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Copy No.  
12 November 1963

BERLIN CHRONOLOGY

A Chronology of Reports Concerning the Berlin Situation Received  
During the Week Ending at 1200 EST 12 November 1963

This is a working paper prepared in the [Redacted]  
[Redacted] Office of Current, Intelligence, CIA.  
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29 Oct

The US Embassy in Paris reported that in a speech to the French National Assembly, Foreign Minister Couve de Murville stated that "we do not draw the conclusion --and this is where a fundamental divergence arises --that we must automatically commence talks on any subject proposed to us. For the talks to become not only possible but useful, we think there must actually be a change in the Soviet Union and its policy; let such a change manifest itself, and all doors will open. Let the Soviets, for example, definitely cease making threats about Berlin and let there be no incident in our communications with the old capital for a reasonable number of months--then real problems can be approached and then taken up.... To legalize the status quo in Germany is manifestly Russia's objective, but with one exception, almost a major exception: Berlin. On this subject, on the contrary, nothing must be done, according to her, to consolidate what exists, namely, the Western presence. Any discussion of this subject is denied to the Americans, and periodically incidents occur with the sole result of reminding us of the still precarious character of our position....But, someone will say, our Allies who are negotiating are fully aware of these elements of the problem, and there is no reason to think that, in the discussions they are holding for their own account, they are likely to compromise what we--and they with us--consider the fundamental interests of the West. I fully concur in this view, and the talks I recently had occasion to have with my American and British colleagues confirmed this conviction of mine. Furthermore, did not the United States Secretary of State recently give a speech on this subject in which he cautioned against illusions in unequivocal terms?... Actually, we of the West are in a situation very like that in which we found ourselves in the fall of 1961, when there were passionate discussions of the question whether it was desirable to have a meeting with the Russians on the subject of Berlin. All of us at that time took positions similar to the ones we are taking today, and for the same reasons.... Likewise, today, without objecting to the British-American-Russian conversations that have been initiated, and which may be pursued, we do not intend to participate in them. As I have already indicated, the subjects under discussion are unfortunate and the first conversations immediately revealed that they raised all the problems relating to Germany on which the respective positions remain unchanged..."

-1-

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31 Oct

The Berlin Mission reported that at his press conference, Mayor Brandt, in re-emphasizing Senat willingness to discuss with the East Germans the possibilities for alleviating the effects of the Wall, indicated that he would accept talks between Senat officials and a member of the East German government if the latter was an authorized representative of the East Berlin Administration. Brandt stated that while it would seem unusual for a Senat official to be confronted by an East German representing an "entirely different level," the significant criterion for the Senat was whether the East German negotiator could be identified also as a representative of the East Berlin city administration. Brandt's remarks reflected views expressed earlier by FRG press chief Bahr who said to US Mission officers that he was concerned primarily with the level of Western negotiators in talks with the East Germans. The Mission commented that Brandt had previously rejected negotiations with GDR representatives as an unacceptable step in the direction of recognition of the GDR and free status for West Berlin. His public statement indicating willingness to accept a GDR government official (in the guise of an East Berlin representative) may thus be expected to evoke criticism, particularly from the Berlin CDU which may accuse Brandt of deviating from the principles inherent in the Senat's policy declaration made last September. [redacted]

-2-

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5 Nov

Secretary of State Rusk cabled the US representative at the NAC in Paris that it was the US view that we should attempt to negotiate a nonaggression arrangement with the Soviets only in the context of or following the achievement of broader arrangements which would result in an objective improvement of East-West relations. Specifically, the US considers that acceptable non-aggression arrangements might be related to 1) satisfactory arrangements on Berlin, 2) measures directed toward amelioration of conditions resulting from the division of Germany, and 3) assurance that any NAP arrangement does not prejudice the eventual reunification of Germany. It was the US view that the Soviet declaration does not meet the criterion regarding Berlin because it does not contribute to a satisfactory resolution of the Berlin problem. The US estimated that Gromyko's proposed statement was calculated deliberately to be unacceptable and we did not think that the Soviets wish seriously to negotiate or make concessions at this time.

