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NEO-NAZISM IN WEST GERMANY

by

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NEO-NAZISM IN WEST GERMANY

The character of right-wing extremism in the Federal Republic has undergone extensive transformations in the seventies. As electoral support for the extreme Right declined, a whole range of new groupings emerged pursuing a militant extra-parliamentary strategy. Essential characteristics are an increasing tendency to use violence and a close ideological affinity to the NSDAP. They attract a growing number of young people.

The increasing susceptibility of young people to rightist ideologies coincides with an economic recession of which young people especially are the victims. Widespread ignorance about Nazism and the prevalence of anti-democratic political attitudes constitute important contributory factors and point to a considerable potential for right-extremism in the Federal Republic. This potential can be attributed to the negative effects of much of the material dealing with the NS past, to serious deficiencies in the area of historical-political education in schools and, above all, to the absence of any real process of 'coming to terms with the past' in the postwar period.

Neo-Nazism is not completely isolated from other trends in West German society. Rightist elements within the established party system and broad sections of the population hold similar views and attitudes. This similarity, linked with an over-exaggerated concern with a perceived threat from the extreme Left may explain the absence of any concerted effort to deal with neo-Nazi tendencies. The response of the courts exemplifies a widespread tendency to under-estimate the significance of the extreme Right. Opposition to the Right is restricted primarily to those circles which suffered most under the Nazi regime.

The analysis suggests that one must reject the simplistic view that at the present time the Right does not constitute a serious threat to West German democracy.

The study evaluates the wide range of views to be found in secondary sources on the subject of neo-Nazism and is intended to contribute to the on-going discussion concerning the potential for right-extremism in West Germany.

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INTRODUCTION

The Development of Right-extremism in Postwar Germany

i. The immediate postwar period

The most striking feature of the first few months after the cessation of hostilities in 1945, not least to the victor powers themselves, was the total lack of activity on the extreme Right in Germany.¹ The generally expected Nazi underground or guerrilla activity did not materialize. This was a surprising turn of events in the wake of what had been no ordinary "run-of-the-mill dictatorship"² but a regime which had enjoyed considerable popular support and which had attempted the total regimentation of society. During the 12 years of Nazi rule few people had escaped involvement in one or more of the organisations run by the NSDAP.³ Separate organisations had been set up for teachers, lawyers, doctors, farmers, school-children and students - the 'NS-Lehrerbund', 'NS-Rechtswahrerbund', 'NS-Ärzte-bund', 'Reichsnährstand', 'NS-Schülerbund' and 'NS-Deutscher Studenten-bund', respectively. For industrial workers there was the 'Deutsche Arbeitsfront' with a membership of approximately 25 million (almost half the total German population)⁴ and for German women the 'NS-Frauen-schaft'. Although membership in these organisations is not a reliable

indicator of National Socialist convictions, one should not underestimate their influence. This is particularly true as far as the 'Hitler Jugend' (HJ) is concerned. "It was that generation which the Hitler Youth had inculcated with the National Socialist Weltanschauung (ideology) which furnished the most convinced and fanatical followers of the Führer, Adolf Hitler."⁵ In addition one must consider the tens of thousands of individuals who had belonged to the SA or the SS and, last but not least, those who had been members of the NSDAP itself. By 1937 there were over 700,000 individuals in leadership positions of one type or another within the party. This figure increased to approximately 2 million during the war years.⁷

One explanation for the failure of this considerable potential to regroup and resist the occupying powers was that the severe mental and physical exhaustion of everyone in Germany at this time and the almost total lack of even the most essential services meant that the psychological preconditions for oppositional activity were absent. Survival, not resistance was the watchword of the hour. Even later, however, when, with the alleviation of some of the most pressing problems, political questions had once again become meaningful, neither open, nor clandestine attempts at reconstituting some form of Nazi organisation were in evidence. Although it would be easy to see in this the total discrediting of radical nationalism if not by the excesses of the Nazi era then at least by its eventual failure, the true reason for the absence of Nazi activity at this time, as later developments clearly underlined, lay in the occupation. Initially a general ban had been imposed on political activity in Germany and when the allies did permit the founding of political parties they were

subject to strict licensing procedures which ensured that only democratic, anti-facist organisations emerged⁸. The formation of underground rightist groupings was effectively precluded by the fact that as a result of the de-Nazification measures undertaken by the allies, all potential leaders and large numbers of potential members of such groupings were either in hiding or found themselves in allied internment camps.

Consequently the first stirrings on the Right⁹ were by organisations initiated by conservative nationalists who had either been former opponents of Nazism or who at least had not been seriously compromised by their involvement with it. Examples of such groupings are, in the British zone, the German Reconstruction Party (DAP) founded by Wulle and Von Ostau, two former conservative revolutionary opponents of the Hitler regime, and the German Conservative Party (DKP) founded by the traditionalist, i.e. Wilhelmine conservative, Wilhelm Jaeger (these two parties merged in 1946 becoming the German Rightist Party - Conservative Association, later to be known as the DKP-DRP) and in the American zone, Heinrich Leuchtgens' National Democratic Party (NDP). From the very beginning these early groupings were racked by internal struggles which were eventually to lead to large scale splintering. Initial tension between traditional conservative and conservative revolutionary elements was soon replaced by a more serious conflict between conservative and national socialist forces. As a result of their adoption of a more aggressive stance in an attempt to mobilize those groups in which they saw their largest potential electoral support, namely "in the masses of denazified and disadvantaged second-class citizens, as well as in the declasses, unemployed, and bitter masses of expellees"¹⁰, these early parties had managed to attract a younger group of men whose political roots lay not in the conservative parties of the

Weimar Republic but in the Nazi party and the Hitler youth organisation of the "Third Reich"¹¹. Furthermore it was in those areas where this younger group of more extreme nationalists had become dominant that the most significant electoral successes of the far Right had been achieved. Examples are the 10% of the popular vote obtained by the DRP in Goettingen during the 1947 Land elections and the 8.1% obtained by the same grouping in Lower Saxony at the time of the 1949 Federal elections. This Lower Saxony result meant that the more extreme DRP had obtained $\frac{2}{3}$ of the total votes cast for the DKP-DRP. Rightist electoral successes at this time did not then lead, as one might have expected, to a certain consolidation of right-wing forces but rather had the effect of augmenting internal tensions within the various groupings. Moreover "...the abolition of licensing requirements under the new constitution and the clear indication that large masses of disaffected, resentful, and economically insecure people were willing once more to engage in radical-nationalist politics led scores of radical, would-be leaders to assume attitudes of uncompromising inflexibility in their ambitious and egotistic pursuit of sole authoritarian power"¹². The most important of the numerous new groups to emerge at this time was the SRP.

ii The Socialist Reichs Party (SRP)

If at the time of the first elections to the Parliament of the new West German state there still remained any lingering doubts as to whether radical nationalism had been finally laid to rest or not, the character and the development of the SRP must have dispelled them. The party was founded in early October 1949 by a number of individuals who had either been expelled or who had resigned from the DRP as a result of conflicts between them and more 'moderate' elements within that party.

A cursory look at the composition of this group of more overtly extremist militants gives a first indication of the character and the function of the party. It was a very homogeneous group as regards both their social and professional backgrounds and their political past in that the majority had had university educations and came from upper middle class families and in that over half of them had become members of the NSDAP or of the SA or SS prior to 1933 and had subsequently held political office under the Nazis, some in high and responsible positions¹³. Likewise their experiences after 1945 were very similar in that most of them underwent extensive internment for their Nazi activities and suffered a "disastrous loss of status, income and prestige"¹⁴ as a result of the defeat of the Nazi regime. For these men only a complete reversal of the trend of history seemed to offer any prospects of salvation.

Elections and voter profile

At its first appearance in a Land-wide election the SRP gathered almost 367,000 votes or over 11% of all votes cast managing not only to draw support from previously tapped rightist potentials (eg. the DRP) but also proving itself capable of attracting large numbers of voters who had apparently been successfully integrated into postwar German society through the bourgeois parties CDU, FDP and DP, thereby revealing the lability of the bourgeois voter potential and consequently of the support for the new Federal Republic. The party represented a threat to postwar German democracy which the authorities were obviously not prepared to tolerate and in November 1951 the Federal Constitutional Court was requested to begin proceedings against it. The SRP was then formally banned on 23 October 1952.

In view of this ban which prevents an empirical study of the further development of the party, it is important not to over-estimate the significance of this one outstanding electoral victory, since for a true assessment of the right-radical potential in the early years of the Federal Republic one would need to know whether the SRP would have held this position or even have bettered it and have become established on the right of postwar German politics, or whether it would have declined in much the same way as later rightist parties. The question as to what would have been the fate of the SRP had it not been banned is, in fact, very difficult to answer. To base an analysis, for example, on results obtained by the party in post-May 1951 elections is clearly unsatisfactory. Not only did these election results, as a consequence of factors specific to the SRP (e.g. the fact that in some areas an SRP organisation had only just been created when it had to go to the polls) and as a consequence of official and unofficial harrassment by the authorities, not reveal the true potential of the SRP, but, in addition, these results did not indicate even a very general trend. Whereas, for example, in some districts the SRP could show large increases over previous results, in others they remained relatively stable and in some the party lost votes.¹⁵

A look at the voter profile of the SRP does, however, give certain insights into this problem in that it shows that the party did not in fact possess a stable socio-economic following. Tauber points out, for example, looking at Lower Saxony, that whilst on the one hand "the voting masses come primarily from the Northern districts, in which close to half of the population (...) follow agricultural pursuits and where the farming pattern is characterized primarily by large-scale operations", on the other hand, "the heaviest electoral turnout for the SRP included such cities as Emden, Wilhelmshaven and Oldenburg".¹⁶ This would seem to indicate that exogeneous factors played a large role in the SRP's election

successes. Tauber does in fact quote positive evidence to this effect when he notes that "the areas with the highest unemploymentwere precisely the ones in which the SRP drew the heaviest vote".¹⁷ This tallies with Rowold's interpretation which points out the correlation between SRP successes in Schleswig - Holstein and Lower Saxony and the severe social tensions in these Laender caused by unemployment, the lack of adequate housing and the massive refugee influx.¹⁸ If one can draw any general conclusions from this analysis, it is then that there would appear to be a close link between right-extremism and high levels of unemployment and other symptoms of instability. This correlation is underlined by Ashkenasi when he asserts that the severe decline in the membership of the SRP prior to its banning was above all attributable to the fact that the unsure social conditions of 1949 and 1950 were giving way to the 'Wirtschaftswunder', that the high rate of unemployment was melting away and consequently, slowly but surely, the potential basis of support for the party was being eroded,¹⁹ although one should not underestimate in this respect the effect of other factors such as the severe internal problems of the party resulting from ideological and tactical differences.

Party statutes and party practise,²⁰ programme²¹ and ideology

Finally one can make some further brief comments on the particular nature of the SRP. An examination of the party statutes reveals a hierarchical command structure conflicting directly with the stipulation of Article 21 of the Basic Law which requires that the internal order of political parties must correspond to democratic principles. However, as the members of the Federal Constitutional Court stated at the time of its banning, the authoritarian character of the SRP (and one might add its

similarity to the NSDAP) became even clearer if one analysed the party practise. The F.C.C. notes in this respect the favouring of those party members who had joined the party early, the arbitrary exclusion of members and the obvious desire of the party leadership to turn the SRP into a political cadre organisation based on the principle of unconditional obedience. Of significance also is the fact that membership of the party was inadmissible for those who had been persecuted during the 'Third Reich' as a result of their political beliefs and for those who had been implicated in the 20 July conspiracy.

Although the party programme contained an explicit acceptance of democracy and of the concept of the 'Rechtsstaat' (constitutional state), a closer analysis of the SRP ideology, its pseudo - socialism, its negation of the plurality and of the heterogeneity of society and its suppression of the rights of the individual in favour of the whole, the 'Volk', the 'Nation', revealed the affinity of the party to the NSDAP. Moreover it clearly did not accept the new republic. Its programme contained an explicit demand for the restoration of the 'Reich'. In fact the SRP made very little attempt to hide its identification with the National Socialist experiment. Statements such as "Germany would be better off today if we had a man like Adolf Hitler again" and "I think the policies of the National Socialist Party would be for the most part correct for today's situation" were not uncommon among SRP party officials. In Göttingen the head of the SRP spoke of the Nazi party as the "SRP's great predecessor".²²

iii The German Reichs Party. (DRP)

The German Reichs Party was founded in January 1950 by elements within

the Lower Saxony organisation of the DKP-DRP who, as a result of their aggressive nationalist stance, had found themselves in conflict with the zonal i.e. conservative leadership. The party was characterized initially by its inability to compete with the more openly extremist SRP as the May 1951 Land election in Lower Saxony clearly showed. Whilst the latter experienced a resounding success, the DRP lost 75% of its following of a year before.²³ In addition, its organisation began to undergo severe strain when "not only individual activists, but entire local and district organisations....deserted to the SRP"²⁴

With the suppression of the SRP in October 1952, however, the DRP remained as the dominant force on the extreme Right and its leadership could look to the future with a certain amount of optimism. Subsequent developments showed that any such optimism was ill-founded. In the 1953 Federal elections the DRP managed only 1.1% of the national vote. This percentage fell to 1.0 in 1957²⁵ and in 1961 (0.8%) the DRP lost 15% of its 1957 electoral support.²⁶ There are several explanations for the disastrous performance of the Right during this period. One factor, and one which gained in importance as a result of changes in the electoral law²⁷ which had the effect of favouring larger, broader based parties at the expense of smaller, regionally based groupings, was the inability of the far Right to present a united front. Programmatic, ideological and tactical differences combined with "the egotism of the several party leaders and the absence...of any personality of such sovereign leadership qualities as to command the loyalty of the scores of would-be Führers"²⁸ to preclude any effective alliance. Secondly the DRP, the largest organisation on the Right, was paralysed by continual internal difficulties. In the late fifties a new conflict, in addition to that which had characterized the Right since the very beginning i.e. that between national conservative and national socialist oriented forces, had

emerged within the party, namely that between extremist neutralists and those who, in order to open the party towards the bourgeois right in an attempt to reverse its electoral fortunes, were willing to accept a more pro-western, a more moderate position. The third and by far the most important factor impeding a successful showing at the polls was, however, the rapid economic progress achieved during this period. The SRP successes of the early fifties had been founded on the disastrous economic situation prevailing at that time. Later developments showed that as prosperity returned, so the potential support for the SRP was slowly eroded. The consistent electoral failure of the DRP throughout the fifties and the early sixties underlines the marginality of radical nationalism at times of economic stability and prosperity.

iv The National Democratic Party of Germany (NDP)

The NPD was founded on the 28 November 1964 and was the end product of a series of negotiations - most of which had foundered on the egotism of the individual leaders²⁹ - initiated by the DRP in an attempt to bring about a merger between the numerous rightist splinter groups in preparation for the 1965 Federal elections. Despite NPD assertions to the contrary it was clear that very few groups in fact participated in this venture and that by no means did the new party represent a true union of the right-wing forces. There seemed little likelihood then of the NPD being able to reverse the disastrous fortunes suffered by the extreme Right since the early fifties. The initial development of the party seemed to confirm this. One year later however the party experienced a rapid growth in membership and electoral support and in the years 1966 to 1968 entered 7 Land parliaments with an average vote of 7.6%. In 1969 with 4.3% it only just failed to enter the Federal parliament.³⁰ These

NPD successes constituted a significant reversal of what had been a dominant trend in the development of the West German Party system since the fifties, namely a clear decline of small 'non-established' parties with a concomitant concentration of the electorate on the 'established' parties, the CDU/CSU, SPD and the FDP.³¹ This reversal was, however, to be shortlived. The 1969 election results, although revealing that the NPD still enjoyed considerable support, were disappointing in view of earlier showings at the polls in the Laender and signified the beginning of a downward trend, a trend which was to continue and become more severe in the following period. In 1972 the party managed only 0.6% in the Federal elections and 1976 saw a further decline to 0.3%.³²

Voter reservoirs.

Early studies³³ of NPD electoral support seemed to confirm the premise that this party was simply a new version of the NSDAP supported predominantly by former National Socialists. They showed a clear over-representation of the older generation and successfully demonstrated extensive similarities between the regional centres of gravity of the NPD and the NSDAP and between the socio-economic profiles of their supporters. The majority of later studies, however, indicated that this was a considerable over-simplification and stressed that it was not so much the similarities with the NSDAP which characterized the NPD but above all the similarities with the social structure of West German society. The young and the old were almost proportionally represented although there was a slight over-representation of that generation which had spent its formative years under the National Socialist regime.³⁴ It became clear that the NPD was neither a middle-class party nor was its support drawn exclusively from traditional rightist reservoirs. Although Catholics were, for example, initially underrepresented, Maier/Bott³⁵ noted a clear tendency towards a

more proportional representation. Although the self-employed farmers, traders and members of the liberal professions were slightly overrepresented (Kühnl argues that this slight overrepresentation is adequate evidence of a fascist social structure³⁶) the NPD effectively mobilized large numbers of workers. Large cities and industrial areas were not immune to the NPD in the same way as they had been to the NSDAP.³⁷ This would seem to indicate that one of the 'traditional' barriers against right-extremism is no longer effective.³⁸ Warnecke notes that one possible explanation for this may be that "the well organised, ideologically confident pre-war workers' movement has broken down. As a result of this decline, many workers feel socially and psychologically adrift and are, therefore, more vulnerable to nationalistic and fascist appeals".³⁹

Liepelt's detailed study⁴⁰ of NPD voter reservoirs gives some indication of the type of workers involved. Semi- and unskilled workers were particularly susceptible. This Liepelt attributes above all to the fact that it is this category of worker who felt especially threatened by the negative economic developments at this time. How an individual saw his economic future was according to Liepelt a key factor as regards that individual's willingness to vote for the NPD, although, as both Liepelt and Niethammer point out, this is only the case when a certain 'ideological predisposition' is present.⁴¹ A second group of workers involved were those who did not have links with a trade-union or did not have links with a church and especially those who had links with neither. Again both Niethammer and Liepelt see non-membership of a trade-union or a church as one of the most important factors contributing to the willingness of an individual to vote for the NPD, although neither of these criteria would seem to be significant in the case of workers in large firms who "as a result of their contact with the world of work (arbeitswelt)-...- frequently come into contact with the views and ideas of employees."⁴² A third category was workers in small firms for whom a middle-class consoli-

-ousness was often characteristic.

An analysis of the NPD voter profile shows, in addition to an increasing susceptibility of workers to the extreme Right, that the NPD did not possess a stable socio-economic following suggesting that exogenous factors played a large role in its successes. The rapid growth of the party and, within the space of a few years, the equally rapid decline, above all in view of the fact that the NPD, apart from a certain modernization, contributed nothing really new to what the far Right had been offering throughout the fifties, would appear to confirm this.⁴³ Factors which are put forward are the economic crisis of the late sixties, unrest among the student population and the 'Grand Coalition' which led to an 'opposite vacuum'. It is of significance that the decline of the party after 1969 coincided with the emergence of a strong opposition (the CDU) in the system and with a certain consolidation of the economic situation.

Development and sociology of membership and leadership groups.

Within one year the newly founded NPD increased its membership from less than 4,000 (3,500 former DRP members plus a few hundred from its partners e.g. the DP) to 13,700.⁴⁴ By the end of 1966 membership had almost doubled to 25,000 with the DRP representing at this time only 1/7 of the total membership⁴⁵ and attained 28,000 in 1967. A combination of the failure to overcome the 5% barrier in the 1969 Federal elections, disappointing results in 6 Länder elections in 1970 and a stabilization of the economic situation resulted, however, in a dramatic fall in absolute membership from 28,000 in 1969 to 21,000 in 1970. This trend continued throughout the seventies so that by the end of 1978 8,500 members only remained,⁴⁶ although it should be noted that this is still more than double the original membership in 1964.

Unlike the NPD electoral support, the composition of which showed no significant deviations from the social structure of the population, NPD membership, like that of the NSDAP, was marked by a considerable over-representation of old middle class occupational groups. By the end of 1968 47% of the NPD's membership were either self-employed or skilled workers in middle-class businesses.⁴⁷ Workers were, however, represented to a significantly higher degree than was the case with the NSDAP (NSDAP 1930, 28.1%⁴⁸; NPD, 1970, 34%⁴⁹) and Rowold notes that due to a higher proportion of workers joining the party since 1969, by 1971 the sociological structure of the party had been slightly modified to their advantage,⁵⁰ again underlining the increasing susceptibility of the working class to right-extremism.

In view of the nature of the NPD as an alliance of various distinct groupings, the leadership and power structures of the party are of particular interest. Considering that the party was founded on the initiative of the DRP and its leader Von Thadden and that the DRP was by far the strongest of the groupings that merged, the make-up of the leadership elite seems at first sight somewhat surprising. Thielen, formerly of the CDU and the DP, was elected party chairman, whilst Von Thadden became one of the three deputy chairmen, none of whom, except for Von Thadden, came from the DRP.⁵¹ In 1965 of 9 Land chairmen only 2 came from the DRP, with 2 from the GDP, 1 from the DP, the DNVP and the FDP and 2 who had not previously been organised in postwar Germany.⁵² It was clear, however, that this hardly reflected the true relationship of power within the party. In reality Von Thadden and his colleagues from the DRP remained firmly in control of both the party apparatus and the press. The old DRP party journal 'Reichsruf' became the national democratic 'Deutsche Nachrichten', the old DRP offices in Hannover became the new NPD offices, all deputy positions in the party and the important positions in the

executive committees at Land level (finance, organisation, press and propaganda) were filled with DRP forces.⁵³ The filling of the representative positions in the party with non-DRP members revealed itself to be essentially a tactical move by Von Thadden to avoid the appearance that the NPD was simply a continuation of the old, unsuccessful DRP under a new name.

By 1966 the original participants in the union of rightist forces which was the NPD had been relegated to a minority as a result of the massive influx of new members. These new members, or neofascists as they have been labelled by Niethammer, represented a new generation of nationalists who, unlike the older generation of postfascists or 'old Nazis' who still clung to aspects of National Socialist tradition, advocated a modernized version of nationalism, a more pragmatic variety of fascism.⁵⁴ A comparison of the 1964/65 and 1966 NPD Federal executive committees shows that the increasing numerical strength of this new generation of nationalists who "were integrated apolitically into the Federal Republic during the Adenauer period and now protest against the loss of the anti - Communist Cold War ideology, which provided them with some sense of ideological certainty and security"⁵⁵ was reflected at least partially in the increased influence of neofascists in the NPD executive. The comparison also shows, however, that this increase in influence was effected solely at the cost of the DRP's former allies in the party. Whilst the DRP's representation in the executive remained constant, that of its former allies sank from 1/2 to a 1/3 over the period in question. At the Hannover party conference in 1967 the representation of the DRP's allies declined further from 1/3 to 17%, that of the neofascists increased slightly to 28%, whilst that of the Von Thadden group, bearing little relation to its numerical strength within the party or to membership trends, increased to 55%.⁵⁶

Whilst at Federal level the DRP group was able to maintain its influence, the picture at Land level was somewhat different. In all executive committees at this level the postfascists were, with on average 35.5%, in a minority. A similar situation existed in NPD Land parliamentary parties. Only 37% of MPs belonged to the DRP group.⁵⁷ For Niethammer this increasing influence of neofascists at Land level seemed to indicate that the latter would eventually take over from the post-fascist leadership and transform the NPD into a modern dynamic rightist party.

Development after 1969

The electoral failure of the NPD resulted, on the one hand, in considerable internal disorders, with serious conflicts developing between the leadership and particularly representatives of the younger generation within the party who advocated a much more militant stance, and, on the other hand, with the emergence of numerous unauthorized extraparliamentary action groups, in a tendency for the NPD to lose control of the right-wing forces in the Federal Republic. Both of these trends were to continue and be exacerbated throughout the seventies.

It was in an attempt to control militant activism on the extreme Right, to assert its influence and maintain its position as the dominant rightist political grouping in the face of serious disintegrative tendencies that on the 5 October 1970 the so-called 'Aktion Widerstand' (AW) was founded. It was not a membership organisation but an extraparliamentary alliance which foresaw the collective membership of whole organisations.⁵⁸ Its purpose, according to its statutes, was "the activation and coordination of all political forces of the German people who disapprove of the actions of the Federal Government in connection with the

Moscow treaty".⁵⁹ Although the NPD did not officially identify itself with the AW,⁶⁰ the evidence suggests that it was in fact brought into existence by leading National Democrats. The actual centre of the AW was the Schuetz - Verlag in Hannover which had close links with the NPD and the chairman and the majority of the deputy chairmen of the organization were NPD members.⁶¹ According to security reports of the office for the Protection of the Constitution the propaganda material of the AW was financed by the NPD Federal executive committee and was passed on to party activists for distribution. Similarly 2 large demonstrations carried out in its name in 1970 were to a large extent organized and financed by the NPD.⁶²

This attempt by the NPD to control militant activism on the Right was largely unsuccessful and the party was unable to prevent the emergence of unequivocally criminal tendencies.⁶³ Moreover the party's association with militant activism through its involvement with the AW was seen increasingly by the party leadership (and especially Von Thadden) as being prejudicial to the party's interests. The directorate therefore dissociated itself from "all members and especially party officials...who take part in illegal acts, who do not attempt to prevent such acts or even plan such acts".⁶⁴ Von Thadden emphasized that uncontrolled activism was "total madness" (Saudummheit), since this was the surest path to radical escalation,⁶⁵ that the party had to "present itself as the party of order",⁶⁶ to dissociate itself from "confused or even half criminal revolutionaries"⁶⁷ and that the most important task of the NPD was to "win votes".⁶⁸

The NPD then, rejected the extraparliamentary strategy which had been embraced with the founding of the AW and returned to the concept it had pursued earlier of a 'moderate' electoral party. In addition Von Thadden increasingly stressed "the national and conservative positions"⁶⁹

of the party work. Ashkenasi, drawing his evidence from the 'Wertheimer Manifest 70' and from copies of the party journal 'DN', notes that "the NPD is stressing conservatism more and more in its official pronouncements... This strong revival of conservatism in the NPD by forces within the party which were responsible earlier for the isolation and defeat of the conservatives in the leadership group, is an element that has become more and more apparent since the Bundestag elections of 1969".⁷⁰

The party membership and officials were, however, far from unanimous in their support of the party leadership. Since 1969 an opposition group of predominantly younger members with Dr. Poehlmann, the deputy party chairman, at their head had emerged, which blamed Von Thadden and his supporters within the directorate for the poor showing of the party at the polls and which was extremely critical of the "arbitrary leadership style" of the latter.⁷¹ The ideological and tactical stance taken by Von Thadden came under increasing criticism. Dr. Poehlmann regularly spoke out openly in defense of those members who were threatened with expulsion from the party as a consequence of their participation in militant actions⁷² maintaining that one should "not throw water on the emotional fire" (das emotionelle Feuer nicht auf Sparflamme stellen)⁷³ and his supporters, far from supporting a greater stress on conservatism, were the advocates of a "social reformist, partially even, a social revolutionary"⁷⁴ approach.

These oppositional elements within the NPD achieved little success however.⁷⁵ The 1969/70 internal security report noted that the "...attempt by predominantly younger officials to achieve a change of personnel at the head of the party, greater influence of the whole party over the party organ 'Deutsche Nachrichten' and a clear dissociation from the radical theses of the professors Anrich and Von Gruenberg as from the

'Politisches Lexikon' produced by the publishing house of Waldemar Schuetz failed".⁷⁶ In fact, and this is indicative of the true extent of the hold of the old DRP leadership over the party, at the Federal party conference in February 1970, Von Thadden was reelected with a large majority. Both Anrich and Schuetz were elected to the party directorate. The proportion of former DRP members in the directorate remained unchanged (38%).⁷⁷

At the party conference in Holzminden in November 1971 the struggle for power within the party came to a head. Von Thadden suddenly announced that he would not stand again for the position of party chairman and the much younger Martin Mussgnug was elected. At first sight this change in leadership would seem to suggest that at long last power had been transferred from the old DRP leadership group to the younger generation. A closer analysis shows that this was not in fact the case. Mussgnug had in fact been Von Thadden's choice for the leadership and in electing him the party conference had delivered a resounding 'no' to Poehlmann⁷⁸ and his colleagues who represented the younger oppositional elements and who, a short time later, turned their back on the party and founded with some 400 NPD members the 'Aktion Neue Rechte'.⁷⁹ It is significant that Mussgnug, although admittedly at this time only 35 and in that sense a representative of the younger generation was also an ex-DRP man, which according to Ashkenasi at least, would seem to indicate a certain proclivity towards old National Socialist tradition.⁸⁰ The fact that to date the party has still not dissociated itself from the racist-biological theses put forward by Professor Anrich at the founding of the party in 1964⁸¹ would appear to confirm this point of view. The developments at the party conference in Holzminden, far from signifying the accession to power of the younger generation, bore witness to Thadden's skill in maintaining the leadership role of the old DRP group and in

disarming the opposition. The 1971 security report asserted that at Holzminden "...the old leadership team which with only a few changes in personnel had determined the ideological and political course of the NPD for years, consolidated its position"⁸² remaining, with 12 out of 32 members, the strongest undivided faction in the party directorate.⁸³ The party continued to cultivate its democratic image, to tone down its attacks on the 'liberal democratic basic order' and to stress its German-national, conservative character.⁸⁴

Although the election of Mussnug as party leader and the secession of the militant Poehlmann faction brought about a temporary lull in the fighting, the view expressed in a circular from the Baden - Wuerttemberg party organisation that with the "...in every respect consolidated party directorate," the party had "...once again found its clear course and unity,"⁸⁵ constituted a considerable exaggeration. If anything, in the following period, the conflicts between the party leadership and the younger generation of NPD members was exacerbated to the extent that it seemed likely that the party would lose control of its youth organisation the 'JN'. These conflicts were partially attributable to the failure of the party to dissociate itself unequivocally from outmoded National Socialist tradition. In 1974 the JN announced an "inexorable" struggle against all those "who belong to the NS-symbol squad."⁸⁶ More important in this respect is, however, the fact that the caution of the NPD leadership, its stress on the democratic, moderate nature of the party and on conservatism contrasted strongly with the much more openly extremist stance being adopted by the JN. Citing from 'Alternative', the 1974 security report notes that by employing the tactics of "revolutionary legality, the antagonistic (beziehungslos) pluralist society" is to be replaced by a "nationalist people's republic", whereby, as far as the JN are concerned, it is not a question of "a few easy chairs in a parliament."⁸⁷

This concept aroused considerable indignation in the party directorate.⁸⁸ The language in JN publications became increasingly fascist in nature.⁸⁹ In an undated copy of 'Der Pfeil', for example, one can read "A criminal clique directed from a distance by international big shots (Bonzen) has seized Germany like a cancer; Its task: the final solution of the German people by poisoning and by terror" and "An end to the machinations of the old system parties! An end to the murderous red gangs in Germany! A referendum to introduce the death penalty! Break the power of the big shots, the parasites and the mass murderers (Volkszerstörer)."⁹⁰ Elsewhere in the same journal one can read "More and more German workers demand DEATH TO THE RED FRONT (VOLKSFRONT VERRECKE)". Paradoxically then, whilst seemingly rejecting outmoded National Socialist tradition, the JN have, by adopting a more and more aggressive stance, in fact drawn closer to National Socialism. Citing from the 1977 JN Federal Congress in Osnabrück, Kolinsky comments "Even the diction indicated the national socialist originals when a speaker shouted at a rally in Osnabrück: We national-democrats declare against the Marxists the most determined war one can imagine. We will burn the Marxist evil from our people unto the raw flesh."⁹¹ It was not only the language which became more aggressive however. The 1977 and 1978 security reports noted the increasingly militant stance taken by the JN and an increased tendency to provoke violent confrontations with opponents.⁹² Furthermore, although officially neo-Nazis are denounced as "Idiots, agents or provocateurs"⁹³ and indeed the JN congress in Kürnberg (1978) demanded that the Federal Government should ban NS groups,⁹⁴ the Office for the Protection of the Constitution saw unmistakable evidence for neo-Nazi tendencies among elements of the JN membership.⁹⁵ Although the JN leadership stresses that only a very small minority of members are involved, the fact that the JN is unwilling in the majority of cases to act according to decrees passed regarding the incompatibility of national democracy with neo-Nazism i.e. to expell members

involved in neo-Nazi activities, seems to suggest that the problem is more serious than is admitted and that the leadership fears a significant loss of membership in the event of a strict application of their decisions.⁹⁶ It may of course also be taken to mean that the JN secretly approves of such activity but is compelled to reject it in public for fear of interference by the authorities. Of significance as regards the extent of the problem is the situation in Nordrhein-Westfalen, where despite frequent expulsions of members with neo-Nazi tendencies, several leading JN (and NPD) officials remain active in neo-Nazi groups.⁹⁷

The JN is significant here, however, not only for its aggressive, militant stance and its ideological and tactical differences with the NPD leadership, but also because since the middle seventies its development has been diametrically opposed to that of the main NPD organisation. Whilst the NPD leadership increasingly complains of resignation among its membership and openly admits that it no longer constitutes a political factor and possesses no social relevance,⁹⁸ the JN seems to have stepped up its activity. Security reports noted as early as 1974 that the JN was publishing more journals and information than the party itself, and that it was predominantly groups of 'Young National Democrats' who carried out the numerous publicity campaigns in the name of the NPD.⁹⁹ Whilst the NPD experienced a serious and continuing decline of membership throughout the seventies, the JN was able to increase its membership in 1974 to approximately 1,200 or 1,300¹⁰⁰ and again in 1976 to 1,800.¹⁰¹ Although membership declined slightly in 1977 to 1,500,¹⁰² this trend did not continue in 1978 where the membership remained at 1,500.¹⁰³ Over a period then in which the NPD suffered a disastrous loss in membership, the more militant JN experienced a growth in absolute terms of approximately 50%, with the result that the JN now constitutes approximately 1/5 of the total NPD membership, representing the actual core of the NPD and

increasingly determining the political profile of the main organisation in the direction of a radicalisation.¹⁰⁴ As far as the origin of the growth of the JN is concerned, it would be shortsighted not to note a parallel between this development and the worsening economic situation since 1973/74.

