

# THE RED ARMY FACTION: ANOTHER FINAL BATTLE ON THE STAGE OF HISTORY



JILLIAN BECKER



In December 1972, Horst Mahler, a lawyer who had organised a terrorist group in West Germany in 1969 and was arrested in October 1970, was brought to trial in Berlin. He was charged with conspiracy to commit crimes and with armed robbery. One of the witnesses called at the trial was Mahler's erstwhile accomplice, Ulrike Meinhof, who had been arrested some five months earlier, in June 1972, and was awaiting trial on charges of armed robbery, conspiracy, murder, and attempted murder.

She appeared in court on the 27th day of Mahler's trial.<sup>1</sup> She refused to sit in the place reserved for witnesses. The Presiding Judge warned her that if she would not cooperate, she would be seated in a special plate-glass box which had been installed for another witness, Karl-Heinz Ruhland, who needed protection because he had agreed to give evidence against the group to which he had himself once belonged.

Meinhof replied: "You threaten me with your Eichmann box, you fascist, you pig. You want to lock anti-fascists into that box in which Genscher [Federal minister of the Interior] belongs."

The court informed her of her rights and duties as a witness. Her only response was, "Blah! Blah!"

She was threatened with a fine.

"All right," she said. "Just get on with it."

Asked her profession she replied, "Anti-fascist."

She was reminded that she must tell the truth.

Meinhof: "We always tell the truth. We are here because we can no longer endure your lying."

In giving her evidence, she said, "I am related to Horst Mahler. We were both born in the 30s; we had the same family background; we both grew up during the Second World War."

The Judge asked whether they were blood relations.

Meinhof: "Oh, of course, blood, that is what you want."

The trial proceeded, and suddenly Meinhof screamed out, "There you are waffling about bank robbery, while experiments on human beings are being conducted in Cologne-Ossendorf!" Hysterically she complained about the "inhuman conditions of detention" to which Astrid Proll, she said, was being subjected at Ossendorf, "a penal institution, whose symbol is a smokestack." She said, "You pigs obviously want a prominent suicide."

The Presiding Judge: "Frau Meinhof is obviously very agitated."

Meinhof: "I have been agitated for thirty-eight years now, over the state of affairs in Germany."

Mahler was given permission to question Meinhof. He told her that he "had to play this shit game" but he was concerned with "making it difficult for them to suppress certain things." And he began to read aloud from an underground publication. The court had rejected his application to read it out loud, so now he wanted to use it to question her.

Amicably, the Presiding Judge suggested that he could hand it to the journalists if he wanted it made public, upon which Mahler sug-

gested that the Judge himself read it aloud. The Judge declined, and Mahler proceeded to read the document.

The polemical declaration which Mahler read was being circulated in 1973 as an "RAF" (Red Army Faction) underground publication under the title *The Action of the Black September in Munich - on the strategy of the anti-imperialist struggle*. It was almost certainly written by Mahler himself. It argued a point of view of which the following is a representative extract:

With their action in the Olympic village, they [the Arab terrorists who killed the Israeli athletes] have carried the apparently only local conflict between the imperialist metropolis Israel and the Palestinians from the periphery of the system to the center - they have forced the character-masks of the Federal Republic law-and-order-state to take off the makeup and appear as what all character-masks of imperialism objectively are: warring parties against the freedom movements of the Third World - in the final analysis: extermination strategists and fascists.

The action, Mahler asserted, was "anti-fascist ... because it was in memory of the 1936 Olympics." And he proceeded: "Israel weeps crocodile tears. It has burned up its sportsmen like the Nazis did the Jews — incendiary material for the imperialist extermination policy."

Ulrike Meinhof did not entirely agree with all that Mahler said. She interrupted his reading several times with comments such as, "That is not a perfect theory, though it does go something along those lines." And eventually she put what she believed was the right theory, concerning the Jews — at present, and in Nazi Germany — in her own words: "Without pronouncing the German people 'not guilty' of fascism — for the people truly did not know what went on in the concentration camps — we cannot mobilise them for our revolutionary struggle."

