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year. In the case of unemployed people who are older than this the duration of this right to unemployment benefit increases in steps, and reaches a maximum period of payment of two and a half years for the unemployed over 55.

- 62. Cf. Hubert Heinelt and Anne Lohmann, *Immigranten im Wohlfahrtsstaat am Beispiel der Rechtspositionen und Lebensverhältnisse von Aussiedlern* (Opladen: Leske & Budrich, 1992).
- 63. Jellinek, op. cit., p. 143.
- 64. Ibid., pp. 163 ff.
- 65. Cf. ibid., pp. 268 ff. In addition, local communities are also corporate bodies under public law—and this is precisely the case in Jellinek's view. The right of foreigners to vote at local elections, which is at present the subject of political controversy, could therefore also be derived from a longer period of stay in these local communities that are not directly state ones. On the right of foreigners to vote at different state levels in the EC member countries cf. Philip Nanton, 'National Frameworks', op. cit., pp. 194 ff.
- 66. Ibid, p. 194.
- 67. Cf. Heinelt and Lohmann op. cit., pp. 45 ff. on the group of Aussiedler.

Regime Collapse in the Peaceful East German Revolution: the Role of Middle-Level Officials

DANIEL V. FRIEDHEIM

During the autumn of 1989, the Communist regime in Fast Germany lost its will to continue using repression to stay in power Rather than in Berlin, peaceful dialogue with street demonstrators came in the regional capitals. The reason is that although the regime did collapse, it began collapsing in the regions and the leading initiatives were taken by surprisingly low-ranking officials who no longer believed in their own legitimacy. After spreading from the periphery to the centre, regime collapse made possible not just the peacefulness of the revolution but also the rapidity of German reunification.

INTRODUCTION

It may be impossible to explain the East German Revolution of 1989 without using the word 'collapse'. Between September and December 1989, successive Communist regimes in the German Democratic Republic (DDR) offered an accelerating series of unprecedented concessions: granting political asylum to illegal emigres, ending repression and talking to opponents, deposing the founding generation of leaders, opening the Berlin Wall literally overnight, and exposing corrupt past practices. Collapse of the Socialist Unity Party (SED) regime had gone so far that it robbed the otherwise Bastille-like storming of State Security Service (Staatssicherheitsdienst, or Stasi) central headquarters in mid-January 1990 of all potential revolutionary decisiveness.

Eastern Europe's comparatively least-organised opposition movements reflected, but did not dictate, the pace of regime collapse, although unorganised waves of emigres may have played a more causal role. If the much-discussed Central Committee decision to open the Berlin Wall was not just a miscalculation or a misunderstanding, as some have argued, then the regime's top officials were losing their will to stay in power. Even earlier, however, surprisingly low-ranking officials played the most important role in breaking with the routine repression that had long been

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German Politics, Vol. 2, No. 1 (April 1993), pp. 97—112 PUBLISHED BY FRANK CASS, LONDON the regime's *ultima ratio*. These faceless middle-level officials making up the regime's staff probably made the regime's collapse inevitable, whatever happened at the top or on the streets.

COLLAPSE AS A PATH OF DEMOCRATISATION

Each east-central European transition from state socialism to democracy exhibited its own combination of regime-opposition negotiation and regime collapse. The importance of negotiation was greatest in Poland, but collapse was more important in the German Democratic Republic, producing what Germans like to call a peaceful revolution. Although both 'paths' lead to similar democratic systems, the rich social science literature on previous negotiations in southern Europe and Latin America has diverted attention from the element of collapse. Now that a large number of documents and memoirs are being published about the East German case, there is some preliminary evidence of how that regime collapsed, making possible the peaceful revolution and facilitating rapid German reunification.

Applying a neo-Weberian definition that highlights the state's monopoly on the use of force, the evidence shows that the SED regime began collapsing by at least early October 1989, that is one month before the Wall fell and two months before Round Table negotiations with opposition groups like New Forum began. Interestingly, the collapse of regime self-confidence, or 'elite legitimacy', began outside Berlin, especially in the regional capitals of Dresden and Leipzig. It started not inside the top leadership itself, whose lost sense of reality was much commented upon within and outside the regime at the time, but rather among mid-level state employees and party members. Only then, prodded along by changes in Soviet and Warsaw Pact policies, did the top leaders lose their will as well.