Parliamentary versus extra-parliamentary opposition.

In addition to serious conflicts between the NPD leadership and younger elements within the party, a process of radicalisation and an apparent increased attraction of the NPD youth organisation, a further major development in the post 1969 period was that as electoral support for the extreme Right declined i.e. as the process of concentration of the voters onto the established parties was resumed, so there emerged a number of new groups on the extreme Right pursuing a militant extraparliamentary strategy. Although there was a subsidence of militant activism after the ratification of the so-called 'Eastern treaties', the period since 1974 - and again one cannot fail to see a parallel with the worsening economic situation at that time - saw a massive increase in such activity. In the following chapters the nature of the large number of new extraparliamentary action groups which have emerged will be examined in detail. Here it will suffice to make some general comments on this development. Firstly it must be pointed out that extraparliamentary activism is by no means a phenomenon which is confined to the extreme Right. On the contrary, the late sixties saw the emergence of the so-called 'Extraparliamentary Opposition' (Apo) made up of predominantly left-wing student elements, the seventies saw a wave of left-wing terrorist activity and the growth of a large Citizens' Initiative movement. It would in fact be true to say that since the late sixties, extraparliamentary action has been a major feature of the West German political system. A partial explanation for

this trend can be provided by pointing to the fact that with the overwhelming concentration of the electorate on two large parties and in view of electoral laws (e.g. 5% clause) and a whole series of provisions contained within the framework of the party laws which serve to impede the development of non-established parties, i.e. to preserve the party political status quo, there has been, quite logically, a recognition on the part of active oppositional elements "that in this system extra-parliamentary pressure holds more promise of success than the founding of right or left-wing splinter parties."¹⁰⁵

To what extent does the growth of extra-parliamentary opposition also point to a lack or a decline of opposition within the Parliament? The considerable increase in extra-parliamentary activity at the time of the Grand Coalition where only the FDP remained as a last vestige of opposition in the Bundestag gave rise to the view that there was in fact a causal relationship between the two phenomena. The continued presence of extra-parliamentary activity in the following period when the Grand Coalition was replaced by an SPD/FDP government does not in itself dispute the existence of such a correlation. The Grand Coalition was only the formalization of a lack of opposition which was inherent in the development of what Rowold has described as a "de-ideologized catch-all party system" in the Federal Republic. De-ideologized catch-all parties, unlike earlier forms, do not claim to represent specific interests and socio-economic groups but have as their goal the integration of all sections of society. The consequence is a political convergence, a loss of individuality and a suppression of inter-party conflict.¹⁰⁶ Vogt's evaluation of the growth of extra-parliamentary action as being less symptomatic of a lack of opposition, of the shortcomings of the established parties, than of a greater degree of political maturity¹⁰⁷ must be viewed with some scepticism. Although extra-parliamentary action undoubtedly has a role

to play in a parliamentary democracy, it is nevertheless true that an extra-parliamentary opposition can only be successful if significant numbers of individuals feel that their interests are not adequately represented by the political parties. Moreover the contrast in the Federal Republic between the willingness of the population to engage in extra-parliamentary politics and their willingness to become involved (e.g. by becoming a member) in political parties, which must be seen as the primary channel for political energy in a representative democracy, again suggests that the origin of the growth in extra-parliamentary activity is closely related to the failings of the political parties. It is our view then that the growth of extra-parliamentary activity in the Federal Republic has resulted from, and is symptomatic of, serious legitimation deficits of the existing party system. The framework within which oppositional elements must operate means that the actual dissatisfaction with the existing parties is not expressed in electoral terms. There is no reason to assume, however, that the party-political concentration and extra-parliamentary opposition will become permanent features of the political system of the Federal Republic. It must be stressed that, although the 5% clause, for example, has proved to be to date an effective barrier against a fragmentization at Federal Parliament level, it is not in the final analysis electoral laws which determine the development of parties but the political needs of the electorate.¹⁰⁸ The most likely type of party to achieve any significant success, in view of widespread anticommunism and the authoritarian trends in the West German political culture, would be a rightist party.¹⁰⁹ The development of right-extremism in the post-war period has underlined the (continuing) susceptibility of German society to extremism of the Right at times of economic instability. It is for those reasons that it is necessary to continue to subject developments on the extreme Right to close scrutiny.

CHAPTER 1

NEO-NAZISM: ORGANISATIONS

1.1 Introduction

The survey of right-extremism in the previous chapter indicated that a major trend in this area since the early seventies has been a movement away from parliamentary politics towards extra-parliamentary activism. As electoral support for the major political party of the extreme Right, the NPD, declined, so there emerged a whole range of new groupings pursuing a militant extra-parliamentary strategy. These new groupings, more radical than earlier rightist groupings in postwar Germany (with the exception of the SRP) and composed of predominantly younger elements, were quickly labelled by political opponents as by the authorities 'neo-Nazi'. Despite the widespread misuse of this term in the post-war period where there was a tendency by the political Left to apply it to any kind of organisation or tendency of the political Right, it was decided to retain the term here since in as much as it points to an "attempt, on the basis of an appropriate intellectual attitude, to justify, scientifically,

organisationally or politically, the National Socialist regime, to place it on a comparison basis with democracy, to assist in preparing the intellectual and political ground for its return or, as the case may be, to participate in its restoration"¹ and in as much as it suggests a close affinity to the NSDAP, its usage would appear to be justified as far as the groups which are the subject of this study are concerned. On the other hand, a certain differentiation of the term neo-Nazi is necessary. Despite certain similarities between the NSDAP and the neo-Nazi movement of the seventies, there are also a number of significant distinctions. Although the NSDAP was, for example, a 'young' party, neo-Nazism is much more obviously a youth movement. The dominant role of the old middle class in the NSDAP (and the NPD) is not a feature of neo-Nazism. The most evident differences between the phenomenon of neo-Nazism and historical Nazism are, however, organisational and tactical in nature. With the failure of the Munich 'Putsch', certain conclusions were drawn concerning the strategy and structure of the NSDAP which were undoubtedly partially responsible for Hitler's take-over in 1933. Firstly a parliamentary strategy, a so-called legality tactic was adopted, that is, the aim of the National Socialists was to gain power by parliamentary means, by professing their allegiance to the Weimar constitution, even if their ultimate aim was to abolish both parties and parliament. Secondly, and this was closely related to the adoption of a parliamentary strategy, considerable emphasis was placed on creating a strong, unified and centrally controlled party organisation and apparatus. This contrasts strongly with the phenomenon of neo-Nazism, the dominant features of which are an extra-parliamentary strategy and the existence of a large number of independently operating cadre organisations.

1.2 Organisational structure.

A brief survey of the situation on the neo-Nazi Right shows clearly that there is no one neo-Nazi organisation but a whole series of small groupings. The authorities reported that there were 24 such groupings in existence in 1978² (13 in 1975).³ Of these 24 organisations, none had a membership of 250 or more, only 4 had more than 100 members, 2 had between 50 and 100, 7 between 20 and 50 and 11 less than 20 members.⁴ Although the usage of the term neo-Nazi to characterize all of these groups⁵ tends to suggest a certain homogeneity, it is important to point out that this is not in fact the case. It is necessary to distinguish between four or five major types of organisation.

A first category is composed of those groups which emerged early in the seventies and which were founded and led by members of the older generation. Examples are the 'Deutsche Bürgerinitiative' (DBI) founded in 1971 by the lawyer Manfred Roeder who was born in 1929 and the 'Bürger - und Bauerninitiative' (BBI) founded in the same year by Thies Christophersen (60). These groupings, both of which were officially registered organisations, were not initially overtly neo-Nazi in character, but gradually began to justify and glorify National Socialism in a more and more open manner.⁶ They were not membership organisations. The 'DBI' was essentially "a legal instrument for collecting donations and for producing publications."⁷ The 'BBI' is described by Christophersen himself in the following terms : "We do have an officially registered association as an organisational centre, but this has only seven members. (More are not needed). We are a publishing-house and produce publications."⁸ Supporters of both groupings are composed of individuals who receive their publications. The majority of the 'members' are not active in any real sense.⁹ Essentially then these organisations are, or at least were,

initially, 'friendly circles' of individuals who shared a common view of society and of history.

During the second half of the seventies one saw the emergence of a second category of groupings of which a dominant feature was that they were led predominantly, but not exclusively,¹⁰ by much younger activists. This type of grouping, although again characterized by a loose organizational structure,¹¹ differs from those organisations of the first category, in as much as they are essentially, and were conceived as, circles of activists i.e. cadre organisations. A further characteristic is that they were modelled more directly on the NSDAP. The usage of former National Socialist symbols and uniforms is widespread, as is the self-characterization as National Socialist organisations, or as constituent elements of an alleged new NSDAP. Within this category it is possible to distinguish further between underground organisations and those which combine conspirative, underground activity with overt, public actions.¹² Examples of the former are the 'Nationalsozialistische Kampfgruppe Ost-westfalen-Lippe' led by the 26 year old Rolf Gebser,¹³ a 'Kampfgruppe Grossdeutschland in Frankfurt/Offenbach',¹⁴ and the 'Nationalrevolutionäre Arbeiterfront' in Bremen.¹⁵ Examples of the latter are the 'Antikomintern Jugend',¹⁶ in Hannover led by the 24 year old Volker Heidel, the 'ANS - Gau Schleswig - Holstein' led by the 22 year old Frank Stubbemann¹⁷ and the 'Aktionsfront Nationaler Sozialisten' (ANS) founded in Hamburg in 1977 by the then 22 year old Michael Kühnen.¹⁸ The emergence of these new groupings led by younger activists would seem to point to the existence of a generation conflict on the extreme Right.¹⁹ Evidence from the groups themselves suggests that the younger elements resented the lack of activity of the groups led by members of the older generation, their tendency to be primarily private clubs rather than political organisations. Michael Kühnen notes for example with regard to the origin of the 'ANS'

... the Hoffmann group, which was
"We were practically a kind of mobile cadre. We were present at almost all the meetings held between Flensburg and Regensburg and basically we were looking for a group to join and basically, notwithstanding all the comradeship which we had with these groups, we did not find a suitable group because they were all 'PENSIONERS ASSOCIATIONS' (Alt - Herren - Vereine), because we always saw that there...that the desire to hold evenings devoted to comradeship surpassed their readiness to work politically in a really serious fashion. And then I said : 'We will go about it differently. We will form a youth group, a real group, with only young people in it. When we have achieved that, then we will be an ally in this camp who is not to be underestimated. Then we will make the conditions.'²⁰

A further, much smaller category of groupings, is made up of so-called 'Auslandorganisationen' (literally Foreign Organisations). Of these the most important is the NSDAP/AO. This organisation, which has been active in the Federal Republic since 1974, is led by the American Gary Lauck and has its headquarters in Lincoln/Nebraska,²¹ although the majority of its members, organised in small independently operating cells, reside in the Federal Republic.²² Its chief functions are to coordinate activities undertaken by NSDAP/AO activists in the Federal Republic and to provide these activists, but also the members of other neo-NS groupings with propaganda material.²³ Horchem notes that the activities of the NSDAP/AO are at least partially responsible for the proliferation of NS groupings in West Germany.²⁴

A final category of organisations is composed of so-called 'Wehrsportgruppen' (Military Sports Groups). These groupings differ from those of the other categories in as much as the stress is not so much on ideology or political action as on paramilitary training. Examples are the 'Wehrsportgruppe Hoffmann' and the 'Wehrsportvereinigung Schleswig -

Holstein,²⁵ led by Uwe Rohwer. Of these the Hoffmann group, which was banned by the authorities on the 30 January 1980²⁶ is undoubtedly the one which over the years has attracted the most public attention and concern. This particularly large group - it is estimated that it had approximately 200 supporters of which, however, only about 50 took part regularly in the paramilitary exercises it frequently organised²⁷ - is, with its fascination for weaponry and its preference for conspirative activity, considered typical of this type of grouping.²⁸

To summarize then, the neo-Nazi right is composed of not one neo-Nazi organisation but of a whole series of small groupings. Nor is there one type of neo-Nazi organisation but various distinct categories. As far as the origin of this organisational pattern is concerned, the absence of a leadership personality of sufficient influence to impose a degree of uniformity or to bring about a unification would seem at first sight to be an important factor. This explanation, however, presupposes a desire on the part of the various neo-Nazi leaders to unify and although certain commentators²⁹ who see neo-Nazism as a serious potential threat argue that the neo-Nazi leadership has as its goal the creation of a unified organisation or political party out of the myriad of existing small groups, the evidence suggests that this is not the case. Apart from a few notable exceptions - Wübbels for example³⁰ - the vast majority of the leadership figures would appear to reject an organisational unification. The NSDAP/AO asserts that "In view of the prevailing state of occupation and the at present laughable weakness of the movement compared to the NSDAP of the Third Reich, a precocious attempt at founding a new NSDAP would endanger the members uselessly...a rigid unification in the underground is suicide. Only the cell system has proven itself in practice."³¹ Christophersen holds the view that "A unification in the so-called national camp would result in a catastrophe. We must continue to work in small groups. Only in this way will we be

successful in the long run. A large alliance would be smashed immediately. We experienced that with the NPD".³² This evidence from the groups themselves appears then to support the hypothesis that the reason for the large number of groups on the Right is that in the wake of the decline of the NPD there has been a realization that under present conditions small cadre organisations represent a more viable proposition than a unified organisation or party. The extensive organisational similarities to left-wing groupings and citizens' initiatives, the loose organisational structure, the adoption of a cell system, suggest in addition that a certain degree of direct modelling of the Right on these non-rightist organisations has occurred. Finally one should not neglect the significance of ideology. The neo-Nazi ideology has a strong anti-party element as will emerge clearly in the following chapter and this may at least constitute a partial explanation for the preference for non-party organisational forms. Here it would be possible to draw parallels with the plethora of small groupings which made up the pre-NSDAP right in the Weimar Republic. The fundamental anti-party nature of these groupings constituted a major impediment to the emergence of a larger, politically more significant, political organisation.

Against the background of these explanations, the views put forward by predominantly left-wing oriented commentators who see the phenomenon of neo-Nazism as a serious threat, implying that the present situation is deceptive, that there is already a strong, unified organisation working underground³³ and that the neo-Nazis have an organisational centre and possess a common plan of action,³⁴ reveal themselves as exaggerations. These views take into account neither the absence or rather the large numbers of potential leadership figures, nor the phenomenon of "Gruppeneigotismus" i.e. the disinclination of nationalist leaders to subordinate their organisation to a larger whole - a phenomenon which paralysed the

Right throughout the postwar period and which, as is openly admitted by neo-Nazis,³⁵ still constitutes a significant factor. Above all, however, they bear witness to a failure to see the fundamental antiparty nature of the neo-Nazi Right and its origin as a response to the failure of the NPD.

Although it is important not to exaggerate the degree of unity on the Right, it is equally important not to exaggerate the lack of unity. The views put forward by official sources that the Right is fragmented, in conflict and therefore weak and insignificant³⁶ would appear to be just as much a distortion of the true situation as are the views put forward by certain critics on the political Left. The evidence suggests that despite isolated cases of animosity between neo-Nazi leaders resulting from personal and tactical differences,³⁷ on the whole the situation is characterized by interaction and cooperation, although not to the extent alleged by neo-Nazis themselves. Kühnen asserts, for example, that "...the impression is deceptive, but that is the intention. We are not at all as fragmented in the national camp as it appears. For one thing all of us leadership people know each other, from the North to the South. We are capable at any time of striking at one stroke (auf einen Schlag) and in coordination. We confer regularly and harmonize our actions."³⁸ More recently official and semi-official sources have increasingly come to accept this view. Horchem who emphasizes the total lack of organisational unity, nevertheless concedes that "The leaders and activists of all groups are in contact with one another."³⁹ In its 1978 security report the Office for the Protection of the Constitution conceded that "All the following neo-Nazi groupings are closely linked by dual membership (personell eng verflochten) and work closely together,"⁴⁰ although this recognition did not result in any revision of the general view that "Right-extremism...is still organisationally fragmented and in conflict."⁴¹ Cooperation and sympathy are not restricted to the same type of neo-Nazi group. Although the emergence of new groups

led by younger activists was seen as evidence for the existence of a generation conflict, there is no evidence to suggest that this has resulted in a degree of animosity between groups led by younger activists and those led by members of the older generation. A passage in 'Der Sturm', a journal edited by Kühnen referring to Erwin Schöborn, the 66 year old leader of the 'Kampfbund Deutscher Soldaten' (KDS) reads "The ANS can thank him for the fact that over the last few weeks it has become a real political factor."⁴² The 'ANS' would also appear to be closely linked to the 'DBI', Edgar Geiss being, for example, a leading functionary in both organisations.⁴³ In addition, there is evidence to suggest that sympathy and cooperation are not restricted to unequivocally neo-Nazi groups but extend over the whole range of right-wing organisations. This is not only valid at an unofficial level or where the lower echelons of the various organisations are concerned as some commentators seem to imply⁴⁴ but also at leadership, official and semi-official levels.⁴⁵ The WSG - Hoffmann, for example, is supported financially by a 'friendly circle' of which Dr. Gerhard Frey, the leader of the 'national liberal' organisation 'Deutsche Volksunion' and publisher of the 'Deutsche Nationalzeitung' is a member.⁴⁶ Hoffmann activists are frequently used to maintain order at 'DVU' meetings.⁴⁷ Although the 'ANS', for example, rejects cooperation with 'national democratic' organisations like the NPD stressing that "We are not Democrats... therefore we keep our distance from those hypocritical national groups, who in public explain again and again: 'Yes, we are the best CSU ever!'"⁴⁸ links were forged between the 'NPD' and the neo-Nazi 'KDS' during the 1976 election campaign in Baden - Württemberg. Werner Kuhnt, the NPD chairman in Baden - Württemberg, and Erwin Schöborn, the leader of the 'KDS' founded a so-called Citizens' Initiative - Vote NPD.⁴⁹ That this was not merely a regional aberration as far as the NPD is concerned is indicated by a circular originating from the Federal Party directorate calling upon all

regional party organisations to order and distribute leaflets of the 'Initiative'.⁵⁰ Despite the large number of groupings and the numerous organisational, tactical and ideological differences, interaction and co-operation would appear to be more important characteristics of the situation on the extreme Right than fragmentation and intergroup rivalry.

1.3 Membership and recruitment

For a number of reasons it is almost impossible to arrive at any unequivocal conclusions concerning either the development or the composition of the membership of neo-Nazi groups in the Federal Republic. Mentioning their amorphous nature, their increasingly conspirative tendencies,⁵¹ should suffice to give an indication of the problems involved. It is, however, possible to delineate general trends and at least to make some tentative assertions as to socio-structural characteristics.

According to West German security reports, membership increased from 400 in 13 organisations in 1975 to 600 in 15 organisations 1976 and to 900 in 17 organisations in 1977.⁵² A slight decline in the rate of increase in 1978, by the end of which year total membership had attained 1,000 in 24 groups, was followed by a considerably more rapid growth to 1,300 in early 1979.⁵³

One of the most significant pieces of information which emerges from a study of the age structure of the membership of neo-Nazi groups is that the vast majority of members are individuals who did not personally experience the 'Third Reich'. A sociological analysis of the 'hard core' of 200 neo-Nazi activists (STUDY A) revealed that 77% were born after 1936.⁵⁴ The 20 to 30 age group, with 42%, would appear to be particularly strongly represented.⁵⁵ This figure is comparable to that of 46% which

emerged from a study of 39 North German neo-Nazi activists (STUDY B) who were involved in legal proceedings during 1978 and 1979 as a result of serious political offences⁵⁶ and is supported, at least in tendency, by assertions made by the groups themselves. In an interview, Michael Kühnen, the founder of the ANS, stated, "If you look around here, you will see that 80 - 90 percent of our people, of the really active people, are between 20 and 25 years old."⁵⁷ Individuals over 30 are clearly underrepresented. Of the 39 activists mentioned above - whose average age, moreover, was 30 which corresponds approximately to that of left-wing terrorists for whom a warrant of arrest has been issued⁵⁸ only 18% came into this age group.⁵⁹ Information concerning the under 20 age group is conflicting. Whilst study B gave the relatively high figure of 23%, the 1978 security report published by the office for the Protection of the Constitution with study A as its source came to the conclusion that "The proportion of young people and adolescents is at 12% small."⁶⁰ That the lower figure is the more accurate is supported both by the fact that the study from which it was taken was based on a considerably larger sample and by the fact that both studies show that it is not school-children and students who form the mass of the membership of neo-Nazi groups - study A shows 15%; study B, 18% - but individuals who have already entered upon a career. Study A reveals that 49% of the membership is made up of white-collar and other workers. Study B gives the even higher figure of 63%

That the under 20 age group represents a relatively small proportion of the membership conflicts somewhat with the widely held view that it is above all younger people and particularly school-children who are most susceptible to neo-Nazi propaganda. Such a susceptibility would appear to be confirmed by the fact that recruitment drives and propaganda actions are centred predominantly on schools. A neo-Nazi "front

report' from Hannover reads, for example, "Early on the morning of the 6 August the mission continued. About 10 schools were defaced with posters and slogans. Our Hitler Youth threw posters and stickers all over the school corridors in order to enlighten our school-children too about our condition of Jewish occupation."⁶¹ Similar actions were reported in Braunschweig and Bremen.⁶² For South Germany Castner notes such actions "at most schools in Nürnberg, Fürth and Erlangen...often over periods of several weeks..."⁶³ The apparent inconsistencies in evidence here may result, on the one hand, from a possible reluctance of very young people, despite an evident susceptibility to neo-Nazi propaganda,⁶⁴ to become members of obviously illegal organisations and in this way become involved in more serious, organized, illegal activity. In other words there is not necessarily a direct correlation, especially where very young people are concerned, between susceptibility to neo-Nazi propaganda and active membership in neo-Nazi organisations. On the other hand, one should take into consideration the fact that the study cited in the 1978 security report (which, as we have already pointed out, is likely to be the more accurate one) is an analysis not of total membership but of particularly militant activists - that is, of those whom one might expect to be found in the higher age groups and, for this reason alone, in employment rather than at school - and the fact that at least some groups have adopted a definite policy of keeping younger members in the background.⁶⁵ Both of these factors would suggest that the actual percentage of young people under 20 involved in neo-Nazi groups may be somewhat higher than 12%.

The development and the age structure of the membership of neo-Nazi groups highlight the trend which was apparent in the growth of the NPD youth organisation, the JN, - namely an increasing susceptibility of young

people to right-wing extremism. Some first indications as to the origins of this trend emerge from a consideration of the concrete situation of young people in the Federal Republic which is essentially determined by symptoms of an economic and social crisis, by continuing high unemployment, by shortages in apprenticeships and by an increasing competitiveness in all areas of education and training.⁶⁶ This has led to the disorientation of and feelings of insecurity among large numbers of young people.⁶⁷ Of significance here are the parallels which can be drawn with the Weimar Republic and the NSDAP. Although it is true to a certain extent that the distinctions between the age structure of the NSDAP and that of the neo-Nazi groups, namely the greater concentration of young people in the latter, underline the fact that "Neo-fascism is, although it adopts the symbols and the ideology of historical fascism, a product of the social problems of the Federal Republic of today,"⁶⁸ Hennig's analysis which concentrates on the similarities between neo-Nazism and historical fascism shows clearly that legitimate parallels can be drawn. The NSDAP was in fact a 'young' party (in 1932 42.2% of NSDAP members were between 18 and 30 years old)⁶⁹ and, as is the case today, it was particularly young people who were affected by the world economic crisis of the late 1920s and early 1930s. "It is estimated that by the end of 1930 approximately 450,000 young people between the age of 14 and 21 were without work."⁷⁰ Summarizing the parallels between the two periods Hennig notes that "In respect of the situational factors, in which youthful diffusiveness crystallizes into right-radicalism (jugendliche Diffusität rechtsradikal verfestigt), the situation in the final phase of the Weimar Republic and the present period in the Federal Republic is comparable in so far as in each case a period of years with a high birth rate coincides with an economic crisis so that consequently young people are especially exposed to the effects of a crisis."⁷¹

In assessing the origins of the increased susceptibility of young people to neo-fascist groups it is obviously not sufficient, however, merely to point out the apparent correlation between the phenomenon of neo-fascism and the objective situation of young people.⁷² It is important, in order to be able to explain fully the attraction of neo-fascist groups and neo-fascist modes of behaviour for young people, to consider also "from which social groups and classes right-extremist youth organisations recruit their members and supporters."⁷³ Assertions made by the leadership that the membership is representative of the population or rather of youth as a whole - Kühnen notes, for example: "In the unit I've everything from 'Arbitur' grade 1,3 and from students to literally educationally subnormal pupils."⁷⁴ - must be regarded with scepticism considering the significance for these groups of the ideological principle of the 'Volksgemeinschaft'. Despite the lack of detailed empirical studies, there are sufficient indications to justify this scepticism. Academics, students and those from higher schools appear to be considerably underrepresented,⁷⁵ as are members of the old middle class (5%),⁷⁶ as one might expect of a youth movement. In the majority of cases, members come from working class families⁷⁷ and were educated in lower or middle schools.⁷⁸ It is not surprising then that the largest social groups represented in neo-Nazi organisations are white-collar and other workers. This is what is shown in fact by both of the studies cited earlier, although as far as the relative proportion of these two groups is concerned, the information is somewhat contradictory. Whilst study 'B' reveals more than twice as many white-collar as other workers (43% and 20% respectively), study 'A' shows a slightly higher proportion of non-white-collar workers (27% and 22%). Finally most commentators agree that many neo-Nazi activists are in fact unemployed.⁷⁹

Neo-Nazism is essentially a working class and lower middle class phenomenon. As such it again confirms trends on the right apparent with- in recent changes in the composition of the membership and leadership of the NPD i.e. the fact that the so-called new middle class shows a suscep- -tibility to the extreme Right in much the same way as the old middle class and, above all, the fact that the working class is proving to be increasingly susceptible to rightist groupings. As was the case with the NPD it would appear that within the working class it is particularly un- skilled workers⁸⁰ (i.e. those among whom the fear of unemployment is likely to be greatest) and those in small firms - Rabe notes a high percentage of artisans in neo-Nazi groups⁸¹ - i.e. those who are not exposed to working class culture in the same way as those working in larger firms, who appear particularly susceptible.

