

TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the
United States of America
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10

OUTGOING

U. S. MISSION BERLIN

USCOB
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RIAS
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Charge:

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Classification

Control:

23

Date:

JAN 11, 1963
7 PM

EDU 13-2

ACTION: Amembassy, PRAGUE 12

INFO: Secstate, WASHINGTON 757

Praguotel 7 to Berlin; 384 to Dept

Ella Lee, American Negro soprano born 1933, lives West Berlin 28 Herbartstrasse, Berlin-Charlottenburg. Married to American citizen Thornel Beblie, who her manager. She one of three US citizens now singing at Komische Oper, East Berlin, two of whom have avoided contacts with USIS presumably because of sensitivity about criticism from West Berliners who dislike American artists having long-term engagements with East Berlin cultural institutions. Miss Lee was attacked by West Berlin paper B.Z. shortly after erection of Wall for allegedly saying she was not interested in politics or Wall. Miss Lee claimed at time she had been misquoted. Same newspaper raised strong objections Nov 1962, when intendant Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra (West Berlin) invited Miss Lee to appear as soloist for Britten's "War Requiem" on occasion of German Volkstrauertag. On this occasion Miss Lee offered to withdraw but eventually appeared for first time in West Berlin after intendant defended inviting her.

600.2 - LEE, Ella

East Berlin press indicate enthusiastic appreciation of her role as Titania in Britten's Midsummernight's Dream and her soloist appearances in East Berlin and SovZone with symphony orchestras and in Lieder recitals. She performed Feb 1962 with the Dresden Staatskapelle in Leipzig. Some East Berlin and SovZone papers play up theme of racial discrimination in USA in their reviews her concerts.

Lightner
LIGHTNER

AUTH: AEHemsing

MA

COORD: EA: Mr. Mays *gmv*

January 11, 1963

23 1m Flrvin/mas

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TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the
United States of America

9

INCOMING U. S. MISSION BERLIN

ACTION:
USIS 2

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Classification

Control: 31

INFO:
USCOB
MIN 3
EA
F&R
RIAS

FROM: PRAGUE

Recd: JAN 8TH, 1963
0750

NO: 7, JAN 7, 7 PM

ACTION DEPT 384 BERLIN 7

ELLA LEE, DESCRIBED BY CZECH AUTHORITIES AS AMERICAN MUSIC
STUDENT IN WEST BERLIN WHO RECENTLY PERFORMED STATE OPERA,
WEST BERLIN, COMING TO PRAGUE LATE JANUARY TO SING. APPRECIATE
SOONEST ANY INFORMATION READILY AVAILABLE ON HER.

HORSFY

600.2 - LEE, Ella (Opera Singer)

ACTION TAKEN:

NO ACTION
REQUIRED

DATE 1/10/63

INITIALS mas.

*Dr. Finen
Cable sent
1/10/63*

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