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RAND RESEARCH MEMORANDUM

POLITICAL OPINION IN THE SOVIET-OCCUPIED ZONE OF GERMANY

H. Hurwitz, S.O. Crane,
and W.P. Davison

July 1, 1959

in brief

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This study is based largely on interviews with refugees from East Germany and on the judgments of experts on East Germany resident in West Berlin. Soviet efforts at Geneva to force the West to give greater recognition to the German Democratic Republic are occasioned somewhat by the current state of political opinion in East Germany. Political opinion in this area is of considerable inportance in view of the Berlin crisis.

East Germany is no longer the powder keg it was in 1953, but neither has it turned into a reliable Soviet satellite. While economic conditions have improved and hope for reunification has receded, most East Germans think of the current state of affairs as provisional. Although certain aspects of the socialist system have found wide acceptance, Ulbricht is continually threatened by Marxist revisionism and "Titoism" from within his own party, as well as by lingering hopes among the population that help may still come from the West. The communist order in East Germany is thus "teetering on the brink of stability," and it must be assumed that a principal aim of the Soviets is to strengthen the regime to a point where the Soviet Union can take full advantage of the East German potential.

If the West recognizes the Ulbricht regime, opposition groups will become discouraged in their fight for reunification. On the other hand, if the provisional nature of the German Democratic Republic is given constant emphasis, this will prevent the Soviets from stabilizing the existing order. In the absence of effective help from outside, however, it is apparent that the East Germans are adjusting to the present system.

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PROJECT RAND

RESEARCH MEMORANDUM

POLITICAL OPINION IN THE
SOVIET-OCCUPIED ZONE OF GERMANY

Harold Hurwitz
Sibylle Crane
W. P. Davison

STAT

July 1, 1959

Assigned to ______________

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SUMMARY

East Germany is no longer the powder keg it was in 1953, but neither has it turned into a reliable Soviet satellite. While economic conditions have improved and hope for reunification in freedom has receded, most East Germans still think of the current state of affairs as provisional. The Ulbricht regime has shown astonishing staying power, and certain aspects of the socialist system have found wide acceptance, particularly among young people. Nevertheless, Ulbricht is continually threatened by Marxist revisionism and "Titoism" from within his own Party, as well as by lingering hopes among the population at large that help may still come from the West. The communist order in East Germany is thus "teetering on the brink of stability," and it must be assumed that a principal aim of the Soviets is to strengthen it to a point where it can make a more substantial contribution to the over-all strength of the communist bloc.

Recognition of the "DDR" by the West, even a partial recognition, would at one stroke increase tremendously the stability of the existing order in East Germany. Conversely, constant emphasis on the provisional nature of the "DDR" pending reunification would keep alive opposition and continue to

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prevent the Soviets from taking full advantage of the East German potential.

The control system in East Germany, including Party, judiciary, military, police, and various "mass organizations," has been fairly successful in making people conform externally, but has not been able to reshape their thinking to the extent desired. One weakness of the controls is that their very pervasiveness breeds opposition to them. Even convinced Communists dislike the way that Party and state seek to penetrate private spheres and encroach on a person's free time. Another weakness of the controls is that they have not penetrated the family successfully. More and more East Germans, apparently including some communist functionaries, are using the family as a refuge from politics.

In examining the political attitudes of East Germans, a distinction should be made between the regime, which is almost universally rejected, and the system, parts of which have been accepted by large groups in the population. The workers, for example, include the strongest centers of resistance to the regime, both because they feel indispensable and because their sense of solidarity gives them additional strength. Most of them approve some aspects of the system, such as socialization

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of the major means of production and many of the social benefits, but few have swallowed the system as a whole. As the standard of living has risen in East Germany, the demands of labor have risen too, and politically-alert workers still dislike the Soviet Union and regard themselves as exploited by the communist functionaries. Even among younger workers the regime has few fanatic supporters. They have adjusted to the system, but their adjustment is not deep since they take their older colleagues as examples. Communist ideology noticeably influences their abstract thinking but has less influence on their practical behavior. It is estimated that not more than 7 per cent of all industrial workers in East Germany are convinced members of the Socialist Unity (Communist) Party.

White-collar employees have lost prestige under the system in East Germany, but many of them have received increased material benefits, especially political functionaries and economic administrators. Young people are able to advance rapidly in white-collar jobs, and many of them now have a stake in the preservation of the system. This is reflected in a very low refugee rate among young white-collar employees. Although there are many strong opponents of the regime and of the system

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in this group, they are for the most part isolated and have no contact with one another. Furthermore, such people are likely to conform outwardly, and even to take an active part in communist organizations, in order to get ahead in their jobs. Young white-collar employees show a strong superficial influence of Marxist ideology, but fundamentally most of them are politically apathetic. White-collar employees tend to have more tolerance for opportunism than do workers, although both groups realize that activity in the Party is not necessarily an indication that a person is a convinced Communist.

Among independent peasants, shopkeepers, artisans, and small manufacturers, political opinions are, of course, strongly anticommunist, but there is little behavioral opposition to socialization or to the regime. Since these groups are now relatively small and disunited, they have only a low degree of bargaining power, and there is no effective way that they can express opposition. At the present time, they see no alternative but to co-operate with the regime unenthusiastically, especially since the pace of collectivization is gradual and they do not lose everything at once. The traditional German middle class, and middle-class ways of thought, have thus all but vanished from the East German scene.

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Students and intellectuals, second only to workers, are a source of opposition to the regime. As in the case of labor, these groups feel indispensable, and they also have a greater sense of solidarity than do the white-collar employees or the artisans and peasants. Their critical approach to the regime tends to come from intellectual currents that have developed in East Germany and Eastern Europe rather than from the West. Indeed, some intellectuals have complained that the West offers them no reasonable alternative to the existing order. Tendencies toward "Titoism" and other forms of Marxist revisionism are strong in these groups, and extend to intellectuals in the higher ranks of the Party.

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Both students and intellectuals have accounted for an increasing proportion of refugees from East Germany during the past months. In spite of the fact that these groups are pampered by the regime, their material privileges do not appear to have reconciled them to their lack of freedom. It is the Marxist revisionists among Party intellectuals, however, who cause the Ulbricht regime the greatest headaches, since these people see no future for themselves in the West and consequently try to bring about reform in the East Zone. In recent years, the major threats to Ulbricht's rule have come from these circles in the Party.

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If the West were able to offer leadership and assistance (i.e., if the power of the Soviet armed forces in East Germany could be neutralized), there is little question that a large majority of all groups in the East German population would turn against the Ulbricht regime and support some form of liberal democracy. In the absence of effective help from the outside, however, accommodation to the existing order is proceeding, although the system has some built-in contradictions that slow up this accommodation process.

Even in the absence of large-scale outside assistance there appears to be some chance that revisionism might make gradual headway from within -- possibly in the manner of Poland -- if the various groups opposing the Ulbricht regime were ever able to co-ordinate their efforts. Attempts to bring about changes to date have been sparked either by the workers (1953) or by the intellectuals (1956-57), but never by a combination of the two. If both groups were able to work together, some liberalization of the existing system might be achieved. This probably would not be possible, however, if opposition groups were dispirited by Western moves in the direction of recognizing the Ulbricht regime.

This study is based largely on interviews with refugees from East Germany and on the judgments of experts on East Germany

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resident in West Berlin. Material from these sources has been cross-checked and supplemented by published information whenever possible.

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Introduction

Exactly how conditions in Soviet-occupied Germany are related to the current Soviet and East German threat to West Berlin has not been definitely established. Nevertheless, it is abundantly clear that the fate of West Berlin and that of the Soviet Zone are inextricably linked. Policies followed by the Western powers in West Berlin have a powerful impact on the Zone, and the pressure that the Soviets and the Ulbricht regime have periodically brought on West Berlin has always been closely co-ordinated with, if not actually occasioned by, their plans for East Germany. It would, therefore, appear that a study of political opinion in East Germany might well contribute to a better understanding of the current Berlin situation.

This memorandum only partially fills the need that the authors hoped to satisfy. It cannot do so completely because it is limited in scope and because it was conceived and executed in great haste. The authors are well aware of its unevenness and of many defects in it, and present the material in this form only because they believe that the memorandum may be more useful now in a rough state than it would be with greater polish several months from now.

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The basis of this description of political opinion in East Germany was a draft study prepared very rapidly by Harold Hurwitz, an American scholar currently working at the Free University of Berlin. This draft was reorganized by Sibylle Crane of the RAND Social Science Division, who also added material from published sources. W. P. Davison of the RAND staff provided additional material from interviews conducted in Berlin during February and May of this year and wrote several brief sections.*

Because of the very limited time available for the collection and analysis of source material, it was necessary for the authors to restrict themselves to relatively few published sources and to rely principally on two other categories of information. One of these consisted of a series of surveys conducted on behalf of the Ministry of All-German Affairs by INFRATEST, a market research organization with headquarters in Munich. Only one of these surveys has been published. The others were made available in mimeographed form through the courtesy of officials of the Ministry of All-German

* Material collected by Messrs. Hurwitz and Davison in February 1959 provided the basis for pages 59-70 of an earlier research memorandum, RAND RM-2340, "The German Crisis: A Field Report," by H. Speier, W. P. Davison, and L. Gouré, March 20, 1959. See also "Supplementary Notes on the German Crisis: May-June 1959," by W. P. Davison, RM-2407, July 1, 1959, pp. 47-66.

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Affairs. The other principal source consisted of persons and agencies in West Berlin who had, over a period of years, devoted themselves to study of conditions in the Soviet Zone. Especially valuable material was provided by specialists in agencies such as the Ministry of All-German Affairs, the Social Democratic Party, the German Trade Union Federation, the Christian Democratic Union, the Free University of Berlin, and the League of Free Jurists*; and also by newsmen who had followed events in East Germany over a period of years. In addition, interviews were conducted with approximately twenty recent refugees from East Germany, most of whom can be classified as intellectuals.

The assembled material has been organized in such a way as to present the available information on the state of opinion of each of the principal population groups in the area: workers, white-collar employees, independent entrepreneurs, peasants, and intelligentsia. Sections have also been included on the communist control system and on recent trends in opinion.

This scheme of organization necessarily slights several important areas of East German life. Economic matters are

* See p. 46.

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referred to only tangentially.* Religious life should have been dealt with in much greater detail, since the churches are one of the very few remaining institutions not completely under communist control. Ideally, more attention should also have been given to the machinery and content of communist propaganda and indoctrination, as propaganda is clearly one of the primary instruments of control used by the Soviet Zone regime.

A word on terminology may be useful. Among West Berliners, the German territory under Soviet occupation is commonly referred to as the "Soviet Zone" or just "The Zone." Foreigners often find it convenient to refer to the area as "East Germany," to distinguish it from West Germany, although this designation sometimes meets with strenuous objections on the grounds that most of East Germany is now under Polish administration, and that the territory in question should be referred to as "Central Germany." The Communists, and also most non-Communists who have lived for some time in the area,

* For fuller information on economic life in East Germany see RM-2305, "Terms of Trade Between the Soviet Union and Smaller Communist Countries, 1955 to 1957," by Horst Mendershausen.

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usually refer to it by its official Soviet-conferred title as the "German Democratic Republic" or "DDR." In the present memorandum it will be referred to variously as the Soviet Zone, East Germany, or the DDR.

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I. Development of Political Attitudes Since 1950

For some years after the Berlin Blockade, people from the Soviet Zone of Germany, when visiting in West Berlin, were apt to quote the old adage: "Rather a sudden and terrible end than terror without end."* This is no longer heard very often. Today, the characteristic reaction to life under communism is more likely to be: "Not everything in the West is good; not everything is bad in the East."

In attempting to explain this change in outlook, let us examine some of the salient developments and characteristics of the German Democratic Republic in recent years.

(a) As all observers of the East German scene appear to agree, economic conditions and hence the standard of living in the DDR have improved markedly, especially in the last two years. Here, the findings of a survey of housewives may be illustrative, which was conducted by INFRATEST in 1958, at a time when the effect of the currency reform and the end of rationing had already made themselves felt.** According to

* "Lieber ein Ende mit Schrecken als ein Schrecken ohne Ende."

** INFRATEST, "Alltagsleben der sowjetzonalen Bevölkerung: Alltagsverhalten und politische Einflüsse" (The Daily Life of People in the Soviet Zone: Everyday Behavior and Political Influences), 1959 (mimeographed). In

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the survey, one-half to two-thirds of East German households consume three meals a day of substantially the same quality as the meals that are normally eaten by employed people in West Germany; from 10 to 20 per cent had a poorer diet. Thirty-six per cent said they were able to save a portion of their income. Thirty-seven per cent had been able to stock up on food at least to a modest extent; only 15 per cent had lacked the means to do so. Nine per cent of households owned cars (compared with 14 per cent in the Federal Republic); 42 per cent had vacuum cleaners (54 per cent in the Federal Republic), of which about one-quarter had been bought within the previous two years. Ninety-one per cent had radios (one-quarter of these acquired in the previous two years); 10 per cent owned motorcycles or motor scooters; 5 per cent had TV sets (as against 9 per cent in the Federal Republic). Sixty per cent of the women expressed themselves satisfied with their housing in the Zone; 15 per cent owned their own homes.

The general picture that emerges from the housewife survey is comparable to the situation that prevailed in West

evaluating the following figures, however, one should bear in mind that the sample of 598 housewives did not include an adequate representation of pensioners and annuitants, who were hit hardest by the price rise that followed the lifting of rationing.

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Germany in the first years after currency reform, although, by comparison, East Germans lack the variety and choice afforded by a free-market economy; they suffer also from difficulties in obtaining the "minor" household items (e.g., safety pins, can openers) that a planned economy is apt to ignore, as well as from a poorly-developed distribution system. There is the seedy and neglected external picture presented by their daily life, the crude quality and style of their dress, the marks of wartime damage and of twenty-year neglect in residential districts where houses have not been repaired since the outbreak of World War II. People have not become altogether accustomed to these things, especially since they know from experience or from hearsay that life has a very different "feel" and appearance in West Berlin and in the Federal Republic.*

There are indications that Soviet Zone inhabitants, in drawing comparisons between East and West, no longer find the material side of life the chief criterion for distinguishing between the two parts of Germany. This tendency to focus on other than economic factors is illustrated by reports of housewives who had taken vacations in West Germany during 1956 and 1957, before the Ulbricht regime radically curtailed

*A survey, compiled by the West German government, comparing the level of living of average consumers in East and West Germany is reproduced as an appendix at the end of this memorandum.

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visits to the West.* (Twenty-three per cent of the housewives interviewed had done so.) When they were asked what they had especially enjoyed, a majority referred to the "different" or "free" atmosphere, or the "life in the West in general." By contrast, material comforts, good quarters, and good food play an important, although far from dominating, role for those East Germans who take vacations in the Soviet Zone. People who travel to West Germany apparently tend to take these material comforts for granted.**

* The East German authorities now issue less than one-quarter the number of passes for visits to the West that they did before the present severe travel restrictions were introduced in December 1957.

** In reply to a question as to what they had considered especially good about their vacations, both in the Federal Republic and in the Soviet Zone, housewives replied as follows:

Vacations in the DDR:	per cent
Landscape	38
Rest, relaxation	26
Quarters	19
Food	16
Chance to do what one wanted during the day	7
Sightseeing	4
Organization of the trip	2
Other things	2

Vacations in the Federal Republic (note the very different order and emphasis):	
Life in the West in general, the free atmosphere	53
Being together with relatives	31
Landscape	16
Food	4
The articles offered in the shops (variety)	3
Quiet and relaxation	2
Other things	2

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If consciousness of gradual material improvement in the Zone is expressed by refugees, it must be assumed to be still stronger in those who do not flee, and to affect their attitudes toward the communist state in considerable measure.

(b) The Ulbricht regime has made substantial progress in transforming the social structure according to the communist formula, and this has resulted in giving large elements of the population a vested interest in the system. The educational opportunities available to young people, and the promotion opportunities which the system offers to those who conform politically, have meant that the social movement of many individuals has been upward. For example, of 128 white-collar employees questioned in 1957, only 34 per cent had belonged to that class before 1946, and 24 per cent had entered it directly upon leaving school. The remainder (roughly 40 per cent) had become white-collar employees after some other professional experience: half of them had been workers, skilled craftsmen, or small tradesmen. Only 4 per cent of the total could be said to have descended from a higher status when they became white-collar employees.

By contrast, some evidence of downward mobility between generations emerged when 18 per cent of the 295 workers

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questioned reported that their parents had engaged in occupations which enjoyed higher social status.

(c) Hope for German reunification has receded steadily over the years, particularly since the mass strike of June 17, 1953, which failed to bring forth Western support in either military or diplomatic form.* While the desire for reunification still remains strong, the feeling of its waning likelihood is bound to increase people's willingness to accommodate themselves to life under present conditions. By the same token, the failure of the June 17 revolt has made people cautious about taking action against the regime.** What action is taken is likely to be motivated less by hope for liberation or reunification than by the hope that improvements can be made within the framework of the system and special grievances thereby eliminated.

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* For example, less than one-fourth of the white-collar workers questioned in 1957, and only 20 per cent of housewives interviewed in 1958, held firmly to a belief in the possibility of reunification. Of a cross-section of refugees interviewed since the beginning of the present crisis, only 12 per cent thought that reunification would "definitely" take place during the next few years.

** For example, in 1952, 43 per cent of the clandestine readers of a forbidden intellectual magazine shared the copies they picked up in West Berlin with five or more persons at home in the Zone. In 1954, one year after the June uprising had failed, this was true of only 20 per cent.

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(d) Since the death of Stalin, the Ulbricht regime has been more arbitrary and relentless than the regime in almost any other communist state. Reforms that have been carried out in the Soviet Union and in other satellite nations in recent years have not been extended to the DDR, apparently because the new order is considered especially vulnerable in the divided country. The regime continues to be unequivocally committed to a slave-driving "speed-up" system with wage rates based on piecework; to the principle of exemplary punishment (that is to say, terror by example rather than mass persecution); to a spoils system dependent on Party membership and extraprofessional activity in the political organizations of the totalitarian state; to a control system that seeks to penetrate the individual's private sphere; and to an aggressive attempt, through education and propaganda, to build what is called "socialist consciousness" and morale.

In part, however, this relentlessness has boomeranged, since it has tended to limit the pace and degree of people's accommodation to the system. The willingness and ability of the individual to accommodate himself vary, of course, in accordance with his social and professional position in the system. But all in all, while the social structure has been transformed radically, people's minds have been influenced

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very imperfectly from a communist point of view, and only a very small minority today identifies itself consciously and completely with the system in its present form. INFRATEST and other survey materials reveal, and expert observers are agreed, that the vast majority of people exhibit ambivalence and confusion in their thinking. Vestiges of traditional Western values rest side by side with elements of communist ideology.* Antagonism against the regime, often accompanied by withdrawal into the less vulnerable private sphere, seems to be contradicted by pride in visible accomplishments, not only one's own, but those of state and community (rising production, reconstruction, etc.). It is a curious fact that such innovations as land reform and the socialization of industry, which the state counts among its "fundamental achievements," are widely approved in the abstract (especially by workers and peasants), but are not credited to the regime. On the other hand, many so-called "derived," or secondary, achievements -- such as educational opportunities for youth and social fringe benefits -- are widely acknowledged as

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* An INFRATEST survey conducted early in 1959 noted that, while East Germans overwhelmingly consider themselves non-Communists, they tend to use communist terminology in discussing political questions.

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communist accomplishments, without apparent awareness that they are common practice in West Germany and most other Western nations.

The condition here described might be regarded as characteristic of any people in the process of transition to communism. But for the East Germans this transition is proceeding under atypical circumstances. Most of them retain a memory of "better times," be it of the higher standard of living they enjoyed under the Nazis before the war, or of the more varied cultural fare during the Weimar Republic. Moreover, they are constantly comparing their lot with conditions in the Federal Republic and Berlin. And the continued division of the country also no doubt helps to raise the level of their aspirations by furnishing them with two alternatives not open to other satellite citizens: (1) they can "change worlds" within their own country by fleeing to West Berlin; and (2) they can cling to the dream of reunification. In addition, they can hope for relaxation of arbitrariness, on the Polish model, within the existing communist system.

Constant awareness of these alternatives pervades their thinking and confounds their attitude vis-à-vis their totalitarian regime. Nevertheless, in the guarded opinion of many experts questioned, the process of accommodation to the

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communist order, though far from complete now, is likely to progress further toward acceptance of the new order as long as there is no reunification in freedom, or unless strong measures are taken by the West to inhibit further acceptance.

Relatively few of those whose attitudes are colored by the open alternative of flight actually flee the Zone. For the remainder, though the East-West comparison may raise their aspirations and keep them aloof from identification with communism -- and thus sustain a state of mind favorable to at least passive resistance -- the continued possibility of escape can act as a cushion against the kind of despair that breeds rebellion. Thus, freedom of access to West Berlin, which has helped to keep alive both the possibility of flight and the hope of reunification in freedom, also has been an important safety valve for East Germans.* The presence of the Western show-window has rendered Ulbricht's efforts at consolidation and stabilization in the DDR more difficult in many ways, but the existence of an escape hatch

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* For example, East Berliners who distribute forbidden publications tend to be less active than dissenters who live far away and do not enjoy ready and frequent access to the West Berlin safety valve. It may also be relevant that the June 17 strikes began in East Berlin, but took a more mature, deliberate, and organized form in the more distant industrial cities.

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also has helped him indirectly by making the lot of Soviet Zone residents seem more bearable.

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II. Socialization of the Economy

The following figures may convey something of the direction and the tempo of social transformation in the Soviet Zone. By October 1, 1958, 88.7 per cent of industrial production was conducted in socialized plants (Volkseigene Betriebe, or VEB's). As of mid-1957, 32.7 per cent of all productive agricultural farmland belonged to the so-called "socialist sector," which consists primarily of agricultural collectives (LPG's). These collectives, which extended over 24.1 per cent of productive farmland in 1957, now involve almost half of it. From 30 per cent in 1956, the trade that passed through what remained of the private sector had dropped to 15-20 per cent at the last estimate available for this memorandum. Small handicraft (enterprises with up to ten employees) remained largely in private hands until 1958.*

In the course of 1958, socialization was stepped up vigorously. Toward the end of the year, owners of private industrial plants, pressed by material shortages, taxes, lack

* Cf. SBZ von A bis Z, Ein Taschen- und Nachschlagebuch über die Sowjetische Besatzungszone Deutschlands (The SBZ [Soviet-occupied Zone] from A to Z: A Pocket Reference Book about the Soviet Zone of Occupation in Germany), Bonn, 4th edition, 1958; and information supplied by the Untersuchungsausschuss Freiheitlicher Juristen (Free Jurists).

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of credit, and inability to hire workers, were "induced" to apply for state participation in their enterprises. The result has been a sudden and striking increase in the number of "half-socialist enterprises" -- an idea the DDR has borrowed from China rather than from the Soviet Union. As of January 1, 1959, the gross product from these plants was 4.5 per cent of the country's total (as compared to only 2.4 per cent the previous October), and of the 11,600 enterprises that still remained in private hands, 5,600 had already applied for state participation. While owners of "half-socialist" plants are still called capitalists, their principal problems are handled and solved by the state. Many of these owners are permitted to withdraw only up to a stated amount from the business each month, regardless of profits; i.e., they are on what amounts to a salary. No one doubts that this is but a transition to full socialization, and that what remains of private industry will before long be captured by the socialist sector in this manner, which is more economical for the state than sudden transfer would be.

Far less subtle has been the treatment of trades and handicrafts. Up to 1958, the regime had given considerable freedom to private enterprises of this type, and waning competition and rising consumer needs had allowed them to

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flourish, often more so than would have been the case in West Germany. Beginning in early 1958, however, all establishments with more than three employees were forced to join production co-operatives. So aggressively was the new policy pushed that, within a few months, only 7-8 per cent of all butchers were still independent (as compared to 90 per cent prior to 1958), and 40 per cent of barbers and hairdressers had been organized in co-ops. On the other hand, bakers were treated cautiously for fear that too sudden action would disturb supply. Otherwise, the effects of the socialization "onslaught" were so violent that a visiting Soviet commission called a halt to it in the fall of 1958, and for the moment the action is on ice.

No recent statistics are available on the rate of collectivization of retail shops, but observers report that a large proportion of retailers were forced out of business in 1958. Particularly in June, when rationing was lifted, many shops were simply confiscated -- usually after the owners had been accused of violating regulations governing retail trade -- and were added to the network of outlets of the Handelsorganisation, or HO (the state-controlled retail trade organization). In a few cases, the former proprietors were allowed to stay on as managers.

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By contrast with other sectors of the population, only a sizable portion of the peasantry has thus far submitted, or been forced to submit, to socialization. The land reform carried out immediately after the war created a class of so-called "new peasants" (Neubauern), who had been given very small holdings. In general, the 1945 land reform was a popular one, and is considered one of the regime's "basic achievements." It has the approval, at least in principle, not only of most East Germans, but of many experts and political leaders in West Germany. However, East German peasants are aware that they are slated for collectivization; and anti-regime feeling among them is said to be strong.

In 1952 and 1953, when agricultural collectives were first established in sizable numbers, there was an immediate upsurge in the tide of peasant refugees, and 19,000 fled within two years. Since then, the flood has receded (only 2,595 peasants fled in 1957, and 1,814 in 1958), partly, no doubt, because the difficulty of finding new farms in the West has become apparent to those who might otherwise be inclined to flee.* At the Fifth Party Congress of the SED**, in July

* Dr. Siegfried Friebe, "Die deutsche Flüchtlingsfrage" (The German Refugee Problem), SBZ-Archiv, October 20, 1958, p. 299.

** The initials SED stand for Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands (German Socialist Unity Party), the name of the communist party in the Soviet Zone.

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1958, a step-up in the creation of collectives was announced. The effects of the intensified drive have become very noticeable. About three thousand new units have been founded in the last year. No more than 53 per cent of farmland is now owned by individual farmers, and the plan to have one-half of agriculture collectivized by 1960 will doubtless be realized. The "voluntary" development toward collectivization creeps along steadily under duress in spite of stubborn resistance by the peasants to governmental pressure in the form of rising delivery quotas, tax burdens, poor supply of seed and feed, and other kinds of harassment.

A former Soviet Zone official concerned with agriculture, who fled to West Berlin early in 1959, predicted that 85 per cent of all farms would be collectivized within the next three years. He explained that at the present time it is possible to keep a family farm in operation only by dint of incredibly long hours of hard work by members of the family. But, as the parents die or retire, the younger generation, deprived of the modern equipment that is available only to the collectives, tend to give up the fight. Some allow themselves to be collectivized, some leave the farm and take industrial employment, and some flee to the West.

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If collectivization were to be sudden and universal, it might conceivably lead to disorders. Otherwise, it is important to remember that the peasantry is notoriously slow to join rebellions that originate in the cities. The ties between city and country have not been strong in Germany for generations, and they appear not to have been strengthened noticeably by the fact that a sizable proportion of today's working and white-collar population are the children of peasants. It remains to be seen whether the more and more frequent forced employment of urban "volunteers" on the farms at planting and harvesting time will lead to a greater feeling of solidarity between opposition-minded people in city and country.

