

PART III 

**STABLE INSTABILITY:
ECONOMIC STAGNATION AND
THE END OF TRANSFORMATION**

FROM ULBRICHT TO HONECKER

All new things have to get properly settled in ... there is agreement with the social development as a whole, but it must be organised properly. Then we'll get something out of it ... We don't want to earn less.¹

(Opinions of LPG members in Stotternheim showing their tentative acceptance of plans for the formation of the KAP.)

The explicit transfer of power at the top of the SED hierarchy from Walter Ulbricht to Erich Honecker in 1971 sealed a shift in the approach of the SED leadership towards the management of the economy. Austerity and economic reform in the pursuit of utopian goals of social and economic transformation were, broadly speaking, abandoned in order to overcome a deficit of popular support for the SED regime. In its stead a form of consumer socialism was established which sought to satisfy the material needs of the population, though with little consideration for the longer-term costs to the state's economic viability. The transfer of power from Ulbricht to Honecker was thus an important turning point.

Measures to improve living and working conditions in rural communities, along with increased investment in agriculture, engendered greater confidence in the possibilities for financial security under a transformed system of agricultural organisation. The gradual return of coherence to the state administration's approach to agriculture, renewed efforts by the SED to assert its influence over the LPGs themselves and the final restriction on private production with the demise of the Type I LPGs were vital in subduing any lingering opposition to the transformation of agriculture through cooperation. The stabilisation of the structures through which SED policies were communicated to and the manner in which they were received by collective farmers during the 1970s, however, must also be seen in the context of the conflicts and accommodations made between farmers, LPG chairmen and the functionaries of the district state and party apparatus during the previous decade.

The Dynamic 1960s? The Limitations of Life in East German Agriculture

The 1960s have been regarded as the dynamic years of the GDR's development.² The security lent the SED leadership by the erection of the Wall at the start of the decade allowed Ulbricht to lead the GDR down a path of radical social transformation and attempted economic reform. They were certainly challenging and exciting years for those who sought to push forward the transformation of the scale and organisation of agricultural production and with it the social fabric of rural society. The gradual professionalisation of the agricultural workforce through increased levels of qualification, the provision of more advanced machinery to the LPGs and the increased scale of crop production and to a lesser extent livestock production under the auspices of the relatively independent district agricultural councils were elements of, what was for some, a positive transformation of agriculture since collectivisation. The consolidation of the LPGs and their stabilisation as independent financial institutions arguably brought a degree of harmony and prosperity to some rural communities relative to the period directly after the completion of full collectivisation.³ The 1960s and early 1970s have been said by some former collective farmers with hindsight to have been 'the best years' in the GDR.⁴

As we have seen, however, collective farmers of all types, but especially in the LPG Type I, were by no means convinced of the benefits of this process of socialist modernisation thus far. Moreover, in terms of living and working conditions in rural communities, there was much less cause for contentment: agricultural transformation did not bring with it comprehensive or consistent improvement to working conditions around the *Bezirk*, while Ulbricht's wider economic reforms came at the price of a degree of austerity which few in rural communities were ultimately willing to pay.

In the early 1960s, in the first years after the completion of collectivisation, the villages of *Bezirk Erfurt* were by no means idyllic. The amount of labour required by collective farmers in all sorts of LPGs was back-breaking and rendered doubly hard by difficult weather conditions and a relative lack of resources of building materials and machinery, fertiliser and good-quality seed, to name but a few shortages. Villages were unconnected to a central water supply, while the quality of the road network and access to public transport left many communities in relative isolation. Access to the latest consumer products and labour-saving devices was very limited given the problems of delivery and the size of the local village shop, while the possibilities for enter-

tainment centred almost exclusively on the local village pub.⁵ Improving housing also proved to be a serious problem in rural communities, as it was in urban centres. Much of the housing in the villages was over a hundred years old and though not so ravaged by war bombardment was in a poor state of repair. There was thus considerable room for improvement.⁶

There is no doubt that by the late 1960s some modern conveniences had become available to villagers in line with the GDR's industrial development during the decade.⁷ Furthermore the LPGs – particularly where they were the largest local employer – had started playing an active role in organising and funding the construction of better communal facilities and improving housing.⁸ Very often for the least well-off the LPG represented something of a liberation; there was much to be said for the regular payment of wages, a regulated working day, subsidised kitchens and even the opportunity for holidays.

There is no doubt, too, that many in the 1960s benefited from the social change associated with collectivisation. Greater access to higher education opened channels for new career opportunities and some social mobility. Landless farm labourers were able to achieve new status in the LPGs, while women and young people were to some extent granted greater independence as their traditional obligations to the farm and to the household were reconfigured following collectivisation. Moreover, the bureaucracy and welfare infrastructure that accompanied the expansion of LPGs made a range of new – not strictly agricultural – jobs available in the countryside.⁹ This enabled women to take up positions of not inconsiderable authority and responsibility in a range of roles from the LPG canteens to the LPG bureaucracy.¹⁰ The potentially powerful position of chief accountant was increasingly occupied by women in LPGs during the 1960s and 1970s. Within the farm itself, there is evidence into the 1970s of women farmers being barred from participation in decision making and discouraged from gaining qualifications while male farmers continued to occupy most of the responsible jobs within the LPG up to 1989. Nevertheless, an increasing proportion of women were able to participate in the LPG boards, become brigade leaders or, in a very few cases, heads of the LPG. For this, among other reasons, village women interviewed after the Wende continued to acclaim the benefits of the collective model. The experience of community, the chance to gain recognition of personal achievement, greater free time and less rigid social control in the village were considered of particular value.¹¹

Nonetheless, in most rural communities by the end of the 1960s, the degree of improvement in living standards and working conditions in

general terms had by no means been consistently dramatic.¹² The process of separating out and then concentrating crop and livestock production as well as other essential elements of agricultural production (machine repair, building, fertiliser and chemical storage) over a wider area encouraged (indeed required) the centralisation of the facilities for agricultural production and administration in single central villages. These in turn attracted investment in housing and other amenities to certain areas, beginning in some respects to fulfil the SED's proclaimed intention of matching rural with urban living conditions. However, this process left a large number of smaller but by no means obsolescent communities with little prospect of future improvement or even the maintenance of their local services. Some villages were beginning to undergo a process of depopulation, losing their status both as settlements and as centres of production. The proportion of people required to work in agriculture was declining steadily during the 1960s owing to technological development. At the same time, many young men were leaving the villages thanks to the introduction of military service in 1962, and the prospect on completion of this service of further education and training and access to better jobs in industry.

On the whole, however, the disparity was most clear to villagers themselves in the extent to which living standards in rural communities had failed to improve in comparison to those in towns over the decade.