DEFINING COLLAPSE

In the thin literature on regime collapse, Alexis de Toqueville comes first on a very short list. But many, including a Solidarity leader, have reduced Toqueville's 1856 classic *The Old Regime and the French Revolution* to this almost hackneyed citation:

... the most perilous moment for a bad government is one when it seeks to mend its ways ... Patiently endured so long as it seemed beyond redress, a grievance comes to appear intolerable once the possibility of removing it crosses men's minds.³

Often ignored is Toqueville's solution to the paradox of the old regime's apparent invincibility right up to the moment when it suddenly collapses:

Though the nation came to seem a homogenous whole, its parts no longer held together. Nothing had been left that could obstruct the central government, but by the same token nothing could shore it up. This is why the grandiose edifice ... was doomed to collapse like a card castle once disturbances arose

Simultaneously strong and weak, the SED regime does seem to have been doomed to collapse. In comparison with other regimes in east-central Europe, the GDR's strength was its weakness. The more successfully it forced civil society into private 'niches' and deported opponents to West Germany, the more likely it was to end in collapse. Unlike Hungary, Poland, and Czechoslovakia, the GDR had enjoyed no tradition of reform Communist projects – there had been no German Gomulka, Nagy, or Dubcek. 6

A regime may be said to collapse in three ways. First, it might attempt and fail to resist a popular uprising with force (Romania). Second, it might attempt to reform itself but fail (Poland, Hungary). Third, it might not attempt to resist with force or reform. This third definition best describes the GDR, which had stopped repressing most demonstrations, but continued to censor news about Perestroika and Glasnost.

An advantage of this definition of collapse is that it helps explain the mechanism through which a revolution occurs without violence. Without reform, it may take regime collapse to make peaceful dialogue with opponents possible. The point is not to deny the pivotal role of mass emigration and demonstrations, but rather to suggest that something interesting was going on inside the state as well. Mass 'mobilisation' may well indicate the presence of a revolution but it cannot explain whether a revolution will be violent or peaceful. To know that, one must know whether the state continues to repress or loses its will.

A focus on regime and state elites is necessary because, even though non-democratic regimes require some degree of mass 'loyalty', they are not based solely on 'legitimacy in civil society'. Instead, an 'elite legitimacy' is imposed 'from the top down'. This distinction between mass and elite legitimacy is fundamental.

Elite legitimacy cannot be monolithic because the elite is not either. At a minimum, regime leaders should be distinguished from their bureaucratic state apparatus. Max Weber, who did not limit his oft-cited discussion of legitimacy to democracies, emphasised that any leader needs a loyal 'administrative staff', which resides in the state. Just as the top leadership's loss of will would paralyse the state from above, a collapse of will in the staff would paralyse it from within. Elite legitimacy logically may collapse at either level.

HOW THE GOR REGIME COLLAPSED

Although a comprehensive history of the East German Revolution is beyond the scope of this article, a sociological note about the rapidly ageing regime leadership is relevant. Party leader Erich Honecker and 24 of 27 Politburo members belonged to the generation that had founded the regime with Soviet sponsorship in 1949. In fact, Honecker and eight others belonged to the pre-war Communist Party (KPD). Only three members had joined the SED after 1949, including the two who eventually would oust Honecker (see Table 1). The average age of Politburo members was rising, which must have been conducive to the kind of midlevel loss of confidence that would occur.

Another underlying factor conducive to regime collapse was the comparative weakness of the East German opposition. After Communist cast central Europe's first popular uprising, on 17 June 1953, was repressed with Soviet tanks, no reform Communist leaders ever rose to power in the GDR. The tactic of 'exporting' dissidents to another state with the same cultural identity, the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), made the relatively mild repression perhaps uniquely effective. It may also help explain why a Vaclav Havel became an opposition leader while a Wolf Biermann could not.

The strongest push from 'below' was represented by the backlog of 1.5 million permanent emigration requests that had built up by 1989. It should have come as no surprise that 15,000 East German 'vacationers' seized the opportunity to flee when Hungarian reformers opened their border with Austria on 11 September. The pressure on the regime from below mounted as citizens not for the first time sought asylum in the FRG's embassies, especially in Prague, from which so-called 'special trains' carried another 15,000 refugees back across what is now the state (Land) of Saxony to freedom in the FRG. After these breaches, the suspension of visa-free travel to Czechoslovakia just bottled up the dissidence and Honecker's successor Egon Krenz's re-opening of that border just caused another wave of emigration until Czechoslovakia also opened its border with Austria.

This pressure from below produced a veritable run on the Wall after Politburo spokesman Günther Schabowski's famous announcement of looser travel regulations on 9 November: 4.3 million, or one-quarter of the entire population, visited the West in the next four days. Remarkably, only one-half million would leave permanently throughout 1989 and up to the democratic elections of March 1990.

