

that it is prepared to change the GDR Constitution to correspond to the current state of societal development and the obligations it accepted under the CSCE treaty. This amendment of the Constitution should transform the leading role of the SED into a constructive, consensus-building cooperation among all democratic forces in the interests of socialism and the GDR.

Schäuble recommended that we give representatives of the Church an important role in the GDR.

In reference to the state border to West Berlin, constructed on 13 August 1961 to protect the GDR, Schäuble also proposed making this border more passable, in accordance with the CSCE process, through the construction of new border crossings.

Schäuble made it clear again that all economic and financial decisions by the FRG government assumed that the GDR would lower its subsidies decisively.

Schäuble also said that many politicians in the FRG did not understand the reticent stance on providing information about the events on 7-8 October 1989. In his opinion, the GDR would be well advised, and it would be in their interests, to name the security officer directly responsible and announce the measures taken.

[He mentioned that] there are occasionally attacks in the FRG that are being investigated.

If the GDR does not take action, the topic will be played up again by certain forces.

Further consideration by the FRG government was necessary for the other issues involved in developing [further] cooperation, particularly in the economic sector and on the question of [extending further] credits. The FRG was not yet in the position to make concrete suggestions for future binding agreements.

The reserved attitude of the FRG government was clear, and it wants to wait until the results of the tenth meeting [of the SED Central Committee] to resume negotiations.

In conclusion, Schäuble again strongly recommended that General Secretary Egon Krenz deal with the aforementioned issues in his speech. If that were not the case, Chancellor Kohl would not be in a position to justify financial assistance from FRG taxes [for the GDR] to the parliament.

[Source: Published in Hans-Hermann Hertle, Der Fall der Mauer. Die unbeabsichtigte Selbstauflösung des SED-Staates, 2nd edition, (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1999), pp. 483-486. Translated for CWIHP by Howard Sargeant.]

DOCUMENT No. 3

~~Letter from Alexander Schalek to Egon Krenz, 7 November 1989¹⁰³~~

Dear Comrade Krenz!

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 Schalek]

[Source: Published in Hans-Hermann Hertle, Der Fall der Mauer. Die unbeabsichtigte Selbstauflösung des SED-Staates, 2nd edition (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1999), pp. 486-87. Translated for CWIHP by Howard Sargeant.]



DOCUMENT No. 4

Minutes No. 49 of the Meeting of the SED Politburo, 7 November 1989

[EXCERPTS]

Information by Comrade O. Fischer on the situation regarding GDR citizens departing via the ČSSR.

Report compiled by:
O. Fischer

1. Comrade O. Fischer will make a suggestion, in agreement with Comrades F. Dickel and E. Mielke, for the SED Central Committee which allows for this part of the travel law that deals with permanent exit to be put into effect immediately through an executive order [*Durchführungsbestimmung*].
2. Comrade O. Fischer will inform the USSR's Ambassador to the GDR Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Comrade V[yacheslav I.] Kochemassov, and the Czechoslovaks about the proposal and the Politburo's position. At the same time, consultations with the FRG are to be carried out.
3. The mass media should use their influence to help that GDR citizens do not leave their country. They should inform about people who have returned. Responsible: Comrade G. Schabowski.
4. Comrade G. Schabowski is assigned to discuss this problem with the representatives of the bloc parties [Christian Democrats, Liberal Democrats] in order to reach a joint position.

[Source: SAPMO-BA, DY 30/J IV 2/2/2358. Translated for CWIHP by Howard Sargeant.]



DOCUMENT No. 5
Memorandum of Conversation between
Comrade Oskar Fischer and the
Soviet Ambassador V[yacheslav] I.
Kochemassov,
7 November 1989, at 11:45 a.m.¹⁰⁴

~~The conversation took place at the request of the Minister, Comrade Fischer.~~

I

~~Comrade Oskar Fischer stated that the Politburo had discussed the problem of exits by GDR citizens, and the connected problems in the ČSSR (blocking of the border crossings...). [It was the GDR's duty] to relieve the Czechoslovak comrades. The GDR/FRG border would not be opened, because this would have uncontrollable effects. For the same reason, the border to the ČSSR could not be closed.~~

~~The following measures were planned:~~

1. ~~The media campaign aimed at inducing GDR citizens to remain in their country will be intensified. It was being attempted to co-opt certain people (personalities) to join the campaign. At the same time, returnees from the FRG should also be effectively used in this~~

~~campaign.~~

~~2. The campaign against the FRG's "duty to take care of [the East Germans]" will also be intensified. In this effort the support of our allies is desirable. Our ambassadors in Western Europe have been instructed to work along the same lines.~~

~~3. The [implementation of the] part of the travel law that deals with permanent exit of GDR citizens will be put in effect in advance.~~

~~4. It is to be discussed with the ČSSR as to whether including its border crossings to Bavaria [Brambach-Vojlanov] as an exit route would bring relief. At the same time the ČSSR would be asked as to whether it could close the border with the GDR. That would mean, however, punishing well-intentioned GDR citizens. If the GDR were to close [its border], a power struggle would ensue.~~

~~5. The GDR will inform Bonn about what they can expect as far as GDR citizens traveling to the FRG are concerned. It will demand forcefully that the FRG oppose the entry of GDR citizens. We will take them at their word.~~

~~6. Comrade Schabowski will inform the bloc parties about these things today, and Comrade Jarowinsky will talk to the representatives of the churches.~~

~~7. Comrade Ziebart will be informed by the Minister immediately, since he has an appointment today in Prague at 1:15 p.m. with Comrade Lenart.~~

II

~~Comrade Gorbachev's opinion as to the larger picture as well as to our plans for the travel law is very important to Comrade Krenz. The GDR would appreciate the support of the USSR.~~

~~Comrade Kochemassov thanked Comrade Fischer for the information. As an additional measure, he suggested including the former allies (USA, Britain, France) in order to prompt them to put pressure on the FRG.~~

~~Comrade Fischer agreed.~~

~~Comrade Kochemassov assured [Comrade Fischer] that the request would be forwarded to Moscow at once and promised a prompt response.~~

[Source: BA, Berlin, DC 20 4933. Translated for CWIHP by Howard Sargeant.]