

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

This Document contains information affecting the National Defense of the United States, within the meaning of Title 18, Sections 793 and 794, of the U.S. Code, as amended. Its transmission or revelation of its contents to or receipt by an unauthorized person is prohibited by law. The reproduction of this form is prohibited.

SECRET/CONTROL - U.S. OFFICIALS ONLY
SECURITY INFORMATION

25X1

COUNTRY	East Germany	REPORT	
SUBJECT	Actions against the Church	DATE DISTR.	19 May 1953
		NO. OF PAGES	2
DATE OF INFO.		REQUIREMENT NO.	RD
PLACE ACQUIRED		REFERENCES	25X1

This is UNEVALUATED
Information

THE SOURCE EVALUATIONS IN THIS REPORT ARE DEFINITIVE.
THE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.
(FOR KEY SEE REVERSE)

25X1

1. The following Protestant clergymen have been arrested in East Germany: Pastor Gestrich (fnu), of Brandenburg, and Youth Pastor Schumann (fnu) of Zwickau, Saxony, who have been sentenced to 12 years and six years imprisonment respectively, for alleged "Boykotthetze"; Student Pastor Hamel (fnu) of Halle; Pastor Winterhaber (fnu), of Hohenauen bei Rathenow (district secretary of the Ecumenical movement); Youth Pastor Reinhold George, of the Markenkirche in East Berlin; professor of theology Abend (fnu), of the University of Halle; Pastor Althausen and an unnamed student of theology of the Humboldt University; and the synod member Kurt Grünbaum, Minister Muschke's referee for church matters.
2. The free movement of clergymen between the eastern zone and East Berlin has been severely restricted since late January. Two east-zone pastors who officiate in East Berlin by nomination of the church administration, under police supervision, have been unable to obtain entry permits from a magistrate.
3. Great difficulties are created for the Evangelical Church in administrative matters, especially in the collection of church dues. Public collections formerly could be taken four times a year, but now only twice a year. This means a loss of 600,000 to 800,000 DM for the church. The deduction of church dues from wages also is no longer allowed. It is feared that the church collections may be confiscated, as they were under the Third Reich, and diverted to unknown state or party purposes.
4. The youthful community is subjected to the greatest pressure. Its members are interrogated individually and harassed, and a good many arrests have been made. The main ground of conflict here appears to be that these members are unwilling to let themselves be enrolled in the national army. The aim of the east-zone authorities is to eliminate the influence of the church entirely, because they have realized that they will not be able to misuse it as a state church.
5. The attack is directed against the Evangelical Church in the first instance because the Catholic Church has a mass of members and is more powerful in the east zone. It is expected, however, that all attacks on the Catholic Church will increase.

SECRET/CONTROL - U.S. OFFICIALS ONLY

SECRET/CONTROL - U.S. OFFICIALS ONLY

STATE	ARMY	NAVY	AIR	FBI	AEC						
-------	------	------	-----	-----	-----	--	--	--	--	--	--

(Note: Washington Distribution Indicated By "X". Field Distribution By "##")

25 YEAR
RE-REVIEW

SECRET/CONTROL - U.S. OFFICIALS ONLY

25X1

-2-

5. The attack is directed against the Evangelical Church in the first instance because the Catholic Church has a much smaller membership than the Evangelical in the Eastern Zone. It is expected, however, that an attack on the Catholic Church will commence soon.

SECRET/CONTROL - U.S. OFFICIALS ONLY