Far from being a cross-section of German youth, neo-Nazism tends to organize marginal social groups, those who are socially and economically most disadvantaged in West German society.⁸² Despite the absence of unequivocal empirical evidence there would nevertheless seem then to be clear indications for the assumption that "Young people who are without stable emotional ties, who feel insecure, déclassé and left in the lurch by society prove to constitute an especially endangered recruitment potential for neo-fascist organisations and activities."⁸³ For such ind- -ividuals the existing political parties and political system appear incapable of finding or unwilling to find a solution to their problems. Hennig notes in this respect that "Crisis signifies in its totality for the individuals concerned a short-term and direct problem-solving requir- -ement (Kurzfristig und direkt zu lösenden Problemlösungsdruck) ...The utterances of political institutions must, in view of expectations of immediate personal help be interpreted as formal activity and avoidance (Ersatzhandeln)".⁸⁴ The problem is exacerbated by the political conver-

-gence of the two major parties which means that no real alternative to the present system is offered. Right-extremist leaders assess the situation in similar terms. Bernd Dröse, a former NPD press officer pointed out that "These are young people who attained their political awareness under a social democratic government. And they are simply bitterly disappointed with this social democratic government. Nothing has remained of the reforms or even developments bordering on the revolutionary which they were promised. And whoever is simply dissatisfied with this system, whoever says that there must be a fundamental transformation, no longer sees this transformation as coming from the social democrats, let alone from the CDU but simply and solely from the Communists on the one hand or from us on the other. Therefore we too are profiting from the polarisation in this system."⁸⁵

Neo-Nazi groups, and this explains at least partially their present attraction, do constitute a radical alternative to what society offers young people whilst at the same time stressing values and norms with which they are familiar - obedience, diligence and order.⁸⁶ In addition, they provide simple answers to complex social problems. Hennig notes, for example, that what is offered by right-radicalism in respect of opinions and activity "promise that clarity, directness and reduction in complexity which have become lost in bureaucratic official channels and which have vanished in the parliamentary democratic process... The attraction of what is offered by right-radicalism is its simplicity and the directness of its extremely uncomplicated solutions, above all it is capable of making abstract structures concrete by personalisations and by avoiding theory. In this it is aided by well-established practices of the more and more prevalent fixation on "Doers" - on the chancellor as the 'political leader of this Federal Republic' for example."⁸⁷ Neofascist

groups respond not only to the political needs of young people, however, but also to their emotional needs, that is, have a compensatory function. They "try to offer young people what they do not find in existing social institutions: the possibility of identification, help in orientation, ... being taken seriously in their desire for meaningful activity, recognition and ties."⁸⁸ From their interviews with Michael Kühnen, Meyer/Rabe came to the conclusion that "comradeship" is a key word in understanding the attraction of neo-fascist groups.⁸⁹ In small closely-knit groups, young people find a "fixed system of reference, with the aid of which they can stabilize their feelings of self-respect and compensate for feelings of impotence and for their fears with respect to the future."⁹⁰ "At the same time the hierarchical organisation of the groups releases young people from the difficulty of acting on their own responsibility."⁹¹

To conclude this section on neo-Nazi membership one can consider two further aspects; namely regional distribution and former political affiliation. As far as the regional distribution of neo-Nazi groups is concerned, to date, a detailed study has not been attempted and, although in Schleswig-Holstein, for example, only one group is based in a city whilst the other groups are composed of young people from towns and numerous small communities,⁹² there are, at the present time, no clear indications that organised neo-Nazism is a predominantly small town/rural area as opposed to a city phenomenon or vice versa.

As regards former political affiliation there seems to be a general consensus that a significant number of neo-Nazi activists are in fact former NPD or, more specifically JN members.⁹³ This view is confirmed by both JN⁹⁴ and neo-Nazi sources. Michael David, Kühnen's deputy in the 'ANS' notes that "What goes into the JN is almost without exception passed on to us."⁹⁵ The assertion that the JN constitutes an exception in this respect, that, on the whole, neo-Nazi activists are not recruited from

established right-extremist organisations,⁹⁶ is disputed by several commentators. Meyer/Rabe note, for example, that "Numerous members of the 'Junge Nationaldemokraten', of the 'Bund Heimattreuer Jugend' and the 'Wiking Jugend' (of organisations of the 'democratic' camp therefore) participated even in the founding of groups which are comparable to the 'Aktionsfront Nationaler Sozialisten'... The 'National Socialists' recruit their exclusively young members from these organisations..."⁹⁷ This latter view is supported by assertions made by the groups themselves: "We all know one another from the JN or the 'Wiking Youth'."⁹⁸ Three further groups would appear to be at least marginally represented. Kühnen mentioned in an interview with Rabe an admittedly very small group with National Socialist parents.⁹⁹ Gross, the Minister of the Interior in Lower Saxony, mentioned the active participation of former National Socialists,¹⁰⁰ and, finally, Kühnen also alleged, again in the interview cited above, that some neo-Nazi activists had formerly belonged to left-wing revolutionary groups, above all the KPD and KPD/ML.¹⁰¹ Most commentators agree that there is evidence for such a mobility between left and right extremist groupings only in a very few isolated cases.¹⁰²

1.4 Activities/Tactics

According to reports issued by the Office for the Protection of the Constitution, there has been a rapid growth in the number of illegal rightist actions since 1974 - from 136 cases in 1974 to 1,483 in 1979.¹⁰³

By far the largest proportion of this increase is due to the growth in the number of actions attributable to neo-Nazi groups - from 24 in 1974 to 758 in 1978. Whilst in 1974 neo-Nazi actions accounted for only 18% of total right-extremist activity, by 1978 this figure had reached

76%.¹⁰⁴

An analysis of the monthly as opposed to the yearly distribution of neo-Nazi actions reveals considerable fluctuations. A graph of this distribution, however, shows three clear peaks in the months of April, November, and July.¹⁰⁵ The significance of these months is clear - 20 April, Hitler's birthday; 9 November, remembrance day of the National Socialist regime (9 November 1923 and 1938, march of the NSDAP to the 'Feldherrnhalle' in Munich and the 'Reichskristallnacht' respectively) and 20 July, attempt on Hitler's life; i.e. a clear correlation exists between the extent of neo-Nazi activity and those months which hold particular significance for right-extremists.

By far the most extensive type of activity involved consists of what one might term clandestine propaganda actions, which entail the defacing of all types of public and private property - key targets are, however, Jewish cemeteries, memorials in former concentration camps and Jewish private property in general - by the painting of swastikas, NS and anti-semitic slogans such as : 'JUDA VERRECKE', 'JUDEN RAUS', 'ROTFRONT VERRECKE', 'HEIL HITLER', 'DEUTSCHLAND ERWACHE', 'WIR SIND WIEDER DA!' and 'die SA'¹⁰⁶ or by the use of stickers with similar content. The 1978 report issued by the Office for the Protection of the Constitution notes 547 incidences (or over 72% of neo-Nazi activity, over 55% of all illegal right-extremist activity.) of such activity and notes that above all propaganda material from the NSDAP/AO was used (In 1977, in 20% of all transgressions of neo-Nazi character propaganda material of the NSDAP/AO was used).¹⁰⁷ Examples of material from this source are stickers, each with a large swastika and with 'messages' such as 'Rotfront verrecke', 'Kauft nicht bei Juden', 'NS-Verbot aufheben', 'Kampf den Judenparteien KPD SPD CDU FDP'. Similar material is supplied by the 'Deutsche Befreiungsfront' of the German-Amer-

Joachim notes that during the course of 1978 the character of neo-Nazi activities underwent a decisive change in that activists were no longer content merely to carry out secretive actions such as those described above but rather attempted to draw attention to themselves in public.¹⁰⁹ The activities of Kühnen are exemplary in this respect. In addition to conspirative action, he also, as Horchem notes, "...used...the increased publicity provided by appearances in the open."¹¹⁰ He founded an openly operating political party, the 'ANS', whose first demand in its so-called 'Kampfprogramm' was the abolition of the ban on National Socialism, announced an intention to participate in the Hamburg local elections, carried out street actions such as the so-called 'Esel-Aktion',¹¹¹ and various other public actions such as the unveiling of a memorial for the 'Führer'.¹¹² The press was well informed in advance. Rabe notes that the "Aktionsfront Gauleiter", i.e. Kühnen, even went so far as to charge journalists 200 Marks entry fee for his 'shows': "...The journalists payed eagerly and provided the desired publicity free of charge."¹¹³ Horchem notes that "This combination of conspirative and open action was a new tactical element introduced into the neo-Nazi groups by Kühnen, which publicity-wise was to prove extraordinarily effective."

As far as these observations concerning a change of tactics during 1978 are concerned, it is important to note that they are only valid for those groups led by younger activists i.e. for the second generation of neo-Nazi groups, since direct public action had been a characteristic of the early groupings. Official sources reported several public demonstrations, meetings and militant actions by groups such as the 'DBI' and the 'BBI' in 1974 and noted in 1975 that neo-Nazi street actions had aroused considerable public attention.¹¹⁵ The overt actions of later groupings differ from these actions, however, in that they are more provocative in

character especially as regards the use of, and therefore the defiance of bans on the use of, uniforms, National Socialist symbols and slogans, and the adoption of forms of greeting and movements associated with the 'Third Reich'. At the first major trial of neo-Nazi activists accused of terrorist activities which took place in Bückeburg in 1979, the leader of the NSDAP/AO, who appeared as a witness, was greeted with the 'German salute' by a number of young spectators wearing uniform-like clothing.¹¹⁶ The 'Frankfurter Rundschau' reported uniformed neo-Nazis marching through the centre of Bremen singing the Horst-Wessel song and threatening passers-by.¹¹⁷ A parliamentary question in the Lower Saxony Landtag revealed that on repeated occasions young neo-Nazis had openly distributed anti-semitic leaflets originating from the 'Deutsch-Völkische Gemeinschaft' (DVG) at an information stand in the centre of Hannover.¹¹⁸

It is important to consider what functions neo-Nazi activities and especially the use of uniforms and symbols serve. For Horchem the use of symbols and uniforms can be explained away as a kind of "almost irrational impulse."¹¹⁹ The evidence from the groups themselves suggests, however, that neo-Nazis are fully aware of the potential provocative and integrative capacities of symbols and uniforms and use them consciously.¹²⁰ Of the swastika Gary Lauck, for example, notes that "No other symbol evokes such love from supporters and such hate from opponents. Its massive dissemination suffices 'to turn everything upside down'. The Democrats are alarmed, the Communists clamour, the whole press warns of the latest 'Nazi excess' and the whole people see that something is afoot."¹²¹ According to Kühnen, the wearing of uniforms and Nazi emblems has three functions - it documents a feeling of solidarity, it provokes and it was very practical in that during confrontations one could easily distinguish

between one's own supporters and counter-demonstrators.¹²²

The use of uniforms and symbols as a means of group cohesion would seem to be particularly important considering the absence of any formal organisational structure, the stability of the group being essentially dependant on "the existence of a leader with a minimum of charisma."¹²³ The various activities of the groups would appear to serve a similar function as emerged from an interview with Kühnen - "...struggle, against political opponents, against the political conditions is the most important thing. In a practical sense it is also what holds us together."¹²⁴ In neo-Nazi groups, action, symbols and uniforms would appear to replace other forms of integration - ideology or ideological schooling for example.¹²⁵

Finally, most commentators, both those who are concerned about the phenomenon and those who tend to play down its significance, agree that the adoption of National Socialist uniforms and symbols does not necessarily imply an identification with the National Socialist ideology, does not mean that neo-Nazi activists are convinced National Socialists. Horchem expresses the view that "For many of the young people the way their belt fits is a more important question than the content of a planned action."¹²⁶ Eigenwald, a history teacher, is of the view that "The optical parallels between neo- and old fascist rituals are overrated. Their function is more symbolic. The invocation (Berufung auf) of old fighters¹²⁷ should not detract from the fact that the behaviour of young neo-fascists is the result of present new experiences, of their own experiences in life and not so much because of things they have read."¹²⁸ Similarly, Paul, adopting a psychological approach to the problem, evaluates the use of fascist symbols less as an indication of an identification with the National Socialist ideology than as an "...expression of pre-political protest and a sign expressing the solidarity of young people

who are excluded, left alone, and déclassé."¹²⁹ The adoption of fascist symbolism as symbols of protest occurs, according to Paul, in societies where these symbols can count on a large provocative effect as the result of the absence of a genuine coping with the past and where young people have no other means at their disposal to articulate their dissatisfaction.¹³⁰

1.5 Use of violence and terror

Reference to the 1977 security report 'Betrifft' reveals a continuous decline in the number of transgressions with right extremist motivation where violence was used from 51 in 1971 at the height of the actions against the treaties with the East to only 16 in 1976. During 1977 this positive trend, however, suffered a severe set-back. The number of violent acts committed by right-extremists rose in that year to 40 i.e. an increase of 150% over the previous year.¹³¹ The figure for 1978 was 52.¹³² Official sources attribute this increase almost exclusively to the increased activities of neo-Nazi groups.¹³³ In the vast majority of cases this type of activity consists of damage to property belonging to, or in some way connected with, those groups towards which right-extremism has had a traditional antipathy. Communist party offices, left-oriented bookshops, trade-union buildings, Jewish property and memorials to the victims of Nazi persecution are then some of the most frequent targets.¹³⁴ Violence is, however, not exclusively directed against property, but threatened and used against individuals. Cases of threats of violence increased from 19 in 1976 to 35 in 1977.¹³⁵ Here political opponents would seem to constitute the most frequent targets, although there have been several incidents involving members of the Jewish community.¹³⁶ In addition violent confrontations with the police are not avoided by those groups who operate

in the open.¹³⁷

Several observers were aware relatively early of the fact that it was unlikely that this use of violence would remain below the level of 'armed struggle'. Höffken and Sattler note for example that "Since the idolization of weaponry, the model of Nazi terror and conflict in general constitute the way of life of the neo-Nazis, a terrorist perversion can be anticipated."¹³⁸ Similarly, Kortzfleisch, chairman of the Society for Christian-Jewish Cooperation noted that "We are observing an escalation of right-radical violence; we are experiencing the emergence of a right-radical terrorism."¹³⁹ Later developments revealed clearly that this was not idle speculation. The 1978 security report¹⁴⁰ notes a whole series of terrorist acts committed between November 1977 and February 1978 by 'ANS' activists including a bank robbery, several attacks on Bundeswehr and Nato installations and on individuals with the aim of procuring weapons and the financial means to build up their logistics. One could mention here also the bombing attacks on a radio and TV transmitter of the Südwestfunk in Koblenz and on a telecommunication tower in the Münsterland in protest against a documentary film on the 'final solution' - acts, moreover, which made it clear to the Ministry of the Interior and the Office for the Protection of the Constitution that the neo-Nazi groups had "...gone over to a new dangerous dimension of political criminality."¹⁴¹ Significant also in this respect is the fact that although one official source notes that the weaponry of neo-Nazi groups "consists predominantly of home-made clubs, chains and knives...",¹⁴² there has in fact been a rapid increase in the number of incidents where firearms, ammunition and explosives have been found in the possession of right-wing extremists. According to security reports in 1975 there was only one such case, in 1976 - 4 and in 1977 15 cases.¹⁴³ A confidential police study from December 1978 however reported

18 cases over 'the last few months',¹⁴⁴ The Federal Prosecutor Friedrich Hecking stated in an interview with the magazine 'Stern' that "We hardly ever now search the homes of right-extremists without finding weapons, explosives and ammunition in considerable quantities."¹⁴⁵

Empirical evidence seems then to suggest that initial, especially tactical (as opposed to moral) reservations against the use of violence and terror evident within certain groups - in 1974, for example, Lauck was of the opinion that "The fact that Communists used terror apparently successfully should not lead National Socialists astray. The former had advantages for their tactics which the NSDAP-AO was completely deprived of: hiding places, finances, weapons, training, intelligence service support. Without these advantages the NSDAP-AO would bleed itself to death;¹⁴⁶ - have now been overcome. This conforms in fact to the stance now taken in neo-Nazi publications. The following passages were quoted from the 'NS-Kampfruf' during the Bückeberg terrorist trial "there is no reason to put on a mourning crape because an official of the Federal Republic has been shot...we welcome anything that destroys this state...here an unjust state is being removed...the end justifies the means."¹⁴⁷ The 'NS Kampfruf' of November/December 1978 emphasizes that the NSDAP-AO has nothing in common with the RAF but asserts that "We are also certainly not so stubborn that we reject strategies and methods just because Anarcho-Communists use them."¹⁴⁸ Lauck's repeated assertions during the above mentioned trial that he in fact rejected violence, that the reasons for the more aggressive tone in the 'NS Kampfruf' was to enable him to maintain control over elements within his organisation which were becoming increasingly militant and that when speaking of terror, it was psychological terror to which he was referring,¹⁴⁹ should of course, considering the situation, be regarded with extreme scepticism as must also statements issued by more or less openly operating groupings. In an interview with Habe for example, Kühnen stated : "As far as we are concerned - we

operate legally. That's clear... knowing well namely that the German people cannot be won through terror and that National Socialists have never needed to use terror to win the German people. The National Socialists came to power in free elections and we demand nothing else but that the NSDAP can operate freely once again. And then none of us have any doubts that at the first attempt we will succeed once again at least in getting a substantial proportion of the vote..."¹⁵⁰ That the views expressed here had more to do with the fact that as a representative of an openly operating organisation Kühnen could hardly openly advocate terrorist methods and less to do with what he actually believed or was prepared to accept is indicated by the evidence which emerged during the Bückeberg trial concerning the terrorist activities of ANS members and Kühnen's involvement in such activity. The views held by other neo-Nazi organisations on violence and terror is unequivocal. The reaction by 'Wille und Weg' to the murder of the Prosecutor General Buback was to state: "No false pity comes over us at this or at further corpses."¹⁵¹ The 'Faschistische Front' announced that Buback's sudden death did not fill them with sorrow since he was a "leading representative of this 'FRG' regime, which is deeply hated by Fascists and all decent Germans."¹⁵² An activist of the 'Nationalsozialistische Kampfgruppe Ostwestfalen-Lippe' stated in an interview with the magazine 'Stern' that "We want the opposite to what they (i.e. left-wing terrorists) want, but are not so stupid that we do not adopt their methods and strategies ourselves."¹⁵³

As far as terrorism from the right is concerned Rabe distinguishes between younger activists who are prepared to adopt terrorist methods and older activists and leaders who, he asserts, as far as the nature of the political struggle is concerned, exert a moderating influence (although he concedes that this influence is decreasing).¹⁵⁴ However, whilst there does seem to be a correlation between the emergence of unequivocal

terrorist activity and the process whereby the number of younger activists is increasing, and although those accused of terrorism would seem overwhelmingly to be younger members - of 39 activists in North Germany who were suspected of executing or planning serious offences, 23% were under 20 and 46% between 20 and 30¹⁵⁵ Rabe's assertions must nevertheless be differentiated somewhat. Whilst admittedly there are a number of prominent activists belonging to the older generation who, overtly at least, reject terrorist methods - Christophersen emphasizes that "...we are not a terror group"¹⁵⁶ on the other hand, Roeder, Eckart and Wübbels are just three prominent neo-Nazi activists, all of whom are over 40 and who leave little doubt as to their approval and advocacy of armed violence. According to Roeder "There has to be terror so that at last things will change"¹⁵⁷ and at a 'Reichstag' in Regensburg Roeder said in connection with Buback's murder: "He who wanted to finish us off now lies under the ground... All who persecute us shall meet with an ignominious end and find their just punishment."¹⁵⁸

According to one official source, unlike the situation on the left, violence is approved of on an emotional level and therefore used where it appears expedient and also simply where it arises, but there are no discussions within neo-Nazi organisations concerning the use of violence, nor have theories on violence been developed.¹⁵⁹ Whether this is still the case is, however, uncertain. There is evidence to suggest that violence and terror are not employed in a completely random manner without any attempt at justification or without any clear conception of its potential strategic value. Within certain groupings at least violence and terror are justified as 'Gegenterror' i.e. as a response to the 'terror' supposedly employed against them by the authorities and by political opponents. In an interview with Rabe, Kühnen stated for example: "Naturally to defend ourselves...we also use such methods. We strike

back when Communists use terror against us. Dr. Goebbels once said in this respect: 'It is exquisite having a good idea but when this good idea finds itself opposed by terror, one can only break this terror with counter-terror.'¹⁶⁰ Lauck threatened that he would not exclude the use of violence in the FRG if the 'police terror' against the NSDAP/AO continued.¹⁶¹ Similarly: "Until now we have confined ourselves to removing this treasonous regime in Bonn through propaganda and by enlightening the people...If however the 'general willingness to use violence' in the NS movement is increasing, as the Minister of the Interior believes, and cases occur where Comrades remember the words of the 'Führer' (MEIN KAMPF P.507) 'that one can only break force with force and terror only with terror', then only the occupation regime in Bonn is responsible for the consequences and neither the NS comrades who have been provoked nor the NSDAP/AO helpers or even members. We will oppose the merciless police and judicial terror to which we were until now helplessly subjected with an adequate resistance."¹⁶² One cannot totally reject the possibility that the use of violence and terror by the neo-Nazis constitutes part of a clear strategy. Kühnen is reported to have once stated that bombing attacks were intended to weaken the citizens' feelings of security, thereby increasing demands for more authoritarian solutions which would serve to prepare the ground for National Socialism.¹⁶³ Moreover one should add here that above all violence and terror are ideally suited to serve the same functions as the other activities of the groups are intended to serve, namely to provoke and to attract attention to the existence of neo-NS organisations.

Despite certain similarities, official sources pointed out that the terrorist activities of neo-Nazi circles differed clearly in "nature, intensity and brutality"¹⁶⁴ from those of left-oriented groups. Whether a North German neo-Nazi terrorist group would in fact have executed plans which involved committing murder was, for example, found to be doubtful

in a recent court case.¹⁶⁵ Several explanations were put forward as to why this should be the case. For one thing, right-wing terrorist circles tended on the whole to be relatively short-lived, that is, the authorities appeared to be more successful at curtailing such activity on the Right than on the Left. One official source attributed this to the fact that "As a rule neo-Nazi, like all right-extremists, maintain conspirative modes of behaviour only with difficulty. It is a basic characteristic of a right-extremist that he 'carries his heart on his tongue'. He is very communicative for reasons of mentality."¹⁶⁶ Secondly reference was made to the absence on the Right of the necessary leadership personnel.¹⁶⁷

However, the fact that plans relating to murder were discussed,¹⁶⁸ the widespread praise to be found in neo-Nazi writings for murders committed by left-wing terrorists and the fact that more and more neo-Nazi activists had access to arms and explosives, all seemed to suggest that sooner or later murder was likely to become an element of the criminal activity of neo-Nazi activists. This was then confirmed by the deaths of 2 Vietnamese refugees as a result of a Molotov-Cocktail attack in Hamburg on the 22 August 1980 and above all by the bomb-attack (by a member of the 'Wehrsportgruppe Hoffmann', although there is no evidence that this member was acting with the blessing of the recently banned Hoffmann group) at the Munich beer-festival in September of 1980, which resulted in the deaths of 12 individuals, including women and young children, and in a total of 211 injured.¹⁶⁹ Since these new developments, the difference between terrorism of the Right and of the Left is no longer that right-extremists are less 'brutal' but that they are more indiscriminate in their use of violence than extremists of the Left, most of whose victims have been either high-ranking public officials or members of the security forces.

1.6 Conclusion

To conclude the present chapter one can reiterate some of the major points and evaluate some of the major trends. The neo-Nazi Right is composed of a large number of small militant cadre organisations stressing direct, provocative action, pursuing an exclusively extraparliamentary strategy. Although this could be seen as a sign of weakness, it is nevertheless clear that as a result of the organisational and tactical reorientations on the Right, a form of right-extremism has emerged which is particularly suited to the conditions prevailing in the Federal Republic of the seventies. Neo-National Socialist groups are outperforming older, more established groupings. Whilst the NPD has experienced a serious and continuous loss of members since the early seventies and complains of resignation and apathy amongst those remaining, neo-Nazi groups have succeeded in mobilizing large numbers of young people. The small, militant groupings (and the militant 'JN') show integrative and cohesive characteristics and capacities for mobilization which, at least under present conditions, cannot be equalled by larger, more moderate political parties. Furthermore, despite the absence of a unified neo-Nazi organisation, the extent of the interaction and cooperation between the various groupings suggests that one should consider the whole rather than stress the splintered nature of neo-Nazism.

Considerable emphasis is placed by official sources on the fact that the increased attraction of neo-Nazism by no means compensates numerically for the losses experienced by the far Right as a whole, that is, on the fact that as far as membership is concerned organised right-extremism in the Federal Republic shows a negative balance.¹⁷⁰ This argument, however, loses much of its validity if one takes the organisational reorientations

on the Right into consideration, the fact, for example, that neo-Nazi groups are not membership organisations but cadre formations. Moreover a more significant tendency on the extreme Right than the decline in total membership is "that in the present crisis the formation of right-radical centres of activity in certain sections of 'young people' is succeeding (or at least can succeed)."¹⁷¹ This phenomenon gains its true relevance against the background of a theory which explains the development of the NSDAP into a mass movement from cadre formations.¹⁷²

Finally one must consider the increasing tendency for violence, including armed violence, to become a constituent element of the phenomenon of neo-Nazism. Whilst the relevant authorities are coming to accept that as a result of this tendency, right-extremism "must continue to be considered as a danger spot for public security and be monitored with extreme care by the responsible security forces,"¹⁷³ this view, which sees neo-Nazism essentially as a short-term security problem, would not seem to constitute a true estimation of the potential dangers resulting from the use of violence. Notable in this respect is the view put forward by Oertzen, a member of the SPD party executive, at a symposium on neo-Nazism organised by the SPD in Hannover in April 1978, who pointed out the possible wider implications for the development of West German society which a combination of violence and terror from the Left and from the Right could have, especially the rôle this could play in increasing the susceptibility of broad sectors of West German society to that "...call for law and order in that demagogic sense that we know..."¹⁷⁴ In other words, somewhat incongruously, the phenomenon of neo-Nazism could conceivably bring about the more general adoption of a political philosophy which the neo-Nazis themselves propagate, not as a result of the successful reception of their propaganda, but rather indirectly, as a general reaction to the symptoms of political instability which their very existence and activit-

-ies tend to create. In a similar vein Kortzfleisch pertinently pointed out that although there are relatively few people involved in neo-Nazi groups, left-wing terrorism has clearly shown what results a limited number of individuals can achieve.¹⁷⁵ Oertzen also remarked that right-extremist actions could serve as a useful alibi for conservative and reactionary circles to justify the increasingly authoritarian deformation of the state.¹⁷⁶ Although there was no evidence to substantiate this assertion at that time, such a tendency was apparent in the wake of the Munich beer-festival bombing. Strauss attributed the attack to the demoralisation of the security forces as a result of liberal policies and stressed the need to strengthen them.¹⁷⁷ In view of the experience in the Weimar Republic where measures taken in response to the threat emanating from the extreme Right served in the end to suppress progressive and democratic forces, it would appear necessary to monitor closely developments in this direction.

CHAPTER 2

NEO-NAZISM : IDEOLOGY

2.1 Introduction

It is when examining the ideological orientation of the groups which are the subject of the present study that the determination of relevant criteria against which this orientation can be measured proves to be most problematic. The Nazi ideology, as Sontheimer noted in his detailed study of 'Antidemocratic Thought in the Weimar Republic' "was never a uniform doctrine which could be compared, even remotely, with the cohesion of the Marxist ideology. It is a question, as various authors have already emphasized, of a conglomeration of the most varied ideas, in which certainly at first the folkish ideas were determinative, which however developed more and more into an open system which permitted numerous interpretations and accentuations according to the situation and the audience."¹ Key components of the Nazi ideology - antisemitism, extreme nationalism, the emphasis on the folkish community, the particu-

-lar concept of the 'Reich', the rejection of pluralist, liberal democracy, the anti-Left complex - were by no means 'inventions' of the Nazis but were constituent elements of the ideology of the pre-national socialist anti-democratic Right.² In many cases fascism sets itself apart from the broad spectrum of right-extremist groups only by the more aggressive formulation of the contents of its ideology.³ Consequently the characterization of an ideology as neo-Nazi necessitates an analysis not only of content but also of style.

In addition to pointing out the problems posed by the eclectic nature of the National Socialist ideology, one must also consider here to what extent elements of that ideology constitute valid criteria for post-Nazi rightist ideologies. Kühnl, whilst not denying certain shifts of emphasis, tends on the whole to stress the ideological similarities between historical fascism and neo-fascism, asserting, for example, that in their basic thought patterns the National Socialist Party and the NPD are identical.⁴ Niethammer's research, however, has shown that a certain differentiation is necessary. Whilst aspects of old National Socialist tradition remain significant as far as post-fascists or 'old Nazis' are concerned, the emergence of a new generation of nationalists in the sixties has had the consequence that "Authority and efficiency and economic conservatism are becoming more important as principles to the NPD than the ideological imperatives of the '30s."⁵ These new nationalists or neo-fascists were not interested in rehabilitating National Socialism (which for Kühnl is a key component of post-war right-extremism) but in creating "a modern dynamic rightist political grouping firmly based on the functional needs of the '60s and '70s."⁶ According to Niethammer, fascism in the post-war period is essentially characterized not by its ideological affinity to Nazism but by a movement away from the National Socialist model towards an "Original neo-fascism adapted to the conditions prevailing in the

Federal Republic."⁷

In the seventies, with the emergence of the groups which are the subject of the present study, there would appear to have been a reversal of this trend. The essential characteristics of neo-Nazism are the resuscitation of elements of the National Socialist ideology and of elements of the ideology of right-wing groupings of the fifties and, as was the case with the SRP, a concentration on the rehabilitation of, and an open identification with, National Socialism, its leading personality and its goals. For the purpose of clarity the following analysis of neo-Nazi ideology has been divided into four sections dealing in turn with neo-Nazi views on the Federal Republic and democracy, National Socialism, the mass murder of Jews during the 'Third Reich' and the Second World War.

