

C-O-N-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-L

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT

INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO.

COUNTRY East Germany

SUBJECT University of Halle

DATE DISTR. 8 July 1955

NO. OF PAGES 6

**PLACE
ACQUIRED**

NO. OF ENCLS.
(LISTED BELOW)

25X1

DATE OF INFO.

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

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1. In the spring of 1954, lectures at Halle University were attended by some 3,000 to 3,200 students, 800 to 1,200 of ~~them~~ belonged to the seecalled Arbeiter- und Bauernfakultaet (ABF) (Workers' and Farmers' Faculty).
2. The majority of the students took medicine, natural sciences, and philology. The GDR is making efforts to intensify the study of physics and chemistry, and a 100 percent increase in the mentioned faculties is to be reached by late 1955 in order to overcome the lack of scientists in these fields. All efforts are being made to create a stock of staunch Communist scientists pursuing the same goal of making the GDR independent Party officials repeatedly stated that there are no intentions to "export" scientists, since sufficient posts are available or will be made available.

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The students are believed to constitute a cornerstone against (sic) Communism. As is the case with teachers at high schools and universities, the students suffer from the lack of spiritual freedom and it affects their studies. The anti-Communist trend among the students, on the one hand, is a reaction to the Communist yoke and, on the other, is the result of family tradition and education.

3. Geology is taught as part of the natural sciences faculty. Between 1950 and 1953, an average of 60 to 80 students took geology. Ten to 12 percent of the students belonged to the GDR. The students had received sufficient high-school training, and university training obtained outstanding results. It was felt a drawback that practical training excursions to the mountains and other GDR areas were no longer taken, and that no entrance permits to Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Rumania, were granted. The available stock of maps was adequate. Plane-table sheets were delivered as secret matter by the Survey Department of the Ministry of the Interior. These sheets were supplied without the marginal data.
4. [redacted] philologists had to take courses in one major subject, and in two minor subjects as well as in philology,

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prior to 1949. After this date, only courses in one major, one minor and pedagogy were obligatory.

Attendance at the different courses varied greatly. Anglo-Saxon and Romance languages were relatively little attended since English is not taught at high school and French is optional. In both languages, the chances for employment in the GDR are rather poor. German language is taken by many students, especially ABF students who want to become high-school teachers.

Great importance is attributed to modern history in teaching "dialectic and historical materialism", and such lectures are chiefly attended by Communist students. Oriental studies are taken by only a few students. Hebrew-language courses are attended by students of divinity. The study of early history is promising and the courses are well attended.

Students as well as teachers are forced to take part in political activities if they do not want to spoil their chances for future employment in public services, at museums, etc.

Sports are taken by a great number of students, particularly by students without high-school diplomas, who are former workmen and who wish to become sports teachers. There is great demand for sports teachers at GDR schools, and at political and military organizations.

The faculty of pedagogy was disbanded and its functions are to be taken over by special institutes for the training of teachers.

5. The medical faculty included numerous top-flight experts. The number of medical students was very high. ABF students were rare among them. Latin was no longer obligatory for medical study.

The medical study extended over 11 semesters followed by two years internship and, in some cases, specialist training.

The newly constituted dentistry course was attended equally by ABF students and high-school graduates.

6. Agricultural courses were chiefly attended by ABF students. The body of teachers and many of the students were considered reactionary. Docents and students were repeatedly arrested, in particular after the 17th June events in 1953.

A veterinary department was incorporated in the faculty of agriculture. A faculty of veterinary medicine is located in Leipzig.

7. Attendance at the juridical faculty was poor and the majority of students were ABF members. Most of the students considered the juridical courses as being of substandard quality, for most of the docents were under 30 years of age and were former ABF students who had never presented a "Habilitationsschrift" (special thesis required to become eligible as a university teacher), and were fanatic Reds.

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Frau Professor Schubart-Finketscher is the only high-grade jurist but, naturally, she could not alter the strict Communist course. For the above-mentioned reasons, juridical studies are chiefly attended by Communist students for reasons of expediency. These students would hardly be capable of graduating in other fields.