In general, the anticommunism of those who are victimized or threatened by socialization may be taken for granted. Even though a kind of reinsurance through membership and active participation in the SED does occur, it is not widespread. For such opportunists are then commissioned with the lonely task of spark-plugging socialization in their hostile environments. However, those in trade, handicraft, and industry who today are still independent property owners are likely to be very cautious about expressing their anticommunist attitudes in view of their material concerns, the precariousness of

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their situation, and their fundamental lack of real independence. Also, the fact that even with their total loss of independence through socialization they do not stand to lose their livelihood is bound to act as a brake on oppositionist reactions, as long as the regime remains stable. Any relaxation of controls, however, that seemed to promise greater liberty within the system or heralded the possibility of reunification in freedom might release some of the opposition, now cautiously repressed, by productive property owners who have been dispossessed or may fear to be. Any genuine opportunity to realize a common goal of that kind with rebellious workers or students, that is, with groups who are better prepared to sustain and express opposition, might even encourage those remaining private owners to join spontaneously in demonstrations, and to seek to provide leadership for them. In such a situation, however, the most important, and perhaps the decisive, factor would be any act of solidarity between peasants and urban dwellers.

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III. The Control System

It could be said that the machinery for keeping the population under control involves the entire state apparatus and all the political formations of the Soviet Zone, including the trade unions. The most important direct controls, however, are exercised by the SED, the "mass organizations," the judiciary, the military, and the police.

The SED

The deliberate transformation of the SED from a mass organization into a communist cadre party began about 1948. Since then, membership has been possible only by way of "candidacy," with every candidate subject to the most careful screening, and the growth in membership has been correspondingly slow. As of 1958, the total number of Party members and candidates stood at 1,473,932, an increase of 59,619 over the previous year. As to its social composition, the last official breakdown available (as of the end of 1957) was as follows:*

* Bericht des Zentralkomitees an den V. Parteitag (Report of the Central Committee to the Fifth Party Congress), July 1958, p. 154.

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	per cent
Workers (skilled and unskilled)	33.8
White-collar employees and members of the intelligentsia	42.3
Peasants in agricultural collectives	2.9
Peasants	2.1
Others (handicrafts, housewives, retired persons, etc.)	18.9

Between 1957 and 1958, the proportion of women in the ranks rose from 20 per cent to 23.5 per cent; that of youth (the age span included in this category is not known) from 5.4 per cent to 7.7 per cent.

Party functionaries tend largely to be drawn from the white-collar group. According to the report of the 36th plenary session of the SED Central Committee in June 1958, only 29.7 per cent of 310,000 functionaries elected that year were workers.*

* According to the "Ostbüro" of the Social Democratic Party (SPD), the SED has difficulty recruiting functionaries from among Party members. In one instance, factory trade union elections had to be postponed by two months for lack of candidates. Trade union delegates are exposed to strong pressure from the workers on the one hand and to the political risk of representing them and seconding their grievances on the other. Non-Party workers are equally reluctant to accept delegate positions, and for the same reasons. The dilemma of the functionary who is caught between Party directives from the top and grievance situations at the base is apparent also in the cultural sphere, in economic planning, and in civil administration.

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About two years ago, the pyramid form of transmission of SED controls was replaced by the so-called "instructor system." Instructors, who are both trouble-shooters and controllers, are assigned by Party centers at the various levels. Thus, instructors sent out from the top may suddenly turn up at the district level to evaluate or supervise the work there, and in some instances (e.g., Erfurt and Halle) top-level Party instructors have brought about the removal of district Party secretaries. The district, in turn, sends instructors into local country and city organizations and into the factories.

To the factories, instructors are assigned not individually but in groups. Their heaviest concentration is in production areas that are most important for plan fulfillment and for export, such as the chemical and machine-building industries. This causes neglect of other industries, and slows up the functioning of the apparatus in these areas. Apparently an emergency measure, the instructor system gives evidence of having been effective at crucial points in the Party organization and the economy.

The following are assorted impressions and data gathered from the reports of various East Zone defectors who have had personal experience of the workings of SED controls and the

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degree to which they affect, or fail to affect, prevailing attitudes in factories and administrative departments.

A woman SED functionary, who had worked in one of the Party's fifteen district headquarters, gave individual descriptions of all personnel (a total of 200-odd, including about 70 technical personnel), from which it would be possible to draw a loyalty sociogram for the entire staff. From her own vantage point as a section head in the headquarters organization, she saw leaders at the very top (the secretaries and the most important division chiefs) as convinced and very active Communists, but she described them as being polite and easy to get along with. She thought only a few of them capable of denouncing anyone.

A considerable number of functionaries on her own level and just above her, including division chiefs, she called eager and ambitious. The most ambitious political functionaries included both the truly dangerous type and the bluffers. On June 17, 1953, and during the Hungarian uprising in 1956, the former behaved like fanatics; the latter were confused and tried to test the way of the wind. She regarded the instructors, however, as most dangerous. There were a few individuals, including some section chiefs, with whom one could discuss political matters frankly and to whom one could

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even voice critical judgments. But the most disaffected element, according to the informant, was to be found among the technical personnel and chauffeurs, i.e., groups outside the political advancement hierarchy. By contrast, the secretaries of leading functionaries were more closely identified with the Party, either by conviction or through professional or personal ambition. There were not many women in leading positions (none among division chiefs, and only a few among section heads).

Speaking of the situation as it existed when she fled to the West in the spring of 1957, the informant described a distinct political cleavage within the staff. In the period of the 1956 thaw, before the Hungarian events, seating in the canteen had ceased to be according to rank (leading functionaries at one table, lower echelons and technical personnel at another). Instead, "from where they were seated you could tell with whom you could afford to talk reasonably, and who belonged to the dangerous and fanatic functionaries....The last type was avoided; one got out of their way....They were the functionaries of the BPKK [District Party Control Commission], most members of the Agitprop Division, and so on."

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Discussion themes in the canteen among those who were not fanatics were likely to include Gomulka, what happened in Hungary, Stalin, or the comparative living standards in East and West Germany. Anyone stupid enough to tell tales of economic misery in West Germany, and of workers going barefoot there, would get a hysterical panning. The reporter painted a picture of one disillusioned Communist whose job it was to report to the Central Committee in East Berlin on the status of public opinion. She thought that he took a sadistic pleasure in piling up the evidence of Ulbricht's great unpopularity.

After June 17, 1953, Party secretaries, division heads, and county (<u>Kreis</u>) Party secretaries were permitted to carry pistols. The same informant described how this permission was extended, after the Hungarian revolt, to a wider circle of SED members. For example, weapons were given to district attorneys and judges, but were denied to certain individuals regardless of their position or formal party status. This drew attention to them as unreliables.

During the Hungarian crisis, the radio in the district Party headquarters was on all the time. Groups gathered in hallways, and there was much conferring behind closed doors in the security section. Most of the Party personnel, the

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informant thought, were prepared to act in defense of the regime if the Hungarian revolution spread to Germany. Even critical people in the Party apparatus were frightened. For the first time, technical personnel who had maintained a withdrawn and noncommittal attitude in the past showed their minds, revealing that they had little love for the regime but that they were also worried about their personal safety. In this they were one with responsible functionaries. The Budapest lynchings were on everybody's mind. The informant reports great general relief in Party headquarters when the Hungarian revolution was crushed. Afterward, there was a collection for Hungarian relief and everyone contributed eagerly.

In May 1959 it was learned that Party members would henceforth be expected to qualify as reservists in the "People's Army." This is the latest in a series of measures apparently aimed to prepare the SED for immediate military action in case of civil war.

A former section head in another SED district headquarters reported a number of serious weaknesses in her department, which was responsible for supervising civil administration in the region. The annual turnover of these Party functionaries, who were responsible for dealing with the state apparatus, ran

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as high as 33 per cent, often making effective Party supervision entirely impossible. Able functionaries working in the Party's district headquarters tended to seek, and often could obtain, transfers to better posts in the civil government, economic administration, or industry. Less capable SED functionaries from the district headquarters who were sent out to instruct or supervise the work of civil administration were not taken seriously by government personnel because they lacked knowledge of the subject.

In one highly industrial area, 50 per cent of the SED members were reported to be workers. However, a disproportionately large number of these were older people, formerly in the Social Democratic Party, who, being too old to flee, were remaining quiet and inactive while waiting for their pensions. The recruiting of younger people was said to be slow, typical reactions being: "We want to remain free," "We want to work at our professional education," or "Party business interferes with professional work." The informant also cited evidence that older workers influenced their younger colleagues against taking part in the work of the Party.*

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* The age pyramid in the SED is, however, gradually becoming less top-heavy, to judge by the latest available official statistics cited above.

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The Mass Organizations

Among other vehicles of communist control are the so-called "mass organizations." Formally the most inclusive but actually one of the weakest of these is the "National Front," which is supposed to organize the entire community for participation in political life. Thus, it is expected to catch those sections of the population who manage to evade affiliation with the trade unions, sport organizations, or movements for youth, women, and so on. The National Front, however, exists more on paper than in reality. Although it was founded in 1949, only half of its planned number of village and neighborhood committees are said to have ever really been established; and most of these now function either very poorly or not at all. One of its principal remaining tasks is to serve as a vast agency for reporting on public opinion, but the weakness of the organization on the neighborhood level has caused the Front to fail in this mission. The originally-stated objective of the National Front, to organize an "all-German" and "antifascist" movement for German reunification in the communist sense, has all but disappeared from view.

Mass organizations that are much more intimately interwoven in the lives of the people show similar weaknesses. In the Free German Trade Union Federation (FDGB), there appears

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to have been a marked slowing down, especially noticeable since early 1958, in the response of the apparatus to political events and in the communication of action directives from higher to lower levels. For instance, the FDGB leadership was said to be very slow in reacting to the Soviet note of November 27, 1958, with regard to the status of Berlin.

Former communist officials suggest several reasons for this slowing down. One is that many members of the FDGB hierarchy are only nominally Communists and have no real interest in furthering the objectives of the Soviet Zone rulers. Another is that trade union officialdom has become more and more "bourgeois," and most functionaries would rather hurry home to enjoy their recently-improved standard of living than give overtime to catching up on their paperwork. A third reason is that experienced functionaries are always alive to the possibility that the Party line may suddenly be modified or reversed; a certain deliberateness in acting on instructions therefore serves as insurance that one will not later be accused of misinterpretation or overhasty action.

Experts report a similar development within the Free German Youth (FDJ), but vary in their appraisal of its meaning and importance. The failure to bind young people to the new order by organizing their free time and molding their minds

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was reflected in data made public at the Sixth Congress of the FDJ in May 1959. The organization reported a membership of 1,760,000, or about one-half of the youth in the Soviet Zone, and of these members only from 33 to 48 per cent were paid up on their dues. In 1958 only 83,000 FDJ members applied to become candidates of the SED. Most of those who join the FDJ do so to qualify for a job or for a higher education and later let their membership lapse, although they are encouraged to remain active until they are 26 years old.

The consensus of expert observers and of refugees is that these mass organizations fall far short of fulfilling their stated political missions, and that the women's and sport organizations are even weaker. However, the significance of this weakness should not be exaggerated. As long as military and police support continues strong, the shortcomings of the political control apparatus cannot seriously endanger the regime.

Military Controls

The role of the Soviet occupation forces in discouraging any possible unrest is an obvious one and does not require our attention here. Though present as before, Soviet forces have become far less conspicuous in recent years. This is not so much because their numbers have been reduced, but because

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they are now concentrated in certain areas and their movements have been restricted. Members of the German population thus rarely see Soviet troops, although nearly everyone is conscious of their presence.

The German military establishment in the Soviet Zone includes, according to West German authorities, some 190,000 men under arms, and in addition about 120,000 in the reserves. Approximately 10 per cent of the German National People's Army are officers, 15 per cent subalterns. There are fourteen schools for officers and for specialized training. Numerically, the 190,000-man establishment is broken down as follows: the ground force numbers 90,000; the navy, 10,000; and the air force, 11,000. In addition there are 35-40,000 elite troops in the border guard and 8,000 in military police units regulating domestic and interzonal traffic. Also included are about 30,000 men in the so-called "alert troops" (Bereitschaften), which are trained for emergency military police duties. If one counts paramilitary units as well as these regulars, then the regime has an armed force of over one million men and women at its disposal. Such equipment as the Soviets permit the People's Army to have is of the highest quality.* (This is,

* According to a recent estimate by a spokesman of the Bonn Ministry of Defense, the East German armed forces at present have 2,000 artillery pieces, 15,000 armored cars, 200 planes, and 100 war ships.

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of course, not the case with paramilitary units.) In the training of all units, the major emphasis is on action to be taken in case of domestic unrest.

A majority of the students of the Soviet Zone armed forces agree that the morale of the DDR's regular military establishment is high and its loyalty to the ruling order strong and unquestioning. A few observers insist, however, that there is still room for doubt whether the rank-and-file would actually fire on West German troops if it came to a showdown. The only controversy recently mentioned as having been noted within the armed forces concerned fraternization between officers and men. This is now being officially condemned as resulting from a "false view of socialism." Morale follows the familiar pattern of being highest in the air force, and higher in tank units than in the infantry. Military personnel are deliberately kept isolated from contact with the civilian population; no one below the rank of captain is allowed to wear civilian clothes while on leave.

A recent program for the creation of so-called "socialist cadres" aims at overcoming the isolation of the army in the political system, at furthering a political sense of solidarity within the army, and at softening some of the antagonism of

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the civilian population. Under it, young soldiers pledge themselves to contribute to the current five-year plan and to study the speeches, programs, and classical writings of the Party. Among other things, the new program provides that general officers shall serve as common soldiers with units other than their own for four weeks out of every year, and that contacts shall take place between soldiers and the workers and employees of industrial plants in the form of visits and discussions.

The authors of a comprehensive study of the Soviet Zone armed forces found that tensions among military personnel were mainly of an organizational nature: adjustment crises among recruits, the problem of whether or not to promote young officers who were political appointees but proved to be poor soldiers, and so on.* Such things, the authors say, do not cause opposition against the system, but only against its methods, and would "hardly seriously endanger the striking power of the People's Army. Even a severe crisis for the system, like the June 17 uprising, is not sufficient to endanger the striking power of this military apparatus." Nearly half the officers above the rank of major have either been trained in the Soviet

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* Helmut Bohn et al., Die Aufrüstung in der Sowjetischen Besatzungszone Deutschlands (Rearmament in the Soviet Zone of Occupation of Germany), Bonn, 1958, p. 174.

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Union or were Communists before 1945. The weakness in the People's Army will become politically significant, these experts conclude, only when "the whole regime has been caught in a crisis for which there is no remedy."*

The reliability of the army is due in part to care in selecting recruits, but appears to be heightened by army life itself. A good index is the rate of defections from military units, which dropped sharply from 1,494 in the first nine months of 1957 to only 686 in all of 1958. The decline was most noticeable after the outbreak of the Berlin crisis: 86 in October, 69 in November, and still fewer in December.

Defection by officers is most unusual, and, according to a newsman well informed on the subject, for several years there has hardly been a defector above the rank of captain. Remarkable also is the low rate of defection among the border troops, where opportunity for escape is particularly good.

Another indication of high morale is the eager response to the newly-created "reservist associations," a means by which inactive soldiers maintain friendly social contact.

Refugee interviews have revealed a hostility against the People's Army on the part of the population in general stronger

* Ibid., pp. 112-124.

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than that against the SED. Almost two-thirds of the white-collar group questioned showed hostility. Of the 37 per cent who showed none, some allowed that the army was necessary for "defense" or fulfilled an "educational" function, but only a few were decidedly favorable to it, arguing that "after all the Federal Republic has its army." All hostile responses were directed against the army as an institution rather than against individuals in it; few of those questioned had any contact with its members. The impression seemed general that enlistment, although supposedly voluntary, was promoted by political pressure, and hostility toward military personnel in general was occasionally qualified by such apologetic remarks as "they are forced to be in the army."

An ambitious system of paramilitary training seeks to involve personnel from youth organizations, schools, universities, factories, and administrative offices throughout the DDR. The purpose of this program is sometimes said to be to compensate for the weakness of the unpopular and ineffectual political control machinery of the Party. Training is carried out principally by the Society for Sport and Technical Science (GST), which provides military instruction for 14- to 24-year-olds, and the so-called "fighting units" (Kampfgruppen), which

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are paramilitary organizations for older persons.

Probably not more than one-fourth of the Sport Society's 650,000 nominal members are at all active, and the political reliability of even this minority is questionable. The Society's organizational strength lies in the schools, where participation can be compelled most easily; it is weakest in the universities, where passive intellectual resistance is widespread. So far it has failed to create an effective militia.

While the Society for Sport and Technical Science is responsible to the state apparatus, the Kampfgruppen are explicitly suborganizations of the SED. Recruiting is done by local Party organizations, although reliable non-Party persons can be enlisted and military instruction is handled by officers of the People's Police, who must belong to the SED. Members include the politically most reliable personnel in socialized industries, on collective farms and tractor stations, in Party headquarters, and in state administrations. Their proclaimed purpose is to "defend the achievements" of the new order against internal or external "class enemies." They are organized in companies of one hundred men, wear uniforms during exercises, and receive four hours of training per week with light arms. West German authorities estimate the size of the

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Kampfgruppen at 250,000 and consider that one-half could be put into action in the event of an emergency.

The views of experts differ as to the ultimate reliability of the Kampfgruppen. Some feel that they could be trusted to fulfill their prime function of quelling domestic disturbances, a view that is supported by the report of a district headquarters Party functionary already cited. Others believe that the reliability of these units will depend on the conditions under which they are expected to act, and on "who shoots first." According to this view, while most units would probably shoot agents who landed by parachute, they might not show discipline in the event of a general strike.

In this connection, the organization and social composition of the Kampfgruppen are important. There seems to be little enthusiasm for joining these units, but many of the more ambitious are moved to join simply by their desire not to seem lacking in reliability. It was generally reported by refugee workers that between 5 and 10 per cent of the work force normally took part in the Kampfgruppen. The proportions are much higher in state and Party administrations than in industry, and the proportion of white-collar personnel employed in an industrial plant who join the Kampfgruppen is considerably

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higher than that of workers. Reports from an SED district Party headquarters and from a number of factories reveal that it is common for leading personnel, who must belong to the Kampfgruppen, to avoid active participation in their exercises.

Some doubt about the reliability of the Kampfgruppen has been indicated by the Ulbricht regime itself. During the Hungarian revolution, the police collected the weapons that had been assigned to these units, and since then special precautions have been taken to prevent the plundering of weapon stores. Only a very few of the most reliable members of each unit have access to the storage vaults -- presumably those who might be expected to turn a machine-gun on strikers if necessary. The military value of the Kampfgruppen might easily stand or fall on the reliability of these few in command positions.

When 77 refugee industrial workers were asked in 1956 whether they regarded the members of Kampfgruppen as reliable, they replied as follows:*

	per cent
most are reliable, dangerous, etc.	19
not wholly reliable -- many insecure elements	19
largely unreliable	35
absolutely unreliable	10
no opinion -- neither, nor	17

* For information on this source, see footnote on p. 60.

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Thus, a plurality felt that, from a communist point of view the Kampfgruppen members were largely or absolutely unreliable. However, when the same workers were asked, at another point, whether the Kampfgruppen "would shoot in a serious situation," more than half thought that they would, or might, shoot:

Table 1

Workers' Opinions on Whether Kampfgruppen Would Shoot

	Depth interviews(76)* (per cent)	Opinion survey(295) (per cent)
"probably" would shoot	47	57
might shoot	23	5
would not shoot	27	31
no opinion, unclassifiable	3	7
	100	100

It is possible that the seeming inconsistency in the judgment that the Kampfgruppen on the whole are not very reliable, but that they would shoot, can be explained by the fact that the respondents were thinking of different members of the units and of different situations when answering the two questions in such seemingly contradictory fashion. In their answers to the first, they doubtless remembered the many unreliable persons

* The INFRATEST findings based on "depth interviews" with workers do not always indicate the same number of respondents, since it may happen that an interviewer misses a question or that he cannot prevent the respondent from going off on a tangent. The number most frequently given is 76, but some of the findings were based on 77 interviews, and a few on only 74 and 75.

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they knew in the Kampfgruppen; in responding to the second question, they may have thought of the few true Communists in positions of command and responsibility who could be counted on to obey orders, and who would in turn be obeyed simply because they were in command. This would tally with the wry self-appraisal that one often hears from Germans, who admit -- at the same time that they criticize -- their own ingrained obedience.

The Secret Police

In contrast to the uniformed security organizations in Hungary and in the Soviet Union under Stalin, East German security police have never become the most despised institution in the country. This is partly because the Red Army and the Soviet military security authorities took the place of domestic German police during the early postwar years, when terror and physical persecution were most rampant. Especially since 1953, the East German State Security Service (SSD) has relied more on brainwashing techniques and less on physical torture. Since 1957 it has been administratively separated from the regular police and from the "alert troops" mentioned above. The Ministry for State Security has thus been able to retain a fairly anonymous and "civilian" presence. Most of its personnel and operations are invisible to the general public. It is, of course, firmly under Party control. On two occasions, heads of the SSD have been purged for opposing Ulbricht's intransigent Stalinist leadership.

The security police operates through an extensive network of agents, and all SED and FDJ members must pledge it co-operation. It is thus in a position not only to report on the Party and military rank-and-file, but also to spy on dissenters in the general population. It can act as a strong deterrent through an ominous presence, without being conspicuous enough to become a prime object for aggressions and hostility.

Judicial Controls

There are no mass persecutions in the DDR, and at present there are only eight to nine thousand political prisoners -- a small number when one considers the extent of opposition to the regime. The prevailing consciousness of terror is due, rather, to the existence of special laws with broad and vague definitions of political transgressions, and to the Party's prerogative of arbitrary interference with legal processes. The situation has been called "terror by example," and involves holding show trials, publicizing "star" prosecutors, instructing prosecutors and judges to give proceedings a political

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accent, and imposing exemplary sentences. Relatively few people are actually arrested, but a great many are liable to arrest at any moment.*

Two members of the Association of Free Jurists** stressed the effectiveness of potential arbitrariness as a deterrent to revolt. Along with several other experts questioned on this point, however, they felt that, without this threat of terror, people would accommodate themselves to the regime more quickly and with fewer reservations. Most residents of the Soviet Zone are reluctant to accept as permanent a system that keeps them in a constant state of uneasiness.

The effectiveness of some of the recent DDR legislation in helping to control the population is generally acknowledged. The new passport law of December 1957, for example, which provides a two-year prison sentence for helping a person to escape, and which forbids the issuance of interzonal passes to the dependents of persons who have already fled to the West, was

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* Cf. Otto Kirchheimer, "The Administration of Justice and the Concept of Legality in East Germany," Yale Law Journal, Vol. 68:705, 1959, pp. 705-749.

** The "Untersuchungsausschuss Freiheitlicher Juristen" is a commission founded in October 1949 in West Berlin to provide residents of the Soviet Zone with legal guidance and to investigate and publicize transgressions against civil liberties under the totalitarian regime.

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reflected immediately in a lower refugee rate.

If many justice officials in the Zone show a certain restraint and endeavor to behave "correctly," and if an element of resistance to the Party line can sometimes be detected in judicial quarters, this is often attributed partly to the watchful presence of observers in West Berlin, particularly the Free Jurists. Justice officials are often anxious not to incriminate themselves too deeply. They know that they, too, may one day want to flee, and even a vague possibility that there may eventually be reunification in freedom is added cause for not co-operating with political arbitrariness too ardently.

Controls in the Universities

The universities provide an example of how a system of controls may be framed for and applied against a specific social group.

The SED regime has been trying in various ways to counteract the susceptibility of university students to antiregime and revisionist ideas. In the last year, these stiffening controls have manifested themselves particularly in the introduction of a "year in production," whereby secondary-school graduates must do a year's practical work in industrial plants before they can begin university study, and they only can do so then if the

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local trade union gives approval. Other recent signs of increased pressure have been the frequent arrests and trials of student opposition groups, and the institution of obligatory premilitary training for students and younger faculty members.

The year in production may prove to be a double-edged sword. Even before this was introduced, students had shown strong resentment at being forced to "volunteer" for industrial work during their vacations (although even refugee students often say that the state has a certain right to tell them where to work once they have finished their education). Thus far, there has been some evidence of strained relations between students and workers. The INFRATEST survey of workers showed that the latter had strong resentments against members of the "new intelligentsia." Students, for their part, complain that, after much SED talk about solidarity with workers, they are now being warned against letting themselves be influenced by the "politically immature" workers when they join them for a year in the plants. If this "year in production" results in breaking down the workers' antipathy and deprives communist-educated youths of idealistic illusions, a basis may be laid for the solidarity between workers and intellectuals which hitherto has been lacking. A communist regime is most vulnerable

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to opposition emanating jointly from industrial workers and the intelligentsia. In East Germany there has been strong opposition to the regime from within both these groups, but it has so far remained quite unrelated.

The fact that the very nearness of a large industrial establishment to a concentration of students can leave its mark on the latter's attitudes would appear from the remarks, in 1957, of a Party secretary at the University of Jena. He was reported to have blamed the waning power of the SED among teachers and students at the university on the proximity of the Zeiss works. He claimed that the workers there created an undercurrent of hostility to the regime, and went on to describe the situation at the university as follows:

> The professors don't bother themselves a bit about the Party and show not the slightest tendency of drawing closer to our views. With the students...it is more and more difficult to hold our ground.*

As long as premilitary training given through the Society for Sports and Technology was voluntary, evasion among students was widespread. Now this training has become obligatory, and experts on the Zonal universities believe that it is likely to provoke aggressive resistance.

* Report received by the Ostbüro of the Social Democratic Party.

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Within the university, the major form of control over students is the compulsory but not altogether unpopular "seminar group," rather than the Free German Youth, which has proved ineffectual at the universities. The entire student body is divided into these seminar groups. An average one comprises eighteen to twenty-five students studying in the same field and in the same or adjacent academic years, which means that they are usually about the same age. Thus, the seminar group offers a natural center for discussion, study, and social life; it also provides an ideal setting for political indoctrination efforts and for recording evidence of opposition. Every group has its FDJ or SED sparkplugs, and many groups are reported to include undercover agents of the State Security Service.

