

comprehensive and that the GDR's self-portrayal as an anti-fascist state enjoyed considerable popular resonance, the 'reckoning' with Nazism and nationalism remained highly flawed. The SED still clung to the 1935 Comintern's out-moded and economistic definition of fascism as 'the open terroristic dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinistic and most imperialistic elements of finance capital'. And likewise the straitjacket of Marxism-Leninism impeded a searching analysis and open discussion of nationalism and nationality. The SED's propagation in the late 1980s of a 'socialism in the colours of the GDR' merely compounded the problem as it was primarily designed to ward off the reformist impulses emanating from the Soviet Union and Poland and was totally inadequate in its efforts to persuade East Germans of the superiority of GDR-style socialism over the capitalism of its West German sibling. In addition, as members of a relatively closed society, GDR citizens enjoyed limited opportunities to acquaint themselves with other nationalities and cultures and to develop a mutual tolerance and understanding.

Part VI

WOLF'S ESPIONAGE EMPIRE

THE MISSION AND STRUCTURE OF FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE

INTRODUCTION

Thanks in part to the publicity skills of Markus Wolf and to its victories on the 'invisible front', the Main Administration for Reconnaissance (*Hauptverwaltung Aufklärung* – HV A) has been semi-heroicised as a remarkably efficient and professional espionage service. Its role in the fall of Chancellor Willy Brandt, the recruitment of Bonn's lonely 'secretaries' by 'Romeo' agents, and most significantly of all, its penetration of the highest levels of West German society and politics have aroused widespread public interest. However, HV A's aims and objectives were not confined to the procurement of intelligence.¹ As an arm of the omnipresent Ministry of State Security, HV A also coordinated its actions with the Stasi's 'domestic' departments in rooting out opposition to SED rule, both in the GDR and in West Germany. Not only did HV A organise its actions on both sides of the inter-German border with other MfS units, their common mission as the 'sword and shield' of the SED regime was also determined by the thesis of political-ideological diversion (PID). As discussed in Chapter 8, this posited that the origins of opposition to the communist system came essentially from beyond its own borders, not least from the alleged role of the Western secret services.

In recognition of HV A's key role in maintaining SED rule, foreign intelligence left its offices in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1953, re-housing itself in the Ministry of State Security under the leadership of Markus Wolf, who would achieve notoriety as one of the Cold War's most successful spymasters. These observations are not in themselves new, although the subject tended to be avoided by 'serious' academics who saw the topic as a Cold War minefield best left to the realm of the media and a number of specialist journalists. What has changed is the access to the documentation, which can support an investigation of HV A's structure, function and methods. This

¹ HV A's role in the circumvention of the West's embargo on high technology is examined in Chapter 8.

chapter will look at the role of HV A in both its intelligence and state security capacities, while the focus in the following chapter is on operations against West Germany, the subject of the SED's greatest fears for its continued survival as an independent state. Before looking at the latter, however, it is necessary to assess HV A's methods of working, location within the SED's power structures and relations with the parent service, the KGB.

THE STRUCTURE AND STRATEGY OF EAST GERMAN ESPIONAGE

HV A's full-time personnel represented a handpicked elite, carefully selected on account of proven political loyalty and, especially by the 1960s, a higher level of education than their domestic MfS counterparts. In numerical terms, HV A employed 4,744 staff in its central office in East Berlin and its Departments XV in the Regional Administrations in 1989.² This constituted an above-average increase of 151 per cent since 1982, when the total strength was 2,973.³ In addition, there were the officers in the District Service Units, bringing the 1989 total up to about 5,000, of which almost 80 per cent were in HV A itself. The latter's number had grown rapidly since the 500 or so officers in the 1950s and the 1,425 HV A and Department XV staff in 1972. As other sections of the MfS were also involved in intelligence work, then there may have been a grand total of 9,000 to 10,000 MfS staff engaged in foreign espionage related activities. Not only did this exceed the 7,500 staff in West Germany's BND in 1989 but per head of population the foreign intelligence of the GDR easily outstripped the 20,000 employees of America's Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in the Reagan era.

