

CONFIDENTIAL

August 8, 1955.

Dear Chancery,

There has been some discussion here about paragraph 4 of your letter No. 1963/33/55 of May 20 in which you reported that the sentries on the stage of the Bolshoi Theatre at the Victory Day celebrations in May did not include a representative of the M.V.D. Internal Troops.

2. We agree with you that this is probably another sign of the fall in the M.V.D.'s prestige. In present circumstances, with the Soviet Government stressing "soviet legality" and trying to impress on the Soviet people that the terror is a thing of the past, it would probably be inappropriate to let a representative of the Internal Troops of the Ministry of Internal Affairs appear in public as the equal of representatives of the armed forces. It is not customary for the Militia to be represented on these occasions, and it may be thought that the Internal Troops should now be given the same treatment as the Militia rather than the same treatment as the Army. The Frontier Troops who are subordinate to the M.V.D. were represented, perhaps because the existence of the Frontier Troops as regular military formations is more palatable to the general public than the existence of regular formations of Internal Troops. The presence of a Frontier Troops representative may have been thought enough to satisfy the honour of the M.V.D.

3. We have heard from the War Office that some members of a military security unit (Voyennaya Okhrana) were seen wearing a new uniform when they escorted Molotov to the Italian National Day party in Moscow. This piece of information has become involved in our discussion about the sentries at the Victory Day celebrations. There are several interesting points about it. First, we have always regarded the Voyennaya Okhrana as a component part of the Internal Troops. Second, we have thought that its duties were confined to the guarding of special points, such as factories, bridges, etc. (as distinct from the guarding of, and maintenance of order in, geographical areas, which is the task of the Internal Troops as a whole). Third, we have always supposed that the civilian security men who accompanied and guarded the Soviet leaders were members of the Soviet equivalent of our Security Service (now under K.G.B. control). There are, therefore, various questions posed by the report about Molotov's escort. Have the duties of the Voyennaya Okhrana been changed? Has its subordination been changed, i.e., has it been detached from the Internal Troops as a whole, or has the subordination of the Internal Troops as a whole been changed from the M.V.D. to the K.G.B.? If the subordination of the Voyennaya Okhrana and/or the Internal Troops has not been changed, has the task of guarding the Soviet leaders been taken out of the hands of the K.G.B. and transferred to the M.V.D.? Was it indeed ever in the hands of the K.G.B.? Is there any significance in the new

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