

3
CBM
B

9734

ACTIVITIES OF THE GDR IN INDIA

INTERDOC

This publication has been made possible through the co-operation of the American-Asian Educational Exchange Inc. (New York), whose assistance is gratefully acknowledged.

This assessment is the third in a series on developments in Asia

1. CAMBODIA - PROBLEMS OF NEUTRALITY AND INDEPENDENCE

The Hague: INTERDOC
May 1970
16 pp.

2. SOUTH VIETNAM TAKES THE OFFENSIVE
-LAM SON 719-

The Hague: INTERDOC
June 1971
12 pp.

Translated from the German
by George Davis

ACTIVITIES OF THE GDR IN INDIA

methods employed by a socialist state for the achievement of full recognition in a leading developing country

September 1971

Radboud Universiteit Brabant	
Inventory number	968876
signature	B 9734

327 (430.2) (540)

International Documentation and Information Centre
(INTERDOC)
Van Stolkweg 10, The Hague
Holland

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Foreword	1
I. India as a power factor in the non-aligned camp	2
(1) Activities of foreign countries in India	2
(2) Foreign activities in India: methods and means	3
(3) General preconditions and principles governing GDR activity in India	6
II. Controlling departments and bodies of control in the GDR	9
(1) Institutions responsible for the co-ordination and direction of activities and the laying down of principles	9
(2) GDR executive bodies in India	11
III. Foreign policy aims and objectives of GDR activity	20
(1) The self-projected image and its true purpose	21
(2) Implementation of aims: the underlying theses	22
IV. GDR activity: methods and means	27
(1) Journalism as a medium for influencing public opinion	27
(2) Supplementary GDR press material	30
(3) Function of GDR radio broadcasting	31
(4) Influencing Indian domestic policy	32
(5) Exploiting cultural work and scientific contacts	33
V. Assessment of the present political position and outlook for the future	36
Bibliography	38

Foreword

The special nature of the theme to be discussed here is underlined by an extraordinary concentration and co-ordination of East German activity in India. But India apart, the peculiar activities of the GDR in India form, so to speak, a model for similar activities in all those developing countries which are increasingly attracting the political attention of East Berlin. Thus it may be assumed that the methods described below (or at least methods similar in form and adapted to local conditions) are also employed in other countries.

In the special case of India, which has still not granted full recognition to the GDR, the intensity of these attempts to exert influence is unlikely to diminish, even in the event of such recognition. On the contrary, the investment of effort to date, including enormous capital and material expenditure, would only bear fruit in the shape of full recognition.

The writer has deliberately avoided lengthy explanations of the whole range of commercial activities, so as not to exceed the scope of the present study. Likewise Indian complaints about East German tractors have not been examined in detail, since even now the Indian press is still giving ample coverage to the subject and examining the matter in all its aspects.

In this study special importance will be attached to the establishment of aims and objectives, together with an examination of GDR activities, area of operations and successes achieved. From the author's point of view it was a regrettable drawback that this study could not be conducted on the spot.

While it is true that this theme has been dealt with before at different times, a glance through the available literature will nevertheless reveal the serious shortage of empirical and comprehensive studies on the activities abroad of the socialist countries. It is the aim of the present study to try and help bridge this regrettable and politically dangerous gap.

I. India as a power factor in the non-aligned camp

Over the years India has acquired a position of pre-eminence in the non-aligned camp, an achievement due notably to the political principles evolved under Prime Minister Nehru. Following a gradual forfeiture of influence by the original partner countries, Yugoslavia and Egypt, India has continued as before to retain her importance as a spokesman for the Third World. India's widely recognized claim to leadership within the non-aligned camp has made India of particular interest to those countries which would like to exercise political influence on the camp as a whole. What has proved politically feasible in India and has been reflected in Indian government thinking has come to be regarded as a yardstick. Thus it is hardly surprising that this same country is the scene of highly concentrated foreign political activity and efforts to exert influence from abroad. The only occasions where restrictions have been imposed were after the 1962 border war when Chinese activities in general were prohibited and after the collapse, during construction, of a Soviet cultural institute, for which no authorization had been obtained, when the erection of further institutes was forbidden.

(1) Activities of foreign countries in India

The countries with the heaviest concentration of foreign activities in India are the two superpowers. As with the latter, the other polarized groups of states also have an interest in promoting direct Indian participation in the confrontation. In addition to the USA and the Soviet Union, other prominently active countries are the Federal Republic and the GDR, the Arab League and Israel, North and South Vietnam and Taiwan.

The pre-eminent position occupied by India, as mentioned above, is highlighted in particular by the extent of the foreign material being distributed in India.

Of the 76 countries having diplomatic representation in India, the 25 most active alone are responsible for 103 regular publications. This does not include embassy press services and information. In 1968 total circulation already ran to some 1.3 million copies, due note being taken of the fact that 12 of the 25 foreign missions do not issue details of their circulation figures. Thus the estimated total circulation

figure for foreign publications in India exceeds 1.4 million copies¹⁾. It must be remembered at this point, however, that out of a total Indian population of some 540 millions only 25% are literate, with the result that the material is inevitably restricted to these 135 million people.

Another tangible comparison can be drawn if one considers only the English-language publications, which by their nature are limited to the upper class and educated sections of the population. In the six years since 1962 the total circulation figure for foreign publications in English has almost doubled to 536,000 copies. Compared with this, the circulation of the Indian daily and weekly English-language newspapers during 1967 amounted to only 2.8 million copies²⁾.

It may be assumed from this comparison between the respective circulation figures for foreign and indigenous publications that in no other country is the influence of the foreign mass media so high as in India³⁾.

(2) Foreign activities in India: methods and means

The principles underlying all foreign activities are basically the same and can be classified under the heading "public relations", provided this concept is understood in the relatively broad sense. Originally this was a term in economics signifying a "systematic and untiring endeavour to build up and foster mutual understanding and trust between a potential client and the public"⁴⁾. If, accord-

- 1) This figure does not include periodicals published by foreign friendship and cultural societies. These periodicals are either controlled from abroad or their entire contents are supplied from abroad.
"Press in India": 13th Annual Report of the Registrar of Newspapers for India, Part I, 1969, New Delhi, 1969; taken from Sielaff, Rüdiger: Die Oeffentlichkeitsarbeit der kommunistischen Länder in Indien, Bonn 1970.
- 2) Ibid., tables 24 and 240.
- 3) Sielaff, op. cit., p. 12.
- 4) British Institute of Public Relations definition, quoted from Oeckel Albert: Oeffentlichkeitsarbeit in Theorie und Praxis, Stuttgart, 1960, p. 5.

ingly, this concept is applied to foreign missions, one could then speak of a "diplomatic mission enterprise", the extent of the comparison being governed by a consideration of the various enterprise objectives. However, it is precisely because of the aims and objectives of the missions, that the latter's "public relations" frequently border on propaganda and agitation ⁵⁾. When using the term "public relations", it should further be borne in mind that this term is employed in its impartial, neutral sense, even where the concept "propaganda" - especially in the case of East German activities in India - would frequently be more appropriate. The extent to which given activities fall under the heading of propaganda can be measured against the general methods and criteria which go to make up propaganda:

- appeals to hatred and fear;
- inconsiderate use of idealistic phrases and loaded value concepts;
- exploitation of accepted values for ulterior motives;
- exploitation of popular personalities for propaganda purposes;
- striking up friendships among the ordinary people;
- falsification of the facts;
- fostering the illusion that a given problem or objective is identical with public opinion ⁶⁾.