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6 Nov

Secretary of State Rusk cabled the US Embassy Bonn that Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin at his own request saw the US Under Secretary of State to make an oral statement under instructions, which is summarized below: "According to an official statement by a FRG Government spokesman, the FRG Government included in a bill on ratification of the Moscow Test Ban Treaty a clause providing that this law would be extended to West Berlin. The Western allies of the FRG allegedly agree with this. The Soviet Government, as it has frequently stated, wishes to reiterate that Western Berlin has never been part of FRG territory. Thus, the above mentioned decision of the FRG Government has no legal force. Such efforts on the part of the FRG Government are attempts to bar relaxation of the international tensions which began with the conclusion of the Moscow treaty. The Soviet Government expects that the US Government will take measures to prevent the FRG from using the ratification of the Moscow treaty for advancing its illegal claims on West Berlin." The US Under Secretary said that he would take note of the Soviet statement, and expressed the understanding that the action of the FRG Government in this instance had been taken subject to the rights which the allied powers had reserved to themselves in the field of disarmament. [REDACTED]

Reuters reported that East German border guards fired three shots at two East German workmen who apparently attempted to escape into the American sector of West Berlin while working near the border fence. The East German guards seized the two men, according to West Berlin police witnesses. [REDACTED]

According to a Reuters report, about 5,500 troops of the US garrison in Berlin went on a 4-day field training exercise in West Berlin's Grunwald forest. The exercise, called "Roadway," had been twice postponed for 24 hours during the two-day detention of a US Berlin-bound convoy on the East German Autobahn. Small British and French units also took part in the exercise. [REDACTED]

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7 Nov

The US Embassy in London noted that the UK press had given extensive coverage to the autobahn incident and to Khrushchev's interview. The 6 November press was unanimous in support of the demonstration of Allied solidarity in the face of the unjustified and inexplicable Soviet provocation. The end result of the incident was generally interpreted as a Soviet retreat. Khrushchev's remarks were quoted liberally but his interpretation was not accepted and the official US denial of a US retreat at Marienborn was cited by all newspapers. Most analysts thought that Khrushchev's remarks were intended for the consumption of CPSU hardliners and the world communist party delegations currently in Moscow. The Tripartite notes were liberally cited; the Times apparently had the verbatim text of the UK note. The Times also indicated under a Washington dateline that the Allies would pursue an active policy on the Autobahn to assert access rights and convince the USSR that further harassment would not be tolerated, also hinting that the Allies might have economic sanctions in mind as part of their response to further provocation. It also "understood" that the US must now reassess the prospect of troop reductions in Europe. [redacted]

AP reported that Soviet delegate to the UN, K. V. Novikov, accused the United States of creating an artificial crisis over access of Western convoys to West Berlin. The US delegate, Charles C. Stelle, said that the effect of the convoy incident and earlier ones "does not contribute to our work toward disarmament." [redacted]

Reuters reported that a US military convoy of 10 vehicles and 22 drivers and co-drivers was cleared without difficulties at the Russian Autobahn checkpoint of Marienborn. The convoy was headed from West Germany to West Berlin. [redacted]

Reuters reported that East German police have blocked the access route for a West Berlin farmer and his stepson to and from their American sector exclave in Wueste-Mark near the Autobahn checkpoint of Babelsberg. The exclave, which consists mainly of fields and meadows, is connected with West Berlin by a 300-yard long road through East German territory controlled by East German police. The farmer was told by the East Germans the previous day that he could not be allowed through to the

-5-

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exclave to visit his stepson working in the fields. The stepson, who was also prevented from returning by the road to West Berlin, had to spend the night on the exclave in a small hut with several chickens and a goat. [redacted]

AP reported that a detachment of Soviet troops in jackboots goose-stepped in West Berlin along an avenue named in honor of an anti-Communist uprising. The Russians, celebrating the 46th anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution, paraded to their war memorial in the British sector. British Military Police watched impassively. Unconsciously emphasizing the gulf between former allies, the British troops near the memorial stood at ease-- and not at attention--as the band played the Soviet national anthem. The whole ceremony lasted less than 15 minutes ending with the troops shouting responses to slogans chanted by a Soviet official. [redacted]

Leopold told a USBER officer that no new proposals or progress had been made on the oil products issue in interzonal trade in the last two weeks. Concerning payment of U-Bahn trackage transiting East Berlin, the West Berlin traffic authority (BVG) had sent a letter to its East Berlin counterpart on 29 October saying its instructions called on it to pay the agreed amounts into IZT account 3 and that the Eastern BVG could raise the matter through IZT channels if it was not satisfied. There had been no reaction. Concerning the Hof bridge reconstruction, the FRG had sent the GDR details of its construction plans. Nevertheless, an official of the GDR's Transport Ministry on 6 November told Leopold that he must clarify a number of questions before another meeting can be held. Leopold replied on 7 November that it soon will be three years since Behrendt agreed in the secret protocol of 29 December 1960 that the GDR would reconstruct the bridge. [redacted]

