Secret Report of the Soviet Military Leadership on the Events of June 17-19, 1953 (June 24, 1953)

Abstract

The Soviet military leadership in the GDR sent this secret report on the June 17th uprising to the government in Moscow. The report shows that the GDR government and the SED made serious political mistakes in the lead-up to the protests and failed to respond adequately to the population's growing discontent. During the uprising, the GDR leadership was largely immobilized. The initiative lay entirely with the Soviet military, which eventually succeeded in suppressing the uprising.

The report recommended various far-reaching measures in response to the events. The "New Course" set by the Soviet Union was to be pursued in the GDR with the utmost resolution. In the interest of increasing the GDR's economic growth and improving the supply situation for the population, the report also considered whether the Soviet Union should reduce or abolish the steep payments it was collecting from the GDR for reparations and occupation costs. In the political realm, the report advocated a clear separation of the responsibilities of the state and the party, as well as a strengthening of the East German parliament. It recommended that Walter Ulbricht leave the government and concentrate on his party functions. SED ranks were to be renewed at all levels. Finally, the report recommended stronger regulation of border traffic in Berlin.

Of these recommendations, it was above all the economic reforms that were implemented in the following months. Ulbricht and the SED retained their positions of power.

Source

Top Secret

Copy no. 1

To Comrade V.M. Molotov

To Comrade N.A. Bulganin

On the events of 17-19 June 1953 in Berlin and the GDR and certain conclusions from these events.

The following memorandum is a preliminary report on the events of 17-19 June in eastern Berlin and the GDR, on the reasons behind the disorders, and on several practical conclusions that can be drawn from the given events. As of yet, we have not been able to come to a thorough understanding of the underlying problems, since the investigation of the arrested participants of the disturbances is still at the beginning stage. The question of the events of 17 June, which constitute a great international provocation, prepared in advance by three Western states and their accomplices within the West German monopolistic capital, has not been thoroughly analyzed in this memorandum, partly as a result of a lack of factual material at the current time, and also due to the fact that the given issues have been already widely publicized in general terms in the Soviet press.

In any case, it is clear that 17 June was the so-called "X-day", that is, the day of open aggression against the democratic sector in GDR, by fascist and other organizations, working primarily under the leadership

of American intelligence.

The setting of "X-day" for 17 June as the day of aggression by the fascist elements was, it seems, due to the following reasons: a/the announcement by the CC SEPG [Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, known by the German acronym SED; hereafter, SED] Politburo on 9 June of this year, of the new political and economic direction of GDR, the enactment of which would have foiled any chances of the somewhat significant support for the fascist aggression by the populace of the GDR; b/ the American effort to stave off further growth, within a broad range of social circles in Western Europe, of opposition to the aggressive policies of USA, and its effort to stem the rise in Western Europe of a consensus with the Soviet Union and the accompanying movement towards peace on the basis of recognizing the Soviet Union's dominating influence in countries of people's democracy, including in the GDR. This is demonstrated by the coinciding aggression in both Czechoslovakia and GDR on the eve of the Bermuda conference of three Western states; c/ the Americans and the Adenauer-Ollenhauer clique took into account the disenchantment among the workers and other laborers with the situation in GDR, stemming from the errors made by the CC SED and the SCC [Soviet Control Commission] during their implementation of the policy of so-called "accelerated construction of socialism." Adenauer intended to exploit this disenchantment to strengthen his position before the upcoming Bundestag elections in August-September of this year; d/ clearly, the provocation of June 17 by the Western states and the government of Adenauer was intended to turn the Soviet Union away from its present course in its relations with GDR.

This memorandum contains three main parts: I. The course of events in the GDR on 17-19 June; II. The Economic problems facing the GDR in light of the events of 17-19 June; III. A few conclusions and recommendations.

