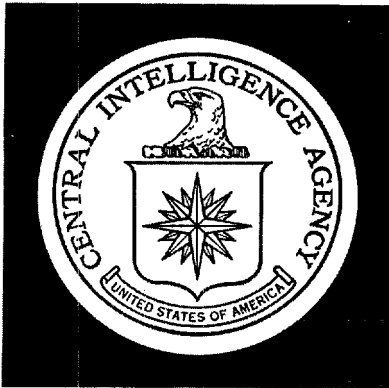


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DIRECTORATE OF
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WEEKLY SUMMARY

Special Report

Ulbricht Campaigns For East German Nationalism

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ULBRICHT CAMPAIGNS FOR EAST GERMAN NATIONALISM

The East German (GDR) regime, fearful that it might become politically and diplomatically isolated, launched a campaign in early January to counteract the effects of the West German Government's policies toward Eastern Europe and inter-German relations. Massive efforts, unprecedented in scope or intensity, have been made to build up the East German image as a separate sovereign state having nothing in common with West Germany, and to create a public sense of East German nationality. On the diplomatic front, the campaign has concentrated on gaining reassurances from the Warsaw Pact states that improvements in their relations with West Germany will not be made at the expense of East German interests.

To date, these diplomatic efforts have prevented several Eastern European nations from establishing diplomatic relations with Bonn, but East Germany's ability to influence future developments is limited because most of these countries are unwilling to sacrifice further their own interests for those of the GDR. The Ulbricht regime will continue the propaganda stressing its sovereignty, but the populace is unlikely to react favorably nor are foreign states likely to accept the regime's arguments.

East Germany's Change in Policy

Although the East German regime has sought to gain acceptance of the GDR as a sovereign state since its creation in 1949, it had also long paid lip service to the idea that the two parts of Germany--despite differing political, economic, and social systems--shared common characteristics. For this reason, it had sanctioned and even sponsored various nonpolitical exchanges

between East and West German members of cultural and professional groups, sports teams, and other similar organizations.

In January 1967, however, the Pankow regime began a campaign of unprecedented scope and intensity to build up the image of the GDR as a separate sovereign state with nothing in common with West Germany, and to arouse in the East German populace a sense of "East German nationalism."

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To accomplish these twin objectives, the regime has cut off those contacts with West Germany from which it does not gain political or economic benefits, and has launched a massive propaganda effort to demonstrate both the incompatibility of the "two German states" and the superiority of the GDR.

In line with this sharp change of policy, propagandists have adopted a new terminology which includes such expressions as "GDR culture," "GDR science," and even "GDR medicine." Since mid-January, the East Germans have consistently referred to the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) as the "SP of West Germany." And on 2 February the GDR changed the name of its State Secretariat for All-German Questions to the State Secretariat for West German Questions. This office had been created as recently as December 1965 to coordinate GDR contacts with West Germany and was especially active in the first half of 1966 when the ruling Socialist Unity Party (SED) proposed to the SPD that a dialogue be established between the "two workers' parties" of Germany.

The Genesis of the New Policy

The effort to negate the all-German concept and to enhance the GDR's image as a sovereign state is part of Pankow's attempt to counteract the effects of the new West German coalition government's policies toward Eastern Europe and inter-German ties. In December 1966, Bonn served notice that it in-

tended to improve its relations in Eastern Europe and to increase nongovernmental contacts with the GDR.

As a significant gesture in this direction, Bonn reversed the priorities that had been established by earlier West German governments and acknowledged that European detente must precede German reunification. It then moved quickly to establish diplomatic relations wherever possible in Eastern Europe. These efforts met with early success in the case of Rumania, which established diplomatic relations on 31 January.

The East German reaction to Bonn's new policy was predictably negative, as revealed in December and January by GDR boss Walter Ulbricht. Characterizing Bonn's new policy as simply another version of its well-known old policy of imperialism and revanchism, Ulbricht warned Eastern European states not to be deceived by the Kiesinger government's new tactics.