The quid pro quo of collectivisation and subsequent steps to transform the organisation of agriculture – restricting private production and local independence – had always been the improvement to living and working conditions in rural communities which social and economic transformation would bring. By the end of the 1960s, however, a large proportion of those who remained in the agricultural workforce could see no real improvement in the living standard available to them, especially when compared with the conditions for those who worked in industry and lived in towns. Although the incomes of farmers had improved since the early 1960s, there was a consistent sense that they were being underpaid for the amount of time and effort they put in. A comparison with working conditions in industry had long been a problem for those functionaries at the grass roots attempting to quell dissatisfaction among collective farmers and persuade young people to remain in agriculture. Concessions to consumerism and immediate improvements to working conditions across the economy, which were introduced under Walter Ulbricht and considerably extended under Erich Honecker, served often only to highlight the lesser status of agricultural production in this respect.

In 1967 the Secretary for Agitation and Propaganda in the SED Kreisleitung Sömmerda wrote of the damage done to popular opinion of the SED regime by the lack of improvement to working and living conditions. In particular he singled out the consistent complaint among farmers that improvements to working conditions (such as the five-day week) promised by the VII SED Party Congress did not appear to include them, especially if they were tending livestock.¹³ Discussion of how in practice to introduce the five-day week had been under consideration by the agricultural council for some time. In response to a request from the chairman of the Rat des Bezirkes for information on how it might be introduced in agriculture at the end of 1965, the head of the Bezirk agricultural council was forced to point out essential problems that prevented the five-day week from being applied to the LPGs. As things stood it was still difficult to find the personnel to give livestock farmers a regular six-day week let alone anything less. Furthermore, with the seasonal variation in agricultural work, five-day weeks could only be arranged around the peak working periods.¹⁴ The introduction of the fortnightly five-day week elsewhere in the economy provoked complaints during end-of-year assemblies held in the LPG in Kreis Arnstadt in January 1966 that agriculture 'never gets taken into account when it comes to such social improvements'.¹⁵

During discussion of the new constitution in 1968, the continuing disgruntlement over their living standards and working conditions was made clear by farmers. The commitment in Article 30 of the constitution to provide employment for everyone and allow everyone the freedom to choose their employment – albeit according to the requirements of the economy – sparked new hopes among some farmers that they might be able to abandon their membership of the LPG more easily and take up better-paid work in industry. Article 31 of the constitution, which guaranteed a right to free time and relaxation to all, provoked some cynicism from LPG members who compared the conditions for those working in industry with the long hours and numerous handicaps faced by farmers in the GDR.¹⁶ Although there had been considerable increases in the amount of machinery available to farmers which alleviated some of the more laborious tasks in agriculture, suitable machinery was not always available or reliable. Root crops in particular continued in many LPGs to be harvested by hand. Moreover those, usually men, who worked with the machinery sustained in large numbers severe physical injury and strain from the new conditions in which they worked. Less manpower may have been necessary thanks to the new technology but not always less individual physical effort from the machine operator.

For those, very often women, who worked with livestock, conditions were reported to be especially hard. Working hours were very long and there was little scope for days off, given the shortage of those free to deputise. At the same time, the concentration on improving crop production had forced LPGs on the whole not to invest properly in the construction of new buildings in which to house animals or in the machinery to alleviate the most labour-intensive tasks of tending the stock. The lack of mechanisation in the sheds to deal with the provision of feed and the removal of dung gave the lie to promises of better conditions in the near future. As one woman farmer pointed out at a meeting of women farmers in the Erfurt-Land district in June 1963:

a lot is said about new technology but in livestock we work like we did in our great grandfather's time. Especially the mucking out and the fodder transport is so difficult that many women don't want to work in the sheds. And when we ask the men to help us with the heavy work, they'd rather do it all themselves. The newly built animal sheds are often so primitive and so far away from the village. It doesn't help us to make the work easier or to enjoy it either.¹⁷

By the late 1960s improvement had often not been forthcoming.

How seriously the conditions for livestock production had been neglected in LPGs in Bezirk Erfurt at the end of the decade is revealed in a report by the veterinary department at the RLN (B) in 1971 which noted seriously high levels of livestock mortality. In most cases the causes of the unnaturally high number of deaths of animals could be traced directly to the conditions in which they were being kept. An investigation found that in approximately one in seven LPGs and one in three VEGs 'unbearable' conditions – in most cases, overcrowding, damp, cold and lack of ventilation in livestock sheds – had caused heavy losses in both old and new livestock sheds. Old buildings were often found to be primitive and not properly suited to the uses being made of them, particularly in terms of the quantities of animals housed in them. Meanwhile, new buildings were found to have been left unfinished or shoddily constructed owing to a lack of materials or insufficient funds to pay for them. The conditions in which cattle were kept in a number of LPGs were described as particularly vile. In thirteen LPGs it was noted that the holdings were vastly overcrowded, resulting in the laming and suffocation of animals, and in nine LPGs a basic lack of sufficient feed had caused animals to die of starvation. Elsewhere large numbers of cows, bullocks and calves were kept in several small sheds, which had no efficient means of disposing of the quantities of muck and slurry produced. Consequently this lay thick on the ground and had contaminated much of the rest of the farm, greatly enhancing the risk of disease

as well as creating an unbearable climate in the sheds.¹⁸ As well as being terrible for the animals, these were clearly grim places to work.

The problem of livestock production was in large part down to the limitations placed on the LPGs during the 1960s for the sake of the ideal transition to industrial-scale farming in the future. Little investment had been allowed in the development of new facilities until it was clear how this could be done on a scale and with a degree of specialisation that allowed the most rational use of resources and provided the greatest level of productivity possible. In the meantime, the numbers of livestock had still to be maintained in order to ensure proper use could be made of the facilities once they were built. In a number of Type I and II LPGs, where the average age of the members was now close or beyond retirement age and where it had not been possible to alleviate some of the burdens of private livestock production because of the lack of space in collective buildings, LPG members were beginning to despair of the future.¹⁹ In one LPG Type I, the members commented on the impossibility of their situation: 'in the immediate future we're not allowed to build and we're not allowed to merge with an LPG Type III ...', they complained, 'where and how are we supposed to contain the livestock production from old people's farms?'²⁰ The abandonment of the dual price for produce from livestock in 1969 placed the LPG Type I on an equal footing with LPG Type III, making it necessary to introduce new measures to control the reinvestment of profits in developing industrial-scale agriculture. Given the straitened economic circumstances in the GDR as a whole and the ongoing conflicts within agriculture itself, however, it is not surprising that they were not universally welcomed.²¹

