

Interview with Spiegel Magazine

This interview with Baader, Ensslin, Meinhof, and Raspe was published in the January 20, 1975, edition of the liberal news magazine Spiegel, under the title “Wir waren in den Durststreik treten” (We are escalating to a thirst strike). The fact that attorney Klaus Croissant worked as an intermediary between Spiegel and the prisoners to facilitate this interview would be cited as a reason to bar him from representing Andreas Baader at the Stammheim trial later that year—see page 346. (M. & S.)

Spiegel: Has the RAF adopted a new tactic? Have the campaigns that you prepared and led from within the prisons attracted the same interest amongst the people as the bombs and grenades you used in 1972?

RAF: It is not a matter of empty talk about tactics. We are prisoners, and we are currently struggling with the only weapon we have left in prison and in isolation: the collective hunger strike. We are doing this in order to break through the process of extermination in which we find ourselves—long years of social isolation. It is a life and death struggle: if we don't succeed with this hunger strike we will either die or be psychologically and physically destroyed by brainwashing, isolation, and special treatment.

Spiegel: Is it really a matter of “isolation torture” or even “extermination through prison conditions”? You read a lot of newspapers; if you like you can listen to the radio or watch television. For example, at one point Herr Baader had a library of 400 books. You are in contact with other members of the RAF. You exchange secret messages between yourselves. You receive visits and your lawyers come and go.

RAF: One might wonder about these things if all they had to go by was *Spiegel* and the information put out by the state security services.

If one only has access to *Spiegel* or state security information, one might ask that. Two, three, four years of social isolation—certainly no more than that—is enough for you to realize that you are in a process of extermination. You can deal with it for months, but not years. Breaking through the institutional brainwashing-by-isolation is a question of

survival for us; this is the reason why the trials will go on without us.¹ To claim that we are using the hunger strikes to make ourselves unfit for prison or unfit to appear in court—when everyone knows that the only political prisoners who are considered unfit for prison are those who are dead—is a countertactic, it is counterpropaganda. The BAW has already postponed these trials for three and a half years, so that the prisoners could be broken by isolation, by the dead wings, by brainwashing, and psychiatric reconstruction. The BAW is no longer interested in these trials taking place. Or, if they are to take place, it should only be without the accused and without their defense attorneys, because these are meant to be show trials to discredit revolutionary politics—imperialist state power is to be put on display, and Buback can only achieve this if we are not there.

Spiegel: Such lies don't become more convincing, no matter how many times you repeat them; and the public understood long ago that these lies are put out in bad faith in order to sow doubts about the justice system, a goal in which you have achieved some success.

RAF: Because these are facts, you can't eliminate their political importance simply by denying them.

Spiegel: You are being held in remand, having been charged with serious crimes such as murder and attempted murder. Aren't you being held in the same conditions as other prisoners in remand?

RAF: We are demanding an end to special treatment, and not only for those in remand, but for all political prisoners—and by this we mean all proletarian prisoners who understand their situation politically, and who organize in solidarity with the prisoners' struggle, regardless of why they are in prison.

The justice system also keeps prisoners who have already been sentenced in isolation, some for as many as four years, for example: Werner Hoppe, Helmut Pohl, Rolf Heissler, Ulrich Luther, and Siegfried Knutz. There are thousands of people here who are abused by the prison system, and the moment they begin to resist they are broken by isolation. This is what we are fighting against with this strike; it is a collective

¹ §231a and §231b had just become law, part of the *Lex Baader-Meinhof*, allowing for trials to continue in the absence of the defendants. See page 345.

action against institutionalization and isolation. In the older prisons, where previously there were no “isolation facilities”—separate wings for “troublemakers”—meaning for those who disrupt the inhumanity which victimizes them—they will be built; for instance in Tegel, Bruchsal, Straubing, Hannover, Zweibrücken, etc.

In their architectural design, the new prisons incorporate isolation as a form of incarceration. In the FRG, these design principles are not in line with the Swedish model, but rather with the American methods and experiments with fascist rehabilitation programs.

Spiegel: In concrete terms, tell us what you mean by special treatment. We have looked into the actual prison conditions of the RAF collective. We found no evidence of “special treatment,” other than a series of privileges.

