

MINING TELEGRAM

Department of State

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SP PARIS 546
L LONDON 533
H MOSCOW 477

SAL DATE: DECEMBER 30, 5 PM

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DAC CONFIDENTIAL

P REF BERLINTEL 862

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PRESS REPORTS WERE RECEIVED IN BERLIN ON AFTERNOON DEC. 28 THAT US OFFICIALS WERE CONCERNED OVER SENAT PROTEST TO GDR (MORNING DEC. 27) RE CHRISTMAS DAY SHOOTING. CRONKITE OF CBS WAS QUOTED AS MAKING THIS ALLEGATION, AND OBSERVING THAT US REACTION WAS CASTING SHADOW ON ERHARD TALKS IN TEXAS. MISSION RECEIVED PRESS QUERY AND REPLIED IT UNAWARE OF ANY SUCH REPORT. SENAT PRESS CHIEF BAHR THEN APPROACHED ME ON BEHALF OF BRANDT TO INQUIRE RE TRUTH OF REPORT. I SAID WE HAD RECEIVED NO INFO ABOUT REACTION IN US, BUT SET FORTH FOL VIEWS ON PERSONAL BASIS: I POINTED OUT THAT IN CURRENT SITUATION IT WAS IMPORTANT TO MAINTAIN WESTERN ALLIED POSITION VIS-A-VIS SOVS ON BERLIN, AND THAT IN PAST ALLIES HAD ALWAYS HELD SOVS RESPONSIBLE FOR ACTIONS OF EAST GERMANS, INCLUDING MAKING OF PROTESTS BY AMB OF APPROPRIATE SECTOR COMMANDER IN SUCH CASES. (I MADE SIMILAR COMMENT TO SEN. SCHUETZ IN CONVERSATION REPORTED BERLINTEL 864. BAHR EXPLAINED, AS HE LATER DID TO PRESS, THAT CPJCSNOLKORBER MEET ANYWAY WITH WENDT AND IT WAS THOUGHT IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM NOT TO MENTION SHOOTING AS AFFECTING PASS QUESTION AND WEST BERLIN ATTITUDES.

ALBERTZ WAS SUBSEQUENTLY ASKED AT DEC. 30 PRESS CONFERENCE ABOUT REPORTS OF US DISPLEASURE. HE REPLIED THAT SENAT ACTION HAD BEEN COORDINATED WITH US AND HAD LATTER'S FULL APPROVAL.

COMMENT: MISSION HAD NOT BEEN CONSULTED IN ADVANCE THOUGH ALBERTZ IN PHONE CONVERSATION DEC. 26 WITH MISSION OFFICER HAD MENTIONED SUCH MOVE WAS BEING CONSIDERED. FOL THE PROTEST, US SENAT LIAISON

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Authority E.O. 11652 SEC. 5(A) and (D)
By isp, NARS, Date 4-26-76

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-2- 869, December 30, 5 P.M., From Berlin

OFFICER HAD DISCUSSED WITH SPANGENBERG AND KORBER ON NIGHT OF DEC. 27 RISKS WE SAW. THERE WAS LITTLE PRESS COMMENT ON THIS ASPECT, HOWEVER, EVEN FROM STAUNCHEST GUARDIANS OF ALLIED RIGHTS, THOUGH LOCAL AP REP WAS ALARMED BY SENAT MOVE.

WE ASSUME BAHR EXPLANATION IN SOME DEGREE CORRECT, THOUGH SENAT MOTIVATED PRINCIPALLY BY DESIRE CREATE PROPER IMAGE IN PUBLIC. HANDLING OF PRESS RELEASE ON PROTEST BY SENAT INDICATED LATTER HOPED THE PROTEST WOULD CLOSE THIS INCIDENT AND PERMIT FURTHER NEGOTIATION WITH EAST (BAHR SAID WNNDT HAD EXPRESSED REGRET, WHICH HE APPARENTLY HAD NOT DONE). WHEN DANGERS OF ACTION WERE MENTIONED TO SPANGENBERT AND KORBER BY LIAISON OFFICER, THEY REACTED AS THOUGH SUCH THOUGHT HAD NEVER OCCURRED TO THEM, AND THIS MAY WELL BE THE CASE.

RE ALBERTZ STATEMENTS REPORTED ABOVE, WE ARE PLANNING TO HANDLE ANY PRESS INQUIRIES AS FOLLOWS:

IN REPLY TO QUERIES RE ALLEGED CONSULTATION AND US APPROVAL, WE WILL SAY: "A SENAT OFFICIAL, IN CONVERSATION WITH A US MISSION OFFICER PRIOR TO THE SENAT ACTION, MENTIONED THAT SUCH AN ACTION WAS UNDER CONSIDERATION. WE DID NOT AT THE TIME INTERPRET THIS AS A REQUEST FOR OUR VIEWS, HOWEVER, AND WE THEREFORE EXPRESSED NONE." IF ASKED HOW US VIEWS SENAT ACTION, WE WILL SAY FOR RECORD THAT WE SEE NO USEFUL PURPOSE IN COMMENTING AT THIS STAGE ON THE SENAT ACTION. ON BACKGROUND WE WILL ADD WE HAVE ALWAYS HELD THE SOVS RESPONSIBLE FOR ACTIVITIES OF THE EAST GERMAN POLICE AND WE CONTINUE TO DO SO.

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*AS RECEIVED, WILL SERVICE UPON REQUEST.

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