

The East German Secret Service Structure and Operational Focus

by
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INTRODUCTION

The East German secret service, more than any other Eastern bloc service, exercises the bulk of its activities in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). Until 1945 the two Germanies shared a common past and culture and Germans in East and West still speak the same language. Consequently, it is much easier for East German agents to penetrate West German society and recruit West German citizens than it is for the Soviet KGB. Of the roughly 4000 Communist spies in West Germany, some 2500-3000 originate in East Germany.¹

Most of the East German espionage is conducted by the Ministry of State Security (MfS) at the Normannenstrasse in East Berlin. Military intelligence operations are chiefly conducted by the Ministry of National Defence (MfNV). Founded in February 1950 — five months after the creation of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) — the Ministry's main purpose was to contribute to consolidating the new Communist regime imposed on the population in the Soviet controlled zone of Germany. About 80% of the Ministry's activities continue to be focussed on internal control and repression and only 20% of its work is devoted to external espionage.² As an organ of the GDR Ministerial Council the MfS is to protect "the socialist order of state and society against hostile attacks on the sovereignty and territorial of the GDR, the socialist achievements and the peaceful life of the people."³

The Soviets had a strong hand in the creation of the East German state security apparatus. They realized that none of their client regimes would survive without an effective deterrent to freedom and that the mere presence of the Red Army would not suffice. Consequently, the strong bond of brotherhood between the Soviet "Checkists" (the "Cheka" or "Extraordinary Committee for Combating Counter-revolutionaries and Sabotage" was the Leninist successor to the notorious Czarist secret police, Okhrana) has been emphasized throughout.

Initially, the Ministry of State Security (MfS) had an entirely domestic function. Espionage operations abroad were conducted by the "Institute of Economic Research" (*Institut fuer Wirtschaftswissenschaftliche Forschung*, IWF) created in 1951 and formally residing under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Political responsibility was placed in the hands of an under-minister, Anton Ackermann, but day-to-day activities were run by Markus Wolf — a promising young man who enjoyed the full confidence of the Soviets. However, in 1953 IWF was incorporated in the Ministry of the Interior and Wolf became head of "Chief Department XV." The Ministry of State Security

temporarily ceased to exist. All its duties were taken over by the Interior Ministry until 1955 when the Ministry of State Security was recreated. A year later all foreign intelligence operations were delegated to the MfS's new "Chief Department of Intelligence" (Hauptverwaltung Aufklärung, HVA) under the direction of Markus Wolf. Erich Mielke became the new Minister of State Security in 1957.

Throughout the 1950s Soviet and East German espionage operations in West Germany were substantial. Wolf soon got a reputation of being the Eastern Bloc's most efficient and dangerous intelligence chief. Under the direction of KGB general Ivan Alexandrovitch Serov, large numbers of East German agents were sent to West Germany, most of whom were spotted as agents. An estimated ten percent who remained undetected still represent a considerable threat. One well-informed source told the author that as a result of the Serov operation there may be many more than the estimated 3000 East German agents.⁴

The Soviets also continue to undertake considerable activity in West Germany, which they consider their main European target. The Soviet network is, partially at least, independent of the East German network. Both Soviets and East Germans managed to penetrate the West German government apparatus, political parties and counter-intelligence service with great effect. One of the Soviets' early successes was the planting of a double agent in the West German Federal Intelligence Service (BND). Before his arrest in 1961 Heinz Felfe had risen to the position of head of the BND's counter-espionage department dealing with communist affairs. Felfe, who recently published his memoirs and now lives in East Berlin, had been recruited by Soviet intelligence as early as 1949. Two years later he joined the newly founded "Organisation Gehlen" — the predecessor of the BND. Trusted by his superiors, and particularly by BND chief Reinhard Gehlen, he managed to climb to a very high position within the BND thus being able to provide the Soviets with the names of many BND agents operating in the East.⁵ Further, both the Soviets and the East Germans run informants and spies within some of the established political parties. One very high level Soviet agent was recruited in the sixties, or possibly even earlier, and provided the Soviets with unique information on German negotiations with the East during the Chancellorship of Willy Brandt. The politician involved still plays a prominent role in West German politics.⁶

THE "CHIEF DEPARTMENT OF INTELLIGENCE" (HVA)

The MfS's "Chief Department of Intelligence" (HVA) is generally considered the most efficiently run Eastern Bloc secret service. The Soviet KGB relies heavily on the HVA, particularly on its ability to obtain militarily significant Western technology. HVA-officers are recruited from among the most loyal elements of the East German Socialist Unity Party youth movement (FDJ) and the party itself. Most of them receive higher education. Recruits first become unofficial "assistants" (*Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter*, IM) during which time they are thoroughly tested before actually joining the service. The quality of

HVA-officers has steadily risen over the years. Unofficial assistants do not necessarily have to become full-fledged HVA operatives. As recruits from other ministries, or the academic community, or as students, the highly useful unofficial assistants, sometimes widely respected scholars of the East German Academy of Sciences who during international scientific forums and conferences perform significant duties for their MfS "control officer" (*Fuerungsoffizier*, FO), make themselves indispensable to HVA officers. Additionally, control officers also run a number of agents in the West.

An important role is played by so-called "agents of influence" who occupy important positions in Western governmental, economic or scientific institutions or in the media. Not all of the agents of influence are actually recruited by the HVA; only rarely is such an agent of influence a HVA officer. This was the case, for example, with Guenter Guillaume, the legendary East German spy and confidant of former West German chancellor Willy Brandt.