After the war, she said, the Left had reacted to fascism in a "careless, stupid, and brazen manner." Personalities were pushed into the foreground, but no deeper view was taken. "How was Auschwitz possible, what was anti-Semitism?" That should have been cleared up then [by "the Left"] instead of its concurring in the view that Auschwitz was the expression of evil.

"That's the worst of it," she said, "that we all agreed on that, Communists along with the others."

But now, she asserted, she herself had recognised that anti-Semitism in its essence is anti-capitalism. It used the hatred of the people of their dependence on money as a medium of exchange, their longing for communism.

"Auschwitz," she said, "means that six million Jews were murdered and carted on to the rubbish dumps of Europe for being that which was maintained of them — Money-Jews."

What had happened, she said, was that "finance capital" and banks, "the hard core of the system of imperialism and capitalism", had diverted the people's hatred of money and exploitation away from themselves and on to the Jews. Not to have made these connections clear was the failure of the Left, of the Communists. The Germans were anti-Semitic, and therefore they were supporters of the RAF. Only they did not know it, because they had not been pronounced "not guilty" of fascism, of murdering Jews, and had not been told that anti-Semitism was actually hatred of capitalism.

Because they had not been told that hatred of the Jews was actually hatred of capitalism, the German people had failed to support the Red Army Faction. But now she was making it clear, and it was on these grounds that the action of the Black September in Munich was to be praised.

However, she went on to claim a "historical identity" with the Jews of the Warsaw ghetto, who had "tried without arms to start a rebellion and then let themselves be butchered." "And with that," she said, "we have broken through the whole 'blah-blah'."

Mahler wanted to continue reading from his document, but Meinhof said she had had enough. "I'm fed up now. I want to go now." And she pretended to faint. She was asked whether she wanted something to drink but she said no, she only wanted to leave, and with the permission of the court she embraced Mahler and was led out.

Ulrike Meinhof was clearly in no state to put forward a reasoned argument at the Mahler trial, and she made no great effort to do so. She declaimed histrionically rather than explained her views: she

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This essay first appeared in *Terrorism: An International Journal*, Vol. 5, No. 1/2, 1981. Jillian Becker is Director of the Institute for the Study of Terrorism, and author of many books, including *Hitler's Children*, and *The PLO*.

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Director: Dr Chris R. Tame

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was “acting to the gallery”. But at the best of times she was not a clear thinker; and her confusion in court was symptomatic, not merely of temporary emotional disturbance, but of character; and what she revealed were certain characteristic assumptions which are, for that very reason, particularly interesting.

The ideology which Meinhof and her associates had embraced, “world communist revolution”, condemned Israel as an arm of American “imperialism”, and Zionism as racism.<sup>2</sup> But the making of a case against the Israelis presented them with peculiar difficulties; for they were the self-appointed champions and leaders of the German “people” in an armed revolution which they hoped to have launched with their acts of terrorism.<sup>3</sup> And in order to justify morally the violent crimes with which they were charged, Meinhof and her fellow terrorists represented themselves as righteous fighters against the same sort of regime as had prevailed in Germany during the Third Reich; and insisted they were being subjected to the same treatment at the hands of the authorities of the Federal Republic as the Jews at the hands of the Nazis (“experiments are being conducted on human beings”, “a penal institution whose symbol is a smokestack”; Genscher “belongs” in the “Eichmann box”).<sup>4</sup>

Not to condemn the treatment of the Jews by their German persecutors would be to deprive themselves of their most cherished propaganda weapon. And the simple expedient, popular with the extreme Left, of making a distinction between the Israelis and the Jews would not quite adequately serve. For unless the German “people” were “pronounced ‘not guilty’” of racial persecution of the Jews, they might find the words condemning anyone for “racism” sticking in their throats.

Fortunately for the Red Army Faction, the very ideology which created the difficulty provided them with a solution if only they could apply it. What was necessary for them to do was to reinterpret the history of the Third Reich in such a way as to exonerate the working class of Germany from culpability by putting the blame for the racial persecution and genocide on to other — that is to say the “capitalist” or “exploiting” — classes.

