

Exercising a Free Conscience: the Conscientious Objectors of the Soviet Union and the German Democratic Republic

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All the nine Communist-led nations of Eastern Europe guarantee their peoples freedom of conscience.¹ How this ideal is understood by the powers that be and how it is applied may, however, contradict in practice what theoretically is said so well. The degree of contrast varies from one country to another. For many persons in these countries, as in western nations, the refusal to take the oath, and/or to bear arms as military recruits, has become a public test of the guarantee of freedom of conscience. Defence of "the Motherland", or "socialist peace" is the obligation of all citizens, according to the same Constitutions which appear to offer a right to reject that demand if conscience so dictates. Penalties for those who refuse to serve are legislated in all these countries, and there are few alternatives. That, for conscientious objectors, is really where the problem may begin.

Conscientious objection to military service, usually on religious grounds, is at present an acknowledged official concern in the Soviet Union, an open debate in Hungary and the German Democratic Republic, and more than just an occasional occurrence (a number of cases are known) in Czechoslovakia, Poland, Romania and Yugoslavia.² Three of these governments, Hungary, Poland and the GDR, already provide legal alternatives for certain categories of these "dissidents", and in several others of the nine, such forms of service can at times be obtained upon request.³

If the sharpness of potential conflict or opposition faced by conscientious objectors in all Eastern European countries were placed on a continuum, then the USSR would be at the end where there are the greatest pressures, along with Albania and perhaps Romania. The German Democratic Republic is at the other end of the spectrum, where there is most accommodation between government and religious objectors to military service. Hungary, and possibly also Poland, if it had to deal with the issue on a larger scale, would be closer to the GDR.⁴

We shall examine two situations, those of the USSR and the GDR, to

illustrate more specifically the range of difficulties which objectors must anticipate, as well as a measure of flexibility which even socialist non-western governments can offer.

The Soviet Union

In the Soviet Union conscientious objectors are in for a struggle the moment they register their reservations about fulfilling their military obligations at their local commanding office. The military statutes, based upon the Constitution of the USSR, state that every able-bodied Soviet male between the ages of 17 and 27 years of age must expect to be called up for military service in the Armed Forces of the Motherland. This means a term of active service of from one to three years, depending on placement in the various branches of the forces. Temporary deferral for study purposes in some instances, or physical inability to serve are the only accepted qualifications for exemption.⁵

Members of a Soviet Peace Committee delegation, when asked about conscientious objectors on a visit to Britain, expressed their disbelief that any man would refuse to fight for his country.⁶ The fact is nevertheless that in the USSR a growing number of individuals, certainly hundreds, and perhaps as many as several thousand a year, are insisting that the right to exemption from military service for reasons of conscience, whether religious or otherwise, ought to be statutory.⁷ What else, they say, can the much-vaunted "freedom of conscience" really mean?

The Soviet government faced this argument with respect to freedom of conscience and military service in its early months, immediately after the Revolution. Lenin, though a bitter opponent of all pacifists, nevertheless yielded to pragmatic considerations when he decreed an exemption clause for conscientious objectors on 4 January 1919.⁸ During the Civil War particularly it was this decree which allowed tens of thousands of persons from such religious groups as the Baptists and Evangelical Christians, Seventh-Day Adventists and Mennonites to obtain exemption from military service on grounds of conscience and religious conviction.⁹

Within a few years after Lenin's death, the decree appears to have been revoked in practice, if not in the statute books. All these groups were forced to reconsider their pacifist views and make explicit declarations of loyalty to the new government.¹⁰ Dissenters from such official support took their views "underground". The Mennonites almost alone continued to negotiate actively for an alternative to service in the armed forces. Tentative arrangements for alternative service such as construction work and forestry service were made, but they too were terminated when the Stalin Constitution of 1936 created a firm and permanent basis for the universal military service requirements as they now stand.¹¹

