Project KMMANLY: U.S. Intelligence and the Subversion of Media in Post-War Germany

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Abstract

This research explores the manner in which the Central Intelligence Agency orchestrated a black operation in West Germany in the early Cold War to enhance the national interests of the United States. At a time when the latter was openly condemning German military tradition, branches of United States intelligence were organizing a covert nationwide media campaign targeting pacifists and neutralists and all those opposed to the remilitarization of West Germany and its integration into a European military pact of defense. This article analyses how, through clandestine assets, the Central Intelligence Agency spent thousands of U.S. dollars to convince the German population of the necessity to rearm.

Keywords: West Germany, Central Intelligence Agency, KMMANLY, remilitarization.
Introduction

The start of the Cold War in 1947 and the creation of two antagonistic blocs dramatically altered world affairs, triggering new scopes and issues in the field of international relations. The Berlin Crisis of 1948-1949 and the beginning of the Korean War in 1950 made the United States realize that an open conflict with the Soviet Union could start at any time and that, in order to gain momentum, the geostrategic balance in Europe had to be adjusted.

The end of World War Two had led to the defeat and demilitarization of Germany and the dismemberment of the country into four zones of occupation. In the years that followed, the Allies conducted various trials to punish the perpetrators of war crimes and implemented a denazification process to cleanse the German society from the remnants of the Nazi ideology and Prussian militarism. U.S. occupational policy was thus fully committed to the principle that Germany had to be kept down and that a German rearmament had to be prevented at all costs. This approach began to change at the end of the 1940’s, however, as the Americans became convinced that, in order to mount an effective challenge to the Soviet Union, the contribution of the German people would be needed. Consequently, the United States started to orientate its foreign policy towards the reintegration of Germany into the international political scene. The union of the three zones occupied by the United States, the United Kingdom, and France in June 1948 was to prove the first step leading towards the assumption of power by an elected German government, which took place with the creation of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) in May 1949.

The establishment of West Germany paved the way for a general debate over the country’s future role in the struggle against the Soviet Union and the place it should occupy in the defense of Western Europe. The Treaty of Brussels signed in March 1948 by six countries of Western Europe had established a pact of mutual defense against any eventual Soviet aggression. The creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in April 1949 further expanded the system of collective defense and brought to the light the question of a German contribution. Opposing any German rearmament and the integration of the country into NATO, France proposed the creation in 1950 of a European Defense Community (EDC) that would serve as a replacement solution to a German entry into the Atlanticist organization. This alternative was highly encouraged by the United States, which sought by all means to influence the West German government to join the newly proposed EDC. While

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1 Although disagreements still exist over its precise beginning, most historians consider the Cold War to have started in 1947. While clarifying the official American stand, the Truman Doctrine and its containment policy, elaborated in the President’s famous speech to Congress on March 12, 1947, sanctioned a situation that already existed in the intelligence field, where a fierce covert war was in full sway.

2 For studies concerning the general issue of West German rearmament see Alaric Searle, Wehrmacht Generals, West German Society, and the Debate on Rarmament, 1949-1959 (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003) and David Clay Large, Germans to the Front: West German Rarmament in the Adenauer Era (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2000).

3 Known as the Pleven Plan after the name of the French President of the Council René Pleven, the proposal called for the establishment of a European Defense Community through the creation of a supranational European military body. Illustrating the French fears of a German rearmament, the plan envisioned the creation of German military units that would be placed under the control of the EDC, thus attempting to prevent the West German government from exerting control over the armed units to be raised.
the Americans knew that intense diplomatic efforts on the part of the Department of State would be needed to achieve such an aim, they also realized that covert mediums would also be necessary to convince the German population of the necessity to rearm.

Created in 1947, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) had received the task of conducting both intelligence and counterintelligence activities.4 Apart from being active in such fields as information-gathering, espionage, and counter-espionage, the agency also operated a whole range of clandestine activities, which included special operations, psychological and economic warfare, and subversion. The Office of Policy Coordination (OPC), a branch created in 1948 as a semi-autonomous organization inside the CIA, was charged with the implementation of projects and operations in such areas.

Targeting those segments of the German population which were most opposed to the entry of West Germany in the EDC, the CIA implemented in the period 1951-1952 a covert nationwide campaign to influence public opinion to support the remilitarization of the country.