Ulbricht's stridently negative tones, however, were not echoed by his Eastern European peers, who preferred not to prejudge the new West German Government. Ulbricht's recurring fear that the GDR would be isolated within Eastern Europe was reinforced in early January when he learned that Prague and Budapest as well as Bucharest would receive emissaries from Bonn.

These developments led to feverish East German diplomatic efforts to convince the Warsaw

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Pact states that they should not permit their relations with the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) to improve until Bonn gave up its claim to be the sole representative of Germany, and until it recognized the GDR as a sovereign state. In quest of support, Ulbricht visited various Warsaw Pact states and signed mutual assistance treaties with Poland and Czechoslovakia. From the GDR viewpoint, these efforts have

been successful, at least in the sense that they have gained reassurances that East German interests will not be ignored even if other Eastern European countries do eventually establish diplomatic relations with Bonn.

Abandonment of the All-German Concept

These diplomatic efforts have been supported by a variety



A West Berlin view of East Germany's Sovereignty Campaign:
The various objects are labelled "East German man,"
"East German cloud," "East German sun," etc.

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of other moves that stress the concept of two Germanies and are intended to gain acceptance of East German identity abroad and to strengthen the sense of nationhood at home.

In January, party leaders and propagandists began stressing these themes. Thus, SED politburo member Kurt Hager, addressing the founding congress of the Association of Film and Television Artists on 21 January, claimed that there now exist two separate German film and television industries which serve antithetical purposes. Culture Minister Gysi, speaking at the Dresden State Theater's 300th anniversary ceremonies on 27 January, denied that a single German culture exists any longer. The head of the science section of the party's central committee told 600 East German scientists on 2 February that there was nothing in common between science in the GDR and science in the FRG. He warned that "behind the theory of a common German science stands... West German imperialism." A doctor from Gera was even quoted as denying the existence of a single German medicine.

GDR Citizenship Law and Penal Code

The regime's propaganda exercises in January and early February set the stage for the Volkskammer (parliament) to proclaim GDR sovereignty in still a more insistent fashion. The Volkskammer on 20 February enacted a law creating a new and separate "citizenship of the GDR"

for all East Germans--despite the constitution's provision that "there is only one German nationality." Although the East Germans have contemplated such a law since at least 1961 and have regarded past and present residents of the GDR as de facto citizens, the timing of the Volkskammer's action, the wording of the law, and subsequent statements by regime spokesmen, all confirm that the law's purpose is to demonstrate to the West Germans, the Eastern European nations, and the East German populace that the GDR is a sovereign state with no legal connections with the FRG.

In a further move to emphasize the legal integrity of East Germany, the regime has also expedited the presentation for "public discussion" of the draft of a new penal code. East German legal experts have been doing preliminary work on a new penal code since 1963, but throughout 1966 the press had indicated that the penal code and other pending legislation would not be completed until 1970. Press commentary has hailed the new socialist code as the first in German history and as a demonstration of the superiority of GDR law over that of West Germany. Lest anyone fail to understand the significance of the new code, Neues Deutschland, the official organ of the SED, commented on 8 February that it would be an "important act of state sovereignty."

The Special Targets

In other domestic propaganda the regime has concentrated its

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attacks on two particular targets: Western cultural influences and the East German churches, especially the Evangelical Church of Germany.

In preparing for the party congress in mid-April, functionaries who manage cultural affairs began in January to propagate the slogan "Our Love, Our Art for the GDR, Our Socialist Fatherland." Such "love," they insisted, was only possible in conjunction with "implacable hatred of the enemy," and in this spirit they launched a new and broadened assault on Western cultural influences. As part of this, all cultural exchanges with Bonn which had not been arranged long in advance were cut off.

Although Ulbricht's cultural policy has long been one of the most rigid in Eastern Europe, the severity and thoroughness with which propagandists have denounced those who reflect any aspect of current Western culture, styles, or fads is unprecedented. A vigorous press campaign, which has sometimes bordered on the ridiculous, has been waged against all things indicating Western--especially West German--influence. Neues Deutschland has criticized East German singers who adopt English-sounding names and songwriters who use such English words as "boy," "girl," or "Charlie." Even the Swingle Singers have been denounced because their interpretations of Bach are said to be incompatible with Socialist cultural policy.

