

REINHARD GEHLEN

**WORLD'S
GREATEST**

SPYMASTER

By Arturo F. Gonzalez, Jr.

A genius at intrigue (he's been called "The Man of 1,000 Mysteries" and "The Shadow General"), his 4,000 man, \$30 million a year West German spy network—the BND—is one of the best in the deadly art of international espionage. In fact, this super-spook is so good the Communists have put a price on his head—even though no one really knows what he looks like!





Gehlen was Nazis' most brilliant intelligence officer.

Gehlen's record of espionage is unparalleled. His most recent feat? He predicted the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia seven months before they attacked.

One by one, the great spies of the 20th Century have passed to their rewards—retirement for a few, for the others, death and eternity possibly in heaven but more likely in a hell lined with the agents they've double-crossed, betrayed and condemned in the dirty-black secret world of international espionage.

Lavrenti Beria, who encircled the world with his Russian spider web of KGB agents, died with Khrushchev's bullet in his head. Allen Dulles, the white-haired, mustachioed pipe smoker who could look like an innocent college professor while his CIA agents were assassinating Reds in half a dozen foreign cities, now lies under a cross in Arlington.

"M"—the legendary British MI-6 chief who became the model for James Bond's boss—has been out of the spook business for almost a generation now.

And just finishing his first year of retirement is Reinhard Gehlen, the 67-year-old German super-spook who well may have been the greatest espionage chief of them all. His 4,000-man, \$30-million-a-year, West German spy network is one of the best in the business—an outfit that for ruthless efficiency puts the best to shame. So far, it's an organization on our side.

Says one CIA source in Bonn, "We're head-and-head with the KGB. Right behind us is England's MI-6, but when Britain retreats East of Suez, their outfit is bound to wither as their Asian contacts dry up. Gehlen's Germans are right behind them, and us *and gaining fast.*"

Gehlen is a man of mystery. German publications trying to profile the elusive spy have labeled him "The Shadow General," "The Man Without a Private Life," "The Man in the Shadow," "The Man of 1,000 Mysteries," and "The Faceless Man."

Correspondents trying to pierce the wall of secrecy around him agree he's never given a press interview to anyone's knowledge. The only reporter to get to him was *Le Monde's* Georges Penchenier who came along on a state visit with General de Gaulle when *le grande Charles* asked to meet Gehlen. Penchenier described the super spy as "a small man, pale, with thin lips, deep-set eyes, a high forehead, uttering hardly more than a courteous 'how-do-you-do'—that is General Gehlen, the mystery man of the century."

His appearance may be unimpressive but Gehlen's record of espionage is unparalleled. It was Gehlen who turned over to the U.S. after W.W. II a complete manual of all of Moscow's agents—names, codes, as well as their operating procedures. Put out by SMERSH, it was a guidebook to Red espionage tactics that the U.S. used effectively for several decades.

Furthermore, Gehlen's agents smuggled out of Russia the original text of Khrushchev's famous speech attacking Stalin at the Twentieth Party Congress in Moscow—a look at the power struggle going on inside the Kremlin which helped to shape free-world political tactics for almost a generation.

When Russian troops smashed into Czechoslovakia in 1968, the first man called to Bonn by a worried West German government was Gehlen, summoned out of retirement for his advice. He pointed out to the German authorities that he had accurately predicted the Russian invasion as early as seven months before the attack. The BND—Gehlen's espionage organization in West Germany—accurately predicted that the Arab-Israeli June 1967 War would break out a week before the first shots were fired.

As Russian troops rolled into Budapest in 1956, they



Tunnel used to tap Commie communications, was 'Gehlen specialty.



Super spy's activities nearly drove Reds crazy. Here, Russian officer inspects elaborate tapping switchboard found in tunnel to East Berlin.

met Hungarian resistance fighters who had been armed and trained by Gehlen's agents to fight the Communists. Explosives, arms and propaganda material were funneled by Gehlen from Germany into Hungary. When the Hungarian liberal, Imre Nagy, was executed by the Communists for rebelling in Hungary, a handful of Gehlen's agents died alongside him.