The German Population and the Rearmament Issue

The end of the war in Europe had not only left Germany devastated and its economy in ruins but had also caused deep psychological wounds on the German population. The post-war trials had brought into light the extent of the Nazi crimes and had, together with the denazification process, convinced the German nation of the necessity to ban military designs and tools in order to prevent the resurgence of that militaristic spirit that had led to the actions perpetrated by the Nazis. This perception was encouraged in the period 1945-1947 by the official position of the Allies, who attempted to eradicate military tradition in the German society by passing a number of laws demilitarizing the armed forces and forbidding the establishment of military conscription. The measures implemented by the Allied Control Council in the immediate years following the war were adopted at a time in which the animosity between the West and the East had not yet transformed into outward hostility.5 The major events which took place at the end of the decade radically changed the position of the United States, which realized the necessity for the newly created West German Republic to adopt a firm stance against the Soviet Union and contribute to the defense of Western Europe. In American eyes, however, the German population was not fully convinced of the immediate threat posed by the Eastern Bloc and had to be influenced so that public opinion would rally around the idea of a West German entry into the EDC.6

4 U.S. intelligence was reorganized several times after WWII. The CIA, which continues to serve today as the only civilian and non-departmental intelligence organization of the United States, was created by the National Security Act of July 1947. For the tasks and prerogatives granted to the agency see National Security Act of 1947, in United States, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, Intelligence Community Legal Reference Book (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2012), 27.

5 Formed of the four Allied Commanders-in-Chief, the Allied Control Council was established in the middle of 1945 to serve as Germany’s governing body as far as matters not pertaining to specific zones of occupation were concerned. The task of this four-body control council was to implement a denazification process and to supervise the disarmament and the demilitarization of the country.

6 This perception was shared by many in the Truman administration as illustrated by the words of U.S. Secretary of State Dean Acheson in a report to the National Security Council: “The truth is that the majority of Germans, and particularly the democratic elements we are supporting, do not today desire to see Germany have armed
In the years following the creation of the FRG, the intelligence branch of the German Democratic Republic (GDR), the notorious Stasi, implemented a propaganda campaign assimilating West Germany to the Third Reich and denouncing the calls for remilitarization as an action aiming at reestablishing German militarism.\footnote{In a countermove to the creation of the Federal Republic of Germany in May 1949, the Soviets responded with a record of the events surrounding the invasion of East Prussia by the Red Army see Antony Beevor, \textit{Berlin: The Downfall 1945} (London: Penguin, 2002).} The campaign orchestrated by the Russians and their East German allies against the FRG benefited from the belief held by various components of the West German civil society that Germany did not have to follow a path which had been taken by the Nazis during the Third Reich.\footnote{Created in 1939, the \textit{Waffen-SS} served as the military branch of the Protective Squadron (\textit{Schutzstaffel} or SS). Its members were considered by many as political soldiers in the service of the National Socialist ideology.} Opposition to the entry of the FRG in the EDC was mostly represented by the Social Democratic Party (\textit{Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands} or SPD), the Communist Party of Germany (\textit{Kommmunistische Partei Deutschlands or KPD), veterans’ associations, and the German Evangelical Church.\footnote{During its march on Berlin, the Red Army behaved with a savagery seldom witnessed in history. Russian soldiers were encouraged in this course of action by Soviet propaganda, which considered that the German people had to pay the high price for the atrocities committed during the invasion of the Soviet Union. For an account of the events surrounding the invasion of East Prussia by the Red Army see Antony Beevor, \textit{Berlin: The Downfall 1945} (London: Penguin, 2002).}

Pacifist ideas were shared by many members of both the SPD and the KPD. The tradition of neutrality held by the German Socialists was deeply rooted in history and was one of the reasons behind the contempt that Hitler and his acolytes held them in. With many of its leaders having spent long years in concentration camps during the Nazi era, the SPD, even though committed to the Western alliance, was firmly attached to the strict demilitarization of Germany. Although it won only a small percentage of the vote in the 1949 Bundestag election, the reorganized KPD still possessed the strong propaganda tools it used to hold before its decimation by the Nazis after 1933 and pushed for the rejection by the German population of any idea of rearmament.

