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RSS No. 0019
Copy No:
24 February 1967

DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

Intelligence Memorandum

STRAINS IN SOVIET-EAST GERMAN
RELATIONS: 1962-1967

(Reference Title: CAESAR XXIX)

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STRAINS IN SOVIET-EAST GERMAN RELATIONS: 1962-1967

Prefatory Note

This working paper of the DDI/Research Staff examines Soviet-East German relations during the period of comparative calm in Europe that has followed the 1962 Cuban missile crisis.

The paper is an expanded and revised version of an unpublished study of Khrushchev's 1964 tactics on the German question written in December 1964 by Irwin Halpern, a former member of the Staff, and Leonard Parkinson. Although the final version of the paper has not been coordinated with other offices, the paper has benefited much from the author's discussions with colleagues in OCI, ONE, FDD, FBIS, and ORR. In particular the author of the final version of the paper, Leonard Parkinson, thanks [redacted] both of OCI and [redacted] both of ONE, for their suggestions. The author also thanks [redacted] of ONE for contributing Appendix One, originally an unclassified essay on Soviet policy toward Germany in the months following Stalin's death.

The author alone, however, is responsible for the conclusions of the paper. The DDI/Research Staff would welcome further comment on the paper, addressed to Mr. Parkinson, or the Chief or Deputy Chief of the Staff [redacted]

STRAINS IN SOVIET-EAST GERMAN RELATIONS: 1962-1967

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Summary and Conclusions

The diminution in Soviet tensions and the comparative improvement in Soviet-West German relations that has followed the 1962 Cuban missile crisis has had an adverse effect on Soviet-East German relations.

The East Germans have shown concern that, if a rapprochement develops between West Germany on the one hand and the Soviet Union and its Eastern European allies on the other, then the East German state will first be weakened by that accommodation and then eventually fall victim to a policy of reunification. Moscow's foreign policy since the 1962 missile crisis has not consistently pursued the tactic of improving relations with Bonn, and Soviet spokesmen have repeatedly tried to convince East German leaders that they have not decided to reverse their long-standing policy--of consolidating the status quo in Germany--in the interest of advancing reunification. However, military developments, political changes in Western Europe, alterations in West German policy, problems with East European allies and the Chinese Communists, internal Soviet concerns and other elements which led the East Germans to make that radical assessment in the last two years of Khrushchev's reign have not fundamentally changed during the Brezhnev-Kosygin administration.

Thus, strains in USSR-GDR relations will probably persist as long as the present Kremlin regime holds a flexible position vis-a-vis the West Germans, and as long as Moscow refrains from its 1958-1962 strategy of trying to force a German settlement on its terms.

Khrushchev's strategy of brandishing military threats and serving ultimatums on Berlin between 1958 and 1961 (the period of the supposed "missile gap") had not

only failed to bring about the desired results, but proved to be counter-productive, first, in drawing the Western powers closer together, second, in showing by several backdowns that Moscow recognized its strategic inferiority. Frustrated, he made a final, unsuccessful attempt in 1962 to break the East-West deadlock over the German question with a badly miscalculated venture to place strategic missiles in Cuba. The humiliating and costly failure of that venture, which weakened Khrushchev's position at home, marked an important turning point in Soviet policy --the tactic of trying to force a German settlement was gradually shelved.

Following Khrushchev's recovery in internal Soviet policy debates in the spring of 1963 and following the rather aimless drift in Soviet policy on the German problem during the remainder of FRG Chancellor Adenauer's administration, evidence began to accumulate that Khrushchev's tactics, and perhaps his goals, with respect to Soviet-West German relations were being modified. The establishment of a new Bonn Government, interested in a "policy of movement" and in taking soundings of Moscow's attitude toward German reunification, was privately greeted with Khrushchev's probes for a meeting with Adenauer's successor, Chancellor Erhard, and Khrushchev's expressions of interest in greatly expanded trade relations with West Germany. Apparently to mollify the increasingly anxious and disgruntled East German leaders, the Soviets in June 1964 signed a friendship treaty with the GDR (which changed nothing basic in the Moscow-East Berlin equation). But this holding action had little positive effect on East German anxieties. For Khrushchev continued to press forward in his own policy of movement with Bonn. In July Khrushchev's son-in-law Adzhubey in his visit to Bonn to make advance soundings made repeated statements suggesting that East German party chief Ulbricht was an obstacle that would not long stand in the way of greatly improved USSR-FRG relations. Adzhubey also renewed Khrushchev's earlier expressed interest in a Moscow-Bonn accommodation along the lines of the 1922 German-Soviet Rapallo Pact. Adzhubey, who was snubbed by Ulbricht on the return trip through East Berlin, coauthored in August

two highly conciliatory articles in Izvestiya on the "changed" mentality of the West German people and their leaders. Meanwhile, Chinese and Albanian propagandists were charging an intended "sell-out" of the GDR, and East German leaders were making remarks suggesting concern over the possibility of a Moscow betrayal. Then on 2 September, Khrushchev accepted Erhard's informal invitation to come to Bonn for talks--which, had the visit taken place, would have been another Khrushchev first.

The unique acceptance of Bonn's invitation was as far as Khrushchev had gone in implementing his new German probes before his opponents in the presidium intervened. On 6 September, two days after it was publicly announced (outside the USSR only) that Khrushchev would go to Bonn, a technician attached to the West German Embassy in Moscow was attacked with mustard gas, touching off a scandal that imperiled Khrushchev's invitation. The Soviets did not offer Bonn an acceptable apology until 12 October--the day the CPSU presidium voted in camera to oust Khrushchev. Also, in September, there were a number of other developments that suggested that Khrushchev's opponents were resisting him and were gaining the upper hand: a conciliatory statement by Adzhubey about FRG political leaders was deleted from a Pravda version of his remarks but was published in Izvestiya (25 September); the GDR-Soviet friendship treaty was at last ratified after a three-and-a-half month delay (also 25 September); Pravda warned that it would be a mistake to think that an improvement in the Soviet-FRG relations could take place at the expense of the GDR (27 September); TASS announced on 28 September that Brezhnev, not Khrushchev as would have been expected, would go on to the GDR anniversary celebration. Then Suslov "guaranteed" that the GDR would not be sold out (5 October), and Brezhnev pledged (6 October) that there would not be any deals made with Bonn behind the backs of the East Germans. A week later, Khrushchev was stripped of all powers. The timing of these developments, in view of the importance of the German question and the allusions to Khrushchev's misconduct of German affairs reportedly raised at the 14 October CPSU Central Committee trial, would seem to suggest that Khrushchev's German policy was at least one of the factors that led to his downfall.

The new cautious and conservative leaders soon made clear that they were not ready to take risks or come up with typically Khrushchevian attempts to achieve breakthroughs by bold initiatives in policy. Their restraint on German issues was evidenced in the shelving of Bonn's invitation and the alteration of certain earlier German formulas; a "settlement" replaced calls for a German "peace treaty" and references to the need to alter the status of West Berlin were eventually omitted from the new Soviet statements on the German question. The East Germans, while enthusiastic about the new regime's attitude toward a Bonn visit, reacted to Moscow's holding operation by obstinately holding on to the old peace treaty-West Berlin demands throughout the first half of 1965 in a continuing, heated discourse with the Soviets. Ulbricht publicly vented his anger over Moscow's shelving of the West Berlin demands, raised the subject of German-Soviet strains during the early postwar Russian occupation days, repeated plaints (first made in the week before Khrushchev's ouster) over the Soviet reparations rape of the Eastern Zone, and praised CPR support for GDR policy.

In the latter half of 1965 and early 1966, however, Moscow-East Berlin relations improved. This respite was generally coincident with the heating up of the Vietnam situation and the attendant cooling of Moscow-Bonn relations. The "threat" of West Germany was emphasized at that time as part of Moscow's rationale for its limited activity in Vietnam and as part of Moscow's defensive counter to Chinese Communist charges that the Soviets were planning to withdraw from--rather than open up--the front in Europe.

The respite, however, was shortlived. Conditions on the European front had not grown more threatening; indeed, the opening up of another Moscow-initiated crisis over Berlin and Germany--particularly at a time when France's de Gaulle had withdrawn from meaningful participation in NATO and when the U.S. was concentrating on the war in Vietnam--would again have been counterproductive to Moscow's long-standing interest in weakening NATO and

driving a wedge between the U.S. and its remaining continental allies. In the wake of the CPSU Congress in April 1966 tensions with the East Germans reappeared, as Moscow renewed conciliatory gestures toward the West Germans. Moscow made plans to renew the USSR-FRG trade treaty and began a direct, private exchange with West Berlin Mayor Brandt, while Ulbricht publicly revived the fears about an abandoned GDR which he had expressed in the days before Khrushchev's ouster. Ulbricht was upset by his ally's exchange with Brandt, and, unlike Moscow, particularly upset by the subsequent political coalition--in December 1966--of Brandt's party (the SPD) with the party of Erhard's successor, Chancellor Kiesinger (the CDU/CSU).

Currently, relations are strained over the FRG coalition's efforts to establish diplomatic relations with East European states. (Rumania has already established formal ties.) And Moscow has not given effective support to East Berlin's insistence of formal West German recognition of East Germany as the precondition for the improvement of relations with East European nations.

I. THE SHELVING OF KHRUSHCHEV'S FORCEFUL GERMAN STRATEGY: OCTOBER 1962 - OCTOBER 1963

1. THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS AND THE GERMAN PROBLEM

In 1962, frustrated by the failures of four years of Berlin ultimatums and realizing that the Soviet strategic position had to be drastically improved if the United States were to give in to Soviet demands in Western Europe, Khrushchev made a final, unsuccessful attempt to break the Berlin deadlock with a hard-line approach. This was the venture to place offensive missiles in Cuba in order to improve the strategic balance in his favor --if not militarily, then psychologically--long enough to make another ultimatum on Berlin produce the desired results.

The timing of his Cuba missile plans was closely tied in with his effort to overcome his earlier German policy blunders. Shortly before the U.S. discovery of the missile launcher construction activity in Cuba, a 12 September 1962 TASS statement on Cuba pledged that no initiatives on the German problem would take place before the "U.S. elections," which at that time were close at hand. In retrospect, what the statement betrayed was that no new Soviet initiative with a chance of success could take place before the establishment of the Cuban missile bases, which was also close at hand.

The 12 September TASS announcement with its threat to liquidate the occupation regime in West Berlin was discussed in a classified Soviet Foreign Ministry position paper dated 30 September, which also presented the Soviet's "problem /of/ how to reconcile /sovmestit/ a USSR-GDR peace treaty with the West's interests in the FRG and West Berlin." The position paper cited Gromyko's overly optimistic 24 April 1962 Supreme Soviet analysis of the 11 March 1962 Geneva meeting with U.S. Secretary Rusk. Reflecting the wishful thinking in Khrushchev's Cuban venture in general, the position paper did not report the U.S. State Department's reaction to Gromyko's assessment--a reaction which did not support Gromyko's optimism on the possibility of reconciling the West's

interests in West Germany and West Berlin--and emphasized only the "positive factors" that Gromyko saw leading to a reconciliation of Soviet and Western interests:*

> A.A. Gromyko noted, after a meeting with Secretary Rusk in Geneva in March 1962, 'as a positive factor...the declaration of the American side that it does not see obstacles to the combining of free access to West Berlin with the demand for respect of the sovereignty of the GDR.' With respect to the question of the non-arming with nuclear weapons of the GDR and the FRG, A.A. Gromyko noted that 'on the American side there is understanding of the importance of this question. This is a positive fact, if, of course, these sensible gleams do not die out here under the influence of other winds.' A.A. Gromyko further noted that 'in the course of exchanges of views between the Governments of the USSR and the U.S. there was achieved in principle mutual understanding regarding the necessity of concluding, in one form or another, a pact of non-aggression between NATO and the Organization of the Warsaw Pact. This is a move in a useful direction.'

The classified position paper went on to claim that the Government of West Germany had successfully "applied pressure on Washington in order to disrupt the contemplated agreement /sic/", but, in conclusion, left the impression that the Soviets could still force a wedge between Washington and Bonn and accomplish the intended Moscow-East German maneuver:

> The U.S. does not want to leave West Berlin. But in this case, after the transfer of

*Five days after the Rusk-Gromyko meeting, Khrushchev in his 16 March 1962 speech made his first comment on a USSR-GDR peace treaty since his 17 October 1961 central committee report to the 22nd CPSU Congress, when he withdrew his threat to sign the treaty before the end of 1961.

control to the GDR of the routes to West Berlin, the Americans will have to negotiate with the Government of the GDR on questions of access. There is a discussion in the U.S. press with regard to the degree to which the U.S. should recognize the sovereignty of the GDR. In this matter it is borne in mind that Chancellor Adenauer is against any kind of recognition.

And [redacted] reports [redacted] stated at that time that the Soviet Union was making extensive military and political preparations for the signing of a separate peace treaty with East Germany in November 1962*--the election month which would also have marked the completion of 40 missile launchers in Cuba. Khrushchev for the first time may well have seen himself, once the missile bases were in Cuba, in a much more favorable position either to employ successfully his one-sided demands that the West upgrade the position of East Germany by negotiating access procedure with the GDR Government, or to offer the withdrawal of the Cuban bases for Western concessions in or withdrawal from Berlin.

The failure of the Cuban venture turned out to be an important turning point in Khrushchev's German policy: with that event, the policy of trying to force a German settlement upon the West began to founder.

2. THE AFTERMATH OF THE CUBAN CRISIS: THE DIMINUTION OF THE GERMAN CRISIS

The earliest high-level pronouncement to the effect that Moscow was attenuating the crisis atmosphere on the German problem which had preceded and accompanied the Cuba missile crisis was given in Kosygin's 6 November 1962 speech on the anniversary of the 1917 Communist counter-revolution in Russia.

*The classified Foreign Ministry position paper cited --and did not deny--press reports to the effect that after November 1962 the USSR would sign a separate peace treaty, and that "a new 'blockade' of West Berlin will take place."

> The Soviet Government has announced /sic/ and is announcing now that the peaceful normalization of Germany can be implemented without detriment to the interests or the prestige of any country or group of countries through a goodwill agreement on the part of all interested sides.

Kosygin in his November speech did not threaten a separate USSR-GDR peace treaty, as had other Soviet leaders prior to the week of the missile crisis, such as presidium member Kozlov in a 6 October Moscow speech on the GDR's 13th anniversary. Nor did Kosygin demand the withdrawal of the Western occupation forces from West Berlin--a "precondition," said Foreign Minister Gromyko on 24 October in East Berlin during the week of the Cuban crisis, for any agreement leading to a German peace treaty.

The decrease in the intensity of hostile, threatening remarks from Moscow did not, however, follow an even pattern after Kosygin's 6 November speech. In fact on the day of Kosygin's remarkably mild call for a "goodwill agreement," Soviet Ambassador to the GDR Pervukin in an East Berlin Neues Deutschland article threatened that after a separate peace treaty with East Germany, control of access to and from West Berlin and other areas within East Germany would be turned over to the GDR. And Khrushchev and Gromyko renewed the separate treaty threat in their Supreme Soviet speeches of 12 and 13 December 1962, respectively.

But following the Supreme Soviet session, threats of a separate treaty diminished, and by early 1963 such threats had virtually disappeared from Soviet propaganda. (For example, SED media, but not CPSU media, publicized an 18 January East Berlin interview in which Khrushchev made his last recorded reference to a separate treaty. The reference, incidentally, was couched in conditional terms and stressed the desire to reach an agreement with

the West "so that no unilateral actions will be taken."*) And along with the diminution of such threats, pressure for a German solution decreased in elite Soviet comments.

Khrushchev himself in his 16 January 1963 East Berlin speech made the argument that the conclusion of a peace treaty was no longer the problem it had been before the construction of the Berlin wall (13 August 1961) in an exceptionally defensive passage which attacked the views of "some people" who "think that four years /of Soviet policy on the German question/ have been wasted." In fact, Khrushchev's 1958-1962 diplomacy for the Germanies represented an inglorious record of policy failures. He had tried and failed to drive a wedge between West Germany and other Western powers and to set West Germany adrift from NATO,** to prevent the recrudescence of a German military threat to the Soviet Union by keeping Germany divided; to conclude a peace treaty with the

*In response to a question, reported Die Wahrheit (the organ of the West Berlin SED) on 31 January, Khrushchev on 18 January in an interview with West Berlin SED representatives replied that "if we sign a peace treaty without the Western powers, we will leave West Berlin untouched. We shall merely take the following road: the line of communication will be placed under the jurisdiction of the GDR; the occupation will end; the rights of the occupation powers will end, for order on this territory will then be guaranteed by the peace treaty. This is our position. However, we are seeking to reach an agreement with the West so that no unilateral action will be taken, after all we are not demanding any gains for ourselves, we are demanding nothing, we want to finalize what exists."

**As a result, the Western powers drew closer together and built up their forces in Europe, thereby helping the Soviet champions of stronger theater forces to halt the troop cut instituted earlier by Khrushchev and to push through their preferred defense programs at the expense of Khrushchev's schemes for general economic progress.

Germanies on Soviet terms and to alter the status of West Berlin; to force a withdrawal of U.S. forces from German soil; to make East Germany a viable sovereign state and to gain non-bloc recognition for East Germany; to expand Soviet influence in West Germany and promote Soviet hegemony in Western Europe; to get West Germany to relinquish claims to territory lost to East Europe after World War II; to cut back substantially Soviet forces stationed in East Germany; or even to achieve some degree of military disengagement through an East-West nonaggression pact.

One of the "some people" that Khrushchev on 16 January 1963 was rebutting may well have been presidium colleague Kozlov, who did not reiterate Khrushchev's 16 January substitution of the Berlin wall for a German peace treaty, and continued to appeal for the "swift conclusion of a German peace treaty and normalization, on the basis of that treaty, of the situation in West Berlin" (Leningrad election speech, 26 February 1963). Almost as if he were replying to such "people" and as if he were trying to allay fears in some quarters that he might consider abandoning the GDR, Khrushchev in his 27 February 1963 election speech pledged that the Soviet Union would not engage in a bargain with the "West German revanchists" to solve territorial disputes by purchase. Later, in his 8 March 1963 Moscow speech, Khrushchev criticized Beria and Malenkov for making "the provocative proposal to liquidate the GDR as a socialist state."*

*The first reference to an East German sell-out was given in the Soviet press in the days following Khrushchev's 22d CPSU Congress withdrawal of the 1961 deadline for a peace treaty. It was also a time when (as in early 1963) Khrushchev's freedom of maneuver was hampered. His aggressive policy had brought about mobilization and increased combat efficiency in the West and had led to the suspension of his proposed one-third troop cut plan. The source of the sell-out reminder was an Ulbricht speech published in Pravda in November 1961 which included a passage stating that "it is known" that Beria, like Malenkov, opposed the building of socialism in East Germany. The appendix (pages 94-104) examines the "Beria heresy."

3. THE DETENTE AND THE GERMAN PROBLEM

In mid-April, Kozlov, whose influence on Soviet policy in general was at its height, left the Soviet political scene, the victim of a heart attack.* Khrushchev in the spring of 1963 than managed to get the upper hand in the internal policy debates, and foreign policy began to take a more deliberate course in the general direction of relaxed tensions.**

*During the winter and early spring of 1963, many of Khrushchev's earlier policies were either halted or reversed. And Kozlov in public speeches at that time appeared to be leading the challenge to Khrushchevian policies relating to the correct role for the CPSU, resource allocation, reform in agriculture, art and literature, and Yugoslavia. (Kozlov's heart attack came at about the time of the unique 10 April Pravda "correction" in the 1963 May Day slogan that Yugoslavia "is building socialism." The original 8 April release of the slogan did not state that Yugoslavia is "building socialism"--a Kozlovian, but not a typically Khrushchevian omission.) By late May 1963, Kozlov's name, which had followed Khrushchev's in protocol rankings since the October 1961 CPSU Congress, was and continued to be listed in strict alphabetical order.

**Chief of the Soviet delegation to the Geneva disarmament talks, Tsarapkin (currently Ambassador to the FRG), made a "big concession" at Geneva and accord was reached on a Washington-Moscow direct communications link, the "hot line"; the Soviets asked for resumption of bilateral talks on Berlin and Germany, etc. The new course gained momentum, with the signing of the partial test ban treaty in July, the signing of a UN agreement to ban orbital nuclear weapons in October, the announcement in December of a reduction in the military budget, a "contemplated" cut in the size of Soviet forces, and a policy of arms reduction by "mutual example."

But even in the new warmer atmosphere Khrushchev continued to be troubled by the German question, because so many of his other foreign policy goals were tied to it. The German question stood in the way of substantial progress toward improving East-West relations, greater stability in Europe, and controlling the arms race, which would have permitted him to press forward with his ambitious economic programs. In addition to the German question, political relations with Communist China added urgency for the achievement of Khrushchev's post-missile crisis objectives with the West. Particularly after the crisis, there was growing evidence that their neighbor to the East was being looked upon by Soviet military planners more as a potential military opponent than as an ally. Soviet military capabilities against possible incursions by Chinese troops along the vast borders were being gradually build up, and the Soviets were beginning to develop a new and more flexible military doctrine suitable for dealing with the kinds of military threats short of "massive retaliation" which China might pose for the USSR.

