

GDR SOLDIER SHOT TRYING TO FLEE EAST

Hamburg DPA in German 1133 GMT 6 Jan 74 L

[Text] Berlin--A GDR soldier attempted to escape in Berlin yesterday with an officer as a hostage, but was shot and presumably fatally wounded by his fellow soldiers. The Federal Government, Deputy Mayor of Berlin Kurt Neubauer, American Commandant in Berlin William W. Cobb, and CDU Bundestag Deputy Olaf von Wrangel, who is chairman of the Bundestag Intra-German Committee, have condemned the shooting.

The West Berlin police state that the incident occurred shortly after 1930 at Checkpoint Charlie, the checkpoint provided for foreigners, in the Kreuzberg District of Berlin. A West Berlin customs officer heard three or four shots and observed a GDR soldier in battledress leading a people's army officer to a barrier at a break in the wall with a submachine gun trained on him. The officer, who had his arms folded behind his head, was obviously the soldier's hostage.

As the soldier stooped to climb through the first barrier, a frontier sentry in a control hut right next to the barrier opened fire. The soldier collapsed, and a sentry dragged the lifeless body behind the wall and then behind a screen.