Yet, in the brief period of intellectual thaw before the Hungarian revolution, and also for some time afterward, open discussions in the seminar groups played a considerable role in establishing the fear of "revisionism" that caused authorities to stiffen controls in the universities. Since 1957, open discussion in the seminars has become rare. While new students may take the ostensible freedom of the seminar group at face value and respond to invitations to speak frankly there, they are likely to be quickly disillusioned when they find that

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opinions expressed in open discussion lead to reprimands or even worse. Active student dissenters find the seminar group a fertile recruiting ground for those who share their opinions. In the process of differentiation within the group, communist sparkplugs may be isolated; if, on the other hand, they are too eager and numerous, the group easily becomes stiff and formal, and is stripped down to purely academic and propagandistic functions. Quite frequently, however, the communist group leaders reveal themselves as tolerant, and hence harmless, so long as dissidence does not go too far. In the exceptional case, a seminar may become a forum for active opposition. More generally, it serves as a training field in political dialectic. But this training rarely seems to lead to mature expressions of resistance; more often it only develops skill in keeping out of trouble.

Stiffened controls at the universities are, of course, reflected in the rising numbers of students and faculty members who flee to the West. But it is worth noting that the campaign against academic revisionism has led to the exodus of more and more students who, although obviously discontented, cannot be called convinced and thoughtful revisionists. The true revisionist, since he hopes for an improvement within the

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framework of the existing system, is likely to flee only when he is threatened with arrest.

The Family -- A Refuge From Controls

The Soviet family has been described as "the institution over which central control is exercised least effectively."* The same might be said of the family in the Soviet Zone. Despite the regime's avowed aim to make the "new family" the smallest collective of the state, Party and mass organizations have failed to penetrate the home to the extent desired. A survey of refugee housewives conducted in 1958** and the consensus of East Zone experts confirm this judgment. What is more, they suggest a picture of more intimate and close-knit family living in the DDR than, for example, in the Federal Republic. While this can be explained partly by the Western citizen's more plentiful distractions from the world of entertainment, the conclusion is inescapable that to many East Germans the family represents a welcome refuge from the demands of the communist state. As one observer has put it, the East German family "is strengthened not by the policy of the SED but in its

* Raymond A. Bauer, Alex Inkeles, & Clyde Kluckhohn, How the Soviet System Works, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1956, p. 60.

** INFRATEST, "Alltagsleben der sowjetzonalen Bevölkerung...."

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defense against that policy."* If we accept this as true, the really important question is whether this community born of resentment becomes a breeding ground for the further development of active dissent, or whether it serves mainly as an apolitical haven from the political pressures of one's occupational environment. Unfortunately, available surveys furnish little statistical evidence of the extent to which politics enter into the social intercourse of families and intimate friends.** Hence our estimate of political solidarity in the private sphere and its bearing on the East German climate of opinion is based largely on impressions and conjecture.

Most observers seemed to think that for many men the family offered protection from the hostility and tension of their work surroundings as well as a refuge from politics altogether. This generalization included even Party functionaries -- increasingly so, said several informants -- and at least one expert felt that their escapism into the private sphere was partly responsible for the malfunctioning of the Party and trade union apparatus. (The distribution habits of

* Carola Stern, "Die Familie in der Sowjetzone" (The Family in the Soviet Zone), SBZ-Archiv, November 10, 1955.

** A much larger percentage of housewives in the Soviet Zone apparently spend their leisure time visiting with friends than is common in West Germany.

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readers of forbidden literature also showed a coincidence of stronger family ties with greater restraint in the communication of dissent outside the home. Under certain conditions, the family would take on the function of satisfying the dissenter's need for communication and thus sustain him in his dissidence.)

As for the nonworking housewife, the dominant impression is of an essentially unpolitical person, who has succeeded better than members of any other social group, or any other member of her family, in evading involvement in the organizations of state or Party. (Observers frequently stressed the lack of political interest even among wives of high Party functionaries.) Far fewer housewives than employed women join mass organizations, and those who do rarely take an active part in them. The organization likeliest to encroach on their lives is the "Demokratische Frauenbund Deutschlands" (German Democratic Federation of Women -- DFD), but the very few housewives who felt that the DFD interfered with family life and the many more who had no opinions of any kind are a measure of how ineffectual that organization has been. Asked about their personal contacts with apartment house wardens

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(Hausvertrauensleute),* half the housewives interviewed by INFRATEST had had none, only 3 per cent attributed poor relations with the wardens to political reasons, and 38 per cent said that relations with the wardens were satisfactory. Neighborhood relations in general were described as good, with friction for political reasons playing only an insignificant part. (This does not necessarily mean that the aggressive champions of the system are an insignificant minority; it may merely indicate that they lay aside their aggressiveness for the sake of neighborliness, or even that they tend to live in separate communities to which the housewives in our sample had no access.)

According to Die Welt,** a recent innovation is the so-called Hausgemeinschaft (tenants' community), which appears to be an arrangement for co-operative management. In many cases, the state makes it nearly impossible for a landlord to keep up with repairs, and urges tenants to take over the landlord's functions. The Hausgemeinschaft then becomes not only a business arrangement, however, but a social institution, with propaganda evenings and the like. Although in most cases this

* The system of "housewardens," first introduced by the Nazis, was adopted in 1945 by the Soviet army of occupation. Today these wardens (most of them members of the SED) work closely with the National Front.

** February 18, 1959.

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new means of limiting individual privacy seems to be meeting with little success, it often needs only one busybody in a building to keep it going.

The critical horizon of the women interviewed tended to be limited to points in their domestic experience at which the communist system caused them annoyance and discomfort. To the extent that such difficulties are material and economic, they are probably becoming less of a factor with the steady rise in the standard of living. The point, however, at which the state has made its most corrosive inroads on the immunity of the family is in its struggle for control of the children, a phenomenon common to all totalitarian societies.

The mass organization for children between the ages of six and fourteen is the "Young Pioneers." Most children insist on joining it, often from no more than the desire to play, and parents have little choice but to let them. The period of discussion, and conceivably of friction, with parents generally arrives only when the young high school student must decide whether to join, or not to join, the Free German Youth, and especially whether or not to submit to the "Youth Consecration" (Jugendweihe). In this atheist celebration, which the state urges on all children of fourteen in place of the Lutheran

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confirmation or the Catholic communion, the young citizen is introduced into the "active life of society," and must swear that he will "place all his strength at the disposal of the great and noble cause of socialism and that, together with the Soviet people, he will secure and defend the peace." He is prepared for this act in a course of instruction filled with atheist and anticlerical propaganda and communist ideology.

At this point in the children's lives, their innate conformism, the desire to assure themselves of admission to a university and to other social opportunities, and the convictions bred in them by the "Young Pioneers" often run afoul of parents' reluctance to see their young, outwardly at least, succumb so totally to the influence of the regime. Both children and parents ordinarily feel strong pressures from their inherited Christian values and are exposed to active agitation by the Churches against the blasphemous Jugendweihe ceremony. It is at this juncture that one of our experts, formerly a member of the Free Jurists, sees the first major break in family solidarity. Children fear that their parents will hold them back, and parents fear denunciation. Certainly, innumerable cases of deliberate or inadvertent betrayal by children have been reported.

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Most frequently, expediency wins out in the dilemma, and parents tell themselves that acquiescence is "for the good of the child." It even happens that the adolescent himself is the one most strongly opposed to the Jugendweihe, and that his ambitious parents urge him to conform for the sake of his educational and professional advancement. Parental acquiescence is most easily compelled in villages and small towns; the Communists find it far more difficult to exert social pressure and control in large, heterogeneous communities.

A great many parents, however, continue to be outspoken in their opposition. They derive considerable moral support from the churches, which have turned the Youth Consecration into a major issue. But Christian arguments are not the only deterrents to conformism here. According to the informant cited above, workers, for example, have been widely opposed to the Jugendweihe, apparently not so much for religious reasons but because they are politically astute enough to see in it an added instrument of the state's control over the child. The peculiar spiritual independence of politically-conscious workers, about which we shall have more to say presently, leaves them freer than others to assert parental influence against outward pressure.

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It is difficult to say how deep a wedge the problem of the children's future has driven into the solidarity of the family. The very existence of the dilemma, however, in a certain sense counterbalances the adults' temptation to use the family as a retreat from all political concerns, for it forces them to come to grips with questions of ideology and morality, and to choose between conforming and labeling themselves and their children as outsiders.

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IV. Workers*

Experts and interview material consulted for this memorandum agree on several points: East German workers, both skilled and unskilled, provide the strongest potential source of opposition to the regime. Some groups of workers have been able to retain a large measure of aloofness and spiritual independence, and demonstrate a far keener political alertness, than, for example, most white-collar employees. Workers are, furthermore, distinguished from the white-collar groups by a stronger sense of solidarity, which, although it does not necessarily generate dissent, favors its dissemination. On the other hand, refugee surveys indicate that among workers without strong political consciousness the slogans of the Ulbricht regime tend often to be accepted quite uncritically. As in all analyses of East Zone attitudes toward communism, it is important to distinguish between resentment toward the regime and the rejection of the economic and social system as

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* Where not otherwise stated, survey material reproduced and interpreted here was drawn from a survey of workers conducted by INFRATEST for the Bundesministerium für gesamtdeutsche Fragen in 1957. Most of the survey findings used in the present study were published by Dr. Viggo Graf Blücher in Industriearbeiterschaft in der Sowjetzone (Stuttgart, 1959). Some data not available in published form were taken from the original, mimeographed manuscript prepared by INFRATEST.

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a whole. In the case of the industrial working class, with its inevitable vestiges of a strong socialist and communist tradition, the tendency to reject the regime rather than the system is likely to be more pronounced than in other sectors of society.

Although experts are agreed that the workers have stored up a large reservoir of resentment against the regime and constitute the greatest potential danger to its survival, and although the revolt of June 17, 1953, was their work, no development in the direction of another rebellion has been noted. As for the opinions of the workers themselves, INFRATEST reports that, when they were asked in 1956 whether a 17th of June could recur, 48 per cent of the refugees thought that it might; 34 per cent denied it; 18 per cent could not tell.

It should be recalled that the June 1953 strikes broke out during an acute food crisis, and in spontaneous response to an unexpected promise of a new deal, which was taken as a sign that the Ulbricht regime was weak. Even then, although hope for reunification as well as freedom had helped propel them into spontaneous action, striking workers in those two days betrayed their fear of the Soviet Union by astutely, if vainly, insisting that their revolt was directed against the

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Ulbricht regime alone, not against the Soviet occupation power.

Since then, the material lot of workers has improved a great deal. The Ulbricht regime today is better entrenched and the Soviet Union more powerful than ever. All these facts, but particularly the gradual improvement of their material situation, have affected the workers' attitudes, the form and direction of their resentment and aggressive actions. Observers generally point out that workers' interests have shifted noticeably from the political to the private sphere. All major demonstrations of unrest in the last few years have been prompted by specific local grievances; these may be complaints about wages, premiums, and norms, or about shortages or low quality of materials that may lead to work stoppages, which, in turn, may cause a cut-back in wages, for workers are paid according to the rate of production.*

* Currently, vigorous resistance is being reported against the so-called Seiffert method, a plan for daily, even hourly, checks in order to overcome the ups and downs of production that arise in a planned economy when deliveries, work processes, and actual production are poorly synchronized. But whatever the subjective responses of workers to this method may have been at the outset, zonal statistics (possibly doctored) for the first time showed an unjagged upward line in production during the last quarter of 1958. Even if the Seiffert method does result in better-regulated production, resentment against it might nevertheless continue, especially if it were also to lead to higher production norms.

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Materially, "life has become bearable," as a trade union official put it. The average skilled worker can afford a motorcycle and looks forward to the day when he will own a TV set. To be sure, several experts point out, the demands of workers also have increased with the rising standard of living. But they are still primarily directed toward material things, and workers have learned that they can secure these by hard work, as well as by stating their grievances in a manner that arouses no political suspicions. In an atmosphere that holds little promise of liberty either through change in the domestic order or through reunification, workers' aspirations tend to be increasingly particularistic and private. One observer goes so far as to say that most East German workers are not interested in politics as such, but are very sensitive to any developments that may affect their pay envelopes; they do not care who pays them so long as they can enjoy the things money can buy. If ever West Germany loses its economic lead over the East Zone, this observer feels, it will lose most of its appeal to labor in East Germany.

Other experts, stressing the workers' growing demands, especially in the past year, disagreed as to the effect of better living conditions on their attitudes. One specialist thought that workers were developing a "petit-bourgeois,"

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antirevolutionary outlook; another, while admitting that active opposition to the regime was growing ever weaker in general, felt that only the workers were still in a position to act, and that their growing demands were linked to rising resentment.

Certainly, material improvements have not given the workers a positive loyalty to the regime. Credit for the better life goes to the worker's own effort, not to communism. Furthermore, there appears to be no doubt that the workers have become increasingly aware of themselves as a "power," an indispensable element that the state has to take into account.* This awareness is believed to make for the rising social demands, for a stronger sense of solidarity, and for a relative spiritual independence.

Only two of the experts questioned, although granting that there were no signs of impending rebellion from the industrial workers, did not fully rule out such a possibility under the status quo. However, a number of specialists foresaw a distinct possibility of a severe response -- in the form of

* This feeling, more apparent after the June 17 uprising than before, has grown steadily since. Thus, a slow-down in the raising of norms during 1958 is cited by workers as an example of the concessions that the oppressive regime has had to make to them.

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either rebellion or despair -- to whatever may turn out to be the solution of the Berlin crisis.

A prognosis by an observer who is particularly well qualified to draw comparisons between social groups in the Zone casts an interesting light on the state of mind of the East German worker, faced as he is today with the possibility of having to go on living under a communist system. According to this expert, material improvements have canalized the aspirations of industrial workers to such an extent that their conscious political resistance has reached an all-time low (although it is still far more common among them than among white-collar employees). However, this could change if ever a saturation of material demands were reached and totalitarian pressure still remained. This, says our observer, is precisely what has occurred among intellectuals, and for the present has caused "a transfer of the center of most advanced resistance from industrial workers to the privileged 'intelligentsia.'"

The INFRATEST survey, in 1956, had no grounds for such a prognosis. It found the situation of Zone workers lying on the margin of subsistence, and poverty a stronger element in their views than the inroads of communist ideology. For three-quarters of the refugee workers then questioned, the reasons for leaving the Zone were not predominantly political.

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Properly speaking, many of them had not fled, but had "moved" to the West for economic or personal reasons. Though in most instances political considerations did play a part, they were decisive for only about one-fourth of the refugees. And in four out of every five such cases, the defectors had fled at the spur of the moment, usually without their families. Among these more explicitly political refugees, the majority were between 25 and 45 years of age; only few of the workers were younger.

In looking back over the entire period between 1948 and 1958, we find that workers have been more apt than members of other groups to leave the Zone. Although, in those ten years, they constituted slightly less than half of the Zonal population,* they accounted for about 58 per cent of all refugees. More striking still is the unrepresentatively large proportion of young workers among them, the chief factor in the high incidence of young people among refugees in general.**

* Estimates of the proportion of workers in the population vary. DDR statistics for 1956 give 47 per cent. Some students feel that even this figure is too high, since it includes Party functionaries as "workers."

** Between 1948 and 1958, 10.9 per cent of the Zonal population were between 18 and 25 years old. Yet among refugees this age group accounted for 22.7 per cent. This ratio is to be explained chiefly by a very large element of workers among the younger group, followed (though to a lesser extent) by students and young people in academic professions. The phenomenon of disproportionately large numbers of younger emigrants is not found among the white-collar employees.

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Of 76 workers interviewed by INFRATEST in 1956, 21 were under twenty-five years of age. In nine out of ten cases, however, political considerations had played little or no part in the young people's decision to move to the West; they had left in search of material improvement, or simply out of a youthful desire for adventure and freedom of action.

In 1954, about one-third of industrial workers in the Soviet Zone belonged to the SED.* The proportion is probably somewhat lower among refugees. Of 76 workers questioned intensively in 1956, 24 per cent admitted having been in the SED, and 17 per cent had been political functionaries. Ninety per cent had been members of the Soviet Zone trade union federation (FDGB), and 37 per cent had belonged to additional mass organizations.

One-half the workers interviewed disclaimed any interest in exercising Party or other political functions,** though

* Carola Stern, Porträt einer bolschewistischen Partei: Entwicklung, Funktion und Situation der SED (Portrait of a Bolshevist Party: Development, Function, and Present Condition of the SED), Verlag für Politik und Wirtschaft, Cologne, 1957, p. 283.

** Among workers who remain in the Zone, the percentage of those similarly indifferent to assuming special functions is no doubt somewhat lower, since their chances for economic improvement are greatly enhanced if they do. Efforts to advance by way of political activity seem far more common among white-collar employees, the group with the largest number of politically active opportunists who are fundamentally indifferent to communism.

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nearly all of them said that this was the way for workers to better themselves, and quite a few blamed their personal failure to advance on "lack of political connections and pull." Only twelve people admitted that they themselves had had opportunities for advancement.

At the same time, however, the 1956 survey attested to the workers' unusual alertness to political affairs in general. In contrast to the white-collar group questioned in 1957 (of whom 37 per cent were either explicitly or implicitly indifferent to political ideas and events), the workers nearly always took positions. Although the majority (64 per cent) complained that the Zonal press kept them inadequately informed about events in the DDR, their second most important reason for reading newspapers was the desire for (domestic) political information.*

As suggested earlier, the workers' interest in the political scene has receded, in recent years, before their greater preoccupation with private concerns. Many of the

* Here a comparison with West German workers is revealing: In opinion polls of 294 workers in the Zone and 623 in the Federal Republic, when asked to list the order of their interests in newspaper reading on a six-point scale, East German workers put political news second, while West Germans put them last; by contrast, nonpolitical and foreign news were listed in first place by Western workers, and in sixth by the East Germans.

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experts consulted confirm this impression. In the face of the seeming stability of Ulbricht's regime, even politically mature, resistance-minded workers are becoming less alert to domestic political developments. For example, there is the experience of one of the several "ostburos" (eastern bureaus), which the democratic parties maintain in West Berlin to keep contact with, and render assistance to, their supporters in the DDR. When a number of the particular bureau's contacts (most of whom were workers) were arrested in the Zone, others first learned of this on casual visits to West Berlin. Yet the wave of arrests had been freely reported in Neues Deutschland, the official SED organ. In short, some of these conscious dissenters were no longer even reading the newspapers carefully enough for their own protection.*

Early in 1959, a survey conducted by INFRATEST among a cross-section of refugees showed that on several issues the

* East German white-collar employees questioned in 1957 showed a similar lack of interest in domestic happenings. While many were fairly well informed of what had occurred in Poland, Hungary, Yugoslavia, and the Soviet Union since the Twentieth Party Congress, they knew relatively little of communist developments in the DDR itself. To be sure, there had been scarcely any de-Stalinization at home. Yet for months prior to the interviews, Party intellectuals had been furiously attacked by the SED as revisionists.

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workers as a group were closer to the position of the Soviet Zone regime than were the white-collar employees. For instance, half the workers (as opposed to only one in four white-collar employees) echoed the Ulbricht line that conclusion of a peace treaty was the first step toward reunification; and twice as many workers as white-collar employees said that Germany should be forbidden to possess atomic weapons. No doubt most of these statements did not come from workers with strong political attitudes. But to have them occur in such numbers -- especially among refugees, who understandably, and often opportunistically, show a fairly high degree of "Western" orientation -- is a measure of how much, in the long run, the politically less alert element is being affected by communist propaganda.

Attitudes toward the Soviet Union

The workers who were interviewed intensively in 1956 were never asked directly how they felt toward the Soviet Union; yet 63 per cent of them spontaneously expressed some degree of hostility. Only in 9 per cent, however, did extreme hatred break through. Hostility was present on all income levels and among groups of all political colorations -- from workers with capitalistic attitudes to radical Marxists. Yet there was a marked correlation between political views and the

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degree of hostility, or its absence. In sharp contrast to the rather moderate reaction of workers with capitalist and moderate-socialist views on property and politics, it was most often the radical Marxists who expressed strong feeling against the Soviets. These men were still dedicated to the communist system, but blamed its failures, or its betrayal, in Germany on the Russians. Of the twelve radical Marxists in the group, six revealed themselves as national-Communists, that is to say, as potential "Titoists."

In the last few years, Soviet troops have been withdrawn to special areas and are not as conspicuous as they used to be. It is possible, therefore, that anti-Soviet aggressions may have receded. But they are probably still strongest among frustrated national-Communists.

Attitudes toward the State, Its Goals and Its Achievements

Some of the questions asked by INFRATEST in intensive interviews with 76 refugee workers were couched in abstract terms. The answers, broken down according to the ideological influences and tendencies discernible in them, permit the following estimate:*

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* Blücher, Industriearbeiterschaft..., from Table 2, p. 13.

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Table 2

Political Thought Patterns of Refugee Workers

	Workers interviewed (per cent)
Entirely or predominantly Marxist*	35
Marxist attitudes present but not predominating	26
Anticommunist, free of Marxist ideology, Western-influenced, including the politically indifferent	35
Not classifiable	4
	100

A breakdown today, if based on similarly framed questions, probably would not be substantially different.

However, responses to fifty questions involving personal experience, and judgments about concrete situations, yielded a somewhat different picture of the worker's relationship to the East German state and its principles.

* Including convinced Communists and doctrinaire Marxists (6 per cent); unreflective carriers of communist ideology, and those with occasional deviations (12 per cent); persons whose thinking is predominantly Marxist, but who are not conscious of it (17 per cent). ("Titoists" and reform-Communists opposed to the Ulbricht regime are included in the first two subgroups.)

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Table 3

How Refugee Workers Picture an "Ideal State"*

	Workers interviewed (per cent)
Communism as the ideal; totalitarianism condoned; in favor of state intervention and unlimited socialization	7
A planned economy, with extensive prerogatives for the state, but preserving private as well as "people's" property	33
Partially planned economy; state ownership of basic industries; but room to be left for private initiative and freedom of opinion	22
Private property, though limited by state control; state interference only where necessary	26
Unlimited freedom of the private sphere; state as servant of the people	12
	100

It is curious, furthermore, that despite the rather high proportion of workers who would appear to be committed to the socialization of industry -- as either of the foregoing tables suggests -- only 7 per cent of those questioned regarded themselves as "co-owners" of their factories, 51 per cent thought of themselves as "paid workers," while 42 per cent actually felt "exploited." It is doubtful whether today an appreciably larger proportion of industrial workers would accept the regime's assertion that they are co-owners of their plants.

*. Blücher, Industriearbeiterschaft..., Table 13, pp. 58-60.

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When asked specifically how workers in the Zone felt about "people's property,"* generally advertised as the "major achievement" of the East German state, the refugees interviewed in 1956 indicated that workers were critical or reserved:

Table 4

Attitudes on "People's Property" Reported by Refugee Workers

	No. of respondents (75)
Most workers give unlimited approval to official line	3
Most workers favor it in principle, but criticize practice and abuses in Soviet Zone	13
Most workers are undecided, not interested, "only interested in earning a living"	23
Most workers reject "people's property" but may approve of other "achievements," state ownership, etc.	25
Most workers are hostile and negative toward "people's property"	11
	75

A large majority thus are said to have remained critical of the "people's property" concept after having seen it applied

* According to official ideology, private ownership is being replaced by a "higher"form, the so-called "people's property," a designation that is applied primarily to the socialized sector of industry. Workers, being co-owners of their factories, are expected to have a close personal interest not only in production output but in the best possible maintenance of machines and equipment. Above all, they cannot go on strike, for to do so would be to strike against "themselves."

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in their own environment. All the more striking, therefore, is the fact that, when asked about their own plants, only 29 of 75 respondents were in favor of reprivatization, even though 42 of them thought well of the former owners.

Most revealing, perhaps, of their lack of identification with the present system is the fact that, when workers were asked what they considered real "achievements" of the communist state, their immediate thought was only of social-welfare and leisure-time benefits (though not without some criticism of their practical administration and complaints about their political misuse); about 75 per cent of the respondents said that, in case of reunification, they wanted to retain such things as paid sick-leave, factory kindergartens, club houses, and free vacation trips. Not a single worker spontaneously cited "people's property" or any other "basic" achievement, whereas 5 per cent of the white-collar group did.

The workers approved in principle certain pseudodemocratic innovations of the Ulbricht regime, which undoubtedly had been conceived as safety valves. For example, the so-called "production consultations" (Produktionsberatungen) were instituted in 1954-1955, allegedly in order to give workers a voice in policy. The INFRATEST survey, conducted in the period of the "thaw," in 1956, discovered that many workers had grown

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to like these meetings, where they could let off steam. At about that time, supposedly as a much more radical concession, but actually with a view to controlling aggressions, the East German Trade Union Federation considered setting up "workers' councils." But Ulbricht feared their consequence and, after the Hungarian and Polish events, throttled the plan. In recent years, the production consultations have been enlisted more and more in the regime's efforts at regimentation, and, according to West Berlin trade union observers, the interest that workers took in them three years ago hardly exists today. Now as before, however, most workers feel that the principle of co-determination -- i.e., that the worker should have a voice in the policy of his plant -- is right. This may once more illustrate the fact, often noticeable in INFRATEST findings, that ideological closeness to communism can co-exist, in the East German worker, with alienation from the regime and its practical institutions.

Another curious contradiction enters into the workers' attitude toward the regime, particularly for the roughly 61 per cent who, in 1956, partly or fully subscribed to the communist idea: whereas the prestige and social status of East Zone workers far exceeds that of workers in West Germany, as might well be expected in any communist state, in material

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benefits they are still decidedly below the level of many in the white-collar group, even though the latter's traditional status has nearly disintegrated. This fact contributes to the solidarity of workers against the regime and those of its organs that seem to favor white-collar and intellectual circles, and it is reflected in their attitude, for example, toward the FDGB* and toward the Party itself.**

Solidarity -- Its Causes and Targets

Two distinct groupings and sets of motivations may be discerned among workers within their factories, each with its own bearing on solidarity. The first group is the community of those who conform to communist expectations and seek their fulfillment. It consists mainly of workers who endorse communism, either from conviction or opportunistically; they

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* Only 7 out of 76 workers interviewed in 1956 gave unlimited approval to the FDGB. Although membership in it was a safeguard against Party pressure and other kinds of harassment in the plant, there was a massive effort to avoid paying union dues. About one-fourth of the workers interviewed labeled the FDGB an "exploiting organ of the state." Only 12 per cent had enjoyed the much-advertised FDGB vacation benefits, as compared to one-half the white-collar employees interviewed the following year.

** For more detail about the workers' relationship to the SED, see below.

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may become active in Kampfgruppe, BPO,* or FDJ, and will usually exhort their colleagues to better performance in the interest of plan fulfillment. This group may be joined also by unusually speedy and ambitious workers, whose motives for exceeding the norms are primarily personal. All these elements, however, have not as yet coalesced into cadres that would be large and influential enough to penetrate and transform a working-class that still is essentially hostile to the regime.

Next, there is the category composed of those who regard themselves, not as co-owners of the plant, but as "paid workers," as well as those who actually feel "exploited." They, too, are anxious to bring home a full pay envelope, are willing to work hard for it, and take pride in their work.**

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* The Betriebsparteiorganisation (BPO) is the organization of all SED members and candidates within a plant or administration. The BPO Secretary often devotes full time to his function of guaranteeing the leading role of the SED and serving as advisor on all decisions affecting the plant in general.