During 1970 new regulations were announced to establish in LPGs greater controls over the balance between consumption of profits in pay and bonuses and accumulation for investment.²² The RLN (K) and the State Bank for Agriculture and the Food Industry were given greater powers to encourage cooperative investment and to force LPGs, particularly the few remaining Type I LPGs, to fund the formation of industrial-scale production facilities. The financial burden met with a negative response from farmers, particularly in those districts where Type I LPGs still existed in large numbers. A number of chairmen in Kreis Sondershausen suggested that the new system punished farmers for having been successful.²³ In particular in Heiligenstadt there was a general feeling among Type I members that: 'we're are being scrubbed dry by the state – now they want to take every last thing away from us'.²⁴ In a report by the DBD in Heiligenstadt in July 1970 the new economic regulations were considered by some even to spell the end of the existence of the collective farmer: 'now they'll pull the rope taut for

us'.²⁵ Similar responses such as 'now they even want our trousers' or 'there's no point in working' were found in other districts in relation to the new restrictive regulations on pay, bonuses and social security contributions in the LPGs.²⁶ Such moves to restrict pay for those working in agriculture seemed merely to add insult to injury given that it seemed to many farmers that they had never before been so badly supplied.²⁷

When the economy seized up and bottlenecks in supply throughout industry and agriculture began to occur towards the end of 1969 and during 1970, collective farmers and villagers in general felt themselves to be bearing the brunt of the shortages that arose. Bottlenecks in industry had begun to compromise the supply of consumer goods to the population, particularly in rural areas which were always hit worst by a breakdown in distribution and supply.²⁸ A report on the situation in 1970 by the SED Kreisleitung Sömmerda put the blame for the country's economic problems on the inadequacy with which complex economic reforms had been implemented and the failure of the party to communicate effectively with the people. Lack of decent housing, shortages of goods available and lack of plan fulfilment all backed up general public scepticism with regard to the SED's claims of socialism's superiority and a sense of resignation that 'things will not improve'. What confidence there was in the SED regime to provide stability and security as well as economic and social improvement was badly undermined.²⁹

The Failure of Economic Reform

In the run-up to the VIII SED Congress in 1971 criticism of the manner of implementation of SED agricultural policy began to mount. Although no direct attacks were made on Ulbricht's decisions with regard to industrialising production, it was clear that agriculture had suffered from the failure of his economic reforms. LPGs were being forced, it seemed, to carry the burden of the difficulties of other sectors of the economy. As a result of price reform in industry, the cost of materials and equipment purchased by the LPGs had risen considerably. A vastly higher proportion of LPGs' profits was thus being spent on equipment – which was not always of good quality – while farmers were being compelled to cap their incomes.³⁰ Particularly at a time of organisational transition for LPGs, the inability to work out a plan for their future development which was based on secure supply of tools, machinery, fertiliser and building materials was clearly a serious problem with far-reaching consequences.

Discussions on plan fulfilment reported on by the DBD *Kreisverband* in Kreis Gotha revealed the degree of irritation growing amongst farm-

ers. Exhortations to farmers to be more efficient must have been like a red rag to a bull. One farmer reportedly commented: 'You lot talk about clever leadership, and yet there are no spare parts here for the machines, no tyres for the trailers – everywhere you look something is missing. Give it a rest with the leadership and the planning.'³¹ If this system of economic administration was to continue, farmers suggested, then the LPGs must be allowed to employ lawyers for themselves so as to advocate their interests against industrial enterprises, which had failed in recent years to keep their contractual obligations. The failure with little or no notice to supply spare parts for machinery, fertiliser, disinfectant, veterinary equipment and protective work clothing had all contributed to poorer working conditions and lower production levels in agriculture, for which farmers now sought redress.³² The head of crop production in Griesheim made his expectations no less clear in June 1971: 'We expect that as a consequence of the VIII SED Party Congress, all the relevant sections of the economy will give us better support, especially those who produce agricultural machinery. One can't get rid of the feeling that in several places citizens are sitting around actually doing the work of the enemy and getting away with things by coming up with all sorts of excuses.'³³

Concerns over the manner in which agriculture was being treated was not just an issue for the collective farmers and LPG functionaries but also resonated throughout the agricultural administration of party and state. It was certainly not the intention of leading SED functionaries responsible for agriculture to see productivity in agriculture reduced. They were well aware that low morale among collective farmers, sustained by difficult working and living conditions, was not conducive to the successful development of agricultural production. It was even clearer to leading agricultural functionaries in Berlin that agriculture was in danger of being made the financial scapegoat for difficulties in industry or construction. As a result, Gerhard Grüneberg was active in lobbying for agriculture to be given greater protection from increases in the prices for industrial products and for greater recognition to be given to the achievements of agriculture since collectivisation.

Fluctuating prices as a result of the latest economic reforms had caused administrative grief and hampered cost control across East German agriculture. Inflation in prices for construction materials and the exorbitant prices charged for new machinery acted as natural disincentives for the development of industrial-scale agriculture.³⁴ The major departure established by VIII SED Party Congress was thus the reorganisation of the economy along more conservative lines. A degree of central control and more extensive centrally defined plans replaced the

complex systems of economic planning and incentive established by the various reforms of the Ulbricht era.

Continuities

With the VIII SED Party Congress in 1971, which marked the effective transition of power from Ulbricht to Erich Honecker within the SED leadership, there was little immediate change in socialist agricultural policy. The gradual development of ever more comprehensive cooperation in crop production was still at the heart of the plans for reaching the next stage in agriculture and rural society's social and economic development. The confirmation of the party line, despite the apparent transfer of power, however, did remove much of the remaining reticence in the hierarchy of both party and state in their attempts to implement policy. The paralysis of the previous year and a half was to some extent relieved by the clear official sanction given at the VIII SED Party Congress to the continuation of cooperative crop production. The path and pace of development continued nevertheless to vary considerably from LPG to LPG. There was certainly neither sudden uniform enthusiasm nor a centrally driven mass agitation campaign for cooperation or for the separation of crop and livestock production.

A *modus vivendi* between farmers, the leading cadres in the LPGs and the district functionaries of party and state could not be established everywhere with ease. The same arguments still remained pertinent to local protagonists disputing the value of cooperative relations with one another. There was thus considerable continuity in the immediate experience of farmers and LPG functionaries on the ground. Despite the apparent significance of Ulbricht's loss in authority within the SED hierarchy, the continuing presence of Gerhard Grüneberg as the leading force in the Politburo on agricultural matters ensured that the vision guiding the ultimate social and economic transformation of agriculture in the GDR remained as before. After the uncertainty of the last years of Ulbricht's period in office, there is no doubt that a degree of initiative and dynamism returned to socialist agriculture, though the impact was neither immediate nor universal.