In this environment, Khrushchev, who seemed to be moving toward a political showdown with the Chinese Communist Party, began to reveal the desire to alleviate the military threat from the West and to consummate his objective of detente with the West. And throughout the summer of 1963 Soviet propaganda references to Western "misuse" of West Berlin and the air corridors to Berlin, to the importance and urgency of settling the German problem, to the need to "liquidate" the Western occupation regime, and to other past crisis themes took on a perfunctory air while references to the possibility of better Moscow-Bonn relations recurred more frequently.

The desire for good relations with Bonn, for example, was given unusual stress in Khrushchev's 2 July 1963 East Berlin speech. Thus Khrushchev, while indicating that the Soviet Union could certainly live without a German peace treaty for the time being, gave considerable emphasis in his lengthy speech to the need to normalize economic and trade relations between West Germany and the USSR. He even recalled personal experiences in the Donbass coal mines working near German engineers during the period of

the Rapallo Pact after World War I "when German statesmen mustered the strength and courage to acknowledge that friendly relations between Germany and the Soviet Union would benefit both countries and both peoples." But he also went out of his way to reassure Ulbricht that he would not sell-out the GDR for the price of good relations with the FRG. Without naming Beria or Malenkov, he stated that the condition put forth by "statesmen of the FRG" for a "change in the policy and social system of the GDR" for good relations with the Soviet Union had been "smashed to smithereens 10 years ago." (This was the last recorded instance of a no sell-out pledge from Khrushchev, as well as the last time he alluded to the "Beria heresy.")

However, another figure, FRG Chancellor Adenauer, remained as a brake on any major Khrushchevian policy innovations regarding Germany. Adenauer's near intransigent "no experiments" policy toward the East gave Khrushchev little flexibility with which to explore economic and political matters with Bonn and, in Khrushchev's lights, did not reflect the "strength and courage" which he ascribed in July to early post-World War I German policy. Khrushchev's apparent inability to set a German policy in motion during the last year of Adenauer's reign was perhaps reflected in an intransigent statement of his own, made [redacted] in September 1963 that a "reunited Germany could, in the Soviet view, only be a Communist Germany."*

*But one year later, when Khrushchev spoke about the future political composition of a reunited Germany, he avoided making a Communist system a condition for German reunification. (Page 22)

II. THE DEVELOPMENT OF KHRUSHCHEV'S GERMAN POLICY: OCTOBER 1963 - OCTOBER 1964

1. EVALUATING THE NEW CHANCELLOR

With the Erhard administration taking over in mid-October 1963, however, Khrushchev began a cautious reconnaissance of Bonn's "policy of movement" toward the East.* In fact, Khrushchev's initial movement on the German question may have been little more than a reaction to Erhard's more flexible approach toward Moscow-Bonn problems. Moscow's generally favorable evaluation of Bonn's new course was reflected in the propaganda which in the main treated the new chancellor with circumspection, and in Soviet diplomacy which did not attempt to frustrate Erhard's (and the FRG businessmen's) "policy of movement" in regard to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

Soviet propagandists criticized Chancellor Erhard's first Bundestag policy statement (18 October 1963) as a continuation of the "anti-detente" policies of his predecessor. But in the months that followed, the propaganda took a more conciliatory turn, the German "anti-detente" policy theme was dropped, and, with rare exceptions,* the image

*While the "policy of movement" originated in the last two years of the Adenauer administration (the policy was authored by Foreign Minister Schroeder), it was limited in scope by Adenauer and was not given impetus until Erhard's administration. Under Adenauer, the policy's main success was the exchange of trade missions with Poland in March 1963.

**Possibly to lay the groundwork for Mikoyan's talks with Ulbricht, Moscow in a TASS release on 6 March 1964 launched its second propaganda criticism of the Erhard government. But even in the middle of Mikoyan's visit to the GDR, Moscow [redacted] affirmed its intentions to maintain highest level contacts with the Erhard government.

of a German Chancellor was no longer presented to Soviet citizens as that of a revanchist, militarist, and intransigent demagogue of the former Hitlerite Reich. Rather, Moscow propagandists greeted statements by Erhard on improving relations with Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union with optimism and expressed hope that "practical deeds" would follow the new Chancellor's policy statement. (Erhard, in the meantime, had been probing for new trade contacts with the East.)

At the same time, the Soviet press and radio made very little mention of such dissonant themes as checkpoint "violations," intra-Berlin traffic incidents, wall "provocations," "provocative" occupation maneuvers in West Berlin, "revanchist" meetings, and "violations" in access procedures to West Berlin. Regarding access, for example, the October and November 1963 U.S. Berlin convoy incidents were played down in Soviet propaganda. The first incident (10-12 October) was publicly regarded by Moscow radio as a meaningless event (the "incident...is not worth a farthing"); the second (4-6 November) evoked a short lived and relatively mild reaction which, without elaboration, ambiguously warned of possible "undesirable consequences" of future U.S. checkpoint "violations." Instead of dissonant themes, attention was paid to West Berlin-GDR cooperation, which Moscow encouraged. For example, the ground-breaking West Berlin-GDR agreement of 17 December 1963 on West Berlin holiday passes to visit East Berlin was said, in an 11 March 1964 Soviet memorandum, to have led to a certain "detente" between East and West Germany; it was said, too, that "as additional similar agreements are reached, they will further efforts toward reunification." Also, significantly, Bonn-Moscow cooperation became a common theme in private statements and practical steps were taken. For example, in the early spring of 1964 the West German industrial firm, Krupps, was permitted by Moscow to open the first West German commercial office in the USSR.

An important development in this period, a watershed in Khrushchev's new approach toward Germany, occurred on 11 March when Ambassador Smirnov delivered a message from Khrushchev to Erhard that gave rise to the first

speculation in the Western press that Khrushchev might be considering a meeting with the new head of the West German state. The message itself reportedly made no basic changes in the prior Soviet positions on the German question; it was only a gambit, but the first of many which led to a greatly improved atmosphere in Moscow-Bonn relations during the remainder of Khrushchev's effective control of Soviet foreign policy.

Also significant was the fact that Moscow's public reaction to an offer made in late 1963 by Erhard to purchase the GDR was one of silence--rather than the ridicule and disdain that spiced Khrushchev's early 1963 public pledge that the USSR would not engage in bargains related to territorial purchase. Erhard, when he first discussed the idea of reunification-through-purchase with a U.S. official in early October 1963, said that Germany might contribute industrial installations for the development of Siberia over a 10-to-20 year period if Khrushchev would agree to a phased German unification program. And [redacted] had suggested that West Germany might extend $2.5 billion of aid a year for ten years for reunification. That Moscow subsequently became acquainted with at least the general idea of Erhard's reunification scheme is almost certain. For in early June, Erhard's message was plainly conveyed in a U.S. News and World Report interview with him.

> We are ready to conclude a trade treaty. I can only repeat we would not shun sacrifices, if by economic means we could improve the lot of the German people in the Soviet occupation zone, or could move a step toward reunification and self-determination.*

*Emphasis supplied here and elsewhere in this paper, unless otherwise noted.

Moscow's propaganda in June scored Erhard's "self-determination" appeal ("it means the absorption of the GDR by the FRG") but remained silent on the expressed willingness of Erhard to make economic sacrifices in the interest of promoting reunification and self-determination. Similarly, Khrushchev, in extensive remarks on the German problem in his 12 June Kremlin speech criticized self-determination as a "non applicable" reunification principle, but nowhere in that or any other public speech mentioned Erhard's economic approach to reunification, Khrushchev, in fact, failed in 1964 to make any explicit "no sell-out" pledges; these, significantly, were first made by Khrushchev's presidium opponents a week before the Kremlin coup.

2. TROUBLE WITH EAST GERMANY

The shelving of Moscow's strategy of trying to force a German settlement and the concomitant diminution of East-West and, in particular, Soviet-West German tensions in Europe had begun to adversely effect East German relations with the Soviet Union. As if to counter the openly expressed fears of Ulbricht and his East German SED colleagues about a Bonn-Moscow detente, a stream of high-level Soviet leaders arrived in the GDR.

Mikoyan's 10-12 March trip to East Berlin, ostensibly to celebrate the 70th birthday of inactive Premier Grotewohl, was particularly curious in light of the fact that no other bloc dignitaries of Mikoyan's rank attended. Mikoyan's appearance seemed to represent a Soviet effort to assuage East German fears on certain economic and military* points of disagreement. However, judging from

*At this time, Ulbricht may already have been aware of a contemplated Soviet scheme, reports of which surfaced in June, to withdraw some 20,000 troops from the GDR. Ulbricht may have also been concerned with the consequences of a planned reorganization of the Group (footnote continued on page 14)

the East German propaganda treatment of Mikoyan and the subsequent--and possibly related--visits of Marshals Grechko and Malinovskiy, the Soviets' mid-spring effort to reassure the East Germans was not entirely successful.

One of the most likely topics of discussion during Mikoyan's March visit was the GDR's resentment of the action of other East European countries in signing trade agreements with West Germany that recognized West Berlin as part of the West German currency area. The East Germans

(footnote continued from page 13)

of Soviet Forces/Germany (GSFG). That Ulbricht felt--at least during March and early April--that the proposed Soviet military changes might be less than advantageous for GDR security is suggested by East Berlin's and Moscow's propaganda treatment of the visits of Grechko and Malinovskiy. The TASS and ADN reports of the 9 April Malinovskiy-Ulbricht meeting atypically deleted the stereotyped references to cordiality; ADN devoted six full paragraphs to Ulbricht's invective on Bonn's nuclear appetite, ignored Malinovskiy's reply, and thus left the impression that Ulbricht had delivered a stern lecture to Moscow on the true nature of the West German menace. East German media apparently ignored Grechko's visit altogether.

However, subsequent developments suggest that Ulbricht's anxiety over Soviet military plans was at least partly assuaged. The 13 June Soviet-GDR joint communique recorded Ulbricht's praise for Khrushchev's policy of "mutual example" in a manner that could be read as giving approval in principal to further Soviet efforts in that vein, including a reduction in the GSFG.

were publicly critical of East Germany's allies for having participated in this West German "scheme" to isolate the GDR, and their criticism was candidly expressed in the SED politburo's 15 February report to the 3-7 February 1964 SED plenum.

No direct evidence bearing on Mikoyan's stand on the "Berlin clause" controversy surfaced during his discussions with Ulbricht. That the Soviets had adopted a "hands-off" policy on the problem, however, was reflected in Moscow's propaganda, which virtually ignored the SED's campaign against the Berlin clause, and Moscow's intra-bloc diplomatic positions. For example, Moscow did not express displeasure when Bulgaria on 6 May signed a West German trade agreement which included a Berlin clause and thus joined Poland, Hungary and Rumania in the FRG "scheme" to isolate the GDR. Another example of Moscow's "hands-off" line may be read into article six of the 12 June 1964 Soviet-GDR friendship treaty. The stipulation in article six that "West Berlin is regarded as a separate political unit" allowed the Soviet Union to conclude economic treaties with West Germany that might include West Berlin without recognizing it as part of the Federal Republic politically.*

*After Khrushchev's ouster, Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Semenov in a talk with FRG Ambassador Groepper on 10 November in Moscow flatly stated that article six of the USSR-GDR friendship treaty barred inclusion of a Berlin clause in a USSR-FRG trade pact. However, Semenov promptly suggested a means of getting around article six. His suggestion, discussed on page 71, in effect recognized that Berlin is part of the West German currency area. Semenov's proposal was later shelved during a period of cool Moscow-Bonn relations in 1965.

Buying Time with the Friendship Treaty

The signing of that Soviet-East German friendship treaty on 12 June afforded Khrushchev an opportunity to mollify Ulbricht, who was becoming increasingly restive over Khrushchev's "detente mood" and, in particular, its meaning for the German problem. For example, this mood was reflected in Khrushchev's efforts to notify in advance the United States, Britain and France that the treaty with Ulbricht would not affect existing Western rights in West Berlin. While the treaty and the subsequent 13 June joint communique endorsed demands for a German peace treaty and a change in the status of West Berlin, the friendship treaty was in fact a further postponement of long-standing Soviet demands.

Some curious developments tend to betray Khrushchev's interest in signing a friendship treaty with his German ally at that time. First, within hours of Ulbricht's departure from Moscow on 13 June, Khrushchev called in the West German Ambassador for a conversation in which he indicated his interest in meeting with Chancellor Erhard who only five days before had been quoted in the press as having favored making economic sacrifices in the interest of achieving reunification. (As in the case of the [redacted] Khrushchev, continuing to play the delicate diplomatic game at this stage, reportedly made no change in the Soviet position on the German question.) Second, Khrushchev, in projecting the nature of future Soviet-West German relations, reportedly [redacted] that it was only a question of time before the Rapallo solution of 1922 would prevail.* Third, despite East German pressures to ratify the friendship

*Interest in a Rapallo-like rapprochement appeared in the Soviet press in August under the editorship of Khrushchev's son-in-law Adzhubey. See pages 26-28.

treaty at an early date, the Soviets managed to delay ratification for three-and-a-half months.

The Early Summer Quarrel With Ulbricht

In the latter half of July, the unrelieved tension between Ulbricht and Khrushchev over the direction in which Soviet policy then appeared to be moving spilled over into the public domain. Differences between them were reflected in the open press both during and following the Polish 20th anniversary celebrations.

Significant differences appeared, for example, in the 21 July anniversary speeches given by Khrushchev, Gomulka, Novotny, and Ulbricht. Khrushchev, unlike the other three, completely ignored the issues of borders, Bonn's alleged appetite for nuclear weapons, the NATO multilateral nuclear force (MLF) issue, any reference to the danger of revanchism, and surprisingly, any call for a peace treaty. (On the same day in the West German city of Dortmund, Khrushchev's son-in-law Adzhubey, in a remarkably conciliatory speech which stressed the need for better West German-Soviet Union relations, pointedly stated that the German press should pay attention to Khrushchev's simultaneous remarks in Warsaw.) Khrushchev's failure to mention publicly the peace treaty issue undoubtedly offended Ulbricht. In addition, Khrushchev's treatment of the source of the main military threat was somewhat different than that of his East European colleagues. Khrushchev placed the sole onus on "imperialist forces...who are threatening a war." Gomulka and Ulbricht presented the main military threat as originating, in the first place, in West Germany and, secondarily, in the "imperialist" countries.*

*On this point, Gomulka's remarks seem to be directed not only to the West but to Khrushchev as well. Under the section entitled "West German Militarism Is Still the Main Threat," Trybuna Ludu gave Gomulka's veiled remarks to Khrushchev:
(footnote continued on page 18)

Ulbricht's hurt feelings were bared in a speech he delivered in East Berlin on 23 July, upon returning from Warsaw. In the speech Ulbricht mentioned Khrushchev's name only twice, and then only in passing. But Ulbricht mentioned Gomulka some ten times, dwelled on Gomulka's remarks at Warsaw, and repeatedly expressed GDR agreement with Gomulka's views. The implied invidious comparison with the state of Soviet-GDR relations and the adroit slighting of Khrushchev could hardly have escaped the notice of Ulbricht's listeners. Moreover, in the same speech, Ulbricht hinted that agreement had not been reached among the Communist leaders on the matter of meeting the MLF problem. While he said that "full agreement" had been reached on other matters, he said only that the MLF issue had been "studied". (Khrushchev's 21 July Warsaw speech, however, belied the suggestion that agreement had been reached on many matters under discussion at the Warsaw meeting.)*

(footnote continued from page 17)

> The invariable response from the West is that we only imagine this threat /of West German militarism/, that the NATO powers keep a tight hand on West German militarists, and that West Germany follows a peaceful policy...We have never imagined anything.

See page 51 for post-coup indications that Gomulka was not pleased with Khrushchev's overtures to Bonn.

*A TASS report on 28 July 1964 stated that GDR Foreign Minister Bolz had called on Gromyko for a "friendly" talk on "a number of questions of interest to both sides." Coming so soon after his participation in Ulbricht's state visit, and at a time when Adzhubey was seeing Erhard, the Bolz visit may have reflected new East German apprehensions.

While Khrushchev and Ulbricht were quarreling in Warsaw, Khrushchev's son-in-law--who was then the subject of rumors in Moscow to the effect that he would shortly replace Foreign Minister Gromyko--was making a series of remarkably conciliatory comments in the territory of Ulbricht's chief "enemy," West Germany.

3. ADZHUBEY'S LAST AMBASSADE

Conciliatory Comments in the FRG

Adzhubey arrived in West Germany on 20 July. One of his primary missions there, evidently, was to determine Erhard's intentions about meeting Khrushchev and about the scope of issues to be discussed. In a [redacted] conversation [redacted] Adzhubey obliquely asked the Chancellor if he were serious about desiring a meeting with Khrushchev. (Khrushchev on at least two previous occasions--in March and June--had reportedly acquainted Bonn with his interest in such a meeting.)

[redacted] In addition to a meeting, Adzhubey, in response to a question in a late July interview in West Germany, stated that he could "visualize" a confidential exchange of letters between Erhard and Khrushchev, and that "nothing but good can come of it." (Der Spiegel, 2 August 1964)

Trade, Adzhubey let it be known, was to be one of the subjects of the Khrushchev-Erhard exchange. [redacted] Also on 27 July Adzhubey told Bundestag member Erler that he (Adzhubey) could appreciate the close commerical connection between the Federal Republic of Germany and West Berlin, the fact that West Berlin

had the same currency, and so forth. According to Erler, Adzhubey was confident that "due account" could be taken of the Bonn-West Berlin relationship in future trade agreements. Thus Adzhubey--who had let it be known to FRG journalists upon his arrival on 20 July that he had met with Soviet Minister of Trade Patolichev before he (Adzhubey) left the USSR--seemed to suggest that the Soviet Union could take due account of the economic ties between West Berlin and Bonn without getting into the question of the political ties between them and the friendship treaty ties between Moscow and East Berlin. And in talks with the chief editors of the Rheinishe Post (Dusseldorf), Adzhubey reportedly stated that West Germany should have no difficulty in consummating a trade and cultural agreement with the Soviet Union, since all the two parties had to do was to find a "face-saving" formula on the Berlin issue.

The issue of West Germany and the NATO multilateral nuclear force proposal was also treated with remarkable candor. In a discussion with prominent Bundestag members on 27 July, Adzhubey indicated that the nuclear armament of West Germany within three years through the MLF or the force de frappe was a planning assumption on which Soviet policy toward West Germany was based. Adzhubey did not link this prediction--a nuclear armed FRG by 1967--to any threat, but merely stated his assumption as a fact which the Soviet policy planners were taking into account. On the next day, Adzhubey made his concern about German nuclear armament known Adzhubey said that the German interest in nuclear armament was represented by its support of the multilateral nuclear force. And he seemed to have been trying to convey the thought that West German participation in the MLF would wreck any chances of a negotiated settlement of the German question.

[redacted]

[redacted] On the next day (28 July) and on the subject of the Soviet zone, Adzhubey told [redacted] in an unofficial talk that the 12 June friendship treaty with the GDR was not intended for eternity and that it contains within its provisions for amendment.

That reunification could be one of the subject to be discussed by Khrushchev and Erhard was also made clear by Adzhubey in his Der Spiegel interview (2 August edition): in response to a question regarding the subjects to be examined if such a meeting were to occur, Adzhubey

*The reunification-MLF withdrawal offer may not have been immediately affected by the October change in the Kremlin leadership. Western press reports on 17-18 November 1964 cited Bonn sources to the effect that West Germany was planning to seek a clause in the MLF treaty that would provide for German withdrawal in the event of reunification. As if to dampen the new Soviet leadership's propaganda campaign against Bonn's interest in the MFL, the 17-18 November reunification-MLF withdrawal reports were circulated three days after a TASS statement warning of the dangers of a nuclear-armed FRG and threatening vague countermeasures to the MLF. Moscow's initial reaction to the reunification-MLF withdrawal reports betrayed a sense of interest in the "deal." Moscow Radio commentator Zakharov in a broadcast to Germany on 23 November 1964 stated that West Germany is not sincere in its desire for reunification, but the commentator went on to indicate that an FRG withdrawal from "dangerous policies" (i.e., the MLF) would be a precondition for reunification. After the MLF proposal was placed in abeyance at the end of 1964, interest in such a "deal" was not pronounced and has not recurred recently in monitored Soviet propaganda.

[redacted]

answered that "if you are referring to the German problem it may very well be among the subjects of discussion." And in a 22 July luncheon in Essen and in a 29 July TV interview Adzhubey repeatedly stressed the need for the two to talk without a fixed agenda and without preconditions. Although Adzhubey made no explicit concessions with respect to the question of German reunification, his remarks on the subject were unusually mild. He diplomatically sidestepped a question by Der Spiegel editors in an interview shortly before his departure as to whether he could visualize a reunification of Germany under non-Communist auspices; he did not reiterate the line that a reunited Germany could be only a Communist Germany.*

*Nor did Khrushchev when he spoke about the future political composition of a reunified Germany on 15 September 1964 in a meeting with Japanese parliamentarians in Moscow:

> The ruling class of the Federal Republic of Germans wants a united Germany founded on capitalism while the people of the German Democratic Republic want a unified Germany founded on socialism. In all probability, the status will continue for some time and the problem will be solved by history. However, you probably would not be surprised even if I, as a communist, should express my belief that a unified socialist Germany will emerge. When will it emerge? I do not know. Who will decide it? It should be decided by the Germans themselves.

Thus Khrushchev appeared to have moved from his unambiguous policy position made in a conversation in September 1963 that a reunified Germany had to be Communist (page 9) to a vague expression of belief that it would be so.