RAF: You have not looked into anything. You got your information from the state security services and the BAW.

When we say special treatment, we are referring to:¹

- Eight months in the dead wing for Ulrike and Astrid;
- Years of isolation for all the RAF prisoners;
- Forced drugging ordered by the court “as an investigation technique”;
- Years of being chained during yard time;
- Ongoing court-ordered “immediate use of force,” which means cruel treatment in pacification cells, during transportation, during interrogation, as a result of confrontations, and during visits;
- Newspaper censorship;
- Special legislation;
- Special buildings for the trials of RAF prisoners in Kaiserslautern and in Stammheim—the 150 million DM,² bloated state security budget for the Stammheim trial to take place in a concrete fortress, which will require the relocation of police units from three *Länder*, even though it looks like neither the accused nor their lawyers will even be allowed to be present—assuming, that is, that the justice system will let the accused live that long;

1 In the original, this list appeared in one long paragraph; we have reformatted it for greater readability.

2 Roughly \$60 million at the time.

- Interfering with the defense, publishing defense materials, sections of files and state security documents and using them in government campaigns to determine the verdicts and have the defense barred.

The Springer Press has access to defense files and to files that the BAW has withheld from the defense. The defense attorneys are watched day and night. Their mail is opened, their telephones are bugged, and their offices are searched. They receive disciplinary sanctions from the bar for their public work. Relatives and visitors are harassed by the state security services, even at their jobs. They have been terrorized with open surveillance. Anyone who wants to write to us or visit us is spied on and ends up in the state security services' files.

Because of the pressure from the hunger strike, they have made cosmetic changes, small things, details, which the Ministry presents to film crews. In reality, nothing has changed.

The reality right now is that isolation is organized within the prisons with deadly technical precision—now with prisoners allowed to be together in groups of two for a few hours at a time. This doesn't interfere with the destructive process; it remains a closed system. This means that the brainwashing is to continue and any social interaction will remain impossible. In regards to the outside, isolation is perfected by excluding the lawyers, or else by limiting their number to three at a time.

Given Posser's³ conditions—for example our six years of remand—and the role of the BAW in postponing the trial, it's clear what we mean by “extermination through prison conditions.” Disprove even one of these “privileges”!

Spiegel: First you said that force-feeding was a fascist tactic, then after Holger Meins died of starvation, you described his death as a “murder by installment.” Isn't that a contradiction?

RAF: We're not the ones who said that, but force-feeding is a tactic used to diminish the effect of the hunger strike—how it appears—on the outside world; in short, to camouflage the murder. This is why intensive care units were set up in the prisons, so that it could be said that “they did everything they could,” although they didn't do the

3 Diether Posser was the SPD Minister of Justice in of North Rhine Westphalia at the time.

simplest thing they could have done: abolish isolation and special treatment.

Holger Meins was intentionally executed by systematic undernourishment. From the beginning, force-feeding in Wittlich prison was a method of assassination. At first, it was carried out by brutal and direct violence to break his will. After that, it was only done for show. With 400 calories a day, it is only a matter of time, certainly only days, before one dies. Buback and the Security Group arranged for Holger Meins to remain in Wittlich prison until he died. On October 21, the Stuttgart Supreme Court ordered that Holger Meins be transferred to Stuttgart by November 2 at the latest. On October 24, Buback informed the Stuttgart court that the state security services would not be able to respect this timetable—a fact that was only made public after Holger's death. Finally, Hutter, the prison doctor, completely cut off the force-feeding and went on vacation.

It must also be pointed out that throughout the hunger strike the BKA received “reports” from the prison administration as to the prisoners' condition. It must be emphasized that in an effort to protect himself, because he could see that Holger was dying, before Hutter left he asked Degenhardt to guarantee that he would not face charges, in the same way that all of the charges against Degenhardt had been dropped. Degenhardt was the doctor who, in the summer of 1973, during the second hunger strike, deprived prisoners at Schwamstadt of water for nine days “for medical reasons,” until a coma was induced. He is the doctor who Buback described, in comparison to Frey, who was dealing with the prisoners in Zweibrücken, as having what it takes.