HV A's mission statement during the Honecker years was set out in two Stasi guidelines, issued in 1968 and 1979, which concur in all crucial areas. In theory, HV A's first priority was to impede the 'imperialist' role of the USA, and its security service the CIA, from endangering the security of the GDR and the Eastern bloc. This meant that HV A's area of operations, known as the *Operationsgebiet*, stretched across the globe from the United States and other NATO countries to the Near East and southern Africa. In practice, however, three-quarters of HV A's foreign operations were conducted against West Germany. Throughout the history of the GDR, the Bonn Republic was constantly regarded as the principal threat to SED rule. In 1973, Wolf informed fellow officers that the FRG was the main operational area as it was 'the centre of almost all hostile activities against the GDR'.⁴ And as a KGB directive four years later revealed, the FRG was a major target for all Eastern bloc intelligence activities as it was NATO's main strategic bridgehead and

the leading West European capitalist country both economically and militarily.⁵ If the means of ideologically underpinning the legitimacy of communist rule changed from Ulbricht to Honecker, then the principle that secret service activity inside both East and West Germany were inseparably interrelated remained constant. HV A's intelligence gathering had the objective of preventing East Berlin being confronted by threatening surprise developments in West German political, economic and military life. Importantly, the guidelines issued in 1979 also indicate that HV A would work both in the West and in the GDR to 'uncover and expose enemy bases'. In addition, HV A was a key instrument in avoiding the West's embargo on high technology goods. So important was this task that by the late 1980s, economic espionage accounted for a higher proportion of top IMs (39 per cent) than any other area of activity.⁶ To achieve these broad objectives, HV A coordinated an extensive network of several thousand IMs in the FRG, which ensured an eastward flow of information from the government in Bonn, its security services and the military, the economy, research centres and grassroots political life. In the Stasi's militaristic jargon the network of IMs in the West was regarded as the 'main weapon' in the fight on the 'invisible front' against communism's adversaries.

Considerable confusion surrounds the number of agents, especially West German citizens, who worked for the Stasi. Hubertus Knabe, a former researcher in the Gauck Authority, estimates that 20,000 to 30,000 worked in the FRG in the period after the founding of the MfS in 1950, not simply as casual sources of information but as fully fledged agents.⁷ This is not easy to verify as HV A records are incomplete on account of the shredding and destruction of most HV A files in late 1989 and early 1990. Indeed, Christopher Andrew has pointed out that historians remain ignorant of what they do not know.⁸ However, data on HV A can be found in the files of other Main Departments of the MfS. These materials, together with information from HV A's own SIRA (*System der Informationsrecherche der Aufklärung*) data bank and the availability, albeit restricted, of the 'Rosewood' materials, provide a relatively accurate picture of the activities and structures of HV A. The SIRA records were decoded painstakingly by employees at the Gauck Authority and contain short reports on the work of HV A's foreign agents between 1969 and 1987.⁹ The 'Rosewood' materials contain the cover and the true names of HV A's Western agents which the CIA acquired in 1990 as part of a top secret coup named 'Operation Rosewood' and passed on in CD-ROM format to Germany in 2000–2002. The 'Rosewood' data indicate that at the end of 1988 1,553 West Germans were working for HV A. Other sources,

⁵ Andrew C. and Gordievsky O. 1992: 39.

⁶ Müller-Enbergs H. 1998: 196.

⁷ Knabe H. 2000: 10.

⁸ Andrew C. 1997: 23.

⁹ <http://www.trend.partisan.net/trd7889/t077899.html>

² For most of the figures in this paragraph, see Gieseke J. 2001: 201–2.

³ Gieseke J. 2000: 396.

⁴ Cited in Knabe H. 1999: 39.

such as the investigations of the Federal Public Prosecutor, point to roughly the same number of agents in the West who worked for the Stasi's domestic units and the army's military intelligence arm.¹⁰ A sample of about 500 Western IMs who have been prosecuted since 1990 reveals that about one-third had a university qualification, that they had served the MfS for about 15 years and that the average age at the time of recruitment was 31 years.¹¹ Of the 1,533 West Germans who worked as IMs for HV A in December 1988, men outnumbered women by 72 per cent to 28 per cent.¹² In addition to its Western agents, HV A may have used approximately 10,000 GDR citizens as IMs.¹³