Gehlen's operatives pulled the most audacious wire-tapping feat of the 1950's when they cut into the East Berlin Communist telephone nerve center, tapping phone calls for nine months before being detected. Gehlen's spies helped operate Radio Free Europe, supervising 28 transmitters broadcasting in 15 Iron Curtain languages, passing news of the free world over the Communist barbed wire to information-starved listeners—and at the same time sending secret code messages via the air waves to espionage agents located deep inside Soviet territory.

During the 1956 Suez Crisis, Bulganin threatened to fire rockets at both Paris and London, attempting to deter Allied troops from landing in Egypt and opening up the Canal. It was Gehlen and his agents who told the allies that the Russians didn't have the missiles to carry out their threats.

As far back as the 1930's, when Gehlen was working for Hitler, he and his agents were helping to shape the course of world affairs. Gehlen participated, for instance, in still-classified talks between the German general staff and the British general staff prior to W.W. II. During these meetings, these professional military men assured each other that war was unthinkable, and while the British were lulled into a sense of false security by the talks, the Germans used them to gain badly needed time for building their armaments stockpiles.

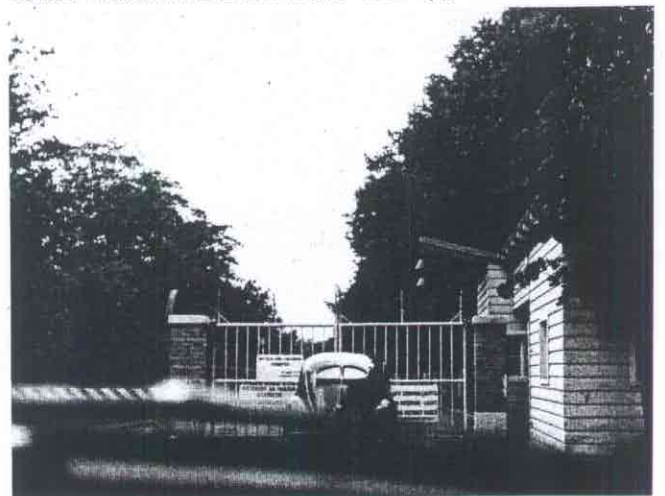
Gehlen helped to shape, "Plan White" the Nazi manual for overrunning Poland and was the first German intelligence officer to cross the frontier in a lead Panzer tank when war broke out.

Ironically, Gehlen helped save Britain in 1940 and thus served to lose the war for the Hitler he served. It was Gehlen's espionage reports which told the Fuhrer that if the Nazis captured Britain, the United States and Japan would probably split up all the remaining pieces of the British Empire and thus become strong enough to topple Hitler ultimately. The Nazi leader took Gehlen's advice, abandoned his attempts to invade England, and turned instead toward a suicidal attempt to conquer the vast steppes of Russia.

Serving as one of Hitler's espionage chiefs on the Eastern Front against Russia, Gehlen was actually able to place a Nazi agent inside Stalin's inner councils where he reported on the

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From his carefully guarded headquarters in Bavaria, Gehlen masterminded his world-wide spy network.



SPYMASTER

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Russian generals' war plans. The Germans had such accurate knowledge of planned Russian counterattacks that, on one occasion, a Soviet general actually committed suicide in despair over constantly being out-foxed by Gehlen's agents.

Not surprisingly, soon after Gehlen was captured by American troops in Bavaria in 1945, he was almost immediately visited by some of the top Allied brass. While technically a POW, he was lavishly entertained by Maj. Gen. William ("Wild Bill") Donovan, head of America's OSS, the forerunner of the CIA. And, just weeks after he surrendered, he was dining with General Eisenhower who pumped him on Russian plans for Europe after the war.

Seeing Gehlen in retirement today, one would hardly suspect him of being the world's greatest spy. His shrewd, cold eyes are usually hidden behind sunglasses under a Bavarian hat pulled down tightly over his forehead. His two-story, brown, wooden house is modest—protected, it should be noted, by the most ferocious dog in the neighborhood. He tools around the countryside in a Mercedes or the family Volkswagen. No longer does he horse-back ride; it would be too easy for a Russian counter-spy to knock him off with a high-powered rifle fired from the woods.

