

Accused woman found hanging in cell in Bonn

BONN (Reuter) — Police throughout West Germany were on the alert today for possible left-wing guerrilla reprisals after Ulrike Meinhof, founder of a gang blamed for a series of urban bombings, was found hanged in her jail cell.

Mrs. Meinhof, discovered hanging from a strip of towel in her solitary jail cell in Stuttgart Sunday morning, had been on trial for almost a year accused of involvement in bombings that killed five persons in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

A defence lawyer in her trial, Otto Schily, Sunday night demanded an international inquiry into what he called her "alleged suicide." Another lawyer, Giovanni Capetti, said Mrs. Meinhof, visited in prison on Friday, had not given the impression of "someone who had given up."

Government and justice officials said her suicide may lead to violent protest by sympathizers of her group, named after Mrs. Meinhof and co-founder **Andreas Baader**.

Another prominent Baader-Meinhof member, Holger Meins, died 18 months ago after a hunger strike in jail, and less than 24 hours later West Berlin's chief judge was shot dead by gunmen in a revenge murder.

In April last year, a guerrilla group calling itself the Holger-Meins Commando blew up the West German embassy in Stockholm after the Bonn government refused to release 26 alleged guerrillas, including **Baader** and Mrs. Meinhof.

"When you consider these incidents, there is a very good cause for taking maximum security precautions at this time," one justice official here commented. Extra measures have been taken to protect government leaders and other possible targets.

In Paris Sunday, the offices of two West German industrial companies were rocked by explosions and police there said they may have been linked to Mrs. Meinhof's death a few hours earlier.

Officials in Stuttgart, where Mrs. Meinhof, 41, had been standing trial in a custom-built annex of the top-security Stammheim jail, will continue their investigations for a motive to her death.

Defence lawyers at her trial told journalists in Stuttgart Sunday night she had been emotionally and physically drained by imprisonment, often in solitary confinement, since her arrest in June 1972.

Justice officials said Mrs. Meinhof, a divorced mother of twins, may have been upset by recent disagreements with co-defendants **Baader**, sociologist Jan-Carl Raspe and former student Gudrun Ensslin over the group's future policy.

The four are considered by police to have been the hard core of the Baader-Meinhof gang. The charges against them include the bombing of U.S. Army bases, the attempted murder of a federal court judge, the killing of a policeman, and several bank robberies.