

Newsletter Cold War Museum - Berlin, May 2010

By Baerbel E. Simon -German Affairs

Dear Ladies & Gentlemen

Dear Adviser and Friends of the Cold War Museum - Berlin

I am pleased to offer the following report about the activities and developments of the Cold War Museum - Berlin.

March /April 2010 European Union Educational Program High School: Cold War of both Sides of the Wall - High School Neutrebbin / Brandenburg.



High School Neutrebbin / Brandenburg, Photo by Helmut Kirchner –The Cold War Museum - Berlin

May 2010

I am pleased to announce that The Cold War Museum - Berlin in cooperation with Luftfahrtmuseum Finowfurt (Aviation Museum Finowfurt) is presenting.

The 50th anniversary of the shooting down of Francis Gary Powers and the U-2 incident

On the 1st of May 2010, the new exhibition at the Aviation Museum Finowfurt will open.

The Airfield Finowfurt was a Soviet Airfield during the Cold War, and is now an Aviation Museum.

www.luftfahrt-museum-finowfurt.de <<http://www.luftfahrt-museum-finowfurt.de>>



June 2010

Project Fund in der Euroregion Pro Europa Viadrina.

Three Nations United - Touching History

I am pleased to announce that "The Cold War Museum - Berlin" in cooperation with the Association Monument Bunker Harnekop e.V. will be hosting High School Students from Neutrebbin / Brandenburg, Gretna, Nebraska; USA and from Bogdaniec/Polen

On June 4, 2010 there will be a special event at the memorial site Bunker Harnekop.

Goals: The understanding and learning the history of the Cold War on both sides of the Iron Curtain.

- Bunker Tour
- "The Cold War Museum - Berlin" tour, presents: the permanent exhibitions
- Panel eyewitnesses.

Patron: Municipality of Prötzel Barnim Oderbruch by the office of the Amtsdirector.

Gretna High School

Located in the center of the Midwest of the United States and just ten miles from the city limits of Omaha is the small community of Gretna, Nebraska. The village of Gretna created its first school district in 1888. Currently there are three elementary schools, one middle school and one high school. The high school has a students population of about 720 students. We are a four year college preparatory high school with a graduation rate nearing 100%. Though the German language program is small, it is active in providing students with an international perspective. This year will be the second exchange between Gretna High School and the Gymnasium Wellingdorf in Kiel. This June 16 students from the 10th - 12th grade will participate in a three week exchange to Kiel with an additional week long visit to Berlin and Harnekop / Brandenburg.



20 years after peaceful revolution and the collapsing of the Iron Curtain.

Als alles began - Die Berliner Mauer (The development of the Berlin Wall)

The photo exhibition shows with more than 100 photos (taken by Herbert Maschke) who was a Berlin Photographer and USN Commander ret. John A. Fahey, Maryland; USA.. However, the Berlin border photos were never published before. In addition a presentation of the life experiences and documents of Commander US Navy retired. John A. Fahey and Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army, retired Lincoln Landis, Virginia, USA both served for the Western Military Liaison Mission in Potsdam, as well as Military orders of the NVA (National People's Army)

We obtained the right to exhibit the copyrights by C: Maschke and M. Tumler

The exhibition takes place on 12 June 2010 at Harnekop Memorial Site.



Gefördert mit Mitteln der Bundesstiftung zur Aufarbeitung der SED Diktatur

The first and the last free elections in the GDR and the last months of the GDR.

By Baerbel E. Simon

From November 1989, the mood on the streets changed. Hopes that the GDR could be reformed began to decrease. More and more demonstrators were chanting, "We are one nation", instead of the earlier slogan "We are the folk". By the first free parliamentary elections in the GDR in March 1990 the population took a decision in favor of German unification.

In January 1990 GDR Prime Minister Hans Modrow, concerned that the situation would become increasingly unstable, proposed that opposition parties and civil rights alliances should participate in government. Elections for the GDR parliament were due in May, but due to public pressure for action the date was put forward to 18 March. The question was the Unification - yes or no and when and how?

Firstly, a rapid reunification was not the aim of the Federal Republic of Germany policy: in late November 1989 federal chancellor Helmut Kohl proposed a ten-point plan for a gradual union process. West German politicians were subject to growing pressure from the population when they visited the German Democratic Republic. At late January 1990 concrete plans for rapid reunification were in motion.

