

Stage Nazi Scare To Intimidate West German Government

The entire spectrum of political terrorism networks in West Germany — ranging from the hard-core “Baader-Meinhof Gang” to Social Democratic Chairman Willy Brandt — has been activated in order to put a temporary lid on the government’s plan to finalize their break with the Carter Administration. The most serious result of this effort so far has been the postponement of a scheduled meeting between West Germany’s Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and his Italian counterpart Giulio Andreotti.

WEST GERMANY

The Schmidt-Andreotti talks, centering around economic issues, were ostensibly postponed because of an uproar following the escape of Herbert Kappler, a Nazi war criminal, from Italy into West Germany. The 70-year-old former SS colonel had only recently been transferred from prison to a hospital with a diagnosis of terminal cancer, and was reportedly spirited away by his wife, a physical therapist residing in the north German town of Lüneburg.

The affair is diplomatically ticklish because according to West German constitutional law, the government cannot honor any other country’s extradition requests. The Italian government has nonetheless applied for extradition, while a West German government spokesman has cited a “certain disquiet” in Italy as the grounds for the postponement.

Although details of the case are still unclear, the escape was obviously timed to coincide with a drive by terrorist-linked networks to portray West Germany and Italy as “fascist.” Widely-circulated “liberal” public media have been using a variety of distortions to hammer at this point. The weekly *Die Zeit* lavishly publicized the arrest in West Berlin of two persons displaying Nazi uniforms in public. More insidiously, *Der Spiegel* magazine cited a recent study of West German schoolchildren, ostensibly proving that a large proportion of the younger generation believes that Adolf Hitler meant well for the German people.

A similar charade is taking place in Italy, including symbolic firings of the officials responsible for the guarding of Kappler and demonstrations outside the mass grave of the 335 Italian resistance fighters murdered by Kappler’s SS squad in 1944. *Repubblica*, a daily generally representative of Fiat’s Gianni Agnelli, printed an article by the leader of the pro-terrorist left grouplet Avanguardia Operaia, Silverio Corvisieri, on the significance of the Kappler affair. “There is a Stalinist-fascist alliance in Italy,” he wrote. “What is occurring is a pact comparable to one between Brezhnev and Pinochet.”

Two other events coincided with the Kappler escape.

First, the imprisoned members of the “Baader-Meinhof” terrorist gang announced a hunger strike, demanding more lenient treatment in prison. When the authorities did not comply, Otto Shily, lawyer for terrorist Gudrun Ensslin, with a representative of Amnesty International accused Federal Prosecutor Rebmann — successor to the murdered Siegfried Buback — of “cold-bloodedly planning the murder of prisoners.” Outside of Rebmann’s office appeared leaflets written by the “Initiative Against the Extermination of Political Prisoners,” justifying the murder of the banker Jürgen Ponto because of Ponto’s ties with “looters of the Third World and with Schmidt, South African Premier John Vorster and the Shah of Iran.”

A small bomb exploded outside the Stuttgart legal office of Baader-Meinhof counsel Klaus Croissant, himself a fugitive from justice now in hiding in France. Two lawyers who had been working in the office, one of whom is married to a wanted Baader-Meinhof criminal, likewise accused Rebmann of creating the conditions for this “rightwing” attack. The “liberal” weekly *Die Zeit* helpfully predicted that an international incident involving Croissant will serve to worsen West Germany’s relations with its European neighbors.

Conservatives Lead Countermeasures

The Schmidt government is maintaining a policy of strict silence concerning its intentions, both in security and in economic policy. This “prudent” posture commenced immediately following the July 29 assassination of banker Jürgen Ponto, who counted among Schmidt’s closest advisers. It has therefore been left up to conservative spokesmen to counter the deteriorating atmosphere with some approximations of the truth. The *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, a leading national daily, tried to preempt the synthetic “anti-fascist” propaganda by predicting “it will only take a few days for the Jean-Paul Sartres to accuse the Germans of never having changed their ways.” In fact, no one is interested in the aging Kappler, the paper writes, “but some groups think this is their chance to bypass the constitution.” The conservative daily *Die Welt* is more blunt: “If people are trying to create the impression that the Federal Republic of Germany is fascist, they are doing so either because they are ignorant or because they are conscious sowers of panic.”

At a press conference, Christian Democratic opposition leader Helmut Kohl called for a concerted campaign not only against the individual terrorists, but also against those who create the political and social atmosphere in which terrorism can thrive. This is a reference to the extended network of lawyers, university professors and protestant pastors who are in fact the controllers of the terrorist scene. The *Bayernkurier*, organ of the Bavarian Christian Social Union, rightly pointed out that most of today’s West German terrorists

previously enjoyed close relations with some of the country's leading Social Democrats. Last week a leading Christian Democrat pointed directly at the Marburg University law professor Wolfgang Abendroth as a key manipulator of the terrorists' belief structure.