8. The faculty of economic sciences was also red-dominated and the lectures were almost exclusively attended by ABF students.
9. The faculty of theology had its normal number of chairholders and attendants. Teachers as well as students were notorious reactionaries. ABF students were rare. In spite of its known anti-Communist policies, this faculty was rated as priority study. The students received an 20 DMO extra appropriation in addition to their basic scholarship. No hindrance of teachers or students was to be noted.
10. Doctor theses are to be submitted after graduation. The printing of the theses as well as of other scientific papers is subject to approval by the Ministry of the Interior.

Academic social gatherings are mostly organized by the FDJ. Nevertheless, the spiritual level of these gatherings is still a high one. The systematic isolation from all foreign institutions is deeply felt in many scientific fields. A great deal of effort is being exerted to compensate for the lack of modern practice by intensifying theoretical training, although the documents cannot be deceived about the negative results of all these attempts. This has become most clear in the field of natural sciences.

The faculty of philology pushes political training, although their scientific standard is deteriorating accordingly. For example, modern writers such as André Gide are completely unknown to the students, while Soviet scientists and writers are made popular. The teachers make efforts to keep out of politics but have to act carefully in order to avoid personal hazards.

11. The students, including the ABF students, belong to the 18-to-20 years age group. Officially 70 percent of them stem from workers' and farmers' families. A great number of them have, however, veiled their real origin in order to be granted scholarships. The students' political backgrounds are carefully screened before they are made eligible to attend university. It is thought that no more than 50 percent of the students come from the proletarian class.
12. About 90 percent of those graduated from high school and 80 percent of the ABF students were thought to be anti-Communist. Yet organized revolts were a rare occurrence since most of the students had scholarships and did not want to run any risks.

Publications stating the loyal Communist attitude of the students hold true only for the ABF and the Red juridical faculty.

The general anti-Communist trend among students, professors and deacons became apparent in the passive attitude adopted by them at the conclusion of Party-organized meetings or similar activities.

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13. About 80 percent of the teachers are old-timers considering their political background and their political inclinations. The students take advantage of this situation. Passive resistance is to be noted against the docents without "Habilitation", who are all loyal Communists and who come from the ABF.

The faculties of medicine and natural sciences were notorious for their reactionary attitude, the attitude of the faculty of philology was doubtful, while the jurists were pronounced Communists.

14. In early 1952, there was a considerable decline in the number of students for the ABF and the gaps had to be filled by summoning youths from enterprises and political organizations. This measure, however, ended in a lowering of the standards reached and many of the students were expelled.

On the other hand, outstanding achievements were reached by a certain percentage of ABF students who were successfully graduated by the university. These students mostly belong to middle-class families and had been barred from high school for economic or political reasons. It appears that the ABF is of great significance in selecting gifted students irrespective of their social status.

15. In 1950 and 1951, seminars were organized following Soviet pattern. In the seminars, groups of 10 students headed by a Communist seminar-leader cooperate in working out their lectures. It became apparent that these seminars were organized for the sole purpose of intensifying the political training and keeping an eye on the participants. The students have to keep a busy schedule attending 40 hours of lecturing per week plus 15 to 20 seminar hours.

16. With a view to keeping a watchful eye on the students of the faculty of natural sciences, it was planned to assign one assistant per seven students. The political clearance of these assistants was extremely strict.

17. In 1953, the Ministry of the Interior requested the drawing up of a university catalogue to be submitted to the State Secretariat for University Questions. It was planned to adjust the catalogues of the different GDR universities to a uniform pattern. This project was heavily protested against by numerous teachers and was subsequently discarded. There were rumors that the faculties of philology and politics had complied with the request and were presently engaged in the framing of such a uniform catalogue after Soviet pattern.

18. In 1952, 50 to 60 students from Halle University, including some 20 students of natural sciences, were selected and ordered to continue their studies in the USSR. In case of refusal they had to leave the university. The selected students received preparatory training in Russian language and politics for 3 months. They had to sign for a 4-to-5-year stay in the USSR. [redacted] the German scholars in the USSR live in good conditions. They are lodged in student homes and their scholarships are half again as high as those granted to Soviet students. [redacted] the Soviet docents are very able and highly specialized. Moscow University is well equipped with literature and technical installations.

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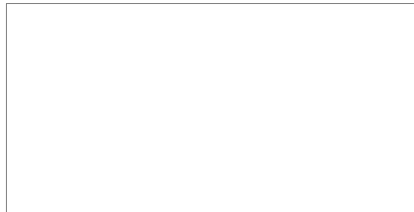
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