A few years later the German invasion during the Second World War brought to the fore the deeply-rooted patriotic feelings of the Soviet

people. The Russian Orthodox Church and the Evangelical Christians and Baptists openly supported the war effort. They were rewarded by being allowed to reorganise and reconstitute themselves as legal church communities.¹² Smaller bodies with pacifist traditions, mainly Mennonites and Seventh-Day Adventists who were of German origin, found themselves classed as “unreliable” and “fascist” enemies of the state. They were most often sent into the work battalions of prison camps and other non-military installations or labour projects. After the war they were left for a decade or so in restricted residence (*komendatura*) communities in the Urals and Central Asia.¹³ Conscientious objection to military service was almost unheard of publicly, though instances of it probably did still occur.¹⁴

Since about 1970 conscientious objection to military service, as a form of dissent, has increasingly become a public affair again. Military authorities not infrequently express anxiety about the influence of “pacifistic ideas” in the army and in society generally.¹⁵ Soviet papers and periodicals comment on this regularly. Conscientious objectors, and those who support or encourage them, whether parents, friends, or congregations, are accused of disloyalty and hostility toward the Soviet state.¹⁶ At least one Soviet religious periodical, the journal of the Evangelical Christians and Baptists, *Bratsky vestnik*, has recently addressed the matter as well.¹⁷

Publicised cases of refusal to bear arms or to swear the military oath are found chiefly among unregistered religious communities such as the reform Baptists, the True and Free Seventh-Day Adventists, Jehovah’s Witnesses, and those Pentecostals who do not belong to the national Protestant organisation, the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians and Baptists.¹⁸ Similar protests may be found, albeit less frequently, among other Soviet Germans and Jews, Crimean Tatars, the True Orthodox Church, Roman Catholics and some other groups.¹⁹ While congregational registration no doubt implies some acquiescence with the laws on military conscription, there is reason to think that members of registered congregations, especially Baptists and Mennonites, are to be found among the objectors.²⁰

Theological differences still divide these groups, but on the issues of bearing arms and the taking of human life, many of them agree. As these objectors interpret the Bible, in the case of Christians at least, killing in any form is wrong and sinful. There is moreover a clear New Testament command against swearing any kind of oaths.²¹ As one Christian recruit put it to his local military officials: “I am a believer, and from my purely religious conviction I cannot take the military oath or bear arms . . . I do not refuse to serve in the ranks of the Soviet army, and am prepared to fulfil conscientiously all that my service demands. But with regard to the oath, as a religious believer, I cannot alter my thoughts and convictions.”²²

That expression of concern about the oath, coupled with a willingness to perform some kind of appropriate non-military form of service (sometimes even including the bearing of arms) is shared by many reform Baptist young men in particular.²³ It may include some Mennonites as well.²⁴ Jehovah's Witnesses are consistently opposed to any form of military or alternative work within the framework of the armed forces.²⁵ Seventh-Day Adventist believers may initially refuse to perform military duties on Saturday (their biblical "day of rest") but are often cited as refusing to take the oath or to bear arms as well.²⁶

For some, the refusal of military service is less a matter of religious conviction than a concern for its impact on emigration plans. This has been true for a number of young Jews and Pentecostals, and also some Soviet Germans who wish to emigrate. They feel that military service could make their departure more difficult. In the past some would-be emigrants have had their requests turned down because they were considered to possess sensitive military information as a result of serving in the army. Some Jewish applicants, having received permission from Israel to enter, hand in their Soviet citizenship papers and claim that they are no longer citizens of the Soviet Union, hence not subject to its military service requirements.²⁷

The Soviet military authorities will not accept any views which disclaim an obligation to serve in the armed forces, either on the grounds of conscience or otherwise. They generally regard a refusal to swear the military oath as an objection to bearing arms. There is some logic to this, since the law forbids the handing of weapons to anyone who does not swear the oath. When prosecuted, such people are sentenced not simply for non-swearing of oaths, or "evasion of call-up to service" (article 80 of the RSFSR Criminal Code), but also under article 249 of the Code, namely, attempting to evade the obligations of military service altogether.²⁸