HVA officers in West Germany often assume new identities using fictitious names, or more usually, the names of dead persons. In order to be sufficiently credible such "illegals" are provided with "legends," that is, stories about their personal backgrounds and reasons for their being in the West. As an example one could cite the man using the name of "Peter Kraus" who arrived in Bonn in 1965. He claimed to be an engineer who had just returned from South Africa and that it was his intention to resume his studies at Bonn university. His real mission, however, was to recruit female secretaries in well-placed positions in government ministries in Bonn. In June 1966 he became the control officer of Helge Berger, chief secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.⁷ Numerous other instances could be given.

That the functions and duties of the HVA are manifold is apparent from its detailed structure and operational focus. There are at least fifteen departments (*Abteilungen*), all subdivided into smaller departments or units (*Referate*).⁸

Department I concerns itself with the penetration of the Federal Government of West Germany, that is the Federal Chancellor's office, the government ministries and other governmental institutions.

Department II targets political parties, their organizations and members of parliament.

Department III concentrates on espionage activities in other West European countries. Before 1968 the scope of Department II was much wider: it focussed on the whole (capitalist) Western world, with the exception of Germany. With the increasing emphasis on HVA operations in the United States, Canada and the Third World, it became mandatory to create two new Departments, viz. **Department XI** (North America) and **Department XII** (Third World). The remaining staff of Department

III could now concentrate on Western Europe. There are subdepartments dealing with each European country or group of countries (such as the Benelux). Austria is a special target.

Department IV deals with military intelligence, especially military-strategic planning. It is not clear whether these activities coincide with those of the Defence Ministry. Conflict of competence between civil and military intelligence services is common practice in the Communist Party states.

Department V concerns itself with economic analysis.

Department VI plays a key role in training and infiltrating agents into West Germany. It is responsible for the so-called "illegals" and agents posing as refugees.

Department VII deals with intelligence analysis.

Department VIII is the operational techniques department. It prepares, for example, forged travel documents and provides all forms of technical assistance to HVA operatives such as wire-tapping equipment, hidden microphones, etc.

Department IX is in charge of counter-intelligence. The chief target is the Federal Intelligence Service (BND).

Department X deals with "disinformation." It prepares and floats fabricated stories, forgeries of official documents of Western governments with a view to deceiving public opinion in the target country and disrupting its relations with other countries. The term used for these activities is "active measures." Active measures are sometimes coordinated with the Soviet KGB and/or the other Eastern bloc services. The KGB is estimated to spend some 300 million West German Marks on active measures.⁹

Department XI coordinates the increasing activities in the United States and Canada.

Department XII concerns itself with the Third World.

Departments XIII (basic research and nuclear physics), **XIV** (electronics and micro-electronics), and **XV** (construction of engines and vehicles) are the "operational departments" of the "Sector Science and Technology" (*Sektor Wissenschaft und technik*, SWT). This unit was an outgrowth of Department V in 1970 when the need for more scientific and technological intelligence gathering was felt.¹⁰ The chief occupation of the SWT is

industrial espionage with increasing emphasis on high technology, especially computer and nuclear technologies. In addition to West Germany, Japan and the United States are major targets. A former HVA officer, Werner Stiller, who defected to West Germany in 1979 revealed much about the successful HVA attempts to obtain embargoed technology. He worked for Department XIII which was subdivided into four smaller departments (*Referate*) dealing with (nuclear) physics (Subunit I), microbiology and bacteriological warfare (Subunit II), chemistry (Subunit III) and the United States (Subunit IV). The head of the Sector Science and Technology was, and presumably still is, Horst Vogel.

MARKUS WOLF AND ERICH MIELKE

Markus Wolf and Erich Mielke have determined both the quality and quantity of East German intelligence operations for more than thirty years. In February 1987 it was officially announced in the East German party newspaper *Neues Deutschland* that Colonel General Markus Wolf was "retiring from active service at the Ministry for State Security at his own request."¹¹ Rumors soon spread that Wolf retired for health reasons. German intelligence sources claimed that Wolf was suffering from the Bekhterev disease which affects the spinal column.¹² However, one month after he had retired Wolf looked quite fit when he attended a concert in the Palace of Friedrichstadt.¹³ Others, therefore, believe that Wolf's retirement was due to a decision made by East German party leader Erich Honecker who was thought to disagree with Wolf's views and lifestyle. Moreover, Wolf reportedly could not get on very well with his immediate boss, State Security Minister Erich Mielke.¹⁴ Wolf was succeeded by his former deputy, Major General Werner Grossmann, considered to be "one of the Eastern bloc's most dangerous Western experts."¹⁵

Wolf never had been a party careerist; he concentrated fully on his job. Invariably, he relied on his KGB friends in Moscow and they, in turn, fully trusted Wolf. Markus Johannes Wolf (1923) grew up in Stalinist Russia and acquired Soviet citizenship. He received his training at the COMINTERN school at Kushnarenkovo and returned to Germany in 1945. After a brief period of journalism and diplomatic service, the Soviets pushed Wolf into an intelligence career and in 1956 he became the chief of the newly formed HVA. By 1960 Wolf could call himself Deputy Minister of State Security. Unlike Erich Mielke, Wolf was never elected into the socialist Unity Party's Central Committee - a prerequisite for being a candidate for the post of State Security Minister. In April 1986, Wolf was again by-passed. Instead, the eleventh party congress granted another MfS General, Rudolf Mittig, full Central Committee membership.¹⁶ By then it has become clear that Mittig, and not Wolf, was the most likely candidate to succeed the aging Mielke. This may well have contributed to his decision to resign ten months later.