As the emigree wave built up in the autumn of 1989, civic movements led by the intelligentsia began founding the formal organisations that

LABLE 1

SED POLITBURO 27 MEMBERS, (grouped by collects)

		Date loaned
Name (function)	Agc	KPD 66 SEP
Original Revolutionaries (9):		
Erich Mielke (Security Minister)	8.2	1971
Erich Honecker (General Secretary)	77	1933
Heinz Kessler (Defence Minister)	69	1976
Willi Stoph (Council of Ministers Chairman)	75	19.28
Kurt Hager (ideology)	77	1929
Alfred Neumann (Council of Ministers)	80	1929
Horst Sindermann (Volkskammer President)	74	1929
Hermann Axen (international)	73	1933
Werner Eberlein (Magdeburg)	70	1934
Other Regime Founders (15):		
Werner Felfe (agriculture)	61	1945
Werner Jarowinsky (trade)	63	1945
Inge Lange (women)	62	1945
Harry Tisch (trade unions)	62	1945
Hans-Joachim Böhme (Halle)	60	1946
Horst Dohlus (publications)	64	1946
Joachim Herrmann (propaganda)	61	1946
Günther Kleiber (Council of Ministers)	58	1946
Werner Krolikowski (Council of Ministers)	61	1946
Siegfried Lorenz (Karl-Marx Stadt)	59	1946
Günter Mittag (economics)	63	1946
Erich Mückenberger (Volkskammer)	79	1946
Gerhard Müller (Erfurt)	61	1946
Werner Walde (Cottbus)	63	1946
Gerhard Schürer (planning)	68	1948
Second Generation (3):		
Günther Schabowski (Berlin)	60	1950
Margarete Müller (Neubrandenburg)	58	1951
Egon Krenz (security and sports!)	52	1953

Source: Günther Buch, Namen und Daten wichtiger Personen der DDR (Berlin: JHW Dietz 1987).

Note: KPD = German Communist Party; membership is counted from date joined Young Pioneers or Communist Youth in some cases.

would attract so much press and academic attention. Participation in their demonstrations mushroomed, especially after violent repression was avoided on 8 and 9 October. After that the fledgling democratic opposition groups were carried into December negotiations with a transition regime of reform Communists by the increasingly numerous crowds: from 140,000 the week of 16 October to 1.35 million the week of 30 October.

Due to these pressures from below, Warsaw Pact developments, and underlying sociological and economic factors, middle-level regime officials lost their will to continue employing force to stay in power. Their superiors, up to Honecker himself, also made miscalculations, but it is less clear that the top had lost its sense of self-legitimation. The late September concession to emigres that they could go to the West, but only if they paid a semblance of obeisance to GDR sovereignty by travelling on the anachronistically named Reichsbahn across southern East Germany, was just a miscalculation presided over by a sick man. Honecker had just returned from gall bladder surgery and announced his decision to an emergency Politburo meeting convened at the Berlin Opera House, but locking refugees on board and deploying tens of thousands of security forces along the train routes was no renunciation of force. Instead, it was middle-level officials who first ended the repression in regional cities.

HOW THE REPRESSION ENDED

Many citizens in Dresden and Leipzig believed an order to shoot at demonstrators had been issued in Berlin. Whether or not it had, ominous bureaucratic language filled Stasi telegrams. Coincidentally or not, security forces began breaking up demonstrations with tear gas and water cannon, and making mass arrests, even of bystanders. As early as March 1989, Stasi troops had been ordered to make contingency plans to 'arrest as well as liquidate... subversives'. Then, in October, local newspapers featured a party militia (*Kampfgruppen*) leader's cry to act 'if need be, with weapons in hand!'. 11

As the wave of emigration rose in September, Stasi chief Erich Mielke warned his regional commanders, 'the situation is serious' and the solution was 'a question of power, nothing else'. The day before Gorbachev's arrival, 1,000 protesters were arrested in various cities and security forces were instructed to prepare for 'offensive measures' to stop demonstrators 'by any means'. Honecker denies issuing a specific order to pass out ammunition to the troops, ¹² but one may not have been necessary to continue the repressive tactics already in operation. Once an embarrassing confrontation during Gorbachev's visit had been avoided,

the stage appeared to be set for showdowns in Leipzip and Dresdon Mielke's central intelligence analysis office (ZAIG) diew an explicit analogy to the 17 June 1953 uprising when tanks had been used concluding 'enemy opposition and a rowdy forces and anger the social state- and social-order'.