Adzhubey also commented, in response to a question by Der Spiegel editors as to whether he foresaw any chance of relaxing the Bonn-Moscow atmosphere, that "a really big step" should be taken to improve relations. The nature of the "really big step" Adzhubey may have had in mind was not defined. But Erhard's stunned reaction to the fall of Khrushchev some months later makes tempting the speculation that Erhard's hopes for a "really big step" on the German question had indeed been raised.

Adzhubey's cryptic reference to a "really big step" tends, in retrospect, to add further interest to his statement to the editors of the Rheinishe Post that "there are a lot of little Molotovs"* who make it difficult for Khrushchev to carry out his policies, and his public statement in the 29 July TV interview that if the media of the FRG and USSR "were now to create certain tendencies in anticipation of the /Khrushchev-Erhard/ talks this would not be good either for Erhard or for Khrushchev." Adzhubey, in effect, seemed to be striving to leave open the possibility of a dodge for his father-in-law. For indeed, had Khrushchev become convinced that a discussion of the reunification question with Erhard at that time would have been a failure and/or would have led him into irreversable difficulties with his Kremlin colleagues, then he would have been able to repeat his past practice

*Molotov was one of the chief opponents of Khrushchev over the 1955 Austrian peace treaty. See Appendix, page 101.

of executing a turnabout and covering up the intent with a high degree of demagogic skill. And in this contingency, the letters which reportedly made no change in the past Soviet position on the German question, could have been used in defense of Khrushchev's "innocence."

Adzhubey while in the FRG combined his conciliatory gestures toward the FRG with frequent disparaging remarks toward the CPR. In a 26 July conversation Adzhubey reportedly asserted that Communist China was a "threat" to the Soviet Union and reported that Adzhubey left the "clear implication" that this threat necessitated better relations with Germany. Two days later in his conversation Adzhubey, in the context of scoring CPR militancy, made the point that Russia had once already defended Europe from the Tartars. And in a 28 July conversation with Muenchner Merkur chief editor Kurt Wessel, Adzhubey said that the Russians were interested in having a peaceful Germany at their back during this time of trouble with China.

And that Ulbricht should not be regarded as an insurmountable obstacle in the way of a Bonn-Moscow rapprochement was indicated in Adzhubey's repeated allegations about the seriously deteriorating condition of Ulbricht's health. Adzhubey made at least three remarks to the effect that Bonn ought not to worry about a "cancer-ridden" Ulbricht who would not be around too much longer.*

*At the September 1964 Pugwash meeting held in Karlovy Vary, Czechoslovakia, Soviet General Talenskiy, a leading military theoretician, also discussed the East German-China problem. He reportedly stated that the major Soviet problem was Communist China and that the USSR "is eager to have the Chinese Communist nuclear potential smashed." He reportedly added that the Soviet Government was embarrassed by the Ulbricht regime, but they were so involved "at the present time" that they cannot disengage themselves. But in the decades ahead, revealed
(footnote continued on page 25)

Ulbricht's Conspicuous Snub

On his way home from his three-week tour of West Germany, Adzhubey on 1 August stopped over in East Berlin for one day. During this short visit the temperamental Ulbricht remained "unavailable" and chose as his representative that East German leader--Norden--whom Adzhubey had publicly embarrassed prior to his trip to the FRG. Norden had authored an article that appeared in Izvestiya in which he referred to West German President Luebke as a "collaborator of the Nazi Gestapo." Adzhubey, in order to prepare a more favorable Moscow-Bonn atmosphere for his visit, had promptly ordered his duty editor to deliver an oral apology to the West German Embassy in Moscow for Norden's harsh remark. Adzhubey's apology stated that the publication of Norden's article had been a "mistake of the duty editor" and that Izvestiya did not agree with Norden's contentions.

Adzhubey's reception in East Berlin, thus, was a poor second to his grand tour of the FRG. His comments on his FRG visit with Norden and Norden's response did not surface,* but assuming that they were as enthusiastic

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[redacted] in early January 1965, Adzhubey had implied that Russia might relinquish East Germany over a 10 to 20 year period, but the principal difficulties at that time were Moscow's prestige within Eastern Europe and the concomitant weakening of the Soviet position vis-a-vis China. [redacted] said that [redacted] had implied that Russia expected to be so busy with the Chinese problem over the next two decades that the Soviet Union might have to make concessions as to its western boundary.

*Peking's People's Daily on 8 September 1964 reported a Norden statement made after Adzhubey's visit that appeared to be a reprimand to Adzhubey and Khrushchev. See page 34.

as his subsequently published Izvestiya accounts (discussed presently) Adzhubey may well have added to the GDR leaders' concern about the extent to which Moscow would go in its "rapprochement" with Bonn. And in what appeared to be an effort to reassure the East German leaders, one German language radio commentary broadcast the day after Adzhubey returned to Moscow tried to balance his efforts to develop trade with the FRG with a rather vague assertion that "unrealistic political deals" are the "main obstacle" to further expansion of FRG-USSR trade.

The Adzhubey "Rapprochement" Articles of 9 and 11 August

Upon returning to Moscow, Adzhubey evidently reported directly to Khrushchev alone on his Bonn mission, rather than to the party presidium. According to post-coup reports, Adzhubey did not give an accounting to the other members of the presidium until two days after his private talk with Khrushchev. The difference, if any, between his private report to his father-in-law and his report at the presidium meeting is not known; it is tempting to speculate, however, that the charge that Adzhubey had given a private version of his Bonn visit before his formal presidium debriefing may well have fanned the suspicions, whether justified or not, of Khrushchev conspirators. (Khrushchev was not present at that reported presidium meeting; he had left on a tour of southern RSFSR.) But Adzhubey's articles in Izvestiya on his German trip probably reflected the tone of his report to the presidium and/or to Khrushchev.

A week after his return from Germany, Adzhubey and three colleagues* published two articles in Izvestiya, entitled, "We have Seen West Germany." The tone set by the articles was not one of antagonism and rasping on the theme of German militarism and revanchism. Rather,

*V. Lednev, N. Polyanov and E. Pralnikov.

the authors adroitly soft-pedalled those traditional themes, and against the background of a West German landscape--painted in warm colors and nostalgically recollected in verse--they set about the business of persuading their readers that the West German people and their present leaders have changed, that they have become more reasonable and realistic, by and large, and that it has therefore become possible to negotiate outstanding differences with them.

The first, more cautious article warmed up the audience gradually to Adzhubey's extraordinary depiction of the "new" German mentality. One passage in the first article that stood out from the remaining, rather turgid, commentary seemed to convey the main message. The authors described how, during a press conference, a director of one of the large Ruhr steel firms passed them a note saying: "Now is the time for a new Rapallo." Then Adzhubey and his colleagues drove their point home: the Germans have changed. Commenting on the note, they wrote:

> This was an interesting detail. How much ingenuity has been expended by Bonn's official propagandists on blackening Rapallo in the eyes of the Germans! Rapallo was the treaty which took its name from the small Italian town where it was signed in 1922, a treaty between young Soviet Russia and the Weimar Republic. Rapallo was the first breach in the tight ring of international isolation which had been clamped around both conquered Germany and the Soviet Republic. Of course much has changed in the past four decades or more, and it would be naive to try to reconstruct the Treaty of Rapallo in its original form. Obviously the author of the note was not thinking of doing so. He was probably thinking of the spirit of Rapallo, of the spirit of realism in relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and the USSR. And incidentally, at present this is by no means to the

liking of the ruling circles of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Yet the little piece of paper pushed across the table became, as it were, the symbol of an important and intelligent idea, of a profound understanding of the state of the modern world, at which everyone who wants to be a realist would willy-nilly arrive.

This plug for the "spirit of Rapallo" was used by Adzhubey to introduce the remarks of Betthold Beitz, the managing director of Krupp who had interrupted his vacation to return to Essen and meet the Soviet group. Beitz was reported as being convinced that there is a real possibility of raising the USSR's share of West German foreign trade to six percent.* But Adzhubey's purpose in boosting the "spirit of Rapallo" may have gone beyond trade exchanges. He may have been paving the way for another Soviet attempt at "Leninist compromises" in foreign policy, one of which was the 1922 Treaty of Rapallo. (An entire article was devoted to a discussion of "Leninist compromist" in the June 1964 issue of Problems of History of the CPSU.)

In the second installment, Adzhubey and his colleagues took unprecendented liberties in depicting the new

*Exports to the Soviet Union amounted to a little more than 1.5 percent of West German foreign trade in 1964. This small amount was reduced by almost one half to .8 percent for 1965 (though a puzzling TASS addendum to Brezhnev's 29 September 1965 plenum speech, cited on page 70 claimed that the Soviet trade with the FRG remained "approximately on the former level"), and for the first seven months of 1966 (the best available recent information) the decline continued with only .6 percent of FRG trade going to the USSR.

face of West Germany. After asserting that the question of postwar border changes in Europe could not be the subject of "political negotiations or political deals," the authors made it clear that other parts of the German question could be settled in that way. The authors said that while there were still some militaristic types who boasted that there is no "German question" which cannot be solved by German military forces, most of the German leaders, including Strauss (the bete noire of earlier Soviet propaganda), fully appreciated the futility of any such thoughts. The authors quoted Strauss as saying that a new world war would mean "biological extinction" for the Germans. Erhard, for his part, was quoted as having described Khrushchev as the man "representing in the best way the great Soviet power."

They pointed out that they had not originally planned to meet with West German political leaders, and interpreted the fact that they were received by "so many prominent leaders as a tribute to the enormous importance of the USSR, its government, and to Khrushchev personally." Moreover, they said, in the FRG, "among people of different political, social and economic positions, there is ripening or beginning to ripen a more sensible view of the contemporary world from which there is no escaping." They concluded with an anecdote about an incident during their visit: their car had crashed into a road barrier upon leaving Erhard's office, and they explained to curious onlookers that "we wanted this barrier to be the last on the road of improvement of relations between the Soviet Union and the FRG."

4. MOUNTING GDR INSECURITY

As the Soviet-West German "rapprochement" began to grow into a more serious affair in the late August and early September days, the East Germans grew increasingly restive. Several developments in particular gave them cause for alarm.

First, Khrushchev cast the die for talks with the West German head of state. On 2 September Soviet Ambassador Smirnov conveyed a letter from Khrushchev [redacted] formally expressing his desire for a meeting with him in Bonn. (The letter left the details of the agenda to be worked out, but emphasized the need for careful advance preparations in the talks.) To make matters worse for Ulbricht, Moscow may not even have informed him directly through official channels about Khrushchev's definite intention to visit Bonn. Rather, on 4 September, the Soviet Embassy in Bonn informed the Bonn correspondent of the SED newspaper Neues Deutschland that Khrushchev would visit West Germany. On that day, at least one GDR radio commentator flatly stated that Moscow "officially" informed the GDR of Khrushchev's visit through the newspaper's Bonn correspondent.

Second, at about the same time, Khrushchev attended a high-level conference in Prague at which he and Gromyko were engaged in secret consultations with Novotny and the foreign ministers of Poland, Hungary and Bulgaria. Conspicuously absent from the meetings was an East German representative. Yet Germany may have been one of the principal topics discussed. Peking's NCNA on 7 September pointedly noted that the "leaders of the GDR were not invited to the meeting which discussed the German question." It does appear from the composition of the group and the joint Soviet-Czech statement of 4 September that a number of foreign policy questions affecting bloc relations with the West were discussed.*

Third, over the weekend of 4-6 September, reports in the West German press stated that West German industrialists

*The ostensible occasion for Khrushchev's visit to Prague--the 20th anniversary of the Slovak uprising--did not warrant a figure of his rank. The 15th anniversary of the founding of the GDR, however, did warrant Khrushchev's attendance; Khrushchev, at the "insistence" of the presidium, went to Sochi, and Brezhnev to Berlin.

were ready to offer Moscow a deal ransoming the GDR for long-term credits (some reports said 30 years). Reflecting Ulbricht's uneasiness, a GDR radio commentator on 4 September promptly ridiculed the "speculation" of a GDR sell-out, but he did not go on to reassure his listeners that Khrushchev would reject such an offer. Similarly, on the same day another GDR commentary on Khrushchev's visit called the GDR sell-out concept "absurd," but left the impression that Moscow and Bonn might, nevertheless, consider such an absurdity. It is absurd, the GDR commentator said, to think that "an improvement of Soviet-West German relations could be implemented at the expense of any third state, for example the GDR; the GDR is not a country which could be bought from someone in the calculating way of a huckster." East Berlin, hence, was publicly warning its principal friend and its principal enemy not to conclude a bilateral arrangement at the expense of the GDR behind its back.

Peking Plays on GDR Sensitivites

Peking media seized upon the sell-out issue in a vitriolic propaganda campaign skillfully designed to play on anxieties of the East Germans and at the same time to discredit Moscow's good faith toward its allies.*

*While Peking was accusing Khrushchev of a "GDR sell-out," CPR considerations for a "GDR backout" were reportedly discussed by the Chinese in talks with the West Germans.

reported in late 1964 that the Chinese Communists indicated that they might be willing to move their embassy to Bonn, provided that the FRG opened an embassy in Peking, and the Chinese indicated they would be willing to remove the CPR embassy from East Berlin and reduce its representation there to something like a trade mission. Regarding CPR trade policy toward Bonn, Chinese Foreign Minister Chen Yi in a May 1964 interview with a correspondent of the Frankfurt Allgemeine Zeitung (5 May edition) indicated that CPR trade relations with the FRG are not entirely determined by political relations with the GDR. Chen Yi made the remarkably noncommittal statement that "it is certainly not our intention to exploit our relations with West Germany to place East Germany under pressure, nor to exploit our relations with East Germany to put West

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Peking's propaganda barrage opened on 7 September with an NCNA report* which stated that the agenda for the forthcoming Khrushchev-Erhard talks was not restricted, that Erhard was willing to "pay a high 'price' economically for a political deal with the Soviet Union on the German question," and implied in conclusion that Khrushchev might accept Bonn's deal. Reported NCNA:

> UPI on 4 September quoted 'informed sources' in Bonn as saying that West German Government leaders were prepared to offer Khrushchev 'large trading credits' in return for Soviet 'political concessions.' The concessions would 'have to include a reorganization of the Communist regime in East Germany.' It added that some West Germans saw 'a ray of hope' for such a Soviet concession in the fact that the Foreign Minister of the GDR did not participate in the Prague meeting of the Soviet and Czechoslovak leaders with the Polish, Hungarian, and Bulgarian foreign ministers.

On the next day the report of West German trading credits for Soviet political concessions was transmuted and amplified by Peking into an elaborately documented charge of

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Germany under pressure." Less than two weeks earlier, SED politburo member Matern had roundly scored CPR policy toward the GDR in a speech in East Berlin (22 April). According to ADN, Matern charged that in its final consequence "the endeavors of the Chinese leaders amounts to complete abandonment of the GDR as the western outpost of the socialist world system in Europe and to a new form of the German policy of the Beria clique which has been repulsed by the CPSU Central Committee under the leadership of Comrade Khrushchev." The lengthy Neues Deutschland account (on 23 April) of Matern's speech did not include this passage, which among other things, explicitly exonerated at least the CPSU Central Committee from the"Beria heresy."

*It appeared in People's Daily on the next day and was summarized in the foreign language Peking Review for 11 September.

a planned Soviet sell-out of East Germany. "A conspiracy that warrants attention" was the opening judgment of an authoritative People's Daily article, transmitted on 8 September by NCNA, on what it called the "current maneuvers" for a "dirty political deal to sell-out the GDR." Then, the article posed the leading questions:

> What makes the Bonn revanchists so bold as to advance barefacedly such an insolent plan of buying the GDR? And what makes them regard the GDR as something put on sale by certain persons? Can it be that they have received tacit approval or hints from those who recently talked like a minion in praise of the West German militarists? But in so doing, these people are reckoning without their host. They should know that the days of Munich are gone for good.

Finally, the article proceeded to provide its evidence for its opening guilty verdict by juxtaposing certain statements by Adzhubey in July and August with contrasting positions taken by Ulbricht during the same period. The contrast, which People's Daily sharpened by editoralizing upon Adzhubey's statements, encompassed divergent remarks on the possibility of fruitful negotiations with the West German leadership and on the basic nature of West German foreign policy. With regard to negotiations, People's Daily reported that Ulbricht held that there were no grounds for the idea that the Erhard Government would make peaceful and reasonable policy shifts, while Adzhubey held that the West German leadership held a realistic attitude toward negotiating with the East. And with regard to Bonn's basic intentions, the CCP paper reported that Ulbricht saw no change in the "revanchist" policy of Bonn, while Adzhubey was reported as stating that Bonn had abandoned the idea of wiping out the Soviet Union. In addition, Ulbricht-Khrushchev differences were implied by People's Daily treatment of the presumed participants in negotiations on the future status of Germany. Ulbricht was quoted as stating that the German question cannot be settled in the absence of or in opposition to

the GDR, nor "can it be settled by other countries." Yet, implied People's Daily, this was precisely what was in store in light of the GDR's exclusion from the early September Prague meeting of the Soviet, Czech, Hungarian, and Bulgarian officials. The People's Daily article reiterated the earlier NCNA item that the GDR was not invited to the meeting which "discussed the German question," and added that Khrushchev's decision to visit West Germany had been taken at the Prague conference. The final point in the article was a quote from the highest East German leader, Norden, with whom Adzhubey talked during his short stopover in East Berlin in early August. According to the article Norden said that it was obvious that "it is impossible to annex the GDR, or buy it from any other Socialist country, or isolate it from its socialist neighbors."

And on the 11th, CPR media carried an extensive summary of an article in the East Berlin quarterly Freie Welt entitled, "How Much Does the GDR Cost?" The article scored as "sinister" the idea that the GDR could be bought as a kind of merchandise. However, the Chinese report included the East German article's curious exoneration of Khrushchev's role in the sinister idea. (A side effect of the exoneration, however, was to keep alive the suspicion of an insidious role on Khrushchev's part.) According to NCNA's extensive summary, the article maintained that:

> we would not be insulting Khrushchev if we shielded him from suspicion. This in no way concerns Khrushchev's personality, but the political understanding of the speculators who have no moral sense to speak of. No man in his right mind can imagine that the head of government of the Soviet Union, a world power, concluded a treaty of friendship with the GDR only to send his friend to the butcher at the first opportunity. But in Bonn (and not only there) there are people capable of such imagination.

Albania's capability for just that was soon displayed in a Zeri I Popullit article on 23 September which charged, among other things that

> there is no doubt that behind this visit /Khrushchev's proposed visit to Bonn/ a new N. Khrushchev conspiracy is hidden... In the name of 'peaceful coexistence' and a rapprochement with imperialism, from which it hopes to draw political and economic advantages, the renegade N. Khrushchev group does not hesitate to deal with the imperialists at the expense of the socialist countries. It does not hesitate to make a bargaining pawn of and to sacrifice a socialist country like the GDR. But the GDR is a sovereign socialist state which cannot be annexed easily and still less be sold or bought by anyone.

5. THE PRESIDIUM OPPOSITION INTERVENES

That Khrushchev's new approach to the German problem may have encouraged opposition in Kremlin ruling circles, and hence figured in the coup against him, is worthy of consideration. One well-known incident that occurred in early September raised speculation in the West that some Soviet leaders, with the assistance of the KGB, tried in an underhanded fashion to torpedo Khrushchev's planned visit to Bonn. On 6 September, only two days after it was announced in public (not in the USSR) that Khrushchev was going to Bonn for talks with Erhard, electronic technician Schwirkmann attached to the West German embassy in Moscow was mysteriously attacked with mustard gas. The episode caused a scandal in West Germany and it was touch-and-go for a while as to whether Erhard's invitation to Khrushchev would be rescinded. On 24 September, the Soviet Government formally rejected a West German memorandum protesting the affair, with the haughty and deceptive statement that the "Schwirkmann

case' venture was needed by certain quarters of the German Federal Republic to prevent an improvement of Soviet-West German relations." Curiously, the Soviet Government did not offer Bonn an apology acceptable to them until 12 October--the day the CPSU presidium voted to oust Khrushchev from power.

The long delay on the part of the Soviets could be interpreted to mean that Khrushchev could not marshal sufficient power to prevail upon the presidium to extend a formal apology to the West Germans.* To be sure, the mustard gas incident can only be regarded as circumstantial evidence of a plot to foil Khrushchev's plan to visit Erhard. Still, the incident seems to have been a turning point in Khrushchev's efforts to develop a warmer Soviet-West German atmosphere. For after the incident, his forward momentum, which had been gaining through July and August, was brought to a dead stop.

Another indication of a dispute in the Kremlin over Khrushchev's German policy turned up on 25 September. Pravda and Izvestiya were at variance in reported remarks made by Adzhubey on the previous day--the day that Moscow rejected Bonn's protest over the mustard gas incident.

*By way of contrast, Adzhubey promptly apologized to the West Germans over the Norden incident in July.

Brezhnev, through the coercive power of the KGB, may have taken the lead in trying to torpedo Khrushchev's German policy by authorizing the Schwirkmann affair, according to [redacted] Since the mustard gas incident took place on the same day Khrushchev returned from his visit to Czechoslovakia, runs the hypothesis, the operation may have been approved in his absence. And due to Brezhnev's responsibilities of the CPSU secretariat at that time, the KGB would have had to seek clearance for such an operation from Brezhnev in Khrushchev's absence. The hypothesis concludes that had the KGB been acting without clearance, a speedy apology would have been issued.