2.2 Ideology

2.2.1 The Federal Republic and Democracy.

The banning of the SRP was a clear indication that an overt rejection of the legitimacy of the Federal Republic would not be tolerated by the authorities. Organised right-extremists modified their stance accordingly. It is a basic premise of the neo-Nazi Right, however, that legally the 'Third Reich' continues to exist. The Federal Republic, as far as neo-Nazis are concerned, is not a legitimate German state but an arbitrary creation of the allies who continue to exercise sovereign control over it. In a leaflet for which the journal 'Wille und Weg' claims responsibility, one can read for example "The GERMAN REICH has not perished. Even the Constitutional Court confirms this."⁸ In his so-called "Declaration of Principles and Proclamation" Roeder asserts "On May 8, 1945 only the German Wehrmacht capitulated. The Reich and the Government were not legally affected, but only hindered in the execution of sovereignty. Also the occupation of the Reich did not change any of this legal condition.... The so-called Federal

Republic is not a state of Germans, but a provisional administration by the Allies. There is no peoples state of Federal Citizens and DDR citizens; there are only Germans who were torn apart by arbitrary force. The top sovereign of these so called State-structures, which are nothing more than a creation of the armistice, is not the German people, but the allied governments, who have reserved the right anytime of forceful and arbitrary interference."⁹ The continuing ban on the NSDAP is put forward as evidence for the lack of sovereignty of the Federal Republic.¹⁰

It is against the background of arguments such as these that the Federal Republic is defamed as a "rascals state" (Lumpenstaat), as a "garbage Republic", whilst members of the Government are denounced as "dishonourable executors of allied revenge policies", as an "anti-German mob", as "collaborators" and as "enemies of the people."¹¹ The aggressive nature of the neo-Nazi attacks on the Republic and its leading representatives is underlined by the lack of respect shown even for the deceased. Mock obituaries appeared in numerous neo-Nazi publications after the murder of the Federal Prosecutor Siegfried Buback. The following, appearing in 'Der Aufmarsch', a publication of the 'Faschistischer Front', is a typical example : "Buback was a leading representative of this 'FRG'-Regime, which we Fascists and all decent Germans hate profoundly. Therefore we are not sorrowful at his sudden death."¹² These attacks on the Federal Republic are combined, as was the case with the SRP, with an unveiled demand for the restoration of the 'Reich'. The programmes of both the 'ANS' and the 'Deutsch-Volkische Gemeinschaft' (DVG) contain explicit demands for the founding of a new 'Grossdeutsches Reich'¹³ and it is emphasized that this by no means refers merely to a 'reunification' (of the FRG and the GDR).¹⁴ In his 'Declaration of Principles and Proclamation' Roeder demands "... a reunited, neutral German Reich with good relations with all

neighbours... Only a free, unoccupied, reunited German Reich can make peace and be in good relations with other peoples. Only such a Reich can make reliable and long standing policies. Only such a Reich is a dependable partner. Upon the actual state of dismemberment, no peace and no just order can be built. The German people will never come to terms with such an arrangement.¹⁵ The reference in this citation to a 'neutral German Reich' reminds one of the national neutralist stance taken by the right-wing groupings of the fifties¹⁶ (including the SRP) and above all of the Hitler - Stalin pact. In an 'open letter' to Leonid Breschnev, Roeder was even more explicit : "... In this context I must emphasize that in the Third Reich also prominent individuals, with Goebbels at their head, advocated a partnership with the Soviet-Union. Goebbels even emphasized that the Communist system was closer to us, ideologically, than the culture-destroying, decadent West. It is not the Communists of the Western world who are your allies. One can see that from the so-called Euro-Communists. They are enemies of Russia, zionist or masonic lackeys of the capitalists. No, the national population of Germany is, historically, the true ally of Russia."¹⁷

Although Roeder seems to stand alone in his advocacy of an alliance with the Soviet Union, other groups being characterized by their aggressive anti-Communist and anti-Soviet stance - "Fight LEFT-fascist VERMIN"¹⁸ - neutralism and especially the anti-capitalist element in evidence here are major components of the neo-Nazi ideology. In its programme the 'DVG' demands that "Greater Germany must maintain strict neutrality" and that Capitalism must be replaced by "Folkish socialism" which is interpreted as "Service to the people's community."¹⁹ Kühnen pointed out in an interview that "We see in Socialism the unity of the people as, in earlier times, was called the people's community... we see that neither under Capitalism nor under Communism can a sensible control

of the economy be achieved. And we call our ideas relating to economic control and the people's community, relating to the solidarity of all also groups in the economic context socialism."²⁰ This anti-capitalist element, which again had been neglected by right-wing groups in the post-war period, smacks of the pseudo-socialism of the left-wing of the Nazi party and of the SRP.

As far as democracy is concerned, neo-Nazis again stress that it did not emerge as a consequence of the will of the German people but was introduced forcibly by the allies.²¹ If one looks more closely at their rejection of democracy one can see evidence for the fact that it is above all the liberal, pluralist components of Western democracy (political parties, interest groups etc.) which come under attack, a form of democracy which in addition to being regarded, as it was by the anti-democratic Right of the Weimar Republic,²² as un-German, alien and unsuitable for Germany - "Whoever is a German cannot be a democrat and whoever is a democrat, cannot be a true German"²³ is seen to be inherently divisive and corrupt and which can only lead to chaos. In 'Der Aufmarsch', for example, one can read that in democracy "The nation is torn apart into no longer compatible parties and views... corruption moves in. Not one day goes by where not at least one corruption scandal or a racket involving a parliamentary wingbag is discovered."²⁴ Roeder notes that "Parties produce artificial contradictions and make corruption unavoidable. The foundation of the moral order of a people can only be the family... no political party or trade-union!"²⁵ Finally in an interview Kühnen explained that "We do not reject democracy, we reject liberalism. I.e. we hold the view that there are other means of enabling the people to participate in the formation of the political will than via parties. The Spanish fascist leader José Antonio once said : People are not born into parties... the participation of the people should take place via the family, the commun-

-ity and the place of work, whilst the parties lead on the whole only to the destruction of a state."²⁶ According to Kühnen trade-unions must also disappear so that decisions are taken only in the "interests of all" and "individual groups do not try to enforce their well-being to the detriment of public welfare."²⁷ The caution in evidence in Kühnens attempted differentiation between democracy and liberal, parliamentary democracy is not a characteristic of those groups which operate in the underground. According to 'Wille und Weg' "Not majority rule but the leadership principle will give our nation once again honour, order and greatness."²⁸

In a further attempt to discredit the existing democratic order neo-Nazis point to the discrepancy between the high ideals for which it allegedly stands and the actual situation in the Federal Republic. In 'Der Wind schlägt um' one can read, for example, "According to Herr Scheel we have never had such a free and constitutional system as we have today... But the facts are unfortunately different... I, for example, am myself a victim of this war against people of a different political persuasion... In a free country there are no political police...above all, however, no political trials. In a free country there are no bans on political parties, no 5% clauses, no employment bans for people of certain political persuasions (Berufsverbote) and no decrees concerning radicals."²⁹ The ban on the NSDAP is, it is alleged, "incompatible with the underlying principals of a liberal democracy."³⁰

The present political and social order in the Federal Republic is clearly rejected by neo-Nazis. It is to be replaced by a society based on the 'folkish community' and structured according to an authoritarian view of the state.

2.2.2 View and Selection of Information on National Socialism.

An open identification with Hitler and National Socialism was not a characteristic of the vast majority of right-wing groupings in the post-war period. This is not surprising. As Ashkenasi stresses and as was pointed out in the introduction of the present study, former National Socialists were only one of many categories of organised nationalists competing for power in the early post-war period.³¹ Later, as Niethammer's research has shown, a new generation of 'neofascists' emerged, for whom the NS system did not serve as a model. For those who remained loyal to the NS experience or to aspects of NS tradition, the ban on the SRP had shown that an open admission of their loyalty was likely to result in administrative measures being taken against them. Moreover it was becoming increasingly clear to right-wing groups that their isolation was above all the result of their being too closely identified with National Socialism. In the seventies, with the emergence of neo-Nazi groups, the situation has undergone a complete reversal.

According to Roeder "the open acknowledgement of Adolf Hitler as the leader of and a model for our people"³² was for him personally a truly liberating action. In the NS-Kampfruf one can read that the "Final goal is the creation of an NS state in a free, sovereign, united Greater German Reich and a New Order with racist guiding principles in the whole of the Aryan world."³³ For the ANS, Michael Kühnen explains that "As far as theory is concerned, we orient ourselves on the great political figures of the twenties and thirties, who tried at that time not only to prepare ideologically, but also to really practice the so-called third path... between democracy and communism. For us in Germany it is natural that Adolf Hitler is for us the greatest politician which we have had in recent

times."³⁴ For Erwin Schönborn the "Idea of national Socialism is the only genuine alternative to those ideologies, which are misanthropic and inimical to the peoples (Völkerfeindlich), which rule the world today."³⁵

In view of this open identification with National Socialism, it is not surprising that a "fanatical glorification of National Socialism and its former representatives"³⁶ is a key component of neo-Nazism. National Socialism is seen and portrayed not just as another political movement but rather, and Knütter notes a similar tendency in right radical publications of the 1950s, as an "historical phenomenon of great importance and of intellectual-cultural significance," an almost religious-like phenomenon. National Socialism is raised to a higher level, is seen as the ideological foundation of a new historical era. These tendencies can be seen clearly in the following citations. The 'Völkischer Beobachter' states: "National Socialism, once the deliverance of Germany is today still strictly forbidden for and withheld from the Germans by its enemies and their internal helpers. The enemies of the spirit (des Geistes) overlook the laws of intellectual cause and effect. They think that ideas and teachings can be extinguished by paragraphs and decrees, persecutions. But each state of power (Machtzustand) is a temporary political constellation which will not be repeated and the vacuum of mediocrity hates nothing more than the intellectual abundance of an idea which the former is not capable of opposing with anything comparable or better. Like a religious wave, the gospel of the coming millenium, National Socialism, has seized all peoples of the earth... The signs are becoming more and more numerous and the "signal of the times" can be read visibly from the skies...and the best Nationalists amongst the peoples are occupied with National Socialism in the knowledge that it will be the gospel of coming millenia."³⁷ Eckart demands "Struggle for the sacred goals and ideas of our National Socialist ideology."³⁸

Hitler also is seen and portrayed as a figure of historic proportion and of lasting significance, a mythical, and religious-like character. For the DVG Hitler is "one of the greatest sons"³⁹ of the German people. In the 'Völkischer Beobachter' one can read "On the 45th anniversary of the National Socialist take-over in the German Reich, Adolf Hitler's movement is once again in action... We lower the flags and place on the invisible grave of the greatest man of all the historical epochs of the nation, the laurel crown with the swastika..."⁴⁰ To Adolf Hitler the 'Faschistische Front' attributes "unique historical achievements" and "true leadership" which will be "a spring of strength for our people even in a thousand years."⁴¹ The BBI saw in Hitler a "deeply religious person" in whom perhaps after a hundred years people will see a Saviour."⁴²

The justification for this type of adulation of Hitler would appear to lie, as far as neo-Nazis are concerned, in the 'noble aims' pursued and in the 'concrete achievements' of the regime. Hitler is alleged to have saved Germany and Europe from Bolshevism and the white race from Jewish domination. The 'Völkischer Beobachter' asserts that "On that day almost 50 years ago, Germany and Europe were once again, through his will and actions, saved from the red flood and thus Western Europe was given another opportunity of reforming itself in peace and order, in freedom and responsibility."⁴³ 'Wille und Weg' points out that "At the Zionist's congress in Basel in 1897, the final solution of the white race with the help of 3 world wars was planned... The great Aryan leader Adolf Hitler tried to avert the horrific fate which was approaching the white race."⁴⁴ In a similar vein, but with a somewhat less cautious choice of language, a hand-painted sign outside the headquarters of a so-called 'NS-Kampfgruppe' read "30th January 1933 - In a short time National Socialism under our leader Adolf Hitler removed the Kosher dictate of Versailles and swept the garlic eaters (Knoblauchfresser) from the Reich."⁴⁵



Here it would appear that elements of the Nazis' own propaganda have been adopted by the neo-Nazis.

Particular emphasis is placed on National Socialism's and Hitler's alleged success in solving the economic and social crisis of the 30s and in creating a true people's community. Under Hitler, it is alleged, the German people enjoyed internal peace and prosperity and once again found happiness. The ANS Kampfprogramm asserts that "Within a few years National Socialism put an end to mass unemployment, reestablished social peace, improved the standard of living, united all Germans and obtained international recognition for the Greater German Reich."⁴⁶ A leaflet produced by the NSDAP/AO and headed with a swastika reads "Under this sign, no unemployment, no inflation, no corruption."⁴⁷ The 'NS-Kampfruf' points out that under Hitler "The mutilated nation was replaced by the community of the people... Everyone could see that the application of the principles of Adolf Hitler's national Socialism created a happy and contented people."⁴⁸

As a final justification of National Socialism neo-Nazis stress the legality of the Nazi regime. In an interview Kühnen pointed out that "...we work legally...in the...knowledge that the German people cannot be won through terror and that National Socialists have never needed to use terror in order to win the German people. National Socialists came to power at that time in the free elections."⁴⁹ A citation in 'Der Sturm' reads "Thirty years ago the last German government was unlawfully imprisoned in degrading circumstances. As a result of this unparalleled act of banditry by the English and the Americans, the German people were robbed of their lawful and elected leadership."⁵⁰

To conclude this section one might add that to the glorification of Hitler and National Socialism there corresponds praise for more contemporary fascist regimes. In 'Der Aufmarsch' one could read, for example,

"Long live General Franco! 5 communist criminals executed-- a blessing for Spain! The red pack howls with rage; but their days are numbered - here also! Germany needs fascism!"⁵¹ Similarly on the occasion of Franco's death the same journal expressed its sympathy: "The Caudillo is dead. We grieve with the Spanish people."⁵²

2.2.3 Attitude to the Mass Murder of Jews and Antisemitism.

There is no doubt that the chief obstacle to a more favourable reception of National Socialism are the measures undertaken by the Nazi regime against its political, ideological but especially racial opponents. Neo-Nazi activists would seem to be well aware of this problem. Kühnen notes, for example, that "You can go anywhere in Germany today, into the street, or into the pub, and say, what do you think of Hitler and National Socialism and you will hear a lot which is positive. But again and again two standard arguments: If he had not started the war and if he had not gassed the Jews."⁵³ It is not surprising then that a considerable proportion of neo-Nazi propaganda is concerned with denying the crimes perpetrated under the NS regime.⁵⁴ The DVG points out that "For over thirty years now it has been hammered into us Germans by the press, schools, radio and television that we Germans murdered millions of Jews during the second world war. Systematic work by German and foreign historians has now proven that it is a case of a huge hoax!"⁵⁵ In a pamphlet headed "Dear Comrades in the Bundeswehr" Erwin Schönborn of the KDS asks members of the Bundeswehr to visit so-called 'Auschwitz trials', so that they too become witnesses to the fact the "...the KDS is right when it asserts that in Auschwitz also there were no 'gassing establishments'."⁵⁶ Schönborn was also responsible for the widely distributed

leaflet with the following text: "We shall pay 10,000DM reward for every indisputably proven 'gassing' in a 'gas chamber' of a German concentration camp. We do not accept witnesses from Poland, Israel or the USA, who, as in the NS trials, committed perjury, without having been prosecuted for it. We require: name, Christian name, date of birth, place of birth, where arrested, imprisoned in which KZ and in which KZ 'gassed'."⁵⁷ In a later leaflet Schönborn concluded that "After, during more than two years, not a single witness, either from amongst the prisoners or from the surviving members of the guard details, has come forward to claim the large sum of money, that which for a long time now has been proven as far as science and history are concerned, namely that gassings did not take place in any German KZ because there were neither 'gas chambers' or similar installations or any other kinds of establishment for mass annihilations, is now evident for the masses also. Only totally imbecile complete idiots or agents of the war criminals' state Israel can still propagate today the lies about the gassings."⁵⁸

The favourite means utilised by neo-Nazis to substantiate these denials are the citing of eye-witnesses and accounts based on personal experience. In one of his mass produced 'letters' W.D. Rothe cites the so-called eye-witness J.G. Burg : "As a member of a state commission of enquiry I had the opportunity at the end of 1944 to visit Maidanek officially. In the Autumn of 1945 privately, once again Maidanek and Auschwitz. I was able to look at everything... I spoke at length with inmates who had been imprisoned for numerous years...not one of them had ever heard of or seen a gas chamber in which human beings had been killed;; I also had the opportunity of speaking unimpeded and candidly with former aids and no-one knew anything about mass annihilations or gas chambers."⁵⁹ In an 'information sheet' the 'DVG' pointed out that "As a result of the experiences of Jochen Floth" (Jochen Floth, the

founder and first chairman of the DVG, had spent some time in the former concentration camp Auschwitz as a prisoner of war and had supposedly seen "nowhere gas chambers or anything similar and no mountains of corpses either") "and those of other witnesses (Thies Christophersen, Wilhelm Stäglich, Hinrich Harms, Bruno Feigl, J.V. Stolzenhain), it is proven that there were no gassing installations in Auschwitz and consequently the chatter in the press, on radio and television...about the millions of gassed people is an evil lie." ⁶⁰ Finally Thies Christophersen in his widely read autobiographical account of Auschwitz states "One evening, my mother enquired about the crematoria where people were burnt...I searched throughout the camp, checked every fireplace and all smoking chimneys. I did not find anything. When I asked my colleagues, they shrugged their shoulders: I should not believe such foul gossip." ⁶¹

'Logical' argument is also used. In 'der Angriff' Werner Braun points out that it was war-time and that the thousands of tons of coal needed for even a million corpses, let alone 6 million, were needed elsewhere. Braun even goes to the what he himself labels 'macabre' lengths of calculating the amount of ash which would result from the burning of a million corpses, an amount which he asserts it would have been impossible to hide. ⁶² Gas chambers are explained away as "Disinfection rooms for the extermination of vermin", ⁶³ whilst the crematoria were used for burning corpses to prevent the spread of epidemics. ⁶⁴ These views, however, which admit the existence of gas chambers and crematoria but argue that they had legitimate functions conflicts somewhat with the view, also widely heard in neo-Nazi circles, that it has now been proven that the gas chambers and crematoria had been built after the war by the allies and by "Jewish bands in American uniforms." ⁶⁵

According to the neo-Nazis then assertions that mass murders of Jews took place in the 'III Reich' are lies, legends, on a par, it is argued,

with the anti-German propaganda - professing, for example, the existence of corpse factories where glycerine was produced from soldiers' remains - prevalent during the first world war.⁶⁶ The perpetrators of these 'legends' are the Jews, Zionists and the allies. 'Der Angriff' asserts that "Extorted 'evidence' from tortured German soldiers and the exposure of Jewish liars (...) complete the picture."⁶⁷ Erwin Schönborn recommends that one should visit the 'Auschwitz trials' to see "...how the witnesses from Israel and Poland committed one perjury after another."⁶⁸ The eye-witness J.G. Burg first learnt of mass murders and gassing installations, according to a citation by W.D. Rothe, "in the Zionist propagandist schools in Breslau..."⁶⁹

The reasons given for the creation of these 'lies' are numerous. Schönborn indicates that their purpose was to force the United Nations to agree to the founding of the Israeli state.⁷⁰ Werner Braun notes that they were intended to "destroy National Socialism in Germany and to ruin Germany's reputation in the world"⁷¹ and also to "divert attention from the war crimes" of the allies, "for if anyone deserved restitution then we Germans and not the Jews."⁷²

The view expressed above that not the Germans but above all the allies were the real criminals is to be found repeatedly in neo-Nazi publications. In another pamphlet by W.D. Rothe entitled 'Holocaust' one finds for example "The German women, children and old men who, in the last world war, became victims of a Western capitalist bomb-dumping profiteering on German cities are considered to have been just as little exposed to genocide as the millions of victims of the expulsion of East Germans from their homeland and the millions of victims of the so-called 'silent camps' in the Soviet Union..."⁷³

The denial of any mass murder of Jews during the 'III Reich' exists side by side with a virulent antisemitism although the nature of this

and the language in which it is expressed varies from group to group depending not so much on fundamental differences of opinion but rather on tactical considerations i.e. whether the organisation is active chiefly in the open or whether there is a concentration on conspiratorial, illegal activity.⁷⁴ Asked about the attitudes of the ANS towards the Jews Kühnen stressed, for example, that "We are not against individual Jews. And this is not just a flowery phrase for propaganda purposes. We have nothing against individual Jews as long as they behave loyally. What we do have something against is the organised power of world Jewry, whereby the term world Jewry is in fact basically wrong. It is a case of those Zionist organisations which, via America or via Israel, exert influence over all world politics."⁷⁵ A similar position is to be found in the program of the DVG, also an openly operating organisation. Section 9 demands "The chief enemy of the freedom of Greater Germany and of the world, international Zionism with its manifestations capitalism and communism is to be fought on a world-wide scale. The struggle must continue until Zionism has been exterminated..."⁷⁶ The 'Freundeskreis der NSDAP' is somewhat less cautious and does not consider it necessary to make such subtle distinctions between Jews, international Jewry and Zionism: "Consequently the term antisemitism is no longer up to date. Even the use of the term anti-Zionism is misleading because it diverts attention from the real relationships. The Jews simply remain what they have been for over 2,000 years, simply Jews and any other characterisation serves only to conceal their activities."⁷⁷

The language evident in the above citations contrasts strongly however with that in publications originating from underground organisations. In 'Der Sturm', the journal of the NSDAP-Gau Hamburg and the SA-Sturm 8. Mai one can read "...we respect the peace of the dead, even if they are hooked-nosed ones. A dead Jew is after all a good Jew!..."

When one reads the impudent challenge of these foreign parasites one is seized with a cold fury and I think that we National Socialists will one day be glad that the concentration camps have been so well preserved as a memorial of atrocities which never took place. They can in fact be put back into operation within 24 hours!"⁷⁸ This example is particularly significant in that since 'Der Sturm' is edited by Kühnen⁷⁹ who is also the leader of the ANS, it would seem to support the view that the differences in language are due merely to tactical considerations. The aggressiveness of the language in 'Der Sturm' is equalled and often surpassed in the journals of other organisations working underground. 'Wille und Weg' urges "Death to the Jewish vermin."⁸⁰ Wolf-Dieter Eckart demands "Strike the Jews in their malicious faces (Fresse), smash their windows, mark the houses of Jews as such. Burn down the synagogues which have been left standing. Germany awaken! Arians, fight for an arian people's community and annihilate Jewry which is the misfortune of us all. Sieg Heil."⁸¹

The justifications for this anti-Jewish agitation are, according to the neo-Nazis, numerous. 'Wille und Weg' points out that "Jews are an oriental people and do not belong to the European community of peoples. Everything which is daily bringing about the destruction of this earth, has, in the final analysis, its origin in the false doctrines which since the emancipation of the Jews are corrupting the peoples."⁸² Marxism is seen as one of these false doctrines. The 'dictatorship of the proletariat' is, according to 'Wille und Weg' "the attempt to transform Jewish dogma into practical politics."⁸³ In addition, Jews, it is asserted, hold the real power both in the East and in the West and exert an influence quite incompatible with their number. An information sheet originating from the DVG entitled "USA and USSR: Jews are looking at you!" provides lists for example to show the number of leading positions in the

military and in the Government in both the USA and the USSR held by Jews. The pamphlet continues : "The Jews number only about 20 millions out of a present world population of approximately 4,500 millions. Jews, however, hold leading positions in the USA, in the USSR and in almost all the industrialized nations. WE REJECT THIS."⁸⁴

2.2.4 Attitude towards the war.

As noted at the beginning of the previous section, the neo-Nazis are well aware that in addition to the racist excesses of the 'III Reich', the war also constitutes a major impediment to any rehabilitation of National Socialism. It is not surprising then that to the denial of the mass murder of Jews, there corresponds a denial of Germany's role in starting the war. A sticker produced by the DVG demands, for example, "An end to the 6 million Jews lie and to the war guilt lie."⁸⁵

One method of absolving Germany from any guilt is to stress that the Jews were the real initiators and beneficiaries of the war. In a letter to the 'Israel Association of Fighters and the Anti-Hitler Front and Victims of Nazism', the Wehrwolfgruppe Saar-Pfalz asserted, for example, "You unleashed a world war against Germany and used other peoples to carry out your dirty business. You set millions and millions of Arians at variance with one another and let them bleed to death, whilst you pocketed the political and material profit from your war agitation. You ruined our country and in addition the whole of Europe..."⁸⁶ In a pamphlet entitled "Zionists unleashed the 1st and the 2nd World Wars", Erwin Schönborn claims that in a brochure Nahum Goldmann, the "spokesman of international Jewry, ...indirectly but convincingly proves that the 1st world war was staged in order to get the English to agree, with the

Balfour declaration, to the fact that Palestine was to become the Jewish homeland and that the second world war was provoked in order to finally found the state of Israel."⁸⁷

The above method is supplemented by arguments which are more acceptable on an intellectual level and thus more convincing. 'Der Angriff' argues for example that the Poles were responsible for the second world war : "The war fury and crusading mood against Germany which prevailed in August 1939 in all groups of Polish society found its particular expression in numerous declarations and newspaper articles... With the mobilisation which began on the 24 August 1939 the war psychosis in Poland had reached its peak. Poland was ready to force a war with Germany at any price. Since the Reich could no longer accept the macedonian conditions on its Eastern border which were no longer tolerable, there resulted - and this had the effect of starting the war - the first sword-stroke on the part of Germany."⁸⁸ The fate of the German minority in Poland is also put forward as a legitimation for the military action taken against her. : "The international manipulators conceal...to this day, the fact that at that time - in the summer of 1939 - as the life of every single German in Poland was threatened and in the greatest danger, there existed for the Reich a state of emergency transgressing normal law and recognized in international law, which was based on the fact that the Polish government was neither disposed to nor capable of adequately protecting its German citizens. In addition, by far the greatest part of the Polish people participated in the hounding of Germans which was staged; so the German march into Poland - if one wishes to be precise - was nothing more than a police action against terrorists which certainly saved tens of thousands of German lives."⁸⁹

Not only, however, do the neo-Nazis stress that the Polish crisis was the fault of Poland and the German intervention was totally justified

and in accordance with international law, but they draw a clear distinction between this crisis and the second world war i.e. they do not admit the direct causal links between the two phenomena. In this way England and France emerge as the guilty parties: "A world war developed from the German-Polish border conflict, which was a result of continual murders of Germans by the Poles, only when England and France declared war on Germany!"⁹⁰ Likewise the ANS asserts "In the final analysis the English and the French declared war on us and not the reverse."⁹¹

As far as the particular outcome of the war is concerned neo-Nazis stress that Germany's defeat was not due to any shortcomings of the German soldier, whose bravery and fidelity to the cause and to Hitler are stressed. A sticker originating from the 'DVG' is headed "Our fathers were HEROES."⁹² A leaflet, for which the journal 'Wille und Weg' claims responsibility notes that Germans have a duty towards "The heroes who fell at the front."⁹³ The 'NS-Kampfruf' points out that "The vast majority of the Wehrmacht - Officers and men - remained true to the Leader and to the Fatherland, to the death."⁹⁴ Military defeat was the direct consequence of the treachery of a small clique of Conservative generals: "Too late, much too late, the Leader realized that the conservative Generals had betrayed him... a handful of traitors cost the lives of a hundred thousand German soldiers and cost Germany the victory. They are responsible for Soviet rule in the Eastern zone and in Eastern Europe."⁹⁵ Here one can see an attempt to create a new 'stab-in-the-back' legend.

2.3 Neo-Nazism and the extreme Right

According to one official source, it is difficult to assess the origin of the phenomenon of neo-Nazism "...since on the whole the neo-

Nazi publications do not reveal an unequivocal target."⁹⁶ The above analysis of key elements of neo-Nazi ideology and propaganda would seem to contradict this view. The virulence of the neo-Nazi attacks on the political parties and the party system of the Federal Republic constitutes at least corroborative evidence for the assertion that underlying the present developments on the right is a profound dissatisfaction with the existing parties and the party system. Similarly the underlining of the economic achievements of the 'III Reich' would seem to substantiate the claim that neo-Nazi tendencies are closely linked to present economic difficulties.

The above study would also seem to indicate that one must be cautious of seeing neo-Nazis as mere 'pseudo-political rockers' or 'harlequins'⁹⁷ without an ideological foundation. Neo-Nazi groups do, as clearly emerged, possess an ideology, albeit a concoction of anti-communist, racist, anti-semitic, folkish collectivist, anti-democratic, anti-party, and totalitarian maxims and slogans, in short a mixture of fragments of the National Socialist ideology.⁹⁸ In addition they glorify the National Socialist era and deny the "negative aspects" of National Socialist rule.

This does not mean to say on the other hand that individual activists (and according to some even parts of the neo-Nazi leadership) are "schooled, ideologically intransigent Nazis."⁹⁹ According to Rabe, despite the adoption of the above maxims and slogans, the young neo-Nazis have scarcely occupied themselves with the 'chapter National Socialism' much more than the average German young person.¹⁰⁰ Indeed this would appear to be confirmed by the neo-Nazis themselves. Kühnen pointed out in an interview e.g. that "Especially older people often turn up and say: "You really ought to do some ideological schooling with your youngsters"... But if I call my people together in a room and give them lectures on Social Darwinism, on race, on biology or heaven knows what else, that's when things would start to crumble."¹⁰¹

This would seem to suggest firstly that it is not primarily out of ideological conviction that young people join neo-Nazi groups¹⁰² and secondly that the fact that young neo-Nazis propagate a rebirth of National Socialism does not necessarily signify an identification with the NS ideology. According to Rabe it is more an "expression of their total rejection of this state, which they no longer wish to change...only blindly destroy..."¹⁰³ In a similar vein Stöss notes "I doubt that the NS renaissance as a rule signifies an identification with National Socialism. It is probable that as a result of a lack of positive identification points, the most frightening caricature (Fratze) (Hitler) or the most frightening symbol (swastika) is brought out, in order to express what one thinks of West German society."¹⁰⁴ Above all Nazi slogans, the denial of mass murder are, like NS symbols and uniforms, aptly suited to draw attention to the groups i.e. fulfil an essentially provocative function.¹⁰⁵

On the other hand one should not underestimate the significance of the ideology. According to Kühnen, for those members who have been active for longer periods "the ideological foundations and ideological practice (Betätigung)...are of primordial importance."¹⁰⁶ There seems little reason to dispute this view that there is a direct correlation between the length of membership and the degree of identification with the ideology propagated. An assessment of the role of ideology by Koppernagel indicates the possible processes involved in this gradually increasing identification. The ideology "...provides an external foe which firstly increases the degree of attachment to the group (...) and provides a scapegoat and consequently a simple explanation for one's own and social misery. The 'positively experienced' group cohesion frees one firstly from one's own problems and the ideology has a culprit ready for these problems; once feelings of enmity have been stimulated against the latter, they have a strengthening effect on the identification with the group, which in turn

increases the belief in the ideology. Consequently the young person finds himself in a closed circle, in which to an ever greater degree the new meaning of the nationalist ideology can become a certainty."¹⁰⁷ The very nature of the ideology, its lack of complexity, would seem to support this tendency.¹⁰⁸

The particular nature of the neo-Nazi ideology, above all the fact that it does not constitute a 'closed system', the fact that a clearly defined ideological framework has not been developed but fragments of the NS ideology have been adopted - a consequence of the neo-Nazi's neglect of ideological questions and their emphasis on action - must also be considered in relation to the potential threat posed. For one thing one must point out that this says very little about its potential mobilizing capacity as becomes particularly clear if one considers the particular nature of the Nazi ideology itself. In his study "Antidemocratic Thought in the Weimar Republic" Kurt Sontheimer noted, for example, that "The National Socialist ideology was never a uniform doctrine, which could be compared, even remotely with the cohesion of the Marxist ideology... The ambiguity of the National Socialist ideology was a general pre-requisite for the mass influx."¹⁰⁹ It would appear incorrect also to see the absence of a clearly defined neo-Nazi ideology as a confirmation of the fact that the neo-Nazi Right is characterised essentially by an ideological chaos. The empirical analysis above showed that although there are slight differences of emphasis of position between the various groups, on the whole it is not the differences which are of significance but the fundamental similarities. As Schäfer points out "Common to all (groups) is an unconditional approval of National Socialism, the struggle for its return and against the system."¹¹⁰ The relative neglect of ideological questions would seem to go a long way towards explaining the high degree of co-operation between the various groups noted in the previous chapter.