As remilitarization concerned first and foremost the former soldiers of the \textit{Wehrmacht}, the German armed forces during the Third Reich, U.S. intelligence understood that any action aiming at changing the psychological state of the German nation had to pass through a well-organized campaign to influence the former members of both the \textit{Wehrmacht} and the \textit{Waffen-SS}.\footnote{Its members were considered by many as political soldiers in the service of the National Socialist ideology.} While naturally inclined to support the West against the Soviet Union, especially after the atrocities committed by the Red Army during the invasion of East Prussia in the beginning of 1945, many of the veterans nevertheless believed that the interests of Germany lay in a strict neutrality towards both West and East.\footnote{For an account of the events surrounding the invasion of East Prussia by the Red Army see Antony Beevor, \textit{Berlin: The Downfall 1945} (London: Penguin, 2002).} This opinion was shared by several former high-ranking officers of the \textit{Wehrmacht} who perceived the confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union as a struggle in which the German nation should not interfere.
This view is clearly illustrated by the words the former Chief of Staff of the OKH, Colonel General Heinz Guderian, held in August 1950 when he stated that, if possible, he would “rather raise the pistol to both the Americans and the Russians at the same time.” Moreover, many officers were also more concerned with specific issues like the release of prisoners of war (POWs) and the grant of war pensions than in contributing to the common defense of Europe. Many veterans linked the rearmament issue to that of the release of German POWs from Allied prisons, an attitude that was unfavorably looked upon by the Americans because it was perceived as a selfish attempt to gain a tactical advantage whereas the urgent necessity to establish a firm stand against the Russians required that veterans momentarily put aside their own demands.

Religious circles and evangelical churches were also strong opponents of any rearmament of Germany, firmly believing that it was their role to protect Europe in general, and Germany in particular, from the calamity of war.

**KMMANLY and the German Media**

Receiving the cryptonym KMMANLY, the secret operation of the CIA to get rid of pacifism and neutralism in the West German society and to counter the propaganda efforts of the Russians and their allies was conducted under the cover of the German media. KMMANLY was launched at the end of February 1951, coming under the overall control of the CIA German Mission. The main purpose of the project was to “combat overt and covert opposition to West German integration into the defense of Europe by initiating appropriate action against the chief sources of dissension.”

Operations in the field were supervised by the CIA Frankfurt office. In its campaign, the OPC adopted at the same time grey and black propaganda methods, grey for the SPD and the evangelical churches, black for both Communist and rightist groups. As stated in a report, the OPC used a whole set of tools:

1. Messages addressed to the western German population, especially to leaders and members of the SPD and Evangelical Church circles, purporting to come from groups within the GDR and appealing to them not to fall prey to Communist trickery, at the same time reminding them that a strong Federal Republic is the best guarantee of eventual freedom for eastern Germany,
2. Posters and leaflets carrying messages concerning the Soviet threat and the need for European cooperation, endorsed by existing indigenous groups or individuals,
3. Pamphlets discussing the straight issues involved,
4. Public opinion polls weighted with leading questions devised to upset the current polls which are being weighted in an unfriendly direction,
5. Additional measures—for instance, influencing individual editors, planting news stories, supporting existing dissenters in target

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13 Project Outline, Project KMMANLY, Operational, undated, in NARA, RG 263, Entry ZZ-19, box 41, Subject File KMMANLY.

14 While grey propaganda is usually disseminated through information whose author or origin cannot be ascertained, black propaganda is used to spread information which purports to come from the opposing side while in fact originating from your own ranks.
groups, subsidizing meetings and activities of bona fide groups devoted to the same purpose—should be added as occasion arises.\textsuperscript{15}

The main propaganda efforts were directed through newspapers and other written mediums. The chief press organ used in the project was the German Soldiers’ Newspaper (\textit{Deutsche Soldatenzeitung} or DSZ), the official publication of the League for the Protection of former German Soldiers (\textit{Schutzbund Ehemaliger Deutscher Soldaten} or BDS). The latter, a veterans’ association formed by former soldiers of the \textit{Wehrmacht}, included thousands of members and was very popular in military circles because it defended the right of soldiers for equal pension, the release of POWs in Allied prisons, and the rehabilitation of several officers of the \textit{Wehrmacht} and the \textit{Waffen-SS}.\textsuperscript{16} The DSZ appeared on a weekly basis, in both West Germany and Austria.

