



June 27, 1953

**Report from Lieutenant-General F. Fedenko to
Lieutenant-General N.O. Pavlovskii**

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Summary:

Fedenko stated that the strikes and demonstrations in the GDR from 17 to 19 June 1953 had been prepared beforehand by the so-called Center of Strike Movement located in West Berlin.

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OPERATIONS DIVISION,
MAIN OPERATIONS ADMINISTRATION,
GENERAL STAFF OF THE SOVIET ARMY

Top Secret (Declassified)

To LIEUTENANT-GENERAL
Comrade PAVLOVSKII, N.O.

I am reporting the generalized data regarding the demonstrations and strikes in the German Democratic Republic.

The strikes and demonstrations in the GDR from 17 to 19 June 1953 had been prepared beforehand by the so-called Center of Strike Movement located in West Berlin and bore an organized and openly anti-government character. This is confirmed by the fact that the riots were simultaneously taking place in 95 cities and towns.

The major centers of strikes and demonstrations were Berlin, Magdeburg, Leipzig, Halle, and Erfurt.

In all, there were the following number of strikers in the GDR:

on 17 June - 132,169, including 81,000 in Berlin;

on 18 June - 218,700, including 20,000 in Berlin;

on 19 June - 46,884, (there were no strikers in Berlin).

In all, there was the following number of demonstrators:

on 17 June - 269,460, including 66,000 in Berlin;

There were minor demonstrations in some localities. There were no demonstrations in Berlin.

The organizers of riots and strikes intended to seize power and abolish the democratic regime in GDR.

The demonstrators, headed and instigated by provocateurs, broke into premises occupied by the SED and units of the Ministry of State Security of GDR as well as state-owned shops, released convicts from the prisons, attempted to capture some administrative buildings and important municipal facilities such as banks, post offices, telegraph offices, [and] power stations. There were some beatings and dispersals of the units of people's police and workers who went on with their work and did not want to take part in the strikes.

The attitude of [the East] German people towards the events of 17-19 June 1953 has varied. The most progressive part of German population has been outraged by the actions of the West Berlin provocateurs. Some Germans have been indifferent to the events. Others have welcomed them. A significant strata of society are satisfied with the most recent decisions of the GDR government aimed at improving the living standard of German people.

The bourgeois parties have responded very coldly to the events. The reactionary elements of the Christian Democratic Union have demanded that the current

government, as the one that made some mistakes, resign and let the Christian-Democratic Union become the governing party.

The occupation (US, British, French) forces in West Berlin have been on higher alert since 17 June 1953, guarding military facilities, government and administrative buildings as well as the borders with the Soviet sector of Berlin. The Commandant of the British sector of Berlin declared martial law on 17 June 1953.

No fresh military units were observed arriving in West Berlin from 17 to 24 June 1953.

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL F. FEDENKO

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