The extreme rivalry among groups of the extreme Left where ideology plays a much more important role would appear to support this view. On the other hand what Rowold pointed out for the 'New Right' namely that the absence of a stringent ideological framework prevents impulses for the development of a political party,¹¹¹ that is the transformation of informal links into an organisational unification, remains valid for the neo-Nazi Right and in this respect the particular nature of the neo-Nazi ideology would seem to be a serious weakness.

It would appear to be a weakness in a further respect, namely in that it impedes a clear demarcation from the traditional Right.¹¹² The views concerning the relationship between the various groupings on the Right differ widely. Official sources stress the distinctions and assert that the Right is made up of a number of fratricidal factions,¹¹³ which moreover is put forward as a key justification for the view that the far Right does not constitute a threat to democracy in Western Germany. Rabe supports this view citing decrees issued by the various extremist factions themselves referring to the incompatibility of the different ideological positions.¹¹⁴ However if one compares the ideology extrapolated above with 'national-democratic' and 'national-liberal' positions, one sees that there are in fact more similarities than differences. Schäfer, who carried out a detailed analysis of the range and structure of neo-Nazi propaganda, writes that the positions of the various factions are not so different that all groups are not influenced by the propaganda of the others.¹¹⁵ Moreover it is only against such a background that the numerous links between the various factions pointed out in the previous chapter become at all possible. Consequently one must look for other explanations for the repeated official 'Abgrenzungen' from the neo-Nazi right than fundamental ideological incompatibility. It may, for example, be an attempt to stem the flow of particularly young members to neo-Nazi organis-

-ations¹¹⁶ or a tactical move to avoid administrative reactions which could impede their own legal activities.¹¹⁷

The view that the far Right is weak as a result of inter-group ideological warfare is therefore incorrect. Similarly the view that neo-Nazism is insignificant in that very few individuals hold such views must also be discounted. It has become clear that considerable numbers of organised extremists hold views which differ only marginally from those held by the neo-Nazis. On the other hand the fact that the views held by neo-Nazis are so similar to those held by much stronger groups of organised extremists would seem to permit the assumption that these stronger groups would exert a considerable attraction on neo-Nazi activists in the event of, for example, a reversal in the present electoral fortunes of the former.

Despite our view that there exists a fundamental ideological compatibility on the far Right, this does not mean that one can ignore the differences between the neo-Nazi and the traditional Right. Neo-Nazism is a much more extreme version of right-extremism than has been seen hitherto in the Federal Republic. This radicalisation (and one will remember that the NPD is becoming increasingly more radical under pressure from the JN) constitutes a major change on the Right. The following section will consider the possible origins of this trend. It will also, by looking at the relationship between the extreme Right and more significant political and social forces, attempt to provide a more accurate assessment of the potential danger emanating from the far Right.

2.4 The Extreme and the Moderate Right.

As far as the radicalisation on the far Right is concerned, it is evident that, on one level, this process is closely related to the incre-

-asing influence of young people who are not only psychologically more prone to radical alternatives but who, unlike many of the older activists and leadership figures, neither experienced the 'III Reich' nor the failures encountered by rightist organisations throughout the fifties and early sixties.¹¹⁸ However, in as much as the more radical position was initially expounded by older activists, as was seen in the previous chapter, to see the ideological changes the Right is presently undergoing solely in terms of the changes in membership structure would seem to be an overestimation of their significance. External factors must also be taken into consideration. Horchem notes in this respect that Right-extremism "is isolated from all prevailing political ideas of this decade... It is cut off from the offensive forces established on the Left or the extreme Left and consequently produced - in decay and weakness - a militant neo-Nazism."¹¹⁹ For Horchem then the process of radicalization on the Right appears as the result of a simple 'Trotzreaktion', a reaction to the total marginality of right-extremism in the Federal Republic of the seventies.

It is our contention, however, that this view constitutes a serious error. A first indication of this emerges from a consideration of past trends on the Right. Far from bringing about a radicalisation, the isolation of rightist ideologies in the post-war period introduced a trend towards moderation. Above all, however, although analyses of membership figures and trends appear to suggest that right-extremism is isolated, comparisons between the ideological positions of right-extremism and those of other social and political groups show, as numerous commentators have already pointed out, that this is in fact no longer the case. H.D. Müller's work 'Der Springer-Konzern' which was published in 1968 and was based primarily on an analysis of 'Die Welt' and 'Welt am Sonntag' showed clearly, for example, that, to use Sontheimer's words, "...the new national-

-ism of this press, which operates within the democratic consensus and which again and again announces its opposition (sich wenden gegen) to any extremism, is only a version which has been polished up and freed from over-crude primitivism, of the same nationalist thought and sentiment which is indigenous to the Right and which is decried as radical."¹²⁰ Towards the end of the Adenauer era this new Nationalism had made a not insignificant impact on certain leadership groups in the Federal Republic: "Erhard, the Federal Chancellor proclaimed emphatically 'the end of the post-war period', Gerstenmaier, the President of the Bundestag touched upon (unkreiste) the idea of the Nation and of the Fatherland in a series of addresses in which he recommended a healthy nationalism as a course of political rehabilitation (Besserungskur)...In an abundance of remarks of this type, an official change of tone towards a supposedly purified nationalism revealed itself."¹²¹

Exemplary of the significance and the increase in significance of nationalist thought in conservative groupings are the positions held and the modifications of position to be seen in the area of the so-called 'Deutschlandpolitik' in recent years. Although in his 'Entwurf für Europa' Strauss noted that he did not believe in the possibility of recreating "a German national state, not even within the boundaries of the four zones of occupation",¹²² Kühnl points out that as early as 1964 Strauss was emphasizing "that the German people will never come to terms with a solution for the political structure of central-Eastern Europe which harms legitimate German interests" and that the Federal Republic had to "strive for the re-establishment of the German Reich of 1937 with all political means."¹²³ In his study "Die von F-J Strauss repräsentierten Kräften", Kühnl, on the basis of comparisons between especially the 'Bayern Kurier' and NPD publications, came to the conclusion that conservative agitation against the 'Ostpolitik' and its leading exponents differed only marginally both in

content and in aggressiveness from that of neo-fascist groupings,¹²⁴ although the areas which neo-fascist groupings were claiming as rightly German were admittedly somewhat more extensive than those claimed by the conservative groupings.¹²⁵ Whether such a distinction can still be made is, however, debatable. The 'German-political statement of principles' (Deutschlandpolitisches Grundsatzpapier) of the CSU Landesgruppe of the 23 February 1978 asserts that "The most important question today is concerned with the legal relationship between the Federal Republic of Germany and Central Germany which is controlled by the SED, although the question of the Oder-Neisse areas and of those parts of the Reich which lie beyond the borders of the 31st. December 1937, is of great importance."¹²⁶ Indicative of the hardening of position of the conservative Right on nationalist themes is their opposition to the proposed new sales tax law (Umsatzsteuerrecht) incorporating a new definition of the term 'home territory' (Inland). Whilst according to the existing law 'home territory' comprises the area of the German Reich in the borders of 31st December 1939, in the new text the GDR is no longer considered a part of the 'home territory' but as a territory which is neither 'home territory' nor 'abroad', whilst the former Eastern territories, now parts of the USSR or Poland are seen as 'abroad'. What is significant here, is the fact that a 1971 law which included the above amendments was approved by the Länder in the Bundesrat which had CDU majorities. The present CDU/CSU opposition would appear therefore, to be indicative of a swing to the right in these parties.¹²⁷

Important here also are the views held in conservative circles on past and existing authoritarian and totalitarian regimes. According to the 'BK', the whole of the Springer press and all significant representatives of the CDU/CSU, the setting-up of the military dictatorship in Chile was a necessary expedient.¹²⁸ In Chile, Stauss announced that "As

far as internal security and defence of freedom is concerned, the Chilean system is a quite excellent and exemplary system"¹²⁹ and warned that Chileans should ensure "that freedom in their country, from wherever it is threatened, is maintained" and that they should strive to ensure "that discipline, industry, achievement, selflessness (Opferbereitschaft) and fellowship create a flourishing land Chile in which every citizen can say with pride, I am a free Chilean."¹³⁰ These views bear striking similarities to those heard in unequivocally extremist circles.

As far as the evaluation of the National Socialist dictatorship by right-wing elements within the conservative parties is concerned one might point out that the 'BK' is able to speak of the "exemplary family policy of the NS regime"¹³¹ Strauss speaks of the overthrow of the NS dictatorship as a "defeat for our people."¹³² As far as the war is concerned, an article in the 'Rheinischer Merkur' asserts that "Until now the West has paid much to little attention to the fact that the Soviet 'peace strategy' is based on the fundamental historical lie that Germany alone was responsible for the outbreak of the second world war."¹³³ For Strauss, who appears somewhat more cautious than the author of the above, it is clear "that Hitler's orders to march against Poland caused the second world war even if he who issued the marching orders did not know that the result would be the second world war and consequently Germany's destruction."¹³⁴ According to Strauss it is true "to say, even today, that the Germans are not the only villains of world history."¹³⁵ Concerning the mass murder of Jews and other victims of racism Strauss asserted that "We do not want to be constantly reminded of our past by any one any more, neither by Washington, nor by Moscow, not by any European neighbour, nor by Tel Aviv."¹³⁶ Whilst in Strauss' view, it is now time to forget the crimes committed by the NS regime, the same reasoning evidently does not apply to crimes committed against Germans: "We do not

add everything up... But - I have never understood, and I have opposed this publicly, why the documents concerning the crimes committed during the expulsion (from the Eastern territories, RC) of Germans are kept back by the Federal Republic and are not published in such a way as to allow the people of today and especially young people easy access to the truthful view of history which we demand."¹³⁷ It is worth pointing out here perhaps that the act of making such documents available would not necessarily contribute to a more truthful view of history. It would be necessary for example, in addition, to draw a clear distinction between systematic, unprovoked genocide and crimes committed in the wake of a war of aggression by those who had suffered.

If one compares the above views to those in evidence in neo-Nazi publications, one can see that legitimate parallels can be drawn. Both the extreme and right-wing elements of the conservative Right divide the National Socialist regime into positive and negative components, for example. Furthermore, although the Conservative Right does not deny outright either German responsibility for the second world war or the mass murder of Jews under the NS regime, there is a tendency to play down the extent of German responsibility and to play off German crimes against those committed by the allied powers.

As far as the initial impetus for the strengthening of nationalist tendencies within conservative groupings is concerned, Sontheimer writes that it was closely related to the disintegration of the substitute ideology of European unity, to the increased emphasis placed by other countries on national interests and to a new feeling of self-esteem based on economic achievements.¹³⁸ According to Strauss "A people, who have realized these economic achievements, have a right not to want to hear any more about Auschwitz."¹³⁹ The economic problems of the late sixties and seventies contributed to the 'swing to the Right' or to what has been

called the 'new trend' (Tendenzwende).¹⁴⁰ Kühnl points out the processes involved. Economic problems have serious political consequences, namely a loss of confidence on the part of the population in the existing parties and government and a tendency for the former to look for possible alternatives. In such a situation "the ruling classes (die Herrschenden) are themselves compelled...to offer an attractive alternative... As one can easily imagine, this alternative is a right-wing alternative, namely the strong, authoritarian state."¹⁴¹ In much the same way Stöss points out that with the onset of processes of economic and social disintegration resulting from the present crisis, 'technocratic conservatism' and also to a certain extent political Catholicism are increasingly being replaced by traditional nationalist ideologies (alter Nationalismus).¹⁴² The playing down of the more obviously negative aspects of the NS regime and the selection of alleged positive aspects would appear to fit into the above scheme in as much as they fulfil the function of, or at least are potentially capable of fulfilling the function of, counteracting widespread antipathy towards authoritarian solutions which is of course to a large extent founded on the NS experience.¹⁴³ Above all, however, the 'swing to the Right' of the Conservative parties which reached its culmination in the 1980 election campaign under Strauss' leadership must be evaluated as an attempt to reverse their electoral fortunes by appealing towards the Right - an unsuccessful strategy as the outcome of the recent Federal election clearly showed.

Finally the phenomenon of anti-Communism in the Federal Republic must be considered. Unlike nationalist, authoritarian trends, which only became clearly apparent more recently, anti-Communism, which again constitutes a key component of the ideology of the far Right, has been stressed since the very beginnings of the Federal Republic. Moreover anti-Communism is by no means restricted to the Conservative parties but was

a major characteristic of the SPD through-out the whole of the post-war period (as indeed it had been previously). This has not, however, prevented Conservatives from accusing, in much the same way as neo-fascist groupings, the Social Democrats of Communist tendencies, of being infiltrated by Communists or of "executing the business of the Soviet Union."¹⁴⁴

A similar phenomenon was to be observed during the anti-terrorist campaign conducted by the Conservative parties through-out the seventies. This campaign was by no means directed solely against those who were supporting terrorists in more or less concrete ways, but charges were levelled against, according to Kühnl, "almost all democratic, socialist and liberal movements and groups in the Federal Republic."¹⁴⁵ At the CDU party rally in Lower Saxony in 1977, Albrecht, the Prime Minister of that Land pointed out that "It is not the terrorists themselves which constitute the real problem for the state, but the sympathisers." These included, according to Albrecht, Heinrich Böll, the Norddeutsche Rundfunk, High school teachers and the Young Socialist. Kurt Biedenkopf included those politicians who had come to power in 1969, the so-called intellectuals and left-wing liberals as being responsible to a large extent for terrorism or rather for creating the conditions likely to bring about the terrorist activity.¹⁴⁶ Kühnl suggests that this violent campaign against the Left was not in fact a response to terrorism but that terrorist activity merely provided the excuse for this campaign, the real significance of which was that it constituted an attempt to emasculate those groups from within which alternatives other than those proposed by the Right i.e. left-wing alternatives were likely to emerge as more and more people became aware of the fact that the existing system was incapable of solving the present crisis.¹⁴⁷

Whatever the origins of the recent developments on the conservative Right, it is clear that the view of right-extremism as a completely

marginal, isolated phenomenon is untenable. Similar or comparable views and concepts to those held by the extreme Right have since the sixties been increasingly propagated by much stronger political and social forces. In the seventies this tendency is particularly apparent. It is here that one must see the origin of the tendencies towards a radicalisation on the far Right. With the general swing to the Right in the Federal Republic, or more concretely, with the resurgence of nationalism, of the mythology of the Reich, of authoritarian views of the state and with the closely related praise and statements of sympathy for rightist dictatorships, including acknowledgements of the fact that the NS regime did have its good sides, with the diffamation of intellectuals, liberals and social democrats as terrorist sympathisers, a political climate has been created which permitted and promoted the emergence of a much more radical version of right-extremism.¹⁴⁸

The question of the affinity of the ideology of the radical Right to that of other political and social forces is, however, not only of significance as regards the recent process of radicalisation, but especially as far as the potential danger emanating from the Right is concerned.¹⁴⁹ Whilst, on the one hand, it is true to say, as Pelinka points out, that by making partial concessions to elements of the NS ideology, the parties of the Federal Republic impeded the formation of a large rightist party in the post-war period and therefore provided an essential contribution to the stability of the multi-party system,¹⁵⁰ on the other hand, the stress on nationalism and authoritarian ideologies, especially to the extent in evidence in the seventies, is not without potential dangers. Sontheimer, in his study 'Antidemocratic thought in the Weimar Republic', shows how the 'antidemocratic thought' of the conservative Right in the Weimar Republic was a decisive factor in the destruction of the latter. On the one hand it denied the Republic the intellectual support

which it so urgently needed and secondly it made wide sections of the population intellectually and psychologically (seelisch) susceptible to the National Socialist revolution.¹⁵¹ Similarly Kühnl points out how Conservatism in Germany had glorified the authoritarian state, had opposed parliamentarianism and democracy after 1918 and had thus prepared the ground ideologically for fascism.¹⁵²

This does not mean to say that direct comparisons can be made in this respect between the Weimar Republic and the Federal Republic. One cannot ignore the major transformations the Conservative Right has undergone between the two periods. Whilst in Weimar the Conservatives were fundamentally opposed to the democratic system of government, the Conservative Right today is composed of strong democratic elements. In view of this Kühnl's allusions¹⁵³ towards the possibility of a new political alliance between the extreme and the moderate Right must be viewed with some scepticism. Nevertheless this study has shown that there are elements within the Conservative parties - and these forces would appear for the moment at least to have gained the upper hand - who are not averse to using concepts which in Weimar did prepare the ground ideologically for fascism, and who, in addition, with a similar effect, minimize the 'bad sides' of National Socialism, points out its 'good sides' and refuse to admit that the NS past has any relevance for post-war German politics. Consequently, despite the considerable differences between the two periods in question, it would appear that certain parallels can legitimately be drawn. It is for this reason that one cannot dismiss too lightly assertions that neo-Nazism constitutes at least a potential threat. This remains valid even though admittedly at the present time, organized neo-Nazism, as a result of the fact that no strong organisational centre has developed and the lack of a clear ideological demarcation from the NPD, does not constitute a serious danger. Its

present function would appear to be restricted to diverting attention by its ideological excesses and militancy from the potential dangers emanating from the NPD and from what is widely considered the most serious threat to West German democracy at the present time, namely the gradual undermining of democracy, the gradual strangulation of democratic rights and freedoms, the gradual move towards the type of authoritarian state envisaged by rightist Conservatives.¹⁵⁴

CHAPTER 3

NEO-NAZISM : THE RESPONSE OF THE COURTS

3.1 Introduction

It is a key theme of the present study that an analysis of right-extremism which focuses too closely on organisations - their ideology, membership etc. - does not permit an accurate evaluation of the potential threat posed. This is borne out by historical experience. The destruction of the Weimar Republic can only be explained if, in addition to the NSDAP's electoral successes and its development into a mass movement, the attitudes and behaviour of other relevant institutions and bodies - economic elites, conservative groupings, the military and the judiciary for example - are also taken into consideration. Since it is impossible within the framework of the present study to examine all the areas in question, one area, namely the judiciary, has been selected for analysis. Although the response of the judiciary to the phenomenon of neo-Nazism has not been subjected to a more systematic analysis - which justifies our selection of it - it is an area onto which considerable attention has been focused by critics. This can be attributed partially

to the prevalence of the view that by 'undermining' and 'disregarding' the democratic constitutional order during the whole of the period of the Weimar Republic, the judiciary played a not insignificant rôle in bringing democracy in Germany to an early end.¹ In addition, evidence would appear to have also emerged during the post-war period for anti-democratic tendencies within the judiciary. Criticism has been centred above all on the courts' rôle in dealing with NS and war crimes over the past 35 years. Here, however, caution is required. Rückerl² lists a whole series of factors which impede the courts and the prosecution in their task and which would seem to constitute legitimate explanations for what appears to many to be a somewhat indulgent manner - reflected in, for example, the small number of convictions and the often extremely long duration of the proceedings (16.8 years on average in 1977, 12.5 years in 1978)³ - with which this aspect of the process of 'coming to terms with the past' (Ver-gangenheitsbewältigung) has been or is being dealt. On the other hand, one might mention that in Austria, despite its relatively small size and, of course, despite comparable problems to those encountered by West German authorities, 13,607 people were convicted of NS crimes between 1945 and 1972.⁴ This figure contrasts strongly with the total of 6,355 convicted by West German courts over the same period.⁵ Moreover a study of successful convictions reveals that in a large number of cases, the sentences imposed do not appear to reflect in any adequate sense the gravity of the crimes committed.⁶

Among those circles where an awareness of the potential danger of neo-Nazism prevails, there would seem to be a general consensus that the response of the courts to this phenomenon can be compared with the failure of the judiciary to deal swiftly and strictly with NS and war criminals, being characterized essentially by complacency and excessive leniency.⁷

Despite the consensus noted above, the views on the response of the courts are in fact extremely wide-ranging. Official sources, as one might expect, on the whole reject the criticism levelled against the judicial authorities.⁸ Neo-Nazis themselves complain of persecution by the West German legal system and speak of "terror sentences".⁹ A somewhat similar stand is taken in certain conservative circles. Writing in the 'Bayern Kurier, Carl Dieter Spranger, MP, referred to the prison sentences received by neo-Nazi terrorists at the end of a recent trial in Bückeberg as "Draconian".¹⁰ The present chapter will be concerned essentially with assessing the validity of these different points of view, that is, with assessing whether the judiciary is adequately utilising the scope given to it by the laws of the land to curtail neo-Nazi activities or whether there is evidence to suggest that the criticism levelled against the judiciary, is, in fact, justified. A further task will be to assess the evidence for and against the assertion¹¹ that there has been a recent change in the attitude of the courts to the phenomenon of neo-Nazism, that there is an increasing awareness that the far Right is a potentially dangerous element in West German society, and if this is proven to be the case, to assess the possible origins of this change in attitude.

3.2 Neo-Nazism and the Courts

A first concrete charge levelled against the judiciary in general is that despite adequate scope for the initiation of legal action,¹² the former has in fact remained "largely inactive",¹³ not only in the face of the considerable increase in unequivocally neo-Nazi activity but also in the face of a massive increase in trade in objects and symbols originating from the 'III Reich' period¹⁴ which can be seen as the "subcultural back-

ground" to the phenomenon of neo-Nazism.¹⁵ A brief survey of relevant literature would indeed permit the compilation of quite a dossier of cases to support this criticism. As examples, one could cite the case of the Public Prosecutor's Office in Frankfurt refusing to initiate legal proceedings against the utilization of Nazi emblems on toys, being of the opinion that the usage of Nazi symbols is only illegal if employed for unequivocally propaganda purposes, that of an attempt to bring charges against the author of inflammatory neo-Nazi propaganda material being delayed for such a time that the case fell under the statute of limitations for press offences and finally that of the decision by the Public Prosecutor's Office in Hamburg that it was not 'in the public interest' to initiate legal proceedings on behalf of a Jewish citizen who had not only been the recipient of a threatening and antisemitic letter but who had been physically attacked by young neo-Nazi activists.¹⁶ Such cases, and the number of examples could be extended at will by reference to the press, would seem to indicate a surprising tolerance on the part of certain Public Prosecutor's Offices.

Nevertheless, the charge of inactivity, would seem hardly tenable in view of the statistical information available. An evaluation of reports originating from the judicial administrations of the various Länder concerning offences relating to 86 and 86a StGB undertaken by the Federal Ministry of Justice revealed a total of 750 preliminary and criminal proceedings in the period 1 January 1975 to 31 July 1978.¹⁷ Reference to recent reports published by the Ministry of the Interior reveals a continuous increase in the number of legal proceedings relating to offences committed by right-extremists - from 80 at the end of 1976,¹⁸ to 317 by the end of 1977 and to 610 by the end of 1978 (450 of these were initiated in 1978, the remainder being from previous years).¹⁹

The question remains, however, whether such statistical information

is really sufficient proof of the fact that the courts "are firmly decided to use every procedural and legal possibility to put an end to these (i.e. neo-Nazi) activities."²⁰ This question becomes especially pertinent if one takes into account not only the number of proceedings but also the evidence concerning the outcome of the proceedings. The view that legal proceedings against neo-Nazis result only rarely in a conviction²¹ would seem to be essentially correct. The Frankfurt Federal Prosecutor (Oberstaatsanwalt), Giebel, notes a "dubious disproportion" between the number of 7 charges out of a total of approximately 220 preliminary proceedings in the period 1978 to November 1979.²² The report cited above concerning 750 preliminary and criminal proceedings relating to 86 and 86a StGB revealed that convictions were obtained in only 54 cases. Whilst admittedly the total yearly number of convictions has increased considerably over the past few years - from 33 in 1976 to 46 in 1977 and to 88 in 1978²³ - the relationship between the number of convictions and the number of proceedings remained relatively stable, both increasing by slightly less than 100% during the period 1977 to the end of 1978.

A question in the Bavarian parliament revealed the frequently quoted²⁴ information that out of a total of 122 proceedings in the period 1975 to June 1977 in Bavaria, convictions occurred in only 8 cases.²⁵ This led to allegations that the judicial authorities in Bavaria constitute a particularly worrying case.²⁶ However the proportion of successful conclusions here, namely 8 out of 122 or approximately 7% compares not unfavourably with the Federal average - 54 out of a total of 750 proceedings or again approximately 7% - or with that attained in other Länder. In Nordrhein-Westfalen in 1978 there were 13 convictions out of a total of 461 relevant proceedings (3%).²⁷ The somewhat lower figure for Nordrhein-Westfalen may result from the fact that here only confirmed (rechtskräftig) sentences are included. Moreover one must ques-

-tion the widespread practise of quoting such figures without any accomp-
-anying commentary. There are a considerable number of quite legitimate
explanations for what at first appears an exceptionally low 'success' rate.
The above mentioned question in the Bavarian parliament revealed for exam-
-ple - admittedly an exceptional occurrence - that 22 proceedings were re-
-solved as a result of the death of the accused. In addition, some of the
proceedings had not yet run their full course and others were halted "be-
-cause of diminished responsibility e.g. because the offender was already
79 years old."²⁸ A further explanation cited, namely that in a large
number of cases the proceedings had to be terminated because "...especially
as regards actions involving stickers - the perpetrators could not be id-
-entified or the crime could not be proven,"²⁹ would seem to be of partic-
-ular importance. Its significance is indicated by the situation in Nord-
-rhein-Westfalen where in 1978, 239 proceedings out of a total of 461 or
almost 52% had to be terminated for similar reasons.³⁰ In view of the
nature of the neo-Nazi activities and the conspirative nature of many of
the groups as outlined in Chapter 1, it would be incorrect to evaluate
these explanations for the terminations of proceedings as an attempt to
cover up a lack of zeal.

Against this background, the relatively small number of convictions
would not seem to permit one to draw any unequivocal conclusions conc-
-erning the criticism of the legal authorities. Reference to certain ind-
-ividual cases, where there is evidence that courts go sometimes to cons-
-iderable lengths to avoid a conviction would, however, seem to suggest
that the criticism is not totally unfounded. In its decision of the 13
September 1978 the Landgericht Kleve expressed the view concerning the
legality or otherwise of the usage of swastikas on model aeroplanes that
"...to this extent it is doubtful whether it is a case of insignia of a
former National Socialist organisation here at all because the swastika

was used as the emblem of the airforce which was not a National Socialist organisation, not, for example, as an expression of National Socialist convictions."³¹ The lack of successful convictions would, however, seem to throw considerable doubt on many of the official views of the phenomenon of neo-Nazism. As an example one might cite Dr. Seidl, Secretary of State in Bavaria who, whilst conceding a "not insignificant increase" in neo-Nazi and anti-Semitic activity, asserts that "a large number of the incidents are limited to a relatively small number of culprits. These mostly well-known individuals became more active in 1977."³² Were this really the case, one might reasonably expect a somewhat greater success in bringing the perpetrators of these acts to justice.

Of particular importance in this analysis of the response of the courts is a consideration of the type of sentences received for neo-Nazi and related offences. It is here, in the predominance of fines and suspended sentences that many see most clearly evidence for over-tolerance and leniency.³³ Of 54 sentences passed during the period 1 January 1975 to 31 July 1978 as a result of offences relating to 86 and 86a StGB, 38 consisted of fines (between 120 and 5,400 DM) and 16 of prison sentences. Of the latter, however, 14 (between 4 and 9 months) were suspended. Consequently of those convicted, only two were obliged to actually serve a prison sentence.³⁴ The 1978 security report published by the Ministry of the interior notes 88 confirmed (rechtskräftig) sentences and summary court orders as a result of politically motivated offences committed by right-extremists. Out of a total of 16 prison sentences (2 months to 2 years), 13 were suspended. In 58 cases fines were imposed (of these 36 were between 75 and 1,000 DM and 22 between 1,000 and 9,600 DM. In 14 cases juvenile detentions, cautions or special assignments were applied.³⁵

According to Horchem the low sentences are attributable above all to two factors - firstly, to the fact that "...a considerable proportion of

those responsible for the offences belong to an age group, for whom, for example, the wearing of a helmet with an eagle emblem and a swastika appears in the first instance as a provocation, but not as a criminal offence...³⁶ and secondly to the fact that for many of the neo-Nazi activists the mitigating factor of a first offence applies. This second argument emerges clearly from the following statement - "The core of the groups will however after new offences very soon have to count on prison sentences, in the first instance perhaps suspended, but then not. This process is beginning to take effect since 1978."³⁷

These arguments would not appear to be substantiated by the available evidence however. In Chapter 1 it was shown that the vast majority of the really militant members and criminal elements are to be found in the 20-30 age group. Although there is no statistical evidence available to dispute Horchem's second insinuation, a look at individual cases does provide useful information. Particularly interesting in this respect is a survey of cases undertaken by Broder.³⁸ To cite just three of Broder's examples, Eckart, Roeder and Hoffmann are all particularly militant activists and are all over 40 years old. They have stood repeatedly before the courts since the early seventies for relatively serious offences. Nevertheless it was not until the late '70s that two of these activists received sentences which prevented further offences being committed. In July 1978, Eckart received a 2 year prison sentence for repeated violation of paragraphs 86, 86a, 90, 111, 130 and 131 StGB.³⁹ Roeder was sentenced in June 1977 by the Landgericht Flensburg to six months imprisonment for distributing propaganda material of an unconstitutional organisation and for defamation of the Federal Republic. Hoffmann remains active in 1980. Despite the gravity of some of the offences and in certain cases previous convictions for similar offences - illegal use of uniforms, resisting arrest and illegal use of firearms - he was given, at

his most recent appearance before the courts in March 1978, a one year suspended sentence. One sentence received by Roeder is especially noteworthy in that it suggests that the courts adopt a different approach when sectors of the community other than right-extremists are involved. In July 1976, he was fined 5,000 DM by the Amtsgericht Heilbronn for "defamation of a deceased person" (Verunglimpfung des Ansehens Verstorbener). This fine contrasts strongly with the 21 month prison sentence (not suspended) received by a criminal in Karlsruhe for slandering the murdered Prosecutor General, Buback, and the 6 month prison sentence (also not suspended) received by a left-oriented student for reprinting a 'Buback obituary' which had first appeared in the Kommunistische Volkszeitung. These cases would seem to confirm what the small number of prison sentences seems to imply, namely an exceptional degree of tolerance on the part of the judicial authorities towards right-wing extremists.

