

The Communist Case for “Demarcation” from the West (February 10, 1971)

Abstract

In response to West German efforts to increase the permeability of the East-West border, the leading communist historian Jürgen Kuczynski justifies the policy of demarcation [*Abgrenzung*] from the West. This policy sought to immunize the GDR population against the blandishments of détente, democracy, and affluence.

Source

Demarcation

At the fifteenth conference of our Central Committee, Comrade Honecker explained that, in developing our socialist society, we must constantly remember “that we are building up the new socialist society under the conditions of irreconcilable class conflict with the imperialism of the FRG and its intensified attempts at intellectual diversion.”

And from this he drew the conclusion: “The continued demarcation of the socialist GDR from the imperialistic FRG is the most effective answer to the reactionary-nationalistic, anti-Communist policy of the FRG's ruling circles.”

The word “demarcation” has elicited enormous indignation in the monopoly-enslaved mass media of the FRG, on the radio, and in the press. And this is understandable.

After all, among the thugs of this world, just as among the monopolies, there are two “fundamentally different” theories on the robbing of liberties, wallets, savings, etc. The thugs adhere to a brutal attack strategy: they knock down their victim and then rob him. The monopolies approach the victim in a chummy manner; they behave, as they call it, “humanely” and then rob him while building a “humane” bridge to the inside pocket of his jacket.

Whoever has the choice should now opt, according to influential circles in Bonn, for the “humane” method of being robbed. Is this not preferable in every respect to the brutal method of knocking down the victim? In this case, one really couldn’t speak of an agonizing choice.

But does it really require that much imagination to envision a different solution to the problem? Namely, not to become the victim of any sort of thuggish or monopolistic strategy!

Certainly the supporters of both theoretical camps will consider such a solution criminal, even inhumane. For it means a sharp demarcation from them; it makes every strategy of robbery impossible. And that’s exactly what we want!

Yes, in our German Democratic Republic, we do want demarcation, we want to set ourselves as far apart as possible, and to keep distancing ourselves from a social order in which the interests of monopoly capital determine people's lives, manipulate their thoughts, and put their livelihood in a state of insecurity.

Demarcation in two senses: demarcation in objective terms, in the development of the socialist society

and its laws, which provide for:

A consistent peace policy, which gives imperialist aggression no chance; whereas the revanchism and militarism in the FRG threaten the security of Europe.

A humane society, which offers a life of human dignity to all; whereas workers in the FRG are reduced to objects of profit-making.

Steady security in life, which also includes the security of employment; whereas growing unemployment threatens the FRG.

Ongoing improvement in the sphere of cultural life, also through university and academic reform; whereas in the FRG the word “misery” is appearing with ever greater frequency in the cultural sphere, even in the monopoly press.

But also demarcation in a subjective sense, in our understanding of what is going on here and in the FRG, in our recognition of the grand and the beautiful here, in our comprehension of all the awful things happening today in the FRG, and of the even worse things to come, and also in our ability to see through the enemy’s thievish tricks.

Yes, we are consciously drawing a line between ourselves and the abyss, between ourselves and the plague, between life and death!

And furthermore:

How many of us, particularly among the older people, have friends over there in the FRG! Old friends, with whom we once marched together under Thälmann’s leadership, with whom we lived and loved in our youth, read Marx and Heine and Hölderlin! Old friends and comrades to whom we are also tied today through common class interests.

But they also call out to us: Yes, indeed, you are acting correctly and also in our best interest when you draw a clear dividing line between yourselves and this imperialistic system, its policies, and ideology. Back then, we were oppressed together; we fought together against exploitation and monopoly. Today, you are free and live in another world, which we love. But we are still fighting against those who dominate us—[those] from whom you yourselves, like us, must be demarcated, if you, being an example for us, want to build up the German Democratic Republic so that it is strong and great and beautiful.

Demarcation—how they hate this word, our enemies, just like the “wall” that we built one night ten years ago to protect against their attacks!

Demarcation—with respect to everything harmful that is meant to be smuggled into our country, narcotics and ideological perversions, pot and heroin, nationalistic reaction and social-democratism!

But when we suggest proper relations between our two countries in accordance with international law, then that goes “too far” for them.

Of course, that goes “too far” down the path of peaceful coexistence for them, for they really want to go down the path of “peaceful” annihilation of our existence.

But we will block this path: with our strength, and for the protection of our socialist community of states.

Source: Jürgen Kuczynski, “Abgrenzung,” *Neues Deutschland*, February 10, 1971. © Jürgen Kuczynski. Reproduced with permission from Prof. Dr. Thomas Kuczynski, Berlin.

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