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ULRIKE & ANDREAS

The Bonnie & Clyde of West Germany's radical subculture may have failed to make a revolution, but they have bruised the body politic

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By Melvin J. Lasky

BONN. In the five years or so that the West Germans have been wrestling with the problem of the "Baader-Meinhof gang," they have absorbed a painful lesson. Liberal-industrial society is peculiarly vulnerable to the machinations of a handful of extremists armed with an ideology, a few guns and home-made bombs, and a fanatical willingness to sacrifice themselves for the cause. But perhaps—and this gave the Germans much heart—it was only a passing fashion? The Palestinian guerrillas and the Irish Republican Army were obviously different. There, behind the violence of the desperadoes, lay deep and grievous issues of nationalism, religion and social conflict. How serious and permanent a threat to established society could come from a small band of agitated middle-class idealists—or, for that matter, from the various other far-left groups of revolutionary terrorists on the West German scene?

The German police were finally satisfied that they had cracked the Baader-Meinhof organization, with its two groupings—the "Red Army Faction" and the "June 2 Movement" (for the date in 1967 when a student was killed by West German police during a demonstration against a visit by the Shah of Iran). Thirty-odd members of the gang, including its leaders, were captured in 1972. The authorities went to the trouble of building a combination prison-court edifice in Stuttgart for the trial of the gang's leaders, now set for May 21. With Germanic practicality, the "Baader-Meinhof annex," where the prisoners will be kept during the proceedings, was designed to be converted subsequently into the very latest in workshops for prisoner rehabilitation. (That, in the end, may turn out to be the gang's most concrete, if least intended, contribution to social progress.) As the years passed, the reservoir of student militants dried up and the universities returned to more humdrum academic pursuits. When a bank was raided, the culprit once again was some nice mediocre bank robber, not an "urban guerrilla" foraging for funds for new weapons.

Then, last February, the sense of things reverting to normal was disrupted. Resurgent members of the Baader-Meinhof gang kidnapped a West Berlin politician. Within 72 hours, all their demands were met, and five of their imprisoned comrades, who had already been tried and convicted, walked out of their cells to be flown first-class by Lufthansa to freedom in the Middle East, with $10,000 apiece in their pockets.

And late last month, six guerrillas shot their way into the West German Embassy in Stockholm at midday, killing the military attaché, and took a dozen hostages. They threatened to execute their hostages one by one unless the Bonn Government released the 26 Baader-Meinhof members still in jail, gave them $250,000 and flew them from Frankfurt to freedom. This time, as night fell, Bonn said no. The terrorists slew the commercial attaché. Then they blew up part of the building and tried to escape, but were captured. One of them attempted to commit suicide and died in a hospital.

Chancellor Helmut Schmidt explained the Government's change of attitude by the fact that in February "we did not know where the hostage was"; hence, there was no way of saving his life short of accepting the kidnappers' terms. Unofficially, it was reported that Schmidt had been for rejecting the demands the first time; this time, he had his (Continued

Melvin J. Lasky, co-editor of Encounter magazine in London, went to West Germany to collect material for this article.

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way, and the decision was shared by the leaders of all the major parties, in and out of government.

Despite the gang's failure, suspense continues to build up. The four principal terrorist leaders are to be tried on charges ranging from forgery and bank robbery to kidnapping and murder. (A fifth defendant died last November in a hunger strike.) The new Stuttgart prison is the most secure penitentiary yet devised, and the court room has been fortified against surprise raids, yet the most careful precautions are not always proof against the kind of resourcefulness and fervor that unite the terrorists inside with their comrades at liberty.

Who are the four leading actors in the drama, and why have their exploits proved so bewildering and unsettling to a public opinion that had faced far graver national issues, such as the division of Germany, with relatively sober equanimity?

Ulrike Meinhof, now 41, is the daughter of two art historians who died early, leaving her as the foster child of an idealistic academic who guided her to leftist causes. A gifted journalist, an affectionate mother and an ebullient star of West Germany's radical-chic (or *Schickeria*, as the Germans call it), she has transformed herself into a ruthless urban guerrilla by some process that has defied analysis by police psychologists and political pundits.

A measure of the revolutionary elixir was doubtless supplied by Andreas Baader. Now 32, Baader turned his back early on the temptations of middle-class educational ideals—his father was a historian — and he intoxicated many of those who ventured close with his Promethean mission of fire and immolation.

