

**Willi Dickhut**

# **What Happened Later?**



**Second Factual Report of a Worker  
from Solingen, from 1949 on**

**Verlag Neuer Weg**

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*Second Factual Report of a Worker from Solingen, from 1949 on*  
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*Zweiter Tatsachenbericht eines Solinger Arbeiters ab 1949*

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## Preface

In 1979, when my book, *So war's damals ..., Tatsachenbericht eines Solinger Arbeiters 1926–1948* (*That's How It Was.... Factual Report of a Worker from Solingen, 1926 to 1948*), came out, a journalist asked me whether I would now make a start on a sequel to the book. I expressed concerns because I asked myself the following questions: Is the bureaucracy in the Soviet Union, in the German Democratic Republic, and in the other formerly socialist countries already so degenerate that it has totally abandoned Marxism-Leninism and unequivocally established revisionism as the leading ideology of the state, the economy, and culture? And has it totally liquidated socialism and transformed it into a capitalism of a new type, bureaucratic capitalism? Can the bureaucrats have become so corrupt that they have lost all touch with the toiling masses, their worries and needs?

Although I had begun as early as in 1971 to write the book, *Die Restauration des Kapitalismus in der Sowjetunion* (*The Restoration of Capitalism in the Soviet Union*), and had furnished *objective proof* of the transformation of socialism into a bureaucratic capitalism, the assessment of the *subjective factor* raised concerns. It was, after all, former communists who had betrayed socialism. Recently a comrade from the Association of Persecutees of the Nazi Regime (VVN) asked me: “How is something like that even possible? Honecker was also a resistance fighter against fascism and was persecuted, and now he is so corrupt.” That the mode of thinking of Honecker and all bureaucrats has changed – from the proletarian mode of thinking to the petty-bourgeois mode of thinking – is incomprehensible to many people; and yet it is precisely the decisive reason for their betrayal of socialism. The petty bourgeois always strives to rise into the capitalist class. On the basis of its power position the petty-bourgeois bureaucracy in the formerly socialist countries turned into a new class that abandoned socialism and transformed it into a bureaucratic capitalism.

This new type of capitalism appropriates the surplus value from production; it thus exploits the working people, oppressing them in a clever way. Corruption runs rampant: the degenerate bureaucrats live in exclusive residential areas, shop in stores catering only to them, amuse themselves in hunting preserves shielded from the public, open bank accounts at home and abroad, and so forth.

In the KPD of the Federal Republic, too, a bureaucracy with a petty-bourgeois mode of thinking grew. Financially dependent on the Socialist Unity Party (SED), it submitted to their commands, gave up Marxism-Leninism, and made revisionism the basis of its politics. The leadership of the KPD (and today of the DKP) evaded any ideological-political discussion, replacing it with intrigue and slander. Even without holding political power, KPD and DKP degenerated bureaucratically.

I have no cause to spread the cloak of Christian neighborly love over these bureaucrats, and so I will name names. My experience in the old KPD obliges me in the interest of building a truly Marxist-Leninist party to relentlessly expose every sign of bureaucracy: Nip it in the bud!

Solingen

November 1990

Willi Dickhut

## Foreword to the first foreign-language edition

This “Factual Report of a Worker from Solingen, from 1949 on,” the second autobiographic book by Willi Dickhut, is entitled, *What Happened Later?* It begins where the first book, *That’s How It Was...*, ends.

As leading thinker and co-founder of the MLPD, Willi Dickhut was one of the few old cadres of the Communist Party of Germany (KPD), which degenerated into revisionism, who made their experience available to build a party of a new type. The person of Willi Dickhut is most closely connected with many burning issues that are of greatest interest still today – also to the international revolutionary movement. He himself emphasized: “As a functionary of the working-class movement in more than 50 years of struggle, I would like to convey my experience in the theory and practice of the class struggle to the youth, as far as I am able to do so.”