In September 1971, there was general acclamation in the party meetings of the LPG BPOs in Bezirk Erfurt of the decision made to supply the LPGs with extra sources of fodder to balance out the problems caused by recent difficult weather.³⁵ This was a much-needed measure and brought relief to several LPGs facing another difficult year feeding their livestock. It also took the pressure off the existing coopera-

tive crop production units to be immediately very efficient in exceeding their plan targets. However, Honecker could not claim the plaudits for a general improvement in living conditions in rural communities. In Bezirk Erfurt, difficulties with the potato harvest saw a public relations disaster for the regime in general and in particular for state functionaries in several rural communities. The need to reclaim potatoes from the cellars of LPG members in order to ensure there were sufficient numbers available in the shops brought with it some lasting bad blood. As a representative of the trade organisation in Leubingen pointed out in September 1972: 'We all remember all too well, what a political outcome the reclamations from the population had last year. Quite apart from the effort which we and the affected farms had with loading and unloading, we can't allow ourselves another such dilemma again.'³⁶

The continuing lack of a sufficient supply of inorganic fertiliser in the Bezirk caused some farmers to voice the suspicion even that 'economic sabotage' was being committed. The response to the extra grain that was distributed to the LPGs was also not wholly positive.³⁷ People's Petitions (*Eingaben der Bevölkerung*) in the second half of 1971 sent to the ZK agricultural department showed that for farmers across the GDR not all the supply problems in agriculture could be solved overnight. A lack of spare parts continued to render new machines useless, provoking widespread complaints.³⁸

The RLN (K)s in different districts also did not immediately improve in their ability to solve the problems of the struggling LPGs/KOGs for which they were responsible. In conjunction with the VIII SED Party Congress in 1971, criticism of the state apparatus for agriculture – particularly with regard to the development of cooperation – had prompted investigation into the functioning of the agricultural councils and their production staff. A report by the SED Bezirksleitung on the working practices of the RLN (B) as well as the RLN (K)s in early 1972 noted, in typical party jargon, 'great differentiation' in the quality of the work done at all levels in the hierarchy of state administration. As usual, however, it was the staff of the RLN (K)s who were found to be severely in need of both more political education and more technical training.³⁹ Despite the clear approach set out at the VIII SED Party Congress, the RLN (K)s were not in a position to take action to resolve all divergent trends on their territory with any speed. There were still competing ideas about how, and how quickly, further specialisation and industrialisation of agricultural production should take place.

The idea of establishing wholly separate administration for crop and livestock production, even in the long term, still provoked in 1971 an openly negative response from some collective farmers. In one LPG, an

SED member argued that if cooperation should be continued at all, then livestock production should be part of the cooperation too.⁴⁰ Pursuing such a plan was rejected on the grounds that it would lead effectively to the formation of a Groß LPG based on the merger of the collective farms in the KOG. Come April 1972, and the RLN (B) had, however, to report that success with regard to the gradual reinvigoration of cooperative crop production was still being overshadowed by widespread desire among farmers to form such large mixed crop and livestock farms. In Kreis Erfurt-Land, the LPGs based in Andisleben, Grossrudstedt and Kerspleben had all begun to expand through mergers. Between the three of them, they occupied more than one-fifth of the district's agricultural land. Similar tendencies were also noted in LPGs in Kreis Eisenach and Bad Langensalza.⁴¹

While in Kreis Sömmerda and Kreis Apolda more than 70 per cent of land was being farmed in a cooperative unit in 1972, the rest of the Bezirk was by no means so far advanced. Only 20 per cent of land was being farmed in this way in Kreis Worbis and Kreis Sondershausen further to the north, where Type I LPGs in particular had remained resistant to cooperative crop production. In the Bezirk as a whole, seventy-two cooperative crop production units (*Kooperative Abteilungen Pflanzenproduktion* or KAPs) administered 45 per cent of the farmland, leaving more than half to be farmed by LPGs either independently or in less formal cooperation with one another.⁴² Nonetheless in the course of the next two years, the proportion of farmland officially administered by a KAP increased steadily. Concerted efforts by the SED Kreisleitung and the RLN (K) ensured that LPG cadres took steps to establish stable cooperative crop production within the KOGs, overcoming rivalries between the individual collective farms and carrying out sufficient consultation with their members before radical steps were taken which had a direct impact on working conditions.

Reconstituting Cooperation

In January 1973, in a document prepared for Erich Honecker's discussions with the SED first secretaries of the Bezirke, Gerhard Grüneberg's office outlined the current position on agriculture. The document suggested optimistically that there was now unity from top to bottom among all who worked in agriculture in the GDR on the correct policy. To maintain this unity, however, the first secretaries were reminded of the importance of a slow process of transition and real discussion with the farmers themselves before greater concentration and specialisation

of production was introduced. In order for socialist agricultural policy to be successfully put into practice, it was necessary above all not to undermine the special – traditional – commitment of farmers to the production process. The continuing existence of LPGs, with their structures of inclusion and participation, and the element of proprietary ties to the land for which they stood in theory, if not entirely in practice, were essential to this policy, because they maintained farmers' 'moral and material interestedness'.⁴³

The reorganisation of working patterns, competences and responsibilities in the LPGs as a result of the formation of a separate crop production unit entailed potentially serious upheaval for many LPG members and raised serious doubts about the nature of their future employment: primarily, where and with whom they would be working, and on what basis they would now receive an income for the labour and land they had contributed. During the SED district party activists' assembly for agriculture in September 1972, a representative of the KOG Sömmerda spoke of the need to strike the balance between taking into account the wishes of the individual LPG member and moving forward with formation of a separate crop production unit: 'We will take on no member, who hasn't been spoken to; we will take on no member where a signed delegation agreement has not been presented and we will accept no cadre files where the questionnaire has not been filled out.'⁴⁴ Prior to the establishment of the KAP Stotternheim/Grossrudestedt in Kreis Erfurt, for example, careful attention was paid to ensuring that the personal objections of the individual members were aired and dealt with before the KAP was set up. Resolutions were passed in the members' assemblies of the LPGs and discussions held with members in their brigades as to who was to be delegated into the KAP and on what basis they were to be paid.⁴⁵

After the VIII SED Party Congress, LPG cadres certainly felt themselves constrained by the need to proceed with developing cooperative relations in line with SED policy and state pressure, and accepted therefore the necessity of forming a KAP. They remained, however, no less keen to avoid any suggestion that they had failed to protect the LPG members' interests, and sought initially therefore to relinquish as little control over LPG finances to the KAP as possible. The question in particular of how to bring about the fair sharing of the profits of the cooperation, given the varying inputs of the LPGs, was at the heart of discussions in the cooperative councils. The leadership of the LPG Type III Tunzenhausen, for example, had to admit in a meeting in January 1972 that: 'the members are sceptical, they want to enjoy the fruits of their labour ... Tunzenhausen', he went on, 'does not want 100 per cent

cooperation as this will just get disputes started again, especially as far as the sharing of profits is concerned.' With each LPG having different resources, there was considerable contention about how these resources could or should be shared and balanced in the division of profits. As a consequence, LPG chairmen insisted on a certain amount of the financial organisation continuing to be run via the LPGs themselves.⁴⁶