To achieve this, Meinhof’s first and obvious recourse was to say that “the people did not know”. This she says; but does not after all believe it herself. She goes on to try another explanation: “The people” had indeed hated the Jews. But not *as* Jews. It was rather because “finance capital” had diverted their hatred, which was really a “hatred of their dependence on money as a medium of exchange,” away from itself on to the Jews. So when the masses participated in, or connived at, or did not prevent the killing of the six million (assuming now that they did know about it), it was because they had been persuaded that the Jews were representative of economic exploitation and therefore received their just deserts in the extermination camps.

But did Meinhof herself believe that the identification of the Jews with what she regards as economic exploitation was without moral justification or factual foundation? Did she believe that “the people” had been entirely misled, and that they therefore in turn had made a mistake, albeit an honest one? It seems not. What she says is this: “Auschwitz heisst, das sechs Millionen Juden ermordet und auf die Müllkippen Europas gekarrt wurden als das, als was man sie ausgab — als Geldjuden.” (Literal translation: “Auschwitz means that six million Jews were murdered and carted on to the rubbish dumps of Europe as that which was maintained of them — as Money Jews.”)

If it is not absolutely clear from this that she herself believed they *were* “Money-Jews”, what is by now perfectly clear is that their murder *as* “Money-Jews” is not to her wrong, as if just might have been if they had been murdered *as* Jews. So, if the people did know, and were responsible at all for mass murder, it was not murder purely for reasons of race hatred, which would have been wrong according to the ideology of the Left in the 1970s, but more for reasons of class hatred, which is not wrong; and therefore the people can be “pronounced ‘not guilty’” of genocide.<sup>5</sup>

But Meinhof did use the word “*Geldjuden*”, intending to convey the loathing and contempt it had long carried, and as a sign of race hatred, anti-Semitism, but with an excuse tacked on which reflected both a traditional and a contemporary Communist rationale.

If we can conclude that to Meinhof they *were* “Money-Jews”, *were* “finance capital”, in the logic which Meinhof did not see or attempt to see, they “diverted” the people’s hatred *away from themselves* as “capitalist exploiters” *on to themselves* as Jews! Even Meinhof seems to have been aware that something was wrong with all this. Uneasily she felt — so it appears — that there was still something she ought to say about Jews, about the victims with whom she was, after all, claiming equality of victimisation. There was still the very important requirement not to appear racist herself. Some Jews must be exempted from condemnation. So with the Jews of the Warsaw ghetto, she claims “fellow feeling”.

But it seems that she still felt dissatisfaction with her own argument. And it was probably out of a sense of frustration that obdurate facts continued to give her the lie, and that her own repeated claims to extraordinary humanitarianism were now betrayed and made her want to do violence to all opposing arguments, with words, since she now lacked other weapons: “. . . broken through the whole blah-blah!” she says.

The idea of conspiracy on the part of malevolent powers who use economic means to oppress the people was implied by Ulrike Meinhof in her speech to the court at Horst Mahler’s trial, and she also trotted out that old canard of anti-Semitism that the Jews are as such economic oppressors. More explicitly, Mahler himself expressed belief in conspiracy in the declaration he made in his own defence.

He declared:

You charge me with conspiracy ... But you yourself, the gang of General Motors, Ford, Armco, General Electric, ITT, Siemens, AEG, Flick, Quandt, BASF, Springer, Unilever, United Fruit, and certain others - the transnational consortia of capital, all together the imperialistic Monopoly Capital — are the most monstrous criminal association in history. To destroy this with all necessary and obtainable means is a necessity of life for more than 3 billion people<sup>6</sup>. . . The imperialist system, which presents hell on earth to ever-increasing portions of humanity, may only be defeated by the action of the armed people and not by incantations, moral appeals, and parliamentary trifling. The Red Army Faction has taken up the idea of arming the people . . .

So he himself desires an international movement for world revolution:<sup>7</sup>

The imperialist system forms a worldwide unit which transcends national boundaries ... Exploitation and repression are globally organised ... It is essential to recognise the global configuration of imperialism as the determining condition of the proletarian revolution; only in that way will it become a world revolution.