This allegation can be further supported by citing some of the reasons given in actual court cases to justify mild sentences. In March 1974 the Landgericht Darmstadt refused to open a trial against Manfred Roeder for his rôle in publishing the 'Auschwitz-Lie' (of which to date some 100,000 copies have been produced and distributed)⁴⁰ amongst other reasons because "the portrayal of the accused is so obviously false that no individual who can be taken seriously is likely to believe it and, as a consequence of it, be induced to take up an anti-Jewish position."⁴¹ In an appeal case against Roeder for a different offence, the Landgericht Heilbronn refused to apply a prison sentence with the explanation that "... a prison sentence could not improve Roeder, nor was it necessary as far as the maintenance of the legal consciousness of the public was concerned."⁴² An appeal court in Mainz considered that a 6 month suspended sentence for a man who had covered a police car with swastikas and with the Nazi slogan "Death to Jews" (Juda verrecke) was adequate in view of the fact that,

although, admittedly, the accused had recently been convicted of another offence, he had "...until he had reached a considerable age, led an ordered and lawful existence..."⁴³ In addition, the court took into consideration the fact that he "...finds himself in the rôle of an outsider and feels subjectively pestered by the control measures undertaken by the police", although later the court notes that such controls are, however, an unavoidable response to his own provocative behaviour. In each case then the courts would seem to be putting forward as mitigating circumstances factors which it at some point, directly or implicitly rejects. Additional mitigating circumstances noted are that "...his personal disposition and his temperament favour subjective and violent reactions... the accused was observed when committing the offence by police officers who could have prevented him from carrying out the act,...the act committed by the accused was relatively insignificant... Because it was very early in the morning, because of the immediate discovery of the deed, because the car was taken away promptly and because it was immediately cleaned, the political content of the daubings of the accused could not attain their full publicity. Only 280 DM worth of damage was caused." This detailed documentation of mitigating circumstances contrasts strongly with the two short sentences documenting the gravity of the offence. In a case against the founder of the 'DVG', who at the time of the case was 26 years old, the Landgericht Karlsruhe decided on a fine because this was the first offence of the accused and because it had become aware "of an unmistakable naïveté of the accused who was obviously inexperienced as far as political questions were concerned, whose desire to investigate was clearly led astray by the exclusive use of false or even 'pseudo-sources,'"⁴⁴ On the 24 July 1978, the Landgericht Lüneburg did not consider it necessary either to individually mention or to take into consideration a considerable number of former convictions received by a neo-Nazi activist

since these had "occured so long ago".⁴⁵ It seemed to the court "that it suits the accused only too well to be given a sentence which...increased his reputation amongst his supporters", consequently it decided also not to take into consideration "...the provocative self-portrayal of the accused..." Although the court noted that it saw considerable evidence to suggest that a fine alone would not have the desired effect on the accused, it nevertheless decided on a fine since there remained some doubt as to whether a fine might not suffice considering the fact that the accused had now reached a mature age. Finally the court mentioned that "...giving him a prison sentence could cause him to feel like a victim of the state which he rejects and induce him to continue his rôle."

To summarize, if the mitigating factor of youth does not apply, then the maturity of the accused is put forward as a justification for a light sentence. If that of a first offence does not apply, then reference is made to the length of time between the various convictions. If the accused is exceptionally militant or adopts a provocative stance during the proceedings, the argument is put forward that in this case a prison sentence would not have the desired effect and may strengthen the individual in his convictions. In short West German courts often go to extraordinary lengths to justify a lenient response, far beyond what could be regarded as a legitimate attempt to avoid the possible harmful effects of harsh sentences on younger activists who to a large extent are the victims of a manipulation by individuals whose ideological convictions run much deeper.

This tolerant attitude of the courts resulted in prominent activists being able to continue their political agitation for a considerable number of years, becoming, if anything, more provocative as it became clear to them that they had little to fear in the short term from the courts. This does not mean, however, that there is a total lack of concern for the

law as far as all activists are concerned. Christophersen, for example, admits that "Everything I publish, I first have to give to a lawyer for it to be censored in order to avoid our publications being confiscated again."⁴⁶ Secondly the response of the courts did not suffice to make neo-Nazi activists aware of the seriousness of what they were becoming involved in, nor did it have a deterrent effect on potential members. A quick and harsh response may, on the other hand, have been sufficient, especially considering the age of many of the activists, to at least have halted the momentum evident in the membership figures of the last few years. There would in fact seem to be positive evidence for this. The chairman of the SPD parliamentary party's working group on domestic policy and head of a special investigation into right-extremism initiated by the SPD, Wilfried Penner, noted, for example, a negative tendency of membership figures after the passing of relatively harsh sentences in Bückeberg.⁴⁷ Similarly a rapid 'removal' of prominent leadership figures - for which there were undoubtedly sufficient grounds - may have sufficed to have caused serious disorientation amongst neo-Nazi activists. As it is, the recent loss of a considerable number of those activists who were prominent in the early stages has had little effect as is evidenced by the continued rapid increase in activity. There is little doubt that the delays involved in dealing with these individuals permitted a certain consolidation of the phenomenon which rendered them less indispensable. In addition a quick response may have succeeded in preventing the particularly worrying developments noted in chapter II, particularly the increasing utilization of terrorist methods. Admittedly it is conceivable that repressive measures could have had a negative effect and have driven activists underground. However, there does seem to be evidence for the fact that it was clearly understood within neo-Nazi circles that a premature adoption of violent and terrorist methods could

only have had serious adverse results. ... but is, in general, in the in-

On the whole a gloomy view of the West German judicial authorities begins to emerge. Amongst those circles who have been critical of the courts, however, the view is held "that judicial measures taken to curtail offences on the far Right are undergoing a change."⁴⁸ The evidence for this assertion is seen partially in the fact that prison sentences appear to be more frequent than previously⁴⁹ and partially in the length of the sentences received in certain recent trials. The statistical information available would appear to confirm that a higher proportion of cases are ending with prison sentences. Of 50 sentences originating from 1978 and not yet confirmed (rechtskräftig) at the end of 1978, 6 or 12% were prison sentences.⁵⁰ Of the 88 confirmed sentences passed in 1978, only 3 or 3.4% were prison sentences.⁵¹

To what extent do an increase in the number of prison sentences and lengthier sentences necessarily reflect a fundamental change in attitude of the judicial authorities towards the problem of neo-Nazism? Two things would seem to suggest that these phenomena are not perhaps as directly related as it might at first seem. For one thing, although earlier Horch-
em's view that "The core of the groups will however after new offences very soon have to reckon with prison sentences, in the first instance perhaps suspended, but then not. This process is beginning to take effect since 1978..."⁵² was shown to be somewhat over-optimistic, one cannot dispute that to a certain extent such a process is occurring. After repeated offences it does become increasingly difficult to avoid imposing a prison sentence. This then constitutes a first possible explanation for the increase in the number of prison sentences.

It is necessary in addition to draw attention to the changes within the phenomenon of neo-Nazism itself, documented in chapter 1, particularly to the increasing use of violence and to the recent emergence of

terrorist 'combat groups' (Kampfgruppen), that is, in general, to the increasing gravity of the offences being committed by certain groups of neo-Nazi activists. The Bückeberg court case may serve as an example in this respect. Despite a number of criticisms of the way in which this case was handled - the failure of the presiding judge to respond to provocation by spectators, lawyers,⁵³ and defendants, for example, or the lack of security measures applied to lawyers which contrasted with the strict security checks for lawyers in left-wing terrorist cases⁵⁴ and was seen to underline the differences in attitude of the courts to right and left-wing extremism - the severity of the sentences were seen by a large number of critics as a marked change for the better.⁵⁵ A closer look at the case, however, provides information which would appear to justify a degree of scepticism. For one thing the charges included armed robbery on several counts, formation of and membership in a terrorist organisation and grievous bodily harm. The defendants in some cases had a considerable number of previous convictions. The final sentences were in several instances composed of sentences received for the offences with which this trial was concerned and of sentences received for previous recent convictions. The provocative behaviour of the accused during the trial must also be taken into consideration.⁵⁶ This again questions the validity of seeing too close a correlation between prison sentences or the increased number of prison sentences and a fundamental change in attitude of the courts.

Nevertheless, the fact that during this case right-extremists were for the first time classified as terrorists does seem to indicate a tendency towards a somewhat less lenient response to the phenomenon. A survey of other recent cases provides further indications for such a trend. Whilst in Bückeberg the court was of the view that being present at preliminary discussions concerning a terrorist act and expressing praise

for this act after the event did not justify classifying an individual as a member of a terrorist organisation, the Federal Appeal Court (Bundesgerichtshof) showed itself to be less lenient, rejecting the decision of the previous instance and advocating the stricter interpretation that even someone who had not yet been directly involved in a criminal or terrorist organisation could, in exceptional cases, be guilty of an offence.⁵⁷ When applying stiff sentences (prison sentences up to three years and fines) to ten neo-Nazi activists accused of reviving the NSDAP, the West Berlin Land court saw fit to emphasize that the accused were fully aware that the NSDAP was banned and to state that the sentences should constitute "... a clear sign for all those living in the past (Ewig-Gestrige)..., that the criminal gas chamber party would not raise its head again in Berlin."⁵⁸ Whilst in March 1978 a court in Neumarkt sentenced an individual who had produced and attempted to market Hitler-reliefs to a "more symbolic" fine of 125 DM, the Appeal Court in Nürnberg-Fürth rejected this sentence and replaced it by a fine of 1,200 DM. Whilst taking into consideration the fact that it was the first offence of the accused, the court found it necessary to stress the need to avoid "...the usage of insignia of banned and of anti-constitutional organisations - whatever the underlying intention - becoming once again so natural that the goal of completely banning such insignia from public life in the Federal Republic is not attained with the consequence that in the end they can be used with impunity by the supporters of those political goals which are embodied in the insignia."⁵⁹ The court noted also the need to ensure that the accused did not commit a similar offence again and the need to ensure that the sentence had a deterrent effect on others.⁶⁰ Significant also is the decision of the Federal Appeal Court (BGH) of the 25 April 1979. Whilst courts and Public Prosecutors had in several cases rejected prosecutions and convictions for the use of NS symbols on toys, being of the opinion,

for example, that the use of swastikas was not illegal as long as it was not for propaganda purposes or that the showing of swastikas on model aeroplanes was unlikely to be illegal since in this case it would merely be the insignia of the 'Luftwaffe' which was not a National Socialist organisation, the BGH took a different view. It reaffirmed, for example, that 86a is concerned with the showing of emblems of an unconstitutional organisation and not in any way with propaganda. It stressed that the onus must be not on whether it could be proven beyond any doubt that the showing of emblems did constitute a concrete danger but rather on whether it was obviously and immediately completely clear that it did not. In addition the court noted in detail the potential dangers of taking a tolerant view in this case:

Linked with this there would be a danger that NS emblems, namely the swastika, could increasingly gain once again a place in the public view and in this way finally also in the public view of everyday political life. In addition to this is the fact that one of the purposes of the regulation is the very goal of protecting young people and especially children who did not themselves experience the National Socialist regime, the lack of freedom prevailing in it and emanating from it, the negation of human rights under it, the crimes committed by it and its destructive consequences for the people and for society, from being influenced by the National Socialist ideology. In any case the massive distribution of models of war planes from the National Socialist era could, when these have swastikas on them, lead to significant numbers of children and young people growing up, as it were, with the swastika and linking with this symbol friendly images originating from periods spent playing which could again make them more susceptible to later political endeavours standing under the same symbol.⁶¹

The language used and the decisions made in the above cases do not by any means suggest an over-tolerance but, on the contrary, a considerable awareness of the problems involved and a firm resolve to deal not only with

what might possibly be the first stirrings of a rebirth of Nazism but also with any related phenomena which might conceivably render such a renaissance a more viable proposition.

There is adequate evidence then to suggest that the attitude of the courts to extremism of the Right has undergone a certain change. This development would appear to be closely related to the increasing concern in evidence amongst political authorities and within political circles generally. Initially there was a widespread tendency to play down the significance of neo-Nazism. The security reports issued by the Ministry of the Interior stressed that right-extremism did not constitute a danger for the liberal democratic basic order of the Federal Republic.⁶² The Foreign Minister, Genscher, stressed towards the end of 1977 in an interview with the Italian newspaper 'La Stampa' that the poor electoral returns gained by extremist parties at the last Federal elections showed that these did not have a chance in the Federal Republic.⁶³ In a written reply to a parliamentary question of the 23 August 1977 Dr. Seidl, Minister of State at the Bavarian Ministry of the Interior, asserted, in direct contrast to trends which can be gleaned from official sources, that one "...can only speak of an increase in the number of neo-Nazi incidents, not, on the other hand, of a considerable increase in neo-Nazism."⁶⁴ In 1978 there was evidence to suggest a change of attitude in as much as the increasing activities and especially the use of violence by neo-Nazi activists began to be recognized as a worrying development. But, and this is important, worrying only in as much as neo-Nazism seemed likely on occasions to represent a certain security problem. No reference was made to the debate concerning the potential for right-extremism in the Federal Republic.⁶⁵ The first time, to the knowledge of the author, that such considerations were in evidence was in an interview conducted by the West German radio on the 23 March 1979

with Andreas von Schoeler, Parliamentary Secretary of State at the Federal Ministry of the Interior, who pointed out the relationship between the consolidation of democracy and the economic prosperity of the post-war period and asserted that there was a danger that in the Federal Republic democracy and prosperity were so closely linked in the consciousness of the population that respect and trust in democracy could be disrupted at times of economic difficulty or even during periods when economic growth was slower than in the early post-war period. He admitted to a concern that extremist forces, but particularly right-extremist forces, could profit from signs of economic instability and expressed the view that whether democracy could be maintained at such a time would be decided today and not at the moment of crisis.⁶⁶

Before this change in attitude by the authorities became fully apparent, there was evidence for an increasing awareness of the potential dangers of the phenomenon in political circles, particularly within the SPD. Willy Brandt expressed his concern about developments on the extreme right in a letter to Schmidt as early as August 1977.⁶⁷ In the various Länder SPD MP's expressed their concern by tabling parliamentary questions.⁶⁸ In addition local SPD organisations issued statements warning of the dangers emanating from the extreme Right⁶⁹ and produced information and documentation about neo-Nazism and related phenomena. The SPD youth organisation in Nordrhein-Westfalen published the detailed documentation and analysis entitled 'Deutschland erwacht',⁷⁰ whilst the SPD in Hannover produced the booklet "Gegen einen neuen Faschismus - für den sozialen und demokratischen Rechtsstaat."⁷¹ Similar initiatives and a similar concern was apparent within the FDP, the trade-unions and Jewish circles. At the 11th Federal Conference of the German Trade-Union Federation in May 1978 in Hamburg delegates unanimously demanded a ban on neofascist propaganda materials and the utilization of all legal means to combat neofascist organisations and

actions.⁷² The Hamburg section of the Education and Science Union (Gewerkschaft Erziehung und Wissenschaft) produced educational materials dealing with neofascism and with the persecution of the Jews under the Nazi regime.⁷³ The Young Democrats (the youth organisation of the FDP) in Berlin produced the documentation entitled 'Nazis in Berlin',⁷⁴ with a preface by Gerhard Meyer, the FDP Senator for Justice in Berlin. The 'Friends of Nature Youth' (Naturfreundjugend Deutschlands) also produced a booklet containing information about fascism and documenting recent developments.⁷⁵ In addition numerous Citizen's Initiatives have emerged to oppose neo-Nazi activities encompassing a wide range of supporters including school-children, students, teachers, lawyers, trade-unionists, artists, politicians, vicars and members of the Jewish community.⁷⁶ As concern about the phenomenon of neo-Nazism increased so political pressure was applied to the courts to increase their vigilance. In a directive issued on 25 January 1978 the Federal Minister of Justice pointed out to the Ministers and Senators of Justice in the Länder the increase in trade in Nazi symbols and literature and warned them to ensure that adequate counter-measures were being taken. In addition he requested information about legal proceedings initiated and carried out since 1975 in connection with NS emblems and propaganda.⁷⁷ At the 49th Justice Ministers' conference in May 1978, the Ministers of the Länder discussed their experiences in dealing with NS propaganda and right-extremist activities with the Federal Minister of Justice and agreed to pay particular attention to these problems.⁷⁸

Finally it is necessary to point out here, that the concern in evidence within the SPD and amongst trade-unionists would not appear to be shared by representatives of the Conservative parties. Here it is argued, for example, that the phenomenon of neo-Nazism has been blown up out of all proportion by the political Left in an attempt to divert attention from allegedly more dangerous left-wing extremist elements. A similar po-

-sition can be seen in unequivocally extremist circles.⁷⁹ In the wake of bomb attacks on transmitting installations in Koblenz and Nottuln/Coesfeld in January 1979 (at a time when information and documentaries on the persecution of Jews under the Nazi regime were being screened as a prelude to the showing of the 'Holocaust' series) Dr. Kunz, a member of the CDU/CSU parliamentary party in the Federal Parliament found it necessary to ask in a parliamentary question whether there was concrete evidence for the assumption that these actions were carried out by right-extremists and whether the Federal Government could "exclude that these attacks like comparable actions in the history of the Federal Republic of Germany (were) attributable to the initiative of other groups and organisations?"⁸⁰ Other variations on this theme which seems to consist essentially of either mentioning left-extremism, issuing warnings about it or attributing developments on the extreme Right in one way or another to left-wing extremism can be cited. Gross, the Minister of the Interior in Lower Saxony, expressed the view that the developments on the extreme Right are at least partially attributable to the polemical and defamatory agitation of the orthodox Left against the Federal Republic.⁸¹ In an article which appeared in the conservative 'Die Welt' immediately after the rightist terrorist attack at the Munich beer festival in September 1980 as a result of which 12 people died and 213 were injured E.V. Loewenstern went so far as to state that "If the 1980 security report of the Office for the Protection of the Constitution (Verfassungsschutzbericht) had listed anti-state tendencies of the Left even approximately to a comparable degree of thoroughness as those of the Right, if incitement to violence by the Left was monitored just as closely as neo-Nazi propaganda, then a lot would already have been done for public security."⁸² Finally large sectors of the press are also accused of exaggerating the situation on the extreme Right and of being at least partially responsible for recent developments

since increased publicity tends to encourage neo-Nazis to undertake further actions.⁸³ However, although it is true that often the amount of publicity gained by certain groups bears little relation to the real significance of those groups, it is also clear that persistent press reporting is also partially responsible for the increasing awareness that a problem does exist.

3.3 Conclusion.

What conclusions can be drawn from this analysis of the West German judicial authorities? Firstly, it must be conceded that in a number of cases the criticism levelled against the courts is somewhat too undifferentiated. It is necessary to bear in mind the considerable difficulties involved in curtailing the types of activity which have been adopted by neo-Nazi activists. Nevertheless, on the whole, the evidence suggests that the courts do not consider neo-Nazism to be a particularly worrying phenomenon. They have not responded to this new challenge with the degree of determination which would show both neo-Nazi activists and antifascists within Germany itself and in the rest of the world beyond any doubt that West German society is not prepared to accept a rebirth, however, politically insignificant it may appear or turn out to be, of the National Socialist ideology and certainly not in a way which would convincingly reflect the view expressed by certain West German politicians that it was above all Germans who suffered under the National Socialist regime. This may be partially attributable to a tendency, when dealing with the phenomenon of neo-Nazism, to leave out a consideration of the past, notably the character and the effects of the coming to power of the National Socialists. One quickly becomes aware when following individual court cases,

of the almost total lack of reference to this period. One should avoid falling into the trap of looking upon all judges and public prosecutors as potential National Socialists or as ultra-Conservatives who are just waiting for an opportunity to replace the democratic Republic. The situation is not, as is sometimes implied, by any means comparable to that which, in essence, existed throughout the whole of the Weimar Period. Nevertheless it is clear that the Right is not considered a serious potential threat in the same way as the Left is. To reduce this question solely to an over-reliance on the electoral performance of rightist groupings is on the whole illogical, in that Communist organisations obtain very much the same support as, for example, the NPD, and, in addition, leftist groups have not in the history of the Federal Republic managed to achieve the kind of success that the SRP was able to obtain in the fifties and the NPD in the late sixties. To a certain extent, undoubtedly, this phenomenon is simply symptomatic of a much more widespread over-exaggerated concern with the potential threat emanating from the political Left - a legacy of the cold war, of the division of Germany, of the continued existence of a Communist regime in the East.

More recently there was evidence to suggest an increasing awareness by courts of the potential gravity of the situation on the extreme Right and an increasing willingness to deal with it. The evidence also suggests, however, that one should be wary of over-emphasizing the extent of the changes which the response of the courts is presently undergoing.

The change in the attitudes of the courts occurred as opposition to neo-Nazism and the extreme Right gained momentum and corresponded to increasing concern within political circles. This opposition to and concern about right-wing extremism bears witness to a considerable antifascist potential in the Federal Republic which must be seen as a cause for optimism. On the other hand, there is clear evidence that this antifascist

potential is on the whole restricted, at least for the time being to certain clearly defined circles - predominantly to the SPD, the FDP, the Communists and the trade-unions. Within the political groupings to the Right of those listed there is a tendency to underestimate the potential threat emanating from the extreme Right. Whilst one can assume that a change in attitude would occur in the event, for example, of a rightist party suddenly making significant inroads into the West German electorate, one must ask whether a change in the face of such a development, which would be partially attributable to the previous lack of response, would not then be too late. Once a party gains a certain electoral support and therefore a certain legitimacy, the scope to oppose it becomes more restricted.

As far as the origin of the tendency to play down the significance of recent developments on the extreme Right is concerned, two factors appear to be of significance. Firstly it can be partially attributed to the over-exaggerated concern with the political Left mentioned previously. Secondly, it would appear to be closely related to a concern to conceal, at all costs, anything which might mar the reputation the Federal Republic has obtained for political stability and to a misguided attempt to maintain the respectability which it has achieved during the post-war period. This is misguided since it is not the neo-fascist groups and their activities themselves which have resulted in criticism of the Federal Republic but above all the absence of a clear indication on the part of the Federal Republic and all its democratic parties that a revival, however politically insignificant it may appear, of ideologies which brought only death and destruction will not be tolerated.

CHAPTER 4

NEO-NAZISM : AN APPRAISAL

4.1 The Hitler-wave

In addition to neo-fascist tendencies and an increasing susceptibility of young people to neo-fascist propaganda, a further phenomenon characterized the Federal Republic of the seventies and caused concern within democratic circles, namely a massive increase in popular, pseudo-scientific and documentary materials concerned with the 'Third Reich' and National Socialism. Whilst initially the bulk of the sales of such material was "conducted by mail order through the established channels of book-clubs of the right fringe,"¹ in the seventies non-extremist concerns joined the 14 right-extremist publishing houses and the 15 right-wing distributing agencies (Vertriebsdienste).² What had formerly been a steady supply developed into a deluge. Especially important here is the John Jahr publishing enterprise. Kolinsky notes that when John Jahr entered the business original recordings of speeches by prominent figures in the Nazi hierarchy - Jahr produces some 30,000 copies per record - became ava-

available in department stores and retail shops.³ Jahr also offered the pictorial magazines 'Das III Reich', 'Der Zweite Weltkrieg' and 'Soldat und Waffe' selling several hundred thousand copies⁴ and in 1977 'Signal' a propaganda journal issued by the high command during the second world war, of which within a very short time 17,000 copies were sold⁵. Other examples can be cited. Joachims Fest's biography 'Hitler' sold over half a million copies and his film 'Hitler - eine Karriere' attracted 100,000 spectators per week. Goebbel's diaries entered the best seller lists. In addition to material concerned exclusively with the 'Third Reich', articles appeared in weekly news magazines. Stern and Quick brought Hitler biographies in installments. Stern printed excerpts from Goering's diaries. Heydrich, Goering, world war two generals and Hitler had their lives, ambitions, motivations and hopes explained to the public.⁶ Nor was it by any means merely a matter of reading material. The 1978 security report notes the widespread availability of objects commemorating the National Socialist era, of National Socialist emblems, of toys and T-shirts with swastikas on the West German market.⁷ Meyer and Rabe note how increasingly NS emblems and the National Socialist past in general are being used to promote popular music.⁸ Although it is impossible to give a more detailed analysis of the extent of the phenomena outlined above, this brief survey is in our view adequate to justify the assumption that views such as those in evidence in President Scheel's rebuking of critics who warn of a Hitler wave as soon as "more reading matter on this theme starts to appear"⁹, or in Horchem's characterization of the phenomenon as a normal process of research and discussion,¹⁰ constitute in reality an attempt to tone down a potentially very embarrassing state of affairs.

It is not only the quantity of material offered, however, which has caused concern in certain circles but above all its nature. To evaluate the character of the Hitler-wave one can take Fest's film 'Hitler - a

career' as an example. The film is of particular significance in as much as young people especially showed great interest. A survey revealed that 17% of young people between 16 and 24 intended to see the film, 43% said they might.¹¹ Certain cinemas offered additional performances at reduced prices for school groups.¹² Moreover it is likely that the film will be used in schools for the purpose of historical-political education. Indeed certain states (e.g. Bavaria) have already purchased the film with this aim in mind.¹³

According to Fest the film was intended, now that the first phase during which it was impossible to be completely dispassionate had passed, to ask the questions which Hitler raised in a more objective and rational manner.¹⁴ Previously, in Fest's view, "one had either praised Hitler or at least emphasized the positive aspects...or one had damned him as an amoral politician..."¹⁵ Now it was necessary to see both sides and to look more closely at the origins of the considerable support he enjoyed: "As a criminal he would never have become popular, and if he had only been the harmless motorway builder he would without any doubt not have been able to attain this extraordinary popularity and these successes which he certainly did achieve and not have had this resonance which he undoubtedly had during long periods of his rule."¹⁶

If one could accept the evaluation of the film by the 'Film Evaluation Centre Wiesbaden (Filmbewertungsstelle Wiesbaden, FBW) i.e. 'of particular value', then it would appear that Fest was successful in his attempt to produce an objective view of Hitler and his time.¹⁷ The conservative and parts of the liberal press echoed this evaluation of the film. 'Die Welt' was of the opinion that Fest "broke through the conceptual stereotypes (Denkschablonen) of antifascist peoples' pedagogy in a credible manner, drew a more exact picture of the epoch and of its man than ever before."¹⁸ 'Der Arbeitgeber', the official organ of the German Federation of Employers (BDA) asserted that the film was, "thanks

to its authenticity, irreproachable."¹⁹ Heinz Höhne of 'Der Spiegel' noted that "For the first time Federal German film-makers free the Leader who had degenerated into a celluloid monster from the conceptual stereotypes of antifascist instruction films (Aufklärungsfilme) and draw a credible and also historiographically reliable picture of Hitler and his epoch."²⁰ Somewhat disconcerting however is the degree of conformity between the above views and those to be heard in unequivocally extremist circles, that is, held by those who have an interest in playing down (or denying) the excesses of NS rule whilst stressing its alleged positive sides. The NSDAP/AO notes "Not one of us had expected to see a completely objective film about the Leader. The time is still not ripe for that ...Without doubt the negative moments in the film (constitute) a concession to the 'spirit of the age' and to the film distributors... But now enough of the weak points in the film. Since it really does not deserve to be criticised sharply. One could hear too many new sounds for that. Here there is talk of the Leader as the German revolutionary who made an imprint on a whole century and of the man who was not to be bought, not by capital nor by other groups...To conclude one can say: The film is certainly not how we imagine a film about Adolf Hitler and National Socialism. We accept this film however because it serves a quite definite function. And this function consists of promoting a change in the portrayal of Adolf Hitler so that to a greater degree aryan find the way to National Socialism..."²¹ Similarly in the 'DNZ' one could read "Now old stereotypes (Klischeevorstellungen) disintegrate and the first, if still timid, glimmers of the truth are appearing on the horizon ... Astonished, the film-goer who is used to everything being painted black finds out that in the III Reich there were bright and dark sides, that considerable injustice took place but that also positive achievements of the regime could be recorded which are still impressive today

and even, in parts, worth imitating."²² This support for the film from rightist circles (and likewise the violent opposition it provoked on the Left) would seem to suggest that a closer analysis of the film is necessary.

There is little doubt that many of the films of a didactic nature about the period of German history in question concentrated on the excesses of NS rule, the concentration and extermination camps etc. and that consequently the considerable popular support for the regime and for Hitler remained inexplicable. In this light Fest's aim to explain this support would appear quite legitimate. However, in focusing on public support it would appear that the excesses of National Socialist rule which were a key component of the regime have been relegated very much to second place. As an example one can take the book 'Hitler - eine Karriere - Bildband zum grossen Dokumentarfilm.'²³ Here, out of a total of 180 pages of individual frames from the film, only approximately 22 (12%) depict the harsher realities of the period - death and destruction through war, persecution of Jews and other races and political opponents, concentration camps etc.. . . Approximately 10 of these pages (i.e almost 50%) depict the destruction of Germany by allied actions. Against this background the support for the film from right-extremist circles becomes more comprehensible whilst, at the same time, the fact that the excesses are not completely ignored explains the case for objectivity.

A further point which must be raised here is whether the focus on public support does in fact contribute to a greater understanding of this support. For one thing Fest's portrayal gives little indication of the fact that "The plebiscites and the mass demonstrations shown were not the result of a growing loyalty of the population but were intended to create it and to help to legitimize that which the regime had already carried out."²⁴ Secondly the scenes of mass jubilation are incapable of

conveying any indication of the fact that these 'masses' were made up of particular social categories of people. Nor does the sound track, whether documentation or commentary, elaborate, but rather reinforces the impression given visually that the whole population was involved. Goebbels speaks for example of 'the whole nation' and the commentary asserts "Agreement with the masses carried him...and the people, unknowing, believing, many until the end, followed him."²⁵ That in reality workers were considerably underrepresented among NSDAP supporters (those who did support fascism coming chiefly from agricultural areas and regions with small industry and, to a certain extent, from towns where the left-wing of the NSDAP was dominant) and that the social base of the Nazi movement was made up of predominantly middle class elements whose susceptibility was founded, amongst other things, on their impoverishment due to the continuing process of industrialization and concentration of capital, the war and inflation, and the severe economic crisis of the 1930s, does not emerge clearly. "The economic crisis and unemployment are admittedly mentioned in the film, can however with the rapid succession of the portrayed party meetings and marches be scarcely noticed let alone appreciated in their unequalled importance."²⁶ For Fest - and this is to a large extent attributable to the biographical approach adopted - the mass support is primarily the result of Hitler's personal qualities.²⁷

In Fest's film and in his book, biography replaces scientific analysis of the various workings of the NS state. In his book, he asserts "In him (i.e. Hitler) an individual once again demonstrated the stupendous power of a solitary person over the historical process" and in the film Fest asserts "In him Jakob Burckhardt's word becomes true, that history likes at times to condense itself in one man."²⁸ The consequence of this personalisation of history is that important elements necessary for an understanding of the period like, for example, the role of violence

and ideology, the parts played by the army and big business, are either omitted or appear to be of merely secondary importance.²⁹ As an example one can take Fest's view of the role of big business. Fest evidently considers it adequate to state "He could neither be bought nor was he in alliance with big business. He only took money when it was given unconditionally."³⁰ This carte blanche may explain the favourable reception of the film, by, for example, 'Der Arbeitgeber' and bourgeois newspapers. However, although the traditional Marxist view of National Socialism as "the open terrorist dictatorship of the most aggressive parts of German monopoly capitalism"³¹ has been discredited and there is an increasing awareness that the NS successes were by no means due chiefly to the millions invested by monopoly capitalism (on the contrary, apart from notable exceptions, Thyssen, for example, big business was initially extremely sceptical of the National Socialists and its highly vocal left-wing as borne out by the fact that the NSDAP suffered acute, indeed in certain cases catastrophic financial difficulties)³² and that the fascist leadership acted on behalf of neither the middle classes, nor big business, nor the military nor the bureaucracy, but essentially in its own interests,³³ by no means does this justify Fest's view. Once the NSDAP had achieved mass movement status and had indicated convincingly that the anti-capitalist aspirations of the left-wing would not be translated into reality, both considerable sums of money were put at Hitler's disposal by big business and considerable pressure was exerted on Hindenburg to make Hitler Chancellor. This does not mean to say that Hitler was bought. Rather it was a question of mutual interest. Hitler needed the cooperation of monopoly capitalism to enable him to successfully carry out his foreign policy aims. A restructuring of the economy as envisaged by the left-wing would have made war impossible in the foreseeable future. On the other hand big business saw Hitler as capable of providing

a stable government, of oppressing the Left and the trade-unions, of injecting the economy with new life through re-armament and, potentially at least, of making available new sources of raw materials. It is evident that Fest, in his film, does not do justice to the complexity of this problem.