LEIPZIG

Krenz's claim single-handedly to have averted the possibility of a bloody 'Chinese solution' as 70,000 gathered to march in Leipzig on 9 October 1 not credible. He says Honecker had issued a specific 'shoot order which Honecker denies – that Krenz had to talk him into resemding 'Krenz's aggerates his role by claiming a call to Leipzig party secretary Hacken burg was the turning point, but it came at 7:20 pm, that is after the Maran statement was read at 6 pm and the demonstration had got under way Krenz only flew to Leipzig, with Politburo security issues specialist Wolfgang Herger and National Police (Volkspolizei, or VoPo) General Karl-Heinz Wagner, on 13 October. It was only the next weekly Monday 'demo' in Leipzig, on 16 October, that Krenz, Mielke, and Honecker monitored together from Interior Minister Friedrich Dickel's office.

Instead, on 9 October Gewandhaus Orchestra conductor Kurt Masur, cabaret star Bernd-Lutz Lange, Nikolaikirche pastor Peter Zimmermann, and District Party Secretaries Kurt Meier, Jochen Pommert, and Roland Wötzel broadcast over local radio an appeal for 'peaceful dialogue'. 'Our common concern and responsibility have brought us together today ... We all need the free exchange of opinions about the further development of Socialism in our country.' The intelligentsia, the Lutheran church, and local SED leaders took the initiative for avoiding bloodshed in Leipzig, despite Krenz's claim to the contrary. Since Krenz's claims confuse the issue in Leipzig, it is useful to look at the first potentially bloody show-down to be avoided between security forces and protesters, which actually had occurred the previous day and for which Krenz claims no credit.

DRESDEN

On 8 October in Dresden 30 'hundred-man' units had been deployed to reinforce local security forces and the crowds had been gathering continuously since the first news that refugee trains would pass through the local station at the end of September. Weapons and ammunition were reportedly distributed to a reconnaissance unit on 5 October for 'defender.

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sive' use and arrestees were being herded into public theatres and kept 60 to a pail cell $^{\rm T}$

While Semor Minister Christof Ziemer and other local church leaders sought out local SED leaders to discuss how to avoid bloodshed, a remarkable Dresden Model' of dialogue developed from a lower level of the state (and church). A catholic curate named Frank Richter asked riot troops who were naturally surprised to see him approaching their ranks, with whom he could negotiate. Eventually he found a commanding officer on the streets who suggested he select 20 volunteers to serve as the protesters' delegation. The officer then ordered his riot troops to lay down their shields as a sign of good faith. SED Mayor Wolfgang Berghofer eventually agreed to receive the demonstrators' 'Group of 20',

TABLE 2
MEMBERS OF THE 'GROUP OF TWENTY'
(Dresden, October 1989)

Name	Age	Sex	Profession
Andreas Bartzsch	32	M	Driving Instructor
Ulrich Baumgart	45	M	Certified Engineer
Friedrich Boltz	36	M	Engineer
Dieter Brandes	58	M	Religious Instructor
Karl-Heinz Denkert	44	M	Master Cabinetmaker
Uwe Glosinski	24	M	Bus Driver
René Grüttner	23	M	Locksmith
Markus Kinscher	18	M	Locksmith's Apprentice
Sabine Linke	19	F	Student Nurse
Henry Matthess	26	M	Student
Maik Miersch	23	M	Lathe Operator
Beate Mihály	45	\mathbf{F}	Nursery School Teacher
Frank Neubert	36	M	Shift Leader (Foreman)
Kerstin Nikolaus	22	F	Assistant Cook
Eberhard Ohst	49	M	Certified Chemist
Heiko Pstrong	21	M	Student
Steven Richter	17	M	Apprentice
Peter Rosenberg	37	M	Baker
Bringfriede Rössler	34	F	Nurse
Olivia Schwarz	18	F	Business Traince

Source: Eckhard Bahr, 7 Tage im Oktober: Aufbrach in Dresden (Leipzig: Forum, 1990), p. 178.

partly because its composition was so accidental. It included five women and 15 men from a wide range of professions, including at least one SED member.

The curate then convinced the crowd to postpone the scheduled demonstration until after this spontaneous 'Group of 20' could hold talks

with the mayor and announce the results at four designated churches the next evening (Kreuzkirche, Kathedrale, Versöhnungskirche, and Christuskirche). At first, the Mayor refused to acknowledge the group as a delegation of protesters, saying he routinely met with normal 'citizens'. (The group finally opened a token bank account in its name to achieve *de facto* recognition.) Yet, Berghofer's willingness to engage in any dialogue was enough to prevent more showdowns with security forces and the next day 500 arrestees were freed. The Berlin leadership had not approved such a compromise.

