

State and National

East Germany closes doors to end mass emigration

By **CHUCK WILLIAMS**

East Germany blocked further emigration to West Germany on Tuesday by putting an end to visa-free travel to Czechoslovakia after agreeing to let 10,000 more people flee to West Germany from Prague.

This wave was the second mass movement in the last four days. About 5,000 East Germans were allowed to travel to West Germany from Prague last weekend.

Since May, nearly 40,000 people have fled to West Germany, first through Hungary and, more recently, by seeking asylum at the West German embassy in Prague.

As has been the case since East Germany was formed in 1949, the

News Analysis

Soviet Union and United States have a vested interest in the relations between the two countries. For perhaps the first time, however, the Soviet Union has been encouraging freedom and civil liberties for East Germans.

As Mikhail Gorbachev prepares to visit East Germany for its 40th anniversary tomorrow and Saturday, East German officials are hoping for a trouble-free visit. As a result, the Soviets have been encouraging East German concessions in allowing the emigrations.

Experts agree Gorbachev must be careful not to step on any toes, since he

needs to protect the strong Soviet ties with East German government while at the same time preaching his popular message of new freedoms for eastern Soviet bloc nations.

"Most of the emigrants are young families and young children," said a spokesman for the West German embassy. "Most are also highly skilled workers and professionals."

Although East Germany allowed the initial wave of migration, the government is not pleased with the ensuing flood of would-be emigrants.

"It was our decision to let these people go from Czechoslovakia," said a spokesman for the East German embassy. "These people are leaving because we allowed them to."

East Germany has criticized West

Germany for offering a passport to any East German who travels west and requests a passport.

"A West German passport is available to any East German who wants one," said the East German embassy spokesman. "I believe many will find that West German life won't be so great."

West Germany says it makes no distinction between East and West Germans.

"We only acknowledge one German citizenship," said the embassy spokesman. "There is no special West German citizenship. The minute anyone from East Germany comes to the embassy and claims a passport we give them one."

Media coverage and recent conces-

sions in other Eastern bloc countries have been named as causes of the recent flood of people.

"The major reason was publicity," said the West German spokesman. "Hungary had removed the Iron Curtain between there and West Germany."

"The people saw this as a loophole and this activated a desire to get out. East Germany is now an isle of stagnation in a sea of movement. Many people see this as a one-time chance to start a new life."

"People see this on television and it causes a chain reaction. They fear a crackdown that the loophole will be closed later. Hungary was a one time thing."

The East German embassy agrees that media coverage has a lot to do with

the increased number of emigrants. "Ninety-five percent of our people can watch West German television," said the spokesman. "If we see it all the time it encourages leaving."

The future of the wave of emigrants is uncertain. Numbers are expected to decline now that restrictions on travel have been imposed.

The number of people applying and leaving legally is greater than the number trying to leave illegally. Officials believe the large numbers of people arriving in West Germany have ceased for the time being.

"We don't anticipate a mass exodus," the spokesman said. "The people cannot leave East Germany without a passport."

Easley becomes 1st official candidate in 1990 U.S. Senate race

By **KIMBERLEY MAXWELL**

Mike Easley, district attorney for Bladen, Columbus and Brunswick counties, announced his candidacy Monday for the Democratic nomination in the 1990 U.S. Senate race against Republican incumbent Jesse Helms.

Easley said he was running because

this was an important time in our country, said Mike McCorkle, acting campaign adviser for Easley. The nation is about to enter the 21st century, and we must make crucial decisions now that will affect our future, he said.

Easley is the only candidate who has officially entered the race. Former N.C. Sen. R.P. Thomas is expected to an-

nounce his candidacy soon.

Lawrence Davis, chairman of the N.C. Democratic Party, said he expects more people to join the race.

"We have had about 20 people expressing interest in running," he said.

William Friday, former UNC system president, announced last Friday that he would seek the nomination.

Easley is concerned with the country's illegal drug problem and has addressed the problem as district attorney, McCorkle said. But drugs would not be Easley's only issue as senator, he added.

Easley plans to use his perspective as a working parent in the U.S. Senate, McCorkle said. Easley said the con-

cerns of the middle and working classes have been forgotten in the nation's politics. He also wants to add a practical point of view to politics.

Easley has not made public the main issues of his campaign, McCorkle said.

Voters in North Carolina have expressed concern on many issues through polls, Davis said. Voters are most con-

cerned with education, the economy, jobs, illegal drugs, crime, industry and the environment.

Easley has said campaigning will in no way affect his job as district attorney, McCorkle said.

"He is committed to do whatever is necessary," and will be dedicated to both activities, he said.

Newly enacted law requires moped riders to wear helmets

By **KYLE YORK SPENCER**

A law requiring moped riders and their passengers to wear safety helmets was passed by the General Assembly earlier this year, and went into effect Sunday.