Punishments under article 249 typically include imprisonment for periods from three to seven years in peace time, and could include the death penalty during war time. A sentence of two to three years served in ordinary regime camps seems to be most common at present.²⁹

Imprisonment is not inevitable however. The local commanding office at its discretion may grant an alternative form of non-combatant service, and this happens more often than might be expected.³⁰ However, even when an alternative form of service is granted, conscientious objectors may still encounter pressures, and sundry forms of harassment designed to force them to surrender their pacifist views, and indeed, their faith itself. Several instances of death brought about by mistreatment and abuse of Christians on active duty have been reported.³¹

The German Democratic Republic

The present-day military service requirements of the German Democra-

tic Republic are in essence identical to (perhaps even greater than) those of the USSR. Conscientious objectors, however, find themselves in a considerably more flexible situation in the GDR. A legal *Wehrersatzdienst* (alternative defence service) option has been in existence for over twenty years, and the prospect for further accommodation to the wishes of objectors may be somewhat less remote than in the Soviet Union.

The GDR had no form of conscription during the first 13 years of its short history. The war-time Allies, having attempted to crush the "military spirit of the German people", made it a major objective in 1945 to ensure that the new Germany would be a nation of peace. For a time some people dreamed of a single neutralist state, with no more than a tiny defence force (Home Guard) along the lines of what was eventually worked out in Austria.³² Events, however, followed a different path. The Federal Republic of Germany passed a compulsory conscription law just ten years after the war ended, and in 1962 the GDR followed suit. The statutes of East Germany rendered all males between the ages of 18 and fifty liable for service in the *Nationale Volksarmee* (National People's Army). For emergencies of defence that regulation was subsequently extended to cover women of the same age, and also to include men up to the age of sixty. In the initial legislation prison was the only legal "alternative" to service in the armed forces of the GDR.³³ Significant segments of the East German public registered disapproval of the move. Among young adults, that is, those who had experienced the horrors of 1944 and 1945 as children, there was widespread detestation of violence and all forms of war. The oft-repeated slogan that conscripts would be "defending the peace" frequently fell on virtually deaf ears.

Some Protestant church leaders of the EKD (Evangelical Church of Germany) were deeply disappointed by the government's seeming lack of respect for freedom of conscience. The EKD had in fact raised this very issue a decade or more before the military service statutes of 1962 had come into being. Its synods of 1948 (Eisenach), 1950 (Berlin-Weissensee) and 1952 (Elbingrode) made public declarations of their readiness to stand behind the decisions of young Germans who might at some time resist the call to military service for reasons of conscience and Christian faith.³⁴

As the situation developed, it was the Protestant leaders in particular (in great contrast to what took place in the USSR), who helped to shape the legal status of conscientious objectors in the GDR. Church-state conversations led in the spring of 1962 to a *modus vivendi* by which the state agreed to end its earlier attacks on all forms of pacifist thinking, and even admitted its willingness to tolerate conscientious objectors. It did not however concede to the church's demand for a legal alternative to bearing arms, so that even its relatively generous treatment of conscientious

objectors in the next few years could not alleviate the unrest and suspicion generated by the 1962 military service legislation.³⁵

In 1963 a conference of EKD leaders called explicitly for the legal protection of those refusing military service for reasons of conscience, and also assured such persons of church support for their position. The creation of non-combatant "construction units" (*Baueinheiten*), which the state ordered on 7 September of the following year, came, by all appearances, as a direct response to this conference request.³⁶ The Party newspaper, *Neues Deutschland*, spoke of the move as a "military necessity" since such military building units would be a vital factor for building up the defence capacity of the nation. The need for broader "democratic legitimisation" of the new state has been cited as another reason for the concession. However, the possibility of facing a potential force of three or four thousand conscientious objectors, and an intensified conflict with the EKD, may have been the strongest motivator of all.

