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SED/PDS Resolution for a New GDR (December 17, 1989)

In an attempt to salvage its waning power, the discredited SED renamed itself the “Party of Democratic Socialism” (PDS) at a special party congress dedicated to preserving the independence of the GDR by finally democratizing its conception of socialism.

The delegates to the special party congress of the SED/PDS hereby declare:

The democratic will of the people inspired the revolutionary renewal of socialism in the GDR. We stand behind this. Together with all democrats and humanists, we socialists support the radical renewal of our society.

What do we want?

We want:

- to have responsibility for this country, which is our homeland
- to preserve the state sovereignty of the German Democratic Republic and protect the country from an economic sellout
- democratic socialism on German soil
- unrestricted rule by the people and rule of law
- constitutionally guaranteed political pluralism with a democratic parliament of high authority
- an economically productive and ecologically sound country
- protection and development of public ownership of the means of production; promotion of corporative and commercial initiatives in industry and agriculture, and in commerce, skilled crafts, and trade
- strengthening of corporative, state, and personal property in agriculture; environmentally sound, healthy nutrition for the people
- a polity that offers its citizens social security by asserting the principle of performance, that protects the weak and guarantees the freedom of every citizen to make life decisions independently
- real conditions for equal opportunities for women and for their equality in society
- the promotion of science, culture, education, and technology; equal opportunities for the younger generations through effective schooling of the kind that develops individuality and is dedicated to moral and humanistic values

- cooperation and friendship with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and with all parties and movements in the world that advocate peace and social progress
- to assure that no more citizens leave our country because they see no future here for themselves and their families
- drastic disarmament and nonviolence in international relations, in solving global problems, and in solidarity with the countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America

We associate this with the name socialism.

Our party is rooted in the tradition of the workers' movement, humanism, and antifascism. It continues the work of Marx, Engels, and Lenin. It is committed to the social democratic party of August Bebel, to the Spartacist League of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, to the hundreds of thousands of German communists and social democrats, citizens of all social strata and political convictions, who opposed Hitler-fascism.

We are convinced: Neither ideological difference nor political disagreement should stand in the way of our common path to a society of democracy and solidarity. Because this concerns our country and our future, we remember our most painful and important historical experience: If progressive parties and movements succumb to infighting instead of forging a common path, the hour of demagogues and right-wing agitators will come. Let us stand up together for nonviolence in political conflicts, following the example of the revolution thus far. Let us raise our voices for justice and law. Pogroms are not allowed. Revenge is barbarous. Neo-Nazism and right-wing extremism must not have a chance! We are certain that our country's majority, like us, is standing up for a peaceful order in Europe and a secure path to overcoming the division of our continent, and wants a common European house. This end is also served by a treaty community between the GDR and the FRG. We shall not allow nationalistic voices calling for a Greater Germany to gain the upper hand. Our neighbors, the peoples of Europe, expect us to do justice to our responsibility for peace. We advocate passable, friendly, yet secure borders with neighboring states. We must rely on one another in order to achieve these goals. Let us all take a common path despite all our political differences.

For a new GDR, for democratic socialism!

Source: "Für die DDR – für demokratischen Sozialismus" ["For the GDR – for Democratic Socialism"], Außerordentlicher Parteitag der SED/PDS. 8./9. und 16./17. Dezember 1989 [Special Party Congress of the SED/PDS. 8./9. and 16./17. December 1989]. Berlin, 1990, pp. 125-27.

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