

Peter-Jürgen Boock's Lies

At the time this statement was issued, Peter-Jürgen Boock had never been more popular with the liberal intelligentsia. In 1985 former SDS leader Peter Schneider coauthored a book with him examining the armed experience; the next year, following a legal appeal backed by many progressives, his sentence was reduced to a single life term. During this period Boock continued to protest his innocence of the various charges for which he had been convicted, while still not testifying against his former comrades. (His first testimony in this regard would come in the early 1990s.) Boock's celebrity took a somewhat excruciating twist in 1988 when he accepted 20,000 DM as a donation to his legal appeal from the brothers of liberal diplomat Gerold von Braunmühl, whom the RAF had assassinated in 1986. In 1992 he would finally admit that—contrary to what he had always insisted to his supporters—he had in fact been an active participant in the RAF's actions in 1977. He would only be released in 1998. (M. & S.)

We weren't going to say anything about Boock. The main point we want to make here is that he knowingly betrayed the group for months, wasting a significant amount of its energy and—after his lies were out in the open—preventing a reasonable resolution of the issues. It was always more important for us to clarify the conditions within the group—the subjective and political content—than to deal with Boock and the contributions he has been making to the anti-RAF smear campaign since 1981, and this allowed him to play his game for quite some time.

We are now going to present a few basic facts, as there is a serious lack of concrete information—information that we now realize could contribute to a more useful discussion. (A more complete report will be issued if necessary.)

Early on, Boock told the group—he told several individuals—a story about being examined by a doctor before he went underground and learning that he had intestinal cancer. As a result he only had a certain amount of time left to live.

Later, Boock would complain of, and was visibly in, extreme physical pain. The painkillers that he wanted at first were relatively easy to acquire. His pain got steadily worse. He doubled over from the cramps and screamed—at first every few days, then daily. Now it was a question of specific painkillers, which were hard to come by, especially for people in an underground organization. It was dangerous. A comrade found herself on her own, taken prisoner as a result, because she had to use an uncool prescription to try to get more dope for Boock.¹ He pressured people. He wanted larger and larger quantities to deal with “unbearable bouts of pain,” which inevitably made acquiring the drugs more risky.

We quickly considered the obvious options. We needed to organize a decent and safe hospice. By decent we mean a place that would allow Boock to remain in contact with the group and with doctors who understood the situation. And this obviously meant a place where the imperialist apparatus had no power. He didn't want to be examined, because, he said, he only had a few months left to live and wanted to spend them with the people he had struggled alongside, and because even doctors who were comrades were bourgeois and objectified the ill.

At one point doctors came to the house, but were unable to examine him, though he did accept the painkillers they gave him. His greatest fear was to be examined, because then it would have been clear that he was healthy.

The situation got increasing serious, and we were arranging—over Boock's objections—for a hospice that met the necessary criteria. Nobody thought that his story was simply an invention; it was convincing, and it made sense. Eventually, everything was ready. Boock didn't want his lies to fall apart, so he had to make the trip. In transit through Yugoslavia, the four were arrested.² So now there were arrests the comrades had to deal with—they struggled desperately to convince the authorities that Boock was seriously ill and needed immediate medical attention. Now, there was no way left for him to avoid an examination, and it showed that Boock was completely healthy.

After being released the four went together to a safe country. One important thing that came out of this was the clarification. The issues were very simple: the lies that had cost the group so much energy and so many arrests, the reasons why Boock had lied, as well as his future relationship to the group. All of this would have to be clarified through further discussion.

1 This refers to the January 21, 1978, arrest of Christine Kuby. See page 50.

2 See pages 51, 53.

He had got caught up in a form of politics in which he was always the “tough guy” and his cunning led him to make up stories and develop an all-encompassing political rationalization for his drug use; it was a dynamic in which he was a rat in a maze of consumption, drugs, lies, and the exploitation of his comrades. What had happened became increasingly clear with time.

The first question was how he and the group would carry on. This was at a time when we were clarifying the ’77 actions, their effects, the errors, and what to do next—in other words, the overall development of a new phase of struggle and a more clear-headed focus on strategy and planning. Obviously no one was willing to work with him after everything that had happened, which meant we had to set up a safe life for him, a viable long-term living situation. That soon became clear.