And Mahler makes it perfectly plain that he and his group are driven by grandiose millenarian ambitions:

Not with cheap words, but with deeds, have we come to stand on the side of the overwhelming majority of the people, who today all over the world are taking up arms to free themselves from imperialist suppression and any kind of exploitation ... This ... is a world war — it will be the last and at the same time the longest and bloodiest war of history, because the exploiters do not hesitate to use the most horrendous torture actions to retain their dominance. It is not a war among nations but a war of classes, which will sweep all national, social, cultural, and religious boundaries and barriers forever from the stage of history.

The New Left movement whose massive demonstrations of protest came to a rather abrupt end about 1969 in Europe, a year or so later in America, and catapulted a few excited and violent people, reluctant to give up the movement’s revolutionary aims, into terrorism, was itself a millenarian movement.<sup>8</sup> In his important and admirable book, *The Pursuit of the Millenium*, Norman Cohn writes:

It is characteristic of this kind of movement that its aims and premises are boundless. A social struggle is seen not as a struggle for specific, limited objectives, but as an event of unique importance, different in kind from all other struggles known to history, a cataclysm from which the world is to emerge totally transformed and redeemed. This is the essence of the recurrent phenomenon or ... persistent tradition - that we have called “revolutionary millenarianism”.<sup>9</sup>

The New Left was of this kind, and so were — or are — its offshoots: the Red Army Faction, the Movement Second June (Germany); the Red Brigades, the Armed Proletarian Cells (Italy); the

Angry Brigade<sup>10</sup> (England); the Japanese Red Army; the Weathermen (U.S.A.); and numerous similar groups in South America.<sup>11</sup>

It seems to me that there are three ways in which traditional millenarian ideas could have reemerged into public life in the 1960s and 1970s so little changed from their earlier manifestations. First, by direct learning. Second, as a result of a tradition having soaked, as it were, the culture of Europe, influencing connotations even of individual words, the vocabulary of values. Third, by some sort of fanatical personalities, driven by the same sort of inner needs, conceiving the same vague visions and pursuing them in the same way, not imitating, but innately resembling their millenarian antecedents.

Certainly some of the founders and leaders of the Red Army Faction — Ulrike Meinhof, Horst Mahler, Gudrun Ensslin, Andreas Baader — all resembled, in various ways and to differing degrees, millenarian fanatics of the past.<sup>12</sup>

As for the tradition, it permeated the cultural air which these gently reared, carefully taught, affluent young persons breathed. In Europe as a whole, and Germany in particular, there had been a long history of religious dissent for centuries before the Reformation, often erupting in militant revolt, with leaders proclaiming their battle to be the last on the state of history, ushering in the Kingdom of Christ, which would last for a thousand years, after which the world would end. They were, they claimed, fighting a righteous battle, fulfilling apocalyptic prophecies (such as the Book of Revelation), and their enemy was Antichrist. Supremely self-righteous, they dreamed of a better world after their victory, usually anarchic, egalitarian, communistic. Many held an ideal of a “return” to a golden age, a simple life, a natural state, Eden: a nostalgia for a condition of innocence, as before the Fall. Antichrist, the enemy, had many legions. Of these the Jews were a part. Avaritia, Luxuria, Dives were working the misery and destruction of suffering humanity, taking the form of clergy, rich townfolk, some (but not all) lay rulers, and the Jews. In pursuit of peace, love, holy poverty, mercy, happiness, innocence, plenty effortlessly provided, equality and justice, they took up arms, tortured, burned, destroyed, massacred, and used the most extreme forms of terrorism. Oppression, want, tyranny, despair were their actual accomplishments.

The example I choose is that of the Hussites, both because it is typical, and because it seems highly likely that if any of the founders and leaders of the Red Army Faction knew anything directly of an idealistic millenarian movement of the past, Ulrike Meinhof knew of the Hussites; for her foster-mother, Professor Renate Riemeck, wrote an authoritative work on John Hus, the Bohemian religious reformer.