** This category includes substantial numbers of women. According to the refugees interviewed by INFRATEST in 1956, female workers, with or without family, often were among those who identified most strongly with the factory and their particular tasks. Most of these women apparently had no strong political interests, but were attached to their jobs and often took great pride in their work. But the more discerning respondents pointed out that those women who belonged to the first (communist) category were likely to be especially ambitious, and hence politically dangerous to their colleagues.

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Thus, they have neither a personal nor a political interest in slowing down production. But they are united in their resistance -- mostly by passive, and occasionally by active means -- to unbearable speed-up methods and quotas, and to revisions in the piece-rate wage system that may work to their disadvantage. They also resent the higher wages and privileged treatment of their white-collar colleagues, and the unmerited advancement of opportunists (whom they call "climbers") by way of the political ladder. And they mock the rhetorical attempts of political "spark plugs" among their fellow-workers to shame them into greater production effort.

Although, as a well-informed newsman tells us, industrial norms are "not unbearable" today, most workers are not "breaking their backs" to meet them. According to a West Berlin union official, production rates differ widely according to type of industry. In certain areas, tempo and quality of production may equal or even surpass those in comparable West German factories, whereas in machine construction, for example, East German workers work slowly and production is lagging.

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The "brigade" system, intended to increase and stabilize production rates,* is generally favored by the workers, but not for the reasons for which it was designed. The brigade provides them with a natural means of social identification and fosters an easy sense of solidarity. In the long run, the co-operation engendered by the brigades has no doubt benefited production, but there is also a great deal of evidence that brigades have collectively resisted exploitative production methods. It is something of a paradox, however, that solidarity in "brigades" or in individual plants may benefit the regime by the very fact that it concentrates the workers' resentment on the objectionable aspects of their common daily experience (speed-up, norms, etc.); that is to say, on the symptom at hand rather than on its political causes.

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* The workers in the socialized industrial plants (VEB's) are organized in small collectives called "work brigades," an institution borrowed from the Soviet Union. Headed by a "brigadier," each brigade has its own production plan, and every worker in the brigade is personally responsible for its fulfillment. Wages are based on the total productive achievement of the brigade, not of the individual. The system is designed to foster competition for maximum achievement, to counteract anti-regime solidarity, and to provide nuclei for political education and influence. Intra- as well as inter-factory production contests among brigades reward the winners with medals and honorific titles.

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Identification with the plant as a whole is quite a different matter. As of 1956, it was not very strong.

Table 5

Workers' Personal Attitude Toward Plant*

	Workers interviewed(74) (per cent)
Plant is "center of life"	12**
Ties to plant exist, but emphasis is outside	16
Detached "job" attitude; ties partly there, partly outside	46
No ties; relations in plant dominated by differences and aggressions	26
	100

Workers' identification with their plants may be growing as a result of modernized production methods, improved equipment, and other inducements that have been introduced in the most important industries since 1956. Production drives

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* Extracted from table 29, comparing workers and employees, in INFRATEST, "Angestellte in der Sowjetzone Deutschlands: Verhaltungsweisen und gesellschaftliche Einordnung der mitteldeutschen Angestellten" (Employees in the Soviet Zone of Germany: Behavior and Social Position of the Central-German Employees), 1958 (mimeographed).

** This was in contrast to 27 per cent of the white-collar group who found their lives centered in their place of employment -- a figure all the more striking in view of the fact that their job environments were probably less congenial socially than those of workers (lack of solidarity, more Party interference, equally poor relations with superiors). The explanation may be that white-collar employees are the more ambitious. It should be noted that in West German industry, too, their identification with the plant is much stronger today than that of workers.

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and reorganization have stepped up quotas and norms considerably. But in areas, such as the chemical industry, where this development has been particularly marked, the discontent that it has engendered has been largely offset by the satisfaction of having new and better machinery to work with.

On the other hand, a growing identification with the plant does not necessarily imply a greater feeling of "co-ownership" or approval of the present system; most experts report that workers today credit only themselves and their own efforts with what material and technical improvements have taken place. Nor are such improvements likely to weaken the solidarity of those who feel "exploited," or the antagonism against privileged groups and "class-splitting" climbers. As the workers' living standard rises, so do their demands, and the majority, just because it endorses the ruling doctrine, may continue to feel toward the system the bitterness of a disappointed legitimate heir.

All this should be kept in mind when one considers some of INFRATEST's findings on intra-factory relations: Two-fifths of the workers interviewed recruited their circle of friends from among their fellow-workers in the plant. Seventy-eight per cent said they got along well with their colleagues in the brigade. The following is an attempt to arrange in

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categories their replies to all questions regarding the social atmosphere in the plant:*

Opinions on factory relationships	Workers interviewed (per cent)
Very good co-operation; good private relations	6
Fairly good relations, though disturbed by political requirements and occasional friction	21
Good relations predominate, but there are tensions present	29
Relations variable, "plant spies" disturbing, co-operation in small groups only	22
Bad relations, respondents distrust people generally; don't get along well	13
Very bad relations, respondents regularly had trouble	9

Thus, although political interference and pressure were almost universal, they did not undermine personal relations sufficiently to prevent the social climate in industry from being, on the whole, fairly good. Only 1 in 5 refugee workers questioned in 1956 felt uncomfortable and as an outsider while on the job. Since that time, political pressures within the

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* Blucher, Die Arbeiterschaft..., table 4, p. 21.

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plants have become somewhat stronger. Yet most experts believe that, today as before, industrial workers in the Soviet Zone suffer less harassment and take more liberties than other occupational groups. And this fact may continue to make their social environment at work relatively congenial.

It must not be assumed, however, that the exponents of the Party line, in confronting the solidarity and independence of the workers' community, meet with a wall of hostile opposition; our observations on SED membership and on the relations between Party and non-Party workers will show that they don't. It would be more accurate to say that efforts at political pressure tend to grow thin and ineffectual in such an environment.

Workers' Relations with the SED in Their Factories

Of some interest are the refugee workers' estimates of how many fellow-workers and white-collar employees in their factories belonged to the SED. Only 7 per cent of the respondents said that more than one-half of the labor force at their place of employment were Party members. (This agrees with the opinion of those white-collar refugees who had been in plants where industrial workers predominated; employees working in primarily white-collar concerns, such as public works and government administration, testified to a far higher SED membership.)

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On the average, workers questioned put the strength of the SED at about 20 per cent. This, however, referred only to nominal membership, not to actual convictions. As we shall see, views on the true political reliability of SED members in the plants differed widely.*

The workers' feelings toward their SED colleagues, and their attitudes toward superiors and white-collar employees, are relevant in this connection.

Three-fourths of the workers expressed hatred of "climbers" (only 7 per cent admitted to good relations with them). In this respect, they contrasted with the white-collar employees, the vast majority of whom were indifferent or ambivalent toward political opportunists. Very apparent also were workers' aggressions against the better-paid white-collar employees (a hostility which, as we shall see, was not reciprocal).

Workers tended to regard the SED as the party of the white-collar employee, and to a large extent their view is borne out by statistics and confirmed even by many of the white-collar refugees. The workers' tendency to dissociate

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* INFRATEST estimates that only about 7 per cent of industrial workers may be called "really convinced" members of the SED. See p. 89.

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themselves from the Party and those it represents does not, however, prevent many of them from accepting the Party in their midst. Nor does it preclude even a certain degree of respect for individual colleagues as Party members.

The following table gives an approximate picture of workers' opinions and actual experience of the SED in their plants.

Table 6

Nature of Refugee Workers' Relations With SED Members in the Plant

	per cent
Largely positive experiences; acceptance of the SED	22
Some respect for the Party; no difficulties or divisions within the plant	25
Indifference toward Party; some friction	8
More difficulties than co-operation; rejection of SED colleagues	21
Poor co-operation and human relations; hatred and extreme rejection of SED colleagues	24
	100

The picture varies considerably, of course, for different industries. In the strategically important chemical industry, for example, where Party pressures are strongest, the workers' feelings toward their factories and toward SED colleagues are very negative. At the same time, an unusually high proportion of workers in the chemical industry join the FDGB, clearly as

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a cushion against political pressure rather than as an expression of loyalty. By contrast, the building trades, for example, are much more impervious to political control, partly because men in this type of work have to move around so much. Building workers pay SED members little recognition, relations among colleagues are unusually good, and membership in the FDGB is far below average. It is perhaps significant that the June 17 uprising started among these workers.

When asked about the behavior of individual SED members in their plants, refugee workers in 1956 inclined to more positive views than one might have expected on the basis of the above table. Thirty-six per cent actually said that SED colleagues behaved in "exemplary" fashion; the majority were inclined to label them "just like everybody else." It was apparent that SED members often had conducted themselves as agreeable colleagues rather than as fanatics. By co-operating with non-Party colleagues, trying to improve shop conditions, organizing social benefits, and showing understanding for individual problems, many SED members had won the respect of the labor force. Of the two possible approaches to their function, they had thus chosen -- and this may be significant -- the one to which the Party itself pays lip service. In communist practice, however, this kind of behavior does not

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always accord with what the Party expects of its cadres and may indeed reflect the fact that, in 1956 at least, the SED was still in its transition from a mass to a cadre party. There is no doubt that the conciliatory approach has paid off in the sense that it has softened the aggressions of non-Party dissidents. It remains an open question whether this represents a Party achievement, or whether it reflects the undermining of the Party through working-class contact.

The acceptable conduct of SED members may help to explain the following skeptical estimate of their political sincerity.*

Table 7

Workers' Estimate of True Attitudes of BPO Members**

	Depth interviews (76) (per cent)
Few convinced (20%); Party not able to function in plant	36
Majority opportunists; 20-40% convinced	15
About 50% convinced and reliable	25
Majority convinced (60% or more); Party effectively functioning	12
No answer	12
	100

* Blücher, Industriearbeiterschaft..., table 11, p. 54.

** White-collar employees, although themselves much more heavily represented in the SED than workers, revealed themselves as more cynical, and thereby also betrayed some of their own opportunistic thought habits: of 128 interviewed in 1957, 5 per cent said they did not believe any of the members of the SED to be convinced Communists (a view never expressed by refugee workers). And only 18 per cent (as compared to the above total of 37 per cent among the 76 workers) thought that half or more of the SED members in their plant were true believers and hence politically effective.

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INFRATEST estimated that, of all industrial workers in the Soviet Zone, no more than 7 per cent were loyal and convinced members of the SED.* Even these, however, may include some who feel resentment against the Soviets, or sympathize with the lot of exploited workers, or feel that the system would work much better without Ulbricht and his severe Party line.

Young Workers

A member of the Free Jurists believes, and his view is shared by other experts in the field, that the regime has few fanatic supporters among the youth. Young people, he feels, master early the technique of "double-think," which permits

* This figure was based on the following estimates: (a) A far larger proportion of white-collar employees than workers in a plant are apt to be members of the SED, (b) of 76 refugee workers questioned, 5 (or 6.8 per cent) were convinced Communists, and (c) on the average, about 20 per cent of industrial workers are members of the SED, but only about one-third of these are generally believed to be reliable Communists.

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them to come to terms with the system without abandoning their inner reservations and without painful conflict. They have, in fact, acquired the kind of detachment that allows them to play their assigned role under the regime and at the same time laugh at it and their own performance.

Interviews with very young refugees, and the particular problems they experienced in adjusting to life in West Germany, revealed the extent to which today's youth in the DDR has come to take its privileged treatment and protection by the regime for granted. As a member of the Ministry of All-German Affairs puts it, "Soviet Zone youth is accustomed to patronage by father-state and often feels helpless when thrown on its own resources."

A number of refugee youths were interviewed by INFRATEST in 1957, at least one year after they had left the Zone. (They had been between fifteen and twenty-four years old at the time of their flight.)* Quite generally speaking, prolonged stay in the Federal Republic had reduced the ideological vestiges of their communist experience more noticeably than it had the

* INFRATEST, "Jugendliche Flüchtlinge aus der sowjetischen Besatzungszone" (Young Refugees from the Soviet Zone of Occupation), May 1957 (mimeographed).

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effects of propaganda. Between 15 and 25 per cent showed no concern with the political life of the Zone at all. Ten to 15 per cent were still strongly under its ideological impact, but, although generally agreed that West Germany was "far behind in the class struggle," they were not consistent in their communist attitudes. On the other hand, only 15 per cent could be described as outspoken anti-Communists; but this did not preclude their favoring certain achievements of the DDR. Young respondents, in general, were apt to recall spontaneously those secondary achievements -- state assistance, scholarships, sports facilities, and the like -- that had affected them most intimately, rather than the so-called "basic" achievements. But when young workers, for example, were asked, a year or more after their flight, what specifically they would like to see retained in case of reunification, 28 per cent still felt that factories should remain in the hands of the state (15 per cent saw no need to compensate former owners); 18 per cent favored a mixed economy; and 42 per cent were for reprivatization of industry. These answers bespoke only slightly less of a socialist bias than was found in the opinions of workers questioned immediately after they fled.

It may be worth asking in what respects and to what extent the pattern of attitudes and opinions observed among

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workers in general applies to the youngest generation among them. As already indicated, an unrepresentatively large number of refugee workers have been between eighteen and twenty-five years of age, and their motives for defection have been predominantly unpolitical. (1) As members of a highly materialistic generation, they have been particularly susceptible to the lure of economic prospects in West Germany. And (2) they have followed the characteristic curiosity of youth about new places and opportunities, and an equally characteristic desire for maximum freedom to do as one pleases. Over the years, with the steady improvement of the Zonal economy and of the workers' lot in particular, the first of these motives is bound to have lost much of its power. But as young workers continue to make up a large percentage of the defectors (though their actual numbers have decreased along with the general decline in the total of refugees), we must assume that curiosity, search for adventure, and a youthful rebelliousness against all kinds of constraint are, if anything, stronger with them than ever. By the same token, the desire for independence and freedom to live as one pleases, while not narrowly or consciously political, does set definite limits to the regime's influence on the behavior and thought of these young people. For, the more conscious they are of

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wanting to follow their material and other individual interests, the less of a place in their lives is there for politics.

It is true that, for lack of the kind of experience that alone would furnish a basis for comparisons, the abstract political thinking of young workers has been molded by communist influences. INFRATEST found younger workers more inclined toward the ruling ideology, less critical of the regime and its institutions, and less anxious to see basic changes than their elders. Asked what changes they would like to see in the Zone, two-thirds put "greater earning power" in first place, and the remaining third was divided between communist revisionists and those who sought a total change of system.

Also, young workers tended to get along better with SED colleagues and with white-collar employees in their plants (though not with the intelligentsia). Moreover, they were quite apt to take for granted the political strings attached to life and success in the Zone, and only 20 per cent (as compared to 50 per cent of the older workers) bothered to mention them as affecting opportunities for advancement. Young workers tended to take a more moderate view than older ones of their economic relationship to the plant; few

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considered themselves "exploited." Also, the young were generally attested to be politically more active, as well as more readily inclined to volunteer for higher production goals.

On the face of it, therefore, the new order would seem to have had considerable influence on these younger people. But the picture is not complete. One must ask: how profound is this accommodation; how strong are its implications?

Lacking a basis for comparison in past experience, young workers must rely heavily on examples and evidence supplied by their immediate environment. Of very great importance, therefore, are their contacts with older colleagues in the plants, and their experiences and relations with others of their own generation.

The 1956 survey revealed little evidence of tension and no irreconcilable conflict between the generations; the differences it uncovered were chiefly those of degree. Today, as one expert sees it, young workers continue to be assimilated quite easily into the skeptical workers' community and to take older colleagues as "examples," though they may wonder why the latter should want to make things unnecessarily difficult for themselves. The minority of young workers with strong political interests -- especially reform-Communists or

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"Titoists" -- probably take their critical older colleagues very seriously indeed.*

In answers to questions involving practical political problems and judgments affecting the worker's condition in the DDR, the 1956 survey found little disagreement between the generations. Almost as common among young workers as among their elders was the tendency to favor "partial planning" and a "dual" economy. The only marked difference arose at one extreme of the spectrum: young workers accounted for the few cases of complete identification with the system that the survey noted, as well as for the two instances in which "people's property" was cited as a commendable achievement, without critical reference to abuses of this term.

It must be noted, also, that the younger age group includes an element of "political activists" who are not likely to be adequately represented in the refugee sample. These political reliables are apt to assume the leadership of

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* A behavior study of a group of active dissenters showed that, while the young white-collar employees among them rarely trusted their colleagues enough to collaborate with them politically, and thus had to become active without the encouragement of their own professional group, young workers usually were able to establish political rapport with colleagues easily, and, conversely, became really active only when they had found such rapport.

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FDJ factory units, and in recent years have been used by the regime in its efforts to promote tensions and drive a wedge between the generations. In a number of factories, for example, the FDJ has become more active than the FDGB or the SED in organizing production drives, making a show of paramilitary preparedness, and keeping check on the rate and quality of production. Older workers are easily embittered, for instance, at having an FDJ functionary publicly denounce them for not having cleaned their tools properly.

However, this particular strategy thus far has met with only isolated success. The regime's effort to form a loyal community of all young workers has failed because the communist image of a politically conscious, organized, and dedicated youth is patently unrealistic and, above all, at variance with the self-image of most of the young workers. The majority of those who join the FDJ -- in response to pressure, for material gain, or to enjoy some of the organization's social activities -- remain members in name only, shunning political responsibilities and voluntary after-hours work programs wherever possible.

The nominal member's attitude toward the FDJ, therefore, is often akin to the point of view of those young workers who refuse to join in the first place, for both are based on an

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aversion to politics and political drill. (It may be significant that, in a recent policy change, the FDJ has promised to pay closer attention to youth's natural, unpolitical interests.)

The INFRATEST survey of 1956 came to the conclusion that, whereas communist ideology noticeably, if superficially, influenced the abstract thinking of young workers, a more pragmatic approach controlled their behavior. The young workers' own apparent unawareness of the discrepancy, their failure to examine contradictions between theory and practice, may be -- so INFRATEST believes -- a "failure to adjust thought to the real world." In our opinion, an even more significant aspect of the young workers' behavior is the selective accommodation they manifest, taking only what is useful to them and rejecting the rest. And the very rejection of politics is, at least by implication, a political judgment, to the extent that it consciously defies the communist image of youth. Also, there seems to be little doubt among experts that, as compared to others of their generation, young workers show the highest incidence of manifest opposition to the regime and to abuses within the system.

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Labor's Bargaining Power

The opposition of industrial workers, young and old, continues to focus on economic interests and grievances. Although, theoretically, they are as liable to both ideological and economic pressure as the white-collar employees, it is actually the latter who are more easily subjected to political controls (but not so vulnerable to economic leverage), whereas the workers can be more effectively harassed by sliding wage scales, speed-up methods, inspections, and the like. However, the regime today is shrewd enough not to press this advantage over labor unduly, since the present position of the workers, particularly of skilled workers, gives them a substantial degree of political power.

According to a student of East Zone labor matters, for instance, authorities are afraid to raise production norms for fear of promoting labor unrest. As a result, with new machinery and improved production techniques, workers are more and more frequently able to earn double pay or better by overfulfilling their norms by astronomical percentages. He cited an automobile factory in Eisenach where, in January 1956, 636 workers had achieved 200 per cent of their norm; by the end of 1957 there were 2,400 workers in this category. Some of the workers in the synthetic rubber industry were earning

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1,500 marks a month as a result of the system of incentive pay, premiums, and so on. When, at the end of 1957, the management of a factory in Magdeburg brought in engineers to make a time study with a view to revising the norms and pay scales, the workers laid down their tools and refused to resume operations until the survey group had left the plant.*

In theory, the Ulbricht regime could take severe measures against workers such as these, but in practice it is impossible. For one thing, skilled labor is in such short supply that various state-owned factories are bidding against each other for manpower; a worker who is dissatisfied at one plant can easily walk over to another. As a result, management is reluctant to bring pressure on labor, since any manpower loss will mean failure to achieve production goals, which in turn usually means that the management itself will be severely censured or even replaced. At the present time, a larger share of total income is going to skilled labor than plans call for, and the power of the state to exploit the worker has thus been reduced. Furthermore, any worker who is seriously disaffected can still flee to West Berlin. (Our informant thought that one of the principal reasons Ulbricht wished to eliminate the

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* Cf. Die Welt, January 17, 1958.

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West Berlin enclave was to gain better control over East Zone labor.)

This enviable situation of relative independence and prosperity applies, however, only to certain favored groups. Workers who are in categories that are not in demand -- particularly those who are nearly or totally unskilled -- find their economic bargaining position very weak. Of those unskilled workers from West Germany who have been lured to the Soviet Zone by promises of good pay and cheaper housing, a large proportion have returned with the tale that housing is indeed cheap but impossible to find, and that pay is considerably worse than in West Germany. It thus appears that a skilled workman who is established in a community can live well -- perhaps even better than his opposite number in West Germany -- but that the unskilled worker who arrives looking for a job must be prepared to accept very low pay and to squeeze with his family into one or, at the most, two rooms.

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V. <u>White-Collar Employees</u>

All generalizations about white-collar employees are bound to suffer from the fact that, in the communist order, one is dealing here, not with a single social group, but with a catch-all category. Such formerly independent practitioners as trade and craftsmen, free-lance artists, and many professional people today are "salaried employees." As a result, the numerical relation of white-collar employees to other social groups has been radically altered. The majority of intellectuals today are "employees"; the ranks of bureaucrats and functionaries have been swelled under the system of Party and governmental controls; the practitioners of independent crafts and trades are dwindling; and private business is gradually disappearing. In the communist state, the former white-collar segment, with its considerable social prestige and corresponding self-esteem, has become a large, amorphous, and highly mobile group, with little of its former sense of cohesion or pride. In keeping with official ideological precepts, its prestige is waning by comparison with the rising star of the industrial worker. At the same time, however, white-collar employees are receiving the lion's share of material benefits and opportunities, and they therefore have

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the greater stake in the preservation of the system. This discrepancy between the official prestige order and the system of material rewards is one of the factors that contribute to insecurity, ambivalence, hypocrisy, and resentment in the attitudes of many East Germans.

If, in spite of what has just been said, we attempt to draw general conclusions about the state of mind of the white-collar population of the Zone, we can do so only if we remember that this group runs the gamut from the lowest factory clerk to the highest government official, from the minor technician to the university professor.* In the pages following, distinctions have been observed, wherever possible, between the higher and lower economic and hierarchic levels of the white-collar group whose opinions were studied.**

We have already mentioned in passing, especially in comparisons with workers, certain of the basic tendencies and characteristics of white-collar employees noted in refugee interviews: young people's opportunities for advancement into and within the white-collar world are reflected in a low refugee rate, the incidence of "firm" Communists is greater than among workers, the element of opportunism in political affiliation and rationalization is more apparent, and solidarity, a safeguard of political independence, is generally lacking.

In evaluating the interviews with white-collar refugees, however, it is important to remember that, even more than the workers who have defected, these refugees are not a representative cross-section of their class in the Zone. For one thing, as we have said, the white-collar class contains the highest proportion of SED members, who are less likely to flee than non-Party people. Also, it includes a vast number of administrative officials and Party functionaries with strong reasons for remaining in the DDR; for, regardless of how insincere their professed communist convictions may be, they have a vested interest in the present system, which guarantees their career and, conversely, they have the most to fear from a radical internal change or from reunification.

The preceding section has already touched on the white-collar employee's place in the communist prestige order, and his own ambivalent reaction to it. Historically a member of

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* For the purposes of this study university professors will be treated separately in the section on "Intellectuals." The same distinction was drawn also by the INFRATEST survey of white-collar refugees, conducted in 1957 for the Bundesministerium für gesamtdeutsche Fragen, whose findings were embodied in a mimeographed manuscript, "Angestellte in der Sowjetzone Deutschlands, Verhaltensweisen und gesellschaftliche Einordnung der mitteldeutschen Angestellten" (Employees in the Soviet Zone of Germany: Behavior and Social Position of the Central-German Employees), 1958.

** The INFRATEST survey does not devote special attention to the top-level employees earning more than 800.-DM.

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the middle or upper class in the bourgeois framework, he formerly possessed a distinctive professional and social pride, either as a member of the highly respected civil service or as the employee of an established industrial or commercial "house." Communism has changed all this. The ideological impact of its glorification of the proletariat can be seen in the fact that not a single white-collar refugee rated his own occupational class above that of the industrial worker. However, not every white-collar employee manifested the wounded pride of the "declassed." Those who would have suffered a severe loss of status in the divided country were apt to have fled to West Germany soon after the war. Only 4 per cent of the white-collar refugees questioned by INFRATEST in 1957 had clearly lost status under the new order; much more apparent was the opposite trend, that of former workers (20 per cent) who had risen to white-collar occupations. If one were to add to them the employees who were children of workers, roughly one-third the refugee sample could be said to have come up from the working-class. Only one in every three of those interviewed had been white-collar employees before 1945. This mobility helps explain why so little of the tradition of precommunist days is evident in this class today.

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Individual reaction to the prestige order prescribed by the official ideology varies considerably. It tends to be related to economic status, to the new prestige value of one's profession, and to the status conferred by Party membership. People in good positions, as well as active Party members, will often refer to themselves as "toilers" (Werktätige), a deliberately equivocal term by which the reigning ideology tries to gloss over the differences between the working-class and the larger community. The self-styled Werktätige does not mind descending to the half-fictitious prestige level of the workers, because by this sophistical device he diverts attention from his own privileges. Significantly, low-level, poorly-paid white-collar employees do not like to call themselves "toilers." If they do not have or do not seek opportunities for advancement, and if they lack the political affiliation that can bestow status, they are more apt to cling to the remnants of their employee-consciousness, to harp on the material disadvantages of their own economic lot, and to count themselves -- sometimes in conscious identification with workers -- among the "exploited." Employees have considerable respect for the morale of workers and for their courage in airing their grievances, and they sometimes express envy of the freedom with

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which workers speak their minds.*

It follows, then, that we must distinguish not only between the old and the new, but between the official and an unofficial prestige order that has grown out of present conditions. True, the worker is said to have inherited the state, and he is given considerable rope by the Party and other control organs, although partly because he is indispensable. Moreover, his children enjoy special opportunities for academic and other training. But in being urged and aided to improve and advance themselves, workers' children are in fact being invited to become white-collar employees, and there is no doubt in any-one's mind that this really represents an "upward" movement. There are also the indisputable facts, mentioned before, that many white-collar employees are far better off economically than even highly-skilled workers, and that great numbers of them, by actively participating in the Party, the FDGB, and the mass organizations, reap more state benefits than the politically more independent worker.

* Only 15 per cent of the white-collar employees interviewed showed a "consciousness of kind" that carried with it aggressions against the workers. About the same number appeared not to have thought about the matter of social position. Almost one-third regarded themselves as Werktätige. Much the largest group showed some elements of employee consciousness, yet without any class aggressions against workers or the state.

