

Appeal “For our Country“ (November 26, 1989)

Abstract

In response to popular pressures for German unification, East German reform communists and dissident intellectuals, led by the writer Christa Wolf, issued a plea for the continued independence of a democratized GDR.

Source

For our Country

Our country is in deep crisis. We cannot, and no longer wish to, live as we have up to now. The leadership of one party arrogated to itself the right to rule over the people and their representatives; Stalinist-influenced structures had penetrated all aspects of life. Without violence, through mass demonstrations, the people forced the process of revolutionary renewal, which is now proceeding at a breathtaking pace. Little time remains for us to exert influence over the various options that offer ways out of the crisis.

Either

we insist on the autonomy of the GDR and try with all our might, and in cooperation with those states and interest groups that are prepared to help develop a society of solidarity in our country, in which peace and social justice, individual freedom, free movement for all and the preservation of the environment are guaranteed

Or,

occasioned by the strong economic constraints and unacceptable conditions to which influential economic and political circles in the Federal Republic tie their assistance for the GDR, we allow the sell-out of our material and moral values to begin, leading in the short or long run to the German Democratic Republic being coopted by the Federal Republic.

Let us take the first path. We still have an opportunity to develop a socialist alternative to the Federal Republic as an equal neighbor to all the states of Europe. We can still remember the anti-fascist and humanist ideals from which we once proceeded. We call upon all citizens who share our hopes and concerns to support this appeal by signing their names.

Berlin, November 26, 1989.

Original signatories:

Götz Berger, lawyer; Wolfgang Berghofer, local politician; Frank Beyer, film director; Volker Braun, writer; Reinhard Brühl, military historian; Tamara Danz, rock singer; Christoph Demke, bishop; Siegrid England, educator; Bernd Gehrke, economist; Sighard Gille, painter; Stefan Heym, writer; Uwe Jahn, head of engineering design; Gerda Jun, physician/ psychotherapist; Dieter Klein, political economist; Günter Krusche, general superintendent [of the Lutheran Church]; Brigitte Lebentrau, biologist; Bernd P. Löwe, peace scholar; Thomas Montag, physician; Andreas Pella, civil engineer; Sebastian Pflugbeil, physicist; Ulrike Poppe, housewife; Martin Schmidt, economist; Friedrich Schorlemmer, pastor; Andree Türpe, philosopher; Jutta Wachowiak, actress; Heinz Warzecha, general director; Konrad Weiss, filmmaker; Angela Wintgen, dentist; Christa Wolf, writer; Ingeborg Graße, nurse.

Walter Janka, who—as was announced—cannot participate in the press conference for organizational reasons, supports the appeal, but has not yet signed it.

Source: *Sächsische Zeitung*, no. 281, November 29, 1989, vol. 44.

Translation: Pam Selwyn

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