In addition to highlighting the church's acknowledged 'active partner role', the Dresden Model shows two important features of the GDR regime's collapse. First, regional officials lost their will to use force before the centre did. Even local party chief Modrow was only informed after the fact¹⁶ and concedes he 'did not immediately do everything possible to oppose the attack orders from the central security staff'. ¹⁷ Berghofer clearly pursued an unauthorised policy. (He would go on to abandon the reformed SED before election day.)

The regional Interior Ministry chief, after the local Stasi chief had initiated contact, also phoned catholic Bishop Reinhelt with three preliminary concessions: the local party (a) had made mistakes, (b) was ready to fix them, and (c) promised 'deeds as well as words would follow'. The Bishop took advantage of this unofficial channel to request that police stay away from the churches where crowds would gather the next evening.

Second, middle-ranking officers could lose their will, at decisive moments, before their regional commanders did. Line security forces had begun to lose faith in the regime's right to use force. As the officer who had invented the idea for a spontaneous delegation recalled:

We had been on alert 24 hours a day without sleep and from October 3 could not even go home. Our wives never heard from us ... by the 8th I was getting tired ... From the beginning [I believed] it was inappropriate to try to settle the political situation with police measures. We were between a rock and a hard place ... [sending the trains] was a clear political mistake ... but what is a man to do? Orders are orders. 18

Strikingly, the officer answered that question by his own actions. He showed exactly how a disillusioned officer may subvert the spirit of his orders. After riot troops laid down their shields, and a cheer went up from the protesters, he recalled, 'a heavy burden lifted from our shoulders ... that night my division leader said, "They're not going to believe us when we report this".

In both Lenzig and Dresden, volunteer militias rebelled. Many of the 10,000 Kampfgruppen deployed to protect the refugee train routes across the southern GDR walked out, the Stasi reported. In Chemnitz, a 300-man unit dissolved. Even refugee train drivers exhibited their own signs of collapse. One, thankful he had only had to drive the less tumultuous Planen route, said he was driving too fast to stop for any protesters on the tracks: 'It was crazy to send those trains across the GDR... I don't know if I had received the order if I could have driven into a crowd... Perhaps if they had put a pistol to my back.' Repression against mass demonstrations ended not because the leadership in Berlin had made the decision but because some regional leaders and their officers, troops, and other employees had.

LEADERSHIP SUCCESSION AND THE WALL

Enough already has been written about Honecker's replacement by Egon Krenz and the seemingly accidental opening of the Berlin Wall. In the context of explaining regime collapse, defined in terms of the will to stay in power by force if necessary, these are important contextual events, but not in themselves decisive. In spite of Gorbachev's famous warning during the regime's 40th anniversary celebrations on 6–7 October that 'Life punishes those who act too late', Honecker was removed from power only after the Dresden and Leipzig show-downs. Even after he had preserved the unity of the Socialist Unity Party for the last time by voting for his own removal, the top leadership had not lost its belief in its own legitimacy and the will to repress looked set to continue under former Politburo security specialist Egon Krenz. Krenz's fellow Politburo conspirator and press spokesman Günther Schabowski recalled still believing in 'the correctness of the moral and political right' to the SED's monopoly on power and that victims of repression were still 'victims of the class war ... the basis for which was a conviction that the moral and political right of the GDR to exist was justified'.20

Although free travel removed an important rationalisation for routine repression, and in hindsight clearly spelled the end of a separate sovereign and socialist state, Krenz's manoeuvre to purge hard-liners by staging the Politburo's mass resignation and immediate re-election made the decision to open the Berlin Wall seem almost inadvertent. Krenz read the new regulations to the Central Committee, but now quibbles that party spokesman Schabowski announced the new rules would take effect 'immediately', when they were only to be published the next day. Whatever was intended, the immediate run on the Wall that night was a

surprise. By 9.15 pm, when the first hast Germans were allowed across at Bernauer Strasse, the decisions of individual border guards may have been more important for avoiding a bloodbath than anything Polithure members now claim to have done. Krenz's belated authorization around midnight was a figleaf. Did the border guards believe they were following any orders before then?

THE COMMUNIST PARTY COLLAPSES

After the Wall was opened, Dresden party chief Hair. Modrow we named President (Chairman of the Council of State) and he set about separating his ministries from the SED for the first time in the GDH history. Under Modrow, the rubber stamp People's Chamber (Volkskammer) began to exercise new power by removing the party 'leading role' from the Constitution, exposing official corruption and reorganising the Stasi.