Many writings of Willi Dickhut in the *Revolutionärer Weg* (Revolutionary Way) series founded by him have now become internationally known through translations. With these two factual reports, interested readers can find out how he processed his struggle using the dialectical method.

The second volume came out in Germany in 1990 and deals with the period from 1949 until the founding of the Marxist-Leninist Party of Germany in 1982. This volume, too, contains many original documents.

Here are just a few of the points that have a bearing on the present situation:

- The reactionary development in Germany under Adenauer and the methods used by the German state to ban the KPD, against the backdrop of rearmament and preparation for war
- The growing bureaucratic tendencies in the cadre work of the KPD under the dominance of the Socialist Unity Party (SED)

- The revisionist betrayal by Khrushchev and, in its wake, by the SED/KPD. During his work assignment in the Soviet Union in 1928/1929, Willi Dickhut already gathered first experience with manifestations of bureaucracy as cause of the restoration of capitalism following the Twentieth Party Congress of the CPSU: bureaucratism in the economy, the state, and the party.
- The struggle against revisionism before and after Willi and Luise Dickhut's expulsion from the KPD
- The importance of mastering the dialectical method, of critical and self-critical assimilation and creative implementation of Marxism-Leninism, of independent thinking and acting, so that one can recognize the betrayal of principles and maintain a revolutionary course. Even when Willi Dickhut was frozen out and slandered in the ugliest way by the revisionist KPD leadership, and later the DKP leadership, he stood firm.
- Theoretical work to prove the revisionist degeneration of KPD/SED and the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union, as necessary condition for building a truly Marxist-Leninist party
- Concentration on the working class for party building. Crucial importance of the victory of the proletarian mode of thinking over the petty-bourgeois mode of thinking
- The outstanding importance of work in enterprises and trade unions; connecting of the economic struggle with the political struggle (in those years especially against the preparation of war on the Soviet Union, which also led to wage squeezing and rising prices)

Like *That's How It Was...*, this book contains numerous messages that were and are of greatest value to the revolutionaries and especially the youth in Germany. It will make for very rewarding reading also internationally.

Gabi Fechtner

Chairwoman of MLPD, July 2023



**Cadre Work  
in the North Rhine-Westphalia  
Party Branch**



## The Domestic Political Situation Worsens

Soon after the end of World War II it became apparent that all endeavors to reunite the two parts of Germany were sabotaged or hampered by the Western occupying powers. On 17 and 18 March 1948 the Second German People's Congress took place in Berlin. It elected a People's Council of 400 members, which issued a "Petition for a Referendum for German Unity." I was county secretary of the KPD in Remscheid then. In a three-week campaign the KPD members collected almost 22,000 signatures; every third voter in Remscheid signed the petition.

But the die was cast and the division of Germany was a done deal. Already on 7 April 1948 the head of the British Military Government, General Robertson, announced the division of Germany before the state parliament of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW). The attitude of the Military Government towards the communists then became even more hostile, as it was the KPD that put up the most determined resistance against the division of Germany.

In my book, *That's How It Was...*, towards the end I reported that after the municipal election in October 1948 *Major Fletcher*, the British city commander of Remscheid, came unexpectedly to our party office. He informed me that there had been a discussion at a conference of the commanders

whether or not the Military Government should ban the KPD. But they had come to the result ... to leave the ban of the KPD to the future German government...

One year later the federal government was formed, headed by Konrad Adenauer. The Cold War had begun, the remilitarization was planned, the division of Germany had deepened, reaction was marching. The most determined opponents of the bourgeoisie, the



staunchest fighters for German unity, for peace and socialism – the communists – stood in the way of reaction.

Two years later, in 1951, the Adenauer government filed a motion to the Federal Constitutional Court to place a ban on the KPD. The communists were to be forced into illegality again. (p. 580)

Although the Military Government refrained from doing the dirty work of banning the KPD, it still wanted to gag the party by banning its newspapers, at first only for some months, then permanently. In May 1948, for instance, the license of *Westdeutsches Volks-Echo* was simply withdrawn; this amounted to a permanent ban. Having been banned once before for three months in 1948, *Freiheit* had its license withdrawn forever in October 1948. The facsimile (ill. p. 18) shows the last issue of *Freiheit*, the issue of 8 October 1948. The front page notes that the newspaper *Neue Volkszeitung*, which had only been in print since 15 September 1948, had been banned for three months by the Military Government.