Such methods have proved particularly successful where the emphasis is on a mass effect. Notably this is so in the developing countries where, on account of their inadequate level of education and a lack of critical ability, the persons and groups at whom the propaganda is directed are often easily susceptible to effective manipulation.

With regard to the choice of contacts, however, a distinction should be made between two groups which have come into being as a result of diversified objectives. If the aim is to reach the largest possible section of the population, use will be made of so-called multipliers who have ready access to the media of mass

5) Rückriegel Helmut: Was ist politische Oeffentlichkeitsarbeit?, in Festschrift zum Geburtstag von P. Pfeifer, Düsseldorf/Vienna, 1965, p. 222.

6) Frühmer Rudolf: Kritik der Aussage, Heidelberg 1954.

communications. Experience has shown that for this purpose the most effective "multipliers" are to be sought among the ranks of the "middle class" ⁷⁾.

"In order to reach this important multiplier group, the Soviet Union and the GDR make use of the CP cadres and their closely associated front organizations. . . . and also the intellectuals" ⁸⁾.

A second group, also used as a multiplier, is employed with the principal object of furthering political influence to the best possible advantage. Its choice is determined on qualitative grounds and by virtue of the potential influence which it wields. Accordingly this group is predominantly "upper class", the majority consisting of members of the State Assemblies and Parliament of the Union, local dignitaries, intellectuals and leading officials. In spite of a generally held belief in the West that communist states attempt primarily to appeal directly to the masses, the interest of the East German activists in this specific group is particularly marked.

Apart from these "public relations" methods the following additional measures are also employed, as and when the opportunity presents itself:

- organization of functions by cultural and information centres;
- activities by foreign and friendship societies;
- marketing and import of books and pamphlets;
- radio broadcasts from abroad;
- exerting direct influence on newspaper editors;
- supplying Indian newspapers with articles, news services and pictures.

7) According to Sielaff the term "middle class" includes the following: white-collar workers holding managerial positions, tradespeople and industrial producers, employers. The majority of these people are literate and English-speaking and belong to the 450 - 1,000 rupee income bracket.

8) Among these organizations are the following: All-India Peace Council, Indian Association for Afro-Asian Solidarity, All-India Trade Union Congress, All-India Kisan Sabha, All-India Youth Federation, Sielaff, op. cit., p. 197.

(3) General preconditions and principles governing GDR activity in India

As will be seen, GDR activities in India are also based, essentially, on the methods described above.

The conspicuously high degree of GDR activity in India can be explained by the same reasons as apply in the case of other states. For the GDR, however, there is an additional, decisive factor at work: viz that India's role in the Third World could secure world-wide recognition for the GDR, should East Berlin succeed in inducing India to establish full diplomatic relations.

But the choice of India as the point of main effort was not prompted merely by India's position in the international political arena. - Statements by each successive Indian Prime Minister on the German Question had laid a favourable basis for "public relations" work which held out good prospects of success.

Addressing the Indian Upper House on August 22, 1961, Prime Minister Nehru drew attention to the fundamental fact that two German states... had been created (whether on a temporary or permanent basis was another matter). Situated in the very heart of East Germany was the great city of Berlin, itself also divided into two parts: West Berlin and East Berlin. While not constituting a part of West Germany, West Berlin was nevertheless closely linked to West Germany in many respects.... It was clear that at the present moment there existed two states with two governments: the Federal Republic in West Germany and the Democratic Republic in East Germany. That they existed was a geographical fact. Whether one liked it or not did not alter the facts, and to ignore the existence either of the one or the other was merely to close one's eyes to the real state of things. At the present moment therefore, Mr Nehru concluded, one had to adopt as one's starting-point the factual existence of these two sovereign German states ⁹⁾.

A short time before Nehru had expressed similar feelings in the Lower House, stating that India recognized the GDR de facto. Nehru also took this stand at the Belgrade conference of non-aligned countries in September 1961 ¹⁰⁾.

9) Sielaff, op. cit., p. 136

10) Belgrade Conference 9/1961, in Review of International Affairs, No. 4/17, Belgrade.

In 1966 Mrs Indira Gandhi endorsed this attitude:

"The Indian side reaffirmed the statement made by the late Prime Minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri, in the Soviet-Indian communiqué of May 20, 1965, that the fact of the existence of two German States cannot be ignored; that any attempt to change the existing frontiers will have dangerous consequences and that there is an imperative need for finding a peaceful solution of the German problem through negotiations with the participation of all parties concerned" ¹¹⁾.

After these endorsements of its existence - endorsements, incidentally, which the GDR was able to secure from by no means all the other non-aligned countries - the crucial task now facing the GDR was to strive for de jure recognition by India.

As far back as the Fifties the GDR had already begun to emphasize the similarity of views between the two countries on important international questions. As prime examples the East German side cited the struggle for peace, peaceful co-existence, the elimination of colonialism, the struggle against neo-colonialism and disarmament questions.

1955 witnessed the first contacts at government level. Talks took place between Heinrich Rau, GDR Deputy Prime Minister, and the Indian Prime Minister. Government delegations were headed by Otto Grotewohl (1959), Bruno Leuschner (1964) and Margarete Wittkowski (1966). In 1959 there occurred the first visit by a Volkskammer (People's Chamber) delegation under its chairman Prof. Dr Johannes Dieckmann. This marked the beginning of a continuous exchange of delegations between the two countries.

On October 16, 1954, the first trade agreement was concluded and since that time India has regularly attended the Leipzig Fair. Following the 1956 trade agreement an East German trade mission was subsequently set up in New Delhi with other trading stations in Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. It was not until February 1957 that the Indian equivalent, the "Bureau for Indian Trading Organizations" was opened in the GDR.

11) Communiqué of July 16, 1966, Pravda, July 17, 1966.

Despite an increase in the volume of trade resulting from the longer-term trade and credit agreements of 1959 and 1964, trade nevertheless remained relatively insignificant and lagged behind that of India's other foreign trade partners. In 1963 a shipping agreement was also signed.

The cultural agreement of February 1964 may be regarded as the formal seal on a development which had begun in 1956. This agreement provided for joint co-operation between the Indian Council for Scientific and Industrial Research and the East German Academy of Sciences. It also laid the basis for the further development of bilateral relations in this field ¹²⁾. Since then East German efforts have been crowned with a cultural co-operation treaty (September 1971), valid initially for two years.

By February 1971 a further agreement had been concluded on scientific-technical co-operation. In accordance with this agreement an "East German-Indian trade group", created at the Leipzig Fair on September 10, 1971, shall set about establishing closer contacts between East German and Indian enterprises directly involved in commercial relations ¹³⁾. As in preceding years, contacts at parliamentary level between the two countries were intensified further. Following the visit to India by a Volkskammer delegation in August 1971, the Deputy Speaker of the Indian Upper House B. D. Khobragade declared during an official visit to the GDR that an Indian parliamentary delegation would pay a return visit to the GDR in October 1971 ¹⁴⁾.

12) Information Bulletin, Trade Representation of the GDR, New Delhi, 10/1964.

13) ADN (General German News Service), Sept. 10, 1971.

14) ADN, Sept. 11, 1971.

