

November 7, 1989

Letter from Alexander Schalck to Egon Krenz

Citation:

"Letter from Alexander Schalck to Egon Krenz", November 7, 1989, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Published in Hans-Hermann Hertle, Der Fall der Mauer: Die unbeabsichtigte Selbstaflösung des SED-Staates, 2nd edition (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1999), pp. 486-87. Translated for CWIHP by Howard Sargeant.
<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/113040>

Summary:

Letter from Alexander Schalck to Egon Krenz regarding conversation with FRG government officials stating that the FRG Chancellor sees cooperation between FRG and GDR if GDR guarantees free elections and permission of opposition groups

Original Language:

German

Contents:

Translation - English

Dear Comrade Krenz![1]

After my conversation yesterday with Seiters and Schäuble, Federal Minister Seiters informed me today of the results. The Chancellor transmits the Chairman of the GDR State Council the following:

The course of yesterday's demonstration in Leipzig and the spontaneous exits from the GDR to the FRG which have occurred in the last few hours have produced public demands in the FRG, and increasingly in certain circles of the SPD, for the Chairman of the [GDR] State Council to declare publicly that the GDR is prepared to guarantee that opposition groups will be permitted and affirm that free elections will be held within a period to be announced if the GDR wants to receive material and financial assistance from the FRG. This applies also to the financial arrangements regarding travel [by East Germans to the West].

It should be noted that this path is only possible if the SED relinquishes its claim to absolute power. [The Party] should be prepared to work on equal terms, and in consensus, with all societal forces, churches and religious communities to discuss a true renewal, with the goal of achieving democratic socialism, and with the understanding [that they are] to be prepared to carry out any resulting decisions.

Under these conditions, the Chancellor thinks a great deal can be achieved and every option can be explored.

Federal Minister Seiters is authorized to be available for further informal discussions.

I ask that you take note of this.

With socialist greetings,
[Alexander Schalck]

[1] Krenz signed off on this letter with his initials "Kr."