His "revolutionary bride" was the 34-year-old Gudrun Ensslin, who tempered his faith in the cult of action with the theological propensities of her religious upbringing. (Her father is a Protestant pastor.) The picture of a loyal and loving pair in the underground gave a romantic tinge to the gang's steely concern with the destruction of German capitalism. Indeed, to some on the far left it seemed that she was compensating for her earlier liaison with the son of a famous Third Reich Nazi writer. (She bore his child; he later committed suicide.)

The fourth in the quartet is Jan-Carl Raspe, now 31, whose degree in sociology marked him so strongly that even in the gang's inner circle he was regarded as a "typical intellectual."

It was hard to say which the Germans found more shocking in the kidnapping of last Feb. 27, the cool efficiency of the operation or the honorable way the terrorists kept their promise not to harm their hostage if all their conditions were fulfilled. Each phase of the spectacle — the negotiations over the terms, the release of the kidnapped politician, Peter Lorenz, and the freeing of the five prisoners—was followed by tens of millions of Germans on television. If this could happen, if the authorities were up against an enemy as scrupulously professional as that, how long before all others in jail for political terrorism were similarly released?

The Germans congratulated themselves on putting one man's life before the interests of the state. "And how often," one German said to me, "have we done that in our history?" Privately, they pitied themselves for their helplessness. How could they, in affluent, unendangered peacetime, go in for a hard "Israeli strategy" at the risk of bloody shootouts in the streets? Wouldn't going in for toughness move them precariously toward another police-state?

"Humiliation was the order of the day," a writer in West Berlin solemnly recorded. "Perhaps never in history, since a medieval Holy Roman Emperor went penitently to Canossa, has a proud nation debased itself so abjectly. . . ." Even the liberal Hamburg weekly, Die Zeit, in rejecting demands for official revenge or police reprisal, could not help but note the historic nature of the decision. Where had the old traditions gone? There was a time, the paper's chief editor, Countess Marion Dönhoff, sadly recalled in her commentary, when King Frederick of Prussia left orders that should he be captured by the enemy, no concessions whatever should be made on his behalf to the blackmailers.

The national TV network was hijacked, in effect, to serve the kidnappers' masterplan. "For 72 hours," one TV editor told me, "we just lost control of the medium. We shifted shows to meet their timetable. Our cameras had to be in position to record each of the prisoners as they boarded the plane, and our news coverage had to include prepared statements at their dictation. There is plenty of underworld crime on our screens, but up until now Kojak and Columbo were always in charge. Now it was the real thing, and it was the gangsters who wrote the script and programed the mass media."

Noteworthy in the political uproar that followed — it ranged from angry demands that all the Baader-Meinhof prisoners be shot by drumhead firing-squads to weary suggestions that the whole gang be dumped on some Saharan airstrip—was a poll indicating that German opinion approved of the exchange as "right" by a 75 per cent majority. (Another 24 per cent thought it was "wrong.") But a clear majority also felt that no such exchanges should be countenanced in the future, and that a return to capital punishment would help reinforce domestic security and law and order.

Where did this new German extremism come from? Why had it survived to become such a formidable issue in a great nation's politics? How is it that a few hundred young revolutionaries, acting in the name of an outmoded Marxian ideology and on behalf of the "oppressed masses" with whom they had no personal contact or organizational connections, could challenge for so long the most prosperously self-confident state in Europe?

Once, on a West German TV program, I was asked whether I thought that "Communist gold" — covert funding from East Germany, from the Russian secret services, etc. — played any role in the efflorescence of the German New Left in the nineteen-sixties. I tended to pooh-pooh the idea. There are those who always think that an indigenous radicalism must be manipulated by foreign string-pullers—

But sometimes it is true, and occasionally it is decisive. We know now that Lenin in exile received millions from the Kaiser's secret political fund and that the money helped finance a plethora of Bolshevik publications.

In the emergence of the German New Left in the nineteen-sixties, a Hamburg magazine called Konkret, brilliantly edited by Klaus Rainer Röhl, played a central part. Its sloganeering was ingenious, its editorial style modern and adventurous (it preferred the methods of Playboy to those of Pravda), and it attracted a wide following of agitators, students, anarchists, poets, terrorists and assorted disenchanted spirits longing for a new Utopia. The magazine was instrumental in the militants' achievements — the capture of West Berlin's Free University, the tens of thousands of student marchers descending on Bonn, the proliferation of militant factions proposing to take power through the barrel of a gun. Among the latter, the Baader-Meinhof group is the most notorious.

