

Terrorist group claims assassination attempt

BONN (UPI) — West Germany's self-styled Red Army Faction claimed responsibility Sunday for the attempted assassination of a leading opposition Christian Democratic party official, police said.

A police spokesman said an anonymous caller, identifying himself as a member of a Red Army Faction group, told the West German news agency DPA that "we assume responsibility" for the shooting.

Of the Red Army Faction group, which originally numbered about 40 persons, police arrested more than 20 since the summer of 1972. Police sources said it was difficult to estimate the organization's present membership but one said it "could be more than 100 persons."

A young man fired three shots Saturday night at Walter Leisler Kiep, 48, member of parliament and treasurer of the Christian Democrats, but missed him. Kiep is a direct descendant of Jacob Leisler, a prominent figure in the colonial New York.

Police said a young man approached Kiep when he left a sauna near his home outside Frankfurt. When Kiep retreated

into the sauna, slammed the door and threw himself on floor, the man fired three shots through the closed door.

The assassin fled the scene after firing the shots with a .12-caliber pistol.

Kiep has toured the United States many times to explain the party's policies. His ancestor, Jacob Leisler, led an insurrection against the forces of James II in colonial New York in 1689 and ran the colony for two years. Returning British forces loyal to William and Mary, persuaded that he was a traitor, hanged him. He was exonerated later and his property restored to his family.

Several of Kiep's close relatives were killed by the Nazis during World War II.

Police said that because of driving rain and darkness at time of the attempted assassination Saturday, Kiep had been unable to provide investigators with detailed description of the gunman.

The attack followed the killing of West Berlin's chief justice Guenter von Drenkmann by a gang of gunmen in his honor guard in Charlottenburg Nov. 10.