

“Bei uns ist immer was los!”

OCTOBER 3—DAY OF GERMAN UNITY

TIMELINE FROM FALL OF WALL TO GERMAN UNITY

The Wall Finally Falls – The night the world changed

Thursday, November 9, 1989, 8 pm –“GDR opens border” is the lead story of the West German TV news program "Tagesschau". At a live press conference, SED spokesman Günter Schabowski, announces new regulations permitting GDR citizens to travel to the West "without prior conditions." Still not quite believing what they had just heard, people from all over East Berlin travel to their nearest border crossing. By 11 pm a crowd of almost 20,000 people stands at the checkpoint on Bornholmer Strasse shouting "Open the gate, open the gate!" The border guards can no longer hold them back – the barrier is lifted. Soon afterwards the barriers are breached at Berlin's other border crossings and along the West German frontier. The Berlin Wall, that symbol of division, has fallen.

November 13, 1989: Dresden party head Hans Modrow is tasked by the East German parliament with forming a new government.



December 7, 1989: A round table - a forum of representatives from old and new parties and organizations - convenes under the auspices of church representatives to put forward proposals to resolve the national crisis and meets regularly until new elections in March.

Transition – Civil rights activists become the driving force behind the GDR's democratization

The opening of the Wall accelerates the SED's fall from power. Step by step the civil rights activists attempt to assume control. They succeed in establishing a "Round Table" in East Berlin that brings together representatives from the old and new political powers. Their main concerns are to instate free elections, draft a democratic constitution and to disband the intelligence service. By the end of the year the Round Tables are monitoring the daily operations of the state establishment and administration in a number of cities.