

The Krefeld Appeal (November 1980)

Abstract

The Krefeld Appeal called on the federal government to withdraw its support for NATO's Dual-Track Decision and sought to provide a common platform for the various groups that were protesting the nuclear arms build-up.

Source

It is becoming increasingly obvious that NATO "rearmament resolution" of December 12, 1979, was a fateful mistake. The expectation that agreements between the United States and the Soviet Union aimed at limiting strategic weapons systems in Europe could be reached before the deployment of a new generation of American intermediate-range nuclear weapons in Western Europe does not appear to have been fulfilled.

A year has passed since Brussels and not even the beginning of such talks is in sight. On the contrary: the newly elected president of the United States has unapologetically declared that he will not accept even the already signed SALT II treaty limiting Soviet and American strategic nuclear weapons and therefore he will not pass it on to the Senate for ratification.

By refusing to ratify this treaty, however, the United States would inevitably push any prospect of negotiations to limit strategic nuclear weapons in Europe even further into the future. A suicidal arms race could not be stopped at the last moment; the increasing acceleration [of the arms race] and the ever firmer belief in the apparent limitability of a nuclear war would expose the European peoples, first and foremost, to an intolerable risk.

The participants in the Krefeld talks on November 15–16, 1980, therefore appeal jointly to the federal government to withdraw its consent to the stationing of Pershing II and cruise missiles in central Europe and, in the future, to adopt a position within the Alliance [i.e., NATO] that no longer exposes our country to suspicions of wanting to be the forerunner in a new nuclear arms race that would endanger Europeans in particular.

There is growing public concern about recent developments. The possibilities of an alternative security policy are being discussed more and more resolutely. Such considerations are of great significance for the democratic process of developing an informed opinion and can help ensure that country will not suddenly be faced with a fait accompli.

All citizens are therefore called upon to support this appeal, so that public opinion will create unremitting and growing pressure in order to force a security policy that:

- rejects the arms build-up that would turn central Europe into a nuclear weapons platform for the United States;
- values disarmament over deterrence;
- directs the development of the army of the Federal Republic toward this aim.

Source: Krefelder Appeal (November 1980), *Deutsche Volkszeitung*, special issue, January 1981;

reprinted in Lutz Plümer, ed., *Positionen der Friedensbewegung. Die Auseinandersetzung um den US-Mittelstreckenraketenbeschluß. Dokumente, Appelle, Beiträge*. Frankfurt am Main, 1981, p. 64.

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