

## "German-Indian Association" - a nazi foundation - and some surprising postwar developments

# The KIT's nuclear transfer to India thriller

by Dietrich Schulze and Wolfram Thiemann

In *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, the role of the atom manager and Nazi Rudolf Greifeld (member of the Nazi party since 1937) and his engagement in the German-Indian Association was illustrated in an article by Dietrich Schulze [1], on the the occasion of the Federal Merit of Honour („Bundesverdienstkreuz“) being awarded to Beate and Serge Klarsfeld by the President of the Federal Republic of Germany. The subject will be treated here under two aspects: As a background of the nuclear transfer deal with India, helping India to construct her atom bomb, and material for the campaign to strip Rudolf Greifeld of his honorary title of „Ehrensator“ granted by the KIT (Karlsruhe Institute of Technology).

### „Karlsruhe meets India“

In 2010, the book entitled „Karlsruhe meets India“ [2] was published by a local publishing house. It gives praise to Rudolf Greifeld's merits in establishing the Karlsruhe branch of the "German-Indian Association" DIG in 1960. The DIG is described as an institution set up to promote German-Indian friendship. But this is only the surface to camouflage a political deal on atom and war technology. Rudolf Greifeld, a man of law, was very experienced in such things. It was not until the mid-1970's that the Nazi past of Greifeld became known. He had been the first president of the Nuclear Reactor Construction and Management Association (later renamed into Gesellschaft für Kernforschung GfK and now KIT Campus Nord), promoted to this post by Franz-Josef Strauss in 1956. Soon after this discovery, the facts were buried, but a little more than four years ago, this obscure atom and Nazi heritage was laid open again and has been the object of public discussion.

### Foundation of the DIG was as early as 1942

The DIG was set up as early as 1942. Quotation from the book cited above: „Rabindranath Tagore was the first man of Asian origin who received the Nobel Price for Literature in 1913, in recognition of his outstanding work of literature, in particular his poetry collection *Gitanjali*. With his far-sighted view on peace and tolerance after the catastrophe of First World War, Tagore found wide positive acceptance, particularly in German circles. On the occasion of a joint German-Indian reception in 1942 in Hamburg, the Indian National Anthem composed by Tagore in 1915 was performed for the first time in public.“ This was on 11 September 1942 in the Atlantic Hotel in Hamburg. In the same month, the disastrous German battle against Stalingrad was opened. Some irony lies in the fact that a person respected all over the world for his special commitment to peace was made the DIG foundation figure in Nazi Germany. How can this be understood?



Bomb Quartet Greifeld, Bose, Alsdorf, Schindewolf.  
Collage Dietrich Schulze

## **Bose versus Gandhi and Nehru**

It is little known among the German public that on the Indian sub-continent a radical military alternative existed to the non-violent campaigns of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru [3] that eventually managed to rid India of British colonial occupation. It was represented by its charismatic leader Subhas Chandra Bose. The booklet cited above, celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> [really the 61st] anniversary of the German-Indian Association DIG 1953-2003 [4], provides some details:

„Nehru clearly condemned the Nazi regime in Germany. A different approach was taken by Subhas Bose, former Mayor of Calcutta and former President of the National Indian Congress, a militant freedom fighter for Indian independence from British rule: he sought contact with the Nazi regime in Berlin. The German government first opposed explicit military cooperation with Bose's freedom fighters. But Berlin permitted the foundation of an official "Center for a Free India", which was granted diplomatic status. On 11 September 1942, the first German-Indian Association (DIG) was set up in Hamburg in the presence of Subhas Chandra Bose.“ (page 29).

„As an outstanding personality at this great reception in the Hamburg Hotel Atlantic Subhas Chandra Bose, the Leader of the militant wing of the Indian Freedom fight for an independent India, was celebrated. In his formal speech Bose claimed that his home India would win his independent status as an immediate result from the Second World War. He had come to Germany during in the mid of the war to probe for a possibility for a political and military cooperation between both countries against a common enemy. Without a definitive success he left Germany later on a German submarine returning to Asia.“ (page 62)

According to Wikipedia entry on Bose [5] the circle is closed: „Bose intended to reach the independence of India by military means and fled 1941 from India, in order to pledge for a military support abroad. After several attempts in vain, he ultimately became 1944 founder and chairman of the so-called „Indian League“, a group of fighters made up from Indian volunteers, which was subordinated to the German „Waffen -SS“, and later-on of the „Indian National Army“, a supporting fighters' group of the Imperial Japanese Army.“