8 Nov

According to LIVE OAK Paris, East bound French convoy T5, consisting of 2 jeeps, 8 trucks, 18 crew and 29 passengers arrived at Marienborn at 0815Z and was cleared at 0848Z. (This convoy had left Berlin on 5 November and had remained at Helmstadt since that time.) The convoy arrived at Babelsberg at 1230Z and was cleared at 1240Z. [redacted]

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USBER, giving a slightly earlier arrival time for the convoy's arrival at Babelsberg--1225Z instead of 1230-- and one minute after clearance time, noted that the French had received no request at either checkpoint to dismount or lower tailgates. The French convoy commander told the US MP representative at Babelsberg that Sergin was "very jovial." He also reported that the French had had an accident with a West German automobile about 11 miles west of Babelsberg. The West German vehicle drove off to Berlin under its own power, while the French truck was towed by another convoy vehicle. [redacted]

[redacted] the same British convoy that left West Berlin on 5 November successfully cleared the Marienborn checkpoint on its return trip to Berlin at 0754Z. [redacted]

[redacted] the British convoy passed Babelsberg checkpoint at 1735Z with no problems and entered West Berlin. [redacted]

USBER reported that Ambassador Abrasimov had made the following comments concerning the Autobahn incident at the Soviet Embassy reception in East Berlin the previous day. "You know of the recent incident on the Autobahn of the GDR in the Marienborn area, which resulted from the attempt of US military authorities to evade existing processing (Kontrolle) procedures. The incident shows that it is necessary to be on guard, to take a firm stand, and not to let oneself be provoked by any action." In reply to Abrasimov, GDR First Deputy Premier Stoph made no reference to the incident. On the 8th Neues Deutschland carried a brief second-page article entitled "Bonn agitates for new provocations" claiming that West German Press chief von Hase's statement that Bonn does not consider the incident closed and "has a very clear and very fixed conception" of the question shows that Bonn is planning to incite the US to new provocations on the "GDR Autobahn." USBER notes that the above seems to be the first Soviet reference to the "GDR Autobahn." It also is the first GDR mention of Bonn in reporting of the 4-6 November incident. [redacted]

Concerning the Soviet ceremony commemorating the October revolution held at the War Memorial in West Berlin the previous day, USBER reported that the

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British, as in past, told the Soviets that military personnel in buses planning to attend the ceremony would be required to enter West Berlin via Sandkrup bridge while other participants would enter via Friedrichstrasse. The Soviets complied. The ceremony was attended by Ambassador Abrasimov, some 150 Soviet civilians, 163 Soviet military personnel and a Soviet military band. Barbed wire in front of the memorial was removed for the ceremony but replaced afterwards. [REDACTED]

British Eastbound convoy T-2, non-dismount, consisting of 8 vehicles, 16 crew and 27 passengers, arrived at the Soviet checkpoint at Marienborn at 1326Z, cleared, and departed the checkpoint at 1354Z. The convoy reached the Babelsberg checkpoint at 1705Z and cleared at 1736Z. There were no demands to dismount or lower tailgates at either Soviet checkpoint. [REDACTED]

LIVE OAK Paris reported arrival at Marienborn as 1331Z, clearance as above, arrival at Babelsberg as 1708Z and clearance as 1738Z. [REDACTED]

USBER's comments on the autobahn incidents stressed that Soviet handling from start to finish tended to confirm the view that they were primarily concerned to demonstrate the tactical advantage which they hold and can exercise at will in ground access confrontations. There may have been broader considerations related to Soviet domestic or intra-bloc factors and the international situation generally. The main factor presumably was to "show who controls access routes" quickly after the 29 October notification of Allied procedures. The detention was only a limited success, since the convoy cleared without dismounting or lowering tailgates. While East German propaganda is seeking to portray the three powers as accepting Soviet clearance controls, the truth eventually will be known to most of the GDR population as it already is to the world. USBER believes that the Soviets are well aware of the limits of their position and reluctant to escalate access incidents dangerously; there were no indications of an Soviet or East German military alert during the 4-6 November incident. USBER also observes that the incident would have been very different had there been any divergences between the Allies, quoting Neuer

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Zuercher Zeitung's veteran. correspondent Otto Frei that the demonstration of Allied unity and association of West Berlin authorities with the Allies constituted the most impressive demonstration of unified Western purpose concerning Berlin in his 13 years in Berlin. Forseeing future autobahn incidents, in line with the Soviet viewpoint that these are a necessary reminder of the facts of Berlin access life, USBER suggests that the USSR might be sensitive to counterpressure in other fields and areas and also that in the future it will be important to commence the Allied response at a later stage of the contingency planning sequence, or to telescope the initial stages. It also notes that it believes the USSR for the present would prefer to keep the autobahn in its own hands, both out of distrust for the East Germans and in order to retain flexibility on larger issues which might become the subject of negotiation with the West.

