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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM NO. 275

3 March 1950

SUBJECT: Probable Effect of the May Youth Rally in Berlin

1. The current Soviet effort to undermine the position of the Western Powers in Germany--evident in Soviet interference with German traffic to and from Berlin and in intensified "National Front" propaganda--will be continued in the announced Free German Youth (FDJ) rally in Berlin during 28-30 May. According to East German Communist officials, the rally will include more than 500,000 youths, representing the East and West sectors of Germany, the USSR, the Satellites, China, France, Italy, and the UK. Reportedly, the FDJ plans to employ a militant group of 20,000 to counter expected resistance in the Western sectors.
2. Through the FDJ rally, the USSR will attack the "aggressive" plans of the Western Powers in Germany while portraying the USSR as the sole champion of peace and German unity. Designed to appeal to the martial spirit of German youth, the rally has the further purpose of attempting to encourage German youth to support the East German Republic (GDR). The proposed FDJ slogans clearly reveal the Kremlin's continuing propaganda efforts to enhance the prestige of the GDR and advance the "National Front" throughout Germany.
3. Berlin, now proclaimed by National Front propaganda as capital of the "united Germany" which the Front wishes to activate, is an obvious target for Soviet-inspired disturbances. In Berlin, the USSR is seeking to weaken the West sector economy and the resistance of West Berliners to Communist intimidation. FDJ propaganda will highlight present uncertainties with respect to unemployment and unfavorable economic prospects in the Western sectors of the city.
4. Despite the pacifist slogans which the German Communists will bear as they enter the West sectors, the East Communists are likely to provoke violence with the West sector police force and, if possible, with Western military units. The FDJ rally will probably include a delegation from the East German paramilitary police, though

NOTE: This memorandum has not been coordinated with the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State, Army, Navy, and Air Force.

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these police may not appear in armed military formations. Use of armed or motorized paramilitary units would obviously increase prospects for violence on a serious scale.

5. FDJ-instigated violence, regardless of its intensity, would not directly involve the USSR, would serve as a probing operation to test Western reaction to violence in Berlin, and would have the advantage of providing the East Germans with martyrs. (Some sabotage is possible, although this would not be a primary aim of the FDJ.) A Soviet move to seize Berlin through the FDJ is not likely for the following reasons: (a) the USSR probably considers a GDR attempt to seize and hold the city would be unsuccessful without direct Soviet troop assistance; and (b) the USSR is pursuing a policy of gradual attrition with respect to Western Power occupation of Berlin.

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