

[Please note that all the footnotes in this document have been added by the editor – none of them appeared in the original document, which was translated by Arm the Spirit]

Statement By Irmgard Möller¹ Regarding The RAF Cease-Fire

April 15th 1992 Lübeck

We'd like to briefly state the following: the decision made by our comrades on the outside is a correct one, one which identifies a political process which we prisoners are also a part of².

We have wanted - ever since '89 - to make a break in the entire political spectrum, and such a step can only be taken by all of us together, not just in the area of prisoners.

We see this now much clearer than we did in the mid-80s, and the hunger-strike of '89 was the first time we made this a part of our political praxis.

The fact that the global and domestic social contradictions are so deep makes the simple pressing-forward of the politics and praxis of the 70s and 80s impossible.

Whoever sees the necessity of the revolutionary change of the existing global and domestic injustices and destructive relationships should also see the need for a change and re-orientation of political content and forms, also in relation to other leftist experiences and ways of living.

We prisoners see this as our task both for now and "after prison".

Re-orientating within society and within international groupings and conditions requires an open learning process.

This must first be achieved for the 4 sick prisoners.

Bernd and Günter must be released immediately.

With their release, a rational moment can exist for discussions between the political

¹ Arrested in 1972 and charged with the bombing of the US Army Base ni Heidelberg (see http://www.germanguerrilla.com/red-army-faction/documents/72_05_25.html) Irmgard Möller was the only prisoner to survive the murders of October 18th 1977 in Stammheim prison. After 22 years in custody, Möller was released from Lübeck prison on 1 December 1994.

² On April 10th 1992 the RAF released a document – *To All Who Are Looking For Ways to Organize and to Push Through a Human Life in Dignity Here and Worldwide On Really Concrete Issues* – in which they stated that they would no longer carry out attacks on representatives of the State or capital. This document can be read at http://www.germanguerrilla.com/red-army-faction/documents/92_04_10.html.

prisoners and the state.

This means a thorough break for all involved.

A break with our 22-year history.

We aren't trying to fool anyone when we say that we want to achieve freedom for all of us within a foreseeable period of time. We don't expect this to happen right away or for all of us at once.

But we'd like to make it clear that, after 22 years of considering and criticizing the attempted destruction of the prisoners (with everything from special legislation to isolation) - against which we struggled as a collective, a struggle in which 9 imprisoned comrades died, although in the end we wrecked the state's plans - after all these decades, there can be no talk of a normal "solution".

That just isn't realistic, and it's a ridiculous thought to anyone who has become familiar with Germany's justice system and state security apparatus over the last 25 years and who doesn't want to disregard their own political history.

The state can't own history; the state's official version is not ours.

It's just a matter of dealing politically with social contradictions.

We, the prisoners from the RAF and the resistance, and the RAF have made room for this.

This has nothing to do with "tactics".

**Irmgard Möller, on behalf of the prisoners from the RAF and the
resistance**

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Der Spiegel¹ Interview with Irmgard Möller

May 18th 1992

Question: *On May 15th you celebrated your 45th birthday in Lübeck-Laverhof prison, your 20th birthday behind bars. What effect has this long term imprisonment had on your physical health?*

Irmgard: I have been in jail since I was 25 – for the first several years, I was completely isolated from other prisoners². Today I have many problems, nothing is right. My skin is damaged. My circulation is totally estroyed. My nervous system doesn't function correctly. For a longtime I suffered psychosomatic illnesses that would then turn into real illnesses. I had headaches all the time.

Question: *Do you feel in good mental shape?*

Irmgard: Now again, this was different, especially during the first years when I was totally isolated. Isolation has, for example, consequences on one's capacity to think. If one experiences no sensory stimuli anymore, if one can't talk with anybody, then one's whole thought process will be changed. You have no associations anymore, you see no pictures anymore, everything is separated, cut into pieces. Everything is in a mess and turned upside down.

Question: *When did the symptoms subside?*

Irmgard: When the isolation came to an end in 1980 and I was confined with other RAF prisoners as a collective.

Here in Lübeck, we are now four. Besides myself, there is Hanna Krabbe, who was captured at the occupation of the German embassy in Stockholm 1975³, Christiane Kuby

¹ A German bourgeois-liberal news magazine.

