**‘Christmas Shopping in the GDR’**

**(*Tagesspiegel,* 21 December 1980)**

What is the availability of consumer goods for the GDR population this Christmas season? Central Committee Secretary [Werner] Jarowinsky and Minister [Gerhard] Briksa, the two highest ranking East Berlin functionaries for trade and supply, examined this question in early December in Mecklenburg. They visited shops and department stores, learned about the availability of goods and discussed current supply questions with salespeople and shoppers alike. Over the past few weeks, high-ranking functionaries in other GDR districts have shown a similarly high level of interest in the supply question “on the ground.”

Since the Polish crisis\*, the SED leadership has evidently taken the supply problem very seriously. After all, it knows all too well that a stable supply situation and a high standard of living have a decisive influence on the internal stability of the GDR and even serve as a kind of “protective shield” against the “Polish bacillus.” For it is apparent that the economic situation, individual prosperity, and possessions are determining the thoughts and actions of people in the socialist German state to a growing extent. The “socialist lifestyle,” in contrast, seems to be fading further and further into the background.

**Nervousness Instead of Merriment**

The *Norddeutsche Zeitung*, which is published in Rostock, even fears that the “race for status” and possessions is having an increasingly negative effect on communal life in socialist society. “It is especially obvious in the weeks just before Christmas: many people’s thoughts are all too fixated on material standards, which need to be surpassed time and again; and in this otherwise wonderful holiday season, more things are being exchanged than thoughts,” the newspaper complained recently. It is not only friendliness, per se, but also altruism and cooperation that are withering away. Someone is deemed a helpful partner only if he can “get hold of something” for someone else. The newspaper appealed to GDR citizens, asking them not to storm the stores “so doggedly or with elbows flying,” and it called for an end to “the race for Christmas presents.” The upcoming holiday should make people “merry” and not “nervous.”

Nice words, but ones that certainly don’t go to the heart of the problem, since GDR citizens race from store to store mostly because of supply shortages. Not without reason did Central Committee Secretary Jarowinsky state during his “professional visit” in Mecklenburg that greater effort is needed to improve the availability of goods (and sales conditions).

The SED Politburo sees the situation the same way. Even though it was reported at last week’s meeting of the Central Committee that continued progress is being made in supplying the population with new, high-quality consumer goods, the Politburo still warned factories to produce consumer goods at a level commensurate with demand, to reach “a markedly higher scientific-technical standard for these products,” and to pay greater attention to “1,000 little things” and to “ensuring the necessary availability of spare parts.” For despite considerable increases in production, there has still been “no success in stabilizing supply in important areas.”

**‘East German Police, Rock Fans Clash in Berlin for the Third Straight Night’**

**(*International Herald Tribune*, 10 June 1987)**

BERLIN – for the third straight night, hundreds of young pop music fans clashed early Tuesday with the East German police, who tried to bar them from listening to a concert just across the Berlin wall.

It was the most serious outbreak of public discontent in East Berlin in nearly 10 years. The police arrested several dozen young people along the Unter den Linden boulevard, the main thoroughfare, wrestling them into police cars and occasionally beating them with nightsticks.

The East German authorities denied Tuesday that there had been any clashes between young people and the police but said there had been Western attempts to provoke trouble.

The official ADN news agency said reports by Western correspondents of angry confrontations between the police and thousands of young people were “horror tales.” “There can be no question of clashes between youths and police,” the ADN statement said. “They exist only in the fantasy of some Western correspondents who drive to and fro over the border with the aim of creating sensations.”

The young people, mostly in their 20s or late teens, chanted “Gorbachev! Gorbachev!” in an evident appeal to the authorities in East Germany, an orthodox-minded communist state, to copy some of the Soviet leader’s reforms aimed at easing restrictions on expression.

The demonstrators tossed small firecrackers and empty wine bottles over lines of green-uniformed police officers and plainclothes agents, who blocked them at several points from coming any closer than 400 yards (365 meters) to the Berlin Wall.