Erich Mielke, born in 1907, was an active member of the pre-war Communist Party of Germany (KPD) which he joined in 1925. Mielke's party duties were mainly confined to guarding the party's headquarters in Berlin. In August 1931, after Mielke shot a policeman in the back, the party provided an escape route for him and Mielke finally ended up in the Soviet Union. A Berlin court convicted him *in absentia*. When in 1945 Mielke returned to Berlin, the public prosecutor issued a warrant against him but the Soviets intervened on Mielke's behalf and the public prosecutor had to flee to West Berlin.¹⁷

Mielke was close to the previous East German party leader Walter Ulbricht, but his relationship with the present party leader Erich Honecker is not always clear. Honecker evidently did not hamper Mielke's career. In 1970 Mielke first became a candidate member of the Politburo, then, in 1976, a full member. In 1980 he received the additional rank of army general.

Mielke is believed to be a doctrinal hardliner and, occasionally, he may have clashed with Erich Honecker over the latter's policy of rapprochement towards West Germany. Mielke obviously has feared that too many contacts between the populations of East and West Germany might adversely affect domestic security. Wolf's HVA, on the other hand, tended to favor an extension of inter-German relations since these would provide new opportunities for recruiting West German citizens and conducting other espionage missions in the West.

More recently Mielke and Honecker have been united in rejecting Soviet party leader Gorbachev's new openness (*glasnost*) and the release of political dissidents. Whether Wolf, in contrast to Mielke, supported the new Soviet line is not clear. Wolf's background in Stalinist Russia, and his refusal to criticize Stalin, would testify to the contrary. Wolf was said not to get along with the present KGB chief, Viktor Chebrikov, an ally of Gorbachev.¹⁸ With the KGB no longer protecting him, Wolf had no other option but to resign. Quite the reverse could also be possible, however. Hoping to exploit the West's positive response to the new Soviet line, Wolf and his HVA might have had the intention of further penetrating Western society and its institutions. This may have led to a serious clash with the party leadership who seemed unified in its rejection of *glasnost*, at least initially. Consequently, Honecker had Wolf removed.

POLITICAL ESPIONAGE IN BONN: USING FEMALE SECRETARIES

Political espionage operations are conducted with a view to influencing the political decision-making process of the target country. The bulk of political espionage operations carried out by the HVA are conducted in Bonn. Markus Wolf introduced the method of recruiting female secretaries in key positions in the governmental apparatus by having them sexually seduced by the HVA's well-trained agents. Both HVA and KGB run systematic programs of "sex-espionage." Both have run whorehouses, escort agencies and "clubs" in major European capitals

and in West Berlin. The KGB term for agents with a mission to seduce female secretaries in Western government ministries is "swallows."

These "swallows" or "romeos" — as they are called in East Berlin — are usually control officers who have penetrated West German society under false identities. Sometimes they claim to work for a Western intelligence service (false flag recruitment). Helge Berger, chief secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was told by her lover that he worked for British intelligence and that there was nothing wrong in passing on information to a NATO country. In most cases, however, recruited secretaries are sooner or later informed of their lover's true intelligence connection. Should she then refuse to cooperate any further, her spy/lover will invariably tell her that the "love relationship" will end or that she will be betrayed for passing on secrets to another government. By that time the relationship between the HVA officer and the target person will usually be so intimate that it would be very difficult to break loose. If the secretary's activities or those of her control officer are traced by West German counter-espionage, both usually "disappear" to East Berlin. The weak spot is the control officer, whose identity sooner or later is blown by counter-espionage.

Sometimes, the HVA succeeds in planting a professional intelligence officer in a key position in a government ministry or a political organization. When Guenter Guillaume came to West Germany in 1956, he was accompanied by his wife Christel. Posing as refugees, both were professionally trained intelligence officers with a mission to penetrate the Social Democrat Party (SPD). Mrs. Guillaume got a secretarial job within the SPD and soon had access to vital information. (See below.) More cases of trained female intelligence officers within the West German government apparatus became known in 1985 when a number of them suddenly "disappeared."

For more than twelve years a woman using the identity of "Sonja Lueneburg" served as the private secretary to Dr. Martin Bangemann, general secretary of the ruling Free Democratic Party (FDP) and currently the Minister of Economic Affairs. Her position provided her with intimate knowledge of the party, its leadership and its role in formulating the policy towards the Eastern bloc (*Ostpolitik*). In August 1985 she suddenly disappeared, probably to East Berlin. Subsequent investigations showed that "Miss Lueneburg" had been a trained intelligence officer using professional camera equipment for photographing documents. The real Sonja Lueneburg was a West Berlin hairdresser who had moved to Colmar, France, in 1966. Some time later the other "Sonja Lueneburg" appeared and informed the French authorities of her intention "to return" to Germany. This "Sonja Lueneburg" then settled in Frankfurt and later in Bonn where she started making a career in the FDP. Meanwhile the real Sonja Lueneburg had disappeared — presumably to East Berlin.¹⁹ Since the "Colmar-route" had been used frequently by the East German secret service to infiltrate "illegals" into West Germany, one may assume that the alleged Miss Lueneburg had been a HVA officer.²⁰ Why she so suddenly disappeared in August 1985 is not known. Someone must have informed

her that suspicions against her had begun to take a serious turn by the summer of 1985. Possibly it was someone in West German counter-espionage.