Röhl was married to Ulrike Meinhof. Both were secret members of the German Communist party. Their magazine, Konkret, was financed by secret Communist funds obtained by Röhl and Meinhof in East Berlin and filtered in through Prague. It was, until Röhl confessed it all in his recently published memoirs, almost unbelievable. The Russians are known to finance good, reliable Communist cadres, enrolled in the party or in some controllable front organization. Röhl and Meinhof,

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despite their [illegible] party cards, could only represent for Moscow what Lenin had denounced as "the infantile left."

Yet they went ahead. For a couple of million marks, or less than $1-million—the cost of a few nuts and bolts in a sputnik — they helped disrupt whole areas of West German society, turn the German youth movement into a mass force of anti-Americanism, and rehabilitate the theory and practice of Marxian revolution (though at the price of heretical anarchist trimmings).

Röhl and Meinhof were given extraordinarily wide latitude. No hard political line was ever obvious. They often bit the hand that fed them. They were free to thrash about in the subcultures of West German radicalism — the *nouveaux riches* of the Ruhr, titillated by the idea of capitalism dying; the pop and drug communes; the pill and promiscuity cults; the Brechtian avant-garde. It became a very popular front, uniting practically everyone on the left—except the proletariat. Like the New Left everywhere in the West, it was essentially a middle-class phenomenon. It went in for abstract idealism, fun, excitement and impassioned commitment, until it wearied of its own excesses and grew frightened of the random violence of the hard core of true believers who began to practice what they preached.

The story of Ulrike Meinhof, not unlike the cases of Patty Hearst and Bernardine Dohrn in the United States, sums up the extremism of a historic decade. But the Meinhof case is more illuminating, for it sheds light more vividly on the major institutions of Western Europe's most prosperous and powerful society.

How did they become gunmen and gunwomen? The talk about force and violence as the essential elements in the transformation of an evil society had been, at first, the same theoretical chit-chat that had animated the fantasies of Marxist revolutionaries for a century, from Engels to Bebel and Kautsky. But who had ever fingered a gun or fired a single shot?

Soon a real weapon, with a shiny barrel and a full cylinder, had its premiere on the German New Left. Röhl bought himself a small-caliber pistol called a Landmann-Preetz. (It later became the favorite handgun of the Baader-Meinhof gang, just as the B.M.W. automobile became their favorite getaway car, partly because it was fast and elegant, partly because of its acronymic coincidence.) One winter evening in 1968, in Röhl's villa in Hamburg, he exhibited his gun to his editors and visiting student revolutionaries. It was marveled at and passed from hand to hand "like some newly forged weapon at a gathering of primitive tribal chieftains." One disciple fondled it in his lap and wanted to know, "It really shoots? Real bullets? And they can really knock somebody off?" They all had their first target practice later that evening, firing wildly in the Hamburg garden at bottles and lamp bulbs until the neighbors threatened to call the police.

Ulrike, though, still found horror in the idea—and the noise—of guns going off. She was walking in the woods one day with her brother-in-law, Wolfgang Röhl, then 16, when, with youthful bravura, he suddenly drew a pistol and fired a few shots in the air. Ulrike broke down in a paroxysm of tears. Her husband ascribes her reaction partly to the "Christian pacifism" that had originally pushed her into crusading politics, partly to her "constant terrible head pains" after a brain-tumor operation, which left her with a "panicky fear" of even the bang from a child's toy pistol.

A few years later, the underground arsenals of the Baader-Meinhof group contained the most formidable private collection of ordnance in postwar Germany, deriving —like the weapons used by the Japanese "Red Army" in its hostage-taking action in The Hague last September—from a raid on a West German NATO munitions depot. And the targets were no longer bottles. The list of victims grew: a librarian in a Berlin reading room hit by a bullet; a night watchman blown up by a bomb; two policemen in Hamburg shot down while walking their night beat; a detective torn apart by dum-dum bullets; 17 employes wounded by bomb fragments in an explosion in a Hamburg newspaper office; an American officer and two sergeants killed by a bomb in the United States Army headquarters in Heidelberg; West Berlin's Chief Justice, a lifelong Socialist, assassinated on his birthday by gunmen carrying bouquets of flowers.

