

## Press Views Transit Meeting

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[From the press review compiled by Eva-Dorothea Jikel]

[Text] FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG writes: By turning back buses Friday at the Marienborn checkpoint carrying travelers planning to participate in a West Berlin demonstration in commemoration of the building of the wall 15 years ago, GDR authorities violated the transit agreement. But since its regulations permit arbitrary judgments that transit roads are likely to be misused, you can hardly call anyone to account for it. If your appearance in Marienborn, Warth or Hirschberg creates "sufficient reason for suspicion" that you will misuse access roads to Berlin, you are exposed to the arbitrariness and arrogance of GDR border organs. But there exist possibilities of defending against arbitrariness, and they must be exploited doggedly. Suspicion is possible in regard to individual travelers but not in regard to crowded buses.

KOBLENZER RHEINZEITUNG points out: Of course the Junge Union and the students' union had planned with their 13 August rally on the 15th anniversary of the construction of the wall what East Berlin terms a "provocation toward the GDR." For this purpose they had banners and other printed material in their buses, that is, "material" easily permitting the suspicion that transit roads were to be misused as defined in the transit agreement.

It was, therefore, not difficult for the GDR representatives in yesterday's Transit Commission session to account for the "individual" turning back of most buses. But it must not be forgotten that this rally was a "counterprovocation" at most. The worst provocation in Germany as before are the fatal shots fired at the GDR border and the Berlin Wall.

BADISCHE ZEITUNG of Freiburg stresses: The politically important issue is not the quarrel on the interpretation of individual cases but the assumption that the GDR by its 13 August action wanted to give the provisions of the agreement a new dimension unacceptable to the Federal Republic and West Berlin. It was trying by massive measures aimed at hindering transit to influence demonstrations in West Berlin. It cannot be tolerated at all that the GDR arbitrarily selects Berlin travelers according to criteria having nothing to do with transit traffic but only with motives of the trip. For such interference and broad interpretation not even the vaguely formulated "misuse paragraph" can be used as justification.

BERLINGER MORGENPOST notes: The SED regime justified its action by saying that there was "sufficient [ground for] suspicion" that transit routes would be misused because the young people wanted to demonstrate against the GDR. You must ask: What does an announced peaceful demonstration on West Berlin sovereign territory against the wall and the shooting order have to do with transit agreements? On what is the unprecedented arbitrariness of Honecker based, when he tries to derive from the transit agreements a say in events taking place in West Berlin? What have press reports and appeals, as well as pamphlets which were removed illegally from the buses, to do with the misuse of transit roads?

RHEINPFALZ of Ludwigshafen notes: It was to be expected that the Transit Commission would not agree to assess the issue jointly. Is it a question whether this will happen at the second session of the commission slated for September. Failure is in the offing. So there will be no other possibility but to appeal to both governments, as envisaged by the transit agreements, which will have to settle remaining problems according to the agreement. But it must be expected that these negotiations, too, will show no joint result. It is a consolation that the three Western powers will not leave the affair solely to the two German governments. For the first time since the implementation of the four-power agreement they have used a GDR violation as a reason to point out publicly that the German transit agreement is consistent with the agreement of the four powers on Berlin, thus pointing out the main responsibility of Moscow.

WESTDEUTSCHE ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG points out: It is now certain that the GDR has not been aiming at a breach of transit agreements and that no new grave conflict is in the offing with repercussions on the four-power agreements. The GDR has limited its action to the application of the "misuse article," article 16, and it seems that the statement of SED chief Honecker is valid, that the GDR does not want further escalation. Actual events of past weeks, however, have not supported such comforting statements. Positive and concrete proof is needed now that pursuit of the course of detente is desired.

RHEINISCHE POST of Duesseldorf concludes the following: The course and result of yesterday's Transit Commission session teach us two things: East Berlin does not intend at the moment to make the most of the demonstration of GDR power on the transit roads to West Berlin on the occasion of the Youth Union rally.

And on the other hand Bora knows now that the Transit Commission, established as an arbitration and clarification means, is unfit to supervise the smooth flow of transit traffic.