² Prisoners from the RAF were held in "dead wings" - complete isolation, being held alone in an entire section of the prison. Not only their supporters, but many human rights observers and medical professionals maintain that this constitutes a form of torture. As Dutch psychiatrist Sjeff Teuns stated in 1973 ("Isolation/Sensorische Deprivation: Die programmierte Folter," in *Ausgewählte Dokumente*): "Sensory deprivation – because it can only be produced through human manipulation – is at once the most human and inhuman method for the protracted degradation of life. Applied for months or years, [it] is the proverbial 'perfect murder' for which no one – or everyone, except the victim – is responsible." (quoted in Jeremy Varon's *Bringing the War Home: The Weather Underground, the Red Army Faction, and Revolutionary Violence in the Sixties and Seventies*, p. 218).

³ On April 25th, 1975 the RAF's Commando Holger Meins seized the German Embassy in Stockholm, Sweden. They demanded the release of 26 political prisoners, including the Stammheim prisoners. A police assault on the Embassy resulted in an explosion, which killed one guerrilla, Siegfried Hausner, and one hostage. (see <http://www.germanguerrilla.com/red-army-faction/documents/75-04-24.html>).

who was captured in January 1978, who fought against that and has been inside since, and Gaby Rollnick from the 2nd of June Movement⁴ who was transferred to our group in 1989.

Question: *Your group is lucky. Until now most of the other RAF prisoners have demanded collective imprisonment in vain.*

Irmgard: Nonetheless, if there are just three or four of us inside, it is still isolation. We are deprived of the opportunity to communicate with all of the political prisoners and to discuss with people on the outside.

Question: *You could be released from prison within a month. Klaus Kinkel, who is currently the Minister of Justice in Bonn, has made a peace offer to the RAF and promised that you and others that you call political prisoners will soon be released. As a result, the RAF has responded with a temporary suspension of violence. Does this mean an end to the escalation of the violence that has cost more than 50 people on both sides of the law their lives over the past 20 years?*

Irmgard: The RAF wants to undertake its politics on a new basis. We want to create a brand new political basis rather than confront the people with continuous escalations.

Question: *What does this mean in concrete terms? Do you rule out the use of armed actions to advance your political aims? Does this renunciation of violence go for you personally too?*

Irmgard: Renunciation of violence sounds so institutional, so governmental. That expression is very foreign to me. But at the moment I can't imagine the use of violence either in this the political situation or in my personal circumstances.

Question: *But that is a very narrow rejection of violence. The political situation could change, as could your personal circumstances.*

Irmgard: I cannot talk about what will happen in 20 or 30 years, and you can't either. That's why I can't answer that question in any other way.

Question: *But the RAF's attitude to violence remains a central theme. The more the RAF shot and bombed, the more you lost the support of those that speak up for social change. Your former comrade in arms, Klaus Jünschke, who was pardoned after 16 years in prison, claims that the RAF lost its moral and political legitimacy with the first shot.*

Irmgard: That's just not true. The armed struggle was legitimate.

Question: *Amongst other things you are in prison for the bombing of the US headquarters in Heidelberg (during the war in Vietnam), in which 3 people died and*

⁴ The June 2nd Movement was a West Berlin guerilla group influenced by anarchism, active in the 1970s. In the 1980s it merged with the RAF.

more were wounded. Do you still feel that this attack was justified?

Irmgard: I still consider that that attack was absolutely legitimate. At that time, attacks on U.S. facilities were our most important initiatives. We attacked Heidelberg because the headquarters was the coordinating point for the U.S. during the Vietnam war. That was where the bombings of the Vietnamese civilian population were coordinated.

Question: *And the RAF wanted to stop this with its own terror bombing?*

Irmgard: We wanted to show them that they could not rely on having a comfortable rear base area anywhere. That point could only be made violently, not with a leaflet. It was just much too little, too little in view of the massacres and the genocide organized from here.

Question: *Looking back, do you also consider the subsequent years' attacks against the top representatives of Germany's State and business world to be justified?*

Irmgard: I consider them to be legitimate. About that, I have no doubt at all. The RAF didn't stop these attacks because they were illegitimate but because they did nothing to advance the political process we had in mind.