I. The course of events in the GDR on 17-19 June.

1. On the eve of aggression.

Soon after the SED Party conference /July 1952/ and as a result of the new direction adopted at this conference towards "accelerating the construction of socialism" in the GDR, there began to arise in GDR serious and ever-increasing interruptions in the supply of goods of basic necessity, and in particular fat, meat, and sugar: in winter 1952-53 there were also serious interruptions in the supply of heat and electricity to the cities. This led to the rise of dissatisfaction, most notably within the less well-to-do sectors of the populace. In December and January-February 1952 there were isolated incidents of small and short-lived workers' strikes within a few enterprises; these, however, did not catch the attention of CC SED and SCC organs. In January-March 1953, as a part of the new "austerity regime" a number of privileges and preferential treatments, enjoyed by German workers since 1945, and in many cases earlier, were revoked with the active participation of SCC /the revocation of railroad passes, the changes in sick leave policy; the revocation of additional vacation time for sanatorium stays; the cut-backs in disability insurance for working women turned housewives and so on/. Further decreases in prices of consumer goods did not take place since spring of 1952. On the contrary, ration coupon prices for meat were increased by 10-15% under the pretext that the quality of meat products had increased. All this, as well as the increase in the price of jam and artificial honey /a product used widely by low-paid workers/, brought about dissatisfaction among workers, which was further aggravated by the party's and government's failure, following the 2nd SED conference, to take any steps to improve the situation of the bulk of workers, with the exception of the July 1952 wage increases for ITR, as well as for qualified workers in the five main branches of industry.

This was joined by the measures taken by the CC SED, as part of their mistaken policy of liquidating the petit and middle bourgeoisie of both city and country, which in some places took the rather ugly forms of insular administrative planning and mass repressions directed also at workers. In addition, the petit-

bourgeoisie's deprivation of ration coupons for fat, meat and sugar was particularly hurtful, given the absence of these products in the consumer market.

Functionaries of the SED and of the State apparatus, under the influence of the decision that emerged from the 2nd conference of the SED "on the construction of socialism, regardless of any difficulties," started to lose contact with the bulk of the populace and increasingly often to rely on management and administrative methods vis-a-vis members of SED, using the harmful methods widely employed within the CC SED Secretariat as a guide. In a number of instances, SED district and regional committees completely supplanted government organs, bringing under their authority police operations, arrests, the day-to-day administration of enterprises, etc.

All these, as well as other unhealthy developments, mentioned in the Soviet Government resolution of 6 June, were the prime causes of the disorders and agitations that took place in the GDR on 17-19 June.

Already, long before 17 June, in certain areas in the GDR there were sporadic worker strikes within a few enterprises, directed against increases in output norms, which were being instituted in accordance with government and isolated GDR ministries' directives, without the accompaniment of corresponding organizational and technical measures and political work among workers. The initiator and the primary author of the policy to increase output norms was [SED General Secretary Walter] Ulbricht, who, in a number of public speeches, rather actively stressed the importance of these measures. The CC SED did not pay attention to these short-lived strikes and only under heavy pressure from SCC announced, on 8 June, sloppily formulated directives on the inadmissibility of overreaching during the course of the campaign to raise output norms; this, however, was not accompanied by any organizational measures on the part of the party CC, and the announcement, for the most part, fell on deaf ears.

2. Events in Berlin on 16-19 June

On 14 June the state security organs of the GDR and the SED city committee of Berlin received information on plans to strike against the increase of productivity norms for construction workers in Berlin, in particular, on the Stalinallee construction site. However, they did not deem this information to be of any importance and did not report of this to the leadership of CC SED and SCC. The events that followed were completely unexpected to the leadership of GDR.

In the evening of 15 June the construction workers in Berlin announced categorical demands to repeal the increase in the productivity norms, of which they [the workers] were informed without any prior explanations through a withholding of corresponding sums from their paychecks. The Berlin organization of SED and the magistrate of East Berlin did not react in any way to these demands.

As came to be known later, agents from West Berlin and as yet unknown traitors from the GDR trade unions were actively involved in inciting the ranks of the workers.

