

through this kind of brutal Soviet “primitive accumulation” in the immediate postwar years, the 1950s and early 1960s. The late 1960s and the 1970s saw a marginal improvement of their living conditions, but the 1980s brought a collapse again.

All of these problems have been brought up again and again, by workers in the plants, by hospital personnel, even at SED party-base meetings. The SED leaders have responded by simply passing on the directives from Moscow: “nyet”—no change.

“Is there any life before death?” is a question many of the young East German refugees asked in personal discussions with *EIR*. Their dramatic and adventurous escape from East Germany in the weeks of September and early October gave the answer: certainly there is no life in the Soviet Occupied Zone.

Desperation to get out now before it is too late, is the dominant motive among the East German youth to make it into the West at all costs. Statements such as, “This was probably the last chance to get out,” or, “Soon, this will no longer be possible,” were made by many refugees in front of Western television cameras and radio microphones. The overriding feeling was that all borders will be closed, and all visas for travel into other East bloc countries canceled, following Oct. 7.

There is a further reason why most of the refugees are aged 20-24. Especially with young men, this is the age category of East German army reservists who would likely be called up for active duty in the uniform-bearing “workers militia” *Kampfgruppen*, in order to break up protest rallies, riots, and the like. The young East Germans simply don’t want to be around to be ordered to fire on unarmed protesters. And shooting has been rehearsed: Special exercises have been held over the past few months, to prepare the *Kampfgruppen* for street-level confrontations with rebellious oppositionals.

The coming crackdown was addressed in the following terms by the West German Minister of Third World Affairs, Jürgen Warnke, in an interview with the daily *Neue Osnabrücker Zeitung* Oct. 4: “There is fear among certain circles of the G.D.R. population that the SED party could deploy its well-organized state security machine down to the *Kampfgruppen*, to secure its power. Also the presence of 400,000 Soviet soldiers in the G.D.R. shows which risks are implied for both sides in violent confrontation.”

This fear was dominant at an unprecedented 25,000-strong protest rally held Oct. 2 in the city of Leipzig—the biggest held since the June 1953 uprising. Slogans on banners included “We shall overcome, Freedom, Freedom,” but also, “Never again another China.” “There is fear that very soon, there will be violent clashes, there is such an explosive mood in the population. We are afraid there will be many deaths,” declared one young woman who had just made it into the West.

## Beijing-East Berlin axis tightens grip

by Mary M. Burdman

Even as tens of thousands flee East Germany in well-founded fear of a repetition, in the heart of Europe, of the June 4 massacre of students in Beijing’s Tiananmen Square, the clouds of crisis are also gathering again in Communist China, East Germany’s staunchest friend. The “Beijing-East Berlin Axis”—with Pyongyang, the North Korean capital, the third partner—is consolidating its forces, not only to face external condemnation, but also to deal with terrible internal crises. Both the Chinese and East German regimes celebrate 40 years of power the first week of October, and they are using “diplomatic” exchanges to issue blunt warnings to their own populations and the world, that they will maintain that power through whatever military means necessary.

The Chinese leadership has been issuing threats right and left. Chairman Deng Xiaoping’s newly appointed leadership gave its first press conference Sept. 25, and Prime Minister Li Peng and Communist Party Secretary General Jiang Zemin both asserted that the June 4 crackdown had done nothing to change Beijing’s determination to achieve the “reunification of [Taiwan] with the motherland”—and Jiang said that the regime will not rule out the use of force. Jiang also reiterated that Hong Kong was being used to “subvert” the Beijing government.

Although Li Peng said there was no timetable for re-taking Taiwan, just the fact that the leadership threatened violence should be a warning, since Deng Xiaoping has vowed to re-take Taiwan by the end of the 1980s.

Jiang Zemin began the four-day anniversary celebrations in Beijing with an 80-minute speech harkening back to the Communist bloc’s “we will bury you” phase of the 1950s. Jiang stated that the Chinese Communist Party is “fully confident of the Communist future of the human race,” and warned China of the “reactionary international forces [that] have never abandoned their fundamental position of hostility toward the socialist system. . . . The struggle against infiltration and counter-infiltration, subversion and counter-subversion” of the socialist countries towards capitalism “will last for a long time.”

Tensions have escalated internally and externally since

those September warnings. Tibet is currently an armed camp, observers report, and five Buddhist nuns were sentenced Oct. 4 to four years in a labor camp for simply shouting Tibetan independence slogans in a Lhasa marketplace last month. The awarding Oct. 5 of the Nobel Peace Prize to the Dalai Lama, Tibet's exiled political and spiritual leader, lit another fuse: Within hours, the P.R.C. embassy in Oslo, Norway protested to the Nobel committee that their choice "would wound the feelings of the people of China."