John Hus was burned as a heretic in 1414. But he himself was not an extremist. He taught that the Church should be disobeyed if its decrees contradicted or distorted the law of Christ as revealed in the Scriptures. It was only after his death, and because of it, that he became the figurehead of a rebellious movement. Multitudes of the discontented found a uniting cause in his martyrdom. The most extreme of the Hussites were the Taborites, apocalyptic phantasists, who idealised apostolic poverty and moral purity and believed that they were fighting the hosts of Antichrist and had a divine mission to purify the earth by destroying sinners. Anyone, they held, who was not with them was against them, and must be ruthlessly destroyed. When they had thus cleansed the earth, the millennium would come, and the surviving saints would live together in a community of love, peace, and equality, free from all law, all compulsion, all rents, taxes and dues, with all goods held in common. Thus they had the outline of a new social order, but no program, no defined method of bringing it into being. As anarcho-communist rebels, in pursuit of their classless society, they waged their war against the wealthy town dwellers. And they had ambitions to carry their crusade beyond Bohemia once their communist paradise had been created there, by going out and conquering the rest of the world. “Unfortunately for their social experiment, the Taborite revolutionaries were so preoccupied with common ownership that they altogether ignored the need to produce.”<sup>13</sup> Where they did conquer, these thirsters after justice exercised tyrannical power over the common people, harassed and oppressed them and ruthlessly extorted rents, dues, and taxes.

Except that the communist and anarcho-communist groups of recent years, such as the Red Army Faction, failed to gain the great following that earlier movements did, the resemblances are so numerous and clear that it is hardly necessary to list them. The one similarity which might have been disputed by those who are aware of, but have not looked closely into, the proclaimed ideals of the RAF, is that of anti-Semitism. Their claims to being anti-materialistic — thoroughly contradicted by their manifest cupidity<sup>14</sup> — is well known; but their identification of economic oppression, or what they called *Konsumerterror*, with “the Jews” was not revealed except, half-involuntarily, by Ulrike Meinhof at Mahler’s trial, as I have shown. For the rest: communism or anarcho-communism, anti-capitalism, egalitarianism; vague beliefs in a revolution which will transform everything forever; pacifism, ideals of moral purity; the sort of people they hoped to gather to their cause; lack of a program; world revolution ambitions, the final and most important battle, to be led by them; their own carefully planned martyrdoms; cruel revenge vented on “deviants”, as well as merciless cruelty to their declared enemies; their use of terror — all are traditional. Furthermore, such movements usually began in the higher social strata, among the better educated and well-off, so in this too there was a close resemblance between the middle and upper-class terrorists of Europe, America, and Japan in recent years, and earlier millenarians.

The nature of the religious beliefs was not quite the same, though some of our latter-day terrorists had a religious upbringing, and were themselves religious in the common meaning of the word. Gudrun Ensslin, co-leader and founder of the RAF had a rigidly puritan Protestant upbringing, with a pastor father and a Pietist mother. Daily searching of the conscience was prescribed, a perpetual striving for moral perfection, with its necessarily accompanying despair of ever achieving it, and its frequently accompanying intolerance of those who seem happy without ever trying to be good. And Ulrike Meinhof not only had parents who were believing Protestants, but had herself, as a student, sought the spiritual refuge of a devout sect, but both Meinhof and Ensslin were religious personalities in a wider meaning of the word. For both, the moral fervour they brought to bear on what they preferred to call political issues was of the religious crusading kind. They and their fellow terrorists in their own and similar movements held the same kind of belief in absolute standards of good, a self-righteous certainty that they were on the side of good, and that they were fighting a vast conspiracy of evil; a simplistic dualism which again puts them in line with many a millenarian crusader of the past.

Millenarian movements were “in no way typical of the efforts which the poor made to improve their lot. *Prophetae* would construct their apocalyptic lore. ... That lore would be purveyed to the poor — and the result would be something that was at once a revolutionary movement and an outburst of quasi-religious salvationism.”<sup>15</sup> Indeed, it could happen that such a *propheta* would step into a genuinely political conflict and turn it into a millenarian disaster. The German Peasants’ Revolt was in the first instance a political and not a millenarian revolt.<sup>16</sup> When Thomas Müntzer and Niklas Storch stepped in to encourage the peasants to overthrow the princes of Saxony — incidentally two exceptionally tolerant princes,<sup>17</sup> the Elector Frederick and Duke John — with a doctrine of social revolution, complaining that the princes were “too rich”, they gained them nothing, but only nudged them to their own destruction. When Philip of Hesse went, contemptuously, to do battle with them, Müntzer told the peasants that God was on their side, a miracle would happen, he would “catch the cannonballs in the sleeves of his cloak”.<sup>18</sup> But the cannonballs found their mark, the revolt collapsed, and Müntzer fled and hid, but was found, tortured, and beheaded.