When he travels, he does so on commercial transportation under an assumed name. He has so many identities, colleagues inside the CIA and within his own organization refer to him simply as "Herr Doktor." He never leaves his home without a six-shot revolver on his person and there are usually armed bodyguards lurking about.

He has needed the gun on several occasions and may again. The Communist East German spy apparatus has offered a million marks for his scalp. It's no wonder that pictures of him hardly exist. One American magazine offered \$10,000 for his photo and never found a photographer who could pick up the prize money. A cordon of locked doors and electrified barbed-wire walls block off his home at Starberg Lake in the little southern German town of Berg.

His wife and four children are also possible targets for Communist revenge. His youngsters have grown up quite used to the gray underworld of international espionage. One of his younger girls was asked by a schoolmaster, "Are you the daughter of the famous General?" Dutifully, she lied, "No—he's a distant relative. A cousin I think."

Gehlen's arch enemies are the SSD—the East German State Security Service—which has its headquarters for death and destruction on *Normannen Strasse* in East Berlin. The dreaded outfit is headed by Erich Mielki, a long-time Communist bully boy who brags often about the German police he killed in street riots during the 30's. Mielki's men splattered Gehlen's car with a fusillade in 1953 as he was driving along a country road. The windscreen on his car was bul-

letproof, however, and he escaped. On another occasion, a suitor romancing his daughter turned out to be an East German agent attempting to kidnap her.

Like most of the world's great spies, Gehlen did most of his dirty work anonymously. His name has become a household word in Germany mainly because the East German radio has been thundering about his "war crimes" for more than 15 years now. Super-secretive, he is mentioned in no Wehrmacht report from W.W. II, registered in no war criminals trial and not even listed in the official German appendix of war literature. Surprisingly, he does not speak Russian and has seldom traveled outside Europe.

The post-W.W. II spy network which Gehlen set up uses as its cover name "The South German Industries Company." Its branches are "firms" like the "Venetian Blind Company" in Karlsruhe or the "Agro Trading Company" in Hamburg.

These phony firms are all legally listed in German trade registers and give legitimacy to Gehlen's underground operations. Using company names, it's easy for Gehlen's agents to register cars, rent apartments or offices for secret meetings and pay social security taxes for the network's chemists, drivers and secretaries. Ironically, some of these spy offices actually have to go into the venetian blind business, or into trade, to deal with customers who innocently come looking to buy or sell.

Headquarters for Gehlen's operation is the tiny Bavarian town of Pullach where, within a 36-acre, walled and fortified compound, the instructions are issued which send German spies on missions around the world. The clandestine nature of the compound is given away by the forest of radio antennae which has sprouted over the treetops during the past 20 years. Fiercely growling police dogs being handled by armed guards patrol the perimeter. Searchlights flood the walls. Electronic warning devices are set to ring if intruders threaten. Closed circuit television inspects every visitor. Pullach, ironically, used to be an SS headquarters for Nazi elite troops guarding Rudolph Hess. Proper names are hardly ever mentioned inside the walls at Pullach. People refer to one another, and to BND spies out in the cold, by numbers only. Thus, if part of the network is ever compromised, very few of the agents can be easily identified by the Reds.

The German residents of Pullach didn't know that a spy nest was in their midst for years.

When Gehlen's first spies showed up, it was commonly assumed that these were German scientists captured by the Allies after W.W. II and being put to work on secret scientific projects. Even today, absolute secrecy still exists. Gehlen's operatives who leave the spy organization are forbidden to talk about their work there, and none are allowed to visit Communist countries for any reason whatsoever.

