The Stasi at Home and Abroad

Domestic Order and Foreign Intelligence

Edited by Uwe Spiekermann

Cover: People storming the headquarters of the Ministry for National
Security in Berlin-Lichtenfelde on January 15, 1990, to prevent any further
destruction of the Stasi files then in progress. The poster on the wall forms
an acrostic poem of the word Stasi, characterizing the activities of the
organization as **S**chlagen (hitting), **T**reten (kicking), **A**bhören (monitoring),
Spionieren (spying), and **I**nhaftieren (arresting).

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AM	Active measures
APN	Außenpolitischer Nachrichtendienst (Foreign Political Intelligence Service, APN)
BB	Betriebsberichterstattung/erstatter (worker correspondence/correspondents)
BBOIS	Berichte des Bundesinstitutes für Ostwissenschaftliche und Internationale Studien
BdiP	Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik (Magazine for German and International Politics)
BfV	Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz (Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution)
BGS	Bundesgrenzschutz (Federal Border Security)
BKA	Bundeskriminalamt (Federal Criminal Office)
BND	Bundesnachrichtendienst (Federal Intelligence Service)
BRD	Bundesrepublik Deutschland (Federal Republic of Germany)
BStU	Bundesbeauftragter für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen Deutschen Demokratischen Republik (Federal Commissioner for the Records of the State Security Service of the Former German Democratic Republic)
BV	Bezirksverwaltung (regional administration)
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CIC	Counterintelligence Corps
COB	Chief of Base
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
CSU	Christlich-soziale Union (Christian Social Union of Bavaria)
DDR	Deutsche Demokratische Republik (German Democratic Republic, GDR)
DIA	Defense Intelligence Agency
EE	Eastern Europe
EEC	European Economic Community
FCD	First Chief Directorate

FDJ	Freie Deutsche Jugend (Free German Youth)
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
FSB	Field Station Berlin
GB	Gesetzblatt (law gazette)
Gestapo	Geheime Staatspolizei (Secret State Police)
GI	Geheimer Informator (secret informant)
GMS	Gesellschaftlicher Mitarbeiter für Sicherheit (Societal collaborator for security, informer who reported more generally to Stasi about GDR society)
GRU	Glavnoye Razvedivatelnoye Upravleniye (Main Intelligence Directorate of the Soviet Union)
HA	Hauptamt (Main office)
HICOG	High Commission for Occupied Germany
HV A	Hauptverwaltung A (Main Directorate A, the foreign intelligence division of the Stasi)
IIP	International Institute for Peace
IM	Informeller Mitarbeiter (unofficial collaborator)
IMA	Inoffizieller Mitarbeiter mit besonderen Aufgaben (unofficial collaborator with special tasks)
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMK	Inoffizieller Mitarbeiter zur Sicherung der Konspiration und des Verbindungswesens (unofficial collaborator for aiding conspiracy)
INSCOM	Intelligence and Security Command
IOJ	International Organization for Journalists
IPN	Instytut Pamięci Narodowej (Institute of National Remembrance in Poland)
IPW	Internationale Politik und Wirtschaft (International Politics and Economics)
IRBM	Intermediate-range ballistic missiles
IWF	Institut für wirtschaftswissenschaftliche Forschung (Institute for economics research, code name for the APN)
JFK	John Fitzpatrick Kennedy
KGB	Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti (Committee for State Security)

KI	Komitet Informatsii (Committee of Information)
KL	Kreisleitung (district administration)
KoKo	Kommerzielle Koordinierung
KPD	Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands (German Communist Party)
LfV	Landesamt für Verfassungsschutz (State Office for the Protection of the Constitution)
MAD	Militärischer Abschirmdienst (Military Counterintelligence)
MFN	Most Favored Nation
MfS	Ministry for State Security
MGB	Ministerstvo Gosudarstvennoi Bezopasnosti (Ministry of State Security)
MI6	Military Intelligence Section 6 (British foreign intelligence agency)
MRMB	Medium-range ballistic missiles
MVD	Ministerstvo Vnutrennikh Del (Ministry of the Interior of the Russian Federation)
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NKVD	Narodnyy Komissariat Vnutrennikh Del (People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs)
NPD	Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands (National Democratic Party of Germany)
NSA	National Security Agency
NVA	Nationale Volksarmee (National People's Army)
NWIO	New World Information Order
OibE	Offizier im besonderem Einsatz (Officer with special tasks)
OSS	Office of Strategic Services
OV	Operative-Vorgänge (Operational Procedures)
PID	Political-Ideological Diversion
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
PRC	People's Republic of China
Rabkor	Rabochii korrespondent (worker correspondent)

RFE	Radio Free Europe
RG	Record Group
RGW	Rat für gegenseitige Wirtschaftshilfe (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance)
RIAS	Radio in the American Sector
RL	Radio Liberty
RoHo	Rosenholz files
RYaN	Raketno-Yadernoe Napadenie (Russian acronym for Nuclear Missile Attack)
S&TI	Scientific and technological intelligence
SA	Sturmabteilung (Assault Division)
SD	Sicherheitsdienst (Security Service)
SdM	Sekretariat des Ministers (Secretariat of the Minister)
SED	Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands (Socialist Unity Party)
SG	Sicherungsgruppe (Security group)
SIRA	System zur Informationsrecherche der HV A (Strategic Information Research Analysis database of the HV A)
SS	Schutzstaffel (Protection Squadron)
Stasi	Ministerium für Staatssicherheit (Ministry for State Security)
SvZ	Studien von Zeitfragen (Studies of Contemporary Questions)
SWT	Sektor Wissenschaft und Technik (Sector for Science and Technology)
Tb	Tonband (audiotape)
VA	Volksarmee (People's Army)
VEB	Volkseigener Betrieb (Publicly owned operation, the principle form of industrial enterprise in the GDR)
UfG	Untersuchungsausschuss freiheitlicher Juristen (Independent Jurists' Investigative Committee)
ZAIG	Zentrale Auswertungs- und Informationsgruppe (Central Evaluation and Information Group)
ZK	Zentralkomitee (Central Committee of the SED)

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This volume is the final outcome of a cooperative effort between the Woodrow Wilson Center's Cold War International History Project and the German Historical Institute, Washington, DC, which led to a workshop in April 2010. The main credit for this common endeavor goes to Robert Gerald Livingston. He suggested an event on the history of the GDR's foreign intelligence service. Due to the often quite sensational nature of debates about espionage both among the public and in some scholarship, we decided after some internal discussion to integrate this topic into both the history of the Stasi and the history of the GDR. The workshop's program resulted from engaged discussions among the four conveners, Robert Gerald Livingston, Christian Ostermann, Mircea Munteanu (both from the Woodrow Wilson Center's Cold War International History Project), and the editor, as well as Benjamin B. Fischer. I am very grateful to the Woodrow Wilson Center, namely, to Christian Ostermann, for its co-sponsorship and generous hospitality and to my colleagues for their substantial contributions to making this event and this publication flowing from it a success.

Most of the contributions to this volume derived from the workshop itself, but several participants were not able to include their revised papers, and new articles had to be acquired to form this collection. This took some time, and I am very thankful for the patience of the contributors, whose commitment to this publication remained firm over such a long time period. I would like to express my gratitude to Hartmut Berghoff, the director of the GHI, who likewise backed this project from the beginning and supported its inclusion as a supplement of the *Bulletin of the GHI*. Without the GHI's financial support, this publication would not have been possible.

Thanks are also due to my highly esteemed colleagues at the GHI. Their professionalism was crucial to completing this project. Bryan Hart produced the cover, and David Lazar helped with his admired language skills. Above all, I owe a debt of gratitude to Patricia Sutcliffe, the editor of this supplement series. She not only improved all the articles and worked with the contributors, but she also resolutely and sensibly pushed the editor to do his work. Without this, this volume would not have been published. I would also like to again thank Gerry Livingston, who first interested me in the topic

and whose lengthy career and publication record testify to his passion and dedicated interest in German-American relations. It was and is a pleasure and a privilege to work with such colleagues in this distinguished academic environment.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the more than fifty participants of a seminar on the history of the Stasi that I facilitated at the University of Münster in 2012/13. They taught me that the history of the Stasi is an important tool that helps Westerners not only understand the world of the former communist East but also perceive current threats in our (Western) world. The Stasi combated open society and liberal democracy — yet a small and idealistic opposition group was able to overcome this large organization and its criminal activities. It is my hope that this volume will help us all do our duty to defend the core of open and liberal society in Western democracies as well.

Uwe Spiekermann, editor   July 2014

Contexts

INTRODUCTION

THE STASI AND THE HV A: CONTEMPORARY RESEARCH AND CONTEMPORARY RESONANCE

Uwe Spiekermann

The Stasi as Both a Point of Reference and Differentiation: Current U.S. Intelligence Activities around the World

At the beginning of the 2013 European Summit, European Commission president José Manuel Barroso proclaimed privacy a fundamental right in Europe. In his sharp repudiation of U.S. espionage against European citizens and their political representatives, namely, German chancellor Angela Merkel, Barroso added that mere decades ago "there was a part of Germany where political police were spying on people's lives daily. . . . We know very recently [sic] what totalitarianism means . . . We know what happens when a state uses powers that intrude on people's lives."[1] With this, Barroso was referring to an intense discussion in Europe on U.S. surveillance practices in the summer of 2013, when whistle-blower Edward Snowden informed civil society of NSA spying activities via the *Washington Post* and the *Guardian*.

While much of the American public has seemed not really concerned about the wide range of unconstitutional NSA activities,[2] and American officials denied any bad intentions, the public discourse about this in Germany has often used terms and arguments formerly only applied to communist and authoritarian states: "When the Stasi still existed, its agents gathered odor samples of its opponents. This isn't necessary for the Americans. They don't need to sniff under our armpits. Their algorithms allow them to crawl into our heads. They know our past, and they want to calculate our future. They aspire to total control — over every single one of us. This ambition makes the very country that stood like no other in the world for the freedom of the individual a totalitarian state."[3] The light artist Oliver Bienkowski projected the term "United Stasi of America" on the façade of the U.S. embassy in Berlin, and the director of the Stasi memorial site and former prison Berlin-Hohenschönhausen, Hubertus Knabe, pressed charges against the NSA activities in court.[4] The key term, however, was introduced by an American expert. According to David

1   "EU's Barroso Warns Spying Can Lead to 'Totalitarianism,'" http://voiceofrussia.com/news/2013_10_24/. . . [10/24/2013].

2   See "DNI Clapper Declassifies Intelligence Community Documents Regarding Collection Under Section 501 of the Foreign Surveillance Act (FISA), September 10, 2013," http://icontherecord.tmblr.com/post/60867560465/. . . [09/11/2013]; Ellen Nakashima, Julie Tate, and Carol Leonnig, "Declassified Court Documents Highlight NSA Violations in Data Collection for Surveillance," *Washington Post*, Sept. 10, 2013; Barton Gellman, "NSA Broke Privacy Rules Thousands of Times per Year, Audit Finds," *Washington Post*, Aug. 15, 2013.

3   Jakob Augstein, "US-Abhörskandal: Deutschland, Verbündeter 3. Klasse," *Spiegel Online*, July 1, 2013: "Als es die Stasi noch gab, haben ihre Agenten Geruchsproben von ihren Gegnern gesammelt. Das haben die Amerikaner nicht nötig. Sie müssen nicht unter unseren Achseln schnüffeln. Ihre Algorithmen erlauben ihnen, in unseren Kopf zu kriechen. Sie kennen unsere Vergangenheit, und sie wollen unsere Zukunft ausrechnen. Sie streben die totale Kontrolle an – über jeden einzelnen von uns. Dieses Bestreben macht ausgerechnet das Land, das wie kein anderes auf der Welt für die Freiheit des Einzelnen stand, zu einem totalitären Staat."

4   "Stasi-Experte Knabe zeigt die USA wegen NSA-Skandal an," *Berliner Morgenpost*, July 8, 2013.

Ellsberg, a former whistle-blower who copied and distributed the Pentagon Papers, the "NSA, FBI, and CIA have, with the new digital technology, surveillance powers over our citizens that the Stasi . . . could scarcely have dreamed of."[5] As a patriot, Ellsberg supported his argument with the U.S. Constitution, namely, the Fourth and Fifth Amendments, and advocated the restoration of the protections of the Bill of Rights.

The vast majority of people in Germany rejected the U.S. surveillance practices — the symbiotic cooperation of German intelligence agencies and the similar practices of French and British intelligence services came up but never entered the core of public discussion. The Stasi legacy narrative was stronger: Former Stasi lieutenant colonel Wolfgang Schmidt, once head of Department XX of the Ministry of State Security and a central figure of GDR historical revisionism, seemed to welcome the news: "You know, for us, this would have been a dream come true."[6] He argued that intelligence services as such have a basic interest in collecting and using information on all citizens and that there was no structural difference between the Stasi and Western services. However, others saw this claim of equality as a kind of relativism that failed to reflect on the differences between the Stasi and its Western counterparts. Roland Jahn, head of the Stasi files agency, the Bundesbeauftragte für die Stasi Unterlagen (BStU, or the Federal Commissioner for the Stasi Records), for example, emphasized these differences: "The Stasi was a secret police service with the aim of securing the power of one party . . . The Western secret services, by contrast, have the task, or at least act as though they have the task, of protecting their citizens from restrictions on their freedom, such as through terrorism."[7] Journalists, for their part, highlighted typical characteristics of the Stasi including its monopoly on and secrecy of information, its suspension of human rights, and lack of oversight by courts and parliament. Information was not deleted, there were no barriers to accessing private data, and it could be used for any purpose.[8] The Stasi had *carte blanche* as long as its members acted on behalf of the Socialist Unity Party.[9]

This debate about NSA surveillance practices and their similarities and differences to those of the Stasi is ongoing and ties in to many other debates between the Atlantic partners. Although the U.S. government has not changed its surveillance

5   Daniel Ellsberg, "Edward Snowden: Saving Us from the United Stasi of America," *Guardian*, June 10, 2013.

6   Quoted in "Former East German Stasi Officer Expresses Admiration for, Dismay at US Government's Surveillance Capabilities," https://www.techdirt.com/articles/20130627/15455123642/former-east-german-stasi-officer-expresses-admiration-dismay-us-governments-surveillance-capabilities.shtml [06/13/2013/].

7   "Die Stasi war eine Geheimpolizei mit dem Ziel, die Macht einer Partei zu sichern. . . . Die westlichen Geheimdienste hingegen haben den Anspruch oder geben ihn zumindest vor, ihre Bürger vor Einschränkungen der Freiheit, etwa durch Terrorismus, zu schützen." "'Nicht akzeptabel.' Der Hüter der Stasi-Akten Roland Jahn verurteilt die Schnüffeleien der westlichen Geheimdienste, warnt aber auch davor, NSA, FBI und CIA mit der Stasi gleichzusetzen," *Cicero*, no. 8 (2013): 68-69, here 69.

8   Christian Booß, "War die Stasi im Vergleich zur NSA nur ein Papiertiger?" *Der Tagesspiegel*, July 21, 2013.

9   Manuel Bewarder, Martin Lutz, and Uwe Müller, "Die NSA wird als neue Stasi verunglimpft," *Die Welt*, Aug. 3, 2013.

practices in principle, and it rejected a no-spying agreement with Germany and is unwilling to conclude one with other European nations, most governments have *de facto* accepted these practices because they believe they benefit from the results. The damage to transatlantic relations, however, is immense and feeds anti-American sentiment in Europe, in general, and in Germany, in particular.[10] The perception of the NSA as a technologically superior version of the Stasi is historically inaccurate but a powerful narrative for the public. Above all, it is supported by the idea that the "War on Terror" has reactivated the paradigm of Cold War confrontation in a broken way: both in the Cold War and now, very general ideas and terms — most prominently, national security — were and have been used to define and describe an enemy not present for the vast majority of the population. The terror attacks of 9/11/2001 provided new justification for the global military and surveillance presence of the U.S. — and prompted the expansion of an intelligence system unparalleled in history. The "imperial presidency" of the U.S. now risks undermining traditional constitutional checks and balances.[11] Fighting "terrorism," a term without any limits or clear-cut definition, allows the U.S. administration to infringe upon civil liberties as traditionally understood.[12]

The current debate on U.S. global mass surveillance and its association with Stasi activities in East Germany and many Western states presents an important challenge to historians. It is no longer only dictatorships that breach the privacy of citizens, whether in their own territory or abroad. Rather, it now opens up comparative perspectives and forces historians to focus on the entanglement of intelligence services during the Cold War and thereafter. The present book, resulting from a conference organized by the German Historical Institute and the Woodrow Wilson Center's Cold War International History Project in 2010, gives substantial insight into Stasi history, providing solid and empirically valid ground for analyzing the differences and similarities between East German intelligence services and the NSA.[13] The volume presents contributions of leading German, U.S.-American, Canadian, and British scholars who give basic information on the Stasi, its place in GDR society, as well as its relation to the Socialist Unity Party and the GDR state. In addition, several contributions analyze the foreign intelligence service of the GDR, the Hauptverwaltung A (HV A), and its relation to the GDR's Western and Eastern neigh-

10 Richard Hüttel, "Industriespionage und vieles mehr," *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, June 6, 2013.

11 See Bernd Greiner, *9/11. Der Tag, die Angst, die Folgen* (Munich, 2011). The concept of the "imperial presidency" was introduced by historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr. in 1973. It characterizes a political system based on excessive secrecy and disregard for the rule of law. Schlesinger criticized mainly Nixon and George W. Bush for transforming the traditional political system of the U.S. Today, however, the concept is used as a general tool for structural changes in post-WWII America.

12 Cf. Bernd Greiner, Tim B. Müller, and Klaas Voß, eds., *Erbe des Kalten Krieges* (Hamburg, 2013).

13 Uwe Spiekermann, "The Stasi and Its Foreign Intelligence Service," *Bulletin of the German Historical Institute* 47 (2010): 119-24.

bors. All in all, the volume provides the information necessary for developing a basic understanding of Stasi activities at home and abroad, but it also includes several case studies to foster a deeper understanding.

The Stasi: Research Topics and Current Debates

"The Stasi was no ordinary intelligence service but a political police with its own remand prisons, its own investigation apparatus, with enforcement employees, and with its own judges and prosecutors working in its service (A XIV)."[14] It was mainly active in the GDR but also included a foreign intelligence service. It was also active in the civilian and the military sphere, included intelligence and counter-intelligence services, and had its own armed forces.[15]

In retrospect, the Stasi has become a symbol for the GDR and the suppression of a large number, perhaps even the majority, of East German citizens.[16] This status resulted from the vigorous actions of the GDR civil rights movement, the safeguarding of and access to the Stasi files, the institutionalization of the BStU in 1991, and an intense and controversial public debate on the importance of the Stasi legacy. Although the future of the BStU is uncertain — the Stasi Files Act will expire in 2019, and perhaps the institution too will end — the Stasi files, along with the large number of public servants and academics who deal with the history of the GDR, have shaped the historiography and the public discourse in a unique way.[17]

The history of the Stasi is therefore not only the history of a repressive intelligence service and secret police. Rather, it must be understood within the context of the Cold War confrontation between East and West, the public debate on the peaceful revolution of 1989, and the East/West German search for identity after unification.

The Role and Function of the Stasi in the GDR

The historiography of the Stasi has ideological and political undertones: it presents a communist regime at work, a state of injustice (*Unrechtsstaat*), clearly distinguished from the Western ideal of separation of powers and the rule of law.[18] The course of Stasi history also exhibits an obvious transition: in the 1950s and 1960s, the agency brutally suppressed any opposition, whereas it shifted to more

14 Karsten Dümmel, "Schild und Schwert der SED – Was war die Stasi?" in *Was war die Stasi? Einblicke in das Ministerium für Staatssicherheit der DDR*, ed. Karsten Dümmel and Melanie Piepenschneider, 4th ed. (Sankt Augustin and Berlin, 2012), 11-13, here 13.

15 Cf. Jens Gieseke, *The History of the Stasi: East Germany's Secret Police, 1945-1990* (New York and Oxford, 2014); Gary Bruce, *The Firm: The Inside Story of the Stasi* (New York and Oxford, 2010). On the military forces, see Hagen Koch and Peter Joachim Lapp, *Die Garde des Erich Mielke: Der militärisch-operative Arm des MfS. Das Berliner Wachregiment "Felix Dzierzynski,"* (Aachen, 2008).

16 The best overview of the history of the Stasi can be found in Jens Gieseke, *Die Stasi 1945-1990* (Munich, 2011). For detailed information on Stasi research, see *Bibliografie zum Staatssicherheitsdienst der DDR*, ed. BStU (Berlin, 2010).

17 "Stasi-Akten sollen auch im Bundesarchiv zugänglich sein," *Zeit Online*, April 14, 2014. For a general overview, see *Bericht der Bundesregierung zum Stand der Aufarbeitung der SED-Diktatur*, Deutscher Bundestag 17. Wahlperiode, Drucksache 17/12115, Jan. 16, 2013.

18 Klaus Schroeder, *Der SED-Staat: Geschichte und Strukturen der DDR 1949-1990*, 3rd rev. and enlarged ed. (Cologne, Weimar, and Vienna, 2013), 557-84; David Gill and Ulrich Schröter, *Das Ministerium für Staatssicherheit: Anatomie des Mielke-Imperiums* (Berlin, 1991), 101-107.

subtle forms of maintaining power in the 1970s and 1980s.[19] As the Stasi steadily gained financial and personnel resources and direct access to information about all the political and social institutions of the GDR (with the exception of the churches), it also increased its use of instruments of social engineering and turned away from direct physical violence, all of which fundamentally changed the agency. Many historians, however, discuss these changes as a kind of modernization of a dictatorship and deem the transformed GDR state as a form of "subtle totalitarianism"[20] or a "dictatorship of a higher order"[21] — and therefore see these changes as evidence of its repressive and inhumane — as well as totalitarian — character. The fact that psychological expertise and deceptive measures like decomposition (*Zersetzung*, a hidden psychological destruction of the subject) came to be applied, as well as the sheer number of operative procedures, back this thesis of a second Stasi phase beginning in the mid-1970s. Other scholars, however, disagree; they refer to the agency's limited resources for applying decomposition on a larger scale — only 1,000 to 10,000 people were directly affected[22] — and conclude that such measures, although directed against proclaimed enemies, were merely used symbolically to keep up the Chekist ideal of the Stasi.[23] Such soft power was comparatively inefficient: it did not break most of the proclaimed enemies of the state but rather confirmed in some way that the Stasi was no longer using physical violence; without it, its sword became blunt. Finally, another argument against this Stasi 2.0 was the opposition — although it was constantly weakened by the sale of political prisoners to West Germany.[24] That it existed at all contradicts the narrative of the GDR still being "totalitarian" at that point.

The history of the Stasi is also an important component in the history of the GDR's failure. The intelligence service provided information on events in the GDR and in Western countries in accordance with the party line and the needs for maintaining the system. The functions it did well included acquiring strategic information, supporting internal cooperation with Eastern Bloc allies and nonaligned states, and infiltration and fighting the (self-produced) opposition. This relative success story, however, was offset by an internal blockade of

20 Sandra Pingel-Schliemann, *Zersetzen: Strategie einer Diktatur* (Berlin, 2002), 70; idem, "Lautlose Formen der Zerstörung: Zersetzungsmaßnahmen des MfS," *Deutschland Archiv* 36 (2003): 233-42. Cf. the reviews by Christof Geisel, *H-Soz-u-Kult*, Nov. 4, 2002, and Walter Süß, "Zersetzung als Methode. Zu Sandra Pingel-Schliemann 'Zersetzen. Strategie einer Diktatur', " *Horch und Guck* 11, no. 39 (2002): 71-73.

21 Hubertus Knabe, "Zersetzungsmaßnahmen?" in *Was war die Stasi?*, ed. Dümmel and Piepenschneider, 28-34, here 34.

22 Ansgar Borbe, *Die Zahl der Opfer des SED-Regimes* (Erfurt, 2010), 66-67.

23 The Cheka, created in 1917, was the first and perhaps most criminal of the Soviet state security organizations. The KGB, created in 1954, is one of its many successors. The Chekist ideal, propagated by its leader Felix Dzerzhinsky, was to brutally combat all opponents of the ruling communist party.

24 Jan Philipp Wölbern, *Der Häftlingsfreikauf aus der DDR, 1962/63-1989: Zwischen Menschenhandel und humanitären Aktionen* (Göttingen, 2014); Hendrik von Quillfeldt, *Dissidenten für Devisen: Häftlingshandel zwischen DDR und Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Erfurt, 2010).

19 For one view of periodizing Stasi history, see Roger Engelmann, "Funktionswandel der Staatssicherheit," in *Repression und Wohlstandsversprechen: Zur Sta-*bilisierung von Parteiherrschaft in der DDR und der CSSR*, ed. Christoph Boyer and Peter Skyba (Dresden, 1999), 89-97. For the early period, see Karl* Wilhelm Fricke and Roger Engelmann, *"Konzentrierte Schläge": Staatssicherheitsaktionen und politische Prozesse in der DDR 1953-1956* (Berlin, 1998).

one-sided, unquestioned concepts of the enemy, as well as through language and phrases antagonistic to differentiated and reasonable perceptions of events and persons. Combined with political goals and political leaders focused on confirming their perceptions and not in exploring alternative scenarios, the Stasi reinforced the resistance to reform of the Honecker era. Consequently, large parts the Stasi staff and the party elite grew increasingly alienated from one another, including the unswervingly loyal leading cadres of the agency itself. As a result, action was blocked, the state suffered losses against the growing opposition, and many in the "firm" fell into an attitude of inward resignation. In the 1980s, the Stasi was unable to staunch the depletion of material resources for the sake of continuous expansion of the security and surveillance services. Nor was it able to prevent the emergence of a second public sphere conveyed via Western media and personal contacts. Under these circumstances, the mighty Stasi simply surrendered when the internal opposition first demanded change and reforms and, finally, a democratic alternative. The example of the Stasi reveals that intelligence services can prolong the existence of regimes, but they cannot really stop the erosion of trust in leading cadres.

The Stasi Files

Researchers have a unique source when seeking to elaborate a nuanced and empirically validated history of the Stasi. Access to the files of intelligence services is normally severely restricted; the files of the (West) German Bundesnachrichtendienst, for instance, are not available to the public, and even members of the newly established commission on the service's post-WWII history are not allowed to publish all the details of their research. A large number of relevant personnel files were destroyed in 1996 and 2007.[25] Although Germany has had an *Informationsfreiheitsgesetz* — its own Freedom of Information Act — since 2006, the law restricts access to information to issues of national security, personal data, business secrets, etc. The U.S. version, by contrast, gives researchers the right of access after 25 years, even if the files continue to be contested.[26] While the German situation shows that the restrictive history of the authoritarian state is still present, the U.S. circumstance is much more open: the nation spent at least $430 million enforcing the act properly in 2012.[27]

The existence of this unique source, the Stasi files, is due to manner in which the peaceful revolution of 1989/1990 unfolded; they

25 *Kassationen von Personalakten im Bestand des BND-Archivs*, ed. Bodo Hechelhammer (Berlin, 2011).

26 See Athan G. Theopharis, ed., *A Culture of Secrecy: The Government Versus the People's Rights to Know* (Lawrence, 1998); Alasdair Roberts, *Blacked Out: Government Secrecy in the Information Age* (Cambridge, 2006).

27 Wendy Ginsberg, *The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA): Background, Legislation, and Political Issues* (Congressional Research Service 7-5700) (Washington, DC, 2014), 11.

symbolize the victory of GDR citizens over the communist regime and the concomitant promise this victory held of a more democratic and transparent future.[28] Open access to the files arose partly from the interest of GDR civil rights activists in the history of their state and their own repression. Yet it also derived from the aim of serving an educational purpose — the files disclose the Stasi's all-embracing management and manipulation of GDR society.[29]

The Stasi files are special because of their exceptional size (comprising about 180 km of shelf space).[30] Even today, a considerable portion of the Stasi files is not yet indexed. Relatively few files have been lost; most sources are preserved in written form on paper and cover a range of activities much broader than that of other political police services.[31] The quality of the files is also high, as the Stasi tried to guarantee a high standard of intelligence information: it drafted guidelines, with some individuals' careers revolving around their implementation. Staff members also underwent regular training, and internal checks were introduced in an effort to improve the quality of evidence received from sources. Nonetheless, the files can be limited in their usefulness for historical research because of the purpose for which they were created. For the most part, the files contain personal data and present a mosaic of repression. The investigations, operational procedures, and direct personal checking of persons they convey represent GDR history in a very specific way. Because of their existence and their sheer amount, the Stasi files deeply shape the broader history of the GDR, although it surely can't be written without the even larger quantity of additional sources from the state, the parties and mass organizations, and the churches.[32] Of course, the preserved Stasi files do not comprise the entirety of the records for the Ministry for State Security.[33] The Stasi began destroying files on a regular basis before unification. Consequently, the bulk of information regarding mail, telephone, and radio surveillance was lost as well as c. 70,000 personal files. Most of the HV A files were wiped out in 1989 and 1990 — with

28 Christian Booß, "Von der Stasi-Erstürmung zur Aktenöffnung: Konflikte und Kompromisse im Vorfeld der deutschen Einheit," *Deutschland Archiv* 44 (2011): 79-87. Cf. Siegfried Suckut and Jürgen Weber, eds., *Stasi-Akten zwischen Politik und Zeitgeschichte:* *Eine Zwischenbilanz* (Munich, 2003). A good example of GDR citizens' tremendous interest in the Stasi is the bestseller Armin Mitter and Stefan Wolle, eds., *Ich liebe euch doch alle! Befehle und Lageberichte des MfS Januar-November 1989,* 3rd ed. (Berlin, 1990), which gave a first taste of the files.

29 Klaus-Dieter Henke, "Zu Nutzung und Auswertung der Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen DDR," *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 41 (1993): 575-87, here 586.

30 This is the size declared and popularized by Joachim Gauck, *Die Stasi-Akten: Das unheimliche Erbe der DDR* (Reinbek near Hamburg, 1991), 11. Today, the BStU claims to have about 111 km of written files (including 12 km of card indexes), 47 km in the form of microfilms, 1.7 million photos, 27,600 audio documents, 2,800 films, and 15,000 boxes and bags ("Überlieferungslage und Erschließung der Unterlagen. Stand: Februar 2013, " http://www.bstu.bund.de/DE/Archive/UeberDieArchive/Ueberlieferungslage-Erschliessung/uberlieferungslage_node.html).

31 Roger Engelmann, *Zu Struktur, Charakter und Bedeutung der Unterlagen des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit* (Berlin 1994), 6. Cf. Roland Lucht, ed., *Das Archiv der Stasi: Begriffe* (Göttingen, 2012).

32 Matthias Buchholz, "Anmerkungen zur Problematik der 'DDR-Archive'," in *Bilanz und Perspektiven der DDR-Forschung*, ed. Rainer Eppelmann, Bernd Faulenbach, and Ulrich Mählert (Paderborn, 2003), 383-90.

33 Roland Lucht, "Ablagen liquidieren – 'spezifische' Vorgänge tragfähig gestalten". Schriftgutvernichtungen des MfS während der "Wende" und der Auflösungsphase der Staatssicherheit," in *Hatte "Janus" eine Chance? Das Ende der DDR und die Sicherung einer Zukunft der Vergangenheit*, ed. Dagmar Unverhau (Münster, 2003), 81-98.

34 Hubertus Knabe, *Westarbeit des MfS: Das Zusammenspiel von 'Aufklärung' und 'Abwehr'* (Berlin, 1999), 133-34.

35 *Bericht der Bundesregierung* (2013), 16.

36 See Saskia Handro and Thomas Schaarschmidt, eds., *Aufarbeitung der Aufarbeitung: Die DDR im geschichtskulturellen Diskurs* (Schwalbach, 2011), particularly the introduction and the articles by Martin Sabrow and Thomas Großbölting.

37 See an overview of early research by Beate Ihme-Tuchel, *Die DDR* (Darmstadt, 2002), 89-100.

38 Anna Funder, *Stasiland*, 3rd ed. (Frankfurt/M, 2011) (first published in Melbourne, 2002).

39 Thomas Großbölting, "Die DDR als 'Stasi-Staat'? Das Ministerium für Staatssicherheit als Erinnerungsmoment im wiedervereinigten Deutschland und als Strukturelement der SED-Diktatur," in *Friedensnation, Leseland, Sportnation? DDR-Legenden auf dem Prüfstand*, ed. idem (Berlin, 2009), 50-73, here 53-61.

40 See Thomas Ahbe, *Ostalgie: Zum Umgang mit der DDR-Vergangenheit in den 1990er Jahren* (Erfurt, 2005).

41 Matthias Wagner, *Das Stasi-Syndrom: Über den Umgang mit den Akten des MfS in den 90er Jahren* (Berlin, 2001).

42 Karl Wilhelm Fricke, "Geschichtsrevisionismus aus MfS-Perspektive: Ehemalige Stasi-Kader wollen ihre Geschichte umdeuten," *Deutschland Archiv* 39 (2006): 490-96; Hubertus Knabe, *Die Täter sind unter uns: Über das Schönreden der SED-Diktatur* (Berlin, 2008), 253-339.

the consent of the new representatives of the former GDR and the implicit support of the Western powers.[34]

The Relevance of Stasi History for (East) German Identity

The Stasi files have generated immense and steady interest: Between 1991 and 2013, 6.7 million applications were made to access files at the BStU, 2.83 million of them by citizens with a personal interest.[35] Dealing with the Stasi past, however, was not mainly a private issue or the passion of a small group of civil rights activists. It was understood as a second chance: In contrast to the research on the Nazi period, which was not conducted on a large scale before the 1960s, the GDR past was to be analyzed with the help of the Stasi files from the earliest time possible.[36] Terms like "state of injustice" and the framework of two German dictatorships were incorporated into this research and educational project — and evinced (necessary) struggles on (East) German identity. The term "Stasi State," especially, delineated the battleground on the character of the GDR, particularly because it opened the door to a renaissance of the theory of totalitarianism.[37] In Germany, and above all in the Anglophone countries, Anna Funder's report *Stasiland* set the tone. In it, she analyzed the Stasi heritage and its ubiquity in East German everyday life.[38] Stasi history was always public history, resulting from the perception that surveillance and repression were omnipresent, the frightening immensity of the intelligence apparatus, the large number of prominent victims, and the deceptiveness of many of the Stasi measures.[39] Stasi history became a fashionable topic; Stasi historians became public figures. Individual persons of public interest, the simple contrast between victim and perpetrator, and the fight against Stasi revisionism and elements of *Ostalgie* were typical themes of research and public discourse in the 1990s.[40] Stasi research was often perceived as a project of the West to delegitimize the utopian idea of a better socialist Germany and to denounce the former elite of the GDR, who, among others, criticized this "Stasi syndrome" as an expression of Western supremacy and its victory in the Cold War.[41]

Such complaints and the rather fruitless arguments with Stasi revisionists[42] spurred very thorough empirical research that focused on individual cases and the details of GDR intelligence activities. Such studies, however, could not be easily integrated into a broader understanding of the GDR and its legacy. At the same time, the early debates already did induce more individualized analysis and

understanding of the different Stasi experiences. Oral history interviews revealed the shame and fear people felt upon being silenced in the GDR and after unification — but they also conveyed pride and defiance. The Stasi was present in everyday life and was perceived as a Big Brother but also as a predictable element of the SED regime.[43] It was perceived variously as an unavoidable evil, as a necessary institution in global class struggles, as life-threatening — or it was simply ignored. The sum of such analyses and interviews was a view of the GDR past with much grayer tones, where it was clear that contradictions had to be negotiated day by day: The GDR was socially relatively homogeneous yet had quite distinct social milieus; it satisfied basic needs yet reinforced individual self-interest; it was oriented toward the West but sealed itself off. Moreover, it oscillated between formality and informality; it was progress oriented yet criticized the results of progress; it was based on traditions but destroyed them; and it was repressive and integrative at the same time.[44] Consequently, there was no single Stasi experience but multiple Stasi experiences — and any attempt to establish a dominant historical narrative will fail.

The Size of the Repression System

Questions about the Stasi as an institution accompanied this differentiation and pluralization of the perception of the Stasi and its legacy. An intense — and in some ways surprising — public debate erupted in 2013 concerning the number of Stasi personnel and the agency's internal structure. Ilko-Sascha Kowalczuk, a historian at the BStU, in his recent overview of the history of the Stasi pointed out the heterogeneous personnel structure of the surveillance service[45] and estimated that 40,000 to 50,000 of the 90,000 full-time staff were actively engaged in surveillance activities — much more than in any other Eastern bloc state.[46] While this figure was generally accepted, his recalculation of the number of unofficial collaborators incited public and academic protest. Kowalczuk emphasized that there were "hardly reliable total numbers for the unofficial collaborator network,"[47] which was characterized by high turnover, a lack of professionalism, and exaggerated numbers due to recruiters being under pressure. Complicating the calculation further, many unofficial collaborators were not hidden denunciators or snitches but worked in various functions for the Ministry of State Security, so they were counted twice in several categories or were full-time members of the Stasi. Consequently, Kowalczuk gave no precise numbers, but his point is clear: 190,000 — the number often mentioned for the total of

43 Dorothee Wierling, "Die Stasi in der Erinnerung," in *Staatssicherheit und Gesellschaft: Studien zum Herrschaftsalltag in der DDR*, ed. Jens Gieseke (Göttingen, 2007), 187-208, here 194-99.

44 Detlef Pollack, "Die konstitutive Widersprüchlichkeit der DDR. Oder: War die DDR-Gesellschaft homogen?" *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 24 (1997): 110-31.

45 See, e.g., Roger Engelmann et al., eds., *Das MfS-Lexikon: Begriffe, Personen und Strukturen der Staatssicherheit der DDR* (Berlin, 2011), 138-41.

46 Ilko-Sascha Kowalczuk, *Stasi konkret: Überwachung und Repression in der DDR* (Munich, 2013), 189. For a detailed overview, see Jens Gieseke, *Die hauptamtlichen Mitarbeiter des Ministeriums der Staatssicherheit* (MfS-Handbuch, part IV/1), 2nd ed. (Berlin 1996).

47 Kowalczuk, 215. Cf. Helmut Müller-Enbergs, *Die inoffiziellen Mitarbeiter* (MfS-Handbuch, part IV/2) (Berlin, 2008), who gives a total number of 620,000 unofficial collaborators from 1950 to 1989.

unofficial collaborators in the late 1980s — is far too high.[48] This does not downplay the role of the Stasi but opens a window to researchers for analyzing the whole system of suppression and surveillance in the GDR, including the police forces, the large number of mass organizations like the Freie Deutsche Jugend, the Frauenbund, the unions, and the Kulturbund, and not just the Stasi.[49] In other words, the GDR was an SED — not a Stasi — dictatorship.[50]

The public response to Kowalczuk's claims, however, was ambivalent.[51] Many criticized this discussion of numbers as a kind of promotion for a book: Kowalczuk was following the early dramatization of the Stasi with a more fashionable dedramatization.[52] Others asked whether such a strategy contradicted Kowalczuk's acclaimed purpose: to focus research more particularly on the social practice of surveillance in all sectors of the GDR society and illuminate its consequences for the economy and society. Calculating the number of citizens who gave information not only to the Stasi but also to mass organizations and state institutions would lead to much higher figures, they claimed.[53] But this latter perspective also underestimated the structural changes in intelligence work in the age of big data. Databases and combining personal data became more and more significant for the Stasi in the 1980s.[54] In the end, the value of this discussion lies in highlighting the need to refocus historical analysis from the Stasi in particular to the whole control and repression apparatus of the GDR and its reigning party. This focus not only broadens Stasi history to a history of GDR society but also allows for a more comparative perspective. The GDR was a borderland in the Cold War and had a Western neighbor with whom it shared a language and cultural traditions. The fearful Eastern elites saw themselves as constantly under threat — and they invested even more money into national security than their Eastern allies. In addition, the GDR and its surveillance activities were transformed by technological progress, just as other nations were, so it can be analyzed as an example of how modern societies have dealt with the challenges and opportunities big data presented.

The HV A: An Ordinary and Successful Intelligence Service?

In the context of the vehement debates about the Stasi, it is surprising that the GDR's foreign intelligence service, the Hauptverwaltung A, is often perceived in a very different manner, even though it was an integral part of the "firm." Espionage, infiltration, sabotage,

48 Although most articles in the debate gave the number of c. 109,000 unofficial collaborators as Kowalczuk's own estimation, this is a misreading of his argument. He simply argues that an internal Stasi report for Erich Mielke listed 109,281 people in 1988 (Kowalczuk, 232).

49 Cf. the summary by Stefan Berg, "Die schlanke Stasi," *Spiegel Online*, Feb. 21, 2013, and the balanced reviews by Jens Gieseke, *H-Soz-u-Kult*, Sept. 5, 2013, and Peter Grimm, "Zurechtgerückt," *Horch und Guck* 22, no. 79 (2013): 68-69.

50 Ilko-Sascha Kowalczuk, "Wir haben die Logik der Stasi nicht durchbrochen," *Cicero Online*, March 15, 2013.

51 Sven Felix Kellerhoff, "Wie viele Spitzel hatte die DDR-Staatssicherheit?" *Die Welt*, March 20, 2013.

52 Christian Booß, "Zurückgeforscht: Die neue Entdramatisierung der DDR-Aufarbeitung," *Horch und Guck* 22, no. 79 (2013): 66-67.

53 See Matthias Schlegel, "'Die Reduzierung auf Stasi verharmlost die Rolle der SED': Chef der Stasiunterlagenbehörde im Interview," *Der Tagesspiegel*, Feb. 27, 2013.

54 Karl Wilhelm Fricke noted these shifts already in *Die DDR-Staatssicherheit*, 3rd rev. and enlarged ed. (Cologne, 1989), 101-103.

and "active measures" are still fascinating to many, not only those who have enjoyed the modern fairy tales about James Bond and other secret agents.[55] While historians proclaim that "James Bond is dead,"[56] the general public — and many academics as well — are still attracted to the hidden world of foreign intelligence. Markus Wolf, the head of the HV A and its predecessor organizations from 1953 to 1986, was known for a long time only as "the man without a face" because he was so elusive. [57] Today, he is often still perceived as a professional and efficient spymaster, in many ways superior to his Western counterparts.[58] The HV A's rather legendary reputation is based on some remarkable successes, in particular its infiltration of the political, military, and industrial establishment of West Germany and the low number of defectors from its ranks.[59] Many former Stasi members used these facts to proclaim that the Eastern service was similar to its Western counterparts and competitors — but simply better.[60] Many former adversaries share this myth as well, with the term "Hauptverwaltung Aufklärung" even being a West German invention: for the Stasi, the "A" did not stand for "Aufklärung" but was simply a designation.[61]

In his lecture at the GHI-Wilson Center conference "The Stasi and its Foreign Intelligence Service," Dirk Dörrenberg, the former director of counterespionage and protective security at the West German Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz (BfV, the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution), drew a rather different picture: From 1964 to 1989, he stated, his agency counted about 40,000 HV A operations, most of them in the military (11,200), political (10,900), and economic sectors (5,400). The BfV took note of about 14,800 recruitments, resulting in about 3,500 active spies mostly motivated by financial gain. Although Dörrenberg conceded that the HV A was able to penetrate all sectors of West German society, these penetrations were, he argued, in many cases well known to Western counterintelligence agencies. In addition, Western counterintelligence had deciphered the KGB information system in the late 1960s, allowing for the recruitment of double agents and the exposure of 450 HV A agents. Moreover, the defection of agent Werner Stiller in 1979 was a severe blow to the Eastern intelligence service. Consequently, Dörrenberg viewed the high evaluation of the HV A among many intelligence experts as inappropriate. The service was in many cases an open book to Westerners, and it failed to achieve important success in the field of economic espionage or in endangering or destabilizing the

55 It is no coincidence that the seventh chapter of Kristie Macrakis, *Seduced by Secrets: Inside the Stasi's Spy-Tech World* (Cambridge et al., 2008), is entitled "James Bond, Communist-Style."

56 Armin Wagner and Matthias Uhl, *BND contra Sowjetarmee: Westdeutsche Militärspionage in der DDR* (Berlin, 2008), 10.

57 Markus Wolf with Anne McElvoy, *Man Without a Face: The Autobiography of Communism's Greatest Spymaster* (New York, 1997).

58 Alexander Reichenbach, *Chef der Spione: Die Markus-Wolf-Story* (Stuttgart, 1992); *Konspiration im Kalten Krieg: Deutsche Geheimdienstchefs im Kalten Krieg*, ed. Dieter Krüger and Armin Wagner (Berlin, 2003).

59 David Childs and Richard Popplewell, *The Stasi: The East German Intelligence and Security Service* (New York, 1996), 112-41.

60 Cf. Klaus Eichner and Gotthold Schramm, eds., *Top-Spione im Westen: Spitzenquellen der DDR-Aufklärung erinnern sich* (Berlin, 2008); Horst Müller, Manfred Süß, and Horst Vogel, eds., *Die Industriespionage der DDR: Die Wissenschaftlich-Technische Aufklärung der HV A* (Berlin, 2008).

61 Peter Siebenmorgen, *'Staatssicherheit' der DDR: Der Westen im Fadenkreuz der Stasi* (Bonn, 1993), viii.

Federal Republic of Germany.[62] Lack of access to the West German files precludes checking this information in detail.

Dörrenberg also stressed the legal and institutional differences between the HV A and the West German intelligence services: The Bundesnachrichtendienst (BND, or Foreign Intelligence Service), for instance, operates on the legal basis of a special law from 1990: accordingly, it is not allowed to do intelligence work inside Germany, has no executive police rights, and is subordinated to the German Chancellery. The service is controlled by the parliamentary control commission and the G10 Commission, the Federal Audit Office, and the Federal Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information. All its operations are potentially subject to legal action. The differences between the HV A and its Western counterparts are thus obvious, at least from a normative perspective: The HV A acted both in and outside the GDR, had police enforcement rights, was active in promoting destabilization and disinformation, was controlled only by the SED, and could not be brought to court.[63]

Such clear-cut differences, however, are diminished if one examines the often quite different actual practices of intelligence services: For instance, from 1993 to 1998, the BND kept critical journalists in West Germany under surveillance.[64] The service also provided and continues to provide the NSA with metadata — such as around 20 million telephone connections per day — and it benefits from NSA information, as well.[65] Although this practice infringes on the basic rights of Germans and citizens of other nations, it is unlikely to have negative repercussions. Scandals, a severe lack transparency, and the close interaction between the government and the intelligence service are some of the reasons that former HV A officials give to argue absurdly that their agency was not only comparable but similar to its Western counterparts.[66] The outspoken admiration many intelligence practitioners voice for the HV A can also be interpreted as a projection, as the desire for less regulated intelligence gathering in the West. The notorious 2007 Odense conference, where former members of the Stasi/HV A and renowned Western academics — among them contributors to this volume — discussed the history of GDR foreign intelligence, was not a scandal merely because participants carried on such a conversation. Exchanging information and arguments is the essence of an open society and of academia. More problematic was the underlying general assumption that Western and Eastern

62 See Dirk Dörrenberg, "Erkenntnisse des Verfassungsschutzes zur Westarbeit des MfS," in *Das Gesicht dem Westen zu. . . DDR-Spionage gegen die Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, ed. Georg Herbstritt and Helmut Müller-Enbergs (Bremen, 2003), 72-111. Dörrenberg elected not to publish a revised version of his manuscript in this volume.

63 Cf. *Hauptverwaltung A (HV A): Aufgaben — Strukturen — Quellen*, ed. BStU (Berlin, 2013); Helge Heidemeyer, "SED und Ministerium für Staatssicherheit: 'Schild und Schwert der Partei,'" in *Die Geschichte der SED: Eine Bestandsaufnahme*, ed. Jens Gieseke and Hermann Wentker (Berlin, 2011), 114-35; Knabe, *West-Arbeit*.

64 See Gerhard Schäfer, *Gutachten* (Berlin, 2006).

65 "BND nennt Details über Datentransfer an NSA," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, Aug. 3, 2013.

66 Werner Großmann and Wolfgang Schwanitz, eds., *Fragen an das MfS: Auskünfte über eine Behörde*, 3rd rev. and extended ed. (Berlin, 2010), 231-63.

intelligence practices were not really different.[67] This is a real challenge for a comparative history of the Cold War because if this is true, norms and values of Western democracies are not essential but can be disposed of as necessary.

Such intellectual chumminess outrages a small group of historians who argue that the HV A infiltrated the Federal Republic of Germany and had a significant influence on political positions and the public debate.[68] This debate flared again when it became publicly known that an unofficial Stasi collaborator, Karl-Heinz Karras, had murdered West Berlin student Benno Ohnesorg on June 2, 1967.[69] Public historians announced: "From the 1950s on, the MfS and its employer, the SED, helped to shape the politics of the Federal Republic — by means of public campaigns and conspiratorial exertion of influence, through spies and allies."[70] The key problem of such statements is that they exaggerate individual cases and neglect the results of a broader *Gesellschaftsgeschichte* or social history, and ignore the multisided entanglement of both German states.

The discussion of the HV A emphasizes basic questions of modern surveillance history. Although the SIRA databases and the Rosenholz files are important tools for serious research, and additional information is available in other archives, there are clear limits to what can be empirically validated.[71] What is typical of many other branches of historiography becomes a more serious problem in intelligence history: Extreme positions and even conspiracy theories are not uncommon because it is not always possible to falsify them easily. The HV A was not merely an intelligence service like others, it affected but did not infiltrate West Germany, and there is no real thrill in its history but a simple mixture of successes and failures. Although it was successful from the perspective of the SED regime, the information it acquired did not stop the economic and the political decline of the GDR, and its limited successes in infiltration were often counterproductive. The HV A until 1989 loyally executed SED prerogatives without contradictions; it was an integral part of the sclerosis and the collapse of the GDR.

Towards an Integrative Social History (or Gesellschafts- geschichte) of the GDR

Social history and *Gesellschaftsgeschichte* have been important elements of the historiography of the GDR and the Stasi since the early 1990s. The Center for Contemporary History in Potsdam under Jürgen

67 Klaus Eichner and Gotthold Schramm, eds., *Hauptverwaltung A. Geschichte, Aufgaben, Einsichten: Referate und Diskussionsbeiträge der Konferenz am 17./18. November in Odense* (Berlin, 2008).

68 Hubertus Knabe, *Die unterwanderte Republik* (Berlin, 2001), argues this most prominently. Jürgen Schreiber, *Die Stasi lebt: Berichte aus einem unterwanderten Land* (Munich, 2009), is similar.

69 Armin Fuhrer, *Wer erschoss Benno Ohnesorg? Der Fall Kurras und die Stasi* (Berlin, 2009).

70 Sven Felix Kellerhoff, *Die Stasi und der Westen: Der Kurras-Komplex* (Hamburg, 2010), 310.

71 Helmut Müller-Enbergs, "Was wissen wir über die DDR-Spionage," in *Das Gesicht dem Westen zu. . .* ed. Herbstritt and Müller-Enbergs (Bremen, 2003), 34-71. SIRA stands for System of Information Research (System zur Informationsrecherche der HV A), a system of individual databases on the HV A's Western activities. The Rosenholz files include data of sources, targets, employees, and supporters of the HV A. For details, see Helmut Müller-Enbergs, *"Rosenholz:" Eine Quellenkritik*, 2nd ed. (Berlin, 2007).

72 Hartmut Kaelble, Jürgen Kocka, and Hartmut Zwahr, eds., *Sozialgeschichte der DDR* (Stuttgart, 1994); Konrad Jarausch, ed., *Dictatorship as Experience: Towards a Socio-Cultural History of the GDR*, (New York and Oxford, 1999).

73 Mary Fulbrook, *The People's State: East German Society from Hitler to Honecker* (New Haven and London, 2008), 4. Similar research was done before by Lutz Niethammer, e.g., Lutz Niethammer, "Erfahrungen und Strukturen: Prolegomena zu einer Geschichte der Gesellschaft der DDR," in *Sozialgeschichte der DDR*, ed. Kaelble et al. (Stuttgart, 1994), 95-115; and Dorothee Wierling, *Geboren im Jahr Eins: Der Jahrgang 1949 in der DDR und seine historischen Erfahrungen* (Berlin, 2002).

74 Fulbrook, *People's State*, 12. See also Mary Fulbrook, *Anatomy of a Dictatorship: Inside the GDR, 1949-1989* (Oxford et al., 1995).

75 See Paul Betts, *Within Walls: Private Life in the German Democratic Republic* (Oxford and New York, 2011).

76 Andrew I. Port, *Conflict and Stability in the German Democratic Republic* (Cambridge et al., 2007); idem, *Die rätselhafte Stabilität der DDR: Arbeit und Alltag im sozialistischen Deutschland* (Bonn, 2010).

77 Gary Bruce, "The GDR as a Responsive Dictatorship," *H-German* (Oct. 2007).

78 Stefan Wolle, *Die heile Welt der Diktatur: Alltag und Herrschaft in der DDR 1971-1989*, 2. rev. ed. (Bonn, 1999); idem, *Aufbruch nach Utopia: Alltag und Herrschaft in der DDR 1961-1971* (Bonn, 2011); idem, *Der große Plan: Alltag und Herrschaft in der DDR 1949-1961* (Berlin, 2013).

Kocka, Christoph Kleßmann, and later Konrad Jarausch and Martin Sabrow, for example, has been an important locus of such research.[72] During the last decade, however, new books on the social and everyday history of the East German state have called the Stasi-centered focus of GDR research profoundly into question. It does not seem coincidental that Anglo-Saxon scholars are at the head of this shift.

Mary Fulbrook, for example, argued that Stasi research didn't really get at the "widespread acceptance of the general parameters of life" in the GDR and that the regime was able to "involve a large number of its citizens in its political structures and measures."[73] The GDR functioned as a "participatory dictatorship," a term that underlines "the ways in which the people themselves were at one and the same time both constrained and affected by . . . the ever changing social and political system of the GDR."[74] Repression and disciplining was normal, but people dealt with it in active and quite individual ways. The Stasi was not strictly separated from society but an integral element of normalcy.[75]

The GDR was a modern industrial society and consequently deeply affected by class differences. Andrew Port, in his detailed analysis of social conflicts and political governance in the district of Saalfeld, stressed the regime's efforts to satisfy the basic needs of workers as well as farmers and rural laborers.[76] This responsiveness on the part of (local) SED representatives created trust and used long-standing differences of class and milieu to reciprocally block oppositional action. This "responsive dictatorship"[77] often acted as a moderator and used violence only after trying to integrate the demands of society. The Stasi was therefore not only an element of repression but an important source of information on the daily needs and long-term interests of different groups of citizens.

Fulbrook's and Port's contributions to East German history have been criticized for underrating the repressive element of the dictatorship. But this argument misrepresents their work because neither of them denies the ubiquitous presence of violence or the Stasi's function as the big stick of the regime. GDR and Stasi history can't be written only from the top down but must be balanced with a bottom-up perspective. The most popular endeavor in this direction is Stefan Wolle's trilogy on everyday life and power in the GDR.[78] Based on his private experiences and detailed knowledge of everyday culture, he presents his Eastern fatherland as a terrible idyll where people could live in peace and happiness, but where the regime systematically

exploited individual desires.[79] Wolle also refers to the utopian idea of a better socialist society, which was an important point of reference and justification both for loyal and oppositional people and all the citizens in between.

The most ambitious and considered claim for an integrative social history of the Stasi, however, was formulated by Jens Gieseke — not only in his contribution to this volume. Similar to the historiography of the Nazi period, in which the analysis of the regime's destructive and repressive institutions is now embedded into the larger history of German society, culture, and economy, the Stasi, he argues, can't be understood without detailed reference to East German and German society and the rich tradition of sources on other GDR institutions.[80] Obviously, Stasi research is in transition.