At the time of the collapse of SED rule, HV A's leadership was headed by Werner Großmann and a staff of four major generals and a colonel, who took responsibility for formulating and coordinating working methods.¹⁴ HV A's functions were divided across its Department XV in each of the Regional Administrations with responsibility for special targets in the West German *Länder*, and the 21 Departments at the centre, each of which subdivided into desks (*Referate*) dealing with the procurement and evaluation of intelligence, logistics and administration. A number of working groups were also used to coordinate specific tasks, such as securing IM networks in West Germany. The main role of these desks can be given in overview according to the following categories. HV A's 'political' operations against the West German government, the state apparatus, the political parties and related organisations were conducted by Departments I and II. The *Zersetzung* or decomposition of organisations and individuals hostile to SED rule by means of disinformation was the task of Department X. Among its many activities were the efforts to undermine the public reputation of politicians such as Rainer Barzel of the CDU and Herbert Wehner of the SPD. Economic and technical espionage was conducted by the Scientific and Technical Section (SWT) and Departments V and XIII to XV. Military espionage in the FRG was carried out by Department IV, with specific operations against NATO and the European Community coming under Department XII.¹⁵ Counterespionage operations against the West German and other states' security and intelligence agencies, such as the BND and the CIA, were undertaken by the large Department IX. The intelligence materials obtained by HV A were evaluated by Department VII, while the technological development of the equipment used in espionage was the role of Department VIII.

¹⁰ Gieseke J. 2001: 202–3; Müller-Enbergs H. 1998: 39–40.

¹¹ Frank R. 2002: 123.

¹² Müller-Enbergs H. 1998: 152.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 142.

¹⁴ On the organisational structure of HV A, see Wiedmann R. 1995: 364–71, and Fricke K. W. 1997: 19–20.

¹⁵ On military intelligence carried out by the National People's Army which was subordinate to that of the MfS, see Kabus A. 1993.

The only branches concentrating on intelligence operations in the wider world were Departments X and III. The former dealt with the USA, Canada and Mexico and while it targeted the White House and the Pentagon for infiltration by its agents, American installations and forces in West Germany were its primary focus. Department III, which concentrated on residents in the Third World and Western countries other than the FRG and the USA, ran its own IMs in these states, including three academics in the UK.¹⁶ HV A had its own training school, in Gosen, which as an autonomous branch of the Law School in Potsdam had the right to award degrees. Its head was Colonel Professor Dr Bernd Kaufmann. HV A was also organisationally anchored at regional level in the MfS's administrative structure. Department XV in the Regional Administrations were responsible for penetrating a West German region, carrying out in total some one-third of all HV A operations in the field. They were able to take decisions relating to the recruitment and running of IM networks in the FRG.¹⁷ The Regional Administrations used liaison officers to coordinate work from the Stasi's local branches as and when required. What this organisational structure primarily indicates is the concentration of HV A's operations against 'them over there', the 'other' German state.

WHO DID WHAT?

Some 70 per cent of HV A officers were primarily 'desk soldiers', who concerned themselves with the planning and organisation of intelligence operations proper. The remaining 30 per cent were involved in carrying out missions and running agents.¹⁸ Although HV A's official guidelines placed most of its agents under the general category of IM, it remains possible to delineate a basic classification of types and a hierarchy from the organisation's elite troops of full-time staff in positions of extensive responsibility down to those on the periphery of the organisation. At the apex of the agent hierarchy stood the classic moles, the 'O-sources' (*Objektquellen*) and 'A-sources' (*Abschöpfenquellen*).¹⁹ The former, who included Dr Gabriele Gast and Günter Guillaume, were the top-flight sources or agents who had access to classified information in key areas of West German politics and society and numbered 449 in December 1988. A-sources were directed to 'cream off' information from key personages without their knowledge. One example is the cultivation of the then up-and-coming politician Helmut Kohl by

¹⁶ Müller-Enbergs H. 1998: 209–10.

¹⁷ See the document from the Leipzig Regional Administration of 6 September 1989 in Sélitrenny R. and Weichert T. 1991: 261–4.

¹⁸ Fricke K. W. 1997: 19.

¹⁹ On the classification and functions of these two types, see Müller-Enbergs H. 1998: 39–47.

the long-serving agent Hans-Adolf Kanter ('Fichtel'). There were 133 such IMs in 1988. Some, but not all, of these top agents were also Officers on a Special Assignment (OibEs). These were individuals who had to be resistant to the overtures of 'enemy' agents on whose territory they operated. For this reason, OibEs were selected on the basis of strict political as well as professional qualities. Politically, they had to have 'proven loyalty' to the SED and 'solidarity' with the Stasi; professionally, they had to be capable of operating independently abroad, in the so-called area of operations. About 50 per cent of the ministry's OibEs in the 1960s and about 33 per cent in the late 1980s were run by HV A.²⁰ Their operational importance is reflected in the fact that either Mielke or Wolf had to sanction their use. Furthermore, they remained secret even within the ranks of the Stasi's wider staff; to ensure this, they were run directly by the relevant heads of a Department. These were lone-wolf fighters of singular importance to East German espionage. However, in order to moderate any 'male vices', which may have drawn unwanted attention, they often worked as part of a married couple espionage unit.²¹ These elite agents were above all found in East German institutions, which cultivated political, diplomatic or trade relations with West Germany. Their 'special missions' included long-range operations, such as working their way into positions of importance in West German political and economic life; perhaps the classic example of an OibE who was also an 'O-source' is Günter Guillaume, the spy in Chancellor Willy Brandt's Federal Chancellery.

SUB-CATEGORIES OF IMs

The following four sub-categories of IMs were in reality intelligence service professionals, a term beloved by the Stasi, with important functions in the espionage apparatus.²² Residents, as the name suggests, had legal residence in the Operation Area either as an employee of the East German quasi-diplomatic missions, a cultural institution or a trading company based there. In 1988, HV A and its Departments XV had over 32 residents in the FRG. Residents were capable of independently running agent networks and evaluating the intelligence obtained. They often worked with trainees, who carried out technical measures and maintained contacts with an agent. Secondly, the role of FIMs or controlling IMs was similar, in that they also had legal residence in the Operation Area; however, they supervised only individual IMs or sources. Efforts to extend the agent network were undertaken by

²⁰ Müller-Enbergs H. 1998: 100.

²¹ Schlomann F. W. 1984: 11-13.

²² See Müller-Enbergs H. 1998: 48-102; Schmeidel J. 1995: 141-3; Schell M. and Kalinka W. 1991: 180-81; Gill D. and Schröter U. 1991: 86-7.

recruitment IMs who identified and recruited suitable persons. In universities, for example, recruitment was done by an IM whose objective was to gain a foothold among the rising generation of the West German elite, who might later become politicians and journalists. Finally, West German citizens recruited with the ultimate aim of moving them into useful positions were known as long-range agents. The Stasi's headquarters in Berlin's Normannenstrasse also dispatched controllers to relay their directives and to ensure they were carried out. These agents crossed the border as East German citizens, but once conducting their mission they could also assume false identities, working as so-called 'illegals'. In their dealings with important IMs, whom Stasi headquarters wanted to run directly, it was essential that they were capable of making decisions on the spot.

The HV A apparatus was supplemented by a wide range of IMs who were recruited from either East or West German citizens. Some were involved in the support networks which facilitated the intelligence work proper. These included: couriers, who passed on information, technical equipment and money; so-called border IMs, who smuggled persons and materials over the border; radio operators, who transmitted information between headquarters and the active operatives; and investigators, who placed persons under observation or obtained information essential for particular operations. This support network was reinforced by other collaborators, who provided addresses for mail, the use of telephones, 'safe houses', and pick-up points for collecting information and materials. Contact persons were defined as persons who were not officially registered as IMs, but were receptive to the overtures of an officer or an 'A-source' who was in regular contact with them. Frequently, they were motivated by a belief that their discussions played a small part in reducing international tensions. Often on the political left, a classic area for approaching and using contact-persons was in the West German peace movement of the early 1980s.²³ 'Influence agents', who used their political or social position to disseminate pro-Eastern bloc propaganda, also belonged to the Stasi's wider work in the West; they ranged from university lecturers to the broader reach of media commentators and politicians. A final category of IM remains to be mentioned: the so-called 'sleeper'. As part of the Stasi's intentions to conduct acts of sabotage behind enemy lines in the event of an East-West crisis, most probably a war, these 'sleepers' would be reactivated as a fifth column to break 'enemy' resistance and conduct sabotage. The role of the last two categories has recently been further detailed by the revelations of the Mitrokhin archive, a collection of top-secret KGB records smuggled out of Russia by the eponymous archivist.²⁴

²³ On the use of contact persons in the peace movement, see Sélitrenny R. and Weichert T. 1991: 196-200.

²⁴ Andrew C. and Mitrokhin V. 1999.

RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF INTELLIGENCE OFFICERS

HV A's full-time staff were selected and approached by officers; it was not possible to offer one's services. In order to ensure the loyalty of HV A agents, the second generation of intelligence personnel was increasingly drawn from the families of the SED apparatus, and this was reinforced by the stipulation that they had no contact with any relatives in the West.²⁵ Nevertheless, the probationary period remained protracted. Prospective operatives were frequently identified in their final years at school, serving a spell in the Stasi's Guard Regiment after the higher education which most officers received, before entering HV A. During this trial period, it was normal for the candidate to act as an IM on the home front with steadily increasing responsibilities. Certain former HV A personnel point to how the creation of a secret service social elite reinforced the narrow ideological worldview that opposition to SED rule derived from external influences, and how this prevented the reforms that may have saved the system from collapse.²⁶ However, the narrow selection criteria among individuals who had a strong ideological affinity with the SED did greatly limit the number of defections to the West.

The qualities looked for in an agent were a belief in espionage's positive role in the 'international class war' and an intellectual flexibility to entice the 'capitalists' who were of interest to HV A. Agents were trained in the craft of espionage in a process lasting up to two years. This could take place either at HV A's training school in Gosen, or on an individual basis in 'safe houses'; some former agents also claim that, instead of formal training, they brought their own experience of life to the intelligence service.²⁷ The training taught agents how to recognise if they were under observation, how to send radio messages, to arrange clandestine meetings and make dead letter drops, how to respond to arrest and, if necessary, how to live under an assumed identity. Agents were also taught that as few persons as possible should participate in an operation. An important psychological preparation for work in the West was the so-called 'operational regime study', which familiarised agents with everyday life and culture in the country where they were to operate. For agents who crossed the inter-German border, it was also necessary to familiarise them with the border checks so that they showed no fear of apprehension.

The methods used to smuggle agents into West Germany also went through certain identifiable phases. In accordance with the long-term strategy conceived

by Markus Wolf, until the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961, long-range agents, who gradually wormed their way into important positions, were floated in on the tide of refugees from East to West. Thereafter, HV A increasingly smuggled in agents through Austria and other third countries; this process involved the adoption of a false identity, using techniques which also changed over time. During the 1950s and 1960s, agents adopted the identity of another living person, perhaps a German living abroad. It was the introduction of computer traces in the mid-1970s, uncovering important East German spy networks, which necessitated a change of approach. The response was to use the so-called 'doppelgänger combination', whereby West German citizens who wanted to live in the GDR, normally for personal reasons, were permitted entry on condition that they re-registered with the police in a city where they were unknown; an HV A agent then assumed their identity. The 1980s also brought a return to the use of agents posing as 'refugees'.²⁸

RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF WEST GERMAN CITIZENS AS IMs

Identifying and recruiting moles belonged to an intensive and protracted official process. All agents were obliged to identify individuals regarded as potential recruits. If HV A was interested in someone, a number of researchers, acting independently of each other, were set to work uncovering the potential recruit's professional and personal life and any problems (such as debts, discontentment or debauchery) which might facilitate recruitment. As the risk of failure was high, recruits were never drawn from an existing mole's immediate environment; it was not unusual for the whole process to take in excess of two years. Around half of all recruitment pitches among West Germans were made during a visit to the GDR. Potential recruits were approached by undercover agents who posed as kindred spirits, using this as a springboard to sanction some form of cooperation in an area of 'mutual' interest. An effort was made to gain their support, or indeed entrap them, by setting a small, manageable task to be carried out in West Germany. The classic case was purchasing books that were unavailable in East Germany. If these tasks were carried out, and even better if a receipt was signed, the recruitment pitch was made.²⁹ As a rule, recruits were selected by HV A. However, there was also a small, if occasionally important, number of 'walk in' offers of cooperation. The motivation of 'walk ins' ranged from hostility to West German rearmament and the hopes of reunification during the 1950s

²⁵ Runge I. and Stellbrink U. 1990: 20.

²⁶ According to this view, Wolf had come to realise that all opposition did not derive from external influences and that reform was essential. On the other hand, his successor, Großmann, adhered to the ideologically narrow perspective.

²⁷ Interview with Wolfgang Hartmann on 3 September 1999.

²⁸ Schломann F. W. 1984: 105, 120; van Bergh H. 1965: 317; Gill D. and Schröter U. 1991: 89.

²⁹ Schломann F. W. 1984: 79-81; and for a failure to recruit a British student at Leipzig University, see the *Guardian*, 21 September 1999.

to the more frequent desire for cash payments. Although some of these 'walk ins' proved to be useful, they were rightly treated as unreliable for a number of reasons, such as their materialistic motivation or the risk that they were double agents.³⁰ One of the more surprising recruiting grounds for IMs was among political prisoners in East German jails. Recruitment was based on providing an opportunity to 'make good' the particular offence 'committed' by working for the intelligence service; an incentive was the prisoner's early release. Although some of these unlikely recruits did work for HV A after being 'bought free' by West Germany, most did not; some even reported what had happened to the authorities in the FRG.³¹

Perhaps the best-known method of recruiting IMs by deception was the use of 'Romeo' agents who seduced secretaries with access to classified materials in Bonn. However, it has become apparent that the use of female 'love commandos' was higher than once thought. Recruitment took place among secretaries and students, often by lavishing attention on the lonely and insecure, dressed up as an appeal to assist 'fatherland and world peace'; many of these women resisted these state-sanctioned calls to join the world's two oldest professions at a stroke.³² Recruitment by deception was also used in so-called 'false flag' operations in order to obtain information from persons who would otherwise have had no interest in cooperation. Depending on the case, secret service operatives posed as either members of a 'friendly', Western secret service, as politicians of an allied country, or, in economic espionage, as representatives of a rival company. If a potential recruit was of enough importance, an elaborate web of deception could be spun over a lengthy period, sometimes using other moles who had already been recruited in this manner. Perhaps the crudest, but not ineffective, method was blackmail. This form of coercion was applied to both politicians and secret service men, whose unwanted ties to the Stasi were cemented by inducing them to provide information which could incriminate them if they tried to break free from their ties to East Berlin. At least when IMs such as secretaries and researchers were required to copy and pass on classified documents, some training in the ways and means of espionage was given.³³

Markus Wolf continues to emphasise that HV A was successful in its intelligence operations because it used agents recruited on the basis of ideological commitment to the Communist cause.³⁴ However, although HV A, at least in the early years, did recruit among Western Marxists and fellow travelling leftists, for example among West German students, this declined along with the Eastern bloc's image in the West. The danger of war in the later

1970s and early 1980s was another powerful motive. An analysis by the West German intelligence authorities in the early 1990s stressed that economic incentives were much more prominent and ideological motivation much less prevalent than HV A believed to be the case. Already by the 1960s, the pattern of recruitment began to change from ideological motivation to 'false flag' entrapment.³⁵ It is, however, difficult, as with IMs who worked in the GDR for other departments, to compartmentalise the various motives. As was recognised by HV A, motives were 'bundled together' and subject to fluctuation.³⁶

TO CATCH A SPY: HV A IN THE EAST GERMAN POWER STRUCTURES

Since the collapse of the GDR, HV A's former leaders, Wolf and Großmann, along with several more minor figures, have insisted that they belonged to a foreign intelligence service like any other, free from association with the Stasi's domestic repression.³⁷ These claims, it should be noted, were made against a backdrop of legal proceedings against former HV A officers' role in suppressing domestic opposition to the SED regime and having supplied the KGB with materials endangering the security of the former West German state. The most high-profile of these cases was brought against Markus Wolf. However, a December 1993 conviction for high treason and espionage was overturned by a ruling of the Federal Constitutional Court in May 1995 that former HV A intelligence officers could only be prosecuted for acts committed under West German jurisdiction.³⁸ In 1990, the protracted public debate and legal preparation that would have been required to ensure a legal basis for conviction were sacrificed to the immediate objective of rapid reunification. Although this became clear to observers at the time, it did not end the Federal Prosecution Service's efforts to prosecute Wolf. A second trial took place in 1997, this time centring on the criminal acts, which accompanied the espionage activities *per se*. As the influential news magazine *Der Spiegel* pointed out, there was now a search for 'blood on Wolf's hands' in order to facilitate his conviction as a 'common criminal' for acts of bribery, corruption, wrongful deprivation of liberty and causing physical injury.³⁹ Although Wolf received a two-year suspended sentence in May 1997, the ruling largely gave some credence to his claims that these trials were about a 'victors' justice' imposed on the losers in the Cold War.⁴⁰ Wolf and his subalterns escaped

³⁵ Schmeidel J. 1995: 135; Sélitrenny R. and Weichert T. 1991: 45.

³⁶ Müller-Enbergs H. 1998: 134.

³⁷ Bohnsack G. 1997; Eltgen H. 1995: 8.