Meanwhile, the SED was disintegrating. By the end of the year, one third of the party's membership – 800,000 of 2.3 million – had left. The Stasi faithfully reported growing dissatisfaction within SED ranks. On 31 August, Mielke had informed the Politburo: 'what worries us especially is that there is such unfounded talk in the Party organisation, too.' By 1 September he was warning of 'a large increase in Party-leaving', concluding party members were so critical that they were 'no longer different from non-party members'. By October, his ZAIG reported that 'many members of central state and economic organisations, members and officials of the SED, no longer accept' the regime's performance. Even though Mielke did not always pass such reports on to the Politburo, members must have suspected they had lost the usual unconditional loyalty.

What leaders could not foresee was how quickly the SED would democratise itself. New Forum had tried to inspire party dissenters, saying on 8 October they had 'enormous potential... You have a leading role, so make use of it! The regime leadership had resisted calling a Special Party Congress because it would be more powerful than a regular Congress, but grass-roots members, regional party leaders, and official radio and television began from 10 November to demand a Special Congress for the same reason. In two short days, the Central Committee had caved in, calling the Special Congress for 8 December. On 14 November 'the base's anger' turned to demanding removal of the Party's constitutional 'leading role'.

In the meantime, the Volkskammer's special Abuse of Power and Corruption Commission began its revelations. Popular outrage grew at

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the modest havings enjoyed by Politburo members in their exclusive photo the Wandlitz residential compound outside Berlin. The 21 Hovember revelation of trade supremo Schalek-Golodkowski's more Western scale embezzlement is another matter. Still, an outsider may perhaps be forgiven some ennui at revelations that leaders drove Volvos instead of Trabants or Wartburgs or an ironic chuckle that jokes about the Volvos so irritated Honecker that he ordered Citroëns instead. A Toquevillian dynamic was at work, 'For the mere fact that certain abuses have been remedied draws attention to others and they now appear more galling; people may suffer less, but their sensibility is exacerbated'. The popular outrage served party reformers' interests by accelerating the departure of the last Honecker Politburo left-overs—or so they thought.

Journalists and editors at the (Radio and) Television Works then joined with academics in the 'Modern Socialism' project at Humboldt University to draft a reform platform on 30 November, which GDR radio duly broadcast. It elicited support from across the country, as well as complaints from Schabowski, the Politburo member in charge of the media.

TABLE 3

THE TELEVISION WORKS (WF) PLATFORM (30 Nov. 1989, excepted)

At the forthcoming extraordinary Party Congress, the SED party base must re-take its party. We had to force this Special Party Congress upon the "Turn" policy leadership and their party apparatus and we did it. We have succeeded because in its current phase, our party has become a danger to our socialist homeland.

We withdraw our confidence from the Party leadership and its supporting apparatus, while we support the current government. The salvation of our party lies in its uncompromising renovation, which will amount to a defacto re-founding.

We call for all forces in the Party, especially the Special Congress delegates to gather for this purpose. As discussion points, we propose considerations about Socialism with a human face, a draft for a new Party Statute, and an Action Plan.

**

We want a Party, whose members are sovereign, with different opinions and unity of action, openness and transparency, tolerance and a search for consensus.

**1

We are workers, officials, artists, scientists, members of the military, doctors, and journalists from various organizations in the country.

Signed: Andreas Thun, VEB WF Thomas Faulkner, Rundfunk der DDR Hans-Gert Lacher, Kombinat BVB

Source: Gregor Gysi, Thomas Faulkner and Werner Hübner, Sturm aufs grosse Haus: der Untergang der SED (Berlin: Fischerinsel, 1990), pp. 62–3.

The first openly contested party delegate elections were held at the local district (*Kreis*) level on 3 December, with reformers dominating. Inside the Central Committee's 'Grand House' headquarters, Hans Modrow called in human rights lawyer Gregor Gysi to accelerate the scandal investigations. Delegates at the nearby Prenzlauer-Berg Kreis called an immediate demonstration in front of the Grand House, which GDR-Radio duly reported. Once again, *Kampfgruppen* units called up to protect the building disobeyed orders.²⁴

Probably to prevent the crowd of angry party members from storming the unprotected building, Schabowski soon emerged to announce that the entire Politburo had resigned again, this time not to be re-elected before the Special Congress. Until then the SED was to be run by a temporary Working Committee. When some of the 15 newly elected regional party leaders demanded the Central Committee also resign until the Congress, it promptly dissolved itself. The grass-roots nature of this revolution within a revolution is summed up by a party member barred from entering the Grand House: 'I am a Party Congress delegate. This is my house, not yours!' Corruption Commission chairman Gysi sealed resigning Politburo members' offices on 3 December, forcing them to ask his permission to remove personal belongings. 'What really shocked me was that none of them bothered to ask: "What do you think you are doing? Who are you anyway?" ... Their behaviour was remarkable.'