The KPD, however, did not let itself be intimidated by the prohibitive measures of the Military Government. So on 3 January 1949 the first issue of the newspaper *Freies Volk* appeared (ill. p. 19). Jupp Schappe from Ratingen was its editor-in-chief.

It was obvious that the domestic political situation was worsening. Therefore it was necessary to train and develop new cadres in the KPD. In early 1949, appointed by the *Land* (state) leadership, I took over the leadership of the Personnel Policy Department (*Personalpolitische Abteilung – PPA*). The PPA had two main tasks then: firstly, to organize the schooling and the care for cadres and to prepare the appropriate deployment of the comrades according to their abilities in theory and practice; secondly, to carry out investigative proceedings in any cases of misconduct and to strengthen revolutionary vigilance against enemies and harmful elements. Owing to the development of the domestic political situation and to other contradictions, the work of the department grew and grew. A division into cadre department

and control commission became necessary, after which I took over the leadership of the cadre department. But before this step was taken in December 1949, I had to carry out an important investigation. *Jupp Schappe* was the first case I had to investigate.





## **The Yugoslav Cuckoo in the Nest – the Ideological Differences**

To understand the character of my first investigation it is necessary to know several things about the background. During World War II the Communist International was dissolved in order not to hinder the creation of a broad antifascist people's movement in Europe. After the end of the war, in some countries of Eastern Europe people's democracies under the leadership of the communist parties developed as a transitional form to socialism. To get the interests into agreement with each other,

an Information Bureau was formed from representatives of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, the Bulgarian Workers' Party (Communist), the Romanian Communist Party, the Hungarian Communist Party, the Polish Workers' Party, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the French Communist Party, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, and the Italian Communist Party. The resolution adopted by representatives of these parties at a conference in Warsaw in 1947 says: "The conference states that the absence of connections between Communist parties who have taken part in this conference is in the present situation a serious shortcoming. Experience has shown that such division between Communist parties is incorrect and harmful. The requirement for an exchange of experience and voluntary coordination of actions of the separate parties has become particularly necessary now in conditions of the complicated postwar international situation and when the disunity of Communist parties may lead to damage for the working class." (*Die Kommunistische Internationale* [The Communist International], p. 654)

Neither the Socialist Unity Party (*Sozialistische Einheitspartei* – SED) nor the KPD were members of this Information Bureau, but they unconditionally recognized the leading role of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). Soon contradictions arose among the members of the Information Bureau. They first manifested them-





*Tito (in the foreground) and Stalin (standing, on the right) in Moscow in 1945*

selves openly between the League of Communists of Yugoslavia and the CPSU. Yugoslavia considered the Balkans as its own sphere of interest, which severely affected the foreign policy of the Soviet Union. In the course of the year 1948 these and other contradictions intensified considerably. Tito alleged, for instance, that the Soviet Union “exploited” Yugoslavia, “prevented” its industrialization, and wanted to “deprive” Yugoslavia of its independence.

In fact, the bureaucracy in Yugoslavia had developed into a new class that was restoring capitalism in their own country. This betrayal by the Tito clique deprived the working people of Yugoslavia more

and more of their rights and caused them to be increasingly oppressed and exploited. In foreign policy, Yugoslavia developed more and more into a mere appendage of US imperialism. This was the “independence” Tito had in mind. Hypocritically, this development was justified with the slogan that Yugoslavia had to reach socialism “on its own path.”

In a session of the Information Bureau in June 1948 in Romania, a resolution on the development of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia was passed, strongly criticizing the development in Yugoslavia.

