



Language

The significant movements against nuclear weapons in the west and in other parts of the world which suffered from nuclear testing, or had been drawn into the global network of nuclear bases and alliances, had no direct counterpart in the Soviet bloc in the 1950s and 1960s, where 'peace activity' was monopolised by the Communist regime sponsored 'Peace Committees', which focused on encouraging resistance to NATO nuclear policies (had their Communist-influenced western counterparts) and presented the Soviet nuclear arsenal and the Warsaw Pact as essentially defensive. By the 1980s, although the official Peace Committees were still prominent in the Soviet bloc, the nonaligned peace movement in the rest of the world was stronger than it had been in the first wave of anti-bomb protest and the European Nuclear Disarmament campaign initiated in 1980 made specific attempts to make links with dissident groups inside Eastern Europe, and other peace activists also promoted links across the East-West divide. The nature of Communist Party rule in the USSR and most of Eastern Europe was also somewhat less oppressive than in the 1950s, which meant that although open dissidents were still liable to harassment and imprisonment the space for protest had grown. Many opponents of some or all aspects of Communist Party rule in the Soviet bloc were primarily interested in internal political change, and greater national autonomy, rather than the dangers of nuclear weapons and were doubtful about western opposition to NATO policies. But there were a few autonomous peace initiatives and protests in both the USSR and Eastern Europe, as well as some conscientious objectors. Although the literature is limited, this autonomous peace activity was an important phenomenon.

Kavan, Jan ; Tomin, Zdena, [Voices from Prague: Documents on Czechoslovakia and the Peace Movement](#) [1], London, Palach Press, 1982, pp. 75

See also: , [Czechoslovakia's Nonviolent Revolution](#) [2] In Martin, [Nonviolent Struggle and Social Defence](#) [3] ([A. 1.b. Strategic Theory, Dynamics, Methods and Movements](#) [4]) London, War Resisters' International, 1991, pp. 36-41

Ramet, Pedro, [Church and Peace in the GDR](#) [5], Problems of Communism, Vol. 35, issue Jul.-Aug, 1984, pp. 44-57

Sandford, John, [The Sword and the Ploughshare: Autonomous Peace Initiatives in East Germany](#) [6], London, Merlin Press jointly with END, 1983, pp. 111

Stead, Jean ; Grunberg, Gabrielle, [END Special Report: Moscow Independent Peace Group](#) [7], London, Merlin Press, 1982, pp. 44

Thompson, Edward P. ; Koszegi, Ferenc, [The New Hungarian Peace Movement](#) [8], London, Merlin Press jointly with END, 1983, pp. 53

Watch, Helsinki, [From Below: Independent Peace and Environmental Movements in Eastern Europe and the USSR](#) [9], New York, Helsinki Watch Report, 1987, pp. 263

See also:

April Carter, [Peace Movements: International Protest and World Politics Since 1945](#) [10], ([D.1. General:](#)



[National and Transnational Movements](#) [11]), pp.183-213.

Lawrence Klippenstein, [Conscientious Objectors in Eastern Europe: The Quest for Free Choice and Alternative Service](#) [12], (C. I.2.a. Comparative Studies of Dissent: Background to 1989 [13])

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