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11 Nov

East Berlin ADN reported that GDR Foreign Minister Bolz stated that the GDR had become a signatory with equal rights of the Moscow test-ban treaty, which has been signed by more than 100 states. Bolz stressed that the Bonn government signed the Moscow treaty only under the pressure of world public opinion and was doing everything in its power to torpedo efforts to ease tension. This spirit was reflected in the West Berlin clause of the Bonn ratification act to the Moscow treaty. By this, Bonn wanted to underline its claim to annex the special area of West Berlin. "As long as West Berlin is not a free city, the Moscow treaty concluded by the big powers is valid for the four-power occupation area of West Berlin," Bolz stated.

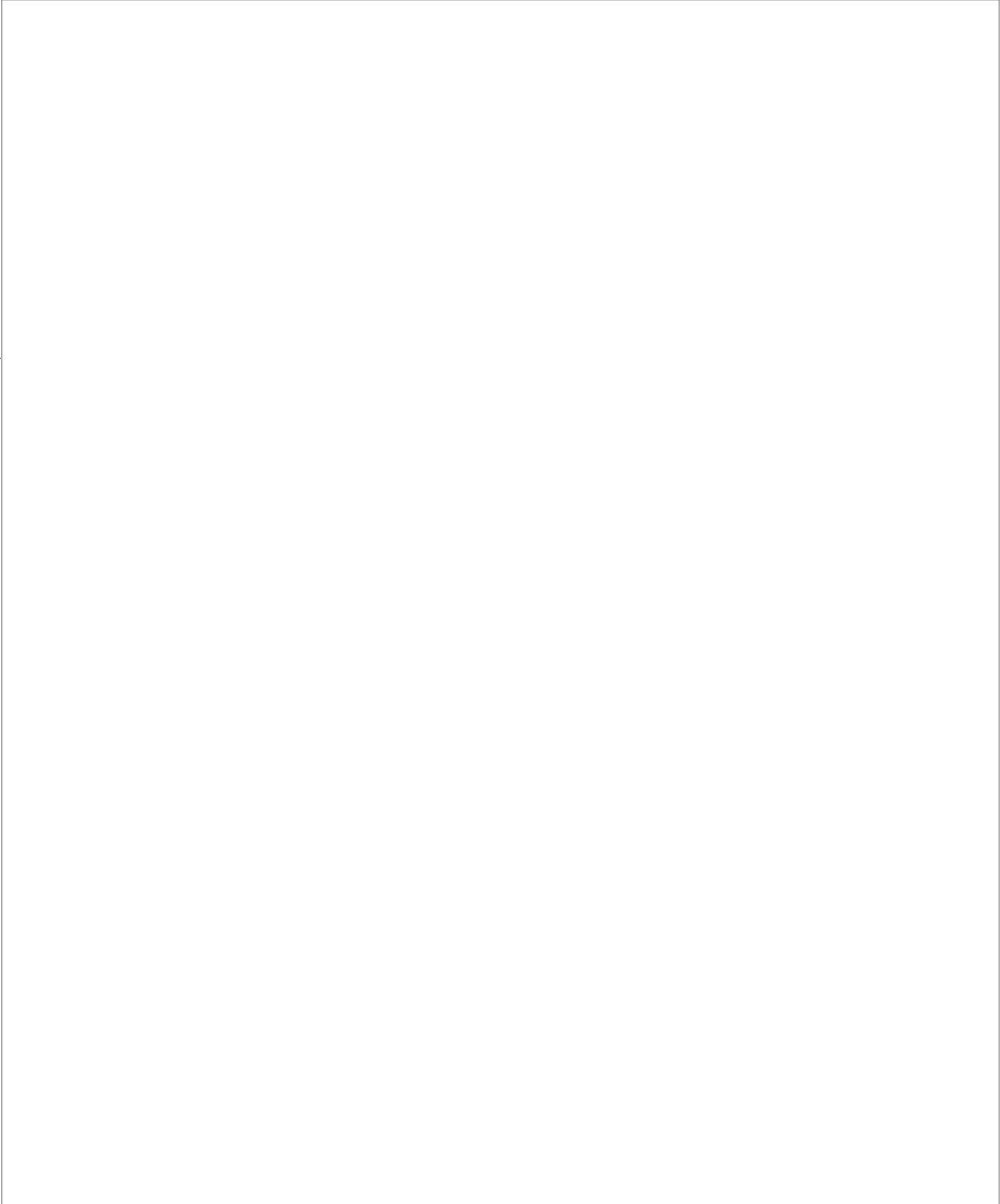
Reuters reported that five East German schoolboys fled together during the night into West Berlin, crawling unnoticed through the barbed wire fences into the British sector. The boys--the two eldest were 16--were taken to a children's home in West Berlin. Officials there must now decide if they will be returned to their parents. In past cases, young persons over 15 have generally been permitted to stay if they have relatives in the West.

