

Further evidence of ties between German neo-Nazi group and domestic intelligence agency

By Dietmar Henning
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The trial against the National Socialist Underground (NSU) at Munich's district court is in the closing stages. For three years, the court and its chair, Judge Manfred Götzl, have looked at thousands of pieces of information. The main question has always remained: How could 10 murders, bomb attacks and a series of bank robberies take place under the noses of the police and intelligence agencies? Who held, and is holding, a protective hand over the right-wing terrorists?

Over recent weeks and months, further evidence has come to light demonstrating close connections between the domestic intelligence agency, police and NSU.

Research by *Welt* editor Stefan Aust and filmmaker Dirk Laabs recently revealed that Ralf Marschner, who worked for the intelligence agency (BfV) for a decade as agent Primus, most likely employed the three NSU terrorists, Uwe Mundlos, Uwe Böhnhardt and Beate Zschäpe, after they went underground in 1998. Both men worked in his construction firm, Mundlos as a foreman under the name Max Florian Burkhardt, while Zschäpe helped out in one of his businesses.

Aust and Laabs then reported earlier this month that in 2001, Marschner was involved in an attack on a pub in Zwickau together with Susann Eminger, Zschäpe's best friend. At this point, Zschäpe, Mundlos and Böhnhardt had already lived in the city for a year. Eminger visited Zschäpe in the apartment throughout the entire period of their illegality. Eminger's boyfriend at the time, André, and her husband since 2005, is charged in the Munich trial with aiding the NSU.

On April 21, 2001, Marschner, Eminger and other skinheads burst into the bar and assaulted guests. According to witness statements from the owner, Marschner was the leader of the group. A political motive was later ruled out by the relevant investigators.

The state prosecutor in Zwickau laid charges of grievous bodily harm against Marschner and Eminger. However,

these charges were not included in the Munich proceedings. These charges were kept under wraps by the federal prosecutor's office as part of its so-called investigation into support structures. "Further investigations on the part of the federal criminal office (BKA) to clarify the extent of relations between Eminger and the agent Marschner remain unknown, even though they would have been required due to the trial over the bar brawl," wrote *Die Welt*.

Proceedings against Marschner for the bar assaults were "temporarily suspended" two years later, while Eminger had to perform 20 hours' community service. Agent Marschner has apparently enjoyed protection from the judiciary for decades. In Saxony alone, several dozen legal proceedings have been led against him since 1990 by the judiciary. The intelligence informant has never been sentenced to prison.

Even when Marschner was accused of killing a 17-year-old on the "Day of German unity" in 1990, he emerged innocent from the proceedings. The files on Marschner and the murder investigation were allegedly destroyed during the flooding in Chemnitz in 2010, authorities announced last week.

A petition by a representative of the joint plaintiffs in the NSU trial to order Marschner, who now lives in Switzerland, to appear as a witness was rejected by Judge Götzl, following consultation with the federal prosecutor. Even if the agent knew and employed Mundlos, Böhnhardt and Zschäpe after they went underground, this was not of immediate relevance in determining the questions of the acts committed and guilt of the defendants, the court said by way of justification.

The inviting of another witness, who was present at a meeting in 1998 between the Brandenburg interior ministry and agents from Thuringia and Saxony, was also rejected by the court. This meeting decided not to provide information to the police about an agent who had supplied the underground trio with a weapon. While a representative of a joint plaintiff concluded from this that the Interior Ministry

had “made possible the series of murders by the NSU,” the court declared that it did not draw the conclusion that “joint responsibility of the state existed in the acts of the defendants.”

But this is precisely what is becoming ever clearer. Marschner’s handler at the intelligence service, code-name “Richard Kaldrack,” was at the same time managing agent Thomas Richter, code-name “Corelli.” Richter was also active around the NSU terrorists and was possibly in contact with them. He worked for the intelligence agency for 18 years and received €300,000 for his services.

Among other things, he made available electronic storage space for a neo-Nazi magazine, which published a greeting to the NSU as early as 2002. He was a founding member of the Ku Klux Klan in Baden-Württemberg, which also included two colleagues of police officer Michèle Kiesewetter, who was murdered by the NSU in 2007. A CD containing data with the title “NSDAP/NSU,” which he handed over to the intelligence service in 2005, only emerged years later. In 2014, shortly before he could be questioned about this, the 39-year-old died suddenly of a diabetes illness that apparently nobody was aware of.

Now, a telephone from Richter, “Corelli,” has also appeared. Corelli allegedly used it in 2012 and handed it over to the BfV in autumn 2012. There it was concealed in an armoured cupboard. It was then discovered in a fifth search in the summer of 2015, the intelligence agency now declares. Intelligence agency experts, who were until April this year working on it, have found a series of pictures and names from the radical right-wing scene. It has now been passed to the BKA for further evaluation of the available data.

Journalist Thomas Moser, who has been working on the NSU story for years, told Teleopolis last Tuesday about “overlaps” between the intelligence agency and the NSU.

He cited from protocol notes from a situational briefing in the police directorate (PD) in Gotha from November 5 and 6, 2011, found by the parliamentary NSU committee. As part of its area of responsibility, the bodies of Mundlos and Böhnhardt had been found in a burnt-out caravan the previous day.

In the protocol, among other things, the following statements are cited: “Efforts to locate the trio were abandoned in 2002. It was known that the state domestic intelligence agency (LfV) was concealing the target persons.” “The PD head intended to do everything to locate Ms. Zschäpe before she was withdrawn by the LfV.” And: “At least one member of the trio was allegedly working for the intelligence service until 2003. ... The trio or part of it was closely tied to the intelligence agency, or the state intelligence agency had something to do with them,

something like that.”

The police in Thuringia therefore assumed that the NSU trio was being protected by the intelligence agency. The situation briefing was led by Michael Menzel, who had led the police directorate in Gotha since 2009 and since 2015 has worked as criminal director in the Thuringia Interior Ministry. Menzel was also on location when the bodies were discovered and could have tampered with evidence. He was invited as a witness by the Munich trial, as well as by a number of parliamentary investigations, but always responded in vague terms.

Menzel, who began his police career in the GDR, is tied by several threads to the NSU. Among his colleagues in Saalfeld, where he headed the criminal police from 1998 to 2001, was Mike Wenzel, who as an intelligence officer dealt with the Thuringia Home Protection (THS), a right-wing organisation out of which the NSU emerged. Wenzel’s niece, Kiesewetter, was believed to be the NSU’s last victim in 2007. Her service weapon was later found in Mundlos and Böhnhardt’s burnt-out caravan. Even though nothing was publicly known about the NSU at that time, Wenzel immediately drew a connection between the so-called “döner murders” and the death of his niece.

It has long been known that over 20 agents of the intelligence service were operating around the NSU. A handler for agents in Hesse, Andreas Temme, was even present when Halit Yozgat was murdered in Kassel in April 2006. Any boundaries between the intelligence services and the NSU terror gang are virtually undetectable.

Whether the intelligence service is jointly responsible for the NSU murders, or whether one of the NSU members collaborated with intelligence, remains unclear, largely thanks to the joint efforts of the interior ministry, intelligence agencies, police authorities, federal prosecutor and the Munich District Court.

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