

October 9, 1989

**Telegram from the Romanian Embassy in Berlin to
the Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

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Summary:

Telegram from the Romanian Embassy in Berlin to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
regarding protests in East Berlin on the anniversary of the GDR calling for following the
model of the Soviet Union and liberalizing

Original Language:

Romanian

Contents:

Translation - English

09 October 1989; 02:30 pm

Cde. Constantin Oancea, Deputy [Foreign Affairs] Minister

In regards with the political situation in the German Democratic Republic (GDR), we would like to communicate the following:

1. On 7 October, around 4:00 pm, while the festivities organized by the government had not yet ended, in downtown East Berlin a spontaneous protest erupted. [The protest] was primarily attended by young [Germans] and, shortly [after it begun] gained considerable proportions. A few thousand demonstrators tried to approach the Volkshammer [Palace of the Republic]. A reception attended by all foreign delegations [to the GDR] was taking place at that time. [The protesters] were asking for "freedom, reforms, democracy, legalizing the New Forum Organization [German name??], etc.

The participants were chanting Gorbachev's name and were carrying signs which read "To learn from the Soviet Union means to learn to win," signs which, years back could be seen everywhere but which, in the past years have been removed from the GDR propaganda.

There were no anti-socialist chants.

The protesters sang socialist songs commonly heard in the GDR, including the "International."

Government forces prevented the participants from reaching the Palace of the Republic, but, at first, did not use force [to accomplish this]. Later, as the protests spilled over in other areas of the city, especially around some evangelic churches, the police intervened more firmly and made some arrests. The rallies [tulburarile] lasted late into the night and continued during the evening [hours] on 8 October, in the Prenzlauer Berg neighborhood (Sunday, the downtown area was completely blocked off by army and police forces). [P]rotests were also taking place in many provincial cities such as Leipzig, Dresden, Potsdam, Jena, Plauen, etc.

The ADN news agency made public, under the title Troubles during the Popular Festivities, a short story in which it announced that, during the evening of 7 October, "hooligans, acting together with [i.e., influenced by] Western espionage agencies, tried to disturb the popular festivities organized for the anniversary of the GDR."

We would like to mention that, during the festivities, other incidents also took place: during the placing of flowers at the monument remembering Soviet heroes [of the Second World War] by the delegation lead by Gorbachev, a group of people chanted "Help us, Gorbachev."

2. The population's state of mind can be characterized by irritation and tension. Based on our information, this state of mind has extended among the various organizations and even party [SED] members. We have previously informed you regarding the initiative of certain [professional] organizations (writers, performers, plastic artists) who have addressed demands [declaratii] to the SED leadership asking for liberalization [Inoiri], dialogue with the population, etc. A similar resolution was recently adopted by the Art Academy of the GDR. All those actions have, until now, remained unanswered. Recently, a new development took place: many citizens have tendered their resignation from the "workers' fighting brigades" (patriotic guards), stating that the brigades were formed to defend the country against imperialism and

not to crush civic actions.

3. The New Forum Organization is continuing its activity, even though it was declared illegal by the Ministry of State Security.

Actions, through different means, including the courts, have been taken to overthrow the decree interdicting this organization.

On 8 October of this year, in a small city north of Berlin, the Social Democratic Party was founded. The founding members (a group of 80-100 people, led by a historian [name??]) declared that this [new] party will have a traditional social-democratic and green [political] orientation. The founding members intend to initiate a request for membership in the Socialist International.

4. Among journalists we have noticed a visible disappointment with the fact that Erich Honecker, during his speech at the festivities, did not make any references to a possible liberalization of the internal socio-political structure. It is being suggested that the pressure from the protests might lead to further inflexibility by the authorities, at least in the short term, until the SED leadership will discuss and decide on the actions that need adopted [to defuse] the tense, current situation.

(ss)[Ambassador] Gheorghe Caranfil