

# Bonn and Its Many Enemies Within: Spy Scandals Bare Its Vulnerability

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**BONN, Dec. 7** — An undulating wall of cement, steel and barbed wire separates West and East Germany, but for Communist spies the frontier is the most penetrable in a divided Europe.

Several thousand agents of the East German Ministry for State Security are thought to spy on ministries and industries in West Germany, pursuing an estimated three-fourths of the Warsaw Pact's espionage on NATO's most important European member.

Sharing a common language and culture with West Germany, they operate with little apparent fear of detection or arrest by authorities.

In recent days, a closed-door parliamentary investigative commission meeting in Bonn has exposed some of the vulnerabilities of an open society in East-West espionage.

Secret testimony disclosed that Hans-Joachim Tiedge, a senior counterintelligence official who defected to East Germany in August, had betrayed two Western agents who had infiltrated the inner circle of the ruling Communist establishment in East Berlin. This revelation was quickly passed to the press, provoking what amounted to an unusual confirmation of its veracity.

"This is why we didn't want to have an inquiry in the first place," said Michael Butz, an Interior Ministry spokesman. "Too much information can be leaked."

## Spies Believed Planted Among the Immigrants

The chain of spy scandals that has agitated Bonn for the last five months has highlighted the peculiarities of a sundered Germany. It is one of the curiosities of Germany's postwar division that the strivings of Bonn governments to keep alive the idea of a united Germany have made it easier for Communist agents to conduct their work of political, military and industrial espionage.

Last year, the Government of Chancellor Helmut Kohl congratulated itself that some 40,000 East Germans had been legally allowed to emigrate westward. Yet West German counterintelligence officers consider it inevitable that a new generation of so-called "perspective agents" — whose work will not show results for a decade — has been seeded among the immigrants.

"It is not that we have more spies than the United States or France," said a Bonn Cabinet minister. "It is just that here suspicion extends over millions of people. In an American city you might write down the names of all spy suspects in a notebook. You can't do that here."

"There are three million Germans from the D.D.R. living in West Germany," said an American intelligence officer, using the German initials for the German Democratic Republic. "How are you supposed to keep track of all of them?"

Bonn also presses East Berlin to take steps that will make it easier and cheaper for West Germans to visit friends and relatives in the East. Yet yearly, according to intelligence officials, several hundred visiting West Germans are crudely blackmailed by East German operatives who try to convert them to agents when they return home.

Through staged traffic accidents or threatened reprisals against East German relatives, the visitors are pressured to sign compromising contracts. Some refuse; others sign and denounce their actions on their return to the West. But a few succumb.

The Ministry for State Security also lures unsuspecting university students through innocent-sounding advertisements in West Berlin newspapers for freelance "research" undertakings that slowly enmesh them in espionage. And so-called Romeos have had astounding success in wooing middle-aged Bonn secretaries into betraying state secrets.

## Behind the Treachery, 'A Bundle of Motives'

Georg Pohl, who heads a Bonn-based association that advises businesses on combating espionage, said "a bundle of motives" draws West Germans into spying for the East. He cited resentment at missing a promotion, alcoholism or other personal debilities that invite blackmail, and the elementary wish to lead a more exciting life.

"The M.F.S. doesn't pay as much as it should for what it gets," said Mr. Pohl, using the German initials for the Ministry for State Security. "Money isn't the main reason that people spy. You don't make money through espionage."

A broad range of West German espionage experts agreed that few of their countrymen become spies out of ideological conviction. The 36-year-old Federal Republic has had nothing comparable to the cabal of Cambridge-educated British intellectuals who became spies for the Soviet Union through a belief in the superiority of Communism.

But a high-ranking West German intelligence officer observed that Switzerland, another nation where German is spoken, was far more resistant to infiltration than his country. He pinpointed the division of Germany, its Nazi past and a feeble West German national consciousness as reasons for the country's vulnerability.

"We notice that if the D.D.R. is rather successful here, compared to Switzerland, it is because of the absence of an identity with the state in the Federal Republic," he said.

The defection of Mr. Tiedge, a 19-year veteran of West Germany's counterintelligence agency, may be a case in point.

After a detailed investigation, Bonn's Interior Ministry has concluded that the Berlin-born Mr. Tiedge was not a long-term "mole" planted in the Federal Office for the Defense of the Constitution in Cologne. Rather, according to an official privy to the investigation, Mr. Tiedge, a 48-year-old widower, made an impulsive decision to flee a burden of mounting debts and responsibility for three troubled teen-age daughters who were drifting into the Cologne drug scene. He had also just been denied a promotion.

In a letter written from East Berlin, the hard-drinking Mr. Tiedge said he had absconded because of "a hopeless personal situation."

## Did the Traitor Warn Three Agents to Flee?

Even so, Mr. Tiedge's abrupt defection is generally considered the gravest operative blow to West German intelligence since 1961 when Heinz Felfe, an officer in charge of gathering intelligence on the Soviet Union, was revealed to have been working for a decade for the K.G.B., the Soviet intelligence agency. Mr. Tiedge's knowledge of West Germany's methods of countering Warsaw Pact spying will make Communist offensive efforts here much easier.

Interior Ministry investigators believe that Mr. Tiedge, who had been responsible for tracking East German spies, warned three highly placed Communist agents in Bonn to flee: Ursula Richter, a 52-year-old secretary in an organization of former refugees; Herbert Willner, a senior official in a foundation close to the liberal Free Democratic Party, and his wife, Herta-Astrid Willner, a long-serving secretary in the Chancellor's office.