*Milovan Djilas*, one of the leading communists and a minister of the Yugoslavian government at that time, went to Moscow with a delegation to avoid the breach with Moscow. But his mission was in vain. In the very same year the open breach took place. Yugoslavia went down in postwar history as “national communism.”

Later on, Djilas criticized the bureaucracy in the leadership of party and state and even wrote a book, *The New Class*, about this bureaucratic development.

This new class, the bureaucracy, or more accurately the political bureaucracy, has all the characteristics of earlier ones as well as some new characteristics of its own. Its origin had its special characteristics also, even though in essence it was similar to the beginning of other classes. (p. 38)

This criticism did not suit the Yugoslavian leadership. In early 1954 Djilas was excluded from the Central Committee of the party. One year later, in 1955, the Tito clique put him on trial and he was sentenced to three years for enemy propaganda. Later on Djilas was imprisoned again on several other occasions. This did not prevent him from writing openly what he meant by the “new class.”

The society that has arisen as the result of Communist revolutions, or as a result of the military actions of the Soviet Union, is torn by the same sort of contradictions as are other societies. The result is that

the Communist society has not only failed to develop toward human brotherhood and equality, but also out of its party bureaucracy there arises a privileged social stratum, which, in accord with Marxist thinking, I named “the new class.” (Milovan Djilas: *The Unperfect Society. Beyond the New Class*, 1969, p. 8)

The SED and the KPD backed the foreign policy of the Soviet Union. The League of Communists of Yugoslavia took this as an occasion to try to undermine the KPD and organize a new party through followers and sympathizers.

One day in autumn 1949, many KPD members and even nonmembers received Yugoslavian literature (books and brochures) in German by mail. The PPA carried out an investigation to find out who was behind it. We had no doubt that *Wolfgang Leonhard* had a hand in it. In March 1949, when he was a lecturer at the SED Party Academy “Karl Marx,” he secretly defected to Belgrade. He stayed in Yugoslavia for more than a year, before he then took up abode in West Germany. He gave the Yugoslav communists a hand in preparing propaganda material (translations and writings of his own) in German language. He later admitted it himself in his book, *Child of the Revolution*. On his arrival in Belgrade he was asked:

“Now, tell me, what had you thought of doing in Yugoslavia?”

“First of all I should like to draw up a complete account of the origins and course of the conflict between the Yugoslav Party and the Cominform for the benefit of my comrades in the opposition in Germany. What has reached them so far has dealt only with particular points of detail about which our comrades know little, so it is sometimes difficult for them to form a picture.”

“Good. You shall write that. We’ll have it printed here in German, in Yugoslavia.” (pp. 421–422)

The result of his activities was before us now. But who had provided the Yugoslavs with all these addresses? What kind of people were the recipients? It was imperative to establish the identity of as many of



them as possible. So we requested our rank-and-file members to hand in the material and the recipient's address to the PPA. That way we soon found out that all the recipients, among them many nonmembers, had taken part in a competition of the newspaper *Freies Volk*. There was a list of these participants and, in fact, there was only one copy. This list was locked up in the desk of the editor-in-chief, Jupp Schappe. He denied having fed the information to the Yugoslavs. Instead, he accused an employee who used to be close to the people around Brandler. The inquiries soon showed that this accusation was baseless. Our suspicion against Jupp Schappe, on the other hand, grew when we found out that he had done political work together with some Yugoslavs in the Buchenwald concentration camp. It stood to reason that the contact between him and the Yugoslavs had been maintained or reestablished after their liberation from the concentration camp.

Still during the investigation, there was a general membership meeting of the party in Ratingen, in which Ludwig Becker took part as a speaker of the *Land* leadership. He was head of the economics department and had no experience at all with investigation matters. In the meeting he challenged Jupp Schappe, who reacted sharply and, on the very next day, issued a leaflet directed against the party leadership. Thereupon he was expelled. So it was not at all the way Manfred Buder told it in *Unsere Zeit* of 16 July 1989, on the occasion of Jupp Schappe's honoring by the Union of Persecutees of the Nazi Regime (*Vereinigung der Verfolgten des Naziregimes* – VVN):

He remained a leftist even when his party, the KPD, "bitterly wronged him," as Professor Jupp Schleifstein (DKP) put it, by replacing him as the editor-in-chief of the central organ *Freies Volk* and excluding him for "Titoism."