Stasi Research as Part of a Comparative Analysis of Cold War History

While early Stasi research was effective at clarifying the fundamental normative differences between the dictatorship and democracy, between a state of injustice and states of law, Cold War history research has turned this black-and-white picture into ideology over the last decade.

In 2012, historian Josef Foschepoth declared that "the old Federal Republic, throughout its existence, was a veritable surveillance state that disregarded the Basic Law, and the constitutional state was infiltrated — not by communists but at the instigation of Konrad Adenauer."[81] From 1955 to 1972, not less than 109.26 million postal items were confiscated by Western agencies. In 1955, more than 5 million telephone calls were monitored. The secrecy of the post — Article 10 of the indispensable basic rights of the Basic Law — was suspended for the sake of "needs" of a higher order of West Germany and its Western allies. The BND, Militärischer Abschirmdienst [Military Counterintelligence], BfV, and the NSA cooperated closely and were not controlled by any parliamentary commission. Although the surveillance of postal items from the GDR was cut back in 1972, when the Basic Treaty improved German-German relations, the surveillance practices of Western intelligence services has not been restricted reliably by any West German administration since Willy Brandt's chancellorship:[82] "The NSA is allowed to do anything in Germany. Not only because of the legal situation but above all because of the intensive cooperation of the services, which, after all, was always desired and was politically accepted on whatever scale."[83]

79 Stefan Wolle, "'Es gab eine Idylle, doch sie war fürchterlich,'" *GeoEpoche*, no. 64 (2013): 158-61, here 160. I'm thankful to Leonard Schmieding for giving me a copy of this interview.

80 Jens Gieseke, "Staatssicherheit und Gesellschaft – Plädoyer für einen Brückenschlag," in *Staatssicherheit und Gesellschaft: Studien zum Herrschaftsalltag in der DDR*, ed. idem (Göttingen, 2007), 7-20.

81 Franziska Augstein, "Die nie ganz souveräne Republik," *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, Nov. 13, 2012. The book in question is Josef Foschepoth, *Überwachtes Deutschland. Post- und Telefonüberwachung in der alten Bundesrepublik* (Göttingen, 2012).

82 Josef Foschepoth, "'Die USA dürfen Merkel überwachen,'" *Zeit Online*, Oct. 25, 2013.

83 Josef Foschepoth, "'Die NSA darf in Deutschland alles machen,'" *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, July 9, 2013.

It is obvious that German administrations have failed to uphold the basic rights not only of their brothers and sisters behind the Wall but also of their own citizens. The Cold War led to the partial suspension of such rights all around the Western world — and it is difficult to fairly assess the extent of the unconstitutional activities by Western governments because sources are lacking.[84] The history of U.S. intelligence, however, makes it clear that the differences between Western and Eastern intelligence services are, indeed, only in degree rather than substance. The FBI's COINTELPRO program and the CIA's CHAOS program, for instance, allowed for the mostly illegal surveillance and discrediting of participants in the Civil Rights and the anti-Vietnam War movements.[85] The Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities, known as the "Church Committee" after its chairman Senator Frank Church and institutionalized after the Watergate scandal, provided evidence of a large number of assassination and attempted assassination operations of figures such as Fidel Castro, Patrice Lumumba, Rafael Trujillo, René Schneider, and Ngo Dinh Diem carried out on behalf of the U.S.[86] In the late 1970s, such practices were forbidden, and the intelligence services were reorganized, better coordinated, and more tightly controlled. The current debates on the NSA, however, suggest that there is no effective control and regulation of mass surveillance in or outside the U.S. It seems that those in power during the Cold War and afterwards publicly proclaim the idea of freedom while denying it in practice. The price of freedom is that we are not allowed to do everything that is possible. We have to take into consideration the basic rights of all citizens, even of opponents. A state of law is based on the idea that every accusation must be examined before action is taken.

Structure and Content of the Volume

This volume includes a wide range of contributions. Although quite heterogeneous in their methodology, their sources, and their understanding of Stasi history, they all share an interest in analyzing and explaining the specific character of the East German political police and intelligence service. The Stasi is not understood here as an East German institution but as a border-crossing one that was active in the Western sphere and associated closely with its Eastern allies, particularly with the Soviet intelligence service, the KGB. This volume is directed predominantly at an American audience seeking reliable information on this particular field of East German history and the history of the Cold War.

84 See Josef Foschepoth, "Geheimes Deutschland: Ist die Geschichte der Bundesrepublik schon geschrieben?" in *Zeitgeschichte, Archive und Geheimschutz. Ressourcen und Konflikte bei der Nutzung von Quellen*, ed. Rainer Hering and Robert Kretzmar (Stuttgart, 2013), 9-18.

85 Ward Churchill and Jim Vander Wall, *The COINTELPRO Papers: Documents from the FBI's Secret Wars against Dissent in the United States*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, 2002); the reports of the Rockefeller Commission are available at http://www.maryferrell.org/wiki/index.php/Rockefeller_Commission.

86 The reports are available at http://www.aarclibrary.org/publib/contents/contents_church.htm.

This is the reason Robert Gerald Livingston's essay "America's Relationship with the GDR" stands at the beginning. In it, the prominent analyst of German-American relations supports a surprising thesis: for nearly two-thirds of its existence the GDR was "a nullity for United States policymaking" and even later "remained of but tangential importance" for the U.S. It was not the GDR but the Soviet Union that was perceived as the main competitor and partner for maintaining the status quo in Europe. Although the Berlin question often caused trouble in U.S.-GDR relations, the U.S. dealt directly with the GDR only on special issues, even after a U.S. embassy was established in East Berlin in 1974. This stance developed not only out of fierce anti-communism in the U.S. as well as anti-American propaganda in the GDR but also from the rather negative public perception of East Germany in the U.S. and the lack of any relevant immigrant community.

In accordance with the current research debates concerning the Stasi, the first section of this volume deals with "The Stasi and East German Society." Gary Bruce, in his contribution "Participatory Repression? Reflections on Popular Involvement with the Stasi," shares some results from his detailed regional analysis of the two Brandenburg districts of Gransee and Perleberg. He shows that the Stasi's effectiveness depended on broad support from ordinary citizens. This close interaction between society and the political police carried on a historical tradition that extended back to the Nazi period and even before. Denunciation, Bruce argues, can be understood as a form participation in a dictatorship, although it was most prominent in the formative years of the GDR. In spite of significant differences, both the Stasi and the Gestapo won some trust from society, enabling them to use active and reactive measures to gather information and to combat deviant activities. Case studies like these help us to learn more about the micro-level of power. Jens Gieseke, in "The Stasi and East German Society: Some Remarks on Current Research," examines the interactions of the Stasi, the SED state, and society in a more general but also subtle way. He criticizes the myth of the omnipresent Stasi and offers detailed insights into the people's perception of the intelligence service and its relevance to everyday life. This interaction provoked a specific form of social life that should not be glorified but analyzed as an integral part of a long-lasting tradition of submission. The perception of the Stasi and its long shadow on German history is also the focus of Konrad Jarausch's "Between Myth and Reality: The Stasi Legacy in German History." He makes a strong plea for

demythologizing the Stasi: its assumed and perceived omnipresence was part of its real power and generated a way of life characterized by fear and uncertainty. "De-Stasification" was crucial for the opposition and one of its important successes — but this narrow focus on the political police still flowed from a specific understanding of how GDR society functioned. Jarausch discusses the enormous social and private costs of the "poisoned legacy" of the Stasi. Although it had not infiltrated every element of life, it forced GDR citizens constantly to negotiate their position in state and society. He advocates a research agenda focusing on these issues that includes a historicization of the Stasi, the use of Stasi files as "normal" ones, a comparative analysis of East and West, and of different time periods and social regimes, thus fostering understanding of the Stasi's effect on society and everyday life, as well as of repression and surveillance and their impact more generally in modern times.

The second part, "The Stasi and the GDR State," explores whether the intelligence service was a state within a state or merely a loyal executor of the directions of the SED. Walter Süß, addressing "The Socialist Unity Party (SED) and the Stasi: A Complex Relationship," gives a detailed overview of and a periodization of the history of the Stasi. Defined as the sword and shield of the SED, the Stasi, in his view, was the most important tool of the communist leadership. Trained in the tradition of the Soviet political police, the Stasi in its early period had to balance out a dual loyalty to the East German and the Soviet communist parties. Conflicts and the dismissal of the early Stasi ministers Wilhelm Zaisser and Ernst Wollweber were the result. From 1957 on, when Erich Mielke led the Stasi, the German leadership came increasingly to dominate the political police. While Süß offers an analytical overview from the outside, Jefferson Adams's "The Stasi and the Party: From Coordination to Alienation" focuses on the ways that Stasi personnel defined and perceived themselves from within. Most of them saw themselves as the backbone of the communist state, and not less than 90 percent were members of the SED. They established their own historical tradition based on the achievements (i.e., the terror) of the Soviet Cheka and the establishment of the first socialist state in German history. This historical tradition was not upheld when the service changed in the 1970s, but loyalty to the SED was always maintained. The decline of the GDR and the rise of opposition groups incited severe alienation from the party, which was neither willing nor able to fight them in a harsh and brutal way.

The generalizations in these contributions are possible on the solid ground of the Stasi files. This is not the case with the history of the HV A. Consequently, the third part, "The HV A: Insights," offers some case studies that give at least an idea of the function of the GDR's foreign intelligence service and its changing history. Douglas Selvage looks at tradition in a very different way from the Stasi officers. In his article "SA-CIA-HV A: Dr. Emil Hoffmann and the 'Jungle of the Secret Services' (1934-1985)," he traces the biography of a German journalist and businessmen who was a Nazi propagandist in the Propaganda Ministry and the Foreign Office and worked after WWII first for the British MI6 service, despite having been active as a national revolutionary in the tradition of Gregor Strasser. After the British released him, he moved to the emerging field of East-West trade, and both the CIA and Soviet intelligence tried to recruit him. Beginning in 1956, the HV A tried to hire Hoffmann, giving up in the early 1960s, but finally managed to recruit him after his retirement in 1976. Selvage's detailed and lucid analysis presents a story of shifting and unclear loyalties and commitments. Clearly, a Nazi past and active work for the West German New Right was no barrier to working for the HV A, and engagement for the other side, as Hoffmann's case shows, made some people even more interesting for the intelligence services of the other. This deconstruction of the normative façade of intelligence services makes it clear that their analysis needs to be detailed and nuanced, focusing especially on their internal dynamics: Georg Herbstritt, in "Aspects of Crisis and Decline of the East German Foreign Intelligence in the 1980s," presents the HV A as a chameleon with goals that shifted in different time periods. While recruitment in the 1950s and even 1960s was relatively easy, social and cultural changes in both German societies undermined the agency's traditional strategies for placing spies in West Germany. From the late 1970s on, HV A officials complained of a lack of flexibility and loss of energy, which led to stagnation and even decline in the 1980s. The erosion of the GDR was not only caused by the rising opposition and effective counterespionage but by frustration and disillusion inside the HV A, as well.

The fourth and final part of the volume, "The HV A and KGB," looks at the interaction of the East German and the Soviet intelligence services. This is not only necessary for understanding specific cultures of intelligence but also for examining the differences between Eastern and Western intelligence — in theory and in practice. Benjamin B. Fischer's "*Bruderorgane*: The Soviet Origins of East German

Intelligence" starts with the basic assumption that the HV A was a Soviet creation. Its tradition can be traced back to the 1920s, when German and Soviet communists cooperated in fighting both the democratic Weimar Republic and its main competitor in the early 1930s, the NSDAP. This led to intense exchanges and to training in the Soviet Union. Fischer analyzes the creation of the Foreign Policy Service, the predecessor of the HV A, in 1951, and gives credit to its head, Markus Wolf, who came back to the GDR after living as an expatriate in the Soviet Union. Fischer presents the main activities and targets of the HV A and assesses its success: the East German service was successful in a professional sense — although it earned no gratitude from its big brother in the East. Finally, Paul Maddrell examines this "Cooperation between the HV A and the KGB, 1951-89." The HV A was particularly useful to the KGB, Maddrell informs us, for infiltration and subversion tactics, based on the large number of immigrants and remigrants between the two Germanys. Common cultural ties to West Germans made the HV A a perfect tool for the Soviet KGB. The erection of the Berlin Wall made this business more complicated, contributing to relations between the two services becoming less hierarchical. Based on early recruitments and the use of informants, the HV A was able to deliver important political, economic, and military information to the KGB. This led to growing self-confidence and independence, although the KGB's higher status was never really questioned. The KGB was mainly interested in military information but used secret political information as well to generate several scandals in the West. Economic information was of high importance but could not be used effectively due to the structural problems of the planning systems. The rapid growth of both the KGB and the HV A from the 1970s on broadened their sphere of activities to the "Third World" — and changed the organizations' and their members' sense of identity in the GDR and the Soviet Union. Whereas Maddrell has an open eye for the large number of successes of the Eastern services, he also makes it clear that all the information they provided was not enough to compensate for the structural deficits of these socialist, authoritarian regimes.

Why the History of the Stasi Still Matters

The Stasi is gone, although we are still struggling with its legacy. The articles of this volume will contribute to understanding Stasi activities at home and abroad and the ongoing controversies about this contested past. Today, the disclosures concerning the unconstitutional

and illegal activities of the NSA and many other intelligence services goad the public to take a different reading of this legacy.[87] Talking about the Stasi is tantamount to talking about the often contradictory goals of intelligence communities and of a democratic and lawful state that respects the individual rights of its citizens.

When dissident Rolf Henrich published his critical report *The Custodial State* in West Germany in April 1989, he wrote: "secret police activity seeks in the end to take control of every imaginable behavior, but a relationship can be found in anything that could put an end to the power of the Politbüro."[88] If we substitute the term "national security" for "power of the Politbüro," this seems to be a warning for current times as well. A modern comparative history of the Stasi and other intelligence services not only has the potential to present an unbiased picture of the ways that the Cold War warped all involved but can also serve the political needs of our times. Intelligence services are a necessary evil that tends to slip beyond the control of society and democratic institutions. Historical research can give insight into the ways and reasons that small groups, either in the intelligence community or in government positions, have suspended basic rights for whatever purpose.

The history of the Stasi shows that freedom is not only, and perhaps not predominantly, endangered by a specific type of communist party state — although there is no doubt that this sort of institution is hostile towards the individual and his liberty. The history of the Stasi gives us an idea of how a state can act against pluralism, heterogeneous traditions, and alternative interpretations it does not sanction. Although there is a need for self-defense of all societies, the state and elites can become problematic when left unquestioned. In this sense, the Stasi epitomized a threat and a danger that we still face today.

87 Gleen Greenwald, *No Place to Hide: Edward Snowden, the NSA, and the U.S. Surveillance State* (New York, 2014).

88 Rolf Henrich, *Der vormundschaftliche Staat: Vom Versagen des real existierenden Sozialismus* (Reinbek near Hamburg, 1989), 189.

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THE CONTEXT: AMERICA'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE GDR

Robert Gerald Livingston

For nearly two-thirds of its existence, the German Democratic Republic (1949–90) as a state was a nullity for United States policymaking. Even after GDR-US diplomatic relations were established in 1974, that state remained of but tangential importance to Washington.[1]

The GDR's role for the US was a strategic-military one, stemming from its location on the frontline of a worldwide confrontation between the two superpowers, the Soviet Union and the United States. A risk of escalation into armed conflict there between the two was always present, sometimes acutely so.

East Germany, the GDR, enveloped Berlin, the most exposed US position abroad. The city was occupied in 1945 by the Soviets, Americans, British, and French, becoming during their occupation a Four-Power administered city — a view that after 1949 conflicted with that of the GDR, which regarded Berlin as its capital. In 1948-49, the Soviets launched a land blockade of the access routes from West Germany to Berlin, which the U.S. and British countered with an American-organized airlift of supplies to Berliners. Intensively covered in the media, this event focused Americans' attention on the city and generated strong support for brave Berlin, thus linking U.S. political fortunes in Europe with it for the following decades.

Between 350,000 and 500,000 Soviet Army troops were garrisoned in the surrounding GDR from 1947 to 1989, far more than in any other Soviet-dominated country in Europe.[2] The headquarters of this Western Group of Soviet Forces was originally set up in the Karlshorst quarter of eastern Berlin (it was later moved to Wünsdorf); and the formidable and threatening military presence was from the mid-1940s a priority target for American military espionage. A US Army Liaison Mission stationed since 1946 in Potsdam, just outside Berlin, patrolled East Germany. There was a tunneling project from the American sector, and a signals site in the British sector intercepted Soviet military communications.

During the entire forty-one years of the GDR's existence, the United States dealt with GDR matters on two separate tracks, bypassing it. The first track concerned all matters relating to Berlin and access to the city and dealt directly with the Soviet Union. This was based on the Soviet capacity, proven over and over again, to control the GDR

1 This chapter is based on the following sources: Anne Applebaum, *Iron Curtain: The Crushing of Eastern Europe* (New York, 2012); Catherine Epstein, *The Last Revolutionaries: German Communists and Their Century* (Cambridge, 2003); Mary Fulbrook, *Anatomy of a Dictatorship: Inside the GDR, 1949–1989* (Oxford, 1995); ibid., *German National Identity after the Holocaust* (New York, 1999); Burton C. Gaida, *USA-DDR: Politische, kulturelle und wirtschaftliche Beziehungen seit 1974* (Bochum, 1989); Jürgen Grosse, *Amerikapolitik und Amerikabild der DDR 1974–1989* (Bonn, 1999); Ilko-Sascha Kowalczuk, Armin Minter, and Stefan Wolle, *Der Tag X: 17. Juni 1953* (Berlin, 1996); Norman M. Naimark, *The Russians in Germany: A History of the Soviet Zone of Occupation, 1945–1949* (Cambridge, 1995); Christian Ostermann, *Uprising in East Germany 1953: The Cold War, the German Question and the First Major Upheaval behind the Iron Curtain* (New York, 2001); Angelika Timm, *Jewish Claims against East Germany: Moral Obligations and Pragmatic Policy* (Budapest, 1997). The chapter also relies on interviews with four American diplomats with service in the GDR and recollections of the author, who served as deputy head and then head of the Eastern Affairs Section (responsible for GDR affairs) of the US Mission in Berlin, 1964–68.

2 Naimark, 17.

and constrain its autonomy in decision-making. Broadly speaking, the state of US-GDR relations reflected the state of US-Soviet relations. Whenever Washington's relations with Moscow soured, so did its relations with the GDR.

Second, in most other matters relating to East Germany the United States deferred to its essential and sturdy ally, the Federal Republic of Germany, where, at times, over 200,000 American soldiers were stationed to help protect it from a potential Soviet invasion from the GDR across the northern German plains or through the Fulda Gap.

1945-53

In May 1945, the Soviet Union moved quickly to impose a communist regime on its zone of the conquered Third Reich. A group of communists, most of whom before 1933 had belonged to the German Communist Party (Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands or KPD), was flown in to take over. It was headed by Walter Ulbricht, a former member of the Reichstag and a leader of the pre-Hitler KPD, which had been the biggest communist party in Europe other than the Soviet one.

Working closely with the Soviet military and with the NKVD (the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs) and MVD police (Ministry of the Interior of the Russian Federation, later to become the KGB), the German communists quickly put a repressive police state in place, one more brutal than in any of the other Soviet satellites.[3] In the first years of Soviet occupation, some 240,000 Germans and Russians were imprisoned in special camps; most of them, like Buchenwald and Sachsenhausen, were the very same ones that had served Hitler's SS as concentration camps. As many as 96,000 prisoners died.[4] Close collaboration between the East German security and intelligence organizations and their Soviet counterparts began in 1945 and continued until the GDR's end. The communist party absorbed the Social Democratic Party in the Soviet Zone in 1946, creating the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands, SED), which ruled until early 1990.

Shortly after the German Democratic Republic was established on October 7, 1949, the three Western military commandants of Berlin issued a communiqué denouncing it as "an artificial creation." The US tried to treat it as such until the 1970s. During the late 1940s and early 1950s, when anti-communist McCarthyism was at its height in the United States, relations with such a grim and rabidly communist state as the GDR were unthinkable.

3 Applebaum, 49–50, 56, 58–59, 66, 154-55, 157, 175–76, 305.

4 Naimark, 276–78.

Even after the GDR's establishment, Stalin remained flexible on German issues, hoping to obtain war reparations for Moscow from the Western occupation zones and to prevent their integration into Western European institutions. In 1952, he sent a tempting offer to end occupation and create a united but neutral and demilitarized Germany; West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, as well as the United States, however, rejected Stalin's note as a deception. His immediate but short-lived successor Lavrentiy Beria also hinted in the spring of 1953 that Moscow might be willing to sacrifice the GDR.

Suddenly, on June 16 and in the week thereafter, over a million East Germans poured out onto the streets in all GDR cities on strike, demanding reduced work norms and then free elections. The uprising, the first in the Soviet-dominated bloc, caught US and West German intelligence organizations completely by surprise. RIAS (Radio in the American Sector), a Berlin station under US control that at least 70 percent of the East German population listened to, played a key role, but not one approved by the American occupation authorities. Its broadcasts spread news of the strikers' demands. The station's broadcasts may have heightened their expectations of American help.

None came. During the US election campaign of 1952, the Republicans, especially the hawkish John Foster Dulles, who was to become Secretary of State in President Eisenhower's cabinet, had urged the "liberation" and "rollback" of communism. Eisenhower, however, took a cautious approach in June 1953, just as he did three years later when Poles and Hungarians rose up against Soviet domination; he was concerned lest such uprisings escalate, bringing on East-West conflict. Washington issued no high-level statements at all during the weeklong uprising. Even Dulles wanted to avoid American identification with it. The inaction of the United States signaled its acceptance of the status quo in Europe, including the division of Germany that had resulted from World War II.

Ignoring the GDR, the United States now concentrated on integrating West Germany into its military alliance, NATO, and into Western Europe's economic grouping, the European Economic Community (which would eventually become the European Union).

Tensions between the two superpowers over Berlin, the chief crisis point in their global confrontation, rose dramatically again

in 1958, when the new Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev renewed Moscow's effort to get the US out of Berlin. He issued an ultimatum in 1958 demanding an end to four-power status and the creation of a "free city" instead. The Soviet Union also pushed for international recognition of the GDR and sought to generate new approaches to the German Question. However, another four-power conference in Geneva a year later ended by preserving that status. This time the US had to take some small notice of the GDR, whose diplomats along with those of the Federal Republic, sat at small "kitty tables" (*Katzentische*) (rather than the big ones) in the conference room.

Berlin remained, however, the chief US-Soviet crisis point on into the 1960s. At the time of the Cuban missile crisis, in October 1962, President John F. Kennedy initially assumed that Khrushchev was deploying strategic missiles on the island as a way of trying to pressure the US out of Berlin.

Although the Soviet Union had stopped exacting reparations from its industrial plant, the GDR's economy was in an increasingly parlous state as the 1950s wore on. About 11,000-23,000 citizens were fleeing each month via Berlin to West Germany, whose booming economy offered jobs aplenty. Unable to afford the loss of the fleeing engineers, technicians, machine toolmakers, medical doctors, teachers, and skilled workers, East Germany's labor market faced collapse. Persuading Khrushchev, who was reluctant at first, Ulbricht ordered the Berlin Wall built on August 13, 1961, thus closing the exit route to the West. Without the Wall, the GDR's stricken economy would not have survived.

Again, American intelligence was caught by surprise. Again, the US did nothing. Again, it signaled its acceptance of the status quo, the division of Europe and Germany, and whatever measures the Soviet Union might undertake to shore up and keep the GDR and its other satellites under control. "Better a wall than a war," declared President Kennedy. It seems doubtful that Adenauer or indeed Berliners living in the Western sectors of the city would have wanted JFK actively to challenge Ulbricht's Wall.[5] In any case, they welcomed and hailed him with cheers two years later when he paid his triumphal visit to Berlin on June 26, 1963 — certainly the high point of Cold War America's love affair with the city.

5   Fred Kempe, *Berlin 1961: Kennedy, Khrushchev, and the Most Dangerous Place on Earth* (New York, 2011), 491-506, is critical of Kennedy for failing to take action against the Wall and believes West Berliners wanted him to.

1963-74

Bogged down in a war in Vietnam during the 1960s and early 1970s, the US wanted peace and quiet in Europe. The GDR sought to assert its sovereignty and underscore its position that Berlin was its capital by periodically trying to interfere with the rail, road, and waterway access routes to the city from West Germany. American responses were to stress quadripartite responsibilities for Berlin, which in 1971 resulted in negotiations and finally a four-power agreement with the Soviet Union. The agreement more or less ended Berlin as a problem for Washington thereafter.

Moscow's control over its East German satellite seemed intact. It did not consult the GDR about the quadripartite negotiations. Earlier in 1971, it arranged for Erich Honecker to replace Ulbricht as SED chief. In 1961, Ulbricht had charged Honecker, who had been a KPD member since 1930 and begun his party career in the GDR as the founder and first head of the SED's youth organization in 1946, with organizing preparations to build the Wall.

The 1971 quadripartite agreement represented early fruit of the détente foreign policy of President Nixon's administration, which began in January 1969, to ameliorate Soviet-American tensions. At the same time, a similar détente effort was launched by the West German chancellor since September 1969, the Social Democrat Willy Brandt. His Eastern policy (*Ostpolitik*) produced treaties between the Federal Republic and the Soviet Union, Poland, and Czechoslovakia, as well as in 1972 a Basic Treaty with the GDR.

1974-90

Whereas, in the 1950s and 1960s, West Germany had insisted on its constitutional position that it was the sole state representing Germans in succession to the Third Reich (*Alleinvertretungsrecht*), Brandt's Basic Treaty with the GDR essentially acknowledged the state, whose citizens were also Germans. At that point, the United States could hardly withhold recognition any longer. Indeed, first informal discussions with East Germany about a US embassy took place at the time of the 1971 quadripartite agreement.

Still deferring sedulously to West Germany, where conservatives continued to object to Brandt's policies in the East, the United

States deliberately delayed opening its embassy until September 1974, almost a year after its allies Britain and France had opened theirs.[6] In its diplomatic documents, it clung to formulae protecting its legal stance on the four-power status of Berlin, referring to its embassy, which was located just off the city's main street, Unter den Linden, as being its representation *to* the GDR, not *in* the GDR.

A few brief years after relations were established, they reached their zenith, but a low one. A consular treaty was signed in September 1979, although no US consulates were set up in any GDR cities outside Berlin. By that time, however, US-Soviet détente had deteriorated following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the failure of another round of US-Soviet negotiations on strategic nuclear weapons (SALT II), NATO's decision to deploy American intermediate-range nuclear missiles in Western Europe, and Soviet support for revolutionary regimes in Africa and the Near East. Reflecting this renewed tension, relations with the GDR likewise turned downward. President Jimmy Carter, who accorded human rights a high priority in his foreign policy agenda, came to Berlin in July 1978 and denounced the Wall.

During the 1970s and 1980s, as greater protection against openings to the West that resulted from Brandt's Ostpolitik became necessary, the Honecker regime strengthened its security ministry, the Ministerium für Staatssicherheit, labeled Stasi for short by East Germans, a term that has become as well known among historians in connection with Germany as Nazi. The Stasi was as highly efficient in surveilling and suppressing discontent at home as its espionage arm, the Hauptverwaltung A, or HV A, was in spying in the Federal Republic.[7]

During the 1980s, there was no progress on issues between the United States and the GDR. The US held firmly to its position that Berlin was not the GDR capital but under four-power administration, which prevented Chancellor Helmut Kohl in May 1988 from making an official visit to the GDR. This would have involved Honecker, who had paid a state visit to West Germany's capital Bonn in 1987, receiving him in East Berlin. (Kohl took a private trip to other East German cities instead.)

US-GDR issues included 2,000 claims by American citizens for such property as homes, savings accounts, or businesses confiscated or lost during the Nazi period, claims that were originally set at $78

6   August 25, 2012, interview with Brandon Grove, chargé d'affaires of the US Embassy to the GDR from September-December 1974.

7   The HV A was a very effective spying outfit. See Benjamin Fischer's essay in this volume.

million, along with Jewish restitution claims set at $100 million. The GDR's chief goal in its relations with the U.S. was to obtain from the American Congress most favored nation (MFN) status in the hope of increasing its trade with the United States. On both the property and Jewish claims, the GDR proved unwilling to make more than token offers ($1 million on one occasion and $5 million on another) and made those only informally. Its ideological position was that as an "anti-fascist state" it had no moral obligation toward Jews persecuted by the Nazis; whatever obligation it might have, Honecker and his colleagues angrily maintained, it had fulfilled by extirpating fascism and racism on East German soil. The GDR's leaders further argued that it had fulfilled its duties under the 1945 Potsdam Agreement among the United States, the United Kingdom, and the USSR by paying extensive reparations to the Soviet Union and Poland.

East Germany could hardly expect sympathy from the Jewish community in America. It never recognized Israel. Instead, it established relations with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and helped train PLO militants. Commemorative plaques in former Nazi concentration camps on East German territory where Jews had been murdered headlined the communist victims and focused very little attention upon the Jewish ones. Few Jews lived in the GDR, perhaps 6,000 or so, but only about 400, mostly in East Berlin, were registered as such.

Exploration by Washington about possible linkage of MFN prospects with settlement of the property and Jewish claims in a "package solution" went nowhere, even when Deputy Secretary of State John C. Whitehead tried to initiate serious negotiations on visits to East Berlin in 1987 and 1988. Not only anti-fascist ideology but also a desperate shortage of hard currency accounted for the GDR's reluctance to sign up to such a package.

No cultural agreement was ever signed either. Even though the West German government encouraged US-GDR cultural exchanges, the State Department made little effort to promote them in the 1980s. German culture — its art and its music — seemed potentially a selling point of the GDR to Americans. A magnificent exhibition of baroque art from East Germany, "The Splendor of Dresden," went on display in Washington's National Gallery in the spring of 1978, but most American viewers failed to associate it with the communist German state. Ironically, West Germany's embassy was inundated

with congratulatory messages about the exhibition from American art lovers.

Other than Whitehead's trips and a three-hour visit to Potsdam in December 1989 by Secretary of State James Baker, there were no top-level official exchanges between the US and the GDR. The first congressional delegation to visit did not arrive until 1983, nine years after diplomatic relations had begun. Honecker had a short conversation with President Gerald Ford at the Helsinki conference in 1975. After Honecker's state visit to Bonn in 1987, his Politburo colleague Hermann Axen came to Washington a year later in what proved to be a fruitless effort to wangle an invitation for Honecker. The only head of GDR government to come to Washington was the only non-communist one, the Christian Democrat Lothar de Maizière, who came in June 1990, by which time the SED had been voted out of power in East Germans' first free election, in March, and the GDR was on its deathbed.

Perhaps it may be said the only US-GDR intercourse at the highest level was — if the FBI was right in suspecting her of being a GDR spy — between President Kennedy and one of his several mistresses, the sexy 27-year-old East German Ellen Rometsch. The FBI and JFK's brother Bobby (also acting as the US Attorney General) eventually persuaded the Federal Republic's embassy in Washington to send Rometsch back to West Germany. (She was married to a non-commissioned officer in the West German air force.)

Incentives and Impediments

The GDR's objectives in its relations with the United States were simple: until 1974, it sought recognition as a state and full-fledged membership in the international order; thereafter, it aimed for the expansion of trade and, secondarily, for the approval of the American public. America's were even simpler: it wanted to avoid problems for its position in Berlin and observation of the large Soviet military force stationed in the GDR.

While the incentive for East Germany was enhancement of its international status, which dealings with the US superpower might bring, there were few incentives for the latter to better its relationship with the SED regime. Only about one hundred American citizens lived in East Germany. Little was to be gained for the U.S. economically. There was no American investment in the GDR's

nationalized economy, of course. Participation by American firms in the annual Leipzig Trade Fair was listless. Trade with the GDR accounted for less than a thousandth of total US trade, amounting to less than two-tenths of a percent of US trade with the Federal Republic.

Impediments to improving the US-GDR relationship, on the other hand, were many. Primary among them was the nature of the East German regime, which adhered firmly to and unceasingly propagandized its anti-fascist, communist (or socialist, as the SED regime called it), anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist ideology. For the SED, the United States was the "main enemy," an "imperialist, capitalist aggressor."

Communist ideology was vital to the GDR's ability to distinguish itself from West Germany. It hardly dared deploy nationalist sentiment as it feared that doing so would promote reunification of the two Germanys, a policy to which the Federal Republic was constitutionally committed. This was a major weakness for the GDR compared to other Soviet satellites including Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. Communist regimes in those countries could, albeit carefully, call upon, traditional national feeling; in the case of the GDR, however, there was an alternative — right next door in fact.

In its very early years, the GDR's appeal as a fully denazified and, accordingly, "better" German state than the Federal Republic, where ex-Nazis were in the cabinet, served to attract leftist writers and intellectuals who had emigrated to Western countries from Nazi Germany. Famous literati such as Bertolt Brecht and Anna Seghers took up residence in East Germany. But with the continuing flight of thousands of its citizens westward each month and the bloody suppression of the 1953 uprising, that "better" image soon faded away.

From 1953 until nearly the end of the GDR in 1989, there was little evidence of dissidence among the citizenry, on the one hand, or of liberalization and protection of human rights by the regime, on the other, as seemed to be developing in Soviet-dominated countries such as Poland or Czechoslovakia. US missile deployments in West Germany in the early 1980s gave birth to a peace movement close to the Protestant Church in the GDR, but no broad popular movement like Poland's Solidarity ever appeared that might have attracted the sympathetic attention of Americans.

Except for the deposal of Ulbricht in 1971, the same SED leaders, for the most part, remained in place from 1945 until late 1989. Turnover at the top among these veteran communists was rare. The views of Honecker and Erich Mielke, Minister of State Security for over thirty-two years, and their colleagues had been formed while they were young KPD members before Hitler came to power. They clung to them fiercely after the war. For example, the father of Markus Wolf, who headed the HV A from 1952 to 1986, was a staunch KPD member beginning in 1928; Markus was schooled in Moscow.

Such East German leaders supported Soviet policies across the board, actively and fervently. The state's HV A delivered Moscow reams of intelligence on the Federal Republic and other Western countries and, along with the East German military, in the late 1970s and early 1980s assisted anti-American countries such as Nicaragua and Cuba and leftist regimes in Africa inclined toward Moscow, such as Ethiopia and Zimbabwe.

With such rigidly ideological leadership, it is not surprising that the GDR was the Soviet Union's most loyal satellite, with a fidelity that often bordered on subservience. Likewise, it was not surprising that the GDR-US relationship almost always reflected that between the Soviet Union and the United States.

Paranoia underlay the GDR's ideological rigidity. That paranoia in turn impeded its willingness to enter into agreements with the "main enemy," the United States.

The 1953 uprising continued to haunt the GDR leadership right down to the very end, even though the Stasi's effectiveness, among other things, prevented any repetition. East Germany felt under constant if latent threat from the neighboring Federal Republic, where the population, four times its own size, was free, democratic, and prosperous. East German radio listeners, television viewers, and the elderly, who in the 1980s were more frequently permitted Western visits, were well informed about these features of life in West Germany. Being on the Cold War frontline, the GDR worried too that it might be overrun were war to break out. From 1982 until the mid-1980s, it shared with the Soviet Union a fear that NATO might launch an offensive. President Ronald Reagan's early rhetoric about the "evil [Soviet] empire" and his increasing military buildup, including the stationing of American intermediate-range Pershing-2

and cruise missiles in West Germany, generated this war scare, during which the HV A stepped up espionage efforts in the West.

Another fear, never articulated, also prevailed: that the Soviet Union, which had in the early 1950s been ready to sacrifice the GDR to its greater interests, might do so again. Even before Mikhail Gorbachev came to power in 1985 and increasingly thereafter, the Soviet Union turned to the German state which had so much more to offer economically, the Federal Republic. Along with Gorbachev's reformist domestic course, which he urged the GDR, to emulate, this behavior reinforced the habitual paranoia in East Berlin.

A great impediment to the betterment of relations was the image of the GDR in America. The flight of three and a half million citizens between 1945 and 1961, the erection of the Wall at the end of that period, and the hundreds killed thereafter trying to escape stigmatized East Germany as the "Wall State." Congressional delegations visiting in the 1980s inevitably brought up the Wall and other violations of human rights only to be rebuffed. As with its disadvantages compared to other Soviet satellites concerning nationalist sentiment, East Germany also suffered the absence of a sympathetic ethnic or national constituency in the United States, such as Polish Americans or Hungarian Americans. Such groups, out of a lingering love for their original homeland, supported favorable US government treatment of their countries, even though they were under communist rule. Except for a very few far left sympathizers such as "red diaper babies" of 1930s American communists or the communist activist Angela Davis, the GDR lacked such a constituency. Americans of German lineage, who in any case identified less with their *Heimat* than did Hungarian or Polish Americans, took pride in West not East Germany.

When President Reagan paid his visit to Berlin in June 1987, he called upon "Mr. Gorbachev [to] tear down this Wall" — not Mr. Honecker, the GDR's leader and the man whom Ulbricht had charged twenty-six years earlier with organizing its erection. Reagan's call was in keeping with American policy since 1949 of dealing with the Soviet Union on matters relating to Berlin and East Germany. Three years later, the GDR collapsed, with the Soviet Union withdrawing its support and relinquishing control — in effect selling out its most faithful ally — and the Federal Republic taking it over. Proof positive again that America had been right in dealing with the GDR on two tracks separate from it.

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The Stasi and East German Society

PARTICIPATORY REPRESSION? REFLECTIONS ON POPULAR INVOLVEMENT WITH THE STASI

Gary Bruce

The works of the newest generation of English-speaking historians of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) tend to eschew organizational concepts such as totalitarianism, repression, and resistance, adopting instead a societal approach that explores ideas of ordinariness, stability, and compromise.[1] Although these works by no means paint a completely rosy picture of life in the GDR, state structures, the Wall, the Stasi, and other controlling aspects of the regime tend to give way to the stuff of everyday life — hobbies, friendships, family, vacations, and local cultural offerings.[2] As a case in point, in the past ten years, the only books on the Stasi's domestic role by a US academic and based on empirical evidence were written by Edward Peterson, a retired historian, and were widely regarded as fairly weak scholarship.[3] Even works that deal with the frequently aggressive way that East Germans engaged with the regime have tended to be informed by the literature on *Resistenz* and *Eigen-Sinn* (self-assertion) rather than on resistance.[4]

The trend in scholarship in German is somewhat different. The 1990s were dominated by studies of *Herrschaft* (state power), including the party's mechanisms for maintaining control. Of all works on the GDR since the collapse of the regime — and it is worth noting that over 15,000 books, articles, and edited collections appeared between 1990 and 2009 — a full 20 to 30 percent dealt with political history, and within that grouping the Stasi formed a substantial subset. In the past decade, the number of works in German on the political history of the GDR has declined, whereas the number on its social and cultural history has increased, to the point that they are now roughly equal. Economic history of the GDR remains a distant competitor.[5]

1   Mary Fulbrook has suggested a dichotomy between the "Checkpoint Charlie" and the "Octopus Theory" approaches to the GDR. See Mary Fulbrook, "Reckoning with the Past: Heroes, Victims, and Villains in the History of the German Democratic Republic," in *Rewriting the German Past: History and Identity in the New Germany*, ed. Reinhard Alter, Peter Monteath (Atlantic Highlands, 1997), 175-96.

2   See the summary of the GDR panels at the 2010 German Studies Assocation conference: Heinrich Bortfeldt, "Die DDR — keine Fußnote der Geschichte," *Deutschland Archiv* 43 (2010): 1088-91.

3   Edward Peterson, *The Secret Police and the Revolution: The Fall of the German Democratic Republic* (Westport, 2002); Edward Peterson, T*he Limits of Secret Police Power: The Magdeburger Stasi, 1953–1989* (New York, 2004).

4   Andrew Port, *Conflict and Stability in the German Democratic Republic* (Cambridge, 2007); Paul Steege, *Black Market, Cold War* (Cambridge, 2007); Jeanette Madarasz, *Conflict and Compromise in East Germany, 1971–1989: A Precarious Stability* (New York, 2003); Jeanette Madarasz, *Working in East Germany: Normality in a Socialist Dictatorship, 1961–1979* (New York, 2006); Mark Fenemore, *Sex, Thugs and Rock 'n' Roll: Teenage Rebels in Cold-War East Germany* (New York, 2007); Alan MacDougall, *Youth Politics in East Germany: The Free German Youth Movement, 1946–1968* (New York, 2004); Paul Betts, *Within Walls: Private Life in the German Democratic Republic* (Oxford, 2010); Patrick Major, *Behind the Berlin Wall: East Germany at the Frontiers of Power* (Oxford, 2009); Esther von Richthofen, *Bringing Culture to the Masses: Control, Compromise, and Participation in the GDR* (New York, 2009).

5   Ralf Jessen, "Alles schon erforscht? Beobachtungen zur zeithistorischen DDR-Forschung der letzten 20 Jahre," *Deutschland Archiv* 43 (2010): 1052-64, 1056-58.

The "societal" approach to the history of the GDR has produced a number of conceptual frameworks to replace totalitarianism, including "welfare dictatorship," "consensual dictatorship," and "participatory dictatorship."[6] These concepts have not been without their critics. Peter Grieder of the University of Hull has provided a spirited defense of totalitarianism, but it is in Germany where the criticism has been most pronounced. Klaus Schroeder has argued for more emphasis on the controlling aspects of the regime, while Ilko-Sascha Kowalczuk has ridiculed the recent concepts for being oxymorons.[7] Nevertheless, these new conceptual frameworks dominate the recent histories of the GDR in English.

What follows is an assessment of the extent to which concepts such as "participatory dictatorship" can accommodate popular involvement with the regime's most important tool for societal control, the Stasi. Certainly, a vast number of East Germans worked for the Stasi. At the time of its collapse, it employed 91,015 full-time workers and 173,000 informants, which translates into about 1 in 50 East Germans between the ages of 18 and 80 who worked for the Stasi either formally or informally.[8] In the course of the GDR's history, roughly a quarter million East Germans had been full-time employees and nearly 600,000 had been informants.[9] In order to explore this relationship at the grassroots, this essay focuses on two Stasi district offices (*Kreisdienststellen*): Gransee and Perleberg. District Gransee, one of fifteen district offices in Region (*Bezirk*) Potsdam, grew from a modest complement of seven operational officers in 1954 to seventeen in 1989. District Perleberg, located in what was Region Schwerin, was considerably larger than District Gransee, with 24 operational officers in 1989. Both districts are located in today's *Bundesland* Brandenburg. Although they have received comparatively little attention in the literature, the district offices were enormously important to the regime, not least because they ran over 50 percent of all Stasi informants.[10] Erich Mielke, Minister of State Security, made plain his views on the importance of the district offices: "The district offices are the decisive instrument for the security of our workers' and farmers' state."[11]

It is important to state at the outset that participation in the Stasi was not uniform; there were myriad ways for East Germans to engage with the secret police. Although scholars frequently cite the 91,000 full-time Stasi employees by the time of the regime's collapse to indicate the enormity of the organization — in contrast to

6   On welfare dictatorship, see Konrad Jarausch, "Care and Coercion: The GDR as Welfare Dictatorship," in *Dictatorship as Experience: Towards a Socio-Cultural History of the GDR*, ed. Konrad Jarausch (New York, 2000). Martin Sabrow has championed consensual dictatorship in Konrad Jarausch, Martin Sabrow, eds., *Weg in den Untergang: Der innere Zerfall der DDR* (Göttingen, 1999). Mary Fulbrook put forward the term "participatory dictatorship" in *The People's State: East German Society from Honecker to Hitler* (New Haven, 2005).

7   Klaus Schroeder, *Der SED-Staat* (Munich, 1998); Peter Grieder, "In Defence of Totalitarianism Theory as a Tool of Historical Scholarship," *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 8 (Sept. 2007): 563-89; Ilko-Sascha Kowalczuk, *Endspiel: Die Revolution von 1989 in der DDR* (Munich, 2009), 463.

8   Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, ed., *Im Visier der Geheimpolizei: Der kommunistische Überwachungs- und Repressionsapparat 1945–1989* (Leipzig, 2007), 12.

9   Mike Dennis, *The Stasi: Myth and Reality* (London, 2003), 90.

10 John Schmeidel, *Stasi: Shield and Sword of the Party* (New York, 2008), 17, 21.

11 As quoted in Martin Debes, *Durchdringen und Zersetzen: Die Bekämpfungen der Opposition in Ostthüringen durch das MfS im Jahre 1989* (Manebach, 1999), 12.

the Gestapo who employed a mere 7,000 in the prewar period for a population more than three times that of East Germany[12] — this number includes every single Stasi employee, from the operational officer who held sway over the life opportunities of East Germans, to the night watchman at a remote Stasi post in the countryside. District Perleberg is a case in point: Of the 53 full-time employees in 1989, 24 were directly involved with societal surveillance, while the rest functioned in a supporting role, primarily clerical or as building security. As much as the individuals in these latter positions provided the necessary infrastructure for widespread repression, and as much as they were frequently committed ideologues, they did not engage directly in repression.

At 173,000, the number of informants was almost twice that of the full-time Stasi officers. As a shorthand, the media frequently use the generic IM (*Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter*) to denote a Stasi informant, but here, too, it is important to differentiate among informants. There were six types of Stasi informants by the 1980s, ranging from a lead informant who was placed in charge of other informants (*Führungs-IM*), to a low-level informant who did not work a specific case and was called on instead to report in general terms on society (*Gesellschaftlicher Mitarbeiter für Sicherheit* — GMS). Typically, the GMS was a functionary of the regime in some position of authority, a fact that reduced his effectiveness since knowledge of his support of the regime would have been widespread. "Informants for aiding conspiracy" (*Inoffizieller Mitarbeiter zur Sicherung der Konspiration und des Verbindungswesens* — *IMK*), who put their dwelling at the disposal of the Stasi so that an officer and informant could meet in private, represented a different informant category altogether and, at roughly one-fifth of the informant roster, a substantial one.[13] Their role was crucial in the logistics of repression, but they were not informants in the true sense of the word; they did not inform on anyone. Although the documents do not allow for more precision about the categories of informants, we know that there were roughly 624 Stasi informants in District Perleberg in 1988, and about 414 in District Gransee.[14] This translated into one informant for every 76 people between the ages of 18 and 65 in District Perleberg, and one informant for every 66 people in the same age category for District Gransee. If the overall trend in the Stasi held true in these districts, about 18 percent of the informants would have been IMKs and 19 percent GMS. The 30,000 IMKs and 33,300 GMS run by the Stasi , or roughly 40 percent of the informant net, should not be considered direct agents of repression in

12 Robert Gellately, "Denunciations in Twentieth-Century Germany," *Journal of Modern History* 68 (1996): 931–67, 933.

13 Jens Gieseke, *Mielke-Konzern. Die Geschichte der Stasi* (Stuttgart, 2001), 113.

14 Gary Bruce, *The Firm: The Inside Story of the Stasi* (New York, 2010), 198.

the same way as the "classical" informant or the full-time operational officer.[15]

In the question of denunciation as a form of participation in a dictatorship, Karl-Heinz Reuband's caution about denunciation in Nazi Germany is noteworthy: it was never a mass phenomenon.[16] Put another way, the vast majority of people in Nazi Germany did not denounce anyone, which was true in the East German dictatorship as well. The extent, then, to which we can conclude that denuciation indicates regime support or lack thereof must be tempered by this fact. Nevertheless, largely as a result of Robert Gellately's pathbreaking works on the Gestapo, which revealed that a not insignificant part of the German populace was willing to spontaneously denounce fellow Germans to the Gestapo, scholars have come to consider denunciation as a barometer for regime acceptance. It has become commonplace to compare the Nazi regime to the East German regime in order to demonstrate that spontaneous denunciation occurred with greater frequency — and therefore popular support was deeper — in Nazi Germany than in East Germany.[17]

The Stasi at first glance appears fundamentally different from the Gestapo. Whereas the Gestapo can be considered an arms-length participant in an essentially self-policing society, the Stasi was required to establish and constantly refine a network of amateur informants.[18] This vast army of informers was ostensibly necessary due to the relatively few spontaneous denunciations from the common person, unlike in Nazi Germany.

Recent research on the Stasi, however, requires us to adjust our image of an East German population that did not spontaneously denounce. In the years immediately following the founding of the Stasi in District Gransee, many East Germans did, in fact, spontaneously denounce to the Stasi, much like denouncers in the Third Reich had done. A vague tip from a police officer in 1957 about a horse-breeding society that he suspected to be a front for former Nazis caused the Stasi to launch a formal (and, in the end, unsuccessful) investigation.[19] In another operation, a 70-year-old man informed the Stasi of his grave concerns that his cleaning lady was a Western spy. The Stasi took this random tip seriously enough to launch a year-long investigation, which ultimately revealed that the initial claim was unfounded. The denouncer was simply retaliating because his cleaning lady refused to pursue a physical relationship with him.[20] A party member denounced to the Stasi the physical education teacher in Zehdenick for allegedly

15 Gieseke, *Mielke-Konzern*, 113.

16 Karl-Heinz Reuband, "Denunziation im Dritten Reich: Die Bedeutung von Systemunterstützung und Gelegenheitsstrukturen," *Historical Social Research* 26 (2001): 219-34, 219.

17 Gellately, "Denunciations," 932.

18 Ibid., 965.

19 BStU-Potsdam, AOV 62/59, 25; March 20, 1957, Vermerk, BDVP Potsdam an VPKA Gransee.

20 BStU-Potsdam, AOV 8/59, 7; May 21, 1958 Bericht, gez. Singer, Hauptsachbearbeiter.

associating with former high-ranking Nazis. Two years after launching the investigation, the Stasi concluded that the denunciation originated in a personality clash between the two individuals: "Since surveillance of the person in question has not revealed any enemy activity and since the tip was provided to us in part for personal reasons, [case] Nr. 15/57 should be sent to the archives."[21] Although these cases derive from District Gransee, they were not out of line with broader developments in the Stasi. In 1955, 30 to 50 percent of all major Stasi operations against suspected regime opponents (the *Operative Vorgänge*) originated from anonymous tips, an important finding that has somehow been lost in the literature despite the fact that Jens Gieseke, a prolific historian of the Stasi, brought it to light in 2001.[22] Perhaps most surprising about this statistic is that, following the massive uprising that swept through East Germany in June 1953, the Stasi undertook a systematic campaign to increase its informant net, resulting in twice the number of informants within two years of the uprising.[23] In other words, although the Stasi by 1955 had at its disposal an extremely large informant net, it still relied heavily on anonymous denunciation. Still, the extent to which this spontaneous denunciation indicated widespread regime support should not be exaggerated. As the above cases reveal, and as was common with denunciations in the Third Reich, much denunciation was based in personal vendettas.[24] Moreover, in the admittedly very few cases above, two of the denouncers, the police officer and the teacher who held membership in the SED, could be said to be part of the regime apparatus, and not necessarily "ordinary" Germans, the typical denouncers in Nazi Germany.

In slotting the Stasi into her broader concept of East Germany as a "participatory dictatorship," Mary Fulbrook has written: "An astonishing number appear to have been willing to act as unofficial informers for the Stasi."[25] Although Fulbrook rightly casts doubt on Stasi internal findings that roughly 90 percent of informants were recruited out of candidates' belief in the cause, she still suggests that the overwhelming majority of Stasi informants did not have to be coerced.[26] Perhaps the greatest difficulty in this approach is that it is exceptionally difficult to judge the degree of willingness to become an informant. In support of her contention, Fulbrook has argued that East Germans could choose simply not to engage with the Stasi: "A common method of avoiding entering an agreement to inform was simply to break the demanded code of secrecy by telling someone else of the approach . . . on hearing which the Stasi would immediately drop

21 BStU-Potsdam, AOV 22/59, 54; Feb. 5, 1959, Schlussbericht, gez. Wallert and Meuschke.

22 Gieseke, *Mielke-Konzern*, 122.

23 Helmut Müller-Enbergs, *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit* (Berlin, 2001), 1:36.

24 Vandana Joshi, *Gender and Power in the Third Reich: Female Denouncers and the Gestapo 1933-1945* (New York, 2003), 108; Gellately, "Denunciations," 945-48.

25 Fulbrook, *People's State*, 4.

26 Ibid., 243.

the potential informant. Another was simply to refuse."[27] Although it is true that refusal to become an informant did not have negative repercussions, East Germans at the time did not know this. As Joachim Gauck, the oppositional Rostock pastor, subsequently first Federal Commissioner for the Stasi Files, and the current German president, has said, to refuse the Stasi required "ein starkes ich" (a strong I).[28] Vaclav Havel's concept of outward adaptation, rather than willing participation, seems more apt for describing the manner in which many informants engaged with the Stasi.

Beyond the issue of measuring degrees of willingness, the argument of informants as willing "participants" in the East German dictatorship does not fit comfortably with the evidence. The 1953 guideline on informants, only the second on informants ever issued by the Stasi, expressed deep concerns that heavy-handed recruitment was leading to a number of informants who "spoke out of both sides of their mouth."[29] Following the dramatic increase in the size of the informant net in the post-uprising years, Erich Mielke issued revised informant guidelines that stated in no uncertain terms that coercing informants to work for the Stasi had "damaged" the organization.[30] In 1979, Mielke again reiterated, in what would be the last guidelines dealing with informants, that Stasi officers were to thoroughly research an informant candidate before an approach was made, to ensure that the officer would not have to resort to coercion.[31] Stasi documents from districts Gransee and Perleberg are replete with incidents of coercive recruitment of informants: an informant in Wittenberge agreed to work for the Stasi to prevent the Stasi from exposing his past as a guard at the Sachsenhausen concentration camp.[32] A clearly distraught twelfth-grader was given little choice by the recruiting officers but to commit to Stasi work. He was so shaken by the recruitment that he immediately told his parents.[33] Another informant who had been less than enthusiastic in his reporting confronted his controlling officer and asked to be released. His Christianity, he claimed, prevented him from spying on people. The Stasi officer responded in a heavy-handed manner, asking the informant whether he "liked his teaching job." The implication was not lost on the informant, who became "visibly nervous" and agreed to continue working for the Stasi.[34] Even though Stasi officers were well aware that a coerced informant was likely to be subpar, they nevertheless typically prepared for the recruitment by uncovering some compromising material about the candidate. This could be anything from a Nazi past to an innocuous conversation with a West German while at a rest stop on one of the transit routes between West Germany and West Berlin.[35]

27 Fulbrook, *People's State*, 244-45.

28 Quoted in *Opfer und Täter der SED-Herrschaft: Lebenswege in einer Diktatur. XVI. Bautzen-Forum der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung* (Leipzig, 2005), 101.

29 BStU-ZA, 2.9.1953 Dienstanweisung Nr. 30/53 über die Erweiterung des Informatorennetzes und die Arbeit mit Hauptinformatoren.

30 Oct. 1, 1958, Richtlinie 1/58, reprinted in Müller-Enbergs, *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter*, 1:212-13.

