

Statement to the Red Aid Teach-In

Comrades, some of you still believe that you don't have any reason to dialogue with the Red Army Faction.

Some of you still believe that the cops will soon have a handle on the armed struggle in the metropole. Some of you still believe what you read in the newspapers: that the RAF is on the run, that there are splits in the RAF, that the RAF has a hierarchical structure, that the RAF is isolated. You aren't seeing reality.

The KB in Hamburg believed that the attack against the Springer Corporation was the work of right-wing extremists. Instead of engaging us in debate, they assure the police that they themselves are not guilty. And the Frankfurt KSV Frankfurt asserts, in agreement with the *Rundschau*, that the recent bomb attacks have nothing to do with the class struggle in West Germany and Berlin. These comrades no longer understand what's going on.

Although they now understand that Genscher didn't call out the police for show, that the murders of Petra, Georg, and Thomas were not mistakes on the part of the system, that the *Kripo* was responsible for the destruction of strike centrals during the strikes last year, that the Emergency Laws weren't adopted just for the fun of it, that the banning of foreigners' organizations isn't just for show and that over sixty prisoners are being abused in prison—although they know all of this full well, they still believe it is too early to begin to resist.

They protest the death penalty in Persia and in Turkey; they wish the Palestinian resistance success; they protest the terror in Greece and Spain; they protest the complicity of the system with fascist regimes— but they are afraid to intervene or to act. They are clearly afraid to arrive at the obvious conclusion. They hide behind the masses and present their problem as one located outside of themselves.

We see things differently than these comrades. We are of the opinion that the hateful assembly-lines and piecework in the factories have gotten so bad that hardly anyone has any illusions any more about the fact that corporate profits require irreparable damage to the health of the workers. The masses already know that in the Federal Republic they must work themselves to death because that is the source of their employers' profits, that the factory workers already know who they're working for—soon it will be for themselves.

We are of the opinion that the problem these comrades see as lying elsewhere is their own subjective problem, that they project onto the masses their own lack of clarity. They want to identify their own inability—an inability to express solidarity with the masses because of their own privileged class position—as lying with the masses, to present it as an objective problem based in the masses' need to develop a higher level of consciousness.

If, as occurred recently in Frankfurt, some women comrades say, for example, that they want to take to the streets if another one of us is murdered, then that indicates it would be easy to spontaneously intervene. Which is to say: the problem of agency is, as Springer journalists put it in a headline, one of marketing and competition. Political content as the commodity, the

masses as the market. So they are ready to moan about imperialist crimes, but not to prevent them with clubs and bombs. For the imperialists, the assembly lines are still not going fast enough and the time required must be further reduced. They will consume as much as they can extract.

There is no reason for further delay in addressing the problem of armed struggle and resistance. Reduced hours, lay-offs, strikes, two million foreign workers, "*Bild* fights for you!", "the extortionist of the week" in *Stern*, Citizens Initiatives, squatted houses—there is hardly any area in which the system can maintain its facade. The people's desires must be unified and transformed into an organized leap forward.

This greed-driven system is ravaging the cities. Teachers must learn to muzzle themselves or they are fired. The mass media has been purged of decent critical journalists. Riot police are mobilized against strike centrals. Rulings of the Federal Labor Court prepare the way to criminalize future strikes. The BKA hopes to eliminate the remaining press freedoms. They are not waiting for the legal left to take up the armed struggle before proceeding with this. It's happening now; it has begun. Is this the point when you will start to resist—or are you still waiting for something?

Comrades, stop hiding behind the masses! Stop shifting the question of resistance to the masses! Stop rationalizing your fear of the system's excessive violence as a problem of agency! Stop presenting your confusion as erudition and your helplessness as a broad perspective!

The system is now producing contradictions at such a rate that they can no longer be integrated, and the masses no longer believe talk of reforms. It is equally true that the guerilla can only be anchored in the people to the degree that we carry out appropriate actions and you make effective propaganda. For this to happen, the revolutionary process and revolutionary consciousness must be developed further; the consciousness that action is justified—and possible!

When we build the revolutionary guerilla, we are creating an instrument that is beyond the reach of the system's repression, that does not depend on the system's tolerance for its capacity to act, that does not have its room to maneuver determined by the *Verfassungsschutz*. If you are domesticated like Müller's¹ demonstrators in Frankfurt on May 18, you can continue to demonstrate for some time to come, and you can celebrate it along with the KSV as the most powerful and most insular demonstration in a long time. Under the watchful eye of the police and funneled between two water cannons and rows of batons, you can go on celebrating successes long into the future. But the price to be paid is the distance people took from Tuesday's demonstration, the denunciation of the comrades who broke free from the Hauptwache;² the price in the end was betrayal of the goals in exchange for permission to walk in the streets.

Today, everyone understands our actions against the extermination strategy in Vietnam. Everybody should be able to understand our actions to defend the lives and health of the prisoners and of the RAF comrades still at large. That the media no longer publishes our communiqués about our bomb attacks, but publishes false statements of fascist origin, that they downplay attacks on U.S. imperialism and play up fascist provocations such as that against the citizens of Stuttgart, demonstrates how things really are, demonstrates what

they are afraid of and how far they'll go to hide the truth from the masses, to prop up their facade.

Dare to struggle; dare to win! Attack and smash the power of imperialism! It is the duty of every revolutionary to make the revolution! We call on all militants in the Federal Republic to make all American establishments targets of their attacks in their struggle against U.S. imperialism!

Long live the RAF!

Ulrike Meinhof for the RAF May 31, 1972

1 Frankfurt police chief at the time.

2 The Hauptwache is the central point on a major pedestrian mall in Frankfurt.