Holger was assassinated according to a plan by which the scheduling of his transfer was manipulated to create an opening that the BAW and the Security Group could use to target the prisoner directly. The fact that so far no journalist has looked into this and nobody has written about it doesn't change the facts, but does say everything that needs to be said about the collaboration, complicity, and personal ties between the media conglomerates and state security: the BAW, the BKA, and the intelligence services.

Spiegel: There is no way we can accept your version of the so-called “murder by installment” of Meins. It seems to us that you have a persecution complex, which would make sense after years spent underground and in prison. We at *Spiegel* criticized Dr. Hutter's behavior, and the BAW launched an investigation into his actions.

RAF: It's not about Hutter or any other prison doctor—they decide practically nothing. The medical system in prison is organized hierarchically, and at most Hutter is an expendable figure. He's a pig, but only a little one, who in the long run might be held accountable, although nobody who knows anything about prison or prison medicine would believe it. When you say you "criticized" him, you are referring to the old trick of talking about "mistakes," so that the actual mistake will not be understood: class society, its justice system, and its prison camps.

Given the situation in the prisons, the media's fascist demagoguery around the hunger strike, the chorus of professional politicians—the uncontrollable outburst against a nonviolent action carried out by a small group of people, imprisoned and isolated, who have been pushed into a position of extreme defensiveness, as if the hunger strike were a military attack—Strauß spoke of the rules of war—all of this shows to what point the system's political and economic crises have eroded its facade of legitimacy. That's where you should look for the sickness, in the state's real interest in exterminating the RAF prisoners, instead of babbling about persecution complexes.

Spiegel: The British recently stopped the use of force-feeding, for instance in dealing with the terrorists from the IRA. The hunger strikes stopped right away. How would you react if this was done here?

RAF: It's not our problem. The CDU calls for an end to force-feeding, in the same way that it leans openly towards a state of emergency and fascism, while the SPD uses its electoral base and its history towards the same end—fascism. State control of every aspect of life, total militarization of politics, media manipulation, and indoctrination of the people, all to promote the domestic and foreign policies of West German imperialism. And public policy amounts to disguising "social shortcomings" and selling them as reforms. So the CDU openly advocates murder, while the SPD passes off the murders as suicides, being unable to openly embrace the state security hard line, which in the final analysis determines our prison conditions.

Spiegel: Isn't this another case of your tilting at windmills? Is it not true that everything we have heard from the RAF so far is based on a patently false analysis of the state, society, the SPD, the CDU, and the justice system?

RAF: What you're serving up here is a bit foolish. That which you describe as "patently false" is not some kind of scam or simply a position held by us alone: proletarian counterpower in response to your imperialist power—analytical and practical antagonism.

It is analytically empty to take a journalistic approach, to talk about the weaknesses, the effects and the basis of revolutionary politics—which it is your job to dispute—as journalism has long been recognized as playing a supportive role for the state, which is to say, it negates proletarian politics. For us, the question—as a question coming from *Spiegel*—is pointless. Theory and practice are only united in struggle—that's their dialectic. We are developing our analysis as a weapon—so it is concrete, and has only been properly presented in cases in which we have control of its publication.

Spiegel: You won't end your hunger strike until your demands have been met. Do you think you have any chance of success? Or will you escalate matters and, for instance, begin a thirst strike if the demands are not met? What further actions are you preparing inside and outside of prison?

RAF: Buback still believes that he can break the hunger strike and use it to destroy us. He hopes to do this by using murder, psychological warfare, and counterpropaganda—and forced psychiatric treatment, which is to be intensified in prison, with us strapped down 24 hours a day and disoriented by psychiatric drugs and sleep deprivation, so as to provoke our complete physical and psychological stagnation.

Buback received the help he needed from, amongst other places, the Heinemann Initiative, but also from the precisely worded fascism of the *Spiegel* essay written by Ditfurth,¹ for whom murder and forced psychiatric treatment are fair game for his cynical distortions, meant to increase the brutality of the political climate around the hunger strike. When, in mid-November, Carstens² began to produce propaganda openly calling for our murder it created public shock, antagonism and horror.

It was Heinemann's role to eliminate any lingering doubts—among intellectuals, writers and the churches—regarding Buback's hard line.

