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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE
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TO Deputy Director (Intelligence)

SUBJECT: The Berlin Situation

There have been several reports in the past week that the Berlin sector borders will be sealed, thus abrogating Berlin's status as a Four-Power city. In this connection, according to the latest information, preparations reportedly have been made which would enable additional trains to operate from Potsdam to East Berlin using the outer ring, bypassing West Berlin.

According to an unconfirmed report East Berlin-Potsdam traffic is to be routed over the Berlin Outer Ring and the wooden S-Bahn stations near the sector border at Baumschulenweg and Friedrichstrasse are to be reactivated. This suggests that S-Bahn traffic through West Berlin is to be greatly restricted to permit customs checks at the wooden stations which were specifically designed for customs checking purposes when built two or three years ago. Steamdriven trains via Baumschulenweg to Potsdam over the Outer Ring could be used to carry passengers to Potsdam. This would restrict, but not eliminate S-Bahn traffic service in West Berlin.

Recent East German harrassments have included increased controls over interzonal trains consisting of thorough searches of cargoes, removal of a number of mail cars from trains, and confiscation of parcel post and freight shipments. Highway traffic has been subjected to delays and intensive searches of passengers and cargoes. Threats have been made by the East Germans that they may assume control over the air corridors to Berlin.

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Soviet interference with Allied traffic has been sporadic and inconsistent. Negotiations on new documentation procedures have been in progress for some time, but the Russians continue to raise objections to Allied procedures on a variety of pretexts.

The East Germans and the Russians have the capability to seal both the zonal and sector borders without prior warning if they should decide to take such a drastic step. An example was the East German regime's 13 October currency conversion with complete secrecy. In connection with the conversion, the regime sealed the Berlin sector borders, and stopped all autobahn traffic between West Germany and Berlin.

This series of harassments of Berlin has been undertaken by the East German regime apparently with the purpose of eroding the Allied position there and establishing East German authority over its zonal territory and East Berlin.

Huntington D. Sheldon

HUNTINGTON D. SHELDON
Assistant Director
Current Intelligence

Orig: GEN DIV
William McCall
ext. 3184

Dist: White House (General Goodpaster)
NSC (Mr. James Lay)
State Dept. (Mr. Hugh S. Cumming, Jr.)
ACSI (Maj. Gen. Robert A. Schow)
ACSI (Maj. Gen. Millard Lewis)
ONI (Adm. L. E. Frost)
JCS (Brig. Gen. Richard Collins)
OCB (Mr. Roman Mrozinski)
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