conclusion of a peace treaty by this fall. One should not forget, however, that often the material incentive is missing. We are currently working with large savings measures, including a reduction in higher wages; the incomes must be cut. That means domestically a certain political risk.

We are having difficulties with investments because the investments in part are in areas with little economic return - e.g., metals [Buntmetalle] and coal. For us, the costs of production in these areas cost many times the world-market price. The plan for 1961 was not achieved. The workforce is lacking. We have a long-term agreement with the Soviet Union, but it cannot be completely fulfilled. It is necessary to develop further the specialization and the deliveries of raw materials. In the trade treaty with the Soviet Union, there are a number of quotas that cannot be met.

In terms of carrying out the plan, there is a greater orientation towards those branches of production that are profitable. A higher worker productivity absolutely has to be achieved by using the best machines, which are now going in part for export. A reorientation of industry in this way is necessary. Then the GDR will be in a situation to repay its credits.

In response to an objection by Comrade Kosygin, Comrade Khrushchev replied that we cannot act like petty traders. It has to do with creating a profitable economy in the GDR.

Comrade Kosygin is in agreement with the plans as they were presented. He pointed out that in the GDR there is, in part, higher consumption than in West Germany. A great deal is paid out in the form of social support, but the German only sees what passes through his fingers. He believes that the reduction in investment in agriculture is incorrect. Unprofitable branches of industry must be cut. The plan for 1962 is not yet ready; it will be necessary to work out the material in 1-2 days in order to reach an acceptable decision.

Comrade Ulbricht referred to the necessity of rebuilding several city centers. It is a political, not an economic, question.

In the construction of housing, a reduction in costs absolutely must be achieved, but he is of the opinion that for the time being, construction should not be touched.

Comrade Khrushchev referred to the difficulties in agriculture and asked whether it is true that the GDR bought potatoes from Poland.

Comrade Kosygin interjected that the GDR is importing sugar and before, it was exporting it.

Comrade Khrushchev pointed out that the transformation of agriculture is a protracted process - e.g., the development of combines.

A long conversation evolved over the development of agricultural machinery.

At the end of the discussions, it was decided to carry out the next discussion on the afternoon of the 27th around 1600 hours. In the meantime, talks were to be held between [Chairman of the State Planning Commission] Comrade [Bruno] Leuschner and Comrade Kosygin.