From Engels down to the Communist historians of today — Russian as well as German — Marxists have inflated Müntzer into a giant symbol, a prodigious hero in the history of the “class war”. This is a naive view, and one which non-Marxist historians have countered easily enough by pointing to the essentially mystical nature of Müntzer’s preoccupations, his general indifference to the material welfare of the poor. Yet it may be suggested that this point too can be over-emphasised. Müntzer was a *propheta* obsessed by eschatological phantasies which he attempted to translate into reality by exploiting social discon-

tent. Perhaps after all it is a sound instinct that has led Marxists to claim him for their own.<sup>19</sup>

Müntzer was venerated by the Anabaptists, whose movement spread in the years following the Peasants' Revolt. It too was an egalitarian and communist millenarian movement. Its "King" and "Messiah of the Last Days", John Leyden, ruled tyrannically over his terrorised flock in the town of Münster. A handsome, swaggering man, who liked to arrange real life as if it were being presented in a theatre, and who had been unable to hold an ordinary job, he had more than a little in common with Andreas Baader. When he and his two closest henchmen were at last defeated by the armies of the Bishop of Münster besieging the town, they were tortured to death, and put in cages hung from the church steeple. They hang there to this day, and were hanging there when Ulrike Meinhof went to Münster to study at the University, and edited a short-lived periodical in support of the Peace Movement in the late 1950s.

If the Communists have Müntzer as one of their favorite German chiliaist *prophetae*, the Nazis had theirs too. An unknown revolutionary of the early sixteenth century wrote *The Book of a Hundred Chapters*. In it we find that "the route to the Millennium leads through massacre and terror."<sup>20</sup> He wanted to lead a crusade against the rich, after which equality and communal ownership would come into being as the new justice. He combined this belief with fervent nationalism. "The Germans once held the whole world in their hands and will do so again, and with more power than ever."

Cohn writes:

In these phantasies the crude nationalism of a half-educated intellectual erupted into the tradition of popular eschatology. The result is almost uncannily similar to the phantasies which were the core of National Socialist "ideology" ... There is the same belief in a primitive German culture in which the divine will was once realised and which throughout history had been the source of all good — which was later undermined by a conspiracy of capitalists, inferior, non-German people and the Church of Rome — which must now be restored by a new aristocracy, of humble birth but truly German in soul, under a God-sent saviour who is at once a political leader and a new Christ. It is all there — and so were the offensives in West and East — the terror welded both as an instrument of policy for its own sake — the biggest

massacres in history — in fact everything except the final consummation of the world-empire, which, in Hitler's words, was to last a thousand years.<sup>21</sup>

It may seem that nationalism was one element of the German millenarian tradition that had disappeared by the time the RAF came along, if by "nationalism" one means exaggerated patriotism. German nationalist fervour had, understandably, abated after the Second World War. But the need for group identification was nevertheless strong in these latter-day millenarians. They were people who needed to be part of a gang, who shirked individual responsibility. (Notice Meinhof's need to claim relationship with Mahler. And Gudrun Ensslin told her sister that her "real" siblings were Petra Schelm and Thomas Weissbecker, two of her dead comrades.) They all believed ardently that the collective was of much greater importance than the individual;<sup>22</sup> devotees of international rather than national socialism.

One final example of millenarianism in the past is worth mentioning, for it had a bearing in our century on both Nazi and Marxist ideology.

In the thirteenth century, Joachim of Fiore "elaborated an interpretation of history as an ascent through three successive ages"<sup>23</sup> — the Third Age, a kind of heaven on earth, enduring until the Last Judgement. He added ideas of communism, apocalypse, and the return of a golden age.