The CIA managed to conceal its support to the editorial board of the DSZ by making the newspaper appear as anti-American and pro-German. The anti-American sentiment was mostly perceived in the persistent demand for an equality of rights between West Germany and the United States. Appealing to the feelings of thousands of Germans who still had relatives detained as POWs in Soviet camps, the newspaper published letters from prisoners recalling their anguish and their love for their mother country. Moreover, long lists containing names of POWs were included to remind the German population that thousands of soldiers were still detained in the Soviet Union. In the issue of August 30, 1951, at the request of the OPC, the newspaper included an article on the fate of German POWs in Soviet camps.\textsuperscript{17} In the issue of December 13, 1951, emphasis was laid on the fact that 1,300,000 German soldiers who had been active in the Eastern Front were still missing.\textsuperscript{18} In the next issues, the editors persistently brought to light the question of German POWs, complying with the demands of the OPC.

The fact of insisting on the prisoners was a very subtle psychological move since the German people had been intoxicated for years during the Third Reich on the fate of all those desperate enough to fall into Russian hands. The Nazis had been clear on what awaited the German prisoners, either the gulags in Siberia or rude prison cells in Moscow or its surroundings. The infamous Lubyanka prison in the Russian capital, run by first the NKVD and then the MGB, was assimilated in the German collective psyche to scenes of torture and utmost bestiality.\textsuperscript{19} The CIA was thus touching a raw nerve. Various other propaganda articles were published, targeting the Politburo and the Soviet armed forces. Stalin’s cult of personality, for instance, was mocked and vilipended in the issue of December 20, 1951.\textsuperscript{20}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{15} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{16} Initially the press organ of the BDS, the \textit{Deutsche Soldatenzeitung} later became the official organ of the Association of German Soldiers (\textit{Verband Deutscher Soldaten} or VDS), an umbrella veterans’ organization created in September 1951 from various major and minor veterans’ associations.
\item \textsuperscript{17} Monthly Project Status Report, October 1951, in NARA, RG 263, Entry ZZ-19, box 41, Subject File KMMANLY.
\item \textsuperscript{18} Monthly Project Status Report, January 1952, in NARA, RG 263, Entry ZZ-19, box 41, Subject File KMMANLY.
\item \textsuperscript{19} The People’s Commissariat for Internal Affairs (\textit{Narodnyy Komissariat Vnutrennikh Del} or NKVD) was Stalin’s secret police. The Ministry of State Security (\textit{Ministerstvo Gosudarstvennoi Bezopasnosti} or MGB) served as the intelligence organization of the Soviet Union.
\item \textsuperscript{20} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
October 1951, the newspaper averaged around 34,000 copies per issue and had around 2,750 subscribers. In January 1952, a special issue was published in 10,000 copies. Its success led to the creation of the DSZ ‘Edition B’, which appeared on a monthly basis in around 10,000 copies and targeted the members of the Verband Deutscher Soldaten. Continuing to attract strong support, the main edition of the DSZ appeared in around 33,000 copies in February 1952, while the number of issues of ‘Edition B’ rose to 30,000 a month around March 1952. In the middle of the same year, under OPC instructions, and taking as an advantage the number of sales and subscribers, the DSZ began to print special propaganda posters, distributing them in West Germany and West Berlin. The first of these posters was entitled “Self-Protection against Soviet Aggression.”

After first using the DSZ the CIA decided to finance two other organs, namely the Military Science Review, or Wehrwissenschaftliche Rundschau, and the European Defense Newsletter, or Europäische Wehr-Korrespondenz, to further influence the former officers of the Wehrmacht on the need for Germany to rearm and to contribute to the common fight against the Soviet Union. Like the DSZ, these other press organs used in Project KMMANLY also attracted much interest. A monthly publication, the Wehrwissenschaftliche Rundschau appeared initially in 3000 copies per issue. The number quickly rose to 5000 copies. Financial support was provided by the OPC to print and distribute around 20,000 advertising pamphlets in January 1952. The number of editions of the Europäische Wehr-Korrespondenz reached 5000 copies per issue. While the number of its subscribers increased, many of its articles were reprinted in several West German newspapers.