With the formation of a cooperative crop production unit within a KOG, initially often only slight changes were made to the conditions under which collective farmers worked. Most often, the field brigades were divided along territorial lines, such that one – or at the most two – LPGs functioned as a subsection of the KAP. As a result, collective farmers could continue to work in their home area. Given that each LPG often continued to receive the produce that yielded from their own fields and used most of their own machinery too, there was little radical change involved in forming a KAP.⁴⁷ The opinion, 'What grows on the territory of the LPG must belong to the LPG', continued thus to be prevalent, particularly in those LPGs where large investments had been made in recent years in producing certain special crops such as hops and types of fruit. This opinion was also present particularly in those LPGs that had long had better yields on their fields than their neighbours.⁴⁸

Steps towards the creation of cooperative crop production units inevitably saw conflicts over the sharing of profits and resources between the LPGs, especially where no unified system for paying all the KAP employees had been worked out. Attempts to set up a KAP in the KOG Grossbrenbach, for example, were seriously undermined by mutual suspicions between members of the various LPGs. On the one hand, tractor drivers from the LPG Grossbrenbach decided to return machines and apparatus to the individual LPGs in the KOG, rather than continue to work together with drivers delegated from the other farms, who, they believed, treated the machinery irresponsibly. In their opinion, the other LPGs were living off the back of their hard work and they felt they were being 'continually duped'. In response, the chairman of the LPG Vogelsberg argued that his members had been done out of 250,000 Marks during the sharing of profits. They had been forced to accept a work unit rate of 9.50 Marks compared to the 11 Marks paid in the other LPGs. Furthermore, he pointed out, the development of cooperative crop production had meant the end of his LPG's lucrative line in poppy production.⁴⁹

Despite the occurrence of such disputes, over the course of 1973 continued pressure from the SED Kreisleitung and the RLN (K) on LPG chairmen ensured new KAPs were formed and existing KAPs over-

came their difficulties. Active support was given to the cooperative councils to ensure the constituent LPGs in the KAP were placed on an equal footing and a uniform system of payment was established for all KAP workers. The RLN (K) helped the members of the cooperative councils set out a plan for establishing a unified level of work units through a unified set of work norms and system of incentives across the constituent LPG, aiming thereby to prevent the sort of disputes which had proved so divisive in the past.⁵⁰ By March 1973, in approximately half of the existing KAPs in the Bezirk, unified work norms had been introduced.⁵¹

The resolution of essential financial questions lent a degree of confidence to collective farmers faced with the prospect of working in a KAP. The idea of cooperative crop production was no longer dismissed out of hand. As long as the incomes of the LPG members were protected and there was confidence in the efficiency of the new structure and organisation of work, the KAP appeared to receive greater acceptance among LPG members. In discussions with farmers in February 1973 in Kreis Erfurt-Land, the step to cooperative crop production was now positively compared with the step from private to collective farming: 'Everything new has to get properly settled. In 1960 during the formation of the LPG, there were people who could already see their downfall. But everyone has developed since then and no-one has been ruined.'⁵²

A New Structure for Agriculture – A New Context for SED Authority

During the early 1970s considerable transition was taking place in many of the Type I LPGs in the Bezirk, which had up until this point successfully guarded their independence. It was becoming increasingly apparent to members of Type I LPGs that they would not be able to continue in this way for much longer. Where financial hardship had not yet forced Type I LPGs to merge with their neighbours, the RLN (K) were bound to take action to end the anomalous existence of the remaining Type I LPGs in the Bezirk. Merger with a neighbouring LPG Type III was still often a bitter pill to swallow. *Eingaben* received by the ZK Agricultural Department during the third quarter of 1972 contained several from members of Type I LPGs, complaining about the level of contribution they were required to pay the LPG Type III to ensure there was no loss of capital funds per hectare after the farms had merged. Sums of between 2,500 and 3,500 Marks per hectare were felt by those Type I members

with few animals left to offset this sum to constitute a crippling burden.⁵³ However, there were, by 1973, considerably fewer collective farmers who were willing to struggle to continue to maintain their independence than there had been five years previously.

For the considerable proportion of LPG Type I members who were approaching or had even surpassed retirement age, there was some relief in the prospect of not having to struggle on fulfilling state demands for increased production. An analysis of Type I LPGs in 1972 had already identified the extreme age of their members as reaching crisis levels.⁵⁴ For the rest of the remaining Type I farmers, attempting to hold on to independence appeared increasingly futile given the now clear direction of SED policy towards separate intensification of crop and livestock production, and was likely only to bring further financial penalties. Merger or transfer of livestock into a collective herd and participation in cooperative crop production increasingly seemed therefore the only viable option for these LPG members. In a few cases the prospect of merger was mitigated by the fact that those farmers who wished it were sometimes allowed to maintain an extended number of livestock privately for a certain amount of time beyond the date of the merger.⁵⁵ By January 1974, the number of animals held in Type I LPGs had been dramatically reduced as a result of mergers and switching to a higher LPG Type. In Bezirk Erfurt only 2.8 per cent of cattle, 2.3 per cent of pigs and 1.4 per cent of sheep were now being held in the remaining forty-nine Type I LPGs.⁵⁶

The merger of LPGs and the formation of the KAPs had brought with it a reconfiguration of the leading personnel in agriculture at a local level. Above all, it provided opportunities for SED members to be established in positions of influence over wider areas of production. Specifically in Bezirk Erfurt, a new generation of functionaries, trained in the latest socialist agricultural theory and methods and largely loyal to the SED, had taken positions as heads of KAP.⁵⁷ Obstruction of steps towards the formation of separate crop and livestock production by LPG cadres had often been put down by the SED Kreisleitungen to the fears of LPG functionaries themselves of being demoted as a result. There were certainly a number of cases in Bezirk Erfurt in which DBD members were considered to be hostile to the development of cooperative crop production.⁵⁸ Whether or not LPG chairmen who were members of the DBD really did obstruct the development of the KAP for fear of losing their positions, the concentration of crop production in the KAP provided an opportunity for the SED to assert its dominance over agriculture.