The *Baueinheiten*, with its recruits henceforth designated as *Bausoldaten* ("building soldiers") provided recruits with a distinctive uniform bearing the design of a spade on a shoulder patch (hence also the term *Spaten-Soldaten* ("soldiers of the spade")). Their regular work excluded the bearing of arms. The term of service was eighteen months, equal to that of regular soldiers. Building activity included in the first instance construction of military sites and installations. The men were usually stationed in small units of fifteen to twenty persons, although they were sometimes used for large-scale projects like that of building a new harbour at Mikran on the Island of Reugen.³⁷

Neither the EKD churchmen nor the conscientious objectors felt that this arrangement was really satisfactory.³⁸ The units were still under the total control of the army, the construction of military sites seemed still to be involvement in the armed forces, and the required oath of commitment to service differed little in substance from that required of regular soldiers. Almost immediately some men protested against the requirements of the units, both by appeals to the authorities and by non-participation. Many men called for an open discussion of all ideas related to finding peaceful alternatives to military service.

By autumn 1964 the regional synod of Berlin-Brandenburg had submitted a complaint that "the concerns of the conscientious objectors were not being met", while the Goerlitz provincial synod a year later asked for "a form of alternative service which would not force anyone to participate in military building projects against his conscience." In spring 1967 the provincial synod of Saxony registered its anxieties about students who had served in construction units being discriminated against in schools. This meant that leading career opportunities were being closed to those who refused to serve in the active military services of the country.

The call for a civilian form of alternative service began to re-focus the

church's interest in the fate of the conscientious objectors. Bishop Jaenicke had already proposed at the 1967 synod in Saxony that the government ought to consider alternatives in the fields of health or disaster services. Beyond East Germany itself the Conference of European Churches held in Nybørg in 1971 considered the same idea put forward in propositions on peace service by Bishop Kausche. It resolved in the end to encourage member-churches to be sympathetic to conscientious objectors, especially in cases of discrimination or even arrest. Beyond all this, it seemed, little more could be done.³⁹

Proposals for a civilian peace service alternative have been sharpened by a seven-point programme set forth in May 1981 by the Dresden group, *Sozialer Friedensdienst* ("Social peace service"). The programme proposes a 24-month term of work, preceded by educational preparation on themes of demilitarisation, disarmament, peaceful security and non-violent forms of resolving conflicts. It suggests the extension of service to that of medical aides, social work, disaster control, and protection of the environment. Synods of the EKD regional churches gave this proposal sympathetic hearings, as the bishops continued to warn against increasing militarisation of the GDR.⁴⁰

In September of the same year Klaus Gysi, the Secretary of State for Church Affairs, explained his government's total rejection of such a scheme. The constitution of the GDR, he pointed out, required military service from all citizens of the nation, while the construction units catered to all those not wishing to bear arms. To make additional exceptions would undermine a fundamental principle. Moreover, the introduction of a so-called "civilian peace service" would imply that the National People's Army, which does nothing but "defend peace and socialism" is a "war service". Such an idea would be inadmissible, Gysi said.⁴¹

This latest encounter between church and state has, then, left the situation basically unchanged. There is some indication in recent times that the construction units are becoming less demanding in their requirements, and that projects of a civilian nature are now qualifying for the use of such units. Defence Minister Heinz Hoffmann praised the "building soldiers" at his visit to the Mukran site in July last year, a form of recognition which the press had not publicised until then. Erich Honecker himself has claimed that there is no discrimination now against these men, and some church circles seem to support this view.⁴²

There remain the *Totalverweigerer* ("total objectors") who resist any form of military service, the *Baueinheiten* included. They are a growing group, and the penalties for them seem to be increasing. All Jehovah's Witnesses (who form an illegal religious community) refuse to participate in the available options altogether. The consequence is a prison sentence of 18 months (it used to be six to eight months). If they are called up to the reserves, they spend the time in jail. In the building units, refusals to

swear the oath or to be involved in military construction can provoke sentences of two years in jail. There are however examples of lesser penalties, and, as in the early years of conscription during the 1960s, cases where no action at all has been taken against those who refuse to serve.⁴³