II. Controlling departments and bodies of control in the GDR

The continuing intensification of relations in the areas referred to and other GDR activities have the firm backing of various departments and bodies in the GDR, which act in the specific capacity of co-ordinating and controlling agencies.

(1) Institutions responsible for the co-ordination and direction of activities and the laying down of principles

The "Propaganda Department of the Secretariat of the Central Committee (CC) of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED)" may be regarded as the central authority of direction and control.

In matters concerning activities abroad this authority works in close collaboration with the "International Relations Department of the CC Secretariat".

The direction of "public relations" activities in India is the responsibility of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, which has at its disposal, specially for this purpose, the "South-East Asia Department" and the "Press Section".

The Ministry for Foreign Trade and Payments, for its part, is responsible for technical and scientific co-operation, co-operation in the economic field and, with its ancillary the Chamber of Foreign Trade, is also responsible for the organization of fairs and exhibitions abroad. The political and economic level is further supplemented by the establishment and/or fostering of contacts on the social level through a wide variety of East German social organizations. Among these particularly active organizations are the following:

- League for People's Friendship;
- East German-South-East Asia Society, with its special India-GDR committee;
- the International Departments of the following:
 - Confederation of Free German Trade Unions (FDGB)
 - Journalists' Association
 - Association for Mutual Farmers' Assistance
 - Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee.

Co-operation and co-ordinated planning between these agencies and the scientific bodies, which are primarily responsible for advising on policy, are managed through the working group on "national liberation and neo-colonialist problems". This group belongs to the "Institute for Sociology of the Central Committee

of the SED".

The work of the group consists in identifying political trends in the developing countries and their significance for future GDR policy 15).

The sifting of "scientific data and proposals for use by the competent state authorities in their international activities" 16) is handled by the Institute for International Relations, an ancillary of the German Academy of Political Science and Jurisprudence. This institute, which has administrative powers, is assisted by the Central Council for Asian, African and Latin American Studies. The latter is charged with the task of co-ordinating general East German research on the developing countries and presenting it in a form suitable for the planning requirements of the Institute for International Relations. The above-mentioned administrative institute also receives co-operation from the "Foreign Planning Department" of the East German Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

On the academic research level (to be kept distinct from the activities of scientific institutes advising on policy) the following centres for Indian research exist in the GDR:

- "India Institute" of the Karl Marx University of Leipzig, Department of Asian, African and Latin American Studies;
- "South-East Asia Department" of the German Academy of Sciences, Institute of Oriental Studies;
- "Institute of Indian Studies" of the Humboldt University, Berlin;
- "Institute for Economics in the Developing Countries", School of Economics, Berlin;
- "Institute for Tropical and Subtropical Agriculture", Karl Marx University of Leipzig.

A comparison with research institutes for other developing countries shows that, apart from a few Arab, African and South-East Asian countries, India is the scientific as well as political centre of gravity 17).

15) Sielaff, op. cit., p. 25.

16) "Statute order of the German Academy of Political Science and Jurisprudence", Gesetzblatt der DDR, Part II, No. 22, Mar. 10, 1967, p. 138.

17) Sielaff, op. cit., p. 26, cites in particular Syria, the UAR, Iraq, Tanzania, Burma, Cambodia and Indonesia.

(2) GDR executive bodies in India

The diversity and rigid organization of the GDR-based agencies responsible for India provide the most favourable basis for effective action by the executive agencies in India itself.

a) The official East German mission in India, which in the meantime has developed into a consulate-general, naturally occupies a central position. The consulates in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras are subordinate to the Consulate-General in New Delhi and act on the latter's instructions. Consular responsibility for the regions is delegated as follows:

Bombay Consulate - responsible for the Union States of Maharashtra, Gujerat, Rajastan, Madhya Pradesh;
Calcutta Consulate - West Bengal, Orissa, Assam and Nefa;

Madras Consulate - Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh.

These divisions thus cover India's most important Union States.

The Consulate-General, together with its subordinate consulates, is charged with one of the heaviest responsibilities, of vital importance for the success of the entire venture: viz, the establishment and cultivation of contacts on the broadest possible basis, i. e. to include all parties, even those of the right, as well as associations, societies and a wide variety of representatives from all levels of society. This responsibility is discharged in exemplary manner by no less a person than the Consul-General himself, who possesses all the qualifications for the job.

Herbert Fischer, who, like the majority of East Germans engaged in "public relations", speaks fluent Hindi, is said to have visited Gandhi in Wardha and during World War II was interned alongside Indian freedom fighters. Appeals to the exemplary national pride of the Indians come easy to him and he has assimilated so much of the Indian character that he cannot even be classified as one of those exaggeratedly pro-Indian Europeans, when, for example, clad in a simple Khadi jacket, he operates the Indian charka spinning-wheel at the opening of exhibitions 18).

18) Cf. Democratic Germany, No. 19/20, Oct. 7, 1969, p. 2; Sielaff, op. cit., p. 54.

In its cultivation of contacts the Consulate-General works at three levels:

- once or twice weekly there are cocktails at Fischer's residence; the guests include politicians, journalists (usually editors and reporters) and members of Parliament, especially of the rightwing socialist parties and the Congress Party;
- cultivation of contacts with CPs and communist organizations;
- contacts with public bodies such as schools, universities, institutes and social cultural organizations.

The organizations of such activities, where political personalities are involved, is the responsibility of the political section of the Consulate-General; overall contacts with the public and with journalists fall within the province of the information section. A typical example of this sort of planning on "general staff" lines in the field of public relations are the signature-collecting campaigns for GDR recognition, held every year. The ostensible purpose of the campaigns is that they should serve as a public demonstration of popular support at every level. The real aim of these activities, however, is to try and bring home to Parliament, the parties and also the Government just how widely the cause is supported. On the one hand, there is the attempt to produce a suction effect drawing in other prominent personalities and entire organizations; on the other hand, the lessening of resistance to recognition is being used in an effort to exert pressure on the Government itself.

In 1969 the appeal was signed by 2,000 persons, including some 200 members of Parliament and 500 State Assembly members. In order to appreciate the full import of these figures, we should bear in mind that the Lower House has a total of 521 members, including 43 representatives from the Communist Parties.

In 1970 the East Germans were able to report that, out of a total of 4,000 signatures, 214 came from members of Parliament and 600 from State Assembly members ¹⁹⁾.

Even though the number of CP members remained more or

19) Neues Deutschland, July 11, 1970.

less constant after the "mid-term" elections of March 1971, the East Germans still managed to increase their figures in the period up to August 1971. This indicates that they must have succeeded in winning the support of other members, in particular from the New Congress Party. Observers covering the elections assume this to be the result of financial backing by the GDR Consulate-General of selected parliamentary candidates. In the light of past experience of GDR activities in India, the assumption must be regarded as highly credible ²⁰⁾. Without disclosing the total number of signatures, the General German News Service (ADN) reported that 265 members of Parliament had now signed the appeal for the establishment of full diplomatic relations ²¹⁾.

The signatories include prominent politicians from all the parliamentary groups, among them the anti-communist parties such as Jan Sangh and Swatantra.

Activities at Union State level have likewise been intensified and have already borne fruit. Following the example set by the West Bengal and Kerala State Assemblies in 1969, 117 out of a total of 136 members of the Orissa State Assembly signed an appeal to the Prime Minister in 1971 calling for an exchange of ambassadors between the GDR and India ²²⁾.

