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70-14
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Date: 06-05-2013

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

5 November 1963

DAILY BRIEF

***USSR-Berlin:** The detention of the US convoy on 4 November clearly reflects a high-level Soviet decision to challenge the Allied "harmonized procedures" for processing Autobahn convoys.

The behavior of Soviet authorities at the Marienborn checkpoint suggests that they were fully prepared to stage a test over the first nondismountable convoy to appear since the three Western powers conveyed their procedures to the Soviets on 29 October. The Soviet checkpoint commander contended there was no misunderstanding, charged that the delay was caused only by US failure to comply with Soviet regulations, and claimed it is Soviet, not Allied, authorities who determine the procedures

He apparently made the same demands that Soviet authorities tried unsuccessfully to impose last month on a British convoy detained at Eabelsberg--personnel should dismount for headcount if (1) a convoy consists of five or more vehicles, irrespective of the total number of passengers or (2) if any one vehicle contains four or more passengers in the rear of the truck.

In addition to asserting the USSR's alleged right to establish procedures, the Soviet leaders probably

hope to use this incident to engage the Allies in negotiations on the governmental level to work out four-power arrangements on access procedures. Such an agreement, in Moscow's view, would not only confirm the USSR's right to a voice in establishing access rules, but would undermine the Western position that the right of unrestricted access is based on the occupation of Berlin and is not subject to negotiation.

The Soviet leaders probably believe that even if their maneuvers fail to draw the West into negotiations, continuing pressure on the dismounting issue will oblige the Allies to avoid test cases in the future and thereby permit the USSR to claim de facto acceptance of its regulations.

