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## **RAF Hungerstrike Statement**

**February 6<sup>th</sup> 1981**

The people's solidarity is grounded in the movement of revolt.

We, the prisoners of the RAF, have recommenced our collective hunger strike.

We shall not stop fighting against the torture, overt and covert extermination, the whole institutionalized strategy to destroy our identity, which is today being increasingly imposed against us.

We shall not let the State attain its goal. On the one hand, their plan consists of forcibly destroying the unity and collective structure of the group, by means of an intentionally and systematically segregated detention program - total isolation, isolation in small groups in perfected special security units or sham integration. On the other hand, their plan consists of protecting itself against the national and international public protests of the International Commission and even Amnesty International. It will not succeed because our concrete experience of the fact that this State is ready and able to carry out any brutality was part of our decision to take up arms.

Having been isolated from one another for years now, isolated from all collective processes and from the outside world, it is our aim to break this disconnection by employing the only effective means we have - unlimited collective hunger strike - and to fight for conditions in which would allow us to take part in a collective learning and working process in order to survive as human beings.

We demand:

the application of the minimum guarantees of the Geneva Convention for prisoners of war to the prisoners of the RAF and other anti-imperialist resistance groups.

This means:

- association in conditions where interaction would be possible, which is excluded by automated perfection, that is to say, acoustic and visual surveillance, in isolation units where air, light and sound are controlled. And this implies the control and surveillance of prison conditions by an International Commission.<sup>1</sup>
- the liberation of Günter Sonnenberg, because his continued detention makes recovery from his head wounds impossible<sup>2</sup>. Nor does the struggle stop in prison. The objectives don't vary, only the means by which and the terrain where the

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<sup>1</sup> The Easter March - a traditional peace march held on Easter weekend each year in West Germany. (13) Bundeswehr - West German Federal Army.

<sup>2</sup> Günter Sonnenberg - RAF prisoners, shot in the head when captured in 1977, suffers from epilepsy, his recovery is hindered by mistreatment and isolation in prison Sonnenberg, like many RAF prisoners, was finally released from prison in the early 90s following the organization's decision to cease armed activity and effectively dissolve itself.

guerilla-State conflict-war is waged differ. This is why, even though we are imprisoned and unarmed, the State reacts against a collective hunger strike as if against an armed attack.

When you see the measures used against us, there is no ambiguity: we are prisoners of war with the status of hostages. At each escalation of the confrontation, an imprisoned cadre of the RAF was executed: Holger<sup>3</sup>, Seigfried<sup>4</sup>, Ulrike<sup>5</sup>. When the politico military offensive of the RAF exposed the failure of the huge repressive effort aimed at exterminating the RAF by all possible means, the special coordination committee of the US National Security Council decided on the final solution; the execution of Andreas<sup>6</sup>, Gudrun<sup>7</sup>, Jan<sup>8</sup>, Ingrid<sup>9</sup>, and our brothers and sisters of the Martyr Halimeh Commando<sup>10</sup>. In this way, it was hoped that every trace of their resistance, their example and the continuity of their struggle, would be destroyed, "Snuff out the flame before it becomes a forest fire" in order to snatch all hope of liberation from people here in the metropolises.

The torture and murder of political prisoners, like the executions in the street, is no longer just a police tactic in this State, which really is the successor to the Third Reich, with identical aims and means. For German imperialism's present onslaught - its third, this time allied with, rather than against, US capital, and not independently, but as a function of American foreign policy, a global domestic policy – it is imperative to liquidate the militant prisoners and the whole resistance movement. That means all those who raise the question of power and directly attack, right here, the heart of the US system of States - the economic, political, and military launching pad for America's aggressive policy since 1945.

The torture and murder of political prisoners and the death squads in Turkey, Ireland, Italy, and Spain all originate from the NATO Supreme Command, which wants to impose this as a centralized domestic policy for the whole of Europe through the BKA<sup>11</sup> and other intelligence services. This is the same Supreme Command which, in the latest "NATO Review", openly reminds governments that there must be no question of considering demands for political status or for international inquiries on the torture of militant prisoners, and that they must respect the already agreed upon directives considering the strategy of criminalizing revolutionary resistance.