A number of instances can be cited illustrating the methods employed by the GDR in the furtherance of its activities. - For example, Ram Swarup, head of "Free News and Feature Service", having managed through a middleman to obtain 5,000 addresses of persons approached during one such action, proceeded to launch a counter-action. As a result a number of the signatures were withdrawn - an obvious indication that the facts had been distorted ²³⁾.

In the course of this counter-action neither the Embassy of the Federal Republic nor Swarup gave any clue as to their

20) Cf. also Sielaff, op. cit., p. 56.

21) ADN, Aug. 14, 1971.

22) ADN, Aug. 4, 1971, and Times of India, Aug. 4, 1971.

23) Sielaff, op. cit., p. 56.

involvement, in order that the findings should be quite "genuine". Officially the signature-collecting campaigns are likewise organized by the Indo-GDR Friendship Association (IGFA). However, a closer examination of this association will reveal that in reality these activities are organized by the East German Mission; the friendship association is merely an implementing body. Another case illustrates the GDR's apparent acceptance of any means available to achieve the ultimate objective. - By resorting to intrigue, the trade mission in Madras attempted to secure the passage of a resolution in the Tamil Nadu State Assembly calling for the immediate recognition of the GDR. In the process, however, it became itself a victim of the intrigue.

"According to information from S. S. Nathan, Madras, November 6, 1969, the son of the DMK (Tamil Party) chief minister of Tamil Nadu, who in spite of prohibition is not exactly impartial to wine, women and song, is alleged to have attempted to blackmail his father into supporting such a resolution. The Indian manager of the trade mission in Madras, a Mr Nambiar, is claimed not only to have supplied Karunanidhi's son with liquor, but also to have incited him to threaten his father with the disclosure of certain financial manoeuvres by the DMK government, unless the latter moved a resolution for GDR recognition. Nathan declares that as a precaution he had already informed the Tamil Nadu security authorities of the situation, so that Karunanidhi was prepared and immediately placed his son under house arrest. Since that time, it is claimed, police surveillance on the trade mission has been stepped up" 24).

Another type of "public relations" consists in inviting Indians, particularly members of Parliament, to visit the GDR. By this means influence can also be exerted on MPs to "sell" their signature of the recognition appeal. Since foreign exchange is extremely difficult to obtain in India, even for politicians, this opportunity is gratefully accepted. By the end of 1969, 110 members of the Lower House (about 20% of all members) had already visited the GDR.

In conjunction with joint projects in the economic, scientific and educational fields wide opportunities are available for obtaining invitations to visit the GDR. Thus on July 14, 1971,

24) Quoted from Sielaff, op. cit., p. 91, Note 120.

an East German education expert, Dr D. Blandow, announced that 16 Indian educationists would be visiting the GDR as part of the cultural exchange programme and that visits by a further 13 had been arranged for 1972 25). The budget of the Consulate-General and the East German Foreign Ministry for invitations of this kind must certainly amount to a considerable sum. Obviously these examples are not exhaustive, but they illustrate the nature and extent of the activities of the East German Mission in India.

Valuable assistance in these activities is supplied by the missions of other East European states. The information sections of the Polish and Czech Embassies are particularly active in adverse propaganda against the Federal Republic and distribute specially compiled articles and pamphlets. The Indian government's "third party rule", stipulating that foreign missions must not engage in agitation against a third country with which India has friendly relations, is circumvented with the aid of Indian nationals who distribute the prepared articles and pamphlets under their own names 26).

b) In the context of the overall "public relations" activities of the Consulate-General and its three affiliated consulates the information sections play the most important role. In their capacity as specialized administrative and co-ordinating agencies for "public relations", they are responsible for the production and distribution of news services, journals, pamphlets and books. They are also responsible for fostering contacts with journalists, a task which they pursue with great zeal. This aspect will be looked at in greater detail in the section entitled "GDR activity: methods and means". For the moment one graphic example will suffice: in 1969 the information section in New Delhi already had at its disposal a card-index system of 13,000 persons and institutes, with whom it had contacts or intended to establish contacts 27).

25) Hindustan Times, July 15, 1971.

26) Gaur K. P. : Sources of Anti-West German Propaganda in India, no place; Gaur refers to an Indian by the name of Rajiv Saxena, a Czech Embassy employee, who comes under this category.

27) According to information supplied by Ram Swarup, head of the "Free News and Feature Service", who acquired these files through a middleman for the sum of 50 rupees, cf. also Sielaff, op. cit., p. 55.

Each information section is divided into five groups:

Editorial staff

This is identical with the section administration, membership being restricted exclusively to East German nationals. Every editorial staff includes at least one member with a command of at least one of the regional languages of the area covered.

Translation department

Production

Distribution

The above groups frequently include Indian nationals, although the latter are officially employed by APN or ADN.

News Service

There are hardly any newspapers which subscribe to the ADN or TASS agencies. Consequently it is the task of this group to supply and distribute extracts from ADN. Approximately 200 newspapers receive these agency extracts free of charge. At irregular intervals this group produces and distributes its own news services in the most important Indian languages. Finally there are the unsigned reports and articles which, for the most part, contain adverse propaganda against the Federal Republic 28).

c) Almost all foreign countries engaged in "public relations" work in India have as their auxiliary and operational bases friendship and cultural societies. In India the biggest and most active society of its kind, surpassing even the American, is the Indo-Soviet Cultural Society (ISCUS). In contrast to the Western societies the communist societies are much more active and above all more militant in their approach. Meanwhile the GDR possesses an effective and rigidly organized society in the form of its Indo-GDR Friendship Association (IGFA), which is founded for the most part on a Union State basis in the respective capitals and is answerable to a central organization at Union level. In 1966 the GDR already disposed of 20 individual societies 29), whereas by 1969 this number had increased to 35.

Primarily these societies share the same aim as all the other GDR activities in India, i. e. full diplomatic recognition. According to the statutes of the IGFA, Calcutta the individual aims are as follows:

28) Sielaff, op. cit., p. 57.

29) ADN, Dec. 1966.

"Promotion by every means of closer cultural relations between the peoples of India and the men and women of the GDR with a view to furthering mutual understanding and goodwill" 30).

Even the methods and means of achieving these aims are set out down to the last detail 31).

"The activities of the Society shall include the following:

- holding meetings, lectures, discussion and study circles;
- facilitating exchanges of delegations and study tours between India and the GDR;
- staging plays and organizing symposia and literary groups;
- arranging exhibitions of art, photography films, stamps, manuscripts, handiwork etc.;
- organizing reading rooms and libraries;
- assisting persons, interested in learning each other's language;
- arranging the exchange of students, scholars, artists, teachers and professors, technicians and experts between Indian and GDR institutions;
- producing the translation into Indian languages of books and publications relating to the GDR;
- publication and distribution of books, journals etc. relating to Indian and GDR culture;
- developing pen-friendship;
- any other activity in furtherance of the above aims of the society.

In itself this list provides a comprehensive coverage of the majority of "public relations" activities and, considering the parallel interests of the Consulate-General, the true source of inspiration behind this catalogue of activities is not difficult to surmise.

Most of the IGFA members belong to the Indian communist parties. In order to offset this obvious "minor blemish", an intensive recruitment drive is being pursued among other groups such as the New Congress Party, the socialist parties and even the rightwing parties. In 1970 the IGFA had a total 3,000 members, of whom only 400 lived in New Delhi. The membership structure is determined according to status and membership dues:

30) Par. I, II, Statutes of the Indo-GDR Friendship Society, Calcutta, Jun. 15, 1967; cf. also Sielaff, op. cit.

