

*By the same author*

ERNST JÜNGER AND THE NATURE OF POLITICAL  
COMMITMENT

OPPOSITION IN THE  
GDR UNDER  
HONECKER, 1971-85

*An Introduction and Documentation*

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*For Diana, Michael and Katherine*

# Contents

<i>Preface</i>	ix
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	x
INTRODUCTION	
1 The Official East German View	3
2 The Challenge of the Seventies and Eighties	8
The Western Connection	8
The Polish Factor	14
The Economic Challenge	15
3 Defining Opposition	17
4 The Major Forms of Opposition under Honecker	24
Dissident Intellectuals	24
Rejection of the GDR	32
The Unofficial Peace Movement	36
5 The Significance of Opposition	42
<i>Notes and References</i>	58
DOCUMENTS	
The Official East German View	75
The Western Connection	89
Dissident Intellectuals	138
Rejection of the GDR	170
The Unofficial Peace Movement	185
The Significance of Opposition	214
<i>Chronology of Events</i>	234
<i>Bibliography</i>	244
<i>Postscript</i>	249
<i>Index</i>	253

## Preface

Apart from the fact that Western interest in the GDR has increased greatly during the Honecker period with as yet no English language survey of the various forms of opposition that exist there, this book was prompted by curiosity on two controversial points.

First, opposition in the GDR tends to be seen in the West either as activity restricted to a small, isolated and therefore insignificant group, or as the expression of the true opinions of the silent majority of East German citizens. At a time of heightened tension between East and West it is important to have a realistic view of just how widespread opposition is and whether it is a significant force in the GDR.

Secondly, forty years after the end of the Second World War, at a time when the majority of East German citizens have grown up under the new socialist regime, it is also worth asking to what extent opposition in the GDR today is the product of a clash between traditional and new political values, and to what extent it stems from conflicts generated within 'actually existing socialism' itself.

This introduction and documentation is intended to provide a conceptual framework and background information as well as a selection of primary sources, so that the reader will be able to draw his or her own conclusions on these points.

Most of the documents contained in the book have not been made available in English translation before and, with the exception of documents 16, 24, 29, 35 and 37, all have been translated by Christopher Upward. The documents (referred to in the introduction by numbers in brackets) have been selected as representative of the views of the individuals or groups from which they came.