

# A phantom dissolves: the end of the RAF?

by Angelika Beyreuther-Raimondi

On April 20, Reuters received an eight-page “self-dissolution declaration” issued by the terrorist Red Army Faction (RAF), also known as the Baader-Meinhof Gang. The relevant authorities ranked the declaration as “authentic,” and claimed that the paper used and the printing technique for the RAF five-point star were identical to earlier publications of the RAF, in which that organization took responsibility for various assassinations.

What does this “self-dissolution declaration” mean? Officials are expressing some skepticism. At the beginning of 1997, the Federal Attorney, Kay Nehm, had claimed that “the Red Army Faction has become practically insignificant. We are working on cleaning up the past.” Once the recent RAF declaration was issued, Nehm told the news magazine *Focus* that the authors of the declaration have not been identified, and that “the anonymous dissolution declaration does not tell us very much.” A high official of the Verfassungsschutz (Office for the Protection of the Constitution) told the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* that a single person had perhaps authored the declaration, some “keeper of the RAF seal.”

The former chief of the Bundeskriminalamt (Federal Criminal Office, BKA), Horst Herold, voiced his reservations too: The authors of this declaration, he said, “understand nothing about the old RAF.” The most devastating assassinations attributed to the RAF were committed during Herold’s term in office, from 1971 to 1981: On April 7, 1977, the terrorist group assassinated Federal Attorney Siegfried Buback; on July 30, 1977, they killed the spokesman of the board of directors of Dresdner Bank, Jürgen Ponto; and on September 1977, an RAF team kidnapped the President of the Federal Association of German Employers and member of the board of directors of Daimler Benz AG, Hanns-Martin Schleyer, in a black-mail attempt to force the release of jailed RAF members. Following six dramatic weeks — which included the hijacking of a Lufthansa aircraft to Somalia, the storming of the aircraft by the GSG9 anti-terror squad, the suicide of terrorists Andreas Baader, Gudrun Ensslin, and Jan-Carl Raspe in the Stammheim Prison near Stuttgart — the RAF commando team assassinated Schleyer.

The first and second “generations” of RAF killers were personally identified. But for years, nothing has been known about the identity of the supposedly still-existing RAF members of the so-called third, fourth, or fifth generations. The BKA

is still looking for six RAF members. Two of them, Sabine Elke Callsen and Barbara Meyer, say they want to surrender to the authorities. A seventh member, Christoph Seidler, surrendered to the Federal Attorney’s office in November 1996.

There have been no further clues with respect to individual RAF members since 1984. The authorities know, according to Hamburg Verfassungsschutz chief Reinhard Wagner, “very little” about RAF organizational structures. As late as 1985, the Verfassungsschutz accorded 10 pages of its annual report to the RAF, but by 1996 it devoted but a single page to this phantom. “Almost 28 years ago,” the RAF self-dissolution declaration claims, “on May 14, 1970, there emerged a liberation operation of the RAF. Today we end this project. The urban guerrilla, in the form of the RAF, now belongs to history.”

## Many open questions

The self-dissolution declaration does not change the fact that all of the assassinations attributed to the RAF in the last 13 years remain unsolved. The perpetrators left not the slightest clues and killed with a high degree of professionalism, sophisticated technical ability, and military precision. Who the killers were, is still not known.

- Who assassinated Ernst Zimmermann on Feb. 1, 1985, the chairman of the board of the armaments firm Motoren und Turbinen Union (MTU)? A woman and a man gained entry to Zimmermann’s Munich apartment and killed him with a bullet in the back of the head. The RAF commando squad which allegedly carried out the hit has remained unidentified to this day, and no arrest warrant for named perpetrators has been issued.

- Who detonated the bomb that demolished the vehicle of Siemens manager Karl-Heinz Beckurts, killing him and his driver, Eckhard Groppler, on July 9, 1986?

- Who shot the German diplomat Gerold von Braunmühl, in October 1986? The authorities know nothing to this day about “Commando Ingrid Schubert,” who claimed responsibility for the killing.

- Who killed the spokesman of the board of Deutsche Bank, Alfred Herrhausen, on Nov. 30, 1989? The chief suspect, Christoph Seidler, whose face was on the “wanted” posters of the BKA for years and who was ranked as belonging to the inner core of the RAF, surrendered to the authorities in 1996. In 1997, the Federal Court lifted the arrest warrant against Seidler, because there were no “urgent grounds for suspicion” against him. But the question remains: Who killed Alfred Herrhausen?