Very few workmen and tradesmen get into the compound. Those that do are

cross-examined, fingerprinted, and have special badges with their photographs on them for instant identification. Vehicles entering are given a very thorough going over. "Switch on your front lights! Switch on light inside the car!" reads a sign outside the main gate, making it easy for the guards to inspect the vehicle thoroughly. Inside the compound is yet another row of barbed wire and that, for years, was Gehlen's house. From here, "No. 30"—his code number—ran the German spy apparatus around the world. From here, his agents fanned out, carrying miniature radio transmitters, cameras small enough to hold in the palm of a man's hand, fountain-pen pistols that fired cyanide cartridges, and pencils with luminous points for writing in the dark.

How did Gehlen, the ex-Nazi, wind up on America's side? To understand this, one must first of all understand that the Gehlen family has been fiercely anti-Russian and anti-Communist since before Reinhard was born. His father fought during W.W. I against the Russians for the duration and came away with a hatred for Moscow. Young Reinhard was ordered to join the Reichswehr by his father to carry on the family military tradition, and Gehlen saw in young Hitler a leader who could keep the Communists from controlling Germany. During his youth, Communist-led strikers all but brought Germany to a standstill. The Reds incited street riots and toppled governments. In Gehlen's formative years, he became an ardent anti-Communist and willingly followed Hitler. His anti-Communism made it easy for him to begin serving as a major opponent to be the Communists.

Gehlen's ability in espionage was discovered early in his military career by the Wehrmacht. Gen. Wilhelm Keitel, Germany's wartime Commander-in-Chief, introduced the young Gehlen to Hitler as "Our most brilliant Intelligence Officer." Hitler at first listened to Gehlen's views, but as the intelligence reports came in, he became bitter at the young man who kept bringing him bad news. To his dismay, Gehlen found that his leader refused to listen to discouraging intelligence analyses, and at this point he began to think of defection, realizing that the war for Germany was probably lost. When Gehlen filed a report saying that the power of the United States was tremendous, Hitler flew into a violent rage and railed at his intelligence specialist that the U.S. could never mobilize in time to influence the outcome of W.W. II.

As German troops pushed deep into Russia during the early, successful days of their attack on the Eastern Front, Gehlen was in the forward lines frequently, interrogating prisoners, taking some Russians and "turning them around"—making them into espionage agents and sending them back behind Stalin's lines to gather information. He set up special "Re-education Schools" in Germany where Russian POW's were treated very well. Those who had families inside German-occupied territory were particularly vulnerable. They were promised they could see their loved ones again

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if they would become German spies behind the Russian defenses. Or, they were threatened that if they refused to cooperate, their wives, children, mothers and fathers would be slaughtered. An amazing number became German spies—and many of them are still operating inside Russia today. As far back as 1943 and 1944, Gehlen was setting up a network which still functions 25 years later.

One Gehlen-trained Soviet spy crossed from the German to Russian lines at night, pretended to be an Inspection Officer and gradually worked his way back through various Red headquarters until he reached Gorki, 900 miles behind Moscow. This most daring mission produced considerable intelligence on Stalin's munitions factories and the amount of war materiel they were preparing for use against the Germans.

By the end of the war on the Eastern Front, Gehlen had also helped create an ex-Red army of more than 900,000 Russians who were fighting alongside the Germans against their own people.

Nevertheless, Hitler continued to distrust Gehlen because his reports were so pessimistic. When one general repeated a grim Gehlen report on Christmas Eve, 1944, Hitler burst out, "This is the greatest bluff since Genghis Khan. Who dug out this nonsense?"

Two weeks later, Panzer General Guderian again used one of Gehlen's intelligence reports in talking to Hitler. Recalls Guderian, "Hitler got very angry when I submitted this material, called it 'completely idiotic' and requested that I immediately send the man who worked it out to a lunatic asylum. At this stage I got mad, too, and told Hitler 'This material comes from General Gehlen, one of my most capable officers on the general staff. If you request General Gehlen to be sent to a lunatic asylum, send me there with him!'" On several occasions, Hitler actually lunged at Guderian to take a poke at him for supporting Gehlen, and Goering had to separate the two.

By this time, Gehlen knew the jig was up. Carefully, he began preparing every report on Russian strength in triplicate and amassing this extra information in steel boxes armed with explosive safety locks which would blow up if opened by unauthorized personnel.