In reporting a meeting of the foreign affairs commissions of the Supreme Soviet convened to discuss the Soviet-GDR Friendship Treaty, Izvestiya (then under Adzhubey's control) printed--but Pravda deleted--Adzhubey's following statement:

> Sometime ago, I was in West Germany, visited its cities, and talked with quite a number of its political and state figures. This trip and these meetings once again confirmed the opinion that it would be completely incorrect to consider all Germans who live in the FRG to be revanchists.

Both Pravda and Izvestiya carried his next sentence which said that

> The overwhelming majority of the working populace of West Germany want to live in peace and friendship with all peoples. There are sober reasonable figures even among the bourgeoisie and in business circles. We will hope that it is they who will gain the upper hand in the Bonn political arena.

Hence, the truncated Pravda version did not make clear that West German political leaders were among the sober elements of West German society, while the Izvestiya version suggests that they were and that it was feasible to discuss political matters with them.

That the presumed opponents of Khrushchev's German policy had gotten the upper hand by this time is suggested by several other developments. On 25 September, after a very long delay that could only have been embarrassing for the GDR regime, Moscow at last exchanged instruments of ratification of the friendship treaty with East Berlin. (On the day before, the extra-legal procedure of the East German People's Chamber in ratifying the treaty displayed signs of haste: the requirement of two readings

of the 12 June treaty was not mentioned in the published proceedings of the late June and early September People's Chamber meetings.) Khrushchev did not attend the ceremony in Moscow, although he was in town at the time and although he had been a cosigner--with Ulbricht--of the treaty and had participated in a meeting held to honor it in June.

On 27 September, a Pravda editorial devoted to the ratification of the friendship treaty included a warning that may have been addressed to Khrushchev and Adzhubey as well as Erhard. Pravda gratituously asserted that "whoever thinks that an improvement of relations between the USSR and West Germany can be achieved in the slightest degree to the detriment of the interest of the GDR is deeply mistaken."

On 28 September, TASS announced that Brezhnev--not Khrushchev, whose rank should have dictated his presence at the East Berlin celebrations--would head the Soviet delegation to the GDR's 15th anniversary festivity.

On 30 September, Khrushchev left for a vacation in the south at the "insistence" of the presidium, according to [redacted] And the last available statement by Khrushchev on future Soviet policy toward West Germany--that he (Khrushchev) expected West Germany, which was not then and is not now a member of the United Nations, "to contribute greatly" as a future member of the United Nations--was reportedly made on 3 October in Sochi before a group of visiting Japanese Parliament members. According to former Japanese Foreign Minister Fujiyama in an interview with the Washington Post at the Japanese Embassy in Washington, D.C. on 22 October 1964, Khrushchev in Sochi brought up the subject of West Germany in an oblique reply to Fujiyama's suggestion that the UN Security Council be broadened to include Japan. Khrushchev, said Fujiyama, replyed that "Japan, India, and West Germany would in the future contribute greatly to the U.N."

On the day Khrushchev left for his vacation in Sochi, GDR leader Willi Stoph made a sudden visit to Moscow and commenced an intensive three-day series of

talks with Kosygin and other high-level Kremlin leaders. The timing of Stoph's visit--ostensibly for the purpose of opening an exhibit devoted to the 15th anniversary of the GDR--suggests that it may have been more concerned with finding out the actual consequences of the new Soviet line toward West Germany than with the more mundane subject of trade matters.

Then in rapid succession, Suslov and Brezhnev came forward with strong statements reassuring the East German leaders about Soviet intentions toward Germany. Suslov made a flat no-sell-out pledge in Moscow on the same day (5 October) that Brezhnev was welcomed in East Berlin by Ulbricht, who had refused to greet Khrushchev's son-in-law two months earlier. Ulbricht on 6 October responded with a rather defiant lecture on the limits of Soviet interference in GDR sovereignty. And at the same podium Brezhnev promised that there would be no "behind-the-back" deals detrimental to GDR interests.

Suslov's Guarantee

Suslov in his 5 October speech at a Kremlin meeting devoted to the GDR anniversary went out of his way to deny the possibility of a Bonn-Moscow deal at the expense of the GDR's "sovereignty." Suslov voiced the flat "guarantee" that "even if all the gold in the world were offered," the relations between Moscow and East Berlin would still not be for sale. He seemed to take seriously the idea that there had been a deal in the offing:

> Of late the revanchist circles of West Germany have begun to spread illusions about the possibility of making a commercial deal with the USSR at the expense of the GDR. If the USSR wants to be on good terms with West Germany, let it sacrifice the interests of the GDR. To say that such plans are of a provocative nature is putting it mildly.

> They prove how pig-headedly bourgeois their authors are, who, in our times, still believe in the possiblity of managing the fates of peoples by means of purchase and sale. The treaty between the USSR and the GDR puts an end to these foolish illusions. It says to those gentlemen: First, the GDR is a sovereign state, and no one has the right to be the master of its interests except its people; second, the relations of fraternal friendship and socialist solidarity linking the USSR and the GDR are not for sale, even if all the gold of the world were offered for them.
>
> Forget your foolish illusions, gentlemen revanchists; they will never come true. As far as normal relations between the USSR and West Germany are concerned, both sides are equally interested in them. These relations can be successfully developed, not on the basis of some shady deals, but on the basis of good will and cooperation in the interests of all the European states, of the cause of peace and international security.

And in a rejoinder to the 8 September People's Daily articles on the "shady deals" between Moscow and Bonn, Suslov added:

> And we are firmly convinced that no intrigue of imperialist reaction in West Germany, no provocations of the Chinese leaders, who attempt to introduce discord into relations between the USSR and the GDR and to start quarrels between the SED and the CPSU, can for a minute shake the fraternal unity, eternal friendship, and comprehensive cooperation between our states, our peoples, and our Marxist-Leninist parties.

Suslov also took this occasion to give the German peace treaty issue a higher priority than it had been given in Soviet propaganda in late summer. He stated that "one of the most important problems, on the solution of which depends the liquidation of tension in Europe and in the entire world, is a peaceful German settlement." In addition, Suslov, like Kozlov in February 1963, injected a sense of urgency into the quest for a peace treaty. He stated that "from the viewpoint of the vital interests of European security, the need for a German peace treaty is becoming more and more imperative." He also tried to put on a face of unity among the Kremlin leaders by attributing to Khrushchev the statement that there are no differences in outlook between the CPSU and the SED. But a summary of his speech in Pravda on 6 October deleted this reference to Khrushchev, thereby dissociating him from Suslov's line. (Izvestiya ignored the Suslov speech altogether.) Moreover, in the light of the reported major role that Suslov played in the ouster of Khrushchev, Suslov's policy pronouncements indicate that a decision had been taken on certain aspects of the German issue (e.g., Khrushchev's Bonn visit, Ulbricht's tenure) in the absence of or without the approval of Khrushchev.

Ulbricht's Challenge

Ulbricht in his own way exacted retribution from Khrushchev by totally ignoring him in a lengthy speech (over 26,000 words) on 6 October, delivered at the East Berlin celebration of the GDR anniversary. And in that speech he made the startling statement that the East Germans paid all of the war reparations for the two Germanies, implying that the GDR had "purchased" its "sovereignty" from the Soviet Union. He also declared in an indignant tone that the "sovereign" GDR cannot be "purchased" by anyone else.

Ulbricht's startling discussion of the sensitive World War II war reparations matter was couched in an anti-Bonn framework, rather than in terms of resentment directed toward Moscow's heavy postwar drain on the

economy of the Soviet zone. But Ulbricht, nevertheless, placed the main onus of the GDR's postwar economic problems on the Soviet Union:

> The year the GDR was founded many ruins were still not eliminated; it was still a main concern to deal with the needs and to make restitution for what German imperialism had done to the Soviet Union and other nations. The citizens of the small GDR at that time made restitution for all Germany through hard work.

Ulbricht did not go on to discuss the amount of restitution the GDR had made to the Soviet Union, but he cited a "Social democratic scientist"* who verified this statement through his studies of the first postwar period and who "came to the conclusion that West Germany owes the GDR a few dozen billion marks." In addition to the "few dozen billion marks," Ulbricht cited 30 billion marks West Germany allegedly owes the GDR for "ruthless exploitation of the open border in Berlin in the years prior to the wall."

Peking propaganda seized upon Ulbricht's remarks and carried a brief report of the speech under the headline "GDR Pays USSR War Reparations for Two Germanies, Says Ulbricht." On 13 October, the Hong Kong Communist Ta Kung Pao cited Ulbricht's statements and related assertions to show "the East German people's resentment at the Soviet demand to pay their debts when East Germany was having a difficult time and at Khrushchev's attempt to sell out their country to West Germany.

*Identified by Ulbricht in his April 1965 SED Central Committee speech, examined on page 61, as a Dr. Badde. Presumably this is economics professor Dr. Fritz Badde of Kiel University, an SPD member who retired from the Bundestag in 1965.

Later in his speech of 6 October, Ulbricht renewed the line that a reunified Germany can only be Communist and again placed on the record his anti-Beria argument that the building of Communism can take place in a divided country. Then, by indirection, he informed the Soviet Union that it had no right to put a price on the GDR. He may have had Khrushchev as well as Erhard in mind when he said that

> a reunification also cannot be had in the way that some incorrigible fools imagine, namely that the GDR be bought from somebody. The GDR belongs to itself, it belongs to its citizens who are not prepared to sell either themselves or their republic to the imperialist Western powers. For this reason, one should finally put an end to speculations on such foolishness in West Germany once and for all and face life as it is.

It is possible that Ulbricht at the time of his speech had been told about presidium resistance to Khrushchev's overtures to Bonn. The fact that Khrushchev was conspicuously slighted in Ulbricht's two-hour speech, combined with Ulbricht's "hands-off-the GDR" challenge and an indirect war reparations barb, suggested that Ulbricht, at any rate, was confident enough to serve notice that he would not surrender his posts without a fight. (In private, and after Khrushchev was removed, the Soviet leaders reportedly informed some visiting delegations of foreign Communist parties that Adzhubey during his German trip had committed a grave error by criticizing Ulbricht's leadership.) Ulbricht's challenge also seemed to warn that if a major change occurred in Soviet policy toward West Germany,* Ulbricht would publicly retaliate by

*And Adzhubey in the FRG, according to [redacted], was regarded as the harbinger of "major" change in USSR German policy.

directly raising and elaborating upon embarrassing issues. (Such issues might well have included Soviet exploitation through war reparations, failure to support the GDR through substantial credits in the early years of its development, vacillation on Soviet policy regarding the peace treaty matter, and, perhaps, other specific grievances accrued during almost two decades of East German peonage.)

Brezhnev's Pledge

After Ulbricht left the rostrum, Brezhnev arose to read a Khrushchev-Mikoyan anniversary greeting, which contained a rather ambiguous passage to the effect that any "plot" against the GDR will be rebuffed. Then Brezhnev plunged into his own speech in which he pledged that no deal would be struck with Bonn politicians "behind the back of the GDR" that would be detrimental to GDR national interests and security. The realization that Khrushchev was planning to visit such politicians, and the accompanying insecurity of leading SED members that Khrushchev might agree to a policy detrimental to and "behind-the-back" of the GDR, was only thinly veiled in earlier speeches by leading SED members in Brezhnev's audience. And after Khrushchev's ouster an SED politburo member in an East Berlin speech on 6 November harked back to Brezhnev's pledge and publicly tied Brezhnev's public statement to Suslov's 5 October flat promise that the GDR cannot be purchased.*

*The SED official, Verner, stated: "Anyone in Bonn or elsewhere still harboring illusions that the GDR can be negated, or that it is possible to make agreements behind the back of the GDR harmful to its interest, shall be reminded of the statements of Comrade Leonid Brezhnev at the festive meeting on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of our republic in Berlin. He said at the time: 'Today it is possible to state with the best of reasons that without the GDR it is impossible to solve either questions concerning the German peace settlement or other
(footnote continued on page 45)

Hence, it would seem that in early October Brezhnev and Suslov intervened to prevent Khrushchev from further developing his West German overtures and to reassure the East Germans that their interests would not be sacrificed for Soviet policy gains.

(footnote continued from page 44)

problems connected with the consolidation of security in Europe and the guarantee of peace." And anyone in the same places still dreaming that there is a price for which the GDR can be purchased, or even believing that, in the manner of horse traders, agreements can be concluded at the expense of the GDR and improved relations with the Soviet Union, should carefully read the statement of Comrade Mikhail Suslov made at a Soviet-German friendship rally on the 15th anniversary of our republic in Moscow. He said: 'Such plans testify to the bourgeois narrowmindedness of their authors who, in our present era, still believe in the possibility that the fates of nations can be decided through purchase or sale. The treaty between the USSR and the GDR tells these gentlemen: one, the GDR is a sovereign state, with no one except the people having the right to decide on its interests; and two, relations of brotherly friendship and socialist solidarity uniting the USSR and GDR cannot be sold or bought, even if all the gold of the world were offered.' This is true and clear, and the gentlemen on the Rhine will be well advised to consider this more seriously."

III. THE NEW SOVIET LEADERSHIP AND THE GERMAN QUESTION: OCTOBER 1964 - JANUARY 1967

1. THE GERMAN PROBLEM AND THE COUP

The leaders who came to power in the Soviet Union in mid-October found little leeway for maneuver on the German question. With political power diffused among a coalition of men with diverse viewpoints on various policy questions, the new Soviet leadership was also hamstrung by a variety of problems inherited from Khrushchev, the solution of which was made difficult by unchanged objective circumstances. With respect to the German question, they did not admit in public that there was substance to the Chinese Communist charge that Khrushchev had been trying to make a deal with Bonn to sell-out the GDR for economic gain, though Soviet and East European sources in November and December 1964 privately stated that Khrushchev had favored a deal with Erhard at the expense of Ulbricht. The new Soviet leaders may also have tried to convince the East Germans that it was in their mutual interest not to implicate Khrushchev in a deal to sell-out the GDR.

East Germany's Reaction to the Coup

The initial GDR reaction to Khrushchev's ouster and its treatment of the sell-out question was ambivalent. On the one hand, there was evidence to suggest that Khrushchev's removal brought quick relief to the leaders in East Berlin about the fate of East Germany's future. The GDR's first official reaction to the Kremlin coup, which was registered in the 17 October communique of the SED Central Committee--the first Eastern European party statement on the Khrushchev ouster--was that the friendship treaty of June 1964 will be carried out "honorably," implying, perhaps, that there was some question among the East German leaders as to whether it would have been honorably implemented prior to Khrushchev's ouster. As

far as Ulbricht himself is concerned, his personal reaction in the first few weeks following Khrushchev's ouster was not made public.*

On the other hand, the SED central committee's communique of 17 October declared in another passage that Khrushchev's removal caused "deep agitation in our party and among our people," and that Khrushchev had merit in implementing "Marxist-Leninist policy as worked out by the CPSU Central Committee." Also, Verner, the SED politburo member who found it necessary to recall the pledges of Suslov and Brezhnev about no deals behind the back of the GDR, in a speech of 6 November, exonerated Khrushchev by name by saying that he had merit for having advocated the policy of a "peaceful and democratic solution of the German question." Though he followed this statement with the blanket charge that Khrushchev had "disregarded" and "violated" collective leadership, presumably including that worked out in the Central Committee, Verner did not explicitly connect these charges with errors in policy.

These discrepancies in the GDR's initial reaction, may be explained by any of several possibilities: division in the SED, initial lack of direction from Ulbricht and/or the new Kremlin leadership, or a cautious attitude on the part of the SED in an effort to evaluate the intentions of the new Soviet leadership with respect to the German question.

Subsequently, the GDR's public line suggested a greater sense of security with respect to the new Soviet leadership. Some GDR spokesmen obliquely contrasted the

*It does not seem likely that the Soviet conspirators would have made (or felt it necessary to make) a break in past practice by bringing a foreigner (like Ulbricht) into an internal CPSU matter--i.e., the 12 and 13 October presidium arraignment and the 14 October Central Committee prosecution. The evidence that Ulbricht went to Moscow on 12 October is weak, dubious and solely speculative. Ulbricht was absent from the East Berlin scene from 12 to 27 October; unlike other East European parties, there was no public announcement of an East German party fact-finding commission being sent to Moscow; and all of the other East European leaders except Rumania's Gheorghiu-Dej were reported to have been in their respective countries on the fateful days, 12-14 October.

situation under Khrushchev with the one at hand, pointing up their grave suspicions about Khrushchev's intentions earlier in the year. Ulbricht, for example, in his speech at the SED plenum on 5 December 1964, stated that the SED was not disturbed by the "slander" created (he said) in the Western press in connection with Adzhubey's July Bonn visit because

> ...anyone can see for himself that the friendship treaty between the USSR and the GDR, as stated in the CPSU telegram of 29 October 1964, constitutes the basis on which the relations of overall fraternal cooperation between our states and parties are further developed.

Ulbricht thus seemed to be admitting that it took a post-coup telegram to put an end to the anticipation of adverse and radical change which had disturbed the SED during the last few months of Khrushchev's regime. SED politburo member Honecker--often mentioned as Ulbricht's successor--at the SED plenum went further than Ulbricht in explicitly stating that "even our enemies...have had to admit that the SED and Ulbricht have emerged from the aforementioned events /Khrushchev's ouster/ not weakened but strengthened."

Other Post-Coup Incriminations

The fact that the new Kremlin leadership, since taking over, avoided any specific public charge that Khrushchev had mismanaged Soviet policy on the German questions, stands in contrast to the Brezhnev-Suslov line of early October, that implied that there were elements in the USSR interested in striking a deal with the West Germans at Ulbricht's expense. Brezhnev's failure to renew a no sell-out pledge in his 29 October reply to Ulbricht's congratulations on the former's new "promotion" is particularly curious in light of Brezhnev's 6 October "guarantee." In his statement of 29 October, Brezhnev said only that "the CPSU will do all they can to guard that historical achievement--the unshakable friendship between our peoples--like the apple of their eyes, and to further develop the

relations of all-around fraternal cooperation between our parties and states." The new leadership's failure to give such "guarantees" appeared to reflect the decision not to implicate Khrushchev in a deal to sell-out the GDR. This phenomenon, along with other indications of the new Soviet policy toward the German problem, raised suspicions that the new leaders concluded, in light of their already limited maneuverability, that open disclosure of any devious Khrushchevian intentions toward the GDR would have made the new Kremlin leadership vulnerable to attack by friend (e.g., the GDR) and foe (e.g., the CPR) alike, and would have unnecessarily complicated Soviet diplomatic relations with the East European allies.

Even the public charges leveled against Khrushchev by Pravda contained only one possible link with an earlier indirect charge against Khrushchev's overtures to Bonn.

Brezhnev's 6 October 1964 East Berlin speech	17 October 1964 Pravda editorial on Khrushchev's ouster
Only short-sighted politicians who have completely divorced themselves from realistic policy, like some gentlemen on the banks of the Rhine, can indulge in the hope of solutions and agreements behind the back of the GDR, to the detriment of its national interests and security. No, gentlemen, this will never happen. These gentlemen will never find that we will do this.	The Leninist party is an enemy of subjectivism and drifting in communist construction. Hare-brained scheming, immature conclusions, and hasty decisions and actions divorced from reality, bragging and phrasemongering, commandism, unwillingness to take into account the achievements of science and practical experience are alien to it.*

*Sheer coincidence cannot, of course, be ruled out. The link may be strengthened, though, by Ulbricht's use of a somewhat similar rhetorical device to depict a "divorce from realistic policy" when he revived similar worries after the 1966 CPSU Congress ("No one who has command of his five senses" can believe that the USSR would abandong the GDR. See ahead page 75) Freie Welt's use of the similar device (page 34) is another case in point.

An explicit indictment alluding to Khrushchev's misconduct of German affairs which Suslov was purported to have presented at the 14 October Central Committee trial of Khrushchev was included in some reports written by non-bloc Communist reporters in Moscow. The Communist-controlled Italian weekly Paese Sera on 30 October, for example, printed a list of "29 charges" against Khrushchev, one of which criticized Khrushchev for sending his son-in-law to Bonn as an authorized private emissary. (The existence of the "29 charges" was denied in a Moscow-datelined report printed in the Italian Communist party paper L'Unita on 31 October. Interestingly, TASS on 3 November chose to deny the authenticity of the indictment printed in the Italian leftist weekly L'Espresso on 1 November which did not include the Adzhubey-as-emissary charge.)*

stated that Khrushchev had contemplated trying to "negotiate an agreement" with Bonn at the expense of Ulbricht. reportedly commented that "this idea" of Khrushchev [illegible]t in any sense new, that Khrushchev had suggested it on several occasions in the past, and somewhat along the lines of Erhard's initial assessment (page 23) of the policy implications of the coup against Khrushchev, said that with Khrushchev's ouster there would not be any agreement between Moscow and West Germany or the West on the Berlin question for "many, many

*While in the FRG Adzhubey reported directly to Khrushchev by phone, or so he told Der Spiegel editors in an interview they published on 2 August. In response to another question, Adzhubey himself suggested that he was Khrushchev's private emissary. He stated that "now I must give away a secret. The Premier wants us to come /back to Moscow/ as quickly as possible." For a careful examination of the other reported charges against Khru-

years." The "agreement" was not spelled out in the report of remarks, -was explicit on the nature of Khrushchev's "idea", or part of that idea. According to Khrushchev told Gomulka prior to 20 September 1964 that he (Khrushchev) had been negotiating with the West Germans, that the West Germans had agreed they would recognize the Oder-Neisse line if Khrushchev would remove the Berlin wall, guarantee free elections in East Germany and promise the removal of Ulbricht upon completion of his term of office. The report, which listed no other West German offers, stated that Khrushchev told Gomulka that he faced a "hard fight in Moscow" if he was to push through this scheme. Whatever the value may be of the report, other post-coup reports from Warsaw stated that Gomulka was apparently mistrustful of Khrushchev's intentions toward West Germany. According to the U.S. Embassy in Warsaw, Gomulka was "upset" by Khrushchev's efforts to improve relations with West Germany. Thus, reported the embassy, Khrushchev's removal disturbed Gomulka less than other Communist leaders. Gomulka himself said cryptically on 28 October 1964 that there had been "justified grounds" for the ouster of Khrushchev. On 17 October the Polish Central Committee Press Bureau briefed newspaper editors on the removal of Khrushchev and reportedly stated that Khrushchev was becoming too friendly with the West and his proposed trip to West Germany was specifically mentioned as a factor leading to his downfall.