"The long-term, indirect influence of Joachim's speculations can be traced right down to the present day, and most clearly in certain 'philosophies of history,'" writes Cohn. He instances the theories of historical evolution of Hegel and others among the German Idealists, and the Marxian dialectic of the three stages of primitive communism, class society, and communism regained. "And," he writes, "it is no less true ... that the phrase 'the Third Reich' ... would have had but little emotional significance if the phantasy of the third and most glorious dispensation had not, over the centuries, entered into the common stock of European social mythologies."<sup>24</sup>

The Third Reich was to last a thousand years in the prophecy of Hitler. It lasted only a dozen, but its millenarian leader did gain a large following. Fortunately, the crusades of the RAF and its remsemblers of recent years gained no following at all, and can have very little significance even in the history of such movements.

1. This account of the proceedings is taken largely from the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* of December 15, 1972. Other newspaper accounts are briefer, but serve to confirm the facts sufficiently.

2. In *The Economic War Against the Jews*, (Corgi, London, 1979), Terence Prittie and Walter Henry Nelson write: "Anti-Zionism has been a convenience for bigots, for it permits the antisemites to pose as anti-Israeli, while denying any anti-Jewish bias." (p. 172.) They substantiate this very fully, and also supply ample proof that the Arab enmity toward the Jews does not date merely from the inception of the modern state of Israel, but is centuries old. "If there had been no other reason for Zionism," they say, "it would have had to be invented in order to bring the centuries-long oppression of the Jews of the Arab world to an end." (p. 169.)

3. There is much evidence in their own underground publications that they saw themselves as leaders of an armed revolution of the masses. It is apparent in Mahler's declaration in court, referred to in the article. Much more evidence can be found in *Über den bewaffneten Kampf in Westeuropa*, which was republished as *Rotbuch 29*, Verlag Klaus Wagenbach, Berlin, 1971, especially on pages 17, 19, 23, 46; *Das Konzept Stadtguerilla*, which was republished in *Stadtguerilla* by Alex Schubert, Verlag Klaus Wagenbach, Berlin, 1971, especially on pp. 109-16, 125; and *Dem Volk Diener*, issued as an underground publication only. It will also be noticed in their own writings that they explicitly advocate the use of 'terror': see e.g. *Über den bewaffneten Kampf in Westeuropa*, section 6, *Terror gegen den Herrschaftsapparat — ein notwendiges Element der Massenkämpfe* (Terror against the Ruler's Apparatus — a necessary element of the mass struggle), pp. 33-40. The last two sentences of the section read: "The rulers use fear, which they produce through terror, to keep the proletariat compliant. So what can be said against the use of fear by the suppressed which they induce in their enemies through terror, so as to set themselves free at last?"

4. I have pointed out and discussed elsewhere the envy of victims and fascination with suffering in general (I call it *Leidensheid*; it is manifested, for instance, by the imitation of the appearance of poverty) among affluent young radicals of the 1960s and 1970s. See Jillian Becker, *Hitler's Children*, Panther, Granada Publishing, London, 1977, 1978, pp. 69-71.

5. Ulrike Meinhof did not give an opinion as to whether the people were not guilty of the killing, enslavement, and persecution of any other races, Gypsies or Slavs for instance, to exonerate them from the charge of "racism" in general, only this ambiguous argument to clear them of "anti-Semitism". For a concise account of racism in the history of socialism, see George Watson, "Race and the Socialists", in *Encounter*, November 1976, in which he writes, for instance (pp. 20, 21): "Marx and Engels were not socialists who also happened to be racialists, or racialists who also happened to be socialists. They openly believed that the one con-

dition requires the other. ... Equality (according to Marx and Engels) may be pursued — may have to be pursued — by killing those who are genetically unequal." The author also refers in his article to Ulrike Meinhof's statements at the trial of Horst Mahler, and asks, "How much was socialism, and how much national-socialism in her passionate self-defence?" (p. 23.)

