



## BACKGROUND GUIDE

# *WAMUNC XXIV*

JCC: Cabinets of East and West  
Germany - *East Germany*

# *LETTER FROM THE CHAIR*

Esteemed delegates,

My name is Ella Derke and I'll be chairing the East Germany side of this JCC Committee. I'm a sophomore double majoring in International Affairs, with a concentration in International Environmental Studies, and Theatre. I'm particularly interested in environmental policy on the global scale, and how alternative means can be used to further global consciousness about climate change, such as live performance as a way of advocating for social change.

I'm originally from New York City and first started doing Model UN in Middle School. It's been a longtime passion of mine and has inspired my major in International Affairs. When not participating in Model UN, I enjoy running and scuba diving. One of my favorite scuba diving projects was when I worked on restoring coral reefs in Honduras, in which I grew baby coral on PVC pipes near reefs bleached by the processes of ocean acidification due to climate change.

I have a particular interest in East and West Germany relations in the mid 1900s because coming from a German family, I've always been interested in the conflict between East and West Germany, having had families on both sides that dealt with the many issues we will explore in committee. I'm excited to see how you will all contribute to committee in your own unique ways.

If you have any questions, concerns, or would like to introduce yourself, please feel free to email me at [gderke@gwmail.gwu.edu](mailto:gderke@gwmail.gwu.edu).

See you all in committee soon,  
Ella Derke

# *LETTER FROM THE CRISIS DIRECTOR*

Hello delegates,

My name is Jordan Rosner and I will be the East Germany Crisis Director of this JCC Committee. I am a junior double majoring in International Affairs, with a concentration in Security Policy, and Political Science and am from Long Island, New York. My research interests revolve around Transatlantic and Western European Security Policy, specifically NATO and its role in the 21st century.

I am very excited to get back into Model UN with this committee, as I participated during all four years of high school and my involvement heavily influenced my current interests in international affairs. At GW, I am a Brother of the Delta Phi Epsilon Foreign Service Fraternity, a Researcher and Editor at the Onero Institute, and a member of the Club Golf team. I am also an avid sports fan, and being from New York I am quite passionate about my Yankees and Rangers.

I am looking forward to CD'ing the East side of this committee and meeting all of you. If you have any questions or just want to introduce yourself, feel free to email me at [jordanrosner@gwu.edu](mailto:jordanrosner@gwu.edu).

Best regards,  
Jordan Rosner

# *LETTER FROM THE JCC CRISIS DIRECTOR*

Hello Delegates,

My name is Mark Thomas-Patterson, and I will be serving as the Crisis Director of this committee. I am a senior majoring in History at the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences. My main area of interest is where international affairs and history intersect: the fascinating field of diplomatic history. In this regard, I have done research on topics ranging from the German Bundestag's debates over Southern Africa during the 1960s and 70 to American Conservatives' views of West Germany. I come from a town in Illinois near St. Louis, Missouri, whose main claim to fame was having an airship hangar during the 1930s.

Outside of CD'ing Model UN committees, I engage in a select number of interesting activities. I very much enjoy running and working out in general, specifically when listening to classical music. I am excited to be your crisis director for this JCC. As a student of history, I seek to make this committee a learning experience. I highly encourage you to do research on your own to come up with new paths for the committee. I look forward to seeing you surprise me with the creativity and depth of your research, and cannot wait to see how everything will play out by Sunday morning.

If you have any questions about how the backroom side of committee, or just want to introduce yourselves, please email me at:

[marktp44@gwmail.gwu.edu](mailto:marktp44@gwmail.gwu.edu).

Best,  
MTP

# *BACKGROUND GUIDE*

## Background

This committee will take place between 1949 and 1955, with the events that occur during the committee being based on real life events which occurred during this time period. Although this committee happens almost directly after the ending of the Second World War, there should be no mentions of Nazis or Nazi ideology during committee. Because it's impossible to have a committee of this nature without acknowledging the circumstances, references to the devastation of war and occupation after the war are to be allowed. Given the fact that this is also occurring in the era of Stalinism, the CD would ban any attempt to invoke antisemitism.

East Germany, better known as the German Democratic Republic (GDR) was founded on October 7th, 1949 as a sovereign nation after the unification of the three western occupation zones into the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), including the modern-day German states of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Brandenburg, Berlin, Sachsen, Sachsen-Anhalt, and Thüringen. At the conclusion of the Second World War, this area was occupied by the Soviet Union, and the Western territories were occupied by the British, American, and French.