2. SIGNALS OF RENEWED DISQUIET

Soon after Khrushchev was replaced, the new Soviet leadership altered Moscow's long-standing formula on the need for a German peace treaty and a "neutral, free city," of West Berlin. The new leadership referred to a German "settlement" rather than a peace treaty, and frequently omitted references to West Berlin in the Soviet formulas. The East Germans, however, obstinately and polemically

held on to the old peace treaty-West Berlin demands throughout the first half of 1965. Ulbricht's polemical remarks to the effect that the West Berlin issue ought not to be shelved were complimented by his rewriting of early postwar history which exaggerated his role and independence under the Soviet occupation, by his renewal of the delicate subject of the Soviet reparations rape of the Soviet zone, and in late April by his praise of CPR support for GDR policy.

Holding Off on the German Issue

The new leadership may have felt that other more pressing domestic and foreign matters demanded their initial concentration and that any major diplomatic action --such as the Bonn visit--on the German question should be postponed. Concentration on other foreign and domestic matters may also explain, in part, Moscow's dropping of any element of urgency in the new Soviet peace treaty line. An initial attempt by the new leadership to introduce the urgent element, by calling for an "early" solution of the problem of the German peace treaty in the 17 October joint Soviet-Cuban communique, was shortly afterwards undone. Brezhnev, in his 6 November October Revolution anniversary speech and the major 13 November Pravda editorial on post-Khrushchev foreign policy made no reference to the need for an "early" solution.

In addition to dropping the formulation calling for the "speediest conclusion" of the German treaty, another switch present in Brezhnev's 19 October and 6 November speeches and in Kosygin's 25 November speech, was the reference to "settlement" rather than German "peace treaty." And a third switch in the formula shelved the long-standing effort to alter the status of West Berlin on the basis of a peace settlement. Moscow's new line on solving the German problem frequently contained no proviso for West Berlin. The standard line since Khrushchev's 1958 treaty ultimatum had been the solution of the German peace treaty and the normalization, on that

basis, of the situation in West Berlin.* Brezhnev in two speeches (6 November and 3 December) and Pravda in its authoritative foreign policy editorial (13 November), by dropping the Berlin rider to Moscow's German formula indicated that the new Soviet leadership was trying to dissociate itself from Khrushchev's six year old policy failures. (The status of West Berlin and the peace "treaty," however, were not consistently ignored in the first few months of the new leadership. The status of West Berlin was broached--but not tied to a peace treaty--in formulations which reiterated the continuing Soviet view that West Berlin remained a polity separate from West Germany. For example, the 4 December 1964 Soviet-Czech communique stated that "the whole international situation would be helped by the conclusion of a peace treaty with the two sovereign German states and also an agreement on the status of West Berlin as an independent political unit.")

Ulbricht's Pique

The shelving of the old peace treaty and West Berlin formulas upset Ulbricht. A glaring affront to his wishes was displayed on the day of Brezhnev's 6 November 1964 speech, which ignored the subject of West Berlin and referred to a German "settlement." GDR leaders telegraphed Brezhnev, Kosygin and Mikoyan on 6 November and pointedly included the urgent appeal that "the conclusion of a peace treaty with the two German states and, on this basis, the transformation of West Berlin into a neutral free city are of extra-ordinary importance in the struggle for the unity and solidarity of the Communist world movement."

*This formulation--dating from the 1958 Berlin crisis--had been reiterated in the 1 October Soviet-Indonesian communique (pre-ouster) as well as in the announced October revolution slogans (post-ouster, but announced prior to Brezhnev's speech).

Brezhnev did not link the solution of the German problem to the world Communist movement, and referred to it as only one of a "number of unsolved problems" causing instability in the world.

And though Ulbricht stated that during his Kremlin talks with Brezhnev and others on the weekend of 6-7 November "complete agreement" was reached on the requirements of a German peace "settlement," other SED spokesmen continued in public and private to call for the "speediest conclusion" of a peace treaty with the two German states and on that basis to solve the West Berlin situation. The SED's continuing (though sporadic) references to the old peace treaty-West Berlin demands in November and December were, perhaps, particularly polemical in light of the fact that the 13 November Pravda editorial had pointedly criticized "some people" who do not reject old doctrines and concepts in efforts to insure European security.

Ulbricht's displeasure with the altered West Berlin line from the new Moscow leadership was renewed shortly after the 19-20 January 1965 Warsaw Pact meeting in Warsaw. In a 24 January East Berlin interview on the Pact meeting, Ulbricht in response to a leading question about Bonn's "revenge policy" and Bonn's "claim" to West Berlin, emphasized that the West Berlin question "is to us of as much importance as the question of the Oder-Neisse peace frontier is to People's Poland." The question of Europe's existing borders had appeared in the Warsaw Pact communique while the Berlin question was ignored, and the decision not to mention Berlin in the communique was, according to a high level Polish Foreign Ministry source, a "political one" in which "all delegations did not agree." Ulbricht's naked complaint regarding the continuing importance of the Berlin question was overlooked in Soviet propaganda, which throughout 1965 devoted the bulk of its German-related copy and time to the virtually dead MLF issue.

Kosygin's Cold Reception

East German displeasure over the Soviet shelving of the peace treaty-West Berlin issues may have accounted, in part,* for the surprisingly low-key treatment given by the GDR to Kosygin's 27 February-2 March 1965 visit to East Germany to take in the annual Leipzig trade fair. Kosygin's arrival was noted in Neues Deutschland in a one paragraph report under a news item about the return of the Polish delegation from the Leipzig fair. Ulbricht's greeting was a curt two-sentence telegram sent from Cairo** on the day Kosygin left the GDR, and during his visit East German protocol and publicity for the new Soviet premier did not measure up to the red-carpet treatment given by the GDR to the ceremonial head of state (Mikoyan) in his visit twelve months earlier.

*In addition to the peace treaty-West Berlin issues, reported that Ulbricht in the winter of 1964-1965 was "greatly agitated" over the Soviet's laissez faire attitude toward continuing West German economic probes with East European Governments. Recent reports on East Germany's concern over Bonn's efforts in late December 1966 and January 1967 to establish diplomatic ties with Eastern Europe (pages 84-85) reflect a generally similar attitude on Moscow's part--that is, to diplomatically caution the East European nations to go slowly and shrewdly in their accommodation with Bonn, but not to exacerbate relations with the East Europeans by attempting to block their dealings with the FRG.

**Ulbricht was in Cairo engaged in a vain attempt to achieve a major breakthrough in non-bloc diplomatic recognition. (For GDR loans and credits equivalent to 100.8 million U.S. dollars, the UAR agreed only to open a consulate general in East Berlin.) The Cairo trip had long been planned; thus Ulbricht's absence, perhaps, was not in itself a major insult to Kosygin.

Almost the only East German report evincing enthusiasm during the visit was the 27 February scoop by ADN's correspondent in Moscow which cryptically cited "official circles of the Soviet Foreign Ministry" for the tidings that Kosygin had not accepted an invitation to visit West Germany. The invitation had been conveyed by [redacted] in Moscow, and it had been well received by Kosygin. Kosygin on the 23rd asked [redacted] to express his thanks for Erhard's invitation, which Kosygin called a friendly act designed to improve relations. He could not reply at once to the invitation, explained Kosygin (perhaps with the Khrushchev lesson in mind), since he had to consult his colleagues. Whatever the decision of his colleagues may have been, it remained curious that the means of conveying the answer to the FRG was by an East German correspondent in Moscow who reported the news while Kosygin was on his way to the GDR. (The day after East German media publicized the Moscow-datelined story by ADN's correspondent, Kosygin, in response to a question, reportedly told an AFP reporter that he was preparing no trip to Bonn.)

East German coolness toward Kosygin stood in contrast to Kosygin's warm praise in his 1 March Leipzig speech for East Germany's economic structure and his boost for Ulbricht's prestige--Kosygin disclosed that Ulbricht called the January 1965 Warsaw Pact meeting. By this and other gestures, Kosygin's visit seemed to bear much in common with the Mikoyan mission to East Berlin one year earlier; that is, to reassure the East Germans that their security was not in jeopardy during a period of diminished Soviet-West German tensions. Thus Kosygin in his 1 March speech balanced temperate references to West Germany ("the Soviet Government by no means intends to consider West Germany as an outcast where everything is bad and nothing is good") and faint hints of interest in the Rapallo line (he praised the fair as a "trading bridge between East and West," stressed that the FRG's interests were better served by "normal good neighborly relations" with the East, and, in private, reportedly expressed interest in expanding Soviet-West German cooperation in the fabrication and construction of fertilizer plants in a meeting with West German steel

executives) with sharp accusations alleging "manifestations of revanchism in Bonn." And, Kosygin tried to reassure East Berlin that the Soviet Union would not sacrifice the GDR's vital interests to West German revanchism: "We would like to make it quite clear to the West German leaders," emphasized Kosygin, "that they should not expect any concessions on our part where the program of revanchism is concerned." And to further the Soviet effort to assuage East Berlin, a flood of high-level Soviet officials* arrived in the GDR on 6 March to visit the Leipzig affair and meet with East German leaders. The rank and number of Soviet visits constituted a record high in Moscow's efforts to solidify intra-bloc views.

Two Views of A Bundestag "Provocation"

But trying to have it both ways with the two Germanies still did not sit well with Ulbricht, who returned from the Cairo visit on 6 March and proceeded to talk tougher in the next few months not only to the West Germans but also, in thinly veiled formulations, to the Soviets.

Ulbricht's diatribes concentrated, at first, on the 7 April 1965 Bundestag session in West Berlin. The session evoked an official protest by the Soviet Union, Soviet fighter planes buzzed the Reichstag building in West Berlin during the Bundestag session, and the GSFG conducted military maneuvers with GDR forces which at times halted autobahn traffic to and from West Berlin.

*Kosygin's belated retinue consisted of two full presidium members (Voronov and Shelest), two members of the CPSU Secretariat (Titov and Rudakov), five deputy chairmen of the Council of Ministers (first deputy Ustinov, soon to be given a chair on the secretariat and a candidacy in the presidium, Dymshits, L. V. Smirnov, Rudnev, Novikov) and 17 ministers.

But Moscow soft-pedalled, while East Berlin highlighted, the events surrounding the Bundestag session. And Brezhnev in his 8 April Warsaw speech appeared to further downplay the significance of the session by calling it a "political provocation." Ulbricht equated the session with supposed military provocations, renewed and again emphasized his disputatious reference to the Soviet backaway from the Berlin issue,* and revived the hoary image of blockade and war in a single paragraph of an article that appeared in the May 1965 edition of World Marxist Review:

> The illegal appearance of the Bonn government in West Berlin and the Bundestag session there were a dangerous and reckless provocation, as important a component of the policy of revenge as the 'forward strategy,' the atomic-mine belt** and participation in a multilateral nuclear force. Bonn thinks that in this way it will succeed in annexing West Berlin and using it as an outpost to "eliminate" the GDR and force the door open to the East. But we have made it absolutely clear that West Berlin does not and will never belong to the Federal Republic. The question of West Berlin involves the vital interests

*The Soviet May Day slogans for 1965, for another example, made no reference to the need for a "free city of West Berlin."

**The atomic-mine belt, or the late-1964 West German proposal for a zone of atomic mines along the forward edge of the battle area in West Germny, evoked Soviet protest on 18 January 1965 which, interestingly, further placed the peace treaty issue on the ice. The note to the U.S. claimed that "pending the conclusion of a German peace treaty" the Soviet Union, along with the USA, Britain and France, continues to have a hand in FRG policy on the basis of the Potsdam Agreement.

> of the GDR. It is every bit as important to us as the question of the Oder-Neisse border is to Poland. We recall that under Hitler the Danzig corridor issue was used not only to foment revanchism, but also to prepare war. Thus, the question of ways of access to West Berlin could become a question of war and peace. Therefore the crime should be prevented in good time. Those who want normal communication with West Berlin through GDR territory by land, water and air should accustom themselves to concluding permanent agreements with the German Democratic Republic. /Emphasis in original/

Brezhnev's relatively temperate analysis of the Bundestag session in his 8 April Warsaw speech constituted the only comment on the subject during the 4-10 April Brezhnev-Kosygin visit to Poland. No Berlin blockade threats were made by the Soviet leaders and the Polish-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance signed by the two parties on 8 April included the first Soviet reference in a treaty to the Oder-Neisse line. (The 12 June 1964 GDR-Soviet treaty--which had not been listed in Pravda's 1 January 1965 tally of Soviet foreign policy successes in 1964--guaranteed but did not specify the GDR borders. Neues Deutschland's 10 April 1965 article on the Soviet-Polish treaty stated that the "Oder-Neisse border has been confirmed by the treaties concluded between the GDR and Poland" and made no reference to the vague 1964 Soviet-GDR border guarantee.)

Reaction from Ulbricht, which constituted an admonishment to the Soviets that the GDR cannot be taken for granted, was not long delayed.

Ulbricht's Rewriting of East German History

Nine days after the signing ceremony in Warsaw, Neues Deutschland took the unusual step of publishing

"for the first time" a five year old Ulbricht speech on the testy subject of the scope and role of Germans in the Soviet zone of occupation in the immediate post war days. The speech, which held that the scope of German activity was large and their role was not fully subservient to the Soviets, was purportedly delivered on 12 May 1960. If so, it may have registered Ulbricht's pique over one of Khrushchev's backdowns on earlier threats to sign a separate USSR-GDR peace treaty. (Khrushchev, on the heels of the Paris summit meeting, made such a tactical backdown in a speech in East Berlin on 20 May 1960).* Presumably its belated publication served to register similar feelings over the backaway by Brezhnev and Kosygin on the peace treaty-West Berlin issues. The 1960 Ulbricht speech made it clear that its purpose was to correct the "not quite correct" historical accounts of the development of East German civil administration under the Soviet occupation. Gratefully acknowledging that "capitalist contradictions" were liquidated and a new administration was established with the help of the Soviet Army and the Soviet occupation organs, the newly published Ulbricht speech claimed that Soviet assistance "is only part of the story." The rest of the story concerned Ulbricht's personal role in forming the SED and the early activities of Germans guided by the "leadership of the SED." "This is the essential point which I wanted to explain here as a historical lesson," declaimed Ulbricht. The publication of the delayed history lesson was soon followed by Ulbricht's return to another sensitive East German-Soviet issue--reparations.

Reparations for all of Germany were made by the GDR, repeated Ulbricht in his SED Central Committee plenum speech published by Neues Deutschland on 28 April. After

*A similar rationale appeared to underlie Ulbricht's November 1961 charge (page 6), made after another Khrushchev backdown on a separate USSR-GDR peace treaty, that Beria and Malenkov did not favor the construction of socialism in East Germany.

charging that the FRG owes the GDR an amount "approaching" 120 billion deutsche marks for the Soviet war reparations and for West German economic "exploitation" of East Germany in the days before the Berlin Wall put a stop to the GDR's manpower drain, Ulbricht bemoaned the limited scope of East Germany's national economy ("just imagine what our national economy would be like if we had invested this additional amount of approximately 120 billion deutsche marks") and, thus, as he had done in his 6 October 1964 speech, indirectly placed the blame on the Soviet Union for its dismantling of the Eastern Zone during the early post war years.

The speaker's personal role during the early years and his newly claimed independence from Soviet tutelage in the 'forties--he lauded the wisdom of his 1945 precept that "the way of the Soviets" could not be followed*--were again glorified in Ulbricht's lengthy SED Central Committee speech (over 37,000 words). He made no reference to Kosygin, or to the Soviet leader's visit to Leipzig one month earlier, though the Leipzig fair was a topic covered in Ulbricht's speech. Nor did Ulbricht mention Brezhnev, or convey Brezhnev's 8 April formulation on potentially favorable forces for the development of West German-Soviet relations.**

In Praise of Peking

While conspicuously slighting the Soviet Union and its leaders, Ulbricht warmly praised Communist China's support for GDR policy. His 28 April praise for the CPR

*Unlike the way of the Bolsheviks, the German Communist Party (KPD) merged with the Social Democrats (SPD) in the Soviet zone in 1946.

**Somewhat like Kosygin's 15 March 1965 formulation, Brezhnev balanced charges of West German revanchism with the assertion that "West Germany is not populated by revanchists alone. There are many peace-loving people, and there are forces which reject revanchist ravings and support a realistic foreign policy."

was particularly glaring since Peking propaganda the day before commenced its public attack on the post-Khrushchev leadership. (NCNA on 27 April transmitted the publisher's note to the fifth volume of Khrushchev's statements in Chinese translation which scored "Khrushchev's successors" for "following in his footsteps.") And Ulbricht praised the CPR in a passage which indirectly suggested his displeasure over his allies' activities with Bonn.

> The Bonn government avails itself of provocations because it believes that it can exploit differences of opinion with the CPR and the various national interests of certain people's democracies. The Bonn government believes that the economic relations of the people's democracies with the West German Federal Republic can force the Warsaw Pact states to yield ground in the event of provocations against the GDR. The contrary was true, as demonstrated by the recent meeting of the Warsaw Pact states. The Bonn government was quickly reminded of the limits of its power. The statements of the CPR Government, too, indicate that the Bonn government has again speculated erroneously.

Peking's flirtation with East Berlin commenced in earnest shortly after the January Warsaw Pact meeting, which, contrary to Ulbricht's distorted denial (above), did not lead to a GDR-bloc agreement on dealing with West Germany's economic policies toward the East. In late February Peking announced an agreement which, unlike most other Chinese-East European trade agreements at that time, provided for an increase in trade. (CPR propaganda said that the agreement provided for a "remarkable increase" in trade). The GDR reciprocated with several friendly gestures; one was a press conference given by the GDR Ambassador to the CPR who thanked the Chinese for their support of Ulbricht's foreign policies. And

surrounding the development of improved CPR-GDR relations, Peking propaganda in April sporadically referred to the indications of Ulbricht's dissatisfaction with the extent of Soviet and East European support. In May, the propaganda returned to the September line of the previous year, that is to allegations of Soviet policy to sell out East Germany. (See pages 31-35) In a speech by CCP Politburo member Peng Chen at the PKI anniversary celebration in Djakarta on 25 May:

> If they /the new Soviet leadership/ truly have departed from Khrushchev's course of revisionism, then why do they continue pursuing Khrushchev's policy to sell-out the GDR. When West Germany's militarists insolently held the Bundestag session in West Berlin and launched their insensible provocation against the GDR, why did they not dare to take measures to repulse this provocation? Why did they put in cold storage the suggestion for reaching a peace treaty with Germany as soon as possible and for solving the West Berlin issue, and, moreover, not daring to touch on the subject again?

Kosygin's Second Mission

Prior to Peng Chen's charge, the Soviet Union had again attempted, through another Kosygin visit to the GDR, to demonstrate that East Germany would not be foresaken during a period of improved Soviet-West German relations. The occasion for Kosygin's second visit in one year was the 20th anniversary of VE Day. And in the morning before his arrival, Ulbricht found occasion to

provide contrasting backdrop for Kosygin's subsequent performance:

Ulbricht, 5 May People's Chamber speech	Kosygin, 7 May East Berlin VE Day Speech
Political Atmosphere in West Germany	
"...the criminal Hitlerite ideology /of revanchism/ prevails in Bonn..." "Twenty years after the liberation, there prevails again in Bonn's domestic policy the spirit of the war-economy leaders, the Hitlerite army officers, the S.S. specialists in the police, and Hitlerite blood judges in the judiciary. Apart from some exceptions, the politically and morally inferior mass press, ruminating on the most base instincts, systematically poisons public opinion."	"The Soviet Union by no means holds that all West Germans are imbued with the ideas of revanchism. We understand that most of the people of the German Federal Republic want to live in peace." "It is being said that the new generation of Germans who have grown up in the Federal Republic since the war cannot be held responsible for the crimes committeed by nazism. It would indeed be unjust to saddle today's West German youth with this grave responsibility."
Reunification	
"The road toward unification of the German states leads via disarmament and a peace treaty, and also through elimination of the remnants of World War II and completion of the great work of liberation from militarism and imperialism and fascism in West Germany."	"...whoever really wants to look for genuine ways leading to German reunification must not seek them through political and military adventures but on the basis of a voluntary agreement between the two German states.