Helmets must meet the standards of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), announced Commissioner William Hiatt of the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) last Thursday. They must be labeled on the outer surface in a contrasting color, and the letters "DOT" must appear on the helmet with the manufacturer's certification indicating that the helmet conforms to the federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards. Riders without helmets will be fined \$25.

There have been an increasing

number of mopeds on N.C. roads and highways, according to Vernon Morton, special assistant to the commissioner of motor vehicles. This increase has led to more accidents in the past few years.

Last year nine moped riders were killed in accidents in North Carolina and 84 were seriously injured, according to DMV traffic statistics. In 1988 there were 401 moped accidents in the state.

The General Assembly passed the bill when it found supporting data that a moped helmet law could save lives, Morton said.

Helmets can make the difference between a severe and minor accident, Morton said. Unlike motorcycle riders, who are often injured even when they wear helmets, moped riders, who aren't

able to go as fast, can prevent severe head injuries by wearing a helmet.

The Chapel Hill Police Department has not yet fined any moped riders without helmets, said Capt. Ralph Pendergraff.

"Usually we go for a couple of weeks of warning."

For many UNC moped riders like sophomore Nori Sie, the helmet law is an inconvenience.

"It's kind of a pain, and I'd rather not wear a helmet. But now I have to go out and buy one."

Other students, such as junior Hanno Ekdahl, oppose the new law because moped riders generally go short distances at speeds no greater than 35 mph. A bicycle going downhill can easily reach 25 mph, but bicyclists do not have to wear helmets, Ekdahl said.

Supreme Court opens new session

By **ALAN MARTIN**

With the nation still trying to determine where it stands on pressing moral problems dealt with in the last Supreme Court session, the high court reconvened Monday and plans to reconsider some of the issues that caused controversy in the last session.

The court will hear cases regarding abortion and the right to privacy, according to Donna Lefebvre, a political science lecturer at UNC.

However, the court is planning to back away from civil rights controversies in order to see how recent decisions will be handled by subordinate courts, said Clint Bolick of the Free Congress Foundation in Washington.

The abortion cases come from Ohio, Minnesota and Illinois, said Dan Pollitt, professor at the UNC

School of Law. The first two cases regard state laws which require parental notification of minors who pursue abortions. The third involves a state law requiring abortion clinics to upgrade their facilities to an extent that will make their services prohibitively expensive, he said.

Pollitt said he expected the court to uphold these cases that undermine Roe vs. Wade because four of the nine justices openly oppose that landmark decision and welcome the opportunity to counter it.

The climate of renewed debate on abortion is affecting the political arena across the country, Pollitt said. Republican candidates in New York City, New Jersey and Virginia have reversed their positions to pro-choice to reconcile themselves with young, female, Republican voters, he said.

The National Abortion Rights Action League also fears these laws will

be upheld, according to spokeswoman Holly Marrow. She does not expect the current court to uphold a woman's right to reproductive choice.

The effects will be devastating in terms of women's health, she said. She predicts that teenage girls will resort to self-induced abortions and visit "back alley butchers" if the state laws are affirmed. The position of her organization is that required parental notification is wrong because "you can't legislate good family communication," she said.

The cases regarding the right to privacy and its derivatives, the right to abort and right to die, come from the Missouri courts, which determined in a split decision that the state's interest in life supersedes the wishes of the parents of a 32-year-old woman on life support, Pollitt said.

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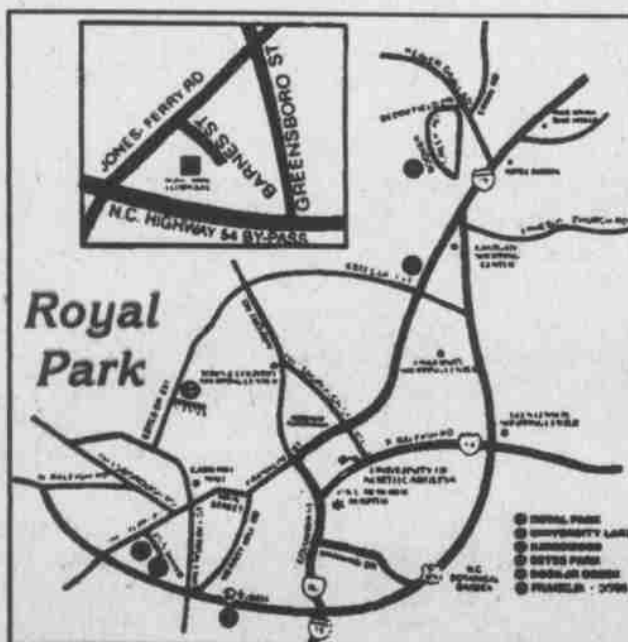


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