Annual statistics on the number of conscientious objectors in the GDR, whether in the construction units or elsewhere, are still difficult to obtain. One source gives the early yearly number of *Bausoldaten* as 250 at first, rising to five hundred in 1976, and one thousand now. The figure is estimated to be about half the number of all conscientious objectors. For the years 1964-1976 about a thousand, thought to be about half, of the objectors who refused even to join the construction units were members of the Jehovah's Witnesses. This could mean that as many as 3,200 men may have served in the units so far, and that about two thousand may have been sentenced for being total resisters during these two decades.⁴⁴

The governments of both the USSR and the GDR emphasise their commitment to defend their countries and to build up the armed forces needed for this task, a decision that few nations of the world have chosen not to make. Smaller nations depend on larger ones to help when the need arises. Both the USSR and the GDR give limited toleration to those who want to serve their countries, but without bearing arms. Conscientious objectors in both countries are trying to discover the final limits of this tolerance. In both countries, the churches do not speak with one voice on this issue. Some support the pacifists and nurture their ideas and actions, others do not. In the USSR supporters of pacifism must generally take an "illegal" path, trusting to the discretion of the system itself to make individual exceptions to the rule. In the GDR there is an officially recognised form of non-combatant service, not fully acceptable, but considerably more than the Soviet Union will grant at present. There is also a church that openly promotes the cause of its conscientious objectors; in the USSR that is something the churches find very difficult to do.

Objectors to the ideological governmental pronouncements of these nations always encounter dilemmas which can be resolved only at a price, with few prospects that it will decrease. What will happen if the demands for an alternative to bearing arms continue to escalate? Can the objectors be "bought off" somehow, and the churches' protests silenced? Only time will show whether compromises can be achieved which will settle the issues in these two countries, and the other Eastern European countries as well.

¹Jan Triska, ed. *Constitution of the Communist Party States*. Stanford, California: 1968, pp. 51, 126, 162, 192, 224, 344, 353, 401, 458.

²See, for example, issues of the past five years for periodicals such as *END Churches Register*, *War Registers International Newsletter*, and various publications of Amnesty International, all published in Great Britain.

³A recent survey of the world-wide situation regarding government policies on conscription for military service, alternative service, etc. has been published: Asbjorn Eide and

Chama Mubanga-Chipoya, eds., *Question of Conscientious Objection to Military Service*. Prepared under the Auspices of the Commission on Human Rights (UNESCO), Geneva, 1983. For Western Europe no countries are listed under "conscription without alternative service", and the following as having no conscription at all: Ireland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, and the United Kingdom.

⁴Poland provided a form of civilian service in 1979. See a comparative study on the USSR and Poland in Karen Schmidt, "Kriegsdienstverweigerung in sozialistischen Staaten. Dargestellt am Beispiel der Sowjetunion und der Volksrepublik Polen", *Berichte des Bundesinstituts für ostwissenschaftliche und internationale Studien*. Cologne: 43/1972, pp. 1-21.

⁵See article 3 in the section "On Universal Military Service" in *Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta SSSR* No. 42, 18 October 1967, item 55, and a summary description of service requirements in *Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR. Their Treatment and Conditions*. London: Amnesty International, 1980, 2nd rev. ed., pp. 51-52.

⁶Catherine Perry, "Voices from Russia", *Newspeace*, April 1982, p. 5.

⁷Exact statistics for conscientious objectors in the Soviet Union are not available. A document noting the refusals of 160 Pentecostals in the Rovno region was published in *A Chronicle of Current Events*, No. 46, 1978, p. 46.

⁸Developments regarding exemption provisions in the early years of the Soviet period have been detailed in Lawrence Klippenstein, "Mennonite Pacifism and State Service in Russia: A Case Study of Church-State Relations, 1789-1936", unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, 1984, pp. 268-314. On Lenin's views on pacifism see Michael Voslensky, "The Concept of Peace in The Political Philosophy and Ethics of the Soviet Union", in *Peace: What Can We Do? International Lutheran Contributions to Peace Ethics*, ed. E. Lorenz. Geneva: 1984, pp. 70ff.

