

## Rudolf Bahro (August 1981)

### Abstract

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The book *The Alternative* [*Die Alternative*], authored by East German publicist Rudolf Bahro, was published in the Federal Republic in 1977. (The news magazine *Der Spiegel* had previously printed excerpts from it.) The book's subtitle—"A Criticism of Real Existing Socialism"—offered a hint about its contents. Bahro identified the move from "revolutionary Marxism" to "bureaucratic centralization" as the fundamental problem of state socialism. Despite the threat of repressive measures, *The Alternative* was read within wide-ranging groups of GDR intellectuals. Bahro was arrested on August 23, 1977; after ten months of pre-trial detainment, he was sentenced to eight years in prison for "treasonous collecting of information" and "betrayal of state secrets." His fate soon became the subject of international protest. On the GDR's 30th anniversary in October 1979, Bahro was granted amnesty and was able to leave for the West, where he remained politically active. Bahro participated in the founding of the Green Party and continued to publish. This picture shows Bahro in August 1981, at a Freedom Forum [*Forum Frieden*] discussion event at the SPD party headquarters in Bonn.

### Source

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Source: Dr. Rudolf Bahro, social scientist and politician. Date: August 27, 1981. Location: Bonn.  
Photo: Ludwig Wegmann. Bundesbildstelle Bonn, image no. 61 208/24a.

Courtesy of the German Information Center

Recommended Citation: Rudolf Bahro (August 1981), published in: German History in Documents

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and Images, <<https://germanhistorydocs.org/en/two-germanies-1961-1989/ghdi:image-2839>> [May 05, 2024].