

September 25, 1953

Draft Instructions to Chuikov and Semyonov

Citation:

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Summary:

In March 1953, Moscow had declined Ulbricht's request for tightening up the sector border in Berlin, then the major loophole in the SED leadership's efforts to seal off East Germany. In the aftermath of the demonstrations and unrest in Berlin, the SED leadership apparently tried to reintroduce the idea of increased "border security" in Berlin. Eager to salvage whatever was left of its political position as a champion of German unity, Moscow again held such measures as politically "disadvantageous" and "unacceptable." Certainly, the Kremlin was also aware of the continued widespread resentment among the Berlin and GDR population which made any more restrictive measures a risky undertaking. Instead, the Soviets urged the SED to increase its "fight against hostile elements" in West Berlin—an issue that would become more and more the focus of Soviet attitude on Berlin.

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

TOP SECRET.

Draft of instructions
to cdes. Chuikov, Semenov

The proposals of the GDR leadership, also supported by you, for the establishment of border security along the sector boundary between East Berlin and West Berlin and the implementation of measures pertaining to the introduction of such security are politically disadvantageous and unacceptable.

You should meet with Grotewohl and Ulbricht and tactfully explain the following:

The implementation of these measures pertaining to West Berlin would place under suspicion the sincerity of the policies of the Soviet Government and the government of the GDR, which actively and consistently speak out for German unification and the conclusion of a peace treaty with Germany, and would bring serious harm to our political successes in West Germany, reached as a result of the implementation of this just policy that answers to the fundamental national interests of the German people.

In addition, the implementation of these measures in a city of several million would unavoidably break down the established order in city life, bring disorganization to the city economy, and would thereby negatively reflect on the interests of the inhabitants of not only East but also West Berlin, in turn causing anger and dissatisfaction toward the GDR government and the Soviet authorities in Germany, which would be taken advantage of by the three Western powers.

It should also be kept in mind that the establishment of border security along the sector boundary of East Berlin would only aggravate Soviet Union's relations with the USA, England and France, which would be a definite disadvantage to the countries in the camp of peace and democracy.

Concurrently with this, you should turn the GDR leadership's attention to the importance of intensifying the fight against hostile elements sent over from West Berlin and subverted within the GDR.

You should also recommend to the GDR leadership to spur the work of the SED and other social organizations in the Western sectors of Berlin.

Attachment to incoming # 0414
from 25/9 1953