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This very independence of the industrial worker, in turn, contributes to his esteem in the eyes of many white-collar employees. It may be significant that, when white-collar refugees were asked to evaluate the prestige of different professions, SED members accorded workers a lower status than did non-Party employees. Also, the responses of white-collar employees to an occupation-rating test bore a clear relation to the degree of freedom that each occupation enjoys, or takes, vis-à-vis the regime. Pastors and artists, for example, were high in this rank order; Party cadrists and other jobholders in the control system were rated at the bottom -- even by many who were themselves Party members.

Nevertheless, white-collar employees, on the whole, orient themselves toward the new privileged stratum of the East German state. This is hardly surprising in the well-paid element and among active Party members, who adopt the functionaries' hypo-critical tribute to the workers while actually striving for a condition that will set them apart from the working-class. But it is also true of many white-collar employees on lower income levels, who tend to be politically indifferent and have no particular resentment toward "climbers." Some of them, when interviewed by INFRATEST, admitted that, at one time, they had

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tried to identify themselves with the new order. Few of them gave reasons for fleeing that could be classified as manifestly political.

All in all, the environment of the white-collar employee tends to generate not the kind of tensions that one associates with an acute political dilemma, but a strong element of opportunism, a tendency toward outward conformism, and an effort to withdraw from facing the contradictions inherent in East German society.

As we said in our discussion of industrial workers, Party controls are exercised most strictly and effectively in the world of offices and commerce. Although the net production of the average white-collar employee cannot be increased significantly by political drives and campaigns, the political risk attached to occupying positions of responsibility is great, and makes their holders very vulnerable indeed. Moreover, the occupational mobility so characteristic of the white-collar world is to the interest of the regime, for it is accompanied by constant competition for advancement, which adds to a job insecurity far greater than that of the workers. As a member of the Free Jurists put it, "white-collar workers feel replaceable and expendable."

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While only 1 per cent of the workers questioned in 1956 had been moved to flight by what might be called a "dangerous occupational environment and/or job," one-third of the 128 white-collar employees interviewed in 1957 gave reasons of this kind. Many of these respondents had occupied positions of responsibility.

When the refugees were divided by income alone, it appeared that three-fourths of the upper-income white-collar group in some manner or other related their reasons for defecting to the "system" (not just the occupational environment), as compared to only one-half of the lower-income group. Obviously, employees in higher-echelon jobs, even though most of them are members of the SED, are in greater jeopardy than their less conspicuous colleagues. But job insecurity has certain political connotations not only for the highly-placed expert or official, but also for the middle-level employee or expert who is not a Party member, and hence is in danger of being replaced by a politically more reliable specialist as soon as there is an adequate supply of trained personnel.

For the time being, however, there is a labor shortage in the DDR and the primary source of insecurity for the white-collar employee is not fear of being out of work, but rather

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the lack of continuity and safety in pursuing a career. This distinction is illustrated by the fact that only 20 per cent of the refugees interviewed by INFRATEST said they had feared for their jobs, whereas a considerably larger group (one-third) had fled because of political pressures and threats connected with their work.

Only 13 per cent of these refugees had worked in the same place for ten or more years; 53 per cent had spent less than five years in the same establishment. Compared with the labor turnover of manual workers in industry, this may seem to indicate fairly stable employment conditions. But compared with West German standards, where employment "for life" is hoped for by many white-collar workers, it may be a high rate of mobility.

Industrial priority on manpower has resulted in force reductions, mainly in civil administration, where the consequent shortages of personnel have made the surviving employees feel all the safer. For employees in the economic bureaucracy, competition and danger of displacement by political activists still exist. Recently, however, more attention has been given to appointing administrators for local and county government offices who are not only demonstrably loyal to the regime, but are also capable and well-trained. One Berliner, who works

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for the Federal Republic's Ministry of All-German Affairs, maintains that the time is past when administrative jobs are given solely on the basis of the Party card:

> Persons responsible for administration and for Party control in it must qualify by taking correspondence courses, special seminars, etc.... The specialized and responsible white-collar employee has to study hard. Naturally, his training is one-sided....Whether it promotes self-confidence...is another question.

This opinion is shared by many observers. One civil administration expert, although he did not regard the situation as serious enough to threaten the stability of the regime, pointed out that it was becoming more and more difficult to recruit students for the civil administration training schools, because young people preferred to go into the economy or aim for better-paid government jobs. Also, it is at the middle level of responsibility that one most often finds nuclei of loyal civil servants who are silently opposed to the system, who retain some of the traditional civil-service pride, and who are either not in the SED or are only nominally so. Such people often are reluctant to advance into the next-higher brackets of civil administration, to become top administrators on the county level, mayors in small communities, and the like. In such decision-making positions they are more likely to be exposed

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to trouble with the Party or the central administration, and salaries usually are not high enough to warrant taking a political risk. The ambitious young Communist who has been trained as an administrative functionary also tends to avoid responsible positions "in the field," because of the combination of political exposure and limited prestige that goes with them.

Most of the above generalizations were corroborated by INFRATEST, which found the political control system varying in effectiveness: not only were Party members in general more vulnerable to pressure than others, but technicians enjoyed greater freedom than administrators and feared less for their jobs. Another phenomenon noted was that of the lower-echelon employee who forgoes advancement and success because of their concomitant dangers, and who deliberately does not distinguish himself through performance records or in other ways that might draw attention to him. His situation and outlook, in certain respects, gradually come to resemble those of the worker.

Political Attitudes of White-Collar Refugees

The dilemma between ideological opposition to the system and the practical need for identification with the regime -- the reverse, as it were, of the workers' position -- was reflected in the white-collar employees' behavior and attitudes

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as recorded by INFRATEST. Generally speaking, its most striking manifestation was the high degree of political indifference observed among the refugees, as well as a great superficiality in what passed for convictions. Though admitting that there must be "elements who are tied to the communist regime by more than opportunism," the survey authors conclude that the white-collar class in general holds many more opportunistic conformists than fanatic supporters of the regime. Very little evidence was found of a third, theoretically-possible, alternative, that of mock conformism to disguise purposeful opposition. The isolation of the confirmed anti-Communist or revisionist is apparently much greater in the white-collar world than among workers or in the intelligentsia. The refugees interviewed seldom showed evidence of extensive political reflection, and one suspects that such "unprofiled" attitudes are, in general, very common among white-collar employees in the Zone.* Western concepts were vaguely present throughout, but, again, rarely as part of a consistent view of life. And even the misgivings about the state that some of the respondents expressed often contained ideological elements of the most contradictory kind.

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* This generalization does not apply with equal force to the intellectual professions and their candidates, the students.

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As for their official political affiliations, 25 per cent of the 128 refugees interviewed admitted to membership in the SED, and nearly everybody had joined one or more of the mass organizations. More than half thought that the SED could justly be called a party of white-collar workers; and many respondents, when asked why people joined the Party, put "ambition" and "opportunism" high on their list of reasons. This was, of course, consistent with their cynical appraisal of the limited extent to which Party membership reflects genuine communist conviction.

Asked about their personal attitudes, slightly more than half of the white-collar respondents indicated that at one time or another they had tried to make their peace with the system, and one in four still thought that it was possible to do so provided one made concessions. Most of the remaining respondents (about 40 per cent) said they had not made any attempt to come to terms with the system inwardly, but only about one-sixth gave "convictions" as the reason. The other members of this group that had not tried to come to terms with the system insisted on their total indifference to all political matters.

According to the estimate of the survey-takers, only a very small minority of those interviewed could be regarded as

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thoughtful, articulate anti-Communists. More than one-third were politically indifferent, and as many as 40 per cent were under some degree of communist influence. Of this last group, about 15 per cent could be called Communists, the more dedicated among whom were apt to be the most critical of the Ulbricht type of regime. They included those who had once been on the "inside" of the Party machine, but had run into trouble there, and thus had become at least potential revisionists.

On this last point, the 1957 survey found little evidence of structured revisionist thought, but a considerable element of "latent" revisionism.* When asked about the chances of a revisionist development in the Zone, three-fourths of the white-collar employees foresaw no possibility of its happening from within the DDR, and only 10 per cent saw hope for improvement in the form of liberal communism. Yet there was notable curiosity and surprisingly wide knowledge about revisionist movements and conflicts in other satellite countries such as

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* The white-collar refugees' estimate of people's reactions to Walter Ulbricht may be significant here: one-third said he was "hated"; the rest thought he was "rejected." Only two refugees felt that Ulbricht was more or less "accepted into the bargain." These findings must be appreciated in connection with another part of the survey, in which two-thirds related the future of the DDR directly to Ulbricht, and only one-fourth thought that his going would not affect the regime.

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Poland, Hungary, and Yugoslavia, somewhat slighter interest in the most powerful communist countries, the Soviet Union and China, and far less curiosity about internal and SED political affairs. The white-collar survey noted that most of the respondents knew relatively little about the controversies with domestic revisionists, although at the time these employees left the Zone, the communist press had been quite vocal in its attacks on intellectual deviationists.

The key to this seeming contradiction probably lies in the fact that Ulbricht's rule seems so stable, and his efforts to keep reformist tendencies in check have been so obviously successful in the past, that people, in their profound skepticism about the likelihood of internal change, have lost their interest in SED developments. The spectacular events in Poland and Hungary, on the other hand, are more apt to capture the imagination; and the warning example of Hungary in a sense helps to justify the Germans' own failure of June 17. Yet the captivating picture of Poland and Yugoslavia enjoying a sustained, if limited, independence does not, apparently, suggest a realizable model for East Germany as long as Ulbricht is so well entrenched.

In defining their vision of a reunited Germany, many white-collar refugees inclined toward a political atmosphere resembling

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Western democracy, but were unwilling to part with some of the features of Eastern economic organization; their idea was often that of a capitalist state form modified by certain socialist "achievements."

More than half the respondents had difficulty deciding what they would like to see done with their erstwhile superiors and top functionaries in the event of reunification, and favored removing only some of them. One-fifth had strong, vindictive feelings, while 10 per cent, on the contrary, thought that most of the high functionaries would be useful and hence worth keeping. This is surprising in view of the fact that four-fifths of the white-collar refugees had had predominantly negative relations with their superiors, who nearly always were in the SED. Evidently, personal difficulties on the job were rarely generalized into inclusive political judgments.

But, with regard to reunification, perhaps the most significant fact was that, a year before the outbreak of the Berlin crisis, only a very few still seemed preoccupied with the problem. Reunification had become more and more academic with time, a frustrated wish that had receded into the background.

It may be part of the same pattern that all questions designed to probe the white-collar employee's relationship

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to the Workers' and Peasants' State received a large number of indifferent responses. Half the refugees, for instance, did not even answer when asked how they felt about the socialized plants -- the VEB's.

There was hardly a respondent, however, who did not use one or another argument from Marxist doctrine when asked his views on the disposition of industrial property.* In the course of mastering the technique of Marxist jargon in order to "pass" as loyal or to get ahead in their highly competitive professional environment, people easily become influenced by the communist ideology, especially in their judgments about matters that do not involve or conflict with personal considerations and interests. Yet the principle of "people's property" elicited a strongly negative and emotional reaction, possibly because its democratic assertions were so patently ridiculous. Three-fifths of the white-collar refugees showed such disapproval, which did not prevent more than half of them from also seeing certain advantages in the idea. Socialist "achievements" were

* On this issue, outspokenly Marxist attitudes were somewhat rarer (17 per cent) than those observed among workers (25 per cent) in 1956. Conversely, twice as many white-collar employees as workers (18 per cent as against 9 per cent) favored unlimited private property. But between these two extremes, white-collar and labor views did not differ strikingly.

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less highly valued by white-collar employees than by workers: fewer of the secondary achievements were cited as worth retaining in case of German reunification, and 29 per cent of the refugees denied that there were any "achievements" at all in the DDR.

On the organization of the socialized enterprises, opinions were fairly evenly distributed: one-third approved both idea and practice; one-third were altogether critical, their views having been formed by Western and former German practice; and other saw advantages as well as drawbacks. Certain communist innovations in the plants, especially those that appeared to give employees a consultative voice in pseudodemocratic fashion, found general approval; premium systems -- a notorious source of trouble among white-collar employees -- did not.

The Employee's Attitude toward His Work and Place of Employment

Whereas industrial workers nearly always gave economic necessity as the reason for their particular choice of work, signs of a work morale that coincided with communist goals were evident in the answers of many white-collar refugees, who worked "because they enjoyed it," out of "ambition," or "to help build the future." Here, however, variations according to age and economic status may be suggestive: young people

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under twenty-five were more strongly motivated by professional ambition tha older age groups, while those over fifty most often worked purely for economic reasons and also included the very small element whose attitudes toward professional work clearly reflected bourgeois or Christian values of a traditional kind. As between lower and higher levels of the white-collar world, the former tended to have much the same motivations as workers, whereas higher-echelon employees accounted for the majority of those who cited social ideals or personal ambition.

The great differences of background, work prestige, salary, opportunity for advancement, and personal motivation that divide the body of white-collar employees, especially in the larger plants, go far toward explaining their lack of the kind of solidarity that unites workers within the plant or brigade.* Their spiritual isolation at work, together with their commitment to political organizations, makes them all the more vulnerable to Party and other political pressure. Nevertheless,

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* Lack of group solidarity, on the other hand, offers a certain advantage, especially for the dissenter in the white-collar group, for it allows the individual to maintain a surface involvement with system and regime that camouflages any deviant views he may hold. To this end, it is far more important for him than for the worker to separate the occupational from the private sphere, and, because of the very nature of his work, he usually finds it easier to do so than the professional intellectual.

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more than twice as many white-collar refugees as workers declared the plant to have been the focal point of their lives. A number of them also cited the "profession" as their chief tie -- a phenomenon not found among industrial workers.

Somewhat surprisingly, the spiritual climate in which the white-collar employee works, though far less congenial and secure than that of the workers, breeds less political hostility than one might expect. Perhaps the dissenters in the group are too isolated, and their environment is too mobile, for it to be otherwise. The temptation to withdraw into a state of political apathy is strong, and white-collar employees lack the solidarity and opportunities for communication that could offset it.

<u>Social Contacts within the Plant</u>

Intra-factory relations varied greatly with income and status. Only about one in four of the INFRATEST respondents recognized the significance of the split between "higher" and "lower" white-collar employees, and these drew the dividing line at the 600-650 Mark salary.* While good social rapport was

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* Workers, in describing their relations as better with lower- than with higher-echelon white-collar employees, drew the line at the 400 Mark income.

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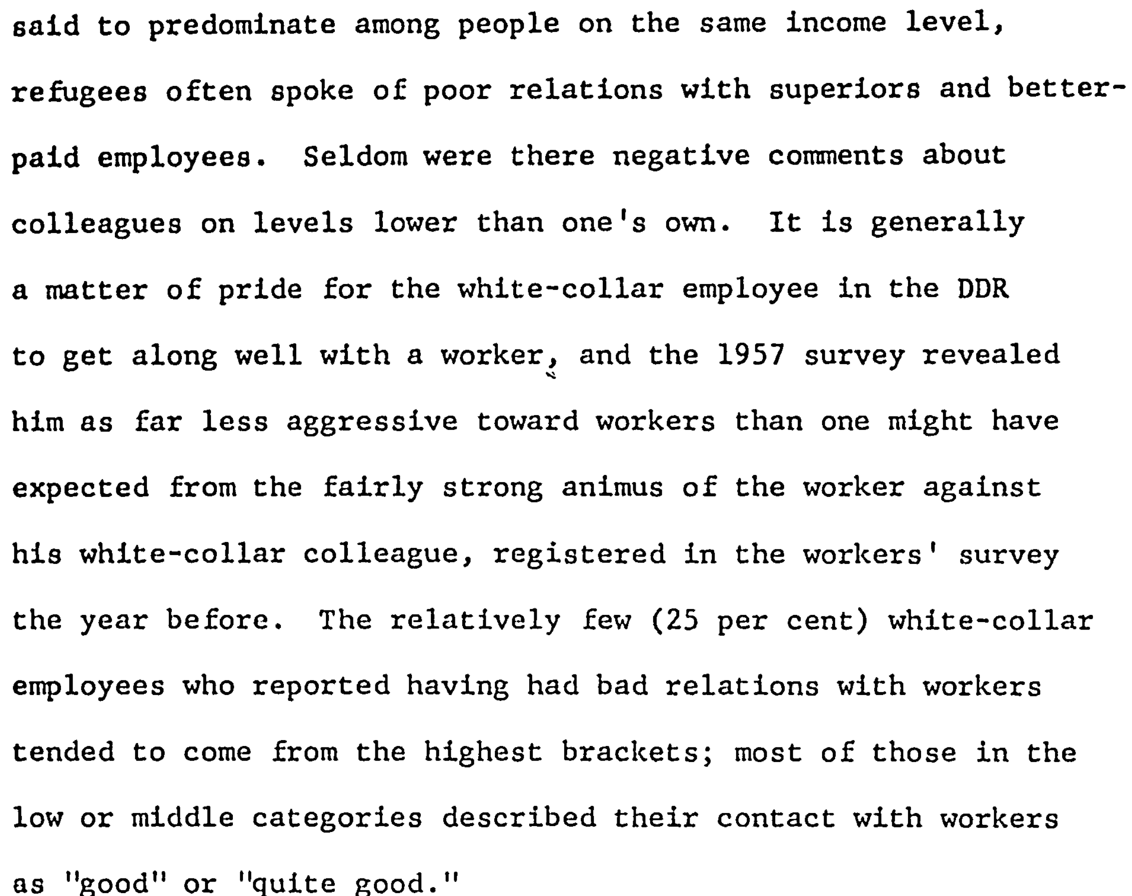

said to predominate among people on the same income level, refugees often spoke of poor relations with superiors and better-paid employees. Seldom were there negative comments about colleagues on levels lower than one's own. It is generally a matter of pride for the white-collar employee in the DDR to get along well with a worker, and the 1957 survey revealed him as far less aggressive toward workers than one might have expected from the fairly strong animus of the worker against his white-collar colleague, registered in the workers' survey the year before. The relatively few (25 per cent) white-collar employees who reported having had bad relations with workers tended to come from the highest brackets; most of those in the low or middle categories described their contact with workers as "good" or "quite good."

With respect to the "climbers," too, white-collar employees were more ambivalent than workers. Whereas three-fourths of the latter hated or rejected "climbers," only about one-half the employees showed criticism. Of these, however, few were unconditionally negative in their comments. The majority qualified their criticism by mentioning contradictory experiences, citing "exceptions" to the rule, and pointing to climbers who were nevertheless "good colleagues." Although

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ambivalence was evident at all levels, the lower income groups were the more readily critical, while the more favorable verdicts tended to come from the higher brackets and, of course, from those who had themselves "climbed" to higher positions. It is worth noting, also, that 40 per cent of all white-collar employees interviewed saw nothing unethical in the political opportunism of "climbing" as such. With industrial workers, on the other hand, even though they, too, have possibilities for climbing, group solidarity militates against their condoning this practice.

It is next to impossible for the white-collar employeee to avoid contact with Party members; only 7 out of 128 refugees had had none. Three-fourths of those who had had dealings with SED members reported some degree of tension in their relations. In general, friction appeared to have been more common than easy rapport; only 40 per cent of the refugees described relations as having been friendly or largely friendly.

Although lacking in the kind of solidarity that immunizes the workers against undesirable encroachments by the system, the majority of the white-collar group sought their social relations primarily (and in one-third of the cases exclusively) within the community of fellow-employees. In their armor of

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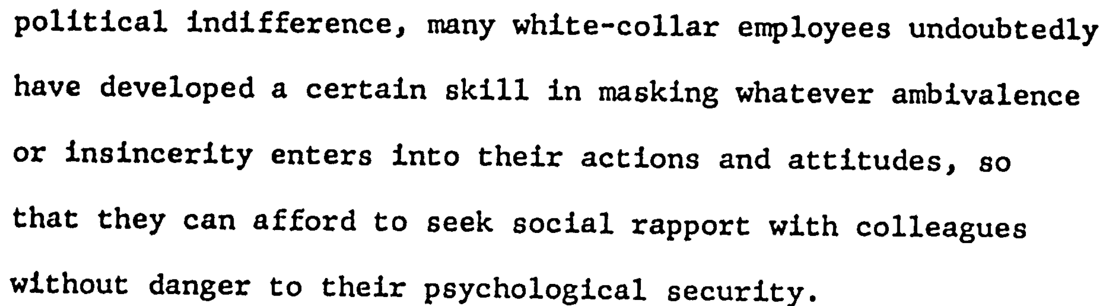

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political indifference, many white-collar employees undoubtedly have developed a certain skill in masking whatever ambivalence or insincerity enters into their actions and attitudes, so that they can afford to seek social rapport with colleagues without danger to their psychological security.

In some people, perfect control of the mask may even become part of the armament for active dissention, especially after they have passed the age at which personal ambition and responsibilities still outweigh other motivations. And here we owe some attention to that minority of white-collar employees who must be considered anti-Communits or revisionists. An occupational environment so subject to political drill and supervision as theirs, and so little designed to breed trust among colleagues, does not encourage the lone dissenter to seek out like-minded persons to whom he might spread his ideas. For example, a survey of clandestine readers of Western periodicals in the Zone noted that among workers and in the intellectual professions a dissenter tended to remain inactive unless he was able to establish good political rapport with colleagues. For dissenters who were white-collar employees, it was, of necessity, different. The social pole around which they centered the communication of deviant ideas and forbidden

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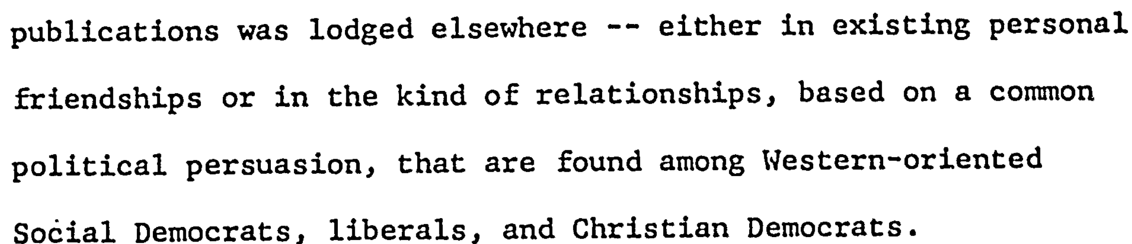

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publications was lodged elsewhere -- either in existing personal friendships or in the kind of relationships, based on a common political persuasion, that are found among Western-oriented Social Democrats, liberals, and Christian Democrats.

The constant need for extreme caution provides the dissenting white-collar employee with hard but useful training in self-discipline. He must learn to separate the personal sphere from professional relationships, to command the language of communist rhetoric, and not to be ideologically confused by his own outward manifestations of support for the system.

This process of learning takes time, and it may be significant that dissenters in typical white-collar jobs, unlike those among workers and professional intellectuals, are rarely found among the very young. Also, the relatively few who are less than twenty-five years old tend to be less active than dissenters of their age in other occupational groups. And -- again in contrast to workers, professional people, and students -- young white-collar employees hardly ever share forbidden Western literature with their colleagues.

On the other hand, once they have learned the ropes, these white-collar employees frequently become most active in disseminating their ideas at an age when the dissenting activity

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of others tends to decline. As a study of readers and distributors of forbidden literature showed, considerations of career and family cause the majority of dissenters to become more cautious between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-five. White-collar employees, however, appear to overcome these demands sooner than do workers and intellectuals, and already in their early 'thirties often resume their activity as dissenters.

Finally, it is worth noting that poorly-paid white-collar employees are far more active communicators of dissent than those earning a fair or good living. Least active are those with middle and high incomes who have "climbed" to success without benefit of a higher education. However, restraint in political activity does not increase indefinitely with the degree to which one profits by the present system. Very well-paid employees (those earning over 800 Marks per month) take more liberties than do their colleagues in the middle income group. And especially active are those among them who have had a university education, and who, therefore, can count on finding lucrative employment in the West, if one day they should be forced to flee.

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White-Collar Youth

Among the youngest group of refugees (those under twenty-five), white-collar employees are less heavily represented than either workers or intellectuals (the latter here including university students). This fact is sometimes explained by the younger employee's exceptionally good opportunities for advancement in the East.

Although 21 of the 128 white-collar employees interviewed by INFRATEST actually were under twenty-five, they probably were not a representative sample of their age group in the Zone, and their opinions, therefore, should be weighed with some caution. Quite uncharacteristically, for example, nearly all of them had never been anything but white-collar employees. Unlike their many young colleagues who owe their ascent from a worker or peasant background to the present regime, the young people in the sample were not particularly indebted to the communist system and showed less than the degree of identification with it that one probably would find in East Germany. It may be all the more remarkable, therefore, that the influence of Marxist ideology on even this unrepresentative group was rather stronger than on the somewhat more typical sample of older white-collar employees; the percentage of those

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who found nothing to criticize in the system, for example, was twice as large.

This tendency of the very young to accept the new order unquestioningly was often mentioned by their older white-collar colleagues in the course of the INFRATEST interviews. It was also confirmed by one of the experts consulted for the present study, who prior to her admission to the bar had served in twelve administrative offices in East Germany. She attributed the dearth of critical thought and expressions of dissent among the young people in civil and economic administration partly to the large number of opportunists among them, and partly to the omnipresent controls in their professsional environment. Although she found that most people quickly sensed who might or might not be trustworthy, the atmosphere was one of suspicion and anxiety, in which private intercourse remained limited to guarded hints and seemingly innocuous advice, and the critical beginner would naturally be particularly bewildered and frustrated. Acceptance of the system in East Germany did not, of course, necessarily mean that these young people approved of the Ulbricht regime.

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VI. The Transitionals -- Artisans, Retailers, and Peasants

There is only a tiny group of "capitalists" left in the Soviet Zone, most of whom today must "share" their enterprises with the communist state. This is at least part of the reason that as yet no special opinion study has focussed on independent entrepreneurs. They are too few and, as a group, too weak to be of primary interest.

As of the middle of 1958, a West German newspaper estimated that there were still 12,000 owners of private enterprises, whose output, however, accounted for only one-eighth of total production.* The remaining seven-eighths was being produced by "co-operatives" or by state-owned enterprises.

Independent ownership today is largely concentrated in agriculture, in handicraft (which includes private artisans as well as small-scale industrial enterprises), and, to a lesser extent, in retail trade. In all three areas, these independents face pressure to join co-operatives -- frequently, in communist countries, the first step in the direction of total socialization. Private retail trade already has come

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* Die Welt, June 18, 1958.

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to play only a minor role in the economy, and in handicraft and agriculture the co-operatives are gradually becoming dominant.

The trend toward socialization of small producers was particularly strong during 1958. Whereas there were only 295 of the so-called "handicraft production co-operatives" (Handwerksproduktionsgenossenschaften) in the Soviet Zone in January, by the end of the year their number was 2,378, and their membership 57,000, including 9,700 master-craftsmen. This rapid advance had been accomplished with the aid of new legislation, which put craftsmen and small industrial enterprises employing more than three people in their shops under strong economic pressure to join the co-operatives. However, the excessive enthusiasm which Party functionaries brought to this campaign caused considerable economic disorganization, and in the fall of 1958 -- on the advice of a group of Soviet visiting experts -- the regime called a temporary halt.

