

ITEM No 10869/54

SPECIAL ATTENTION: Mr. Henze

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Dec 4
III - 569

EAST GERMANY

SSD SECRETARY OPENING LETTERS.

SOURCE BERLIN: Investigation Committee of Free Jurists.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: November 26 1954.

EVALUATION COMMENT: None.

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For a second time within the last six months the Investigation Committee of Free Jurists in West BERLIN advised in November the East Germans to take precautions against the East German State Security Service when writing letters addressed to persons living not within the Soviet-occupied zone of Germany.

In almost 20,000 pamphlets being distributed all over the German Democratic Republic, the committee told East Germans that a special branch of the infamous State Security Service is engaged in secretly opening letters that are to cross the zonal borders in or out of East Germany proper. "Controllers of the SSD succeeded in finding a method of opening letters that does not leave any traces whatever. Letters are resealed by the SSD and forwarded to the addressee who will not know that the content has been read or even copied by State organs," jurists say.

Therefore, the committee argues, East Germans should always observe two important rules:

1. Additional glue should be applied when letters are being sealed by the sender. Glue available in the East German market does not dissolve under steam, used by the SSD to force letters open for inspection.

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2. Copying-pencils should be used in writing addresses or the name of the sender. The color of the pencil will fade and thus leave marks whenever steam is applied to the letter.

Thus, the committee points out, "the addressee will always be capable of telling whether the SSD inspected his mail."

End