In the morning of 16 June, 2,000 out of a total of 35,000-40,000 construction workers in Berlin struck in the city centre. They had a strike committee, which maintained ties with West Berlin. The construction workers decided to march to the GDR Statehouse, located on Leipzigerstrasse, right on the border between the Soviet sector and the Western sector of Berlin. The construction workers were joined on the way by large groups of West Berlin provocateurs, carrying placards directed against the government, with demands for the resignation of the GDR government that had made mistakes, as well as with demands for the lowering of prices by 40% in the commercial stores of KhO [Konsum-Handels-Organisation]. Crowds of onlookers also joined the demonstration, so that there were gathered some 5,000 people at the GDR Statehouse.

Having learned of the demonstration and of the workers' demands, the CC SED Politburo decided, at a session that was taking place at the time, to repeal the increase in the productivity norms and sent the

CC Politburo member [Heinrich] Rau to meet with the workers. However, Rau and other government members were not allowed to speak by the provocateurs, who drowned them out with shouts that [GDR Premier Otto] Grotewohl or [GDR President Wilhelm] Pieck should speak to the workers. The announcement concerning the repeal of the productivity norm increase was made over a loudspeaker. Upon hearing this announcement, the construction workers began to disperse, but the West Berlin provocateurs began to agitate them that they should not settle for simply a repeal of the increase in norms, but should demand a decrease in the old norms, as well as lower of prices in KhO, the resignation of the GDR government and the holding of all-German elections. The majority of construction workers were not taken up by these provocations and, after a short period of time, dispersed from the Statehouse. A small number of construction workers was led by the West Berlin provocateurs to nearby pubs and restaurants where they were served vodka while being encouraged towards new actions.

During the day of 16 June, there was a marked increase in the activity of small groups of provocateurs in various parts of East Berlin, carrying out anti-democratic agitation amongst the populace. In a number of enterprises in East Berlin and in GDR a slogan was sent forth from West Berlin calling for an immediate strike in solidarity with the construction workers of Berlin, as well as a slogan calling for a general strike on 17 June. In the evening of 16 June an extra edition of the evening paper "Dernbend" was published in West Berlin, with calls for a general strike in the Eastern zone of Germany. Solidarity strikes started to spread throughout a number of enterprises towards the day's end on 16 June.

In the evening of 16 June the situation in Berlin became more difficult. At 20.00 an extraordinary session of the most active members of the Berlin SED organizations was held, where, in the presence of the entire CC SED Politburo. Ulbricht and Grotewohl gave speeches on the new political course of the party and government. The mood of the active party members, according to members of the Politburo, was good. However, the GDR leadership said not a word of the strikes that were taking place in the city, and gave no indication as to what course the active party members ought to take in the near future. During this time crowds of West Berliners, consisting mostly of youth, began to arrive on city railcars and other means of transportation as well as on foot. A crowd of some 4,000-5,000 people moved in the direction of the Friedrichstadtpalast where a session of the active members of the party was taking place, thus creating a possible danger that the members of the CC SED Politburo could become hostages. At the same time, in the centre of the city at Stalinallee, a crowd of West Berliners numbering some 2,000 began throwing rocks at the monument of comr. Stalin, and calling for the overthrow of the GDR government. The were also shouts by isolated provocateurs, calling for the killing of Russians.

The GDR police, acting on their instructions, did not actively intervene in these events. The measures that we undertook (the dispatch of police reserves to the Friedrichstadtpalast), were enough to disperse the crowd that was moving in the direction of Friedrichstadtpalast, as well as the mob at Stalinallee. Following this, various groups of provocateurs and bandits, principally from West Berlin, took to rioting in various places in the Soviet sector of Berlin, overturning automobiles, looting shops and apartments of SED activists on Stalinallee, stopping street traffic, trying to break into the [natural] gas plant and other important city enterprises. These acts of outrage were carried out by groups that together numbered approximately 1,500-2,000 people.