1 Christian von Ditfurth, historian and journalist.

2 Karl Carstens, a former Nazi who was at this time the Leader of the Opposition for CDU in parliament.

It has always been the role of this character to dress up the aggressive policies of West German imperialism in a language and form that makes them seem humane. Heinemann's letters amounted to an appeal for us to submit to brainwashing or murder. In the same way that he, as President, pardoned Ruhland, with his letters he promoted the death sentences the BAW wanted to impose on us, with humanist gestures that soothe the conscience of his supporters. What he wanted was to clear the way for murder—just like in Easter 1968, during his Presidency, when he hoped to integrate the students, the old antifascists, and the New Left into the new fascism.

We are going to escalate to a thirst strike, but imprisoned and isolated as we are, we are not planning actions either inside or outside of prison.

Spiegel: Did Holger Meins' death provide the RAF collective with an opportunity?

RAF: That is fascist projection, an idea from someone who can no longer think except in the terms of the market—the system that reduces all human life to money, egotism, power, and one's career. Like Che, we say, "The guerilla should only risk his life if this is absolutely necessary, but in such a case, without a moment's hesitation." Holger's death most certainly has "the resonance of history," meaning that what started with the armed anti-imperialist struggle has become a part of the history of the people of the world.

"An opportunity" in this case could only mean that it broke through the news blackout about the strike. You yourself bear some responsibility for the fact that lots of people only woke up when someone was finally murdered, and only then began to realize what was going on. For eight weeks *Spiegel* did not say a word about the hunger strike of forty political prisoners, in order to prevent solidarity and leave them vulnerable. Your first report on it appeared on the 53rd day of the strike, five days before Holger's death.

Spiegel: Are you prepared to see other people die?

RAF: Buback is sitting at his desk waiting for that.

Spiegel: You must know that we think that's a monstrous suggestion.

RAF: Oestereicher, the Chairman of Amnesty England, a professional human rights activist, following a conversation with Buback in his efforts at mediation with the state, was “shocked” by the “ice-cold” way that Buback “was gambling with the prisoners’ lives.” That’s a quote.

Spiegel: How do you analyze the situation in the Federal Republic?

RAF: An imperialist center. A U.S. colony. A U.S. military base. The leading imperialist power in Western Europe and in the European Community. Second strongest military power in NATO. The representative of U.S. imperialist interests in Western Europe.

The position of the Federal Republic vis à vis the Third World is characterized by the fusion of West German and American imperialism (politically, economically, militarily, ideologically based on the same interests in exploiting the Third World, as well as on the standardization of their social structures through the concentration of capital and consumer culture): in terms of its participation in the wars which imperialism wages, as well as being a “city” in the worldwide revolutionary process of cities being encircled by the countryside.

So the guerilla in the metropole is an urban guerilla in both senses: geographically, it emerges, operates, and develops in the big cities, and in the strategic and politico-military senses, because it attacks imperialism’s repressive machinery within the metropole, from the inside, like partisans operating behind enemy lines. That is what we mean by proletarian internationalism today.

To sum up: the Federal Republic is part of U.S. imperialism’s system of states, not as one of the oppressed, but rather as an oppressor.

In a state like this, the development of proletarian counterpower and the liberation struggle to disrupt the ruling power structure must be internationalist right from the beginning, which is only possible through a strategic and tactical relationship with the liberation struggles of the oppressed nations.

Historically, since 1918-1919, the German imperialist bourgeoisie and its state has held the initiative in an offensive against the people, from the complete destruction of the proletariat’s organizations under fascism, through the defeat of the old fascism, not by armed struggle here, but by the Soviet army and the Western Allies, and onward up until today.

In the 1920s, there was the treachery of the Third International,¹ with the communist parties all totally aligned with the Soviet Union, which prevented the KPD from advancing the revolution and conquering power through a policy oriented around armed struggle, through which it could have developed a class identity and revolutionary energy. After 1945, U.S. imperialism tried to brainwash the people with anticommunism, consumer culture, and the political, ideological, and even military restoration of fascism in the form of the Cold War. Nor did the GDR develop communist politics through a liberation war. Unlike France, Italy, Yugoslavia, Greece, Spain, and even Holland, there was no mass, armed antifascist resistance here. What conditions there were for that were then destroyed by the Western Allies after 1945.