Just beyond the wall, the British rock group Genesis and its star, Phil Collins, were performing on the last night of a three-night rock festival in West Berlin. “The wall must go!” and “Down with the pigs!” the young people also shouted.

The incidents came at a particularly embarrassing time for East Germany, which has sought to use this year’s 750th anniversary of Berlin to highlight the country’s successes. East Germany enjoys one of the highest standards of living in Eastern Europe and has shown few signs of political instability.

The street confrontations are likely to sharpen the dilemma facing the East German president, Erich Honecker, who has resisted Mikhail S. Gorbachev’s appeals for greater openness and democracy in communist societies, Western diplomats said.

The East German authorities fear that an easing of restrictions on the media or on public debate could be more disruptive than in other East European countries, according to the diplomats and other political observers. That is because East Germans, with ready access to West German television and radio and with family and historical ties to West Germany, are more likely than other East Europeans to expect Western-style freedoms, they said.

**Stasi Report on the Size and Structure of the East German Opposition**

**(1 June 1989)**

One of the main lines of attack in the enemy's subversive action against socialism is the attempt to create and legalize a so-called domestic opposition, and to inspire/organize political underground activity in the socialist states as a "domestic pressure potential" intended to soften up, undermine, politically destabilize, and ultimately do away with socialism.

In carrying out the anti-socialist "program for democracy" approved by imperialist circles in the USA, leading political forces in the NATO states are working – under the banner of "democratization, liberalization, and advocacy of Western-style political pluralism in Communist countries" – to develop and promote opposition parties and movements in these states, and thereby provide active support for the legalization of already existing so-called independent groups. This action is reflected both in the state policy of the major imperialist powers and in the various subversive activities of antagonistic centers and organizations as well as of additional forces hostile to socialism and acting against the socialist states. (Through abuse of the CSCE process, and through reference to certain developments in some socialist states, these activities are increasingly intended to provide political, material, and moral support to hostile, oppositional forces and personal alliances in the GDR, and to inspire and trigger actions directed against the socialist political and social order.)

It is estimated that the political, ideological, and subversive influences of the enemy, as well as the influences deriving from the current situation in some socialist countries, are achieving certain effects among sections of the GDR’s population. They are reflected particularly in the presence of personal alliances (manageable and under the control of state and society) and of corresponding groupings and groups that, in agreement or cooperation with reactionary clerical persons, and together with external enemies, are attempting to advance this oppositional strategy.

Since the beginning of the 80s, persistent attempts at gathering and assembling by such persons – who have made it their goal to weaken, undermine, and politically destabilize the GDR to the point of changing its social relations – have led to the formation of corresponding groupings and groups. These are almost exclusively embedded in the structures of the Protestant churches in the GDR, or they are able to make extensive use of the material and technical resources of these churches for their activities. Correspondents accredited in the GDR and the staff of diplomatic missions (including secret intelligence staff under cover as diplomats) from non-socialist states, especially from the FRG, the USA, and Great Britain, play a decisive role in this process. They inspire hostile, oppositional forces and personal alliances to undertake anti-socialist activities, offer them continual support, and popularize actions in this connection with the aim of placing such persons and alliances under the protection of international public opinion.

**Preamble to the Unification Treaty**

**(31 August 1931)**

The Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic,

Resolved to achieve in free self-determination the unity of Germany in peace and freedom as an equal partner in the community of nations,

Mindful of the desire of the people in both parts of Germany to live together in peace and freedom in a democratic and social federal state governed by the rule of law,

In grateful respect to those who peacefully helped freedom prevail and who have unswervingly adhered to the task of establishing German unity and are achieving it,

Aware of the continuity of German history and bearing in mind the special responsibility arising from our past for a democratic development in Germany committed to respect for human rights and to peace,

Seeking through German unity to contribute to the unification of Europe and to the building of a peaceful European order in which borders no longer divide and which ensures that all European nations can live together in a spirit of mutual trust,

Aware that the inviolability of frontiers and of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all states in Europe within their frontiers constitutes a fundamental condition for peace,

Have agreed to conclude a Treaty on the Establishment of German Unity, containing the following provisions: