

INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY: West Germany
SUBJECT: Influential Personalities
Around Chancellor Adenauer

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1. Chancellor Adenauer has been gradually enlarging the circle of his close personal advisers, largely because of the increasing complexity of government affairs and because of his sensitivity to charges that he is too autocratic. At present this circle includes Finance Minister Fritz Schaeffer, Economics Minister Ludwig Erhard, Eugen Gerstenmaier, and bankers Hermann J. Abs and Robert Pferdmenges.
2. Schaeffer has been spending more and more time with the Chancellor. Many party leaders believe that the 66-year old cabinet member is being groomed to take over CDU leadership and that he would be the most capable successor to Adenauer as Chancellor. He is considered to have a brilliant financial mind and to be an extremely clever and shrewd politician, even though he has kept his political activities deep in the background.
3. Gerstenmaier has been steadily gaining favor with the Chancellor who, along with other CDU officials, considers him the hardest working and most capable federal official in the foreign policy field. These officials feel, however, that he will not be named Foreign Minister since Adenauer will prefer either to retain the post himself or to choose a weaker man like Heinrich von Brentano. They stress that Gerstenmaier is somewhat too independent, that he is apt to create the appearance of being a bit overbearing. At a critical juncture in German foreign policy when foreigners are sensitive to the behavior of individual Germans, these characteristics are in his disfavor, but do not alter the fact that he will probably continue to be a key foreign affairs advisor.
4. These officials believe that Abs is not likely to be named Minister for Foreign Affairs but will remain a close adviser to the Chancellor and might still be given a top post, possibly as some sort of special emissary.

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