Question: *What you always refer to as "attacks" almost all other citizens consider to be simply murder.*

Irmgard: We don't see it that way because we did not plan them as individual murders, rather we see them as an armed attack on the State.

Question: *But with your so-called attacks on the State you've always hit persons of flesh and blood, with families and children.*

Irmgard: Of course that's not easy and we take no joy in it. But because the state is abstract I don't see how at that time it could have been attacked in any other way but through its representatives. Today that has changed.

Question: *But the RAF's assassinations have continued right up until the recent past. As recently as 1989 for example, after the last big hungerstrike of the RAF prisoners, a RAF commando bombed the banker Alfred Herrhausen⁵.*

Irmgard: 1989 was a year of fundamental changes. With our hungerstrike, we reached very new sections of the population; Christian groups for example. Also people from the unions discussed our terms, the conditions of our custody and our collective imprisonment. At the same time, the political systems in the East collapsed. We have tried to respond to these political questions as they've occurred. We've had new

⁵ The communiqué for this action can be read at http://www.germanguerrilla.com/red-army-faction/documents/89_12_02.html

discussions about the conditions in which we are held, as well as talks with the State. At the same time the RAF continued its attacks...

Question: *...and murdered Herrhausen.*

Irmgard: What was the situation in 1989? Even before GDR's⁶ collapse, Herrhausen, without attracting the attention of the Left and the population in the West, determined how he could best exploit the situation and maximize his gains.

Question: *What gave the RAF the right to condemn someone to death?*

Irmgard: The certainly that the goal I'm fighting for is not only mine but that of the majority of the people of the whole world. From the certainty that it's right and justified to put an end to a system, to overthrow it, because it murders the majority of the people instead of letting them live.

Question: *It seems to us that the man on the street did not even understand what you were saying, never mind your actions.*

Irmgard: I don't think our statements were always written for him.

Question: *For years you gave the impression that your revolution should be carried by the majority of the population.*

Irmgard: Right from the beginning the goal for us was not to look for majority support. Here the population's consciousness was such that only a minority could advance the revolutionary process.

Question: *You thought of yourselves as a revolutionary vanguard?*

Irmgard: Yes, we did.

Question: *Do you still think of yourselves in that way?*

Irmgard: In their declaration the RAF has said that at the moment we don't want to be the vanguard, we don't want to be the center of attention.

Question: *Minister of the Interior Kinkel says that his initiative aims at reconciliation between the State and its worst enemy. A lot of your statements still sound completely irreconcilable.*

Irmgard: It is not simply that Mr. Kinkel has had some humane insights. This is just one small part of it. He has understood that he will never be able to control us in the old way.

Question: *What do you mean by "old way?"*

⁶ German Democratic Republic; East Germany.

Irmgard: The approach of criminalizing the prisoners and trying to capture and mop up the militants on the outside.

Question: *Isn't it true that Kinkel's idea of reconciliation means absolutely nothing to you?*

Irmgard: In any case, we don't take it at face value. Kinkel can't reconcile us to the content and form of the system that we have fought against. He has to accept that we are and will remain adversaries and that we are not just some criminals as they have pretended for the past 20 years. In this respect reconciliation is wrong.

Question: *People have been killed and injured during your attacks. Are you sorry about this? Is there something like regret?*

Irmgard: I can't grasp this in a personal and individual manner at all.

Question: *But we ask you personally. Not as spokeswomen of a political group.*

Irmgard: I can't think that way. I can't abstract and take apart the attacks using such categories.

Question: *Others, like for example your former militant companion Werner Lotze who shot down a policeman in 1978, have asked the victims relatives for forgiveness on TV. Can you imagine such an apology for yourself?*

Irmgard: No, absolutely not. And I also believe that the whole thing was arranged. But I also didn't feel like thinking Lotze was a pig. Instead I thought: What are they doing to him? The show was really arranged with the Federal German Bar following the motto: How can we most effectively make use of those who give State's evidence for public relation work?

Question: *Can you imagine entering into a dialogue with the relatives of the RAF's victims, like the brothers of Gerold von Braunmühl, killed by RAF, have tried from the other side?*

Irmgard: I can't see the sense of it. I can't see any basis for it.

