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REMEMBRANCE AS DUTY

Federal Foundation for the Study
of Communist Dictatorship in East Germany



English

www.bundesstiftung-aufarbeitung.de



Foundation
Under Public Law

BUNDESSTIFTUNG
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Intercession and Silent Vigil at the Gethsemane Church in Prenzlauer Berg, a locality of Berlin, 1989



Holding Cell at the Former East German Secret Police (Stasi) Prison, today the Bautzen Memorial Site



Propaganda Event of East Germany's Socialist Unity Party (SED) on 7 October 1989

Remembrance as Duty

As defined by federal law, the Federal Foundation for the Study of Communist Dictatorship in East Germany promotes a comprehensive reappraisal of the causes, history, and impact of the dictatorship in the Soviet zone of occupation in East Germany and the former GDR. The Foundation also supports the process of German unity, as well as the reappraisal of communist dictatorships in international contexts.

Together with other institutions and partners at home and abroad, the Foundation supports the critical examination of communist dictatorships in the Soviet zone of occupation in East Germany, the GDR, and East Central Europe. Together, we aim to strengthen public awareness of communist tyranny. The Foundation maintains that as part of efforts to overcome Germany's and Europe's postwar division, the peaceful revolutions of 1989 – outstanding events in the development of both German and European democracy – deserve special recognition. The Federal Foundation was established by Germany's Federal Parliament in 1998.

*SED: East German Socialist Unity Party

Spheres of Action

Key elements of the Foundation's work are encouragement and support, as well as the sharing of information and networks. The Federal Foundation serves as a partner to a wide range of institutions, including but not limited to memorial sites, museums, historical societies, independent archives, representatives of the victims of the SED dictatorship, state and local government, universities, schools, and other educational outreach efforts. Insofar as possible, we support projects with regard to both content and funding. Additionally, the Foundation develops various types of initiatives and publications, and is also a forum for networking and cooperation.

The Foundation provides thought-provoking impulses and promotes debate via podium discussions, workshops and conferences, conversations with eyewitnesses to history, colloquia, and special training opportunities. Taken together, these measures contribute to knowledge transfers, communication, and consultation, all elements in society's ongoing appraisal of the past.

Since 1998, the Federal Foundation has supported around 3,000 historical-political projects carried out by educational agencies; these include initiatives to create or maintain archives, mount exhibitions, complete publications or documentary films, as well as special programs initiated by victims of the SED dictatorship. Since 2001, the

Federal Foundation has also offered financial support to more than 90 young scholars.

The Federal Foundation is home to a library, archive, and documentation center. We make available to the public a variety of books, documents, and other materials related to the themes of opposition and repression in the GDR and the Soviet zone of occupation, as well as political persecution and repression more generally. Our well-equipped reading room is open to the public. The Federal Foundation's archives offer special services to such external repositories as the archives of the East German opposition.

The Foundation's press office provides a wide range of information to journalists; one example is a German-language publication, published six times a year, that informs media representatives about upcoming historical events of interest.



The Former Inner-German Border, today the Eichseld Border Museum



Demonstration in Front of the Stasi Headquarters in Leipzig, 1989



Soviet Tanks in Berlin's Leipziger Strasse on 17 June 1953



"Wallpeckers" at the Berlin Wall, November 1989

Oversight and Governance

Head of the Foundation is the Foundation's Board of Trustees. It is elected to five-year terms and contains representatives of the Federal Parliament and Government, a representative of the federal state of Berlin, as well as persons committed to the challenges and questions involved in the investigation of communist dictatorships. The Chairman of the Board of Trustees is *Markus Meckel*. His deputy is *Hartmut Koschyk*, Member of the Federal Parliament. The Foundation's Board of Directors works on an honorary basis and serves at the behest of the Board of Trustees. *Rainer Eppelmann* is the chairman of the Board of Directors that guides the tasks of the foundation. *Dr. Anna Kaminsky* guides the operational office. The Foundation also receives support and advice from expert advisory committees. The Foundation is subject to the legal control of the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and Media.

Funding

The Foundation possesses an endowment of approximately 77 million euros, most of which derives from former SED assets. The Foundation's budget consists of interest earned on these assets, as well as an annual supplement from the budget of the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and Media.