³⁸ Colitt L. 1995: 274.

³⁹ See the interview with Federal Prosecutor Kay Nehm in *Der Spiegel*, no. 43, 1997, pp. 34-5.

⁴⁰ See the interview with Wolf in *Der Spiegel*, no. 18, 1993, pp. 40-54.

³⁰ Knabe H. 1999: 559; Müller-Enbergs H. 1998: 121-2.

³¹ Schlomann F. W. 1984: 72-4.

³² See *Scotland on Sunday*, 26 September 1999.

³³ For the case of secretaries, see Quoirin M. 1999: 9-12, 79-84.

³⁴ Wolf interview in *International Herald Tribune*, 22 November 1989.

imprisonment because the Federal Prosecutors could not prove that he had committed a crime under West German jurisdiction or according to East German law.

RELATIONS WITH THE KGB

The East German foreign intelligence service was set up in 1951 as a carbon copy of the KGB's foreign intelligence wing. However, although all roads to decision making ran through Moscow, the relationship between the KGB and HV A changed from one of strict subordination to a measure of cooperation.⁴¹ Between 1951 and 1952, the fledgling intelligence service was run by a staff of omnipresent Soviet 'instructors'; then, from 1952, a so-called apparatus of 'advisers' was installed throughout the MfS hierarchy. The change was largely symbolic, since the former 'instructors' enjoyed a broadly similar remit. At least until the later 1950s, these 'advisers' regulated the work of all operational departments, even in matters of everyday routine, and trained the apparatus functionaries. Looking back on HV A's relationship with the KGB, Markus Wolf later wrote of the 'domineering role' played by Moscow:

At first our section chiefs drew up all their plans for work under the watchful eye of these [Soviet] advisers, who followed extremely bureaucratic Soviet methods, which drove us crazy. Besides copying regulations and other papers by hand, we had to spend hours binding them neatly into file folders, a procedure introduced by the Czar's secret police before the Revolution. No one knew the rationale for this procedure, and no one questioned it either.⁴²

By around 1960, a landmark stage in this transformation was the dramatic scaling down of the apparatus of 'advisers' to a system run by 32 'liaison officers' in the leadership of the individual sections.⁴³ With the reduction in the direct Soviet presence, the borders between the Eastern bloc's intelligence services also receded. From the mid-1960s, the Soviet bloc exchanged intelligence information at bi- and multilateral conferences. When the SQUAD database came on line in 1979, HV A also benefited from access to information on the international connections between the growing human rights and peace movements, which transcended the East-West and inter-Eastern bloc political divides. However, while Moscow had unlimited access to this information, HV A's use of it was regulated by the KGB.⁴⁴ Although the HV A leadership comprised Soviet-trained, communist stalwarts, the relationship was never truly one of trust. The KGB laced the East German security and

intelligence services with 'informal sources', which kept Moscow informed behind their colleagues' backs: this form of spying on 'friends', as the KGB referred to their German counterparts, made this the system of panopticism *par excellence*.

HV A, MfS AND SED

Since 1953, when the foreign intelligence service was organisationally integrated into the MfS, HV A had worked closely with the 'domestic' wing of the Stasi, even though there are indications of resentment and internal boundary disputes, for example, on the part of Main Department II against HV A's growing responsibilities in the 1970s for counterespionage in the GDR.⁴⁵ Along with Erich Mielke and the head of the party organisations in the state security services, Wolf and, after his departure in 1986, Großmann sat on the MfS central Collegium. Not only did the guidelines and instructions issued by this body stress HV A's integral role in guaranteeing the security of SED rule but Wolf himself also constantly stressed to his officers the need to work in tandem with the relevant domestic MfS units.⁴⁶ This cooperation took the form of a direct involvement in domestic operations and in supplying information gathered by HV A's network of agents in the West on political opposition in the GDR and their external links. The other units of the MfS provided intelligence obtained by post controls, telephone taps and radio signals intercepts.⁴⁷ Documentation discovered in Leipzig following the fall of the Berlin Wall also details the activities of HV A's Regional Department XV against the local peace and church-based opposition movements.⁴⁸ During the 1980s, foreign intelligence was increasingly called upon in the ultimately vain effort to stem the emigration movement.⁴⁹

