

A note regarding the current situation – by some who have been RAF members at various points in time

For three years now, state security and the media have been speculating on who exactly killed attorney general Siegfried Buback and industrialist Hanns Martin Schleyer more than thirty years ago. Investigating agencies are trying to find evidence from other RAF attacks. As the last prisoners from the RAF barely emerge from prison, they are confronted with new prosecutions while others are issued testimony summons and threats of coercive detention. After the first wave in summer 2007 in the legal procedure against Stefan Wisniewski, a second attempt to elicit testimonies from us began late 2009 in the legal procedure against Verena Becker. Verena Becker was in the RAF in 1977. In 1983, we separated. Shortly, a court case will be started against her, apparently a prelude for further trials. Legal procedures against Stefan Wisniewski and Rolf Heissler continue to be pursued.

The apparent purpose is to obtain individual “recriminations”, i.e. to pressurize individuals to say who exactly did what. More than 30 years no-one really cared who was convicted for what. All that counted was to make us disappear behind bars. Suddenly, in 2007, with the media circus about “30 years after the German Autumn,” the “struggle for clarification” became the sixty-four-thousand-dollar question. Not enough that we have stated our collective responsibility for the attacks of the RAF. We should “finally” squeal in order to “give up the logic of conspiracy.”

What it is really all about is to pull down the debate on the history of armed struggle to the mere level of murder and violence. A level where contexts are torn apart and only dealt with in terms of criminalistics, so that no space whatsoever can be developed that would allow for considerations other than those determined in advance.

For some, we should “face” a “discussion” for which the conditions have already been fixed beforehand, with the aim of depoliticizing the RAF’s actions by personalization. Or, as the newspaper *Süddeutsche Zeitung* commented on this issue, “Soon, political motives in this war will not be recognizable anymore. (...) The individualization and privatization of German terrorism is its last stage. What’s happening with it at the moment, is a case of applied historiopolicy: of retrospective transformation of the political into the personal.” (24 April 2007)

We are supposed to “come to terms with history” on any terms but ours. We are to “draw a line” no-one else is prepared to join and whose prerequisites are not even negotiable. It is again a major attempt to bury actual experience, to prevent true learning processes, to isolate the different struggles from each other. That would finally be it. End of story. A story of which nothing remains but self-accusation and mutual denunciation.

What triggered the whole thing were the preparations for a campaign that was aimed at creating publicity for the planned racket in autumn 2007 and the film productions that followed. Between late 2005 and late 2006, contributors to *Der Spiegel* left no stone unturned to try and win us over for a tv-series directed by *Der Spiegel* editor-in-chief Stefan Aust. Something new was needed to feed the campaign. Anecdotes, gossip, chit-chat, to try and provide the whacked “contemporary witnesses” with some credibility.

As we know, this only resulted in the reprocessing of old “revelations”, but in the meantime Aust’s protégé Peter-Jürgen Boock was pushed forward to get hold of the “victims of the RAF”. Since nothing could be squeezed out of the “experts” and “crown witnesses” anymore, some politicians demanded in public that the last prisoners from the RAF be released only if they “name names”. By the end of March 2007, Boock used this opportunity to instrumentalize the son of attorney general Buback for his umpteenth culprit version. This time with the names of exactly those who had not yet been convicted for the attacks in question.

That was a real gift for the media, who immediately started the counting-out game. With an old police trick which simply turns the tables: in the end, sufficient denials would automatically lead to the real culprits. One day after a talkshow with Boock in late April 2007, Karl-Heinz Dellwo in a *Panorama* interview came up with the following: “I definitely know cases in which people were completely innocent and have done time for others.” Asked if we should name names, he answered, “people must decide that for themselves.” Two weeks later Knut Folkerts stumbled into the trap and in an interview with *Der Spiegel* declared his innocence in the Buback case. For the Office of the Attorney General, the media fuss was sufficient to formalize legal procedures accordingly.

The RAF was dissolved in 1998, based on its assessment of the changed political situation globally. The fact that it was its own decision and that it has not been defeated by the state, obviously remains a thorn in the flesh. Hence the eternal lament of the “myth” yet to be destroyed. Hence the political and moral capitulation demanded from us. Hence the attempts to finalize the criminalization of our history, upto the mendacious proposal of a “Truth Commission”. Whereas the search for those who are still underground, the smear campaigns in the media and the legal procedures against former prisoners continue, we are expected to kowtow publicly. As, in all these years, it didn’t work by “renunciation”, we are now to denounce each other. Save yourself if you can.

None of us has testified, not because of any specific “agreement” among us, but because it is a matter of course for anyone with a political consciousness. A question of dignity, of identity – of the side we once took.

Not to testify is not a RAF invention. It has been an experience of the liberation movements and guerilla groups that it is vital to provide no information whatsoever when in custody, in order to protect those who continue the struggle. We have the historical examples of the resistance against fascism. Whoever seriously wanted something politically over here has reflected on these and learned from these. In the student movement, the refusal of testimonies was a widely understood necessity when its criminalization started. Ever since, militants in various contexts have been confronted with the question. For us within the RAF, it has just as much been a necessary condition that no-one testifies. There is no other protection – for those in prison, for the group outside and for the illegal space as such, its movements, its structures and its relationships.

But also like this. We don’t testify because we are no state witnesses, not then, not now.

Through all these years, despite “screensearch” technologies, the highly armed state security apparatus hasn’t been able to obtain a reasonably comprehensive picture of our movements. Even those who, under the pressure of isolation, smear campaigns and blackmail, broke down and were used as “crown witnesses”, could not contribute to completing the picture. The bits and pieces put together by state security agencies haven’t been very useful for general counterinsurgency purposes. They have no clue of the approach, the organization, the traces, the dialectics of an urban guerilla in the metropolis. And there is no reason to help them out on this. The RAF’s actions have been discussed and decided collectively when we agreed. All of us, who in a particular period have been part of the group and shared these decisions, obviously have the responsibility for these as well. We have stated this several times, and the way we relate to it doesn’t change by the fact that the RAF is history.

The RAF’s collective structure has been attacked right from the start. It was not supposed to exist, it had to be old school, authoritarian relationships, “officers and soldiers”, ringleaders and followers. Those were the compulsory terms for the police, for the propaganda, and those are their terms today. The judiciary, however, considering itself at the “forefront” against “state enemy number one”, was lacking evidence in court due to our lack of collaboration. Its solution was the “conspiracy” paragraph 129/129a, with which everyone could be made responsible for everything. That’s what the verdicts have been based on, partly, and criminalistic details were only used to suppress political contexts.

In contrast, testimonies which we sometimes provided in the trials against us, during the years of prison, have been determined collectively, as a possibility to say something against the worst shithouse propaganda. For us it was hardly of any importance what the state security’s or judiciary’s attributes and constructions consisted of in detail. We were in prison because we started armed struggle over here, and our interest during the trials in court was, at best, to convey the contents and aims of our policy. A policy of attack in the metropolis which understood and determined its praxis in the context of struggles worldwide for the liberation from capitalism.

If anything remains to be said, then with regard to this policy.

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