By this time the top leadership's will to retain power by force had completely collapsed. Again, mid-level actors in the party and state apparatus had initiated change. A proposal to dissolve the party formally was considered by the Special Congress before it settled for a new name: the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS). This then should be considered the end of the 'old regime'.

ENDGAME AND CAUSES

The square Round Table at which Modrow's transition regime negotiated an orderly surrender of power via reunification amounted to an endgame. Instead of speeding the transition, the regime was in such an advanced state of collapse that these talks were a deliberate attempt by Modrow to prop up the ailing regime. However in contrast to the Hungarian and Polish negotiated transitions, the old regime had already collapsed *before* the talks began. The left-leaning civic movements at the Round Table, which advocated building a '3rd Way' model of democratic socialism, were co-opted through their participation in Modrow's cabinet during the Government of National Responsibility formed on 28 January.²⁷ The draft constitution they produced was irrelevant and their Bündnis '90

In the aboute of survey data from those middle-level officials who lost faith in their own 'chie legitimacy', it is not possible to prove just why the regime collapsed." Among the obvious candidates for long-run causes are the routinisation of ideology, the example of Perestroika reforms, and stagnation of the economy. Among the immediately precipitating causes might be the surge of emigration, the opposition's street demonstrations, Warsaw Pact members' consular policies, and Gorbachev's famous last warning. For what it is worth, leaders' memoirs to date play down the economic factor and the opposition, make mention of the emigres and Gorbachev's warning, but tend to emphasise the Hungarian and Czech border openings. Typically, Honecker recalled from a Soviet military hospital inside a reunified Germany in March 1990:

Once it was clear that solidarity within the socialist countries had gone under, it would have been false and inhumane to defend the society with force ... once it had been pronounced that the GDR was the price for creating a European House, that was completely out of the question.

Perhaps more interestingly, Central Committee staff officer for security issues, National People's Army (NVA) General Werner Hübner complains 'the guidance from above painfully contradicted every party base official's life'. There is, however, no reason to expect that the attitudes of these central, high-ranking officials reflected what the pivotal regional and middle-level officials were thinking.

CONCLUSION

Honecker's decision to allow East Germans to emigrate from Prague in late September did not forswear the use of force to stay in power. Nonetheless, by the final mass Politburo resignation on 3 December, two days after the SED's 'leading role' was removed from the Constitution, the regime's 'elite legitimacy' had collapsed. As early as 8 October, the repression against demonstrations was ending, but this crucial aspect of regime collapse began outside Berlin. In the Dresden and Leipzig showdowns, regional officials took the initiative. And, both in the regional cities and during the SED rebellion back in Berlin, low-ranking members of the party-state apparatus were the first to act.

If one state security official could be singled out for starting the chain reaction of collapse it would be the mid-level police commander who, on the streets of Dresden, decided to cooperate with a priest to create the unprecedented 'Group of 'O. The moment the CrDR began to collapse was when that officer ordered his troops to buy down then not sho lit. Soon after, Gorbachev's carber warning at host impried a body hop succession and the SED party apparatus itself would full apart. Daring regime collapse to 8 October, and tracing its subscipient spiral from lower ranks to the top leadership and from regional capitals to the Politburo, helps suggest how regime collapse opened the door for the non-violent demonstrations that deserve the ultimate credit for bringing about the East German Revolution of 1989.

NOTES

This article is based on a paper originally presented at the Eighth International Conference of Europeanists in Chicago, 27–29 March 1992. Professor Juan J. Linz has clarified my thinking on several points.