What this means for us and for the legal left here is that we have nothing to hold on to, nothing to base ourselves on historically, nothing that we can take for granted in terms of proletarian organization or consciousness, not even democratic republican traditions. In terms of domestic policies, this is one of the factors which makes the drift towards fascism possible, with the exaggerated runaway growth of the police apparatus, the state security machine as a state within the state, the de facto concentration of power, and the proliferation of fascistic special legislation in the framework of “internal security”—from the Emergency Laws to the current special laws that allow show trials to be held in the absence of the accused and their lawyers, permit the exclusion of “radicals” from the public service, and extend the jurisdiction of the BKA. A democracy that is not won by the people, but is imposed on them, has no mass base, cannot be defended, and won’t be.

All this sums up the specific conditions within the borders of the Federal Republic.

Spiegel: So far, all of your bombs and slogans have only attracted very small groups of intellectuals and anarchist fellow travelers. Do you think you’ll be able to change this?

RAF: The Third World peoples’ liberation wars have economic, political, military, and ideological repercussions within metropolitan soci-

1 The Third International was a worldwide organization of communist parties under the leadership of the U.S.S.R.

ety, which Lin Biao¹ referred to as “cutting the feet out from under imperialism.” They accentuate the contradictions within the metropole. The techniques the system depends on to cover up these contradictions cease to work. Reform turns into repression. In areas where people lack social necessities, the military and police budgets are enormously bloated. Inevitably, the system’s crisis unfolds: impoverishment of the people, militarization of politics, and increased repression. The historic, politically defensive intervention into this process of disintegration forms the basis for revolutionary politics here.

Spiegel: You are often criticized for having absolutely no influence on the masses or connections to the people. Do you think this might be because the RAF collective is out of touch with reality? Have you sharpened your perspective? Many now feel that the only people paying attention to you are those who feel sorry for you, and that even the far left does not approve of you. Where do you think your supporters are?

RAF: The politics of the RAF have had an impact. Not supporters, not fellow travelers, not successor organizations, but the RAF and its political effect is apparent in the fact that—as a result of the measures the government has taken against us—many people are seeing this state for what it is: the repressive tool of the imperialist bourgeoisie against the people. To the degree that they identify with our struggle, they will become conscious—the system’s power will eventually show itself to be relative, not absolute. They will discover that one can do something, that the feeling of powerlessness does not reflect objective reality on the level of proletarian internationalism. They will become conscious of the connection between the liberation struggles in the Third World and here, conscious of the need to cooperate and work together legally and illegally. On the level of practice, it’s not enough to talk. It is both possible and necessary to act.

Spiegel: Do you intend to remain a cadre organization and bring down the system all by yourselves or do you still think you will be able to mobilize the proletarian masses?

1 Lin Biao was a close associate of Mao, and second in command during the Cultural Revolution.

RAF: No revolutionary wants to "bring down the system on his own," that's ridiculous. There is no revolution without the people. People said things like this about Blanqui, Lenin, Che, and now they say it about us, but they only ever say this to denounce revolutionary initiative, appealing to the masses in order to justify and sell reformist politics.

It is not a matter of struggling alone, but of creating a politico-military vanguard, through everyday struggles, mobilizations, and organizing on the part of the legal left, of creating a political-military core that can establish an illegal infrastructure, which is necessary in order to be able to act. In conditions of persecution, an illegal practice must be developed and can provide continuity, orientation, strength, and direction to the legal struggles in the factories, the neighborhoods, the streets, and the universities. In this way it indicates what is necessary at this point in the imperialist system's economic and political crisis: seizing political power.

Our political objective, what we are struggling to develop, is a strong guerilla movement in the metropole. This is a necessary step, in this phase of U.S. imperialism's definite defeat and decline, if the legal movements and the movements that develop in response to the system's contradictions are not to be destroyed by repression as soon as they appear. In this age of multinational capital, of transnational imperialist repression at home and abroad, the guerilla organizes proletarian counterpower, and in so doing represents the same thing as the Bolshevik cadre party did in Lenin's day. It will develop through this process—nationally and internationally—into a revolutionary party.

It is stupid to say that we are acting alone, given the actual state of anti-imperialist struggle in Asia, Latin America, and Africa, in Vietnam, Chile, Uruguay, Argentina, and Palestine. The RAF is not alone in Western Europe: there is also the IRA, the ETA, and the armed struggle groups in Italy, Portugal, and England. There have been urban guerilla groups in North America since 1968.