During a training week for leading members of the DBD in Kreis Nordhausen, an instructor from the SED announced in a speech that the position of head of the KAP would only go to SED comrades. When challenged about this comment afterwards, on the basis that the head of the DBD in Bezirk Erfurt, Willy Grandetzka, had only recently suggested the opposite, the SED member responded bullishly that Grandetzka would have to revise his opinion too.⁵⁹ In the KOG Grossengottern, for example, changes to cadre positions with the creation of the cooperative crop production unit in August 1972 were the cause for concerned discussion among DBD members. The new administrative construction of the KAP was described by DBD members, who considered themselves to have been demoted compared to their former positions, as a 'great changing of the guard'. Some even asked to join the SED instead, if this would allow them to hold their functions.⁶⁰ By the end of the year, complaints were still arriving from DBD members at Grandetzka's desk. In Grossengottern the KAP head had allegedly told a member of the DBD that he had no chance of being sent to qualify himself at the LPG school in Meissen in the near future, as all SED members would be sent there first and SED members would be the ones occupying the mid- and top-level functions in the future.⁶¹

With the settlement of the status of all but a few Type I LPGs, the proportion of land in the Bezirk under the control of LPGs actively participating in cooperative crop production was considerably increased. By 1974 the switch to KAP had been almost completed across the Bezirk. There were now 115 KAPs in the Bezirk with an average size of 3,033 hectares.⁶² Moreover, steps were being taken to revolutionise the conditions of production. Many of the KAPs had already begun to be restructured towards specialised production of particular crops over large areas. In the process, working conditions began to change for those LPG members who had been delegated into the KAPs.

With the development of a different layout of fields and crop rotation, the KAPs began to organise their work brigades on more than the simplest territorial lines, effectively eradicating the old distinctions between LPGs. Work brigades attached to specific territories were to be joined by brigades charged with specific tasks across crop production in general, whose members might come from various LPGs and which might be deployed in various parts of a KAP.⁶³ This was a radical departure for the organisation of agricultural production and signalled a considerable change in the status of the agricultural workforce, seeming to break the traditional connection of responsibility between the individual collective farmer and the land and livestock of his LPG.

Conclusion

By the mid-1970s, the basic elements of a new stable context in which the SED leadership might seek to exert its authority over agricultural production at the grass roots had been established in Bezirk Erfurt. There were still numerous obstacles to overcome in the organisation of the relationship between crop and livestock production; however, a significant milestone had been reached. With the demise of the LPG Type I, the last remnants of the concessions necessary to large-scale private production had been removed. With the formation of the KAP, any tendencies towards the Groß LPG and the pursuit of the traditional pattern of mixed livestock and crop farms had been abandoned.⁶⁴ At the same time, the process of professionalisation of the agricultural workforce in line with specialisation of production was beginning to make itself felt. Just as the number of agricultural workers had begun to reach a steady level in balance with the machinery and technology available, so a steady ratio of farmers attained a basic qualification in socialist agricultural theory and methods.

Perhaps most importantly, in the mid-1970s the SED as a party was able to achieve a more consistently dominant status within the structures of agricultural production on the ground. Although the SED BPOs continued to vary in their ability, the proportion of party members among collective farmers reached unprecedented levels. More importantly still, the party had established itself firmly among the leading local functionaries determining the manner in which policy was implemented at the front line of farming. A stabilisation of SED authority was thus beginning to take place at the grass roots of agricultural production.

Notes

1. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt IV/C/2/7-356 SED Kreisleitung Erfurt-Land an den Sekretär für Landwirtschaft der Bezirksleitung, Information über den Stand der Bildung der KAP Stotternheim/Grossrudestedt, die gegenwärtig stehenden Probleme und der sich daraus ergebenden Schlussfolgerungen für die Leitungstätigkeit, 1.3.1973, p. 83.
2. See for example the collection of essays in A. Schildt, D. Siegfried and K. Lammers (eds), *Dynamische Zeiten*, Hamburg, 2000.
3. Siegfried Kuntsche pinpoints the positive impact of the New Economic System and the Agricultural Councils in enabling the LPGs a greater degree of self-determination over the development of their production facilities

during the 1960s, which in turn encouraged greater identification with the LPGs. In contrast, the 1970s saw greater centralisation of state control over investment and limitation of local autonomy. Kuntsche, 'Die Umgestaltung der Eigentumsverhältnisse und der Produktionsstruktur in der Landwirtschaft', in *Ansichten zur Geschichte der DDR*, Vol. 1, eds D. Keller et al., Bonn, 1993, pp. 204–9.

4. This was the comment of farmers interviewed by Christel Nehrig. C. Nehrig, 'Das Leben auf dem Lande: Die Genossenschaften (LPG)', in *Befremdlich Anders: Leben in der DDR*, ed. E. Badstübner, Berlin, 2000, pp.195–216, here p. 216.
5. SAPMO BArch IV 2/2.023/36 Büro Gerhard Grüneberg, Die 5. Tagung des Zentralrats der FDJ am 22. und 23. April 1960, Discussionbeitrag, p. 90.
6. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt IV/C/2/7-344 SED Bezirksleitung Abt. Landwirtschaft, Analyse und Probleme der Entwicklung des gesellschaftlichen Lebens in den Gemeinden des Bezirkes, 27.3.1972, pp. 14–35.
7. I. Merkel, *Utopie und Bedürfnis: Die Geschichte der Konsumkultur in der DDR*, Cologne, 1999, p. 353.
8. ThHStAW RdB Erfurt L041313 Referat für Ratssitzung – Genosse Kummer (Experiment), 22.8.1968.
9. ThHStAW RdB Erfurt L015464 Bezirksplankommission, Information über die von der Bezirksplankommission für die Bilanzierung der Planangebote AK-Entwicklung und Neueinstellung von Schulabgängern für eine Berufsausbildung 1968 zugrundegelegten Kennziffern, 21.3.1967.
10. D. Langenhahn and S. Roß, 'Berufskarrieren von Frauen', in *Sozialistische Eliten: Horizontale und Vertikale Differenzierungsmuster in der DDR*, ed. S. Hornbostel, Opladen, 1999, pp. 147–62.
11. B. Van Hoven, 'Women at Work – Experiences and Identity in Rural E. Germany', *Area* 33(1), 2001, pp. 38–46.
12. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Kreisleitung der SED Sömmerda IV/B/4.10/214 SED Kreisleitung, Abt. Staatsfragen, Einschätzung der Durchsetzung der Aufgaben der vorangegangenen Plenum und vor allem des VII. Parteitages, 16.8.1968, p. 2.
13. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Kreisleitung der SED Sömmerda IV/A/4.10/092 SED Kreisleitung, Genosse Hermann, Sekretär der SED Kreisleitung an Genossen Friedrich, Sekretär der Bezirksleitung, Abt. Agit./Prop, 29.5.1967, p. 74.
14. ThHStAW RdB Erfurt L1075 Band I Bezirkslandwirtschaftsrat, Vorsitzender an den Vorsitzenden des Rates des Bezirkes, Probleme, die sich aus der Einführung der 5-Tage Arbeitswoche in der Landwirtschaft ergeben, 23.12.1965.
15. ThHStAW RdB Erfurt L1158 Bezirkslandwirtschaftsrat, Information über die durchgeführten Jahresendversammlungen in den LPG im Bezirk Erfurt, 12.1.1966.
16. BArch DK 1 VA Neu 2846 Landwirtschaftsrat der DDR, Information zu einigen Problemen der Verfassungsdiskussion in den sozialistischen Betrieben der Landwirtschaft, 1.3.1968.

17. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt BIV/2/7-497 Information über die durchgeführten Kreisbäuerinnenkonferenzen, 14.6.1963, p. 83; IV/A/2/2-38 Protokoll der Bezirksparteiaktivtagung Landwirtschaft am 17.12.1963, Referat Genosse Thieme, Stellv. Leiter des Büros für Landwirtschaft, p. 22.
18. ThHStAW RdB Erfurt L036207 Land-, Forst und Nahrungsgüterwirtschaft, Abt. Veterinärwesen, Bericht zur Konzeption für die Untersuchung der objektiven und subjektiven Ursachen der Tierverluste, 16.8.1971.
19. SAPMO BArch DY60/2973 DBD Bezirksvorstand, Abt. Parteiorgane, Wertung des weiteren Verlaufs der Diskussionen zur Vorbereitung des Perspektivplanes, 21.9.1970.
20. SAPMO BArch DY60/2973 DBD Bezirksvorstand, Abt. Parteiorgane, Weitere Kurzeinschätzung über Verlauf und Ergebnisse der Diskussion in MV und in der politischen Massenarbeit zur Vorbereitung des Perspektivplanes und zur weiteren Anwendung des ÖSS, 10.9.1970.
21. J. Rösler, *Zwischen Plan und Markt: Die Wirtschaftsreform, 1963–1970*, Berlin, 1990, p. 147.
22. Siegfried Kuntsche refers to such measures to centralise control over investment and accumulation as an erosion of the autonomy that the LPG had enjoyed under the NÖS. The loss of independence, bound up with the loss of incentive in turn, he suggests, was a severe blow to LPG members' traditional identities as farmers. Certainly it was a turning point for the remaining members of Type I LPGs. Kuntsche, 'Die Umgestaltung der Eigentumsverhältnisse', pp. 206ff.
23. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt IV/B/2/5-184 SED Bezirksleitung Abt. Parteiorgane, Kurzinformation Nr. 54, 22.6.1970, pp. 142–4.
24. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt IV/B/2/5-165 SED Bezirksleitung Abt. Parteiorgane, Kurzinformation Nr. 57/70, 13.7.1970, p. 491.
25. SAPMO BArch DY60/2973 DBD Kreisvorstand Heiligenstadt, Information, 17.7.1970.
26. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt IV/B/2/5-165 SED Bezirksleitung Abt. Parteiorgane, Information aus der operativen Tätigkeit, 30.7.1970, p. 513.
27. SAPMO BArch DY60/2973 DBD Bezirksvorstand, Abt. Parteiorgane, Parteiinformation, 11.8.1970.
28. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Kreisleitung der SED Sömmerda IV/B/4.10/211 SED Kreisleitung Abt. Parteiorgane, 'Wie wird die Lage in den einzelnen Orten eingeschätzt?' 19.2.1970, p. 162; Rat des Kreises, Kreiswahlbüro, Bericht über die durchgeführten Rechenschaftslegungen in Vorbereitung der Volkswahlen sowie über die Eingabenbewegung, p. 182.
29. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Kreisleitung der SED Sömmerda IV/B/4.10/148 SED Kreisleitung Abt. Agit./Prop, Gesichtspunkte eines Beschlusses des Politbüro vom 5.10.1970, Zu inhaltlichen Problemen der politischen und ideologischen Arbeit und ihre Wirksamkeit, 10.11.1970, pp. 49–66.

30. SAPMO BArch DY30/ IV A 2/2.023/2 Büro Gerhard Grüneberg, Analyse der Vorschläge, Hinweise und Kritiken der Werktätigen in der Landwirtschaft und Nahrungsgüterwirtschaft in Vorbereitung des VIII. Parteitagess der SED, 10.5.1971, pp. 116ff.
31. SAPMO BArch, DY60/2958 DBD Kreisverband Gotha, Abt. Parteiorgane, Parteiinformation, 2.4.1971.
32. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt IV/B/2/5-410 DBD Bezirksvorstand an den Sekretär für Landwirtschaft der SED Bezirksleitung, Sozialistischer Wettbewerb nach dem Beispiel Tuchheim, 15.2.1971, pp. 229–34; DBD Bezirksverband an die SED Bezirksleitung, Vorschläge unserer Mitglieder aus MV, differenzierten Beratungen und persönlichen Aussprachen, 4.5.1971.
33. SAPMO BArch DY60/2958 DBD Kreisvorstand Arnstadt, Einschätzung der Meinung der Mitglieder unseres Kreisverbandes zum VIII. Parteitag der SED, 24.6.1971.
34. SAPMO BArch DY30/IV A 2/2.023/50 Büro Gerhard Grüneberg, Hausmitteilung, Dr. Feil an Genossen Grüneberg, Stellungnahme zur 'Analyse der Preisentwicklung wichtiger Produktionsmittel für die Landwirtschaft', 28.6.1971; Information für Genossen Kiesler, 'Im Zusammenhang mit den Untersuchungen zur Preispolitik und den dazu notwendigen Berechnungen ...' 26.7.1971; Information über weitere Manipulationen der Staatlichen Zentralverwaltung für Statistik und des Amtes für Preise bei der Darstellung der Industrie- und Baupreisentwicklung, 28.7.1971; Untersuchungen zur Preispolitik – Teil Landwirtschaft, 24.8.1971.
35. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Kreisleitung der SED Sömmerda IV/B/4.10/101 SED Kreisleitung Abt. Parteiorgane, Einschätzung der MV – Monat Oktober, 8.11.1971, p. 356.
36. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Kreisleitung der SED Sömmerda IV/C/4.10/073 SED Kreisleitung Sekretariat, Protokoll über die Kreisparteiaktivtagung am 25.9.1972, 27.9.1972, Diskussionsbeitrag Gen. Freistauer, HB Leubingen, pp. 65–6.
37. SAPMO BArch DY60/2958 DBD Bezirksvorstand, Abt. Parteiorgane, Ergänzender Abschlussbericht über die Arbeit unserer Partei in Vorbereitung und Durchführung der Wahlen am 14.11.1971, 17.11.1971.
38. SAPMO BArch DY30/IV B 2/2.023/24 Büro Gerhard Grüneberg, ZK der SED, Abt. Landwirtschaft, Einschätzung der Eingaben aus der Bevölkerung, 25.1.1972.
39. ThHStAW RdB Erfurt L041299 SED Bezirksleitung, Abt. Landwirtschaft an das Sekretariat, Ergebnisse der Arbeitsgruppe zur Untersuchung der Arbeitsweise der Produktionsleitung des RLN des Bezirkes Erfurt und der Produktionsleitungen einiger Kreise, 9.3.1972.
40. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Kreisleitung der SED Sömmerda IV/B/4.10/101 SED Kreisleitung Abt. Parteiorgane, Einschätzung der MV – Monat September, 5.10.1971, p. 344.
41. ThHStAW RdB Erfurt L041299 RLN (B) Information an das Sekretariat der Bezirksleitung Erfurt der SED über den Stand und die Entwicklung horizontaler Kooperationsbeziehungen in der Pflanzenproduktion des Bezirkes Erfurt, 3.4.1972.

42. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt IV/C/2/7-344 SED Bezirksleitung Abt. Landwirtschaft, Analyse und Probleme der Entwicklung des gesellschaftlichen Lebens in den Gemeinden des Bezirks, 27.3.1972, pp. 14–35.
43. SAPMO BArch DY30 IV A 2/2.023/1 Büro Gerhard Grüneberg, Grüneberg an Honecker, Material für die Beratung mit den 1. Bezirkssekretären, 24.1.1973.
44. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Kreisleitung der SED Sömmerda IV/C/4.10/073 SED Kreisleitung Sekretariat, Protokoll über die Kreisparteiaktivtagung am 25.9.1972, 27.9.1972, Referat des Genossen Heckmann, Kooperation Sömmerda, p. 58.
45. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt IV/C/2/7-356 SED Kreisleitung Erfurt-Land, Information über den Stand der Bildung der KAP Stotternheim/Grossrudstedt ... 1.3.1973, p. 83.
46. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Kreisleitung der SED Sömmerda IV/C/4.10/171 SED Kreisleitung Abt. Landwirtschaft, LPG Koop. Sömmerda, Protokoll der Beratung der Vorsitzenden und Parteisekretäre mit Vertretern der Kreisleitung der SED und der Produktionsleitung des RLN, p. 4.1.1972, pp. 1–3.
47. BArch DK 1 VA neu 2464 Ministerium für LFN Abt. Wissenschaftliche Führungstätigkeit und Inspektion, Bericht – Erfurt, 1972.
48. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Kreisleitung der SED Sömmerda IV/B/4.10/200 SED Kreisleitung Abt. Landwirtschaft, Stellungnahme zum vorliegenden Bericht der Produktionsleitung über den Stand der Entwicklung der Kooperationsbeziehungen in der Landwirtschaft, 11.10.1971, p. 252.
49. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Kreisleitung der SED Sömmerda IV/B/4.10/200 SED Kreisleitung Abt. Landwirtschaft, Fragen zur Entwicklung der Abt. Kooperative Pflanzenproduktion der KOG Grossrembach (undated), p. 283.
50. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt IV/C/2/7-356 RLN (B), Betriebswirtschaftlicher Beratungsdienst, Einschätzung der gesellschaftlichen Entwicklung der Kooperation Greussen, 23.2.1973, p. 33.
51. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt IV/C/2/7-356 SED Bezirksleitung Abt. Landwirtschaft, Handmaterial zur Information zum Stand der Entwicklung der kooperativen Beziehungen zwischen den LPG, 27.3.1973, p. 144.
52. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt IV/C/2/7-356 SED Kreisleitung Erfurt-Land, Information über den Stand der Bildung der KAP Stotternheim/Grossrudstedt, 1.3.1973, p. 83.
53. SAPMO BArch DY30/IV B 2/2.023/24 Büro Gerhard Grüneberg, ZK der SED, Abt. Landwirtschaft, Einschätzung der Eingaben aus der Bevölkerung im III. Quartal 1972, 19.10.1972.
54. SAPMO BArch DY30/1609 ZK der SED Abt. Landwirtschaft, Brief an Genossen Kiesler von Genossen Ewald, Analyse über einige Hauptprobleme des gegenwärtigen Entwicklungsstandes der LPG der Typ I.

55. D. Gabler, *Entwicklungsabschnitte der Landwirtschaft in der ehemaligen DDR*, Berlin, 1995, p. 227; Staatliche Zentralverwaltung für Statistik, Bezirksstelle Erfurt, *Statistisches Jahrbuch – Bezirk Erfurt*, Vol. I, p. 173.
56. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt IV/C/2/7-344 SED Bezirksleitung Abt. Landwirtschaft, Faktenmaterial zum Stand und zur Entwicklung der Landwirtschaft des Bezirkes, 13.12.1974, pp. 85–96.
57. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt IV/C/2/3-164 SED Bezirksleitung Abt. Landwirtschaft, Material für die Mitarbeiterberatung am 27.8.1973, p. 184.
58. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Kreisleitung der SED Sömmerda IV/C/4.10/171 SED Kreisleitung Abt. Landwirtschaft Information über die Aussprache in der Kooperation Büttstädt zur Entwicklung der Kooperation in der Feldwirtschaft, 12.1.1972, pp. 4–9.
59. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt IV/C/2/15-517 SED Bezirksleitung Abt. Landwirtschaft Aktennotiz, p. 39.
60. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt IV/C/2/15-517 SED Kreisleitung Mühlhausen an die Bezirksleitung Abt. Parteiorgane, Information, 30.8.1972, p. 30.
61. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt IV/C/2/15-517 SED Bezirksleitung Information an den Bezirksvorsitzenden der DBD, 21.12.1972, p. 42.
62. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt IV/C/2/7-344 SED Bezirksleitung Abt. Landwirtschaft, Faktenmaterial zum Stand und zur Entwicklung der Landwirtschaft des Bezirkes, 13.12.1974, pp. 85–96.
63. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt IV/C/2/7-356 SED Bezirksleitung Abt. Landwirtschaft, Handmaterial zur Information zum Stand der Entwicklung der kooperativen Beziehungen zwischen den LPG, 27.3.1973, p. 144.
64. Some elements of the debate for and against the Groß LPG are discussed in: D. Langenhahn, “Wir waren ideologisch nicht ausgerichtet auf die industriemässige Produktion.” Machtbildung und forcierter Strukturwandel in der Landwirtschaft der DDR der 1970er Jahre’, in *Zeitschrift für Agrargeschichte und Agrarsoziologie* 2(51), 2003, pp. 47–55.