The creation of East Germany dates back to the Yalta Conference in February 1945, where the US, UK and the Soviet Union divided Germany into occupation zones following the conclusion of World War II. The Potsdam Conference followed later in 1945 where each zone was officially recognized and the Soviet Military Administration in Germany took control of the Eastern zones. Berlin was split between all four powers and the eastern side of it was given to Poland and the Soviet Union, later consisting of many Eastern Europeans as population transfer was common among the region following the war. While the original intention of overall German policy was focused on demilitarizing the zone, economic differences caused East and West Germany to begin to drift apart.

## Possible Committee Topics Sections

### *Relationship with Communist Eastern Europe/Soviet Union?*

As a committee of delegates representing the recently formed East German government, one of the foremost issues that they will have to debate will be their relationship with the Soviet Union. I plan on speeding up Stalin's death so that there is more freedom for the delegates to craft their own policy than happened historically. How will the new government under Ulbricht seek to maintain the trust of Moscow? How will it seek to improve relations with Eastern Europe, many of whose leaders are fearful of a powerful Germany?

### *Government Structure*

Related to the first question, I plan on having Stalin's death occur earlier than historically occurred to give the delegates more freedom in choosing their path. Should the delegates aim to model Stalin's legacy word for word in an effort to resurrect German heavy industry? Or should they instead try to make a new form of socialism truly befitting the homeland of Marx? At the same time delegates will be forced to reckon with how much power they should give the people?

### *Relationship with the US and Western Europe*

Delegates will also be tasked with determining the new state's relationship with western Europe and the rest of the capitalist world. A major goal of this will be gaining international recognition, something that currently lacks from the non-communist world. The growing sentiment of European integration is a question that East Germany will have to answer. Should East Germany seek to improve relations with Western Europe with the hope of pulling it away from an alliance with the US? Should reunification be proposed? However, the outbreak of the Cold War means that there is also a high likelihood of tensions running high and chaos ensuing.

## Possible Solutions

Delegates will have a difficult task ahead of them. They start off with a smaller and economically weaker country than their western counterpart. At the same time, they have access to a large number of skilled workers as well as top of the intelligence agency trained by the NKVD. East Germany could either strive to use its resources to become a leading member of a Soviet-dominated communist bloc. It could create a united Eastern Europe that would serve as a buffer between the West and the USSR—a much larger version of Yugoslavia. At the same time, those in committee could seek to stray even farther from the Stalinist mold and adopt the policies of the West German SPD in an attempt to peacefully unify and create a united Europe. Domestically, the delegates in the committee will have to ensure that the East German economy is able to grow and not flounder—at it maintains the respect of its citizens.

## Positions

\*For ease reference, every committee head will be referred to as as Comrade\*

### *Co-Head of the SED-Wilhelm Pieck*

Wilhelm Pieck is the President of the German Democratic Republic in 1949. Unlike many of the other members of the committee, he had a long and impressive career as a member of the social democratic party in the pre World War I era, and was a friend of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht and had served as the head of the KPD (Communist Party of Germany) in exile. As such, Pieck commands deep respect not just in East Germany, but also in the Soviet Union, where he is one of the select few admired by Stalin.

### *Co-Head of the SED-Otto Grotewohl*

Otto Grotewohl was a member of the SPD who avoided Nazi persecution during the Second World War by living underground. Following elections postwar, it was found that the SPD was more popular than the KPD. As such Soviet occupation officials pushed for a merger between the two left-wing parties, in part to prevent a repeat of 1930s German politics which had seen an intra-left rift.

While Grotewohl is now subservient to the interests of the Communist Party, he still commands a great deal of respect from the East German populace, and as such, has the opportunity to serve as a challenger to the Soviets and their regime.

*Walter Ulbricht-Deputy Minister of the SED*

Walter Ulbricht is the Deputy Minister of the SED. During Weimar, he had a long history of activism within the KPD. Following the rise of Hitler, Ulbricht fled to Moscow, where he had been active in anti-Nazi emigre circles. While deputy minister of the SED, Ulbricht is ambitious and there are rumors that he will rise to a higher position within the SED government. Ulbricht looks to Stalin as a potential model for the development of East German socialism.