Brochures were issued by the CIA sponsored Association for Defense Science, or Gesellschaft für Wehrkunde, founded in January 1952, and formed by former officers of the Wehrmacht. The CIA propaganda efforts appeared in the Mitteilungen Gesellschaft für Wehrkunde, the bi-monthly newsletter of the association. The Mitteilungen Gesellschaft für Wehrkunde was printed in 1000 copies per issue after its creation in the beginning of 1952, with the number quickly rising to 1,500 under the impetus of the OPC. Individual study groups of the Gesellschaft für Wehrkunde also published special brochures that counted around 30,000 copies per issue. The business manager of the Gesellschaft für Wehrkunde, Dr. Wilhelm Classen, was a professor of philosophy and a former member of the Abwehr and of the propaganda staff of the OKW who was placed at the head of the association by the OPC. He succeeded in shaping “its policies, publications and activities according to OPC

21 NARA, RG 263, Entry ZZ-19, box 41, Subject File KMMANLY.
22 See footnote 15.
23 Ibid.
24 Monthly Project Status Report, July 1952, in NARA, RG 263, Entry ZZ-19, box 41, Subject File KMMANLY.
25 NARA, RG 263, Entry ZZ-19, box 41, Subject File KMMANLY.
26 Ibid.
27 Ibid.
28 Ibid.
29 NARA, Entry ZZ-18, box 20, Wilhelm Classen Name File. The Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht, or Oberkommando der Wehrmacht (OKW), was the body formed of General Staff Officers that exercised full command over the German armed forces during WWII. Its intelligence branch, the Abwehr, was the most important intelligence organization of the Third Reich.
instructions.”

30 Classen was under complete control of the CIA as demonstrated by a report of his handlers: “When his personal views or policies have conflicted with our own, he has accepted the course laid down by us.”

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Along with the financial support provided to press organs and veterans’ groups, the OPC distributed black letters, leaflets, and handbills through obscure sub-groups that were included in the project. Thus, 153,000 propaganda handbills targeting the Eastern Bloc were printed by one of these groups in 1951 only. 32

KMMANLY, Nazis, and Rightist Groups

The main press organ used by the CIA in KMMANLY, the DSZ, was created by a small group of former Nazis. The idea of a newspaper for German soldiers originated in the prison camp of Garmisch-Partenkirchen where a former member of the NSDAP, Helmut Dammerau, and a former colonel of the Wehrmacht, Heinrich Detloff von Kalben, were detained. 33 They were later joined in their project by SS-Obergruppenführer Felix Steiner and SS-Standartenführer Joachim Ruoff. 34 The initial capital was provided by Dammerau, who distributed the newspaper through Schild-Verlag, the publishing house he created in 1950. 35

The first issue of the DSZ appeared on June 6, 1951. Like mentioned by historian T.H. Tetens, the DSZ never acknowledged the crimes of the Nazis nor showed the slightest sign of condemnation of the actions of the Wehrmacht and the Waffen-SS. 36 The main issues the newspaper was concerned with were the release of war criminals, the defense of German military honor, and the necessity to reinstate the country in its past greatness. It did not conceal its admiration of the military achievements of both the Wehrmacht and the Waffen-SS. Some of the articles published were so controversial that the Allies in Austria did not hesitate to ban the distribution of the newspaper. In a letter to the Austrian Chancellor, the representatives of the Allied Control Council stated: “The Allied Council has studied the recent issues of the German newspaper ‘Deutsche Soldatenzeitung’ and considers that its contents are contrary to the principles of the Control Agreement. It therefore decides that the future distribution and sale of this particular newspaper should be prohibited in Austria.” 37 Thus, the CIA financed a press organ at the same time that it was banned by the United States in Austria.

Interest on the part of the CIA for various German veterans’ groups increased during the implementation of Project KMMANLY. The agency believed that these groups could be:

30 Ibid.
31 Ibid.
32 NARA, RG 263, Entry ZZ-19, box 41, Subject File KMMANLY.
The National Socialist German Workers’ Party (Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei or NSDAP), the Nazi Party, remained in power from Hitler’s accession to the position of Reichschancellor of Germany to his suicide in 1945.
34 The ranks provided before the names of officers or officials of the SS and Waffen-SS are the highest attained by the end of WWII.
35 Ibid.
(a) induced actively to support Germany's participation in Western defense; (b) encouraged to influence German ex-soldiers and German public opinion in general in favor of democratic ideals and objectives and of the aims of U.S. foreign policy; (c) used for resistance and stay-behind operations, whether directly or as recruiting grounds, in line with general OPC plans and operations in this field.  