31 Müller-Enbergs, *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter*, 1:57

32 BStU-Schwerin, AIM 275/56; May 31, 1956; Beurteilung des GI Schulz, gez Danneberg.

33 BStU-Potsdam, 687/94, 71; Aug. 28, 1988, Aktenvermerk zum IM-Vorlauf des Gen. Oltn. Besenbiel.

34 BstU-Schwerin, AIM 444/56; Jan. 7, 1956, Beurteilung des Kuschel.

35 Interview with Matthias Piekert (pseudonym), Stasi officer with District Perleberg, Wittenberge, May 23, 2006.

The Stasi's institutionalized obsession with the size of the informant net, the frequency of meetings, and the number of informant reports, rather than a focus on quality, led to this enormous pressure on Stasi officers to recruit ever more informants. The dossiers of Stasi officers contain elaborate spreadsheets itemizing their informants and their frequency of contact. In 1984, District Perleberg Stasi officers held 2,430 meetings with their informants. This number increased to 2,596 in 1985, and 2,787 in 1987, before tailing off to 2,168 in 1988. In 1984, 1985, and 1987, informants in the district authored more than 5,000 reports annually.[36] Not only is the revelation that Stasi officers in this innocuous, outlying district held roughly seven informant meetings per day illuminating, so too is the fact that the Stasi even *recorded* these numbers. For East Germany's secret police, it was all a numbers game. A larger informant roster, more meetings, and more reports were equated with increased national security. When considering Lothar Schrader for promotion to first lieutenant, and deputy director, of District Gransee, the Stasi leadership in District Neuruppin, where Schrader was employed, made it clear that his frequent meetings with informants factored heavily into its deliberations: "In his average number of meetings with informants, [Schrader] is top in the district."[37] Stasi officers earned promotion and monetary bonuses based on their operational activity, primarily informant recruitment and effective running thereof, and successful monitoring operations against regime opponents. It should surprise little that they would adopt whatever means necessary to find "participants" for their system.

Gender must also be considered in evaluating participation in the Stasi since, at 90 percent, males dominated both the informant net and the regular corps.[38] This stands in stark contrast to the Nazi regime, where women made up about half of the denouncers.[39] That there was a continuing gender bias in the Stasi is no secret. Erich Mielke made it clear that Stasi workers needed to be available around the clock, something that he did not consider realistic for women because of their maternal duties. As Jens Gieseke has so cuttingly summarized, Mielke was not going to let the security of the "Workers' and Farmers' State" depend on the opening hours of day-care centers.[40] This view of women's domestic roles was, of course, not particular to the Stasi. Even though women had made significant advances in their representation as doctors, judges, and in industry — to the point that by 1970 East Germany had the world's highest percentage of female participation in an industrialized workforce[41] — they still were vastly underrepresented in leadership positions in the party and in the state.

36 BStU-Schwerin, 10376, 10377. Bericht über IM in der KD Perleberg.

37 BStU-Potsdam, K2002, 68. Lothar Schrader. 16.4.1947. July 1, 1979 Vorschlag zur Beförderung zum Oberleutnant, by Major Abraham.

38 Gieseke, *Mielke-Konzern*, 113.

39 Joshi, *Gender and Power*, 97.

40 Jens Gieseke, *Die hauptamtlichen Mitarbeiter der Staatssicherheit* (Berlin, 2000), 268–69.

41 Donna Harsch, "Society, the State, and Abortion in East Germany, 1950-1972," *American Historical Review* 102 (1997): 53-84, 83.

Overall, although only 1 in 5 adults held membership in the SED, roughly 50 percent of informants were recruited from within the party. Depending on the region, however, this could be a relatively low percentage. No informant net in any region had less than 47 percent party members, while some regions soared as high as 73 percent.[42] This heavy recruitment from inside the party exasperated the Stasi leadership, who insisted that the party was off-limits for the simple reason that the informant's party affiliation would have been known to the public, making them ill-suited to uncovering popular sentiment.[43] Nevertheless, out of sloth or pressure from above to increase the roster, it was precisely in the party that the Stasi sought its informants. From this point of view, and notwithstanding the significant role that coercion played in non-party recruitments, it is perhaps not that surprising to find a certain degree of willingness to inform for the Stasi when almost half of all informants (and in some regions as high as three-quarters) had been members of the communist party prior to recruitment.

Although the informants, the IMs, have received the lion's share of attention from academics and journalists alike, there was another group of people who worked for the Stasi on an informal basis who were, in the recollections of certain Stasi officers, even more important for monitoring the population than the regular informants.[44] "Contact persons" (*Kontaktpersonen*) were a shadow army of informants. On a regular basis, Stasi officers received information from individuals who were not on the books as official informants, including factory managers, school principals, landlords, hospital directors, and even acquaintances of Stasi officers themselves. Given the fact that contact persons generally enjoyed some privileged position in society, and that they usually had an ongoing relationship with the Stasi, they cannot be considered an equivalent to the random, spontaneous Third Reich denouncer, but their conduct nevertheless had parallels. Contact persons did take the initiative of approaching the Stasi when they considered something to be amiss. In this regard, a contact person was a much more valuable informant than the GMS informant who reported in general terms on East German society. Just as recent research has demonstrated that for certain target groups in the Third Reich, like Catholics, the Gestapo was more proactive than originally thought, so too was the Stasi more reactive than early accounts suggest.[45] Former Stasi officers, in their highly illuminating two-volume defense of the Stasi, tangentially distinguish between informants and other denouncers when they write: "It is beyond

42 Müller-Enbergs, *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter*, 3:102.

43 BStU-Potsdam, AKG 240, Jan. 8, 1979, Kontrollbericht, 3.

44 Author interview with Reihnard Kuhlow (pseudonym), Stasi officer of District Perleberg, Wittenberge, May 22, 2006.

45 On the Gestapo as more proactive in certain circles, see Eric Johnson, *Nazi Terror: The Gestapo, Jews, and Ordinary Germans* (New York, 1999).

doubt. Every intelligence service depends primarily on information obtained by its informants and other 'tip-givers.'"[46] Contact persons were the most important of these other "tip-givers." By 1989, the use of contact persons as quasi-informants had become so ubiquitous that Erich Mielke was forced to take a stand: "Contact persons are not informants. . . . We know of cases, however, where their work differs from that of an informant only in so far as one is registered, the other not."[47]

At the district level too, this heavy dependence on contact persons annoyed the Stasi leadership,[48] but the reasons for it must have been clear. It was much easier for a Stasi officer to wait for tips from a school principal, for example, than to engage in the lengthy process of grooming an informant. The result of this continued reliance on contact persons was that by the waning years of the regime in District Perleberg, at least 40 percent of Stasi monitoring operations were launched based on tips from contact persons and mail monitoring — not from its roster of regular informants.[49] This point is worth stating explicitly: The more than 600 informants in District Perleberg accounted for only 60 percent of denunciations. Moreover, the percentage of operations resulting from non-informant sources was roughly the same as it had been in the 1950s. Although more research is required into the role of contact persons, these first findings suggest that contact persons were almost as important to the Stasi as regular informants throughout its history.

The trend of late in the historiography of East Germany toward the study of ordinary Germans' engagement with the regime, rather than of major state actors, has, of course, good grounds. It is an inescapable fact that the East German dictatorship, like the Nazi one before it, could not have functioned if not for the ordinary Germans who served it. At the same time, the recent emphasis on "ordinary" Germans has meant that those "extraordinary" Germans who occupied positions of authority and who were in a position to determine the manner by which "participation" in the dictatorship occurred have been relatively understudied. Our understanding of GDR history could now well be enhanced by a focus on the few, rather than on the many. In District Perleberg, for example, there were roughly 600 informants, but only eighteen operational officers for a population of some 90,000. By virtue of the fact that those officers recruited and groomed every informant, their importance in establishing parameters of participation cannot be overstated.

46 Reinhard Grimmer, Werner Irmler, Willi Opitz, and Wolfgang Schwanitz, eds., *Die Sicherheit: Zur Abwehrarbeit des MfS* (Berlin, 2002).

47 Müller-Enbergs, *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter*, 1:86.

48 BStU-Potsdam, A/S 9.60, vol. 2, 10; July 26, 1958, Bericht der Arbeitsgruppe für Anleitung und Kontrolle über den Einsatz in der BV Potsdam in der Zeit vom Juni 23 bis zum Juli 23, 1958, gez. Major Kairies.

49 BStU-Schwerin, KD Perleberg 10586; July 8, 1987, Bestandsaufnahme, gez. Hauptmann Hummel, Referat A/I, bestätigt von Ryll.

Let us consider the case of the last leader of District Gransee, Hans-Jürgen Töpfer. Töpfer took over from the retiring Siegfried Tamme in 1985 and was at the helm of District Gransee when the regime collapsed. Based in large part on the dedication he demonstrated to Communism as an adolescent, which included a leadership position in the Free German Youth from the age of 15 to 17, the Stasi recruited Töpfer into the Stasi at the age of 23. By that time, he had been a member of the Socialist Unity Party for two years.[50] Prior to his recruitment, the Stasi noted with approval that he liked to read "socialist newspapers" in his spare time, and that he had agreed to three years of military service.[51] There can be little doubt that Töpfer and his spouse were committed ideologues. During his vetting process, Töpfer's fiancée agreed to end all postal contact with her grandparents in West Germany so as to improve Töpfer's chances of recruitment by the Stasi.[52] Later on, concerned that he had hit a ceiling in his career because of his parents' visits to relatives in West Germany, Töpfer asked his superiors to prevent them from obtaining permission to travel. A few months after the death of his wife's grandmother, a frequent visitor to the West, Töpfer was made leader of District Gransee, which was no coincidence.[53] Töpfer was intensely dedicated to his career in the Stasi, so much so that the Stasi observed that he fell into depression when his coworkers did not undertake their tasks properly.[54] Töpfer was by all accounts not an East German who simply "participated" in the regime, but a committed ideologue who enthusiastically engaged with the state out of conviction and in order to advance the regime's agenda.

He was not an exception. In District Gransee, the majority of the 35 employees, and the vast majority of the 17 operational officers, had been brought up in households where at least one of the parents was a member of the party. It is, again, worth emphasizing that only 20 percent of East German adults held membership in the party. Even in households with no parents in the party, the Stasi registered positive indications, like the fact that the parents did not watch Western television, or that they were "positively inclined" toward the GDR.[55] Töpfer and the rest of his Gransee officer corps were, and had always been, dedicated Communists.

As time went on, the Stasi increasingly turned to the children of Stasi officials to replenish their ranks. By 1989, 6 out of 35 Stasi employees in District Gransee were the children of Stasi officials, placing it in line with the Stasi overall where about 16 percent of all Stasi workers

50 BStU-Potsdam, K531, Hans-Jürgen Töpfer, Zusammengefasste Auskunft (undated), 16.

51 BStU-Potsdam, K531, Hans-Jürgen Töpfer, 20 Feb. 1967 Abschlussbericht from KD Rathenow, 31–32.

52 BStU-Potsdam, K531, Hans-Jürgen Töpfer, 82, Apr. 21, 1978, Beurteilung des Genossen Töpfer, gez. Verch.

53 BStU-Potsdam, K531, Hans-Jürgen Töpfer, 106. Aug. 12, 1985, Vorschlag zur Ernennung Töpfer zum Leiter der Kreisdienststelle Gransee mit Wirkung vom 1.11.1985; Nov. 18, 1980, Brief, KD Rathenow an VB Potsdam.

54 BStU-Potsdam, K531, Hans-Jürgen Töpfer, April 21,1978, Beurteilung des Genossen Töpfer, gez. Verch, 83.

55 See BStU-Potsdam, K3806 Eberhard Berndt, 25.9.1951 and K 3251 Volker Ehmig, 06.01.1955.

were the children of Stasi officials.[56] If one considers familial ties to the Stasi, the statistics are eye-opening: Between 1968 and 1982, 47 percent of Stasi personnel had a relative in the secret police.[57] In District Gransee, this trend was even more pronounced, where 61 percent of employees had a relative in the Stasi, and of those, 26 percent had more than one relative in the organization. By way of illustration, one Perleberg officer, the son of a female Stasi worker, had two sons with the Stasi in nearby districts, and his niece and her husband were employed at the Stasi headquarters in East Berlin.[58] The Stasi was a male, Communist, family affair, and by no means a representative cross-section. These were the outliers, the ones whom one would expect to seek out opportunities to engage with the regime. They did not so much participate in the dictatorship as serve it.

Conclusion

Broad popular enthusiasm for the Nazi regime, and the sense of belonging the regime engendered, have been at the heart of recent works on the Third Reich.[59] Germans applied in droves for *Ahnenpässe* to prove their Aryan ancestry, they took part enthusiastically in Strength Through Joy programs, and they helped out their racial comrades with generous donations to the Nazi charitable winter relief campaigns (*Winterhilfswerk*). Ian Kershaw has suggested that they also supported the regime to the bitter end partly out of the sense of collectivity that involvement in Hitler's mad racial schemes brought on.[60] As Sebastian Haffner brilliantly observed during his 1939 exile in London, the Germans were not subjugated; they were "something else, something worse, they [were] 'comraded.'"[61] This image of a mobilized population stands in stark contrast to the East German case, where, as the Stasi instructs, participation appears rather more like outward accommodation except for a privileged minority. No one would talk of East Germans being "comraded," unless it were tongue in cheek.

There is little question that the vast majority of East Germans had to participate in the system, especially after the erection of the Berlin Wall in 1961,[62] and that, in some areas, like select cultural and leisure activities, there was a certain communality of interest. In order to understand state-sponsored repression, however, a shift of emphasis is required, a shift toward those who did not *have* to participate, but *chose* to. "Contact persons" who, from their privileged positions, denounced fellow East Germans require much more study, as do

56 Gieseke, *Die hauptamtlichen Mitarbeiter*, 421.

57 Ibid., 335.

58 BStU-Schwerin, Abt KuSch, 106, Joachim Abraham, unpaginated. The 61 percent is based on a sample of two-thirds of employees in District Gransee.

59 Götz Aly, *Hitler's Beneficiaries: Plunder, Racial War, and the Nazi Welfare State* (New York, 2007); Peter Fritzsche, *Life and Death in the Third Reich* (Cambridge, MA, 2008); Thomas Kühne, *Belonging and Genocide: Hitler's Community, 1918–1945* (New Haven, 2010).

60 Ian Kershaw, *The End: The Defiance and Destruction of Hitler's Germany, 1944–45* (New York, 2011).

61 As quoted in Kühne, *Belonging and Genocide*, 32.

62 Fulbrook, *People's State*, 292.

63 Ralf Jessen, "Alles schon erforscht?," 1057.

mid-level functionaries who ran the district offices of the Stasi and were responsible for the lion's share of surveillance. Their role in the "system" was crucial: They had regular meetings with the first secretary of the party in the region, they liaised with the local council, and they met regularly with party bosses in factories. They are closer to the idea of a participatory dictatorship than the run-of-the-mill informant, but they were hardly ordinary Germans.

East Germans engaged with the Stasi in different ways, and for different reasons. Some, like the roughly half of all informants who came from the party, participated out of conviction. Many others were coerced, cajoled, and blackmailed. Some became high-ranking informants; others begged for mercy and were dismissed. Some became full-time operational officers who held sway over the life opportunities of fellow East Germans, while others cleaned the Stasi's floors. Males participated in the Stasi; women, mostly, did not. As much as a more nuanced approach is required to understanding the Stasi than the conceptual frameworks currently forwarded, one that addresses differentiation in participation and that recognizes the elitist quality of the Stasi, there is one overriding factor that must guide any alternative concept, a factor that speaks to the raison d'être of the Stasi and to the limits of concepts such as consensual or participatory dictatorship: Unlike in Nazi Germany, at no point could the ruling party in East Germany have depended on the voluntary support of the population.[63]

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THE STASI AND EAST GERMAN SOCIETY: SOME REMARKS ON CURRENT RESEARCH

Jens Gieseke

The place of repression, persecution, and surveillance in our overall picture of East German society is still contentious. It was in the focus of big public debates, like the discussions about the federal memorial concept in 2007, which was designed to shape some basic concepts and topics of "official" memory policy, and of academic research as well.[1] These discussions presented contrasting images of a totalitarian rogue state and a safe and comfortable niche society that still form the core of public and academic debates about GDR society.

Part of the progress, at least in mainstream research, in the past twenty years, is the recognition that everyday life and social history are relevant as research fields for post-Stalinist times. At the same time, it has become obvious that such histories cannot be written "with the politics left out." Not by chance did contradictory terms like "The idyllic world of dictatorship" or "welfare dictatorship" attempt to catch this connection.[2] Despite all the sharp controversy, this is true for the debate among German and French academics on East German society,[3] as well as for the Anglo-American one — for instance, as represented in the H-German discussions on Andrew Port's microhistorical study on Saalfeld or Mary Fulbrook's phrase of the East German "People's State," debating the grade of "totalitarianity" versus "normality" of life in late communist societies.[4]

Behind these conflicting interpretations lies a complex of contradictory findings: 1) It is clear that East German society had a huge secret police apparatus, but did its size express a strength or rather a weakness of the system? 2) There was, likewise, a huge number of political prisoners and persecuted people. Nevertheless, in a more differentiated view, it becomes clear that the overall intensity of persecution decreased over time or at least changed significantly in character. 3) From the 1950s on, the intensity of active resistance and opposition declined, resulting in the formation of an internal opposition in the late 1970s that was limited in size and confined itself to a reform-oriented program. 4) We have to acknowledge that a broad majority of people did not fit into the dichotomous pattern of perpetrators and victims (or resistance fighters, respectively), but

1   See Martin Sabrow, ed., *Wohin treibt die DDR-Erinnerung? Dokumentation einer Debatte* (Göttingen, Bonn, 2007). For a general account on the topic, see Jens Gieseke, *The History of the Stasi* (New York, Oxford, 2014).

2   Stefan Wolle, *Die heile Welt der Diktatur* (Berlin, 1998); Konrad H. Jarausch, "Care and Coercion: The GDR as Welfare Dictatorship," in *Dictatorship as Experience: Towards a Socio-Cultural History of the GDR*, ed. Konrad H. Jarausch (New York, Oxford, 1999), 47–69.

3   For the French contributions, see Emmanuel Droit and Sandrine Kott, eds., *Die ostdeutsche Gesellschaft. Eine transnationale Perspektive* (Berlin, 2006); Sandrine Kott, *Le communisme au quotidien. Les entreprises d'État dans la société est-allemande, 1949-1989* (Paris, 2001).

4   Andrew Port, *Conflict and Stability in the German Democratic Republic* (Cambridge, 2007); Mary Fulbrook, *The People's State: East German Society from Hitler to Honecker* (New Haven, London, 2005), 297. For the discussion on H-German, visit http://www.h-net.org/~german/discuss/other/ostalgie07.html.

have to be defined as somehow "in between." Even if we are cautious in interpreting retrospective accounts,[5] there is no denying that this majority today tends to draw a surprisingly positive image of life under communist dictatorship and seems to claim that, at least in their personal lives, the Stasi played a much less significant role than is presented in public memory culture. 5) Finally, the East German system was stable over a long period, from the 1960s to the 1980s, but was subject to rapid disintegration and dissolution of all kinds of structures of domination under the pressure of a mass movement generated by the previously quiet population, which was united by three major objectives: to end SED rule, to open the border, and to eliminate Stasi surveillance.

In the following, two major fields of research that derive from such findings will be discussed. The first is the role and function of the State Security Service in relation to the broader population, and the second is the research on secret police informants, the *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter* ("unofficial collaborators"), which can be seen more or less as a development unique to Stasi research.

Omnipresence as a Research Problem – Outlines of an Image of State Socialist Society

The first issue to be addressed is the relationship between the Stasi and the "quiet" majority of East German society that belonged neither to the opposition scene nor to the layer of active supporters of the regime. The term "quiet majority" itself is highly problematic in that it suggests homogeneity and well-defined limits for the group that both dissolve immediately upon more detailed consideration, particularly with respect to its members' relationship to the Stasi. Even the claim that there is such a "quiet majority" is part of a certain conceptualization that contradicts the thesis of total surveillance and atomization, because this thesis implies an evenly spread level of totalitarian pressure of repression of "the state" against "the society," and, therefore, a dichotomous split between perpetrators and victims with nothing or nobody in between.

The term "quiet majority" heuristically picks up the public discussions and oral history narratives in which the Stasi or the question of principal resistance against the regime frequently played no major role. As Dorothee Wierling observed throughout her interviews,

5   For instance, the survey conducted by Mary Fulbrook in 2005 tends strongly to overrepresent former state officials and supporters of the SED regime by focusing on their preferred residential districts in East Berlin; see Mary Fulbrook, ed., *Power and Society in the GDR, 1961–1979: The 'Normalisation of Rule'?* (New York, Oxford, 2009); for a critical review, see Thomas Lindenberger, "Normality, Utopia, Memory, and Beyond: Reassembling East German Society," *German Historical Institute London Bulletin* 33, no. 1 (May 2011): 67–69; and Ralph Jessen and Jens Gieseke, "Die SED in der staatssozialistischen Gesellschaft," in *Die Geschichte der SED. Eine Bestandsaufnahme*, ed. Jens Gieseke and Hermann Wentker (Berlin, 2011), 16–60.

> In a first step, we should engage with a simple explanation for the silence about the Stasi in their life stories: the possibility that a considerable part of East Germans never felt touched or affected by the Stasi phenomenon and therefore kept silent about something that was not experienced personally. This explanation may particularly apply to the lower classes of East Germany, at least for the period in which the snitch system expanded most, that is, in the seventies.[6]

I will later come back to the substance of that argument, but, meanwhile, it opens the field to raise more questions: How and by whom was the Stasi acknowledged as a factor of personal life? What kinds of threats were perceived? How did the Stasi usually act toward the "average" East German? What was the threshold for a minimum of attention or for more intense operational activities, culminating in detention or strong pressure like the notorious measures of covert psychological terror (*Zersetzungsmaßnahmen*); and, finally and more generally, how political or apolitical was the existence within the quiet majority under the influence of Stasi presence?

The relevant data on the Stasi apparatus from the mid-1960s onwards show a continuous expansion in absolute numbers as well as differentiation by sectors of society. Although the basic units of the apparatus, particularly the local offices (*Kreisdienststellen*), grew much more slowly than the central ministry bureaucracy, the expansion is obvious. The average staff of the more than 200 local offices grew from 30 officers in 1972 to more than 40 in 1982 and, finally, to nearly 50 in 1989.[7] Moreover, a considerable portion of the intermediate-level district administration (*Bezirksverwaltung*) staff was responsible for certain local companies or institutions. Thus, the Stasi got a broad basic structure in the 1970s and 1980s, but it was not evenly distributed. As Daniela Münkel recently showed for the local office of Halberstadt in the Magdeburg district, staff resources were concentrated on a number of specific priorities and problem areas:[8]

- As Halberstadt bordered West Germany (like about one-quarter of all GDR counties), a large proportion of officers concentrated on preventing escapes. This can be generalized insofar as even in nonborder local offices, the uncovering of escape plans and preparations and, from the mid-1970s onwards, the struggle to prevent people applying for exit

6 Dorothee Wierling, "Die Stasi als Erinnerung," in *Staatssicherheit und Gesellschaft. Studien zum Herrschaftsalltag in der DDR*, ed. Jens Gieseke (Göttingen, 2007), 187–208; translation J. G.

7 BStU, Central Archives, Ministry for State Security, Main Department for Cadres and Education, statistical staff reports.

8 Daniela Münkel, "Staatssicherheit in der Region. Die geheimen Berichte der MfS-Kreisdienststelle Halberstadt an die SED," *Deutschland Archiv* 43, no. 1 (2010): 31–38.

visas remained the most demanding tasks for the Stasi. This was the most important field of direct persecution as well: from 1961 on, continuously, about 70 to 80 percent of all arrest cases involved people who had attempted to leave East Germany one way or another, while all other forms of oppositional behavior, like "*staatsfeindliche Hetze*" (subversive agitation), *Gruppenbildung* (building of groups), etc. (including espionage, by the way), only played a minor role.[9]

- A second priority was the monitoring of economic performance: a large portion of central and local reports dealt with the problems of economic plan fulfilment and respective obstacles, the supply situation in retail and industry, and the corresponding reaction among the population.

- A third priority was containment and control of all kinds of Western influence, so-called political-ideological diversion (or PID). It goes without saying that the fight against PID was a general duty of the Stasi, but step-by-step operational activities in this field concentrated on disciplining and monitoring the upper layers of society, i.e., nomenklatura cadres, like ministry staff or industrial managers in all sectors and particularly the members of the elites responsible for regime security in general, like SED party functionaries and officers of army and police forces.[10]

The scope of success in these three main sectors of activity varied extremely. The priority-setting that fueled the expansion of the Stasi showed a clear focus on the political security of the regime and ideological homogeneity within the state-socialist upper class, but these priorities were realized at the expense of other communist policy goals. The State Security Service's intrusion into the economic field was dysfunctional in terms of economic efficiency, because it ended up acting in the same mixture of voluntaristic command style and "gray," half-legal improvisation as all other branches of the plan economy — and, moreover, weakened technological innovation and creativity by intervening against engineers or management staff with private contacts to the West and in cases of ideological deviation or personal misconduct. Not by accident did state-owned enterprises try to block or evade such interventions, but they were not too successful.[11]

As guards of the ideological homogeneity of the socialist "upper class," the Stasi, moreover, contributed to negative selection, thereby preventing plurality and creativity. It is obvious that, in

9   See the Annual Reports of Main Department IX on *Ermittlungsverfahren*; BStU, Central Archives, MfS, Main Department IX.

10 For a more detailed account, see Gieseke, *The History of the Stasi*, Chapter 5.

11 Franz-Otto Gilles and Hans-Hermann Hertle, *Überwiegend negativ. Das Ministerium für Staatssicherheit in der Volkswirtschaft dargestellt am Beispiel der Struktur und Arbeitsweise der Objektdienststellen in den Chemiekombinaten des Bezirks Halle* (Berlin, 1994); Georg Wagner-Kyora, *Vom "nationalen" zum "sozialistischen" Selbst. Zur Erfahrungsgeschichte deutscher Chemiker und Ingenieure im 20. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart, 2009).

the long run, such practices diminished integration within social-ist society.

The Stasi and the Working Class

At the same time, in the lower layers of society, it is clear that there was compromise concerning the intensity and scope of penetration by the Stasi and all other institutions of repression, except in the case of managers, ministerial bureaucrats, functionaries, and security staff. One side of that compromise was harsh repression against all kinds of collective or overt political action. As Renate Hürtgen has shown, the number of strikes or even minor walkouts among workers, or other forms of political action like collective petitions, decreased under the pressure of continuous criminaliza-tion to nearly nil. The powerful traditions of the labor movement's collective articulation of interests, which had been lively in the early 1950s, became largely extinct during the 1970s and 1980s.[12]

Within this framework of repression, however, the East German work-ing class developed a specific kind of agency and a clear sense of the scope and limits of criticism that it could articulate, particularly in the areas of wages, retail prices, supply of daily goods, and general ques-tions of equality and egalitarianism.[13] Not only petitions, but central and local Stasi reports (and those of other party and state institutions) as well, attest to these forms of criticism consistently over time, while the vast majority of individuals voicing such criticism feared no sanctions. Grumbling or even political jokes remained without con-sequences within this layer of state-socialist society. Such statements were judged "politically unclear" but not "hostile," so those who ut-tered them were not prosecuted.[14] And, by the way, the typical Stalinist allegation against workers in the 1950s — sabotage in case of produc-tion breakdowns — did not play any significant role in the later period.

As a first conclusion, we can determine that the Stasi was strongly present in East German society and was a vital requirement for regime security and the maintenance of ideological conformity, but it was, at best, useless for economic efficiency and social integration, if not strongly counterproductive. Moreover, in the post-Stalinist period, it became possible for individuals to lead lives relatively distanced from the regime and its instruments of repression as long as they learned to consciously or unconsciously accept their place and the limits of their agency. Therefore, despite the exceptional expansion of the Stasi from the late 1960s until 1982, the concepts of total penetration and

12 Renate Hürtgen, *Zwischen Disziplinierung und Parti-zipation: Vertrauensleute des FDGB im DDR-Betrieb* (Cologne et al., 2005).

13 Renate Hürtgen and Thomas Reichel, eds., *Der Schein der Stabilität — Betriebsalltag in der Ära Honecker* (Berlin, 2001).

14 For details, see Jens Giesecke, "Bevölkerungsstimmungen in der geschlossenen Gesellschaft. MfS-Berichte an die DDR-Führung in den 1960er- und 1970er-Jahren," *Zeithistorische Forschungen/ Studies in Contemporary History*, Online-Ausgabe 5, no. 2 (2008) <http://www.zeithistorische-forschungen.de/16126041-Giesecke-2-2008>.

repression are misleading. To put it in terms of the regime's policy in the Honecker era: the SED First Secretary commented on the Helsinki process in 1976 that "security comes first," and, of course, this was so,[15] but Honecker's policy was actually prompted by a mixture of aims, a combination of securing the party's position of power *and* gaining legitimation among the population by means of social and worker-friendly measures, not to mention securing the legitimation and approval of the West — and, in particular, the West German government — as well. So, in fact, the basic feature of the Honecker era was not only the well-known strategy of "unity of social and economic policy" but the unity of a combination of social, economic, *and security* policy — a policy that failed, of course, in all three fields. Moreover, the strong presence of the attractive West in the minds of East Germans via electronic media and personal contacts made all SED policy an uphill fight. Repressive stabilization was an important feature, but not the only one.[16]

The findings presented here are, of course, largely provisional. They are based on a first wave of sectoral and regional studies that tried to go beyond counting and describing the overwhelming number of staff, funds, files, etc. These projects include the BStU research on Halberstadt and other important studies on Saalfeld by Andrew Port and on two villages in Saxony-Anhalt and Mecklenburg by Jan Palmowski.[17] Notable sectoral studies are Georg Wagner-Kyora's research on engineers from the Buna-Leuna chemical industry, which draws heavily on the microanalysis of the research and development divisions in these factories, and Dolores Augustine's work on scientists and engineers in East Germany.[18] Such local and regional analyses can be particularly valuable, because they make it much easier for a researcher to track the complex interactions among several institutions and draw a detailed and differentiated image of everyday practices of rule and life and their change over time.[19] In such research, it is important not to restrict one's analysis to the Stasi but to focus on the local society as a whole. By the way, the Stasi files can be useful sources to complement the usual sources like petitions, trade union reports, etc., for researching everyday life.

The Stasi Presence and Behavioral Patterns of "Ordinary" East Germans

Thomas Lindenberger described the general setting of East German society as a "dictatorship of limits." These limits included, first and

15 "'Helsinki und wir'. Interview des Neuen Deutschlands mit Erich Honecker, dem Ersten Sekretär des Zentralkomitees der SED," *Neues Deutschland*, Aug. 6,1975, 3-4.

16 Jens Gieseke, "Die Einheit von Wirtschafts-, Sozial- und Sicherheitspolitik. Militarisierung und Überwachung als Probleme einer DDR-Sozialgeschichte der Ära Honecker," *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 51, no. 11 (2003): 996–1021.

17 Port, *Conflict and Stability*; Jan Palmowski, *Inventing the Socialist Nation. Heimat and the Politics of Everyday Life in the GDR, 1945–90* (Cambridge, 2009).

18 Wagner-Kyora, *Vom "nationalen" zum "sozialistischen" Selbst*; Dolores L. Augustine, *Red Prometheus: Engineering and Dictatorship in East Germany, 1945-1990* (Cambridge, 2007).

19 Roger Engelmann, "Eine Regionalstudie zu Herrschaft und Alltag im Staatssozialismus. Methodische Fragen, Erkenntnisziele, Quellen," in *Staatssicherheit und Gesellschaft*, ed. Gieseke (Göttingen, 2007), 167-86.

foremost, the large concrete border, but a lot of restrictions in everyday life as well that citizens had to learn and know. These taboos, which were sometimes more, sometimes less, defined, framed the field of personal agency.[20] Aside from the mere existence of the real concrete wall and the threat of being killed if they attempted to flee, East Germans experienced open violence and repression from 1945 until the late 1950s that strongly influenced their behavior, particularly in the ranks of the older generations: the more than one hundred thousand prisoners in special internment camps, the several thousand victims of Soviet military tribunals, and other political prisoners.[21] The period of harsh repression after the second SED party conference in July 1952, the suppression of the June uprising in 1953 or other local unrest (like 1951 in Saalfeld),[22] the expropriations and collectivization of private property, and, finally, the building of the Berlin Wall itself were all major fields in which memories were taboo.[23] These experiences of powerlessness left their traces on the older generations, the more so as destalinization remained half-hearted, to say the least, so that a return to these methods still seemed possible, even though the Stasi was far from achieving total penetration in a town like Saalfeld and its major factories, such as the Maxhütte Unterwellenborn, in the 1950s and 1960s.[24]

It goes without saying that these experiences were not the only ones from the early years, and, as taboos, they were not easily communicated to younger generations. Yet they continued to have hidden effects and were kept alive via Western electronic media and passed on within families. It would take the post-Wall generation, which was not traumatized as intensely, to overcome these experiences and develop its own attitude towards the regime in that respect.

The taboos — like the unquestionability of party rule, the absence of democracy, the travel restrictions, and the question of German unity on any basis other than the East German model — were established in the early 1960s. To maintain them was, first and foremost, the duty of the institutions of political socialization like parental homes, kindergartens and schools, the Free German Youth, vocational training and universities. In these spheres, the Stasi intervened only in severe cases.[25] Besides selective repression, what the "silent majority" experienced was an occasional encounter with the preventive security bureaucracy. Parts of the population felt the presence of the Stasi like a "scratchy undershirt" (as dissident Jens Reich noted

20 Thomas Lindenberger, "Die Diktatur der Grenzen. Zur Einleitung," in *Herrschaft und Eigen-Sinn in der Diktatur. Studien zur Gesellschaftsgeschichte der DDR*, ed. idem (Cologne, Weimar, Vienna, 1999), 13–44.

21 See Bettina Greiner, *Verdrängter Terror. Geschichte und Wahrnehmung sowjetischer Speziallager in Deutschland* (Hamburg, 2010), 331–458.

22 See Port, *Conflict and Stability.*

23 Daniela Münkel, "Mauerbau und Staatssicherheit," *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* 61, no. 31 (2011): 34–39; idem, "Unruhe im eingeschlossenen Land. Ein interner Stasi-Bericht zur Lage in der DDR nach dem Mauerbau," *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 59, no. 4 (2011): 579–608.

24 Port, *Conflict and Stability*.

25 Marc-Dietrich Ohse, *Jugend nach dem Mauerbau. Anpassung, Protest und Eigensinn, DDR 1961–1974* (Berlin, 2003); Dorothee Wierling, "Die Jugend als innerer Feind. Konflikte in der Erziehungsdiktatur der sechziger Jahre," in *Sozialgeschichte der DDR*, ed. Hartmut Kaelble, Jürgen Kocka and Hartmut Zwahr (Stuttgart, 1994), 404–25; Emmanuel Droit, *La Stasi à l'école — Surveiller pour éduquer en RDA, 1950–1989* (Paris, 2009).

in 1988),[26] or tried to manage these encounters psychologically by daring to tell one joke or another afterwards. For others, the Stasi was, perhaps, a faraway phenomenon that had little to do with their personal life. Yet even in these times, the image of the Stasi changed but never disappeared. Nearly everyone remembered or at least had to reflect with caution on surveillance by means of mail censorship, bugs, and informants.

As Palmowski shows in his case study of the village of Dabel in the northern part of the GDR, all these images of the Stasi were, nevertheless, countered by a certain feeling that some space for agency and solidarity was left within smaller communities. In Dabel in the 1960s, the Stasi failed to identify the creators of some "hostile" graffiti for years, even though one example had even been painted on the wall of the local policeman's house. The Stasi case officers were convinced that the village inhabitants knew the culprits, but they were unable to break the wall of silence. In the view of the villagers, the Stasi, with its dark limousines and leather coats, was perceived as an outside force (unlike, for example, local party members) that conducted its search of the village and left again (despite Palmowski retrospectively identifying 46 informants among the village population).[27]

The Stasi myth produced in such a manner was transformed and dealt with by means of a certain discourse fuelled by a mixture of fear and hope for an act of self-assertion, such as mocking the alleged eavesdropping on the telephone line or speculating on perceived spies among colleagues. This "people's own" Stasi experience (to vary the phrase by Lutz Niethammer) flowed into sarcastic double entendres and split levels of communication in whispered jokes and rumors, and into circumlocutions for the agency like "the company," "Konsum," or "VEB Horch und Guck [Listen and Look]."

In the light of all this, Fulbrook's claim seems debatable that "it is important [also] to notice just how many people never had occasion to hit against these boundaries [of the repressive system], and genuinely felt that they were able to lead 'perfectly normal lives.'"[28] First, it is necessary to acknowledge that these boundaries did, indeed, exist. Second, citizens had to at least unconsciously know of the existence of these boundaries to keep from hitting against them. Stasi mood reports from the 1970s — a time recognized as the most stable and quiet period in GDR history — show clearly how present such "unnormalities" as the travel ban or the absence of democratic elections were.[29] The phrase "perfectly normal lives," in this context, describes

26 Jens Reich, "Sicherheit und Feigheit — der Käfer im Brennglas," in *Staatspartei und Staatssicherheit. Zum Verhältnis von SED und MfS*, ed. Walter Süß and Siegfried Suckut (Berlin, 1997), 25–37, first published in 1989 under the pseudonym Thomas Asperger in *Lettre international*.

27 Palmowski, *Inventing the Socialist Nation*, 284.

28 Fulbrook, *People's State*, 297.

29 For details, see Gieseke, "Bevölkerungsstimmungen."

a very old tradition of German political culture, which can be called *Untertänigkeit* (or "submissiveness"), and which obviously was perpetuated by the continuity of dictatorial rule in East Germany across the century.[30] This mentality was particularly present in the middle layers of GDR society, which were confronted with constellations of entrapment most frequently, like requests for official or unofficial reporting on colleagues to secure their own career position or keep doors open for the education of their children. After 1990, this *Untertänigkeit* mentality was turned into the metaphor of collective disease by Hans-Joachim Maaz and Joachim Gauck — maintaining the traditions of Critical Theory's notion of "authoritarian character."[31] In terms of the history of society, it may be more adequate to read it as a continuity of older German traditions of political culture under conditions of a predemocratic (or, less teleologically, nondemocratic) constitution of society.[32]

Given all this, it seems justifiable to doubt whether a majority of former GDR inhabitants would, in levelheaded self-inquiry, ascertain that they never felt the hidden presence of state authority or took it into account in their behavior. Quite the contrary: their very efforts to live "perfectly normal," inconspicuous lives can be taken as confirmation of covert political pressure. Consequently, Wierling's abovementioned observation can be read more as a defensive response to the "black and white" Stasi images of recent hegemonic memory culture. After all, practically all GDR inhabitants had a story to tell about their initial brush with the surveillance apparatus, even if it may not have been the most decisive experience in their everyday lives.

Towards a Sociology of Informants

When we accept these more complex descriptions of Stasi presence, of repression and surveillance within East German society, we have to reexamine the canonical images of the Stasi apparatus itself, particularly concerning the major "link" between this surveillance apparatus and society: the informants.

While the classification of the full-time staff of the Stasi apparatus as part of the security elites is unproblematic, the informants present more difficulties. The strong focus on informants in post-communist memory culture was not based on their systematic position or juridical seriousness (unlike in the case of SED functionaries or the border guards killing people on a regular basis at the Berlin Wall),[33] but on their social proximity. In a society shaped by the division

30 See Dietrich Staritz, "Untertänigkeit — Heritage and Tradition," in *Studies in GDR Culture and Society 6* (London, New York, 1986), 37-48. Stefan Wolle noticed an "apparent concord between authorities and subjects," which could neither be "totally denied" nor explained "by the ever present threat of violence alone." Stefan Wolle, "Alltag und Diktatur," in *Lexikon Opposition und Widerstand in der SED-Diktatur*, ed. Hans-Joachim Veen et al. (Berlin, Munich, 2000), 42.

31 Joachim Gauck, "Der sozialistische Gang*," Der Spiegel*, no. 25 (2006): 38-39; Hans-Joachim Maaz, *Der Gefühlsstau. Ein Psychogramm der DDR* (Berlin, 1990).

32 See Sigrid Meuschel*, Legitimation und Parteiherrschaft in der DDR. Zum Paradox von Stabilität und Revolution in der DDR, 1945–1989* (Frankfurt/Main, 1992).

33 Transitional justice was mainly focused on these cases: Klaus Marxen and Gerhard Werle, eds., *Strafjustiz und DDR-Unrecht — Dokumentation*, 10 vols. (Berlin, 2000–2009).

between "official" and "private" life, they represented the regime's strategies for intruding into the private sphere. It is no coincidence that the most heatedly debated cases were those of representatives of intermediate positions between the party-state and society who enjoyed a certain authority (like clergymen or half-dissident writers like Christa Wolf or Heiner Müller).

The strong public interest in informants results from the largely unilateral decision to open the Stasi files. Academic research, therefore, is strongly influenced by the concentration on (more or less) prominent individual cases, and by the evaluation and assistance in civil service vetting processes, the so-called lustration. Evaluations of these informant files show that research and political statements were directly linked. Doubts about the reliability of Stasi records in these cases may not only be subject to scholarly considerations, but may challenge the authority of the Stasi Records authority itself in many respects.

Moreover, researchers work under strong pressure to deliver clear criteria and definitions in their role as attestors of the authenticity and credibility of the files. This mode of "public history," thus, preshaped the concepts of research. Categories of analysis and perception follow the — ostensibly clear-cut — secret police terms and thought systems: attention is focused, for the most part, exclusively on formally recruited IM, while all other forms of cooperation with the repressive apparatus (official contacts, spontaneous denunciations, etc.) are hardly recognized. Even the usage of the term IM is a remarkable outcome of this discourse. It changed from an internal bureaucratic euphemism of the secret police, which was designed to keep Stasi language clean and enhance the informants' imagined position towards their case officers, to a synonym for the communist evil in post-communist language. In this discourse, it is taken for granted that the files are reliable, while retrospective testimony by accused people is put under suspicion of serving concealment as a matter of course.[34] These effects lead to a "reification" of Stasi files and their contents, followed by the involuntary adoption of vocabulary, thought patterns, and case narratives from the texts of the police bureaucracy.[35] It culminates in the widespread perception that the recruitment of a person as an informant is the one and only key to all other dimensions of his or her biography.

To overcome this kind of "Stasi positivism," it may be helpful to recollect the conditions under which these records were produced. For

34 For example, Jochen Staadt, "Persilschein vom Führungsoffizier. Lügen die Akten von damals oder schwindeln ihre Verfasser heute?," *Zeitschrift des Forschungsverbundes SED-Staat,* no. 20 (2006): 142–61.

35 See Ralph Jessen, "Diktatorische Herrschaft als kommunikative Praxis. Überlegungen zum Zusammenhang von 'Bürokratie!' und Sprachnormierung in der DDR-Geschichte," in *Akten. Eingaben. Schaufenster. Die DDR und ihre Texte. Erkundungen zu Herrschaft und Alltag,* ed. Alf Lüdtke and Peter Becker (Berlin, 1997), 58–75.

instance, the pressure to appear as successful and fulfil recruitment plans promoted the tendency among Stasi officers to polish their assets, in terms of the number of meetings or the quality of the delivered information. Consequently, there are distortions in statements or entries concerning the personality of informants. For example, "political conviction" was a reputable basis for recruitment, which led to an extremely high percentage of such entries in the forms. On the other hand, fear and pressure were regarded as a problematic basis for recruitment. Generally, such kinds of ideological bias are obvious. The file language poured the complexity of informant business into a rigid system of pre- and post-1989 political and bureaucratic categories.

Whereas this tunnel vision has been widened a bit by a psychoanalytical approach and some academic or journalistic case studies,[36] we are far from a sociological and sociohistorical analysis of the informants within state socialist society. The findings and methodological lessons from social and cultural denunciation history, which was fueled by a wave of research on Stalinism and National Socialism, have not been adequately used for research on the Stasi, because such approaches would question the clear-cut images of IM and would make it necessary to draw a more differentiated and complicated image of informants and their motives.[37] Even the cases debated in public hint at the broad range of different types of cooperation. One person complied reluctantly and full of fear, the second did not know anything but scrupulous performance of his duties, the third was keen to secure his career, the fourth wanted to contribute to "dialogue" between state and society. One or another individual perhaps tried to track personal interests and, finally, one or another perhaps was driven by staunch communist ideals.

As the turnover rates and the analysis of individual cases show, in the 1950s a large twilight area of more or less forced recruitments — which proved to be of little value for the Stasi in terms of information gathering and influence — lay behind the impressive numbers. Presumably, information from party officials or spontaneous denunciation were much more important for persecution than informants in these years. Moreover, the analysis of this period, in particular, clearly reveals the strongly disciplining side effects of recruitment attempts on the general atmosphere within society. Thus, the practices of informant recruitment can be read in themselves as a particularly intense kind of reproduction of *Untertänigkeit*. This is true of

36 Ingrid Kerz-Rühling and Tomas Plänkers, *Verräter oder Verführte. Eine psychoanalytische Untersuchung Inoffizieller Mitarbeiter der Stasi* (Berlin, 2004); "Stasi auf dem Schulhof," TV documentary, German television, ARD/ Februarfilm, 2012.

37 See, for example, Sheila Fitzpatrick and Robert Gellately, eds., *Accusatory Practices: Denunciations in Modern European History 1789–1989* (Chicago, London, 1997).

successful cases of recruitment, a process whose sociopsychological intensity can be regarded as on the same level as status passages of socialist "personality molding" like the military service. (Not by accident was the military service one of the most common settings for recruiting informants.) Yet the experience of a recruitment attempt reinforced the Stasi's presence even if one managed to decline. To put it in a nutshell: a well-balanced approach to informants may benefit from taking into consideration the results of historical denunciation research and from shifting the focus to the *Lebenswelt* of formal and informal informants.

From a sociological perspective, a second point may be important. Even if Stasi guidelines, which were designed to penetrate primarily milieus that were distanced or hostile to the system, demanded that informants be recruited from all layers of society, statistics show that the actual distribution was anything but even. Contrary to the revelations from the opposition and church milieus, the majority of Stasi informants were SED party members, with a strong emphasis on nomenklatura cadres and army and police staff or those otherwise concerned with security questions.

This has been well known since the late 1990s, but it challenges our understanding of Stasi informants: First, it stresses the importance of the Stasi function of securing ideological conformity and loyalty within the upper strata of socialist society and enforcing the respective codes of conduct. Second, this distribution shows that recruitment as an informant was, in fact, connected in the majority of cases with other forms of collaboration and participation within the dictatorial system, like other more visible volunteer positions in border control, the People's Police, combat groups, etc. This link is interesting with respect to our images of informant activities as expressions of "indecency." Obviously, in some layers and sectors of East German society, it was part of a kind of "normality" to be a Stasi informant, just as it was "normal" to be responsible for the "house book" in your tenement block (in which visitors had to be noted) or to become a party member or a FDJ secretary for cultural activities, to attend the annual May Day demonstrations, etc. In a society in which citizens had to make concessions to political demands right from the cradle, it perhaps appeared much less "indecent" to follow the call of the Stasi. It must remain open to further research to determine how powerfully contemporaries from different milieus perceived the special moral implications of informant commitments and how they dealt with the situation.

It is obvious that these and other topics are tricky to research due to the strong impact of the Stasi files — an overwhelming amount of material on our images of Stasi activities — and the nearly total lack of alternative sources. But one should take into consideration that the chance to dive into this dimension of dictatorial rule should no longer be ignored, even though the records ought to be read against the grain and well-established certainties ought to be questioned.

The Shaping of Prerevolutionary Consciousness in the 1980s

It is not possible to discuss here in adequate detail the developments which in the 1980s, or, to be more precise, from the mid-1970s on,[38] led to the breakdown of the repressive system in 1989. But with respect to the trends described above, it is noteworthy that some spheres had evolved over the years wherein people were able to present a different tone and attitude. Once GDR inhabitants decided to drop higher expectations for their career and advancement, they gained a certain inner freedom, with the SED and the Stasi increasingly accepting or even condoning such patterns of nonconformity. As a result, while the Stasi tried with ever more effort to monitor all aspects of life, at the same time it lost its vigor in pursuing some kinds of deviation. From such a perspective, the exorbitant expansion of the apparatus and its opportunities can be reflected not as an expression of, but as a misleading surrogate action for, the declining totalitarian claims of the era of mobilization of communist rule.

Obviously, the political culture of *Untertänigkeit* became a framework too tight for larger parts of the population, particularly because the SED was no longer able to fulfil the promises of modest prosperity and welfare, nor the demand for a satisfying life. Confronted with the omnipresent images of Western values and standards of living, broad layers of East Germans turned this unease into a pivotal feeling of futility and a loss of life prospects for themselves and their descendants.

In the autumn of 1989, it became apparent that the Stasi had not been forgotten in these times, despite the successive exhaustion of ideological pressure, when the dissolution of the Stasi apparatus turned out to be one of the major issues of public unrest. It is not quite clear how people perceived the Stasi in the moment of revolt: Was their suffering so strong that the threat of a repressive "Chinese solution" did not impress the demonstrators, or was there a hidden consciousness or even a vague hope that the ruling elites and security

38 See Roger Engelmann, "Funktionswandel der Staatssicherheit," in *Repression und Wohlstandsversprechen. Zur Stabilisierung von Parteiherrschaft in der DDR und der ČSSR*, ed. Peter Skyba and Christoph Boyer (Dresden, 1999), 89–97, and the other contributions in this volume.

39 Cf. Stephen Kotkin, *The Uncivil Society: 1989 and the Implosion of the Communist Establishment* (New York, 2009).

forces of the "uncivil society" had lost their will to defend their position by means of violence, as we learned in hindsight?[39] Perhaps most of the demonstrators in the early days of October 1989 had no precise idea about this and were driven by a willingness to take the risk necessary to achieve revolutionary change.

As these more or less provisional remarks on the state of research on the Stasi's role within East German Society may have shown, finding the balance between overestimating and ignoring the role and function of the State Security Service is like walking a tightrope. The communist system in East Germany could not — and did not want to — exist without the Stasi, but neither was the Stasi omnipotent and omnipresent, even though the SED and the secret apparatus did a lot to spread that image. It was strong in guaranteeing the physical security of the system against all kinds of internal or external threats, thereby shaping social life in East Germany to a considerable extent. But, in the long run, it was not able to maintain a basis for its own existence — in terms of economic efficiency and the requirements of complex, modern societies. In these fields, strength turned into weakness, and the extensive expansion proved to be ballast.

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BETWEEN MYTH AND REALITY: THE STASI LEGACY IN GERMAN HISTORY

Konrad Jarausch

Almost everyone who dealt with the GDR has a Stasi story. My own version involves Werner and Ingrid Deich, who were personal friends at the University of Missouri. He was a colleague in Early Modern History, while she was pursuing a PhD in sociology, analyzing the nuclear research programs of the FRG. When he was refused tenure, she was hired at the branch campus in Rolla. In 1979, Werner burst into her classroom, she dismissed her students, both rushed to their house, dumped documents into the trash and drove off, sending a telegram from Mexico City stating that a family emergency had called them away. A few years later, one of her former professors encountered her at an international sociology conference in Sweden where she was representing the University of Leipzig. It turned out that both had worked for Markus Wolf but were forced to flee when Werner Stiller defected to the West. The first to be fired after reunification, they lived in a modest apartment and tried to start a consulting business. They had been idealistic members of the student movement but were shocked by the reality of socialism in the GDR.[1]

In popular perception, the Stasi has become the new German ogre, competing with the SS to be *the* representation of absolute evil. Stimulated by Le Carré's intriguing spy novels, the Anglo-American public has been particularly interested in the exploits of its foreign espionage section, which was masterminded by the elusive and gentlemanly Markus Wolf.[2] In Germany, the shocking media revelations of collaboration by prominent figures like Lothar de Maizière, Manfred Stolpe, and Gregor Gysi have illustrated that the Ministry of State Security was well-nigh all-powerful in the GDR. Moreover, the public has been entertained by disclosures of spycraft like the infamous assembly of smell samples used to identify opponents of the regime. Finally, visitors to some of the Stasi prisons like Hohenschönhausen have been able to view the sites of torture and listen to stories of suffering by victims.[3] Taken together, these revelations have endowed the Stasi with an aura of larger-than-life mystery that is fascinating and repellant at the same time.

1 Ingrid Deich, *Zwischen Dallas und New York. Wie ich die USA erlebte* (Leipzig, 1986); and Werner Stiller, *Beyond the Wall: Memoirs of an East and West German Spy* (Washington, 1992).

2 John Le Carré, *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold* (New York, 1963), is the classic text of this genre. See Markus Wolf, *Man Without a Face: The Autobiography of Communism's Greatest Spymaster* (New York, 1997).

3 For the prison memorial, see http://en.stiftung-hsh.de/document.php?nav_id=CAT_233&subcat_id=CAT_253&recentcat=CAT_233&back=1&special=0. See also Rainer Eckert, *Antitotalitärer Widerstand und kommunistische Repression* (Leipzig, 2006).

The interpretational impact of such publicity has been the conflation of the SED regime with its state security service. In a prize-winning 2003 book tellingly called *Stasiland*, Australian author Anna Funder published a dozen stories to illustrate "the vicious war [the GDR] waged on its own citizens" by means of its secret service. On the twentieth anniversary of the fall of the Wall, she emphasized the repressive nature of the communist dictatorship in the London *Times* to counter the Left's claim that the GDR was a "benign leftist social-welfare experiment."[4] Academically speaking, this perspective has led to the revival of totalitarianism theory, which emphasizes the interplay of repression and resistance at the expense of daily life, a view which has been championed by the Hannah Arendt Institute in Dresden. Unfortunately, the neo-totalitarian approach is a considerable oversimplification as it ignores the element of voluntary compliance essential to the functioning of a "participatory dictatorship."[5]

Two decades after the "peaceful revolution," therefore, the challenge for historians is to demythologize the Stasi in order to discern its actual role in the GDR and abroad. There is no doubt of its "great importance," since popular circumlocutions such as "the firm" or "listen and see" indicate a fearful reluctance to address the secret service by its real name.[6] The endeavor of discerning the actual role of the MfS needs to free itself from the dialectic of exaggeration by its former victims and belittling by its erstwhile members and strive instead to determine exactly what the Stasi did or did not do. In order to suggest ways to provide a more realistic picture of Stasi activities, the following remarks will briefly describe aspects of the organization's mysterious reputation at the time, discuss the problems of de-Stasification, and comment upon some of the aftereffects of this process. Only such an effort to separate reality from myth will enable us to come to terms with what Jens Reich called "a scratchy undershirt" of the GDR.[7]

The Stasi Mystery

Paradoxically, the secret service's existence was quite well known in the GDR since the Stasi touted itself as the "sword and shield" of the SED. As a fighting arm of the regime, it took pride in its toughness, yet at the same time it subordinated itself to the political dictates of the communist party. Staffed by ruthless cadres and steeled in the street-fighting of the Weimar Republic and the International Brigades in Spain, it possessed a Civil War mentality; that is, it saw

4   Anna Funder, *Stasiland* (London, 2003); idem, "Why Germany Can't Get Over the Wall," *Times* (London), November 3, 2009.

5   For a totalitarian approach, see Klaus Schroeder, *Der SED-Staat. Partei, Staat und Gesellschaft 1949-1990* (Munich, 1998). For a more nuanced understanding, see Mary Fulbrook, *The People's State: East German Society from Hitler to Honecker* (New Haven, 2005).