West Berlin Solution

"No debates and no conflict would be necessary because of West Berlin if West Berlin did not let itself be misused by the Bonn revanchists, if West Berlin becomes a neutral free city.	(no reference to a West Berlin solution)

In addition to remaining silent on a West Berlin solution, Kosygin did not broach Ulbricht's 5 May repeated call for 120 billion marks from the FRG, his militant complaint regarding the Bundestag meeting in West Berlin, and his distress over alleged Western proposals to the GDR's eastern neighbors--one of which, Ulbricht disclosed, was a U.S. scheme to buy off "in dollars" and border guarantees interested East European countries in return for East European support for Bonn's "revanchist policy toward the GDR." This charge, presumably, was Ulbricht's interpretation of the U.S. bridge-building proposal. The FRG's trade-building proposals were interpreted in a similar distorted fashion, and in May, Neues Deutschland printed a flood of articles cautioning its allies on Bonn's supposedly subversive trade tactics, the aims of which were also seen as strengthening Bonn's "revanchist policy" toward the GDR.

3. THE RESPITE, THEN THE RENEWAL OF THE TRIANGLE

East German expressions of confidence in Soviet support followed Kosygin's second mission to the GDR in May. Ulbricht's confidence may have stemmed from the particularly hostile Soviet attitudes, expressed in private as well as public statements, toward West Germany. The Soviets were then inflating the West German "threat" in order to support the rationale for limited activity in Vietnam. The inflated "threat" may also have been a defensive response to CPR charges that the Soviets were planning to pull back from, rather than open up, a "second

front" in Europe. The respite during this period of cool relations between Moscow and Bonn still did not restrain Ulbricht in July from his rewriting of East German history or Brezhnev in early September from sounding out the West Germans on the possibility of improving relations in the indefinite future. But in late September, after Ulbricht's trip to the Soviet Union, the Soviets appeared to have adopted the GDR's harsh assessment of the FRG. And after the conclusion of a long-term trade pact in December 1965, Ulbricht appeared to have nothing but servile salutations to extend to the Soviet Union.

The period of comparative tranquility was not long lived. After the CPSU Congress in April 1966 Ulbricht publicly revived old fears about an abandoned GDR while Moscow was making plans to renew the USSR-FRG trade treaty which had expired in 1963. And though the Soviets were quick to reject new West German offers to buy out the GDR, Soviet-GDR differences on a number of key developments were not papered over. Contrasting views were exposed over the proposed SED-SPD talks from which the East Germans backed away while the Soviets expressed the view that the exchange would be welcome and useful; over Soviet Ambassador Abrasimov's direct talks with West Berlin Mayor Brandt about which the GDR was not pleased; and over the evaluation of the "grand Coalition" in Bonn to which Moscow attached some hope while East Berlin painted the new FRG Government in hues as black as the GDR depicted the Erhard and Adenauer predecessors of the coalition.

Signs of "Correct" But Cautious Soviet-GDR Relations

The red carpet treatment given to Kosygin on his second visit to the GDR in 1965 was followed by expressions of confidence in Soviet commitments by Ulbricht and other GDR leaders. For example, Ulbricht expressed such confidence in rebutting SPD leader Erler's April 1965 Foreign Affairs proposition that since it was hopeless to talk with the East German regime about the terms for its liquidation only Moscow could negotiate German reunification. Thus, in opposing Erler's proposition,

Ulbricht's chief argument in his speech at the 10th SED plenum (23-25 June 1965) was that "the Soviet Union has unequivocally declared that normalization of relations and reunification of the two German states is a matter for the Germans." Other SED speakers, such as Herman Axen, pointed to the talks between Ulbricht and Kosygin in East Berlin and Honecker and Stoph with Brezhnev and Kosygin in Moscow in which "the leading Soviet comrades emphasized that the alliance between the Soviet Union and the GDR is firm and indisoluble." And by early July, Ulbricht came close to endorsing Kosygin's 7 May "voluntary agreement" formula--a formula reminiscent of Kosygin's November 1962 appeal for a "goodwill agreement." In a 4 July speech in Rostok, Ulbricht said that reunification is possible only through establishment of "good peaceful relations" in Germany itself.

Independence on Ulbricht's part, however, continued to season his rewriting of early postwar history in the Eastern zone. And in a speech on 13 July, Ulbricht directly referred to the existence of early differences of opinion with the Russian occupiers. The post war antifascist parties in East Germany, Ulbricht boasted

> can take credit for the great success of establishing a firm unbreakable alliance of friendship with the Soviet Union. This was not always easy. After our liberation from Hitlerite terror, the Soviet Union protected our antifascist democratic reconstruction and helped us fulfill many tasks. However, our Soviet friends could not take from our shoulders independent creative thinking and independent initiative in taking the democratic road of the antifascist democratic order and socialist reconstruction in accordance with the special conditions in Germany.

And through early August Ulbricht, while maintaining an atmosphere of "correct" relations with Moscow, was still sticking to his West Berlin formula: "we are willing to

guarantee access to a free and neutral city of West Berlin" he responded in an interview with the Indian paper Blitz (Bombay) on 5 August.

During this period of correct relations, Moscow did not close out the possibility of an eventual normalization of affairs with the FRG. Expressions of Moscow's willingness to eventually improve relations with Bonn, for example, preceded FRG State Secretary Carsten's September trip to the Soviet Union--a visit directly aimed at ascertaining the prospects for improving Bonn-Moscow relations. On the eve of Carsten's visit, Brezhnev in a 14 September speech at a Soviet-Czech meeting in the Kremlin, seemed to be offering hospitality to the West German foreign affairs expert:

> In the Soviet Union we would naturally welcome the normalization of relations with the Federal German Republic, but one thing must be clear once and for all. Such a normalization cannot be attained on the basis of satisfying revanchist claims by Bonn. There can be no normalization at the expense of the interests of the German Democratic Republic, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, the Polish People's Republic, or any other socialist country. This shall not be. And if in West Germany there really exists the intention of developing relations with the Soviet Union, then an end must be put to the futile aggressive desires, and the basis of reality accepted without ignoring the results of the war and postwar development in Germany and in Europe.

Thus while pledging that the interests of the GDR (among others) would be guarded by the USSR, Brezhnev left wide open the possibility of improved relations with the FRG. A like suggestion was made directly to Carstens during his farewell dinner. Deputy Foreign Minister Semenov emphasized at the dinner that the West Germans and the

Soviets should set aside their differences and "get on with our business." And, according to the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, Carsten's hosts also allegedly assured him that a way could be found to exclude recognizing the East Germans in any NATO-Warsaw Pact non-aggression treaty.

Signs of Close and Confident Soviet-GDR Relations

But after Carsten's visit and Ulbricht's September visit to the USSR, the possibilities for improved relations were flatly disclaimed by Brezhnev himself in his 29 September speech at the CPSU plenum. However, some ambivalence was preserved by TASS's curious and as yet unexplained addendum to the text of Brezhnev's address:

> /With regard to West Germany/ we are dealing with the main center of reaction and militarism in Europe and with the main ally of aggressive U.S. imperialist circles, and it is but natural that under these conditions there are no possibilities for fruitful development of relations with West Germany. (Although economic links on mutually profitable basis continue to exist, in particular our trade with the German Federal Republic remains approximately on the former level--TASS)

And leaving the impression that Moscow was willing to sacrifice that mutually profitable trade for USSR-GDR political principles, Soviet Ambassador Abrasimov, according to a 4 November ADN account of an interview in East Berlin, proudly pointed out that "for about three years /the USSR/ has signed no trade and cultural agreements with the Federal Republic because Bonn is trying to include West Berlin as part of the Federal Republic in these agreements." Abrasimov's public statement thus provided further evidence that the Soviets had turned

from the conciliatory line that had been raised anew after Khrushchev's ouster.*

East German leaders favorably responded to Brezhnev's and Abrasimov's strong support for Ulbricht's intransigent line toward West Germany, and GDR expressions became particularly warm when it became clear that the statements by Abrasimov and others accurately indicated that Moscow's discourse with the FRG had in fact taken on the symptoms of political anaemia. Politburo member Axen, who had praised the "indissoluble" GDR-USSR alliance in June, amplified that theme in a 5 November anniversary speech which scored "imperialist politicians and so-called Kremlinologists who try to deceive the working people and themselves about the bankruptcy of their own policy with silly and equally boring speculations about discord between the GDR and the USSR." Axen delivered another punch to "those gentlement" who entertain designs on the GDR by lecturing that the widely propagandized "October Storm" Warsaw Pact maneuver in East Germany was an "auxiliary lesson" aimed at dampening the ardor of the West German "imperialists." Axen also demanded that the CPR press discontinue its public polemics against the Soviet Union--a demand which was another gesture on behalf of the Soviet Union inasmuch as the GDR Foreign Ministry had earlier denied rumors circulated in West

*That is, that a Bonn-Moscow trade pact could in effect include some type of Berlin clause, such as the recognition, implied or explicit, that the D-Mark West (FRG currency) area includes the area of West Berlin. A Soviet overture to this effect surfaced [redacted] 1964 when Deputy Foreign Minister Semenov [redacted] suggested [redacted] a means of resolving the Berlin clause issue. He suggested that Bonn could present a letter to the Soviets defining the area covered in the bilateral trade agreement as D-Mark West Area, rather than making an explicit reference to the West Germans Lands and territory of West Berlin as the area covered by the trade treaty.

German media that Ulbricht would visit the CPR sometime within the next three months.* And Ulbricht's history lessons shifted from the theme of East German troubles with the Soviet Union to the theme, which he repeated over and over in a 7 November TV discussion, that cooperation and alliance with Russia had been and will remain the Germans' wisest and most important foreign policy accomplishment.

With the knowledge that Brezhnev in late September had disclaimed the possibility of improving relations with Bonn, Ulbricht in the TV discussion safely and hypocritically asserted that "as far as we are concerned, we, the representatives of the GDR, are willing to do everything in our power to promote the development of friendly relations between the West German Federal Republic and the Soviet Union."

Economic policy support was, at that time, another accomplishment that Ulbricht may well have had in mind. His subsequent and frequent references to Soviet support conveyed the impression (later born out) of a denial to the West German news reports that the Soviet Union was planning a substantial cut in its economic commitment to the GDR. And following the conclusion on 3 December of a five year trade treaty, Ulbricht meticulously glossed over the technical troubles which preceded, and may have been related to, the dramatic suicide of East German planning chief, Erich Apel. Thus Ulbricht in his 17 December praise of the treaty at the 11th SED Central Committee meeting did not provide support to the Western reports that Apel had shot himself to death on the day the treaty was signed due to his opposition to the USSR's trade policy toward the GDR. Instead, Ulbricht indicated that

*Handelsblatt (Dusseldorf) reported on 26 October 1965 that Ulbricht would visit Peking in December at the earliest, and February at the latest. Der Spiegel on 3 November reported that Ulbricht would visit Peking in February 1966.

Apel had been maneuvered into a quarrel "between the interests of society on the one hand...and the interests of branch interests, which frequently address unrealistic demands motivated by wishful thinking and which cannot be implemented by /Apel's/ State Planning Commission." And in support of the long-term trade pact with the Soviet Union, Ulbricht rationalized that its conclusion "is a pain for reactionary circles in West Germany because they had hoped to be able to blackmail the GDR by economic measures. These gentlemen now understand that concluding thds long-term agreement ruined their plans."

But one year later, when the long-term trade agreement was up for annual readjustment and when relations had been showing signs of strain since the CPSU Congress in April 1966, East German dissatisfaction with the Soviet's trade policy toward the GDR was not suppressed.*

*The five year trade agreement praised by Ulbricht (above) over Apel's body called for, but apparently was not followed up in its second year by, a substantial increase in total trade. And treatment of the 10 December 1966 trade agreement signed in Moscow betrayed East German disenchantment: Neues Deutschland's announcement of the second year of the long-term trade agreement omitted the traditional trappings--which Pravda's announcement provided--of the "cordial atmosphere" of the trade talks and of the "full agreement" achieved. Soviet Minister of Foreign Trade Patolichev in a 12 January 1967 Izvestiya interview diplomatically sidestepped any indication that the long-term trade agreement signed in December 1965 would increase as rapidly as earlier planned. Envisaging that Soviet trade volume in 1967 with socialist countries will increase "not less than nine percent," Patolichev did not tie the projected increase with trade activities with the GDR, which he, nonetheless, described as "the principal Soviet trading partner."

Concern After the CPSU Congress

Emphasizing in public the stale line that the West German militarists are poised to pounce on the lost territories to the East, Moscow was telling the West Germans in early March 1966 that they would like to begin trade negotiations "without any preconditions" after the 23rd CPSU Congress (29 March-8 April).*

And in the Congress speeches by Soviet officials, the only precondition for improved relations was the vague insistence that Bonn should pursue a policy of peaceful cooperation. In the context of this insistence, Gromyko at the Congress referred to Moscow's desire for the "normalization and improvement" of relations with West Germany where "far from all Germans...are poisoned by the ideas of revanche." He had made similar points in his 9 December 1965 Supreme Soviet reply to interpellations from Soviet deputies, but the tone of his 2 April 1966 Congress speech was much less strident and demanding on other Soviet-FRG related matters. For example, in December he stated that Chancellor Erhard's 10 November 1965 policy statement "is an aggregation of militarist and revanchist ideas which is rarely met in such a naked form." In April, Gromyko judged Chancellor Erhard's generally similar 25 March 1966 policy statement as only a "mixup of notions." In April, Gromyko stated that "we stand for the normalization and improvement of relations with the FRG on the basis of its turning to the policy of peaceful cooperation and realism." In December 1965, he had required that "good relations" were possible "only if there is a change in the FRG's policy.../from/ militarism

*One month earlier, Soviet Ambassador Smirnov told that one precondition would have to be met-- politics" would have to be excluded in any trade talks. The talks, which began on 3 October 1966, were subsequently recessed, and are expected to commence with the new Bonn coalition government early this year.

and revanchism." Former Chancellor Adenauer, who was derided by Gromyko in December, was applauded by Gromyko in April for making "quite a reasonable admission" regarding the Soviet Union's demonstrated desire (i.e., the Tashkent talks) for peace. And Gromyko, who in December had threatened a "due rebuff" to attempts to include West Berlin into the FRG, followed the example of the other Congress spokesmen in his Congress speech in not even mentioning West Berlin. Nor did Gromyko repeat the threat presented in his harsh December 1965 speech which struck a line somewhat similar to Ulbricht's demands for FRG retribution for war debts.*

Ulbricht promptly took note of Gromyko's Congress bids and displayed earlier fears of being abandoned in his 11 April statement on the return of the SED delegation from Moscow:

> Comrade Gromyko clearly stated that the Soviet Union, which is linked with the GDR through ties of close friendship and cooperation, desires good and objective

*Gromyko's unusual December demand, which has not been repeated, held that "the Soviet Union and the other states which fell victim to German aggression are in the right to present a bill for all damages inflicted by the war unleashed by Germany: for the death of millions of people, for the crimes perpetrated by German fascist troops on occupied territories, for the millions of people tortured to death in Nazi torture chambers and concentration camps, for the destroyed towns and villages, and for the innumerous brutalities which marked the road of the Hitler armies. This bill cannot be erased from the memory of our people. And if the recklessness of the policymakers in West Germany makes it necessary, our people will present this bill."

On the subject of "bills," and in a sharply contrasting tone, Adzhubey in his 21 July 1964 speech in the West German city of Dortmund stated that neither the USSR nor the FRG owed the other any debt.

relations with West Germany. However, he left no doubt that it is the task of the West German Government to prove by deeds that it is willing to make a contribution to peace and to abandon the adventurous policy of revanchism.

The 23rd congress also was designed to end all speculation by incorrigible revanchist politicians, and to induce them to abandon their foolish hope that they can make some kind of deal with the Soviet Union at the expense of the GDR. The SED delegation is convinced that implementing the decisions adopted at the 23d CPSU Congress will contribute to the further strengthening of the good and fraternal relations of friendship and objective cooperation between our parties and states.

Pravda's report (13 April) of Ulbricht's statement deleted all references to West Germany and its "foolish hope" of dealing with the USSR behind the GDR's back, though Pravda printed the last sentence of Ulbricht's above statement. And nine days later Pravda and other Soviet media deleted another example of Ulbricht's fear of being betrayed by Moscow. The deleted passage in his 21 April speech in East Berlin marking the 20th anniversary of the SED dealt with Ulbricht's display of concern over unrequited policy support:

The fairytale spread by West German anticommunists that the socialist countries of Europe could be played up against each other has burst like a soap bubble. The 23rd CPSU Congress testified to the inner strength, creative force, and purposefulness of Lenin's party and the peoples of the Soviet Union. No one who has command of his five senses can believe that in this period when the majority of the people of Europe live in the Soviet Union and in

socialist states, the Soviet Union could be willing to favor the dismantling of socialism in the GDR.

And in his 21 April speech, he rattled the old closeted skeleton of the January 1959 Soviet draft peace treaty and caustically recalled that "the Soviet Union declared that it would do everything in its power for the conclusion of a peace treaty with Germany." (That the new regime had placed that "power" in abeyance was instanced by the omission of the eight-year old call for a German peace treaty in Moscow's 1966 national day slogans, released on 17 October.)

While Soviet media failed to record Ulbricht's post-Congress references which kept alive the notion of an abandoned GDR, West German statements on the subject of economic sacrifice for a reunited Germany drew prompt and negative reactions from Moscow in the spring of 1966.* For example, within hours of Chancellor Erhard's comments on the publication of an FRG White Paper on the subject of reunification, a 30 April Moscow Radio commentary beamed to Germany concluded with the pledge that "there will be no reliable satisfaction of the aggressive claims of the industrial and financial oligarchy and its political puppets at the cost of the GDR and the territories of other states." (The lengthy FRG White Paper released on 29 April contained 193 previously published documents describing Bonn's efforts since the 1955 Geneva conference to achieve reunification. None of the documents shed any light on former Chancellor Adenauer's late March 1966 statement made at the CDU convention, that when the German archives are open for historians, the world will then know what he had offered for reunification.) And a similar prompt Soviet pledge aimed at crushing any East German doubts followed Bundestag member Barzel's 17 June 1966 New York speech in which he presented a unification

*Silence greeted such proposals in the spring of 1964. See pages 12 and 13.

plan which offered the stationing of Soviet troops in a reunited Germany and the assumption of East Germany's economic commitments to the Soviet Union for the next twenty years. For the same time period, he suggested a yearly expansion of 5 percent in the shipment of "advantageous supplies." Izvestiya quickly rejected Barzel's economic temptation, and Pravda writer Mayevsky on 19 June referred to Barzel's novel troop idea as "the Teuton's crude, though it is presented as naive, proposal to 'guarantee' the presence of Soviet troops in Germany." Mayevsky said that the "hopes of some 'deal'" at the expense of the GDR's sovereignty are futile"and avowed that "all the socialist countries guard the gains of the GDR."

Two Key Developments, Two Different Attitudes

Soviet pledges notwithstanding, the renewed exposure of Ulbricht's concern over the degree of Soviet support and Moscow's renewed bid for improved relations with West Germany and West Berlin were common features in the two principle post-Congress developments relating to the German problem during the remainder of Erhard's administration--the scuttling of the proposal for SED-SPD talks, and the development of direct Soviet contacts with Berlin Mayor Brandt.

SED-SPD talks, aimed at "breaking the ice in the German question" by bringing together the "two strongest German parties" to discuss what type of future nation "German workers" would like to see built, were proposed in an open letter of 7 February from the SED Central Committee signed by Ulbricht. The invitation was repeated in another "open letter" of 24 March, and on the day the CPSU Congress convened (29 March), Neues Deutschland published another Ulbricht history lesson which warmly praised the 1946 merger between the German Communist Party (KPD) and the East German SPD. But following the CPSU Congress and following SPD leader Brandt's "open answer" of 14 April which accepted the SED invitation, Ulbricht seemed to display second thoughts about the risks of the

venture (such as SED party solidarity, and East German popular reactions*) in debating the SPD. In light of the potential risks involved, it has been argued that the venture was initiated by Ulbricht for the sole purpose of repeating past propaganda tactics that would follow an expected SPD refusal. Indeed, claims of SED reasonableness and SPD obstructionism had followed Ulbricht's 1963 and 1964 invitations, which were not accepted. On the other hand, if the proposal was intended to be more than a repeat of a hollow propaganda gimmick, it may have been aimed at promoting differences between the SPD and the West German government over their approaches toward East Germany. Thus the talks would have been part of a serious GDR effort to project a better image abroad in order to support the GDR's protracted effort to gain eventual non-communist recognition. If the latter was the case, then full and credible Soviet support to offset the SED's potential risks would have been essential. And following the Congress, Ulbricht's concern over Soviet support** accompanied references which suggested that Ulbricht was

*East German citizens reportedly purchased over one million copies of Neues Deutschland's 26 March edition which printed the SPD's first (and non-committal) "open answer" of 18 March to the SED's 7 February "open letter." The SPD's second answer of 14 April which explicitly accepted the invitation was not printed until 29 May by Neues Deutschland--at which time East Germans again snapped up the SED paper.

**Inasmuch as Ulbricht in the past had evinced concern over Soviet plans for withdrawing troops from the GDR, it seems noteworthy that his renewed anxiety was coincident with post-Congress reports in the Western press on an impending major withdrawal of Soviet forces from East Germany. The magnitude of the reported withdrawal had grown to five divisions in the West German press by mid-June. (Die Welt, 15 June 1966.) And Soviet sources in late June alluded to the "possibility" of a reduction of its force in East Germany. Whatever may have been the Soviet plans at that time, no subsequent reduction in the GSFG for 1966 was confirmed.

also concerned about the risks of the SED-SPD speaker exchange.