Two days earlier, the government of Hong Kong had allowed a champion Chinese swimmer, Yang Yang, who had appealed for asylum in Hong Kong when his visa expired in August, to leave for the United States. Yang had not been involved in the democracy protests in Beijing in May and June, but said he had helped dissidents to escape from China. Xinhua news agency, which functions as Beijing's unofficial embassy in Hong Kong, issued a very nasty protest, saying the move was "certain to cast a shadow on other aspects of cooperation between Hong Kong and China," and had set a very bad precedent. As the China editor of a prominent Hong Kong newspaper told *EIR* Oct. 5, we have only seen the beginning of this problem. Beijing was "very unhappy" with the Hong Kong decision, he said. There are some 100 students who fled China hiding in Hong Kong, and if they try to leave, the crisis will escalate.

In addition, the Republic of China on Taiwan has issued new emergency regulations to allow leaders and members of the democracy movement to take refuge there, and immediately offered Yang asylum—an action which Beijing, which ranks Taiwan as a breakaway province, can only take as a threat.

## Origins of the axis

The Beijing-East Berlin axis was "founded" in October 1986, when East German leader Erich Honecker embraced supreme Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping repeatedly when he became the first East German leader to visit Beijing. Although Polish leader Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski, who was in Beijing a month before Honecker, was the first East bloc leader to visit China since the Sino-Soviet split over 20 years before, Honecker's visit was considered officially far more important, especially in re-establishing Communist Party ties between the East bloc and China.

Both China and East Germany have given everyone full warning that the crackdown is only beginning. Following the June 4 Tiananmen massacre, East Germany was the first to express its public backing for Beijing's actions. In mid-September, Deng Xiaoping thanked Honecker on his birthday, stating: "I am deeply convinced that the relations of friendship and cooperation between our two parties, states, and people will continue to be consolidated." The next day, P.R.C. ambassador to East Germany Zhang Dake told the Karl Marx College for cadre of the ruling Socialist Unity Party (SED), "The Communist Party of China and the P.R.C.

government pay great attention to the relations between the P.R.C. and the German Democratic Republic. . . . The SED, the G.D.R. government, and the People's Chamber have offered our country support and solidarity in quelling the counter-revolutionary putsch in Beijing."

The diplomacy culminated around the two countries' 40th anniversary celebrations. East German Politburo member Egon Krenz arrived in Beijing Sept. 25 for a week-long visit. He was accompanied by East Germany's deputy defense minister. The only senior official at the Oct. 1 celebration was North Korean Vice President Li Jong Ok. Krenz met during the week with Chinese Politburo member Qiao Shi, who heads internal security in China and is considered a "dark horse" candidate for succeeding Deng. The two discussed promoting party and government ties, according to Radio Beijing. Krenz also met party head Jiang Zemin.

A high-powered delegation of SED leaders attended the reception at the P.R.C. embassy in East Berlin Sept. 29, including Politburo members and many senior officers of the East German army. Axen proclaimed "firm solidarity with the comrades of the People's Republic of China." Axen added that "in Europe, the campaign of forces hostile to détente is currently concentrating on the G.D.R.," and that no letting-down of "alertness at this highly sensitive border between Socialism and Imperialism, between NATO and the Warsaw Pact," could be allowed.

East Germany reciprocated by inviting Vice-Premier Yao Yilin to East Berlin for the 40th anniversary of SED rule, where Mikhail Gorbachov is the supreme guest. The Chinese delegation was greeted at the airport by SED Politburo member Guenther Kleiber, who said, "We share the same positions and expectations, for the basic challenges of our times." Kleiber said that the "recent developments" in China—the crackdown—were a "common lesson for us."

## North Korea's role

The third part of the new axis is North Korea, the most repressive regime on earth. Exchanges between Beijing and Pyongyang have been intense. Since the late August visit of North Korean Chief of the General Staff Choe Kwang to Beijing, exchanges and trade delegations have come thick and fast. Choe was greeted by Chinese Defense Minister Qin Jiwei, and also by Liu Zhenhua, political commissar of the Beijing Military Area. Since then, Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen spoke at the Pyongyang Embassy in Beijing Sept. 8, stating that the Chinese people "invariably" support their Korean counterparts. A Chinese Communist Party delegation led by Yang Yichen of the Central Advisory Commission met with North Korean Politburo member Ho Tam in Pyongyang Sept. 5, and two weeks later, a Korean Supreme People's Congress delegation was received by high-level officials in Shanghai, including Xi Zhongxun, vice chairman of the Standing Committee of China's National People's Congress.