It is possible that Social Democratic Chancellor Schmidt remains silent because of pressure from terrorist control networks within his own party. According to a recent *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* article, SPD

Chairman Willy Brandt is currently holding consultations with a group of SPD leftists including Jochen Steffen, former SDS leader Rudi Dutschke, and Lower Saxony SPD head Peter von Oertzen. This group of known intelligence agency operatives has been maneuvering to found an "independent" left alternative to the SPD. Brandt may well be using them in order to threaten Schmidt's conservative wing with a party crisis.

West German Law Professors 'Debate Terrorism'

Below are extracts of an interview by the West German magazine Der Spiegel with three university professors of law questioning whether they are supporters or sympathizers of terrorist groups. The three are among some 40 professors who forced publication of a book containing the text of a pamphlet distributed at the Göttingen University shortly after the assassination of Federal Prosecutor Siegfried Buback.

This leaflet, authored under the pseudonym "Mescalero," is purposefully ambiguous on terrorist violence, and was designed to open a public discussion similar to the "violence debate" of the late 1960s, a crucial factor in the consolidation of today's terrorist operations. The extracts reveal that one of the professors, namely Ulrich K. Preuss, is a "witting" intelligence agent manipulating the other two. Until 1976, Preuss was a lawyer for terrorists Ulrike Meinhof and Astrid Proll.

Spiegel: ...let's try to use one statement in order to determine what separates you from "Mescalero" and what unites you. The statement accuses (murdered Federal Prosecutor) Buback of "torturing leftists." Did Buback indeed order torture to be used, and are the people this refers to — Andreas Baader, Gudrun Ensslin, Jan-Carl Raspe, for example — leftists?"

Preuss: The concept "torturing leftists," taken as such, is extremely liable to misinterpretation. There does exist the idea that certain prison conditions — especially isolation and the resultant sensory deprivation, to use the medical term — must, under the present conditions, be described as a new form of torture.

Spiegel: Is that just some idea, or is that *your* idea?

Preuss: I have discussed this with Ulrike Meinhof and with Astrid Proll, whom I personally counseled, as well as with others who have described the same feelings about their own cases, and I said to these people: It is possible for people to say that this is a modern form of torture.

Spiegel: We're not interested in what people say, but only in what *you* say.

Preuss: I myself have made no secret of my rejection of this sort of prison treatment, but I have not described it as torture, since I know this would bring up many false associations, and that things would keep having to be explained afterwards. For me, therefore, torture means physical abuse in the classical sense of inflicting pain.

Spiegel: concerning the second part of our question: In your view and in that of "Mescalero," are the terrorists sitting in Stammheim prison and elsewhere leftists?

Preuss: Ulrike Meinhof, Horst Mahler and whoever else, all came out of the left culture of the student movement, and therefore we, as leftists who mostly come from there too, have a relationship with them. I, for example, have a very close personal relationship with Horst Mahler.

I can't pin each of them down, and so I regard all of them as members of this left family who have, however, taken completely different paths, ones which we disapprove of. They belong to the left current, even though the consequences they have drawn from this are rejected by us and by the overwhelming majority of the left.

Spiegel: If...

Gerstenberger: I'd rather say it somewhat differently. For us leftists it is much more problematic to say that the prisoners are no longer leftists, since this would make our disputes with them too simplistic.

Spiegel: Now, if...

Knieper: May I also answer your question? It's much more difficult for me to say: What is left? Up to what point does that go? Have the violent criminals catapulted themselves out of the left camp? This might lie in the fact that I did not come out of the student movement. This is probably the reason why I don't have any set opinion on this.

(To Preuss): I have the impression that you're also not absolutely sure about it, as I noted by your hesitation a while ago.

Preuss: No, I'm not uncertain here. They have taken a different path from ours. But how can they be classified if they don't stay a part of the left?

Knieper: Permit to strongly disagree with you: We do know, for example, that Mussolini came from the Italian left, but no one can seriously count him as a member of the left for his whole life.

Preuss: You have to make distinctions. Whenever I talk about prisoners, I am actually thinking about particular people. I'm thinking about Ulrike Meinhof, or about Mahler. I don't think, for example, about Baader, whom I did not know beforehand ... But now, if you want to have it in terms of political classification, then I don't have any problem with saying that, for example, terrorist groups who are responsible for the murders of Buback and Ponto...