Question: *Don't you fear your attitude will endanger your release and give ammunition to those politicians who reject Kinkel's line anyway.*

Irmgard: This danger exists as long as we are not willing to give in, and we'll never do that.

Question: *Don't you see any reasons to revise the old concept of the enemy in Kinkel's venture, that is of course a break in the State's dealing with the RAF?*

Irmgard: Sure, it's possible. But for that things have to de-escalate a bit more on both sides. What the RAF has declared is important to the State anyway: They need not fear attacks now.

Question: *What do you expect as consequences?*

Irmgard: The release for all of us, regardless of whether one was captured 5 or 20 years ago and regardless of criteria like seriousness of guilt. Such criteria make no sense anyhow because we have determined the actions collectively and carried them out together.

Question: *How do you imagine it? The courts, which have jurisdiction, decide about the discharge of prisoners.*

Irmgard: One consequence has to be that the State doesn't insist on letting us out separated by those courts. Now is the time for a real solution to be brought about. That means we all have to be released within a period of one or two years. That's how we see it.

Question: *That would be illegal. Should all get pardoned by the President then?*

Irmgard: I don't know how it should work concretely. I can only say what cannot work. But I also cannot see being introduced to the President and having to say this and that.

Question: *Do your demands also include the RAF commando level members who are still being searched for? Do you expect amnesty for them?*

Irmgard: No, I haven't thought about that.

Question: *Do you really know any of these members of the third or fourth generation RAF personally?*

Irmgard: Do you mean if I know the individual militants? No, I don't.

Question: *The security authorities maintain that attacks have been planned and directed from the cells following to the motto: The bosses are inside the prisons and the manual workers outside.*

Irmgard: That's not true. This assertion was always intended to have one effect: To criminalize the best-known prisoners and present them as the only ones who want to and are capable of waging this struggle. All others should be presented as manual workers and recipients of orders.

Question: *Haven't there been at least recommendations from the prisons to the scene outside?*

Irmgard: When the militants out there have carried out attacks it has had an influence on our situation, on everything. But we never said: Do this or do that. It doesn't work like that at all.

Question: *Ms Möller you are the only survivor of the dramatic events at Stuttgart-Stammheim prison, where according to the inquiries the RAF's founding members Andreas Bader, Gudrun Ensslin and Jan Carl Raspe committed suicide on the night of October 18th. You yourself were hospitalized with serious injuries and have supported the RAF version that this was a case of murder⁷.*

Irmgard: That's not a version but a fact for me. For the past 15 years I have had no opportunity to speak about that. I haven't seen the records. I didn't get the testimonies made in front of the investigation committee. Even now I have not been able to see the final report. I myself lodged a murder charge but the proceeding was abandoned at once.

Question: *So according to your memory, what happened on that night in Stammheim?*

Irmgard: We were in single cells on the 7th floor; the cells next door were empty. Of course I knew that a Lufthansa airliner had been hijacked to secure our release. But I also knew that GSG 9⁸ was on its way to attack the airliner.

Question: *The authorities claim that you heard about the airplane being stormed and the hostages freed and after that you attempted suicide with a cutlery knife.*

Irmgard: This is a lie. The last time I listened to the news was at 11 p.m.. I knew something was about to happen, that a decision had been made. But I didn't know which one. That was unbearable to me. Then I fell asleep.

Question: *And then?*

Irmgard: At some time I heard a kind of muffled noise I couldn't identify. A vehement noise. I didn't think about a shot, it sounded more like a cupboard falling down or something like that. And then the next thing I knew I was lying under neon lights in the corridor, getting grasped everywhere by people who opened wide my eyes. Then I heard