31) Ibid., Par. 1, III.

life members and founder members who pay 100 rupees per month;
subscribing members who pay 500 rupees or more, either in a lump sum or in instalments;
co-opted members, firms and companies paying a minimum of 250 rupees annually;
associated members, East German citizens resident in India and Indians unable to pay the ordinary membership subscription;
ordinary members, Indians paying an annual subscription of between 1 and 10 rupees, or students, teachers and "working journalists" who have a 50% reduction ³²).

The IGFA has its own journal, published under the characteristic title "Recognition". In addition to the regular issues there are also special numbers marking all memorable occasions (e. g. 150th anniversary of the birth of Marx or 20th anniversary of the founding of the GDR).

Having once been admitted to the IGFA, Indian politicians are subjected to continuous pressure to launch parliamentary offensives for full GDR recognition.

On the occasion of the 10th anniversary celebrations of the IGFA in New Delhi - celebrations accompanied by great expense and announcements - the impression was created that such societies already exist in all parts of India. After the celebrations, however, this impression was given the lie when the official journal of the East German Mission "Democratic Germany" announced the founding of an IGFA in Bombay ³³).

This type of propaganda, tantamount to a falsification of the facts, also occurred in the case of the Assam IGFA. According to "Democratic Germany", one of the highlights of H. Fischer's visit in 1967 was the founding of the IGFA in the Assam capital, Shillong ³⁴).

Another typical example illustrating how the GDR uses the friendship societies to further its activities in India is an ADN bulletin coinciding with the four-week visit to India in December 1966 by Professor Kurt Huber, Vice-President of the East German - South-East Asia Society. In the bulletin it is stated,

32) Sielaff, op. cit., p. 84.

33) Democratic Germany, No. 5, Dec. 15, 1966.

34) Democratic Germany, Apr. 15, 1967.

among other things, that Huber had visited Calcutta at the invitation of that city's IGFA. The truth of the matter, however, is that the Calcutta IGFA was only founded on June 15, 1967 - a fact which has been faithfully recorded and officially announced in "Democratic Germany"! ³⁵).

35) Democratic Germany, No. 16, Aug. 15, 1967.

III. Foreign policy aims and objectives of GDR activity

Let us now take a closer look at the aims and objectives of GDR activity, so far touched on only in general terms.

As we have seen, the primary objective, to which all activities have been geared and all other aims subordinated, is full diplomatic recognition of the GDR by the Indian government. At times the struggle to achieve this objective is waged with importunate obstinacy. For, while de facto recognition has indeed been achieved, diplomatic relations at ambassadorial level have so far been steadfastly refused³⁶⁾. East German irritation over this state of affairs can be clearly detected in a statement made by the East German Deputy Foreign Minister, Wolfgang Kiesewetter: "At times one is inclined to conclude that the principles of neutrality and non-alignment launched by India are not being applied with logical consistency"³⁷⁾. Kiesewetter then goes on to set out in semi-official terms the aims of the GDR in India: "The existence of wide-ranging relations and a spirit of sincere friendship, on which these relations are based, will be reflected at the proper time in the elevation of relations to their true status. Of this we are convinced"³⁸⁾.

Running parallel with this aim, which fundamentally is in line with traditional foreign policy, is the ideological aim. In collaboration with all revolutionary-democratic forces, i. e. all anti-imperialists and anti-neocolonialists, efforts are being made to direct India's development into non-capitalist channels. To this end the Indian mixed economy, consisting of the public sector and private enterprise, offers favourable points of departure. If the form and extent of developments in the Indian public sector of the economy have not proceeded in the way the East Germans, and in particular the Soviets, would have wished, efforts in this direction are nevertheless being continued with a steadfast persistence.

36) Sielaff, op. cit., p. 187.

37) Kiesewetter, Wolfgang: Die Beziehungen der DDR zur indischen Union, in Deutsche Aussenpolitik, No. 8/1967, p. 943.

38) Ibid., p. 944.

The current disappointment felt emerges quite clearly from an East German essay on the subject: "Developments in India over the last twenty years have not led to a solution of the country's economic, social and political problems on the basis of democratic principles; the anti-imperialist, national democratic revolution is incomplete. Instead India has reached a stage of development characterized by the rapid spread and intensification of capitalist production methods"³⁹⁾.

(1) The self-projected image and its true purpose

One of the techniques employed in furtherance of the desired goal is the self-projected image. Accordingly, the GDR tries with all the methods and means at its disposal to present itself as an independent economic and political force to be reckoned with at international level. The calculated effect of this is to convince influential Indian politicians and personalities of the advantages, not only of good contacts at all international levels, but also of the establishment of full diplomatic relations.

The achievements, successes and triumphs of the GDR are endlessly depicted in the most glowing colours. In this connection the characteristic tactic is to present the East German example of achievement and success after the complete collapse at the end of World War II as a commendable model for the developing countries, which (in the East German view) are faced with the same problems.

The activities surrounding the 20th anniversary of the founding of the GDR will serve as an illustration. - After the GDR missions and "friendship associations" in most of the larger Indian cities had held their celebrations, in the course of which reference was again and again made to East German triumphs, the crowning glory of the occasion was a national conference of all friendship associations held in September 1969 in New Delhi. This conference, of course, boasted an impressive list of participants, including delegations from Ceylon, Cambodia, Nepal, Japan and Africa. The guest of honour at the conference

39) Spree Alexander: Die indische Grossbourgeoisie - eine Gefahr für die unabhängige Entwicklung Indiens, in Deutsche Aussenpolitik, No. 8/1967, p. 957.

was the Deputy Chairman of the East German Council of Ministers and President of the East German - South East Asia Society, Max Seffrin. Apart from the obligatory resolutions for full recognition of the GDR, a 23-man "National Campaign Committee" was set up to organize a so-called "GDR Campaign Month". The opportunities offered by the GDR 20th anniversary celebrations were too favourable for them to be allowed to slip by without political exploitation. For over a month, and in addition to the other IGFA celebrations already arranged, this campaign proclaimed East German triumphs and achievements ⁴⁰).

(2) Implementation of aims: the underlying theses

Basically speaking, the theses underlying GDR activity in furtherance of East German aims recur regularly. Changes in the content of the arguments are introduced primarily where the contingencies of the actual political situation can be made to fit in with time-honoured tested principles.

For added effect, the theses advanced are frequently heightened by quoting the Indo-Soviet communiqué and statements by the Prime Minister expressing Indian recognition of the reality of two German states. The implied aim, therefore, is to suggest that the logical consequence of such declarations would be GDR recognition. In the continued absence of recognition, however, it is inevitable that the existing situation should be regarded as disgraceful. On the "public relations" level, pro-GDR Indians are led to the conclusion that the only reason why GDR recognition has been withheld is because of improper machinations ⁴¹).

Essentially two theses can be discerned: the one can be traced to the internal situation and India's national pride in her own sovereignty, the other more versatile thesis is based on Indian foreign policy.

For example, Indira Gandhi's resounding victory, exceeding all expectations, in the last elections in March 1971 has been completely distorted to represent an overwhelming vote by the Indian population for immediate GDR recognition. With the defeat of all the rightwing parties, opposed to GDR recognition, the elections have allegedly demonstrated that the Indian

40) National Herald, Sept. 19, 1969.