There was one option, but Boock still had not decided what to do. Boock was only one factor in the overall clarification. In the following months, there was also the question of how to develop the next phase of struggle, and one after another, eight people decided to leave the group. The reasons and routes that led to these departures varied, and the desire to clarify matters always came in part from the individuals themselves, but sometimes the initiative came from those who would later continue the politico-military project.

For those who wanted to leave, we sought a place that would be more than just a safe hideout, something that would offer much more of a life and a future. We found a good solution, and Boock could have chosen to accept it. This would have been possible, because the solidarity and the sense of responsibility within the group (and the political bonds) were more important than the personal and political differences about whether or not to continue the struggle here after ’77. The group was soon deeply immersed in both the reflection and the practical steps required to carry on politically. At first, this was more focused on new concrete actions than on fancy conceptual formulations.

Soon, Boock was insisting that he wanted to return to Western Europe with us to continue the struggle. There were many discussions about this. He didn’t want the exile we had arranged and overcame the group’s resistance to the idea of continuing to work with him.

Boock conducted multiple self-criticisms to achieve his goal, and, most importantly, he rejected exile. We couldn’t jam up the comrades there with a guy who absolutely didn’t want to be there. That would have been a disgraceful solution. They were already finding his demands difficult to bear.

Eventually, we arranged for Boock to travel back to Western Europe and integrated him into a section of the new structure. It wasn’t long

before he began trying to acquire dope. That made it perfectly clear that a different decision was required, that we could no longer work together. Exile was the solution, and we weren't giving in this time. Boock saw that this was now a clear group decision and that we were organizing his trip. That was when he ran for it.

There was a reason he was so determined to return to Western Europe: the kind of drug consumption that is only possible in the metropole; and ultimately his confidence in his own cunning, which made him think he could deal with life in the underground, and that should he ever be arrested he could simply continue to make deals on a new terrain thanks to Baum's offer at that time.³ This was the basis for the deal he tried to make with Rebmann, which proved that his cunning was nothing more than political idiocy. In this way, Boock eventually defected with the support of some public figures and everyone who wanted dirt on the RAF. That was the road that lay before him, and it is along that road that he has foraged ever since.

It is unclear whether or not Boock is connected to the state security apparatus, but it is obvious that he is managed—for journalistic purposes. Among the defectors, Boock holds a special place. In pursuing his charade, he has become morally bankrupt. That makes him particularly useful to state security propaganda. He is an empty vessel that can be filled with anything. His claim to fame in this regard: "Insider" (but not too far inside). Even a section of the left, with its consumerist and voyeuristic mentality, sits at home believing that there is much in Boock's many stories that is true. But there isn't. His story is a house of cards. It's nothing more than his trip. With spite and projections he rejected everything in his own life in exchange for a pardon: this is what his cunning really amounts to.

The most important thing is the campaign he is engaging in. It always includes the tried and true model of the state security campaign; the campaign to politically and morally discredit the guerilla and all other decisive efforts for liberation in the metropole. Boock's fabrications: an underdog's special relationship with the original Stammheim prisoners; the early RAF was still political; the RAF continues as the struggle against prison conditions; the hierarchy; the futile attempt to shape the new human; group pressure; his friendship with the Palestinians, which served to protect him from the group; the return home; and the red carpet rolled out for his rehabilitation, with the claim that the Nazis were worse and they never had to serve time in prison.

³ See chapter 8, especially page 263-265, 268, 270.

This has created a feeding frenzy within the deflated German left-wing intelligentsia. They aren't victims of Boock's lies. It's a mutual arrangement. It all serves to justify their shameless subservience to power. The fleeting moment of truth that these sectors of the left experienced in '77 melted away in their dance with the fraud, Boock.

Die Zeit proudly presents, while in *Spiegel* one can read that "Weizsäcker is interested in the case." The extensive media campaign—the showpiece of contrite, repentant former militants and an imposed peace—all of this is fuel for expanding the role of German imperialism on a world scale.

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