"Bitterly wronged him"? No, that is not how it was. The investigation proceedings were correct and fair, and the expulsion in February 1950 was justified. Whoever maintains the contrary is lying.

The Yugoslavs wanted to undermine the KPD, at first with their political material, then directly. When Wolfgang Leonhard was still a teacher at the Party Academy, he had a young man called *Stambula* as an assistant. This man also defected to Belgrade, where he was instructed by the Yugoslavian party leadership to organize groups in the KPD to undermine the party from within. He was paid DM 500 per month for it. This was a lot of money at that time compared to the salaries of the county secretaries. We instantly became aware of his doings and played a cat-and-mouse game with him by setting up small groups to spy him out. It was not difficult, because Stambula was inexperienced and did not have a clue about party building. After we had found out everything we wanted to know from him, the groups stopped their work. When Stambula, as a result, had nothing left to present to his employers, the Yugoslavs dropped him.

An attempt by Jupp Schappe to build a new party also failed. With this, the brief spell of Yugoslavian influence in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) ended.

But not so at the international level. Already in *November 1957* the *first meeting of representatives of communist and workers' parties* took place in Moscow, opposing modern revisionism and dogmatism. The joint declaration that was adopted there states:

Of vital importance in the present stage is intensified struggle against opportunist trends in the working class and Communist movement. The meeting underlines the necessity of resolutely overcoming revisionism and dogmatism in the ranks of the Communist and Workers' parties. Revisionism and dogmatism in the working-class and Communist movement are today, as they have been in the past, international phenomena. Dogmatism and sectarianism hinder the development of Marxist-Leninist theory and its creative application in the changing conditions, replace the study of the concrete situation with merely quoting classics and sticking to books and lead to the isolation of the party from the masses. A party that has withdrawn into the shell of sectarianism and that has lost con-

tact with the masses cannot bring victory to the cause of the working class. ...

Modern revisionism seeks to smear the great teachings of Marxism-Leninism, declares that it is “outmoded” and alleges that it has lost its significance for social progress. The revisionists try to exorcise the revolutionary spirit of Marxism, to undermine faith in socialism among the working class and the working people in general.

This was substantially true for the League of Communists of Yugoslavia. The Tito clique established the “workers’ self-government” in the factories. Behind this well-sounding name was a system of intensified exploitation. Altogether it was an underhanded deception maneuver. In the *statement of the representatives of communist and workers’ parties* meeting in Moscow in December 1960, the leaders of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia were accused of modern revisionism.

The Communist Parties have unanimously condemned the Yugoslav variety of international opportunism, a variety of modern revisionist “theories” in concentrated form. After betraying Marxism-Leninism, which they termed obsolete, the leaders of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia opposed their anti-Leninist revisionist programme to the Declaration of 1957; they set the L.C.Y. against the international communist movement as a whole, severed their country from the socialist camp, made it dependent on so-called “aid” from U.S. and other imperialists, and thereby exposed the Yugoslav people to the danger of losing the revolutionary gains achieved through a heroic struggle. The Yugoslav revisionists carry on subversive work against the socialist camp and the world communist movement. Under the pretext of an extra-bloc policy, they engage in activities which prejudice the unity of all the peace-loving forces and countries. Further exposure of the leaders of Yugoslav revisionists and active struggle to safeguard the communist movement and the working-class movement from the anti-Leninist ideas of the Yugoslav revisionists, remains an essential task of the Marxist-Leninist Parties.

Condemning the revisionist Tito clique was appropriate and necessary, and bore the hallmarks of the Communist Party of China (CPC) under the leadership of Mao Zedong. But were not most of the representatives attending the meeting opportunists and revisionists, too? Had not Khrushchev already proclaimed modern revisionism at the 20th Party Congress of the CPSU in 1956? The meeting of communist and workers' parties could cover up the open contradictions only with effort; the struggle of two lines came to the fore.



