

May 29, 1953

**CIA Report Evaluating Vladimir Semyonov's
Appointment as Soviet High Commissioner for
Germany**

Citation:

"CIA Report Evaluating Vladimir Semyonov's Appointment as Soviet High Commissioner for Germany", May 29, 1953, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Central Intelligence Agency (FOIA Release). On file at the National Security Archive, "Soviet Flashpoints" Collection. <https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/111337>

Summary:

A CIA report presents an analysis of the dissolution of the Soviet Control Commission (SCC) and the return of V.S. Semyonov to Germany as the Soviet High Commissioner for Germany.

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Transcript - English

TOP SECRET

29 May 1953

East Germany

The dissolution of the Soviet Control Commission (SCC) in Germany and the return to Germany of V. S. Semenov [Semyonov] in the new post of Soviet High Commissioner may foreshadow a new Soviet move on the German question. Semenov's return, thirty-seven days after his replacement as Political Advisor to the Chairman of the SCC by P. Yudin, a career Party official and theoretician, suggests indecision in Soviet policy toward Germany during the period following Stalin's death. [4 lines excised]

Semenov's replacement by Yudin on 21 April left no prominent Soviet Foreign Ministry official in Germany at a time when the USSR was expressing interest in an improved international situation through big-power negotiations. His return to Germany as the top Soviet representative reveals the present primacy of the Soviet Foreign Ministry in German policy determination. It was announced on 1 May that Semenov had been elevated to the Collegium of the Soviet Foreign Ministry; the announcement of his return to Germany as High Commissioner was made by the Foreign Ministry. Further, the wording of the announcement creating the new office in Germany, which parallels the Allied High Commissioner's, indicates more Soviet attention to diplomatic protocol.

The extent of Yudin's actual control of East German policy during late April and May cannot be ascertained; however, the brief Yudin period on the SCC was characterized in East Germany by a marked intensification of the communization process and vituperative speeches by [Deputy] Premier Ulbricht in support of this program castigating, among other things, the historic role of the Socialist Party in Germany. The disparity between this uncompromising East German position and recent Soviet conciliatory gestures was manifest.

Although the dissolution of the SCC may be designed in part to soften West German public opinion and to popularize the Soviet-supported National Front with a view to the coming election in West Germany, it will probably have very little effect.