

German gang leader jailed for bomb murder

STUTTGART — (AP) Urban guerrilla **Andreas Baader** and two companions were sentenced to life imprisonment yesterday for the terror-bomb murders of four U.S. soldiers stationed in West Germany during the Vietnam war.

Baader, 33, his girl friend Gudrun Ensslin, 36, and Jan-Carl Raspe, 32, were found guilty of bombing army posts in Frankfurt and Heidelberg in 1972 and buildings in four other German cities.

"Not everyone can declare himself a subject of international law and declare war on his own," chief Judge Eberhard Foth said in rejecting defence claims that the bombings were legitimate protests against U.S. military actions in Vietnam.

The three terrorists were also convicted by the five-judge tribunal of 34 counts of attempted murder and of forming a criminal conspiracy. They are on a hunger strike in their jail cells and refused to come to court to hear the verdict.

The 23-month trial in a special security courthouse built for the case at Stuttgart's Stammheim Prison was punctuated by the same outbreaks of violence that made the Baader-Meinhof gang West Germany's "Public Enemy No. 1" from 1970 to 1972.

Three weeks ago, the chief federal prosecutor in Karlsruhe was murdered by a group calling itself "Commando Ulrike Meinhof."

Meinhof, 41, the gang's accused co-chief along with Baader, was found hanged in her jail cell last May. West Germany authorities said she committed suicide in a fit of depression, but her sympathizers claimed she was murdered.