The regime has also clamped down on more serious East German

artists, criticizing any who do not follow the precepts of Socialist realism in the creative arts. SED culture functionaries have indicated that the party may extend control over works of art at an early stage in the process of their creation. Alfred Kurella, a regime functionary who has specialized in "guiding" wayward artists, has proposed, for example, that entries for the sixth German art exhibit scheduled for next fall be "judged" before it opens and preferably before being completed.

The Church

The regime has long sought to end all connection between the East German Protestant churches and the Evangelical Church of Germany (EKD), and to establish an East German "national church." Beginning in January the regime stepped up its efforts to persuade or pressure East German pastors and laymen of the EKD to support these objectives. Party writers on church affairs impugned the EKD as the religious arm of NATO, and condemned its West German members as servants of the Bonn government. Other writers questioned the validity of the term EKD because it implied one Germany when "according to international law," there were two.

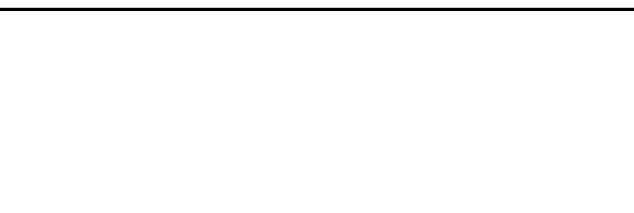
These pressure tactics backfired on the occasion of the EKD synod meeting of 2-7 April that was to elect a new church governing council and chairman. Hoping that a lack of communication between the East and West German members of the synod would aid its plan to split the church,

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the GDR forced the East German members to meet in Fuerstenwalde rather than in East Berlin, which had been the site of their annual gathering since the Berlin Wall was built. (The Western members of the synod met as usual in West Berlin.) Nevertheless the East German clerics rebuffed the regime by reaffirming EKD unity in a ringing declaration and by joining their Western colleagues to elect a common council and chairman.

Popular Reaction

Despite the regime's efforts, the East German people do not accept the idea that they are, in some sense, no longer "German." Although they passively tolerate the regime, and perhaps do not trust West German leaders or anticipate reunification, the available evidence suggests that the East German public generally resents the regime's pressure tactics as well as its blandishments.



Among writers, few of whom have publicly defied the regime

in the past, there is open opposition to the regime's attempts to dictate artistic standards and to its denial that there is one German culture. For example, the chairman of the Halle Writers Conference, while speaking at a district-level SED meeting, publicly attacked Alfred Kurella--and was applauded by the delegates for doing so.

Outlook

Ulbricht's de facto rejection, at the opening of the party congress on 17 April, of Chancellor Kiesinger's 12 April proposal to improve inter-German relations indicates that the regime intends to continue its efforts to stress the sovereignty of the GDR and to avoid East - West German contacts. Pankow can be expected to continue both its domestic propaganda campaign and its diplomatic efforts to sign mutual assistance treaties with other Warsaw Pact countries.

The time is fast approaching, however, when these policies will reach the point of diminishing returns. The diplomatic effort has temporarily deterred Hungary and Bulgaria from establishing diplomatic relations with West Germany, but Budapest and Sofia still desire such relations and will probably respond to Bonn's initiatives eventually--even though they may also agree to sign a treaty with the GDR. Any further remonstrances

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thus could be counterproductive, and could result in the very isolation that Ulbricht is trying so hard to avoid.

The GDR also is limited in what it can do in inter-German relations. Unless Pankow is willing to risk the economic and political sanctions that could result from taking the two significant steps open to it--severing interzonal trade contacts with

West Germany and imposing a visa requirement on West Germans and West Berliners transiting the GDR--the regime will be limited to continuing the campaign largely through propaganda. Since propaganda has not convinced the majority of East Germans that contacts with West Germany should be avoided, or has even brought about a feeling of East German nationalism, the regime will probably gradually moderate these efforts as well.

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