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AIDE TO PRESIDENT OF WEST GERMANY IS ARRESTED AS SPY

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BONN, Aug. 25 — West Germany's espionage scandal widened today with the disclosure that a secretary in President Richard von Weizsäcker's office had been arrested on charges of spying.

The 50-year-old woman, whose name was not given, was the fifth West German Government employee to be identified this month as a probable East German spy. She was arrested tonight, according to the federal prosecutor's office in Karlsruhe.

On Friday, East Germany announced that a senior West German counterespionage officer, Hans Joachim Tiedge, had defected and sought asylum. Two Bonn secretaries and a West German Army messenger are thought to have preceded him covertly to East Berlin.

Few Details Are Given

Alexander Prechtel, a spokesman for the prosecutor's office, gave few details on the latest case but said the woman arrested tonight was not Mr. von Weizsäcker's personal secretary.

The President's powers are limited and many of his functions are ceremonial, but he is regularly given top-secret briefings. A former Mayor of West Berlin and a member of the governing Christian Democratic Party, Mr. von Weizsäcker has been President since May 1964.

According to a well-placed official, the secretary arrested tonight was recruited as a spy by an East German agent who became her lover — a well-established espionage technique in Bonn. Her role appears to have been discovered as counterintelligence agents reviewed secretaries' records.

An Apparent Pattern

The evident targeting of the President's office, a relatively modest bureaucratic entity, hinted at an East German pattern of placing agents at many levels of the West German Government. Some reports said the secretary had worked in a section dealing with military and foreign policy.

One of the secretaries who vanished this month had worked for 12 years for Martin Bangemann, who is Economics Minister and chairman of the Free Democratic Party. The other had been a bookkeeper for an organization of refugees from Eastern Europe.

On Friday, the day Mr. Tiedge's defection was reported, the State Department said the United States would consult with West Germany to determine the damage to their mutual security interests. There was no comment from

the White House or the State Department today on the latest developments.

Chancellor Helmut Kohl has studiously avoided stepping into the spy scandal, and he went to southern France on Saturday for previously scheduled talks with President François Mitterrand. Interior Minister Friedrich Zimmermann has been left to take the heat.

Mr. Zimmermann is a protégé of Franz Josef Strauss, the Bavarian Premier and an occasional foe of the Chancellor. He promised today to overhaul West Germany's counterintelligence efforts after Mr. Tiedge's defection.

"What we need now is a new concept for combating Eastern espionage, particularly the activities of the East German intelligence services," he told the newspaper Bild in an interview that is to be published Monday. "What is urgently needed is a reorganization of our counterespionage and the development of new operative investigation methods."

In television interviews this evening, Mr. Zimmermann conspicuously passed up opportunities to defend Herbert Hellenbroich, who until Aug. 1 was the president of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, the Cologne-based agency where Mr. Tiedge worked for 19 years.

First Political Victim

Mr. Hellenbroich has been promoted to head the Federal Intelligence Service outside Munich. But well-placed officials have predicted that he will be the first political victim of the Tiedge

defection, since he condoned the officer's unruly behavior and spurned advice not to promote him.

In a clear effort to lay responsibility on Mr. Hellenbroich, the Interior Minister told a television interviewer that while Mr. Tiedge's personal problems may have been well known inside the Cologne agency, the information had never reached his ministry.

Mr. Zimmermann also complained that various measures to tighten and improve internal security had not yet been approved by Parliament.

Resistance to some of the measures has come from the opposition Social Democrats and from the Free Democrats, who have sought to portray themselves within the governing coalition as defenders of individual rights.

"Those who have believed up to now that security is a second-rank issue will have to see that security should be very first rank," Mr. Zimmermann said.

Meeting With Chancellor

Mr. Zimmermann is to inform the Chancellor on Monday on the implications of the defection of Mr. Tiedge, who had been responsible for catching East German spies in West Germany. On Tuesday the Interior Minister will report to the Cabinet and a parliamentary intelligence subcommittee.

Despite East Germany's announcement that Mr. Tiedge had sought asylum, Ludwig Rehlinger, a state secretary in the ministry responsible for relations with East Germany, has been designated to approach Wolfgang Vogel, a well-connected East Berlin lawyer, to seek an interview with the defector.

Bonn officials gave little hope for an opportunity to talk with Mr. Tiedge, but they said they were intrigued that the East Germans had not shown Mr. Tiedge on television. There has been speculation here that East Germany's fairly low-key treatment of the defection is motivated by a wish not to severely damage ties with Bonn.

The Leipzig Fair, an international showcase for the East German Government, will open in a week, and it is traditionally an occasion for high-level contacts between the Germans. Until the spy scandal, Mr. Strauss, the Bavarian conservative leader, and former Chancellor Willy Brandt, the Social Democrats' chairman, had been expected to meet soon with Erich Hoenecker, the East German leader.