"Miss Lueneburg" was not the only Bonn secretary to disappear in 1985. An East German refugee, Ursula Richter, entered the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) in 1951. After some five years she returned to East Germany. At the end of 1964, however, another lady assuming the identity of the real Ursula Richter was infiltrated into West Germany. She used a forged passport ostensibly issued by the West German consulate in Toronto.²¹ In 1972, she successfully applied for the position of bookkeeper at the Bonn-based Union of East European Expellees (*Bund der Vertriebenen*, BdV), an organization with a right-wing political tinge and influential in Christian Democratic circles. Although she provided information about German expellees from Eastern Europe living in Germany, her position gave her access to important, sensitive governmental information. It is thought that the alleged Miss Richter could have been the liaison or even the leader of a spying to which "Sonja Lueneburg" also belonged. She had regular meetings with HVA control officers in Romania, Hungary, Copenhagen and Berlin. Two days after she had disappeared, a Mr. Lorenz Betzing, employed by the West German army as a messenger, disappeared as well. Mr. Betzing had been a close friend of "Miss Richter's."

The Soviet KGB runs its own network of female agents and informants in Bonn. One such well-placed agent was Miss Margret Hoeke who had been employed as a secretary in the Office of the Federal President since 1959 and was one of the very few spies who was actually caught in 1985. The political damage caused by Miss Hoeke, who had been recruited by the KGB in 1971, even superseded the Guillaume case.

She has probably betrayed several BND agents and American agents in Moscow. The BND had agents in high Soviet positions, whose reports to the federal president and the federal chancellor could be read by Miss Hoeke, including information from those closest to Brezhnev and Andropov. The BND was even informed about communist party leaders' family matters.

It can be derived from the indictment that in case of war, Miss Hoeke would have belonged to the federal president's staff of 15 persons. She was supposed to handle the government's 'red telephone' for passing on alerts in case of war or tension.²²

HIGH LEVEL POLITICAL ESPIONAGE: THE GUENTER GUILLAUME AFFAIR

Political espionage by Eastern bloc secret services does not confine itself to female secretaries. There are examples of members of parliament and former government ministers who have rendered services to Soviet bloc intelligence. Political parties, even those representing the extreme right, are targeted without exception by both KGB and its sister services.

Special preference has been given to West European Social Democratic Parties. A well-informed Czech defector has revealed that both the German and Swedish Social Democratic Parties were heavily infiltrated and manipulated by the Soviets, Czechs and East Germans — even to the extent of funding left wing factions within those parties.²³ “We planned,” Jan Sejna wrote, “to use our penetration of the European Social Democratic Parties to weaken their ties with the United States and strengthen their will for an accommodation with the Warsaw Pact.”²⁴

High-level penetration of the West German Social Democratic Party (SPD) could no longer be denied after Guenther Guillaume, a trusted friend and advisor of SDP Chancellor Willy Brandt, had been exposed as an East German intelligence officer. Guillaume, a typical creation of HVA chief Markus Wolf, claimed to be an East German refugee when he entered the Federal Republic in 1955. Guillaume and his wife Christel settled in Frankfurt where they joined the SPD in 1957. Mrs. Guillaume got a position in the provincial chancellery of Hessen giving her access to documents on the United States armed forces stationed near Frankfurt. Meanwhile, Mr. Guillaume ingratiated himself with the local party leadership. Posing as a right-winger and criticizing the powerful left-wing SPD youth movement (“Jusos”), Guillaume soon won the confidence of George Leber, the Federal Minister of Transport and Post Services. Due to Guillaume’s incessant efforts, Leber successfully resisted left-wing pressure to remove him. Leber subsequently recommended Guillaume for a position in the Office of the Federal Chancellor (*Bundeskanzeleramt*) in Bonn. At that time, however, Guillaume, with his East German background, was not above suspicion. In an attempt to prevent Guillaume’s appointment in the Federal Chancellor’s office, Gerhard Wessel, head of the Federal Intelligence Service (*Bundesnachrichtendienst*) sent a letter to the chief of the Federal Chancellor’s office, Horst Ehmke, informing him of certain suspicions against Guillaume. Ehmke, who seemed to be determined to appoint Guillaume, then asked him whether he was a spy. Guillaume, of course, denied that he was and Ehmke believed him. Guillaume’s security check was handled poorly and unprofessionally with fatal consequences.²⁵

Once close to Chancellor Willy Brandt, Guillaume soon managed to become his confidant. As Brandt’s personal advisor on party affairs, Guillaume was able to provide East Berlin with interesting biographical details concerning the whole SPD leadership. Furthermore, he was well aware of attempts by West German counter-espionage to prevent Communist penetration of the party. Guillaume was able to provide East Berlin with information on these attempts. As a result, a number of sources aiding West German counter-espionage efforts could be neutralized.

Guillaume often accompanied Brandt on his trips and had detailed knowledge of the Chancellor’s private life, such as his preference for the young women whom Guillaume was always willing to provide. Suspicions against Guillaume grew more serious in the spring of 1973. By then, West German counter-espionage had found out that previously

intercepted code messages which the MfS had sent to "Georg" and "Chr." in 1956 and 1957 were most probably addressed to the Guillaume couple.²⁶ In May 1973 Interior Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher was informed of these findings and he in turn informed Chancellor Brandt. However, neither Brandt nor Genscher took action. On the contrary, Guillaume was allowed to accompany Brandt on his holiday to Norway where the suspected spy even got access to highly confidential letters and documents on NATO affairs. Brandt was later on confirm that he never really believed that Guillaume was a spy: "Otherwise I wouldn't have taken him with me."²⁷

Guenter and Christel Guillaume were arrested on April 24, 1974. Under pressure by Herbert Wehner, the SPD leader in parliament, Brandt was to resign a few weeks later.