Ideology trained them to justify "the necessary murder." From the example of Ho Chi Minh, whose name they chanted in the streets of Germany, they drew a sense of cunning counterattack. Infatuated with the Black Power romanticism of Stokely Carmichael and Eldridge Cleaver, they learned the catechism of "Burn, Baby, Burn," and their German conversation and manifestoes were studded with American slang like "cool" and "right on" and "off the pigs." When two innocent bystanders were killed by rocks in a Munich radical demonstration, Horst Mahler, one of the members of the gang, commented, "When I drive off in my car, I can't know beforehand if a tire will go flat."

The brutalization went on apace. One member, Dieter Kunzelmann, released from a Berlin jail a little ahead of time so he could campaign as a local Maoist candidate, had a ready explanation of why he had planted a bomb in Berlin's Fasanenstrasse Synagogue, rebuilt after the Nazis burned it down in 1938. He and his comrades, he said, had to get over their *Judenknax*, their "thing about the Jews"—i.e., their postwar pro-Jewish liberalism. One of his collaborators, Georg von Rauch (later killed in a street shoot-out with the police), argued that in eliminating political enemies "we must, I must, simply liquidate human feeling."

It took Ulrike a number of years to learn to take joy in her unerring marksmanship. Patty Hearst learned to fondle her machine gun in something under 90 days, but in California everything develops fast. Ulrike had to be sure that Hegel and the True Laws of History were on her side; that Late Capitalism with all its Imperialist Contradictions was now in its final stage and the end was nigh; that the working class, with its reformist trade-union leaders, was a lost potential, and that a small remnant of the faithful had to rise up and act on their own. She studied the writings of Herbert Marcuse, she followed the financial pages on the contradictory movements of capital, and, reassured of the truth of these propositions, she accepted them as articles of faith.

Two souls, in Goethe's phrase, dwelt within Ulrike's breast. A struggle was taking place between Old Left earnestness and New Left liberation. Konkret was a mixture of sex and politics. Röhl was a kind of ideological Hugh Hefner, alternating nude pin-ups, lightly disguised as "sexual enlightenment" for the young, with modish left-wing propaganda.

What secret guilt complexes must this mixture of sex and revolution have induced in Ulrike! She took her $10,000 a year for a dozen brief columns (they were worth it, if only for their decent grammar and vocabulary), and she bought herself boutique dresses and fancy jewelry and was seen at the cocktail parties, but she longed for the day when she could strike a pure and uncompromising blow for the oppressed masses.

Finally, in 1968, she managed to make the break. Taking her twin daughters, then 6, with her, she left her husband and moved to West Berlin. There she began a new life, devoting herself to the plight of the underprivileged, from orphans to convicts, recruiting for the Revolution as she went along. Although she missed the old world of the artists and poets and witty millionaires, she was soon an established figure in the milieu of shabby, zealous, blue-jeaned conspirators.

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Klaus Röhl still wanted her back—both as his wife and as Konkret's *star Kolumnist.* She wrote a savage attack on the fortnightly's editorial policies and forced it to be printed in the magazine. Röhl wrote a lame and rather loving reply. Unappeased, she infiltrated the paper with her cronies, who eventually were to take over the magazine by a "democratic vote." The coup barely failed to come off, and she resigned from the paper, denouncing it as an "organ of the counterrevolution."

The magazine survived, but another symbol of the shameful past of "sex and politics" was easier to ravage. A group of her Berlin friends proceeded to her old home in a fashionable section of Hamburg. They sacked the premises, smashing the lamps, furniture and stereo and painting a phallus on the front door. Before leaving, they collectively urinated on the double bed.

Ulrike Meinhof had met Andreas Baader in 1968, some time before she left her husband. Andreas and his girlfriend Gudrun had been arrested for setting fire to two Frankfurt department stores. Ulrike interviewed him, and caused a stir by writing in her Konkret column that the acts of arson were politically "progressive" — not so much because they destroyed the shoddy goods of a rotten consumption society but because they represented audacious defiance of the law.

Now, in 1970, she joined in a plot to spring him from jail. (He and Gudrun had been released on a technicality after serving 14 months of their sentences, but he had been rearrested and imprisoned in West Berlin as a suspect in new incidents of arson and bombings.) "We needed Baader," Ulrike later testified, "to set up the urban guerrillas."

Although the wardens knew that some kind of escape plan was afoot, they let Andreas visit various libraries, under guard, to pursue his "sociological research." He claimed to be writing a book on youth problems for a radical Berlin publisher, and the authorities took what they stolidly call a "serious" view of his project.

