

West Germany's Bonnie And Clyde

By JOE ALEX MORRIS JR.

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BONN — A young fraulein had a most unpleasant experience in Cologne the other morning.

There she was, snuggled in her boyfriend's arms in the anonymity of a transient hotel when the door bust open at 5 a.m. and a posse of armed police poured in.

They were looking for West Germany's Bonnie and Clyde.

It was a false tip, like so many recently. But it illustrated well the official and public hysteria surrounding Ulrike Meinhof and **Andreas Baader**, now public enemies No. 1 here.

The couple, plus what remains of their "Red Army Faction," are the object of the biggest manhunt in postwar Germany. It is all the more bizarre since they are not run-of-the-mill criminals.

They started their careers as anti-establishment political radicals. But, like America's Bonnie and Clyde before them, they have degenerated to a stage where they appear to commit violence for its own sake.

The leader, Ulrike Meinhof, 37, is a long-haired, bespectacled intellectual, a former journalist and mother of twins by a former husband who edits a leftist satirical magazine.

Baader is 28, a sometime artist and a school dropout. He is the latest of Ulrike Meinhof's many successive lovers.

In the past 18 months, the Baader-Meinhof gang has spread terror and violence throughout West Germany. Their philosophy — that the means (not the ends) justifies the means — has been sharply criticized by other radical leftists.

At least four bank robberies (with loot of more than \$150,000) have been attributed to them. A policeman and a girl gang member are dead following shootouts, and several other persons have been wounded.

There were even reports — never verified — that they planned to kidnap Chancellor Willy Brandt at one stage and hold him ransom for gang members held in jail. The reports were enough, however, to lead to tightened security measures around the chancellor.

The public at large has not been spared. This fall, millions of German televisioners were horrified when police dragged a pretty, 23-year-old psychology student before the cameras, then roughly jerked her head back by pulling on her long tresses so that her face came into view.

"A macabre scene," commented one shocked newspaper. "Barbarous," said another.

Other big cities besides Cologne, such as Hamburg and Muenster, have been tied up for as long as 20 hours by police raids following reports that gang members had been spotted. And the pressure is mounting.

The police fear that Baader and Meinhof will bring urban guerrilla operations, of the South American Tupamaro style, to the cities of West Germany. Manfred Bruhns, senior attorney at the Federal Criminal Bureau in Karlsruhe, claims there is evidence they have already accomplished this in Hamburg, Berlin, and Heidelberg.

"In these three cities we have had crimes which fall into the same pattern," he said. "The materials used, the weapons, and the false documents and disguises, have been too similar to be coincidental."

So far, 15 of the original 23 hard-core gang members have been arrested, but the police don't know how many new members have been recruited. The first goes on trial in January, for Berlin bank robberies.

Meanwhile, Baader and Meinhof are underground,

helped by radicals throughout the country. "The number of sympathizers is far greater than people realize," said a Berlin police official.

The gang is a fallout from the disintegration of the radical student movement in West Germany. It reached a high point here, as it did in France, in 1968, but the decline here began following the attempted assassination that year of radical student leader Rudi Dutschke.

As the radical movement began to wither, many of the students who had been throwing cobblestones at police joined the establishment. Others became the professional left-wing splinter, dedicated to politics rather than violence.

This evolution left people like Ulrike Meinhof homeless. The daughter of a museum director, she had been orphaned early in life and taken in by a university professor well-known for her leftist views.

There were passed on to Ulrike who, after a brilliant school career, became a left-wing journalist. She married a man who became her boss as editor of "Konkret," a satirical magazine, but they fell out when he refused to print some of her more extremist views.

She went to Berlin, the center of the West German radical movement, and the Baader-Meinhof gang began to coalesce. Its members were mostly young students from respectable middle-class families.

There was Gudrun Ensslin, a preacher's daughter and early accomplice of Baader's in setting fire to a Frankfurt department store. Margrit Schiller, the girl dragged before the TV cameras, was the daughter of an official in military intelligence. Horst Mahler was an attorney who gave up a promising career to become the "hippie lawyer" of West Berlin.

And so on. The solid German burghers are, like people elsewhere, puzzled that young people from such good families could get themselves involved in such a violent and seemingly nonsensical protest against society.

The watershed which led to formation of the Baader-Meinhof gang was the Frankfurt department store fire in April, 1968. Baader and two girls were caught and tried for the act.

Later on, the Frankfurt fire was developed into something almost holy in the evolution of the group. Ulrike Meinhof was to say:

"In the burning of the department store, the progressive moment was not the burning itself, but the criminality of the deed according to the law."

Baader was "liberated" on May 14, 1970 in West Berlin in another shootout, in which an employee of the Social Rehabilitation Institute was seriously wounded. This act sent the group underground, and into its campaign of terror and violence.

They attempt to cloak their acts in political justifications. But the fact is that they have few or no contacts with the political leftists, who they claim are under police control in any case.

More significant, they appear to get little sympathy from Communist East Germany, which helped them in the past. The East Germans have rebuffed West German overtures to exchange members of the Baader-Meinhof gang for West German citizens being held in East Germany.

The checkered path led, among other places, to the Middle East. Gang members got their via East Berlin, in the days when the East Germans

were not so unsympathetic.

They submerged themselves into the Palestinian guerrilla movement last year, about the time of King Hussein's showdown battle with them. Peter Homann, an artist, doctor's son, and ex-boyfriend of Ulrike Meinhof, was one of the group making the Middle East trip.

Homann, who turned himself in to police recently, said the Palestinian guerrillas quickly saw through the Baader-Meinhof gang. "They said this was no revolutionary group but a gang," he said.

As for Baader, he quoted one guerrilla chief as saying: "He is a coward. We wouldn't take him on a patrol."

Homann's own opinion of Baader:

"He is a character out of a bad 19th Century novel."

The ex-group member confirmed many peoples' suspicions that the gang was less than politically motivated.

"There was never any real political discussion," he said. "Mostly, we discussed practical matters, like how to elude the police."

Homann talked freely to the magazine Der Spiegel before

turning himself in. What emerges is a fascinating picture of the public pressures on the fugitive group, and how it tended to keep together an organization which probably would have broken up on its own long ago had the pressure not been there.

He claimed that despite that nationwide manhunt, he circulated freely and without disguises. Once he spent several hours in a sauna bath with five policemen, discussing the Baader-Meinhof gang.

"Since I wasn't clothed, they didn't recognize me," he said wryly.

Nevertheless, his own surrender indicated the burden under which the group is operating. Since the killing of policeman Norbert Schmid in Hamburg this fall, that pressure has intensified.

The remnants of the gang are believed to have fled Hamburg for West Berlin.

The feeling is strong that the days of the Baader-Meinhof gang are numbered. Increasingly, Germans are turning to the question of how, not when, it will end.

In a hail of bullets, in the tradition of Bonnie and Clyde?

Moose Still A Wanderer

BLUE EARTH, Minn. (AP) — The wandering moose who left the wilds of northern Minnesota several weeks ago and meandered south is within 12 miles of Iowa, state conservation officers report.

The moose, which had been following the Minnesota River and was reported in the New Ulm area about a month ago, is now in the Walnut Lake area of Minnesota along U.S. 16 near Blue Earth.

Conservation officers cannot explain why the 2-year-old

moose would leave its normal northern Minnesota habitat. They say if it continues south it will probably be the only moose in the state of Iowa that isn't in a zoo.

General Dies

FITCHBURG, Mass. (AP) — Brig. Gen. Thomas F. Bresnahan, 79, whose military career spanned 31 years, died Saturday. Bresnahan was commandant of the Army War College in Washington in 1941-42.