What do we learn from these facts? The DIG has a Indogermanic-fascistoide foundation history. Bose had applied since 1941 for a military cooperation with German fascism. The Nazis however did not want to establish a second front against England, since the intended destruction of the Soviet Union created more and more problems after Stalingrad 1942. Hence Bose's hopes were delayed and finally in 1944 he was – as the actively practising fascist and leader of the Indian league within the Waffen-SS - persuaded to join the Japanese companion for the aim of the final victory in Asia. Hard to believe that Bose to the present day is praised as a great hero on Indian grounds and the International Airport in Calcutta (now Kolkata) is named officially after him, the hero from Bengal.

## **Fascistoid Postwar “German-Indian Association” DIG**

Let us continue reading the jubilee booklet (4): “With the end of the war the constitution – with her individual members of the board - of German-Indian Association deceased, too. The association constituted herself again with the founding of the Federal Republic of Germany in the year 1949 and the construction of a German-Indian roof society in Stuttgart in 1953 under its chairman Dr. Seifritz. At the occasion of the new founding of the branch in Hamburg in November of the same year 1953 the famous Indologist Professor Ludwig Alsdorf was elected as president of the Hamburg DIG branch, the same man, who had acted as the closest consultant of Subhas Bose during his stay in Germany. The former links, which were forged during the wartime among Germans and Indians, were at the berth of the “New” DIG at Stuttgart and its branch at Hamburg.” (page 63)

Here the additional helpful Wikipedia article concerning Ludwig Alsdorf [6]: “Alsdorf was nominated 1941 after the escape of Subhas Chandra Bose from India to Germany as an expert into the Foreign Office in Berlin and active in the “Sonderreferat Indien” (Special Unit India)”

After all these enlightments the dear reader will not be more surprised. The Indology Nazi Professor Alsdorf from the Nazi-Sonderreferat Indien was at the berth of the baptism of the postwar DIG. What were the intentions of the men, who were coined by fascism and war? After the historic 1945 defeat of Germany we dare a new start with other means. This was exactly the concept of Alsdorf's academic Nazi brother Greifeld, when he finally founded the Karlsruhe branch of the DIG in 1960. Under the sail of friendship with India an extremely busy transfer of science and technology began in Karlsruhe. And to fulfill the hopes of the active partners a very basic strategy was brought to life.

## **Nazi Criminals and KIT Atom Transfer**

In Germany's mega-research centers (Karlsruhe, Juelich, Geesthacht), which were all founded in the mid-fifties, experienced lawyers and engineers/scientists were employed as leading personnel, who were trained and practised during the Nazi regime. Why this? Franz Josef Strauss and Konrad Adenauer desired the possession of a German atom bomb. But even in the case of non-realization of their plans – the resistance of the former allied opponents of Germany to a restrengthening of German nuclear ambitions was not so surprising after all - an option for excellent personnel who were willing to try alternative routes to such an aim was obvious. A lot of literature covering this topic is available. Exemplary for this choice of personnel are cited here only 3 cases, of which two from Karlsruhe (former GfK) and one from Juelich (former KFA) [7]:

- Walther Schnurr, 1960-70, scientific CEO GfK, chemist. Until 1945 he worked among others with IG Farben on the production of Zyklon B for Auschwitz. Hitler's top expert on explosives. 1945 succeeded to escape to Argentina via the “Nuclear Rat Line” and enabled Peron to get access to the atom bomb. During the 80's he continued the covered atom cooperation.
- Rudolf Greifeld: 1956-75 CEO, lawyer. 1940-42 Hitler's supreme SS-Führer with the High Military Commissioner in the region Greater Paris, responsible for the persecution of the Jews in France. Stubborn antisemitic. Discovered for his deeds in the Third Reich and removed from his position in GfK.
- Alfred Boettcher: 1960-66, scientific CEO at the KFA Jülich. Until 1945 director at DEGUSSA, in charge of development of “secret weapons”. SS-Hauptsturmführer in Leiden/Holland. Sentenced to several years of prison due to his war crimes. Removed from his post due to the above deeds. In the 70's Boettcher organized the atom cooperation of Germany with both Brazil and South Africa, the first country under military dictatorship, the latter one under apartheid regime.