Guillaume was not the only well-placed Communist agent in Bonn. One Soviet defector, Arkady N. Shevchenko, claims that Valentin Falin once told him: "We have quite a net in Germany, you know."²⁸ There are even indications that the Soviets may have had their own man in the Chancellor's Office. The Soviets appeared to be extremely well informed on the background and positions of the Brandt government during the complicated negotiations on the treaties with the East (*Ostpolitik*). The information leaked out of the Chancellor's office could only have come from a source with much more detailed access to classified information than Guillaume ever could have had.²⁹

Heribert Hellenbroich, who subsequently served as president of both the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (which is in charge of, *inter alia*, counter-espionage) and the Federal Intelligence Service, claimed recently that "probably ten, if not more, top spies sit in the highest positions" in Bonn government headquarters. "The GDR and the KGB," he added, "have made Bonn their number one field of operations. Entire battalions of agents are active in Bonn."³⁰

HANSJOACHIM TIEDGE: A DOUBLE AGENT?

On the same day, August 23, 1985, that the East German news-agency ADN announced that Hansjoachim Tiedge, a high-ranking West German counter-espionage specialist, had asked for political asylum in the GDR, the East German party paper *Neues Deutschland* referred in a front page article to "severe setbacks for the intelligence service of the FRG." It claimed that between January 1984 and June 1985, 168 FRG agents had been caught.³¹ The timing of this most unusual statement, no doubt, was linked to the defection of the above-mentioned Tiedge. Until his defection, Tiedge had been (from 1982) head of the subdepartment for East German espionage in the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (*Bundesamt fuer Verfassungsschutz*, BfV). Tiedge's subdepartment resided under the BfV's huge Department V (Counter-espionage). He was one of the most knowledgeable experts on East German espionage operations. He also knew a lot about the techniques of West German counter-espionage and those involved in it. His memory was excellent. He knew the names of some 160 West German agents and

their contacts. Intelligence experts who knew Tiedge well were aware of the substantial damage caused by his defection which could cripple West German counter-espionage for a number of years.

One question remained however. Could Tiedge be considered a typical "mole" who had passed on information to East Berlin for a number of years or had his defection been a purely spontaneous act of desperation? If Tiedge had been a mole or a double agent, a further question arises, when did his activities for the Eastern bloc start — at the beginning of his career with the BfV in 1966 or much later? Most intelligence experts believe Tiedge had not been a mole, certainly not from the very beginning. Interior Minister Friedrich Zimmermann noted in parliament that the facts surrounding Tiedge's defection pointed in a different direction. The decision to ask for political asylum in the GDR had been a panic reaction, he said.³²

Tiedge's personal circumstances were distressing. After the tragic death of his wife he suffered from one crisis after another. He had a serious drinking problem and his debts mounted to over 300,000 German Marks. Had Tiedge been in the pay of East Berlin, his debts would most likely have been met before they could rise to such proportions. In a letter written shortly after his defection, Tiedge claimed that he had taken his decision to do so freely and "in view of the desperate situation I found myself in."³³ One well-informed intelligence expert claims that the case of Hansjoachim Tiedge was not a classic case of espionage. Only by changing sides had he betrayed his country — he had most probably not been recruited by East German intelligence.

All indications were that he planned his step only in the final week, possibly even a few days before.³⁴ By August 1985 Tiedge was aware that his position in the BfV's office had become virtually untenable. Thus far his boss, BfV president Heribert Hellenbroich, had protected him, but Hellenbroich was appointed president of the Federal Intelligence Service (BND) on August 1 and his successor at the BfV, Holger Pfahls, was less disposed to Tiedge. Pressure by Department IV chief Engelbert Rombach to remove Tiedge as a security risk would probably no longer be resisted. Meanwhile Interior Minister Friedrich Zimmermann was not informed of the problems within Department IV. He was only informed of Tiedge's disappearance on August 21, 1985. Tiedge could not get on with his direct chief Engelbert Rombach who had been appointed to his position in 1983. Tiedge felt by-passed. When, in the summer of 1985, he learned that internal investigations into his rising financial debts had started, he suddenly took two days leave after which he disappeared.³⁵

Some other intelligence experts doubt the "panic reaction" theory, however. Werner Kahl, for example, suggests that a close associate of Tiedge, chief executive officer (*Amtsrat*) Gruetzfeld who had disappeared three years before, could have informed the HVA about Tiedge as a possible recruitment target. The HVA subsequently might have instructed a double agent to approach and finally recruit Tiedge.³⁶ Similarly, Karl Wilhelm Fricke, another authoritative West German intelligence

expert, considers it likely that Tiedge had cooperated with the other side for some time: "It is contrary to all our experience that a man in Tiedge's position could change sides without any reassurances or guarantees concerning his livelihood over there."³⁷

Opinions as to whether Tiedge had been successful in his job also differ. One source claims that Tiedge could not possibly have been a mole "since he played an essential role in preventing important HVA operations in the area of Hamburg in the summer of 1984."³⁸ Others claim that the effectiveness of BfV Department IV in combating East German espionage operations had significantly dwindled since Tiedge became chief of its East German section. In the author's assessment, Tiedge had not been a long-time mole in West German counter-espionage. He could have been "turned" in 1984 or early 1985 but there are no indications that he had cooperated with the East Germans in the period preceding 1984.

The sudden disappearance of a number of female secretaries and some others in Bonn at roughly the same time can only be explained if one assumes that someone with detailed knowledge of West German counter-espionage had tipped them off. Had it been Tiedge? In view of his position he knew that some East German agents and their contacts had come under suspicion. Why did Ursula Richter disappear just a few days before Tiedge? Why did other Bonn-based secretaries suddenly disappear at about the same time? The only arrest that could be made was that of Miss Hoeke who worked for the KGB, not for East Berlin. Moreover, Miss Hoeke was arrested after Tiedge had gone and there may have been no time to warn her. Tiedge, therefore, might have had a hand in the "disappearances" that so shocked Bonn in the summer of 1985.