As the Russians rolled over the German forces, Gehlen took a group of his best intelligence officers, about 40 men, and moved them, with the boxes full of Red records, to a hideout in the Bavarian Alps. The group split into three and was ordered not to release any information after becoming American POW's unless they received written permission from Gehlen, himself.

As the American tanks smashed through Bavaria, Gehlen sat high in the Alps. Each morning, as the sun went up, he and his officers would climb the mountains, assuming correctly that the American troops would never go where their jeeps could not carry them. At night, as the US patrols retreated to the major towns, Gehlen and his troops would come down from the hills. Only when one of the secretaries in his unit was hit by machine-gun fire, did the Germans finally decide to surrender.

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When he turned himself in, there was the usual GI foul-up. The Yanks had been capturing so many Nazi generals that one more didn't seem very important. The fact that he had over 30,000 pages of secret documents about the Russians didn't impress anybody. The 36th Infantry Division took him in and passed him back to one of their many "cages" where other Nazi bigwigs were languishing.

Finally, however, the American G-2 apparatus realized that they had a big fish. Gehlen was asked to write a report on his anti-Russian activities and turned in a 130-page biography of his Eastern Front experiences. Immediately, he went into a VIP compound and American G-2 agents went to the Bavarian fields, code-named "Cold Comfort Farm," where he had buried his anti-Communist espionage files. Once the Americans got a good look at the voluminous data, Gehlen was home free. Just a few weeks' later, he was inconspicuously put into the uniform of an American two-star general and whisked over to Washington for a series of Pentagon conferences. Back in Europe, Eisenhower dined with him and Wild Bill Donovan came to call.

Almost immediately, Gehlen was given precisely the deal he wanted: He and his staff were put on the CIA payroll. He was told by the CIA that he would never have to work against German interests. He was also promised that once West Germany was reorganized and a government, he could leave the CIA payroll and go to work for his country once again. Gehlen kept his word and the Americans kept theirs.

Gehlen's network of agents are called "V-Men"—which stands for "*vertrauens maenner*" or "confidence men." Some V-Men are penetrators—agents who have worked their way into important positions inside the Communist organization, working for the Red police or the military. Other V-Men have U responsibilities—these are checking sources, reporting on railroad activity, the status of military forces in a local Soviet area, etc.

Other agents are R-Sources—frequent travelers who can cross borders and move from city to city reporting on various Communist activities. III-Sources are counter-intelligence agents—spies for Gehlen who are working inside the Reds' intelligence network.

Gehlen's recruiting methods are interesting. Everything depends on what he calls "The Tip"—some hint by a Red that he might be converted to a Gehlen spy. When a Gehlen agent thinks he's received a tip from a Red—a hint that a man might be willing to work for the Germans—he passes the tip on to Pullach. He never knows if the man ultimately becomes a Gehlen agent.

A Gehlen "researcher" now takes over. He talks to the Red in some discreet fashion and tries to find out if the man really is interested in become an agent. The prospective spy, for instance, might be an engineer living in Dresden. One day, a former wartime friend from the engineering unit which he belonged to will visit him and renew old relations. The former comrade is a Gehlen agent, a researcher, trying to find out how really anti-Red the engineer is. If the researcher decides the

man is right, he passes the word to Pullach. He, too, then disappears from the scene, never knowing whether the engineer has in fact eventually become a Gehlen spy.

Then Gehlen's recruiters move in. The engineer might be invited to West Germany to a scientific conference. It is then that the Gehlen organization must, as the spies describe it, "pull down their pants." They have to put it to the engineer boldly: does he want to become an agent? The recruiters always make sure they make their offer in safe surroundings. It would be suicidal for the engineer merely to be able to call down the hall and bring Communist police in on the run to nail the recruiting spy. If the engineer accepts, he returns to Dresden and is ultimately contacted by his espionage superior to begin his job. If he refuses, he goes back to Dresden, not knowing who tried to recruit him and not being able to blow the whistle on anybody.