41) Sielaff, op. cit., p. 175.

progressive parties have sailed home to victory by their endorsement of recognition ⁴²).

By appealing to Indian sovereignty the implied suggestion is that other states should not be allowed to impose their will by the exertion of economic pressure. "India's policies. . . . should not be unduly swerved by economic considerations, especially when we are opposed to all political strings attached to aid. In any case, India is no more so dependent on other nations for economic assistance" ⁴³).

It is not difficult to see that the reference here is to the Federal Republic. This argument can be defended on the grounds of repeated statements by pro-West German Indians who point to Federal German aid as an argument against East German recognition ⁴⁴).

East German arguments arising from Indian foreign policy are based in the main on India's principles. Recognition, it is claimed, is a test case for the implementation of Indian non-alignment policy. For, whereas normal relations exist with the Federal Republic - an imperialist NATO country -, this is not so in the case of the GDR - a peace-loving socialist state.

Even European security is brought into the argument, in as much as recognition of the GDR would strengthen simultaneously the democratic and socialist forces in Europe and the Federal Republic. This, in due course, would be to the advantage of peace in Europe ⁴⁵). The chain of positive effects accruing from such a move by India is further developed thus: peace in Europe is the basis for peace in the world, which in turn produces the equation "recognition of the GDR = safeguarding of world peace".

42) Argument put forward in a resolution at the meeting of the Delhi State Peace Council, Jun. 2, 1971.

43) Mainstream, Sept. 27, 1969, article by M.S.N. Menon.

44) Lok Sabha Debates, 4th Series, Vol. XVII, No. 56, p. 1851 et seq.; Sielaff, op. cit., 175; cf. also Orbit Weekly, May 23, 1971.

45) Kiesewetter W., op. cit., p. 940 et seq.

For the rest, there are appeals to solidarity stressing the mutuality of foreign policy principles. "In all situations, even in the most complicated ones caused by the forces of imperialism and colonialism, the GDR proved a sincere and reliable ally of the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America" 46). Statements of this kind are borne out, for example, by the GDR's support of Indian policy in the "Bangla Desh" question. The heavy publicity being given to this support is illustrated by some headlines from Indian newspapers:

- "GDR hails peace efforts" 47);
- "GDR supports India on Bangla Desh" 48);
- "GDR supports India's stand" 49);
- "Berlin backs Indian stand" 50);
- "More GDR relief arrives" 51);
- "GDR aid to refugees" 52);
- "Aid for evacuees from Soviet Union, GDR" 53);
- "GDR backs Indian stand on DPs" 54);
- "GDR appreciates India's stand" 55);
- "East German MPs coming today" 56);
- "GDR MPs to visit camps" 57);
- "GDR team visits DP camps in Bengal" 58).

46) Winzer Otto, in Blitz, Oct. 2, 1969.

47) The Motherland, Aug. 15, 1971.

48) New Age, July 4, 1971.

49) Amrita Bazar Patrika, Jun. 28, 1971.

50) The Motherland, Jun. 26, 1971.

51) Patriot, Jun. 22, 1971.

52) Patriot, May 30, 1971.

53) New Age, Jun. 27, 1971.

54) National Herald, Jun. 10, 1971.

55) Patriot, Jun. 24, 1971.

56) The Motherland, Aug. 14, 1971.

57) Patriot, Aug. 15, 1971.

58) Patriot, Aug. 18, 1971.

By letting off these journalistic fireworks, the East Germans are obviously hoping to corroborate once more their claim that India's real friend is the GDR - a friend who will not desert her, even when times are hard. That this support is world-wide, however, and the GDR by no means occupies the number one position, is apparent only to the most assiduous newspaper reader.

Antagonism between India and Pakistan, as evidenced once more in the Bangla Desh question, is highly charged with emotion. The high level of emotional feeling inherent in the conflict is welcomed by the GDR as an opportunity to make capital for its own cause by means of falsification and distortion. For the GDR nothing is tabu, and even feelings are unscrupulously twisted and exploited.

The GDR uses the Indo-Pakistan dispute to show that Pakistan is allied to the neo-imperialist USA through SEATO and CENTO, in exactly the same way as is the Federal Republic through NATO. The GDR, moreover, has no relations with Pakistan, not even a trade mission. But just how much the GDR would like to have relations with Pakistan, if the latter were agreeable, is deliberately kept quiet. The most recent East German negotiations with Pakistan on the establishment of a trade mission have been reported in the Pakistan press. On the East German side, however, a complete silence has been maintained, whereas on all other occasions even partial successes make headline news and the establishment of new relations are presented as a breakthrough in the recognition question 59).

India's relations with Pakistan are cited as proof of the inapplicability of the West German formula that recognition of the GDR aggravates the problem of the two German states. "If there is no possibility for India and Pakistan to coexist in peace and amity, then this logic is equally applicable to the German problem" 60). In view of the Indian people's emotions vis-a-vis Pakistan, this simplification of the facts serves in the same breath to render credible the East German position. This

59) Shanker Shiv: Tactics for Recognition - Strain on GDR Resources, in Orbit, May 23, 1971.

60) Mainstream, Sept. 27, 1969.

gives rise to the apparently justified question as to why the Indian government has not fully recognized the GDR long ago.

In the same way simplifications are used to extol the aims and ideals of East German political principles and to set them on a par with generally accepted Indian values, such as Gandhi's non-violence, the veneration of Gandhi in general, democracy, political tolerance and humanitarian ideals. In the process the East Germans have scored notable successes in winning over sections of the Indian intelligentsia. These include prominent Indian personalities, who cannot be regarded as communist-inclined, yet who actively support the GDR cause on the grounds of these and similar arguments.

The list of arguments could be continued, but for our present purpose a few selected examples will suffice to illustrate how the GDR conducts the struggle in India.

IV. GDR activity: methods and means

According to importance, the methods employed by the GDR, as described in the preceding chapters, serve to a greater or lesser extent as a cover for the East Germans' most vigorous pursuit: exploiting the mass media to influence the public or selected target groups.

(1) Journalism as a medium for influencing public opinion

As previously mentioned, the motivating factor underlying GDR activity vis-a-vis the Indian press is the effect of the mass media as multipliers. Fostering contacts with Indian journalists is therefore one of the fundamental prerequisites for success or failure in this field. Thus it is not surprising that the tactics employed here by the GDR are highly discriminative and that the method of approach is carefully tailored to suit the individual contact. Four groups can be detected offering opportunities for the exertion of influence at four different levels ⁶¹⁾:

- The communist press and others closely associated in their orientation with the GDR and also the Soviet Union. This group is the easiest to influence and influence is duly exerted on a grand scale ⁶²⁾. In most cases this section of the press has direct economic links with the GDR through the delivery of printing machines and technical equipment. These deliveries are often financed by means of favourable credits, or the publishing house receives exceptional discounts.
- The leftwing press and newspaper staff, whose individual journalists are relatively free from editorial control and some of whom are even in a position to promote news and commentaries deviating from the official editorial line. This group is not only the largest of the four, but also the most important, since it is here that influence can be exerted on a large scale

61) For a detailed treatment cf. also Sielaff, op. cit., p. 59.

62) Cf., for example, article by GDR Deputy Foreign Minister Ewald Moldt, GDR Membership in WHO, in New Age, Apr. 11, 1971.

