

## PCI MEMBER'S KILLING ON GDR-FRG BORDER PROTESTED

### Government Protest

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[Text] Bonn, August 6 (ANSA)--The Italian Embassy in East Berlin has not yet been able to obtain any explanation from East German officials on the border incident yesterday that claimed the life of a thirty-eight year old Italian trucker.

Benito Corghi, married and the father of two children, was shot down yesterday by East German border police while crossing a check-point between East and West Germany by foot.

The incident is still clouded in mystery, although it appears certain that Corghi was returning to East Germany after having crossed the check-point into West Germany in order to pick up some identification papers that he had left behind when he was downed by the machine-gun fire of East German frontier guards.

The Italian Embassy in Bonn issued a statement today deploring the reticence of East German officials and their laconic description of the victim as "a sort who was walking over from West Germany."

Western journalistic sources have discovered that Corghi, an Italian Communist Party member, generally transported meat from Eastern Europe.

He was apparently employed by the "ARA: trade company of Reggio Emilia, which was probably linked to a communist meat cooperative.

The Italian truck driver was killed at dawn on Thursday but news of his death was not dispatched by the East German ADN press agency until last night. Upon learning of the incident, the Italian embassy lodged a formal protest and demanded a full explanation of the circumstances surrounding the case. It also called upon East Berlin authorities to facilitate the transport of the dead man back to Italy.

One of the many uncertainties surrounding the affair was the fact that Corghi was apparently called back to the check-point control after having successfully passed through a detailed first control. Another mystery was the telephone call that East German customs officials apparently made yesterday afternoon to their West German counterparts asking that Corghi be sent back to the border to pick up his documents. The call was made after the driver had been dead for several hours.

Corghi was the first non-German Western national killed by East German border police. The last analogous case dates back to June 1973, when the so-called East German border "Vopos" shot down a Hungarian man who was fleeing to the West via the East-West German border.