The Reactions of Artisans and Retailers

Specialists who have been in touch with artisans and small businessmen stress, however, that the drive did not meet with strong, open resistance from the private owners at whom it was directed; reluctant though they doubtless were, the attrition of their morale as independents was by then so advanced that pressure was enough to make them yield quite readily. Also, the regime had paved the way for a "spontaneous" development toward the co-operative by creating conditions in which, materially, the private businessman or very small industrial producer often had more to gain than lose by joining. One sign of the acquiescence of most independent entrepreneurs is the fact that in 1958, when the pressure was most acute, only 1,978 owners of handicraft and small industrial establishments fled to the West, that is to say, fewer than one for every newly-formed co-operative.

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For a variety of reasons, the independent craftsman usually would rather give up his independence and stay with his work than seek employment in West Germany. First, he does not necessarily lose all rights to his property immediately; some types of co-operatives permit him to withdraw with his equipment if he wishes to do so, as indeed sometimes happens. Second, the independent artisans and small industrial entrepreneurs have had to pay for their independence with considerable harassment. While, on the one hand, they had little competition and an enormous market for their work, on the other hand, there was a definite limit to the extent to which they wanted to expand their workshops. If they hired more than a couple of additional persons they would jeopardize their status as

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independents; and materials were difficult to procure, so that they often had to risk obtaining them illegally. (Private artisans, as well as the co-operatives, have tended increasingly to turn from production to repairs and services.)

Also, in practice, the differences between socialized and private plants are becoming smaller all the time. One observer cited as typical the experience of a friend, an independent producer of small household appliances, who has to set up a production plan a year in advance and have it approved; he is told how many items he may produce, where he can get the raw materials, and to whom he may sell his output. And, finally, new tax burdens have erased many of the material advantages of being an independent earner.

The gamble of remaining independent under communism paid off until fairly recently, but with hope for reunification receding and pressures increasing, the odds seem to have changed. In the co-operatives, by contrast, the artisan or small operator finds some of the security he has not known before: health insurance, a pension, vacations with pay, and regulated hours of work.

The problem is similar, but even more acute, for people in the retail trade. Here, the private storekeeper has for years been fighting a losing battle against competition from

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the socialized sector. As early as 1956, only 30 per cent of all retail trade passed across privately-owned counters. The store owner who submits to socialization by becoming a "commissioner" is no longer troubled by taxes, draws an income of 6 per cent of his turnover, and has claim to certain security benefits for his future that he never had before.

The willingness of the independent craftsmen or storekeepers to succumb to necessity or expediency does not mean, however, that they have become less hostile to the communist system. Their attitude is perhaps most appropriately described as one of resignation. Over the years, the spirit of enterprise that earlier may have maintained them in their often solitary gamble has weakened as the stakes have become lower, and social solidarity among the private practitioners of a trade has suffered as more of their number have joined co-operatives. The break with independence is all the less radical a step so long as a man, in joining a co-operative, suffers no grave material loss, and his life, at least outwardly and at first, does not change very much. The co-op member does not feel, and is not made to feel, that he is a worker. Also, the formation of the production co-operative, and later the function of "representing" it, are often entrusted not to SED functionaries but to members of such

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bourgeois bloc parties as the LDP and the NDP.* The co-op member can thus feel that he remains on the periphery of the system.

This illusion of semi-independence is easily destroyed, however, when the co-operative, as sometimes happens in urban centers, has its members work together in one workshop. In this manner, a co-operative may also grow to the point of self-liquidation, as has occurred, for example, with some furniture-making co-ops, which were said to have "matured" sufficiently to become socialized industrial enterprises.

As of now, the antiregime feeling of those artisans, small manufacturers, and storekeepers who are still independent is probably kept in check by their concern for physical safety and financial profit, and by the fact that the bonds of solidarity in this class have become very loose. Others, who have already lost their formal independence, are aware that their existence has not thereby been threatened, but that, on the contrary, they have traded nominal freedom for a material security that is worth protecting. Such considerations also

* The Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and the National Democratic Party (NDP) are middle-class parties permitted in East Germany as window dressing, but are completely under communist control.

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tend to act as brakes on their rebellious impulses. As long as the regime remains as firmly entrenched as it is today, their opposition is likely to remain very cautious. Any relaxation in the political scene, however, might encourage stronger reactions, whose nature would depend on the direction that such a change takes. If the outlook were for greater economic freedom within the present system, this might result in pressure for the kind of neo-capitalist enterprise that Russia experienced in the period of the New Economic Policy. Any prospect of actual liberation conceivably could unleash stored-up aggressions that would be channeled into political action.

Peasants

The opinions of experts differ as to the political significance of the often violent resentment expressed by peasants who flee to West Berlin or who come there on temporary visits. Peasants are apt to be loudest in urging West Berlin radio stations to be more belligerent in broadcasts to the Zone. On the other hand, the flood of peasant refugees, which was so high when collectivization began in 1952-53, subsided quickly when it became evident that there were no farms to be had in the West. The division of large holdings, carried out so extensively in East Germany after 1945 in the

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so-called "agrarian reform," took place on a very modest scale in the West. This fact meets with strong disapproval from the East German refugee peasants, who, although opposed to collectivization, are all in favor of the land reform that preceded it, and simply cannot understand why room cannot be made for them in West Germany by having large estates divided up in the same manner. Observers also point out that East German peasants, whatever their resentments, did not go into action when the workers revolted on June 17, 1953. Most specialists agree that, at the present time, the attitude of free peasants in the Soviet Zone is best defined as one of resignation.

Independent peasants today probably own less than half of the East German farmland. In the course of 1958, collectivization progressed at a very fast rate,* though it seems to have slackened somewhat under the impact of the Berlin crisis. The pressures used to induce peasants to join collectives voluntarily have been subtler, and more successful, than in earlier years. Whereas formerly quotas for compulsory contributions to the state were set at a point beyond the peasant's capacity, the difficulty today is not so much that the quotas are too high, but that the independent farmer cannot procure enough labor and machinery to meet his quotas and produce enough in addition to give him a profit and protect him against bad years. Farm labor is scarce because the young either are drawn increasingly into the collective farms or, to a much greater extent than in West Germany, seek to make a living in the cities. At present, youths under eighteen make up only 3 per cent of all farm labor! Tractor stations, which in the past could be bribed to provide needed machinery, are now entirely at the disposal of co-operatives and state farms. In order to earn a profit, the peasants often have to engage in somewhat risky transactions -- to obtain more than the legal allotment of seed, to evade registrations, and so on. Although such minor transgressions usually don't lead to court action, they are carefully watched, and, when a co-operative is organized in the village, they are sometimes used to blackmail reluctant peasants into joining. Also, the recent currency reform wiped out most of the peasants' savings, thus adding to the independent farmer's realization that his position, in the long run, is untenable.

Although, on the average, the independent peasant may be better able than the co-operative to make the land pay, and

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* See pp. 20-21.

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although by joining a co-op he has more to lose than, for instance, the artisan, there is much that encourages him to do so, including the prospect of being able to work with improved, mechanized equipment. In joining the co-operative, the peasant may lose income, but in return he finds security and freedom from responsibility. For the first time in his life he may work an eight-hour day, and he receives a vacation with pay. The first type of co-operative he joins is limited to field tillage. It does not pool the members' livestock, and permits them to retain private plots of land, which naturally receive their owners' preferred attention. The contract stipulates -- and this serves as an effective inducement -- that the peasant has not given up his property. Withdrawals from co-ops were still quite common in 1954-55, but have since become less and less frequent.

Collective farms do not have to pay their own way in order to continue in operation. Indeed, agricultural experts and certain communist revisionists were severely censured for suggesting that farms unable to support themselves should be dissolved. While on some farms the minimum wage of the peasant may be just enough for him to live on, there are also well-run co-operatives where profits are substantial.

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In explaining the growing willingness of peasants to joiSTAT co-operatives, one expert said: "Solidarity is at the zero level. If one or two break ranks in a village, all the rest follow." Another observer thought this somewhat exaggerated, but he agreed that the free peasants no longer saw any real alternative to collectivization. The lack of an attractive alternative is underlined, these students say, by the fact that independent and co-operative peasants alike are quite opposed to an agricultural system such as that in West Germany. They do not favor free competition in agriculture, and criticize what they regard as inadequate state protection for the West German farmer. Furthermore, in every co-operative there are several elements that have gained both materially and in status: the formerly landless agricultural workers, the so-called "new peasants" who received very small parcels in the land reform of 1945, and those children of peasants who have taken advanced study in agriculture and are thereupon assigned to high positions in the collectives, where they usually prove quite capable.

Observers see no reason why, in time, the agricultural co-operative should not pay its way and even prosper. A newly-launched program for merging several co-operatives to permit broader-scale operations has not yet met with much

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opposition from the farmers. But a projected law, to be passed in October, which would increase the prerogatives of the co-op directors and limit the rights of members, is more likely to meet with a negative reaction.

In a society such as the one in East Germany, close ties between peasantry and workers are of vital importance if purposeful and effective resistance to state power is to crystallize. Thus far, there are no indications that such ties have developed. Whether the growing mechanization of agriculture will draw the two elements more closely together remains to be seen.

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VII. The Students

We have already touched briefly on the attitudes of the very young industrial workers and white-collar employees, as compared to those of their elders, and have found that, except in the behavior patterns of active dissenters, the differences between generations are not very striking. In the following, we shall examine another segment of East German youth, the students, and especially those who, upon completing their secondary schooling (at about the age of nineteen), have gone on to universities and schools of technology.*

Historically, students have formed reservoirs for rebellious causes. Under an oppressive system of rule, their level of culture and articulateness, their easy access to the professors whose legitimate business is in the realm of ideas and criticism, the immunity conferred by numbers, the absence

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* Most of the material following has been drawn from a variety of sources: a very incisive report by a young refugee who had himself been an assistant at an East German university (Gerd Böttger, "Die politische Situation an den Hochschulen" [The Political Situation at the Schools of Higher Learning], SBZ-Archiv, June 25, 1957); a large number of interviews and conversations with student refugees conducted recently; a few recent interviews with persons still in the Zone; a large number of interviews conducted in 1952 and 1954 with student readers of forbidden Western publications; reports available in the "Ostbüro" of the SPD; and interviews with persons who are professionally concerned with East German affairs.

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of restraints that will later be imposed by career and family responsibilities, and the opportunity to exchange and disseminate ideas among themselves all make them particularly interesting for any inquiry into active or latent dissension.

Control, Indoctrination, and Communication of Dissent

Like any communist regime, the DDR has a far-reaching organizational program for the young, designed to insure the loyalty of the next geration. Active membership in the political organizations open to the young is known to be the ladder to advancement, and, on the average, young people in high schools and universities spend more time after hours in state-connected activities than other members of their families. The social premium on the kind of success that can be attained only by way of an education makes East German students hard-working and ambitious, possibly even more so than their opposite numbers in West Germany.

Earlier in this study, we quoted the opinion of a member of the Free Jurists who thought that the number of fanatical supporters of the regime among young people in general was quite small. Youth was said to have mastered the technique of the "double-think," combined with a detachment that permitted them to understand and transcend their own opportunism. Among students especially, the solidarity of

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the classroom not infrequently shows how tenuous is the political loyalty of even conscientious FDJ members.* Indeed, this solidarity explains many instances of impulsive flight. In a number of cases, entire school classes have fled in a body after one student had done or said something that would have led to his expulsion, and the class refused to give him away.

Stiffer controls, designed to prevent any spread of revisionist thought, and increasing demands on the individual student, including paramilitary training and compulsory labor service, have brought a sharp rise in the number of university student refugees, at a period when the general exodus has been lessening. Thus, 2,522 students fled in 1958, as compared to 1,894 in 1953 and 1,431 in 1956. And the proportion of university students in the total body of defectors nearly doubled between 1957 and 1958. While their numbers have grown, however, the more recent student refugees have included relatively fewer of the element that is often described as most dangerous to the Ulbricht regime -- revisionists and critical Marxists. These adversaries are often least willing

* When twenty-one high-school students were questioned some years ago, a number were regularly circulating copies of a forbidden Western magazine through their entire class.

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to leave the Soviet Zone, partly because their training qualifies them only for agitprop and Party control jobs and it therefore would be difficult for them to make an adequate living in the West, and partly because -- much like some militant Christians -- they tend to have a strong sense of their responsibility to remain and improve conditions in the Zone. When such students do turn up among refugees, they are more apt than others to have fled as a last resort, in order to escape arrest.

As might be expected, the rate of defection varies considerably with the field of academic specialization, that is to say, with the degree of pressure to which students are subject in the different faculties and with the type of career for which they are preparing. Although one would need complete statistics on refugee students' subjects of specialization to determine exactly how defector rates differ from field to field, such material as is available points to certain general facts and tendencies.

Political drill and other manifestations of the control system obviously are least effective and troublesome in the natural sciences, engineering, and medical schools; they are stronger in the liberal arts and humanities; and they encroach most heavily on the life of students specializing in

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philosophy (Marxism), modern history, social and economic sciences, law, and education. For students in such fields as physics, medicine, machine construction, and metallurgy, formal political instruction is limited to the basic courses in social science and in Russian and German literature (Marxist interpretation) that are compulsory for all students, and most of them seem to take these requirements rather lightly. Where there is strong solidarity among fellow-students, as is the case in medical faculties, such courses may even become the occasion for an exchange of critical ideas. But such criticism is usually directed toward emphasizing the detachment and independence of the professional group and rarely becomes political in the broader sense.

The curricula of the humanities have been strongly influenced by communist interpretations and perspectives, but there are limits to the degree to which the content of the liberal arts can be fitted into a dogmatic frame of reference. Also, students of language, literature, art, and architecture are often apolitical, and, although tensions and conflicts do arise, they are apt to achieve a certain degree of detachment from the political approach.

In the social sciences, economics, philosophy, and history, on the other hand, the impact of Marxist interpretation

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and dialectic is all-pervasive. Detachment cannot be found by simple withdrawal; the student can reach it only through the fire of controversy, alone or at best with only a few trusted friends. However, such a personal purgatory presupposes a strong critical ability. Where that is lacking, the students' training allows little scope for the development of independent thought. In addition, students in these fields are necessarily concerned with their own professional future in positions in which they will be expected continually to manifest their political loyalty. They know, also, that any credits earned in these fields at East German universities would have no value anywhere in the West. Finally, we must assume that very few students of basically pro-Western orientation would have elected to study philosophy or social sciences in the DDR to begin with. Yet it is here that we find critical Marxists developing revisionist ideas.

Studies of readers and distributors of a Western publication, among whom university students are prominent, suggest that the student's activity as a dissenter is related to his age as well as to his field of study. In all departments, the youngest dissenters were apt to be quite active in distributing the forbidden literature. After a year or two, at about the age of twenty-two, student dissenters would

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suddenly come face to face with the dilemma of reconciling their activity with the thought of their career and safety under communism. The crisis then was sharpest in the humanities, to which many students originally had turned with the naive illusion that, in studying languages, literature, or the arts, they would remain free from political supervision. By the same token, the crisis was weaker and recovery quicker for those preparing to be economists, administrators, jurists, and educators; that is to say, for students who had elected careers which they knew to be closely supervised by the regime. Most students in this second group had been aware of the problem they faced, and realization of their dilemma was therefore less sudden and shocking for them. Also, the longer students had read and distributed forbidden Western literature the less severely affected were they by the crisis described above. While the crisis lasted, relatively inexperienced students tended to become almost entirely inactive. More experienced ones often restricted their communication severely for the remainder of their stay at the university. However, students twenty-five years and older who had recovered from the crisis and remained dissenters often became not only more active but also more careful than the very young, especially if they had been reading and

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sharing Western periodicals for some time. Questioning showed that students in this category frequently were headed for academic careers or for other kinds of positions that the regime considers politically important. Nevertheless, their activity as dissenters was balanced and mature, and they often carried it beyond the university into the broader community.

Taken by field, the most active dissenters were medical students, reputedly the most independent element in the student body, with what appears to be an unusually strong sense of solidarity. By contrast, the least active students were those in engineering and the other natural sciences, where inactivity is directly attributable to total lack of interest in politics.

Political Opinion Among Students

The most systematic analysis of students in the DDR is that by Gerd Böttger, mentioned above. Böttger isolates four major groups within the student body: the adherents of the Party line; the "spontaneous opposition"; the idealistic opponents of Marxism; and the critical Marxists.

(1) Among followers of the Party line, Böttger distinguishes two subgroups. The first of these consists of sincere

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enthusiasts, who start out by accepting everything uncritically (and no doubt are most numerous in the younger age groups). Their subjective honesty easily runs afoul of political reality and Party practices, especially since the Twentieth Party Congress. Once disillusioned, they may stick to some of their convictions and may even become "critical Marxists," or they may retreat behind a mask of ostensible participation during their remaining semesters and continue in their later careers with minimal political involvement. Alternatively, they may join the second subgroup: that of unscrupulous, often fanatical, politicians and careerists, in whom it is difficult to detect the dividing line between ambition and conviction.

(2) What Böttger calls the "spontaneous opposition" -- in his opinion the single largest student group -- are those who are opposed to, or skeptical of, the regime from the outset. He attributes their attitudes largely to parental influence. They are to be found primarily in the natural sciences, especially in medicine. These are the fields that permit them the greatest degree of political aloofness, for not only are controls less severe, but medical, science, and engineering students are aware that the state needs them.* Their knowledge

* Both in their sense of indispensability and in the strongly materialist direction of their personal interest they resemble the industrial workers, though, of course, far more privileged.

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of Marxism-Leninsim is superficial, and their antagonism to the regime arises more often from the self-centered desire to be "left alone with one's profession" than from any well-thought-out ideology. But their relative freedom from political control encourages spontaneous reactions against the encroachments of the state on their private interests, and in October and November of 1956, when the timid trend toward de-Stalinization reached its climax in the DDR, medical students were in the forefront of those who openly demanded university reforms and separate student organizations, and who fought the obligatory "social science" lectures on Marxism-Leninism. As to the depth of their convictions, however, Böttger is probably close to the truth when he says: "If the state would give up trying to make conscientious class-fighters out of them and make concessions to their interests, they would be the last ones to rebel against the state."

(3) The motivations of idealistic opponents of Marxism among students vary in origin. For one thing, there are intellectual or academic family backgrounds that foster a conservative or liberal-humanistic sense of values. To judge by students interviewed in 1958, these traits do not emerge in the form of a set of consistent ideas, but are reflected rather

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in a general tendency toward moderate and well-balanced judgments on the part of some children from well-situated academic families. It is quite different with another type of young idealist, the conscientious Christian. Böttger believes, and refugee students bear him out, that the Christian student is not easily shaken by communist ideology, whose postulates he accepts, if at all, only critically and with reservations. His views tend to be fairly specific and consistent, and he can even find shelter and support in one of the legal (though much-hounded) student organizations of the two major churches. Particularly the Protestant "Young Community" (Junge Gemeinde) has concerned itself critically with Marxist-Leninist philosophy, and during 1956 engaged the Communists in an open ideological contest. However, the anticommunism of the Christian students does not often lead them to take issue with the bases of the social and economic system, and they are anxious not to appear "disloyal" to the state.

(4) Critical Marxists, in Böttger's definition, are those who are convinced that the future belongs to communism, but who, by intensive study, have become persuaded of the inadequacy of orthodox Marxism or the harmfulness of Stalinism.* Critical

* A sizable minority of refugee students might be classified as critical Marxists. But they very rarely show the degree of reflection and maturity specified by Böttger. The profiled revisionist or critical Marxist student groups in the Zone sometimes maintain contact with left-wing Socialists in West Berlin.

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Marxists are most often found among advanced students or young assistants, and particularly in the social sciences. Within this category, Böttger again distinguishes two subgroups: those who are willing to consider certain Western approaches and break with the Party should this be necessary to safeguard their ultimate goal; and those who foresee no possibility of true national communism in the divided country, will not rebel against Party discipline, and fear for the "achievements" of the DDR if concessions should be made to the West. The first group is more reluctant than the second to subordinate "humane socialism" to tactics, and its representatives range from Harich supporters to Po Prostu revisionists, including also some Gomulka followers.*

* * *

* Wolfgang Harich, a young professor in East Berlin and editor-in-chief of the Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie, vainly sought the support of SED leaders and Soviet representatives for a radical program of reform. He foresaw an evolutionary road to socialism for Western Europe and took the position that the SED should take a back seat after free elections in a reunified Germany, provided that "restorative" forces were eliminated by the SPD in West Germany. In March 1957, Harich was convicted of conspiracy to form a group hostile to the state, and was sentenced to ten years in prison.

Stronger than the influence of East German revisionists has been the impact of greater intellectual freedom in Poland on critical Marxist students in the DDR. After the Twentieth Party Congress and the Poznan strikes, the student newspaper Po Prostu became the major popular organ of revisionism

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Böttger's analysis seems to imply that all university students are politically decided. No doubt, the strict political control of their environment by state and Party precludes anything like the rate of political indifference that we observed, for example, among white-collar employees. It is much more difficult for the student to separate his personal world from the field of academic training. Also, personal compensations and satisfactions such as home, family, and acquisition of property, which might encourage withdrawal from politics, usually do not yet exist for the university student. On the other hand, interviews with student refugees, and even the impression created by student readers of forbidden Western magazines, cast considerable doubt on the assumption that all students are politically alert.

The views of one of the experts consulted on this subject are somewhat more elastic. He estimates that between 10 and 15 per cent of the students are unconditionally tied to the DDR. In his definition, this would include not only Böttger's apparent fanatics, but a type of careerist who is not necessarily

in Poland. Some Po Prostu editors favored restoration of a free multiparty system. Although the newspaper had been influential in bringing Gomulka back to power in October 1956, Gomulka, after repeated warnings, suppressed it in September 1957.

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aggressive, as well as many of Böttger's "critical Marxists" who are preparing for careers that would make a professional transfer to the West difficult, if not impossible.

There is still another type of careerist who, although politically dangerous, is not at all "tied" to the communist system. A few refugee students exhibited the purest kind of opportunism in their identification with communism. Wholly uncritical and conscious only of personal ambition and interest, these students seemed to have embraced wholeheartedly all the judgments and goals of the regime in order to be safe and make good. But when questioned on their ambitions in West Germany and their opinion of how things should be done there, they seemed likely to become just as fanatically and successfully conformist in trying to pursue careers in the West.

The consultant cited above put the number of decided opponents of the system at 30-35 per cent of the student body. This number would include the more thoughtful element of Böttger's "spontaneous opposition," as well as what has been known since Nazi times as the "inner emigration" in Germany -- people who deliberately withdraw from their political surroundings into a private spiritual life that permits them to nourish deviant interests and live by their own moral code. The remaining 50 per cent the informant considers merely Mitläufer --

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that is to say, those who will just "go along" with whatever ideas and institutions are in fashion -- a group that would seem to overlap with the remainder of Böttger's "spontaneous opposition." Once disaffected, members of this group have neither the Christian idealist's notion of self-sacrifice nor the Marxist revisionist's sense of mission to prevent them from leaving the Zone, if by doing so they can live more safely and prosperously.

Ambivalence and Revisionism

The following are impressions gathered from interviews and conversations with student refugees, chiefly in 1958, and some of the students' attitudes on specific subjects.

As already indicated, our findings from these interviews did not always tally with Böttger's clear-cut divisions and his picture of a fairly large proportion of thoughtful and politically knowledgeable students. Rather, one finds here, too, a surprisingly high incidence of confused, ambivalent, and often superficial thinking. The influence of communist ideology and propaganda on the refugee students' opinions and thought habits made itself felt throughout, even among the half-dozen or so whose parents had suffered social degradation under the regime. For example, quite a few, even though they

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had fled, still maintained that communism was superior to Western forms of government and that it would one day rule the world. They did not necessarily thereby acknowledge communism as the better economic system; more likely, they had arrived at this judgment purely in terms of power politics and because of the vitality they sensed in the Soviet Union.

There were few signs of violent emotional reaction against Communists as such; most of the students had known, or thought there existed, what they called "decent" Communists. Some spoke of the "idealistic Communist" who practiced a kind of "socialist morality"; others, however, denied that there was such a type. Many of the students thought there was a distinction between Leninism and Marxism, but few were able to define the difference.

Communist conditioning was noticeable especially in the students' frequent references to "classes" and to "antagonistic class interests." Even those who found workers to be better off in West Germany than in the DDR often thought that there was a class struggle in the Federal Republic. But refugee students were perhaps even more inclined to find class antagonism in the DDR. The less analytic and thoughtful among them might parrot the definitions of orthodox communist doctrine

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and speak of a conflict between the workers (or "the people") and what remained of independent property owners. But the larger and more perceptive group would point to the "new class" -- or, to use a term preferred by critical-Marxists, the "stratum" -- of functionaries, whose ascendancy, some of them thought, had shifted the class struggle to one between the workers and this new elite.

There was no mistaking the vestiges of Nazi and nationalist sentiment in the judgments and attitudes of quite a few students. Such residues of Nazism as were observed, however, were not so much aggressive as they were nostalgic and apologetic, and parental influence had clearly been at work. Nazi echoes turned up mostly among children of parents whose sense of self-importance under the Nazis had been most rudely shattered by the East German state. The tendency to look back with some longing to the days of greater personal comfort and national self-esteem had been a common one also in West Germany before the days of the "economic miracle." But in East Germans it was combined in a very curious fashion with communist formulas. Some of those who displayed both Nazi and communist elements in their attitudes were not at all bothered by, or aware of, any conflict between them.

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Students were likely to exhibit striking misconceptions about the West in general, and its stand on communism in particular, often combining a conscious liberalism with the unconsciously assimilated legends of communist propaganda. Quite a few believed, for example, that there was an official Nazi party in the Federal Republic. Most of the students condoned the outlawing of the West German Communist Party (KPD), though for a surprising variety of reasons, some of them having first described the KPD as a party of idealists fighting for true communism. Others disapproved of the ban because they thought it violated the tenets of democracy.

Although nearly everyone could name the major West German parties, many thought that the government was a coalition of CDU and SPD, and showed complete unawareness of the function of an opposition party, a common failure throughout Germany in the first years after the war.