The urgency of the exchange which permeated his February and March open letters notably contrasted with his post-Congress statement on the talks. For example, the 7 February letter stated that "it is really high time" to create conditions leading to joint action. But the tone of Ulbricht's 18 April remarks to visiting labor union delegations--his first comment after the Congress on the accepted invitation--suggested that his interest had shifted into a lower gear: in briefly acknowledging the SPD's acceptance, he said that the main thing is "gradually" to achieve joint action of German workers. And in his 18 April speech, as in the two post-Congress speeches cited earlier (11 and 21 April) Ulbricht did not touch upon pre-Congress references to Soviet support for GDR attitudes and policies toward West Germany. In fact, Soviet views toward West Germany and the SPD in particular contrasted with GDR propaganda in May and June and the divergent treatment evidenced in commentaries on the 1-5 June SPD Congress in Dortmund was pronounced.* East German treatment of the SPD Congress was almost wholly negative--it even roundly attacked leading SPD speakers (Brandt, Wehner, Erler, Schmidt and others), some of whom were to participate in the proposed exchange with the SED. Soviet treatment, on the other hand, was remarkably mild. A 6 June article by Pravda correspondent V. Mikhailov approvingly quoted remarks by the leading SPD speakers:

> Helmut Schmidt, who delivered the main thesis on foreign policy, spoke of 'better chances for peace and limitation of armaments,' he spoke of 'an all-European system of collective security,' he said that 'there is not a single

*For a good examination of divergent East European reaction to the SPD Congress, see

nation in the world which could support the illusory dreams about changing the Oder-Neisse frontier.' He also indicated that it would be possible 'to reach agreement on disarmament without any preliminary political conditions'and even on 'guarantees of the inviolability of the frontiers' of the German Democratic Republic. Willy Brandt, the party chairman, expressed the idea, although rather timidly, about the possibility of qualified coexistence of the two parts of Germany.'

With the contrasting SED attacks on the SPD becoming shriller, more demanding and more frequent, SED Politburo member Norden in a 29 June press conference signalled the withdrawal of the SED from the exchange. In an aggressive tone, Norden made it clear that the GDR considered that a safe-conduct law passed on 23 June by the Bundestag made the exchange impossible: the law "is a gross chauvinistic provocation which even transgresses Hitler's legislation...it cements the division of Germany." In a defensive tone, Pravda commentator Mikhailov's belated 6 July reaction to the FRG law was a circuitous rebuttal of a statement by a Bonn spokesman to the effect that the law removed all obstacles on the road to the dialogue (which, in fact, it did). Mikhailov did not echo Norden's and other East Germans' hostile interpretation of the law as a regression to Nazi jurisprudence, did not reiterate GDR calls for the repeal of the law, did not conclude that the law finalizes the division of Germany, and did not support the GDR's view that the law sounded the exchange's swan song.

The Brandt-Abrasimov talks in the meantime had been underway since early May. And by the 6 June meeting (the day Pravda's Mikhailov approved certain SPD Congress statements) Abrasimov dismissed the violent SED attacks on SPD official Wehner as "being of little importance" and conveyed the impression, which Pravda's Mikhailov sustained in his 6 July article, that the Soviet Union was assuming that the SED-SPD dialogue would take place. (Brandt himself in a 28 June interview with AP

correspondent John Hightower, said that Abrasimov had given him no reason to believe that the Soviets opposed the exchange.) In the 6 June meeting, Abrasimov also seemed to be trying to arouse Brandt's interest in a meeting with Soviet leaders in his closing remark to the effect that Brandt had made a serious tactical error in refusing to accept Khrushchev's January 1963 invitation to meet in East Berlin because, said Abrasimov, "Khrushchev had had some interesting things to say" to Brandt.* And in the weeks following another Brandt meeting with Abrasimov on 29 September, mounting East German worries were reflected in their escalating propaganda attacks on the West Berlin Mayor. Thus on 12 October--the day Brandt, by Soviet prearrangement bypassed East German border guards on his way through Checkpoint Charlie into East Berlin (his first visit since the Berlin wall was built) to meet Abrasimov--East German propagandist Eisler authored a sharply critical article in Berliner Zeitung denouncing Brandt for, among other things, "committing a crime against the German workers class" by "riding the oxen of anti-communism." And on the day after Brandt's check-free passage through the wall, the GDR's People's Chamber passed a law empowering East German authorities to prosecute all West Germans and West Berliners who have ever committed the crime of "persecuting or helping to persecute"

*East Germany's enthusiastic reaction in January 1963 to Brandt's refusal to visit Khrushchev in East Berlin betrayed the same general sense of relief reflected in the GDR treatment of Kosygin's February 1965 shelving of an invitation to visit Bonn (pages 56-56). With gusto, the GDR promptly scored Brandt's decision not to visit Khrushchev during the January 1963 SED Congress. Soviet comment on the affair, which somewhat more mildly scolded Brandt for not making use of a chance to discuss "vital problems concerning the West Berlin situation," did not surface until early February 1963.

East Germans.* [redacted] At the 22 November meeting, Abrasimov made more explicit his earlier hints of a Moscow invitation--he said that his people in the Soviet Union would be happy if Brandt could visit Moscow--and, said Brandt, Abrasimov seemed quite interested

*The law, which on the surface appeared to be the GDR's retaliation for Bonn's 23 June safe-conduct law, represented another GDR-sponsored threat to West German use of the access routes through East Germany. Control over Allied use of those access routes also appeared to be the motive behind a series of East German probes in late August along the autobahn between Helmstedt and Babelsberg, from which the Soviets dissociated themselves. And the Soviets did not back up the GDR position on the Elbe River incident in mid-October, though East Berlin sought to engage their support. (British officers accompanied West German Elbe patrol officials in response to East German attempts to prevent a West German survey boat from conducting soundings along the GDR-claimed eastern shore of a segment of that river.) In contrast to the harsh and public GDR protest on 20 October--the Elbe incident "is a repetition of the practices of the Hitler regime"--the Soviets mildly protested to British military headquarters in Germany. And, as in the case of a mid-November Pan-American Airways cargo plane crash on East German territory, the Soviets did not give the East Germans opportunity to upgrade the "sovereignty" inasmuch as the Soviets, not the East Germans, delivered what remained of the PAA crew and cargo plane.

in Wehner's 12 October proposals for an economic integration of East and West Germany.

One week after the 22 November Brandt-Abrasimov meeting (the fifth known meeting), Ulbricht in a Neues Deutschland interview vented himself in an outburst of redirected rage against Brandt for his acceptance of a CDU-CSU proposal for a West German political integration--the "grand coalition."

4. THE COALITION AND THE CONTRASTS

The "grand coalition," said Ulbricht in a 29 November East Berlin interview, is a government of "rightwingers" in which Brandt "is to act as diplomatic advertising chief for the adventurist policy" and Wehner "is to enrich the psychological warfare against the GDR with new methods." And in even blacker terms, GDR propaganda axman Eisler in a radio roundtable discussion with high-level SED leaders (Matern, Norden, Winzer) unleashed another vitriolic barrage against SPD leaders, and Wehner in particular, on 4 December. But in a Soviet radio roundtable discussion on the same day the inclusion of Social Democrats in the new government was treated not only with restraint --which had characterized earlier Soviet comment on the prospect of such a merger--but also with a touch of optimism. One speaker said that the presence of Brandt and Wehner in the new government "provides the Social Democratic leaders with certain opportunities" to make a "realistic" turn away from Bonn's past policy.

Discussion of the new Chancellor, Kiesinger, and new Finance Minister, Strauss, followed somewhat similar patterns: East German propaganda and GDR leaders made harsh and frequent attacks on both, while Soviet public media was restrained. Soviet propaganda noted but did not emphasize Kiesinger's past membership in the Nazi Party and acknowledged but did not stress Strauss' nationalist sympathies. And Soviet leaders were notably circumspect in their discussion of the top coalition leader. Kosygin, for example, reportedly replied to a Deutsche

Presse-Agentur (DPA: Hamburg) correspondent in Lyons France on 6 December that it is up to Kiesinger to make the first move to improve Soviet-West German relations. And according to DPA, Kosygin in response to a question did not shut the door on a possible visit to Bonn. "At the moment I have no reason to envisage a journey to Bonn; after all, I cannot go the Federal Republic as a tourist."

In addition to their contrasting restraint on the political complexion of the new Bonn government, the Soviets have continued to hold on to their subtle--and flexible--formulation regarding the relationship between Bonn and East Berlin and the significance of that relationship for Bonn-Moscow relations. That is, Moscow, unlike East Berlin, does not lay down the condition of formal West German recognition of East Germany for the improvement of Moscow-Bonn relations. Thus, Kosygin in Paris on 3 December reiterated earlier Soviet formulations that West Germany's policy contribution to European security involved, among other things,* "acknowledgement" of the actual situation in Europe "that we have two German states, the GDR and the FRG, and that no outside force can change it." (Less ardently, but to the same effect of preserving an element of flexibility, the 5 July 1966 Warsaw Pact Declaration called upon the FRG to "take as a point of departure the existence of two German states," and Kosygin in Sverdlovsk on 13 October 1966 stated that to insure European security means "to proceed from the fact that two German states exist.")

But Ulbricht in his 15 December SED Central Committee speech, while praising Kosygin's Paris remarks on the existence of two Germanies, purposefully disregarded the subtlety of the Soviet formulation in support of his strident and rigid demand that West Germany and West

*Such as, said Kosygin, recognition of existing frontiers and renunciation of efforts to gain nuclear weaponry.

Berlin must "recognize" East Germany as the quid for all negotiations. (At the time the quo was the Christmas/New Year pass agreement, which, for the first time since it was initiated in December 1963, was not renewed.) And in his 15 December speech, Ulbricht, in roundly scoring Kiesinger's 13 December policy statement, made the explicit demand that the "establishment of normal state relations through official negotiations" between the two Germanies must be part of the new Chancellor's policy calling for diplomatic relations with East European countries. In effect, Ulbricht's demand of FRG-GDR recognition as the prerequisite for FRG-East European recognition represented another effort on East Germany's part to try to undermine the FRG's claim to sole representation of Germany.

The growing West German contacts with certain East European governments prompted Ulbricht in a New Year's reception speech in East Berlin to caution, again, the ambassadors and other bloc representatives to the GDR not to be tricked by Bonn's new policy of "expansion and hegemony"--which, in Ulbricht's lights, merely reflect old covetous designs on his possession. Ulbricht, however, did not voice Neues Deutschland's bitter lament at the turn of the year that "members of sister parties have nothing better to do than to stab German Marxists-Leninists in the back." But his New Year's warnings and Neues Deutschland's plaint were sustained in a 26 January 1967 "authorized ADN statement" which implicitly exhorted East Berlin's allies against legalizing the FRG's "aggressive expansionist program" by establishing diplomatic ties with it.

In the meantime, Soviet spokesmen continued to echo the Soviet's calculated vagueness on this issue by reiterating Brezhnev's 13 January 1967 Gorky formulation which did not specifically tie improved relations

and negotiations with the FRG to its recognition of East Germany.* Soviet spokesmen have also voiced Brezhnev's comment in his Gorky speech on Chancellor Kiesinger's December policy statement, which, like Kosygin's statements in Paris and Lyons, left the door open for talks and called for "deeds not words." And Brezhnev's expressions reflected both Moscow's caution toward Kiesinger's grand coalition program--which "unfortunately" contains "ample evidence" that old imperialist goals remain unchanged--and Moscow's willingness to support "appropriate steps" undertaken by the FRG:

> Chancellor Kiesinger said specifically that his government will strive to deepen mutual understanding and trust between the German Federal Republic and the Soviet Union in order to provide requisites for future successful meetings and talks. But so far there are only words. And these words, by the way, are denied by other statements in the program of the new government of the German Federal Republic.
>
> Naturally, we shall support everything that is sensible and useful for peace in Europe, including appropriate steps by the German Federal Republic, should such steps be taken.

*Without referring specifically to the FRG, he said that the USSR "is firmly convinced that unconditional recognition of the GDR as a sovereign independent state is, in our time, one of the basic prerequisites for real normalization of the situation in Europe." In his 21 June 1966 meeting with de Gaulle in the Soviet Union, Brezhnev reportedly voiced the similar line that progress could be made once the "West" recognized "the reality of the two German states."

The step of West German-Rumanian diplomatic recognition, and the advance reaction in Moscow and East Berlin to that groundbreaking development (formally consummated on 31 January), provides this study's final case in Soviet-East German contrasts on the Bonn coalition. Instead of the backdrop of alarmist caveats that Ulbricht's redundant appeals and ADN's "authorized statement" offered to the GDR's allies, Moscow on 28 January issued a Soviet Government statement which did not include passages pressuring its allies to block the FRG recognition campaign and did not flatly demand that the FRG's recognition of the GDR ought to be the prerequisite for a policy of recognition and cooperation with the East. In fact, the Soviet statement alleged that the Soviet Government would "continue to work for...cooperation between East and West European states, including, of course, the German Federal Republic." And like Brezhnev in Gorky, the statement saw both hopeful and menacing indications in the Kiesinger Government's policy statement. One of the menacing indications included the particularly malicious "attentive analysis" that "in the final count there are numerous common features in the political orientation of neo-Nazis of different shades and in the official revanchist-militarist course of the German Federal Republic ruling circles."* However, the accompanying note to the statement to the FRG included a remark which tended to separate the West German Government from neo-Nazis; the accompanying note, according to TASS on 28 January, stated that the Soviet Government "expected the government of the FRG to take appropriate measures to curb the dangerous activities of neo-Nazi and militarist forces."

*This hostile association may well have represented an attempt to humor Ulbricht, who in his New Year's pleonasm had gone one step further in charging that the Bonn government was "infiltrated from top to bottom" by "millions of little Nazis."

IV. CONCLUSION: FACTORS FOR CONTINUING STRAIN IN USSR-GDR RELATIONS

Ulbricht himself, taking rigid, black-and-white views of the nature of West German intentions, has represented a factor opposing the development of improved Soviet-West German relations since the 1962 Cuban missile crisis. In the period of diminished tensions in Europe, he has, at the least, acted as a catalyst bringing to the surface the inherent problems in the relations between his artificially-supported regime and the freely constituted Bonn government on the one hand and the Soviet Union on the other. And this triangular relationship in the post-missile crisis period has been viewed, logically, by Ulbricht in a form as sharp as his view of the unchanging nature of Bonn politics. That is Ulbricht's seemingly monomaniacal fear that if a real rapprochement develops between Bonn and Moscow (and the capitals of Eastern Europe), then Ulbricht and his ersatz state will be "stabbed in the back" and will, inevitably, wither. Ulbricht's rigid premises have not consistently fit Moscow's foreign policy interests since the shelving of their 1958-1962 forceful strategy on the German problem, and thus Soviet spokesmen have repeatedly tried to counter Ulbricht's apocalyptic conclusion. But objective conditions, which have influenced the broad outline of Soviet policy since the 1962 Cuban missile venture, have not radically changed and will likely remain in the near future. And these objective conditions (discussed below) have led Ulbricht, and perhaps his successors,* to the radical conclusion that the

*One school of thought on the political makeup of the SED leadership feels that the evidence is too thin to be able to discern major political differences with Ulbricht's policies. Another school, which includes West Berlin Senat officials who claim to have credible information from East German sources, holds that two factions exist; the "hard-liners" are represented by heir apparent Honecker and the "soft-liners" center around Premier Stoph.

shelving of Moscow's forceful German strategy meant that the Soviet Union might well have decided to reverse the objective of consolidating the German status quo and to pursue, step by step, a policy of accommodation and eventual reunification.

Military considerations constitute one such operative factor on Soviet policy making. Strategically, Khrushchev had been strongly of the opinion that Soviet deterrence and wartime requirements for the European theater did not require large ground forces in forward areas in view of the massive IRBM/MRBM forces and on that basis strove to cut back Soviet ground forces across the board. The commitment of 20 nearly full strength divisions in East Germany, then, was seen by him as unessential for strategic purposes. And though the Soviet military theoreticians in the post-Khrushchev period have strongly argued for the continuing relevance of ground forces in contemporary conditions of war, the fact remains that the modernized East European forces--which began to take over a greater share of the defense burden on the Western frontier in the early 1960s*--and the projected developments in Soviet airlift capabilities could serve as the basis for an eventual, low-risk withdrawal of a large number of the costly and oversized Soviet force from Ulbricht's supported state. The apparent East German anxiety over the contemplated partial Soviet withdrawals in the spring of 1964 and the spring of 1966 might well recur in case of an actual implementation of a major Soviet redeployment in the future.

Political considerations regarding Western Europe, particularly in light of current military developments, also augur ill for the smooth functioning of the Moscow-East Berlin relationship. For example, Soviet leaders themselves have occasionally acknowledged and applauded

*See CAESAR XXVI of 7 June 1965, "Warsaw Pact Military Strategy, a Compromise in Soviet Strategic Thinking" RSS No. 0007/65.

de Gaulle's frequent pronouncements, which surrounded his defection from effective participation in NATO, that the danger of war in Europe is slight. And the consequent debilitating effect on the Soviet forces' raison d'etre in East Germany has tended to present Moscow with something of a dilemma. If they choose to inflate the military "threat" from Western Europe in order to rationalize their static position, then they stand to impale themselves on the horn of Ulbricht's political inflexibility. And current Soviet policy--with its interest in driving a wedge between the United States and its remaining NATO allies--would not be helped by reverting to the 1958-1962 crisis strategy which tended to upgrade the importance of the GDR while it proved to be counterproductive for Soviet interests.

East European and Chinese Communist considerations add other complications to the Moscow-East Berlin relations. With regard to the former, the new Soviet leadership, unlike the GDR leadership, apparently sees little advantage in trying to block the development of mutually advantageous FRG-East European relations. The addition of new elements of friction with Moscow's East European allies would add an unnecessary complication, particularly in light of the long range consideration that West Germany's involvement in Eastern Europe might further long range Soviet interests--that is, to weaken the FRG's ties with the West, to develop an eastward-looking peaceful Western Germany, to settle border issues, to prevent Bonn's nuclear armament, and to gain long-term economic benefits, or to work out collateral and commerical interchanges reminiscent of the Rapallo treaty. At any rate, tension on Moscow's western front would constitute another complication to Soviet policy makers, particularly in light of Moscow's sustained and expanding difficulties with the CPR. Relieving tensions in the West to concentrate on the hostility of China was a Khrushchevian formula (1963-1964) that has not been consistently rejected by the new leadership. And the effort to strengthen Soviet defenses along the Sino-Soviet border that got well underway after the reorganization of the KGB border guards in 1963 has continued under the new Kremlin leadership with the addition of four divisions along the border and the

movement of Soviet combat advisers and air defense specialists into Mongolia.

Finally, internal Soviet problems, particularly the cumulative effects of the economic imbalance stemming from the monumental military claims on the Soviet budget, were exacerbated during Moscow's attempt to force its will on Western Germany. And the opening up of another Moscow-initiated crisis in the West in order, among other things, to upgrade East Germany would do little to further the ambitious Soviet economic programs announced by Brezhnev and Kosygin in 1965 and 1966. A new crisis would, in addition, do little to further Moscow's current interest in easing internal strains by making a major increase in trade relations with Western Europe. These considerations, when viewed in light of East Germany's actual economic value to the USSR, take on added significance when the examination of the extreme case--giving up control of East Germany--has led to the conclusion that the Soviet Union in purely economic terms has little to lose.* In fact, since the GDR payments for Soviet occupation costs were discontinued in 1959, virtually all that remains is the Soviet interest in the East German uranium mines.

*Colleagues in ORR have recently reaffirmed the conclusions of an ORR report entitled "Economic Interest of the USSR In Control of East Germany" of August 1965 which held that after a political settlement on Germany, the accompanying changes in trade terms and commodity composition would "involve little or no net economic loss to the USSR." The study, which took into account the probability that Soviet-East German trade would decline after such a settlement, stated that "the USSR could readily make the necessary economic adjustments at little cost, mainly by shifting from the production of certain goods now taken by East Germany to the production of substitutes for some goods now imported from East Germany. Under any such settlement, however, the Soviet government probably would insist on retaining control of the East German uranium mines until they are exhausted."

In spite of assurances that the GDR's interests will be protected and that the Soviet Union will strive to prevent the isolation of the GDR, Moscow's current effort to maintain the broad outline of the status quo in Central Europe will not in itself relieve the strains in Soviet-East German relations. For, Soviet vital interests take precedence over the interests of their German satrapy. And East Germany leaders will most probably remain fearful that in the long term, if the gains are good enough or the danger great enough, Moscow will again sacrifice German Communists in order to further Soviet internal and international interests.

APPENDIX: THE ORIGIN OF THE "SELL-OUT" IDEA

The idea that the abandonment of East Germany would be a Soviet gain is not new to Soviet policy-making circles. Its roots may be traced back to 1953, to the thinking of Beria, Malenkov, and possibly even Khrushchev in the months following Stalin's death. Khrushchev laid the 1953 sell-out idea entirely on the doorsteps of Beria and Malenkov. To date there has been no public Soviet allegation that Khrushchev himself had toyed with the idea as early as 1953, or that he was trying to develop a policy leading to the sell-out of East Germany in 1964.