Late in the evening of 16 June, we met with the leadership of CC SED (Grotewohl, Ulbricht, [secret police chief Wilhelm] Zaisser, [SED Politburo member Rudolf] Herrnstadt). We turned their attention to the seemingly serious nature of the disorders that had taken place in the city, pointing out that the slogans thrown out by the provocateurs at the end of the day calling for a general strike were finding a positive response within the enterprises of East Berlin and in some other places in GDR, and also pointing out that it is necessary to take the most decisive measures to maintain order in the city on 17 June, since one could expect a massive influx into East Berlin of provocateur bands from West Berlin. We informed our friends of our decision to send Soviet forces into Berlin. Our friends announced that they did not believe the situation so serious as to warrant such extraordinary measures, and that, in their opinion, one should

not expect serious unrest in the city on 17 June, though they did not rule out the possibility of a slight increase in unrests compared to 16 June. They evaluated the situation in GDR rather optimistically. We pointed out to the GDR leadership that it is necessary to be highly prepared and we proposed that documents of German barracks-based police in Potsdam and Oranienburg be called out, what they did by the morning of 17 June.

During the day of 16 June we sent a warning telegram to our regional representatives informing them of the unrest in Berlin and recommending that they take urgent preventive and preparatory steps to tackle unrest in the regions of GDR. We advised the friends /Ulbricht/ to also warn the regions about this through CC SED channels, but they could not think of anything better than to call the first secretaries of regional committees to Berlin on 17 June "for instruction," and as a result, during the unrest of 17 June the regions were left with practically no top party leaders.

At about 7 o'clock in the morning of 17 June, in East Berlin and in many cities in the western and southern parts of GDR, there took place simultaneous mass strikes that turned into demonstrations, which, in a number of cities / Berlin, Magdeburg, Herlitz, and others/, in turn became riots.

The provocateurs were not able to call out a general strike in Berlin. However, according to preliminary figures, on 17 June 80,000 workers, out of a total number of 200,000 did strike. In addition, the largest enterprises participated in the strike: the Stalin electrical machinery factory, the "Bergman-Borzig" factory, the Soviet enterprises of "Siemens-Planya," cable factories, and others.

After stopping work, many workers proceeded in columns towards the city centre to Strausberger Platz, where, the day before, the provocateurs called a general city meeting. At 7:30 about 10,000 people gathered at this plaza, who proceeded in separate columns towards the GDR Statehouse, carrying banners "Down with the government," "We demand a decrease of norms," "We demand a decrease of prices at KhO by 40%," "We demand free elections."

At 9 in the morning a crowd of 30,000 people gathered outside the GDR Statehouse, a significant part of which was made up of West Berlin residents, who were the main organizers of the provocations.

The insurgents were able to break through the line of steadfast policemen, who did not use weapons during this time, and after throwing rocks at them, they broke into the Statehouse where a pogrom was committed. The police security force of the Statehouse was reinforced and at the time of the attack numbered 500 men The Statehouse was recaptured only upon the arrival of the Soviet forces, in concert with which by the way, the German police, having been partially beaten by the crowd, actively participated in the reestablishment of order.

At the same time, in the region of Alexanderplatz (the centre of Berlin) large columns of demonstrators came together from the regions of Pankow, Weissensee, and Köpenick (the Soviet sector of Berlin).

The crowds of demonstrators, with the active participation of provocateurs, besieged the CC SED building, the Berlin Polizeipräsidium, the main telegraph, the city trade-union administration and other buildings. At the Alexanderplatz and in the Pankow region, the demonstrators built barricades and obstructions. Windows were smashed in a number of GDR government buildings.

At Potsdamer Platz, on the sector border, the insurgents had an exchange of fire with the people's police and 7 policemen were disarmed.

The provocateurs also organized a pogrom of the bookstore "International book" and of the central department store "KhO" on Alexanderplatz, set fire to the already half-empty department store Kolumbushaus on Potsdamer Platz, looted the cinema "Defa" and a number of other public buildings. There was also looting of stores in other parts of the city.

The crowds of insurgents moved through the city, chanting hostile slogans and singing fascist songs. Numerous groups of provocateurs penetrated through to the city enterprises, to call workers to strike. Most importantly, they tried to stop the main city electrostation Klingenberg, as well as a second large electrostation Rummelsburg and a [natural] gas plant. However, the workers of these enterprises showed a high degree of consciousness and organization, having established their picket lines around the plant buildings, thus not allowing the provocateurs through.