- Who shot Detlev Karsten Rohwedder, the head of the Treuhand agency, entrusted with reorganizing industries in formerly communist East Germany? Rohwedder was killed on April 1, 1991, by a sniper. “Commando Ulrich Wessel” claimed responsibility, but no clues leading to the identification of specific persons were found.

## Helga Zepp-LaRouche on RAF terrorism

*Who benefits from the terrorism of the so-called Red Army Faction? Helga Zepp-LaRouche addressed this question in an article in EIR, April 3, 1992, titled "New Evidence Emerges in the Herrhausen Assassination Case." Here are excerpts:*

Sensational new evidence in connection with the November 1990 assassination of the former board chairman of Deutsche Bank, Dr. Alfred Herrhausen, has just emerged from an interview with former Pentagon official Col. Fletcher Prouty, conducted by Italian journalist Antonio Cipriani and printed in the Italian daily *Unità*. The key to the motive behind Herrhausen's assassination lies in 11 pages of a speech he delivered in the United States only four days before he was ambushed. The speech contained Herrhausen's vision of a new kind of relationship between eastern and western Europe which would have fundamentally altered the world's future course.

Colonel Prouty . . . said in the interview that Herrhausen, Kennedy, former Italian Prime Minister Aldo Moro, Italian industrialist Enrico Mattei, and Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme had all been killed for the same

reason: They had not been willing to accept world domination by the Yalta condominium. In each case, it was the same small, elite grouping which acted against a perceived threat to their power, a power based on the idea of a *pax universalis*. . .

There can no longer be any doubt, that had Herrhausen's policies prevailed in Bonn, the extraordinary historic opportunity which existed with the opening of the borders, would not have been frittered away as carelessly as it has been in the main. The relationship between East and West established at Yalta, could have been put on an entirely different basis, to the benefit of all participating nations. Not only would economic cooperation have developed the East, but it could have stimulated the entire world economy, which instead is now threatened with global depression. . . .

It is not necessary to lapse into simplistic formulas about Eastern or Western control: It can be historically proven that terrorism actually has elements from both sides. It comes from the forces in both East and West, who have thrown in their lot with the condominium policy of Versailles, and with its re-formulation in the form of the Yalta agreement. In the 1920s, these were the Anglo-American circles behind the policies of the "Trust," while, in the years following World War II, they were the forces who, like Bertrand Russell, influenced and controlled the Pugwash process. . . .

Shortly after the assassination of Rohwedder, the spokesman of the office of the Federal Attorney claimed that the "hard core" of the RAF operated "like a secret service." Members of the "commando level" used coded messages and modern secret-service equipment. And, contrary to the experience of the '70s, the perpetrators left no clues at the scene of the crime.

The RAF self-dissolution declaration has unleashed a barrage of interpretive efforts in the German media, along with the proliferation of old myths about the RAF and international terrorism as a "sociological phenomenon." No one seems to have given much thought to the fact that terrorism is a form of irregular warfare, in which the issue of the "interested third party" is always foremost, as Prof. Friedrich von der Heydte emphasized in his standard work on the subject, *Modern Irregular Warfare*.

Following the collapse of the communist system in the East, a number of facts have surfaced concerning the close relationship between terrorists and the intelligence services of these countries. The connection between the RAF and the Stasi (East German intelligence service), shown in many documents now available, provided enough evidence to convince

even stubborn empiricists of the intelligence-service control of terrorism. The degree to which intact networks of Eastern intelligence services have gone to work for Western services, is not known. There is, in any case, a lid on any consideration of the possibility that there is also a Western-controlled terrorism.

What is certain, is that leading people among the "industrial faction" of the Federal Republic of Germany were assassinated, and the killers were not called to account. It is unpardonable that politicians do not have the courage to pose the question, "*cui bono?*"—who benefits? That concerns the issue of the "interested third party" which profits from the killings. There is a lack of courage—as in the case of the assassination of Herrhausen—to think about the implications of the statements of former Pentagon official Col. Fletcher Prouty, who told an Italian newspaper in an interview after the assassination: "Terrorists do not kill the president of a bank without a special reason for it. Most terrorists are paid lackeys and tools of great power centers. Some great power center wanted, for some reason, to get rid of the board spokesman of Deutsche Bank, on that day and in that manner, in order to teach others a lesson."