Markus Wolf's close personal and political ties, as well as his aptitude and intelligence, made him Moscow's ideal spymaster. Wolf's earliest political socialisation had been in the communist movement. After his father, Friedrich, joined the German Communist Party in 1928, Markus and his younger brother, the eminent East German filmmaker Konrad Wolf, joined the Young Pioneers. The intellectual credentials of the family – Wolf's father was a playwright and doctor – contrasted sharply with the humble origins of Mielke, as did the spymaster's cosmopolitanism with the coarse personality of the minister: beauty and the beast. The Wolf family's commitment to communism was reinforced by their Jewish origins. Wolf has frequently stressed that without the Soviet Union granting his family asylum, they too would have

⁴¹ Important sources for the relationship between the MfS and the KGB include Marquardt B. 1995: 297–331 and Fricke K. W. 1984: 37–46.

⁴² Wolf M. 1997: 46.

⁴³ Engelmann R. 1997: 71.

⁴⁴ Schmeidel J. 1995: 129.

⁴⁵ Richter P. and Rösler K. 1992: 69–70.

⁴⁶ Fricke F. W. 1997: 22, 25.

⁴⁷ Knabe H. 1997: 7–8.

⁴⁸ Sélitrenny R. and Weichert T. 1991: 126–32, 218–20.

⁴⁹ For details, see Chapter 14.

died in the Holocaust, as other relations did. Having arrived in Moscow in 1934, aged ten, and taking on citizenship five years later, Wolf became one of the few bilingual functionaries of German extraction. In 1943, Wolf was chosen to attend the Comintern's training school, which was engaged in the formation of a small group of top KPD functionaries to run Germany after the defeat of the Third Reich. Wolf's adoption of the Stalinist tenets of unquestioning discipline, undeterred by the purges of the mid-1930s or the Nazi-Soviet Pact of 1939, and his identity as a socialist 'true believer' made him precisely the type of loyal *apparatchik* Moscow required after 1945 to serve in the Eastern European satellite states. Appointed to the nascent East German foreign intelligence service in 1951, Wolf headed HV A from 1956 until his departure in 1986; thereafter, his links with leading KGB figures remained close. If Wolf's reform-communist face of the later 1980s is widely regarded as a mask, then his success as its head goes largely unquestioned. There can, however, be little doubt that Wolf knew precisely what his functions in the communist system required: to act in any manner along with the MfS to preserve SED rule. While the highly urbane and intellectual Wolf stresses the high degree of personal antipathy between himself and Mielke, there is absolutely no reason to believe that their working relationship suffered from this. Wolf's successor, Großmann, a long-serving officer in HV A, was less creative and a more compliant partner for Mielke.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Richter P. and Rösler K. 1992: 133-4.

IN THE OPERATION AREA

PARALLELS BETWEEN THE BND AND HV A

During the early 1990s, Wolf and his former officers claimed that HV A had acted no differently from the West German foreign intelligence service, the BND. Historians of the Stasi have tended to stress the differences while opting to omit the parallels between the actions of the BND and HV A. In contrast to HV A, the BND is presented as a foreign intelligence service protecting a democratic republic using secret service methods within the framework of legality and parliamentary accountability.¹ However, studies of the BND have drawn quite different conclusions, pointing to structural similarities with HV A. Particularly during the early years of the Bonn Republic, the BND's relationship with parliamentary democracy was at best ambivalent. The BND was the only West German authority to have an unbroken line of continuity with the Nazi era. Continuity was particularly pronounced during the Gehlen era (1942-68). Gehlen, the first head of the BND, had headed the Nazis' intelligence apparatus in the East and many of his personnel shared a similar past. The organisation's objectives also remained rooted in the Third Reich's pronounced anti-communism, substituting the organisation's constitutional duty to serve democracy with its own hostility to the West German mainstream left, the Social Democratic Party (SPD) and trade unions. Particularly before the reforms initiated in 1967, hundreds of files were built up on SPD and trade union leaders. Throughout the life of the old Federal Republic, West German citizens' postal correspondence and telephone conversations to and from the GDR, and more generally the Eastern bloc, were randomly monitored. During the 1970s, it is estimated that some 10,000 letters were sent each day for intelligence evaluation by the BND.² In theory, the BND had no West German 'unofficial collaborators' on their books; however, in practice, information flowed to the BND from as many as 5,000

¹ See, for example, Schell M. and Kalinka W. 1991: 220-22.

² Schmidt-Eenboom E. 1993: 59-60; *Der Stern*, no. 47, 1978.