On May 14, 1970, he was in a reading room of the Free University when Ulrike and four accomplices, disguised in wigs, burst in, firing pistols and discharging tear gas. There was an exchange of fire; several guards and librarians were wounded, one of them seriously. The guerrillas got away unharmed. Andreas and Ulrike escaped by jumping out of the first-floor window and racing off in a stolen silver-gray Alfa Romeo. Before going into hiding they picked up Ulrike's twins.

An alarmed Röhl alerted Interpol, and after months of search the girls were found in Rome. They had been hidden away in Sicily, where they learned to sing *"Bandiera rossa"* and other revolutionary ditties. *"Evviva communismo —e libertà!"* they chanted. But they had found Italian rice bitter, and they didn't really care for the occasional pull on a joint to which their hash-smoking guardians would treat them.

The plan had been to take them on to Jordan and place them in a Palestinian orphanage, not far from the guerrilla training camp where Ulrike, Andreas, Gudrun and others of their group were now in residence, taking lessons in marksmanship. The Germans joined the Palestinians in a little Jew-hating, but their drinking, smoking and sexual habits were found offensive, and their contingent was expelled and returned to Germany. Ulrike's children were thus stranded in mid-passage.

Today, the twins appear to be relatively well-adjusted to their middle-class Hamburg environment. But their father, who won legal custody of the children in a divorce action, told me they came home one day with cuts and bruises; when asked what had happened, they said, "Well, we were playing 'Baader-Meinhof Gang' and we hurt ourselves trying to make a quick getaway."

Ulrike joined Andreas and Gudrun in the underground, learning to disguise her appearance, forge passports, steal automobiles, break through roadblocks, rob banks and escape to secret hideouts. Now, starting in 1970, the public was jolted by a new terrorist offensive, attributed henceforth to the "Baader-Meinhof gang." Hardly a day went by without the police recording some new incident. American installations were fire-bombed; some 130 policemen were hospitalized after an attack, with thousands of bricks and rocks, on a courthouse; judges' chambers were gutted; Molotov cocktails, affectionately called "Mollies," wrecked public offices, and a substantial treasury for terror was built up by one bank robbery after another. Was the Republic ever in danger? Hardly. But the spectacle of young people ready to shed blood for a cause reminded too many Germans of another tragic generation of fanaticized youth.

Opinion was polarized; many liberals despised the cry for "law-and-order" and offered nothing but kind words for the disciples of violence. How could there be enemies on the left? The old distinction between democratic Socialists and authoritarian Communists, between meliorists and militants, between reform and revolution, had been blurred in the nineteen-sixties. A surprisingly high percentage of young Germans indicated in a poll that they "liked" the idealism of the guerrilla movement and probably would help Ulrike and Andreas hide or get away if asked to.

A campaign to "save Ulrike Meinhof" before she came to harm at the hands of the police arose on the left. Among the voices raised were those of Nobel Prize-winning novelist Heinrich Böll and Klaus Röhl, still loyal to the mother of his children. Konkret ran a long open letter from Dr. Renate Riemeck, her foster-mother, pleading with Ulrike to give herself up. Böll demanded an official safe-conduct pass for Ulrike to protect her, as he put it, from the vicious hysteria of 60 million Germans now hunting witches as they once hunted Jews. The storm of dismay and indignation at this comparison almost destroyed Böll's reputation as a crusading liberal intellectual. Röhl tried to arrange to get her out of the country. But Sweden, troubled enough by American Army deserters, and Cuba, doubtful of the ideological purity of "infantile anarcho-terrorists," both turned her down. A Cabinet Minister in Bonn was requested secretly to let her cross from West Berlin into East Germany, but she was unwelcome there too. Even Röhl's old contacts in the Communist apparatus of the nineteen-fifties cold-shouldered the scheme.

Early in June of 1972, acting on a series of tips, the police trapped most of the hard core of the gang. Andreas, Jan-Carl Raspe and another leader, Holger Meins, were captured in a 5 A.M. raid on their hiding place, a garage in a well-appointed Frankfurt apartment house; Andreas was wounded in the shoot-out. Gudrun was picked up shopping in an elegant Hamburg boutique with her revolver showing. Ulrike was still at large.