⁷ Hanns-Martin Schleyer, a leading industrialist and former Nazi, was kidnapped by the RAF on September 5th 1977. His release was offered in exchange for that of RAF prisoners being held by the West German State. The state opted for a repressive hard line, and the situation escalated further when a Palestinian Commando hijacked a Lufthansa Airliner in support of the RAF's demands (and also demanding the release of two Palestinian political prisoners held in Turkey). The Palestinian "Commando Martyr Halimeh" flew the airplane from Bahrain to Dubai to Aden (where the pilot was shot) and then finally – on October 17th – they landed in Mogidishu (Somalia). The next day, on October 18th, the conflict reached its climax, as a West German anti-terrorist unit stormed the hijacked plane, killing three of the four hijackers. Left-wing houses were raided across West Germany. Most ominously, the State announced that four RAF prisoners – Andreas Bader, Jan-Carl Raspe, Gudrun Ensslin and Irmgard Möller – had been "found dead" or seriously injured in their cells. Only Möller survived, and despite the fact that to this day she has described having been attacked in her cell, the State maintains that the three committed "suicide"

⁸ GSG 9 (Border guard group 9) = special federal police group, trained for "anti-terrorism" interventions.

a voice: Baader and Ensslin are dead. After that there is nothing.

Question: *What is the next thing you remember?*

Irmgard: I first regained consciousness three days later at the intensive care unit. From that time on I've a continuous memory again.

Question: *What kind of injuries did you have?*

Irmgard: Four stab wounds in the chest. My lungs were damaged and also filled up with liquid from the pericardium which was also damaged.

Question: *Several medical experts, some of them from foreign countries, have come to the conclusion that your companions' deaths were suicides.*

Irmgard: I know. They of course haven't been objective, but were brought in just for that. I know details of the autopsy reports and know for example about an injury Gudrun had that was never investigated at all.

Question: *Who do you think caused the injuries?*

Irmgard: I don't think the guards did it, not the ones who were running around there right after. I believe it was done by a commando. There are different entrances to the prison section.

Question: *Even former RAF comrades doubt your account. Monika Helbing for example has called the murder-version a lie. In reality, it was meant to be a propaganda action, the so-called operation "suicide action", with the aim of showing the deaths in Stammheim to be the "Reaction of the Fascist State". Also Susanne Albrecht and Ralf Friedrich⁹ expressed themselves similarly.*

Irmgard: And why are they doing that? They are all people who lived anonymously in the GDR for a long time, who were then captured, and who now want to profit from that state-witnesses thing. They are telling these stories now because they have nothing else to offer, nothing else to give as evidence.

Question: *Do you consider those who left the RAF to be traitors?*

Irmgard: All these years while they were living in the GDR they were not traitors. Now they are traitors. They surrender and are driven to venality. This was absolutely not necessary. Some of them could have been free a long time ago if they hadn't incriminated each other. And then they incriminated others of us who shall get new trials now.

Question: *You yourself haven't gotten venal as you call it and have paid a heavy price for it. Have you ever regretted the fact that you were underground by the age of 24 and*

⁹ Former RAF militants captured in the GDR after the GDR's collapse.

embarked on the path of armed struggle with all its consequences?

Irmgard: Not at all; at no time.

Question: *You could have lived a completely different, also a bourgeois life. You could have had children, a family.*

Irmgard: I would have had to forget everything that was most important to me. The situation in Germany wasn't one where you could have children and live within the resistance.

Question: *Don't you perhaps cling to your identity as a resistance fighter for reasons of psychological self-protection? Otherwise all your personal sacrifices would of course have been pointless.*

Irmgard: That is an absolutely incorrect formulation of the question. I don't want to live a different life at all. If I was only clinging to my identity for reasons of self-protection, I would be inflexible and incapable and could no longer think. Then I would have stopped, would now be paralyzed. You cannot survive that way.

Question: *Are you possibly afraid of freedom?*

Irmgard: I'm really not a prisoner by nature. This is of course an absurd idea. Of course I want to get out of here and work politically on the outside again. I will not return to illegality, but will work politically on other levels to offer resistance.

Question: *How do you imagine the "political struggle" you want to wage if you are released?*

Irmgard: Well, I imagine having a lot of discussions, visiting the cities, examining different political groups. Then I will orientate myself absolutely anew and find out what is really happening. For example I would like to speak to the people who mobilize against the WES (World Economic Summit). I can't imagine any parliamentary form. This is out of the question.

Question: *Do you also have any personal hopes for a life in freedom, unconnected to political struggle?*

Irmgard: Nothing that stands in contradiction to the political struggle. I don't feel the need to lay somewhere on the beach, absolutely not.

Spiegel: Ms Möller, we thank you for this dialogue.