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RADIO PROPAGANDA REPORT

SOVIET AND EAST GERMAN PROPAGANDA ON THE STATUS OF BERLIN

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PROPAGANDA REPORT
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SOVIET AND EAST GERMAN PROPAGANDA ON THE STATUS OF BERLIN

Soviet Propagandists Avoid Commitment: The USSR's delegation of jurisdiction over East Berlin to the GDR and its effect on four-power agreements regarding Berlin have been ignored in Soviet propaganda. Soviet leaders visiting East Berlin have referred to it as the capital of the GDR, but propagandists have rarely repeated and never discussed this claim. Although the subject of Berlin had been largely avoided in earlier Soviet propaganda on Germany--it was rarely mentioned even in October 1949's voluminous material on the formation of the GDR--the current reluctance to propagandize East Berlin as the East German capital is particularly striking in the midst of the campaign dating from the 20 September Soviet-GDR treaty to portray the GDR in other respects as a sovereign, independent state.

Soviet propaganda has similarly not echoed the East Germans in characterizing West Berlin as a spearhead of NATO militarism and explicitly charging that the Western Powers have invalidated the four-power arrangements by concluding the Paris Agreements.

Illustrative of Moscow's almost complete silence on Berlin is its failure either to report or to comment on:

1. Major General Dibrova's 29 November rejection of the U.S. protest against the East Berlin authorities' detention of two American congressmen on the grounds that East German law, rather than Soviet military regulations, was applicable;
2. The 9 December GDR announcement, apparently resulting from an agreement with the USSR, that the GDR frontier police had assumed full responsibility for guarding and controlling the sector boundaries in Berlin;
3. The detention in early December by East Berlin authorities of two American soldiers charged with beating a nightclub entertainer.

The tacit acknowledgment, by excision of the Berlin question from propaganda, of an inconsistency between the USSR's position on the GDR and its stand on the German capital would be consonant with a Soviet decision to avoid any immediate action forcing a showdown on the issue of four-power control.

East Germans Challenge Four-Power Privileges but Acknowledge Two Cities: GDR officials and propagandists, unaffected by Soviet reticence, press their claims to sole jurisdiction in East Berlin and reiterate that the Western Powers have invalidated four-power jurisdiction by conclusion of the Paris Agreements. They do not, however, explicitly challenge Western rights in West Berlin, and they continue to acknowledge the existence of two Berlins, the "democratic sector" and the "NATO bridgehead," in contrasting the social and economic progress of the one with the military and economic exploitation of the other.

The East Germans draw no distinction between the nature or urgency of their aim for Berlin and that for all of Germany--the creation of the "democratic" prerequisites for unity. The restoration of a unified Berlin is promised only after fulfillment of these prerequisites in West Germany makes possible the reunification of all of Germany. The specific changes in West Berlin necessary for reestablishing a unified city were outlined by Mayor Ebert on 30 November: eliminating West Berlin as a military base, breaking the power

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of the "militarists," withdrawal of occupation troops, confiscating the property of war criminals and Nazis, socialization of the big combines, a purge of the municipal administration, and a democratic school reform. Other spokesmen have added to this list the smashing of agent centers and militaristic organizations and the development of the class struggle.

GDR leaders call for united working-class action in West Berlin, including extraparliamentary action in the plants and offices and on the streets, to force the reorientation of government policy toward these reforms.

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