All these disappearances can be best explained if one would assume that Tiedge had been turned by the East Germans early 1985 or even some eight months earlier. By the summer of 1985 it must have become psychologically unbearable for Tiedge to continue to act as a double agent. Since there was no way out, and his drinking habits and huge debts were bound to worsen should he stay in Bonn, Tiedge must have seen only one way out — East Berlin. Just before he went, he tipped off those East German agents that had come under suspicion and then disappeared himself. This theory might be more plausible than the other assumptions.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND MILITARY ESPIONAGE

The Soviets and their Eastern bloc allies have a long tradition of acquiring western technology by covert means. The new "Gorbachev" Party Programme of March 1986 emphasized the need for "a rapid renewal of the production apparatus through extensive introduction of advanced technology. . . . The introduction of the latest achievements of science and technology must be achieved everywhere. Science will become in full measure a force directly involved in production."³⁹

Although the gap between Soviet and Western technological achievements is rapidly closing, Soviet dependence on Western research and know-how is still extensive. Western technology, therefore, is still a major target for Soviet and Eastern bloc intelligence. The East German secret service is heavily involved in this effort. As early as in 1970, the HVA created an entire "Sector for Science and Technology" (SWT) comprising three "operational departments" dealing with nuclear technology, micro-electronics and the construction of engines and vehicles. The importance of the SWT markedly increased over the years and significant successes were achieved in Europe, Japan and the United States. As far as West Germany was concerned, the HVA managed to penetrate a number of firms and research centres like Siemens, AEG, Messerschmidt-Böelkow, Blohm, IBM, Hoechst and the nuclear research centre in Karlsruhe. Early in 1979 East German defector Werner Stiller revealed much of the SWT workings and operations in which he himself had been so deeply involved. Stiller had run a vast network of informants and agents some of whom were highly qualified scientists. On Stiller's instruction, arrests by West German authorities followed in seventeen cases while many others managed to escape. Even more important were the documents Stiller removed from the HVA files. They showed the extent to which the East Germans had penetrated the scientific and technological world in the Federal Republic. Between 1975 and 1978 some fifty agents provided the HVA with 530 documents on matters of science and technology, thus saving the GDR an annual 300 Million German Marks in research and development costs. In addition, the HVA could count on 400 to 500 informers in West German firms and industry.⁴⁰ Many of the HVA documents Stiller had taken with him were marked "SU," meaning that these had to be passed on to the KGB. Stiller further revealed that the HVA attempted to stimulate the anti-nuclear movement in West Germany.⁴¹

Scientists, of course, are highly instrumental in obtaining embargoed Western technology and know-how. Consequently, the HVA considers them a special target for the approaches by their colleagues from the GDR "Academy of Sciences" which is heavily penetrated by the HVA. Werner Stiller, for example, was the control officer of Dr. Heinz Hillman who was in charge of the Academy of Sciences' international relations department. "Hillman," Stiller writes,

had to formally approve all travels to Western countries by members of the Academy. Through him I was able to prevent such travels, if I wanted to, or to use the Academy's cover for my own agents whom I preferred to send to the West. Above all, I learned which GDR academicians belonged to the so-called "Travel-cadres" and which ones rendered their services to the MfS.⁴²

According to Stiller, virtually all GDR scientists visiting international conferences performed additional duties for the East German secret service. Only those willing to cooperate receive permission to attend such forums and to travel abroad. They are asked to collect as much information as they can and approach Western scientists.

East German and other Eastern bloc scientists are also expected to perform useful propagandistic functions. There is no doubt that Communist intelligence services are behind many "scientists for peace" initiatives, rallying scientists from East and West behind Soviet peace proposals. In East Germany a "Committee of Scientists for Peace and Disarmament" (*DDR-Kommittee fuer Wissenschaftliche Fragen der Sicherung des Friedens und der Abruestung*) was formed in May 1983. One prominent member of that Committee is Professor Dr. Klaus Fuchs.⁴³ Fuchs is hailed in the Soviet media as "an active participant in the great campaign against nuclear war." The same Klaus Fuchs, however, provided the Soviet Union with the nuclear bomb when he spied for the Russians during the time of his involvement in the production of the first American atomic bomb.⁴⁴ In November 1986, a number of East German physicists from the Academy of Sciences issued a call for disarmament. Among those who signed it were Klaus Fuchs and Robert Rompe. Rompe was identified by Werner Stiller as a long-time and trusted KGB and HVA agent.⁴⁵

Industrial and technological espionage does not confine itself to penetrating the world of scientists. Both the political and business communities are just as important as targets. There are substantial East German efforts to lure West German politicians like Oscar Lafontaine, the Social Democratic Premier of the highly industrialized Saarland, with a view to fostering technological and industrial "exchanges" and cooperation. East German secret services even created their own firms in West Germany in order to obtain militarily significant technology. According to a 1983 West German intelligence report, there is a whole range of firms and so-called private enterprises that have been taken over by or set up and financed from East Berlin.⁴⁶ Communist secret services are even involved in banking as a way of obtaining access to computer-based data of their clients — private individuals as well as business enterprises.⁴⁷ Other means of achieving access to the business world of the West is through the annual Leipzig trade fair. The MfS runs a special unit (*Messestab*) for the Leipzig trade fair which also contacts hotels and private lodgings where Western businessmen stay.⁴⁸