UPI reported that West Berlin police began to install a television camera on the West Berlin border to observe the Eastern highway checkpoint at Babelsberg one and one-half miles away. The television camera was ordered installed on a high mast because the Babelsberg checkpoint is around a bend and cannot be seen from the ground. Western military convoys and German civilian traffic pass through this checkpoint entering and leaving Berlin.

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SPECIAL INTELLIGENCE SUPPLEMENT TO BERLIN CHRONOLOGY



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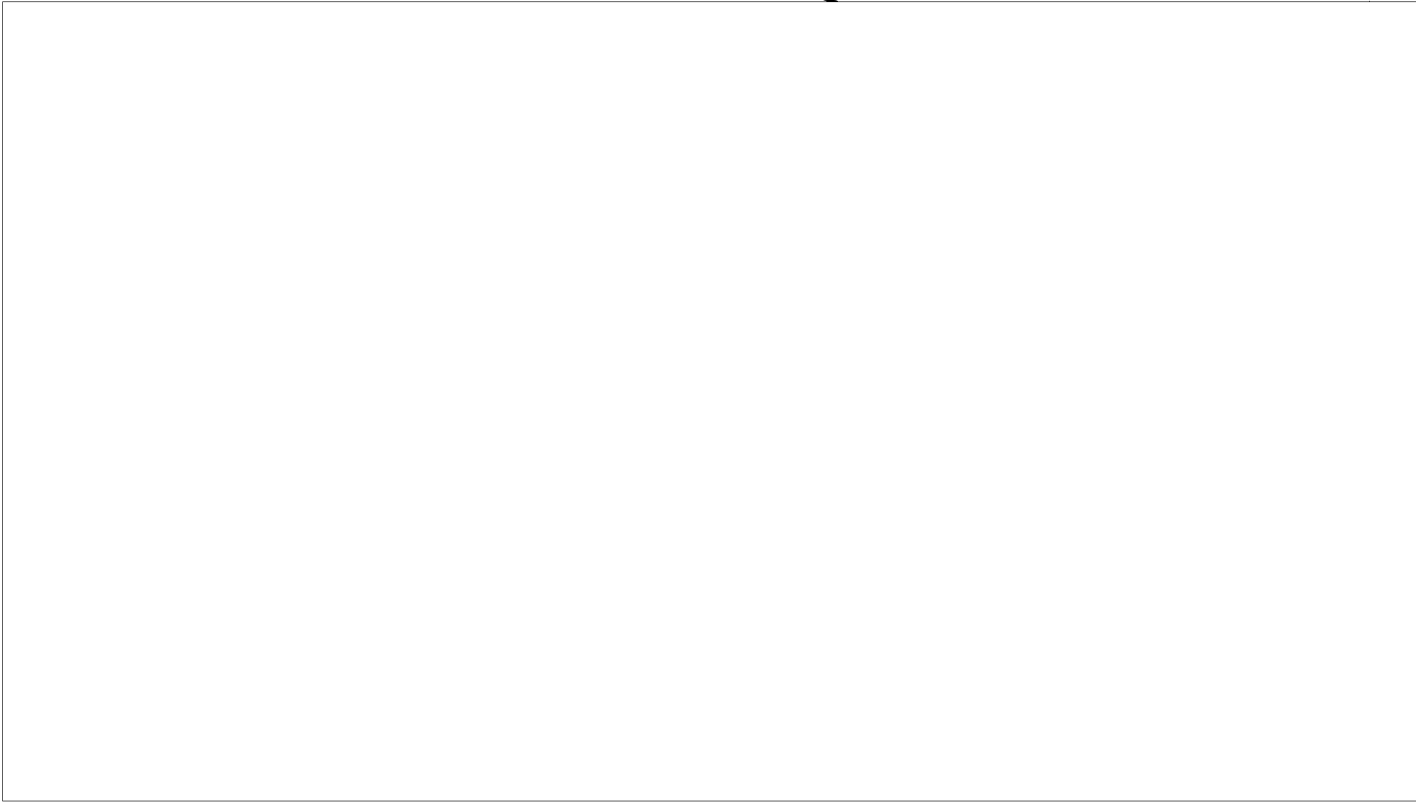
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