

“Bei uns ist immer was los!”

OCTOBER 3—DAY OF GERMAN UNITY

TIMELINE FROM FALL OF WALL TO GERMAN UNITY Prospects – Posing the German Question

The fall of the Wall suddenly placed the German Question on the global political agenda. While Washington signals encouragement, Poland is concerned about the validity of its western border, the United Kingdom and France see Germany as a new big power on the horizon, and the Soviet Union fears losing the fruits of its arduous war against Nazi Germany. In both East and West Germany the looming prospect of reunification is rejected above all by intellectuals. But the demonstrators who first shouted "We are the people!" now chant "We are one people!"



December 19, 1989: West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl arrives on his first official visit to the East Germany. In Dresden he is enthusiastically received with calls of "Helmut, Helmut" and chants of "Germany united fatherland."

Powerless – The Stasi is dissolved and the secret archives are opened:



January 15, 1990: Some 2,000 demonstrators storm the headquarters of the Stasi secret police in East Berlin while 100,000 demonstrate in front of the building.

In October 1989 the secret intelligence service, called the Stasi, had 90,000 full time employees and roughly 174,000 "undercover collaborators" (spies). In January 1990, the Modrow government gives in to pressure and renounces plans to continue the Stasi's work altogether. At the same time that citizens have overcome the power of the Stasi and gained access to their files, these files are also crucial for investigating the SED dictatorship.