The new founded political organizations close to the traditional West German parties, the SPD, CDU and FDP, had an advantage in the election campaign. The West Parties gave them organizational and financial support and sent helpers. The efforts and goals were the demolition of the GDR. New Parties and movements with similar goals formed coalitions to progress their electoral chances. Neues Forum, Initiative fuer Frieden und Menschenrechte, Demokratischer Aufbruch, Deutsche Soziale Union und Allianz fuer Germany (New Forum, the Initiative for Peace and Human Rights, and Democracy Now created the coalition Alliance 90). The CDU, Christian Social Union (CSU) and Democratic Awakening formed an Alliance for Germany, relying on the popular program promising financial and economic union.

On March 18, 1990 the citizens of the GDR were able to vote in free elections for the first time in 40 years. With unusually high voters, more than 90% of the citizens voted, and the result was clear. The Alliance won just over 50% of the votes, which meant the majority of the population had voted for rapid reunification.

The CDU and Demokratischer Aufbruch (Democratic Renewal) earned 41.7% of the votes, the SPD 21.9%, the Deutsche Soziale Union (German Social Union) 6.3% and the liberals 5.9%. The SED, which until then had been all-powerful and had renamed itself, Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus (Party of Democratic Socialism) received 16.45% of votes cast.

The cry "We are the folk!" gave rise to the cry "We are one folk"! The people of the GDR considered itself part of a people, part of the German people, which is to grow together once again. The voters gave the clear expression to their political intension by the election. The task was given to the government by the voter's demands the establishment of German unity in an undivided, peaceful Europe. This demand includes conditions regarding speediness and quality.

On April 19, 1990, the first and last free voted Prime Minister Lothar de Maizière of the CDU, Lothar de Mazière headed a coalition of CDU, DSU, DA, SPD and FDP. He presents his government program to the free elected Volkskammer. His focus was the rapid unification and he also insisted that West Germany must share its wealth, this was the first time, that the Volkskammer did justice to its name.

In center of the debates were the monetary conversion an exchange rate at 1:1 or 1:2 has made it in abundance clear that there is a connection here and that we must agree on conditions that ensure that GDR citizens do not feel like second-class citizens of the Federal Republic. These goals, immediate and quality, can be best guaranteed if our way to unity is based on a treaty in accordance with Article 23 of the *Basic Law". The Kohl administration agreed a timetable for monetary, economic and social union with effect from July 1, 1990. There was no longer an economic basis for the GDR to continue on its own as an independent state. In August 1990, the Volkskammer of the GDR (the parliament) resolved to push for the fastest possible accession to the territory that came under the ambit of the Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany. The Unification Treaty of August 31 designated that the five newly formed federal states - Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-Western Pomeranian, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia - become states of the Federal Republic of Germany. In Moscow, on September 12, 1990 the foreign ministers of the Federal Republic of Germany, the GDR, the Soviet Union, Great Britain and France signed the "Treaty on the final Provisions with respect to Germany" the "Two-plus-Four-Treaty" as it became known. On October 2-3, 1990 it was welcomed in a communiqué by the foreign ministers of the OSCE countries convening in New York. The GDR formally ceased to exist on October 3, 1990. The sovereign unity of Germany had been re-established.

Basic Laws Federal Republic of Germany

<http://www.iuscomp.org/gla/statutes/GG.htm>

The deepest respect and thanks go to the people of the former GDR, their courage tore down the Iron Curtain and in addition we should respect the first and last free voted government of the GDR for their excellent work to merge quickly both Germanys into one. Without them the reunification of Germany would have not been possible. They all should be remembered forever. "We walked on the path of happiness" for 10 years and 11 month, the fatal end was September 11, 2001. The enemy has a new name, the international terrorism.

Source: Die letzten Monate der DDR by Ed Stuhler

Contact:

Baerbel E. Simon

The Cold War Museum

Berlin Chapter

Skarbinastrasse 67

D 12309 Berlin / Germany

Ph./Fax +.49.+30.745.1980

Email: baerbelsimon@hotmail.com

Photos by Horst Simon & Helmut Kirchner