6   Jens Gieseke, *Der Mielke Konzern. Die Geschichte der Stasi 1945-1990* (Munich, 2006), 18ff.

7   Jens Reich, "Sicherheit und Feigheit — der Käfer im Brennglas," in *Staatspartei und Staatssicherheit. Zum Verhältnis von SED und MfS*, ed. Walter Süss and Siegfried Suckut (Berlin, 1997), 25-37.

the world in red and white terms and was ready to use physical force. Since it was established in 1950 by the Stalinist KGB, it also affected a romanticized Chekist ethos and worked in the tradition of the Bolshevik struggle against the counter-revolution. In the Cold War, the MfS therefore tackled the double task of defending the socialist GDR against outside subversion from the West and securing the power of the SED dictatorship within. After some early personnel upheavals, the Stasi stabilized under the tough MfS minister Erich Mielke, who expanded his ministry into a state within the state.[8]

Domestically, the Stasi ruled by means of fear derived from the secrecy that cloaked its operations. Some people would whisper about men in leather coats shadowing known dissidents while others talked of dark limousines pulling up in the early morning hours, hustling neighbors away, never to return. Its places of operation and detention exuded a dangerous aura, making pedestrians cross to the other side of the street. Rumors were rife since shaken victims fortunate enough to reemerge from interrogation were sworn to secrecy. This deliberate lack of precise information inspired an image of ubiquity, as one could never be sure who would report an unguarded remark at a bar or on an overcrowded train. Since there were few attorneys and prosecution rested on vague laws like "subversive agitation" (*Boycotthetze),* defending oneself against such accusations was extremely difficult. The growth of the number of formal employees and informal informants made the Stasi seem ever-present and intimidating far beyond its actual capacities.[9]

Its reputation abroad also lived from the same mixture of mystery and partial knowledge, which was amplified by spy fiction. During the 1950s, there were spectacular cases of kidnapping from West Berlin or of executing Stasi defectors in the West. Later on, revelations of Eastern spies penetrating the highest echelons of the chancellor's office (the Guillaume Affair) and attaining the post of the FRG's NATO liaison (Topaz) fired the public imagination. For a long time, the chief of foreign operations (HV A) Markus Wolf was known as "the man without a face" because his identity remained hidden until Stiller's defection.[10] Even on a more mundane academic level, every visit to an East German archive was complicated by the question of which fellow researchers could be trusted and which ones might be leaking information to the Stasi. When I invited GDR colleagues such as Heinz Vosske, the director of the central party archive, for a lecture, I had to accept the fact that another person who worked for the MfS would be coming along.

8 Jens Gieseke, *Die hauptamtlichen Mitarbeiter der Staatssicherheit: Personalstruktur und Lebenswelt 1950–1989/90* (Berlin, 2000).

9 David Childs and Richard Popplewell, *The Stasi: The East German Intelligence and Security Service* (New York, 1996), 33ff.

10 Mike Dennis, *The Stasi: Myth and Reality* (Harlow, 2003), 177ff.

Nonetheless, the fear of the Stasi gradually subsided in the 1980s, undercutting its effectiveness in preventing domestic unrest. One reason was its fundamental misunderstanding of system-immanent dissenters like Havemann, Biermann, and Bahro as agents of foreign subversion instead of as idealists trying to democratize socialism.[11] Another cause was the agency's gradual shift away from physical violence to more subtle techniques like psychological intimidation in the form of isolation, disinformation, and so on. This change of methods gave potential victims more room to maneuver: Many people refused to cooperate by rejecting secrecy and telling others about Stasi approaches (*Dekonspiration*); others managed to resist by becoming *Aussteiger*, opting out of the reward system and no longer looking for promotion, Western travel, cars, or the like. Even though the Stasi managed to penetrate the opposition to a considerable degree, a committed minority nonetheless dared to throw off their *Stasiangst* and challenge the system. Not even efforts to modernize spy technology could counter this gradual emancipation from Stasi control.[12]

Hence, the fiasco of 1989/90 was a product of demystification due to both bureaucratization and ideological confusion. Ironically, the endless reports generated by the Stasi's perfection of surveillance ultimately created a credibility gap when SED leaders refused to believe that the population was becoming more restive. Moreover, the professionalization of the service through training at the Stasi academy in Golm resulted in a routinization that made its measures more predictable. At the same time, Stasi involvement in the commercial-coordination (Koko) deals of Alexander Schalck-Golodkowski and in the staffing of the privileged Wandlitz enclave added a whiff of corruption that undermined the fighting spirit.[13] More important, however, was the loss of a clear-cut image of the enemy. Gorbachev's reform course in the Soviet Union made Russia more liberal than the GDR, undercutting the connection to the KGB that hardliners had previously relied upon. Krenz's dialogue policy as well as Modrow's negotiations at the Round Table recognized the opposition groups as legitimate partners. When these changes demystified the Stasi, reducing its capacity to instill fear, its power evaporated.[14]

The Process of De-Stasification

Ironically, the Stasi's desperate effort to guard its own secrets from a resentful public eventually hastened its downfall. The growing chants

11 Ehrhard Neubert, *Unsere Revolution. Die Geschichte der Jahre 1989/90* (Munich, 2008); and Ilko-Sascha Kowalczuk, *Endspiel. Die Revolution von 1989 in der DDR* (Munich, 2009).

12 Kristie Macrakis, *Seduced by Secrets: Inside the Stasi Spy-Tech World* (Cambridge, 2008).

13 Walter Süss, *Staatssicherheit am Ende. Warum es den Mächtigen nicht gelang, 1989 eine Revolution zu verhindern* (Berlin, 1999); and Matthias Judt, "Häftlinge für Bananen? Der Freikauf politischer Gefangener aus der DDR und das 'Honecker-Konto'," *Vierteljahrsschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte* 94 (2007): 417–39.

14 Konrad H. Jarausch, *Die unverhoffte Einheit* (Frankfurt/ Main, 1995). This dimension is underestimated in most accounts.

"make the Stasi do real work" (*Stasi in die Produktion*) during the fall of 1989 demonstrated the population's widespread anger over secret service observation and manipulation. Against this backdrop, the shredding and burning of the Stasi files prompted concerned citizens' committees in early December 1989 to occupy some of the regional headquarters to preserve the records of repression. Modrow's misguided effort to salvage the core of the secret service by shrinking its size and renaming it the Office of National Security (Amt für Nationale Sicherheit, AfNS) only increased resentment, inspiring angry citizens to storm the Berlin headquarters in the Normannenstrasse in mid-January. His final attempt to split the service into independent foreign espionage and domestic information branches also misfired due to the suspicion of former victims who insisted on its complete dissolution.[15] Due to this inept self-defense, the abolition of the secret service became a central demand of the peaceful revolution.

One of the most controversial issues during reunification was the question of what to do with the written remains of the Ministry of State Security. While the Modrow cabinet authorized the cleansing of personal CVs, the Round Table permitted the destruction of all computer tapes and foreign espionage records out of fear of Western misuse and retaliation against perpetrators. In order to have some proof of persecution, the majority of the civic movement nonetheless insisted that the 120-kilometers of files be preserved for the sake of "political, historical, judicial and personal *Aufarbeitung*." The CDU/FDP government was reluctant to comply since the Stasi records threatened to implicate many West German politicians by disclosing salacious details of their lives. In spite of the FRG's data-protection mania, a hunger-strike by dissidents in the summer of 1990 succeeded in making the preservation of the records part of the unification treaty. Over the resistance of former Stasi members and Western skeptics, the Bundestag passed a Stasi records law a year later that secured public access to them as an essential component of democracy.[16]

This legislation created a large new BStU bureaucracy known after its first president as the Gauck Office, which was tasked with organizing the files, regulating their use, and providing information on a case-by-case basis. Since intellectuals considered the way the government had addressed the Nazi past inadequate, the public now insisted that it deal with communist crimes more quickly and thoroughly. Most vocal in this regard were the numerous victims of the Stasi, who

15 Joachim Gauck, *Die Stasi-Akten. Das unheimliche Erbe der DDR* (Reinbeck, 1991). One of the first disclosures from the files was the volume *"Ich liebe euch doch alle!" Befehle und Lageberichte des MfS, Januar-November* 1989, ed. Armin Mitter and Stefan Wolle (Berlin, 1990), during the debate about the future of the files.

16 Siegfried Suckut and Jürgen Weber, *Stasi-Akten zwischen Politik und Zeitgeschichte. Eine Zwischenbilanz* (Munich, 2003); and Joachim Gauck, "Wir sagten unserer Angst auf Wiedersehen," in *Die demokratische Revolution in der DDR*, ed. Eckart Conze et al. (Cologne, 2009), 154-69.

wished to document their suffering in order to be rehabilitated and compensated. Politicians also wanted reliable evidence to support the Bundestag Commission of Inquiry's investigations into the abuses of the SED dictatorship and thereby combat post-communist nostalgia. Journalists were eager to feed the public appetite for scandals with details of former abuses that discredited many well-known East Germans like the Olympic figure skater Katarina Witt. Finally, foreign secret services were happy to recruit turncoats and to acquire access to secret files such as the Rosenholz list, which exposed HV A operatives in the West.[17] What started as a laudable effort at enlightenment therefore soon assumed a more problematic guise.

The lustration process of de-Stasification was rather rigorous and formalistic. The purge was justified with the understandable argument that the nascent democracy should not be burdened by the official perpetrators or secret supporters of prior repression. Every applicant for public employment had to fill out a detailed questionnaire, listing all prior affiliations with the SED or MfS. If one admitted involvement, one was barred from such work, and if one did not but was found out, then one would be fired for lying. For all higher officials and politicians, a regular inquiry was submitted to the BStU seeking to clarify whether they bore any trace of collaboration in the voluminous Stasi records. If one had been an informal informant, one was usually excluded as well. To avoid the humiliation of being dismissed, some like Michael Brie voluntarily resigned, but the majority developed a strange case of amnesia. At the Humboldt University, a student committee found 12 employees and 155 informants of the Stasi among 780 faculty members, 67 of whom were still active in police training, the natural sciences, and international studies.[18]

In spite of the political commitment to avoid past mistakes, the effort of "transitional justice" has produced somewhat disappointing results. Due to the partial destruction of records, requests for Stasi information from the BStU have sometimes yielded somewhat contradictory replies, for example, suggesting that a person had some degree of culpability without establishing the exact extent. As a result, the evaluation of ambiguous cases like that of HU president Heinrich Fink has been left to the courts, which, in turn, have found it difficult to decide how much to trust Stasi records. For some popular figures like Manfred Stolpe or Gregor Gysi, the public has even been willing to overlook evidence of involvement. Moreover, the public's fixation on formal Stasi membership has all too often prevented people from

17 Joachim Gauck, *Winter im Sommer, Frühling im Herbst. Erinnerungen* (Munich, 2009). See Andrew Beattie, *Playing Politics with History: The Bundestag Inquiries into East Germany* (New York, 2008); and Robert Gerald Livingston, "An Operation Called 'Rosenholz' — How the CIA Bought the Stasi Files for $75,000," *Atlantic Times*, March 2006.

18 John O. Koehler, "The Stasi and De-Stasification," in *Dismantling Tyranny: Transitioning Beyond Totalitarian Regimes*, ed. Ilan Berman and J. Michael Waller (Oxford, 2006), 43–74; and Ilko-Sascha Kowalczuk, "Die Humboldt Universität zu Berlin und das Ministerium für Staatssicherheit," in *Geschichte der Humboldt Universität*, vol. 3, ed. Konrad H. Jarausch (Berlin, 2012).

engaging in a substantive evaluation of the severity of an individual transgression. Hence, only a couple dozen court cases have resulted in prison sentences for perpetrators among the tens of thousands of human rights violations committed under Stasi control. Although legal prosecution has remained a blunt sword, full disclosure was so successful in dispelling apologetic myths that other East European countries eventually followed the German approach.[19]

A Poisonous Legacy

On a personal level, the revelations about Stasi collaboration have tended to poison relations, ruining friendships and sometimes even breaking up marriages. Though the names of perpetrators have been blacked out, the several million East Germans who have read their files in the past two decades have been shocked to discover proof that many members of their personal circle informed on them to the secret police. While denunciation also flourished in the Third Reich, ratting on one's neighbors was even more widespread in the GDR. Subsequent revelations of such abuses of trust have had devastating effects, since, as in our relationship with the Deichs, they leave a feeling of being sullied by the breaking of a fundamental interpersonal bond. Dissidents like Vera Lengsfeld, writers like Christa Wolf, and foreign observers like Timothy Garton Ash have been astounded by the energy and inventiveness spent on observing them — and by the triviality of most of the recorded details. At the same time, it has been distressing to ascertain how paltry the rewards were, since a little idealist rhetoric, personal praise, or some money seemed to have sufficed in most cases to motivate informers to report.[20] The result has been the spread of distrust and cynicism in the East.

In public perception, fixation on the Stasi records has fostered the development of a sort of tunnel vision that sees the hand of the secret service everywhere, even where it was not. The inclusion of some of the most brutal prisons like Hohenschönhausen in the memorial funding of the federal government is to be applauded because the Stasi's human rights violations have to be documented where they occurred. A lecture by a former inmate, livened up by personal reminiscences of physical or psychological torture, leaves a deeper impression than a textbook assignment.[21] But the alarmism of the director of this penitentiary, Hubertus Knabe, about the Stasi's penetration of the Federal Republic is rather excessive, disgusting as instances of collaboration may have been. For example, his thesis that the student movement

19 James McAdams, *Judging the Past in Unified Germany* (New York, 2001); and Helga Welsh, "When Discourse Trumps Policy: Transitional Justice in Unified Germany," *German Politics* 15 (2006): 137–52.

20 Vera Lengsfeld, *Mein Weg zur Freiheit. Von nun an ging's bergauf* (Munich, 2002); Hermann Vinke, ed., *Akteneinsicht Christa Wolf. Zerrspiegel und Dialog*, 2nd ed. (Hamburg, 1993); and Timothy Garton Ash, *The File: A Personal History* (New York, 1997). See Eric A. Johnson, *What We Knew: Terror, Mass Murder and Everyday Life in Nazi Germany* (Cambridge, 2005).

21 Hubertus Knabe, ed., *Gefangen in Hohenschönhausen. Stasi-Häftlinge berichten* (Berlin, 2009); and Gabriele Schnell, ed., *Das "Lindenhotel". Berichte aus dem Potsdamer Geheimdienstgefängnis*, 3rd ed. (Berlin, 2009).

of 1968 was a creature of the GDR clearly overshoots the mark since it confuses financial assistance for the leftist journal *Konkret* with control over editorial content.[22] Seeing the world only through the eyes of Stasi perpetrators or victims, therefore, runs the risk of retrospective exaggeration and ignores the relative normalcy of life around them.

In academic terms, the Stasi fixation has supported the *Unrechtsstaat* interpretation wherein the GDR is regarded as a gigantic prison. Such a neo-totalitarian view correctly emphasizes the structural similarities between the SED regime and the Nazi system, but the simplistic equation "red equals brown" tends to ignore their basic ideological antagonism and the enormous difference in the number of respective victims. More discerning German scholars (e.g., Martin Sabrow) and most Anglo-American historians (e.g., Mary Fulbrook) instead stress the importance of so-called soft stabilizers of communist rule such as utopian appeals or material incentives in producing that "reluctant loyalty" which kept the GDR afloat for four decades. The latter approach also comes closer to the memory of the majority of East Germans who sought to lead a normal life within an abnormal system, and, though always aware of the threat of sanction, tried to ignore it as much as possible. The problem of one-sided fixation on repression is its scapegoating of the Stasi as the source of all evil in the GDR.[23] Oppression and everyday life must rather be seen as interrelated halves of the same coin.

Among former operatives, the massive media criticism of the Stasi legacy has produced an astounding role reversal in which many perpetrators now claim to be victims of an ideological purge. When confronted by individuals whom they had mistreated in the GDR, most officers have remained silent or denied any wrongdoing so as not to become legally liable and to keep faith with their peers. Others, more adept in the media, have used the *tu quoque* argument, pointing out that they merely did the same thing as everyone else since Western states also had espionage services or a political police. This argument even convinced the German Supreme Court to accept foreign spying as legitimate. Yet others portray the barring of Stasi officers and collaborators from public employment or political careers as a revival of McCarthyism, an anti-communist crusade based on "class justice."[24] While the reluctance to admit their misdeeds is understandable, the utter lack of contrition among most of the perpetrators has fed a retrospective glorification of the GDR that, in turn, only hardens Western condemnation.

As a symbol of the mysteries of human depravity and the contradictions of the GDR, the Stasi is likely to remain a subject of cultural

22 Hubertus Knabe, *Die unterwanderte Republik. Stasi im Westen* (Berlin, 1999); and idem, *Der diskrete Charme der DDR. Stasi und die Westmedien* (Berlin, 2001).

23 Corey Ross, *The East German Dictatorship: Problems and Perspectives in the Interpretation of the GDR* (London, 2004). See also Martin Sabrow, ed., *Wohin treibt die DDR-Erinnerung? Dokumentation einer Debatte* (Göttingen, 2007); and Mary Fulbrook, *Ein ganz normales Leben: Alltag und Gesellschaft in der DDR*, 2nd ed. (Darmstadt, 2011).

24 Matthias Wagner, *Das Stasi-Syndrom. Über den Umgang mit den Akten des MfS in den 90er Jahren* (Berlin, 2001); Herbert Kierstein and Gotthold Schramm, *Freischützen des Rechtsstaats. Wem nützen Stasiunterlagen und Gedenkstätten?* (Berlin, 2009), 9-14. See also Barbara Miller, *Narratives of Guilt and Compliance in Unified Germany: Stasi Informers and Their Impact on Society* (London, 1999).

projections for years to come. Harassed writers like Reiner Kunze, Erich Loest, and Stefan Heym initially responded by publishing their files in order to recreate the climate of fear, as well as to expose the absurdities of surveillance. More imaginatively, author Wolfgang Hilbig explored in the surrealist satire *"Ich"* how literary collaboration with the secret service progressively destroyed the personality of his protagonist writer-informant as it forced him to serve an inhuman regime.[25] In films, the Stasi could be reduced to ironic clichés as in Leander Haussmann's *Sonnenallee*, an upbeat recollection of growing up on the wrong side of the Wall. Or it might be the topic of a probing melodrama as in Henckel von Donnersmark's prize-winning movie *The Lives of Others*, which portrays the East Berlin theater scene through the eyes of a Stasi observer who eventually tries to protect his subjects. The success of Uwe Tellkamp's meticulous reconstruction of Dresden's educated middle class during the last decade of the GDR in his novel *Der Turm* shows that the Stasi still wields much posthumous power and continues to attract and frighten spectators at the same time.[26]

The Challenge of Historicization

Two decades after reunification, the time has come to historicize the Stasi by treating it as if it were really part of the past. But in order for efforts at public enlightenment about the nefarious practices of the East German secret service to remain effective, their approach needs to be changed in several fundamental ways: First, the MfS must be removed from political controversies and no longer instrumentalized for discrediting current opponents by accusations of collaboration. Second, the Stasi reporting in the media should stop being sensationalist but ought rather to become more factual and nuanced so as to convey the ambiguities of living in the SED welfare dictatorship. Finally, the Federal Office of Stasi Records (BStU) has to be dissolved and its records turned over to the Bundesarchiv, since the special tasks of providing victims access to their files and supplying personnel information for hiring have largely been completed. Only by opening the finding aids and documents to all qualified researchers without privileging BStU members will scholarly studies of the Stasi be able to achieve full credibility.[27]

Historians also face the task of developing a more realistic picture of what the East German security service actually did or did not do. Media-driven revelations that titillate public interest may sell

25 Reiner Kunze, *Deckname "Lyrik". Eine Dokumentation* (Frankfurt, 1990); Stefan Heym, *Der Winter unseres Missvergnügens. Aus den Aufzeichnungen des OV Diversant* (Munich, 1996); Erich Loest, *Die Stasi war mein Eckermann oder Mein Leben mit der Wanze* (Göttingen, 1991); Wolfgang Hilbig, *"Ich". Roman* (Frankfurt, 1993).

26 Leander Haussmann, *Sonnenallee. Es war einmal im Osten* (Pfäffikon, 1999); Henckel von Donnersmarck, *Das Leben der Anderen* (Culver City, 2007); and Uwe Tellkamp, *Der Turm* (Frankfurt, 2008). See also Brad Prager, "Passing Time since the Wende: Recent German Film on Unification," *German Politics and Society* 28 (2010): 95–110.

27 Sven Felix Kellerhoff, "Die Pannenserie der Stasi-Unterlagenbehörde," *Die Welt*, March 6, 2010. On advocacy for open access, see Dorota Darowska, Agnes Bensussan, Nicolas Beaurpre, eds., *Die Überlieferung der Diktaturen. Beiträge zum Umgang mit Archiven der Geheimpolizei in Polen und Deutschland nach 1989* (Essen, 2004).

newspapers or raise TV ratings, but they only mythologize the Stasi by making it appear larger than life. Serious research has already unearthed much information about the size of the MfS, its internal structures, the orders issued to its members, its shifting surveillance priorities, and the like. But considerably less known is its exact role in different areas of society, which ranged considerably from saturation to marginal presence. Moreover, a focus on spectacular foreign espionage cases tends to obscure the GDR's failure to convert such information into technological gains or policy initiatives. What is needed, therefore, is a series of micro-studies that explore the mundane functioning of the Stasi in important social institutions like the universities. Only further empirical research will be able to resolve the contradiction between its vast information gathering concerning the popular mood and the SED's inadequate political response to it.[28]

The interpretative challenge consists of reconciling two disparate findings — the MfS's longtime control of GDR society and its ultimate inability to stem the system's collapse. On the one hand, the Stasi was an essential prop of the SED dictatorship that compensated for the regime's weakness of popular support. Especially after *Ostpolitik* had begun to erode the solidity of the Wall, the rapidly growing secret service was instrumental in maintaining the *Abgrenzung* by combating Western influences. Situated on the frontlines of the Cold War, the MfS was able to obtain more NATO secrets than other Warsaw Pact spies because of its cultural proximity to the FRG. On the other hand, the Stasi showed a strange inability to deal with the growth of internal dissent, which it misconstrued as subversion from the outside. Due to the rise of East-West détente and Gorbachev's reforms in the Soviet Union, service operatives increasingly lost the bearings they needed to develop effective counter-strategies because they failed to realize that demands for democracy could come from inside "real existing socialism." Ironically, the fixation on external subversion that had stabilized the GDR for four decades proved fatal when confronted with the popular challenge in 1989.[29]

Finally, the Stasi legacy needs to be integrated into the longer-range narratives of German history. In one view, the communist dictatorship's heartless repression of its population by means of the MfS fits into the catastrophic version of the twentieth century that emphasizes the servility of human nature to power. Moreover, the sacrifice of individual lives for a greater cause is part of the contest of modernizing ideologies in which even the realization of a purportedly progressive

28 Jens Gieseke, ed., *Stasi und Gesellschaft. Studien zum Herrschaftsalltag in der DDR* (Göttingen, 2007); and the micro-study by Steffen Reichert, *Unter Kontrolle. Die Martin-Luther-Universität und das Ministerium für Staatssicherheit 1968-1989* (Halle, 2007).

29 Dennis, *Stasi*, 211ff.; Gieseke, *Mielke Konzern*, 247ff.; Süss, *Staatssicherheit*, passim.

utopia produced immense suffering. But from another perspective, the Stasi story also has an encouraging message since it demonstrates that it is possible to overthrow sinister repression when enough people have the courage to challenge it with civil disobedience. This alternate reading, symbolized by the peaceful revolution in the fall of 1989, shows that even a cowed people like the East Germans can ultimately choose human rights over shameful complicity.[30] It is this double significance of the Stasi's ruthless effort to terrorize its own people and of that people's courageous resistance to it that will make the Stasi legacy a fascinating subject for a long time to come.

30 Konrad H. Jarausch, "Beyond the National Narrative: Implications of Reunification for Recent German History," *German History* 28 (2010): 498–514.

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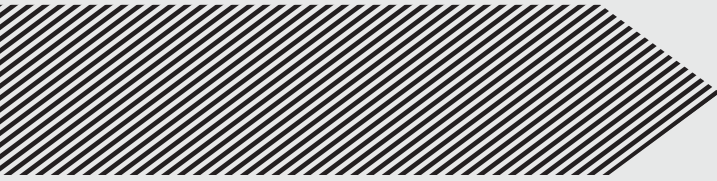
The Stasi and the SED State

THE SOCIALIST UNITY PARTY (SED) AND THE STASI: A COMPLEX RELATIONSHIP

Walter Süß

While there were some constants in the nearly four-decade relationship between the ruling East German Socialist Unity Party (SED) and the Stasi, there were also various stages and dramatic breaks — such as the Uprising of June 1953 and the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961 — that impacted the relationship and Stasi activities. Two equally popular yet mutually exclusive slogans that have been used to describe this relationship are, on the one hand, that the Stasi constituted the "sword and shield of the party" as an institution that existed in order to enforce and protect the party's prerogatives and thus was only the party's handservant, and, on the other, that the Stasi constituted a "state within the state" — i.e., it was an independent actor largely outside the party's control. Although both formulations come directly from the people involved and have served retroactively to shift responsibility onto the other institution, the truth is not somewhere in the middle but is much more complicated than such simple formulas suggest.

This paper will try to fill out this complexity by outlining the development of the relationship between the party and the Stasi, focusing on its structural characteristics as seen from a historical perspective. It will address the establishment of the Stasi and its basic relationship with the SED, problems that arose in this relationship in light of the presence of Soviet secret services in East Germany, forms of concrete collaboration between the Stasi and SED officials, as well as the end of the Stasi/SED relationship in the waning days of the GDR.

The Institutional Relationship

The Ministry for State Security (MfS) was established on February 8, 1950, on the basis of a law approved unanimously and without debate by the East German parliament, the Volkskammer. It came into effect ten days later — February 18, 1950, the true founding date of the Stasi — when it was ratified by President Wilhelm Pieck. The act, which did not mention the communist party, the SED, was laconically brief: "The main department for the protection of the national economy of the Ministry of Interior will be transformed into

an independent Ministry of State Security."[1] Yet the law was adopted on the basis of an unpublicized SED Politburo decision — a fact that revealed the true power relations.[2]

To some extent, the relationship between the party and the Stasi was made official at the Third SED Party Congress in June 1950. The party issued an order stating that the organs of state security were to improve their work in order to "unmask and eliminate the enemies of the working class and agents of imperialism."[3] This made it very clear who set the tone. This order also highlighted the two main functions of the Stasi: external defense and internal repression — that is, the Stasi structurally had a dual nature as both an intelligence service and the secret police.

Even while the Stasi was still being formed, one could see two opposing structural characteristics in the GDR as a state. While SED leaders were anxious to keep all parts of the state apparatus under their direction and control, they nonetheless maintained a formal division between party and state. This was not a foregone conclusion, given their absolute claim to power. They might also have fused the two apparatuses, and the question of why they never attempted to do so merits its own consideration. In the case of the Stasi, however, the party came much closer to fusion than with any other government organ because the Stasi had to be absolutely trustworthy to the party to fulfill its main tasks: enforcing and safeguarding party rule with secret-police means.

There was, of course, an ideological character to the aforementioned slogan that the Stasi constituted the "shield and sword of the party." Whereas the purpose of the Stasi was to secure overall party domination, it was not "the" party as a collective body that made use of it but rather — to use the term of East German dissident thinker Rudolf Bahro — the "politbureaucracy."[4] This politbureaucracy consisted of the SED's top leadership and the full-time party apparatus, which numbered around 40,000 employees in 1989. It was the Stasi's duty to keep East German society under control, including the mass of party members that made up more than one-sixth of the adult population. The party's dictatorship over state and society was possible only to the extent that the party apparatus could maintain its control over the around two-and-a-half million party members.[5]

Even before the MfS was established, security organs dedicated to the same task had been in place. They had acted under the guidance of

1 GBl [Gesetzblatt] DDR 1950, No.15, 21.2.1950, p. 95.

2 Decision by the SED-Politbüro of 24.1.1950, excerpt in Dierk Hoffmann, Karl-Heinz Schmidt, and Peter Skyba, eds., *Die DDR vor dem Mauerbau. Dokumente zur Geschichte des anderen deutschen Staates 1949–1961* (Munich, 1993), 55–56.

3 "Die gegenwärtige Lage und die Aufgaben der SED," in Protokoll des III. Parteitages, 225–75, here 251–52. On the exact circumstances of this campaign in the GDR, see Karl Wilhelm Fricke, *Warten auf Gerechtigkeit. Kommunistische Säuberungen und Rehabilitierungen. Bericht und Dokumentation* (Cologne, 1971); Georg Hermann Hodos, *Schauprozesse. Stalinistische Säuberungen in Osteuropa 1948–1954* (Frankfurt and New York, 1988), 176–98; Wilfriede Otto, "Visionen zwischen Hoffnung und Täuschung," in Thomas Klein, Wilfriede Otto, and Peter Grieder, *Visionen. Repression und Opposition in der SED (1949–1989)* (Frankfurt/Oder, 1996), 217–22; Hermann Weber, "Schauprozess-Vorbereitungen in der DDR," in *Kommunisten verfolgen Kommunisten: stalinistischer Terror und "Säuberungen" in den kommunistischen Parteien Europas seit den dreißiger Jahren*, ed. Hermann Weber and Dietrich Staritz (Berlin, 1993), 436–49.

4 See Rudolf Bahro, *The Alternative in Eastern Europe* (London, 1978).

5 See Ralph Jessen and Jens Gieseke, "Die SED in der staatssozialistischen Gesellschaft," in *Die Geschichte der SED. Eine Bestandsaufnahme*, ed. Jens Gieseke and Hermann Wentker (Berlin, 2011), 16–60.

the Soviet security organs in the Soviet Occupation Zone of Germany and in cooperation with the intelligence structures in the SED party apparatus.[6] They had not only supported denazification but also the establishment of the dictatorship by breaking all resistance to the occupation regime and the processes of economic and political transformation. Within the party, the security organs' first priority was to discipline the Social Democrats, who were suspected of maintaining oppositional ideas after their party's forced merger with the East German communists.[7]

Given the political nature of the Stasi's main aim, only carefully selected, politically loyal and faithful individuals were eligible to work for the organization; professional qualifications played only a minor role in its early years. As the guidelines for the Stasi's cadre work from the early 1950s stated, "Employment in the . . . state security service is open only to screened and politically blameless members of the SED and the FDJ [the communist youth organization]."[8] This prerequisite for the Stasi was distinct from those of other parts of the state apparatus, such as the state police (Volkspolizei) and the army, where a number of opportunists and fellow travelers were able to join the ranks. The People's Army included even former Wehrmacht officers in its early years. But the Stasi tolerated lack of party membership at best only temporarily — in the case of newly acquired cadres or employees in its few civilian services.[9] Particularly in the Stasi's formative years, candidates for recruitment not only had to be party members but they also had to pass a sort of preselection to make the short list. Although it is not mentioned in the directive cited above, eyewitnesses have reported that early on, Soviet "advisers" had to give their consent as well before the MfS could recruit a given candidate.[10]

The Stasi and the Soviet Institutions

As this unwritten recruitment requirement underscores, the Stasi did, indeed, have a dual loyalty in its early years; its second master was the Soviet occupation authorities. Soviet intelligence had placed former Soviet agents at the top of the East German repression apparatus, including the first two Ministers for State Security Wilhelm Zaisser and Ernst Wollweber, and, to a certain extent, the third minister Erich Mielke.

It was not only at the top that the Soviets relied on former agents in these early years; Soviet agents were present everywhere in the Stasi during its early years, and the minister himself had his own Soviet "chief adviser." Soviet "friends" also often participated at meetings of

6   See Jan Foitzik and Nikita W. Petrow, *Die sowjetischen Geheimdienste in der SBZ/DDR von 1945 bis 1953* (Berlin et al., 2009); Jens Gieseke, *Mielke-Konzern. Die Geschichte der Stasi 1945–1990* (Munich, 2006), 39–50.

7   See Andreas Malycha and Peter Jochen Winters, *Die SED. Geschichte einer deutschen Partei* (Munich, 2009), 79-92; Klein, Otto, und Grieder, *Visionen*, 170-229.

8   Dienstanweisung No. 43/53 of 6.11.1953, quoted in Jens Gieseke, "Die Hauptamtlichen 1962. Zur Personalstruktur des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit," *Deutschland Archiv* 27 (1994): 940–53, here 950.

9   See Jens Gieseke, "Erst braun, dann rot? Zur Beschäftigung ehemaliger Nationalsozialisten als hauptamtliche Mitarbeiter des MfS," in *Staatspartei und Staatssicherheit*, ed. Siegfried Suckut, and Walter Süß (Berlin, 1997), 129-50.

10 See Jens Gieseke, *Die hauptamtlichen Mitarbeiter der Staatssicherheit. Personalstruktur und Lebenswelt 1950-1989/90* (Berlin, 2000), 79-81.

the council or Kollegium, the highest collective body in the MfS, and Soviet instructors who had insight into all operational processes were assigned to all heads of administrative units or subdepartments.[11] Of course, it was conceivable that conflict would arise in such a situation, and Stasi chief Wollweber made it clear at a staff meeting in 1953 that agents should ultimately defer to the Soviets in such cases: "If a Soviet instructor intervenes . . . you can show that you have a mind of your own, but you have to follow the advice of the instructor."[12]

Soviet advisors also directed large operations, including the mass arrests between 1953 and 1955. The largest of these campaigns was Action "Blitz," in which 521 people were arrested. There is an interesting comment written in pencil in the margins of the operational plan for this action that someone obviously forgot to erase: "Translated from the Russian."[13] This points to another characteristic of Soviet involvement in the Stasi: the Soviets sought to leave behind as few traces as possible, and were largely successful in this throughout the history of their cooperation with the Stasi, up to the very end.

The dominance of the Soviet secret police in the Stasi created problems for the SED leadership. In the end, it was a question of power. When political differences between the SED and the CPSU (the Communist Party of the Soviet Union) arose, it was almost impossible to know whose side the secret police would take. This issue underlay Ernst Wollweber's removal as Minister for State Security. A confidant of the Soviets, he was replaced by Erich Mielke, Ulbricht's confidant, in 1957.[14]

In the mid-1950s, the Soviets began to limit their visibility in the Eastern European satellite states in general. Due to this reorientation, the influence of Soviet advisors on the Stasi also waned, and the number of "consultants" was drastically reduced, leaving only 32 Soviet "liaison officers" in the GDR. However, Soviet influence was still palpable. There were Soviet liaison officers in the Ministry in Berlin and in the district offices, and these positions still had considerable weight. Moreover, the Soviet and East German secret services cooperated closely on all levels — from the minister down to the individual departments, facilitated by the proximity of the KGB Residency in Berlin-Karlshorst, whose several hundred employees primarily spied on the West.[15]

The Legal Framework for the Ministry of State Security

The law on the Ministry for State Security did not mention the party, but the secret first "statute" of the MfS signed on October 15, 1953, by East

11 See Jens Gieseke, *Das Ministerium für Staatssicherheit 1950 bis 1989/90. Ein kurzer historischer Abriss*, BF informiert 21 (Berlin, 1998), 10; Bernhard Marquardt, "Die Zusammenarbeit zwischen MfS und KGB," in *Materialien der Enquete-Kommission "Aufarbeitung von Geschichte und Folgen der SED-Diktatur in Deutschland" (12. Wahlperiode des Deutschen Bundestages)*, ed. Deutscher Bundestag (Baden-Baden, 1995), 8:297–361, here 301–303.

12 Staff meeting at 21.8.1953; BStU, MfS, SdM 1921, p. 228.

13 In Karl-Wilhelm Fricke and Roger Engelmann, *"Konzentrierte Schläge". Staatssicherheitsaktionen und politische Prozesse in der DDR 1953–1956* (Berlin, 1998), 29.

14 See Roger Engelmann, and Silke Schumann, "Der Ausbau des Überwachungsstaates. Der Konflikt Ulbricht-Wollweber und die Neuausrichtung des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der DDR 1957," *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 43 (1995): 341–78.

15 See Roger Engelmann and Walter Süß, "Verhältnis des MfS zum sowjetischen Geheimdienst," in *Das MfS-Lexikon. Begriffe, Personen und Strukturen der Staatssicherheit der DDR*, ed. Roger Engelmann et al. (Berlin, 2011), 275–79.

German Premier Otto Grotewohl remedied this.[16] As with the law establishing the MfS, this occurred after the party had made a secret decision.[17] This secret statute at last formally defined the relationship between Stasi and the party, explicitly stating that the decisions of the leading party organs were of primary importance for the MfS and that the laws of the East German state came second. This was no doubt carried out in practice.

Ernst Wollweber, who became the Minister for State Security in 1953, expressed the nature of this relationship best during the SED Party Congress in 1954. Seeking to distance himself from his predecessor, Wilhelm Zaisser, Wollweber accused him of having disregarded "the leading role of the party."[18]

> Our comrades in State Security have a special mission, but it's a party mission. . . . Our party — as has been shown in the unmasking of Zaisser — can rely on the comrades in State Security. That must be so, because the Stasi should be a sharp sword with which our party strikes the enemy relentlessly, no matter where he has established himself![19]

Two aspects of this statement are remarkable: first, the definition of the Stasi as a "sword" of the party, and second, the stated willingness to act even against high-ranking party officials — after all, Zaisser had been a member of the Politburo. Wollweber certainly did not seek to proclaim the Stasi's superiority over the party. Rather, he sought to emphasize its loyalty. His comment about the ministry's willingness to strike the "enemy," even if he is part of the top leadership, can be understood only as an expression of loyalty to party leader Walter Ulbricht. The Stasi lay at Ulbricht's disposal. This was particularly so during the first half of the 1950s, when the Stasi had authority even over top officials. In 1956, Wollweber clarified the Stasi's subordinance to the Politburo in speaking to the Central Committee of the SED: "The arrest of important personalities . . . is not decided upon by the Stasi alone; rather, it submits these decisions to the Security Commission [of the Politburo]."[20]

This Security Commission, a circle of top SED officials whose composition was ultimately decided upon by party chief Ulbricht, had been set up in 1953.[21] The model for this likely came from the Soviet Union as it resembled the "leadership group" Stalin had set up in 1937 within the Politburo of the CPSU, whose members could order even the arrest and execution of Politburo members.[22] Ulbricht

16 "Statut des Staatssekretariats für Staatssicherheit of 6.10.1953," in *Grundsatzdokumente des MfS*, ed. Roger Engelmann and Frank Joestel, BStU (Berlin, 2004), 61–63.

17 Decision by the SED-Politbüro of 23.9.1953, Anhang; BArch-SAPMO, DY 30, J IV 2/202/62.

18 Decision by the SED-Politbüro of 23.9.1953, Anhang; BArch-SAPMO, DY 30, J IV 2/202/62, p. 4.

19 Cited by Karl Wilhelm Fricke, MfS intern (Cologne, 1991), 83.

20 BArch-SAPMO, IV 2/1/156, cited in *DDR vor dem Mauerbau*, 239–40.

21 See Armin Wagner, *Walter Ulbricht und die geheime Sicherheitspolitik der SED. Der Nationale Verteidigungsrat der DDR und seine Vorgeschichte (1953–1971)* (Berlin, 2002), 78–87.

22 See Oleg W. Chlewnjuk, *Das Politbüro. Mechanismen der Macht in der Sowjetunion der dreißiger Jahre* (Hamburg, 1998), 332–48.

23 See "Beschluß der Sicherheits-kommission vom 16. Dezember 1954. Betr.: Maßnahmen zur Erhöhung der Sicherheit und zum verstärkten Schutz gegen das Eindringen von Agenten in den Parteiapparat"; VVS 1012/54; BStU, MfS, SdM 407, pp. 1–5.

24 This was also the case in the 1980s. When a political employee of an SED local administration fled to the West, the Stasi demanded a review of the bureaucracies of the district and local administrations. The Stasi played only an auxiliary role. Mielke's relevant order declared "that the review must be undertaken by employees of the SED local administrations themselves." MfS Der Minister, Schreiben an die Leiter der BVfS vom 18.10.1983; BStU, MfS, DSt 102978.

25 See "Richtlinie 1/68 für die Zusammenarbeit mit Gesellschaftlichen Mitarbeitern für Sicherheit und Inoffiziellen Mitarbeitern im Gesamtsystem der Sicherung der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik"; reprint in *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit. Richtlinien und Durchführungsbestimmungen*, ed. Helmut Müller-Enbergs (Berlin, 1996), 242–82, here 261.

26 No relevant party resolution or internal Stasi order can be found. However, in the archival files of various unofficial collaborators (IMs), there is an abundance of individual examples.

27 See Roger Engelmann, Staatssicherheitsjustiz im Aufbau: Zur Entwicklung geheimpolizeilicher und justitieller Strukturen im Bereich der politischen Strafverfolgung 1950–1963, in *Justiz im Dienste der Parteiherrschaft: Rechtspraxis und Staatssicherheit in der DDR*, ed. Roger Engelmann and Clemens Vollnhals (Berlin, 1999), 133–64, here 156–60; Falco Werkentin, *Politische Strafjustiz in der Ära Ulbricht. Vom bekennenden Terror zur verdeckten Repression*, 2nd ed. (Berlin, 1997), 349–55, 379.

stopped short of doing this with leading comrades; after all, times had changed since Stalin had died. Nevertheless, the Security Commission was a strange construction even under GDR conditions: a party board not subject to any legal regulations — not even those provided by the party's constitution — that directly oversaw a state institution.

Wollweber's reference to the necessary permission for the arrest of important persons reflected a limitation on the decision-making authority of the Stasi. In fact, the Stasi was allowed to police anyone in the entire full-time party apparatus only under exceptional circumstances and under Ulbricht's direct control.[23] The use of the Stasi as a tool in internal party struggles was ultimately dangerous to the party leadership itself as it might then become independent and turn against its own creator. Therefore, some caution was necessary. The GDR leadership placed specific limitations on the Stasi, including a ban on investigating full-time employees of the party apparatus,[24] and on recruiting SED members as unofficial collaborators.[25] Although this second rule was continually broken, SED members who made a career in the party apparatus were definitely off-limits to the Stasi and had to break off any unofficial contact with the relevant cadres.[26] Outside the party apparatus, simple party members were never safe from the Stasi, but in later years, the Stasi mainly acted as an informant for the Party Control Commission in such cases.

It should now be clear that the party leadership determined the scope of the Stasi's activities, including what rules it had to observe. In the 1950s, the Stasi's leash was very long, and it engaged in relentlessly brutal repression. Though this seemingly derived from the instructions of the Soviet "advisers," who simply imported their own methods, this fact alone cannot explain the Stasi's brutality. When Soviet influence declined markedly in the second half of the 1950s and Ulbricht felt more in charge following a short phase of liberalization after the Twentieth Party Congress of the CPSU, the Stasi intensified the prosecution of political crimes, although it no longer achieved the high number of convictions that it had in the early 1950s.[27]

Also contributing to the Stasi's brutality were developments within the Soviet bloc. The Twentieth Party Congress of the CPSU in 1956 and the beginnings of de-Stalinization had spread great uncertainty among the Eastern European regimes. When the situation seemed under control again, the ruling communist parties met for a conference in Moscow in November 1957 and announced a new general line to guide their actions. Crucially, the concluding "statement" of this

conference made the parties' stance against revisionism perfectly clear: "Under present circumstances, the main danger is revisionism, or, in other words, right-wing opportunism."[28]

This anti-revisionism was a new concept of the enemy with far-reaching political implications. Ulbricht warmly welcomed it as a rejection of all attempts at reform. Three months later, a plenum of the SED Central Committee declared an end to the "opportunistic interpretation of the results of the 20th Party Congress" — in other words, an end to de-Stalinization. It criticized the old leadership of the MfS under Wollweber for having concentrated too much on work against the West while neglecting the need for internal repression without mentioning that the Soviet security services had ordered it so. Rather, the plenum characterized this setting of priorities as "short-sightedness regarding the enemy's . . . ideological and material subversion."[29]

Against this backdrop, Erich Mielke . who had previously served as Walter Ulbricht's confidant within the upper reaches of the Stasi, was appointed the new head of State Security. In his report on the Central Committee Plenum, Mielke drew the necessary conclusion regarding the Stasi's political reorientation at a meeting of its internal council, the Kollegium. Part of this reorientation involved fighting "ideological subversion," a term he coined and defined as "the enemy's method aimed at the party's disintegration in order to eliminate its leading role in building socialism and to soften up the GDR and the entire socialist camp."[30]

The reactionary turn under Khrushchev, wherein "revisionism" was defined as the "main danger," was politically disastrous. Within the Soviet Union, however, it was of limited duration; it represented a tactical maneuver in the factional struggle at the top of the CPSU. In contrast, in the GDR, the SED's leaders and the MfS maintained this reorientation and took it to the next level, associating all forms of political dissent with "enemy" activities and thereby stigmatizing them. From this point on, the Stasi could justify combatting and suppressing even the most carefully voiced criticism as a form of "subversion," which stifled political life in the GDR.

All of this was done in consultation with the party's leaders, of course. The SED set the political line at Party Congresses, Plenums of the Central Committee, and meetings of the Politburo. The MfS then communicated the party's line throughout its hierarchy at personnel

28 "Erklärung der Beratung von Vertretern der kommunistischen und Arbeiterparteien der sozialistischen Länder, die vom 14. bis 16. November 1957 in Moskau stattfand," *Einheit* 12 (1957): 1473–85.

29 "Bericht des Politbüros auf dem 35. Plenum des ZK der SED, 3.2.1958," reprinted in Roger Engelmann and Silke Schumann, *Kurs auf die entwickelte Diktatur. Walter Ulbricht, die Entmachtung Ernst Wollwebers und die Neuausrichtung des Staatssicherheitsdienstes 1956/57* (Berlin, 1995), 65–70.

30 Engelmann and Schumann, *Kurs*, 26.

conferences and meetings of its party organizations, coupled with the demand to "analyze" it, that is, to draw conclusions from it for its own work. This was also important for conceptualizing the "enemy," which served to confirm the Stasi personnel's ideology, orientation, and motivation. Several conceptions of the "enemy" handed down from the SED were relatively constant, such as "imperialism" and "foreign subversive centers," but others changed with the political situation, like the aforementioned term, "ideological subversion." The Stasi, for its part, had the potential to influence the development of such negative images by means of its reporting to the SED, for example, by hyping certain "threats."

The National Defense Council

As we saw above, in the 1950s the Stasi was subordinated to a Security Commission of the Politburo, which was a somewhat strange construction even under East German conditions. In 1960, this changed when a law established the National Defense Council as the successor organization to the Security Commission; this formalized the relationship between the SED's leadership and the "armed services"[31] and subordinated the latter once again to a government institution. The Security Services were still subordinated to SED leaders because only high-ranking SED functionaries sat on the National Defense Council. (This was different from the State Council, the collective head of state, which also at least included representatives of the bloc parties.) Only the Chairman of the National Defense Council was authorized to issue directives to subordinate state organs, but he was typically the same person as the Chairman of the State Council and the First Secretary of the SED Central Committee, so this personal union created a statutory link to the party.[32] The National Defense Council was responsible not only for the country's preparations for armed defense but also for "defense against counterrevolutionary activities,"[33] both functions it had assumed from the Security Commission.

The subordination of all state organs and thus also the Stasi to the communist party was first fixed in law in the Constitution of the GDR of 1968, which, in Article 1, defined the state as "the political organization of workers in the city and on the land under the leadership of the working class and its Marxist-Leninist party."[34] Then, in 1969, a second statute for the State Security was issued that expressed this subordination in more concrete terms. This second statute replaced that of 1953 and remained in force until the end of the GDR. Just like

31 Gesetz über die Bildung des Nationalen Verteidigungsrates der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik vom 10.2.1960; GBl DDR I, Nr. 8 of 13.2.1960. See Wagner, *Walter Ulbricht*, 160–71.

32 "Statut des Nationalen Verteidigungsrates der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik" vom 23.10. 1967; Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv, DVW 39487, pp. 5–25, here p. 9.

33 Ibid., p. 11.

34 "Verfassung der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik vom 6.April 1968 in der Neufassung vom 27. September 1974," in *Verfassungen der kommunistischen Staaten*, ed. Georg Brunner and Boris Meissner (Paderborn et al., 1980), 95.

the first statute, this one stated the "bases" for the activity of the MfS at the very beginning. These were, first of all, the program and resolutions of the SED, and only thereafter the East German constitution, laws, and the resolutions of the National Defense Council.[35]

In terms of the SED's determination of the Stasi's room for maneuver, it is important to note that both statutes — that of 1953 and 1969 — expressly approved the use of unofficial collaborators ("support from true patriots"),[36] as well as "[s]pecial means and methods." This vague formulation served to justify secret searches of homes, bugging phones, reading mail, and other secret police interventions. It was a blank check that allowed the Stasi to engage in activities that were otherwise forbidden by GDR law. In other words, the Stasi could operate, to a certain extent, in a legal vacuum.

The Intertwining of the SED and Stasi Command Structures in the Honecker Era

Of the two phrases used to characterize the relationship between the party and the Stasi, we have so far examined only the view of the MfS as the "shield and the sword" of the politbureaucracy. To be sure, this was the Stasi's dominant function. Nevertheless, talk of the Stasi as a "state within the state" — although it is inaccurate overall — does have a rational core.

A central problem arose during the rule of East German leader Erich Honecker from 1971 to 1989: the intertwining of the command structures of the SED and the Stasi. Both institutions were organized hierarchically: the SED, according to the principles of "democratic" — but, in fact, bureaucratic — centralism, and the MfS with military command structures.

The link at the top of both hierarchies was relatively simple after the conflicts of the early years. Under Ulbricht, the first two Ministers for State Security, Wilhelm Zaisser and Ernst Wollweber, had proved intractable and were removed from power after falling out with the party leader. Mielke, who was determined to succeed Wollweber, had plotted with Ulbricht against his superiors, making him particularly suitable for the office in Ulbricht's eyes. At the same time, Ulbricht refused to integrate Mielke into the inner circle of power, the Politburo, which kept the lines of command clear. Nonetheless, as early as the 1960s, Mielke was able to successfully defend his fiefdom against control by the Central Committee apparatus.[37]

35 "Statut des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, 30.7.1969," in *Grundsatzdokumente des MfS*, 183–88.

36 "Statut von 1969, § 4," ibid., 185.

37 See Siegfried Suckut, "Generalkontrollbeauftragter der SED oder gewöhnliches Staatsorgan? Probleme der Funktionsbestimmung des MfS in den sechziger Jahren," in *Staatspartei und Staatssicherheit*, ed. Suckut, Süß, 151–68.

During the 1970s and 1980s under Honecker, the situation was more complicated. The new General Secretary made Mielke a candidate member of the Politburo in 1971 — the first time since 1953 that the head of the Stasi had belonged to the center of power. This fact alone constituted a major change under Honecker and increased the power of the Stasi. Yet, what was more, most of the issues that directly concerned the Stasi were not even addressed in the Politburo but in confidence between Honecker and Mielke, who met for this purpose on Tuesdays after Politburo meetings.[38] After Mielke was forced to resign in November 1989, he described the decision-making structure like this: "I couldn't decide anything. I submitted, and received, approval for my decisions."[39] Yet this was perhaps a little exaggerated as Mielke himself had boasted at other times of having influenced policy decisions with his information.

Although no records of these Tuesday conversations have survived, it is still possible to characterize the relationship between the two men and to gain insight into how Mielke managed to retain the sensitive post of Minister for State Security for thirty-two years. Mielke fully respected Honecker's authority and respected his policy guidance even when it made his own situation more difficult. He maintained this attitude until shortly before Honecker's fall from power, which was instigated by a third person.[40] At the same time, Mielke used his privileged access to the General Secretary to shield his rule from all others, even the Central Committee apparatus, and to extract maximum financial and personal resources for the Stasi. However, the structure of the relationship between Mielke and Honecker did not translate to the regional level, where military and party discipline could come into conflict. It would have violated the MfS hierarchy for a Stasi officer to be under the command of a local party functionary.

Beginning in 1976, when Mielke became a full member of the Politburo, even the rules regarding party discipline could be functionalized to shield the MfS. The Stasi chief now stood above all local party officials within the SED hierarchy. At the same time, there was a tighter centralization within the Stasi so that even small decisions had to be made at the top. For example, by the mid-1970s, the minister himself had to decide whether the local Stasi should prevent a civil-rights activist in Leipzig from speaking to an opposition circle. In talks with regional party officials, the local Stasi chief was able to argue that the issue had to be decided "in Berlin." Most likely, at the top of the party hierarchy, the main form of communication between

38 See Reinhold Andert and Wolfgang Herzberg, *Der Sturz. Erich Honecker im Kreuzverhör* (Berlin, 1990), 367; Günter Schabowski, *Der Absturz* (Berlin, 1991), 115; Wolfgang Schwanitz, "Die Sicherheitspolitik der SED und das MfS," *Zwie-Gespräch* 16 (1993): 1–12, here 3; Markus Wolf, *In eigenem Auftrag. Bekenntnisse und Einsichten* (Munich, 1991), 210.

39 Erich Mielke, "Vernehmung des Beschuldigten am 16.1.1990," appendix in *Erich Mielke. Eine deutsche Karriere*, ed. Jochen von Lang (Berlin, 1991), 270–75, here 271.

40 The same was true of Mielke's relationship with Ulbricht, whose downfall was also precipitated by a third person.

the party and Stasi was direct orders, whereas mutual information and cooperation likely predominated at the lower levels.

The interaction between the Stasi and the party during this period was quite close, with the regional Stasi offices supplying the SED with regular — often daily — "party information." This included reports on all aspects of political and social life deemed important by the secret police, such as the mood and conversations in factories, the satellite parties, and "mass organizations"; activities by dissidents and the Church; and such mundane matters as supply bottlenecks, which could lead to greater dissatisfaction. In short, anything and everything that could jeopardize the stability of the regime was of interest. There were also verbal reports to the first secretaries of SED district and county organizations once a week from the head of the respective Stasi units.

Whether written or oral, there were certain rules regarding what information could be exchanged. Party officials were not to be informed of concrete unofficial collaborators (IMs), the general use of such IMs, nor secret operational methods. In other words, "sources and methods" were taboo topics for local party officials, as were current secret operations. In addition, information to party officials had to be edited so that it was impossible for the recipient to identify people currently subject to Stasi operations. However, the Stasi probably had to seek the party's agreement to make arrests in political cases.

These restrictions were also in force within the party organization at the MfS. From as early as the mid-1950s, any discussion of the particulars of operational work at party meetings within the MfS was strictly forbidden. This means that intelligence and the methods of the secret police were shielded from the party. One should not conclude on this basis, however, that the Stasi was, in fact, a "state within the state." Rather, these conspiratorial methods aimed to benefit the party, though they also provided the Stasi with unusual freedom of action. The party apparatus made the relevant political decisions, but the Stasi could influence these decisions by selecting the information that was passed on. The party apparatus had little opportunity to control this information because the Stasi preserved conspiratorial methods also in relation to the SED.

Conclusion

I would like to conclude this description of the complex relationship between the Stasi and the SED by saying something about how it

ended. As we have seen, the Stasi always recognized and respected the party's prerogatives, and this was true even during the fall of 1989. The regime had fallen into a deep crisis — as we know, its final crisis. In its helplessness, the new SED leadership under Egon Krenz had proclaimed a policy of renunciation-of-force, of "change" and "dialogue."[41] Explaining the policy change at a meeting of his staff in mid-October, Minister Mielke declared the Stasi's complete compliance: "All measures taken by the Ministry for State Security must conform to the general line . . . and policy decisions of the Central Committee and its Politburo."[42] This was discipline to the point of demise.

In the weeks preceding the staff meeting, the Stasi, along with the Volkspolizei, had continued to practice police-state methods. They had dispersed demonstrations, beaten untold numbers of people, and placed thousands temporarily under arrest in an effort to prevent any disturbance of the GDR's fortieth anniversary celebrations, public events meant to bolster the regime. Nevertheless, the generals within the Stasi, not believing that it would be possible to overcome the crisis by means of repression alone, were waiting for an initiative from the new leadership that could politically mobilize the party's own base — something along the lines of the Soviet model of reform. Mielke had contributed to Honecker's removal because he had lost faith in him and his policies, but the new General Secretary, Egon Krenz, had turned out to be incompetent as well. His indecision and delays dashed any remaining hopes that the party could be reformed and discouraged even the staunchest regime supporters.

The Stasi generals reached the sobering conclusion that the "leading role of the party" was no more, even before the East German parliament adopted the relevant constitutional amendment on December 1, 1989. The Stasi, established as the ruling party's secret police, thus became redundant, and the generals were unable to provide any new direction to their subordinates. That the MfS was a mere tool of the politbureaucracy became clear once again as it reached its final end.

