

Willy Brandt Resigns Over Spy Scandal

Post 5/11/74
Reuter
BONN, May 6—Chancellor Willy Brandt officially resigned tonight as a result of an East German spy scandal.

The 60-year-old chancellor asked President Gustav Heinemann to release him from his duties, effective immediately, and to appoint Foreign Minister Walter Scheel as acting chancellor until a successor has been elected by the lower house of parliament, the Bundestag, according to an official statement.

Brandt, a Social Democrat elected chancellor in October 1969, held high-level meetings with politicians and government officials throughout the day today. His foreign minister, Walter Scheel, cancelled a planned trip to chair a meeting of the Common Market's industrial council in Brussels Tuesday to attend an urgent Cabinet meeting in Bonn.

A top aide to Brandt, Guenter Guillaume, was arrested on April 24 and subsequently admitted he was a spy for East Germany. At the time, Brandt expressed shock and dismay that East Germany would plant a spy in the West German chancellor's office just as Brandt was moving to normalize relations between the two halves of the country, divided since World War II.

Brandt delayed for a few days an exchange of liaison officers — de facto ambassadors, although the two do not have formal diplomatic relations — to protest the spy plot in his office.

But there was nothing to predict Brandt's imminent resignation.

In his letter to Heinemann, Brandt said:

"I accept the political responsibility for negligence in connection with the Guillaume espionage affair and declare my resignation from the office of federal chancellor.

"At the same time, I request that this resignation should take immediate effect and that my deputy, Federal Minister Scheel, be entrusted with

the office of federal chancellor until a successor has been elected."

Brandt, the first Social Democrat to be elected chancellor since before Adolf Hitler seized power in 1932, headed a coalition government with Scheel's smaller Free Democratic Party. Scheel also holds the title of vice chancellor.

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After the coalition's initial victory in 1969, it was returned to power with a larger majority in November 1972.

Scheel was scheduled to stand in the presidential election on May 15 as the government coalition's candidate to succeed Heinemann.

The Bonn government had at first attempted to minimize the importance of Guillaume — "the man nobody noticed."

But the official version that Guillaume had no access to secret documents and was fed worthless "play material" had met with skepticism, even from newspapers normally friendly toward Brandt's left-liberal government.

Brandt's resignation removes a major figure from the world political scene and deprives Europe of a man who seemed to tower above other European politicians.

A keen supporter of the European Common Market, he worked ceaselessly to get Britain and other applicant nations into the European Economic Community.

His controversial *Ostpolitik* policy of reconciling West Germany with Communist East Europe won him the 1971 Nobel Peace Prize.

Ironically, it was the presence of a man as his close aide who has admitted spying for East Germany which brought an end to his leadership.

The fruits of Brandt's policy of détente with the communist world included treaties with Moscow and Warsaw and the signing of a four-power agreement over West Berlin which at last safeguarded the rights of the beleaguered city.

It was in Berlin, where he was lord mayor for nine years, that the dashing figure of Brandt first caught the public eye. He seemed to epitomize the strength of the Berliners in refusing to be intimidated by the Communists.

In 1972, Brandt's efforts led to the signing of a treaty between the two halves of Germany that had been divided for 27 years. The treaty in turn was to assure the entry of both West and East Germany into the ranks of the United Nations.

The ex-chancellor was born Herbert Karl Frahm in Lubeck on Dec. 18, 1913. He never knew his father, and grew up in poverty.

He joined the Socialist Youth movement in the early 1930s and was working as a journalist for a Lubeck news-

paper when Hitler came to power in 1933.

He adopted the name Willy Brandt as a cover to deceive the Gestapo, while he worked for the Socialist Workers Party, and eventually fled into exile in Norway.

As a reporter for Scandinavian newspapers, he went to Spain for five months in 1937 to report the Spanish civil war from the Republican side.

A year before the outbreak of World War II, the Nazis stripped him of his German citizenship, and he obtained Norwegian citizenship.

Long afterwards, taunted for not taking back his "German" name, Brandt retorted: "Everything in my life worth mentioning has happened to Willy Brandt, not to Herbert Frahm."

When the Naz armies overran Norway in 1940, the young exile was again in grave danger. Friends gave him an ill-fitting Norwegian army uniform and he disappeared into a prisoner-of-war camp. Released after a few weeks, he fled again, this time to Sweden.

Only when Hitler's Third Reich was finally crushed in 1945 could he return to his home country—as a Norwegian correspondent covering the Nuremberg War Crimes Trial.

What he saw at Nuremberg led him to write a book called "Criminals and Other Germans," which pointed out the difference between the war criminals and a nation capable of redemption.

The offer of a job as press attache at the Norwegian military mission in Berlin brought him to the devastated city in the uniform of a Norwegian major—something which die-hard German nationalists still hold against him.

Brandt's resignation is certain to plunge the West German government into political chaos.

Scheel, who becomes acting chancellor, was to be his party's candidate for president when Heinemann resigns in June. The election was scheduled for May 15.

Sources said they expected the leadership of the Social Democrats and the Free Democrats to form a committee Wednesday or Thursday to discuss a new coalition team and government program.

The sources said the Bundestag was expected to elect the new chancellor on May 16, a day after the election of a successor to President Heinemann by an electoral college.