- and without arousing outside suspicion 63).
- The economically weak press labours under the chief disadvantage of being restricted in its ability to gather news. The GDR tries to exploit this situation by offering its own material for publication and, in the event of articles being accepted, pays a fee of between 25 and 50 rupees per publication. Since these medium-sized newspapers are not sufficiently independent economically and politically, they are also open to an approach by political opponents 64).
 - The high-circulation, mainly English-language newspapers and journals are largely independent politically and are extremely difficult to influence. It is due to these organs, modelled above all on the British pattern, that the Indian press enjoys such a high reputation and esteem, particularly in Asia. This is the section of the press where announcements, compiled by the East German "public relations" bodies, are usually inserted.

Considered individually, the following newspapers from the first (communist) group are of importance:

- "Janayugam", organ of the Communist Party of India in Kerala (circulation 30,000; Malayalam; daily);
- "Deshabimani", party organ of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) in Kerala (40,000; Malayalam; daily);
- "New Age", central organ of the CPI, New Delhi (11,000; English; fortnightly);
- "Kalantar", Calcutta (11,000; Bengali; weekly);
- "Navayugam", Trivandrum (6,000; Malayalam; weekly);
- "Janashakti", Madras (5,000; Tamil; weekly);
- "People's Democracy", Calcutta (11,000; English; fortnightly).

The more important second group is controlled, to all intents and purposes, by India's biggest political weekly, "Blitz".

63) For example, during the election campaign articles appeared in the National Herald (Feb. 28, 1971, and Apr. 1, 1971) and also in the Indian Express (May 27, 1971).

64) The March of the Nation, Jun. 12, 1971.

"Blitz" has a total circulation of about 300,000 - 200,000 in English and 50,000 in Hindi and Urdu respectively. The paper has its own East European correspondent. In this connection, however, it is revealing to discover that the correspondent, Kunhanandan Nair, is on the payroll of the Chairman of the East German Council of Ministers' press office. His "Blitz" Articles represent nothing other than semi-official East German commentaries on political problems. On top of that, the editor-in-chief and owner of the paper, a Mr Sukamaran, is a personal friend of the East German Consul-General in India.

A similar situation obtains in the case of two other important publications in this group: the news magazines "Link" and "Patriot". Both are owned by leading Indian communists. Heading the list is the Chairman of the Communist Party of India (CPI), S.A. Dange. The printing-offices of these newspapers have been equipped with East German machines on the basis of a 25% discount and a twenty-year credit. Apparently the instalments on this credit have never been demanded 65).

In addition the publishing house received Indian government funds for the reconstruction of a building. K.D. Malaviya, at that time Minister for Mineral Oil and a member of the left wing of the Congress Party, made available 500,000 rupees as an advance payment for the renting of rooms in the building at a later date.

The head of publishing for both of these newspapers 66) is Mrs Aruna Asaf Ali, a particularly interesting personality of whom brief details are given here. - Mrs Ali was a member of the CPI from 1952 to 1956 and in 1958, with Congress Party backing, became Mayor of New Delhi.

Since 1961 she has distinguished herself as an active supporter of the GDR. She has demonstrated outstanding skill in exploiting for active propaganda purposes her offices as President of the National Indian League of Women, member of the All-India Peace Council and Vice-President of the Indian Association for Afro-Asian Solidarity.

65) Sielaff, op. cit., p. 61 et seq.

66) The names of these publishing houses are United India Periodicals Ltd and Raisina Publications Ltd.

Above all, in her capacity as a publishing house chief she is excellently placed to transfer party funds or foreign contributions to India quite unobtrusively. These funds can then be invested in the publishing houses; they can, however, also be used for activist operations in accordance with the true wishes of the donors ⁶⁷⁾.

(2) Supplementary GDR press material

The publication of inspired texts in Indian journals and newspapers is supplemented by the GDR's own articles, which are compiled and distributed for publication in Indian newspapers, or else appear in the GDR's own organ.

The news services supplied by the GDR missions, the so-called GDR press releases, are assured of a relatively wide distribution, in that they appear not only in English, but also in Hindi, Gujerati, Bengali, Tamil, Malayalam, Oriya and Marathi. The contents are usually devoted to topical local problems.

The users of these services are individually selected multipliers who can be relied upon to publish the text ⁶⁸⁾. The majority of these people belong to the first three groups.

It is only since 1967 that the GDR has concentrated on the publication of a single periodical "Democratic Germany". Compiled by the information section of the GDR Consulate-General, the English edition is printed on the same premises as "Link" and "Patriot". The individual consulates alter the text and content according to prevailing local conditions and publish the Indian-language regional editions only monthly, instead of fortnightly as with the English edition.

A comparison between "Democratic Germany" and similar periodicals clearly demonstrates East Germany's position of advantage ⁶⁹⁾:

67) Cf. detailed article in Current, Jun. 6, 1970, containing information on Mrs Ali's pecuniary circumstances, as supplied by the Central Bureau of Investigation.

68) Cf. also Sielaff, op. cit., p. 70.

69) The author has been unable to obtain the latest circulation figures: the information cited here probably dates from the the year 1969. Cf. Sielaff, op. cit., p. 77.

<u>"Democratic Germany"</u>		<u>"German News" (Fed. Rep.)</u>	<u>"This is Britain"</u>
<u>Language</u>	<u>Circulation</u>	<u>Circulation</u>	<u>Circulation</u>
English	12, 000	72, 000	13, 500
Hindi	7, 200	8, 000	-
Bengali	5, 000	-	-
Oriya	not known	-	-
Malayalam	3, 000	-	-
Tamil	5, 000	-	-
Marathi	3, 000	-	-
TOTAL	35, 200	80, 000	13, 500

These figures are very modest when compared with the massive circulation figures of the Soviet Union and the USA. The Soviet Union's newspaper "Soviet Land" has a total circulation of about 545, 000 ⁷⁰⁾, while the "American Reporter" still runs to some 347, 000 copies.

(3) Function of GDR radio broadcasting

Radio is a classic communist medium for "public relations" work. The GDR too possesses this instrument in the form of Radio Berlin International, although it should be pointed out from the start that India is much more effectively served by the Soviet Union's three broadcasting stations Radio Moscow, Radio Peace and Progress and Radio Tashkent with comprehensive coverage in 15 languages.

Reception of Radio Berlin International in India is poor, but there are daily English-language transmissions of three hours with an additional 1½ hours on three weekdays. Since 1968 a forty-minute programme in Hindi has been beamed on India four times a week. The importance of radio for India lies above all in the high percentage of the population who are illiterate and who can only be reached swiftly and effectively via the radio.

The object of the GDR broadcasts is to establish contact with the listeners, who are encouraged to send in their letters or take part in competitions. These contacts are used to establish links with the India-based GDR organizations (consulates, Indo-GDR Friendship Association). In this way a constant circle of

70) Soviet Land appears in thirteen languages and, in terms of numbers of copies, is India's biggest newspaper.

contacts is maintained 71).

(4) Influencing Indian domestic policy

Indian domestic politics offer the GDR ample opportunities to pursue the above-mentioned aims. Apart from the methods outlined in preceding chapters, only two methods - too important to go unmentioned - will be dealt with here.