The shortcomings of Fest's film, the over-reliance on biography, the extreme personalization of history and the over-emphasis on mass support with a concomitant neglect of Nazi excesses is characteristic of the Hitler-wave as a whole. Kolinsky notes that "'Hitler - a career' abounds with pictures of mass jubilation and happiness. They are also the key theme of photographs in journals and books."³⁴ Schneider in his study of the magazine 'Das III Reich' asserts that "Completely in the bourgeois tradition of writing history, the origins of fascism and its rise to power are explained...in psychological terms and through personalization ...A global view of what fascism is, cannot be imparted in the magazine 'Das III Reich'; nowhere is there a serious attempt to outline the social basis of National Socialism, the pre-fascist environment."³⁵

The Hitler-wave would not appear then to contribute to a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of National Socialism. What it would appear to do, by neglecting the excesses of the NS regime and by focusing on public support, is to bring about a 'revision' or a 'correction' of previous historical interpretation. The 'Third Reich' emerges from this re-interpretation as an "attractive, dynamic, though not flawless German past."³⁶ Kühnl points out (and here he is referring specifically to Fest's film although this remains valid for the Hitler-wave as a whole) that although the excesses of fascism are criticized the 'jubilant masses' and 'happy faces' of the period before the war are not in any real sense i.e. "Dictatorship as such appears as a system which brought happiness and contentment."³⁷

The mass of documentary material whilst appearing at first sight unproblematic seems to perform a similar function. According to Schneider, the usage of the term 'documentation' can have the effect that the content of, for example, a Hitler speech is seen as authentic whilst the propagandist nature of the speech is concealed.³⁸ The arrangement of the material is also significant in this respect. Kolinsky writes that John Jahr's series of records entitled 'Ein Volk, ein Reich, ein Führer' "ends on the final communiqué issued by the German high command which stresses that the 'struggle' was 'heroic' and surrender 'to the much stronger side with full honour'. The soundtrack then continues with the national anthem interspersed with the replies of the war criminals accused at Nürnberg :Not guilty, not guilty."³⁹ The effect is increased on some records by the inclusion of NS songs.⁴⁰ Several critics are of the opinion that the post-war commentary, if present (in many cases it is not)⁴¹, does not neutralize the negative effects of the documentation. Kolinsky is of the view that "...it tends to whitewash rather than expose" and gives the following example : "The cheers of the people...which sound so macabre today, were spontaneous and honest...The cheers of the people...about the desired and speedy end of the war and the victory knew nothing of the commissar order...of the extermination of the Jews in the East, of plans for enslavement by the NS leadership and nothing - of hardship to come."⁴² The Federal agency concerned with the protection of young people from potentially harmful literature (Bundesprüfstelle für jugendgefährdende Schriften) showed itself to be of a similar view when banning the open sale of 'Signal'.⁴³ "Without critical interjection the Nazi propaganda machine of the people's receiver (Volksempfänger) and the mass rally continues its exercise in self-justification in the German living rooms of the seventies."⁴⁴

Two questions remain to be answered here. On the one hand it is

important to consider the possible origin of the sudden massive increase in the production of and the demand for literature about and documentation and regalia associated with this period of German history and the possible factors determining the particular character of the material, and, on the other hand, one must consider probable or possible effects.

The Hitler-wave has been variously attributed to a justifiable interest in historical truth, to the need for political stimulants in right-extremist circles, to commercial factors and to a fashionable trend, or to a combination of these factors.⁴⁵ These 'explanations' seem to raise more questions than they answer however. Why, for example, should Hitler and the 'III Reich' suddenly become 'fashionable', why should the commercialization have proved so lucrative, when, it is alleged, the German population has been bombarded with information about this period of German history for the last 35 years and wishes now only to be allowed to forget? Or, to give another example, why should this sudden widespread interest in the past occur in the seventies? In an attempt to provide an answer to these questions Exner points to the similarities between the situation in the thirties which was essentially characterized by unrest, fear, insecurity and dissatisfaction and that of the seventies when one is becoming increasingly aware of a "fear and scepticism which is becoming more and more widespread in view of disturbing phenomena and developments" and of a "resigned 'We are helpless, the state is weak, democracy has failed'."⁴⁶ A repetition of those problems - economic crisis, unemployment - which brought forth National Socialism and which the National Socialists claimed to be able to resolve, seems to have created a new interest in National Socialism. This argument of course presupposes a failure on the part of those whose interest has been kindled to learn from historical experience and a tendency on their part to see the claims made by the National Socialists and by their latter-day

supporters concerning their successes in certain domains as being authentic. Whether this is in fact the case will be considered later in this chapter.

As far as the effects of the phenomenon of the Hitler-wave are concerned one must point out firstly that there can be little doubt, considering the simultaneity of the two phenomena, that there is a close casual relationship between the Hitler-wave and the recent trends on the extreme Right in the Federal Republic, notably the radicalization to neo-Nazi positions and recent tendencies towards more public forms of action. The Hitler-wave is in fact an important component of the present political climate in the Federal Republic which, as pointed out earlier, permitted and promoted the emergence of a more 'extreme' version of right extremism.⁴⁷ In somewhat more concrete terms one can say that not only has the Hitler-wave had a very direct effect, in that it has put at the disposal of young people who were searching for something with which they could identify and who were searching for a way of expressing a profound dissatisfaction with their lot, something which is ideally suited to serve these functions, but also a more indirect effect in as much as it has brought about a general desensibilization towards National Socialism - Broder provides examples to support the view that "...The term National Socialism...no longer arouses that horror which is inherent in it" and to illustrate an "increasing tolerance towards Nazi tendencies and phenomena"⁴⁸ which, in turn, lowered the threshold inhibiting the use of NS symbols etc. for purposes of provocation and identification⁴⁹ and which undoubtedly increased the scope for actions by neo-Nazi groups. The neo-Nazi leader Kühnen notes how "...the so-called Hitler-wave led to a moderation (Auflockerung) of public opinion."⁵⁰

Whilst there can be little doubt that the increase in neo-fascist tendencies and activities is the most spectacular and immediate consequen-

-ance of the Hitler-wave, it is not necessarily the one which gives the most cause for concern. A further consequence is that on a scale unprecedented in the Federal Republic it has become possible for Germans to talk, or rather talk openly, about this particular aspect of their national history, a phenomenon which possesses an inherent capacity to promote, indeed is largely a pre-condition for, new positive developments as regards the process of 'Vergangenheitsbewältigung' i.e. coming to terms with the past.⁵¹ What is important, however, is not necessarily that one talks about it but, above all, how one talks about it. In this case "Hitler becomes like you and I and in this way the person is distorted, made light of, made harmless. A rogue...intelligent and ambitious, genial even...Hitler becomes to a certain extent repeatable, he becomes possible... . However not everything suits 'our Hitler' any more: not the millions of gassed Jews...not the total war of annihilation...but the motorways, the reorganisation of the economy...do... . And it is precisely that which is alarming about this cleverly constructed Hitler-wave; one can not only talk about such a purified Hitler but, unexpectedly, he becomes a possibility in our time."⁵² A somewhat similar point of view is put forward by Kogon who notes that the Hitler-wave "...concealed within itself the danger of normalising our relationship (Umgang) with historical National Socialism, which was an inhuman system; as if it had been something of which one could in some respects approve."⁵³

Above all, however, in view of its particular nature, it is aptly suited to strengthen those views on National Socialism and of dictatorship and those political attitudes which do not conform to pluralist democracy, which, as will be shown later in this chapter, are already widespread within the Federal Republic, and thereby increase the latent potential for right-extremism. It is here in our view that the real danger lies. Those who assert that in view of the 'stability' of the Fed=

-eral Republic there is little likelihood that the Hitler-wave will have an immediate effect on the existing political constellation or that the Hitler-wave is not indicative of a return or a strengthening of the National Socialist ideology,⁵⁴ are essentially stating the obvious whilst at the same time avoiding the real issue as defined above.

According to Kühnl there is a close relationship between the Hitler-wave and the so-called 'swing to the right', the gradual move towards the authoritarian state allegedly envisaged by the ruling classes: "...If one wishes to put forward the strong authoritarian state...as the rescuing alternative...the German fascism of the past must now be portrayed in a new light. This is the actual function of the so-called Hitler-wave."⁵⁵ However, although there seems little reason to dispute the view that the Hitler-wave does serve the function of preparing the ground ideologically for a move to the right, this does not necessarily mean, as Kühnl's analysis seems to imply, that this function is the result of a conscious decision on the part of those who have produced the material which makes up the Hitler-wave. In fact it is more likely that the particular nature of the Hitler-wave which determines its function is determined less by any underlying political aims than by commercial factors. Schneider's comment on the illustrated magazine 'das Dritte Reich' is particularly interesting in this respect: "One reproach especially must be made: the evident calculation of the editors to obtain as wide a range of people as possible as readers by portraying facts to a certain extent ambiguously and consequently susceptible to a subjective interpretation... . The opportunity of informing wide sectors of the population with new journalistic and technical means, correctly and comprehensively about the period of National Socialist rule in Germany and over large parts of Europe and about the pre-requisites of the NS regime seems to have been squandered. What remains is the economic success of this venture, which uti-

-lised the deficit of knowledge about National Socialism in the popula-
-tion just as much as the latent or overt inclination of many contempor-
-aries to want to succumb once again to the alleged fascination of Hitler.
Calculated misunderstanding and intentional ambiguity in the text and
images helped to bring about this economic success."⁵⁶ The predominance
of commercial over didactic considerations has meant that the Hitler-
wave, rather than counteracting erroneous popular views⁵⁷ on Hitler and
National Socialism, has reflected and strengthened these views.

4.2 Schools

It is not only the increase in neo-Nazi activities and the Hitler-
wave which have brought the present discussion about neo-fascism in the
Federal Republic to a head but above all the apparent susceptibility of
especially school-children to neo-Nazi propaganda as is indicated by a
massive increase of neo-Nazi and anti-semitic tendencies in schools and
youth centres. Jokes about the fate of Jews in the 'Third Reich' are
rife among German school-children. National Socialist symbols are dau-
-bed or scratched onto class-room and corridor walls and desks. Young
children greet each other with the NS salute. Detailed reports request-
-ed from district school administrations by Rasch, the Senator responsi-
-ble for schools in West Berlin, in February 1979 revealed that since
the beginning of the school year 1978/79 in Berlin schools 55 antisemitic
and neo-Nazi incidents were registered involving 62 pupils.⁵⁸

Although more recently critics have noted that the increase in the
frequency of such incidents towards the end of 1978 and at the beginning
of 1979 seems to indicate that they may be attributable to the consider-
-able emphasis placed on informing children about this period of German

history by the Education Ministers in the wake of the 40th anniversary of the so-called 'Reichskristallnacht' and the transmission of the 'Holocaust' series i.e. may represent some kind of psychological defense mechanism (Abwehrreaktion),⁵⁹ there is in fact a widespread consensus of opinion that the susceptibility of school-children is above all a consequence of a lack of knowledge about this period of German history.⁶⁰ From his analysis of 3,000 children's essays Bossman came to the conclusion that in their heads there is for the most part "total confusion about Hitler, his cronies and the political system of the 'Third Reich' represented by them. What they know about our most recent past can be termed at best a preposterous collection of shallow (vordergründig) half-truths."⁶¹ Whilst Bossman's methodology has come under considerable criticism his general findings would nevertheless appear to be essentially correct. A representative poll of young people undertaken by EMNID in 1977 revealed that 21% had a very bad, 28% a bad and 25% an average knowledge of contemporary German history. Only 19% had a good and only 7% a very good knowledge.⁶² Similarly Bossman's findings that the situation was particularly worrying as far as children in elementary (Hauptschulen) and technical schools (Berufsschulen) were concerned⁶³ are also confirmed by other sources. Another Emnid poll for example conducted among 16 to 24 year olds and asking them to evaluate their knowledge about Hitler revealed that 57% of elementary school-children estimated that they knew 'little' or 'as good as nothing' about Hitler, 33% of secondary school-children but only 11% of grammar school pupils.⁶⁴

The shortcomings in the knowledge of young people about National Socialism has profound implications as regards a correct evaluation of non-organised neo-Nazi tendencies. "It is a completely different matter if a politician...a teacher or, on the other hand, a youngster paints swastikas on walls; a youngster who has learnt nothing about National Soc-

-ialism at school and at best knows from his parents that Hitler had motorways built and solved the unemployment problem."⁶⁵ This type of non-organised activity should not be seen as an expression of National Socialist convictions (This is not even the case as pointed out earlier, with organised tendencies), nor indeed, even as an expression of National Socialist sympathies. From Bammé's case study of 'Fascist tendencies at school' it emerged that even pupils who tended more towards the Left were involved.⁶⁶ Such activity, and here there is a broad consensus of opinion, would appear to constitute above all a form of protest which stems from the failure of society to give young people the opportunity to identify with it. It is for this reason that one should not consider it totally harmless. Many of those who supported the National Socialists were not in fact convinced fascists but, like young people of today, were above all looking for a way out of their misery.⁶⁷

That non-organised 'neo-fascist' activities are by no means necessarily indicative of anti-democratic beliefs does not mean that such tendencies do not exist or indeed are not widespread among young West Germans as is clearly indicated by the results of numerous opinion polls which moreover reveal a clear correlation between such tendencies and educational levels. A recent study showed that 29% of elementary school-children and 16% of children in secondary modern schools but only 9% of grammar school pupils evaluated Hitler on the whole positively.⁶⁸ Similarly a study undertaken in 1968 showed that 43% of non-academic youth but only 9% of students approved of the statement "National Socialism was basically a good idea which was only wrongly executed" (56% and 91% respectively rejected the statement).⁶⁹ In view of the correlation between educational levels and knowledge about National Socialism the above polls would seem to confirm that "inadequate information about Fascism favours at least sympathies for it,"⁷⁰ although it would appear important also

to point out here that other factors may play a role - the difference in future career prospects of individuals with differing educational levels for example.

Above all these polls seem to confirm that the few thousand organised right-extremists "constitute the tip of an iceberg; for a missing, unsatisfactory or false historical and an underdeveloped, or non-existent democratic consciousness are characteristic for large numbers of young people in the Federal Republic."⁷¹ Other polls could be cited to support this. A survey for German television among the younger generation who were born during the war or later revealed that 30% favour a one party state and the return of some strong man of government.⁷² A study by Walter Jaide in 1976 of the political views of 17-19 year olds brought him to the conclusion that 15% of this category of young people were resolute right-extremists (entschieden).⁷³ A recent study by Emnid revealed that 48% of young people in Bavaria had no objections to a 'dictator' as long as he was 'capable' and a 'statesman'.⁷⁴ The affinity of the above views to the ideological position of the extreme Right says much about the alleged marginality of the latter. One must point out here however that this affinity is by no means a new development. The views of young people have not undergone a massive swing to the right as some critics seem to imply,⁷⁵ Anti-democratic attitudes have in fact been widespread among West German youth since the founding of the Federal Republic. The view that this youth was until very recently predominantly left-oriented arose as a result of a failure to distinguish sharply enough between West German youth as a whole and the highly vocal left-wing student movement.⁷⁶

It is important now to try and explain why the views and attitudes noted above are so widespread among West German youth. Whilst pseudo-documentary material about National Socialism and the 'Third Reich' which

has been produced specifically for young people such as for example the 'Landser-Hefte' is partially responsible and the role of parents in transmitting political attitudes and views about the NS past should not be underestimated (this aspect will be considered in greater depth in the following section), this state of affairs would appear above all to constitute a massive indictment of the political and historical education provided in West German schools.

Before looking at some of the more important specific criticisms of especially the teaching of history in West German schools, one must first consider whether a problem exists at all. A history teacher writing in 'die Zeit' argued that even highly gifted children have only a partial insight into the complexity of historical processes and that these children constitute a minority which is not more numerous than "that minority which for example in the natural sciences is well acquainted with elementary fundamental principles in Chemistry and Physics whilst still at school."⁷⁷ In this view Bossman's study reveals nothing unusual, on the contrary, it is what one must expect. On the other hand, however, it is difficult to see how this argument renders the given state of affairs that young people know very little about fascism any less disconcerting, especially in view of the fact that the detailed study of historical fascism is generally considered one of the chief means of imparting a democratic consciousness in young people. The view that knowing about the basic law is "certainly more important than knowing the dates of Hitler's birth and death,"⁷⁸ which also tends to suggest that there is no real problem in this area, must also be differentiated. Whilst it is correct that the uncritical memorizing of dates and events is more or less worthless, the value of the Basic Law can be clearly illustrated by contrasting it with the National Socialist system.⁷⁹

Criticism of the teaching of history in the Federal Republic starts

at the highest possible level namely the ministerial framework guidelines and the curricula. Considerable criticism is, for example, directed against the decree decided upon at the conference of the Ministers of Education in 1962 which compels teachers to teach the so-called totalitarianism theory. This theory is now considered even by bourgeois critics to provide only a very inadequate explanation of the phenomenon of National Socialism.⁸⁰ The time element is also frequently criticized. Rabe cites the case of secondary schools in West Berlin where only 10 hours are prescribed for a consideration of the numerous aspects of the NS phenomenon.⁸¹ It is important to point out here yet again that in evaluating the adequacy or otherwise of the time devoted to the NS era one must take into account the special role attributed to this in the Federal Republic.

It is not only the number of hours prescribed for the treatment of National Socialism which has caused consternation but also the number of hours actually spent on this theme. A study undertaken by the second German television channel revealed that on average 80 hours were spent on the period of Karl the Great whilst only 7 were devoted to National Socialism although the framework-guidelines and the curricula prescribed 8 and 10 hours respectively.⁸² This state of affairs is by no means attributed by critics, as one history teacher tends to imply,⁸³ to the failings of history teachers, to their entanglement in the 'guilt problems' of the NS system. It is self-evident that this factor became less and less significant as time passed. The limited time spent on National Socialism (and the fact that occasionally this topic is omitted completely) is considered above all to be a further consequence of the framework-guidelines and the curricula which prescribe a chronological approach to the teaching of history.⁸⁴ Often there is simply insufficient time available to treat more recent historical events with an adequate degree

of thoroughness. The chronological approach also means that this aspect of German history is taught to intermediate classes when the pupils are at an age when for reasons of developmental psychology their capacity to learn is at its lowest. This should not be seen primarily as a factor exculpating teachers and German schools for the shortcomings in the knowledge of young people about National Socialism.⁸⁵ Rather it points directly to a need to revise the curricula so as to permit an earlier treatment of this subject.

It is unlikely that developmental psychological factors are the only or even the primary determinants here. From their own experiences as teachers, Hochmut and Jansen came to the conclusion that since a rational systematic or chronological treatment of National Socialism did not interest pupils and interest became apparent only when with the year 1933 the chronological approach was dropped and the persecution of Jews and concentration camps were discussed, it appeared more logical to start with that particular aspect.⁸⁶ This would seem to suggest a need to link a rescheduling of the curricula with further didactic innovations.

Another major area of concern is that of teaching materials especially text-books and history text-books in particular. A major criticism of the '50s was the degree to which National Socialism and particularly the 'Holocaust' was neglected in German text-books. Certain critics are of the view that a similar situation still exists today, at least as far as certain books are concerned. One of the examples cited at a conference organised by the Education and Science Trade-Union (GEW) was that of the history text-book for vocational schools by Hugo Andreae which devotes only 4 sides to National Socialism but 14 to the first world war.⁸⁷ On the whole, however, there is a broad consensus that quite considerable improvements have been achieved in this area over recent years. A report on the results of several research projects with

the theme 'History and Religion of the Jewish people' undertaken at the University of Duisburg came to the conclusion that since about 1965 'the cultural contribution of the Jews in the 20 century' and above all the 'Holocaust' had been treated to an increasing degree in the relevant text books. In one text-book series 20% of the space is devoted to information about Jews. Some devote 10 to 20%. For the majority the proportion is 5 to 10% and in only a few 1 to 5%. In this information the 'Holocaust' occupies a key position.⁸⁸ According to Kremers a parallel development is in evidence as far as the portrayal of the NS period in general in text-books for historical and political education is concerned.⁸⁹

The improvements made in this area do not mean that all the problems have been solved. According to Klönne, "the information about fascism is concentrated too much on the portrayal of the history of the Third Reich and of the second world war (whereby a disproportionately large space is devoted to information about military events). Mentioning the criminal NS Jewish policy and several other terrorist or dictatorial characteristics of that system...then provides the basis for a moral condemnation."⁹⁰ This approach would appear however to have serious deficiencies. The confrontation of children with photographs of mounds of corpses and victims does not necessarily politicize and indeed sometimes brings about the very opposite.⁹¹ Castner's reports of school-children shouting and applauding at violent scenes and Nazi sayings during documentary films on the Third Reich illustrate this clearly.⁹² There appear to be two possible explanations for this phenomenon. For one thing the portrayal of fascist terror appears to overtax the conceptual capacity of young people and secondly it seems closely linked to the fact that whilst teaching materials are designed to bring forth moral indignation and feelings of guilt, "moral compulsion is often the best enemy of morality."⁹³ It does not take the person who is learning seriously

in his capacity to draw his own conclusions from the factual document-
-ation. Against such a compelled setting of values on the basis of the
teachers authority barriers and protest are then mobilized.⁹⁴ For Gamm
the main reason for this type of response is the inability of the person
who is learning to identify with the people being persecuted which is
always the case when instead of an individual the fates of an anonymous
group are portrayed. He therefore suggests that it would be preferable
to follow the path of the victims using the example of specific individ-
-uals.⁹⁵ A similar approach is suggested by Radkau for other aspects of
the Third Reich: "...social and economic history which at national level
inevitably remains very abstract, become the life history of real people
at local level; the relationships between politics, the economy and soc-
-iety which at the level of the state can only be reconstructed as com-
-plex processes of mediation (Vermittlungsprozess), become at the local
level a very clear comparison which can be directly understood."⁹⁶

An approach which concentrates primarily on Nazi terror as a basis
for the moral condemnation of the regime would appear to be inadequate
also in as much as it constitutes a unidimensional view of what is ess-
-entially made up of two components: terror and integration. By concen-
-trating on the 'terror' aspect, the information provided at schools is
often found by children to conflict with views heard from parents and
others who often did not experience the NS era merely as one of fear and
suffering. This apparent contradiction can lead children to the conclus-
-ion that the information provided at school is one-sided and biased.⁹⁷
Moreover in this view the considerable support or acceptance of the reg-
-ime by large numbers of individuals must necessarily remain largely
unexplained.

A further criticism of history books is their tendency to person-
-alize historical processes. Despite the very positive conclusions

Kremers was able to draw from his study of the treatment of the Holocaust in German text-books he nevertheless found it necessary to express concern that in several cases a tendency was in evidence to portray the Holocaust as Hitler's doing.⁹⁸ This, it is asserted, is equally valid as far as the phenomenon of National Socialism in general is concerned. There would appear to be an over-emphasis on, for example, Hitler with a concomitant neglect of other aspects such as the collaboration of conservative groups and bourgeois sectors of society, big business and the bureaucracy.⁹⁹

The above assertions which have resulted from analyses of text-books can be substantiated. A survey undertaken by Weber¹⁰⁰ in the framework of a seminar at the University of Münster in 1978 revealed that the vast majority or 78% of those asked were of the view that Versailles, the economic crisis and Hitler's personality had been put forward during their time at school as the causes of the take-over of power by the National Socialists whilst only a minority or 27% remembered that they had been informed about the role of big business and agrarian interests. The same survey indicated also that resistance to the National Socialist regime on the part of the workers' movement had been neglected. Only 5% of the students participating in the survey were able to state that the same importance had been attached to resistance from this quarter as to resistance from bourgeois-military circles (e.g. the 20 July attempt on Hitler's life). This phenomenon can also be attributed to the personalized approach to history, to the view that historical processes are essentially a function of the acts and wills of 'important' men.¹⁰¹

The shortcomings of schools in building up resistance to rightist ideologies and modes of behaviour resulted in a demand on the part of a wide range of interested parties, including anti-fascist groups, trade-unions and Education Ministers, for greater stress to be placed in sch-

-ools on imparting knowledge about historical Fascism. More recently this response has been criticized by teachers and educationalists as being too simplistic, probably ineffective and possibly counter-productive. In an analysis of the rôle of political education in combatting right-wing extremism among young people, Paul writes that it is difficult to see how "Solidarity and democracy as everyday orientations and modes of behaviour (can) be quasi administratively prescribed in artificially fragmented learning units (Lerneinheiten) in a hierarchically organized, achievement oriented, individualistically structured school system."¹⁰² Eigenwald warns that a too rigorous and intensive treatment of a subject can bring defence mechanisms into action.¹⁰³ Moreover it is argued that instructions issued to schools by Education Ministers cannot constitute a complete solution to the problem since neofascist tendencies are not simply the result of contact with elements of the fascist ideology but are also a direct consequence of the experiences of young people today : "In their eagerness to issue directives the representatives of the Education Ministries mostly forget to investigate...the social origins of (neo) fascism... The relationship between authoritarian personality and political beliefs does not trouble them unduly; they do not see in which multifarious often subtle ways the new subject is being formed in our society."¹⁰⁴ Finally one cannot ignore the simple truth that children often accept least what they hear at school and from teachers who represent the adult world and its values.¹⁰⁵

The ability of schools to counteract neofascist and antidemocratic tendencies is evidently subject to serious limitations. Whilst didactic innovations may improve the situation, they cannot eradicate all of these limitations. It must therefore be underlined that an adequate response will necessarily be composed of a combination of pedagogic and political measures.

4.3 Political attitudes and the popular evaluation of the NS past.

In the preceding section some of the shortcomings in the area of historical and political education in West German schools were outlined. These deficiencies explain only partially the prevalence among young West Germans of antidemocratic political attitudes and of erroneous views on the National Socialist past. The role of pseudo-documentary sources and more recently the Hitler-wave in this respect have already been mentioned. Of importance also is the role of parents and relatives. Rabe sees the latter as "One of the most important, if not the most important source of information..."¹⁰⁶ Bossman's study, does not merely highlight the shortcomings of history teaching in German schools as some critics suggest,¹⁰⁷ but "also reveals facets of a popular image of Hitler and National Socialism shaped by discussions and remarks in the family circle."¹⁰⁸

This would appear to be confirmed by the results of opinion polls concerning the popular evaluation of the National Socialist past and political attitudes in general. A study by the Kehrmann institute showed that 85.7% of the population are 100%, to a large extent or at least partially of the view that Hitler provided for law and order, 77.7% that in reality he always wanted the best, 80.3% that his personality was impressive and imposing and 68% that he was a genial kind of person.¹⁰⁹ A poll conducted by the Allensbach institute in 1975 revealed that 21% of those aged 30 or over were of the opinion that Hitler would have been more capable of solving today's problems than those presently responsible.¹¹⁰ Between 1962 and 1975 6 polls were conducted asking the question: "Everything that was built up between 1933 and 1939 and much more was destroyed by the war. Would you say that without the war Hitler would have been one of the greatest statesmen?" On average more than a third of those questioned answered in the positive (1962:36%, 1963:35%, 1964:29%, 1967:32%,

1972:35%, 1975:38%). Less than half of the respondents were of the contrary view (1962:43%, 1963:44%, 1964:44%, 1967:52%, 1972:48%, 1975:44%).¹¹¹ One of the most recent studies concerning political attitudes in the Federal Republic is that undertaken by Habermehl. Habermehl came to the conclusion that although the vast majority of West Germans assert that democracy is preferable to dictatorship, for many this fundamental support for democracy was not without reservations. Over 40% were for example of the view that in at least one of several areas selected by Habermehl - solving unemployment, law and order, for example - a dictatorship was superior to a democracy.¹¹² Some other significant findings were that 70% agreed with the view that what was needed "more than laws and political programmes (were) selfless and incorruptible leadership personalities" and 42% that "the welfare of the community depends essentially on the political leadership and that therefore this leadership should be made as strong as possible."¹¹³

The evident similarity of views held by large sectors of the general population to those held by the present younger generation and the relative degree of consistency over a considerable number of years of the percentage of those who hold such views are of course indicative of the degree to which those views are passed on by parents to their children. Significant also in this respect is the fact that old prejudices have survived. In his study of antisemitism in the Federal Republic Silbermann came to the conclusion that between 15 and 20% of the population had pronounced antisemitic prejudices and that a further 30% had latent antisemitic tendencies.¹¹⁴

The data provided by opinion polls is not only of significance in that it gives some indication as to the origins of political attitudes and views on National Socialism held by young people but also in as much as it shows that such attitudes are by no means restricted to the younger

generation. This has profound implications as regards the potential for right-extremism in the Federal Republic. Here, however, some caution must be exercised. In normal circumstances, fundamental attitudes have little influence on political behaviour and are not dangerous.¹¹⁵ Similar percentages of individuals with basically authoritarian convictions can, for example, be found in all the major parties.¹¹⁶ Moreover authoritarian and antipluralist views are not only widespread in Germany but also in other countries such as Britain and the United States which on the whole are considered to be relatively immune to political extremism and consequently those views cannot be seen as leading inevitably to political extremism. When dealing with right-extremism factors in addition to fundamental political attitudes must be taken into consideration such as, for example, the role of socially influential individuals (to exemplify this point Scheuch cites the example of the sudden NSDAP successes in the 1932 elections in Schleswig-Holstein which were to a large extent attributable to the fact that the leadership groups of the rural population went over to the Nazis.¹¹⁷ A similar phenomenon was observed for the NPD).¹¹⁸ Nevertheless it is true to say that in conjunction with other relevant factors (particularly pessimistic economic expectations)¹¹⁹ antidemocratic attitudes are of significance as regards the potential for right-extremism.¹²⁰ This is particularly the case with those attitudes relating to the NS past.¹²¹ Finally it should be mentioned that the similarity of attitudes and views held by substantial numbers of the West German population to those expressed by organised neo-Nazis would appear to explain at least partially why neo-Nazi organisations and activities have had so little impact on West German society. There has been no evidence of widespread indignation or condemnation.