Spiegel: It seems that right now your base consists of forty RAF comrades in prison and about three hundred anarchists living underground in the FRG. What about your sympathizer scene?

RAF: Those are the constantly-changing numbers issued by the BKA. They are incorrect. It is not so simple to quantify the process by which people become conscious. At the moment solidarity is spreading internationally. At the same time, international public opinion is becoming

increasingly aware of West German imperialism and of the repression that goes on here.

Throughout the RAF's existence, there has been an increasing process of discussion and polarization on the legal left regarding the question of armed struggle. A new antifascism is taking shape, one which is not based on any apolitical pity for the victims and the persecuted, but on an identification with the anti-imperialist struggle, directed against the police, the state security services, the multinational corporations, and U.S. imperialism.

Helmut Schmidt wouldn't have listed the RAF in his New Year's speech under the five things/developments of 1974 that are most threatening to imperialism—worldwide inflation, the oil crisis, Guillaume,¹ unemployment, and the RAF—if we were fish out of water, if revolutionary politics here had as limited a base as you and the psychological warfare campaign claim.

Spiegel: It is said that one of your main sources of support is the dozen or so lawyers who are in charge of coordinating things for you inside and outside of the prisons. What role do your lawyers play?

RAF: Committed lawyers, those who are involved in our cases, are inevitably politicized, because quite literally at every turn, right from their very first visit with a RAF prisoner, they experience the fact that nothing they took for granted about the legal system holds true. The body searches, the mail censorship, the cell raids, the hysteria, the paranoia, the Disciplinary Committee rulings, the criminalization, the psychological warfare, the legislation custom-made to exclude them, on top of what they see of the special conditions we are subjected to, and their utter powerlessness to change anything in the normal way, that is to say, by using legal arguments in court, and the fact that every step of the way they see that it is not the judges who are making the decisions regarding us, but the Bonn Security Group and the BAW. The discrepancy between the letter of the law and the reality of the law, between the pretense of the rule of law and the reality of a

1 This refers to the "Guillaume affair." Günter Guillaume was an East German spy who worked as SPD Chancellor Willy Brandt's personal assistant. He was uncovered in late 1973 and arrested on April 24, 1974. The crisis forced Willy Brandt to step down, making room for the more bluntly right-wing and pro-American Helmut Schmidt to take over the party and the chancellorship. Guillaume was released to the GDR in 1981.

police state, turns them into defenders of the constitutional state, into antifascists.

It is part of the counterstrategy of the BAW and the BKA to claim that these lawyers are our “auxiliary forces,” which they are not. To a large degree, the justice system has been taken over by state security, in order to serve the goals of the counterinsurgency campaign and to aid in the BAW’s extermination strategy. In this context, defense attorneys who insist on the separation of powers are considered obstacles to the drift towards fascism and must inevitably be targeted.

Spiegel: Do you have political disagreements with other underground anarchist groups?

RAF: Not about *Spiegel*.

Spiegel: What about the 2nd of June Movement, which murdered the West Berlin Supreme Court Judge Drenkmann?

RAF: You should ask the 2nd of June about that.

Spiegel: What do you think: did Drenkmann’s murder accomplish anything?

RAF: Drenkmann didn’t become the top judge in a city of almost three million without ruining the lives of thousands of people, depriving them of their right to life, choking them with laws, locking them away in prison cells, destroying their futures.

What’s more, just look at the fact that despite calls from the highest West German authorities, the President of the Republic and the President of the Constitutional Court, only 15,000 Berliners came out to the funeral, and this in a city where 500,000 to 600,000 people used to come out for anticommunist demonstrations. You yourselves know that all the indignation about this attack on the Berlin judge is nothing but propaganda and hypocrisy, nobody mourns a character mask. This whole exercise was just a way for the bourgeoisie and the imperialists to send a message. The indignation was just a reflex action in one particular political climate, nothing more.

Those who, without themselves being from the ruling elite, automatically identify with such a character mask of the justice system simply make it clear that wherever exploitation reigns, they can only imagine

themselves on the side of the exploiter. In terms of class analysis, leftists and liberals who protested the Drenkmann action simply exposed themselves.