Most of the veterans’ associations were rightist groups whose leaders had occupied eminent positions in the Nazi apparatus during the war. Many of them were eager to work with the Americans against the Russians. Felix Steiner, the former commander in chief of the 5th SS Panzer Division ‘Wiking’ and a leading officer of the Waffen-SS, tried for years to get the support of the U.S. in his efforts to establish a front against Communism. Heading the veterans’ association Schutzbund Deutscher Soldaten in 1950, Steiner had rallied around him former high-ranking officers of the Waffen-SS, convinced that only a firm stance would prevent the Russians from pouring into West Germany. He was firmly committed to the establishment of a paramilitary organization that would help fight the Soviet Union in case of invasion. According to him: “....the Germans must create an underground selection and recruiting organization which is apart from national or occupation authorities, but which must be tolerated by them and empowered to operate generally in accordance with its own viewpoints.” The CIA envisaged the recruitment of Steiner in the beginning of 1951 but ultimately backed off in fear of the negative publicity that would follow if it was found out that U.S. intelligence was cooperating with such an individual. An active member of the Gesellschaft für Wehrkunde, Steiner collaborated in the edition of its newsletter but was forced to cease all activities inside the association because of his “obnoxious SS background.”

Colonel General Johannes Friessner, who acted during the war as Commander in Chief of Army Group North and Commander in Chief of Army Group South Ukraine, was in 1951 the head of the Verband Deutscher Soldaten. There is not the single doubt that by financing his press organ, the DSZ, the CIA contributed to the expansion of his ideas as well as of those of the military circles coalescing around former eminent members of the Wehrmacht. Friessner’s views on some aspects of WWII are illustrated by the claims he made at a press conference in September 1951, that Poland had started the world conflict and that the officers who instigated the July 20, 1944, putsch against Hitler were traitors.

Several Nazis were involved very early in the staff and editorial board of the DSZ. The editor in chief, A. W. Uhlig, and his colleague in the editorial staff, Dr. Hans W. Hagen, had both worked during the war in the Propaganda Ministry of Joseph Goebbels. Lothar Greil, a former SS-Untersturmführer in the Waffen-SS, served as the circulation manager of the

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38 Monthly Project Status Report, November 1951, in NARA, RG 263, Entry ZZ-19, box 41, Subject File KMMANLY.
39 Secret, 18 April 1951, in NARA, RG 263, Entry ZZ-18, box 126, Felix Steiner Name File.
40 Secret, 18 April 1951, in NARA, RG 263, Entry ZZ-18, box 126, Felix Steiner Name File.
41 NARA, Entry ZZ-18, box 20, Wilhelm Classen Name File.
42 Searle, 151. The July 20, 1944, coup against Hitler, in which several officers were implicated, nearly succeeded in reversing the Nazi regime.
43 Tetens, 115.
newspaper in February 1952. In the middle of the same year, he was serving in the staff at Munich. Greil was a very close assistant of Erich Kernmeyer, himself a former SS-Sturmbannführer, who had acted during the war as the press assistant of Joseph Bürckel, the Gauleiter of Gau Westmark. A right wing extremist who later became very active in several rightist political parties, Kernmeyer became in July-August 1952 the correspondent of the newspaper in Austria, replacing the notorious SS-Sturmbannführer Wilhelm Höttl. The latter, who had served as Deputy Head of the department of the SD in charge of southeast European affairs, had been involved in several reprehensible actions during the war. He was nevertheless hired by the Counter Intelligence Corps in 1947 and used in intelligence operations targeting East European countries.

The termination of Project KMMANLY in December 1952 almost proved fatal to the DSZ, as the CIA ceased its financial coverage. Survival only came after that the West German government ultimately accepted to take over. In 1958, Dr. Gerhard Frey, a publisher with far-right connections, bought 50% of the shares of Schild-Verlag. He acquired complete control over the editorial board of the DSZ in 1960, when he acquired the remaining 50%. Renamed several times, the DSZ became the Deutsche National-Zeitung in 1968 and adopted a clear far-right stance.

