

Summaries

Wolfgang Rudzio

The Default of Socialisation in the Rhein and Ruhr Regions. Essay on the socialisation policy of Labour Government and SPD 1945–1948

The want of socialisation in the western part of post-war Germany is considered as one of the most important pre-decisions which have influenced the social structure of the Federal Republic of Germany. Against this background, the essay investigates the role of the British occupation power (Labour Government) and of the SPD in the conflict concerning a socialisation of basic industries in the Rhein and Ruhr areas. In contrast or in addition to what may be found in existing literature on this subject, it shows that the British occupation power included socialisation as a mere competitive tendency in a multifarious policy, and that their eventual veto against the North-Rhine-Westfalian Socialisation Act in the year 1948 is probably not only a result of American economic pressure. On the part of the Germans, well-defined concepts for a socialised economy were lacking, but above all – and contrary to a legend that there was a general mood in favour of socialisation during the post-war period – German opinion on socialisation was greatly divided. Social-Democratic socialisation policy, therefore – against the background of a strained and relatively weak co-operation with Labour – had to fight against very strong German opposition. In spite of the failure of the Social-Democratic strategy, i.e. to adopt the parliamentary method with British backing, no realistic alternative which could have led to socialisation can be seen.

Rolf Steininger

England and the German Trade Union Movement in 1945/46

In 1945 victors and vanquished alike were of the opinion that trade unions would have to play a major, if not decisive role in rebuilding a new, democratic Germany. It was therefore of paramount importance on which lines these new trade unions in Germany were to be formed, which »model« of which of the four zones eventually would set a precedent for the rest of Germany: there was no doubt that the model developed in the British Zone which contained the bulk of the German people (e.g. Ruhr) would have a significant bearing on the trade union movement within the whole of Germany. – The opening of British Government and T.U.C. papers makes it possible to assess for the first

time the part played by the British authorities and especially the T.U.C. in the formation of a policy during the crucial period 1945/46 which led to the resurrection of the trade union movement in Germany. – This essay intends to illustrate four aspects of this policy: 1. British planning up to the Berlin Conference. It shows that post-war planning with regard to German trade unions started in 1944; it resulted in a paper »German Labour« on the policy to be adopted in Germany after her surrender, which laid down that the formation of free Trade Union movements was to be encouraged subject to the necessity of maintaining military security and a smooth administration. It was intended that a draft directive to Allied Commanders-in-Chief should be prepared and should be circulated for consideration by the E.A.C. These efforts were thwarted (a) by the American decision in June 1945 that for a period of three months from July 1st no trade unions would be allowed in the American Zone and the request by the Americans for the British and French to fall into line with this policy, (b) by the policy adopted by the Russians in their Zone, i.e. building up the Communists dominated FDGB. Despite growing distrust on the part of the British they were not prepared to take this matter up in Potsdam. 2. The deadlock in the Allied Control Council over the attempt to pass a trade union law which was to have permitted the formation of free trade unions »in conformity with Western ideas« within the whole of Germany. 3. The Trade Union situation in the British Zone, where trade unions were regarded as a »sinister force« by the Military Government which would not accept a »general union« open to all workers in a given area, and which obviously was in most cases the objective of the German sponsors (e.g. H. Böckler / A. Karl); the Military Government was in favour of a small number of unions with limited membership on a craft or industry basis. Under the smoke-screen of »building from the bottom up« the Military Government pursued a policy of discouragement regarding the formation of trade unions, which in autumn 1945 ended in a complete deadlock. 4. At that point the T.U.C. was called in to break this deadlock. The T.U.C., without any policy with regard to the reconstruction of the German trade Union movement and full of misgivings about most of the new German trade union leaders, who in 1933 did not fill the bill and failed to stand up to the Nazis, willingly accepted the role the Military Government expected them to play in supporting their model. When the delegates of the T.U.C. visited the British Zone they gave the expected piece of advice which the Germans concerned could not afford to reject, if they were to avoid the risk of finding themselves out of step with developments in other areas of the British Zone.

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The World Federation of Trade Unions and the Cold War

The essay gives an outline of the internal and external conditions, under which the WFTU had to develop its activities on a world wide scale. Setting out from the period prior to the World Trade Union Conference in London, the authors set forth that in spite of the combined efforts of TUC, AUCCTU and CIO, which called the WFTU into being, there were from the beginning too many traditionally inspired apprehensions, in particular on the TUC-side, which hampered a more clear-cut development. The allied wartime companionship was evidently not obligatory enough to guarantee an everlasting engagement

