

Spy Business Doing Nicely

By Murray Seeger
Los Angeles Times

Bonn

West Germany continues to be one of the world's busiest spy centers, even though the espionage trial of Guenther Guillaume and his wife has been in the news for six months and most observers expect them to be found guilty shortly on at least some of the charges.

Guillaume's arrest in 1974 exposed East German espionage operations high in government and forced the resignation of then-Chancellor Willy Brandt, who only recently has recovered his political standing as chairman of the Social Democratic Party.

The chief federal prosecutor, Siegfried Buback, has asked the court to give Guillaume 15 years and his wife ten years in jail. They already have been in custody 18 months.

Regardless of the court decision on the Guillaumes, however, espionage goes forward at a steady pace.

German authorities estimate there are 15,000 spies of various types working against the interests of the Bonn government at any one time. While the counterintelligence services claim to "neutralize" about 700 agents a year, the Communist governments have stepped up their efforts.

In his annual report on security last spring, Interior Min-

ister Werner Maihofer said Bonn's counterespionage agents uncover the country because of the proven ineptness of the Bonn Counter-Intelligence Office (BFV), the size of the American military presence in the country and because Germany is the reception point for a large number of defectors across its long border with the Communist world.

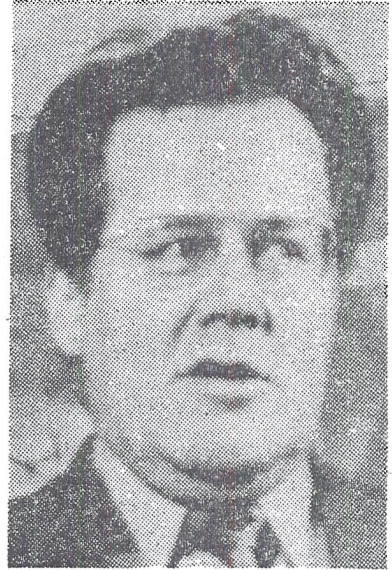
The greatest number of agents operating in the federal republic come from East Germany, which operates a remarkably large espionage service. The next largest contingents reportedly come from Poland, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union.

"The Soviet embassy in Bonn is unusual compared with other Soviet embassies because of the relatively smaller complement of KGB (espionage) agents on its staff, twice as many spy contacts in 1974 as in 1973 despite improved political relations between Germany and its Eastern neighbors.

Mathofer admitted the counterintelligence agency had erred seriously in failing to uncover Guillaume's work earlier.

The East Germans, he said, were interested in the usual military and political secrets but also were anxious to uncover escape systems from the Communist world.

The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency also has a sizable force in



GUENTHER GUILLAUME
A top East German agent

staff, "a qualified source said. "They seem to let the East Germans and Poles do their work for them."

The KGB maintains a large base just outside East Berlin, however, and in East Berlin itself, KGB agents work openly. A foreign journalist who recently found himself being followed by two apparent agents startled them by asking, and receiving, directions in Russian.

Guillaume, according to court testimony, was typical of the hundreds of agents whom East Germany slipped across the border to the West 20 years ago

in West Germany

before the Berlin Wall was erected.

Although he was then a captain in the East German intelligence service, Guillaume was able to disappear into Western bourgeois life as a "political refugee." Actually, he was a "deep plant" of the Communist spy master, Colonel General Markus (Mischa) Wolf.

Guillaume started his new life by selling hot dogs in Frankfurt in 1956, and the following year became an enthusiastic worker for the local Social Democrats. He was so diligent that in 1969 he was invited to take a minor job in Bonn, and three years later to move up as a personal aide to Brandt.

In that job he appeared to be the perfect "beamter," or German bureaucrat. He bustled around with a full briefcase, never far from Brandt's shoulder, and had a reputation for being efficient and friendly to newsmen.

At home, according to his wife's statement to police, Guillaume would put on the earphones of the classic spy and send coded messages back to East Berlin. Sometimes they were addressed to "the first team," meaning the Communist Party Presidium, or "the club" the executive committee.

Crystal Guillaume's job was to wrap in fancy gift paper the official papers that her husband

copied. She would wear a particular dress or coat, as arranged in advance, and head off to different towns to meet couriers who carried certain newspapers to identify themselves.

One reason for the checkered record of the German counterespionage service has been its history of high executive turnover and apparent disloyalty. It also has been used illegally to gather information on political figures.

The postwar German Intelligence Office (BND) was run by the legendary General Reinhard Gehlen, who had been in charge of penetrating Russian military secrets for the Hitler regime.

After working for the U.S. Army, Gehlen set up the BND in 1955. But the operation was seriously flawed when it was discovered in 1961 that the chief of its Soviet counterespionage section was a spy for Moscow.

Another famous counterspy was Dr. Otto John, who defected to East Germany in 1954 only to return to the West 18 months later. He claimed to have been kidnaped and taken to the East but was sent to jail for four years as a traitor.

Lieutenant General Gerhard Wessel reorganized the agency following Gehlen's retirement in 1968. But the service was stunned again that fall when its veteran administrative chief, Horst Wendland, shot himself in his office

An Agreement In Rhodesia

Salisbury, Rhodesia

African nationalist leader Joshua Nkomo and Rhodesian Prime Minister Ian Smith yesterday signed a pact pledging to resolve the ten-year deadlock between black and white in the breakaway British colony.

British insistence on eventual majority rule by the country's six million blacks led its white rulers to seize sovereignty in November, 1965. Attempts since then to negotiate a constitutional settlement have failed.

Reuters

under mysterious circumstances.

Herbert Schreuebers, who headed counterintelligence for 17 years, was forced to resign in 1973 because of his record of Nazi activities.

Just as the U.S. FBI often has been accused of not cooperating with the CIA, so the German intelligence agencies, BND and BFV, were criticized for lack of coordination in failing to root out Guillaume before he caused shocking embarrassment to the government.

Dr. Richard Meier was named head of the BFV last summer to replace Guenther Nollau, who was the official fired for missing Guillaume.

As with any secret organization, the German intelligence service has been criticized often for failures at least partly because many of its successes are unknown.