By far the majority of industrial and technological espionage serves military purposes. Soviet technological advancements have only been made possible through meticulous and consistent intelligence gathering by the KGB and its sister services. They are assisted by the respective military intelligence services — although these often operate on their own. Military intelligence also involves penetrating Western military establishments (NATO, particularly Afcemt, Defence Ministries, US military headquarters in Germany, etc.). The most recent case of military espionage in Germany was that of Juergen Westphal, until his arrest a high-ranking official in the West German Ministry of Defence. In the summer of 1986 Mr. Westphal had been recruited by a man introducing himself as "Dr. Sternberg." It is assumed that "Dr. Sternberg" was an officer of the East German HVA or of East German military intelligence (*Verwaltung Aufklaerung*). Westphal had access to documents classified

“secret.” What made things worse was the fact that Westphal was quite familiar with the computer- and data-network of the West German army. He was particularly involved in long-range planning for the armed forces.⁴⁹ This might explain why the East Germans rewarded him so highly.

Military intelligence in the GDR is conducted from the “Department of Intelligence” which is part of the Ministry of Defence. To conduct military intelligence more effectively, Soviet and East European services avail themselves extensively of lorry drivers. These lorries frequently follow strange detours and are often spotted near airfields, military or naval bases. It is assumed that there are special elite forces among, particularly, the Soviet lorry drivers — so-called “spetznaz” or sabotage units.⁵⁰ West European intelligence experts claim that East German, Czech and Polish lorry drivers have frequently been involved in spying and reconnaissance missions in Sweden, West Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands.⁵¹ The East German state firm of “Deutrans” has close links with the intelligence services. Its lorries cover most of West Europe but particularly the Federal Republic of Germany.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

It would be wrong to assume that the dawning era of “glasnost” in the Soviet Union, however significant, would automatically curb the vast intelligence effort on the part of the Communist secret services. As one of the most efficient Eastern bloc services, the East German secret service (HVA) has achieved much success both in the realm of political espionage and the realm of industrial and technological intelligence. The Soviet and East German secret services concentrate heavily on West Germany which is considered one of the most important targets in Europe. Quite worrisome is the fact that the number of undetected spies is far greater than the number detected. Then there are those whose public exposure is hampered for political reasons.

When in the summer of 1985, some highly placed female secretaries in Bonn disappeared into East Berlin it suddenly dawned on many that those female agents had worked in Ministries and other governmental or political bodies for years without arousing the slightest suspicion. The Guillaume affair showed that high level penetration of political parties is a reality. A well-known West German politician who makes frequent trips to the East, is suspected of having been recruited by the KGB in the sixties or even earlier. Should these suspicions prove to be well-founded, a political row far surpassing the Guillaume affair would be bound to follow. Referring to this case, an intelligence expert told the author: “West Germany is just one major security risk. Not only is it an essential target for Soviet and East German penetration efforts but it also provides unique opportunities for their secret services.”⁵²

On the other hand one must not be tempted to exaggerate the successes and possibilities of East German espionage operations. There have been serious failures and setbacks as with the defection of Werner Stiller who, even before his actual defection, started cooperating with West German counter-intelligence (BND). Although such setbacks do cripple East

German operations for a time, recovery always follows sooner or later. Western intelligence, therefore, must not depend solely on one defector or double-agent in the other camp but on many.

Western counter-espionage efforts often are seriously hampered in that political considerations or "party politics" thwart some of the most promising operations. Soviet and East German spies in the Federal Republic of Germany can harm essential Western interests purely because they enjoyed the full confidence of a high-ranking politician. Guenter Guillaume, for example, got his post because his friends in the Social Democrat Party trusted and protected him. Although they were aware that he came originally from East Germany, they declined to make any serious security checks. At that time, the dominant mood in the party was rather anti-intelligence. It was assumed that intelligence and counter-espionage aimed at the Eastern bloc was a relic of the Cold War, now rapidly being replaced by an openness towards the East.

What is needed, then, is a proper balance between political responsibility and intelligence or counter-espionage operations. Too much "oversight" — however necessary and useful "oversight" may be — would cripple necessary operations and eventually harm those bearing political responsibility. On the other hand, too much leeway for the services would result in these services becoming too powerful and eventually forming a sort of police state — as is the case in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

Communist secret services, and the East German secret service in particular, are powerful adversaries whose activities are ignored at one's peril. It is through close cooperation between those bearing political responsibility in a parliamentary democracy and the secret services that the detrimental effects of hostile intelligence operations can be rendered harmless.

Endnotes

1. Author's interview with Friedrich-Wilhelm Schlomann, Bonn, 12 October 1985.
2. Author's interview with Karl Wilhelm Fricke, Cologne, 30 April 1986.
3. Waltraud Boehme, et al., eds., *Kleines politisches Woerterbuch* (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1973), p. 833.
4. Source prefers anonymity.
5. Heinz Felfe, *Im Dienst des Gegners. 10 Jahre Moskaus Mann im BND* (Hamburg: Rasch und Roehring Verlag, 1986.).
6. Confidential source (1986).
7. *Betrifft: Verfassungsschutz 1982* (Bonn: Interior Ministry, April 1983), p. 205.
8. The best study available on the HVA structure is: Friedrich-Wilhelm Schlomann, *Operationsgebiet Bundesrepublik. Spionage, Sabotage und Subversion* (Munich, Universitas Verlag, 1983; third enlarged edition), p. 28ff.
9. *Verfassungsschutzbericht 1983* (Bonn: Ministry of the Interior, June 1984), p. 191.
10. *Verfassungsschutzbericht 1984* (Bonn: Ministry of the Interior, August 1985), p. 231, 232.