between the noncommunist and the communist or communist-controlled organizations. The virtually inherited inconsistency between two social systems was never smoothed out, not even between workers' organizations; on the contrary, under the influence of the cold war- events this contradiction turned out to be insurmountable. The study shows, it is true, that not only the differences between two social systems, but also traditional problems like autonomy of national unions or international trade secretariats cut a great figure in the period between the foundation and the final cleavage in 1949; but on the whole, by dealing in detail with the constitutional problem of the integration of the ITS into Trade Departments, and describing the WFTU activities in occupied Germany, Greece and vis-à-vis fascist Spain as well as the colonial question and the Ecosoc problem, it is clearly shown that the overall capitalist-communist opposition in world politics was the driving force, which never gave a chance to the WFTU to form a real unity. The chapter on the part played by the introduction of the Marshall-plan, which finally gave rise to the cleavage, not only demonstrates the socio-economic antithesis being an important topic within the WFTU, but at the same time depicts the AFL as the main enemy of the WFTU. This American union which remained outside the WFTU for pure ideological reasons, never ceased from the very start to fight the new world organization of working men in a way which should be described as an example of clear-cut anti-communism. It is not too far-fetched to say that after all the undermining activities of the AFL helped to accelerate the splitting up of the WFTU which had too bad a start to be successful.

Heiner R. Adamsen

Factors and Data of Economic Development in the Early Stages of the Federal Republic of Germany 1948–1954

The process of growth which lasted for 25 years (1947–1973) and had initially high but, in their overall tendency, decreasing growth rates was the prominent feature of economic and social development in the Federal Republic of Germany. This »economic explosion« made an important contribution to stable political conditions in the Federal Republic. Growth started during the short period of West-German zonal economy. Therefore, the economic and currency reform of 1948 which is widely considered as having triggered off growth, and the Marshall Plan aid given by the USA were important only as flanking measures. Even the effects of dismantling on economic recovery – in this case, the negative effects – were overestimated. The problems of shortage which arose in the wake of the Korea boom in 1950/51 and concerned, in particular, the availability of coal were caused by an overall expansion of production, by the Allied restrictions and by West-German reconstruction policy as pursued since the economic and currency reform. Governmental reconstruction policy hastened the production of consumer goods and, through open prices and tax privileges, encouraged a strategy of formation of capital which led to an extremely high self-financing rate in industrial investment with all its consequences on wealth formation policy. Direct governmental control of capital was practised in the equivalent-funds-distribution and in the Investment Aid Act which was unconventional in its way and, as evidence of the structural policy pursued by the first government under Mr Adenauer, united in itself the typical elements of reconstruction policy (decontrol of

prices, fast tax write-offs), and which represented, at the same time, the only open and official compulsory austerity measure in the process of reconstruction. Direct governmental control of capital supplied the necessary investment capital primarily to heavy industry since this industry was still under Allied control and had not been included in the liberalisation of the market for political and economic reasons. The fact that economy in the Federal Republic had overcome the effects of war was signalled not only by production fast reaching the pre-war level but also by the development in foreign trade. As early as 1954, a high balance of trade surplus was achieved, export and import structure again largely corresponding to the traditional range of German foreign trade. The main feature of the entire economic reconstruction policy was a close co-operation between state and private industry. This co-operation was illustrated not only in a number of basic decisions regarding the economic system, but also in the course of the manifold direct and indirect government interventions in favour of private industry.

Gerard Braunthal

The Anglo-Saxon Model of Democracy in the West German Political Consciousness after World War II

A brief introductory section examines the German image of the political systems of the United States and Great Britain before World War II. It is followed by a more detailed analysis of West German reactions to the policies of American and British occupation authorities from 1945 to 1949, especially those concerning reparations, denazification, the Nürnberg war crimes trials, democratization, exchange programs and binational conferences, information activities (including press and literature, radio, and films), and education. Reactions to Allied attempts to reshape German political institutions, such as the public service, local government, and to influence the Basic Law are assessed. In the concluding sections, German views of the British and American models of democracy in the period from 1949 to 1963 are examined.

Data is obtained on the basis of public opinion polls, journalistic reports, commentaries in the media, and impressions gained by visitors to the Anglo-Saxon democracies. But data is incomplete, and must be used with caution. One must differentiate between the apolitical and political German public in their negative and positive reactions to American and British policies. While in the course of time a political socialization process took place, especially among the younger Germans that welcomed such Allied practices as the protection of individual rights and the freedom of interest groups to organize, other practices such as an emphasis on civic participation proved difficult to transplant to German soil in view of their being viewed as alien to the German tradition.

