The Enemy of My Enemy Is My Friend

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Abstract

Following WWII, the United States and Western Germany, under the impetus of Captain John R. Boker and former Wehrmacht Major General Reinhard Gehlen, initiated an extensive espionage operation throughout the Eastern Bloc. "Operation Rusty" played a fundamental role in early Cold War intelligence acquisition. It was the primary source of American information on the Soviet Union. However, when the Soviet Union successfully infiltrated Operation Rusty by turning a select number of its agents, it likely fed false information to the Americans and Germans. This project seeks to answer three major questions: 1. What connection is there between Gehlen's appointment as the Chief of the German Wehrmacht Fremde Heere Ost intelligence section and a marked increase in mass murder under the Holocaust? 2. How did successful Soviet corruption of Rusty agents impact the machinations of the operation? 3. How did this corrupted information impact American Cold War domestic and foreign policy?

Figure 1: Reinhard Gehlen c. 1943

Conclusion

The United States of America made the conscious decision to cooperate with former Nazi officials in order to acquire intelligence on the Soviets shortly after WWII had ended and the undeclared Cold War began. As soon as the Soviets realized this, they recognized the intelligence-related threat the Americans posed to their security and began to counteract the operation by corrupting it in turn. These two developments are key to understanding early Cold War intelligence history, and very likely escalated the mutual perceptions of threat and danger that the United States and the Soviet Union harbored for one another. Moreover, due to Operation Rusty's strict operational security status, it is highly probable that many former Nazi and/or Wehrmacht officials were successfully and secretly shielded from apprehension and international trial.
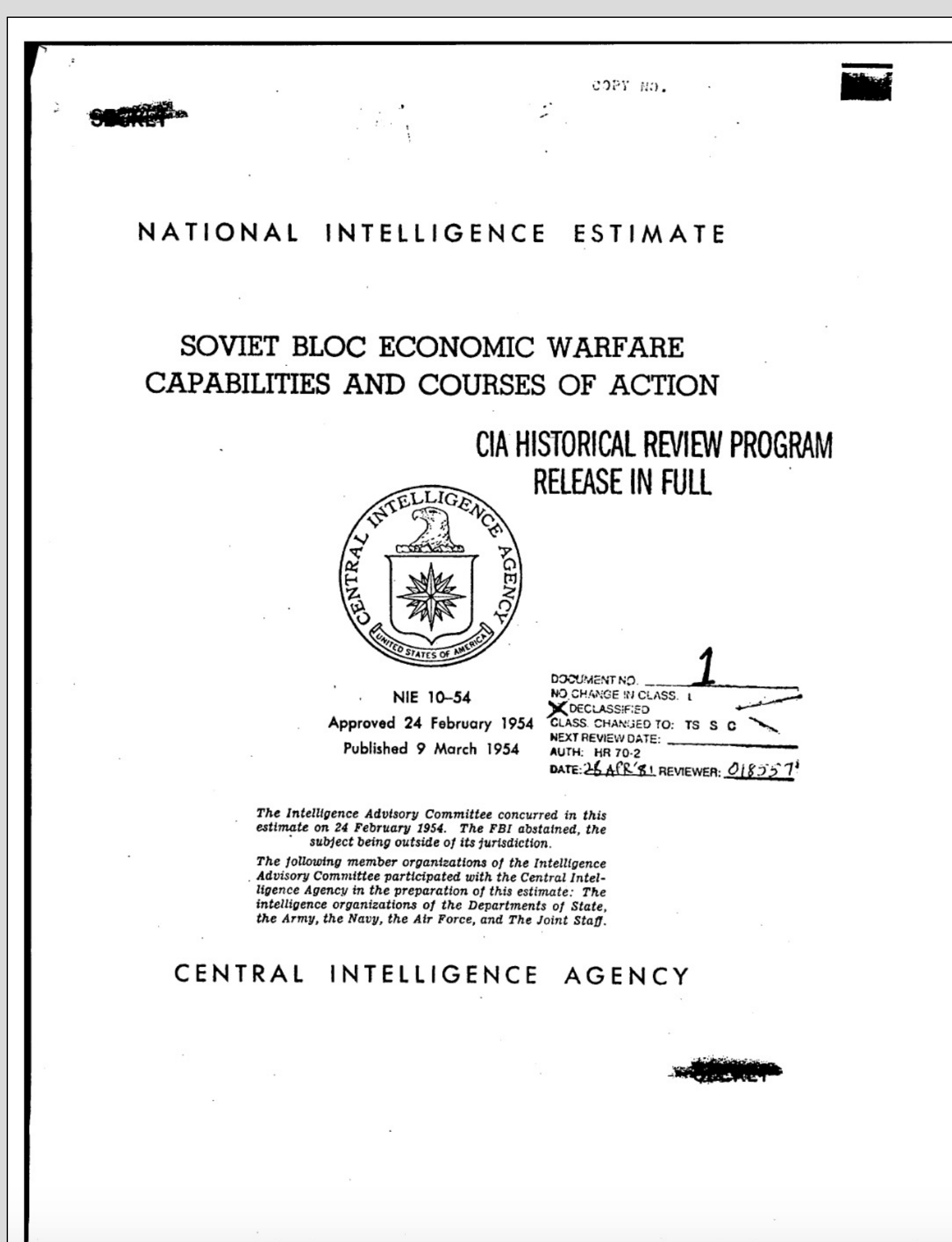

