

## about andreas and the group

gudrun ensslin, june 16, 1976

he gives no "instructions", he gives no "orders", and i can only recall one order apart from situations within an action: the one regarding journalists attempting to buy the prisoners – not to speak to them.

furthermore, the raf's definition of an order is well known. it is a collective decision in an operational phase . decisions are not taken as long as one member of the group making the decision has objections.

a's function never took the form of pressure. to me, it appears to be the exact opposite of that – he provides the lines around which the group discussion develops and around which analyses are summed up as concepts. one could also say that what is so clear in the way he fights is the degree to which he is able, in any situation, to theoretically and practically arrive at the concept on the basis of the analysis and expectations found in any fighting group.

for example, he doesn't "assert himself." that's stupid shit, ridiculous – i, in any case, have never seen such a thing. it works differently. it was never even necessary. he doesn't push. his method of analyzing, comprehending, and acting is based on persuasion, and i think it's very important, faced with the total distortion of what his personality is like as part of the psychological warfare smear campaign, to establish that, in the fighting group and in what we call the tent, the intimacy of the underground collective, he has, through his sensitivity and his specific rejection of all forms of *domination*, pointed the way to a structure that is free and *thereby* disciplined. it is hard to describe, because no one who lives and is politically active aboveground can really understand it. however, what we actually see in him is a glimpse of the nature of these politics – liberation – as they are found in the underground group's collective structure, that is to say, that for which each individual longs in the alienated, corrupt, dead relationships in which the world of profits imprisons, exhausts and destroys the individual.

the decision in favour of the proletarian situation in the metropole is the decision in favour of the guerilla: struggle, lack of possession, and collectivity as a prefiguring. in the post-fascist police state that is the federal republic, a country that has a forty-five year history of smothering or corrupting every revolutionary initiative with anticommunist rabble-rousing, such a decision will incur every conceivable form of hatred and institutional mendacity possible. the state brings its full desire for annihilation and all of its pressure to bear against any underground group, and with the institutional strategy of mass manipulation – through corporate journalism and the "public" which is to say, state media – and the technical counterinsurgency instruments, and as such it has more ways to isolate, encircle, assimilate, and smother resistance than the old, orthodox fascism did.

guerilla in the federal republic, the raf as an instance of class consciousness, arises from and against this structure. i in its formative stage, it already had a sense of the enormity of the desire for annihilation that would mark the state's reaction. each of us was clearly conscious of the antagonism. what we couldn't have – *because the raf launched the guerilla* in the most stable state in the imperialist bloc – is experience with the subjective prerequisites for the group, or groups. we had to make mistakes. we learned from these mistakes, and the major thing we came to understand was that freedom is *only* possible in the struggle for freedom. the degree to which underground continuity exists in the federal republic has an important prerequisite in the strength of the structure that andreas developed in the raf, which is to say, the consciousness and identity of the group, which has prevented it from being smashed and turned into a tool of the government's counterpropaganda by the torture, dead wings, isolation and extermination detention that followed the 1972 setback. to the extent that this struggle for continuity, on a terrain totally determined and controlled by the state, has been successful because it has been an example, buback was bound to get bogged down in his extermination program. in the last two years, four prisoners have been killed and forty prisoners have been tortured to the point of physical and psychological exhaustion using psychiatrically conceived extermination imprisonment. however, in the six years that there have been prisoners from the raf, only two have collapsed: ruhlmann and müller.