*Erich Honecker-Head of the FDJ Youth Group*

Erich Honecker was active in interwar Communist activities, and was later taken prisoner under the Nazi Regime. As leader of the Communist Youth Group the FDJ, Honecker has been able to amass a considerable amount of power for someone relatively young. Furthermore, he has close ties to Ulbricht and is committed to helping build Stalinist style Communism in Germany. Since Ulbricht was taken prisoner, however, he lacks the connections to Moscow that many of the exiled prisoners have. Furthermore, there are rumors circulating that he offered to serve in the Wehrmacht during the war in an attempt to get out of prison. It will be up to the delegate to prove his loyalty to the newfound Republic.

*Vladimir Semyonov-Soviet Ambassador to East Germany*

Vladimir Semyonov is the Soviet Ambassador to East Germany. Semyonov is still smarting from his attempts to force the Berlin Blockade to take control of West Berlin in 1948. As Ambassador, Semyonov is not merely concerned with making sure that Stalin's orders are carried out in Eastern Germany—he wants to make sure that there is as much room as possible for the Soviet version of Communism to expand. At the same time, he is concerned about the potential for the SED to waver in its stalwart alignment with Communism and perhaps pursue a less Stalinistic path towards Socialism.

*Wilhelm Zaisser-head of the Ministry for State Security*

Zaisser again has experienced the full might of the Soviet state, having undergone intelligence training there during the 1920s and 1930s. He also served as a brigadier general in the Republic Spanish Forces during the Spanish Civil War. Unsurprisingly, he has strong connections to the Soviet Union. Due to this experience, he is regarded by many as a strong contender for leadership in the newfound republic. At the same time, however, his promotion to head of the office came over that of Erik Mielke, who is angered by being passed over.

*Heinz Hoffman-head of the People's Police and development of independent East German armed forces.*

Hoffman is another member of the Soviet exile group in the SED. Hoffman served in Spain, where he was wounded multiple times in combat. During the Second World War, he interrogated German prisoners and received parachute training (which he had to stop due to problems with his injuries). He is viewed as a potential leader to head an East German armed forces given his experience with military training. At the same time, his experience gives him a degree of independence that makes him more willing to question the official party line.

*Rudolf Herrstadt-head of the official newspaper Neues Deutschland.*

As head of Neues Deutschland, Herrstadt controls a powerful lever through which he can influence policy in East Germany. The paper receives the highest quality material as it is recognized as a key part of the East German propaganda machine. Herrstadt fully supports Stalinist line being advocated by Ulbricht and his allies. This includes support for the Stalin Allee construction project in Berlin as well as the reshaping of the SED into a party mirroring the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, as well as harsh criticism of Western European Social Democracy. Due to his influence, he has developed strong ties with Moscow, and seems bound to hold a higher position in Soviet leadership in the future.

### *Hans Loch-Minister of Finance*

Hans Loch has a background in Thuringia during the Weimar era. Unlike many of the other delegates in committee, he was not involved in communist politics, having been part of the center-left German Democratic Party in Thuringia. Following the Second World War, Loch joined the East German Liberal Democratic Party, and became head of the Thuringian SED. Given his background, Loch is much more willing to experiment with more market based forms in order to improve the situation in the East. At the same time, however, Loch supports the USSR, and helps. While his liberal background is quite different from many others in the committee, his knowledge of economics is essential for East Germany to try to compete with the West.

### *George Dertinger- Minister of Foreign Affairs*

Dertinger served as the first chief of foreign affairs minister for the GDR. In the Weimar era, Dertinger served as a reporter and covered Federal politics. While he was never a member of a political party, he had connections to conservatives including Franz von Papen and continued to work as a journalist under the Nazi regime. Following 1945, Dertinger organized the East German CDU and became its general secretary from 1946-1949, and also established contacts with the Western German CDU as well. Given this role, he seeks to prevent the permanent division of Germany. He also has connections to members of the West German CDU, which makes him immensely important if Berlin wants to make any progress on the inner German question.

### *Chairman of the State Planning Commission-Heinrich Rau*

Rau was trained as a metal presser and saw service in World War I. Rau was involved in the Independent Social Democratic Party and the Spartacist movement following the end of the First World War, after which he joined the Communist Party of Germany. He was elected to the Prussian Parliament, where he sought to help out small farmers. Following Hitler's rise to power, Rau went to the USSR, where he helped organize international brigades during the Spanish Civil War and saw service in the conflict. Following the end of the conflict, Rau was interned

in France and later transferred over to Germany, where he was imprisoned in concentration camp Mauthausen. Following the collapse of Nazi Germany, Rau began serving as the economic minister for the province of Brandenburg, and was later promoted to head of the economic planning ministry in 1949. In this role, Rau was widely respected for his pragmatism and his ability to work efficiently, and was involved in setting up the first five year plan. He also aims to promote East German trade overseas.

