

MORE PERSONS ARRESTED IN GDR ESPIONAGE CASE

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[Text] Karlsruhe/Hamburg--The Federal Prosecutor's Office in Karlsruhe tonight officially confirmed the arrest of two more suspected GDR agents. Their identity was not disclosed.

One of them apparently is on the editorial staff of BILD-ZEITUNG. The paper's editorial board confirmed that an editor was arrested in its office yesterday as a suspected GDR agent. On the same day he was taken to the examining magistrate in Bonn. He is resident in Halstenbek, Pinneberg District.

The arrest of the two brings the number of spy suspects tracked down in the wake of the defection of Lt Werner Stiller from the GDR to eight. Two of them escaped and have probably reached the GDR.

A statement by the editorial office of BILD-ZEITUNG says the editor arrested as a suspected agent had been exposed by the GDR officer, who defected to the Federal Republic over the weekend. He was apparently infiltrated into the editorial office as a "long-term agent." He applied for a post in response to an advertisement and was employed as a subeditor in 1977 after the customary period of probation. He had no influence on key editorial decisions and dealt with political, economic and cultural news.

The Federal Prosecutor's Office has initiated proceedings for intelligence activities against Stiller, who was taken by the Americans to an undisclosed place, probably near Frankfurt. Stiller, not officially named by the Federal Prosecutor's Office, had been in charge of several agents in the Federal Republic. He was showing "active repentance" and by his confession had made a contribution to combating GDR espionage in the Federal Republic. He was not in custody as there was no danger of his escaping or tampering with the evidence.

According to a report in tomorrow's edition of KOELNISCHE RUNDSCHAU/BONNER RUNDSCHAU, Stiller's wife and daughter were brought to the Federal Republic from the Eastern bloc in a "dramatic rescue bid" after Stiller was already in the West and East Berlin was aware of his escape. In order to keep this a secret and to deceive the GDR authorities, the Federal Prosecutor's Office even had to let some GDR agents exposed by Stiller escape from the Federal Republic.

Felix Kaul of the Federal Prosecutor's Office tonight refused to confirm or deny this "rescue" took place. But the allegation that eight agents had escaped was strongly denied.

An official statement by the Federal Prosecutor's Office last Saturday said Stiller had come to West Berlin Friday night and had brought his wife and child with him. Reliable information from Berlin the same day said Stiller had reached West Berlin like a normal citizen and not in any spectacular manner.