Positive comments about West Germany concerned the high standard of living far more often than they did personal liberty or the "free way of life." Negative views had many earmarks of the wild-west picture painted by the Communists: extravagance, rowdyism, cheap entertainment, and pornographic literature were mentioned often and spontaneously; allegations of selfishness

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or lack of interest in reunification usually required prompting.*

Criticism of East German institutions varied considerably. The "derived achievements" of the DDR -- educational opportunity, social welfare, free vacation trips with pay, etc. -- had fairly general approval. The so-called "basic" ones -- land reform and state ownership of industry -- though rarely cited as "achievements," were nevertheless thought desirable, and a great many of the students questioned, possibly the majority, wanted to see them retained in case of reunification. A large majority wanted continued state ownership of heavy industry, but almost everyone favored reprivatization of small

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* As to the students' personal interests in various political areas, especially by comparison with nonstudents, the interviews were somewhat less revealing than the responses of a smaller number of students among readers of Western publications who, in 1954, were asked how they felt about coverage of certain subjects. At that time, students seemed to have resigned themselves to the gradual eclipse of the prospect of liberation and were escaping into other areas of interest. They were less anxious than others to read about "communism" and "East-West tensions," and did not share very heavily in the then widespread interest in the idea of European federation. Disappointment with America found expression in their desire to read less about that country; interest in "internal German affairs," on the other hand, was markedly greater here than among other (older) groups. To appreciate this last fact, we must remember that revisionist perspectives had not yet crystallized at that time. However, a strong "inner emigration" -- an esoteric withdrawal from politics into literary and intellectual interests alien to communism -- is probably as common among student dissenters today as it was in 1954.

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industry and particularly of trade.

Asked about various features of university controls, refugee students, on the whole, were only moderately critical. For example, a great many were not opposed to the idea of having only one youth organization that included the students, although they tended to wish for a greater degree of autonomy for the student section in it. Also, many approved in principle of the "social science" courses, objecting only to their being obligatory; they would have preferred that such courses be elective. Few criticized the idea of centrally controlled higher education, but quite a number felt that more room should be left for electives, and many asked for assurances against political drill.

It is true that the student community showed itself susceptible to rebellious influences during and after the revisionist crisis of late 1956. We have already pointed out the two chief reservoirs of potential dissenters: (1) students in fields that politically are relatively untouched, who feel free at times to put forward their grievances over minor, local issues; and (2) the more profoundly and lastingly discontented "critical Marxists," most of them from fields where political supervision is inescapable, who may rally to the spiritual

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leadership of such intellectuals as Harich, Bloch, Havemann, or Vieweg.* It is all the more remarkable, then, how limited an impact the controversy surrounding the revisionist professors appears to have had in terms of the total student community. Not more than 15 per cent of the students interviewed could identify Harich, whose case had made headlines in the press, and even fewer knew Bloch. Even some of the students who regarded themselves as critical Marxists were ignorant of the

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* Ernst Bloch, born in 1885, is an unorthodox "Marxist" philosopher and Soviet apologist. He re-migrated from the United States in 1949, and returned to the University of Leipzig, where he exercised a strong influence on a whole generation of communist youth. After the Twentieth Party Congress, anachronistic elements in his approach suddenly assumed an immediate political significance. Although he was not a Party man, the SED had used him as a parade horse. When Ulbricht could no longer afford to do this, Bloch was retired, in January 1957, under heavy attack for "subjectivism." He had always been less of a Marxist than Georg Lukacs, the Hungarian mentor of revisionism.

Robert Havemann, a natural scientist and professor in East Berlin, branded the application of dialectical materialism to the natural sciences as "philosophical dogmatism." Unlike Bloch, Havemann recanted when attacked by the Party.

Kurt Vieweg (born 1911), a lifelong Communist, was a leading agrarian expert and director of the Akademie der Landwirtschaftswissenschaften (Academy of Agricultural Sciences). He came under sharp attack for suggesting the dissolution of collective farms that cannot support themselves, and for favoring family agricultural establishments of medium size. Vieweg fled to West Germany in the spring of 1957, but returned to the Zone the following October. In May 1958, he was sentenced to four years and eight months in prison.

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conflict and the men involved. Among those who did have some idea -- and they included some alert and thoughtful minds with reform-communist leanings -- the influence of a communist environment was apparent in the way in which knowledge and beliefs intermingled with hearsay and secondary impressions. Quite characteristic were remarks about Harich such as this one, by a woman student of German (an essentially uncritical person): "I heard his lectures on the history of philosophy. We were enthusiastic about him, and we were shocked when we learned what a terrible man he was supposed to have been."

A remark by a student who can be described as the most perceptive "critical Marxist" we have met (and who is still in the Zone) may be typical of one segment of student opinion not represented in the refugee interviews. He said: "I know Harich's platform from the SBZ-Archiv [published in West Germany]. He took a socialist position....Subjectively he was honest enough, but objectively he could have led to the weakening of the DDR and cleared the way for a pogrom atmosphere like that in Hungary." Perhaps this informant is representative of a group of dissenters whose resistance follows certain patterns of protest and evasion, but shrinks from such major action as might endanger the system as a whole. This attitude, like the

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more incisive and uncompromising kind of revisionism, feeds on communication within small groups whose members are not inclined to flee. Certainly, the manner of reasoning of this particular informant presupposes a degree of knowledge and curiosity about the internal Party struggle that was not evident in most of the refugees, and must not be assumed to be widespread among students in the Zone. On the other hand, attitudes such as these, even though they may be rare, gain importance from the fact that they are found among the very people whom the regime is grooming for strategic positions, from which one day they may exercise considerable influences.

Summarizing our impressions from interviews and conversations with student refugees, we might say that, as of 1958, the political thinking of most students in the Soviet Zone was still diffuse, their resistance behavior particularistic and self-defensive, their rejection of the communist system rarely the result of a consistent philosophy. Intensive training in Marxist-Leninist dogma had had its effect -- not perhaps to the extent of forming strong convictions and patterns of thought, but in planting in the young minds many abstract concepts that today affect their political judgment. The postulates and formulas that students accept from communism, which they might

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easily apply critically to East Germany, are far more evident in their criticism of the Federal Republic. But we have already noted that abstract thought does not necessarily carry over into concrete action; and the fact is that large numbers of students, critical as they may be of West Germany, nevertheless prefer to live there, even though they usually lose several semesters when they transfer to Western universities.*

As for those who remain behind, the Ulbricht regime is doing its utmost to keep revisionist tendencies and the elements of "spontaneous" resistance from jelling into a movement. Nothing, however, can prevent these forces from smoldering under the cover of small, intimate groups, and thus slowly maturing into a potential for aggressive anticommunist action.

* Entrance requirements there are different, and indoctrination courses are not credited.

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VIII. The Intellectuals

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The intellectual professions have traditionally enjoyed high social status in Germany. Today in the DDR, as in virtually all communist states, they are even more obviously privileged. University education, or its equivalent at an institute of technology, is becoming a prerequisite for most positions of leadership and responsibility. The state attracts and rewards its intellectuals by providing them with a financial security and a standard of living far beyond those of the general population, and sometimes even of their colleagues in West Germany. This favored treatment extends to the creative artists and members of other "free-lance" professions, who enjoy a security unknown to their brothers in the West.

Any analyst who attempts to formulate generalizations about the class of professional intellectuals in the Soviet Zone is bound to be hampered -- perhaps even more than in an analysis of white-collar employees -- by the enormous range of functions that this category includes. He must take into account the many variations, not only in the individuals' exposure to Party control and to the moral temptations afforded by the communist reward system, but also in the extent to which different occupations permit their practitioners to

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divorce private political opinions from their work and to keep professional associations -- and thus political controls -- out of their personal lives.

To begin with, it is important to distinguish between the "old" and the "new" intelligentsia. The former, who were educated in the precommunist order, are still indispensable, and hence are tolerated and even promoted; the latter, raised and indoctrinated in the "socialist" spirit, meanwhile are being groomed to replace them as fast as possible. Ulbricht, however, has been facing a twofold problem: older intellectuals, as might have been predicted, have by and large persisted in undogmatic, rational habits of thought and behavior, and have remained aloof from political ritual. The new intellectuals, the regime's hope for spiritual leadership of the coming generation, have been unexpectedly susceptible to the influence of their older colleagues. The intellectual elite of the party, in particular, has been infested with revisionism.

In coping with this problem, Ulbricht has steered a very cautious zigzag course, alternately tightening controls and making grudging concessions. However, the usefulness of this technique is limited by the fact that people can leave East Germany; neither approach has succeeded in stemming the flood of defectors. Concessions on the matcial side may prove

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effective while the living standard of the East German intellectual is still below that of his West German colleague. But once it reaches a certain saturation point, he is likely to become increasingly sensitive to the spiritual straight-jacket that Ulbricht has thrown on him and his children. Any effort by the regime to exact compliance by tightening the jacket thereafter results merely in a higher refugee rate. In 1958 this process was especially apparent in the growing defection from university faculties and the medical profession.

It may be useful to compare some of the figures on defectors for the last four calendar years.

Table 8

Intellectual Defectors, 1955-1958*

	1955	1956	1957	1958
University teachers	56	43	58	208
Other teachers	2,720	2,453	2,293	3,089
Doctors, dentists, veterinarians	344	467	440	1,242
Pharmacists	108	125	99	184
Judges and public prosecutors	31	26	27	11
Lawyers and notaries	126	130	55	65
Engineers & technicians	1,835	1,431	1,894	2,522
	5,220	4,675	4,866	7,321

* "Der permanente Flüchtlingsstrom" (The Permanent Flow of Refugees), Bulletin des Presse- und Informationsamtes der Bundesrepublik, January 17, 1959, Table 2; supplemented by Friebe, "Die deutsche Flüchtlingsfrage," p. 298.

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In 1956-57 a majority of defectors from the Soviet Zone were people who, having traveled to West Germany legally, with interzonal passes issued by East German authorities, refused to return to the DDR. This led the regime to issue a severely restrictive revision in the law regulating passports and passes. Instead of an average of 225,000 interzonal passes for travel to the West issued each month in 1957, the average of such legal travelers in 1958 was only 57,500 per month, and the number is constantly being restricted still further. As a result, the proportion of defectors coming to West Germany with the help of legal visitor permits has dropped sharply (from 54 per cent in 1957 to 21 per cent at the end of 1958), and West Berlin is becoming ever more important as an escape hatch.

Despite the rising number of "illegal" departures, however, there has been a radical decline in the total number of defectors since the revised passport law went into effect at the end of 1957. Significantly, though, this development does not hold for the intellectuals. As the above table indicates, they continue to flee with their families, although, by going through West Berlin without legal passes, they run the risk of being caught. The large-scale defection of intellectuals is all the more remarkable because most of them

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leave behind more privileges and personal property than do most other defectors.

It is also worth noting that the combined number of university and other teachers who fled in 1958 included 2,144 "new" and 1,153 "old" educators, an indication that the disenchanted and noncompliant element is not confined to the precommunist intelligentsia.

State interference in the professional and private sphere has been a strong motive in the flight of many intellectuals. Having opportunities for professional contact with West German colleagues and attendance at foreign and West German conventions once more curtailed came as a heavy blow after the relatively liberal policy of 1956-57. Another particularly sore point concerns the children. The old intellectuals have long been disturbed by their children's difficulties in gaining admission to the universities in competition with the children of workers and of newly privileged groups. The issue of the communist Jugendweihe (youth consecration) also remains very much alive.* Furthermore, as of the fall of 1958, school children from the seventh grade up have been compelled to spend one day per week in factories or

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* See pp. 56 ff.

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agricultural co-operatives, and additional periods in various phases of production, a practice that is likely to antagonize a great many parents who formerly may not have been overly critical of the regime. And, beginning in 1960, no one will be able to enter a university without first having spent his "practical year" in production.

As yet no empirical study has been made of the opinions of the East German intelligentsia that is comparable to the surveys of workers and white-collar employees. We can safely assume, however, that intellectuals are experiencing many of the same conflicts, arising out of the attempt to adjust to the present system, as are the upper-level white-collar employees. Professors, engineers, theater directors, writers, and the like also face political trouble when they are called to account for their own and their subordinates' work. West German authorities, by a very formalistic system of classification, at one time estimated that no more than 8 to 9 per cent of all refugees defected because political compulsion and threats left them no alternative. A purely political motivation has, however, always been most common in the flight of the intelligentsia; and the statistical effect of the increased rate of intellectual defectors has been an almost twofold rise in the proportion of such primarily "political" refugees.

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At the same time it is safe to assume that the thinking of many intellectuals has been affected by "socialist" changes and communist ideology. Though the impact is likely to be greater on the younger intelligentsia, the Party cadres, and people in education and other cultural fields, it does not fail to reach Protestant ministers, social scientists, and engineers. Though intellectuals may well be politically more alert than the average white-collar employee, they are more likely to be impressed with the major "achievements" of the system, and to favor their retention in the event of reunification in freedom. We must add to these factors the intellectual's strong pride in past achievement, which ties him to his life in the Zone, and the fact that members of the younger intelligentsia, in particular, are often severely critical of the West. Many of them, in the opinion of at least one expert, do not feel that the West today offers them a genuine alternative. It is in this atmosphere that revisionist and reform-Marxist tendencies develop most readily.

Much of what we said about the state of mind of today's students no doubt applies also to the intelligentsia. It would be true especially for the new intellectuals, for the students share much of the latter's educational and doctrinal

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experience and will one day inherit their positions as well as their moral problems.

As with the students, the intellectual's field of specialization is bound to make a difference. Engineers in responsible jobs, who have to meet production schedules, easily run into political difficulties. Such areas as creative writing, theater, and film, which are subject to constant doctrinal interference, are ridden with strains and tensions. And, obviously, people in positions that carry direct political responsibility are least likely to find relaxation from control in their professional lives.

Of the many factors that enter into the intellectuals' dilemma, their isolation from other social classes is one. They are separated from the masses by more than just a higher standard of living. The regime sees to it that, as far as possible, the social life of intellectuals takes place in a separate, esoteric world, and that their contact with the rest of the people, and with the realities of the latter's lives, is limited to a few, contrived situations designed to keep up the egalitarian fiction. One of the privileges of intellectuals, aimed at fostering this social isolation, is their access to "club houses," which are open to both members and nonmembers of the SED and have become truly popular.

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Here, all heavy-handed political pressures are turned off; members and their wives may relax with the feeling of belonging to a privileged elite. In the most exclusive clubs Western newspapers and fashion magazines are available to the trusted caste.

For Party cadre intellectuals, disillusionment, intellectual frustration, and estrangement from the masses are most acute and most painful. These people are ideologically rooted in the communist order and understandably reluctant to break away. Even if they secretly wish they could leave, they know how limited are their chances of establishing themselves successfully in the West. Yet it is because they tend to stay in the Zone that the Party intellectuals have been a more severe headache to the Ulbricht regime than any other group.

The upheavals in communist parties throughout Europe that came in the wake of the Twentieth Party Congress in the Soviet Union had profound repercussions on Party intellectuals in the DDR. Willi Bredel, a novelist and member of the SED Central Committee, is reported to have described the situation at a Party gathering in the following terms:

> Comrades, what I'm going to say isn't for the public....Comrade Stalin's tragic mistakes cut me to the quick. I know others who entertained thoughts of committing suicide. I

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> spent nights discussing things with some of these comrades. Believe me, they weren't our worst comrades.
>
> Then came the October events in Poland and Hungary. For many writers, it is true, wounds were opened that had scarcely healed....Many lost their balance, and not only young comrades did....
>
> With many intellectuals...one has the feeling they belong to those who think our Workers' and Peasants' State is a passing thing. They want to survive it. They are waiting for it to end. Well, they're going to lose on that bet. They're not going to outlive socialism.

The opposition most dangerous to Walter Ulbricht has always come from the very top ranks of the SED. After the 1953 uprising, it came from the Minister of State Security, Wilhelm Zaisser, and the editor-in-chief of the major Party newspaper, Rudolf Herrnstadt. In 1956-57, it was led by the chief of Party cadres and intelligence, Karl Schirdewan; by the then Minister of State Security, Erich Wollweber; and by Fred Oelssner, Deputy Minister President and major economist and Party theorist. In both periods, a top-flight opposition failed to secure Soviet support for Ulbricht's removal and for a more moderate policy.

Moreover, Ulbricht's opponents in the top leadership have never dared to seek support among Party cadres or in the masses.

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Both after the 1953 workers' uprising and in the suppression of reform-communism among Party intellectuals in 1957, the secret police did its brutal work even though the Minister of State Security was himself part of the opposition; and at the very moment that Karl Schirdewan was pressing for a new, "safety-valve" policy in the Central Committee, he was warning students: "The Party and Government will permit no change!" The opposition leaders thus preserved outward solidarity with Ulbricht almost up to the point when they were destroyed.

Consequently, the Party cadres, many of whom were themselves deeply alienated, always learned of the full import of the struggle in the Party leadership only after Ulbricht had managed to finish off his major rivals. Not until Schirdewan had fallen did Minister President Otto Grotewohl tell the Party world: "In recent times, our work was in danger of becoming paralyzed."

It may well be, of course, that the brewing opposition on lower levels creates the setting in which leadership struggles occur. At the time of the revisionist controversies, for example, Ulbricht often found that, when he addressed Party cadres, he faced a wall of silence, while behind his back there was disquieting chatter. A former SED functionary described

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this as symptomatic of a condition in which a potential opposition was isolated from any leadership and hence powerless to act. Concerted action of discontented elements was hindered also by the fact that the economic planners, industrial managers, writers and artists, and other SED intellectuals, although in a rebellious frame of mind in 1956-57, were confused by what they saw happening in Hungary and Poland. On one hand, they were deeply afraid that the system might collapse in a blood-bath of popular vengeance, which is what most Party people imagined had happened in Hungary before Soviet intervention. On the other hand, they were tantalized by the liberal ideas that were flowing in from the East across the Polish border.

However, the weakness of critical Party intellectuals is caused not merely by their isolation from the struggle among the top leaders, or by their fear of setting in motion a chain of events they could not control, but by the gulf that separates them from the really popular levels of discontent, especially the working-class. We have already noted the workers' distrust of the "new intellectuals." In this lack of understanding between workers and intellectuals lies one of the major weaknesses of any resistance to Ulbricht's regime. In Warsaw and Budapest, for example, the course of events in 1956 would have

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been entirely different had it not been for the solidarity between intellectuals and workers. In East Germany, on the other hand, the workers who revolted in June 1953 received no support from the intellectuals. And, in October 1956, when intellectual circles were making motions in the direction of rebellion, the workers stood aside, watchful, waiting, and distrustful.

It is easy enough to see why the opposition of 1956 failed to find the popular echo in East Germany that it received in Poland and Hungary. For months after the Twentieth Party Congress in the Soviet Union, revisionist trends had successfully been kept hidden in the Soviet Zone, Ulbricht having put the lid on deviationism at the first stirrings of unrest. By October 1956, dissent was nevertheless evident in the ranks of the Party and among economists, technicians, and planners, and it was rampant in the academic and cultural sphere, where people are most intimately concerned with ideas and are sensitive to atmospheric changes. But none of this added up to anything like the "thaw" in Poland and Hungary, where for half a year an intellectual renaissance had been in progress against a retreating and vacillating Party leadership. In those two satellites, the rebels' loud voice in the press,

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in clubs, and through other vehicles of public controversy had convinced all those who listened that the Communists were divided at all levels. As the promise of emancipation grew, so did the popular understanding for the role of the dissident Communist and the non-Party intellectual, and the sense of solidarity it engendered between the intellectual leadership and the working-class proved crucial in the actions that were to follow.

This union, however, was further cemented in Poland and Hungary by an element that, to this day, remains lacking in East Germany, namely, the community of national interest and purpose that can unite dissident Communists and the masses. This factor, which played an important role in bringing about the defection of the "people's armies" in both Poland and Hungary, does not have the parallel in Soviet-occupied Germany that one might expect to find. Here, the national question is more likely to divide the critical German Communists from the masses. The chief reason for this is that national interest is synonymous with reunification, which up to now has meant political suicide for German communism, so long as the Federal Republic is the larger and stronger of the rival states.

Still, one might imagine that so acute a national issue as the division of their country could be felt deeply enough

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by German intellectuals to make them take such a risk even though they be convinced Marxists and Communists; certainly, the Hungarian example shows that, in a dilemma between patriotism and communism, many Communists will (like Imre Nagy) ultimately choose the nation. Yet it is extremely difficult for German communist intellectuals to do so. Their distrust of German nationalism is so strong that their critical faculties fail as soon as they are exposed to propaganda about a "West German militarist restoration." Their memory of national-socialism is very vivid, and their sensitivity in this respect creates one of the few spots where even critical Communists are vulnerable to compromise with Ulbricht's "hard course," not out of opportunism, but from genuine conviction. It is difficult, therefore, for "national Communists" to mature in the Soviet Zone. Even the most disenchanted revisionists -- including many who might consider fleeing to the Federal Republic if it became necessary -- are seldom anxious to see Germany reunited under the hegemony of the West German system, which they continue to misunderstand and distrust.

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IX. East Germany's Basic Instability

It is clear that more and more East Germans are coming to terms with the existing state of affairs in the Soviet Zone. Very few like the Ulbricht regime, and most object strongly to some aspects of the system. Nevertheless, by withdrawing into their families or professions or by taking part in a minimum degree of political activity, large numbers have been able to adjust to the state of affairs in which they find themselves.

This process of adjustment is important, but neither its extent nor its permanence should be overemphasized. As one student put it, "The Zone is now teetering on the brink of political stability." It has not yet achieved stability. The staying power of the Ulbricht regime has been due not to its solid foundations but to Ulbricht's ability to convince the Soviets of his indispensability and to his skill in balancing one opposing force against another. As of now, relatively little is needed to arouse dormant hopes and create new ones. For instance, when the Western powers, in a diplomatic communication, recalled the fact that Thuringia and Saxony had originally been occupied by forces of the West, and had been evacuated by them only when the Soviets evacuated West Berlin, this was

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reported to have caused signs of nervousness among SED functionaries in the two provinces. The great majority of the inhabitants hate the regime and would like to see many aspects of the system changed. A newspaper correspondent, who has specialized in East German affairs for many years, has summarized the combination of resentment and adaptation by saying that the symbol of the DDR is a clenched fist -- in the pocket.*

Contradictions Within the System

The basic instability of the DDR is caused by a number of factors, many of which have been pointed out above: the regime is unpopular, a small part of a divided country cannot easily achieve a national existence, hopes of reunification in freedom have not been extinguished entirely, and so on. In addition, the communist system, as it is known in the DDR, has within itself a number of contradictions that limit the extent to which people can adjust to it. Two of these are believed to be of particular importance.

One such contradiction is the inclusive, all-pervasive nature of the communist system, which is the source of much of its strength, but is also proving to be its greatest weakness

* Die Welt, June 18, 1958.

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in East Germany. People bitterly resent the fact that Party and state are trying to penetrate all aspects of the life of the individual. Most refugees mention some aspect of this meddling interference as one reason for their having fled. Even a former West German Communist, who had emigrated to East Germany and then defected back to the West, gave this as one of his principal reasons for returning.

The same story is heard from persons still resident in the Zone. A school teacher complained about the extra duties he was continually being asked to perform: making house calls to see parents, taking part in special youth evenings, volunteering for construction work, volunteering to work on holidays, assisting in the instruction of the "Young Pioneers," and so on. A professor from the University of Halle, presumably a Communist and certainly not an opponent of the regime, was quoted as saying in a public meeting that university teaching personnel were now so loaded with extra activities that they did not have the "inner peace" that was necessary if they were to do fundamental thinking.

Attempts of the Party and state to reach into every sphere of public and private life are all the more obnoxious in view of the essentially arbitrary nature of the system. This

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arbitrariness caused a second important internal contradiction. Law in the DDR is not primarily a body of legislation and precedent, as in the West; added to it are administrative orders, Party resolutions, articles in official communist publications, and public speeches given by high officials. Often, this legal hodgepodge leavesa large area of discretion to the executive personnel.* One hears from refugees and students of East Germany that even the personality of an individual local Party chairman may make a sharp difference in the local interpretation of the law. For example, when asked why the Church was persecuted so much more harshly in one area than in another, a Lutheran administrative official ascribed this to personality differences between the Party officials in the two districts.

Because of lack of specificity in the law, combined with the arbitrariness of those who apply it, no citizen can ever be sure that he is on the right side of the law-enforcement machinery. Even convinced Communists must live in doubt, and this quality of unpredictability makes it more difficult for many individuals to achieve a stable adjustment. Nevertheless,

* Cf. Otto Kirchheimer, "The Administration of Justice and the Concept of Legality in East Germany," Yale Law Journal, Vol. 68:705, 1959, pp. 705-749.

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vagueness and arbitrariness appear to be essential to the efficient functioning of the system as it exists in East Germany, since the law must be sufficiently elastic to follow the twists and turns of the Party line emanating from both Moscow and Pankow, and communist officials must always be assured legal grounds for dealing with any individual whose activities threaten to hamper the policies of the moment.

But at the same time that arbitrariness of official behavior and the intrusive nature of Party and state are necessary for the preservation of the regime, they also help to prevent a firm commitment to the state by just those individuals whose loyalty is most important if stability is to be achieved.

The Sense of Impermanence

One thing most politically-alert East Germans agree on is that the present state of affairs cannot last; that the DDR is a "provisional arrangement." There is, however, little agreement as to when the supposedly inevitable changes will take place, or what the nature of these changes will be. Furthermore, it is generally agreed that the forces for change will have to come from outside East Germany. Since most East Germans no longer expect to be able to bring about any change themselves, the best thing for them to do, they feel, is to

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make themselves as comfortable as possible, and wait. Nevertheless, this sense that the existing state of affairs is transitory is another factor making for instability in the Soviet Zone.

When asked why they are so sure that the DDR cannot last in its present form, refugees from East Germany give several kinds of reasons. Some point out that the DDR can never be organized along national lines, because it is only a very small part of a nation. "National communism," a form of adjustment that many consider more stable, and mention as having been achieved in Poland or Yugoslavia, is believed to be impossible in East Germany because no truly national forces could ever develop without reference to the larger and more powerful West German state. Nearly all refugees agree that the DDR cannot be considered a German state because it is not ruled by and for Germans. The real source of support for Ulbricht is known to be the Soviet Union, and the policies of the DDR are believed to be governed by directives from Moscow. Thus, the Soviet Zone clearly resembles a colonial area, and is in an "unnatural" state that simply cannot endure.

Other respondents mention contradictions within the existing system, both those contradictions that have been

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pointed out immediately above and others. The DDR calls itself a "worker's state," but gives the greatest rewards to white-collar personnel. People hear Ulbricht promise over and over again that the Oder-Neisse border with Poland is a permanent one, but they know that even many SED leaders are in favor of revising this border. East Germans frequently have to say things they do not believe and listen to others make equally insincere statements. They are able to live with these contradictions and often manage to build a satisfying personal existence in spite of them, but they still tend to think of them as indicative of a state of affairs that is somehow abnormal and cannot last.

One may suspect, although it is not so often explicitly stated, that the most important reason for the sense of impermanence that most residents of the Soviet Zone have about the DDR is the awareness of the existence of another world. Whether he approves of conditions in the West or not, the East German is constantly aware of West Germany, of Western Europe, and of more distant areas living under a different system. He may be convinced that capitalism is doomed and that the future belongs to some form of communism, but at the same time he is conscious of the German tradition as part of the

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Western world and feels that the East Germans will eventually have to come to terms with this tradition. Furthermore, even though the East Germans were disappointed by the West in 1953, there is a chance that some day the West might be willing to help.

