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DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 67230
By BKT/NC 26 March 2013

AIRGRAM

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A-208

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~~REF~~
~~Kidnapping of Refugees~~
CSM 9-2

TO : DEPARTMENT OF STATE
INFO : BORN, LONDON, PARIS, MOSCOW, USAREUR
FROM : USEER
SUBJECT : Reports of East German Kidnapping of Refugees from West Berlin

SEPT 27, 1963

At a press conference on August 30, a young refugee, who had defected from the East German border police a few days previously, created a local stir when he stated that he had observed a person being kidnapped from West Berlin by East German security agents while he had been on duty as a border guard. When questioned as to the circumstances of the case, the refugee stated that he could not know for certain but supposed that it had to do with the forcible abduction of defectors. He added that he knew of at least three cases where VOPD defectors had been kidnapped from West Berlin and returned to East German authorities. In one case, the East Germans had punished a defector with a 15-year prison sentence. The statements made by the refugee drew a somewhat skeptical response from West Berlin Senat and police officials. However, a full investigation of the cases described by the defector was promised.

On September 26 the Berlin press reported on another case in which West Berlin police on September 15 had arrested a former refugee named Gerd MANTHEY on suspicion of having been involved in a 1961 abduction from West Berlin of a GREPO defector. Manthey had been taken into custody on two previous occasions on similar charges but had been released for lack of evidence. On September 15, however, he had attempted to talk another person into participating in the abduction of a border guard who had defected to West Berlin. The other person initially pretended an interest, but subsequently denounced Manthey to the police. Manthey has now also confessed to the 1961 crime.

Comments: In spite of the recent publicity concerning political kidnappings, police sources here state that they are aware of no cases

Declassified after September 27, 1966

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of kidnapping from West Berlin since the erection of the Wall other than the one for which Manthey has now been arrested.

FILE For the Assistant Chief of Mission:

Declassified under Executive Order 11652

Subject: E. Jan Nadalman, Acting Chief, Political Affairs Section

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Reference: [Faded text]

MEMO : [Faded text]

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INFO : [Faded text]

TO : [Faded text]

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