Spiegel: We know something quite different. We know that Drenkmann was shot, and we consider the RAF's justification of this murder to be outrageous, nothing but lynch mob justice for a so-called "crime" that was committed collectively by what you refer to as a "fascist" justice system. Even if one accepts the maxim that the ends justify the means, as you obviously do, one can see by the public's reaction that Drenkmann's murder constituted a setback for the RAF.

RAF: The logic behind the means lies with the ends. We are not justifying anything. Revolutionary counterviolence is not only legitimate, it is our only option, and we expect that as it develops it will give the class that you write for many more opportunities to offer up ignorant opinions, and not just about the attempted kidnapping of a judge. The action was powerful—as an expression of our love and our mourning and rage about the murder of an imprisoned combatant. If there are to be funerals—then they will be on both sides.

Your indignation has to be seen in the light of your silence regarding the attack in Bremen, where a bomb went off in a vending machine shortly after a football game had been cancelled.¹ Unlike the action against Drenkmann, this bomb was not aimed at a member of the ruling class, but at the people; it was a CIA-style fascist action, and it met with a much less heated reaction. How do you explain that in this case the Bremen Railway Police were already on alert the morning of December 8—the day that the bomb went off at 4:15 PM—because they had been warned by the Hessian Criminal Bureau to expect an attack in the station or on a train. How do you explain the fact that at 3:30 PM the Civil Protection Service in Bremen-North had already received the order to send five ambulances to the central station because a bomb was going to explode, while the police, who were there immediately after the explosion, claimed that they had only received word of the bomb threat at 3:56 PM, and that they had thought it was going to go off in a downtown department store? The Bremen authorities not only knew

1 The Bremen bombing and other false flag attacks are discussed in Section 9. *Shadow Boxing: Countering Psychological Warfare*. The RAF's statement on this attack in particular can be found on page 371.

the exact time and place of this attack, but immediately afterwards they had this statement prepared to conceal, manipulate and deflect any investigation away from what they had actually been doing. So where is your indignation now?

Spiegel: We will look into your allegations. While underground, you yourselves emphasized violence. When the bombs went off in Munich, Heidelberg, and Hamburg, the RAF saw these as political acts and claimed them as such. Since then have you recognized that violence against property and people is ineffective—that it doesn't attract solidarity, but rather repels it—or do you intend to continue along this path?

RAF: The question is, who does it repel? Our photos were hung in the streets of Hanoi, because the RAF attack in Heidelberg destroyed the computer that was used to program and guide U.S. bombers deployed in North Vietnam. The American officers and soldiers and politicians found this repellent, because, in Frankfurt and in Heidelberg, they were suddenly confronted by Vietnam, and could no longer feel safe.

Today revolutionary politics must be both political and military. This is a given because of the structure of imperialism, which must guarantee its sphere of control both internally and externally, in the metropole and in the Third World, primarily by military means, through military pacts, military interventions, and counterguerilla programs, and through "internal security," i.e. building up the internal machinery for maintaining power. Given imperialism's capacity for violence, there can be no revolutionary politics without resolving the question of violence at each organizational stage as the revolution develops.

Spiegel: How do you see yourselves? Do you consider yourselves to be anarchists or Marxists?

RAF: Marxists. But the state security image of anarchists is nothing more than an anticommunist hate campaign aimed at portraying anarchists as only being interested in blowing stuff up. In this way, the necessary terminology is established for the government's counterinsurgency campaign, meant to manipulate those anxieties which are always lurking just below the surface. Anxieties about unemployment, crisis, and war, which feed the insecurity about living conditions that people experience in a capitalist society, and which are used to sell the

people “internal security” measures as peace and security measures in the form of the state’s military machine—the police, the intelligence services, and the army. It aims at a reactionary, fascist mass mobilization of the people, thereby manipulating them into identifying with the state’s machinery of violence.