Should the engineer become an agent, he begins to transmit information. Sometimes he uses what Gehlen calls a "dead mail box"—under an old gravestone in a cemetery, for instance. He might put nails in a nearby tree to indicate to the courier each time information is under the gravestone. No nails, and the courier needn't look. Too many trips to a graveyard might arouse the suspicion of the Reds.

"Live letter boxes" are apartments or offices where a Gehlen agent might stop to discuss intelligence with the only other V-Man he ever meets—his boss. A certain telegram or telephone message is the warning signal that the Reds are closing in; then it's every man for himself as the agents flee to the West.

Gehlen has lost a few battles with the East Germans. One agent, Geyer, was recruited by Gehlen and then went back to East Germany to spill the beans, compromising several dozen of Gehlen's men.

Gehlen was extremely successful in using postage stamp dealers as a vehicle for getting information out of East Germany. Agents in East Germany pretended to be stamp merchants and affixed to the margins of the East German stamps they were selling to Western collectors micro-dots of classified information. These were sent in large quantities to alleged West German stamp dealers where the micro-dots were carefully lifted off, blown-up and studied. Always anxious to turn a profit Gehlen's men actually did sell the East German stamps to collectors eventually, once the classified information was removed.

Gehlen was also able to help the British. Some years ago, over 100 British Communist dockyard workers were trained in Germany to burn up British ships and then sent back to the U.K. to set fires. Gehlen passed along the information on who they were to the British and MI-6 was able to round them all up.

In the "Brutus" affair, a Gehlen agent called Walter Gramsch was actually able to penetrate the East German Secret Service and, for a number of years, passed back to Bonn information on what the East German spies were up to.

This war between the two German secret services has been particularly ruthless. In the first 15 years after the end of

W.W. II, there were 255 kidnappings and 240 attempted abductions in West Berlin alone. For years now, agents have been slinking back and forth with cyanide-filled guns, assassinating their opposite numbers. Because virtually every West German has some friends or relatives in East Germany (and vice versa), it's been particularly easy for the espionage networks to infiltrate one another. Gehlen almost lost his job over Heinz Felfe who, for 10 years, ran the Russian desk of West Germany's counter-intelligence service while taking orders from Moscow. He was Gehlen's Kim Philby. When Felfe was exposed as a double agent, Gehlen had to rebuild almost his entire East German network of spies—which he did in just seven years.

The one prize which eluded Gehlen during his long spy career was to assume supreme control over the NATO espionage network. As good as he was, the Allies just couldn't accept the idea of having an ex-Nazi running their spy apparatus. Gehlen insists that very few of his agents are ex-Gestapo men, but the French and British weren't so sure. Also, the recent rash of suicides among German intelligence men indicates that there continues to be a certain amount of Russian rot inside the German espionage network.

Moreover, there have been some disturbing discoveries that Gehlen's operation is so all-inclusive that his agents have even been doing a certain amount of spying on Germany's allies. In the world of espionage this is not unusual; America spies on Great Britain and France, and both of them do the same to the U.S. But Gehlen's agents may have been a little bit more aggressive about it than is generally considered proper. Gehlen is said to have once remarked, "We don't read our friends' mail," but the allies aren't so sure that some of their secrets are not winding up in the sealed, brown envelopes marked With the German Top Secret stamp—bright red crosses—which go each day to the Palais Schaenberg in Bonn.

Whatever master the German Intelligence Service ultimately serves, it must be said that Gehlen has left his impression on that organization forever, as well as becoming part of the German lexicon. When a German is asked an impossible question, he often responds "Das weiss nur der Gehlen"—"Only Gehlen knows that."

★ THE END

MASS MUTINY

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mock battle site he was stripped to the buff again, and even when it started to snow he wouldn't don anything more than a pair of GI long johns.

The same week the Army bounced Burchill as "unsuitable," Dick Steinke, a 27-year-old lieutenant with six months Vietnam service, suddenly sickened of the war and disobeyed an order transferring him to a counter-guerrilla unit. He was court-martialed on Okinawa, stripped of

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