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TRANSPORT ROUTES OF GDR SHIPMENTS TO THE EASTBerliner Morgenpost,
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By correspondent

The main gateway of the GDR eastward to the Soviet Union is at Frankfurt/Oder. After World War II, this railroad junction was turned, almost overnight, into the most important export center of the GDR. Just recently, the Frankfurt classification yard has been expanded to be the largest yard in the GDR. It has modern centralized traffic control towers and other extensive mechanical facilities.

The second railway gate to the East is at Guben. Within a short time, Guben's facilities will equal those of Frankfurt/Oder. Within 2 years, the most modern railroad shop of the GDR is to be built at Guben, with 120 locomotives based there. The sum of 20 million Deutsche marks (East) has been provided for this project. At present, the transit locomotives going to the Soviet Union via Guben are based at the Cottbus shop. Cottbus has a classification yard with 33 tracks and a capacity of 2,000 freight cars. It is about half the size of the Frankfurt/Oder yards, but still large enough to dispatch up to ten freight trains daily to the Soviet Union.

Together with the Cottbus yard, the new Guben classification yard, which, because of its size, will not be located at the site of the railroad station, will probably exceed the capacity of Frankfurt/Oder by a considerable margin. The Guben-Cottbus line so far is still single-tracked, but intensive work is going on to complete the second track. The double-track operation of the line is to start before the end of this year. The second track is being laid with rails supplied by Czechoslovakia and Belgium.

The crossings of Horka, Goerlitz, and Forst serve only for transports to Poland. Kostrzyn and Szczecin are of secondary importance, dispatching reparations shipments about three times a day.

The trains routed via Kostrzyn go to Torun and Olsztyn, with Korsz as their destination. There the goods are taken over by the Russians, who then route them to the northern part of the Soviet Union, with Leningrad as the center. The Cottbus brigades usually take the trains via Guben, Krosno, Radom, and Lublin to Jagodzin, where the Russians take over. They then transport the German products via Kovel' to the Ukraine. The heaviest traffic of trains to the Soviet Union is on the line Frankfurt/Oder-Poznan-Warsaw-Terespol' to Brest-Litovsk. The lines from Frankfurt/Oder to Terespol' and Czeremcha are double-tracked. East of these points they are single-tracked, but fitted for both the standard gauge and the Russian broad gauge.

Last year, the Frankfurt-Brest-Litovsk line and its continuation to the interior of the Soviet Union carried 11,200 trains. In 1951, the number of trains was 17,800; in 1950, 21,200; and in 1949, 16,400. However, 25 percent of these were empty trains sent East for ore transports to Fuerstenberg and for other shipments from the Soviet Union.

During the summer of 1953, the total number of trains with reparations shipments sent via Poland to the Soviet Union on all lines amounted to an average of 20 per day. The most easily distinguishable goods transported on open cars were cable drums, rolling-mill products, small locomotives, automobiles, trucks, bridge parts, cranes, castings, and large enameled containers. The boxcars are usually loaded with sugar. During the sugar campaign (November 1952-February 1953), 3 sugar transports, each of 1,300 tons were dispatched as "barter shipments." In general, the uranium-ore trains from Sachsen and Thueringen are also routed via Frankfurt/Oder.

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