

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE 39

NEW YORK POST
29 August 1985

Why the West is vulnerable to spying

By **MAX LERNER**

WE READ spy stories as our nightly fare, making the John LeCarres rich and snobbish, and we watch spy films ad nauseam, and then when life imitates art in the case of the West German counterintelligence chief who was an East German spy — probably a long-term mole — we greet it with consternation.

For me the devastating exploits of Hans Joachim Tiedge — along with the damage wrought by the Walker family complex of alleged U.S. Navy spies — are part of the unending intelligence war that the West has had to fight against the Soviet Union and its satellites.

For a long time the Soviets and the Nazi intelligence operations maintained close ties, which gave Josef Stalin the excuse he wanted for the purge of his generals in the 1930s.

At Potsdam, in July 1945, President Harry Truman thought he had a surprise when he told Stalin about the test explosion of the atom bomb, but Stalin was unmoved. Truman didn't learn until later that year, from the Igor Gouzenko defection, that Stalin's spies had already told him.

The Soviets couldn't have built their own bomb without a network of spies, and they are more active than ever today, 40 years later, in their elaborate espionage effort to steal America's computer, electronic and Star Wars secrets.

In many ways the West plays into the hands of the Soviet spy commanders.

The most idiotic is the West German rule never to examine the background of anyone presenting himself as a German.

It is an invitation to the fabrication of a false identity, as happened in several of the current spy histories.

Another thing of wonder is the ease with which these bogus patriots move into positions as advisers to West German high officials or as chiefs of the intelligence community, and get access to treasures of state.

This gives us, I think, a clue to the puzzle of why Western societies are so inimitable to penetration by Soviet and satellite spies.

The clue lies in the scorn the liberal West applies to authentic love of country and especially to intelligence operations in its own domain.

The historic Cambridge school of British spies, in the 1930s and 1940s, expressed a high culture which was pacifist and mocked patriotism.

The West German spies who toppled Willy Brandt's government and imperil Helmut Kohl's, come out of the same high culture that gave Germany its Baader-Meinhof syndrome of left terrorism a decade ago.

After the horse is stolen the West Germans are locking the barn, to assess and limit the damage that Tiedge inflicted.

But, however urgent, damage control is no answer. The Soviet spy war uses every vulnerable chink in the armor of Western society and belief.

I am saying the spies thrive in the cultural climate of contempt for intelligence systems, disdain for country, and denial of personal responsibility for the consequences of one's acts.

Nor does the new value our culture places on capitalist enterprise resolve the problem. As the alleged mercenary operations of the Walkers show, love of money is no substitute for love of country.

The American culture has a long way to go in making cohesiveness and responsibility its chief values before it can meet the onslaught of the intelligence war.