

September 10, 1953

CIA Information Report, 'Aftermath of the Riots'

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Summary:

A CIA report presents information about the aftermath of the East German Uprising and known plans and actions taken by the SED in terms of arrests and reconstruction efforts.

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Transcript - English

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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THE SOURCE EVALUATIONS IN THIS REPORT ARE DEFINITIVE.

THE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.

(FOR KEY SEE REVERSE)

Source: [Excised]

1. Up to early July 1953 no measures had been ordered to bring about the reduction in strength of the militarized police (KVP) which had been promised. On the other hand the discontinuance of defense building, which had also been announced several times, took place about the beginning of July, and no more work was done on Rügen Island, along the demarcation line with Poland, or at airfields; work continued where it was already in progress on barracks. The building materials which had been delivered to the various construction sites were "under requisition" and were not released for other uses.
2. The SED efforts to calm the populus after the June riots are reported to have had little success, although great numbers of meetings were held. The majority of the workers refrained from attending the meetings.
3. Of the persons arrested in connection with the riots, none had been released up to the first of July.
4. Aside from the reduction of certain work quotas, which were described as incapable of fulfillment, no changes were observed in the factories. The workers are said to have still been discontented, but with no signs of depression: indeed they are pictured as having a feeling of strength in the knowledge that it had required Soviet troops to force them back to work.
5. The planned reconstruction of the East German government seems more and more likely to be abandoned. As early as 25 June the SED (Central Committee?) held a discussion which was devoted to proposed changes amounting only to the creation of a new propaganda organ. A government commission designed to supervise all activities of the government will probably turn out to be a purely Soviet undertaking, although nominally under the chairmanship of Otto Grotewohl. Any changes in the Central Committee of the SED will be made at the next party convention scheduled for October 1953 with a pretense of democratic procedure. In no case will the SED cease to be the "state party."
6. Many members of the KVP were arrested for participating in the riots, and about 800 were given long prison sentences by Soviet courts; furthermore, there were at least 62 death sentences and 130 officers were reduced in rank for disobeying orders. The loss of production caused by the strikes is estimated at 200,000,000 marks by the East German government, but physical damage through fires and sabotage was probably much higher.