⁹A. Klibanov. *Religioznoye sektanstvo i sovremennost'*. Moscow: 1969, p. 203.

¹⁰Walter Sawatsky, *Soviet Evangelicals after World War II*. Kitchener, Ontario, Canada and Scottsdale, Pennsylvania: 1981, 116ff.

¹¹Article 132 of the Constitution: "Military service in the Armed Forces of the USSR is an honourable duty of the citizens of the USSR." It meant everyone, and the wording of that article has remained basically unchanged to the present day.

¹²Sawatsky, *op. cit.*, p. 119. See also W. Alexeev and T. G. Stavrou. *The Great Revival: The Russian Church under German Occupation*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: 1976, pp. 53ff.

¹³Walter Sawatsky, "Mennonite Congregations in the Soviet Union Today", *Mennonite Life* XXXIII, March 1978, pp. 12-26.

¹⁴The situation is well depicted in Walter Wedel, *Nur zwanzig Kilometer*. Wuppertal: 1979, where one of the main characters mentions his struggle with his conscience over serving in the army during this period.

¹⁵Oxana Antic, "Atheist Indoctrination of Soviet Troops", *Radio Free Europe Research*, 17 August 1982, pp. 1-3.

¹⁶*Ibid.*

¹⁷"Materialy plenuma VSYeKhB prochodivshego 30 noyabrya — 1 dekabrya 1982 goda", *Bratsky vestnik*, No. 1, 1983, p. 39.

¹⁸Reports from these groups are found frequently in *samizdat*.

¹⁹Examples are found in *Amnesty International Report*, 1980, p. 304 and *A Chronicle of Current Events*, No. 53, 1979, p. 10, or more recently *Menschenrechte*, January-February, 1985, pp. 39-40.

²⁰Sawatsky, *Soviet Evangelicals*, p. 120.

²¹Passages in question would include Exodus 20:13 and Matthew 5:34.

²²*Prisoners of Conscience*, pp. 56-57, and "Young Christians Refuse the Soviet Military Oath", *Evangelical Times*, January 1985, pp. 1-2.

²³Bud Bultman, "Serving Two Masters. Bearing Arms and the Cross in Soviet Military Service", *Sparks*, Vol. 5, No. 4 (Summer 1980), p. 6; and Michael Bourdeaux, Hans Heblly, and Eugene Voss, eds., *Religious Liberty in the USSR. WCC and USSR. A Post-Nairobi Documentation*. Keston, England: 1976, pp. 87ff.

²⁴Heinrich and Gerhard Woelk, *Die Mennoniten Brüdergemeinde in Russland 1925-1980*. Fresno, California: 1981, p. 215.

²⁵Jehovah's Witnesses seem to be gaining more attention in the Soviet press recently. Their refusal to bear arms is noted as evidence of their disloyalty to the nation. See Oxana Antic, "Jehovah's Witnesses in the Soviet Union", *Radio Free Europe Research*, 39/82, 19

January 1983, pp. 1-2, and the March 1984 issue of the recently published *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Ukraine*, p. 11, which mentions 18 Jehovah's Witnesses of Transcarpathian Ukraine, imprisoned for refusing to serve in the Soviet Army. (All extant issues (nine) are on file in the Keston College archives.)

²⁶V. A. Shelkov, "Lenin Cited in Support of True and Free Adventist View", *RCL* Vol. 8 No. 2, 1980, pp. 213-17. The history of pacifist thought among Adventists is surveyed helpfully in Marite Sapiets, "One Hundred Years of Adventism in Russia and the Soviet Union", *RCL* Vol. 12 No. 3, 1984, pp. 256-73. A case of conscientious objection is described in "Paul Schreider: Conscientious Objection and the Criminal Code", *A Chronicle of Human Rights in the USSR*, No. 34, April-June 1979, pp. 65-69.