It is also an attempt to turn the old quarrel between Marxism and revolutionary anarchism to the advantage of the imperialist state, to use the bland opportunism of contemporary Marxism against us: “Marxists don’t attack the state, they attack capital,” and “It is not the streets, but the factories that are key to class struggle,” and so on. Given this incorrect understanding of Marxism, Lenin must have been an anarchist, and his work, *The State and Revolution*, must have been an anarchist work. Whereas it is, in fact, the strategic guide of revolutionary Marxism. The experience of all the guerilla movements is simple: the tool of Marxism-Leninism—what Lenin, Mao, Giáp, Fanon, and Che took from Marxist theory and developed—was for them a useful weapon in the anti-imperialist struggle.

Spiegel: So far as the people are concerned, it would seem that the “people’s war” as conceived of by the RAF has become a war against the people. Böll once spoke of six against sixty million.

RAF: That’s just the wishful thinking of imperialists. In the same way that in 1972 the newspaper *Bild* turned the idea of people’s war into “a war against the people.” If you think that *Bild* is the voice of the people... We don’t share Böll’s contempt for the masses, because NATO, the multinational corporations, state security, the 127 U.S. military bases in the Federal Republic, Dow Chemical, IBM, General Motors, the justice system, the police, and the BGS are not the people. Furthermore, hammering into the people’s consciousness the idea that the policies of the oil companies, the CIA, the BND the *Verfassungsschutz*, and the BKA are in the interests of the people and that the imperialist state represents the common good is the function of *Bild*, *Spiegel*, and the psychological war waged by state security against the people and against us.

Spiegel: Vox populi, vox RAF? Haven’t you noticed that nobody takes to the streets for you anymore? When there is a RAF trial, hardly anyone shows up in court. Haven’t you noticed that from the moment you began throwing bombs nobody has been willing to shelter you? All of which goes some way to explaining the successes in the hunt for

the RAF since 1972. It is you and not Böll who have contempt for the people.

RAF: It's nice of you to repeat Hacker's clichés, but the situation is this: a tactically weak and divided legal left, facing heavy repression in the national context, cannot transform the reactionary mobilization into one that is revolutionary. This is not on their agenda. It is precisely because of this contradiction that proletarian politics must be armed politics.

The understanding of strategy and class analysis contained in your silly polemic can be repudiated by examining these facts.

The RAF, its politics, its line, and its actions are proletarian, and are the first stages of proletarian counterviolence. The struggle has just begun. You talk about the fact that some of us are prisoners—this is only a setback. You don't talk about the political price the imperialist state has paid hunting this little unit, the RAF. Because one of the goals of revolutionary action—its tactic at this point in its development—is to force the state to show itself, to force a reaction from the repressive structure, so that the tools of repression become obvious and can be transformed into the basis for struggle in a revolutionary initiative. Marx said: "Revolution progresses by giving rise to a powerful, united counterrevolution, by the creation of an opponent through which the party of revolt will ripen into a real revolutionary one."¹

The surprising thing is not that we suffered a defeat, but that five years later the RAF is still here. The facts to which the government alludes have changed. In answer to a poll in 1972, 20% of adults said that they would hide one of us at their home for a night, even if it meant risking criminal charges. In 1973, a poll of high schools found that 15% of high school students identified with the RAF's actions. Of course the value of revolutionary politics cannot be measured through opinion polls, as one cannot quantify the processes of becoming conscious, of gaining knowledge, and of becoming politicized. But this does show how the concept of armed insurrection develops into protracted people's war—this shows that through the struggle against the imperialist power structure, the people will eventually recognize their role and will break free from media brainwashing—because our battle is a realistic

1 This is a rough quote from "The Class Struggles in France," a series of articles which Marx wrote in 1850 about the 1848-1849 revolution and counter-revolution in France. These articles can be read online at <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1850/class-struggles-france/index.htm>.

one, it is a battle against the real enemies of the people, whereas the counterrevolution is obliged to stand facts on their head.

At the same time, there is the problem of metropolitan chauvinism in the people's consciousness, which is poorly addressed by the concept of labor aristocracy as an economic category. There is the problem that national identity can only be reactionary in the metropole, where it implies an identification with imperialism. This means that right from the beginning, popular revolutionary consciousness is only possible in the form of proletarian internationalism, by identifying with the anti-imperialist liberation struggles of the people in the Third World. It cannot develop simply through the class struggle here. It is the role of the metropolitan guerilla to create this connection, to make proletarian internationalism the basis for revolutionary politics here, to connect the class struggle here and the liberation struggles of the people of the Third World.