

German prosecutors to investigate more far-right terror groups

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Statistics from the Interior Ministry and Attorney General suggest that far-right terrorist networks are much larger and more numerous in Germany than previously thought. At the same time, new evidence has come to light of their ties to government agencies.

Last week, the Interior Ministry released figures from the Federal Criminal Office (BKA) and the 16 state police agencies (LKA) about possible far-right assassination attempts over the last 20 years. Officials have investigated 3,300 unsolved cases of attempted or completed homicides between 1990 and 2011. In 746 cases, they found evidence of a “possible right-wing political motive.”

The government’s official statistics for this period have previously recorded only 63 such offences. Journalists and victims’ associations had previously assumed that some 150 to 200 cases existed. The 746 cases are now to be examined more closely, with results not expected until next summer.

On Wednesday, the Attorney General’s Office announced it was investigating four further alleged right-wing extremist terrorist groups, each with four to seven members. According to Federal Prosecutor-General Harald Range, so far there is no evidence of concrete plans for attacks. However, he did not provide detailed information.

Both reports suggest that the “National Socialist Underground” (NSU) terrorist organisation uncovered in 2011 was not an isolated group, but part of a much broader network that may be responsible for numerous terrorist attacks. The three alleged members of the NSU—Uwe Mundlos, Uwe Böhnhardt and Beate Zschäpe—are accused of responsibility for ten murders.

Previous investigations have already shown that the trio could rely on a wide network of supporters. The Attorney General has presented the NSU trial in Munich with a list of 129 people regarded as part of the group’s wider

network. Later, it admitted that this was only part of a list of over 500 people.

In September, 21-year-old Florian H. wanted to provide the Baden-Württemberg state police (LKA) with information about another alleged terrorist group called “Neoschutzstaffel” (NSS, New SS). The NSS was said to have been active in the Heilbronn region, where the NSU murdered the police officer Michèle Kiesewetter in 2007 for as yet unexplained reasons. Florian H. died as a result of a fire in his car shortly before he could provide his statement, however, and the exact circumstances of his death remain unclear.

It beggars belief that the connection between various right-wing terrorist groups and the complex structures of the extreme right were not known to the security agencies. Rather, the evidence suggests that sections of the intelligence agencies are closely linked with far-right groups and want to cover up this connection. The latest revelations portray a picture of a close-knit mesh of intelligence agencies and neo-fascists and their supporters.

Last Tuesday, the ARD programme *Report Mainz* broadcast an interview with an LKA official in Thuringia, who reported how his superiors prevented him from investigating the NSU trio. Mundlos, Böhnhardt and Zschäpe had been sought by the police since 1998, after one of their explosives depots was uncovered and the three went underground.

In June 2003, the police received some promising evidence: an old school friend of Böhnhardt claimed to have seen the right-wing extremists in Jena in August or September of last year. He was even able to provide the model and part of the license plate of the car in which Böhnhardt was travelling.

According to his own statements, the officer was sent with a colleague to meet the informant. Apparently, they received a clear order: “Drive out there so no one can say

we did nothing,” then-Deputy LKA President Werner Jakstat supposedly told the police officers, who continued: “But we should not investigate anything. It was explicitly said, ‘Don’t find anything out.’ (...) There was then no further investigation because that was prevented from the very top. For us, the matter was done with.”

Jaksat, who is now president of LKA Thuringia, wrote concerning the witness in a report to the ministry responsible: “The investigation did not lead to success, as the details provided by the witness were related to events one to three years earlier, and were inconclusive.” In fact, the sighting of Börnhardt was less than a year previously, as the witness told *Report Mainz* .

Confronted by the *Report Mainz* journalists with the statements made by his co-worker, Jaksat began evasively. He “could not say anything about it. I don’t know anything about what you’re saying, there is no interview. This is not authorised,” Jaksat stammered into the reporter's microphone.

The identity of the officer interviewed was disguised in the broadcast is, according to *Report Mainz*, a serious source.

The statements are also in agreement with previous revelations that the secret service and police protected the NSU. Recently, Mundlos’ father Siegfried stated before the investigative committee of the Thuringia state parliament that he had given the police evidence of the whereabouts of his son, which was not pursued. Furthermore, he had been instructed by the secret service not to disclose new information to the police, but only to them.

There is growing evidence that the secret service was not only informed about the goings on of the NSU trio and covered this up, but may have been involved very much further and more directly in the organization of the murders.

In the NSU trial in Munich, in which Beate Zschäpe is the main defendant, the attention of the joint plaintiffs is currently focused on Andreas Temme. He was present at the murder of Halit Yozgat by the NSU on April 6, 2006, at an Internet cafe in Kassel. Temme was then a full-time agent and lead the undercover informants of the Hesse State Office for the Protection of the Constitution (as the secret service is called).

After the murder, he did not volunteer as a witness, and when the police determined his identity, he stated that he had not heard the shot and had not noticed the corpse behind the counter on the way out. When he heard of the

murder, he had thought it had been on a different day in the café. He repeated these allegations in court without being able to dispel a single of the numerous open questions.

Rather, more new information keeps coming to light that place in question Temme’s claim he had nothing to do with the murder. A map of Kassel, which was found in the NSU’s secret apartment, listed potential attack targets. They were mostly on Temme’s daily route.

The ancillary suit lodged by Yozgat’s relatives point to the fact that the 2006 investigation file contains the record of a phone call between Temme and a secret service officer, Mr. Hess. In the call, Hess recommended Temme stay as close as possible to the truth, in order to lie all the better.

The fact that the Hesse state secret service has something to hide is also evident in its intervention in the questioning of Benjamin G, one of the undercover informants Temme was running at the time of the attack. A few months previously, he had been at a far-right rock concert, at which a witness claims to have also seen members of the NSU.

The secret service paid for a lawyer to represent G. at his interview in Munich, so that he not exceed the “limit of his ability to provide evidence.” G. was forbidden to make “statements on the functioning” of the secret service and regarding “the cooperation of employees there,” a spokesman said. Another reason why the state paid for a lawyer was to prevent G. becoming a mere “object of the proceedings.”

The attorney of the co-plaintiffs Thomas Bliwier, Doris Dierbach Kienzle and Alexander have detailed all the inconsistencies in the statements made by Temme and G. Based on this record, they have twice applied for access to the entire 2006 investigation file, from which so far only partial information has been provided. The court has rejected both applications.



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