

German police and secret services linked to neo-Nazi murder band

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More information came to light last week about the intimate links between numerous state intelligence and police bodies with the ultra-right terrorists of the “National Socialist Underground” (NSU). Not only did the German intelligence agencies, both at a state and federal level, maintain contact with, fund and cover up for the terrorist cell, a similar role was also played by the German Military Counterintelligence Service (MAD) and various police bodies.

These links were then systematically covered up by the federal government and numerous state administrations involving parties of all political persuasions, including the Christian Democrats, Social Democrats, Greens and the Left Party.

Last Thursday, it was confirmed that the neo-Nazi Thomas Starke was a “trusted contact” of the Berlin State Criminal Police Agency (LKA) for more than ten years.

According to the daily *Junge Welt*, Starke was considered a “key figure in enabling the NSU to go underground”. He has already confessed to having provided explosives to the NSU in the late 1990s. From 2000, Starke then worked for the Berlin LKA and was only removed from operations in January 2011, just months before reports emerged of the killing spree that left ten people dead.

Spiegel Online reports that Starke had spoken to the LKA about the NSU on at least five occasions between 2001 and 2005. He is said to have concealed his own role as a supporter (delivering explosives, providing housing).

Already in 2002, he had drawn the attention of investigators to Jan Werner, a senior representative of the “Blood & Honour” neo-fascist network. Werner was already under observation by the Brandenburg state secret service, who suspected him of supplying

weapons to the NSU.

According to the *Berliner Zeitung*, Werner cooperated personally with the Berlin LKA from 2001 to 2005. The newspaper quoted an LKA fax in which the Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA) was asked to inform Berlin about any action taken against Werner.

Clearly the Berlin police authorities had enough information to take action against the three members of the NSU—Beate Zschäpe, Uwe Mundlos and Uwe Böhnhardt—who had been underground since 1998 and murdered at least ten people between 2000 and 2007. However, the Berlin LKA, like the other official bodies, took no action.

Both the current Interior Minister in the Berlin state legislature, Frank Henkel (Christian Democratic Union, CDU) and his predecessor Erhart Körting (Social Democratic Party, SPD) knew about the services of Thomas Starke. In March, Henkel provided the information to the Attorney General, but only after this was requested. But neither Henkel nor the Attorney General thought it necessary to inform the NSU investigatory committee of the Bundestag (parliament) about the case, let alone the public. Henkel cited on-going investigations which made it impossible for him to publicise the case.

Last Tuesday it was announced in the parliamentary committee that MAD was also deeply involved in the affair. In the 1990s, German military intelligence had a file on Uwe Mundlos. MAD is said to have even tried to recruit Mundlos as a source on the right-wing extremist scene, but he rebuffed this approach.

Until Tuesday, neither the parliamentary committee nor the public had been informed about the existence of such a file, although the Defence Ministry had been informed about it last December. In March, the Attorney General and the BKA were also informed,

upon request.

A spokesperson for the Ministry referred to a complex legal process that had stood in the way of releasing information. Moreover, according to *Financial Times Deutschland*, the Ministry had initially wanted to select files “with a different focus for the committee”. The response of MAD and the Defence Ministry reeks of a cover-up and raises the question: what further information and links to the neo-fascists are they concealing?

MAD claims to have destroyed its file immediately after Mundlos finished his military conscription. However, the agency had previously sent a copy to the Federal Secret Service Agency and its state offices in Thuringia, Saxony and Saxony-Anhalt. Nevertheless, only the Federal Agency had responded to the committee’s request of the previous month. The other official bodies concealed the existence of the file and lied to the committee.

Last Thursday, the Chief of the Saxony-Anhalt state intelligence agency, Volker Limburg, resigned after admitting one day earlier that his office possessed a copy of the file but had not been able to find it. Limburg is thus the fourth boss of a German secret service agency to have resigned in connection with the scandal in the past two and a half months.

The files and connections which have emerged in the last week make increasingly clear that government agencies were apparently well informed of every detail on the activities of the terrorists. State intelligence and police not only knew of weapons and explosives supplies, but even paid the parties involved. It is now irrefutable that state institutions covered up for those behind the murder attacks and financed them.

It is only a small step to the conclusion that state forces were directly involved in the crimes themselves. It is still unclear what role was played by a member of the Hesse state secret service who was present at the April 2006 murder of Halit Yozgat in his Internet cafe. Despite repeated dragnets he had not reported to the police. Known among his acquaintances as “little Adolf”, he was transferred within the state agency and has still not been subjected to any public questioning.

According to *Junge Welt*, more than one in four members of the Thuringia Heimatschutzes (Thuringia Homeland Security, THS) could have been on the secret service payroll. The NSU emerged directly out of

the THS at the end of the 1990s. It should be recalled that in 2003 the Supreme Court judges ruled that the far right German National Party (NPD) should be adjudged to be a “a state function” when it was revealed that one in seven of NPD functionaries was a state informer.

The systematic cover-up and falsification by the authorities hinders any serious investigation of this situation. This cover-up is provided a political cover by the parliamentary committee in which representatives of all the parties sit and participate in federal and state governments. They have no interest in a thorough investigation that would reveal the culpability of colleagues in their own parties. The committee has not even exhausted its own legal powers and ordered a systematic inquiry for information from the state police agencies. Almost all of the information so far uncovered came to light partly as a result of persistent research by third parties, partly by coincidence, but never as a result of the initiative of any of the authorities involved.



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