Detachments of the people's police tried everywhere to put up resistance against the bandits and the hooligans, however, as a result of their small numbers and inadequate weapons, they were to a great extent overrun and dispersed.

The number of police in Berlin on hand was completely inadequate for putting down more or less serious unrest (a total of 4,940 men, not counting the border police). An analogous situation took place in other large cities in GDR.

During the course of the day, reinforcements from Potsdam, Frankfurt-on-Oder and other population centers of the Republic, numbering 2,000 men in total, were brought into Berlin. In addition, certain units of the German barracks-based police, numbering 2,200 men, were also brought in. Of all of these, 3,660 were stationed along the border with West Berlin, the crossing of which was prohibited for both vehicles and pedestrians by the order of Soviet military commanders.

While our forces were not undertaking any active steps to stop the unrest, the demonstrators were able to resist the people's and the barracks-based police, which created a threat of a takeover of government buildings and other important places by the insurgents. In view of this, at around 10:30 a.m. we evacuated the members of the CC SED Politburo and several members of the GDR government to the buildings of the Supreme Commissar of the USSR in Germany, located in Karlshorst.

In view of the unrest that had taken place in Berlin, in the morning of 17 June the city committee of SED showed confusion. The city committee showed practically no leadership to the regional committees. At 10 o'clock in the morning the members of the SED city committee secretariat, including the first secretary Endretsky, headed for the most important city enterprises so as to prevent any strikes from taking place there. The staff of the Central Soviet of the SNM [Union of German Youth], the regional party committees and 200 members of the city party school were also sent to the city enterprises. Although the active members were able to avert strikes in a number of enterprises, their expedition to the enterprises during the time of the unfolding of street unrest, as well as their failure to call on the party members to go to the streets in order to defend the democratic government, resulted in [a situation such] that the central streets of the city were esentially [sic!] in the hands of the better organized opposition. While, it is true that in a number of places SED activists bravely joined in hand-to-hand skirmishes with the insurgents, they were beaten by the mob.

Due to these reasons, the control of the situation in the city was essentially passed to the hands of Soviet organs. The second-rank members remaining in the SED city committee were, for the most part, occupied in gathering information by request of the CC.

In the SED city committee, the channels of receiving communiqués from places were badly organized, as a result of which, the city committee was not informed of the actual situation in the enterprises. At 12 o'clock the members of the secretariat of the city committee returned to the city committee building and until 3 o'clock were busy with "formulating arguments" of propaganda for the populace. In addition, the city committee took the necessary measures to insure the continuous operation of the electrostation, water supply, city transport, [natural] gas plants, and the trade network.

The Presidium of the people's police of Berlin (V. Schmidt) managed rather effectively the people's

police, which functioned smoothly.

The main role in the dispersion of the demonstrations and in the liquidation of street unrest in Berlin was played by the Soviet forces. It should be noted that in the beginning the insurgents acted rather provocatively against our troops — they climbed on top of tanks, threw rocks at the troops, and so on. At the Polizeipräsidium building our forces opened fire against the insurgents. This seemed to have a highly sobering effect, after which unrest in the city quickly abated. By the evening order was established in the city.

Overall, approximately 66,000 people, including some 10,000 West Berliners, took part in the street demonstrations in East Berlin on 17 June. In addition to the workers, the demonstration included artisans, merchants, and other members of the petit bourgeoisie.

During the course of the day on 17 June, there appeared over various parts of the Soviet sector of Berlin American planes, from which were dropped leaflets containing calls to the population to participate in the strikes and the unrest, and to work to overthrow the Government of GDR. On the sector border mobile loudspeakers appeared on several occasions over which the insurgents were given orders. After the deployment of guards on the sector border, several large groups of provocateurs and hooligans from West Berlin broke through to the Soviet sector. In the streets Braunekstrasse and Bernauerstrasse, these bands started an exchange of fire with the German police, as a result of which there were casualties.

In the evening of 17 June, the American radio station RIAS in its transmissions recommended that the insurgents submit to the orders of Soviet officials, and not clash with Soviet forces.

