

Bonn's Spy: 'Mr. Available'

By Joe Alex Morris Jr.
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BONN—Guenter Guillaume is stubby, 47, a typical German bureaucrat, who combs his black hair straight back and wears semi-rimless glasses. He is average German overweight, lives in a modest row house in Bonn's diplomatic suburb of Bad Godesberg and drives a middle-class car.

Guillaume also shares the German obsession for hard work. "He was Mr. Available," one acquaintance recalls. "Whenever there was a dirty job to be done, no matter what the time or place, Guenter was ready to do it."

This untiring lust for hard work and his apparent dedication to the ideals of West Germany's Social Democratic Party, brought Guillaume close to the seat of power. On Feb. 1, 1973, he was named one of Chancellor Willy Brandt's three personal aides.

It was the closest an alleged Communist spy is known to have come to sharing the most intimate secrets of government here.

As one of West Berlin Mayor Klaus Schuetz's aides said, "It was as if John Ehrlichman turned out to be a Soviet agent."

How did Guillaume do it? His was a masterful performance, even in a country which long has been known as a happy hunting ground for Communist agents.

Rudi Arndt, the mayor of Frankfurt and one of Guillaume's promoters since the 1950s, was thunderstruck at the news that Guillaume was a confessed agent:

"If it's all true, then Guenter was the greatest actor and at the same time the greatest spy of all time."

Yet the fact is that Guillaume made it simply by plugging away. He was a Sammy Glick rather than a James Bond.

As such, he represents a new and much more dangerous type of agent than the routine type from earlier days, who was likely to be a bankrupt small businessman, a blackmailed homosexual or a simple adventurer. As a Social Democrat documentation on the case put it:

Guillaume is the typical representative of a new generation of East German agents, who in the '50s slip-



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In September, confessed spy Guenter Guillaume walked to the right of Chancellor Willy Brandt.

ped into the federal Republic disguised as refugees."

This new type agent is a long-term investment. Guillaume has said only that he is a captain in the East German People's Army and "I ask you to respect my oath as an officer." He was sent to the West in 1956, under humble circumstances, to build a new life like any other refugee from Communism.

He started in Frankfurt, and for a while ran a wurst stand while his wife was selling flowers. He graduated into photography and through it made his first connection with the Social Democrats.

Soon he was working upward in the party's Frankfurt organization, with a reputation as a tireless worker. But few gave him high marks for intellectual brilliance.

Indeed, when the call came in 1970 to go to Bonn, the main criticism of Guillaume was that he was not mentally up to the task assigned him in the chancellor's office.

The path to the source of

power took 17 years. West German authorities still do not know the details of what Guillaume transmitted to East Germany, but there is little doubt anywhere that the investment paid off for the East German intelligence services.

It is accepted that Guillaume gave East Germany the fullest information about Bonn's negotiating positions on various East-West treaties. It is still unclear whether he was able, from his desk in Brandt's office, to gather intelligence information on Western agents in East Germany, or about private organizations which help East Germans flee their country — not to mention military and inter-allied affairs.

The federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, the German version of the FBI, once estimated there were 15,000 active spies in this country. No one challenged that figure.

About 80 per cent of these spies are said to be working for East Germany. In 1972, 48 persons were sentenced here on espionage charges,

and 42 of them allegedly worked for East Germany.

The vast majority of these cases are almost trivial: East German refugees, with relatives still trapped in the other Germany, are blackmailed into collecting information, largely of an industrial or economic nature. But many are not trivial.

They include parliamentary deputies and high officials in West German military and counterintelligence circles. One was Adm. Hermann Luedke, who was in charge of logistics at NATO headquarters in Brussels until he retired and subsequently committed suicide as the ring closed around him.

Another suspect was Gen. Horst Wendland, another suicide who had been No. 2 man in the famed Gehlen organization, the core of the West German counterintelligence network.

The list includes simple code clerks in the foreign ministry, executive secretaries from various ministries and second-level people in all walks.

One of the encouragements to espionage has always been the knowledge that if caught, there was a good chance of receiving merely a minimal prison sentence. Political parties have agreed on a program of exchanging spies for political prisoners in East German prisons.

Karl Carstens, parliamentary leader of the opposition, says the risk involved in spying here is "virtually nil." Another opposition deputy, Gerhard Reddeman, has criticized the system under which enemy agents are allowed to remain in West Germany after exposure and may even apply for pensions.

There is also much criticism of the West German counterintelligence network, which involves 13 different agencies whose coordination sometimes is less than perfect. But in a case such as that of Guillaume, who took 17 years to reach his ultimate insider position, no amount of coordination will uncover an agent.

As a Bonn counterintelligence expert put it, "There could still be a hundred other Guillames in Bonn, and they could be in any or every party."