The period following the split in the Congress Party, when the Prime Minister led a minority government sustained by the shifting support of other parties, presented the GDR with its most favourable opportunity for exerting influence. During this time Mrs Gandhi drew in particular on the support of the CPI and the smaller splinter parties, with the result that parliamentary bills had to be withdrawn, whenever the CPI refused to support the Government. The best known example of this was the Preventive Detention Bill. The Union and various regional governments had emphasized that the prolongation of this temporary act was essential for the preservation of law and order in the country; the act was not prolonged. Under such circumstances the GDR was in a better position than ever before to exert influence on the Indian government through the CPI. Admittedly there is no conclusive proof as to whether or not the Prime Minister's decision to change the two countries' trade missions into consulates-general was really based purely on her own judgement. However, it is significant to note that the upgrading of relations between the two countries occurred precisely during the period described 72).

As a footnote to this episode, and as a further illustration of GDR methods, it should be pointed out that the East German Foreign Ministry moved with lightning speed to implement this measure, at the same time bestowing on the head of the upgraded GDR mission the title of ambassador.

71) For this instance of listeners' letters to Radio Berlin International attracting by return lists of various contact addresses in India cf. Sielaff, op. cit., Appendix XIII.

72) Gaur K. P. : Is Diplomatic Recognition of GDR Imminent?, no place, Apr. 30, 1971.

This new nomenclature was deliberately calculated to mislead the public and create the impression that bilateral relations exist at ambassadorial level.

Since the March elections the domestic and party political situation has been far less favourable, as the Prime Minister's two-thirds majority in Parliament guarantees her the leadership of a stable government relatively free from foreign influence.

(5) Exploiting cultural work and scientific contacts

In addition to the extraordinary methods employed by the GDR, work in the cultural field - one of the traditional activities of foreign missions - is also used to promote East Germany's by now well-known objectives. The GDR proceeds from the same universal assumption which forms the basis of cultural work by Western missions. Interest in culture exists above all in intellectual circles, which prove to be good multipliers. So far there is nothing exceptional about GDR activity. However, as soon as firm links are established with individual persons and where, in addition, these persons are local dignitaries or other well-known personalities, then there is an attempt to turn to political advantage what were originally cultural contacts.

Since the GDR has no cultural centres of its own (a fact which is incomprehensible in view of the GDR's proven pre-occupation with India), the responsibility for this task rests with the cultural sections of the GDR missions. After contact has been made with culturally interested persons further contacts are then established with the appropriate Indo-GDR Friendship Association 73). The subsequent pattern of events is as described above.

Yet another way of opening up contacts is the organization of numerous film evenings or even festivals to attract the Indians, well-known as enthusiastic film-goers. In part, these functions are arranged in collaboration with the Soviet Union.

In May 1970 a working plan was drawn up for cultural co-operation between the GDR and India. Apart from the seconding of German teachers to India, the plan also provides for advising

73) Cf. Sielaff, op. cit., p. 91.

the Indian Ministry of Education on the development of poly-technical schools. In the meantime the Ministry of Education has set up 16 pilot schools throughout India, all of which are being advised by the GDR. This advice and assistance can serve equally well as a means of exerting influence, although in this case the ideological side has priority. Polytechnical education is not a subject discipline, but an educational principle, which is applied exclusively in the GDR as a socio-political necessity in a socialist state in accordance with Marxist-Leninist requirements. Thus in its capacity as adviser to the Indian government, the GDR is not only in position to implement its propaganda aims, but also to promote the socialist education system and its methods. To the extent that this becomes a part of Indian social policy, the GDR will be able to maintain or even intensify its own socialist influence. As recently as July 1971 the East German education expert Dr Dietrich Blandow presented a detailed scheme to the Indian Ministry of Education proposing that polytechnical education should become a general principle of Indian education 74).

Reference has already been made to co-operation in the scientific-technical field. This co-operation is based on various agreements between the East German Academy of Sciences and the Indian Council for Scientific and Industrial Research. In June 1971 a new agreement was signed, following which an East German delegation led by Professor W. Ruber visited 30 Indian scientific institutes.

It was announced by Professor Ruber that the GDR would present India with scientific equipment for the investigation of the ionosphere, with a view to a later exchange of scientific findings between the two countries. The East German equipment, valued at about 150,000 rupees, is being placed at the disposal of the Gujerat University in Ahmedabad 75).

By actions such as these the East Germans are succeeding in putting the finishing touches to their would-be image of the GDR as a party genuinely interested in Indian progress. Basically there can be no objection to the provision of disinterested advice and scientific-technical assistance to countries in the process of development. However, assuming that the GDR's aims in

74) Hindustan Times, July 15, 1971.

75) Hindustan Times, Jun. 24, 1971.

India should have now become clear, Professor Ruber's reference to a future exchange of notes between Indian and East German scientists can only mean one thing: the possibility of opening up new contacts which can be used to further political aims.

Bibliography

- Bechtholdt Heinrich: J. Nehru und die deutsche Frage, in Aussenpolitik, 11/1961, p. 745;
- Duckwitz G. F.: Die Grundzüge der indischen Aussenpolitik, in Aussenpolitik, 1/1966;
- Frühmer Rudolf: Kritik der Aussage, Heidelberg 1954;
- Gaur K. P.: Sources of Anti-West German Propaganda in India, n.p. or d.;
- Gaur K. P.: Is Diplomatic Recognition of GDR Imminent?, no place, 1971;
- Kiesewetter Wolfgang: Die Beziehungen der DDR zur indischen Union, in Deutsche Aussenpolitik, 8/1967;
- Langbein Thomas: Die DDR im indischen Unterhaus, in Deutsche Aussenpolitik, 7/1968, p. 892;
- Ludwig Harald: Beziehungen zu den Entwicklungsländern - Die DDR in Asien, in Deutschlandarchiv, 3/1968, p. 310;
- Moldt Ewald: GDR Membership in WHO, in New Age, Apr. 11, 1971;
- Oeckel Albert: Handbuch der Public Relations, Theorie und Praxis der Oeffentlichkeitsarbeit in Deutschland und der Welt, Munich, 1964;
- Oeckel Albert: Oeffentlichkeitsarbeit in Theorie und Praxis, Stuttgart, 1960;
- Osten Walter: Moskau-Peking und die SED; Der Fall Indien, in Osteuropa, 6/1964, p. 447;
- Raks Ralph/Schrader Erich: Nichtpaktgebundenheit - Prinzip der indischen Aussenpolitik, in Deutsche Aussenpolitik, 8/1967, p. 945;
- Rückriegel Helmut: Was ist politische Oeffentlichkeitsarbeit? in Festschrift zum 70. Geburtstag von P. Pfeiffer, Düsseldorf/Vienna, 1965;

Schrader Erich: Mahatma Gandhi und die Formierung der indischen Bourgeoisie, in Deutsche Aussenpolitik, 2/1969, p. 174;

Shanker Shiv: Tactics for Recognition - Strain on GDR Resources, in Orbit, May 23, 1971;

Sielaff Rüdiger: Die Oeffentlichkeitsarbeit der kommunistischen Länder in Indien, Bonn, 1970;

Spree Alexander: Die indische Grossbourgeoisie - eine Gefahr für die unabhängige Entwicklung Indiens, in Deutsche Aussenpolitik, 8/1967.

INTERDOC

The purpose of INTERDOC is to promote a better and wider knowledge of East-West problems through the exchange of documentation and information.

INTERDOC specializes in the collection of information, the preparation and dissemination of periodicals and special studies and the organization of conferences.