41 See Walter Süß, *Staatssicherheit am Ende. Warum es den Mächtigen nicht gelang, 1989 eine Revolution zu verhindern* (Berlin, 1999), 343–45.

42 BStU, MfS, ZAIG 4885, pp. 1–79, here p. 28.

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THE STASI AND THE PARTY: FROM COORDINATION TO ALIENATION

Jefferson Adams

In early 1979, a bulky four-volume dissertation totaling 740 pages was completed at the Ministry for State Security (MfS) School of Law (Juristische Hochschule) in Potsdam-Eiche.[1] With subversive enemy activity as its main concern, it sought to show how the controls at the frontiers with the Federal Republic and West Berlin could be significantly strengthened. While diagrams were appended that depicted the physical barriers already firmly in place — the three-meter high hinterland fence, the two-meter high signal fence of barbed wire and steel mesh that triggered an alarm, the so-called death strip, the barrier ditch, and finally the three-meter high *Grenzwall* — the authors had a different focus.

Criticizing the conventional measures then being used, First Lieutenant Reckhard Härtel and Captain Jürgen Föhr urged greater variation, thoroughness, and agility in overseeing Border Troops (*Grenztruppen*), which at the time numbered roughly 38,000 men. What follows in their exposition is a dizzying labyrinth of human controls. They recommended that MfS officers in special deployment (*Offiziere im besonderen Einsatz*) needed to be carefully placed throughout the Border Troops, notably in the key command sections, to increase "Chekist" influence; that unofficial collaborators (*Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter* or IMs) — lauded as ever as the most valuable resource available — should be recruited in greater numbers among both the soldiers and non-commissioned officers (they would be active on both sides of the border); and that more public relations in all units of the Border Troops should be instituted. They also suggested that two auxiliary groups drawn from the population living near the frontier should be expanded: the Volunteer Helpers of the Border Troops (*Freiwillige Helfer der Grenztruppen*) — youths 18 years of age or older, unarmed and normally wearing uniforms without insignia but also capable of undercover work in civilian clothes; and the volunteer Helpers of the Border Reconnaissance (*Freiwillige Helfer der Grenzaufklärung*), which already counted roughly six per officer. Finally, they urged that all incidents needed to be reported to the relevant units of the MfS, even though their direct intervention might not be required. Such a multilayered system of controls and counter-controls recalls a passage in the novel *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* by the Franco-Czech

1   BStU, JHS 21878, vols. 1-4.

writer Milan Kundera. In explaining to Tereza the functions of the present-day secret police, the ambassador concludes by saying: "They need to trap people, to force them to collaborate and set other traps for other people, so that gradually they can turn the whole nation into a single organization of informers."[2]

Typically, the relationship of the MfS to the East German citizenry is conveyed simply in numerical terms — 91,000 full-time employees and 180,000 IMs for a population of 16 million. Yet as unsettling as such numbers are — no other state security force in history ever matched this per capita ratio — they convey primarily the breadth of surveillance, not its unusual depth and complexity. Likewise, it hardly suffices to assert that the security forces were merely a loyal servant of state socialism throughout East Germany's existence. The MfS and the party interacted in myriad ways, many unknown at the time. It is true that various important aspects of this relationship await further research — the degree to which the Stasi used its resources to shape certain policies of the Socialist Unity Party (Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands, SED), for example, or how the two institutions functioned on the regional and local levels. Still, it is possible to sketch how this relationship manifested itself in a manner distinctly at odds with the practices that had developed in the Western democracies. Above all, it is a tale of how four decades of fostering the closest coordination ultimately climaxed in a mood of deep resentment, even alienation.

One should note at the outset the strong sense of elitism that prevailed in the MfS. No other institution in the GDR could claim as high a level of party membership. Sample survey data for the year 1988, for example, reveal a quota between 83 and 87 percent with a large majority of the full-time staff having promptly joined the SED upon entering the MfS.[3] The first minister of state security, Wilhelm Zaisser, emphatically asserted this dual affiliation at a party conference in June 1952: "For us the number of staff members is identical to the number of party members. We have no one without a party membership. Everyone who works in the Ministry of State Security is an employee and, on the other hand, a party member."[4] Even though Zaisser had to concede some exceptions that existed, the ultimate objective had been clearly set forth.

It is therefore not surprising that those barred from consideration for a position included former members of the Nazi Party, current members of the East German bloc parties, and anyone who had been

2   Milan Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* (New York, 1991), 163.

3   Jens Gieseke, *Die hauptamtlichen Mitarbeiter der Staatssicherheit. Personalstruktur und Lebenswelt 1950-1989/90* (Berlin, 2000), 423.

4   Cited by ibid., 119. Zaisser also coined the phrase "comrades of the first category" (*Genossen erster Kategorie*) in reference to those under his command. Ibid., 544.

on the German police force prior to 1945. Moreover, when disputes between party and Stasi officials arose, it was not uncommon for the MfS to take an even more zealous interpretation of party doctrine. This sense of elitism had two other main sources. One was the awareness that their origins as "Chekists" had a long lineage traceable to Felix Dzerzhinsky and the earliest days of the new Bolshevik regime;[5] the other derived from the GDR's geographic position within the Warsaw Pact, which meant that the MfS was engaged in fighting the main enemy on the westernmost front.

The leaders of the party, however, took special pains to protect themselves after creating this new powerful ministry. Following the debacle of the MfS in combatting the Uprising of June 17, 1953, not only was Zaisser removed as minister for allegedly forming "an anti-party faction pursuing a defeatist policy calculated to undermine the unity of the party and advocating a slanderous platform designed to split the party leadership."[6] The Security Commission of the SED Politbüro also forbade the Stasi to conduct surveillance (*operativ bearbeiten*) on members of the main party apparatus unless assistance had been requested regarding a suspected deviationist in its own ranks. The East German bloc parties, by contrast, enjoyed no such immunity, and the notion that an enemy of the SED was simultaneously an enemy of the state became a working axiom for the MfS.

Institutionally, the relationship between the party and the MfS operated both externally and internally. The top party authority was the Central Committee Secretary for Security Questions; its three occupants were successively Erich Honecker, Paul Verner, and Egon Krenz. Especially in the latter instances, the influence of this post was minimal. Verner and Krenz tended to rely primarily on the tier immediately below them in the hierarchy — the division dealing with the armed forces, and, in turn, the department with direct ties to the MfS. One of its main functions concerned the selection and appointment of top officials in the Stasi, although it had to consult with the Stasi's own Department for Cadres and Training. Any recommendation in this complex procedural process was then subject to the approval of Erich Mielke, the longstanding head of the Stasi.

Within the MfS, an even more elaborate network existed under the rubric of the Party Organization. The principal SED unit was the Central Party Organization in the MfS. Accorded the status of a Party District Organization, it functioned according to directives issued by the Central Committee and, in 1989, possessed a staff of 159 full-time

5   In December 1917, at the request of V. I. Lenin, Felix Dzerzhinsky (1877–1926) formed the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counter-revolution and Sabotage, known to most Soviet citizens by its abbreviation Cheka. By 1954, this vast secret police apparatus had officially evolved into the KGB.

6   *Dokumente der Sozialistischen Einheitspartei Deutschlands* (East Berlin, 1954), 4:471.

employees. According to its last head, Horst Felber, it had "the task of clarifying the resolutions of the Central Committee and its Politbüro along with [providing] a general orientation for the work of the MfS, motivating and mobilizing the party members politically in solving their tasks, and overcoming the obstacles and deficiencies in the ranks by drawing upon the strength of the party."[7]

Particularly significant was the pervasiveness of party organizations and party groups at every level: the regional, the district, and the object (or installation, such as a research institution or nuclear power plant). After all, roughly one half of the Stasi worked in locales outside East Berlin. The principal tasks for each of them were initially set forth in a 1954 Politbüro directive — a directive that remained generally unchanged over time. Among its main points were to provide training "in the uncompromising struggle against agents, spies, saboteurs, and all enemies of the workers' and peasants' power" and to become familiar "with the glorious revolutionary traditions of the German working class as well as the great combat experiences of the Soviet security organs."[8] Also underscored was the importance of the "merciless struggle against opportunistic and divisive elements" within the ranks — meaning, specifically, appeasers, pacifists, and social democrats.

The directive noted eight fields of activity: cadre work; disciplinary action; party education; material needs such as housing and medical treatment; the arrangement of sports and culture activities (particularly through the Dynamo Sports Association); volunteer work outside of one's job; the direction of the Free German Youth (Freie Deutsche Jugend) in the MfS; and internal party work.

Of these, the issue of discipline merits closer examination. In light of the secrecy inherent in undercover operations, Mielke, like his predecessors, adamantly insisted that no operational details be divulged should a disciplinary problem arise, even though the party might theoretically claim that it bore responsibility for all aspects of a person's life. As he emphasized on more than one occasion, the MfS was by definition a "military-conspiratorial" organization and therefore had to severely limit what was known to outsiders.[9] Serious matters, therefore, were handled by the disciplinary arm of the Main Department for Cadres and Training. Nevertheless, the Party Organization was by no means inactive in this field. Generally, it operated like an early warning system, monitoring the slightest infractions, even in one's private sphere, lest they grow to full-blown offenses.

7   Cited by Karl Wilhelm Fricke, *MfS intern. Macht, Strukturen, Auflösung der DDR Staatssicherheit. Analyse und Dokumentation* (Cologne, 1991).

8   Cited by Silke Schumann, "Die Parteiorganisation der SED im MfS 1950–1957," in *Staatspartei und Staatssicherheit. Zum Verhältnis von SED und MfS*, ed. Siegfried Suckut and Walter Süß (Berlin, 1997), 115–16.

9   This issue surfaced in a number of other contexts. There was, for example, considerable debate in the early years about how much operational detail should be included in the party training manuals.

Excessive drinking, overdrawn bank accounts, tardy arrival at work, reckless driving, marital difficulties, and unruly children all came under the purview of the party. Both the number of disciplinary cases and dismissals from the MfS reached a high point in 1957 — 9 percent in each case — and then stabilized at under 5 percent following the construction of the Berlin Wall four years later. Also noteworthy was a new set of cadre rules issued in 1964. Political responsibilities headed the list: "unconditional loyalty to the German Democratic Republic and to the leadership of the Party of the working class" along with "unshakable loyalty to and friendship with the Soviet Union and other socialist states as well as the willingness to fight for the greater unity and integration of the socialist world order."[10]

The Party Organization functioned not just as a disciplinary instrument. Meetings took place on a regular basis, providing basic grounding in Marxism-Leninism and a discussion of new party decisions. In true Leninist fashion — encouraged especially by Ernst Wollweber, Zaisser's successor — the politics of the enemy also underwent careful scrutiny in order to determine how MfS operational work would be impacted. In addition, pre-determined elections were held. They had meaning inasmuch as gaining a higher office reflected the continued trust of one's superiors and even the prospect of a promotion in one's job with the MfS. Political education was further supplemented by the existence of the MfS's own party school named after Robert Mühlpforte, an "activist of the first hour" and the earlier head of the Main Division of Cadres and Education. While most of the attendees came from the Berlin headquarters, regional workers went to the schools operated by their local SED units. Outstanding cadres were accorded the opportunity to go to "Karl Marx," the main training school for party leaders, or even to the Soviet party school in Moscow, as was the case with Werner Großmann, the final head of the foreign intelligence division Hauptverwaltung Aufklärung (HV A).

The 1954 Politbüro directive, as noted earlier, laid particular stress on keeping alive the memory of the revolutionary past. This practice became known as *Traditionspflege* — the preservation of tradition — and was regarded as a crucial safeguard against enemy penetration of the Stasi. Under the rubric of security within its own ranks, the MfS, in its official dictionary, specifically called for "a greater emphasis on the preservation of tradition, conveying through individual Chekist examples the history, the role, and the importance of the MfS, and thereby stimulating pride in being a member of

10 Cited by Gieseke, *Die hauptamtlichen Mitarbeiter*, 277.

the MfS, an organ of the dictatorship of the proletariat, venerated by the people and hated by the enemy." The entry went on to note that "a position with the MfS should not be regarded as a routine job, even if a well-paying one. Rather, it is a calling by the party of the working class, one which needs to be re-energized on a daily basis."[11]

Most studies of the MfS tend to ignore the concept of *Traditionspflege*, but it held considerable importance in fostering an esprit de corps and a deeper attachment to the party. In his memoirs, Markus Wolf, the long-serving head of the foreign intelligence division (HV A), noted how "personally enthralled" he was with the stories of Richard Sorge, Ruth Werner, Max Christiansen-Klausen, Harro Schulze-Boysen, and Arvid and Mildred Harnack — and later on with those of Wilhelm Zaisser, Ernst Wollweber, Richard Stahlmann and Robert Korb. As he put it, he " . . . saw the value of presenting them to our recruits as models for the role of spycraft in underpinning socialism." Wolf further emphasized how this practice formed a major difference between the East bloc and the Western services such as the CIA and MI6. He found the latter group had a "rather dreary approach to their jobs and themselves"; they were "encouraged to see themselves not as glamorous or special in any way but rather as worker bees, gathering information for other far grander souls to process." By contrast, the MfS "even had battle songs and a ministry choir avowing eternal loyalty to the Cause."[12] Wolf then quoted from a stirring song — dating from the early days of the Cheka — that he had translated from Russian.

Another noteworthy musical piece was "In Praise of Illegal Work," the composition having originated in Bertolt Brecht's 1930 play *The Measures Taken*. It found a prominent place in early MfS anniversary celebrations. In the words of the control chorus:

> Tenacity and secrecy are the links
> That bind the Party network against the
> Guns of the Capitalist world:
> To speak, but
> To conceal the speaker.
> To conquer, but
> To conceal the conqueror.
> To die, but
> To hide the dead.
> Who would not do great things for glory, but who

11 *Das Wörterbuch der Staatssicherheit: Definitionen zur "politisch-operativen Arbeit,"* ed. Siegfried Suckut (Berlin, 1996), 252.

12 Markus Wolf (with Ann McElvoy), *The Man Without a Face: The Autobiography of Communism's Greatest Spymaster* (New York, 1997), 205-206.

Would do them for silence? . . .
Step forward
For one moment
Unknown and hidden faces, and receive
Our thanks![13]

As the ranks of the MfS began to be filled with younger persons possessing scant knowledge of past struggles — firsthand or otherwise — this practice was deemed even more essential. Tradition cabinets filled with various memorabilia were strongly encouraged at every level. One study submitted to the MfS School of Law took note of a practice to increase the political resolve and hatred of the enemy among IMs about to be sent on Western missions: at the Frankfurt an der Oder district office, they were given a tour of the tradition cabinet on the premises.[14] There were forums with senior and retired officers, as well as excursions to important historical sites. The obligatory annual marathon of the Berlin regional office bore the name of Felix Dzerzhinsky.[15] *Traditionspflege* was also manifest in various ways in daily life, such as naming buildings and streets after important historical figures. In 1972, the Hans-und-Hilde-Coppi-Gymasium was established, and a number of streets in Berlin-Lichtenberg, where the central office complex was located, were renamed after Harro and Libertas Schulze-Boysen, Wilhelm Guddorf, and John Sieg.[16]

A profusion of awards played a conspicuous role in the official life of the GDR, and this was certainly true in the MfS as well.[17] These decorations came in all sorts of shapes and sizes: orders, prizes, medallions, service and commemoration medals, anniversary medals, and financial awards. They could also be of foreign origin, the Soviet Union, Cuba, Vietnam, Czechoslovakia, and Bulgaria being among the most prominent countries represented. Incidentally, with few exceptions, there was no limit to the number of times a person could receive the same award. One consistent trend was apparent: the higher the rank, the greater the number of medals. For example, Major General Heinz Fielder, the head of Main Department VI (passport control) managed to accumulate seventy-five over the span of his career.

It is noteworthy that the MfS had only two awards that it could bestow. One was the Coworker of Outstanding Merit (Verdienter Mitarbeiter der Staatssicherheit), which was established in December 1969 to

13 Bertolt Brecht, *The Measures Taken and Other Lehrstücke* (London, 2001), 13–14.

14 BStU JHS MFVVS 160-298/73.

15 BStU JHS 2057.

16 All of these figures had ties to the Red Orchestra (Rote Kapelle), the German resistance group that also served as a Soviet spy network. During the war, they were arrested and executed by the Nazis with the exception of Sieg, who committed suicide in his prison cell.

17 See especially the meticulously catalogued and illustrated collection in two impressive volumes by Ralph Pickard: *Stasi Decorations and Memorabilia: A Collector's Guide* (Lorton, VA, 2007 [vol. 1] and 2012 [vol. 2]). The latter extensively covers both the MfS School of Law and the Felix Dzerzhinsky Guard Regiment.

recognize long and exemplary service or an unusually successful mission or operation. The other was the Dr.-Richard-Sorge Prize awarded by the MfS School of Law. A new service medal, the *Verdienstmedaille*, had been designed to commemorate the fortieth anniversary of the MfS on February 8, 1990, but that festivity, of course, never came to pass. These awards visibly reinforced the interaction between the Stasi, the party, and other state institutions, thereby helping to curb any separatist tendencies on the part of the MfS.

When Mielke celebrated his sixtieth birthday on December 28, 1967, he received the following honors: Service Medal in Gold from the Customs Administration, the medal for outstanding accomplishment in socialist education in the Young Pioneer organization Ernst Thälmann, the service medal in gold from the German Railway, separate badges of honor in gold from the Gymnastics and Sport Federation and the German Soccer Association, and a badge of honor for outstanding accomplishment as a GDR huntsman.[18] A shrewd political operator, Mielke in turn bestowed honors on leading SED members — an act, however, that required the approval of both Honecker and the Division for Security Questions. In one documented instance, on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the MfS, Mielke proposed that Werner Lamberz, the head of the Agitation Department in the secretariat, be awarded the "Medal for the Armed Brotherhood." Yet Mielke had to settle for the lesser "Fighting Order for Service to the People and Country" due to Honecker's ruling. In short, these medals — in an important sense — became a ubiquitous form of political currency and influence.

The intimate relationship fostered between the party elite and the MfS found further reinforcement in 1960 with the establishment of Forest Settlement Wandlitz (Waldsiedlung Wandlitz). Anxious to provide Politbüro members and candidate members with more centralized and spacious accommodations, the SED selected this idyllic wooded site northeast of Berlin and charged Erich Mielke with its manifold operations. In time, this self-contained compound came to comprise twenty-three relatively modest single-family residences along with a clubhouse/movie theater, a restaurant, a beauty salon, a tailor shop, a greenhouse, an indoor swimming pool, medical services, and an automobile repair facility. Most conspicuous of all was the so-called *Ladenkombinat* — a shopping emporium offering better quality East German goods as well as items acquired from abroad — all at attractive prices. Special orders from West German mail order catalogues — offering items such as ski clothing and video

18 Wilfriede Otto, *Erich Mielke. Biographie* (Berlin, 2000), 325–26. It is estimated that Mielke accumulated more than 200 East German civilian and military awards and honors along with many bestowed by other countries belonging to the Warsaw Pact. In early 1990, however, the former were revoked along with his honorary title "Hero of the GDR."

recorders — were also fulfilled though the efforts of the working group "Kommerzielle Koodinierung" (Koko) under the leadership of Alexander Schalck-Golodkowski, the deputy minister of foreign trade, himself a Stasi officer in special deployment. In no known instance did Mielke ever refuse a request.[19]

Yet probably the greatest financial advantage for Politbüro members came from the low rents charged and the domestic help that was included. Immediately adjacent to the so-called *Innenring*, which housed the party elite, was the *Außenring*, where most of the personnel resided. Full party members had two persons assigned to their home, while the general secretary had up to four persons. Numbering roughly 600 during the period 1960-1989, these workers had been selected on the basis of strict security criteria and were officially deemed members of the MfS, specifically the Protection of Individuals (Personenschutz) Division, and ranged in rank from private to captain. Emphasizing the exacting standards required, Mielke once stated, "Among other things, the employees must constantly show a skilled and understanding demeanor along with a sensitivity to the specific wishes of the [state's] leading representatives."[20] He also admonished them to strictest secrecy. As added measures of security, members of the Felix Dzerzhinsky Guard Regiment patrolled the wall surrounding the property day and night, and, for the personnel living in the *Außenring*, there was but a single guarded point of entry into the *Innenring*.

Mielke's influence extended into yet another related realm. The nearby weekend luxury dachas available to each Politbüro member likewise came under the auspices of the MfS. For example, Willi Stoph, the chairman of the Council of Ministers, was provided with a property containing five elaborate greenhouses — presumably on the advice of his doctors — while Hermann Axen, Honecker's closest advisor on foreign affairs, had a spacious thatched-roof residence replete with a boathouse. Mielke himself possessed "Gasthaus Wolletz" near Angermünde — a vastly expanded hunting lodge that had come into the possession of the MfS under Wilhelm Zaisser in 1951. In its final form, Wolletz could accommodate not only the families of close associates of the minister but two dozen other party members or foreign dignitaries. The required personnel — such as cooks, waiters, and technicians — numbered sixty-two MfS workers. As game hunting was one of Mielke's greatest passions, the most frequented events tended to be the various shooting parties scheduled throughout the year such as the *Bockanjagen* in May and the *Hubertusjagd* in November. Whereas scant social interaction

19 Klaus Bästlein, *Der Fall Mielke. Die Ermittlungen gegen den Minister für Staatssicherheit der DDR* (Baden-Baden, 2002), 66.

20 Cited by Thomas Grimm, *Das Politbüro Privat. Ulbricht, Honecker, Mielke & Co. aus der Sicht ihrer Angestellten* (Berlin, 2004), 10.

occurred among the families residing at Waldsiedlung Wandlitz, a quite different atmosphere prevailed at Wolletz, which more closely approximated Western standards of luxury. It is noteworthy, too, that Honecker counted himself an avid hunter, thus adding a further dimension to the close relationship between him and Mielke.[21]

Lastly, there was the concept of socialist competition as laid down by Lenin in a posthumous publication. Anxious to arouse what he considered the latent "organising talent" among workers and peasants in the new socialist state, Lenin had written,

> Far from extinguishing competition, socialism, on the contrary, for the first time creates the opportunity for employing it on a really *wide* and on a really *mass* scale, for actually drawing the majority of toilers into an arena of such labor in which they can display their abilities, develop their capacities, reveal their talents, of which there is an untapped spring among the people, and which capitalism crushed, suppressed and strangled in thousands and millions. Now that a socialist government is in power, our task is to organise competition.[22]

Thus, the Soviet Union began to foster competition on a wide scale during the 1930s — a practice that was subsequently extended to the Eastern bloc states after the war. An essential component of industrial production, competition was designed to encourage workers to make an extra effort beyond their routine tasks with the socialist ideal held firmly in mind. As Ursula Sydow, a former editor at Aufbau publishing house, recalled, "Completely normal assignments at work were declared competitive assignments. It was nothing more than empty form, but it had to proceed according to this ritual, a ritual created by the party."[23] State security found no exemption from this practice, either, as candidly recounted by Werner Stiller of the HV A in his autobiography:

> Whereas its overuse had long ago made it a meaningless concept in industry and agriculture, the MfS acted as if it still had continuing relevance. Nearly half of all our party events had the topic of socialist competition on the agenda. That meant each of us had to make a "personal commitment" or face later reprisals. However deluded we knew this practice to be, no one ever conceded it openly.[24]

21 These hunting parties had a clearly defined code of etiquette. Mielke, for example, always permitted Honecker to shoot first, even when the prey was closer to him. In addition, one had to be mindful of not exceeding the kill of a higher-ranking official.

22 V. I. Lenin, "How to Organise Competition," in *The Lenin Anthology*, ed. Robert C. Tucker (New York, 1975), 427. This article first appeared in *Pravda* in January 1929 on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of his death.

23 Cited in *The Wall in My Backyard: East German Women in Transition,* ed. Dinah Jane Dodds and Pam Allen-Thompson (Amherst, MA, 1994), 138.

24 Werner Stiller (with Jefferson Adams), *Beyond the Wall: Memoirs of an East and West German Spy* (Washington, 1992), 101–102.

The resilience of the Stasi and party relationship underwent its most severe test during the upheaval immediately preceding the demise of the GDR. Mielke had never ceased to affirm the primacy of the party — "State security will prove itself at all times to be a reliable shield and sharp sword of the party and of workers' and peasants' power"[25] — just as his confidential tête-à-tête with Honecker following the weekly Politbüro meetings on Tuesdays had become an established practice. But as major signs of discontent steadily mounted in the general population, distinct cracks in the Stasi-party axis began to appear.

This increasing discord was especially prevalent on the local level.[26] In Karl-Marx-Stadt (now Chemnitz), for example, the celebration of the GDR's fortieth anniversary on October 7, 1989, was also the occasion of a silent protest march by approximately 1,500 citizens. Nearby Plauen saw dissidents assembling in twice the number. The regional MfS office decided to respond with force — a combination of nightsticks, water cannons, and low-flying helicopters — and more than 100 people were arrested in the two cities. The local SED, however, noted its regret that no preventive measures had been taken by the security forces and expressed its willingness to have discussions with the new political groups provided they adhered to nonviolent action. What irked the regional Stasi chief, Siegfried Gehlert, was the party's inability to take an unequivocal stand, which placed the MfS in an untenable position. He would have simply banished all the protestors from the country rather than try to placate them as the party was attempting to do.

Defiant chants such as "Out with the Stasi" and "Stasi go to work" (*Stasi in die Produktion*) started to be heard, as the MfS, not the party, quickly became the focal point of widespread discontent. But to local state security officials, it was actually the SED's inertia in grappling with the country's severe problems that formed the root cause of the unrest. Since 1987, Gehlert had conveyed 120 memoranda about these issues — the overburdened environment, the restricted media policy, the increasing shortages of basic supplies and foodstuffs, and the general lack of vision for the country's future — but neither the party nor the bureaucracy had taken heed. For its part, the SED leadership appeared reluctant to defend the security forces publicly and even questioned whether the MfS had kept them fully informed about the mood of the country. Although at this point one Stasi report explicitly referred to a "breach of trust," both institutions knew that an open break would put each of them in greater jeopardy.

25 Cited by Karl Wilhelm Fricke, "Das MfS als Instrument der SED am Beispiel politischer Strafprozesse," in *Staatspartei und Staatssicherheit. Zum Verhältnis von SED und MfS*, ed. Siegfried Suckut and Walter Süß (Berlin, 1997), 200.

26 See especially Holger Horsch, *"Hat nicht wenigstens die Stasi die Stimmung im Lande gekannt?" MfS und SED im Bezirk Karl-Marx-Stadt* (Berlin, 1997).

Having to confront forces of dissent face-to-face had a strong impact on many Stasi officers and raised fundamental questions about the correctness of party doctrine. Until then, the enemy had been largely couched in formulaic expressions such as "hostile-negative persons" (*feindlich-negative Personen*) and described secondhand in IM reports. But now hearing grievances that seemed all too immediate and understandable, these officers found it hard to endorse Mielke's ironclad conviction that domestic unrest could be traced exclusively to the enemies of socialism abroad. As one former major assigned to counterintelligence later remarked, "Then came the mid-1980s when those persons dissatisfied with the GDR were classified as [members of the] political underground. An enemy category was created where there was none. That led to making mountains out of molehills. . . . The MfS should be reproached for doing things that no longer conformed to the stated regulations."[27] Furthermore, an increasingly critical tone could be detected in the vital reports assembled by the Central Assessment and Information Group (Zentrale Auswertungs- und Informationsgruppe [ZAIG]) and forwarded to Mielke. In trying to explain the reasons for the mass emigration of GDR citizens, for instance, ZAIG specifically cited the failure of the SED to address the worsening domestic situation.

The rancor that had developed between the SED and the MfS finally came into full public view in late January 1990 following the official dissolution of the security forces. In a statement to the Central Round Table, Egon Krenz, having resigned the previous month as Honecker's immediate successor, described the Stasi as

> ...increasingly a state within a state, screened off from the outside world and even exercising control over members of the party. In violation of democratic principles, questions of state security and the specific operational work of the Ministry of State Security were essentially discussed and decided by the head of the National Defense Council and the Minister of State Security, the sole exceptions being cadre appointments and investments.[28]

27 Udo M. in *Stasiprotokolle: Gespräche mit ehemaligen Mitarbeitern des "Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit" der DDR*, ed. Gisela Karau (Frankfurt am Main, 1992), 17.

28 Cited by Jens Gieseke, *Der Mielke-Konzern. Die Geschichte der Stasi 1945–1990* (Munich, 2006), 94.

For many, the fact that Krenz had also served as the former Central Committee Secretary for Security Questions seemed to raise serious questions about his own competence. Honecker, for his part, while

acknowledging his high admiration for the work of the ministry and its responsible personnel, nevertheless agreed with Krenz's characterization. Specifically, it was Mielke who had used the Stasi as his own power base. Honecker had completely depended upon Mielke but the Stasi chief had withheld important information and kept him in the dark regarding the innermost operation of the security apparatus.

Not surprisingly, Mielke categorically rejected such accusations. While awaiting trial in 1992, he stated in his defense:

> The picture of the sword and shield of the party is not an idealized construct. The MfS was subordinate to the party to the very end . . . Honecker knew the number of full-time employees. He received the figures for the disarmament talks in Vienna. It is possible that he did not know the precise number of unofficial collaborators. Fundamentally, though, the full extent of the ministry's activities was known to him. It was such that when something happened in the country that evoked criticism of the general secretary, then state security was blamed for not having reported it beforehand . . . An independent existence was never the case. The MfS was no state in a state.[29]

Reinforcing Mielke's assertion was the final head of the HV A, Werner Großmann. As he wrote in his memoirs,

> No one in the party and state leadership, neither during Honecker's tenure nor afterwards during that of [Hans] Modrow [the GDR's interim premier prior to reunification], is willing to call a spade a spade. The MfS acted according to political orders. It is no state within a state, rather an instrument of power for the ruling party, its sword and shield just as Mielke often stressed.[30]

On balance, while the MfS could pose as a powerful lobbyist on certain issues, it never outwardly broke with party doctrine at any point, neither concerning a policy that it regarded as unpalatable such as détente with the West, nor during the heightened confusion of the final period. It is difficult not to be struck by the irony of how
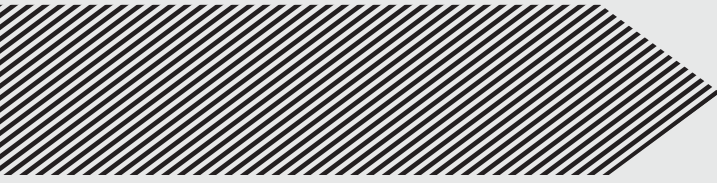
29 Erich Mielke, "Ich sterbe in diesem Kasten," *Der Spiegel*, no. 36 (1992): 48.

30 Werner Großmann, *Bonn im Blick* (Berlin, 2001), 171. At the same time, it is noteworthy that Großmann had no fondness for Mielke's leadership style, especially his habitual choleric outbursts directed at subordinates.

the relationship between the party and the security forces ultimately climaxed. One of the trademark tactics of the Stasi involved infiltrating opposition groups with IMs in order to sow dissension and cripple them from within. Such was notably the case as protests sharply escalated in the summer and fall of 1989. What happened instead was that the citizens groups remained generally intact while major fissures began to appear in the ruling regime — none greater, in fact, than the one that developed between the SED and the MfS. It was an outcome that no one had predicted.

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The Hauptverwaltung A: Insights

SA-CIA-HV A: DR. EMIL HOFFMANN AND THE "JUNGLE OF THE SECRET SERVICES" (1934-1985)

Douglas Selvage

On February 27, 1976, a routine summary of the Soviet press from the U.S. embassy in Moscow contained the following information item:

> *Pravda* reports from Vienna that "well-known West German publicist" Emil Hoffmann has sent to [the] embassies of CSCE[1] signatories in that city a letter on "the illegal activities of radio stations Free Europe and Freedom [sic, Liberty]." Hoffmann says that the "subversive activity" of these stations "contradicts a basic principle of international law which is obligatory for all states — non-interference in the internal affairs of other states."[2]

What *Pravda* failed to mention was that Emil Hoffmann was, in fact, a former member of the Nazis' Sturmabteilung (SA) and one-time employee of Joseph Goebbels's propaganda ministry. It also failed to report that Hoffmann had distributed the study on Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) at the behest of the East German Ministry for State Security (MfS, Stasi) — specifically, its foreign intelligence division, Hauptverwaltung A (HV A). What the U.S. embassy did not know and failed to report was that Hoffmann's action constituted, to some extent, an act of personal revenge against the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), whose "terror" Hoffmann blamed for his loss of lucrative business deals in East-West trade and — from his perspective — his forced retirement as a journalist. Having worked for decades in East-West trade — the "jungle of the secret services," Hoffmann called it[3] — the former Nazi propagandist decided to moonlight in his retirement for the HV A.

Hoffmann's decision to work for the HV A by no means reflected an ideological affinity with East German communism. In the 1950s and 1960s, he had feared potential arrest and "disappearance" at the hands of the Stasi,[4] and in his post-unification memoirs, which make no mention of his work for the HV A, he wrote derisively about the East German regime and its representatives (although much less so about Soviet officials).[5] As the HV A explained, Hoffmann

6 "Centers of ideological diversion — RFE/RL," attachment #4 to memorandum, Col. Jan Ostrovský, Ph.D., Department 36, I. Directorate, ČSSR Federal Ministry of the Interior (Federální Ministerstvo Vnitra, FMV), Record of the negotiations with GDR intelligence, 22 June 1978, in ABS, Archival Signature (Archivní číslo, A.č.) 81282/107, p. 81. "Jan Ostrovský" was a cryptonym for Czechoslovak intelligence officer Jan Ondrovčak, born 1924. See Prokop Tomek, *Československé bezpečnostní složky proti Rádiu Svobodná Evropa "Objekt ALFA"* (Prague, 2006), 29n53.

7 Hoffmann, *Mandat*, 14–19.

8 Ibid., 90, 227–32.

9 Jens Mecklenburg, ed., *Handbuch deutscher Rechtsextremismus* (Berlin, 1996), 436–38, 448.

10 See Paul Maddrell's contribution in this volume for a discussion of what active measures entailed.

11 See the short biography prepared by the Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz (BfV), attached to the dispatch, Chief of Base (COB) Berlin to COB Bonn, 10 March 1958, in NARA, RG 263 (Records of the Central Intelligence Agency), Entry ZZ-18, Box 56, Hoffmann, Emil, 1 of 2. In 1936, Hoffmann had received his *Dr. jur.* from Marburg University for his doctoral thesis regarding the application of National Socialist principles to criminal law. See Emil Hoffmann, "Die Analogie im Strafrecht: Eine politisch-weltanschauliche Betrachtung," Jur. Diss. Marburg.

was driven by a "strong anti-Americanism,"[6] which ran like a thread through his life from his ideological groundings in the SA and the Strasserite wing of the Nazi Party, through his postwar neutralism and confrontations with the CIA, and into his post-retirement career as a propagandist for the HV A against RFE/RL. Opposition to American policies and anti-American sentiment provided common ground not only for Hoffmann's work on behalf of the HV A after his retirement but also for its potential appeal to the West German left, a major target of the HV A's propaganda and a milieu from which it drew both knowing and unknowing collaborators. Not surprisingly, after the collapse of communism and the unification of Germany, Hoffmann found a new, old home in Germany's "new right," as reflected by the publication of his memoirs — a font of praise for Gregor Strasser and his ideas[7] and a philippic against the U.S. for its alleged oppression and alleged responsibility for the 41-year division of Germany[8] — by the right-wing Siegfried Bublies Verlag.[9]

While Hoffmann's career demonstrates the continuity of certain anti-American sentiments from the Nazi era into postwar and post-unification Germany, it also exemplifies how intelligence agencies, East and West, competed in their efforts to recruit former Nazi functionaries before and during the Cold War and how, when it came to recruiting foreign agents in general, their methods differed very little. It also shows how individuals with connections in East and West could fall into the "jungle of intelligence agencies," in which the interest of one side could stoke the other's, both in terms of countermeasures and potential recruitment. Hoffmann's post-retirement career also serves as a case study of how Division X of the Stasi's HV A (HV A/X), responsible for active measures,[10] went about its work.

"National Revolutionary" Propagandist between Intelligence Services (1939-1948)

After working for several newspapers as a law student, Hoffmann began his career as an official "publicist" in 1939, when he joined Joseph Goebbels's propaganda ministry as an adviser on "nationality questions in the Southeast."[11] During his time there, he published a *Blut und Boden* propaganda tract about the resettlement of ethnic Germans to Poznania and coauthored a second book on the return of Bessarabian Germans to their homeland for the Nibelungen Press,

a front organization for Goebbels's ministry.[12] The first publication, a picture book in an initial run of 117,000 copies, praised the *Führer*'s reclamation of Poznania from the "robber state (*Raubstaat*) Poland," the "elimination" of the "filth of the Poles" from the region, and the return of German "order and cleanliness."[13] Hoffmann's publications for the Nibelungen Press arguably represented his first engagement in "active measures" — at this point, for Goebbels's ministry.

In 1941, Hoffmann transferred to the German Foreign Office, and from 1941 to 1942, he worked as an adviser on propaganda matters to the German legation in Bucharest and as an official adviser to Romania's Deputy Prime Minister Mihai Antonescu.[14] By 1942, if not before, Hoffmann had come to have doubts about the war, and a friend, Carl Marcus, had put him into contact with Kurt Jahnke, a former German intelligence official who sought a negotiated peace with the Allies. Jahnke was affiliated with Walter Schellenberg's Amt VI for foreign intelligence of the Sicherheitsdienst (SD), which subsequently sought to recruit Hoffmann. This confronted Hoffmann with a dilemma; joining the SD would mean joining the SS. For Hoffmann, a former *Truppenführer* in the Sturmabteilung (SA) and member of the the "Schwarze Front," the national-revolutionary wing of the Nazi Party, joining the SS would have meant betrayal of his Strasserite comrades and ideas. In the end, Hoffmann decided against the SD. Nevertheless, Hoffmann undertook at least two missions in the Balkans on behalf of Jahnke after 1942. Ironically, Hoffmann still ended up in the SS; to avoid compulsory transfer to a SS combat unit, he joined a SS war-reporting unit.[15]

Upon his capture by U.S. forces in Austria in 1945, Hoffmann claimed a longer association with Jahnke — since 1936 — to burnish his credentials as a dissident within the Nazi regime. On November 17, 1945, he was released by the Americans. The Army's Strategic Services Unit, the successor intelligence agency to the U.S. Office of Strategic Services (OSS) and predecessor to the CIA, apparently had second thoughts; it sought to organize Hoffmann's recapture, but to no avail.[16] He had made his way to Rheydt in the British zone of occupation in Germany, where he moved in with his old friend Marcus, whom the British had appointed the town's mayor.[17]

From this point until the end of 1948, Hoffmann's biography becomes rather murky. He apparently joined a Strasserite, national-revolutionary organization, the "German Revolution," which sought to reestablish German autonomy along "German socialist" lines within a pan-European framework in collaboration with the Western powers

12 Emil Hoffmann, *Neue Heimat Posen* (Berlin/Leipzig, 1940); Emil Hoffmann and Alfred Thoß, *Der vierte Treck: Leistung und Heimkehr der Deutschen aus Bessarabien* (Berlin/Leipzig, 1941). For confirmation that Emil Hoffmann, born 1911, who later worked for HV A/X, was the author, see Gerhard Keiper and Martin Kröger, *Biographisches Handbuch des deutschen Auswärtigen Dienstes 1871–1945* (Paderborn et al., 2005), 2:334.

13 Hoffman, *Neue Heimat Posen*, 10–11.

14 Keiper and Kröger, *Biographisches Handbuch*, vol. 2, 334; short biography, BfV; Hoffmann, *Mandat*, 49–62.

15 Hoffmann, *Mandat*, 62–63, 67, 74–75, 84–85; BfV, Short biography (see n3).

16 Major Reed, H.Q., 7 O.C.U. to Chief E-2 SSU, Major Crosby Lewis, 17 November 1945. NARA, RG 263, Entry ZZ-18, Box 56, Hoffmann, Emil, 1 of 2.

17 Hoffmann, *Mandat*, 75.

and especially with Great Britain. The U.S. suspected that if the network did not find support from the Western powers, it would turn to the Soviet Union.[18] Based on conflicting accounts, Hoffmann worked either knowingly or unknowingly as an agent for MI6 through Marcus and may have sought to help the British to capture or, alternatively, to recruit Klaus Barbie, the infamous Gestapo chief in Lyon.[19] Hoffman has claimed in his memoirs that he fled Rheydt upon learning of Marcus's recruitment by MI6. He sought to avoid arrest — implicitly, for harboring former Nazi officials and Waffen-SS officers sought by the Anglo-Americans. The latter subsequently arrested Hoffmann, along with other SS and Nazi officials from the "German Revolution" underground, in "Operation Selection Board."[20] According to a Stasi report, the British had justified Hoffmann's arrest by citing his "alleged contact to subversive Nazi and Russian espionage circles."[21] The Stasi, relatively certain that Hoffmann had worked for the British, received information from their Soviet "friends" that Hoffmann had also worked for Moscow as a secret informant (*Geheimer Informator*, GI) at the end of the war. Both the British and the Soviets allegedly broke off contact with Hoffmann due to his real or perceived relationship with the other side.[22]

After his release by the British, Hoffmann had little or no problem with denazification in 1948. His work for Jahnke, membership in the Schwarze Front, and conflicts within the former party and state bureaucracy spoke in his favor. Hoffmann also claimed to have assisted individuals threatened by the Nazi regime, including "a Romanian Jew, a half-Jewish ethnic German [*Volksdeutscher*] from Czechoslovakia, [and] a freemason friend."[23]

Between the CIA and the Stasi: The "Jungle of the Intelligence Agencies" (1949-1956)

Hoffmann sparked renewed interest on the part of intelligence services, East and West, as he began a new career in East-West trade as

18 Perry Biddiscombe, "Operation Selection Board: The Growth and Suppression of the Neo-Nazi 'Deutsche Revolution' 1945–47," *Intelligence and National Security* 11, no. 1 (January 1996): 59–77, here, 61–65.

19 Biddiscombe, "Operation Selection Board," 62, 69, 72; Magnus Linklater, Isabel Hilton, and Neal Ascherson, *The Nazi Legacy: Klaus Barbie and the International Fascist Connection* (New York, 1984), 140, 146, 153.

20 Hoffmann, *Mandat*, 74–84. On the "Selection Board" arrests, see Biddiscombe, "Operation Selection Board," 72. The Stasi, for its part, believed Hoffmann's later account — i.e., that he had not wanted to work for British intelligence and had thus fled Rheydt. Bericht über festgestellte Aktivitäten in Richtung des Rats für Gegenseitige Wirtschaftshilfe (RGW), 20 March 1972. BStU, MfS, HA XVIII/2940, pp. 70–81; here, pp. 71–72.

21 Oltn. Proft, HA II/3, Auskunftsbericht über Dr. Hoffmann, Emil, 1 July 1964. BStU, MfS, AP 1639/65, pp. 2-20; here, p. 5.

22 Ibid., p. 3. The CIA received a telegram from a subsequently "sanitized" sender — perhaps from London? — on July 8, 1963, reporting that Hoffmann "was used by RIS [Russian Intelligence Service] for months in [19]47 as source on war-time G.I.S. [German Intelligence Service] and Balkans, dismissed for gross indiscretion. We have had no contact with him since 47. Traces suggest he might possibly be an R.I.S. or MfS agent." Telegram, 8 July 1963, NARA, RG 263, Entry ZZ-18, Box 56, Hoffmann, Emil, 2 of 2.

23 Hoffmann, *Mandat*, 84–85.

a broker and journalist in 1949. From this point forward, Hoffmann posed a problem for intelligence services on both sides: Should they try to recruit him, arrest him, or simply keep him under "operational control"? They all agreed on the need to spy on him. The more attractive he became to one side as a potential target or agent, the more interesting he became to the other side. While Hoffmann, for his part, sought to avoid entrapment by the various intelligence agencies, he also sought to play upon their thirst for information for economic and journalistic benefits. If Hoffmann fell into the "jungle of intelligence agencies," as he later wrote, it was a jungle with which he was quite familiar. Between 1949 and 1956, Hoffmann's greatest fears in his erstwhile "jungle" were the CIA, which actively spied upon him, and the Stasi, which — he feared — might arrest him.

In 1949, Hoffmann's entry into the field of East-West trade as a representative for the West German firm, Atlas Trading, along with his decision to join the neutralist Nauheimer Kreis of Professor Ulrich Noack, raised the interest of both Soviet intelligence and the CIA. In September 1949, Hoffmann accompanied Noack to the Leipzig trade fair, where they met with the Soviet High Commissar for Germany, Vladimir Semenov, to discuss not only interzonal trade but also the neutralization and unification of Germany.[24] The suspicions of the U.S. authorities about the "German Revolution" network, it seemed, were thus fulfilled,[25] at least in the case of Hoffmann.

Between 1949 and 1951, Soviet intelligence continually sought — unsuccessfully — to recruit Hoffmann,[26] and the CIA, suspecting him of already working for the Soviets, began to spy on him. The CIA's initial concern focused on Hoffmann's work for Atlas, an alleged "source of funds for communist activity in West Germany."[27] The CIA, as well as the U.S. High Commissioner for Germany (HICOG), suspected Hoffmann of engaging in triangular trade via Scandinavia or Austria in violation of the West's embargo on strategic commodities to the Soviet bloc.[28] With regard to Hoffmann's political activities, HICOG reported: "As might be expected of an adherent of the Nauheimer Kreis, Hoffmann displays a marked animosity to the U.S.A."[29] The CIA subsequently provided its own assessment: Hoffmann "makes no secret of his intense German nationalism; he belongs in the extreme right-wing lunatic fringe of politics."[30] In January 1951, the CIA ordered U.S. Army telephone taps and mail intercepts on Hoffmann.[31] Hoffmann, aware of both measures, complained to West German authorities and to the post office. He knew it was the Americans at

24 Ibid., 92–100, 120–21.

25 Biddiscombe, "Operation Selection Board," 62.

26 Proft, Auskunftsbericht, p. 14.

27 Memorandum, Chief of Base, Berlin, to Chief, Eastern Europe (EE), 20 December 1957, NARA, RG 263, Entry ZZ-18, Box 56, Hoffmann, Emil, 1 of 2.

28 Agent Report: Trade in War Material, 18 January 1951, NARA, RG 263, Entry ZZ-18, Box 56, Hoffmann, Emil, 1 of 2.

29 Charles W. Thayer, Chief, Reports Division, Office of Political Affairs, US HICOG, Bonn, to Department of State, 17 April 1952, with attachment, "Case Study: EMIL FRIDOLIN HOFFMANN, Interzonal Trader," NARA, RG 263, Entry ZZ-18, Box 56, Hoffmann, Emil, 1 of 2, pp. 1, 4.

30 Memorandum, Chief of Base, Berlin, to Chief, EE, 20 December 1957, p. 2.

31 Acting Chief of Station, Karlsruhe, to Chief, BOB, 22 January 1951, NARA, RG 263, Entry ZZ-18, Box 56, Hoffmann, Emil, 1 of 2.

work; his wife once picked up the receiver and heard American voices discussing the telephone tap.[32]

A turning point in Hoffmann's unwanted relationship with the CIA came in 1953. He blamed "CIA terror" for ruining his business deals with the East through West Berlin, and he abruptly moved from Berlin to West Germany.[33] The CIA was unsettled by Hoffmann's decision to leave Berlin. Its Chief of Base there later reported that Hoffmann felt that U.S. officials had forced him to leave out of jealousy of his trade position and for personal, ulterior motives. This "erroneous belief" had induced "Hoffmann's anti-Americanism."[34] In fact, Hoffmann based his decision to leave Berlin on the phone taps, mail intercepts, and — most importantly — the revocation of his interzonal passport, which had made his travel for business to West Germany impossible. Hoffmann suspected that the Americans would use the information from the telephone taps and mail intercepts to ruin his business.[35] He blamed the Americans for the fact that one of his trade deals through Sweden had netted only 7 million West German Marks (DM) rather than the ca. 180 million that he had anticipated.[36] Although HICOG was indeed responsible for the revocation of Hoffmann's interzonal passport, the CIA wanted to keep Hoffmann in Berlin. The CIA's Chief of Base in Bonn, startled that Hoffmann suddenly popped up on his grid in 1953, recommended CIA intervention with the West German Ministry of the Interior to compel Hoffmann's return to Berlin, "where he may be more closely watched and, possibly, neutralized."[37]

However, things did not work out as the CIA intended. As Hoffmann himself had predicted and planned, the West German authorities were less willing than the authorities in West Berlin, where the occupying powers had greater influence, to maintain pressure on him. In 1953, the BfV informed the CIA that its investigations of Hoffmann had "not resulted in any concrete indication" that he was "engaged in espionage activity." Unless "American offices" could provide additional material suggesting the contrary, the BfV planned not only to discontinue its investigations of Hoffmann but also to "notify the LfV [Landesamt für Verfassungsschutz, State Office for Constitutional Protection] in Berlin that objections to the furnishing of travel passes to Dr. HOFFMANN no longer exist."[38] Over the CIA's objections, Hoffmann subsequently received a West German passport.[39] Then, at the end of 1956, the CIA had to discontinue its telephone taps and

32 Hoffmann, *Mandat*, 101.

33 Ibid., 131–32.

34 Memorandum, Chief of Base, Berlin, to Chief, EE, 20 December 1957, p. 2.

35 Hoffmann, *Mandat*, 131–32.

36 Translation, Memorandum for Mr. Hughes, 14 July 1953, attachment to cable, Chief of Mission, Frankfurt, to Chief of Base, Bonn, 26 August 1953, NARA, RG 263, Entry ZZ-18, Box 56, Hoffmann, Emil, 1 of 2. The translation was of a memorandum from the BfV.

37 Chief of Base, Bonn, to Chief, BOB, 20 April 1953, NARA, RG 263, Entry ZZ-18, Box 56, Hoffmann, Emil, 1 of 2.

38 Chief of Mission, Frankfurt, to Chief of Base, Bonn, 26 August 1953, NARA, RG 263, Entry ZZ-18, Box 56, Hoffmann, Emil, 1 of 2.

39 Memorandum, Gerken, Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz (BfV), o.D., attached to memorandum, Chief of Base (COB) Berlin to COB Bonn, 10 March 1958, in NARA, RG 263, Entry ZZ-18, Box 56, Hoffmann, Emil, 2 of 2.

mail intercepts of Hoffmann through the U.S. Army in Germany (CIA codename: "CALLIKAK") because of complaints from Hoffmann's "influential friends in the West German government."[40]

These earlier interventions notwithstanding, the West German authorities initiated their own investigation of Hoffmann for "treasonable relations" in 1959 and briefly arrested him in 1962 — if only in order to interrogate him.[41] Ironically, by this point, the CIA had considered the possibility of recruiting Hoffmann (see below) and seemed to have lost interest in his trading activities. Hoffmann was also a cause for CIA introspection. The CIA worried that it — or more likely, the U.S. Army's Counterintelligence Corps (CIC) in cooperation with the LfV — had gone too far in their efforts against Hoffmann in the early 1950s. The CIC/LfV investigation, Hoffmann's CIA case officer reported in 1957, had most likely involved "the usual telephone and mail censorship, surveillance, possibly even hostile interrogation." The CIC, he wrote, "mugs and fingerprints most suspects and generally treats its clients in a dragnet fashion." Hoffmann, he wrote, probably "underwent some such handling and as an upper class European reacted violently."[42] Despite the CIA's erstwhile regrets, it still received a copy of Hoffmann's interrogation from the Federal Criminal Office (Bundeskriminalamt, BKA).[43]

* * *

The CIA was not the only agency to receive a report regarding Hoffmann's arrest; the Stasi obtained similar information from its own purloined cables from the BKA.[44] For Hoffmann, the Stasi was as much a cause for concern as the CIA; indeed, he feared that the CIA might even feed the Stasi with information that could lead to his arrest and "disappearance" in the East. His main cause of concern was his contact to Helmut-Sonja Casemir, an old fraternity brother in East Berlin. Hoffmann had been astonished to learn in 1950 that Casemir had joined the East German state police (Volkspolizei). He asked Casemir upon their reunion in 1950 how he, "as a nationally-minded German and fraternity brother," could accept a rank in such an organization. To Hoffmann's chagrin, Casemir replied that he was secretly working for the CIA "as a staunch supporter of the USA," because he believed that only the U.S. would bring about German reunification — i.e., the opposite of Hoffmann's stance. Around the same time, Hoffmann had also

40 Memorandum, Chief of Base, Berlin, to Chief, EE, 20 December 1957. The decoding of all CIA cryptonyms in this article is based on U.S., NARA, "Research Aid: Cryptonyms and Terms in Declassified CIA Files, Nazi War Crimes and Japanese Imperial Government Records Disclosure Acts," at http://www.archives.gov/iwg/declassified-records/rg-263-cia-records/second-release-lexicon.pdf.

41 Federal Criminal Office, Security Group, 6 November 1959 (translation), attachment to Chief of Base Bonn, to BEDOX/DISTAG/HIWAY/[sanitized]/CALL, 4 December 1959; and dispatch, Chief of Base, Bonn, to Chief, EE, and Chief of Station Germany, 22 April 1963, with attachment, BKA, "Verantwortliche Vernehmung, 15.11.1962," both in NARA, RG 263, Entry ZZ-18, Box 56, Hoffmann, Emil, 2 of 2.

42 Memorandum, Chief of Base, Berlin, to Chief, EE, 20 December 1957, p. 3.

43 BKA, "Verantwortliche Vernehmung, 15.11.1962" (see n45).

44 Telegramm, BKA, Sicherungsgruppe (SG) Bad Godesberg to Generalbundesanwalt Karlsruhe, 23 October 1962, BStU, MfS, AP 8993/82, Bd. 17, pp. 32–33.

established contact with a West Berlin communist, Alfred Nehm, and the three began to meet socially.[45] Nehm, who — as the U.S. suspected — was working for the MfS in "intelligence collection,"[46] tipped Hoffmann off in the same year that the East Germans were planning to arrest Casemir. According to Hoffmann, he helped Casemir to escape across the border to West Berlin.[47] Casemir eventually became the chief of security for the Untersuchungsausschuss freiheitlicher Juristen (Independent Jurists' Investigative Committee, UfJ), an organization to which the CIA was providing covert funding and advice.[48] Despite Hoffmann's fears, the MfS apparently did not know about his earlier contact with Casemir; they first noted such a connection — in fact, a connection between Hoffmann and the UfJ — in 1954.[49]

The CIA sought to use Casemir — CIA codename CARBOHYDRATE — to spy on Hoffmann, but in 1957, it noted with some concern: "There is a hint in CALLIKAK reports that Hoffmann is aware of CARBOHYDRATE's connection to an American agency. We intend to debrief CARBOHYDRATE on this score for obvious security reasons and to follow up with a detailed summary of his relationship to Hoffmann."[50] In 1959, if not before, the GDR outed "HELMUT CASEMIR alias DOHRMANN," then head of the UfJ's security office, for his connections to U.S. intelligence.[51] The incident from 1950 suggested, however, that for Hoffmann, Nehm, and Casemir, personal friendships were more important than erstwhile political alignments or intelligence-service loyalties.

Recruiting Dr. Hoffmann? The CIA and Stasi, 1956-1964

Around the same time, 1956-1957, both the Stasi and the CIA began to reconsider Hoffmann. Perhaps it would be better to recruit him than to continue intensive surveillance against him? Both agencies agreed that Hoffmann, given his contacts in East-West trade, could provide valuable political, economic, and personal information about the other side. In 1956, Main Division III (HA III) of the Stasi, responsible for economic questions, including trade with the West, first broached the possibility of recruiting Hoffmann; he could provide valuable information, they thought, not only about East-West trade but also about the BfV and the UfJ.[52] The Berlin Operations Base of the CIA hoped to win general economic, political, and "personality" information from Hoffmann about the East.[53] The CIA subsequently learned from the BfV that Hoffmann had already declared his willingness

45 Hoffmann, *Mandat*, 137-39.

46 Proft, Auskunftsbericht, p. 5; memorandum, Chief of Base, Berlin, to Chief, EE, 20 December 1957, p. 3.

47 Hoffmann, *Mandat*, 138-39.

48 George Bailey, Sergej A. Kondraschow, and David E. Murphy, *Die Unsichtbare Front: Der Krieg der Geheimdienste im geteilten Berlin* (Berlin, 1997), 159-61.

49 Bericht über festgestellte Aktivitäten, p. 72.

50 Memorandum, Chief of Base, Berlin, to Chief, EE, 20 December 1957, p. 10.

51 *... im Dienste der Unterwelt: Dokumentarbericht über den 'Untersuchungsausschuß freiheitlicher Journalisten* (Berlin [East], 1959), 50-51. On the Stasi's general activity against the UfJ, see Karl Wilhelm Fricke und Roger Engelmann, *"Konzentrierte Schläge." Staatssicherheitsaktionen und politische Prozesse in der DDR 1953-1956* (Berlin, 1998), 89-97.

52 HA III/4/k, Bericht, 11 February 1956, in BStU, MfS, HA XVIII/2940, pp. 57-60; here, p. 60.

53 Memorandum, Chief of Base, Berlin, to Chief, EE, 20 December 1957, p. 11.

to work for an unnamed Western intelligence service in 1954 and to report on "East-West trade in its larger context"; his "ongoing contacts to important Russian functionaries and offices," including Semenov; and his "contacts to high-level economic functionaries" in East Germany.[54] Thus, the agency wondered whether he could provide similar information to the U.S.

Both HA III and the CIA agreed that special care would be necessary in any potential recruitment of Hoffmann. HA III wrote that low-level contacts would not suffice for a recruiting pitch; Hoffmann should first be approached by the "press chief of the Central Committee" and other "authoritative functionaries in politics and economics." Just as importantly, "Fridolin" (Hoffmann's fraternity name) "will never agree to a written commitment, since he would necessarily see it as a violation of his principles, if not necessarily his person ....[55] Hoffmann's CIA case officer agreed that Hoffmann could be won over only through informal contacts that appealed to his ego. "[A]fter additional vetting by CARBOHYDRATE," he wrote, "it may be possible to induce Hoffmann to meet with an American posing as an economic researcher surveying east/west problems." The case officer continued:

> If this cooperation with the American, possibly using an ODACID [Department of State] office for meetings, showed signs of developing over a period of months into a personal friendship, it might be possible gradually to elicit from Hoffmann some of the economic, political and personality information that we want. Played carefully and by throwing an occasional benefice his way — offering for example, to look into his record with US security, which he is bound to mention anyway — Hoffmann might be wooed a little at least over to our side.[56]

Hoffmann's CIA case officer suggested that financial inducements would be important; Hoffmann should be paid for his assistance to the "American researcher." At any rate the CIA knew that Hoffmann could not be recruited in the "usual" way, especially given his past experiences with U.S. agencies. His CIA case officer wrote:

> The more or less negative forms of recruitment — for example, picking him up on a security charge and then

54 Memo, Gerken, BfV, o.D.

55 HA III/4/k, Bericht, 11 February 1956, in BStU, MfS, HA XVIII/2940, pp. 57–60; here, p. 60.

56 Memorandum, Chief of Base, Berlin, to Chief, EE, 20 December 1957, p. 11.

offering to let him off the hook if he works for us — we have rejected out of hand. He has too many influential friends in the West German press and Government to whom he would complain, as he did when he suspected CALLIKAK surveillance. Moreover, let's face it, these recruitments are rarely successful.[57]

An attempt to recruit Hoffmann was finally made in 1961, not by the CIA or Stasi, but by the GDR's foreign military intelligence service, the 12th Administration of the Ministry for National Defense. The erstwhile recruiter apparently did not follow the refined methods recommended by HA III and the CIA's Berlin base. After Hoffmann offered to provide an officer from the 12th Administration general information about the FRG's trade and economic policy, he failed to show up for a second meeting. The 12th Administration reported to the Stasi's counterintelligence division, Main Division II (HA II), that Hoffmann's "grounds for keeping away are questionable."[58]

By this time, the CIA and the Stasi had decided that there were a number of good reasons not to recruit Hoffmann. The CIA worried about Hoffmann's potential reaction, including negative publicity for the agency. The CIA's Berlin base wrote in 1958:

> We have decided to postpone indefinitely our plans for approaching Subject [Hoffmann] under any guise in view of the possibility that he would cry to his friends in the Bundestag. This is a legitimate risk in dealing with Subject and cannot be overlooked. The flap potential is too great to warrant further consideration of an operation at this time...[59]

The Stasi, for its part, worried about Hoffmann's true loyalties. HA II implicitly discouraged efforts to recruit him, given the experiences of the Soviet "friends" in 1949-1951, East German military intelligence's failed recruitment in 1961, and the HV A's assessment of his informational activities.[60]

The latter point was perhaps decisive. The HV A, just like HA III, had been tapping Hoffman — officially unbeknownst to him — for

57 Ibid.

58 Proft, Auskunftsbericht, p. 14.

59 Dispatch, Chief of Base, Berlin, to Chief, EE, 14 July 1958.

60 Proft, Auskunftsbericht, pp. 14-16.

information through its unofficial collaborators (*Inoffizielle Mitar-beiter*, IM). The HV A reported with regard to Hoffmann:

> His information consists mainly of vague reports about certain developments and events about which we already partly know from the West German press; conclusions and predictions that later are almost never confirmed; and several proven cases of disinformation. Only in exceptional cases has the information that he has provided proved to be correct.

> Characteristic for all of Hoffmann's information is the tendency to report mainly on such issues in which the security organs of the GDR are naturally interested (activity of the Lemmer Ministry,[61] the work on the GDR by the Bonn Foreign Office, warnings about alleged American agents etc.). Hoffmann never forgets in such cases to declare himself a citizen consistently friendly to the GDR.[62]

In other words, although Hoffmann played upon the desires of intelligence agencies, East and West, for secret information, he was offering mainly public information, private information that was not necessarily secret, and some details about erstwhile agents or unfriendly elements from the other side of the Cold War — primarily, individuals with whom Hoffmann had had run-ins of his own. Much of the information that Hoffmann collected and offered to the various intelligence agencies was most likely public and intended for publication in his own articles and books.[63] By flirting with the intelligence agencies, Hoffmann apparently sought to obtain funding and other privileges — for example, publication in East-bloc journals with corresponding honoraria or inside economic information that he could use in his publications or for his on-again, off-again work as a trade consultant. In general, Hoffman sought to exploit the intelligence agencies, East and West, as much as they sought to exploit him. He thus sought to avoid formal commitments; an agreement with one side could lead to lost opportunities for information and trade with the other. In his memoirs, Hoffmann justified his rejection of the GDR's attempted recruitment — he assumed it had been

61 Ernst Lemmer was West German Minister for All-German Affairs from 1957 to 1962.

62 Proft, Auskunftsbericht, p. 15.

63 Ibid., pp. 12, 14; Memo, Gerken, BfV, o.D.

the Stasi — on the grounds that the GDR would attempt to censor his publications, the center of his standing and his career, and he would thus lose the "freedom of maneuver" that he enjoyed in the West despite the CIA.[64]

The interest of the Stasi and the CIA in Hoffmann continued to wane in the second half of the 1960s. Even the Stasi's HA II, which had been collecting material on Hoffmann since 1961 for potential espionage charges, decided that he was no longer worth the effort. He was no better or no worse than the other Western journalists who visited the GDR to collect information. Indeed, the effort necessary to convict him would "surpass" HA II's "current capabilities."[65] The CIA's declassified files on Hoffmann suggest that their concerns about Hoffmann waned after 1964, although they continued to keep an eye on his activities in East-West trade and especially his contacts with the People's Republic of China (PRC).[66]

Likely contributing to the declining interest in Hoffmann was his decision in 1964 to move to Vienna and to curtail his visits to East Germany. Whereas CIA "terror" had been the main problem for Hoffmann in the 1950s, he now perceived Stasi "terror" at work against him in his journalistic and trading activities in the form of delays on the borders to West Berlin, lack of access to East German officials and journalists, and the sudden cancellation of contracts that he had brokered for West German firms in inner-German trade.[67] He failed in an attempt to establish his own journal on East-West trade. Hoffmann's East German contacts had refused to finance it,[68] and, according to Hoffmann, he was stymied by the intervention of the Bavarian Christian Social Union (CSU) and its alleged U.S. backers, including the CIA. Instead, Hoffmann maintained his post as director of the Bavarian-based *Welthandels-Informationen: Zeitschrift für freien Welthandel* from 1963 until his retirement in 1976.[69]

Active Measure "Spider": Life after Retirement

Given the thought that various intelligence agencies had put into Hoffmann's recruitment in the 1950s and 1960s, it would be interesting to learn the details of how he came to work for HV A/X in 1976 and how the HV A subsequently coordinated his work. Unfortunately, the almost complete destruction[70] or removal of the archives of the

64 Hoffmann, *Mandat*, 181–82.

65 Proft, Auskunftsbericht, pp. 19-20.

66 CIA, telegrams, sanitized, "Info Director [of Central Intelligence]," 13 September 1973 and 18 September 1973, RG 263, Entry ZZ-18, Box 56, Hoffmann, Emil, 2 of 2.

67 Proft, Auskunftsbericht, pp. 182-83.

68 Proft, Auskunftsbericht, p. 15.

69 Hoffmann, *Mandat*, 215, 224–26.

70 In February 1990, the Working Group for Security of the Central Round Table, consisting of members of the East German opposition as well as former East German officials, agreed that the HV A could dissolve itself, and in contrast to the efforts of the opposition with regard to the other Stasi divisions, the HV A was permitted to destroy its own archives. Hubertus Knabe, *West-Arbeit des MfS: Das Zusammenspiel von "Aufklärung" und "Abwehr"* (Berlin, 1999), 133.

former HV A[71] has made a detailed reconstruction impossible. Still, there are some telling traces in his memoirs, the former card catalog of the HV A ("Rosenholz"),[72] the remnants of the HV A's former databank for incoming and outgoing information (SIRA),[73] other former MfS card catalogs, and records at the Security Services Archive (Archiv bezpečnostních složek, ABS) in Prague on cooperation between HV A/X and the active measures division of Czechoslovak foreign intelligence, Department 36 of Main Division I of the ČSSR's Ministry of the Interior.[74]

In terms of Hoffmann's motivation to work for the Stasi in his retirement, the officers of HV A/X later asserted in talks with their colleagues in Prague that the driving force behind Hoffmann's activities was his "strong anti-Americanism."[75] As suggested above and based on Hoffmann's memoirs, his disdain for the U.S. resulted not only from his run-ins with the CIA but also his rejection of U.S. policy, which he blamed for Germany's division and arguably, at least in part, for the scuttling of his youthful, "national revolutionary" dreams. He also blamed the CSU and indirectly, its alleged U.S. supporters for his forced retirement in 1976; someone close to the CSU had allegedly bought the publisher of *Welthandels-Informationen*, closed the publication, and dismissed Hoffmann.[76]

Another motivation was money. Both the CIA and the MfS had assumed that the best way to obtain information from Hoffmann in an ongoing fashion would be to pay him for information reports or articles. For HV A/X's active measure "Spider," Hoffmann prepared articles and a book attacking RFE/RL for HV A/X. For the publications, he ostensibly collected not only honoraria from the journals and presses that published his work but also payments from HV A/X. In November 1979, HV A/X requested assistance from the ČSSR's Department 36 in laundering one payment in the amount of 24,000 DM to Hoffmann through the International Organization for Journalists (IOJ), a communist front organization with headquarters in Prague.[77] Hoffmann remained, even in retirement, a paid publicist.

71 Polish scholars have recently asserted — based on documents at the Polish Institute for National Remembrance (Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, IPN) — that files from the HV A archives were transported via rail "containers" to the Soviet Union in 1990. The documentation appears accurate, but the "containers" likely refer — in Stasi jargon — to the relatively small "containers" used to smuggle photographs and copies of covertly-obtained documents. Of course, if the "containers" in question contained microfilm, then the quantity of documents would be larger, although likely not as large as the content of an untold number of railway "containers." See, for example, Sławomir Cenckiewicz, "W kontenerach do Moskwy...," in idem, *Śladami Bezpieki i Partii: Studia — Źródła — Publicystyka* (Łomianki, 2009), 589–600.

72 On Rosenholz, see Helmut Müller-Enbergs, "Rosenholz: Eine Quellenkritik" (Berlin, 2007), http://www.bstu.bund.de/DE/Wissen/Aktenfunde/Rosenholz/rosenholzbericht2007_pdf.pdf?__blob=publicationFile.

73 On the *System der Informations-Recherche der HV A* (SIRA), see Stephan Konopatzky, "Möglichkeiten und Grenzen der SIRA-Datenbanken," in *Das Gesicht dem Westen zu ...: DDR-Spionage gegen die Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, 2nd corrected ed., ed. Georg Herbstritt und Helmut Müller-Enbergs (Bremen, 2003), 112–32.

74 For an overview of the Soviet bloc's joint operations in the realm of active measures during the 1980s, see Martin Slávik, "Spolupráce rozvědky StB a KGB v oblasti aktivních opatření," in *Aktivity NKVD/KGB a její spolupráce s tajnými službami střední a východní Evropy 1945-1989, II.* (Prague, 2009), 175–84.

75 "Centers of ideological diversion — RFE/RL," p. 81 (see note 6).

76 Hoffmann, *Mandat*, 225–26.

77 "Operation INFECTION," pp. 215–16, attachment #9 to memorandum, Ostrovský, Record of the negotiations with GDR intelligence, 28 November 1979, in ABS, A.č. 81282/107, pp. 187–89. Apparently, Department 36 did not help out as expected. In May 1980, HV A/X reported ongoing difficulties and asked Department 36 for information on the IOJ's bank account in West Germany so that it could pay Hoffmann. "Operation INFECTION," ABS, A.č. 81282/111, p. 22.

As the Stasi had predicted in 1956 — and as witnessed by the experiences of East German military intelligence — Hoffmann apparently sought to avoid any written or binding commitment to the HV A. Although Hoffmann began to prepare and place materials for HV A/X under the codename "Fridolin" in 1976, he was first officially registered by the HV A as an influence agent (IMA)[78] in its card catalog under that cryptonym on September 28, 1981. The registering officer was Rudolf Mnich of HV A/XVI,[79] responsible for the HV A's various "legal covers," including the East Berlin Institute for International Politics and Economics (Internationale Politik und Wirtschaft, IPW). The IPW served not only as a contact point for journalists, East and West, but also as a cover for HV A officers to meet unofficial collaborators (IMs) and Western contacts that they sought to influence.[80] It is likely that Herbert Bertsch — Division Director at IPW, Director of its Working Group for the GDR Council of Ministers, and an Officer with Special Tasks (*Offizier im besonderen Einsatz*, OibE) for the HV A[81] — played a major role in Hoffmann's work. In a section of his memoirs devoted to Bertsch, Hoffmann writes that they had been personal friends since their first meeting in East Berlin in 1955.[82] Bertsch, codename "Korff," had the same control officer as Hoffman — i.e., Mnich.[83] Although Mnich may have met with Hoffmann, it is possible that most or all of Hoffmann's contact with the HV A ran through Bertsch. When Hoffmann presented a paper at a conference in Tampere, Finland, in 1977 on the alleged illegality of RFE/RL in international law, Bertsch chaired the panel.[84] Shortly after Hoffmann visited Bertsch in East Berlin in 1985, IM "Fridolin" sent his first and only incoming report logged in the HV A's database: a report on the opinions of an "Albanian diplomat in Austria regarding the 'Kosovo problem' and the work of the embassy."[85]

78 "IMA" stands for "*inoffizieller Mitarbeiter mit besonderen Aufgaben*" or "unofficial collaborator with special tasks." This referred in Stasi jargon to an IM assigned with special, offensive tasks for the HV A in the West — mainly active measures, including the placement of articles in the West German mass media. See the entry on IMAs by Helmut Müller Enbergs in Roger Engelmann et al., *Das MfS-Lexikon: Begriffe, Personen und Strukturen der Staatssicherheit der DDR* (Berlin, 2011), 161.

79 BStU, Rosenholz (RoHo), F16 and F22, Reg. Nr. XV/5877/81; BStU, MfS, HV A/MD/6, SIRA-TDB 21, ZV8225612. In previous conversations with Department 36, the leaders of HV A/X had referred to its "collaborator Fridolin"; at meetings in October and November 1981, HV A/X referred to its "unofficial collaborator" Fridolin. See "Operation INFECTION," attachment to memorandum, Col. Václav Stárek, Director, Department 36, to Director, I. Directorate, National Security Corps (Sbor národní bezpečnosti, SNB), Major General Karel Sochor, 19 October 1981, in ABS, A.č. 81282/111, p. 120; and "Operation INFECTION," in ABS, A.č. 81282/111, p. 22.

80 Günter Bohnsack, *Die Legende stirbt* (Berlin, 1997), 111-12.

81 Herbert Bertsch, "Von der HV A getragene Kontakte zur BRD als Teil der auswärtigen Politik der DDR," in *Hauptverwaltung A: Geschichte, Aufgaben, Einsichten*, ed. Klaus Eichner and Gotthold Schramm (Berlin, 2008), 78-108; here, 78; BStU, AR 2, Abt. Fin/Abt. 6-GKK-HIM/OibE, Reg. Nr. 3665/60/1.

82 Hoffmann, *Mandat*, 200-202. On Hoffmann's visit to Bertsch in 1985, see BStU, AR 2, Karteikarte HA XIX/Abt. 1-VSH, Dr. jur. Emil Hoffmann.

83 RoHo F16, Reg. Nr. MfS/3665/60; RoHo F22, MfS 3665/60, PNA "Korff"; BStU, MfS, HV A/MD/6, SIRA-TDB 21, ZV8261620. The three cited sources suggest that Bertsch had been an employee of the HV A since February 13, 1957. The finance card for Bertsch in the Stasi's former catalog states that he had entered the MfS in 1970, but the MfS calculated his "loyalty payments (*Treuegeld*)" based on an entry month of May 1955. BStU, AR 2, Abt. Fin/Abt. 6-GKK-HIM/OibE, Reg. Nr. 3665/60/1.

84 See Bertsch's introduction to the panel in *Wissenschaft und Frieden* 1/78: 33-40. At the time, Bertsch had worked as an OibE for HV A/X. BStU, MfS, HV A/MD/6, SIRA-TDB 21, ZV8261620.

85 BStU, MfS, HV A/MD/3, SIRA-TDB 12, SE8503084.

When Hoffmann began his work for HV A/X in 1976, the Soviet bloc had launched a new offensive against the Munich-based RFE/RL. Having failed to achieve its closure in its bilateral negotiations with Bonn in the era of Willy Brandt's new *Ostpolitik*[86] and then at the negotiations of the CSCE in Geneva,[87] the Soviet bloc now proclaimed that the activities of RFE/RL violated the Helsinki Final Act of the CSCE and international law in general. Both broadcasters, alleged relics of the Cold War, needed to be closed. Boris Ponomarev, the CPSU's International Secretary, launched the new offensive in January 1976 at a meeting of the Soviet bloc's International and Ideological Secretaries. At the meeting, Ponomarev reconfirmed the Soviet bloc's line of "completing" the "political détente" embodied in the Helsinki Final Act with "military détente" — i.e., arms control and disarmament, especially in the West — in order to make détente "irreversible." To this end, he called for more assertive countermeasures in the East's propaganda against the growing Western accusations of Eastern violations of the human-rights (Principle VII) and human-contacts (Basket III) provisions of the Helsinki Final Act. Ponomarev singled out RFE/RL as a target: "Whereas we could limit ourselves before — in military terms — to propagandistic 'covering fire,' now a well-directed target shooting is necessary. Among the most important targets in this regard are the broadcasting stations 'Liberty' and 'Free Europe.' These malicious CIA tools are poisoning the atmosphere in Europe and are executing the vilest work against socialism. And it is necessary to do everything possible to achieve their closure...."[88]

In the new offensive against RFE/RL, the divisions for active measures of the Soviet bloc's intelligence services were assigned a key role. Within three weeks of Ponomarev's address, representatives of the bloc's intelligence services gathered for a "working meeting" in Prague. Colonel-General Oleg Kalugin, head of the counterintelligence (KR) line of the KGB's First Chief Directorate, opened the meeting. He and his Prague hosts announced that the goal of the new offensive, Operation "Infection," was to "remove" RFE/RL from Europe and to "finally liquidate" it.[89]

Apparently, HV A/X had already engaged in preparatory work for the new campaign. In 1975, the West German Pahl-Rugenstein Verlag had published in its journal, *Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik* (*BdiP*), an article attacking Bonn's lack of "courage" in permitting RFE/RL to continue its operations in alleged violation of the CSCE Final Act.[90] Although the article and its author might not

86 For an overview of the new offensive against RFE/RL, see A. Ross Johnson, *Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty: The CIA Years and Beyond* (Stanford, 2010), 208-18; and Paweł Machewicz, *"Monachijska Menażeria": Walka z Radiem Wolna Europa* (Warsaw, 2007), 311-22.

87 John J. Maresca, *To Helsinki: The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, 1973-1975* (Durham and London, 1987), 52, 151, 167.

88 Text of Ponomarev's speech, 25 January 1976, in Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der ehemaligen DDR im Bundesarchiv (SAPMO BA), DY 30/11861, pp. 37-71; here, pp. 69-70. Although the CIA's covert funding for RFE/RL had ended in March 1972, Soviet-bloc governments and their security services continued to treat it, as Ponomarev had stated, as a CIA "tool." Johnson, *Radio Free Europe*, 200-201.

89 Colonel Geyer, HV A/IX, Bericht, 18 February 1976, in BStU, MfS, ZAIG 22570, pp. 217-22; here, p. 218.

90 Norman R. Wiener, "Relikte des Kalten Krieges: Zur Rolle der Sender 'Radio Liberty' und 'Radio Free Europe,'" *BdiP* 10/1975, pp. 1116-25; here, pp. 1124-25. The article subsequently received favorable mention in an expert opinion prepared for the MfS on RFE/RL: Prof. Dr. sc. Jur. H. Kröger, "Ergänzungen zu dem Gutachten von Dr. E. Hoffmann zur Frage der Völkerrechtswidrigkeit des Betriebes der Sender RFE und RL," 19 September 1976. BstU, MfS, HA IX/16133, pp. 39-49; here, p. 39.

have had any direct connection to the HV A, HV A/X covertly subsidized Pahl-Rugenstein, and the editorial policy of its publications, including *BdiP*, tended to reflect and echo the foreign-policy line and interests of the Soviet bloc.[91] *BdiP* followed up with a second article in 1976 by the same author. The article began: "The ink was not yet dry under the CSCE document before the President of the U.S. Bureau for International Broadcasting, David Manker Abshire, proclaimed that 'Radio Free Europe' and 'Radio Liberty' would expand their antisocialist program."[92]

However, the central contribution of HV A/X to the new campaign, discussed at the multilateral meeting in February 1976, was active measure "Spider" (*Spinne*) in Austria, which would "bring home to the states that participated in the CSCE in Helsinki and world public opinion in general the legal grounds for [declaring] the ongoing existence of Radio 'Liberty' and 'Free Europe' to be illegal."[93] While the record of the multilateral meeting of the Soviet bloc's intelligence services provided no details about "Spider," the record of a subsequent meeting between HV A/X and the ČSSR's Department 36 presented more details. The comments of the Deputy Director of HV A/X, Lieutenant-Colonel Hans Knaust, made clear that Hoffmann stood at the center of "Spider" and HV A/X's planned efforts against RFE/RL:

> Comrade Knaust acquainted us with the content of their active measure [*Aktion*] "Spider," directed against RFE/RL. The study regarding the international-law aspects of RFE/RL's existence has been distributed at the UN and distributed at UNESCO, the World Peace Council, and 34 embassies in Vienna, and they are trying to publish it at a press in the FRG in a somewhat different form. The best hope for its publication is still with the journal "*Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik*" in Cologne. The author of the study, Hoffmann, a recognized expert on international law, has a strongly anti-American focus.... He has already received a few responses from international organizations that have promised him support in the fight for the abolition of both ideologically subversive radios.[94]

Hoffmann's study had already garnered international publicity, as reflected in the *Pravda* article cited by the U.S. Embassy in Moscow on February 27, 1976.[95] Although it was not published in *BdiP*, as

91 Bohnsack, *Legende*, 111–12.

92 Norman R. Wiener, "Wellenreiten mit toten Seelen: Zur Rolle von 'Radio Liberty' und 'Radio Free Europe' im Konzept der Entspannungsgegner," *Blätter für deutsche und international Politik* 8 (1976): 910–15.

93 Arbeitsplan zur Erörterung auf der Beratung von Vertretern der sozialistischen Länder, n.d., in BStU, MfS, ZAIG 22570, pp. 223–29; here, p. 224.

94 "Operation INFECTION," attachment to memorandum, Ostrovský, Director, Department 36, I. Directorate, FMV, Record of negotiations with GDR intelligence, 18 June 1976, ABS, A.č. 81282/103, pp. 215–16.

95 See footnote 2.

HV A/X had considered, it did appear in June 1976 in the IOJ's international journal, *The Democratic Journalist*.[96]

Hoffmann's study on the illegality of RFE/RL in international law, which he submitted to the embassies of the CSCE states in Vienna in 1976 and subsequently published in various forms, was originally prepared, in fact, by Herbert Kröger, Rector of the German Academy for Government and Law in Potsdam-Babelsberg, in January 1975.[97] Hoffmann's abbreviated study copied directly from Kröger's the key argument regarding the illegality of RFE/RL based on the CSCE — namely, that it constituted "intervention in the internal affairs" of the communist states. Both Kröger's study and Hoffmann's abbreviated version declared: "All these conclusions [regarding the illegality of RFE/RL] must apply all the more today in Europe since the 35 states participating in the CSCE posed the task in the Final Document from Helsinki [1973]: '[to] respect the right of every participating state to freely determine and develop its own political, social, economic and cultural system, as well as its right to determine its laws and statutes on its own.'"[98] Hoffmann's study was already outdated at the time of its preparation in January 1976; for example, he had cited the CSCE foreign ministers' declaration from 1973 instead of the CSCE Final Act of August 1975. In September 1976, Kröger corrected this and other omissions in a new study for the MfS, "Supplementations to the Affidavit by Dr. E. Hoffmann regarding the Illegality in International Law of the Operation of RFE and RL." The title and text of the paper suggested that Kröger was informed about Hoffmann's use of his work.[99] Not surprisingly, an abbreviated version of Kröger's "Supplementations" with Hoffmann as author, dated May 1977, found its way into the Stasi files,[100] and in May 1977, Hoffmann's "Supplementations" appeared in a West German journal, *Interfact*, published by the neutralist *Verlagsgemeinschaft Studien von Zeitfragen* (SvZ).[101]

98 Hoffmann, "Zur Frage," p. 88; Kröger, "Gutachtliche Stellungnahme," p. 20.

99 Prof. Dr. sc. Jur. H. Kröger, "Ergänzungen zu dem Gutachten von Dr. E. Hoffmann zur Frage der Völkerrechtswidrigkeit des Betriebes der Sender RFE und RL," 19 September 1976. BStU, MfS, HA IX/16133, Bl. 39-49.

100 Dr. jur. Emil Hoffmann, "Ergänzungen zum Bericht über die Völkerrechtswidrigkeit des Betriebs der Sender 'Radio Free Europe' (RFE) und 'Radio Liberty' (RL)," Vienna, May 1977. BStU, MfS, HA IX/1231, Bd. 2, pp. 63-72.

101 A subsequent paper prepared for HV A/X by another author, codename "Bober," cited Hoffmann's article in *Interfact*, but the bibliographical data appear to be incorrect, and the journal could not be located. The citation: "Dr. jur. Emil Hoffmann, Wien in 'Interfact,', Nr. XXXII/77, 'Supplementations to the Report of the Operation of the Broadcasting Stations RFE and RL in Contravention of International Law.'" BStU, MfS, HV A 1015, p. 169. The page with the bibliographical citations was separated in the archival file from "Bober's" article, ibid., pp. 1-32.

96 Dr. Emil Hoffman (FRG), "Unlawful Transmissions of Free Europe and Radio Liberty," *Democratic Journalist* (Prague) 6 (1976): 18-21.

97 Prof. Dr. Herbert Kröger, Potsdam-Babelsberg, "Gutachtliche Stellungnahme zur Frage der Völkerrechtswidrigkeit des Betriebes der Sender 'Radio Free Europe' und 'Radio Liberty,'" 20 January 1975. BStU, MfS, HA IX/16133, pp. 2-38. An abbreviated version of Kröger's study, dated January 1976, was archived by Main Division IX (HA IX) of the Stasi under Hoffmann's name. See E. Hoffmann, "Zur Frage der Völkerrechtswidrigkeit des Betriebes der Sender Radio Free Europe und Radio Liberty," January 1976, BStU, MfS, HA IX, Bd. 1231, pp. 73-102. With regard to Kröger, see the entry on him by Helmut Müller-Enbergs in Bundesstiftung Aufarbeitung, Biographische Datenbanken, "Wer war wer in der DDR," http://www.stiftung-aufarbeitung.de/wer-war-wer-in-der-ddr-%2363%3B-1424.html?ID=1915

In the fall of 1977, Hoffmann spoke at a conference organized in Tampere by the Finnish Institute for Peace Research, the Institute for Journalism of the University of Tampere, and the International Institute for Peace (IIP) in Vienna: "The Role of the Mass Media in Maintaining and Strengthening Peace." Knaust reported to Department 36 shortly thereafter: "The Hoffmann materials from the conference in Tampere will be published in book form by the peace committee for the purposes of UNESCO, which has effectively legalized them internationally as well."[102] Indeed, the IIP published Hoffmann's presentation, "A Principled Assessment of the Operations of the Stations Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty as Violations of International Law," which was based on his (and Kröger's) previous research, in its journal, *Science and Peace*, in early 1978.[103] It was subsequently republished in March 1978 in East Berlin in the IPW's monthly review of international politics and economics, along with Hoffmann's original study from 1976 (under the rubric "Documentation").[104] In June 1978, Knaust told his Czechoslovak colleagues: "Hoffmann, driven by a strong anti-Americanism, wants to continue working."[105] A few months later, HV A/X reported that with Hoffmann's assistance, "they are further attacking the activities of RFE/RL from the standpoint of international law, and they are expanding this activity to Spain and Portugal."[106]

<p style="text-align:center">* * *</p>

Although Hoffmann and others were apparently working hard for the closure of RFE/RL, the question naturally arises: How effective were the Soviet bloc's active measures, including "Spider"? Despite the overt and covert activities of the Soviet bloc, including Hoffmann's work for HV A/X, the East failed to attain sufficient support from the Western or the neutral and nonaligned delegations at the Belgrade Follow-Up Meeting (1977–1978) of the CSCE for the closure of RFE/RL, let alone for a Czechoslovak proposal for a "code of conduct" for journalists and the mass media in their reporting — i.e., that their reporting serve the cause of peace, friendship, and détente as the Soviet bloc understood them.[107] Nevertheless, as Ladislav Bittman, a Czechoslovak foreign intelligence officer who had defected, pointed out to his U.S. audience in

102 "Centers of ideological diversion – RFE/RL," attachment #4 to Ostrovský, Record of negotiations with GDR intelligence, 22 June 1978, in A.č. 81282/107, p. 81.

103 Emil Hoffmann, "Prinzipielle Wertung des völkerrechtswidrigen Betriebes der Sender Radio Free Europe und Radio Liberty," *Wissenschaft und Frieden* 1/78 (1978): 41–44. For the draft presentation/article, prepared for (or by) the MfS, see Dr. jur. Emil Hoffmann, "Prinzipielle Wertung des völkerrechtswidrigen Betriebes der Sender Radio Free Europe und Radio Liberty," Vienna, October 1977, BstU, MfS, HA IX/1231, Bd. 2, pp. 51–62.

104 Idem., "Völkerrechtswidrige Tätigkeit von Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty," *IPW-Berichte* 3 (1978): 48–50. Hoffmann's original study from January 1976, based on Kröger's work, is published in ibid., 65–69.

105 "Centers of ideological diversion — RFE/RL," attachment #4 to Ostrovský, Record of negotiations with GDR intelligence, 22 June 1978, in A.č. 81282/107, p. 81.

106 Department 36, I. Directorate, FMV, Course of cooperation with GDR intelligence in 1978 in the area of AM [active measures], 6 October 1978, ABS, A.č. 81282/107, p. 132.

107 Paul Roth, "Die neue Weltinformationsordnung. Argumentation, Zielvorstellung und Vorgehen der UdSSR (I)," *Berichte des Bundesinstituts für Ostwissenschaftliche und Internationale Studien (BBOIS)* 44 (1982): 41. On the activities of the Soviet bloc with regard to RFE/RL before the Belgrade meeting especially with regard to the radio stations' alleged illegality under the CSCE Final Act, see ibid., 37–41.

1985, Moscow believed "that mass production of active measures will have a significant cumulative effect over a period of several decades."[108]

Indeed, Hoffmann's publication from the IIP conference in Tampere had already helped the Soviet bloc to open a second front against RFE/RL at UNESCO, where Moscow was asserting the illegality of RFE/RL on the basis of international law and the CSCE Final Act. At the CSCE's follow-up meeting in Madrid (1980-83), the Soviet bloc openly proposed the closure of RFE and RL, citing their alleged illegality in international law. To bolster the argument, the USSR stressed the efforts of the UN through UNESCO to establish a New World Information Order (NWIO), which, at least from the Soviet perspective, was supposed to ban any broadcasting that was directed against the internal order of other states or that could potentially threaten peace.[109] Hoffmann made a further contribution on the UNESCO/NWIO front against RFE/RL with a subsequent book entitled *Medienfreiheit? Anspruch und Wirklichkeit (Free Media? Claims and Reality)*. The book was published in the FRG in 1981 in an initial run of 2000 copies — again, by the SvZ press. For the publication, Hoffmann secured an introduction by Sean MacBride, former Irish foreign minister, recipient of both the Nobel and Lenin Peace Prizes, and chairman of UNESCO's International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems, responsible for NWIO.[110]

The book, which did not focus exclusively on Soviet-bloc desiderata, had apparently sparked tensions between HV A/X and Hoffmann. Knaust commented in November 1981: "With considerable delay, the book — Emil Hoffmann's *Medienfreiheit* — has come out abroad. However, it did not meet the GDR's expectations. The basic error of the book is that it mechanically juxtaposes imperialist propaganda with the propaganda of the socialist commonwealth. Only with regard to Chapter III (RFE/RL) can there be no reservations."[111] HV A/X had originally wanted a book with three chapters, focused exclusively on RFE/RL.[112] In contrast, *Medienfreiheit* consisted of five chapters, and only Chapter III, "U.S. 'Freedom Radios' in the Light of International Law," focused on RFE/RL. The other chapters contained general information relating to UNESCO's efforts to create a NWIO.[113]

110 Emil Hoffmann, *Medienfreiheit? Anspruch und Wirklichkeit* (Schotten, 1981). On the print run, see the memorandum from the MfS, 9 December 1981, in ABS, 81282/111, Bl. 127-28.

111 "Operation SYNONYM," o.D, ABS, A.č. 81282/111, p. 137.

112 Knaust and the Director of HV A/X, Klaus Wagenbreth, had outlined the proposed book to their colleagues in Prague in November 1979: a first chapter on Western plans and intentions with regard to RFE/RL; a second chapter on the illegality of RFE/RL in international law, ostensibly to include its alleged violation of the CSCE Final Act; and a third chapter on RFE/RL's interference in the internal affairs of the socialist countries. "Operation INFECTION," attachment #9 to Ostrovský, Record of negotiations with GDR intelligence, 28 November 1979, ABS, A.č. 81282/107, pp. 215-16.

108 Ladislav Bittman, *The KGB and Soviet Disinformation: An Insider's View* (Washington, 1985), 45. Ironically, Hoffmann played a disputed role in Bittman's defection to the West in 1968. See Hoffmann, *Mandat*, 215-16; Dispatch from Chief, European Division, to [sanitized], 9 April 1971, and Telegram, Munich to Director, 27 September 1968. both in NARA, RG 263, Entry ZZ-18, Box 56, Hoffmann, Emil, 2 of 2.

109 Paul Roth, "Die neue Weltinformationsordnung. Argumentation, Zielvorstellung und Vorgehen der UdSSR (II)," *BBOIS* 17 (1983): 30-32.

113 Hoffmann, *Medienfreiheit?*, passim.

Arguably, the ostensibly neutral character of the publication brought it — including HV A/X's favored chapter — to the attention of a broader public than a propaganda screed focused only on RFE/RL. However, based on Knaust's comments, this subtlety seems to have been lost on HV A/X. Department 36 reported in November 1981: "IM FRIDOLIN, who worked on the brochure, is already too old in the opinion of the German comrades and they will cease to use him."[114]

Others were more positive about Hoffmann's book. Two Soviet authors cited favorably the "well-known Western journalist Emil Hoffmann" in their 1985 brochure, *Aggressive Broadcasting*. They quoted one passage from *Medienfreiheit* — particularly ironic given Hoffmann's own patronage — about the CIA's alleged "direct management of journalists...working on its behalf."[115] At another point, they asserted the illegality of RFE/RL in international law based on "studies...prepared for the GDR's foreign press service 'Panorama' by Dr. Emil Hoffmann (legal expert)."[116] The People's Republic of Bulgaria published a translation of *Medienfreiheit* in 1985,[117] and although HV A/X apparently discontinued its cooperation with Hoffmann in 1981, it reported in 1984 that it was preparing an "updated" study on the illegality of RFE/RL based on the Kröger/Hoffmann materials from 1977.[118]

Indeed, Hoffmann's work and the anti-Americanism that had fueled it proved more enduring than the HV A or even Hoffmann himself. Since 2009, *Studien von Zeitfragen* (*SvZ*) has maintained on its website an excerpt from Hoffmann's *Medienfreiheit* that decries the alleged U.S. "disinformation war against Iran since 1978."[119] To attest to Hoffmann's *bona fides*, *SvZ* has posted alongside its excerpt from *Medienfreiheit* both MacBride's introduction to the book and a short biography of the Nobel and Lenin Peace Prize laureate.[120]

Conclusion

Emil Hoffmann's long path from Goebbels's propaganda ministry to the HV A elucidates various aspects of the intelligence agencies' Cold War in Germany and in Europe as a whole. As has long been known, former membership in the Nazi Party and work on behalf of the "Third Reich" was by no means a barrier to recruitment by the intelligence agencies of its former enemies during the Cold War. At the end of World War II, both British and Soviet intelligence, as well as the Americans, were interested in Hoffmann and his potential information regarding other, more important, Nazis — more

114 "Operation SYN-ONYM," o.D. ABS, A.č. 81282/111, p. 135.

115 Gennadi Alow and Wassili Wiktorow, *Aggression im Äther. Der psychologische Krieg: Zeugnisse, Fakten, Dokumente* (Berlin, 1987), 80; the quotation is from Hoffmann, *Medienfreiheit*, 48. The English edition of the Soviet brochure came out in 1985: Gennady Alov and Vassily Viktorov, *Aggressive Broadcasting. Psychological Warfare: Evidence, Facts, Documents* (Moscow, 1985).

116 Alow und Wiktorow, *Aggression*, 125n9.

117 Emil Hoffmann, *Svoboda na sredstvata za masova informacija: pretencik i dejstvitelnost* (Sofia, 1985).

118 "Operation INFECTION," ABS, A.č. 81282/117, p. 152.

119 Dr. Emil Hoffmann, "Des-Informationskrieg gegen Iran seit 1978 — Anfänge," SvZ-Net 2009, http://www.studien-von-zeitfragen.de/Eurasien/Iran-USA/iran-usa.html.

120 Sean MacBride, "Über die Verantwortung der Presse," SvZ-Net 2009, http://www.studien-von-zeitfragen.de/Eurasien/MacBride/macbride.html.

important not only in terms of their rank and potential war crimes but also in terms of their potential knowledge about the other side in the future Cold War. Hoffmann's entry (or re-entry) into the "jungle of the secret services" as a broker and publicist in East-West trade and the subsequent interest of intelligence agencies, East and West, in his activities demonstrate how one side's interest in an individual could spark the other side's interest. Hoffmann's relationship with CARBOHYDRATE served as an interesting example; the CIA's efforts to use Casemir to spy on Hoffmann increased the Stasi's interest in the latter, due to its struggle against the CIA front organization, UfJ. The CIA also wanted Casemir to help smooth the path to Hoffmann's potential recruitment; ironically, Hoffmann's contact with Casemir only heightened his fears that the CIA could tip-off the Stasi and potentially cause his "disappearance" in the East.

The methods of the CIA and Stasi in their respective efforts to "neutralize" or recruit Hoffmann or others in West Germany, it turned out, were not that different: use of secret informants, telephone taps, opening of mail, and the general collection of secret and private information. In terms of recruitment, although various sticks could be used — e.g., arrest for alleged security violations — carrots were considered more effective for the potential recruitment of Hoffmann: high-level meetings and official contacts, offers of information for his activities as a publicist and consultant, and payment for professional services rendered.

One major difference between the activities of the CIA in Germany in contrast to the Soviet secret services and the Stasi was that restrictions on CIA activities grew in the early 1950s due to the increasing independence of the Federal Republic. First, the General Treaty (Deutschlandvertrag) of 1952 gave it some independence, and in 1955, it attained relative sovereignty. This independence had already marked a shift in the CIA's efforts to "neutralize" Hoffmann in 1953. At that point, the BfV informed the CIA that an interzonal pass could no longer be denied to Hoffmann without any concrete proof of criminal activity on his part. In general, the CIA was no longer able to use some methods that it had used before because they were unconstitutional in the Federal Republic. It curtailed some of its earlier surveillance and control practices in West Germany. However, based on Hoffmann's CIA file, West Berlin remained an exception, at least in the 1950s, and the Federal Republic's newly established BfV, BKA, and BND proved willing to cooperate, at least on an *ad hoc*

basis, in providing the CIA and U.S. officials in general with private information obtained from its own investigations of West German citizens. Of course, the Stasi and its "fraternal organ," the KGB, faced far fewer restrictions in East Germany.

Hoffmann's post-retirement career in active measures demonstrated the close coordination and blurring of boundaries between the Soviet bloc's overt (e.g., through communist-front organizations) and covert propaganda (i.e., through the security services). Covertly funded publications, such as those by Hoffmann for HV A/X, found their way not only into secretly subsidized Western press organs and into journals published by communist-front organizations but also into unsuspecting private publications and officially funded publications by such organizations as UNESCO. Covertly funded publications by one Soviet-bloc intelligence agency received further publicity and attention through the overt and covert propaganda efforts of the other Soviet bloc states in their respective press outlets at home and in the West.[121]

As for Hoffmann, he had remained true throughout his adult life to his national-revolutionary, Strasserite principles, whether during the Third Reich years; as a member of the "German Revolution" network until his arrest and its dissolution; in his support for a neutral, unified Germany in opposition to the U.S. and the Adenauer government in West Germany; in his support for East-West trade, especially inner-German trade, to maintain all-German, national bonds; in his attacks on the commercial media of the West, especially the U.S., or against Washington's propaganda organs, RFE and RL; or in his support for ostensibly nationally minded, state-controlled media. In all periods of his life, he successfully maintained his career as a publicist, in tandem with occasional contracting work for Western firms and at least one intelligence agency (i.e., the HV A). Hoffmann asserted this ideological and professional consistency — despite omitting his publications under Goebbels or his work on behalf of any foreign intelligence agencies — in his 1992 memoir, *A Mandate for Germany: Enemy of the State from a Sense of Responsibility*.[122] His choice of press for his memoir reflected his ideological consistency: the Siegfried Bublies Verlag (SBV), named after its director, the one-time chairman of the Republikaner Partei in Koblenz.[123] One expert on the right-wing in Germany characterized the SBV's journal, *wir selbst*, as standing in the "left-nationalist, anti-capitalist," "national-revolutionary tradition" of Otto Strasser in its support of

121 For a general overview of such cooperation in the placement of disinformation in the West, see U.S. Dept. of State, ed., *Active Measures*, 1–14, 17–22; and Federal Republic of Germany, Bundesminister des Innern, ed. *Moskaus getarnte Helfer: Die Aktivitäten sowjetisch gesteuerter internationaler Einwirkungsorganisationen und ihrer Partner in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Bonn, 1987), passim.

122 Hoffmann, *Mandat*, passim.

123 Mecklenburg, ed., *Handbuch deutscher Rechtsextremismus*, 436–38, 448.

"ethnopluralism" and "liberation nationalism" against "universalist political philosophies" and the "chains of imperialism."[124] The revival of Strasserite ideas as part of a "new Right" in West Germany had ensued in the 1980s in the wake of the neo-Nazi National Democratic Party's (NPD) decline as an electoral force. One of the New Right's slogans was "learning from the left" — that is, from the anti-American new Left of the 1960s, which had attacked the alleged "daily fascism" in the U.S. and had adopted the rallying cry, "USA-SA-SS."[125] Against this backdrop, Hoffmann's path from propagandist for Goebbels to propagandist for HV A/X against RFE/RL and back to the new Right after German unification was perhaps not such a long path after all; he was associated from the beginning of his career to its very end with the "left-wing people on the right."[126] However, in contrast to the West German new Left, he would never have equated the SA with the SS, let alone the SA of his youth with the USA. His path through the "jungle of the intelligence agencies" had been quite different — from membership in the SA through surveillance by the CIA to eventual work for the HV A: SA-CIA-HV A.

Colonel Henryk Sokolak, head of Polish foreign intelligence and a former inmate of Buchenwald concentration camp, allegedly offered a blunter, less-nuanced assessment of Hoffmann and his career. In 1961, a Polish defector to the U.S. reported to the CIA that Sokolak had declared Hoffmann, whom he suspected of working for the BND, to be "an unreconstructed Nazi."[127]

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124 Hans-Gerd Jaschke, "Nationalismus und Ethnopluralismus: Zum Wiederaufleben von Ideen der 'Konservativen Revolution,'" *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* B 3-4/92, 10 January 1992. An excerpt is available on the website of the Siegried Bublies Verlag: http://www.bublies-verlag.de/contents/de/d205.html.

125 Philipp Gassert, "Mit Amerika gegen Amerika: Antiamerikanismus in Westdeutschland," in *Die USA und Deutschland im Zeitalter des Kalten Krieges 1945-1990: Ein Handbuch*, vol. 2, *1968-1990*, ed. Detlef Junker (Munich, 2001), 750-60; here 754-55, 758-59.

126 For the term, see Jaschke, "Nationalismus," 9.

127 Memorandum, "Subject: Dr. Emil HOFFMANN, 18 December 1961; Date of Debriefing: 14 October 1961," NARA, RG 263, Entry ZZ-18, Box 56, Hoffmann, Emil, 2 of 2.

ASPECTS OF CRISIS AND DECLINE OF THE EAST GERMAN FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE IN THE 1980S

Georg Herbstritt

The HV A, the Stasi's foreign espionage department, is said to be one of the most successful intelligence services of the twentieth century. However, this statement is true only in some respects. One very often ignores the fact that Stasi espionage also had its weaknesses and problems, that it had better periods and worse ones. While the HV A experienced dynamic development and enjoyed some success in intelligence-gathering in the 1960s and 1970s, it grew stagnant in the 1980s and exhibited symptoms of crisis and decline throughout East Germany's final decade.

The central thesis of this contribution is that the undifferentiated picture of the HV A as one of the world's most successful intelligence services — frequently drawn by former HV A employees — strongly resembles the "Stab-in-the-Back" legend [*Dolchstoßlegende*] that circulated in Germany after World War I. At that time, General Paul von Hindenburg, the former chief of the Supreme Army Command [*Oberste Heeresleitung*], claimed that the German army had not been defeated militarily in World War I but had lost the war because the home front had failed the army — that is, had stabbed it in the back.

This thesis — that former HV A employees created a kind of "Stab-in-the-Back" legend about their own organization — can be proved by analyzing different documents from the Stasi archive, and by providing statistics from the SIRA database, the "System of Information Research of the HV A" [System der Informations-Recherche der HV A], that was in use in the 1970s and 1980s. Some of these documents and statistics show that, in the 1980s, East Germany's foreign intelligence, like its economy and politics, also underwent a crisis. This contribution will present some of these documents, which will allow a more differentiated view of the development of Stasi espionage. However, they will not tell the whole story — or history — of the HV A. Rather they will concentrate by way of example on one question: How successful was the Stasi in recruiting West Germans as agents ("unofficial collaborators" [*Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter*], also known as "*West-IM*")?

Before going into detail, it has to be mentioned that the HV A archive was almost completely destroyed in early 1990. But since the HV A was an integral part of the Stasi, some documents related to it, or of HV A origin, can be found in other parts of the Stasi archive, such as some important talks by HV A officials. Because they are such rare documents, they are very important.

The documents presented below in chronological order originate from middle- and high-ranking Stasi officials and from the governing communist party of the German Democratic Republic, the Socialist Unity Party (Sozialistische Einheitspartie, SED). They are mainly presentations in which the speaker takes stock of a certain period of time. They will be followed by a brief analysis of some statistics from the SIRA database.

1962: The SED's Central Committee Harshly Criticizes the Work of East German Foreign Intelligence

The first document dates from spring 1962. It is a report addressed to Stasi minister Erich Mielke, written by the "department for questions of security" of the SED's Central Committee. This "department for questions of security" had just finished a three-week review within the HV A. It had evaluated the HV A and now wished to inform Mielke of its findings.[1]

Three statements in this report are of particular importance. First, it praises the HV A for having changed the system of communication among agents sufficiently early — before the inner German border was closed in August 1961 when the Berlin Wall was erected — to prevent this event from seriously affecting the HV A's spying activities:

> The size of the [agent] network has essentially been maintained since August 13, 1961, and, the mode of communication was already changed in accordance with the security measures of the party and government beforehand.[2]

This statement is remarkable, because after 1990, former HV A leader Markus Wolf said that the building of the Berlin Wall caught him completely by surprise.[3] This report refutes this assertion. Second, this report faults the HV A for running too few agents in West German power and decision centers so that the copious information it procured turned out to have only limited value. Third, the report criticizes the HV A for having professional staff (i.e., officers), who

1 ZK der SED, Abteilung für Sicherheitsfragen: Bericht über den Brigadeeinsatz der Abteilung für Sicherheitsfragen in der Hauptabteilung [sic] Aufklärung des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit Berlin, 15.3.1962; BStU, MfS, SdM 1351, pp. 122–38.

2 Ibid., p. 123.

3 For example, see his statement in Markus Wolf, *Letzte Gespräche* (Berlin, 2007), 48-50. Wolf headed the HV A and its predecessors between 1953 and 1986.

were neither controlled nor educated enough. As many professionals proved to be unfit, they had to be removed or fired, resulting in a very high turnover rate. Furthermore, between 1952 and 1962, four HV A professionals defected to the West. One of them was Max Heim, head of a division that spied on the governing West German Christian Democratic Party. His 1959 defection led to the arrest of more than 30 HV A agents in West Germany. The report attacks Markus Wolf personally:

> Even the leader of the Hauptverwaltung, Comrade General Major Wolf, restricts his monitoring activity in the main only to individual, important operative procedures and to receiving reports from the division heads. There is insufficient on-the-spot monitoring of particular specialties and entire areas of operation.[4]

Finally, it is important to know that Stasi chief Mielke accepted the criticism of this report and requested that Markus Wolf present proposals for remedying these faults.[5]

1967: General Secretary Ulbricht and Stasi Minister Mielke Are Dissatisfied with East German Foreign Intelligence

Five years later, in February 1967, in a speech at an HV A conference, Erich Mielke harshly criticized the foreign intelligence branch. In his view, although the HV A procured a huge amount of information from the West, most of it was superficial, subjective, or completely worthless. Mielke warned the HV A officers that the Stasi could "no longer afford to buy information from our agents that has zero — or only little — value," adding sarcastically that "We are very well informed about some African states, but we still know far too little about the steps and actions planned in Bonn that are directed at the GDR and the other socialist states." Then Mielke let the HV A know that Walter Ulbricht, the General Secretary of the Socialist Unity Party, was dissatisfied with it as well, having called the agency "thin" in the sense of weak or feeble. In addition, Mielke made interesting remarks about the first use of atomic weapons, saying that the East would "throw the bomb before they [the NATO members] can throw it," declaring this perspective "the biggest humanism."[6]

The HV A clearly got Mielke's message. Two years later, at the next HV A conference, the head of the SED organization within the HV A,

4 BStU, MfS, SdM 1351, p. 127.

5 A handwritten order from Mielke to Wolf to declare himself, dated 16 April 1962, in BStU, MfS, SdM 1351, p. 121. See also Protokolle der MfS-Kollegiumssitzungen, 19.3.1962, and 26.4.1962; BStU, MfS, SdM 1902, pp. 209, 225. On some of Wolf's proposals for improving the HV A's situation, see BStU, MfS, SdM 1351, pp. 139–40.

6 Hinweise für das Schlusswort auf der Delegiertenkonferenz der Parteiorganisation V (HV A) – 2.2.1967 [= notes Mielke used during his speech]; BStU, MfS, SdM 1343, pp. 27, 54, 56, 68, 79-81, 86-87, 92; Mielke later deleted his sarcastic words about the HV A's knowledge about some African states from his notes. A lot of the above-quoted remarks were repeated several times in his notes and probably in his speech; see, for example, pp. 12, 19–20, 23, 32, 40, 47, 55–56, 58, 63, 65-69, 71, 75-78, 83, 118-20.

Otto Ledermann, referred directly to Mielke's criticism from 1967 in a speech. He remarked that the HV A understood very well that Mielke was concerned with introducing "a fundamentally new quality to the entire political-operational work." At the same time, Ledermann stated in the name of the HV A that it had achieved tangible improvements, both in terms of procuring information and recruiting new agents in the West.[7] At this point, in 1969, Mielke was no longer criticizing the HV A.

Quite obviously, the HV A had now begun to profit from two developments: First, its persistence in systematically searching for new agents in the West and sending a lot of East German citizens to settle as agents in West Germany, like Günter Guillaume, the "Chancellery Spy," had started to bear fruit. Second, many young people in West Germany had grown increasingly enthusiastic about socialist ideas since the end of the 1960s.

1970s: East German Foreign Intelligence Benefits from Political and Social Changes in the West

In April 1976, Werner Großmann, then a deputy leader of the HV A and later Markus Wolf's successor, spoke at an internal Stasi conference about the increasing attractiveness and popularity of socialist ideas among young people in the West. As Marxist-Leninist convictions had spread in the West, the HV A had gained access to segments of Western society that it had not been able to penetrate before — such as students. This spread of left-wing views in the West, he concluded, had, "a promoting and aiding effect" on the recruitment of new agents in West Germany.[8] Markus Wolf had essentially noted this same fact in January that same year. In a talk with HV A professionals, he had said, "We are undergoing a change: we see people in West Germany becoming open to our arguments whom we could not reach in the past…, such interesting groups as students and others."[9]

It is interesting to see how directly the East German foreign intelligence department benefited from general political and social changes in the West. But the most surprising aspect of these statements is the date: Only in 1976 did HV A leaders fully realize these changes and the impact they could have on their business. Indeed, in his speech in 1976, Werner Großmann admitted that the HV A had "reacted too slowly and not flexibly enough" to these new possibilities. He explained this failure as a consequence of the HV A being formed

7   BStU, MfS, SdM 1344, pp. 16, 19–20; this document contains notes without date and author. However, it undoubtedly refers to the mentioned HV A conference on 14 May 1969, and its content leads to the conclusion that the speaker was Otto Ledermann.

