

November 7, 1989
**Information Note from the Romanian Embassy in
Berlin to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

Citation:

"Information Note from the Romanian Embassy in Berlin to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs", November 7, 1989, Wilson Center Digital Archive, AMAE, Berlin/1989, vol. 2, pp. 394-397. Translated for CWIHP by Mircea Munteanu
<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/113044>

Summary:

Note from the Romanian Embassy in Berlin to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding continuing protests in the streets, the proposal to allow freedom to travel to foreign countries, the demands by the population for the removal of the Politburo and all ministers, and the movement towards the economic integration of the GDR with the FRG.

Original Language:

Romanian

Contents:

Translation - English

07 November 1989, 06:15 pm

Cde. Constantin Oancea, Deputy [Foreign Affairs] Minister,

In regards to the evolution of events in the German Democratic Republic (GDR), we inform [you] of the following:

1. The protests continue throughout the country with the same intensity. The biggest street protests were registered in Leipzig (a few hundred thousand participants), Halle, Karl-Marx Stadt, Cottbus, Schwerin, Erfurt. All protests were informed on by the mass media. A radicalization of demands is being noted. The main demand is that the SED renounce its leadership role [of German Society] and the organization of free [and fair] elections. The protesters in Leipzig made clear, in an active manner, that they will not stop holding protests as long as free elections are not being scheduled. Protests are still taking place in a peaceful fashion.

2. The proposal regarding the freedom of travel to foreign countries, which stipulates that every [GDR] citizen has the right to obtain a passport and to take a 30-day trip to any country of his choosing, is not accepted by the population. The mass media is also describing it as insufficient. The main criticism is that there are no procedures to ensure access of citizens to the hard currency necessary [for such the travel]. The government has suggested that it might be possible to create a special fund for this purpose, created by receipts from the mandatory currency exchange undertaken by tourists from capitalist countries [visiting the GDR], consular taxes, etc. It is clear that the draft will be improved after the public debate and the Parliamentary debate.

The number of people emigrating from the GDR is growing. Since 1 November, the border with the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic (CzSR) has been re-opened and, subsequently, an understanding was reached with the Czechoslovak government that allows GDR citizens to travel to the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) based only on identity papers. The numbers of people emigrating to the FRG reached 30,000. Presently, approximately 200 people cross the GDR-FRG border each hour. Aside from the protests, this is the gravest problem faced by the GDR [government]; there is now a chronic scarcity of able workers. Some [economic] sectors are seriously affected, some 2,000 soldiers have been ordered to work in health and other public services. Various ministers told me that soldiers have been brought into their own ministries to make up for the lack of personnel.

3. From a trusted source, we were informed that the population and political organizations are demanding that all members of the Politburo and all ministers be replaced. Until now [the demand] regarded only the resignation of the government for a governmental reshuffling, which could have been partial. It is believed that a policy of reform can not be accomplished with the old cadres; practically, [however,] some members of the Politburo and ministers will retain their positions. Today, 7 November, a meeting of the Politburo takes place to decide the main ideas of the action plan which will be presented and adopted at the plenary sessions tomorrow, as well as a decision regarding the cadres [of the Politburo].

4. There are clear indications that the GDR is moving toward an economic integration with the FRG. The General Director of the "Karl Zeiss" Institute-in [the city of] Jena-which is equipped with the highest technology and is participating in the Soviet space program, has announced the establishment of a partnership with a West-German firm.

There are proposal for establishing judicial facilities for the formation of West German - East German partnerships. The East German leadership is trying, through this policy,

to make up for all the lost ground in technological development and productivity. West German representatives from the permanent mission of the FRG in Berlin have confirmed that the FRG is willing to cooperate with the GDR, financially and by transferring technology, but not in a "unsound economic system." Future [economic] reforms [in the GDR] represent a condition for [future] cooperation.

5. West German diplomats are also suggesting that the "historical events" taking place in East Germany have placed the German problem in a new light. Germany was divided as a result of the division of Europe following World War II. Now, since this division is about to be eliminated, it is logical that the future of the German nation be also discussed. Western declarations (the US, France) as well as declarations made by East [bloc governments] (the Soviet Union, Poland, Hungary) are hopeful for " the German people." No one thinks of the re-unification "tomorrow of the two German states" since there are a series of international treaties which must be observed, as well as "memories and historical reticence" as in the case of France.

There must also be political will on the part of the "German people" (FRG and GDR) to unify [the two states]-a possibility that is now more widely recognized. Presently, the dissident organizations in the GDR have more pressing issues dealing with the restructuring of the socio-political and economic systems. Later, of course, the national question will also be brought forth.

The same diplomats suggest that the Gorbachev-Bush Summit in November [December] of this year is inevitable. (Side Note: the former Chief of the FRG mission in Berlin, G. Gaus, proposed today, 7 November 1989-considering the mass emigration of the GDR population to the FRG-a conference of the Big Four-the US, the USSR, Great Britain and France-with the participation of two German states, [in the hopes of] finding a solution.)

(ss)[Ambassador] Gheorghe Caranfil