

## Bonn Trades Top Soviet Agent For 3 Students Jailed as Spies

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BERLIN, Feb. 14 — Heinz Felfe, by all accounts the most effective Soviet agent ever known to operate in West Germany, was exchanged today for three students who had been convicted by the Russians as intelligence agents.

The exchange, announced in Bonn by the Ministry for All German Affairs, came after more than two years of efforts by the Soviet Union to obtain the release of Mr. Felfe, now 51 years old.

A former member of the headquarters staff of the Nazi Gestapo, Mr. Felfe and two accomplices began to work for the Russians in 1951.

He and his assistants, Hans Clemens and Erwin Tiesel, joined West Germany's intelligence service on Soviet orders and for the following 12 years delivered information to Moscow.

According to the indictment in the 1963 trial, the Felfe group delivered 15,000 pictures on 300 foils of film as well as 20 tape recordings from the agency's archives. They also betrayed 95 undercover operatives to the Russians.

Mr. Felfe was exchanged at an undisclosed frontier crossing for three west German students, Walter Neumann, Peter Sonntag and Volker Schaffhausen, who had been seized in the Soviet Union between 1961 and 1967.

The Russians convicted Mr. Neumann and Mr. Sonntag of espionage in the service of the United States and sentenced each to 12 years in prison. The main accusation against them was spying on Soviet rocket and aviation installations.

Mr. Schaffhausen was found guilty of having distributed "emigrant literature" hostile to the Soviet Union.

Judging by official German reports, the magnitude of the students' alleged espionage could hardly be compared with that of the Felfe group. In the view of some observers here, West Germany was doing the Russians a favor by releasing Mr. Felfe to them in exchange for the students.

Described in his indictment as a "dangerous, intelligent and ruthless agent," Mr. Felfe was said to have gone over to the Russians because he had been "badly treated" by United States occupation authorities after the war. He sent the Russians weekly intelligence reports from the West German agency as well as reports on individual intelligence operations.

Mr. Felfe was said to have received almost \$36,000 from the Russians for his services. His accomplice, Mr. Clemens,

got \$44,500, while Mr. Tiesel, their courier, received \$1,000. A federal court in Karlsruhe sentenced Mr. Felfe to 14 years in prison, of which he served six. Mr. Clemens got 10 and Mr. Tiesel 3 years.

The exchange of Mr. Felfe was matched in West Germany only by the 1966 trade of a parliamentary Deputy, Alfred Frenzel, convicted of espionage for Czechoslovakia, for a West German journalist, Martina Kischke, and three "political criminals" who had been held in East Germany. Mr. Frenzel died last year.

According to unconfirmed reports, today's exchange took place on the East German border near an autobahn at Warthe, in Thuringia.

A senior American intelligence operative said recently that the Russians had appealed for Mr. Felfe's release through various channels virtually every month since 1966.

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