The alternative route taken may be described briefly as follows: A construction of atom bombs outside Germany will be enabled through the delivery of nuclear devices from industry and research and training of nuclear experts from countries like South Africa, Argentina, Brazil, Pakistan, India, Iran, etc. From here a definite strengthening of German power results as well as an exclusive accessibility for German ambitions. While a number of critical comments have been published in the above quoted countries themselves, the similar transfer of atomic equipment and know-how to India has been held undercover at large up to this day.

## **Heavy Water Bomb Technology in India**

Thanks to Wolfram Thiemann's professional expertise we could locate interesting facts in the literature. The author Ulrich Schindewolf writes about his own engagement in his article published in the Bunsen-Magazin 6/2000 [8] entitled “100 Years Institute of Physical Chemistry at the University Karlsruhe”: “U. Schindewolf continued his work on isotope enrichment, in particular on the enrichment of heavy water, which started with S. Walter in the Nuclear Research Centre Karlsruhe, based on the catalyzed isotope exchange between technically produced hydrogen and liquid ammonia. These experiments lead to the construction of a large technical plant for the production of heavy water by the firm Friedrich Uhde GmbH in India, designed to extract the heavy hydrogen isotope - deuterium - from the hydrogen line of the ammonia synthesis process after Haber-Bosch. Schindewolf has

contributed thus »ungewollt« (German for “without intention”) to the development of an Indian atom bomb.”

Ulrich Schindewolf pretends that he did not know that the heavy water plants in India might serve the construction of an atom bomb. This is known however to every child, who does read a little about the history of nuclear armament. His contribution obviously was not »ungewollt«, but purposely and irresponsible. A pretty naive academic fabrication, which could not even convince anybody with a healthy mind.

As can be found in the web [9], there are up to today 7 sites of heavy water production plants in India, needed for the construction of nuclear power plants as well of atom bombs. Based on his autobiographic article the chemist Ulrich Schindewolf had doubtlessly contributed essentially to the heavy water large scale production made in India (“dual use”). The above cited nuclear cooperation between Jülich and Karlsruhe is still of another “dual use” character: Jülich had signed a cooperative agreement of a joint development of nuclear technology with India, while Karlsruhe did the same with Pakistan. Greifeld had been personally engaged in the formulation of both agreements. Without feeling a special responsibility German research administration, science, and economy had assisted the both atomic powers India and Pakistan, - each one of them intertwined in deadly animosity towards each other, - in the successful build-up of their lethal armament; of course the international cooperation proceeded in carefully separate locations in Germany, where there was little chance that Pakistani and Indian scientists would ever meet. Let us look briefly to the causes of such a monstrous perversity.

## **Politics, Business and Military-Industrial Complex**

During the cold War this narrow interdependence of military, industry, and politics is generally understood as the Military-Industrial Complex. Ironically it was General Dwight D. Eisenhower himself (“Atoms for Peace”) who had warned against a misuse in his leaving US presidential speech 1961 that this complex could become a danger for the democracy and peace in the world, as long as political institutions - as the prolonged arm of industrial complexes - would try to “solve” conflicts rather militarily than politically.

This has exactly happened as the standard program of this Republic. Politics has turned the “prolonged arm of industry finally” as predicted by Eisenhower, an industry which steps over bodies for the sake of increasing their profits. The military-industrial complex has penetrated all sectors of our society. It cares for a civil-military development politics and a “battle for the heads in schools and universities”. We reported in the March edition of Neue Rheinische Zeitung [10] about 6 examples in civil-military-university-industrial complexes. A black-red-green-yellow united front is ready to create a source for an atom conflict of a lethal threat in Ukraine exactly against those, who had sacrificed 27 millions for the liberation from German fascism. And the taxpayer bleeds daily for paying this armament. A lot of 4 billion Euros was granted by our war minister just recently for supplying the war driving flight defence system MEADS.

The peace movement, the anti-atom movement, and the anti-fascist historians' science get more today every day, successes move far away, yet they seem still possible.