The same officials assert that Mr. Tiedge was unaware that Sonja Lüneburg, a secretary to Economics Minister Martin Bangemann, was a spy. Infiltrated into the Federal Republic in the 1960's under the identity of a West German who had moved to the East, the 60-year-old Miss Lüneburg set off the Bonn spy scandal by failing to return from vacation on Aug. 2.

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Since Miss Lüneburg was not under surveillance or suspicion, her disappearance remains a mystery. East German diplomats have privately told high-ranking members of the Kohl Government that she did not work for the Ministry for State Security. "But just because they say that doesn't mean it's the truth," one intelligence official said.

Investigators are inclined to believe that Margarete Höbe, a secretary in the offices of President Richard von Weizsäcker, had been working for the K.G.B. for 18 years. She was arrested on Aug. 25 after having been observed meeting in Copenhagen with a man called Franz Becker, a German-speaking agent who had been her lover, according to officials.

The Soviet Union, Poland and Czechoslovakia have been known to recruit agents from German-speaking minorities in their own countries for spying in West Germany.

### *Spying Scandal Brings Fall of a Chancellor*

The Tiedge scandal has illuminated what critics contend are weaknesses in West Germany's intelligence procedures. One has been a reluctance of Bonn governments to take measures that would seem to discriminate against settlers from East Germany — like Mr. Willner, a veteran of the Nazi SS and the East German Communist Party.

The immigrant issue came dramatically into focus in 1974 when Chancellor Willy Brandt was forced to resign after an East German agent, Günter Guillaume, an immigrant from East Germany, was discovered in his entourage.

An investigative commission recommended in a post-mortem report that resettled East Germans should be subject to more thorough security checks. But Chancellor Helmut Schmidt's left-of-center Government refused to endorse the recommendation, which remained a dead letter.

"The problem for us is that we cannot put all the people who come from the D.D.R. under a blanket of mistrust," commented Gerhard Baum, a former Interior Minister in the Schmidt Cabinet and a leading figure in the Free Democratic Party.

East Germany's Communist rulers, by contrast, go to extraordinary lengths to seal off sensitively placed officials from any contacts with the West. Ranking members of the Ministry for State Security, for example, live in luxurious ghettos and are watched 24 hours a day.

"There is no member of the People's Army who has a relative in the Federal Republic," observed Heirbert Hellenbroich, the former head of the Office for the Defense of the Constitution. "They see the danger. They are Germans. This makes them hard to penetrate."

### *Low Morale Said to Hurt Intelligence Services*

According to various specialists, low morale in the West German intelligence community has lately become a severe problem. Traditionally, the two main intelligence services have not had strong political backing from Bonn, and governments have sought to insulate themselves from what have become chronic problem areas.

Since the founding of the Federal Republic, every head of the Office for the Defense of the Constitution has departed because of scandal. Mr. Heilenbroich, who had been promoted to take over the Federal Intelligence Service, would have been the first exception to this rule, but he was dismissed for having allowed Mr. Tiedge, a clear security risk, to keep his post.

Morale was not heightened, experts maintain, by the Kohl Government's impulse to play down the Tiedge scandal to protect diplomatic relations with East Germany. As the affair was peaking, Franz Josef Strauss, the powerful Bavarian President, said at a news conference in the East German city of Leipzig that intelligence services mostly reported nonsense.

Colleagues of Interior Minister Friedrich Zimmermann contend that an excessive concern for individual privacy — embodied in legislation from the Brandt-Schmidt era — has inhibited counterespionage. One ministry official noted that such scruples have prevented photographs from being attached to the dossiers of secretaries and others who undergo security checks.

"So if you want to put somebody under surveillance," this official said, "you have to first go and get a photograph of him so that the people watching him know who he is and what he looks like."

This official also argued that the extremely strict West German legislation on the tapping of telephones and mail interception overly limits such activities. The law stipulates that if a telephone tap does not lead to prosecution the person concerned must be informed of the action; rather than provoke civil rights scandals, the official said, the ministry errs on the side of prudence.

### *New Chief Is Expected 'To Shake Things Up'*

Some critics from friendly NATO services contend that a bureaucratic mentality pervades West German intelligence, and they welcome the appointment of the hard-driving Hans-Georg Wieck, a professional diplomat with experience in the Soviet Union, to head the Federal Intelligence Service.

"Pullach is a four-and-a-half-day-

week place," a NATO intelligence officer complained, using the name of the service's headquarters. "You should try to get a phone call through there on a Friday afternoon. Wieck will shake things up."

Western experts regularly warn against a tendency to glamorize the East German Ministry for State Security. But over the years the ministry has enjoyed political backing, continuity in its leadership — Gen. Markus Wolf has led its intelligence-gathering wing since the 1960's — and status in the Communist hierarchy.

"They have a stricter discipline than the army or the police and live in their own world segregated from the people," commented Franz Loesser, a high-ranking East German Communist who defected in 1963. "The frightening thing is that over the years there has been a tremendous growth of the machine of the secret police. You can visually see that by the number of huge buildings the secret police have built in East Berlin."

In their contest with the West, the East German services have suffered setbacks — most spectacularly in 1979 when Werner Stiller, a top-ranking officer in the Ministry for State Security, defected to West Berlin. But the ministry's caste mentality and Marxist-Leninist indoctrination clearly enable many East German officers to ward off the temptations of the good life in the West.

"There is such a thing as ideological motivation," an American intelligence officer warned. "You and I don't believe in it, but it exists."