- 1. For example, Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market* (1992), which builds on Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe Schmitter (eds.), *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), among others.
- 2. See Bronislaw Geremek, 'Between Hope and Despair', *Daedalus*, Vol. 119, No. 1 (1990), p. 99.
- 3. Gilbert Stuart translation (New York: Doubleday, 1955), p. 177.
- 4. Ibid., p. 137
- Günther Gaus, Wo Deutschland liegt, eine Ortbestimmung (Hamburg: Hoffman & Campe), p. 156.
- 6. On this point see Sigrid Meuschel, Legitimation und Parteiherrschaft: zum Paradox von Stabilität und Revolution in der DDR (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1992), pp. 9, 301–5.
- 7. Giuseppe DiPalma, 'Legitimation from the Top', World Politics, October 1991.
- 8. Max Weber, Economy & Society (1922/1978), p. 212.
- 9. Similarly bureaucratic, vague orders sufficed for the Tienanmen Square massacre on 4 June. See Andrew Scobell, 'Why the People's Army Fired on the People: the Chinese Military & Tienanmen', *Armed Forces & Society*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (1991), p. 199.
- These and following Stasi quotations may be found in Jochen von Lang, Erich Mielke, eine deutsche Karriere (Berlin: Rowohlt, 1991); or Armin Mitter and Stefan Wolle, Ich liebe euch doch alle: Befehle und Lageberichte des MfS (Berlin: Basis, 1990).
- 11. Volker Gransow and Konrad H. Jarausch (eds.), Die deutsche Vereinigung: Dokumente zu Bürgerbewegung, Annäherung und Beitritt (Köln: Wissenschaft und Politik, 1991), p. 74.
- 12. All Erich Honecker citations may be found in Reinhold Andert and Wolfgang Herzberg Der Sturz; Honecker im Kreuzverhör (Berlin: Weimar, 1990).
- This and following Krenz quotations come from his memoirs, Wenn Mauern fallen (Wien: Paul Neff, 1990).
- 14. Gransow and Jarausch, op. cit., pp. 76-7.
- 15. This account of what occurred in Dresden draws on Eckhard Bahr, 7 Tage im Oktober: Aufbruch in Dresden (Leipzig: Forum, 1990) and Hans Kromer, Dresden: die friedliche Revolution, Oktober 89-März 90 (Böbingen: Anita Tyke, 1990).
- See Uwe Cordt-Schnibben, 'Wie Erich Honecker und sein Politbüro die Konterrevolution erlebten', Der Spiegel, No. 18 (1990), p. 204.
- 17. See his memoirs, Aufbruch und Ende (Hamburg: Konkret Literatur, 1991).
- 18. This and the following quotation are from Bahr, op. cit., pp. 134-5.
- 19. Bahr, op. cit., p. 156.

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- 1 than A turn a transman PPA 1991 (Yale University Press, Forthcoming), which is about he heat shout he heat of the Revolution.
- 11 This account draws heavily on Gregor Gysi, Thomas Faulkner and Werner Hübner, Nurm anly grove Hany der Untergang der SED (Berlin: Fischerinsel, 1990).
- 11 milbert Stunt translation, op. cit., p. 177.
- 34 Shortly after re-unification the building was condemned for asbestos contamination and it remains empty today.
- 25 Quoted in Gysi et. al. op. cit., p. 86.
- 26. Ibid, p. 76-7.
- 27. See Uwe Thaysen, *Der runde Tisch: Oder, Wo bleibt das Volk?* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1990), especially pp. 71, 76.
- 28. Wolfgang Gibowski, 'Demokratischer (Neu-) Beginn in der DDR: Dokumentation und Analyse der Wahl vom 18 März 1990', Zeitschrift für Parlamentsfragen, Vol. 21, No. 1 (1990), pp. 5-21.
- 29. These ruling elites were, of course, un-surveyable before their will collapsed, but the dissertation field work in which I am currently engaged includes a *post hoc* survey in Berlin and two regional (*Bezirke*) capitals.
- 30. Gysi, op. cit., p. 25.

Women Students in the Former C.DR A Research Note

LOTHAR MERCENS

Drawing on longitudinal statistics on admissions graduated subject choices and studies in eastern European countries du paper brings together further evidence about the unequal appear tunities of women in higher education in the former GDR

Educational policy in the German Democratic Republic seemed set to open higher education to those social groups which had been unable to benefit from it in the past: working people and women. Commencing in the Soviet zone of occupation and continuing during the lifetime of the GDR (1949–1990) the declared policy was to raise the proportion of children from working-class and farming backgrounds in universities and bring their place in the education system at least in line with their place in society. Immediately after the Second World War and following the Soviet model, the GDR instituted so-called Workers' and Peasants' Faculties – *Arbeiter- und Bauernfakultäten* (ABF). They were intended to break down the social barriers and offered shortened degree courses to speed up recasting the country's elite to include more people from working class backgrounds. It has been shown that recasting the social structure of the elite was effective for a time but had been abandoned by the mid-1960s.

With regard to women's participation in higher education, the policy aims of the 'first hour' were slower to leave their mark. During the 1950s, the proportion of women students sank continuously from a high point of 27.2 per cent in 1952.4 While official pronouncements appeared committed to increasing the number of women in higher education, the real priority at the time was integrating women into the labour market to alleviate the labour shortage. The 1960s saw the introduction of a system of women's promotion (*Frauenförderung*) in universities as well as the beginnings of the Special Programme of Study for Women (*Frauensonderstudium*). By the mid-1980s, women had gained a fair place in higher education as far as access was concerned. In 1986, 50.3 per cent of students in the GDR were women (Table 1). With regard to university staff the situation had improved without reaching equality. In the early

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