1. Beria Moves to "Undermine" the SED

According to Khrushchev, Beria began his effort to "undermine" Soviet relations with fraternal countries in the "first few days" after Stalin's death. This may refer to a warning which the GDR premier, Grotewohl, received while he was in Moscow for Stalin's funeral. When he returned to East Germany he told his colleagues that the Soviets would be unable to fulfill many of their economic commitments to the GDR. Moscow promised to discuss this question further, but Grotewohl had been put on notice. In view of Grotewohl's rank in the hierarchy and the state of Soviet politics at that time, it is probable that he held discussions with Malenkov, Beria, or Molotov. Despite this warning, the East German leaders responded by appealing to the Soviets in early April for "advice and action," on the grounds that they had concluded that they could not make the "necessary changes" in economic policy quickly enough by themselves. (Sometime in April Moscow replied by urging the SED leaders to soften their rigorous economic policies and take measures to improve the lot of the populace.)

Meanwhile, the GDR regime introduced no changes in its political or economic policies. In effect, Ulbricht still hoped to gain some economic subsistence to see his regime through the summer, and to permit the party to continue with its hard political line. It is possible that he chose to ignore Soviet recommendations on the advice of patrons in Moscow. At any rate, he was clearly heading toward a crisis.

During this period, a definite group of opponents to Ulbricht began to take shape. The group was led by Rudolf Herrnstadt, the editor of Neues Deutschland, and the Chief of the Security Service, Wilhelm Zaisser. Herrnstadt was a candidate member of the politburo and Zaisser a full member. They had the support of at least three other candidate members of the politburo: Anton Ackermann, acting foreign minister, his former wife Elli Schmidt, head of the East German Women's Federation, and Hans Jendretsky, chief of the East Berlin party organization. Other lesser functionaries supported this group. The most prominent was Max Fechner, Minister of Justice.

This opposition group went so far as to draft a written program. From what has been alleged about this document, it looked to sweeping changes and a basic revision of policy. Its main premise was that the entire course of East German policy since the war was incorrect, because of the impossibility of "building socialism" in a divided country. The new program advocated a complete reformation of the SED into a People's Party which would represent all classes. A new economic plan would be adopted, and in effect, the GDR would prepare to dissolve itself into a "new Germany". Herrnstadt would become head of the party, Zaisser Minister of Interior. In effect, the program called for a new party which might cooperate with West German Socialists in a new state.

It is highly unlikely that this group would have contemplated such a drastic policy reversal if they did not have good reason to believe that the Soviets would support them. There is various evidence indicating that, in fact, Beria was their patron until his undoing in June 1953. After the purge of Herrnstadt and Zaisser,

in early 1954, Ulbricht publicly linked them to Beria, but of course there was no mention of Malenkov. In an unpublished report to the central committee, Ulbricht revealed Beria's private contacts with Zaisser, as well as some of the details of their efforts to replace the SED leaders. As subsequent denunciations of Zaisser and Herrnstadt were made, the connection with Beria was strengthened. In March 1954, for example, the head of the SED Control Commission reported that the "factional activity of Herrnstadt and Zaisser must be viewed in relationship to the influence of Beria." In addition, Zaisser was accused of following a policy which would have resulted in Western control of the GDR, a policy which corresponded with the "views of Beria."

The Soviet party also linked Beria to the German situation, in a private letter circulated to Communist parties after Beria's fall. According to this version Beria had imposed on the GDR leaders the harsh policies which precipitated the riots in East Germany; the other Soviet leaders were aware of Beria's machinations but were powerless to act.

These accusations are, of course, post facto. But they are confirmed in general by the evidence from former East German Communists Heinz Brandt and Fritz Schenk.* Both of them became aware of Ulbricht's fall from Soviet favor, and Brandt learned of Beria's involvement directly from Herrnstadt. Moreover, he concluded that Malenkov was supporting an anti-Ulbricht movement as part of a foreign policy line which foresaw the dissolution of the GDR in return for negotiated concessions from the West. It was believed by Brandt and his colleagues that Malenkov was preparing for or already engaged in secret negotiations with the [redacted]

*Fritz Schenk, Im Vorzimmer der Diktatur, Cologne, 1962, p. 182; Heinz Brandt, Review, Imge Nagy Institute, October 1959, p. 99 ff.

A connection between Beria and Zaisser, at least, is quite plausible on other grounds. As the now notorious "General Gomez", Zaisser was one of Moscow's agents in the Spanish Civil War. He returned to the USSR and may have been imprisoned for a time. As chief of State Security in the GDR he was almost certainly involved with Beria. After Stalin's death, Beria moved rapidly to regain complete control over the Soviet security apparatus in East Germany. Herrnstadt was a journalist who went to Moscow in the early 1950's where he served in Soviet military intelligence. East German party functionaries regarded both of them as having special connections with the Soviets.

Ulbricht was aware of this opposition, although he may not have realized what degree of Soviet support they had. His move against Franz Dahlem in early May was probably a preliminary to a more drastic purge. Just prior to May Day 1953, party members learned that Dahlem, a politburo member and considered by some as second only to Ulbricht, was to be expelled in a Slansky-like affair. The purge of Dahlem, however, was only part of Ulbricht's counteroffensive. At the 13th party plenum which announced the Dahlem affair (14 May) two other forward moves were made by Ulbricht. First the work norms were to be raised by 10 percent by 1 June. Second, Ulbricht's 60th birthday on 30 June, was to be transformed into a stupendous occasion for glorifying the General Secretary.

Moscow's disapproval of these developments was evident in the public reaction. Pravda and Izvestiya published only short TASS accounts of the plenum which briefly mentioned the Dahlem affair, but ignored both the long harangues on the "lessons of the Slansky trial" and the economic decisions. Tension between Berlin and Moscow is also suggested in the exchange of messages on the anniversary of V-E Day. No message from the Soviet Control Commission was published, although an East German message was printed on 9 May by Pravda and Izvestiya. Moreover, Malenkov's formal greeting to the GDR was curt, with no mention of the usual slogan about building East German "socialism." Molotov and Mikoyan, were the only prominent Soviet leaders to attend an East German

reception in Moscow, and the celebrations in Berlin were marked by the absence of the GSFG commander, General Chuikov.

The growing tensions inside the East German party were dramatized by the long delay between the conclusion of the party plenum on 14 May and the approval of the new work norms by the GDR Council of Ministers on 28 May, too late for implementation by 1 June, and rescheduled for 30 June instead. On the following day Pravda announced a change of policy for Germany. The Soviet Control Commission was dissolved, and replaced by a High Commission similar to the structure of the Western powers' administration in West Germany. The new Soviet High Commissioner was V. S. Semenov, who would assume all the occupation functions hitherto performed by the Soviet military in Germany. In early June General Chuikov was recalled and replaced by Colonel-General Grechko.

The change of Soviet policy was a major event, but what it meant for East Germany was not completely clear until 3-5 June, when Semenov returned to Karlshorst and summoned the East German politburo. He presented for immediate adoption an outline of a new economic policy which would emphasize production of consumer goods and repudiate the harsh measures already taken against the populace. From that point forward the politburo was almost constantly in session, with Semenov in virtual control. Speed was supposedly of the greatest importance because of the impending "negotiations" with Churchill. Herrnstadt was assigned the task of drafting a new policy statement based on the Soviet outline and proposing a reorganization of the politburo and secretariat. Ulbricht was party leader in name only. Soviet officials discreetly sounded out East German officials on their reaction to the possible removal of Ulbricht. Semenov caustically suggested that Ulbricht celebrate his birthday as Lenin did his 50th birthday, that is, by inviting in a "few friends." One East German functionary said that Moscow became impatient and simply forwarded a Russian text for translation and publication. The politburo's statement on the new course was finished on 9 June and published on 11 June.

Even so, Ulbricht managed to salvage something in those few days. First, in violation of the party statutes, the central committee did not meet to approve the new economic measures. This was a partial victory for Ulbricht because if the central committee had been convened Ulbricht probably would have been removed. Second, the pronouncement of 9 June did not contain a revocation of the new work norms. Thus Ulbricht managed to withhold some of the substance of the new policy while formally enforcing it.

Despite Ulbricht's limited success in preventing a complete repudiation of his past policy, the next few days after the decision of 9 June indicated that a major change was underway. The Soviet occupation newspaper emphasized that the new resolutions had great "international significance." The actual texts of the politburo decision also hinted at a change of Soviet policy on the German question by claiming that the new economic decisions would facilitate German unification. On 11 June, the Berlin party organization was instructed to remove quietly all slogans and posters which contained any reference to "building socialism" in the GDR. This is a significant aspect in view of Khrushchev's accusation that Beria and Malenkov "recommended" that the Socialist Unity Party of Germany abandon the slogan of the struggle to build "socialism."

After the announcement of the new course, the struggle continued in Berlin. On 14 June, Herrnstadt used an editorial to attack the failure to revoke the norm increase announced a month earlier. By 16 June it was clear to Semenov that further measures were needed. At a session of the politburo it was decided to abolish the new work norms and the decision was announced that evening. It was too late, of course; rioting had already begun, and it broke out in full fury the following day.

2. The Fall of Beria, the Rise of Ulbricht

The 17 June uprising and the Soviet intervention did not end the policy struggle, but it must have decisively

weakened the position of Herrnstadt, Zaisser and Beria. However, until the arrest of Beria (26 June at the latest), there were signs of vacillation both in Moscow and East Berlin.

The East German party remained overtly divided, as indicated in public pronouncements by the various leaders, until early July. For example, on 20 June Zaisser received the traditional birthday greetings from the SED central committee and Herrnstadt continued to carp at party mistakes in the columns of Neues Deutschland. At the party plenum of 21 June there were no major personnel changes, and the "new economic course" was re-endorsed for "many, many years to come." Ulbricht remained in the background, while Grotewohl made the main address to the plenum. Max Fechner was so bold as to justify publicly the demands of the workers who participated in the uprising and this statement was reprinted in both Neues Deutschland and Taegliche Rundschau (29 and 30 June).

The decline and fall of Beria, however, turned the tide in Ulbricht's favor. At first, both Izvestiya and Pravda were reticent on the events in Berlin. On 21 June, however, Pravda published an editorial calling for "heightened vigilance" and the suppression of all intrigues of "imperialist intelligence"--almost exactly the same line taken after Beria's fall. But on 19 June and again on 22 June, Pravda and Izvestiya reprinted editorials from Neues Deutschland (presumably by Herrnstadt) that were critical of the regime and sympathetic to the "honest people of good will who were seized with distrust" of the party. Then on 23 June Pravda published an editorial linking the events in Berlin to the release of prisoners of war in South Korea as part of a western plot. Pravda stated that: "The collapse of the foreign hirelings venture in Berlin opened the eyes of many who had believed the false claims of the propagandists opposing peace." By June 26, the day of Beria's arrest, there occurred an obvious change from this vacillation: Pravda devoted its entire second page to reports of support for the GDR regime; on 28 June, in the same issue of Pravda that carried the announcement that all the leaders except Beria attended the ballet, there was extensive

coverage of Soviet workers' meetings supporting the GDR, and reports of solidarity meetings in East Germany.

The fall of Beria must have encouraged Ulbricht to act against Beria's allies in the East Zone. The official record against Herrnstadt-Zaisser refers to a "week-long debate" after the uprising of 17 June. Herrnstadt supposedly revealed his program for the party, and Zaisser proposed Herrnstadt for the post of first secretary. Herrnstadt even threatened to appeal to the "masses." According to the party's version, Jendretsky, Ackermann and Schmidt supported the opposition "in the beginning," but later abandoned them after they "capitulated." It is not known exactly when Ulbricht carried the day, but on the basis of the change in Neues Deutschland tone, this struggle was probably resolved by 12 July, that is two days after the announcement of Beria's arrest. Certainly Herrnstadt had lost by 16 July when Max Fechner was removed from office.

The formal charges were unveiled at the central committee plenum of 24-26 July. The purge of Zaisser and Herrnstadt, however, was developed carefully. Moreover, they were not excluded from the party. Not until a month later (22 August) after the East German leaders had been invited to Moscow by Molotov, did the party issue further indictments against them. And not until January 1954, after Beria's "trial" in December, were they removed from the party.

3. Unanswered Questions of the "Beria Heresy"

How far Beria was actually prepared to go in negotiating away the Soviet position in Germany is still open to

[redacted]

[redacted]

Malenkov's role is also not clear.* Until Ulbricht's speech after the 22nd CPSU Congress in 1961, no allegations were made about Malenkov's support for Beria's plan to "liquidate" the GDR. However, Khrushchev could have had good reasons for avoiding this question. After Malenkov's resignation as Premier in early 1955, it would have been imprudent for Khrushchev to accuse him of a conciliatory policy on Germany, since at that time Khrushchev was quarrelling with Molotov over a somewhat similar situation (in which Khrushchev was the conciliatory figure) in Austria and Yugoslavia. Also in 1957 after the defeat of the anti-party group it would still have been unwise to link Malenkov with Beria's plans for Ulbricht and East Germany, since the general line against the anti-party group was that it was Stalinist and opposed new initiatives,

*Malenkov and Khrushchev have changed roles as opponents of Beria. The original indictment of Beria credited Malenkov with proposing his removal. Later only the central committee received credit. In the 1962 version of the party history, however, the central committee, "after hearing Khrushchev's statement adopted his proposal and curtailed the criminal activity of Beria."

[redacted]

such as the rapprochement with Tito, the Austrian treaty, and the high level contacts with the West.

Nevertheless, the actual alignment of forces in Moscow in the spring of 1953 is still an intriguing question. After Stalin's death the entire presidium apparently accepted the necessity for some major economic changes in Eastern Europe, but there was a division on how far to carry such moves in both the USSR and Eastern Europe. On some issues, Beria and Malenkov were probably naturalallies against the primacy of the party under Khrushchev. They are believed to have reorganized the top command of the government immediately after Stalin's demise. Until 1955, relations with East Germany were carried on primarily through government rather than party channels. Malenkov obviously had definite ideas about foreign policy and the situation in Eastern Europe. He is closely identified with the fall of Rakosi and the promotion of Imre Nagy. For his part, Rakosi identified Beria so completely with the new economic and political course in Hungary that he attempted to renege on his promises after Beria's fall, and had to be warned by Khrushchev. One student of Soviet affairs associates Malenkov and Beria with German policy under Stalin and credits Malenkov with initiating the soft line which preceeded the Soviet notes of March-April 1952* that

*The 1952 Soviet proposals were virtually identical to the early 1954 Soviet proposals on the peace treaty issue. That is, the 1952 and early 1954 Soviet proposals both insisted that the two German regimes should independently conduct their own elections--rather than the Eden plan's call for Big Four election guarantors.

embodies Stalin's offer to conclude a German peace treaty.* Thus, it is possible that both Beria and Malenkov looked toward a negotiated settlement on Germany as a prerequisite to a relaxation of tensions in order to implement their economic policies.

Knowledgeable East Germans credit Molotov and Kaganovich with saving Ulbricht at the critical moment before the uprising.** Molotov's entire record would place him in opposition to any experiments in foreign policy. Similarly, Kaganovich's record suggests a thorough-going conservative outlook. Mikoyan also seems linked with this group; his appearance with Molotov at the V-E Day reception points in this direction. Moreover, one of his proteges, I.F. Semichastnov, served as General Chuikov's deputy. Obviously, other powerful leaders must have opposed Beria. But opposition to Beria, because of fear of his growing power, does not mean that he did not have some sympathy for his policies.

It is possible that Khrushchev and other presidium members may have equivocated over Beria's plans for Germany. When Ulbricht accused Beria and Malenkov of wanting to restore capitalism in Germany, he mentioned that Beria became "outraged and I argued against" him; this suggests a personal confrontation, which must have taken place in Moscow. Ulbricht also mentioned Shepilov's opposition to Ulbricht's "characterization of Stalin's errors." This too suggests a personal confrontation, which took place according to Ulbricht at the "Higher Party School." If Ulbricht did plead his case before the Soviet leaders including Beria, as Rakosi did, then he clearly did not win unqualified endorsement. His mention of Shepilov may indicate Khrushchev's position was equivocal, because at that time and until 1957 Shepilov was generally regarded as Khrushchev's protege. If

*Brandt, op. cit., p. 101.

**Boris Meissner, Russland, Die West Maechte und Deutschland.

Shepilov opposed Ulbricht, and did not subsequently suffer for it, then he must have been protected by Khrushchev. All this suggests that Khrushchev may have been willing to consider the possibility of abandoning East Germany in 1953.

APPENDIX TWO: KHRUSHCHEV'S REPORTED SUPPORT FOR AN ANTI-ULBRICHT CABAL IN 1956

Abandoning Ulbricht in 1956 is one interesting topic in a book to be published in early March this year by former East German Communist Heinz Brandt (whose earlier work was cited on pages 95 and 103) entitled Ein Traum, Der Nicht Entfuhrbar Ist (A Dream That Is Beyond Reach). According to a Der Spiegel report on 20 February 1967, Brandt's book, after examining the 1953 Malenkov-Beria "arrangement" to sacrifice the GDR (the report does not implicate Khrushchev in the 1953 "heresy"), discusses in some detail Khrushchev's alleged approval in 1956 of the idea to oust Ulbricht.

The possibility of an Ulbricht ouster in 1956 has been the subject of much analysis. For example, Carola Stern in her exemplary biography Ulbricht: A Political Biography (1965 Praeger) concluded that influential East Germans viewed Ulbricht's dismissal as the most important consequence to be drawn from the decisions made at the 20th CPSU Congress (pages 152-170). Stern's general conclusion is strengthened by Brandt's more specific recollections. The highlights of Der Spiegel's excerpts of Brandt's new book follow:

> Karl Schirdewan [Ulbricht's heir apparent in 1956, expelled from Politburo in February 1958] asserted that he had told Nikita Khrushchev the following on the occasion of a visit to Moscow after the 20th Congress, when the two of them were alone:

'You had to cope with your Beria, and we have to cope with our German Beria--otherwise the results of the 20th Congress of the CPSU will not have any effect among us.'

The German Beria was Walter Ulbricht.

According to Schirdewan, Khrushchev advised caution. He mentioned his own rather difficult position.

'Tomorrow Ulbricht will ally himself with all those who can make trouble for you because they think that you are going too far,' Schirdewan urged.

Nikita Khrushchev: 'There must be no new outburst or shake-up in the GDR. The change in the leadership must be smooth. You must guarantee this.'

There is no doubt that Nikita Khrushchev was for a short time in favor of the idea and even worked toward the idea of having Karl Schirdewan promoted to First Secretary of the SED and to establish a new Political Bureau.

At that time he saw in Schirdewan the German Gomulka and he promised him his support: 'But be cautious, very cautious; you have many duraki (dopes) among you.'

'Ulbricht's crimes are so tremendous,' Schirdewan persisted and assured Khrushchev, 'that we will be able to disclose them to the German [Communist] Party only in small doses, drop by drop.'

After a discussion of Schirdewan's alleged plans to destalinize and liberalize political and economic conditions

within East Germany, Der Spiegel excerpts a passage of Brandt's new book which discusses elite SED approval of such changes:

> So long as Khrushchev gave his well-meaning approval, Otto Grotewohl, Fritz Selbmann, Franz Dahlem, Fred Oelssner, Gerhart Ziller, Kurt Hager, and a number of other high and very high party leaders more or less extensively sympathized with Schirdewan's plans.* But when Khrushchev ran into growing difficulties after the Hungarian debacle, and after all he was accused of having triggered phenomena of dissolution in the hitherto

*Of the six officials named by Brandt above, three were accused of being members of Schirdewan's "anti-Party" group: Selbmann, at that time the GDR's Deputy Planning Chief, was removed from the SED Central Committee under criticism of his support of the Schirdewan group; Ziller, then SED Secretariat member responsible for the economy, shot himself to death in 1957 and was posthumously accused of having been a member of Schirdewan's group; and Oelssner was expelled from the Politburo in 1958 because of his role in Schirdewan's "opportunistic group" and because of his criticism of economic and agricultural policy. Prime Minister Grotewohl died in October 1964; Hager is currently chairman of the Politburo's Ideological Commission; Dahlem is First Deputy State Secretary for Universities and Technical Schools.

'monolithic' East Bloc with his secret speech and his thaw policy--he found himself forced to drop the Schirdewan-Wollweber* front.

Walter Ulbricht once again was firmly in the saddle and now launched a ruthless counterattack.

Like the 17 June 1953 Berlin uprising, the Hungarian revolt which began on 23 October 1956 turned the tide in Ulbricht's favor. Or as Stern concluded in her biography, Ulbricht's stock rose in Moscow since he had made sure that the Polish example was not followed and since he had prevented the Hungarian revolution from spilling over into East Germany. However, well over a year passed before Khrushchev agreed to Ulbricht's purge of Schirdewan, Oelssner and Wollweber, announced in Neues Deutschland on 7 February 1958--the year which marked the beginning of Khrushchev's forceful strategy on the German question.

*Ernst Wollweber, in 1956 Minister of State Security, was expelled from the SED Central Committee in 1958 due to his collaboration with Schirdewan. Schirdewan, after his expulsion from the Politburo in 1958, remained chief of the GDR State Archive Administration until September 1965. Der Spiegel on 20 February 1967 reported that Wollweber in 1958 retired on a government pension in the Soviet Union. This information on Wollweber's whereabouts contrasts with a [redacted] report from a former SED functionary to the effect that Wollweber was not pleased about SED instructions to move from a villa he had occupied since 1957 in the Berlin-Karlshorst compound--where he "enjoyed the protection of powerful Soviet friends"--to new quarters in East Berlin's Stalinalle in late January 1960.