²⁷Cf. the experiences of Anatoli Malkin, noted in *A Chronicle of Current Events*, No. 37, 1978, pp. 10ff., and that of Grigori Viktorovich Yevich, in "Soviet Religious Samizdat", *RCL* Vol. 11 No. 1, 1983, p. 80.

²⁸There is no specific article dealing simply with non-swearing of oaths. The four articles normally applied are: article 80: "Evasion of Regular Call to Active Military Service"; article 81: "Evasion of Call-up for Mobilisation"; article 198-1: "Evasion of Training Courses or Musters and of Military Registration by Persons Subject to Military Service", and article 249a: "Evasion of Military Service by Maiming or Any Other Method". Cf. Harold J. Berman, ed. *Soviet Criminal Law and Procedure. The RSFSR Codes*. Cambridge, Mass: 1972, pp. 155-56, 184 and 197.

²⁹Based on about a hundred publicised cases of conscientious objection examined by the writer for this study. The conclusions need confirmation from a broader study.

³⁰Gary Thatcher, "Despite official scorn, interest in religion rises in the Soviet Union", *Christian Science Monitor*, 13 January 1985, p. 12; Perry, *op. cit.* p. 5, and Woelk and Woelk, *op. cit.*, p. 215. The cases examined by the author (cf. note 29) included only one or two instances of alternative service. Grigori Viktorovich Yevich, a Pentecostal CO, was sent to serve in a construction camp (see note 27).

³¹Bultman, *op. cit.*, pp. 5-6, and "Other Cases of Religious Persecution in the Red Army", *Religion in Communist-Dominated Areas*, Vol. XII, Nos. 1-3, January, February and March, 1973, pp. 9-10.

³²Martin McCauley, *The German Democratic Republic Since 1945*. London: 1983, pp. 7ff.

³³Kurt and Hildegard Mocker, "Wehrdienstverweigerung in der 'DDR': Rechtsgrundlagen des Wehrdienstes", *Christen drueben*, No. 1, November 1984. These writers also cite the earliest phase of ideological development in the GDR when the slogan of the Socialist Unity Party was radically pacifist: "No German may again take a weapon in his hand" (p. 10).

³⁴Bernd Eisenfeld, "Mit wechselnder Intensität: Das Eintreten der evangelischen Kirchen in der DDR für den waffenlosen Ersatzdienst", *Kirche im Sozialismus*, Vol. V, No. 1, March 1979, pp. 27-28.

³⁵*Ibid.*, p. 29.

³⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 30-31.

³⁷Bernd Eisenfeld, "Spaten-Soldaten. 20 Jahre Bausoldaten in der DDR", *Kirche im Sozialismus*, Vol. X, No. 4, 1984, pp. 21ff. Renate Hackel, "20 Jahre Bausoldaten-Dienst mit den Spaten", *Informationen und Berichte*, No. 1, 1985, pp. 16ff.

³⁸Eisenfeld, "Mit wechselnder Intensität . . .", pp. 31-32. Mocker and Mocker, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-12; Ernst Legahun, "'Bausoldaten' und ziviler Ersatzdienst", *Christen drueben*, No. 1, 1984, pp. 8-9. The latter includes the exact wording of the oath.

³⁹Eisenfeld, "Mit wechselnder Intensität . . .", pp. 31-32, 35-36.

⁴⁰Hackel, *op. cit.*, pp. 14-15.

⁴¹*Ibid.*

⁴²*Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

⁴³*Ibid.*

⁴⁴Mocker and Mocker, *op. cit.*, p. 12. Cf. also the comments of John Thiessen in a memo to the author, "Bausoldaten in the GDR". The comment includes a summary of remarks made by speakers at two events celebrating the twentieth anniversary of the institution of the "construction units" in 1964. The basic materials are drawn from an address by Manfred Stolpe, entitled "Wie dienen wir den Frieden am Besten: mit oder ohne Waffen?" (How can we best serve the interests of peace: with or without weapons?).