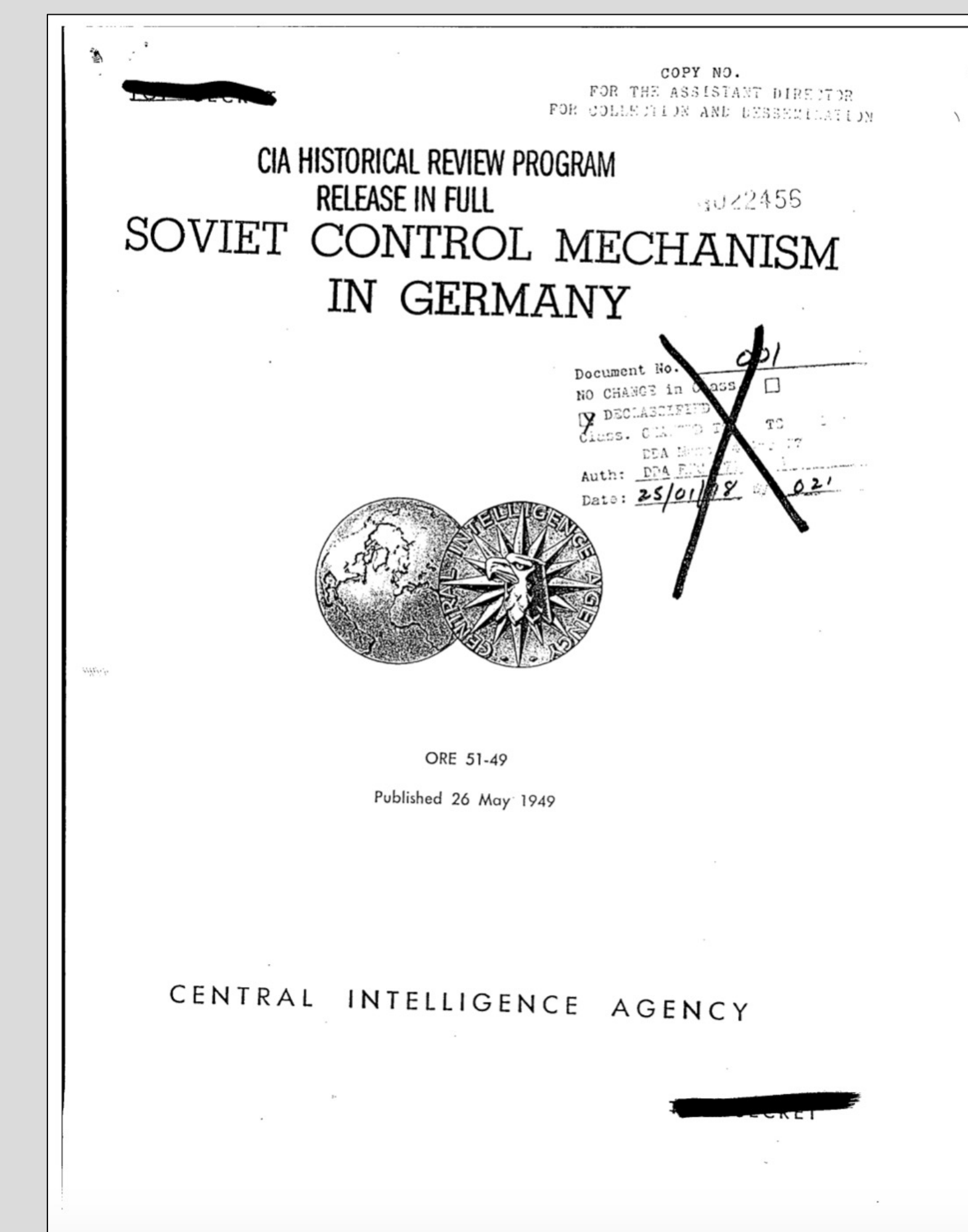Figure 2: Soviet Bloc Economic Warfare Capabilities And Courses of Action

Figure 3: Soviet Control Mechanism In Germany

Methodology

This research project relies upon archival research from such diverse places as public government databases to journalistic reports. We have taken the collected information and arranged it chronologically and thematically. For this segment of the project, we analyzed the American intelligence interpretation of Soviet capabilities in highly classified reports known as National Intelligence Estimates (NIEs). The NIEs are arranged according to their date of publication and their content (military, political, economic, civil, simulative).

Acknowledgements

References

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