She had been using "safe houses" provided by an extensive network of sympathizers. But now a 33-year-old teacher in Hanover named Fritz Rodewald began to have doubts. A number of mysterious guests had arrived in his apartment, "warmly recommended by friends." Rodewald was concerned lest all this terrorism play into the hands of the German right, enabling the reactionaries to defame the genuine New Left. Should he call the police? For a day and a night he wrestled with his dilemma. Then, on June 15, he dialed 110 from a phone booth and spoke to the inspector in charge of the special Baader-Meinhof *Kommando.* (Such task forces had been set up in all major West German cities.) By the time he came home, the police had made their raid and the guests had been removed. The haul included weapons, smuggled messages from comrades in prison, boxes of cartridges, false identity papers. In a bright red-leather cosmetics

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case there was a gift-wrapped package containing a 10-pound home-made bomb. The police promised Rodewald immediate payment of the reward. The conscience-stricken teacher promised himself to donate the money to the Ulrike Meinhof defense fund.

The underground career of "the most hunted woman" in German history was over. In the pictures taken of her that day in the Hanover police station she was almost unrecognizable. "No one here has touched her," a detective explained, "but her entire face is puffed and swollen because, like some enraged trapped animal, she has been struggling and screaming and weeping for hours." They did hold her firmly by her hair in the police line-up, a doctor tried to examine her Caesarean scars and a medical assistant wanted an X-ray picture of the metal clip that had completed her brain tumor operation of a decade earlier. The German police are not especially bureaucratic these days, but "an identity must be established properly." Ulrike resisted savagely. She was afraid of being "brainwashed." "You want to kill me!" she cried. "You're all next on the list!" She refused to touch the coffee and cigarettes they offered her, for fear that they might be poisoned.

Protests began to be organized. Heinrich Böll suspected police brutality. The left was indignant over alleged infringements of due process. Röhl raised his voice to warn against a witch-hunt, declaring that Ulrike was "more Joan of Arc than red-haired sorceress." Newspaper feature-writers mused on her childhood—on the pretty little girl who liked to read classical poetry and do the boogie-woogie. Theologians speculated on the elements of youthful Catholicism in her make-up. Her foster-mother half-regretted that her ward had "put aside her Proust and Kafka to mess about with politics."

The Baader-Meinhof guerrillas who were placed in a dozen jails of Western Germany and West Berlin developed an extraordinary communications system for keeping in touch with each other. Ulrike continued to write her manifestos; Andreas wrote detailed memorandums on five different ways of effecting his escape, and all these exhortations and instructions were distributed regularly among other incarcerated comrades and the accomplices on the outside. Their strategies were all coordinated: when to begin a hunger strike, when to end it, how to put pressure on backsliding comrades. One woman prisoner was kept, fictitiously, on the medical "danger" list by the prison authorities for fear of consequences if the others found out that she had stopped fasting without "official" approval. When a young militant who was still at large talked secretly to the West Berlin police, copies of the police report on his testimony were found circulating in the Baader-Meinhof cells. He was subsequently found dead in a Berlin park—"executed" by a bullet in the head by order of the gang's leaders.

All this was possible because the gang took brilliant advantage of the fairly liberal German prison regulations. There can be no doubt that not a few of the Baader-Meinhof lawyers, including some young law-school graduates, have been smuggling documents in and out. Surprise searches of the cells have turned up circulars, escape plans, research assignments, leaflets and lists of Bonn politicians to be targeted.

To what avail? Nothing is so unloved in Germany today as a lost cause. The urban guerrillas, in their mounting frenzy, have isolated themselves completely from German public opinion. They have become nothing but an embarrassment to the German left. Is martyrdom in limbo all that is left to them now?

Holger Meins, a former student at the Berlin Film Academy, who was captured together with Baader and Raspe, persisted in a hunger strike that reduced him after two months to 84 pounds. He died last fall, at the age of 33, despite the authorities' efforts to keep him alive with intravenous feeding. "We will struggle on, Holger!" cried an aging student leader at his funeral, and the terrorists who stormed the embassy in Stockholm identified themselves as the "Holger Meins Commando." Yet his death, almost deliberately embraced, dramatized the self-destructive element in the terrorists' mystique.

As the trial date approached, the defendants' lawyers recommended that they put aside their agitprop and concentrate on preparing their cases. But it would be altogether out of character for Ulrike Meinhof and Andreas Baader to confine themselves to what they hold in contempt as "juridical cretinism." For months, police, press and public shared the conviction that another ransom-and-rescue operation was in the offing—and, as last month's abortive coup in Stockholm demonstrated, they were wrong only in weighing the probabilities of success.

Other desperate attempts by the remnant of the network are regarded as probable. After standing firm, it will be hard for the Bonn Government to do anything but continue to refuse to negotiate. In that way, the Government hopes to withstand what Chancellor Schmidt calls "the most serious challenge in the 26-year history of our democracy." ■