

Olympic decision nicks Bonn

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Bonn

West Germany has shivered a lance in its never-ending tilt with the Communist regime across the Iron Curtain.

By 52 to 7 the International Olympic Committee voted on Oct. 8 in Madrid to accept two separate German teams—one Western, one Communist—for the 1968 games in Grenoble and Mexico City.

So the (East) German Democratic Republic (DDR) gained another toehold in the struggle to be recognized as a nation by the outside world.

The toehold was small. Both teams will march under one black, red, and gold flag, will wear similar insignia, and will be honored by a Beethoven stanza, in lieu of a national anthem.

But separate teams there will be. That of the DDR will be called the team of East Germany. This falls short of a prouder title, German Democratic Republic, for which the Communists had striven.

This the International Olympic Committee declined to grant. So the DDR had to take its cake without frosting. But this was enough to cause rejoicing in East Berlin. Fifty-two nations had recognized the DDR's claim to separate entity, at least in the Olympic field.

Aid offered

Recognition by the non-Communist world is the goal of Walter Ulbricht's East German regime. Recognition helps to erase the stigma borne by the DDR — that its Communist regime was imposed on, not elected by, 17 million Germans.

So far no nation outside the Communist bloc has exchanged embassies with East Berlin. But the Olympic decision was the latest of several modest achievements by the DDR:

- Following a state visit by Mr. Ulbricht to Cairo last February, the United Arab Republic (Egypt) opened a consulate general in East Berlin.

This matched the East German consulate general already in place in Cairo. The DDR sweetened this relationship by promising \$100 million in economic aid to Egypt.

- Syria is expected shortly to open a consulate general in East Berlin. This follows the visit of a high East German official to Damascus last May.

- The DDR was allowed by the government of Tanzania to maintain a consulate general on the island of Zanzibar. Tanzania is a merger of Zanzibar and Tanganyika.

There have been Communist disappointments, too. President Nasser of Egypt failed to exchange ambassadors with East Berlin, as Mr. Ulbricht had hoped.

India, rather than risk good relations with West Germany, declined an East German aid offer worth \$40 million at easy interest terms.

Nonetheless, the field is potentially wide open for East Berlin to nibble out small political gains. Every gain, however small, is a corresponding setback to West Germany's claim to represent all Germans abroad.

The Olympic team is an example. In the Olympics of 1956, 1960, and 1964, a single

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German team was fielded, including athletes from both sides. West Germany's claim to sole representation was not openly infringed.

By such small erosions, the Communists hope, the world will grow used to the existence of two German states.

The DDR seeks also to expand its trade with Western powers, notably France and Britain. Both these nations have granted credits longer than five years to the DDR to build a petrochemical complex.

But there are limits to DDR trade expansion. East Germany must earn hard currency with which to pay for Western imports. This can come only through sales of East German goods.

Here the DDR bumps up against sharp

competition, in which the powerful West German economy has an advantage. As a result, more than 75 percent of East Germany's trade still moves within the Communist bloc.

Bonn seeks to turn the tables on its rival in this regard, by expanding West German trade east of the Iron Curtain. In 1964 West Germany did more than \$1 billion worth of business with Communist countries, including the DDR.

This was only 5.2 percent of total West German exports and 5.4 percent of Bonn's imports. Yet it was almost one-third as much business as the DDR accomplished within the Communist bloc.