On 18 June in Berlin, under the presence of the military situation, many factories continued to strike. In a number of places there were attempts to resume the demonstrations and to form picket lines of strikers, which were suppressed by the decisive actions of the German police and, in part, by the Soviet forces, which secured all points of importance in the eastern part of the city. In the relations between the populace and the Soviet military there was [a] significant feeling of alienation; in fact, not until 22 June did the party organize any campaign to reestablish friendly ties between the populace and our military.

By 19-20 June the strikes in Berlin began to decline sharply and normalcy was established. However, amidst the striking workers in the enterprises there could be observed a feeling of bitterness. There were numerous instances of enemy agents and provocateurs working in the enterprises. SED and SNM continued to act irresolutely and weakly, mostly making use of lower functionaries. The SED city committee, as well as the CC SED, began to send its staff to the factories on a large scale on 19 June, though even on that day, in accordance with the directives of Ulbricht, they limited themselves to holding small meetings, afraid that in large worker meetings the party functionaries would encounter opposition and would be whistled [booed]. On 19 June we called the entire SED city committee of Berlin to meet with us, and in no uncertain terms made clear to them that there must be an immediate and unswerving move to send all party forces on hand in Berlin to the factories, so as to assure a corresponding change in the mood of the workers.

[Ed. note: Other sections of Part I of the report examined "The situation in other cities in GDR on 17-19 June"; "The demonstrators' and strikers' slogans and demands"; "The workers' mood"; "The behavior of other groups of people. The Intelligentsia. The Rural Areas. The Church"; and "The Party. Party apparatus. Party bloc. Social Organizations." Part II examined "The Economic Problems Facing the GDR in Light of the Events of 17-19 June."]

III. A few conclusions and recommendations

With regard to the above-stated, we think it appropriate to undertake the following measures in order to correct the situation in the GDR:

1. To firmly and consistently carry out the new political course, as outlined in the Soviet Government Resolutions of 6 June 1953 on the normalization of the political situation in the GDR.

2. To undertake immediate steps to radically improve the food supply for the population of the GDR by providing it with corresponding aid from Soviet Union and other people's democratic countries. With regard to this, one should bear in mind that so far the forms of assistance, including the additional shipments ordered by the Soviet Government on 24 June, have been limited to food rations and to minimal commercial trade in the "KhO" stores during the 3rd quarter of this year.

3. In order to create a stable economy in the Republic and to improve the standard of living of the citizens of the GDR so as to match that of the citizens of West Germany, to examine the question of discontinuing the shipment of goods in the form of reparations to the Soviet Union and Poland and discontinuing the shipment of goods to USSR as payment for currently operating Soviet enterprises in the GDR, as of the second half of 1953, so as to use these goods to improve GDR foreign trade and to provide for the domestic needs of the Republic.

To continue the reparation payments in [deutsch] marks, in amounts that would ensure a normal activity of A/O "Vismut".

4. To examine the question of sharply reducing the GDR's financial responsibility in the maintenance of Soviet occupation forces in Germany.

5. To transfer, on favorable terms, the ownership of all remaining Soviet industrial, trade and transport enterprises, including the bank and the Black Sea-Baltic Insurance Company, to the GDR, using the payment received for these enterprises primarily as future expenditures made by the Soviet Union through A/O "Vismut".

6. To determine the exchange rate between the GDR mark and the ruble in financial dealings between the USSR and GDR, so as to reflect the actual buying power of the mark and the ruble.

7. To make it the primary goal of CC SED and the Government of the GDR to seriously improve the living standards of workers in public and private enterprises of the GDR, as well as to undertake wide-ranging political action among workers, focusing on improving their relations with the party.

8. In light of the recent misdirection of CC SED in their methods of governing by taking over government and administrative organs, [it is necessary] clearly to separate the functions of the Government of the GDR and the CC SED, giving the CC SED the power of oversight on solely the most important questions of the State and its citizenry. To focus the attention of CC SED on carrying out political campaigns among the populace and on smoothening out intra-party operations by introducing broader intra-party democracy, criticism, and self-criticism from top to bottom.

