

Reunification of East and West Germany

by Diane Davis

(Editor's note: information documented from the Winston-Salem Journal)

On Tuesday, February 14, 1990 East and West Germany agreed on the framework for the reunification of Germany. The Ottawa plan, as it is being called, consists of two stages. The first calls for East and West Germany to discuss the internal details of the unification. Then united the Germans would negotiate the issues relating to the international security with the United States, Great Britain, France and the Soviet Union.

The Ottawa Plan was formulated as President Mikhail Gorbachev altered his policy and accepted President Bush's proposal for U.S. and Soviet troop reductions in Europe. According to the plan, Soviet and U.S. troop levels in central Europe would be restricted to 195,000; however, the U.S. would be permitted an additional 30,000 troops in the remainder of Europe.

The agreement was announced at the end of a three day conference of East-West foreign ministers, originally called to discuss an agreement that would give NATO and the Warsaw Pact nations open

airspace for the aerial inspection of each other. The quickness with which these agreements were reached seems to suggest that German unification could occur much sooner than anyone had believed possible.

The key international issue involving German unification centers around the two alliances. West Germany and its allies want the united Germany to remain as a member of NATO. The Soviet Union and the East Germans desire the state to be neutral. According to the New York Times, on Monday Soviet Minister Eduard A. Shevardnadze said, "the most sensible way" to implement German reunification was for the state to be neutral. When asked on Tuesday if unified Germany could be a member of NATO he simply shrugged his shoulders and refused to comment. His actions suggest that the Soviet position here could change as it did on the recent arms control proposal. The Soviets had previously insisted upon absolute equality in European troop strength.

According to the plan, negotiations for reunification would begin between the two Germanies after a democratically elected governments comes to power in East

Germany following the March 18 elections. However, many issues are already being negotiated. The East German Prime Minister has already agreed that the official currency of East Germany. West Germany only agreed to give the East Germans \$2.4 billion of the \$9 billion they sought in aid. This reflects West Germany's confidence that they can organize the unification on their terms with few concessions to the East Germans. East Germany's Green Party said that it was clear that West Germany intends "an unconditional annexation of East Germany."

After the issues of domestic integration have been addressed, the united Germans would begin negotiation of security issues with Britain, France, the Soviet Union, and the United States. The announcement of the plan simply stated that the foreign ministers would meet "to discuss external aspects of the establishment of German unity including issues of security of neighboring states.

This is not enough for many other states. The Prime Minister of Poland, Tadeusz Mazowiecki, said that his government was concerned about the new Germany interests in once German land which is now a part of Poland. He said that his

government "will demand participation" in a conference on the reunification of Germany. "Our security matters cannot be settled by proxy for us," he said.

Yitzhak Shamir, the Prime Minister of Israel, expressed his concern the German reunification was a deadly danger to Jews. However, after a meeting in Bonn Wednesday the Israeli Foreign Minister, Moshe Arens, said that if the unified Germany is democratic

and "fully conscious of the responsibilities that it has toward the Jewish people...there's (no)... danger."

Aside from the political issues, many nations will be forced with a tremendous new economic competitor. Nations, including the United States and Japan, will have their economic dominance threatened by the tremendous potential of a united Germany. German unification will also dramatically affect the European community as it moves towards consolidation in 1992.

According to the Washington Post West German officials indicated that the interests of nations other than Germany would be considered at the 35 nation European Summit this fall.

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biodegradable materials can't decompose there anyway. Perfectly preserved organic materials such as newspapers and even hotdogs have been found in landfills after decades. Look for products that have less packaging to be disposed of. (Why must manufactures package plastic deodorant bottles in cardboard boxes as well?)

In addition to cutting down on the amount of trash we produce, we need to recycle everything we can. Did you know that a ton of recycled newspaper saves 17 trees from being cut down? You can get enough fiberfill to stuff a sleeping bag by recycling 36 plastic two-liter soft drink bottles. Nine gallons of fuel are saved every time a ton of recycled glass is used to make new glass. Show your support for companies that are actively involved in recycling by buying their products. Products that are recyclable or made from recycled material usually say so on their

containers. If you drink Pepsi products, STOP! Pepsi cans are not recyclable because they are not made with pure aluminum. Think about this for a moment. How often do you casually toss a beer or soda can into the trash, or even worse, on the ground. Next time before you do so, consider this: reprocessing aluminum takes only 1/20th of the energy needed to produce it from raw materials. By recycling only one aluminum can, enough energy is saved to power a 100-watt light bulb for 3.5 hours.

With the earth's population expanding as rapidly as it is and our demand for raw materials increasing, we can't afford not to recycle. The most important thing for you to do is realize that you make a difference as an individual. People will be influenced by your actions and change their actions. Remember to "think globally and act locally," as the bumper sticker says, and help improve the state of the earth. It is your environment too.

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in its struggle for the cause of equal rights for blacks and granted his continued support for the acts of violence perpetrated to destroy white supremacy in South Africa. The nationalist government found little hope for a reduction of tensions between blacks in South Africa and the National Government. Mandela refused to announce his future plans until he spoke to his colleagues in the ANC. He called for the continuation of sanctions against the South African government to further the reforms. This opinion was reverbrated by many anti-Apartheid leaders including black activist and former Noble Peace Prize winner, Bishop Desmond Tutu. Despite their call for continued sanctions, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher called for the removal of some British sanctions against South Africa and stated that she would encourage the other eleven nations of the European Community to do

the same.

Mandela's release brought joyous reactions throughout the United States. President Bush telephoned Mandela to congratulate him on his release and to invite him to visit the US. Bush stated that he would have to study whether or not US sanctions would be lifted, but encouraged President DeKlerk to continue his reforms. President DeKlerk will most likely push for speedy negotiations between the ANC and the government before he has to face the electorate again in 1994. The African National Congress had agreed to send a delegation to negotiate with the government, but stated that no real progress could be expected until all political prisoners are released and the state of emergency is lifted. Later, from his home in Soweto, Mandela explained that his guerilla forces would continue to target military institutions in its fight to end Apartheid.