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East Germans Sentence U.S. Citizen to 15 Years

Special to The New York Times

BERLIN, Sept. 29—A court in East Berlin today sentenced an American free-lance photographer and art student, Peter Feinauer, of Providence, R. I., to 15 years in prison on a charge of espionage.

The sentence was the severest ever given a United States citizen by an East German court.

In a report on the trial, A.D.N., the East German press service, said Mr. Feinauer, 27-years-old, had been found guilty of committing espionage and other crimes against East Germany as an agent of the United States Central Intelligence Agency.

Studied in West Berlin

Western representatives were not admitted to the courtroom, but officials said that Wolfgang Vogel, an East Berlin lawyer who has defended numerous Western nationals,

Student From Rhode Island Accused of Espionage— Term Is Severest Given

represented Mr. Feinauer at the trial.

Mr. Feinauer attended courses in design and photography at the Academy of Arts in West Berlin. He occasionally drove a cab and worked as a photographer.

According to A.D.N., Mr. Feinauer was recruited by the C.I.A. in West Berlin in 1961, two years after he had first come to live in the city.

Mr. Feinauer was alleged to have sought to establish espionage contacts with Government and social agencies and organizations. He was also charged with having helped East Germans flee to West Berlin.

A.D.N. said he produced filmed material of "border pro-

vocations" and East German border fortifications for the C.I.A., for West German institutions and for the National Broadcasting Company.

It could not be immediately learned when and where Mr. Feinauer was arrested. Another American, Roland Wiedenhoef, a university teacher, was arrested in East Berlin earlier this month. The charges against him have not been made public.

N.B.C. Denies Using Film

Frank Donghi, manager of news for the National Broadcasting Company, said here yesterday that N.B.C. "never used a piece of Mr. Feinauer's film."

Mr. Donghi said that in 1961 "we looked at a piece of film he submitted, but it was returned and we did not use it."

"He was one of countless free-lances who have submitted film to us," he said.