### *Willi Stoph-Economics Ministry*

Willi Stoph is much younger than many of the other delegates in the committee and had his start serving in the youth organizations of the Weimar Republic. While he served in the German Army during the Second World War, he had ties to Communist resistance groups, and following his capture by Soviet soldiers in 1945, he began working in the Communist government. After quickly rising, he became head of the Central Committee for Economic Policy. However, many within the SED are expecting him to rise higher, and he is reportedly involved in creating an internal state security structure similar to the Soviet MGB.

### *Hans Reingruber-Minister for Transportation*

Hans Reingruber has a background in transport engineering, having worked as a university professor and high school teacher during the Second World War. He also has close connections to the city of Dresden, where he helped lead the city's reconstruction following the damage it sustained during the second world war. As minister for transportation, Reingruber has to ensure that transportation is being rebuilt-which will be essential for the success of the East German economy. Furthermore, unlike many other members of the committee who were involved in Communist politics in the prewar era, Reingruber's apoliticalness gives him flexibility in approaching the West.

### *Vasily Chuikov-Commander of Soviet Occupation Forces, Germany*

Vasily Chuikov is highly regarded throughout both East Germany and the wider world as the Hero of Stalingrad, where he commanded Soviet Troops in the city. He also accepted the surrender of Berlin. As a well respected commander in the Red Army, Chuikov has a few goals, one of which is making sure that his troops are well supplied and that stability is kept in East Germany. Furthermore, he wants to avoid getting recalled and feeling the wrath of Stalin, who is worried about the fame of military heroes challenging his control of the Kremlin. He is also widely respected in the West for his status as a war hero.

### *Minister of Culture-Johannes R. Becher*

Johannes Becher has a long history of involvement with German Communist politics, having joined the KPD in 1919. In 1928, he created the League of Proletarian-Revolutionary Writers, which sought to create literature that would glorify the Communist Party. Following the Nazi seizure of power, he fled to Moscow, where he became friends with the Hungarian philosopher Georgy Lukacs. In 1945, Becher returned to Berlin, where he founded and served as the first president of the Cultural League for the Renewal of a Democratic Germany, which sought to bring exiled writers back to East Germany. He also created the Reconstruction publishing house, which included the Weekly Newspaper Sonntag and magazine Aufbau. In 1946, he was made a member of the leading committee of the SED, and became heavily involved in the party's cultural affairs. This experience means that Becher has weight with many East German intellectuals, as well as connections to those throughout the Eastern Bloc.

### *Paul Wandel-Minister for Education*

Paul Wandel joined the Communist Youth Association in the interwar era, and worked his way up to be a member of the KPD on the city council in Mannheim. Following the Nazi seizure of power, Wandel fled to the USSR, where he received a doctorate at the Lenin School and became a personal secretary for Wilhelm Pieck. He later worked in the prestigious Marxist-Leninist Institute in Moscow. Upon his return to the GDR, he was made part of the presidium. These experiences give him ties to leadership in the USSR.

*Elli Schmidt-Chairwoman of the Democratic Women's League of Germany*

Elli Schmidt was from Berlin, where she had apprenticed as a dressmaker. In the late 1920s, she joined the Communist Party, and became involved in its Women's Department. While she was undergoing training in Moscow when the Nazis took power, she later returned to Germany to help organize Communists in the underground. As head of the DFD, she has a powerful position in the East German government and also led one of the most powerful organizations in the country. As such, she holds tremendous power in influencing the direction of East German politics.

*Otto Körting-Head of Peasants Mutual Aid Association*

Otto Körting began his career in the pre World War I SPD in Anhalt and became a successful leader of the local party in the Weimar era. After being arrested following the July plot against Hitler and spending time in Buchenwald, Körting became active in the SPD following the end of the Second World War. In 1945, he founded the Peasant's Mutual Aid Association, and helped carry out the incredibly successful land reform which took away land from aristocrats and gave them out to small farmers. This, in combination with the key role that agriculture has in improving the lives of East German citizens, makes him a tremendously influential figure. At the same time, given his background and his organization, Körting is much more skeptical of Stalinist efforts of collectivization.