8   Diskussionsbeitrag Werner Großmanns auf der Kreisdelegiertenkonferenz der SED-Kreisleitung 18-01 (MfS) am 2./3.4.1976; BStU, MfS, SED-KL 3366, pp. 56–61.

9   This talk by Markus Wolf, presented at an internal Stasi conference in Dresden on 31 January 1976, exists only on a tape; BStU, MfS, BV Dresden/Tb/27 (Z).

during the hardest period of the Cold War, which made it difficult for the HV A to revise its approach.[10]

Speeches of other high-ranking HV A officials from the early and mid-1970s show that the HV A had been very wary of the new *Ostpolitik* (détente) of West German Chancellor Willy Brandt. For a long time, HV A officials had rejected it, viewing it as a new and a very clever version of anticommunism. In 1971, they had even declared it to be a version of Nazi politics.[11] Not until February 1974 at a Stasi conference did the HV A acknowledge that the changes in West Germany might support new agent recruitment in the West. Yet at that point, the HV A was still mainly afraid of the threats of Ostpolitik.[12]

For example, at this Stasi conference, the HV A speaker Werner Roitzsch attacked SPD politician Egon Bahr, one of the masterminds and architects of the new détente and Ostpolitik:

> Just recently, he [Egon Bahr] characterized communism as a disease that one must cure in the long term.
>
> This is the concisely presented objective of the political-ideological diversion as it is currently pursued by the powers of the governing coalition in Bonn.[13]

In the same speech, however, HV A officer Roitzsch first pointed to the new opportunities that these policies opened up for the agency:

> The crisis of bourgeois ideology as a part of the general crisis of capitalism, the disappointment in the broadest circles of society in the imperial countries, not only among the youth — about the inhumanity and rot of the imperialistic system, about the ever increasing social insecurity — offers us great new opportunities and starting points for our political work and for the expansion of our operative basis right within the enemy camp, which me must actively make use of.[14]

It is typical of such documents that they are overloaded with ideological terms and undercover jargon. Nonetheless, it is easy to perceive the core meaning of these statements: the HV A, quite accurately, discerned that people in the Federal Republic, the youth, in particular, were dissatisfied with the political process. And the phrase "expansion

10 Diskussionsbeitrag Werner Großmann (see note 8), p. 58.

11 Diskussionsbeitrag Otto Ledermanns auf der Kreisdelegiertenkonferenz der SED-Kreisleitung 18-01 (MfS) am 22.5.1971; BStU, MfS, SED-KL 3448, pp. 244–48.

12 Diskussionsbeitrag Werner Roitzschs auf der Kreisdelegiertenkonferenz der SED-Kreisleitung 18-01 (MfS) am 15.2.1974; BStU, MfS, SED-KL 3363, pp. 234–41.

13 Ibid., p. 235.

14 Ibid., p. 240.

of our operative basis right within the enemy camp" meant, rather simply, recruiting new agents in West Germany.

Even if, in the early 1970s, the HV A's fear of the effects of détente predominated, this speech from 1974 shows that it recognized that the policy offered opportunities alongside the negative effects. Consequently, an optimistic viewpoint prevailed at the HV A in the following years, as the above-mentioned speeches by Wolf and Großmann from 1976 make clear.

1980s: Peak and Decline of East German Foreign Intelligence

From a speech by Markus Wolf dated January 1983, we can identify the peak of the HV A's success as 1982. Taking stock of the previous year, Wolf said to his employees: "Without being effusive, I may state that in 1982 our work reached a level that we had not managed to achieve in recent years."[15] Despite Wolf's implication that 1982 was somehow exceptional, his statement actually marked the high point of a continued long-term trend: the harsh criticisms of the HV A from the 1960s had given way in the 1970s to new possibilities for recruiting HV A agents brought about by changes in West Germany society, and by January 1983, Markus Wolf could look back over an upward trajectory for the HV A that had lasted twenty years. From this perspective, the HV A could boast a record of success. At the same time, Wolf's statement indicated a turning point — this long-term trend had come to an end.

15 Auszug aus dem Referat des Genossen Generaloberst Wolf auf der Aktivtagung der Parteiorganisation der HV A am 13.1.1983; published in Hubertus Knabe, *West-Arbeit des MfS. Das Zusammenspiel von "Aufklärung" und "Abwehr"* (Berlin, 1999), 396–410, quotation, 397.

16 Although there were still protests in the 1980s, principally in connection with the Peace Movement, this constituency was not as fruitful for HV A recruitment because the attraction to the socialist countries diminished with the heightening Cold War. For more information on the Peace Movement, see the GHI's web site nuclearcrisis.org.

One conclusion that can be drawn from this record is that a country's general political situation can directly affects the work of a foreign intelligence service. However, if this conclusion is true, it begs the following question: If the increasing enthusiasm for socialist ideas in West Germany during the 1970s, the "red decade," including an attractive image of the East German state in the West, supported the HV A's work, what happened at the beginning of the 1980s, when the HV A's upward trajectory leveled out?[16] How had the situation in both German states changed to the detriment of HV A recruitment in West Germany?

In his talk of January 1983, Markus Wolf reflected on this question in his own way: he pointed out some important political changes in West Germany and the West that the HV A needed to be aware of as they were likely to affect its work. In Bonn, Christian Democrat

Helmut Kohl had recently become chancellor, and Wolf had already realized that a shift of emphasis in relations with East Germany had taken place. For example, Kohl, when speaking about the inner German situation, used the term "two states in Germany" instead of speaking of the "two German states" (the latter term was the official one used in the Basic Treaty of 21 December 1972, in which the two Germanys had formally recognized each other as sovereign states for the first time). The new conservative government initiated stronger diplomatic activities against East Germany, and the West German foreign intelligence service, the Bundesnachrichtendienst (BND) intensified its activities against East Germany, too. Furthermore, Wolf highlighted changes on the international level, such as the anticommunist policies of U.S. president Ronald Reagan and the active Ostpolitik of Pope John Paul II. Having explained all these shifts, Wolf stated — but already with a *defensive* undertone — that "the results of our fight in the 1970s cannot be simply wiped away."[17]

Wolf was not alone in noticing developments that put it into a defensive position. Werner Groth, a leading official of HV A Department II — which undertook an important part of HV A espionage against West German political institutions — also connected political change in West Germany with diminished recruitment in his department. In a speech delivered during an internal HV A conference in January 1986 (one of several preserved on a tape in the Stasi archive), Groth reported on the state of political espionage. He noted that since Helmut Kohl had become chancellor in West Germany in 1982, ushering in a change in the political winds, his department had not been able to recruit any more valuable agents in West Germany.[18] As this is a very important and remarkable statement, it shall be quoted here at length:

In the past, the pioneers of intelligence, both agents and professionals, created a number of good and very good points of departure [i.e., new sources], which, up to today, have continuously developed into top positions. We have to admit soberly that, up to now, we have still been living on their results. Of course, we created new positions year by year. But, all in all, the recruitment of new sources in the main target areas is too low. Because of this, we have information deficits that we have to eliminate fast. Add to this that sources can always drop out, also for reasons of age.

17 Ibid., 403–404, 406–407, 409.

18 This did not result from Western counterintelligence so much, although that played a role, as from the declining effectiveness of the HV A's previous strategy: In the 1970s, the HV A had won agents in the West among those who saw the East German state as an alternative to the Federal Republic. In the 1980s, this stopped working, as we can see in some comments of HV A officers. Furthermore, in the 1980s, a new generation came to maturity in both German states that did not share the experience of a common country. East Germans who were sent to West Germany undercover had to learn to behave like West Germans. Moreover, most of the younger West Germans were not at all interested in East Germany or the Eastern Bloc in general.

The number of sources not only has to be maintained, but has to be enlarged quantitatively and especially qualitatively. . . . Thus, it affects us all the more that in the third year after the so-called change [*Wende*], we as a department still have not reached a satisfying breakthrough in creating operational positions in the governmental parties.[19]

This speech is clear and rare evidence of a changing trend. Of course, the HV A was still operating at a very high level, but in the 1980s, its problems were increasing again.

Historian Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, an authority on American intelligence history, described a changing trend in U.S. intelligence that was roughly the reverse of the HV A's experience in his 1989 book, *The CIA and American Democracy*. Under Ronald Reagan, there was a "revival" of the CIA in the early 1980s such that "the campus radicalism of the Camelot-Ramparts-Vietnam era had died down, and it was no longer imprudent for Agency recruiters to enter university precincts.…" One important indication of this trend was the dramatic increase in the number of applications and inquiries received by the CIA: in 1980, only 9,200 men and women applied for 1,458 CIA jobs; by the mid-1980s, the CIA was receiving about 150,000 inquiries per year.[20]

Despite the opposite effects, in both the HV A and CIA cases, the general political situation affected the recruitment of agents. The development Jeffreys-Jones described was the same one HV A officials Markus Wolf, Werner Großmann, and Werner Groth described in their speeches in 1976, 1983, and 1986. It is remarkable that these speeches actually corroborate in reverse the phenomenon Jeffreys-Jones elucidated in his analyses. But it is also remarkable that HV A leaders displayed a certain helplessness in the 1980s. Although HV A officials realized the problems they faced in the 1980s, but quite obviously they failed to develop an efficient new strategy to resolve these problems.

Some Statistics

The stagnancy in recruitment that HV A officer Groth complained about in January 1986 can, in fact, be proved with some statistics derived from the HV A's SIRA database. It contains information about the type, quality, and quantity of the espionage material the HV A received from its spies, agents, and sources in the 1970s and 1980s.

19 Redebeitrag von Oberstleutnant Werner Groth über die Arbeit der Abteilung II der HV A auf der Delegiertenkonferenz der Parteiorganisation der SED der HV A am 16.1.1986; BStU, MfS, MfS ZAIG/Tb/5.

20 Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, *The CIA and American Democracy* (New Haven, London, 1989), 229–30 (same in the 3rd ed., 2003).

At the same time, it provides some details about the profile and importance of every single one of these contacts (without revealing their real names, however, since SIRA operated only with codenames and registration numbers. The real names of sources can be found with the help of the Rosenholz files). Today, the SIRA database, divided into five sub-databases, is part of the Stasi archive.[21]

By analyzing the SIRA database, one can find out, for example, how many HV A sources continually delivered information from the West: In 1982, there were 484; in 1985, 551; and in 1987, 573 sources delivering at least ten pieces of information in the respective year.[22] This is indeed an *increasing* number, but it is increasing because of a rise in economic espionage, which has its own rules. However, if one concentrates only on those agents who delivered information concerning politics in general and military politics, the result is very different: In 1982, there were 223; in 1985, 215; and in 1987, 197 sources delivering at least ten pieces of information in the respective year.[23] This gives a clear indication of the decline in political espionage in the 1980s.

The SIRA database also reveals how many of these sources served at least 15 years: Again, taking the HV A sources from all fields of HV A intelligence together, the situation looks relatively stable. One can see that in 1982, 22 percent of HV A sources had served at least 15 years, in 1985 it was 26 percent, and in 1987 it was 24 percent. Yet in the field of political espionage and military politics, the figures once again tell a different story, and, indeed, a story of an aging workforce: In 1982, 27 percent of the sources had served at least 15 years, in 1985 it was 32 percent, and in 1987 it was 34 percent.[24]

These statistics prove that the problem of recruiting new agents described by Werner Groth in his speech in 1986 was real: The number of active sources was declining, but the mean age of these sources was increasing. So political and military political espionage in the HV A actually was stagnant in the 1980s.

Conclusion

The HV A, the GDR's foreign intelligence agency, could not act in isolation from general developments. It was shaped both by domestic and Western changes and reactions. To be sure, the HV A remained very efficient until the end, in spite of the symptoms of crisis presented here. Yet it is evident that its development corresponds to the development of the East German state. Just as the German

21 SIRA sub-database 11 was used to register information from economic espionage, SIRA sub-database 12 was used to register information concerning politics in general and military politics, SIRA sub-database 13 was used to register information about special aspects of Western infrastructure, SIRA sub-database 14 was used to register counterintelligence information, and SIRA sub-database 21 was used to register some formal information about every single source.

22 According to the Rosenholz files, the HV A was running a net of around 1,500 sources or agents in West Germany in 1988, but a lot of them were not delivering information.

23 These numbers are taken from SIRA sub-database 12.

24 The percentages of sources that had served fifteen or more years are directly related to the numbers in the first two cases. For example, the 34 percent of political espionage agents who had served fifteen years or more in 1987 derives from the 197 HV A political espionage sources that delivered at least ten pieces of information that same year.

Democratic Republic faced increasing problems in the 1980s, so, too, did its intelligence service. Similarly, like the East German political leadership, HV A leadership failed to come up with a new strategy to react to the problems of the 1980s and remain successful. Thus, it is indeed merely a legend and not truth to say that the HV A was immune to the crisis of communism but merely lost the battle because of the breakdown of the East German state. In reality, both the GDR and its secret service underwent a crisis in the 1980s.

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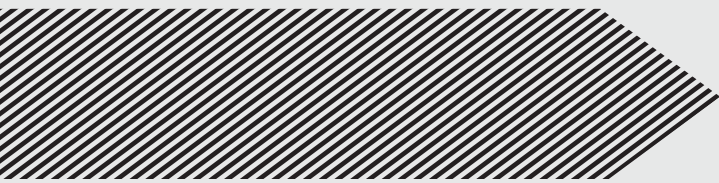
The Hauptver-waltung A and the KGB

BRUDERORGANE: THE SOVIET ORIGINS OF EAST GERMAN INTELLIGENCE

Benjamin B. Fischer

The East German foreign intelligence service, the Hauptverwaltung A (Main Directorate A, hereafter HV A), is the stuff of legends. "It was probably the most efficient and effective service on the European continent," claimed Markus Wolf, who headed foreign intelligence for thirty-four years.[1] A boast to be sure, but many observers believe he was the most successful spymaster of the Cold War.

There is no gainsaying the HV A's feats, but the East Germans had a little help from their adversaries. Officials in Washington, London, and Bonn not only underestimated the HV A's prowess; they also were largely ignorant of its size, efficiency, and contribution to Soviet intelligence. Warning signs went unheeded. In 1959, for example, an East German defector claimed that the HV A was on its way to becoming the premier espionage service in the Eastern bloc with 2,000–3,000 agents in West Germany.[2] He was ignored. The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) wrote off East Germany as a "backwater" of little or no intelligence interest.[3] As a result, the HV A became a stealth weapon of the Soviet KGB (Committee for State Security), flying under the radar of Western intelligence and wreaking tremendous damage in the process. In several espionage trials of HV A agents after the Cold War, presiding judges declared that the information they provided Moscow might have meant the difference between survival and defeat in the event of war, as serious a damage assessment as one can imagine.

Soviet intelligence and its Warsaw Pact allies referred to each other as *Bruderorgane*, brotherly or fraternal services. The HV A, however, was first among equals. "We were Moscow's prime ally," Wolf declared. Former Soviet officers, perhaps with grudging respect, have tipped their hats to the East Germans. One declared that the HV A was "even more successful than the KGB."[4] Another said that the HV A "had so deeply penetrated the West German government, military, and secret services that about all we had to do was lie back and stay out of Wolf's way."[5] Never one to hide his light under a bushel, Wolf himself once bragged that he had enough West German politicians on his payroll to form his own bipartisan faction in the Bundestag.[6] Even his former adversaries, with grudging candor but no respect, have acknowledged his successes. German authorities estimated

1   Markus Wolf with Anne McElvoy, *Man Without a Face: The Autobiography of Communism's Greatest Spymaster* (New York, 1997), xi.

2   Richard Meier, *Geheimdienst ohne Maske: Der ehemalige Präsident des Bundesverfassungsschutz über Agenten, Spione und einen gewissen Herrn Wolf* (Berlin, 1992), 197–203.

3   See Benjamin B. Fischer, "Deaf, Dumb, and Blind: The CIA and East Germany," in *East German Foreign Intelligence: Myth, Reality and Controversy*, ed. Thomas Friis, Kristie Macrakis, and Helmut Müller-Engbergs (London and New York, 2010), 48–69, 49.

4   Christopher Andrew and Oleg Gordievsky, *MORE Instructions from the Centre: Top Secret Files on KGB Global Operations 1975–1985* (London, 1992), 37.

5   Oleg Kalugin with Fen Montaigne, *The First Directorate: My 32 Years in Intelligence and Espionage against the West* (New York, 1994), 171.

6   "Meisterspion für zweimal A 13," *Der Spiegel*, January 6, 1992, 32.

that the HV A, by itself, provided some 80 percent of all Warsaw Pact intelligence on the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).[7]

Soviet Origins of German Intelligence

The HV A was a creation of Soviet intelligence. Its organization, bureaucratic culture, and ethos were more Russian than German, making it a hybrid German-Soviet intelligence service. Germans offered technical skills, discipline, and efficiency that the Russians typically lacked. Most important, they had entrée to the other half of the divided German nation just across the border that geographically defined the Cold War. For the East Germans, West Germany was the *Hauptfeind* (main enemy), a country they called simply the *Hauptoperationsgebiet* (Main Operational Area).

German espionage for the USSR, however, did not begin with the Cold War. Its origins reach back to the revolutionary upheavals following World War I. Lenin and his Bolshevik followers believed that their October Revolution in backward Russia, a predominantly peasant country, could not survive without revolutionary upheavals in the industrial West, where the large and well-organized working class would come to their aid. They pinned their hopes above all on Germany and prepared accordingly.[8] Posters in Moscow declared that "The German October is at the gates." The moment of truth came in 1923, when the Comintern (Communist International), the general staff of the Soviet world revolutionary movement, and Soviet intelligence funded and incited an uprising led by the German Communist Party (Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands, KPD).[9]

The German proletariat, however, refused to throw off its chains, as Bolshevik theory had predicted. The ill-conceived revolt fizzled, and Germany remained a capitalist country until it became the Third Reich. Not all was lost, however. As one of the top Soviet operatives in Europe noted:

> When we saw the collapse of the Comintern's efforts, we said: "Let's save what we can of the German revolution." We took the best men developed by our Party Intelligence . . . and incorporated them into the Soviet Military Intelligence. Out of the ruins of the Communist revolution we built in Germany for Soviet Russia a brilliant intelligence service, the envy of every other nation.[10]

7 "Die Gussen kommen," *Der Spiegel*, March 16, 1992, 129.

8 Bogdan Musial, *Kampfplatz Deutschland: Stalins Kriegspläne gegen den Westen*, 2nd ed. (Berlin, 2008), 26–27, 62–67.

9 Bernd Kaufmann, Eckhard Reisener, Dieter Schwips, and Henri Walther, "Die 'Revolution' wird organisiert (1923)," *Der Nachrichtendienst der KPD 1917–1937* (Berlin, 1993), 57–93.

10 David J. Dallin, *Soviet Espionage* (New Haven, 1955), 92.

The KPD created its own covert intelligence service, the KPD-Nachrichtendienst, in 1921. It spied on the Weimar government; the Reichswehr, the small defense force permitted under the terms of the Treaty of Versailles; and other political parties and paramilitary units of rightwing nationalist organizations. After 1923, however, the KPD became increasingly involved in spying for the Soviet Union and facilitating Soviet espionage in Germany and the rest of Europe.[11]

The trajectory of the KPD intelligence service followed and reflected changes in the USSR. After Stalin rose to power by eliminating the Old Bolsheviks, he foreswore the idea of revolution in Europe and in 1928 set out on a course of "building socialism in one country" as the USSR's strategic objective. The following year, the Comintern declared that "war and the danger of war" in Europe was imminent. All communist parties were obliged to accept Moscow's "iron discipline" and join in a *Waffenbruderschaft* (alliance of comrade-in-arms) to defend the USSR as "the center of the world revolution."[12]

Historians debate whether the Soviet war scare was genuine or contrived, but its impact on the KPD was quite real. In preparation for an impending civil war at home and an "imperialist war" in Europe, the KPD created a new clandestine organization, the Abteilung Militärpolitik (Department of Military Policy), which also was known by cover names such as AM-Apparat, Kippenberger-Apparat after its leader Hans Kippenberger, "Alex," and "Adam-Apparat."[13] Increasingly, the KPD was forced to serve Soviet interests rather than its own and to support the Soviet Union's forced-pace industrialization and massive armaments buildup.[14] "The KPD-Nachrichtendienst became essentially the product, the main instrument, and ultimately the victim of Bolshevization [more appropriately of Stalinization]."[15] At Moscow's direction, KPD leaders were purged and replaced with true Stalinists. The Germans' tragedy was twofold. Many were arrested, tortured, and murdered in Hitler's concentration camps, and many others who fled to the Soviet Union suffered the same fate during Stalin's blood purges. Kippenberger was one of first refugees executed in Moscow in 1937.

Germans Spying on Germany for Russia

Germany suffered little damage during World War I. Its industrial infrastructure had not only remained intact; it was the envy of the world, especially in the production of iron and steel, chemicals,

11 Kaufmann et al., "Spionage für die Sowjets," in *Der Nachrichtendienst der KPD 1917–1937*, 163–66.

12 Ibid., 173.

13 Ibid., 179–80.

14 Ibid., "Spionage fur die sowjetische Rüstungswirtschaft," 200–203.

15 Ibid., 9.

and electricity. Within a few years, with KPD support, the volume of industrial and military-technological secrets purloined and sent to Moscow became "an avalanche" of information on chemical formulas and production methods, blueprints, and prototypes. The effort was so sweeping and so efficient that "Moscow often knew about a new German invention before it went into serial production."[16]

Trials involving industrial espionage linked to the Soviet Union give some indication of the scope and magnitude of the KPD-Soviet effort. In 1928, German courts tried some 300 to 360 cases. In 1930, the number soared to more than 1,000.[17] Even these numbers, however, understate the real situation. Because Weimar Germany maintained good diplomatic and trade relations with the Soviet Union, and also because the Reichswehr was conducting covert military training and weapons R&D there, Berlin often turned a blind eye to such transgressions.[18] Many cases never reached the courts, and some egregious incidents were tried *in camera* and the records sealed so as not to disturb relations with Moscow. Moreover, the German criminal code did not treat industrial snooping as espionage. Hamstrung, the courts could only apply a weak statute on "unfair competition," which provided for light sentences of one to three months. Finally, in 1932 the Reichstag issued a new law that called for three-year terms in cases of routine industrial espionage and five years if a foreign power was involved. The Nazis replaced it with the death penalty.

Rabkors and Russia-Goers

In addition to party members who worked in industry, the KPD could call on sympathizers and fellow travelers to acquire information for Moscow. One especially rich source came from the so-called *rabkor* or worker-correspondent movement after the Russian term ***rab****ochii* ***kor****respondent*. Instigated by the USSR, communist press organs in Europe and the United States collected information from industrial workers on labor relations and working conditions. The *rabkor* movement, however, was actually a cover for espionage. The KPD was the first party in the West to implement the *rabkor* movement, which by 1928 had several thousand members, many more than Great Britain, France, and the United States.[19] In Germany, the movement was known as *Betriebsberichterstattung* and its practitioners as *Betriebsberichterstatter*, or simply BBs, both terms being literal translations from Russian.

16 Dallon, *Soviet Espionage*, 76.

17 Ibid., 76–77.

18 The treaty placed restrictions on the size and armaments of the Germany army or "defense force" (Reichswehr). Weimar Germany and Soviet Russia, the two "pariah countries of Europe," reached an agreement under which the former conducted research and development of tanks, poison gas, and military aircraft in the latter, far away from the eyes of Entente inspection teams. See Manfred Zeidler, *Reichswehr und Rote Armee 1920–1933: Wege und Stationen einer ungewöhnlichen Zusammenarbeit*, 2nd ed. (Munich, 1994); and Aleksandr M. Nekrich, *German-Soviet Relations: Pariahs, Partners, Predators* (New York, 1997).

19 Dallin, *Soviet Espionage*, 86.

The "best brains" in Soviet military intelligence ferreted out industrial and military secrets to accelerate the USSR's armaments program.[20] The KPD routinely collected classified information on German armaments R&D and production and on the Reichswehr, which it occasionally exposed in the communist press before passing it on to Moscow.

Communists, at least overt members of the KPD, were banned from the army and military industrial and research facilities. Ordinary workers who comprised the basis of the BB movement had neither the access nor the capability for reporting on sophisticated military technology and R&D programs. With guidance from Moscow, however, the KPD found a solution by recruiting German scientists, engineers, and technicians who had no record of communist sympathies or affiliation.[21] A primary source was the so-called Russia-Goers movement, unemployed Germans who sought work in the Soviet Union. The Soviets pored over applications submitted at their embassy and trade mission in Berlin, looking for suitable candidates. Once recruited, the Germans were steered toward finding jobs in Germany rather than in Russia while spying for Soviet intelligence. A secretary and KPD member at the Soviet trade mission ran a dummy employment agency used to screen and recruit Russia-goers.[22]

The German-Soviet Intelligence Hybrid

The KPD worked for three Soviet organizations: the KGB, the Fourth Department of the Red Army (later the Glavnoye Razvedyvatel'noye Upravleniye, or GRU, Russia's largest foreign intelligence agency), and the Western European Bureau of the Comintern, which was based in Berlin.[23] For security purposes, the Germans referred to the intelligence services as the "two girls" or "Grete" for the KGB and "Klara" for Krasnaya Armiya or Red Army.

German collaborators proved to be essential to the success of Soviet intelligence during the 1920s and 1930s. As one historian observed:

> With their proverbial precision, discipline, and incomparable technical skills, the German members of the apparat were quick to learn the methods of *conspiratsia*; indeed, they improved upon them, and in more than one way outdid their teachers.[24]

20 For an account of Soviet military espionage, see "5. Military Targets," in Dallin, *Soviet Espionage*, 112–19; and Kaufmann et al., "Spionage für die sowjetische Rüstungswirschaft," in *Der Nachrichtendienst der KPD 1917–1937*, 200–203.

21 Kaufmann et al., "Betriebsberichterstattung," in *Der Nachrichtendienst der KPD 1917–1937*, 194–200.

22 Dallin, *Soviet Espionage*, 85–86.

23 From 1923 to 1934, Soviet foreign intelligence was reorganized and renamed twice. The more familiar term KGB is used here, although it did not become the official name until 1954.

24 Ibid., 87.

German support to Soviet intelligence "was enormous, exceeding in quantity the contribution of all other non-Russian components of the apparat abroad; in quality it exceeded even the Russian core itself."[25] The HV A saw itself as the heir and lineal descendant of the KPD intelligence service, and, like their predecessors, the East Germans often outperformed Soviet intelligence during the Cold War.[26]

For all their contributions, however, the German communists received little credit from Moscow, and many of those who fled to the USSR to escape Nazi persecution ended up in the Gulag or KGB execution chambers. Stalin decimated about 70 percent of the KPD exile community. Some of those who survived, however, became Soviet citizens and rose to high ranks in Soviet intelligence and in the Comintern. They returned to their homeland on the coattails of the Red Army in 1945, where they became the founding fathers of East German intelligence.

Present at the Creation

In 1951, Markus Wolf, who was posted to Moscow as the *chargé d'affaires* of the East German embassy, was recalled to East Berlin. There he was summoned to a meeting with Anton Ackermann, the state secretary in the foreign ministry and, more important, a member of the ruling Politburo of the Socialist Unity Party (SED) in the recently established German Democratic Republic (GDR). Ackermann told Wolf that he was being assigned to a new intelligence unit in the ministry, which would report directly to Ackermann himself. An organizing session was held on September 1, 1951, in a safehouse in Bohnsdorf, an East Berlin suburb. HV A officers celebrated that date as the founding of their service.

The new unit's official name was the Foreign Policy Intelligence Service (Außenpolitische Nachrichtendienst, APN).[27] The APN was a clandestine organization; its very title and existence were classified. No one outside of a small circle of officials in the USSR and the GDR had ever heard of it until after the Cold War. Old habits die hard; in his memoir Wolf refused to "break cover" and referred to the APN by its cover name, the Institute for Economic-Scientific Research (Institut für Wirtschaftswissenschaftliche Forschung, IWF).[28]

The APN/IWF was a new organization, but it did not lack for talent or experience. The founding fathers, all veteran communists from the prewar KPD underground, included Richard Stahlmann

25 Ibid., 92.

26 Bernd Kaufmann et al., *Der Nachrichtendienst der KPD 1917–1937*, 11.

27 The following account of the APN is based on Peter Richter and Klaus Rösler, *Wolfs West-Spione: Ein Insider-Report* (Berlin: Elefanten Press Verlag GmbH, 1992), 13–30; Meier, *Geheimdienst ohne Maske*, 145–60; Peter Siebenmorgen, *"Staatssicherheit" der DDR: Der Westen im Fadenkreuz der Stasi* (Bonn, 1993), 114–15; and Wolf, *Man Without a Face*, 43–48.

28 Wolf, *Man Without a Face*, 44. Wolf evidently did not remember that he had already revealed the APN in a previous publication. See *In eigenem Auftrag: Bekenntnisse und Einsichten* (Munich, 1991), 267.

(pseudonym of Artur Illner) and Robert Korb. Stahlmann was a legendary figure in the international communist movement, a brilliant operative who had run Comintern operations in Scandinavia, the Balkans, and China. Korb was a gifted political analyst, who had served as personal secretary to Georgy Dmitrov, the Bulgarian expatriate head of the Comintern.

Also present at the first organizing session were Gustav Szinda, Gerhard Hentschke, and Gerhard Heidenreich. Szinda had served in Stalin's foreign intelligence service, the Comintern, and the Soviet-backed International Brigades during the Spanish Civil War. He and Hentschke fought with Soviet partisans behind enemy lines during World War II. Heidenreich, another KPD veteran and protégé of SED leader Walter Ulbricht and Ulbricht's future successor, Erich Honecker, was head of the East German youth organization, which screened candidates for the new intelligence service. To protect the APN's covert status, even within SED ranks, officials referred to it as the Heidenreich-Apparat, since Heidenreich was openly known as the head of the SED youth organization. Wolf represented the rising generation of young communists, all devoted Stalinists, as did Werner Großmann, who would succeed Wolf in 1986 as only the second head of the HV A during its entire existence.

Soviet intelligence played a dominant role in the APN/IWF. Four Soviet intelligence officers were present at the organizing session. Soviet officers were omnipresent as "advisers," guiding its operations and making sure that the Germans carried out Moscow's orders. As Wolf noted, "Our Soviet advisers played a strong, even domineering role." The APN was "an exact mirror of the Soviet model"; its structure and operational guidelines were based on verbatim translations from Russian documents.[29]

KGB oversight of the HV A and its parent organization, the Ministry for State Security (MfS), remained in place throughout the Cold War. A Soviet-East German protocol from 1978 revealed that Soviet officers were issued passes that allowed them unrestricted access to MfS and HV A offices, files, and technical equipment. The KGB also reserved the right to recruit East German citizens without informing the Ministry.[30]

The APN/IWF was created to fill a gap in the SED's information on West Germany and the Western Allies' intentions in the unfolding

29 Wolf, *Man Without a Face*, 46.

30 "Pingpong für Spione," *Der Spiegel*, February 17, 1992, 86.

East-West conflict. It also had critical implications for Soviet policy. In the early stage of the Cold War, Germany, not the United States, was the cynosure of Stalin's foreign policy, as it had been in the prewar period. The Soviet dictator's greatest fear was that the Western powers would rearm and integrate the new West German state, founded in 1949, into an anti-Soviet alliance. This became a self-fulfilling policy after Stalin ordered the 1948-1949 blockade of West Berlin and gave the green light for North Korea to invade South Korea in 1950. NATO was formed in 1949, and Bonn became a full-fledged political and military member in 1955.

The IWF provided non-alerting commercial cover for espionage. Its overt mission was to facilitate interzonal trade between the Soviet, American, British, and French sectors of East and West Germany, which was still flourishing before the erection of the Berlin Wall. Access to West Germany was secured by opening a "research" branch in Frankfurt and an East-West Trade Corporation (Ost-West Handelsgesellschaft) in Hamburg.[31] In addition to political and military intelligence, East German operatives were tasked with collecting information on nuclear weapons, nuclear energy, chemistry, electrical engineering, electronics, aviation, and conventional weapons. These intelligence requirements were of little interest to East Berlin but of overriding concern to Moscow. With the exception of nuclear issues, they were reminiscent of Soviet tasking of the KPD in prewar Germany.

By 1952, APN/IWF had a staff of 200 officers. Ackermann was the chief, and Stahlmann and Szinda were his deputies.[32] The latter two were in charge of day-to-day operations and divided responsibility for managing several main departments and subordinate branches. The main departments included political and military intelligence; economic intelligence; evaluation and requirements, under Korb; and administration. Wolf was initially assigned as Korb's deputy but soon took over a small counterintelligence unit. Heidenreich headed the personnel department.

In December 1952, Wolf was summoned once again to the SED Central Committee building, this time by none other than Ulbricht himself. Ulbricht told him that Ackermann had asked to be relieved of his duties for health reasons.[33] "We have decided that you should take over the service," Ulbricht said — "we" meaning Ulbricht himself and the Politburo. Wolf was thirty years old. He was ordered to report directly to Ulbricht.[34]

31 Dallin, *Soviet Espionage*, 343–44.

32 See the table of organization, Appendix 8, in Siebenmorgen, *"Staatssicherheit" der DDR*, 316.

33 In fact, Ulbricht purged Ackermann both because he was a political rival and an advocate of a "separate German road to socialism," a heresy that Stalin did not tolerate as he was preparing to impose the Soviet model of a command economy and collectivized agriculture on the GDR.

34 Wolf, *Man Without a Face*, 55–57.

Wolf wondered why he had been chosen; he was not only young and inexperienced but also lacked high standing in the SED. He acknowledged, however, that "I am sure that my upbringing and connections with Moscow weighed heavily."[35]

Richard Stahlmann, the acting APN chief, was already sixty-one years old, but he gracefully accepted the role as Wolf's deputy. Years later, Wolf paid tribute to Stahlmann as his mentor, role model, and chief adviser, saying the veteran communist apparatchik was "the true organizer of our foreign intelligence" who had stood "side by side with Soviet intelligence."[36]

Mischa

Wolf represented the new generation of East German functionaries and the amalgam of German-Soviet intelligence. Born in 1923, he fled Nazi Germany to the Soviet Union with his mother and brother in 1934. His father, a physician, prominent playwright, and communist official, had arrived the year before. During the next eleven formative years of his youth, Markus became Mischa and in his own words "half Russian." The Soviet Union, he added, was "our second homeland [*Heimat*]."[37]

Wolf's life in clandestine operations began in 1943 at the age of twenty, when he was selected for admission to the Comintern school. It was a stroke of luck that allowed him to escape the vicissitudes of war, since the school had been relocated from Moscow to the safety of Kushnarenkovo, about sixty miles from Ufa. The timing was significant. After the defeat of the Germany army at Stalingrad during 1942–1943, Stalin realized that victory over Hitler's Germany was now a matter of time. He was planning for the postwar occupation and control of Germany, and he needed a cadre of young and reliable Germans to carry out his plans.

Wolf returned to his native country in 1945, a committed revolutionary determined to realize the prewar goal of a Sovietized Germany. He was a prodigy with prodigious ambition. A fellow exile and Comintern student described him as

> the type of very clever, calm official who stands in the background [*Hintergrund Funktionär*], who only regards as a game of chess everything that other comrades take seriously, that

35 Ibid., 57.

36 Meier, *Geheimdienst ohne Maske*, 147.

37 Alexander Reichenbach, *Chef der Spione: Die Markus-Wolf-Story* (Stuttgart, 2009), 49.

they fight for, that they are inspired by. "Background officials" seemed to be inspired by nothing and apparently nothing could shake their calmness. They confined themselves to working out the next tactical step cautiously and carefully. . . .[38]

Wolf stood out among the returnees, despite his youth, due to his fluency in Russian and his "sparkling contacts with the Soviets." Unusual perks underscored his status. Still in his mid-twenties, he was assigned a sumptuous country house on the Glienecker Lake away from the ruins of Berlin. His compatriots had to make do with lesser quarters and lower rations. Clearly, his Soviet masters were grooming Mischa for more important assignments.[39]

The APN/IWF suffered several setbacks on Wolf's watch, one of which could have ended his career. Several agents working in IWF cover offices in West Germany were caught spying.[40] Much more serious was the case of Gotthold Krauss, a former banker hired by the APN to work on economic intelligence who became a deputy department chief. He defected to the United States in April 1953, bringing with him copious information on APN staff officers, agents, and operations. "I took it as a heavy personal blow, and it made me realize that our young service was still far from secure," Wolf wrote years later.[41] Yet fortune smiled on him; his Soviet overseers overlooked the security breaches.

In 1953, the APN/IWF was disbanded; its staff and files were moved to the Ministry for State Security. Internal security and foreign intelligence were joined in a single ministry on the model of the KGB. Wolf's main department was designated HA XV. Two years later, HA XV was renamed HV A.

Germans Spying on Germany for Russia Redux

From its modest start in 1951, East German foreign intelligence hit its stride in the 1960s; registered spectacular successes in the 1970s; and became the preeminent Soviet bloc service in the 1980s. It almost certainly exceeded Soviet expectations.

Sheer numbers do not tell the whole story, but they indicate the scope and magnitude of the HV A's success in carrying out its main mission. The number of West Germans and West Berliners who spied for East Germany almost defies belief. The precise figures will never

38 Wolfgang Leonhard, *Die Revolution entlässt ihre Kinder* (Cologne, 1981), 576.

39 Reichenbach, *Chef der Spione*, 60.

40 Dallin, *Soviet Espionage*, 343–44.

41 Wolf, *Man Without a Face*, 58. Wolf misspelled Krauss's name and gave a spurious account of the defection, claiming that West German intelligence was in charge. In fact, Krauss had been in contact with the CIA in West Berlin since 1950 and planned his escape over the intervening years. Krauss attended Wolf's first staff meeting as chief of the APN, during which Wolf complained about the organization's poor security. See Benjamin B. Fischer, "Markus Wolf and the CIA Mole," *Center for the Study of Intelligence Bulletin* (Winter 2000): 8–9.

be known, but a rough estimate for the MfS and HV A from 1949 to 1989 ranges from 17,000 to 23,000.[42] The HV A accounted for about 6,000 agents during the same period. Some 3,000 agents were still active when the Berlin Wall fell. About half spied for the MfS and the East German army's intelligence service and the other half for the HV A. Five of every 100,000 West German citizens were "working clandestinely for the GDR."[43]

After reunification, a German counterintelligence official said, "You see the entire society was sort of infiltrated by hostile intelligence agents. We didn't understand that."[44] Between 1993 and 1995, Germany's federal attorney investigated 2,928 cases of possible espionage or treason by West German citizens. Some 2,300 of those were dropped. There were 388 indictments and 252 convictions. Sixty-six persons were sentenced to two years or more in prison. The longest sentence handed down was twelve years, but only a few served more than six. Eighty-five persons received sentences of one year or less, probation, or a monetary fine.[45]

The Soviet decision to exploit the East Germans' comparative advantage in spying on West Germany was vindicated many times over. Common language, geographical proximity, past history, and family and business ties all played a part. The main factor, however, was the large number of intelligence officers focused on a single target. The HV A employed 4,268 staff officers inside MfS headquarters, and another 800 were assigned to MfS offices in the GDR's fifteen administrative regions. The most important regional offices, such as the one in Leipzig, were located along the inner-German border, where they conducted operations to recruit and infiltrate agents into West Germany.

Soviet intelligence's largest foreign *rezidentura* (field station) before World War II was in Weimar Germany. The Soviet embassy on the famous Unter den Linden boulevard and the Soviet trade mission provided diplomatic status, and therefore legal cover, for intelligence officers. The Comintern's Western European bureau in Berlin was another base of operations that shielded intelligence operations.

After World War II, the KGB established a *rezidentura* in the East Berlin suburb of Karlshorst, the site of Nazi Germany's surrender to the Red Army. It became the largest in the world with a staff of about 1,000 officers.[46] About one hundred counterintelligence officers were posted to another office in Potsdam-Cecelienhof. By

42 Georg Herbstritt, *Bundesbürger im Dienst der DDR-Spionage. Eine analytische Studie* (Göttingen, 2007), 70.

43 Ibid., 84.

44 John Marks, "The Spymaster Unmasked," *U.S. News & World Report*, April 12, 1993, 42.

45 Robert Gerald Livingston, "Rosenholz: Mischa's Files, CIA's Booty," in *East German Foreign Intelligence*, ed. Friis et al., 70–88, 79.

46 Rita Sélitrenny and Thilo Weichert, *Das unheimliche Erbe: Die Spionageabteilung der Stasi* (Leipzig, 1991), 114.

itself, the *rezidentura* annually poured out as many intelligence reports as an entire KGB main directorate, and the *rezident* (chief of station) held a rank equivalent to that of a deputy director of intelligence in Moscow.[47]

What the Moles Knew

With a few exceptions, the HV A spied with impunity. Very few of its agents were caught, and the number of defections could be counted on the fingers of one hand. The main reason: HV A counterintelligence penetrated and neutralized West German intelligence and security agencies with "moles." There were moles, in some cases several of them, burrowed inside the BND (foreign intelligence); the BfV (domestic counterintelligence) and its state-level components (LfVs); the SS/BKA (state security department of the federal criminal police); the MAD (military counterintelligence); and the BGS (federal border security).[48] The three most damaging moles were Klaus Kuron, a senior BfV officer in charge of anti-GDR operations; Gabriele Gast, a senior Soviet affairs analyst with the BND; and the deputy chief of MAD, Col. Joachim Krase.

The impetus to recruit moles inside West German national security agencies resulted from one of the HV A's few setbacks and one the BfV's few successes. The HV A dispatched agents to West Germany as emigrants with false names and identities — called legends in intelligence jargon — who resettled in West Germany and West Berlin. Using computer analysis of records from the national network of residential registration offices, the BfV developed profiles of the "illegals." Codenamed "Anmeldung" (Registration), the operation netted several dozen agents. Arrests, however, were only part of the problem. Wolf had to recall many other illegals, and years of careful work and preparation were lost.[49]

After that setback, Wolf later claimed to have "concentrated everything on one objective: We must get inside their [West German] organizations so that the game is open again."[50] The HV A, according to a history compiled by former officers, carried out Wolf's orders with alacrity.[51]

Scientific and Technical Intelligence

Political intelligence was a top HV A priority. Beginning in the 1960s, however, acquisition of scientific and technical intelligence in the

47 Kalugin, *First Directorate*, 174.

48 See the List of Abbreviations.

49 K. Eichner and G. Schramm, *Konterspionage: Die DDR-Aufklärung in den Geheimdienstzentren* (Berlin, 2010), 110–13.

50 Berlin ADN 0708 GMT, September 29, 1991.

51 See Eichner and Schramm, *Konterspionage*, 110–13.

West became a paramount objective both for the GDR and even more so for the USSR.

In 1971, Wolf created a separate component, the Sector for Science and Technology (Sektor für wissenschaftliche-technische Aufklärung, SWT). SWT doubled in size within a few years. Its table of organization comprised five departments.[52] Three collected intelligence on basic research in nuclear, chemical, biological, and agricultural sciences; microelectronics, electro-optical components, lasers, and software; and vehicle manufacture, shipbuilding, aeronautics, and astronautics. The other two departments evaluated and reported the information and technology samples acquired by the operational departments.

SWT officers, most of whom held degrees in science and engineering, were the elite of the elite HV A, and their work was highly valued in East Germany and the Soviet Union. By the mid-1980s, SWT alone was annually acquiring an estimated 3,400 reports and samples of technology and equipment.[53] A review of the so-called Rosenholz files, HV A records obtained by the CIA and then shared with German counterintelligence, revealed that almost half of all agents were run by the SWT.[54]

Target NATO

Recruitment of West German citizens working at NATO headquarters near Brussels was another key HV A mission. Former officers claim that NATO was "an open book" for the HV A.[55] Starting in the mid-1960s, well-placed agents provided comprehensive knowledge of the Western alliance's military plans, intentions, and capabilities, often by purloining documents that reached East Berlin before or at the same time NATO's senior officials received them. HV A agents also provided a steady stream of information on Western armaments production and deployments, arms control policy, military-technological developments, and material and human resources, and identified the numbers and locations of all nuclear weapons deployed in Western Europe.[56] Agents also acquired copies of NATO's annual defense plans, as well as the defense plans of its member states. "We knew exactly the strengths and weaknesses of NATO. We could count down to the last soldier, tank, and aircraft," former HV A officers claim.[57] There were only two gaps on their list of intelligence requirements: NATO's nuclear-targeting plans, which they were forced to infer

52 See Appendix 17 in Siebenmorgen, *"Staatssicherheit" der DDR*, 326–27.

53 Sélitrenny and Weichert, *Das unheimliche Erbe*, 30.

54 Kristie Macrakis, "The Crown Jewels and the Importance of Scientific-Technical Intelligence," in *East German Foreign Intelligence*, ed. Friis et al., 185.

55 R. Rupp, K. Rehbaum, and K. Eichner, *Militärspionage: Die DDR-Aufklärung in NATO und Bundeswehr* (Berlin, n.d. [2011?]. See especially chapter 7.1: "Die NATO — ein offenes Buch für die HV A," 235–48.

56 Ibid., 11–12.

57 Ibid., 193.

from analysis of military exercises and documents, and NATO's General Defense Plan.[58]

The former officers were bragging but not exaggerating. Research based on some ten thousand pages of NATO documents acquired by the HV A and deposited in the German agency that oversees the archives of the former MfS, the BStU, supports their assertions.[59] The HV A's success was "striking."[60] From the late 1970s until the demise of the Soviet bloc, East German "human intelligence operations targeting the Western alliance evolved into one of the most successful enterprises by any communist intelligence service."[61] HV A agents had access to classified documents from NATO, the West German Ministry of Defense and Bundeswehr (Federal Armed Forces), US forces stationed in West Germany and West Berlin, and the American embassy in Bonn. The HV A also obtained information on a regular basis from every other member of the Western alliance.[62]

Target USA/CIA

Until the late 1970s, the Eastern European services worked under an explicit division of labor in which the KGB jealously guarded its primary status in targeting the United States and the CIA. Each allied service had to obtain KGB permission before developing an anti-US operation, and then the operation had to be cleared in advance by the KGB and serve KGB interests. By the turn of the decade, however, the division of labor had been revised. The HV A was allowed to hit off its own bat. As two ex-officers reported, "the HV A became increasingly engaged in targeting the US intelligence services under the solipsistic slogan 'the CIA is the main enemy; the West German intelligence services are our main target.'"[63]

Wolf explained his new hunting license by saying that "the Soviets believed that my country's forward geographic position in Europe and our immediate proximity to the American sectors of Berlin and Germany gave us certain advantages in penetrating the United States." The large US presence offered the HV A "a veritable smorgasbord of sources."[64] Only after the Berlin Wall had fallen and the GDR had collapsed did US intelligence discover that the HV A had netted dozens of American servicemen, businessmen, and students in West Germany and West Berlin.[65] Wolf's reputation soared in Moscow, and his officers began calling him the Eastern bloc's *rezident* for Western Europe.[66]

58 Ibid., 12, 236–37.

59 See the List of Abbreviations. The BStU has also been known as the Gauck-Behörde, after Federal Commissioner Joachim Gauck and as the Birthler-Behörde after Gauck's successor Marianne Birthler. In 2011, Roland Jahn replaced Birthler.

60 Bernd Schaefer, "The Warsaw Pact's Intelligence on NATO: East German Military Espionage against the West," 3; <http://www.hollings.net/Content/ParallelHistoryProject-STASIIntelligenceOn-NATO.pdf>

61 Ibid., 1.

62 Ibid., 3.

63 Richter and Rösler, *Wolfs West-Spione*, 55.

64 Wolf, *Man Without a Face*, 292–93.

65 Jamie Dettmer, "Stasi Lured Americans to Spy for E. Germany," *Washington Times*, November 14, 1994, A1.

66 Günter Bohnsack, *Die Legende stirbt: Das Ende Wolfs Geheimdienst* (Berlin, 1997), 60.

The chief HV A analyst of the CIA, Klaus Eichner, noted that "it was difficult to operate against the CIA without inside sources. But it was not impossible."[67] The HV A's solution was to dispatch double agents to the agency, i.e., agents pretending to work for the CIA while actually under East German control. The HV A term for double-agent operations was *Blickfeldmaßnahmen*, field-of-vision measures. Putting phony agents in the CIA's field of vision was one of the biggest intelligence coups of the Cold War. As Wolf noted in his memoir:

> By the late 1980s, we were in the enviable position of knowing that not a single CIA agent had worked in East Germany without having been turned into a double agent [after being caught by East German counterespionage] or working for us from the start. On our orders they were all delivering carefully selected information and disinformation to the Americans.[68]

Former senior CIA officials have confirmed Wolf's claim, acknowledging that all of their putative East German agents were doubles.[69] "We were batting zero" in East Germany, one noted. Another added, "They dangled people in front of us . . . [and] we wound up taking the bait."[70]

The double-agent deception had serious implications. For one thing, it meant that by controlling the agency's putative agents, the HV A neutralized an entire sector of Eastern bloc operations. For another, the East Germans ensured that the CIA knew no more and no less than what they allowed it to know. Disinformation was used to shape the agency's perception of East German realities. Another result was to tie up CIA resources with bogus agents while keeping the Americans away from genuine sources of information.[71]

Target Field Station Berlin

Field Station Berlin (FSB) was America's premier signals intelligence (Sigint) site during the Cold War. Located in the upscale Grunewald district in the British sector of West Berlin, it was perched atop the Teufelsberg (Devil's Mountain), an earth-covered mound formed from 25 million tons of rubble excavated from bombed-out Berlin. To outsiders, FSB's geodesic domes and protruding antennas made it look like a radar station. In fact, it was a gigantic listening post that offered a 115-meter, 360-degree vantage point from which to monitor Soviet and Warsaw Pact military forces and installations.

67 Klaus Eichner and Andreas Dobbert, *Headquarters Germany: Die USA-Geheimdienste in Deutschland* (Berlin, 1997), 103.

68 Wolf, *Man Without a Face*, 285.

69 "Testimony of Bob Inman, Hearings of the Commission on the Roles and Capabilities of the United States Intelligence Community": <www.fas.org/irp/commission/testinma.htm>; see also "Remarks of Former DCI Robert Gates to the CIA Conference 'US Intelligence and the End of the Cold War,'" Texas A&M University: <www.cia.gov/news-information/speeches-testimony/1999/dci_speech_111999gatesremarkshtml>

70 John Marks, "The Spymaster Unmasked," 41, 45.

71 See Fischer, "Deaf, Dumb, and Blind," 51, 54–60.

In the early 1980s, the HV A recruited an American sergeant, James W. Hall III, who was assigned to FSB as a member of the 766th Military Intelligence Battalion of the US Army's Intelligence and Security Command (INSCOM). This single recruitment would be enough to put the HV A in the record book of Cold War espionage. The East Germans were not fooled by FSB's cover story as a radar facility, but they underestimated its range, believing that it extended only as far eastward as Poland. Hall revealed that the Americans could eavesdrop on Soviet troops as far away as the western USSR.

Hall caused inestimable damage. He compromised vital US capabilities for gathering real-time intelligence on Warsaw Pact armed forces and providing early indications and warning of war. Markus Wolf claimed that Hall's treason "helped our service cripple American electronic surveillance of Eastern Europe for six years."[72] US officials confirmed that the operations Hall compromised went dead in the 1980s.[73]

Hall gave the HV A and KGB insight into the worldwide organization, locations, and operations of the US Sigint community. On just one occasion, he handed over thirteen documents from NSA, INSCOM, and the Pentagon's Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA). Wolf passed them on to MfS's Sigint directorate, whose evaluation concluded that:

> The material consists of some of the most important American signals intelligence directives . . . [and] is timely and extremely valuable for the further development of our work and has great operational and political value. . . . The contents, some of which are global in nature, some very detailed, expose basic plans of the enemy for signals collection into the next decade.[74]

Hall left West Berlin in late 1986 for a stateside post and a year later requested assignment to the 205th Military Intelligence Battalion in Frankfurt am Main, which supported the US Army's V Corps. The new job was a windfall for Hall and for the HV A. As Hall later confessed, he had access to "the same type of information as in Berlin, only more current, more state of the art."[75] His biggest haul was a complete copy of the NSA's National Sigint Requirements List (NSRL), which former HV A officers described as "a worldwide wish list" of intelligence requirements. The NSRL consisted of 4,000 pages that were kept in ten loose-leaf binders for continual updating.[76]

72 Wolf, *Man Without a Face*, 295–96.

73 Stephen Engelberg and Michael Wines, "U.S. Says Soldier Crippled Spy Post Set Up in Berlin," *New York Times*, May 7, 1989, A1.

74 Kristie Macrakis, *Seduced by Secrets: Inside the Stasi's Spy-Tech World* (New York, 2008), 111.

75 Stephen Engelberg, "Jury Hears Tale of Spy Who Did It out of Greed," *New York Times*, July 19, 1989, A10.

76 Macrakis, *Seduced by Secrets*, 105.

From 1982 to 1988, the HV A disseminated 232 intelligence reports attributed to Hall. Of those, 169 received the highest evaluation of I (very valuable), and 59 received a grade of II (valuable).[77] Ironically, Hall began spying for the KGB before the HV A recruited him. Eventually, the Soviets and East Germans compared notes and decided that they were running the same agent and paying twice for his information. Hall was given a choice: work for the KGB or the HV A but not both. He chose the East Germans.

Praetorian Guard of the Soviet Empire

During the 1980s, the KGB became increasingly dependent on the HV A for foreign intelligence, counterintelligence, and internal security inside and outside the Eastern bloc. The Soviet service was a spent force plagued by bureaucratization, poor morale, corruption, defections, expulsions from foreign countries, and an inability to recruit well-placed agents.[78]

The HV A set the precedent in Poland. The rise of Solidarity, the labor union that ballooned into a ten-million-strong national protest movement, sent shudders through the East German regime. The MfS and the HV A formed task forces aimed at thwarting the Polish "counterrevolution."[79] The HV A began targeting Solidarity as early as 1980.[80] Covert measures were used to sow distrust and discord within the union's ranks and discredit Solidarity as an alleged tool of Western subversion. The campaign escalated after December 13, 1981, when a military dictatorship under the command of Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski seized power, declared martial law, and outlawed Solidarity, driving it underground.

After Jaruzelski's coup, a task force of MfS and HV A counterintelligence officers arrived in neighboring Poland where it took over an entire floor of the East German embassy in Warsaw and operated from offices in consulates in Szczecin (Stettin), Gdańsk (Danzig), Wrocław (Breslau), and Kraków.[81] Along the East German-Polish border, the main land route used for delivering humanitarian aid from the West, the MfS controlled all traffic entering and exiting Poland, searching for printing equipment, radios, and other contraband being smuggled to Solidarity.[82] The task force recruited its own agent networks, intercepted mail, and conducted physical, audio, and video surveillance of Solidarity leaders and Catholic Church officials who supported it.