11. *Neues Deutschland* (East Berlin), February 6, 1987.
12. *Bild* (Hamburg), February 16, 1987, p. 1.
13. *Der Spiegel* (Hamburg), March 9, 1987, p. 17.
14. Karl Wilhelm Fricke, "Mitteilungen und Mutmassungen zu Markus Wolf," *Deutschland Archiv* (Cologne), no. 3 (1987), p. 231.
15. *Ibid.* See also: *Bild am Sonntag* (Hamburg), March 15, 1987, p. 7.
16. *Neues Deutschland* (East Berlin), April 23, 1986, p. 4.
17. Friedrich-Wilhelm Schlomann, *Operationsgebiet Bundesrepublik. Spionage, Sabotage und Subversion* (Munich: Universitas Verlag, 1982; second printing), p. 29. The second and third editions of Schlomann's study differ substantially.
18. *Kurier* (Vienna), February 12, 1987, p. 5.
19. *Verfassungsschutzbericht 1985* (Bonn: Ministry of the Interior, August 1986), p. 238. See also: Der Generalbundesanwalt beim Bundesgerichtshof (Karlsruhe), *Pressemitteilung*, December 11, 1985, p. 57, 58.
20. Werner Kahl, *Spionage in Deutschland Heute* (Munich: Nymphenberger Verlagshandlung, 1986), p. 193. See also: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (Frankfurt), August 20, 1985, p. 1.
21. Der Generalbundesanwalt beim Bundesgerichtshof (Karlsruhe), *Pressemitteilung*, December 11, 1985, p. 58.
22. Former BfV/BND chief Heribert Hellenbroich, in: *Bild* (Hamburg), December 15, 1986, pp. 1, 6 (*FBIS-WEU*, 86-241, December 16, 1986, J2). See also: *Bild am Sonntag* (Hamburg), December 14, 1981.
23. Jan Sejna, *We Will Bury You* (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1983), pp. 117, 122.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 107.
25. Reinhard Gehlen, *Verschlussache* (Mainz: von Hase und Koehler Verlag, 1980), p. 37.
26. Guenther Nollau, *Das Amt. 50 Jahre Zeuge der Geschichte* (Munich: C. Bertelsmann Verlag, 1978), pp. 254, 255.
27. *Sueddeutsche Zeitung* (Munich), May 11, 1974. Guenther Nollau, *op. cit.*, p. 261.
28. Arkady N. Shevchenko, *Breaking With Moscow* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1985), p. 170.
29. The author was informed by a confidential source that a high-ranking Soviet agent close to former Chancellor Willy Brandt could have passed on this classified information to the Soviets.
30. Heribert Hellenbroich, in: *Bild* (Hamburg), December 15, 1986, pp. 1, 6.
31. *Neues Deutschland* (East Berlin), August 23, 1985, p. 1.
32. Deutscher Bundestag, *Plenarprotokoll*, September 3, 1985 (10/151), p. 11301.
33. For the text of Tiedge's letter, see: Werner Kahl, *op. cit.*, p. 48.
34. Friedrich-Wilhelm Schlomann, *Operationsgebiet Bundesrepublik* (Munich: Universitas Verlag, 1986; 2nd edition), pp. 360, 361.
35. *Der Spiegel* (Hamburg), August 26, 1985, p. 24; *NRC Handelsblad* (Rotterdam/Amsterdam), August 26, 1985, p. 5.
36. Werner Kahl, *op. cit.*, pp. 48, 49.
37. Author's interview with Karl Wilhelm Fricke, Cologne, April 30, 1986.
38. Author's interview with Friedrich-Wilhelm Schlomann, Bonn, October 12, 1985.
39. *The Programme of the CPSU. A New Edition* (Moscow: Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, 1986).
40. Karl Wilhelm Fricke, *Die DDR-Staatssicherheit. Entwicklung, Strukturen, Aktionsfelder* (Cologne: Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik, 1984), p. 168. On Stiller, see also Werner Kahl, *op. cit.*, p. 25ff.

41. *Verfassungsschutzbericht 1984* (Bonn: Ministry of the Interior, June 1984), p. 191; and Werner Stiller, *Im Zentrum der Spionage* (Mainz: von Hase und Koehler, 1986), p. 228ff.
42. Werner Stiller, *op. cit.*, p. 281.
43. *Aussenpolitische Korrespondenz* (East Berlin), May 20, 1983, p. 155.
44. On Fuchs' role, see: H. Montgomery Hyde, *The Atom Bomb Spies* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1980), p. 93.
45. Werner Stiller, *op. cit.*, p. 169. On the "Call for Disarmament," see: *Neues Deutschland* (East Berlin), November 27, 1986, pp. 1, 2.
46. *Die Welt* (Bonn), February 1, 1984, p. 4.
47. *Verfassungsschutzbericht 1984*, *op. cit.*, pp. 213, 214.
48. *Verfassungsschutzbericht 1983*, *op. cit.*, p. 198; and BfV-president Heribert Hellenbroich, in: *Der Spiegel* (Hamburg), July 15, 1985, p. 22.
49. Der Generalbundesanwalt beim Bundesgerichtshof (Karlsruhe), *Pressemitteilung*, January 29, 1987, pp. 1, 2; and *Newsweek* (International Edition), December 22, 1986, p. 20.
50. Victor Suvorov, *Soviet Military Intelligence* (London: Hamish Hamilton 1984), p. 140ff.
51. As for Sweden, see in particular: Dragan Jovius, *Sovjethotet Mot Norden* (Stockholm: St. Georgs Förlag, 1984), p. 105ff; *Svenska Dagbladet*, December 7, 1986, p. 1.
52. Source prefers anonymity.