

Arrest of the RAF Leadership (1972)

Abstract

The film shows the arrest of leading members of the Red Army Faction (Rote Armee Fraktion, or RAF), Andreas Baader, Holger Meins, and Jan-Carl Raspe, in Frankfurt am Main on June 1, 1972. (*Please note: the spoken commentary gives June 2 as the date, but June 1 is correct*). During the arrest Andreas Baader was shot in the leg. The arrest followed an intensive two-year-long police investigation and search for the core members of the terrorist group. Gudrun Ensslin and Ulrike Meinhof were arrested later the same month. In 1975 the so-called Stammheim Trial against Baader, Meinhof, Ensslin, and Raspe commenced. The trial was named after the high-security Stuttgart-area prison where group members were held.

Source

Translation of transcript

June 2, 1972. Arrest of the so-called “hard core” of the Baader-Meinhof Group in Frankfurt am Main. The tentative end to a period of fear and terror that kept the Federal Republic of Germany on edge in the 1970s and beyond. A risky undertaking. Officers of the Federal Criminal Police Office and the Hessian police surround the building where the terrorists are holed up. Over megaphone, those barricaded inside are ordered to surrender.

Officer: Think about it: what do you want to do now? How are you going to get out of this situation? There is no chance. The only chance you have is to stay alive. And that will only happen if you follow our instructions.

Speaker: Until the last moment, the operation is on a knife's edge. Holger Meins is the first to surrender. Stripped down to his underpants, he is taken into custody in front of live cameras. Andreas Baader is the second to be arrested. He, who suffered a minor gunshot wound, is the head of the RAF. The officers also managed to catch Jan-Carl Raspe, another member of the leadership. His capture, too, gives the public a sigh of relief. The danger of terrorism is by no means banished with these arrests. Officials show a pistol that the terrorists used to try to resist arrest. Hand grenades and explosive devices are also among the weapons seized. But the operation is a first major success. Horst Herold, the head of the BKA at the time, makes a personal appearance to review the results. After a period of powerlessness, this was a symbolic event. The constitutional state founded on the rule of law defends itself.

Source: June 1972. Arrest of the RAF Leadership, Frankfurt am Main. History Vision (history-vision.de), Clip-ID: AAA000001C (1972).

history-vision.de

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