6. Mahler's insistence that the developed countries are responsible for the poverty of the less developed, is widely held in the developed world. For a clear and impressive argument against it, backed by convincing facts, see Professor P. T. Bauer's "Western Guilt and Third World Poverty" in *Commentary*, New York, January 1976. Professor Bauer writes, for instance, "... allegations that the West is responsible for the poverty of the so-called Third World ... have come to be widely accepted, often as axiomatic, yet they are not only untrue, but more nearly the opposite of the truth." (p. 31.) And again, "So far from the West having caused the poverty of the Third World, contact with the West has been the principal agent of material progress there." (p. 32.) He explains in the course of the article how Marxist-Leninist ideology reinforced mistaken notions which gave rise to the wide acceptance of the view that the West caused the poverty of the Third World. He further points out that, "... people in the West who are sufficiently disillusioned with their own society to have become disaffected from or even hostile to it ... see the Third World as a useful instrument for promoting their cause in what is in essence a civil conflict in the West." (p. 38.)

7. It should be noted that during his years in prison, Horst Mahler has changed his mind about many of the views he held in the 1960s and early 1970s, and in particular has declared himself to be no longer in favour of terrorism.

8. Tom Wolfe in "The Me Decade and the Third Great Awakening", on p. 131 of *Mauve Gloves and Madmen, Clutter and Vine*, Bantam, London, 1977, writes: "It is entirely possible that in the long run historians will regard the New Left experience as not so much a political as a religious episode wrapped in semi-mythical gear and guerrilla talk."

9. Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium*, Paladin, London, 1970, p. 281.

10. The Angry Brigade was influenced by the French "Situationists". For the millenarian flavour of their political views, see e.g., Raoul Vaneigem, *The Revolution of Everyday Life*, Practical Paradise Publications, London, 1972.

11. But all the millenarian groups which arose out of the New Left were "urban guerrilla" movements. There were — and still are — numerous cults, religions, and quasi-religions, of which many erstwhile supporters of the New Left became adherents. Some of these seem lunatic, exhibiting characteristics of such groups in an exaggerated form. One example was the Charles Manson "family", a drug-taking, murdering, orgiastic group, with weird but distinctly millenarian beliefs; a final war, between blacks and whites, which the blacks would win, though Manson

("Man's son", both "God and Saturn", as he called himself) would then emerge from hiding in the desert of California, wrest victory from the blacks because they would find themselves simply unable to govern, and so establish his own blessed reign, a lasting peace on earth.

12. For details of their lives and characters, see Jillian Becker, op. cit., especially Parts One, Two and Three.

13. Norman Cohn, op. cit., p. 217.

14. For instances of this, and their preference for high living standards and luxury goods, see Jillian Becker, op. cit., especially e.g., pp. 230, 245-46.

15. Norman Cohn, op. cit., p. 281. And on p. 282: "Revolutionary millenarianism drew its strength from a population living on the margins of society — peasants without land ... beggars and vagabonds — in fact from the amorphous mass of people who were not simply poor but who could find no assured and recognised place in society at all." Cf. Herbert Marcuse, one of the Marxist philosophers most favoured by the New Left, who writes in *One Dimensional Man*, Sphere Books, London, 1972, pp. 199-200, that the true revolutionaries now were not the working classes but "the substratum of the outcasts and outsiders ... unemployed and the unemployable." The Red Army Faction did not despair of leading the working classes too, but in fact they led neither the proletariat nor the *lumpenproletariat*.

16. Norman Cohn, op. cit., p. 245.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 244.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 255.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 251.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 120.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 125.

22. I have said (in *Hitler's Children*) that the chief real motivation for these terrorists was ego gratification. Following the usage that Karl Popper prefers (see *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1969, fifth edition, p. 101), I distinguish between "individualism" and "egoism". The individualist is opposed to collectivism. The egoist, by contrast, often seeks emotional satisfaction in membership of a group or tribe, as Popper explains. Furthermore, the Red Army Faction and similar terrorist groups selected individuals for attack and killing on the grounds that they were to be regarded primarily as representatives of groups — capitalists, managers, bankers, industrialists; judges, public prosecutors; shoppers in department stores; etc. As this is precisely equivalent to persecuting individuals on the grounds that they "represent" this or that national or racial group, one might hear the moral indignation they like to express over "nationalism" or "racism" (even without remarking Ulrike Meinhof's view of Auschwitz as the just deserts of "Geldjuden") as having a hollow ring.

23. Norman Cohn, op. cit., p. 108.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 109.