The human face of the resistance grew on the scorched earth of bourgeois resistance and the German Workers Movement, from the naive humanism of the Easter March<sup>12</sup> to the pacifist ban-the-bomb movement, through the youth revolts and the Vietnam opposition

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<sup>3</sup> Holger Meins - founding member of RAF, died in prison on hunger strike in 1974.

<sup>4</sup> Siegfried Hausner - died as a result of lack of treatment for injuries sustained in an RAF action against the German embassy in Stockholm in 1975. The objective of the action was the freeing of imprisoned comrades.

<sup>5</sup> Ulrike Meinhof - founding member of the RAF, murdered in prison in 1976.

<sup>6</sup> Andreas Baader — founding member of RAF, murdered in prison on Oct. 18, 1977.

<sup>7</sup> Gudrun Ensslin - founding member of RAF, murdered in prison on Oct. 18, 1977.

<sup>8</sup> Jan-Carl Raspe - founding member of RAF, murdered in prison on Oct. 18, 1977.

<sup>9</sup> Ingrid Schubert - RAF prisoner, murdered in prison on Nov. 11, 1977.

<sup>10</sup> Martyr Halimeh Commando - Palestinian Commando that hijacked a Lufthansa airliner on Oct. 18, 1977 and demanded the release of RAF prisoners.

<sup>11</sup> BKA - West German equivalent of FBI.

<sup>12</sup> The Easter March - a traditional peace march held on Easter weekend each year in West Germany.

to the urban guerilla. Against this human face, they set the inhuman face of massacre, because humanity gets in the way of their solution: to present brutality, misery, the total violence of property and genocide as "the cultural tasks of humanity". They project their crimes onto the guerilla - "poisoned drinking water, nuclear contamination, deadly bacteria" - to divert the fear that they themselves produce, so that no resistance can possibly develop out of an understanding of the real origins of these crimes. The culmination of the hunt against the RAF is now to prevent, at all costs, militant protest against rearmament, militarization in all fields and the deployment of the *Bundeswehr*<sup>13</sup> in the streets, all of which are meant to bring Germany back to where it was 35 years ago. It is further meant to prevent the resistance from declaring its solidarity with the guerilla and drawing exactly the same conclusion we did: that illegality is the liberated zone of resistance in West Germany, that militant protest creates its own capacity to act.

The State's reaction reveals its weakness and vulnerability and the possibility for us to accelerate the process of decomposition by constant attack, transforming it into a "real state of siege;" we cannot prevent the process of the transformation into a fascist State - in which the state of siege is legalized – since it is inevitable.

Since capital is now creating the conditions for its own aggressive reconstruction on a world scale, we must - all of us who want liberation, responsibility, and a humane way of life - prepare ourselves, in the countries from which this violent expansion springs, to prevent the realization of their project. In this phase, we have to develop the political and military counter-force in order to establish a "political barrier" which can prevent the military use of US imperialism's overkill potential, and in order to ultimately destroy it.

If the militant left can learn what imperialism has learned each time it has been defeated - that its power ends at the point where its violence no longer succeeds in intimidating – then it will have laid bare the whole secret of imperialism's seeming invincibility.

Solidarity excludes constraint and it cannot be cancelled like a credit arrangement. It is the practical expression of each person's consciousness that there is no contradiction between individual and collective liberation, despite what the pathetic apologists of the satisfaction of individual needs believe. Rather, there is a dialectical relationship - just as liberation here cannot be separated from the liberation struggle of the peoples of the Third World.

Solidarity manifests itself as proletarian internationalism, which means attacking the common enemy, US imperialism, at its strategic points wherever we confront it; solidarity is the basis on which the anti-imperialist battle lines will converge.

Our hunger strike is an expression of solidarity:

- with the prisoners of the IRA and the INLA and their long and determined struggle for political status.
- with the prisoners of the Red Brigades in their struggle against the strategy of extermination, in which they have seized the political initiative.
- with all prisoners from the anti-imperialist resistance in West Europe, especially in Turkey.

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<sup>13</sup> *Bundeswehr* - West German Federal Army.

- with the struggle of the Palestinian prisoners for Prisoner of War status.
- with all prisoners who have begun to resist in prison and are struggling to organize themselves.

ARM THE RESISTANCE

ORGANIZE ILLEGALITY

ORGANIZE ARMED RESISTANCE IN WEST EUROPE