Hans Braun

The Striving for »Security« in the Fifties. Social and Political Causes and Manifestations

The striving for security in the 50ies must be seen against the background of the enormous potential of uncertainty which comes into being with the end of the second World War

and weighs on the Federal Republic. This potential is created by a collective fate such as expulsion from home, flight, loss of property, loss of relatives and social degradation but also by the collapse of a political and ideological system as witnessed and by uncertainty with regard to the future of the new state which is initially set up as a provisional arrangement. Under these circumstances, the individual believes to achieve security most easily by withdrawing into smaller communities and concentrating on a social career or new beginning. This is accompanied by a distinct detachment from the public and political sphere which is considered as liable to give rise to disappointment. This detachment is given up whenever the political enforcement of strategies which contribute directly to a stabilisation of the individual's circumstances is at stake. The reform of the system of social security of 1957 may be regarded as the most important strategy of this kind. By comparison to this strategy, public assessment of international safeguarding through rearmament and the integration of the Federal Republic in the Western Alliance is considerably more controversial. Collective security is here considered to contain starting points for new uncertainties. It is only gradually that the reservations large parts of the population have against German military forces diminish.

Volker Hentschel

The System of Social Security in the Light of History – 1880 to 1975

This study throws some light on the historical dimension of the present problems in the system of social security which are characterised though in a somewhat distorted manner by the catchwords »too much economic and financial emphasis«, »too much emphasis on legal procedure«, and »centralisation«. It is rather more the attachment to the insurance and causal principles and the fragmentation into many insurance corporations which impede a pertinent further development and consolidation. This cannot be explained rationally but only historically.

In the first part, the theoretical and institutional foundation of the system of social security and its gradual expansion on to new areas of application are described. The creation of the four, now classical, branches of insurance is due, at best in the second place to socio-political intentions, but in the first place to intentions of national policy and middle and upper class interest. The secondary, socio-political motives proved sufficiently strong to maintain the social security system after the original leading ideas had become obsolete but they were never brought together in a uniform political concept on the basis of which the system could have been re-shaped and extended systematically to bring it up to date. Since the time of the Kaiser, policy in the field of social insurance drew strength, direction and limitations of its development mainly from the existence of its institutions. This is the reason for its being rooted in, and bound to, traditional and partly obsolete socio-political guiding images and principles of contributions and payments. New theoretical and practical approaches in the Federal Republic (protection of the family, protection of the quality of life) remained weak and did not, to any essential extent, re-direct the social security system away from its historical basis. The performance of the system has, however, increased enormously. The second part proves that social insurance during the Kaiserreich and the Weimar Republic had very little to do with security. It provided an allowance which, in most cases, was not sufficient to maintain subsistence

level. It is only in the Federal Republic – in spite of grave structural defects and performance deficits – that one may speak of social *security* through social *insurance* with justification. But even that has not turned the system of social security into an instrument of socio-politically motivated re-distribution of income to any noticeable extent.

Gerald D. Feldman / Irmgard Steinisch

The Weimar Republic between Social State and Economic State. The Decision against the Eight Hour Day

One of the major indicators of the depth of labor-industry hostility in the Weimar Republic, with all its attendant political dangers, was the readiness of the employers to launch major offensives against organized labor and to use the powerful weapon of the lockout to achieve their goals. Their uncompromising posture, which marked a break in the long term trend toward the »modernization« of industrial conflict, first became clearly evident in the turbulent transition from inflation to stabilization between 1922 and 1924. The major point of contention was the hours of work question. The employers, supported by important segments of public opinion and by the authorities, claimed that Germany could not afford the eight hour day if she was to restore her position on world markets and meet Allied reparations demands. The trade union leaders would not surrender what had come to be regarded as the chief gain of the Revolution, although they were prepared to accept temporary modifications of the eight hour day when made in consultation with labor and appropriately compensated. The successful effort of the employers to regain a virtually free hand in the hours of work question is demonstrated by the three major industrial conflicts discussed in the paper: the South German metal workers strike and the lockout connected with it in the spring of 1922, the unilateral effort of the Ruhr industrialists to restore the prewar hours of work in the fall of 1923, and the May 1924 strike and lockout in the Ruhr coal mines. In the first case, the metal industrialists forced the workers to accept a 48 hour week where an average of 46 hours had been the rule. The outcome demonstrated that the balance of strength had shifted decisively to the advantage of the employers and that the government stood on their side when it came to questions of productivity. The actual direct assault on the eight hour day was then undertaken by heavy industry in 1923, and while the government forced the heavy industrialists to modify their tactics, the Labor Ministry under Heinrich Brauns at once sanctioned and imposed their demands on the badly weakened trade unions. When the coal miners finally decided to resist further increases in their hours of work and depression of their wages in 1924, the result was a standoff in which the employer victories of 1923 were confirmed but under which further conflict was momentarily avoided by wage increases for the miners and subsidies for the mine owners. It was an indication that the Labor Ministry would now use its powers of compulsory arbitration to protect labor from further employer imprecations, just as it demonstrated that the events of 1922–24 had permanently poisoned labor relations in Weimar and that government intervention was the only means of maintaining social peace in an industrial system dominated by heavy industry.