

we are now making one thing public, namely that there is a split among the prisoners regarding their political affinity to the raf. the content of this affinity has collapsed, and there is no other alternative left but to make a split. we have reached an end to the political agony which began in 1992, namely that the foundations for our politics were being chipped away, and today we will stop having our life and our struggle developed behind our backs. since may, the prisoners in celle have started a process of liquidating the raf and the prisoners, with the support of those members who are still underground.

we have only come to know of this very recently, and then only by coincidence. we did not expect this, because we were sure that the people in celle, and the raf, knew that none of us other prisoners would ever take such a route. now we were supposed to accept certain accomplished facts, take it or leave it. in other words: whoever does not "accept" this will stay in prison forever.

the disappointment did not just come over us, but rather over everyone who has been connected with the struggle of the raf and the prisoners, everyone who has been in solidarity, and everyone who has wanted to struggle with us for the freedom of the prisoners. in one way or another, we were all just trump cards in a deal. we want no part in this. the situation should be clear to everyone, everything else represents political confusion and a lack of responsibility. everyone should be able to see for themselves how things are and where she/he wants to go. and for us ourselves, we can't go on in any other way, otherwise we would be trampling our lives and all of our experiences in our struggle into the dust.

first, i'd like to talk about the fundamental concept behind this development, and then i'll put forward the facts as we know them.

the starting point was the assumption that kohl had some interest being able to say, with elections approaching, that he had found a "political solution" to end the 23 years of confrontation. that's why they were so punctual, acting before the election strategies had been set, signaling a willingness to kohl on the part of the raf and the prisoners to make a concrete offer.

beyond this, people in significant societal positions were informed of this willingness, and they, for their part, discussed making the offer of such a solution to kohl. the long-term reasoning behind this was - in case kohl did not act - that these people would know that the raf had, so to speak, been forced back into confrontation. it was to be made clear to them that the state would be to blame for the continuation of actions. the raf was willing, but kohl was not.

now there is no more independent political orientation and concept coming from the raf, but rather just a focus on "pressure", to press for better conditions, as was the case with weiterstadt.

in other words, the end of the politics which the raf has stood for for more than 20 years, namely, revolutionary intervention in the metropolises. and that was never a question of the means alone, but rather more of the content of these politics. we can see where this content has lead today, because armed action is today defined as a product to be exchanged.

so much for the concept. this whole affair had a negotiator, one of our former lawyers. he thinks he's doing something for us, supposedly our last chance of ever getting out of jail. irmgard and i have spoken with him, and from him we learned the details.

initially, edward reuter, former economics minister, was approached. that was in may. but reuter didn't want to hear anything, so the negotiator only got as far as the security chief. only then did he go to "benz" and his associates at the office for the defense of the constitution, and they were informed of the matter and gave the green light for reuter to get on the telephone.

karl-heinz dellwo's fixation on these talks was this, namely that reuter would be someone who would see the end of the raf/state conflict as being in the economic ministry's interest, and then their central people would play major roles in the discussion. an end seemed possible, although the state had only sought a military solution, something which would only prolong the conflict. that's why it was necessary for reuter to use his influence to force a solution. reuter is not in favor. he finally speaks with schnarrenberger, and later with kohl. kohl's answer is negative.

that was shortly before bad kleinen.

wolfgang was shot, birgit arrested, and steinmetz, who was supposed to deliver the entire raf into the hands of the state, disappeared.

the negotiator goes to birgit to see if he still has her support and that of the people still living underground. birgit thinks he should continue.

he calls reuter once more, tells him that bad kleinen has not wrecked everything, but rather made it more urgent, but reuter is no longer interested and refuses.

next, the negotiator tries to win ignatz bubis' (the head of a major jewish organization in germany -trans.) support, to thereby get some more support and influence behind the celle- concept.

during another meeting, bubis agrees to further talks along these lines in bonn. his mind seems to have been won over by the reasoning that there is a need for political development in germany because the danger from the far-right has grown so serious, therefore the state needs to focus all of its energies on that. he speaks with schnarrenberger, kinkel, kohl. his proposal, to visit celle to hear everything from the prisoners themselves, is turned down by kohl, who wants to wait and see what the bad kleinen investigations turn up, and to see how far they got with steinmetz. kohl's interest is in turning up the heat,

not backing off. and the economy folks see this as their interest as well. a meeting planned for the end of september, between bubis and kohler and kanther, does not take place. that's what we know at this point. how things were to develop concretely from there, we only partially know, but one sign that the state was seriously considering the offer was to have been the release of the prisoners who have been in jail the longest, the transfer of birgit to frankfurt, and the regroupment of the remaining prisoners. then there was to be the "entire solution", which was to include those people still underground. we don't know what they have in mind, probably legalization with some sort of exile or a short jail sentence, or what they were planning to do with the rest of the prisoners.

and we don't care. they can continue, but they should do it openly. they should not try to use other people for their purposes, people whom they neither can nor should ignore.

there is no time right now to write much more, but i would just like to say something short.

we are not drowning in bitterness. the bitterness was last year, when it became clear that the "end" of the raf was not leading to a new orientation of radical and revolutionary politics, and for searches and struggles for people's own proposals, but rather a step towards adaptation and an empty de- politicization. this was unavoidable, not because they did not understand what we were talking about, but rather because they wanted something different. what's certain, however, is that revolutionary politics can regain a foothold here, with a new determination, and with a conscious break from this legacy.

we all have a lot to say - that will follow - but the meaning and content of our politics are part of our lives, an inseparable existential unity, one which has been nurtured together, and that is what we struggle for.

brigitte mohnhaupt

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on behalf of the prisoners from the raf in luebeck, cologne, frankfurt, schwalmstadt, frankenthal, bruchsal and aichach