Correspondingly, it is necessary:

a) to reorganize the Government of the GDR with the goal of strengthening and reducing the size of government apparatus both centrally and at its branches, by consolidating a number of scattered ministries and departments into larger ministries and departments;

b) to liquidate the Ministry of State Security [KGB] of the GDR, by merging into the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the GDR;

c) to relieve comr. Ulbricht of his duties as deputy prime minister of the GDR, so as to enable him to concentrate his attention on work within the CC SED;

d) to elevate the role of the Chamber of the People to that of an active Parliament of the Republic, that would debate and legislate the laws of the Republic, establish commissions, debate inquiries and demands voiced by its deputies, etc.

To forbid the passage of any resolutions, that are in effect laws, bypassing the Chamber of the People of the GDR;

e) to call an extraordinary session of the Chamber of the People of the GDR, as a vehicle for the Government of the GDR to report on its work as well as on its past mistakes, and afterward reorganizing the ranks of the Government, letting go the less capable and less popular ministers, and bringing in the more popular persons to ministerial positions, drawing more widely from among representatives of other parties.

9. To restrict the functions of the Secretariat of CC SED to tasks such as the supervision of the execution of CC Politburo decisions, organizational questions, selection of personnel, placement and education of personnel, as well as to questions of party related political campaigns among the masses. To reorganize the Secretariat CC with the goal of bringing into its ranks new personnel, including the intelligentsia. To reduce the number of Secretariat members from 11 persons to 5 persons.

To liquidate the currently existing position of General Secretary of CC SED, replacing it with several CC Secretarial posts.

10. To hold the IV Party Convention of SED in the next 3-4 months, in which the questions of the party's role in the establishment of the new direction would be discussed. During this convention to seriously renew the ranks of the CC, so as to include a greater number of younger personnel, who have excelled in their work with the working classes, working peasants, as well as the intelligentsia. To radically renew the ranks of the CC SED Politburo, purging it of members who do not demonstrate the necessary capabilities required of leaders of the party and of the State in these times.

11. To carry out a special investigation of the work of the professional unions and to make decisive changes in the ranks of the leaders of corresponding organs, as well as to introduce new regulations that would radically change the role of the professional unions in step with the requirements of the new direction.

12. To reexamine the ranks, the organization and the distribution of the people's police of the GDR, to arm it with modern weapons, including armored transports and armored vehicles, and with communications equipment, as well as to create, drawing from the ranks of current detachments of barracks-based police, mobile detachments of sufficient readiness and strength as to be able to maintain order and peace in the Republic without the help of the Soviet military.

To reorganize the currently existing army corpus of the GDR into a national guard-type army, along the lines of the one existing in Western Germany.

13. To give the SNM organization the character of a broad-based non-party organization of youth, using the experience of earlier German youth organizations. To make changes in the leadership ranks of the Central Soviet of the Union of German Youth (SNM).

14. To change the character of the diplomatic delegation in the Soviet Union from the GDR, and their assignments. To strengthen cultural and technical ties between the GDR and the Soviet Union. To reduce vacations and sanatorium trips of SED functionaries to the Soviet Union and other countries, and increase the vacations and sanatorium trips of prominent members of German intelligentsia, workers, members of other parties, as well as tourists.

15. In order to raise the international prestige of the GDR and the authority of the GDR government in the eyes of the German populace, to have the new government, chosen by the Chamber of the People, make an official visit to Moscow.

16. After the changes in the military situation in East Berlin, to hold it unwise to continue to maintain the border of East Berlin with West Berlin open, until the commandants of West Berlin take the necessary steps to guarantee that agents and provocateurs, who carry out subversive activities against GDR in East Berlin, are no longer sent from West Berlin.

With regard to this, to establish, in the immediate future, a system of permanent and temporary visas to allow the crossing of the border between East and West Berlin, however, making sure not to create unnecessary difficulties and, in general, considering the interests of the German population.

17. To entrust the Commanding Group of Soviet occupational forces in Germany to improve the distribution of Soviet forces, keeping in mind the lessons learned during the events of 17 June, and, in particular, to see that the necessary number of tank detachments are quartered in Berlin.

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24 June 1953

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