The Significance of Potential Instability

Contradictions within the communist system, combined with the sense of impermanence that so many people have about the DDR, limit the degree to which East Germans have identified their own futures with the existing order. While there is no question that the Ulbricht regime is firmly in the saddle, and that no large-scale spontaneous move to throw off Soviet domination can be expected from within East Germany, a high degree of potential instability remains. There are still many in the Soviet Zone who would participate actively in a struggle to improve their condition if they saw any chance of success. If they had a clear-cut promise of Western military assistance, large numbers would be willing to fight for reunification in freedom. Others, if they saw any sign of Soviet acquiescence or weakening, would make new attempts to revise the DDR along Polish or Titoist lines. Still others, seeing no chance to improve conditions, will defect to the West as long as the

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opportunity of doing so remains.

This potential instability limits East Germany's usefulness to the Soviet Union, and must also be a source of constant anxiety to the Ulbricht regime. Even though it has been possible to make great strides in organizing East German society along communist lines, and to increase its economic productivity during the past few years, both developments have been hampered by the constant exodus of refugees and by the mental reservations of those who remain. Furthermore, both Ulbricht and the Soviets must realize that any military value the DDR armed forces might otherwise have in a European war could be cancelled out by the disaffection the East German regime would face at home. The potential instability of the DDR thus detracts substantially from the military capability of the Soviet bloc in Europe -- although observers do not agree on the precise extent of this loss in military capability -- and conversely, this element of instability improves the military position of the West.

One must assume that the Soviets and their German agents are aware of this problem and are making strenuous efforts to reduce it. Some factors underlying the lack of stability are difficult to overcome except perhaps over a long period of

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time, especially those rooted within the system itself. Others are being successfully attacked by communist organization and indoctrination.

Certainly nothing would solidify the DDR more rapidly than recognition by the West. At one stroke this would wipe out the hopes still entertained by a large proportion of the East German population, even though faintly, that the West might sometime intervene actively on its behalf. Furthermore, recognition would confer a degree of legitimation on the Ulbricht regime that even communist revisionists have sought to deny it. If the West indicated that it believed the DDR was here to stay, it would be very difficult for the individual East German to continue to look on it as a provisional arrangement. Full recognition would, of course, be most desirable to Moscow, but even partial recognition would substantially increase the value of the DDR to the Soviet bloc.

Conversely, emphasis by the West on the principle of German reunification in freedom, on the illegal character of the Ulbricht regime, and on the necessarily provisional nature of the present state of affairs in East Germany, tends to preserve the potential instability of the DDR.

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Efforts at Geneva on the part of the Soviet Union to force the West to give greater recognition to the DDR must at least in part be occasioned by the current state of political opinion in East Germany.

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Following are selections from the literature bearing on the subject of the present memorandum. Although the list is far from exhaustive, it may prove a useful point of departure for the student who wishes to go more deeply into one or another aspect of institutions and prevailing political attitudes in the Soviet Zone of Germany. Bearing in mind the problem of availability to Western scholars, we have not listed any materials originating in the East Zone or other satellite countries. Nor have we attempted to include the abundant newspaper literature on the subject, or to mention any but the few most informative periodicals.

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APPENDIX

THE STANDARD OF LIVING IN THE SOVIET ZONE*

The End of Rationing Has Not Yet Resulted in Noticeable Improvements for the Consumer -- Rationing through High Prices -- Norm Fulfillment and Overfulfillment as Guiding Principle

On May 29 of last year, thirteen years after the war and after nineteen years of rationing, the Soviet Zone abolished the food-rationing card. It was the last of the participants in the Second World War to do so. The Soviet Zone press gave much publicity to this fact, not only within the Zone itself, but also abroad and in the Federal Republic. This propaganda effort was designed to cover up a certain skepticism within broad circles of the population. The lifting of rationing, promised for years, and actually fixed by law in 1951 as due by 1953, had been postponed again and again. In the end, it brought no noticeable improvement in living conditions. Parallel with the lifting of rationing went a reform in the price system, and simultaneously certain changes in the income structure were also making themselves felt. It is therefore worthwhile to compare the levels of living in the two parts of Germany as of the end of 1958.

Reform of the Price System

In connection with the abolition of food rationing, the price system of the Soviet Zone was completely revamped. The prices of goods previously available on the free market were lowered, while those for [formerly] rationed products were increased. Prior to May 29, 1958, for example, according to official Soviet Zone statements, on the average 45 per cent of all meats and sausage, 27 per cent of butter, 60 per cent of margarine, 34 per cent of animal fats, and 11 per cent of sugar had been

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* This account of the standard of living in the Soviet Zone is a free translation of an article that appeared in the Bulletin des Presse- und Informationsamtes der Bundesregierung, No. 72, April 18, 1959, pp. 688-691.

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sold "on the Handelsorganisation (HO) basis," that is to say, at excessive prices. While it is true that since 1949 the authorities had enforced seventeen price reductions -- which applied, however, largely to hard-to-sell textile and industrial products -- it is worth noting that HO prices in 1950 were far above prewar prices and above comparable prices in the Federal Republic.

One can at best speak of a step-by-step reduction in the legalized black-market prices that had prevailed in the state-owned HO stores in the Zone. As can be gathered from individual figures in the Statistical Yearbooks of the Soviet Zone, however, prices for formerly rationed goods quietly went up. Members of the Zone "government" continually and inaccurately maintain that prices for rationed foodstuffs were fixed at the 1944 level. However, as soon as an item was removed from the rationing system, its price, at least at first, would go up considerably. Subsequent [enforced] reductions were negligible by comparison with this price increase. This was true, above all, of shoes, textiles, and household equipment. The only prices that were consistently kept low, corresponding roughly to prewar prices, were those for potatoes, bread, and rolls, which make up only a minor portion of the total cost of living.

It appeared from statements by Soviet Zone Deputy Minister President Rau to the Zonal parliament in East Berlin that the introduction of the new price system would result in added per capita expenditures of an average of 14 East Marks per month. Thus, instead of the hoped-for reduction in the cost of living, the consumer in the Soviet Zone had to accept new burdens. Whether in practice these higher expenditures would be adequately covered by the increase in wages that went hand in hand with the lifting of rationing had to remain an open question for the time being. Previous prognoses, however, that the abolition of the food-ration card would be followed by rationing through [higher] prices were soon confirmed.

In view of the impending Fifth SED Party Congress, due to convene in mid-July 1958, and in view of the fact that sales of milk, cheese, and meat were declining, it became necessary, five weeks after the end of rationing, to make the first corrections in the new price structure. Effective July 7, 1958, retail prices for milk were lowered by 15 per cent, those for cottage and other cheese by 11 per cent, pork and various types of sausage by an average of 8 per cent, and lard by 13 per cent. Since the demand especially for milk could not be adequately met, it was necessary to introduce special permits (Berechtigungskarten) that guaranteed a privileged supply of milk for households with children and infants. Lower prices for first- and second-grade lard, although originally to be effective only from August 11 to September 30, 1958, subsequently were reduced still further, by 18.4 and 20.6 per cent, respectively.

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The low prices for lard were designed to compensate the many people who had been forced to change their consumption habits by higher butter and margarine prices. As of October 6, 1958, prices were lowered for shoes, leather and synthetic leather goods, and work trousers, the reductions varying considerably. At the same time, it was announced that the originally temporary price reduction for lard would be retained. In addition, it was announced that soap prices would be lowered by 30 per cent, and eggs would be subject to different prices in summer and winter. To compensate for lagging potato supplies, the prices for rice of various grades were lowered by an amount varying from 32 to 44 per cent effective January 1, 1959, and those for a number of rice products by between 12 and 50 per cent. As of February 2, 1959, the two leading brands of margarine...went down 20 per cent, prices for grade 1 and 2 margarine were reduced by 14.3 and 25.9 per cent, respectively, and sugar...came down 16.3 per cent.

Higher Consumer Prices

In spite of these measures, retail prices for these goods in the Soviet Zone are still far above those in effect in the Federal Republic. The following picture emerges if one compares prices of the most important and basic food products as they prevailed in the Soviet Zone prior to May 29, 1958, and then at the end of January 1959, with those that were in effect in the Federal Republic at the latter date.

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Commodity	Quantity	Soviet Zone: HO-Price until May 29, 1958	Soviet Zone: Rationed Goods until May 29, 1958	Soviet Zone: Jan./Feb. 1959	Federal Republic: Jan./Feb. 1959
		East Mark	East Mark	East Mark	West Mark
Rye bread	1 kg	0.52	--	0.52	0.85
White bread	1 kg	1.00	--	1.00	1.10
Wheat flour, type 405	1 kg	1.32	--	1.32	0.96
Cream of wheat	1 kg	1.34	--	1.34	0.98
Oatmeal, by weight	1 kg	0.98	--	0.98	1.06
Noodles, without egg	1 kg	1.84	--	1.84	1.20
Peas	1 kg	1.04	--	1.04	1.33
Rice	1 kg	3.80	--	1.50	1.02
Potatoes	1 kg	0.12	--	0.12	0.26
Whole milk (bulk)	1 liter	1.12	0.28	0.68	0.43
Eggs	1	0.32	0.13	0.32	0.20
Butter	1 kg	19.20	4.20	9.80	7.02
Margarine, grade 1	1 kg	4.40	2.20	3.00	2.35
Rapeseed or soy oil	1 kg	6.00	2.80	4.40	2.15
Beef (for stewing, 25% bone)	1 kg	6.60	2.08	5.80	4.96
Beef (for braising)	1 kg	10.80	3.14	9.60	5.43
Pork chops	1 kg	11.20	2.86	8.20	6.13
Liver sausage	1 kg	12.20	3.94	8.40	4.66
Hard sausage (Salami-type)	1 kg	12.20	3.60	6.80	5.81
Fat bacon (smoked)	1 kg	7.50	2.65	4.00	4.12
Sugar (cubed & granulated)	1 kg	3.00	1.12	1.54	1.24
Jams & marmalade	1 kg	1.70	--	1.70	1.52
Raisins	1 kg	16.00	--	6.40	2.34
Whole milk chocolate	100 g	4.80	--	3.85	1.29
Cocoa	125 g	8.00	--	4.00	1.22
Coffee	1 kg	80.00	--	80.00	18.70

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The enormous discrepancy in prices that this table reveals does not apply merely to food products. Shoes, textile commodities, and other industrial products of comparable quality are also far more expensive in the Soviet Zone than in the Federal Republic. Lately, complaints about creeping price rises can be found more and more often in the Zonal press. With respect to the quality of available goods, the Soviet Zone remains considerably behind the Federal Republic. The difference in quality is generally presumed to be 10 per cent, a figure that emerges from comparisons of purchasing power between East and West Germany for the year 1958. The improper packaging of food and luxury products has frequently been the subject of severe criticism. Also, the East German consumer continues to have to put up with a delivery system that varies the supply of consumer goods irregularly according to region. He is committed in advance to receiving certain commodities at certain times and in certain localities, and for the most part does not have sufficient opportunity to exercise his prerogatives as a consumer according to his individual habits or to take advantage of favorable prices.

Shifts in the Wage Structure

The Soviet Zone government plans to counter the full effects of the price increases through an intricate system of differentiated, tax-free bonuses. To be sure, the argument goes, these increments will gradually have to be absorbed into the wage structure. In connection with such measures, a raising of work norms cannot be ruled out. For the time being, since June 1958, the married wage-earner receives a tax-free bonus of 5 East Marks for his wife, and of 20 East Marks for each child, in addition to a pay increase that is determined by his wages and varies by a progressive principle ("gestaffelt") for all incomes between 183 and 800 East Marks. Annuitants receive only a small cost-of-living adjustment (Ausgleichsbetrag) of 9 East Marks per month over and above their pension. Also, by the "Decree of May 28, 1958" the gross amount of all wages between 183 and 410 East Marks per month was increased through changes in the wage schedule.

Since June 1958, this wage increase amounts to 23 East Marks per month on a base pay of 183 East Marks, and goes down [as the wage goes up] to only 1 East Mark on a base pay of 410 East Marks. Members of the free professions, artisans, and tradesmen are entitled to bonuses for wives and children only

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if their gross annual income does not exceed 10,000 DM. If it does, they receive only a children's bonus of 15 East Marks per child. At the same time, however, these occupations are subject to tightened income tax regulations, which, among other things, involve a tax increase for incomes over 15,000 East Marks per year. Furthermore, these handicraft and small trade enterprises must assume the burden of the aforementioned wage increases and bonuses of their workers and employees. For barbers, painters, and photographers, who in addition have been compelled by state decree to lower the prices for their services, the new burdens have been particularly painful. Members of agricultural and handicraft production co-operatives, as well as independent farmers, are subject to specific regulations, which in general, however, are in line with the legislation outlined above.

The East German wage structure, which from year to year had shown an ever greater concentration in the upper wage groups, has undergone a change as a result of the principle of progressively smaller increases that operates under the system of wage increments described above. The first attempts in this direction could be observed as early as the fall of 1957. From a table published by the German Institute for Economic Research (Deutsches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung -- DIW), showing the changes in the income structure for industrial workers in the Soviet Zone, it is apparent that, as a result of the wage increases and bonuses that became effective on June 1 of last year, the average earnings in wage group 1 rose by 13.5 per cent, whereas those in wage groups 6 to 8 went up by only 2.3 per cent each.

Wage Group	Average earnings May 1957	Bonuses and Wage increase acc. to Decree of 5/28/58	Average Earnings June 1958	Increase in Average earnings, June 1958 over May 1957
	East Mark	East Mark	East Mark	Per Cent
1	237.11	32.--	269.11	13.5
2	280.55	28.--	308.55	10.0
3	314.94	24.--	338.94	7.6
4	363.81	19.--	382.81	5.2
5	423.54	18.--	436.54	3.1
6	476.03	11.--	487.03	2.3
7	481.46	11.--	492.46	2.3
8	474.22	11.--	485.22	2.3

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An analysis of the DIW based on the average earnings cited above showed that the gap between the highest and the lowest wage group had been reduced by 20 per cent. The fact that wage groups 6 and 7 list actual wages higher than those in group 8 is to be explained by the better opportunities of workers in these [lower] groups to increase their income through overfulfillment of the norm. Workers in wage group 8, on the other hand, tend predominantly to exercise controlling and supervisory functions.

Comparison of Wages of Industrial Workers

Soviet Zone statistics thus far have furnished no data about the distribution of wages by individual wage groups, and no figures have been published for workers within each of these groups. We therefore can get only an approximate picture of the wage structure. Information is available only for production workers in industry, but this permits us to draw certain conclusions as to the total picture. Whereas in the entire Soviet Zone roughly 6.6 million employed persons and their families are dependent for their existence on wages and salaries, the figures on average earnings given in the above table apply to about 28.8 per cent of that number, that is to say, to a little under 1.9 million wage earners.

As regards the wage situation of industrial workers in the two parts of Germany, the average gross earnings of those in the Soviet Zone rose by 6.5 per cent during 1958, reflecting the wage increases and bonuses that went into effect in June 1958. In the Federal Republic, the rise in gross earnings between the end of 1957 and November 1958 was 7.1 per cent. The average income of the industrial worker in the Zone was thus 435 East Marks, as compared to 467 West Marks for his West German counterpart, a difference of 7.4 per cent. Not only therefore does the Soviet Zone worker have to pay heavily for food, clothing, etc., but his income is lower than that of the West German worker. In addition, his income is taxed at a much higher rate, which makes the discrepancy even greater when it comes to net wages.

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Considerable Difference in Level of Living

Even after the end of rationing an appreciable difference in the level of living existed in the Federal Republic and the Soviet Zone, as far as a majority of the population was concerned. Taking as a standard the "market basket" of an average family in the middle-income group of consumers in the Federal Republic, a comparable family in the Soviet Zone in June 1958 would have had to spend about 33 per cent more if it wished to live in exactly the same manner. The following table gives an overview of the individual categories of expenditures:

Nature of Expenditure	Soviet Zone (East Marks)	Federal Republic (West Marks)	Soviet Zone Expenditures as per cent of Fed. Rep. Expenditures
Total Cost of Living	463.50	347.97	133
Food	237.79	175.91	135
Luxuries	32.58	16.92	193
Housing	26.00	33.80	77
Heat and Light	17.96	21.23	85
Furniture	23.41	15.15	155
Clothing	82.66	37.89	218
Cleaning and hygiene	13.59	11.49	118
Education and entertainment	18.17	24.03	76
Transportation	11.34	11.55	98

Outlays for food, luxuries, furniture, and clothing, which are subject to high excise taxes, make up a particularly large share of the entire cost of living because of their relative size. In the case of costs of housing, education, and entertainment -- which are intentionally held very low in the Zone -- the hidden political purpose involved should not be ignored.... In all categories of expenditure, attention should be given to the difference in quality, which has already been mentioned above.

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Only about 15 to 20 per cent of all families of wage earners and salaried employees have a family income with which they can buy the same things that are purchased by an average family in the middle-income group in the Federal Republic, even adding in the family bonuses that the government has recently started paying. Less than half the production workers in industry (about 900,000 in wage groups 5 to 8) can be included in this [relatively high-income] group. Since June 1958 these workers have on the average achieved a monthly net income that varies between 424 and 465 East Marks. The various categories that make up this income can be seen from the following table:

Categories of Income	Wage Group 5	6	7	8
Average Monthly Gross Income	423.54	476.03	481.46	474.22
Less:				
Contribution to Social Security	42.35	47.60	48.15	47.42
Payroll tax	15.30	24.40	24.40	24.40
Plus:				
Wage bonus	13.00	11.00	11.00	11.00
Bonus for 2 children	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
Bonus for a wife	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Total disposable income as of June 1958	423.89	460.03	464.91	458.40

Achievement of such an income, however, assumes correspondingly high fulfillment of work norms. In the case of other workers, in order to afford the "market basket" of a comparable family in the Federal Republic, it is necessary for the wife or some other family member to contribute to the family income. If a family of four in the higher consumer group wants a "market basket" that would cost 606 West Marks in the Federal Republic, it would have to spend 874 East Marks in the Zone, or 27.7 per cent more. The proportion of families of employed persons with such an income is certainly under 5 per cent in the Soviet Zone.

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To summarize, it can be seen that -- compared with West German purchases -- more than three-quarters of all East German families of employed persons have a standard of living below or somewhat below the level of the middle-income consumer group in the Federal Republic.

Comparison of "Market Baskets" Shows Low Standard of Living

The contents of the East German "market basket" are actually less varied and more modest than the West German. Now that the double price system in the Zone has been dropped, a revised price index can be worked out and the value of the actual purchases calculated. As far as the middle-income consumer is concerned, the Economic Research Institute of the West German Labor Unions (VWI) determined on the basis of the actual livings costs -- as of the end of January 1959 -- that the buying power in the two parts of Germany was in the relation of 100 to 128. That is, the average standard of living of the Soviet Zone population is actually 78 per cent of that of the population of the Federal Republic. A comparison of the development of the cost of living since May 1958 (before the end of rationing) shows the following picture:

Year and Month		Soviet Zone (East Marks)	Federal Republic (West Marks)	Soviet Zone as a Percentage of the Federal Republic
1958	May	390.60	319.50	122
	June	423.50	317.80	133
	August	417.00	316.25	132
	October	407.00	314.70	129
1959	January	407.00	317.80	128

For the contents of his smaller "market basket" the East German "normal consumer" still has to pay about 30 per cent more than the West German does. In the Soviet Zone, after the end of rationing and through the introduction of new price regulations, living expenses have risen almost to the level of 1954. The loudly announced price reductions, which had been imposed periodically between 1955 and 1958, were thus wiped out again.

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Retail Trade - Change in Consumer Habits

Since ration cards were abolished, there has been a change in consumer habits in the Soviet Zone. This process of change is still in progress and not yet completed. Most noticeable is a trend toward the purchase of cheaper foods. Although, for example, since May 29 of the previous year the average retail prices of alcoholic beverages have been raised 20 per cent, the share of such luxury items in the total retail turnover has not risen as fast as the proportion of foods and manufactured consumer goods. The production plans within the planned economy anticipate that, by 1960, manufactured consumer goods will constitute 45 per cent of the retail trade turnover, and food and luxuries 55 per cent. Since clothing and household equipment are far more expensive in the Zone than in the Federal Republic and the amount of food needed to cover requirements has always been figured very closely, the state-directed retail trade system is always able to absorb excess purchasing power by offering more manufactured consumer goods. A lady's rayon dress, comparable in quality to one that could be purchased in the Federal Republic for 27 West Marks, still costs two-and-a-half times that much in the Zone. A similar relationship, to take another example, exists in the case of a man's poplin sport shirt. Leather shoes, stockings, wool products, and so on cost on the average more than double in the Soviet Zone what they would in the Federal Republic. In this connection it is worthy of note that the price figures given in Soviet Zone newspaper advertisements -- insofar as they do not concern special sales of goods whose quality is no longer up to standard -- are considerably above those given in the official statistics.

An overview of the retail trade in the last three years, according to [the main] categories of goods, is given in the following table:

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Year		Unit	Total retail turnover	Of this: food	luxuries	mftd. cons. goods
1956		Billions of Marks	32.6	12.9	5.9	13.8
		Per Cent	100	39.6	18.1	42.3
1957		Billions of Marks	34.8	13.2	6.5	15.1
		Per Cent	100	37.9	18.7	43.4
1958		Billions of Marks	38.1	14.8	6.9	16.4
		Per Cent	100	38.9	18.1	43.0
1958	1st Quart.	Billions of Marks	8.1	3.1	1.5	3.5
		Per Cent	100	38.1	18.5	43.2
	2nd Quart.	Billions of Marks	8.9	3.4	1.7	3.8
		Per Cent	100	38.2	19.1	42.7
	3rd Quart.	Billions of Marks	9.8	4.0	1.8	4.0
		Per Cent	100	40.8	18.4	40.8
	4th Quart.	Billions of Marks	11.3	4.3	1.9	5.1
		Per Cent	100	38.1	16.8	45.1

Absorbing the Purchasing Power of Bonuses and Wage Increases

According to statements of Soviet Zone "Deputy Minister President" Rau before the parliament in East Berlin, the average per capita increase in expenditures occasioned by the introduction of the new price system in June 1958 is 14 East Marks per month. If one estimates that there are 17.3 million people to be supported (not counting the national armed forces), this amounts to 242.2 million East Marks per month, or 1,695.4 million East Marks during the months from June to December 1958. Taking into account the price reductions up to the end of 1958, which amounted to about 4 per cent of the cost of living, this total is reduced to 1,627.6 million East Marks. Since the retail turnover of food and luxury items increased by only 1.4 billion East Marks in the second half of 1958 as compared to the same time period in the previous year, it must be concluded that, in general, the Zone population was not noticeably better supplied during the second half of 1958, that is, after the abolition of ration cards, than it had been in the second half of 1957.

In the whole year 1958, there was an increase of 10.2 per cent in the value of turnover of food and luxury items as compared with 1957. If we take into consideration the increased costs occasioned by the new price regulations, an increase in turnover of only 1.5 per cent in terms of 1957 prices can be established. By way of comparison, the increase of 1957 over 1956 was 4.8 per cent. When the Soviet Zone government, at the end of May 1958, predicted an increase in the buying power of the population of 1.7 billion East Marks, the responsible planners nevertheless knew in advance that they could at any time easily bring back into the coffers of the state the bonuses and wage increases that were granted in connection with the abolition of the ration cards.

Real Purchasing Power of the Hourly Wage

A particularly striking example of the actual "situation of the working class" (a Soviet Zone propaganda slogan) in both parts of Germany is furnished by a comparison of the purchasing power of the net hourly wage. Taking an average for the year 1958, and including the family bonus, a married industrial worker with one child in the Soviet Zone received a net hourly wage of 1.97 East Marks. A comparable industrial worker in the Federal Republic, as of November 1958 (taking an average for the month), received 2.12 West Marks. According to the price level obtaining in his part of Germany in late January/ early February 1959, each of the two workers would have had to work for a different length of time (figured in hours and minutes) in order to pay for a given quantity of consumer goods of varying kinds. The following table gives a comparative overview:

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Commodity	Quantity	Working Time Necessary (in hours and minutes)		Soviet Zone as a Percentage of Fed. Rep.
		Fed.Rep.	Sov.Zone	
Rye bread	1 kg	0/22	0/11	50.0
Flour, type 405	1 kg	0/27	0/40	148.1
Sugar (granulated)	1 kg	0/35	0/47	134.1
Fat bacon (smoked)	1 kg	1/57	2/02	104.9
Pork chops	1 kg	2/53	4/10	144.6
Pork (cheaper cut) [Schweinebauch]	1 kg	2/03	3/22	164.2
Beef (for stewing)	1 kg	2/20	2/57	126.4
Beef (for braising)	1 kg	2/34	4/52	189.6
Liver Sausage	1 kg	2/12	4/16	193.9
Salami-type sausage	1 kg	2/44	3/27	126.2
Rice, grade 1	1 kg	0/29	0/47	162.1
Noodles (without egg)	1 kg	0/34	0/56	164.7
Cream of wheat	1 kg	0/27	0/41	151.9
Peas	1 kg	0/38	0/32	84.2
Potatoes	5 kg	1/28	0/18	20.5
Butter	1 kg	3/19	4/58	149.7
Margarine, grade 1	1 kg	1/07	1/31	135.8
Whole milk (bulk)	1 liter	0/12	0/21	175.0
Eggs	12	1/08	1/57	172.1
Cocoa	125 g	0/34	2/02	358.8
Tea, black	50 g	0/44	1/01	138.6
Coffee	125 g	1/06	4/32	368.5
Whole milk chocolate	100 g	0/37	1/57	316.2
Man's suit, with synthetic wool	1	58/29	63/42	108.9
Lady's dress, rayon	1	12/44	34/16	292.7
Mens' shoes, boxcalf	1 pr	16/33	42/54	259.2
Womens' shoes, boxcalf	1 pr	15/08	35/09	243.3
Ladies' stockings, perlon	1 pr	1/36	4/08	258.3
Man's sport shirt, poplin	1	6/33	18/16	278.9
Lady's sweater, long-sleeved, part-wool	1	10/03	20/18	200.9

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The thesis that the speed-up system continues to exist as a result of high prices is supported here in connection with the real net hourly wage of a Soviet Zone industrial worker. Only those goods that are necessary to cover the minimum requirements for existence are more easily earned in the Zone than in the Federal Republic. More than ever the key to the standard of living of the East German worker has become fulfillment and overfulfillment of work norms. Nevertheless, the propaganda pressure of the Soviet Zone government for the increase of per capita production in all branches of industry is far from guaranteeing the worker a better level of consumption.

In addition to the disadvantages of the everyday life of the Soviet Zone inhabitant that can be expressed in figures, there are a whole series of factors to which he is exposed and against which he has no defense. We can mention only examples here: the allegedly voluntary contribution of unpaid hours of work in so-called "national construction," the arbitrary separation from his relatives in the Federal Republic and in West Berlin, the constant surveillance by informers of the almighty secret police in the factory and in daily life, legal insecurity, and political compulsion.

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