

October 11, 1989
**Information Note from the Romanian Embassy in
Berlin to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

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Summary:

Information Note from the Romanian Embassy in Berlin to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the protests, concern on the part of the intelligentsia regarding the lack of dialogue with the population, and concern on the part of the SED about possible strikes

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Contents:

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11 October 1989; 3:00 pm

Cde. Constantin Oancea, Deputy [Foreign Affairs] Minister

In regards with the internal situation in the GDR, we would like to communicate the following:

1. Following the protests of 7, 8 and 9 October in Berlin and many other cities in the provinces, the situation in the GDR continues to be complex and tense. Meanwhile, the mass media has, indirectly, confirmed the fact that the protests were more wide-spread than initially reported. Aside from cities where the potential for opposition forces existed for a long time (Dresden, Leipzig, Jena), protests have also spilled over in other areas (Magdeburg, Suhl, Arnstadt, Halle, Potsdam, Karl-Marx Stadt, etc.) Since among the participants, a majority of whom were young people, anti-social elements were also present, it was unavoidable that acts of vandalism [and/or] brutality would take place (in Dresden, Leipzig and Potsdam). The official number of wounded: 106 police-men and 46 protestors. There were no deaths.

2. Meanwhile, among the intelligentsia, protests grow stronger regarding the SED's policy of informing [the population] and [regarding] the lack of dialogue with the population. The president of the Writers' Union, Hermann Kant, published in the [SED's] youth organization newspaper Junge Welt, an open letter in which he vehemently criticizes the news-media organization in the GDR. He demands, among other things, that the practice of self-commendation end and that the problems which plague socialist society be presented, in a self-critical manner and that the reasons for which a massive emigration of [GDR] citizens is taking place [be analyzed]. He challenges the idea that they [the GDR citizens] have been exploited by the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) [government] since the majority of those emigrating have been raised and educated during the years of socialism. Similar declarations were made by other well-known authors (Christina Wolf, Stephan Hermlin, etc.)

3. We are noticing for the first time some forms of dialogue between the government and state authorities [on the one hand, and] the Church and opposition groups. The mayor of Dresden received a group of citizens that challenges the result of the local elections of 7 May of this year (by a vote of 99 percent [in favor of the resolution]). Having democratic elections (based on the Soviet model) is one of the central themes in the demands of the opposition. More radical [opposition] forces are demanding that future elections take place under UN observation. It is suggested that the incipient dialogue between state authorities and the opposition movements is responsible for the completely peaceful character of the demonstration which took place in Leipzig on 9 October of this year (the estimated number of participants: 50,000). Before the rally, an appeal, signed by local leaders of the Party, by cultural personalities of great reputation such as conductor Kurt Masur, as well as leaders of the Lutheran Church, etc., was issued which asked that the population does not commit or provoke acts of vandalism.

4. Among SED members there is a great deal of agitation and concern [regarding the situation]. From sources close to the embassy, we were informed that at meeting of the local SED organizations there were open requests made that the SED leadership be changed, which [is considered] unable to control the situation throughout the country. There are requests that the [SED] congress be moved forward. The same sources inform us that yesterday, 10 October, the Politburo meeting was enlarged to include members of the Central Committee, especially those who deal with economic and spiritual issues. It is suggested that the first changes will take place in the propaganda [apparatus] and the public relations organizations.

5. From our contact with directors of factories and businesses, it is apparent that the

SED leadership is concerned with the possibility of social actions taking place within factories and institutions (strikes), which could destabilize the economic situation. From our discussions with the director of the chemical factory from Pisteritz, a member of the CC of the SED, emerged the fact that the SED leadership requested that they [the directors] take actions to avoid administrative conflict with the work force. The concern of the GDR leadership regarding the possible emergence of social unrest stems from the fact that the opposition forces have not accomplished their goals through the protests organized [to date] and are planning to increase the pressure [on the government] through organizing strikes.

(ss)[Ambassador] Gheorghe Caranfil