## **KIT Title of Honorary Senator for Greifeld**

Back to the topic of atom Nazi and founder of Karlsruhe DIG Greifeld. who was honored as Ehrensensator by the University of Karlsruhe in 1969 without knowledge of his Nazi past. Since September 2012 the cancellation of this title has been postulated based on the findings of documented evidence. In addition to this the bomb story about the cooperation with India comes to light based on proven facts since 1942. We are anxious to see when the KIT ethic commission has found sufficient evidence to come to a final decision.

It is well known, that Prof. Rusinek - specially employed by the Research Center FZJ – has worked on a fair consideration of the postulated cancellation of the title for the ethic commission of the KIT. It may be granted here to repeat the last sentence of the article [1]: “Could it not be that Prof. Rusinek might make use of his status of an independent historian devoted to the truth, (in line with Federal President Gauck) to the end of recommending the KIT ethic commission the cancellation of the title to Greifeld in view of the documented facts – and in appreciation of Beate and Serge Klarsfeld's tireless efforts towards a clarification of historic facts?”

## Heritage Léon Gruenbaum

The scientist Léon Gruenbaum, who had discovered jointly with the Klarsfelds the Nazi past of Greifeld under great personal sacrifices, was honored in October 2013 in a Symposium of Forum Ludwig Marum [11]. His most important and at the same time most scientific reply to his displacement by Greifeld – cf. the brief description in Klarsfelds' book “Mémoires” published in March 2015 [12] – was is change from a physicist to a historian.

He had worked out the monography “Genesis of the Plutonium Society – Political Conspiracies and Businesses” in the late 70's. A very fundamental analysis of the historic development of this particular stuff Plutonium, which had inspired the worldwide lust for power long before the first application in Nagasaki. Unfortunately his book written in French could not be printed yet in German to this day.

## Science in Responsibility

Yes, this monography by Léon Gruenbaum is a wonderful example of “Science in Responsibility”. Since the referendum of the KIT students about the so called “Civil Clause” this clause has become a symbol for a German-wide appellation to “Science in Responsibility” indeed.

The reality however leads into another direction. Here only 2 examples to demonstrate the present German discussion:

At first KIT: On 29 April this year lectures on the subject “Civil-military atom research in KIT – Stop it!” [13] were held by MdB Sylvia Kotting-Uhl, Dr. Wolff Geisler and Georg Rammer in the Redtenbacher Auditory organized by AStA and several university and peace initiatives. Excerpts from a film “Bombenwahn” (attac Karlsruhe 1989) [14] were shown at this occasion. Such kind of research activities appear as extremely macabre in view of the historically documented facts.

Second example: A series of articles in the weekly journal “Die Zeit” by 7 German University professors, who expressed their complains about the working conditions with their employers. Among others was Andreas Fischer-Lescano (University of Bremen) with a contribution of an essay on “We sell our souls...” [15] criticizing political and economic limitations of the “university freedom” under legal aspects.

We should not allow us to get demotivated. This holds for the peace movement, for the labour unions, and naturally for a science devoted for the maintenance of peace.



Brochures Envelope documentary about the event [13]

## Sources:

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## About the authors:

Dr.-Ing. Dietrich Schulze (born 1940) after 18 years of research in High-Energy Physics, from 1984 until 2005 (his retirement) Chairman of the Works Council of the Karlsruhe Research Center (subsequently merged with the University to form the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology KIT). 2008 he set up in Karlsruhe - with others - the Initiative against Military Research at German Universities (WebDoku [www.stattweb.de/files/DokuKITcivil.pdf](http://www.stattweb.de/files/DokuKITcivil.pdf)). Member of the Advisory Board of the Scientists' Initiative for Peace and Sustainability; active in the initiative "Universities for peace - Yes to Civil Clauses" and through publications.

Prof. Dr. Wolfram Thiemann (born 1938), Professor emeritus of Physical and Environmental Chemistry at University Bremen since 1976. He is known for his publications on the chemist, Noble Laureate and enthusiastic promoter of poison gas application as chemical weapon in World War I. Before joining the University in Bremen he was associated 9 years at the Kernforschungsanlage Juelich (formerly KFA, now Forschungszentrum Juelich FZJ) from 1968-76. There he became a victim of the administration for criticizing the massive use of atomic energy in public lectures, he was threatened with firing from the job, but he won in court for keeping the free word. He gained some intimate knowledge while working in Brazil (PUC Rio de Janeiro) and India (at the Bremen partner University Pune)

## Translation:

Lothar Letsche and Wolfram Thiemann