

FBI Arrests Army Sergeant In Major Spy Investigation

■ Case most complex and extensive ever, agents say

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An Army sergeant was charged with espionage Thursday for providing "extremely sensitive" Army and NATO defense secrets, including tactical nuclear-weapon plans, to intelligence agents for Hungary and Czechoslovakia from 1985 through 1988.

The FBI arrest of Sgt. Jeffrey Stephen Rondeau, 29, in Tampa, Fla., is the latest development in the investigation of an alleged espionage ring organized by former Army Sgt. Clyde Lee Conrad in West Germany. German authorities convicted Conrad of high treason in 1990, characterizing the offense as unprecedented in its seriousness.

FBI officials said they were continuing the investigation, which one described as "the most complicated and extensive espio-

nage case" ever conducted by the bureau. They said that the inquiry has been aided by the cooperation of confessed spy Roderick James Ramsay, also a former Army sergeant stationed in Germany, who was sentenced to 36 years in prison.

A federal judge in Florida said that the sentence was lenient because of Ramsay's cooperation.

FBI Director William S. Sessions said that Rondeau's "arrest underscores the FBI's commitment to thoroughly investigate all espionage matters," a statement that demonstrates U.S. intent to continue pursuing spying conducted on behalf of former communist regimes in eastern Europe.

In March 1989, U.S. officials said that as many as five American soldiers were under investigation for assisting Conrad, who was reported to have been paid \$1.2 million for the spying. Ramsay received \$20,000. The three-count indictment of Rondeau did not specify what amount of money he received.