*Josip Tito*

Tito pinned his expectations on Western, mainly US, imperialism. Since the conflict with the Soviet Union had aggravated, Yugoslavia continuously received war material from the USA. In October 1963 Tito traveled to Washington to ask President Kennedy for even more economic and military aid on the basis of the "most-favored-nation clause." *Die Welt* of 18 October 1963 reports about his visit:



*John F. Kennedy*

*Talks with Kennedy about Economic Problems*

Washington, 17 October (UPI-dpa)

President Kennedy received the President of the Republic of Yugoslavia, Josip Broz Tito, for an information meeting at the White House on

Thursday. On his arrival in Washington Tito was welcomed with a 21 gun salute and full military honors.

In a short address Kennedy emphasized the importance of a basic understanding “across the distance of water and across perhaps a difference in political philosophy.” The President said: “This is a difficult and dangerous world in which we live.” Tito replied that friendship with the American people was the basis of the Yugoslavian policy.

According to the views of political observers, the American economic and military aid for Yugoslavia will occupy center stage in the talks between Kennedy and Tito. *Belgrade has as yet received around 10 billion deutschmarks from the United States.* Yugoslavia most of all wants to be granted *most-favored-nation status* again, which Congress had denied the country last year....

In spite of Tito's ingratiation with US imperialism, Khrushchev went to Belgrade in the same year, greeting Tito with the words “my friend and comrade Tito.” What a transformation! Revisionism does not know any principles. It appears in various forms, but all variations have one thing in common: rejection of and fight against Marxism-Leninism.

The former principal contradiction between the CPSU and the League of Communists of Yugoslavia faded more and more into the background. Instead, the ideological-political differences between the CPSU and the CPC under the leadership of Mao Zedong had constantly grown since the 20th Party Congress of the CPSU and now constituted the dominating contradiction. In 1963 the *conflict between Moscow and Beijing* broke out openly. The disputes took on nasty forms.

When, for instance, the Chinese delegate Wu Xiuquan (Wu Hsiu-chuan) took the floor at the *Sixth Party Congress of the SED in January 1963*, where Khrushchev, too, held a long speech with open and veiled criticism of Albania and China, Wu was howled down.

There was an uproar of foot-stamping and whistling in order to prevent him from continuing his speech.

What had happened there? There was no elucidation whatsoever about the incidents and background on the part of our party. But around March 1963 I received, anonymously, from Paris, the first issue of *Peking Review* in German language. It contained the full speech of the Chinese delegate at the Sixth Party Congress of the SED. The speech itself was prefaced with the following words:

Much to our regret we observe that the presence of our comrade Wu Hsiu-chuan at the Sixth Party Congress of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany in Berlin was not appreciated in a way that would be appropriate towards the representative of a large fraternal party from the socialist camp. To our great surprise the Tito group and its accomplices, who want to abandon the unity of the socialist camp under the guise of Marxism-Leninism, also seem to raise their heads in the German Democratic Republic now.

These groups serve their master in different ways:

1. They advocate the so-called Yugoslav road among the socialist countries. It is the road by which socialist countries “peacefully develop” into capitalist countries.

2. They try to propagate among the Asian, African and Latin American peoples, who are waging a struggle for a national and democratic revolution, a so-called policy of “positive coexistence,” which is a policy that obliterates the difference between the enemy and ourselves.

In Berlin, too, we have heard the tongues of modern revisionists speaking – tongues that have a habit of presenting resistance against dogmatism as their slogan. But their so-called resistance against dogmatism really means resistance against the Marxist-Leninist theories about class struggle, about state and revolution, about imperialism, about the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, as well as about the people’s revolution in colonial and semi-colonial countries. They turn precisely against the centerpiece of Marxism-Leninism and the revolutionary spirit of Marxism-Leninism. (Our translation from the German)