77 Herbstritt, *Bundesbürger im Dienst der DDR-Spionage*, 158.

78 Sélitrenny and Weichert, *Das unheimliche Erbe*, 115.

79 Markus Wolf, *Spionagechef im geheimen Krieg. Erinnerungen* (Munich, 1997), 335.

80 Wolf, *Man Without a Face*, 122-25.

81 Manfred Schell and Werner Kalinka, *STASI und kein Ende: Personen und Fakten* (Frankfurt/M and Berlin, 1991), 270.

82 Ibid., 122-25.

The HV A also pursued Solidarity leaders in the West. Using intercepted correspondence, it forged letters suggesting that exiled activists were enjoying the "good life" while their colleagues were living underground in Poland. Meanwhile, Wolf was tasked to spy on Western governments, political parties, and intelligence services, as well as Polish émigré organizations, all suspected of helping Solidarity.[83]

The East Germans failed to disrupt or defeat Solidarity, which survived underground and then arose, Phoenix-like, in 1988 and then won the first free elections held in the Eastern bloc in 1989. Yet, Moscow retained its confidence in the MfS and HV A. On its orders, more operations groups were deployed to Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Bulgaria, as well as to the USSR itself in Moscow, Leningrad, and Kiev.[84]

The last Stalinist regime in Eastern Europe and the once young but now aging Stalinists in the MfS and HV A became the Praetorian Guard of the Soviet empire. That empire, however, was crumbling under their feet. In just six months after Solidarity's electoral victory, all the other Eastern bloc regimes collapsed in "a chain reaction originating in the Polish revolt."[85]

New winds were blowing from Moscow, where the new Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, was trying, and failing, to reform the communist system at home and in Eastern Europe. During a visit to East Berlin in 1989, Gorbachev warned the SED regime to get on board with the reform movement. The warning was ignored. The East German people, meanwhile, took to the streets in silent protests until the Berlin Wall was opened and the communist regime fell, taking the HV A with it.

Final Thoughts

German reunification spelled the end of German-Soviet intelligence cooperation. For seventy years, Moscow benefited from a Fifth Column of Germans who spied on Germany for Russia. The German contribution to Soviet intelligence was considerable, a fascinating and still little-known subject in the history of intelligence, as well as the history of Germany and German-Soviet relations.

For all the contributions the KPD and the HV A made to Soviet intelligence, however, their blind devotion earned no gratitude from Moscow. Stalin ruthlessly purged the German communist exiles,

83 Wolf, *Man Without a Face*, 175.

84 Schell and Kalinka, *STASI and kein Ende*, 274–75; and Sélitrenny and Weichert, *Das unheimliche Erbe*, 116.

85 Constantine Pleshakov, *There Is No Freedom Without Bread!: 1989 and the Civil War that Brought Down Communism* (New York, 2009), 6.

who had helped him build an industrial base and the armed might that defeated Hitler's Wehrmacht and paved the way to the USSR's rise as a world power.

If the East Germans expected Soviet gratitude, they, too, were disappointed. Facing the prospect of indictment in the new Germany, Wolf had two choices: an offer from the CIA of "a considerable sum of money" and resettlement in the United States, or flight to Moscow, "the city of my childhood . . . where a large part of my heart had always remained."[86] He chose the second course. Once there, however, he found "no great rush of comradely support." Indeed, the KGB was in no position to help, since "the supposedly eternal brotherhood to which we had raised our glasses down the years was now a ragged band."[87] Wolf pleaded directly to Gorbachev: "We were said to have made a great contribution to your security. Now, in our hour of need, I assume that you will not deny us your help."[88] Gorbachev never replied. He was too busy trying to save what was left of a ragged Soviet Union.

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[86] Wolf, *Man Without a Face*, 10-15, 4-5.

[87] Ibid., 4-5.

[88] Ibid., 7.

Contexts   Stasi and East
German Society   Stasi and
SED State   Hauptverwaltung A:
Insights   **Hauptverwaltung A
and KGB**

COOPERATION BETWEEN THE HV A AND THE KGB, 1951–1989

Paul Maddrell

This chapter examines the relationship between the foreign intelligence service of the German Democratic Republic (GDR), the Hauptverwaltung A (Main Directorate A, or HV A) and the First Chief Directorate (FCD) of the Soviet Union's Committee of State Security (Komitet Gosudarstvennoi Bezopasnosti, KGB) and how it changed over time from the early 1950s until the GDR's collapse in 1989–90.[1] It analyzes cooperation in intelligence collection and in influence operations ("active measures," as both communist services called them), and considers the sense of identity of the intelligence officers on both sides that underpinned this cooperation.

Both the HV A and FCD were foreign intelligence services that collected clandestinely obtained information (human intelligence, known as Humint) from networks of agents abroad. They also sought to influence the politics of the states they targeted. They were relatively small divisions of large security agencies — the KGB, in the FCD's case, and the Ministry of State Security (Stasi, standing for Ministerium für Staatssicherheit), in the HV A's case. The Stasi was a security and intelligence service built on the Soviet model: domestic security and foreign intelligence collection were inseparable from one another. The objectives of the state security service were the maintenance of communist rule at home and destabilization of the "class enemy" abroad. In the GDR's case, the main "class enemy" was the Federal Republic of Germany (or West Germany), which was far and away the HV A's main area of operation.[2]

The basic aim of HV A-FCD relations was the communization of Germany. The FCD collaborated with the HV A to infiltrate and subvert the Federal Republic. The FCD's policy towards the Federal Republic was no different from its policy towards any other Western or non-aligned state: infiltration and subversion. However, the FCD did not have to operate alone against the Federal Republic; the GDR was a natural bridgehead. West Germany could most easily be infiltrated and subverted by East Germans. This led to the creation of the HV A in 1951. Thereafter, the FCD cooperated closely with it.

In short, like the other satellite services, the HV A played a role in the geographical division of the labor of undertaking intelligence

1   The HV A bore the letter "A" in emulation of the FCD's status within the KGB as the *First* Chief Directorate: see Helmut Müller-Enbergs, *Hauptverwaltung A (HV A). Aufgaben — Strukturen — Quellen* (Berlin, 2011), 41.

2   Peter Siebenmorgen, *"Staatssicherheit" der DDR. Der Westen im Fadenkreuz der Stasi* (Bonn, 1993), 98–100.

collection and subversion. The HV A was the most important satellite intelligence service, partly because it was the most successful of them and partly because it operated against the most important Western European state, the Federal Republic. The HV A's areas of operation were the Federal Republic and West Berlin, certain regions of Third World and, to some extent, the USA. It was successful in collecting in West Germany a huge amount of valuable political, economic, military, scientific, and technological information. The consumers of this information in the GDR proved less able to make good use of it. The HV A also had some limited success in influencing West German politics.

The HV A was more than a foreign intelligence service. It was a secret instrument by which the GDR's communist regime sought to interfere in and influence politics in West Germany. Its intelligence collection was meant to alter the balance of power between East and West in favor of the former. Intelligence collection from spies was its main task. What it chiefly sought from them were classified documents. At its peak, in the 1970s and early 1980s, its intelligence collection focused above all on obtaining political information on the Federal Republic's government and political parties; political and military information on alliances of which the Federal Republic was a member, chiefly the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Economic Community (EEC); and scientific and technological intelligence (S&TI), above all scientific research and data relating to advanced weaponry. By this time, it was collecting much valuable information on American targets in West Germany and West Berlin, although the Federal Republic always remained its principal target. As this tasking shows, it was very much a Soviet vehicle for strengthening the Warsaw Pact and its weaponry against the NATO threat. The S&TI collected was used in Soviet and East German weapons development. The military intelligence collected was passed to the GDR's armed forces and the Soviet Ministry of Defense. In practice, the HV A collected intelligence for the Soviet Union's General Staff, Ministry of Defense and military-industrial complex, via the KGB residency in Karlshorst.[3]

The HV A also engaged in counterintelligence, seeking to penetrate hostile intelligence services — those of West Germany, the United States and other NATO states — to gain intelligence on their operations and capabilities. It was very successful in penetrating West Germany's foreign intelligence service, the Bundesnachrichtendienst

3   Jens Gieseke, *Der Mielke-Konzern. Die Geschichte der Stasi, 1945–1990* (Munich, 2006), 218.

(Federal Intelligence Service, BND), and security service, the Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz (Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, BfV), and severely impaired their ability to operate effectively against the GDR. Above all, the HV A's counter-intelligence successes protected its own spies in West Germany: its agents in the counter-intelligence units of the BND and BfV revealed to it any developing security risk. The HV A also conducted extensive subversion and disinformation, particularly in West Germany. It was active outside Europe, sending advisers and instructors to selected Third World countries and national liberation movements.[4]

The Forms Cooperation Took

The relationship between the HV A and the FCD developed over time. A relationship of dependence and subordination had, by the late 1950s, given way to a more equal relationship, which was maintained until the HV A was dissolved in 1990 and KGB officers were allowed by the government of the Federal Republic to destroy most of the HV A's archive.

Most cooperation between the FCD and the foreign intelligence services of the Soviet Union's satellite states took place bilaterally. There were also multilateral conferences every four years, involving all the Eastern European services and the Cubans as well. The last was in East Berlin in 1988.[5] Multilateral conferences on the subject of active measures took place every year; there were many bilateral meetings as well.

Bilateral cooperation ensured that the Russians dominated the relationship and cooperation served principally their interests. For this reason, cooperation in all fields between the Soviet Union and its satellites tended to be bilateral. There was no alliance organization which united the intelligence services of all the satellites, serving as a counterpart to the Warsaw Pact Organization.[6] Nor was there one type of bilateral relationship between the KGB and the satellite services. Relations between them varied in closeness. The KGB's relationship with the Bulgarian Interior Ministry was even closer than its relationship with the Stasi and was one of complete subordination; the ministry was a dependency of the KGB. The Stasi was not only responsible to the KGB, of course; the leadership of the GDR's ruling communist party, the SED, also had a large say in intelligence matters.[7]

4   Siebenmorgen, *"Staatssicherheit" der DDR*, 120–21.

5   Werner Großmann, *Bonn im Blick* (Berlin, 2001), 160. The states whose intelligence services met there were the USSR, the GDR, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Cuba, Vietnam, and Mongolia (Romania was not invited).

6   Siebenmorgen, *"Staatssicherheit" der DDR*, 107.

7   See the chapter by Walter Süß in this volume.

The FCD's superiority over the HV A was both intellectual and practical. The East German officers were from the origins of their service steeped in the intelligence tradition of the Soviet Union. The sense of identity which Soviet intelligence officers had was passed on to them. Since the GDR was a communist state, they were committed to serving the cause of communism. Soviet intelligence officers regarded themselves as the Communist Party's élite special fighters, or "Chekists" (after the first Soviet security and intelligence service, the Cheka, which was founded just after the Russian Revolution took place in November 1917). It was their job to spread the revolution.[8]

The HV A's subordination to the FCD was also practical. Plans for intelligence collection and active measures were drawn up by the leaderships of the HV A and FCD in Moscow. The FCD, as the senior partner, had the larger say in them. Above all, they served the interests of the USSR.

Cooperation took many forms. Firstly, annual plans were prepared in Moscow, for influence operations ("active measures") as well as foreign intelligence collection. This reflected communist practice in both the USSR and the GDR; everything was planned. The HV A leadership liaised with the FCD leadership and then passed on instructions to the various divisions of the service. Each department in the HV A dealt with its FCD counterpart and agreed on operations. Each also reported on operations and their success. Naturally, the FCD reported this success on to its leadership as its own, which created resentment among HV A officers. The FCD was a very bureaucratically minded partner: every operation planned by the HV A had to be made known to it by a proposal or at least by letter. Nevertheless, cooperation was genuine. The FCD laid down the general character of operations, and the HV A devised operations that fit this bill.[9]

Cooperation extended beyond the planning stage. There were joint operations, both in Humint collection and active measures. There were also operations running in parallel. Each side, in time, learned from the other. In the 1950s, the HV A, like the rest of the Stasi, learned its trade from the KGB, but the FCD proved willing to learn from its East German partners as well. The HV A and the rest of the Stasi also gave much valuable assistance to FCD operations to penetrate the Federal Republic. For example, they supplied the Karlshorst residency with East German "illegals" and agents.[10]

8   Jens Giesecke, *Die hauptamtlichen Mitarbeiter der Staatssicherheit: Personalstruktur und Lebenswelt, 1950–1989/90* (Berlin, 2000), 127–28.

9   On the nature of this cooperation, see David Childs and Richard Popplewell, *The Stasi: The East German Intelligence and Security Service* (Basingstoke, 1996), 124–26; Hubertus Knabe, *Die unterwanderte Republik. Stasi im Westen* (Berlin, 1999), 113–16; Müller-Enbergs, *Hauptverwaltung A*, 108. See also Markus Wolf, *Spionagechef im geheimen Krieg: Erinnerungen* (Munich, 1997), 332.

10 Dirk Dörrenberg, "Erkenntnisse des Verfassungsschutzes zur Westarbeit des MfS," in *Das Gesicht dem Westen zu …: DDR-Spionage gegen die Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, ed. Georg Herbstritt and Helmut Müller-Enbergs (Bremen, 2003), 88. "Illegal" was the Soviet intelligence term for an agent with a false identity in a targeted country who thus had no apparent connection to the Soviet government.

The HV A also handed over huge quantities of intelligence, much of it high-grade, to the FCD. This was a one-sided arrangement; the Russians gave little in return.[11] Almost all important information was sent to the FCD directly by the collection and analysis departments of the HV A.[12] Indeed, the Federal Republic was the only Western state on which the FCD received more high-grade intelligence from a partner service than it collected itself. The identities of the HV A's intelligence sources or agents of influence were all that it concealed from the Russians.[13] However, the KGB had its own network of sources in both the GDR and the Stasi and learned much that was not officially reported to it.[14]

Liaison and visits to one another were important to cooperation. An indication of how valuable the FCD considered liaison with the HV A to be is that its liaison officers were posted to East Berlin for long periods of time (usually about five years). Liaison was as one-sided as the transfer of intelligence. The FCD officers had HV A identity cards and could therefore visit the HV A department for which they were responsible whenever they wanted to. However, the HV A's officers could not visit the KGB headquarters in Berlin-Karlshorst whenever they wanted to. The KGB leadership also discouraged its staff from having private dealings with HV A officers. "German-Soviet friendship" was more propaganda than reality. Communication between the FCD and HV A was very frequent, however. The latter received correspondence about operations from Moscow every day.

The Development over Time of Cooperative Work between the HV A and FCD

Although the HV A's relationship with the FCD became a more equal relationship at the end of the 1950s, it never became one of full equality or partnership; the East Germans remained junior partners of the Russians.

There were no partner intelligence services in the USSR's satellite states in the years immediately after 1945. Neither satellite regimes nor satellite intelligence agencies had come into being, and the USSR's intelligence agencies operated alone. Soviet intelligence policy was then far-sighted and long-term. As Moscow saw it, the Second World War was over, but the international class struggle was not. From the Soviet zone of Germany, the KGB's forerunner, the MGB, pursued a policy of mass infiltration of agents into the

11 There are examples of information flow in the other direction. From the late 1960s to the late 1980s, the FCD supplied the HV A every month with intelligence assessments: see Müller-Enbergs, *Hauptverwaltung A*, 145. The FCD also provided intelligence obtained from its penetration agents in Western secret services to the counterintelligence services of the Soviet bloc, including the Stasi, so that they could arrest Western spies. Intelligence obtained from Kim Philby and George Blake, the FCD's agents in Britain's Secret Intelligence Service, and Heinz Felfe, its agent in the BND's forerunner, the Gehlen Organization, was used in 1953-55 to do severe damage to those services' spy networks in the GDR: see Paul Maddrell, *Spying on Science: Western Intelligence in Divided Germany, 1945–1961* (Oxford, 2006), 145.

12 Gieseke, *Der Mielke-Konzern*, 218; Günter Bohnsack, *Hauptverwaltung Aufklärung. Die Legende stirbt* (Berlin, 1997), 65-67.

13 Bohnsack, *Hauptverwaltung Aufklärung*, 35. There seem to have been exceptions to this rule. The Russians were very impressed by the intelligence provided by a parliamentary whip of West Germany's Social Democratic Party, Karl Wienand, and made an unsuccessful attempt to recruit him: see Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The Mitrokhin Archive: The KGB in Europe and the West* (London, 1999), 589-90.

14 Günter Bohnsack and Herbert Brehmer, *Auftrag: Irreführung. Wie die Stasi Politik im Westen machte* (Hamburg, 1992), 41.

Western Occupation Zones. The USSR's military intelligence service, the GRU (Glavnoye Razvedivatelnoye Upravleniye: Main Intelligence Directorate), which was subordinate to the Ministry of Defense, was also very active in infiltrating agents into Western Europe. American military intelligence interrogators in West Germany concluded in 1947 that the GRU was trying to create a large network of agents in Western Europe operating under commercial cover. One of the interrogators involved, Arnold Silver, has described this network as "a model of long-range, meticulous operational planning by the GRU."[15]

The East German communist regime founded a foreign intelligence service in 1951. It was called the Außenpolitischer Nachrichtendienst (Foreign Political Intelligence Service, APN) and was directed by the Politburo member and Deputy Foreign Minister Anton Ackermann. Placing the APN under his leadership followed Soviet practice: then the Soviet Union's foreign intelligence services were all under the control of the Committee of Information (Komitet Informatsii, KI), which was chaired by the USSR's Foreign Minister (then Andrei Vyshinsky).

The APN's task was to assist Soviet espionage. To begin with, it was little more than a local branch of the FCD. Until the late 1950s, Russian "advisers" largely ran the Stasi and the other GDR intelligence services.[16] Though called "advisers," they were in reality directors and instructors. In 1953, the APN was incorporated into the Stasi as its Hauptabteilung XV (HA XV: Main Department XV). After the popular uprising of June 1953 in the GDR, the Stasi was itself made subordinate to the Interior Ministry. This, again, followed the example of the USSR, where intelligence and security were again merged in one ministry, the MGB, which had itself, like the Interior Ministry, been brought under the control of one man, Lavrenti Beria. There was a further reorganization of the Stasi in the mid-1950s, as a result of which the HA XV was in 1956 renamed the HV A.

The APN used the cover name Institut für Wirtschaftswissenschaftliche Forschung (Institute for Economic Research, IWF). Its tasking was to gather economic and political information, mainly by penetrating ministries, political parties, and trade unions in Bonn. This intelligence collection was meant to give knowledge of the class enemy's plans for the GDR and of the Federal Republic's domestic politics and its relations with its allies.[17]

15 Arnold Silver, "Questions, Questions, Questions: Memories of Oberursel," *Intelligence and National Security* 8, no. 2 (1993): 199–213, 210.

16 In addition to the Stasi and APN, there was also a military intelligence service in the GDR. This was the Verwaltung Aufklärung (Intelligence Directorate) of the Nationale Volksarmee (NVA), the intelligence department of the GDR's armed forces (VA/NVA). In other words, it was the counterpart to the Soviet armed forces' GRU.

17 Siebenmorgen, *"Staatssi-cherheit" der DDR*, 112–13, 124.

This tasking changed with the creation of the Warsaw Pact in 1956 and the onset of the thermonuclear revolution. In 1955, the Soviet Union tested its first true thermonuclear weapon, its counterpart to the hydrogen bomb tested by the United States in 1952. The FCD and GRU were under strong pressure from the Soviet General Staff to obtain military and scientific and technological intelligence (S&TI) in the West. The HV A was required to play a role in this intelligence collection. In fact, military intelligence was more important to the USSR — as a military superpower that would bear the brunt of any war with the United States and its allies — than it was to the GDR. The GDR's need for such intelligence was smaller: it wanted it to prevent war and to stir up opinion against the armed forces based in West Germany.[18] Nor, in the mid-1950s, did the GDR have much of a defense industry that could exploit the S&TI gathered in West Germany and other Western countries.

An era of genuine liaison began in the late 1950s. The HV A's officers were partners rather than subordinates. Soviet "advisers" were now called "liaison officers." This was a reward for the success the HV A had begun to achieve. The HV A officers' self-confidence grew. The Russians saw this and gave the service more freedom of action. In the wake of the uprisings in East Germany and Hungary, Soviet policy was to treat the satellites more as equals.[19] However, the FCD always received more from the HV A than it gave. It was always a condescending and mean senior partner. The HV A, like the rest of the Stasi, operated independently, but under close Russian supervision. The Russians had to be informed of whatever was being done. Cooperation was close and served chiefly the interests of the Soviet Union. For example, the FCD was very secretive in its dealings with the HV A's S&TI collection division, the Sektor Wissenschaft und Technik (SWT). It was very interested in the information the division collected but provided none itself. It did make prospective agents available to it to assist its work (from which the FCD, of course, expected to benefit).[20] In the 1980s, the HV A's intelligence reporting department, Abteilung VII, provided the FCD with nine times as many assessments as it received in return.[21]

The HV A's success in obtaining valuable intelligence grew considerably in the 1960s and 1970s. By this time, the high-level penetration by the Soviet Bloc's intelligence services of foreign governments, civil services, intelligence communities, and armed forces was more successful in the Third World than in Western countries. Thanks

18 Ibid., 127-28.

19 Roger Engelmann, "Diener zweier Herren. Das Verhältnis der Staatssicherheit zur SED und den sowjetischen Beratern 1950–1959," in *Staatspartei und Staatssicherheit. Zum Verhältnis von SED und MfS*, ed. Siegfried Suckut and Walter Süß (Berlin, 1997), 51-72, 71-72.

20 Werner Stiller, *Beyond the Wall* (McLean, Virginia, 1992), 103-105.

21 Müller-Enbergs, *Hauptverwaltung A*, 145.

to the HV A, the Federal Republic was the main exception to this rule. The HV A had unique opportunities of penetrating it.[22] This was the severest security problem any Western state faced during the Cold War. West Germany's intelligence and security services were comprehensively defeated. They were progressively penetrated by HV A agents and, by the late Cold War, their effectiveness against the HV A and the rest of the Stasi had been severely reduced.[23]

The United States also had a security problem. This was caused less by the ideological attraction of communism than by mercenary motives; some Americans proved willing to betray secrets for money. So the FCD did achieve successes against it and particularly against its intelligence community, armed forces, and defense contractors. Indeed, its penetration of the US intelligence community was most successful at the very end of the Cold War, when the success of the HV A was in decline. It was then that the devastating American traitors Aldrich Ames and Robert Hanssen were recruited.

However, on present evidence, after the very early Cold War, the FCD proved unable to achieve the HV A's success in collecting high-grade political intelligence on its "Main Adversary" ("Glavnyi Protivnik"), the United States. The KGB's residencies in the USA (and Britain) depended on recruiting low- to middle-ranking penetration agents with access to high-grade secrets. Its most valuable such agents worked, as a rule, for intelligence agencies or defense contractors and had no access to political information.

In the late 1960s, West Germany, like the United States and other Western states, decided to seek a less confrontational relationship with the Soviet Union and its bloc. The USSR decided that negotiations were worth pursuing. It therefore had greater need of political intelligence to guide it in its policy. The HV A's deepening penetration of the Federal Republic's government and political parties was valuable to it. Spies like Karl Wienand and Günter Guillaume, an assistant to the new Social Democratic Chancellor Willy Brandt, provided information demonstrating that Brandt's Eastern policy (*Ostpolitik*) was a genuine change in West German foreign policy. Wienand's intelligence on the SPD was much valued. The chairman of the SPD parliamentary party, Herbert Wehner (once a leader of the German Communist Party), spoke regularly to Stasi sources; a copy of the report on each conversation with him, edited and censored, was sent on to Moscow.[24]

22 Christopher Andrew and Oleg Gordievsky, *KGB: The Inside Story of Its Foreign Operations from Lenin to Gorbachev* (London, 1990), 427.

23 Maddrell, *Spying on Science*, 269; cf. Dörrenberg, "Erkenntnisse des Verfassungsschutzes zur Westarbeit des MfS," 85–88, 92–93, and 109.

24 Karl Wilhelm Fricke, "Ein 'Tschekist' als Zeitzeuge," *Deutschland Archiv* 5 (1997): 821; cf. Wolf, *Spionagechef im geheimen Krieg*, 195–96, 209. Wehner was not betraying the Federal Republic, and the Stasi did not regard him as its agent. Indeed, it considered him a dangerous enemy and tried to discredit him: see Knabe, *Die unterwanderte Republik*, 153–81.

The superpowers' move towards détente was, in part, a result of the ever-greater burden of the arms race.[25] The progress of science and technology was speeding up and rising in cost. Most advances took place in Western countries. The HV A was again valuable to the FCD since, by giving the Russians secret access to one of the world's most developed states, it made available to them a wide range of advanced science and technology. The Federal Republic rose steadily in importance as a target of S&TI collection. Consequently, the HV A's importance rose steadily as well. The expansion of its operations to collect S&TI served Soviet interests. The FCD was itself very active in collecting S&TI in West Germany (this was the job of its Line X, at the head of which stood FCD Directorate T). Line X sent agents recruited in East Germany into the Federal Republic to penetrate companies there. It was very successful in penetrating them. However, much S&TI was obtained from partner services: in 1980, just over half of the intelligence obtained by FCD Directorate T came from its partners, chief among them the HV A and Czechoslovakia's StB. In that year, 10 percent of the S&TI supplied by Soviet intelligence agencies to the USSR's Military-Industrial Commission was obtained in the Federal Republic.[26]

The collection of military intelligence was another important HV A task whose priority shifted consistently in accordance with Soviet strategic fears. In 1959 and 1968, intelligence collection requirements placed military targets in the Federal Republic, NATO, and the United States second in priority to political intelligence collection on the West. Most of the intelligence actually collected in this period concerned the Federal Republic.[27]

In the mid-1970s, the collection of military intelligence became the HV A's first priority. The Soviet regime and the KGB were alarmed at the rapid development of military electronics and the danger this created, as they saw it, of NATO attempting a surprise nuclear first strike. The rising popularity in American, West German, and Japanese politics of fierce critics of détente, such as Ronald Reagan and Franz Josef Strauß, also disturbed them. Consequently, it became the HV A's overriding priority to collect intelligence on American and NATO military strategy and weapons research, development, and production in the NATO states, including the USA. The priority of these states was now greater than that of the Federal Republic. In the 1970s and 1980s, military intelligence consistently represented about 30 percent of the intelligence collected by the HV A.[28]

25 For other causes, see Raymond Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations from Nixon to Reagan* (Washington, DC, 1985), 5–17.

26 Andrew and Mitrokhin, *Mitrokhin Archive*, 597.

27 Gieseke, *Der Mielke-Konzern*, 217–18.

28 Ibid., 219–21.

In the early 1980s, fear in Moscow of an American first strike went up another notch with the rise to political pre-eminence of the KGB's fearful chairman, Yuri Andropov. The KGB and GRU were in 1981 ordered to engage in a worldwide intelligence collection operation to obtain warning of any nuclear attack (the operation was code-named "RYaN," the Russian acronym for "Nuclear Missile Attack").[29]

The HV A was less afraid of an American first strike than the KGB but played its full part in "RYaN," intensifying its efforts to recruit West German and American military personnel and collect intelligence on targets in NATO and West Germany. Markus Wolf considered the operation "a burdensome waste of time."[30] Both he and his successor as chief of the HV A, Werner Großmann, claim to have persuaded Moscow by the mid-1980s that there was no immediate danger of a nuclear attack by NATO.[31] Whether this is true is uncertain; the intelligence collected by the HV A could have been interpreted in the opposite way, namely, as showing that the USA was trying to achieve a first-strike capability. This was the interpretation of the HV A's top spy in NATO, Rainer Rupp, and of Klaus Eichner, one of the HV A's experts on the US intelligence community.[32] The allocation of greater priority to military intelligence collection was not in the interests of the GDR; indeed, it conflicted with the state's interests. The SED regime fell owing to political unrest, not military attack. Nor did the HV A's greater efforts to obtain S&TI benefit the GDR significantly; this intelligence failed to stop the GDR's economic decline.[33]

Political intelligence supplied by the HV A remained valuable to the Russians in the late Cold War. Gabriele Gast, a BND analyst with responsibility for the Soviet bloc, provided it with BND analyses of the Solidarity resistance movement in Poland. This information demonstrated how much the West knew about Solidarity and what its view of the movement was. Wolf has commented that the information proved valuable to the Russians and East Germans in coping with Solidarity's emergence.[34] In the early 1980s, as the GDR's economic crisis deepened, its leadership showed more interest in intelligence on economic matters. The HV A duly collected more.[35] The service's main priority at this time was "RYaN" — that is, a task performed on behalf of the Soviet Union.

Intelligence Methods

The methods of the HV A and FCD were largely consistent through-out the Cold War and were those of the FCD, the HV A's parent and

29 On "RYaN," see Christopher Andrew and Oleg Gordievsky, eds., *Instructions from the Centre: Top Secret Files from the KGB's Foreign Operations, 1975–1985* (London, 1991), ch. 4.

30 Quoted in Andrew and Mitrokhin, *Mitrokhin Archive*, 596.

31 Wolf, *Spionagechef im geheimen Krieg*, 331–32.

32 Klaus Eichner and Andreas Dobbert, *Headquarters Germany. Die USA-Geheimdienste in Deutschland* (Berlin, 1997), 243–45.

33 Gieseke, *Der Mielke-Konzern*, 244–46.

34 Andrew and Mitrokhin, *Mitrokhin Archive*, 588–89.

35 Siebenmorgen, *"Staatssicherheit" der DDR*, 121.

teacher. Over time, they learned from one another, but the HV A inevitably learned more from the FCD than vice versa.

The HV A's most successful method was its exploitation of the migration of Germans and of cross-border connections between them, both of which required exploiting its own population. Though a foreign intelligence service, the HV A had domestic branches, called Abteilungen XV (Departments XV), in each district of the GDR that made thorough use of the numerous connections between East and West Germans.[36] The HV A was an all-German institution; it had informer networks both at home and abroad. The purposes of both were to secure and win advantages for the GDR.[37] Its approach towards West Germany was exactly the same as the FCD's approach towards Israel. Soviet Jews were, like Germans during the Cold War, a migrant and cross-border population. Both they and ethnic Germans living outside the Federal Republic represented a migrant and transnational community that Soviet and Russian intelligence agencies could exploit. They still do.

The USSR's intelligence agencies started exploiting the migration of Germans and Jews as soon as the Second World War ended. US military intelligence in West Germany concluded in the late 1940s from its interrogations of defectors from Soviet intelligence and of agents that the MGB was recruiting thousands of Germans in what was then the Soviet Zone of Occupation to migrate to West Germany, settle there, and pursue careers in politics, science, the press, academic life, business, banking, trade unions, the police, security services, and so on. The MGB's aim was the penetration of every sector of West German life over the long term.[38] The HV A continued this policy as soon as it was established in 1951.[39] Most of the MGB's agents signed recruitment statements and were told that they would be contacted when they had established themselves in their careers. The Russians' attitude towards the agents was practical; they knew that, once in the West, few would honor their promises to spy. Their rule of thumb was that 10 percent of them might in future become useful agents.

Among the records that dissident FCD archivist, Vasili Mitrokhin, smuggled out of Russia to the West in 1992 were ones relating to just such spies. A spy code-named "Mark" was recruited in East Germany in 1946 by exploiting "compromising circumstances" arising from his service in the Wehrmacht. He fled to West Germany a few years later and pursued a political career. The FCD resumed contact with him in

36 See Müller-Enbergs, *Hauptverwaltung A*, 269–316.

37 Georg Herbstritt, *Bundesbürger im Dienst der DDR-Spionage: eine analytische Studie* (Göttingen, 2007), 99–103; Müller-Enbergs, *Hauptverwaltung A*, 21. See also Manfred Bols, *Ende der Schweigepflicht: Aus dem Leben eines Geheimdienstlers* (Berlin, 2002).

38 Silver, "Questions, Questions, Questions," *INS* 8, no. 2 (1993): 199–213, 206–207.

39 Dörrenberg, "Erkenntnisse des Verfassungsschutzes zur Westarbeit des MfS," 76.

1956 and maintained contact with him for the next 24 years. But, like many KGB agents in Israel, he seems to have provided no intelligence of significance; he clearly did not want to spy for the Russians.[40]

Soviet intelligence was at that time pursuing exactly the same policy with regard to Israel. In 1947, the Committee of Information, which then directed all the USSR's intelligence agencies, instructed its Middle and Far Eastern Department to ensure that the new state of Israel became an ally of the Soviet Union. Agent controllers duly recruited many agents among the Soviet Jews then emigrating to Israel. Many were scientists. The KGB continued to exploit Soviet-Jewish migration to Israel throughout the Cold War. However, its efforts seem to have been less successful than the HV A's exploitation of East German migrants to West Germany; many of the KGB's Jewish migrants did not honor their promises to betray their new country.[41] Israel seems to have established a stronger hold over them than did the Federal Republic over the HV A's spies; the HV A also seems to have selected and managed its agents well.

The HV A adopted the FCD's method of mass penetration via migration. Effective security was impossible in West Germany in the face of such a large inflow of migrants (some 3.25 million between 1949 and 1961). Several thousand spies could not be identified among them. Consequently, it is still impossible to say how many agents of the FCD, HV A, and other Eastern services there were in West Germany. The Law on the Stasi Records[42] has enabled only the spies of the HV A and the rest of the Stasi to be revealed. Those of the other Soviet Bloc services remain, for the most part, unidentified. The FCD's operations went beyond dispatching migrants into West Germany, of course. Its Karlshorst residency also supplied well-trained East German and Soviet "illegals" with false identities; these people were infiltrated into the Federal Republic via third countries.

Pursuant to the Law on the Stasi Records, the Stasi's informer network in the Federal Republic has been uncovered. Both the number of spies and their identities have been established. The spies reported to the HV A, to counterintelligence and security departments of the Stasi, and to the intelligence service of the Nationale Volksarmee (NVA, National People's Army). These services had forty years and a wealth of opportunities to build up their informer networks in the Federal Republic, which could maintain only a weak security regime to protect itself.[43] Between their creation in the early 1950s and dissolution in 1989-90, the East German intelligence agencies ran informer

40 Andrew and Mitrokhin, *Mitrokhin Archive*, 593.

41 Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The Mitrokhin Archive II: The KGB and the World* (London, 2005), 222–23, 231, and 233–34.

42 See http://www.bund.bstu.de

43 Dörrenberg, "Erkenntnisse des Verfassungsschutzes zur Westarbeit des MfS," 91–93.

networks among West Germans comprised of some 12,000 people, approximately 6,000 of whom reported to the HV A. A further 6,000 reported to other departments of the Stasi and to the Intelligence Directorate of the NVA.[44] However, the HV A owed its success not to the number of its spies, but to its skillful, well-planned recruitment of agents and their adroit infiltration into suitable targets.[45]

A further method of both the HV A and FCD was the exploitation of cross-border connections between East and West Germans. This did not involve migration; instead, an East German was used to recruit a West German as a spy. The HV A called these East Germans "the basis for operations provided by the GDR." A fundamental principle of the HV A was that the foreign connections of GDR citizens should be thoroughly exploited.[46] The GDR provided ideal conditions for exploiting such connections since it was not a country: it was only part of one.

The HV A exploited these cross-border connections more thoroughly after 1961, when the border in Berlin was closed. Thereafter, it was much harder for East Germans to migrate to the West. Moreover, those who did flee, being much fewer in number, were subjected to stringent security examination. Its Department XV in every GDR district liaised with the Stasi's security divisions and passed useful information to the HV A. Informers identified relatives in West Germany who might be valuable sources. The HV A was informed when promising people were going to visit the GDR.[47] Recruitments were made. However, as a rule the West Germans concerned did not prove to be successful spies. The reason was their very connection with citizens of the GDR: this made them security risks in the eyes of West German institutions, which meant that the spies had difficulty gaining access to secrets. There were exceptions to this rule, though. In a recent study, the cases of 499 West German spies were researched. Of these, 51 were considered to be "Spitzen-IM" (high-grade sources). Ten of these 51 were recruited in the GDR owing to their family connections there.[48]

A celebrated method of the HV A was romantic compromise by "Romeo" spies. Agents were sent into West Germany to seduce lonely women, often secretaries working for important ministries like the Defense Ministry or for the President's Office. The agents' instructions were to obtain information over the long term by developing romantic relationships with these women. The originality of this method should not be exaggerated. Sexual compromise had long

44 Herbstritt, *Bundesbürger im Dienst der DDR-Spionage*, 84.

45 Siebenmorgen, *"Staatssicherheit" der DDR*, 130–31.

46 Bohnsack, *Hauptverwaltung Aufklärung*, 97.

47 Siebenmorgen, *"Staatssicherheit" der DDR*, 100.

48 Herbstritt, *Bundesbürger im Dienst der DDR-Spionage*, 220.

been a favorite Soviet method of blackmailing a targeted person into becoming a spy. Its limitation was that it yielded an unstable relationship with the spy, who often provided intelligence for only a short time. Markus Wolf preferred romantic compromise because it promised intelligence over the long term. This is, in fact, the only example of the HV A developing and improving on Soviet intelligence tradecraft. It was so obviously a promising method that the FCD copied it: from the late 1950s, the Russians initiated a "secretaries' offensive" of their own, using East German illegals. They successfully penetrated West German ministries and intelligence agencies.[49]

Joint Soviet-East German "Active Measures"

In the field of influence operations ("active measures," in Soviet parlance), the HV A's practice was, again, that of the FCD. Indeed, the active measures units of all the satellite services used the same methods as the Russians. News agencies were established to send information to opinion-makers; suitable documents were passed to confidential contacts; leaflets were distributed; books published; letters written; and propaganda press conferences staged. For instance, HV A agent William Borm, a member of the Bundestag, ran a news agency that published political news, including information supplied by the HV A. The FCD's disinformation department, Service A, supplied materials for use in these operations. Examples are parts of the diaries of Joseph Goebbels, which Service A handed over in the 1970s in the hope that they would help the HV A revive the fading memory of Nazism. The HV A's Abteilung X (Department X), created in 1966, also prepared its own materials. It was established to enable the HV A to assume responsibility for active measures campaigns from other Stasi departments, especially the Agitation Department (Abteilung Agitation). The FCD was behind this change.[50] The two units, whose operations were closely coordinated, worked according to bilateral annual plans for joint operations.

The Federal Republic was, of course, the HV A's main target, just as the USA was the FCD's main target. Both Western states were important disinformation targets. The FCD's disinformation effort against the United States was huge, conducted worldwide, and started as soon as World War II ended.

The HV A's very good agents and contacts in West German politics, government, and the media were its greatest strength. It utilized these people in influence operations, just as it exploited them to

49 Andrew and Mitrokhin, *Mitrokhin Archive*, 581.

50 Müller-Enbergs, *Hauptverwaltung A*, 131.

obtain intelligence. It sought people well suited to influencing West German public opinion ("multipliers," as it called them), using them to infiltrate a very wide range of Stasi-created propaganda materials into West German public life.

These joint campaigns against the USA and West Germany focused on their role in the West's alliance systems; their relations with the Third World; and their relations with one another. The two services sought consistently to exacerbate differences between the United States and the Federal Republic, thus damaging their cooperation in all major fields. The HV A carried out varied active measures against NATO, especially against the least committed NATO members (countries such as Portugal, Greece, and Denmark). In the 1970s, it made considerable efforts to destabilize Greece and Portugal as they made their way out of military dictatorships.[51] While joint FCD-HV A operations largely concerned matters of foreign policy, operations conducted by the HV A alone concerned the internal politics of the Federal Republic.[52]

Being inherently political, the HV A's active measures followed political trends. In the 1950s and 1960s, East German propaganda campaigns (like those of the FCD) concentrated heavily on damaging the reputations of West German politicians by presenting them as neo-Nazis, revanchists, and lackeys of American capitalism. As fuel for its campaigns, the Stasi used Wehrmacht, SS, and Nazi Party records seized by the Soviet army in 1945. Its standard method was to mix authentic archival information with falsehoods to damn the pasts of leading figures in West German politics, business, and the armed forces. Typical publications of this kind were the so-called *Braunbuch* (Brown Book) and *Graubuch* (Grey Book) made public, officially, by the GDR's National Front.[53]

By the mid-1960s, the Soviet Union was moving towards détente with the United States and its allies. The Soviet leaders saw the international political situation as less tense. Therefore, the active measures of the FCD and HV A became more constructive. They were aimed at encouraging support for Willy Brandt's new *Ostpolitik*. The HV A sought above all to undermine the political position of the West German conservative parties, the CDU/CSU, which opposed détente, and thus to ensure that the Soviet Union got the best terms possible in the Eastern treaties. One operation of the period was OV "Schwarz" ("Black"), a package of active-measure campaigns against leading right-wing politicians in West Germany, such as Franz Josef Strauß, Rainer Barzel, Kurt Kiesinger, and the Federal President, Heinrich Lübke.[54]

51 Knabe, *Die unterwanderte Republik*, 110–16; Müller-Enbergs, *Hauptverwaltung A*, 170–79.

52 Andrew and Mitrokhin, *The Mitrokhin Archive*, 577.

53 Nationalrat der Nationalen Front des Demokratischen Deutschland, *Braunbuch. Kriegs- und Naziverbrecher in der Bundesrepublik* (Berlin, 1965); idem, *Graubuch. Expansionspolitik und Neonazismus in Westdeutschland* (Berlin, 1967).

54 Knabe, *Die unterwanderte Republik*, pp. 118–20. This was a big, long-lasting operation against varied targets. Black is the color of the CDU/CSU.

According to the 1967 plan agreed between the two services, a dozen joint operations were to be carried out that year, designed above all to discredit the Federal Republic internationally. Leading politicians and civil servants were to be discredited with information about their Nazi pasts (Operation "Nazi Camarilla"). SPD politicians on the moderate wing of their party were to be discredited. The Federal Republic's relations with the United States were to be worsened. American involvement in the Vietnam War (and West Germany's support for it) were to be condemned.[55]

From the mid-1960s, active measures were also more subtle. Instead of putting across a crude anti-fascist message, they were concerned with encouraging disarmament (Operation "Mars") or weakening NATO (Operation "Flank"). The communists' long-term objective was to encourage Western European states to leave NATO. Much effort also went into aggravating differences between the two great Western European partners, West Germany and France (Operation "Discord"). Another strong strand in influence operations was the mobilization of Third World and non-aligned countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America against the United States (Operation "Forward"). These operations continued until the end of the Cold War. The FCD and HV A made consistent efforts to influence the conferences of the Non-Aligned Movement, to incite Third World countries to resist "the rich USA," and to discredit the International Monetary Fund (IMF).[56]

The HV A carried out influence operations across the political spectrum. It had many agents and contacts in the SPD whose job was to encourage the party down the road to détente. Left-wingers in the party were encouraged to push the party towards confrontation with the CDU/CSU. The HV A also sought to discredit media outlets and figures hostile to the GDR. Increasingly, it carried out influence operations to hamper the work of the Western secret services, such as OV "Dschungel" (Jungle), which was launched in the late 1960s.[57] It was later expanded so that all the satellite intelligence services contributed to it, which signaled its importance to the FCD. Over time, the HV A's efforts to harm the BND were successful in sowing mistrust and concern about its reliability among the latter's foreign partners.[58]

The mid-1970s represented the peak of détente in Europe. Its centerpiece was the Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. The Stasi feared the subversive influence that greater contact with West Germany might have on East Germans.[59] Consequently, détente led to no decline in active measures; only their

55 Knabe, *Die unterwanderte Republik*, 110–16.

56 Bohnsack, *Hauptverwaltung Aufklärung*, 35–40.

57 Bohnsack, *Auftrag: Irreführung*, 34.

58 Ibid., 80–81.

59 Gieseke, *Der Mielke-Konzern*, 88–92.

targets changed. The human rights provisions of "Basket Three" of the Helsinki Final Act of 1975 stimulated human rights activists in the Soviet Bloc and unsettled the Communist rulers. Accordingly, the FCD and HV A directed their active measures against human rights organizations and activists. The HV A's greater focus on the GDR opposition continued into the 1980s, when it undertook active measures to intimidate dissidents who had been expelled to West Germany and to discredit dissidents and peace activists in the GDR itself. The HV A was also then heavily involved in supporting the West German peace movement and damning NATO and its missile deployments in Western Europe.

The HV A and FCD made joint efforts in the 1980s to encourage the peace movement in West Germany and other Western states. Likewise, efforts to discredit the United States by planting stories about American planning for a nuclear war in Europe (Operation "Tsunami") in the media were conducted together. This operation lasted almost ten years. The two services released many secret American documents (some genuine, others forged) purporting to show that the United States was planning a nuclear first strike. This was a brother operation to "RYaN."[60] There was a joint operation in 1979-80 to discredit Franz Josef Strauß as the CDU/CSU's candidate for Chancellor (Operation "Cobra-2"). It had no effect on the result of the federal elections of 1980 (which Strauß and the CDU/CSU lost), though the FCD claimed that it had.[61] However, the main targets of active measures in the 1980s were the secret services of the West; OV "Dschungel" continued. In this respect, influence operations very much pursued an objective of secondary importance, not a major political aim.[62]

The FCD consistently exaggerated the success its active measures had achieved. In the early 1980s, its most important influence operation was to stir up opposition among West Germans to the deployment of American medium-range (MRBM) and intermediate-range (IRBM) ballistic missiles in the Federal Republic. The SPD did vote in 1983 to oppose this deployment. The FCD claimed credit for this in its reports to the Soviet leadership. However, the claim is an implausible one.

The HV A was successful in causing scandals in West German politics and aggravating differences within and between West German political parties.[63] However, there is no adequate evidence that its influence operations changed the political course of the Federal Republic. For example, the peace movement failed to prevent the

60 Bohnsack, *Auftrag: Irreführung*, 220.

61 Andrew and Mitrokhin, *Mitrokhin Archive*, 595.

62 Ibid., 876n113.

63 For further examples of such scandals, see Dörrenberg, "Erkenntnisse des Verfassungsschutzes zur Westarbeit des MfS," 80-82.

deployment of MRBMs and IRBMs. A possible exception to this rule is the failed CDU/CSU vote of no confidence in Brandt's coalition government in April 1972. The motion (which failed by two votes) might have succeeded in toppling Brandt if the HV A had not bribed a CDU deputy, Julius Steiner, to vote with the government. However, public support for Brandt's policy was strong enough for him to have stood a good chance of winning any election that might then have ensued. His coalition government did indeed win a larger parliamentary majority in the federal elections of November 1972.[64]

The Chekist Identity

Cooperation between the HV A and FCD rested not only on joint plans and methods but also on a shared communist identity. This was a special form of proletarian internationalism: the HV A officers saw themselves as members of a transnational élite of communist security officials, the brotherhood of Chekists. This identity was an idealized self-image, made up of two parts: one Russian and one German. The first part was that a Stasi officer was a defender of the great communist transformation of the world that had begun with the Russian Revolution in 1917. Stasi officers identified with the Soviet Union as the home of the communist revolution and the leader of the international working class. They saw themselves as part of the élite of that working class. The HV A officers therefore accepted subordination to the FCD.

Added to this was the second part of their identity: an anti-fascism encouraged by the Second World War, the disastrous defeat of Nazism, and the construction of a socialist society in the GDR. Communism had particular significance for some Germans after 1945: Stasi officers were taught that it had redeemed Germany from its horrific past and ensured that Germany would not start another war. Consequently, their self-image required them to be furiously hostile toward the Western capitalist states, or "imperialists," as they called them. "Imperialism" was seen as a malevolent and permanently conspiratorial force seeking to undermine communism, the true faith. The HV A's task, as a foreign intelligence service, was to uncover these malevolent and illicit activities. Like FCD (and other KGB) officers, HV A officers tended to exaggerate the importance of the Western intelligence services in their governments' policy-making towards the Soviet Bloc, even though they had plenty of information about the Western intelligence communities.[65]

64 Andrew and Mitrokhin, *Mitrokhin Archive*, 579–80; Knabe, *Die unterwanderte Republik*, 15–17.

65 Gieseke, *Die hauptamtlichen Mitarbeiter der Staatssicherheit*, 127–28; Silke Schumann, "Die Parteiorganisation der SED im MfS 1950–1957," in *Staatspartei und Staatssicherheit*, ed. Suckut and Süß, 105–28, 115–16.

At the very top of the HV A, there was a sense of being Russian as well. Markus Wolf regarded himself as part Russian (having been a Soviet citizen as a young man). The HV A officer Hans Knaust (formerly a diplomat with Wolf in the GDR's embassy in Moscow) once aptly called Wolf "a Russian" and "Moscow's station chief in Western Europe."[66] An affinity with Russia prevailed among the senior officials of the entire Stasi in the first half of its existence. Many of the men who led it then had lived in exile in the Soviet Union in the 1930s and 1940s or had at least received "military-political" training there. The Stasi was then quite small and easy for them to dominate. Among such people, in addition to Wolf, were the minister himself, Erich Mielke, and senior officers like Richard Stahlmann (the first deputy head of the APN), Gustav Szinda (another senior foreign intelligence officer), and the APN's first head, Anton Ackermann.

However, this Russian identity grew weaker over time. The Stasi developed into a huge, elaborately structured bureaucracy staffed by people who had been born and raised in the GDR. Of the Stasi's ruling group at the end of the 1970s — Mielke, Bruno Beater, Rudi Mittig, Günter Kratsch, and others — only Mielke had lived in Russia.[67] Often the Stasi's staff were children of existing or former officers, which increasingly strengthened a German identity in the organization. Indeed, Mielke, with his love of discipline, uniforms, and weapons, gave it a very military and almost Prussian character. Consequently, Stasi officers suffered a dismal fate after 1990: culturally, they were entirely German but were rejected by their own country. Some tried to cultivate a Jewish identity to replace the communist one, so as to exchange the status of a perpetrator of crime for that of a victim. An HV A officer I interviewed, Herbert Brehmer, emphasized his Jewishness to me. He went out of his way to tell me that his grandfather, a Polish Jew by birth, had been murdered by the SS in Sachsenhausen camp in 1940. Both Brehmer and Markus Wolf visited Israel after the GDR's collapse.[68]

In reality, the HV A was more committed to proletarian internationalism than the KGB. The KGB was anti-Semitic and nationalist. The HV A subordinated national pride to loyalty to the Soviet Union. Its hostility toward Zionism concealed some anti-Semitism, though it was not as conspicuous as in the KGB's case.[69] From the late 1930s, the KGB was deeply anti-Semitic; for most of the Cold War, it was the most anti-Semitic section of the Soviet government. Until the end of the Cold War, there was a total ban on Jewish entrants to it; not

66 Bohnsack, *Hauptverwaltung Aufklärung*, 64.

67 Siebenmorgen, *"Staatssicherheit" der DDR*, 104.

68 Interview with the late Herbert Brehmer, formerly of the HV A Abteilung X, 5 July 2008.

69 See Gieseke, *Der Mielke-Konzern*, 55.

even half-Jews were allowed to join.[70] (Markus Wolf, whose father was Jewish, would not have been allowed to join when he was a Soviet citizen. Bizarrely, Wolf was utterly loyal to it throughout his life, which reflects his devotion to Marxism-Leninism.) The national minorities deported to Siberia during World War II (Chechens, Crimean Tartars, and others) were not permitted to join it, either.[71]

The KGB's anti-Semitism was clear to those who knew it. After the Six-Day War of 1967, Wolf found it "fixated on Israel as an enemy."[72] Its anti-Semitism colored its view of everything. During the Prague Spring of 1968, the KGB regarded the Czechoslovak reform movement as the result of a Western conspiracy directed by Western intelligence services using Zionist agents. During the Polish crisis of 1980-81, the FCD interpreted the prominence of Jews in the Solidarity trade union's leadership as evidence of a Zionist conspiracy.[73] In the 1970s and 1980s, the KGB considered international Zionism to be one of the main (perhaps *the* main) vehicle for ideological subversion in the USSR. Many KGB officers believed that Western capitalism was controlled and directed by Jews. Zionism was second only to the United States as a target for KGB active measures.[74]

Conclusions

The HV A's success in creating a large agent network in the Federal Republic that provided intelligence from every major part of West German society was exceptional among the performances of communist intelligence services against Western states. Western states maintained a high level of security for most of the Cold War, so the communists' efforts to collect Humint and Comint (intelligence from electronic communications) achieved less against them than against Third World states.

Western states also had educated populations, freedom of speech, and wary media, so communist active measures were less effective in them.[75] The KGB achieved many of its successes in active measures targeting Third World states. The HV A's success against West Germany was similar to the KGB's against India (thanks to rife corruption there): numerous agents provided information from within government ministries, intelligence agencies, and the police; and there were agents also in the press who channeled FCD propaganda into Indian public life. India in the 1970s was probably the arena for more FCD active measures than any other country in the world. By contrast, in some important NATO countries (Italy, for example), the

70 Andrew and Gordievsky, *KGB*, 5, 348.

71 Ibid., 514.

72 Markus Wolf, *Man Without a Face* (London, 1997), 257.

73 Ibid., 484–85.

74 Andrew and Mitrokhin, *Mitrokhin Archive II*, 237.

75 Gieseke, *Der Mielke-Konzern*, 245.

FCD was able to plant little more than 1 percent as many articles as it placed in the Indian press.[76]

The main intelligence successes of the HV A and the rest of the Stasi were as follows. First, their counterintelligence collection was effective. They deeply penetrated the West German intelligence services and frustrated their operations against the GDR. Western intelligence services collected no significant Humint in the GDR in the 1980s. They relied heavily on technical intelligence collection. The West German government did not realize in the late 1980s that the GDR was on the point of collapse; the disappointing performance of its intelligence services was one reason for this.[77] Secondly, the HV A's military intelligence collection was successful, at least up to a point. Within its region of responsibility, the HV A was capable, at more or less any time, of providing prompt, reliable, and substantial information on NATO's military-political plans and how great the danger of war was. However, this did not affect the Warsaw Pact's military strategy, which was based on Soviet ideological concepts and the historical legacy of the Great Patriotic War.[78] Moreover, the HV A did not succeed in obtaining intelligence on NATO's nuclear targeting.[79] However, thanks to the HV A's penetration of NATO, the Soviet General Staff did know well how much NATO knew about the Warsaw Pact. It was able to establish how deeply the pact had been penetrated by Western intelligence operations and how effective Soviet disinformation was. The HV A obtained a large volume of S&TI, but it could not save the GDR's economy from deterioration and collapse. The HV A gathered a wealth of excellent political information, but much of it was not accepted by the GDR's political leadership.

Unlike the Western mass media, which did undermine East Germans' loyalty to the GDR, the communists' active measures proved to be better at small things than big. They could start or aggravate political scandals and differences, but they could not change the political course of a state. Indeed, when it came to the big things, active measures actually exposed the GDR to danger; psychological warfare created tension and did not promote peace.[80] The FCD's active measures were probably more successful than those of the HV A because they were conducted in a more favorable environment: the Third World, where the media were very credulous and the regimes often anti-American and unstable.[81] It is clear that the FCD's active measures encouraged the Soviet leadership's delusions about the state of world politics. The service reported more success than it actually

76 Ibid., 321–24.

77 See Paul Maddrell, "The Economic Dimension of Cold War Intelligence-Gathering: The West's Spies in the GDR's Economy," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 15, no. 3 (2013): 76–107.

78 Siebenmorgen, *"Staatssicherheit" der DDR*, 129–34.

79 Ibid., 132.

80 See Bohnsack, *Auftrag: Irreführung*, 46–47.

81 Ibid., 217.

82 Ibid., 37.

achieved. Boris Tumanov of the Soviet news magazine *Ogonyok* once aptly called communist propaganda "an official surrogate for reality."[82] The HV A's active measures could be similarly described and probably also encouraged the SED's leaders' delusions about world events.

The HV A's officers were the better Chekists, in the proper sense of that word, than the officers of the FCD or KGB. The KGB of the Cold War period was very much a product of the Stalin era: it was fiercely Russian-nationalist, anti-Semitic, and racist-imperialist; its commitment to proletarian internationalism was superficial. It treated its partners as dependencies (even, to some extent, the HV A). However, the HV A was genuinely committed to proletarian internationalism.

The FCD exploited the HV A. Their alliance was the most one-sided intelligence partnership in history. Its only rival is the Gehlen Organization's alliance with US intelligence. There was a comprehensive transfer of intelligence (both raw intelligence and analyses) from the HV A to the FCD without much for the HV A in return. The Russians were not attached to the Germans; they abandoned them in 1989-90. Mikhail Gorbachev did not even insist on an amnesty for the Stasi's officers as a precondition of Soviet agreement to German reunification (even though Markus Wolf requested this of him). The relationship was one of subordination: the HV A took on much of the mentality of the Soviet Union and served its interests in a very one-sided way.

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