The Impact and Results of Project KMMANLY

As shown by the continuous increase in the number of issues published by the newspapers involved in the project, the black operation conducted by the CIA was essential in changing the stance of some components of the German population towards the rearmament issue. The covert campaign undertaken by U.S. intelligence, coupled with the intense diplomatic pressure exerted on the Adenauer government by the American administration, ultimately led the West German authorities to envisage joining a West European force of defense. The success of the propaganda efforts undertaken by the United States is illustrated by the fact that no significant opposition was displayed when the West German Republic signed the Treaty of Paris on May 27, 1952, formally establishing the EDC. The latter provided for the remilitarization of the FRG through its contribution to the common defense of Europe with a dozen divisions. Accordingly, Project KMMANLY was terminated at the end of 1952. Even though the EDC never materialized due to the rejection of the Treaty of Paris by the French National Assembly in August 30, 1954, the failed plan paved the way for the assumption of full sovereignty by the West German government in 1955. In the same year, the Bundeswehr, the German Federal Armed Forces, was created and West Germany was allowed to join NATO.

44 NARA, RG-263, Entry ZZ-18, box 44, Lothar Greil Name File.
45 Ibid.
46 The Gauleiters, or leaders of the large NSDAP regions called Gau, acted after 1933 as undisputed rulers in the regions they controlled.
47 Memorandum, Subject: CC-2 Interrogation Resume, 30 January 1953, in NARA, RG 263, Entry ZZ-18, box 14, Anton Boehm Name File.
48 See NARA, RG 263, Entry ZZ-18, box 1-6, Wilhelm Höttl Name File. The Security Service (Sicherheitsdienst or SD) initially served as the intelligence branch of the NSDAP before evolving into the main civilian intelligence organization of the Third Reich.
49 Ibid. Part of U.S. intelligence, the Counter Intelligence Corps had as a broad mission to conduct activities related to counter-espionage, counter-sabotage, and counter-subversion.
As one of the main objectives of Project KMMANLY was to “prepare the German people for active resistance to Communist forces in the event of occupation and/or annexation of western Germany,” the operation should be closely related to other covert projects operated during the same period by the CIA in Germany. The propaganda campaign orchestrated by the agency was undertaken in parallel with covert paramilitary activities which aimed at organizing the intended resistance following an eventual Soviet invasion. In Project KIBITZ, the CIA established in all of West Germany clandestine units that included signals and communications specialists and trained paramilitary agents which would activate only after the entry of Soviet soldiers. Tons of weapons and other equipment were buried in various secret locations only known to the German agents involved and their American handlers. The creation of stay-behind programs such as KIBITZ and PASTIME was considered essential by the CIA in order to confront the threat posed by the Eastern Bloc. Together with these projects, KMMANLY provides a clear insight into the general activities of U.S. intelligence in Germany in the immediate post-war period.

Conclusion

This article has shown how the CIA used newspapers and other press organs to target specific segments of the German population in order to instill beliefs that were intimately linked to the ideology of the West.

KMMANLY demonstrates that, contrary to the belief prevailing amongst Western public opinion, the United States was capable of conducting large scale propaganda campaigns that had nothing to envy to those of the Communist Soviet Union. For a long period, much stress has been put on the Russians for their capacity to orchestrate propaganda campaigns and to use the media for ideological purposes. Cold War historians have underestimated the role played by the United States in the psychological warfare against the Soviet Union and its attempts to convince people in the West of the wicked and pernicious nature of the Communist ideology.

KMMANLY illustrates the methods used by intelligence services to interfere into the internal affairs of foreign countries. The implications of the project point to the difficulty of recognizing propaganda originating from a foreign government when it is disguised under the cover of local media. The dangers stemming from the attempts of foreign governments to influence public opinions in other countries are here evident.

50 Project Outline, Project KMMANLY. Operational, undated, in NARA, RG 263, Entry ZZ-19, box 41, Subject File KMMANLY.
51 See NARA, RG 263, Entry ZZ-19, box 40-41, Subject File KIBITZ.
52 Ibid.
53 For the stay-behind operations conducted by U.S. intelligence in the FRG see NARA, RG 263, Entry ZZ-19, box 40-41, Subject File KIBITZ; and NARA, RG 263, Entry ZZ-19, box 54, Subject File PASTIME.
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