

Report from Bonn by Rainer Apel

KGB spy ring in Germany blown

The arrest of a network of well-placed spies reveals new facts about Soviet espionage.

During the third week of March, Germany's counterespionage units delivered a serious blow to the Soviet KGB. In a concentrated police action kept secret from the media for several precious days, 30 locations in Germany were searched, the identity of 24 persons checked, and 10 were placed under arrest as spies.

There was a peculiar pattern in the cases of those arrested: Of the 10, eight were Russian-born immigrants who had come to Germany in the late 1970s and early 1980s and rapidly made their way to the top echelons of espionage-related professions.

The case of Edmund Neufert, a teacher of Russian at the government's Federal Language School (BSA), is probably the most serious. Having worked as a KGB spy in Russian emigré organizations for several years after leaving the Soviet Union, he took a job as a language teacher at the BSA in January 1986. His pupils included young intelligence officers whose future assignments were to work in counterintelligence against the KGB and other Soviet agencies.

The BSA is the central German institution for training administrative personnel in foreign languages. Neufert's position there was extremely valuable to the KGB. Neufert was able to compile a detailed profile of the capabilities, future assignments, and specializations of each of his pupils. Wherever one of these designated counterintelligence experts would go to work, the KGB had his profile long before his arrival.

A German counterintelligence source told *EIR*: "This affair has burnt

a whole generation of experts on the Soviet Union, and we don't have many who know the Russian language." In other words: All those who passed Neufert's courses have been rendered useless.

No doubt, however, the arrest of Neufert is a grave blow to the KGB, which may have lost one of its best-placed agents in Germany.

Several others deserve attention. One of the two non-Russian emigrés detained is Helmut S. Kolasch, a Vienna-born engineer whose PMG electronics company in Sinzheim serviced the Tornado jet fighter and the projected "Fighter 90." He was not the only agent to provide Moscow with information on current and future NATO combat aircraft in Europe, but Kolasch's work made detailed data on the flight performance and weak points in the technology of these aircraft available to the Soviets.

The case of Shimon Or, a Russian-born Jew who apparently worked for the KGB before he emigrated to Israel in the 1970s, is of special interest. From Israel, where he worked as a religion teacher, he moved to Germany in 1979 and provided the KGB with information on the Jewish communities and institutions related to German-Jewish relations.

Or's case may shed some light on the peculiar fact that many times in the course of the 1980s, Soviet black propaganda has been capable of triggering new "Nazi guilt" campaigns by circles inside the Jewish community against Germans in general. A case in point is May 1985, when President Reagan visited American war dead in

the cemetery at Bitburg, where World War II German soldiers are also buried. Predominantly Soviet propaganda, joined by radical Jewish networks, turned the Bitburg trip into an alleged case of "Reagan honoring the German SS."

A large part of the propaganda basis for Edgar Bronfman's 1986 campaign against Austrian President Kurt Waldheim, was created during the "Bitburg affair."

A fourth case is that of an Iranian-born agent, Amir Dara. His contact with the KGB dates back to 1969, when he began spying inside the Shah's Iran. Brought to the Soviet Union when Ruhollah Khomeini took power, he was assigned to emigrate to Germany in 1981.

His German home near Aachen was to be used as a covert radio relay base for KGB special agents "in time of crisis or war," which may refer to spetsnaz (special forces) activities. According to publicized information, the Iranian cut loose from the KGB after he settled down in Germany, and was recontacted by the Soviets in 1985.

The interesting question here, is why an Iranian coming from the Soviet Union was allowed to settle in Germany and achieve German citizenship without problems. This points to some higher-up protection, likely connected to the "Irangate" network inside the Bonn government, a circle run under the tight control of Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher in close cooperation with Vice President George Bush and Adm. John Poindexter's secret operations network in the United States. Provided that Dara is permitted to speak, without the foreign ministry interfering as it has in many court cases involving Iranians, his trial may provide valuable new facts on the German connection to the Irangate affair.