

Reflections on the Opening of the Border...

**... by Heinz,
a West German teacher in his forties**
December 1989

I have been particularly struck by the pictures of tens of thousands of refugees from the GDR, the cordial welcomes at border crossings and railway stations, and by the moving scenes at the opening of the Berlin Wall and the Brandenburg Gate, all of which displayed a feeling of belonging together which nobody had thought possible.

Forty years of division and separation have not been able to prevent or diminish the wish for unification.

**... by Hendrik,
a 13-year-old grammar school student**
in West Germany
December 1989

My opinion on all this is that it is no solution that all people who have a bad standard of living in the GDR come over to us. I think it is better to start from scratch than to sweep the problems under the carpet. I think it is self-centered to say: "I go west, that is better for me!" One should remove the real problems and do it together. As far as unification is concerned I think that on the one hand it would be good if people from East and West could come together again but on the other hand we will have to pay a lot of money to help people in the GDR: housing, pollution of the environment, public buildings, etc.