The prevalence of antidemocratic attitudes and views should not be seen solely in terms of the intergenerational transmission of views and attitudes and of the failures of political and historical education. It

must be related to the wider concept of what has become known as 'Vergangenheitsbewältigung' - a coming to terms with the past, or to paraphrase Sontheimer's definition, the process of working on the past in such a way as to profit from the National Socialist experience as far as the creation of a better, more humane, democratic order in the Federal Republic is concerned (Fruchtbarmachung der nationalsozialistischen Vergangenheit für eine bessere, humanere, demokratische Ordnung in der neuen Republik durch Aufarbeitung der Vergangenheit).¹²² The National Socialist experience did not - as many hoped and as some seem to imply when noting that the Federal Republic is probably less susceptible to extreme nationalism than other European countries¹²³ have a profound effect on political attitudes.¹²⁴ What appears to have happened is that instead of a conscious attempt to come to terms with the past, a process of collective repression, a general desire to forget the past came to characterize the Federal Republic. Symptomatic of this "irrational rejection (Abwehr) of the past"¹²⁵ are those cases documented where the revelation that a particular individual was involved in criminal activities during the Nazi period failed to arouse moral indignation on the part of the latter's friends, relatives and colleagues. On the contrary very often they proved to be only too willing to speak in his defence.¹²⁶ Public opinion on the Statute of Limitations for Nazi crimes is also symptomatic. A 1978 survey showed that 65% of West Germans were in favour of putting an end to Nazi trials. Only 32% were in favour of abolishing the Statute of Limitations.¹²⁷ The phenomenon can be partially explained by the well-known psychological process of eliminating problems by 'not remembering' by 'forgetting'.¹²⁸ As has often been pointed out, however, other factors reinforced this tendency. The success of the Federal Republic in the economic field and the new sense of national pride it engendered rendered many Germans even less willing to reflect on

the past.¹²⁹ In the early stages of the Federal Republic the onset of the cold war and the resulting change in the attitude of the allies towards Germany was also a contributory factor. The process of de-Nazification, an attempt to prevent the past being simply forgotten, was to all intents and purposes abandoned as the allies came to see Western Germany more and more as a potential ally against the emerging Eastern bloc. Even before this, however, the manner in which the de-Nazification process was carried out had opened up the possibility of collective repression instead of individual responsibility.¹³⁰

Finally it is worthwhile mentioning two other tendencies in addition to repression and 'forgetting' of which there is evidence - that of playing off crimes committed in the name of Germany against alleged crimes committed by the allies and that of playing down the extent of the crimes. What is important here is the similarity between these processes and mechanisms and those which have been seen to constitute an essential characteristic of right-extremism in the Federal Republic.¹³¹

4.4 'Holocaust' and a new phase?

Towards the end of the seventies an 'event' occurred which seemed at least potentially capable of reversing the trends and tendencies which have been illustrated in the present study. This was the screening in January 1979 of the US TV series 'Holocaust'. The public response to the film was overwhelming. For the first installment 31% of the TV sets in the Federal Republic were switched on. This percentage increased to 35, 37 and 40 for the second, third and final installments respectively. 48.1% of the adult population saw one or more of the episodes. A large proportion of sets were kept on for the discussions following each epis-

-ode despite the late hour (11, 13, 15 and 18% respectively).¹³² Over the week during which the programmes were screened, the West German television service 'ARD' received over 30,000 telephone calls in connection with them.¹³³ "Teachers reported spontaneous 'Holocaust' discussions in schools. 81% of the viewers discussed the film with other people. 65% felt deeply moved, 42% were ashamed to be Germans."¹³⁴ The impact of the series cannot be interpreted solely in terms of the admittedly very intensive publicity campaign which preceded its screening. The nature of the film itself would appear to constitute a more significant factor. Unlike documentaries on this subject in which the victims of Nazi persecution appear as an anonymous mass impeding any identification of the viewers with them, 'Holocaust' concentrated on the lives and experiences of one particular (fictional) Jewish family.¹³⁵

More important than the immediate public response is an evaluation of the possible long-term effects. Much of the criticism of the series would appear to be irrelevant in this respect in as much as it was focused almost exclusively on aesthetic deficiencies and minor historical inaccuracies¹³⁶ whilst avoiding the actual content of the film. The major failing of the series was its inability to explain the phenomena documented.¹³⁷ It is evident that from something which cannot be explained, no lessons, either for the present or the future, can be drawn. The nature of many of the telephone calls the series provoked confirm that the film did not bring about a greater understanding of what had happened and was therefore unlikely to have any effects beyond the initial shock and indignation. One of the three main themes which characterized the majority of the calls could be paraphrased by the question "How could it have happened."¹³⁸ Moreover since the series was concerned with only one aspect of National Socialism, namely the treatment of the Jewish people, it is likely that those who before divided National Socialism into posit-

-ive and negative elements, condemned its racist policies but pointed out also its many 'positive' achievements, could possibly continue to hold this attitude after seeing it.¹³⁹

Since 'Holocaust' would not appear to contribute to a greater understanding of Fascism, it is unlikely in the long-term to augment the anti-fascist potential in the Federal Republic to any significant extent. This does not mean that the film was without value. On the contrary, its function was to interrupt the process of repression and, linked with this, the tendencies towards a revision of historical interpretation and, on the basis of its emotional effect, to bring about a renewed interest in the Nazi past. In short 'Holocaust' created the preconditions, the framework for a more successful 'coping with the National Socialist past'. Whether there will be a utilization of the potential which has been created is looked upon with considerable scepticism by numerous critics. "It remains to be seen whether the educational effort will maintain the emotional momentum which was created. The postwar generation who professed not to have known what happened has yet to show a desire to expand their horizon beyond the programme."¹⁴⁰ It is significant that the 'boom' of material concerned with the NS era in magazines and on the book market which followed the screening of the film soon died away and that by May 1979 at the latest 'Holocaust' was no longer a topic for the wider public.¹⁴¹ Moreover there are powerful forces working against any real and profound discussion about the past.¹⁴²

Finally it must be emphasized that the process of coming to terms with the past is a long-term process. One film, whatever its inherent qualities, cannot make up for the shortcomings and failings of the last 35 years. The phenomena under discussion in the present study are symptomatic of these shortcomings and failures and, at the same time, of the serious legitimization deficits of the present political system. Above all

the phenomenon of neo-Nazism, the response to it and other related phenomena constitute a warning sign, a clear indication that despite the apparent stability of the political system which has evolved in the Federal Republic, National Socialism has not been overcome, has not been relegated to the past. It is necessary to take heed of this warning sign and not to be satisfied with repeated and simplistic assertions that at the present time right-extremism does not constitute a serious threat to the liberal democratic basic order in the Federal Republic. To date, with the exception of those political and social circles which suffered most under the Nazi regime - primarily trade-unions, socialist, liberal and communist political parties and groupings and Jewish organisations - very few people see or are willing to see the problem in these terms. The unavoidable consequence is that the latent threat from the far Right will continue to co-exist with an apparently stable party democracy.

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31. see Rowold, op. cit. for a detailed analysis of this trend and for criteria of 'established' and 'non-established' parties.
32. Cf. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1976, Bundesministerium des Innern, p. 25.
33. e.g. Fred H. Richards, Die NPD : Alternative oder Wiederkehr?, (Munich) 1967 and Werner Smoydzin, NPD : Geschichte und Umwelt einer Partei, (Pfaffenhofen) 1967.
34. Cf. Rowold, op. cit., p. 235 and Hans Maier/Hans Bott, Die NPD. Struktur und Ideologie einer 'nationalen Rechtspartei', (Munich) 1968, p. 13.
35. Maier/Bott, op. cit., p. 15.
36. Reinhard Kühnl, Die NPD : Struktur, Programm und Ideologie einer neofaschistischen Partei, Voltaire Verlag (Berlin) 1967, p. 78.
37. Cf. Steven Warnecke, The Future of Rightist Extremism in West Germany in : Comparative Politics, Vol. 2, No 4, 1970, pp. 629-652.
38. Cf. Eike Hennig, Kontinuitäten zum historischen Faschismus und jugendliches Politikverhalten in der Bundesrepublik, in : Gerhard Paul/Bernhard Schossig (eds.), Jugend und Neofaschismus - Provokation oder Identifikation?, Europäische Verlagsanstalt (Frankfurt a.m.) 1979, p. 99.
39. Warnecke, op. cit., p. 643.

40. Cf. Klaus Liepelt, Anhänger der neuen Rechtspartei, in : Politische Vierteljahresschrift, June 1967, pp. 237/71.
41. Liepelt, op. cit., p. 265 and Niethammer, op. cit., p. 24.
42. Liepelt, op. cit., p. 247.
43. Cf. Niethammer, op. cit., p. 25 and Rowold, op. cit., p. 248.
44. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1977, p. 20.
45. Rowold, op. cit., p. 217.
46. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1978, p. 23.
47. Ashkenasi, op. cit., p. 111.
48. Kühnl, op. cit., p. 55.
49. Rowold, op. cit., p. 219.
50. Rowold, op. cit., p. 219.
51. Niethammer, op. cit., p. 277 and Rowold, op. cit., p. 221.
52. Niethammer, op. cit., p. 68.
53. Ibid., p. 67.
54. For criteria of 'neofascist' and 'postfascist' see Niethammer, op. cit., and Ashkenasi, op. cit.
55. Warnecke, op. cit., p. 650.
56. Niethammer, op. cit., p. 84.
57. Cf. Rowold, op. cit., p. 223 and especially Niethammer for a detailed analysis of this aspect of the NPD.

58. Rowold, op. cit., p. 227.
59. Sitzung vom 5 Oktober 1970 cit. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1969/70, p. 10.
60. Cf. Rowold, op. cit., p. 227.
61. Loc. cit.
62. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1969/70, p. 10.
63. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1971, pp. 19 and 22.
64. Rundschreiben vom 26. 1. 1971 cit. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1971, p. 19.
65. NPD - inform, 8/71, loc. cit.
66. Rundschreiben des Parteivorstandes vom 22.6 1971, loc. cit.
67. Deutsche Nachrichten, 29/71, loc. cit.
68. Rundschreiben des Parteivorstandes vom 28.7 71, loc. cit.
69. Loc. cit.
70. Ashkenasi, op. cit., p. 130, Note 1.
71. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1969/70, p. 7.
72. Cf. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1971, p. 19.
73. Loc. cit.
74. Ibid., p. 11, cf. also p. 19.
75. Cf. Rowold, op. cit., p. 231.

76. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1969/70, p. 9.
77. Ibid., p. 9.
78. Cf. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1971, pp. 19/20.
79. The founding of the 'ANR' did not, as its founders had hoped, result in a large scale movement of disappointed NPD members to it. Moreover the lack of a clear ideological position and strategy meant that the organisation was subject to considerable internal problems. The ANR formed part of the so-called 'New Right' or 'Young Right' which, in contrast to the conservative authoritarian and German national 'old Right' had revolutionary socialist tendencies reminiscent of the left-wing of the Nazi party. Membership of the 'New Right' decreased from 800 in 1975 to only 200 in 1977 in a total of 9 small groups. 5 of these had less than 20 members and none of them had more than 100. For a discussion on the 'New Right' see Günther Bartsch, Revolution von Rechts? Ideologie und Organisation der Neuen Rechten, (Freiburg) 1975. Also Richard Stöss, Väter und Enkel : Alter und Neuer Nationalismus in der Bundesrepublik in: Faschismus heute? Schwerpunktheft der Zeitschrift Ästhetik und Kommunikation, No. 32, 1978, pp. 35-57. Unlike most commentators Stöss argues that these groupings are potentially more significant than the neo-Nazi groupings under discussion in the present study.
80. Ashkenasi, op. cit., Note 20, p. 135.
81. Cf. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1978, p. 27.
82. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1971, p. 20.
83. Cf. Rowold, op. cit., p. 222.
84. Cf. Alwin Meyer/Karl-Klaus Rabe, Unsere Stunde, die wird kommen = Rechtsextremismus unter Jugendlichen, Lamuv Verlag (Bornheim - Merten) 1979, p. 13 and Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1977, p. 25.
85. Cit. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1971, p. 20.

86. Cit. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1974, p. 28.
87. Ibid., p. 23.
88. Ibid., p. 28.
89. Cf. D. Joachim, B. Keller, V. Ullrich, Auf dem Wege zur 'Vergang-
-enheitsbewältigung'? : Zur Auseinandersetzung um Neofaschismus, "Krist-
-allnacht" und Holocaust in : Blätter für deutsche und internationale
Politik, 3/1979, p. 315.
90. Die rote Mörderbande bedroht auch Dich, Der Pfeil, undated.
91. E. Kolinsky, Nazi shadows lengthening over Germany, in : Patterns
of Prejudice, Nov-Dec. 1978, pp. 25-32.
92. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1977, p. 27, Betrifft : Verfassungs-
-schutz 1978, p. 25.
93. Gösta Thomas, Federal Chairman of the 'JN' cit. Meyer/Rabe, Unsere
Stunde..., op. cit., p. 34.
94. Cf. Der Pfeil, Nr. 14-15/1978, p. 7.
95. Cf. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1976, p. 30; 1977, p. 27; 1978,
p. 25.
96. Meyer/Rabe, op. cit., pp. 62/63.
97. Cf. Verfassungsschutz bericht des Landes Nordrhein - Westfalen
1978, Der Innenminister des Landes Nordrhein - Westfalen Düsseldorf.
98. Cf. Frankfurter Rundschau, 21-3-1978 and Betrifft : Verfassungs-
-schutz 1977, p. 25
99. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1974, p. 28.
100. Loc. cit.

101. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1976, p. 30.
102. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1977, p. 26.
103. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1978, p. 25.
104. Cf. J. Berlin, D. Joachim, B. Keller and V. Ullrich, Neofaschismus in der Bundesrepublik : Aktivität, Ideologie und Funktion rechtsextremer Gruppen in : Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik, 5/1978, pp. 528-554.
105. Hannah Vogt, Parlamentarische und ausserparlamentarische Opposition, Leske Verlag (Opladen) 1972, p. 78.
106. Cf. Rowold, op. cit., esp. ch. 11.
107. Cf. Vogt, op. cit., passim.
108. Rowold, op. cit., p. 128.
109. Ibid., p. 83.

CHAPTER 1

1. Was heisst "Neonazistisch" in : Bericht des 6. Parlamentarischen Untersuchungsausschusses des Niedersächsischen Landtages, Niedersächsischer Landtag - Dritte Wahlperiode - Landtagsdrucksache Nr. 177, February 1956.
2. Cf. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1978.
3. Cf. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1977.
4. Cf. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1978, p. 19
5. A list of the various organisations with brief descriptions is given in : Bericht über neonazistische Aktivitäten 1978 - Eine Dokumentation, PDI - Taschenbuch 1, (Munich) 1979. It is important to note however that this documentation does not distinguish between the various types of right-wing groupings. All groups are labelled 'neo-Nazi'.
6. Hans Josef Horchem, Zum Entwicklungsstand des Rechtsextremismus in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, in : Manfred Funke (ed.), Extremismus im demokratischen Rechtsstaat, Schriftenreihe der Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, Band 122, (Bonn) 1978, pp. 204ff.
7. Horchem, op. cit., p. 205.
8. Thies Christophersen, Letter to the author, dated 28 July 1979, Mohrkirch
9. Cf. Hans Josef Horchem, Rechtsextremismus in der Bundesrepublik : Der harte Kern hat sich durch junge Aktivisten erweitert, in : Frankfurter Rundschau, Nr. 275, 26 Nov. 1979, p. 10.
10. The NSDAP - Gruppe Wübbels constitutes an exception Wübbels is over 50. This organisation differs from other neo-Nazi groupings however in that it was conceived by Wübbels as a leadership group under the influence of which all other groupings had to be brought.

11. Cf. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1977, p. 30; Horchem, Zum Entwicklungsstand des Rechtsextremismus... . op. cit., p. 204.
12. Horchem, Rechtsextremismus in der Bundesrepublik..., op. cit.
13. Cf. W. Barthel/W. Poelchau, Die netten Nazis von nebenan, in : Der Stern, Nr. 8, 15 February 1979.
14. Cf. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1978, p. 37.
15. Cf. loc. cit.
16. Cf. Ibid., p. 36.
17. Cf. Ibid., p. 35.
18. Cf. loc cit. and Jürgen Pomorin/Reinhard Junge, Die Neonazis und wie man sie bekämpfen kann, Weltkreis - Verlag (Dortmund) 1978, pp. 49-85.
19. Cf. Meyer/Rabe, op. cit., p. 32, also p. 34.
20. Michael Kühnen cit. Alwin Meyer/Karl-Klaus Rabe, 'Ohne dass ich sagen würde, ich bin der neue Führer?: Gespräch mit einem jungen Nationalsozialisten in : Kursbuch 54, (Berlin) 1978, p. 129.
21. See PDI - Taschenbuch 1, op. cit., p. 103.
22. Cf. NS Kampfruf, Nr. 23/1977 in : Meyer/Rabe, Unsere Stunde die wird kommen..., op. cit., p. 256.
23. Loc. cit.
24. Horchem, Rechtsextremismus in der Bundesrepublik..., op. cit.
25. See Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1978, p. 35.
26. Cf. Wolfgang Benz, Die Opfer und die Täter - Rechtsextremismus in der Bundesrepublik in : Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte, beilage zur Wochenzeitung das parlament, B27/80, pp. 29-45.

27. Meyer/Rabe, Unsere Stunde die wird kommen..., op. cit., p. 77.
28. Benz, op. cit., p. 33.
29. Cf. Karl-Klaus Rabe, Beispiele und Einschätzungsversuche neofaschistischer Tendenzen im Bereich organisierter und nichtorganisierter Jugendlicher : Ergebnisse journalistischer Recherchen in : Paul/Schoessig (eds.), op. cit., p. 52 and Berlin et al., Neofaschismus in der Bundesrepublik..., op. cit., p. 532.
30. Cf. Verfassungsschutzbericht des Landes Nordrhein - Westfalen 1978, p. 8. Kühnen would not appear to be one of these exceptions however. The evidence suggests that the founding of the 'ANS' and the announcement that it would participate in local elections in Hamburg were staged simply and solely for the press i.e. were attempts to cause a sensation, to provoke and to attract attention. (Cf. Meyer/Rabe, Unsere Stunde die wird kommen, op. cit., p. 67). Kühnen's own evaluation of his activities - "I think that in ten, twenty years, we will be able to achieve something politically with the cadre which we are now building up all over Germany. For the moment, and I say this quite truthfully, provocation, causing a sensation in the press, making the public aware of the fact that we exist at all, are more important tasks" - (Cit. Meyer/Rabe, Ohne dass ich sagen würde..., op. cit.) hardly gives the impression of someone who considers a new right-wing political party a viable proposition.
31. NS - Kampftruf, 23/1977 in : Deutschland erwacht, Jungsozialisten in der SPD, Landesverband Nordrhein - Westfalen (ed.), Düsseldorf, (First published by Lamuv Verlag, 1978), p. 59.
32. Die Bauernschaft, Nr. 2/1979, p. 49 'Anmerkung'.
33. Cf. Berlin et al., Neofaschismus in der Bundesrepublik..., op. cit., p. 532.
34. Cf. Pomorin/Junge, op. cit., p. 71.
35. Cf. Die Bauernschaft, Nr. 2/1979, p. 49.

36. Cf. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1977, p. 59.
37. Roeder, for example, made many enemies in the rightist camp as a result of his tendency to stress his own significance (cf. Die Bauern-
-schaft, Nr. 2/79, Letter Nr. 14 signed Joachim Nehring, Freudenstadt, p. 48.) and as a result of his decision to go into exile to avoid a prison sentence. Many right-extremists had intended to turn him into a 'martyr' of the rightist cause. The relationship between Roeder and Schönborn, the leader of the Kampfbund Deutscher Soldaten (KDS), was particularly tense. Schönborn was extremely critical of Roeder's so-called 'proclamation' (De-
-claration of principle and proclamation, Liberation movement of the Ger-
-man Reich (Freiheitsbewegung Deutsches Reich), signed Manfred Roeder, May 23 1978) which declared the take-over of the administration of the German Reich by Roeder's 'Liberation Movement of the German Reich'. For Roeder, on the other hand, Schönborn's involvement in the election campaign for the European Parliament was "...no less than treason to the Ger-
-man Reich and our national interests!" (63rd Letter, Deutsche Bürgerin-
-itiative c.V., November 1978).
38. Michael Kühnen cit. GEW Unterrichtsmaterialien 1 ; Neofaschismus, Gewerkschaft Erziehung und Wissenschaft - Landesverband Hamburg 1978.
39. Horchem, Zum Entwicklungsstand des Rechtsextremismus..., op. cit., p.204.
40. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1978, pp. 33/34.
41. Ibid., p. 16.
42. Der Sturm, Kampfblatt für Hamburg und Umgebung, Nr. 8/1978 in : Meyer/Rabe, Unsere Stunde die wird kommen..., op. cit., p. 254.
43. Pomorin/Junge, op. cit., p. 44.
44. Cf. Horchem, Zum Entwicklungsstand des Rechtsextremismus..., op. cit., p. 211.
45. XXX

46. Bericht über neonazistische Aktivitäten 1978, op. cit., p. 109.
47. Meyer/Rabe, Unsere Stunde die wird kommen..., op. cit., p. 77.
48. Ibid, p. 32, cf. also p. 34.
49. Cf. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1976 p. 26.
50. Loc. cit.
51. Cf. Gross, der niedersächsische Minister des Innern, Niedersächsischer Landtag, Drucksache 8/Nr. 3625.
52. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1977, p. 18.
53. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1978, pp 2, 3 and 5.
54. Fragen und Antworten zum Bereich des Neonazismus, available from Landesministerium der Justiz, Nordrhein - Westfalen.
55. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1978, p. 33, cf. also Benz, op. cit., pp. 32/33.
56. Fragen und Antworten..., op. cit.
57. Cit. Pomorin/Junge, op. cit., p. 56.
58. Fragen und Antworten..., op. cit.
59. Loc. cit.
60. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1978, p. 33.
61. NS - Kampfur in : Deutschland erwacht, op. cit., p. 59.
62. Berlin et al, Neofaschismus in der Bundesrepublik..., op. cit., p. 542.

63. Hartmut Castner/Thilo Castner, Schuljugend und Neo-Faschismus - ein akutes Problem politischer Bildung in : Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte, B44/78, pp. 31-46.
64. Cf. Chapter 4 of the present study.
65. Cf. Meyer/Rabe, Ohne dass ich sagen würde... op. cit.
66. Cf. D. Joachim, B. Keller, G. Ullrich - Hadler und V. Ullrich, Nazi - Schwärmerei und Rechtsextremismus unter Jugendlichen in der Bundesrepublik in : Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik, Nr. /1980. pp. 701-716.
67. Castner/Castner, op. cit., p. 43.
68. Joachim et al., Auf dem Wege zur "Vergangenheitsbewältigung"?..., op. cit., pp. 316/7.
69. Hennig, Kontinuitäten zum historischen Faschismus..., op. cit., p. 87.
70. Ibid., p. 89.
71. Ibid., p. 92.
72. Cf. Joachim et al., Nazi Schwärmerei und Rechtsextremismus..., op. cit., pp. 709/10.
73. Ibid., p. 710.
74. Cit, Meyer/Rabe, "Ohne dass ich sagen würde...", op. cit., p. 134.
75. Fragen und Antworten..., op. cit., p. 9.
76. Loc. cit.
77. Cf. H. Joachim Schwagerl, Rechtsextreme, ins besondere neofaschistische Jugendgruppen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland - Ein aktuelles

Lagebild aus der Sicht des informativen Verfassungsschutzes in : Paul/
Schossig (eds.), op. cit., p. 35.

78. Cf. Fragen und Antworten..., op. cit., p.9.

79. Cf. Meyer/Rabe, Unsere Stunde die wird kommen..., op. cit., pp. 71
and 91; Schwagerl, op. cit., p. 35; Fragen und Antworten..., op. cit., p.
9; Castner/Castner, op. cit., p. 43; Wolfgang Krieger, Worrying about
West German Democracy in : The Political Quarterly, Vol. 50, Nr. 2, April
/June 1979 pp. 192-204.

80. Meyer/Rabe, Unsere Stunde die wird kommen..., op. cit., p. 91.

81. Loc. cit.

82. Cf. Meyer/Rabe, Unsere Stunde die wird kommen..., op. cit., pp.
91/2

83. Joachim et al., Nazi - Schwärmerei und Rechtsextremismus..., op.
cit., p. 711.

84. Hennig, Kontinuitäten zum historischen Faschismus..., op. cit., pp.
84/5.

85. Berndt Dröse, ehem. Pressesprecher der JN, Waltrop 12.5.1978 cit.
Meyer/Rabe, Unsere die wird kommen..., op. cit., p. 29.

86. Cf. Meyer/Rabe, Unsere Stunde die wird kommen..., op. cit., p. 86.

87. Hennig, Kontinuitäten zum historischen Faschismus..., op. cit.,
p. 86.

88. Joachim et al., Nazi - Schwärmerei und Rechtsextremismus..., op.
cit., p. 711.

89. Rabe, Beispiele und Einschätzungsversuche neofaschistischer Tenden-
-zen..., op. cit., p. 54.

90. Joachim et al., Nazi - Schwärmerei und Rechtsextremismus..., op. cit., p. 711; cf. also Maria Koppnagel, Gefahren neuer nationalistischer Strömungen in : Rechtsradikale Jugendorganisationen - Beiträge und Dokumentation, PDI - Sonderheft 8, PDI (Munich) 1979, p. 26.
91. Joachim et al., Nazi - Schwärmerei und Rechtsextremismus..., op. cit., p. 712.
92. Cf. Fragen und Antworten..., op. cit., p. 13.
93. Cf. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1978, p. 23, also Gross, der Niedersächsische Minister des Innern, Drucksache 8/Nr. 3625.
94. Cf. Fritz - Ullrich Bundt, Deputy Federal Chairman of the 'JN', 'Land' chairman in Lower Saxony cit. in : Pomorin/Junge, op. cit., p. 16.
95. Michael David, Kühnen's deputy in the 'ANS', cit. in : Ibid., pp. 50/51.
96. Cf. Fragen und Antworten..., op. cit., p. 12.
97. Meyer/Rabe, 'Ohne dass ich sagen würde...', op. cit.; cf. also Berlin et al., Neofaschismus in der Bundesrepublik..., op. cit., p. 532.
98. Michael David, Kühnen's deputy, cit. in : Pomorin/Junge, op. cit., pp. 50/51.
99. Kühnen cit. in Meyer/Rabe, Unsere Stunde die wird kommen..., op. cit., p. 64.
100. Gross, Minister of the Interior in Lower Saxony, Drucksache 8/Nr. 3625, cf. also Pomorin/Junge, op. cit., p. 57.
101. Meyer/Rabe, Unsere Stunde die wird kommen..., op. cit., p. 64.
102. Cf. Fragen und Antworten..., op. cit.
103. This is the highest figure since the wave of neo-Nazi daubings in

1959/60, cf. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1978, p. 55. For an analysis of neo-Nazi tendencies at that time see Falschspiel mit der Vergangenheit, Verlag der Frankfurter Rundschau, 1960.

104. Cf. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1978 p. 57.

105. Loc. cit.

106. Ibid., p. 54.

107. Ibid., pp. 56/57; Betrifft ; Verfassungsschutz 1977 p. 52.

108. Cf. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1978, pp. 50/51.

109. Joachim et al., Auf dem Wege zur "Vergangenheitsbewältigung...", op. cit., p. 315.

110. Horchem, Rechtsextremismus in der Bundesrepublik..., op. cit.

111. "Donkey-action". In May 1978 ANS activists marched through Hamburg wearing donkey masks and carrying placards with the message "I, ass, still believe that Jews were "gassed" in German KZ's. (Cf. Deutschland erwacht, op. cit., p. 125.

112. Cf. Meyer/Rabe, Unsere Stunde die wird kommen..., op. cit., p. 67.

113. Ibid., pp. 67/68.

114. Horchem, Rechtsextremismus in der Bundesrepublik..., op. cit.

115. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1974, pp. 30/31; Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1975, p. 34.

116. Cf. Frankfurter Rundschau. 24 August 1979, Nr. 196, p. 1.

117. Frankfurter Rundschau. 24 November 1977.

118. Drucksache Nr. 8/3625.

119. Horchem, Zum Entwicklungsstand des Rechtsextremismus..., op. cit., p. 210.
120. Cf. also Meyer/Rabe, Unsere Stunde die wird kommen..., op. cit., p. 71 and Joachim et al., Nazi - Schwärmerei und Rechtsextremismus..., op. cit., p. 712.
121. Cit. Horchem, Zum Entwicklungsstand des Rechtsextremismus..., op. cit., p. 208.
122. Loc. cit.
123. Fragen und Antworten..., op. cit.
124. Cit. Meyer/Rabe, 'Ohne dass ich sagen würde!...', op. cit., cf. also Fragen und Antworten..., op. cit.
125. See Chapter 2.
126. Horchem, Rechtsextremismus in der Bundesrepublik..., op. cit.
127. Refers to NSDAP members who joined to party prior to 1933.
128. Rolf Eigenwald, Geschichtslehrer angesichts des Neofaschismus : hilflos in : Frankfurter Hefte, Nr. 10/1978, p. 5.
129. Gerhard Paul, Zur Sozialpsychologie des jugendlichen Rechtsextremismus heute, in Paul/Schossig (eds.), op. cit., p. 166.
130. Ibid., pp. 166/7.
131. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1977, p. 51.
132. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1978, p. 4.
133. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1977, p. 52.
134. Cf. also Stern, Nr. 8/1979 and Berlin et al., Neofaschismus in der

Bundesrepublik..., op. cit., pp. 540/1.

135. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1977, p. 52.

136. Cf. Ibid., p. 16 and Kleine Anfrage der SPD - Landtagsabgeordneten Wernstedt und Pennigsdorf, 1 February 1978, Drucksache 8/Nr. 3625.

137. Cf. Stern, Nr. 32/1978 for a detailed report on one case.

138. Heinz-Werner Höffken/Martin Sattler, Rechtsextremismus in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland : Die 'alte' die 'neue' Rechte und der Neonazismus, Die Landeszentrale für politische Bildung, Hamburg 1978, p. 51.

139. Siegfried Von Kortzfleisch, Chairman of the Society for Christian-Jewish Cooperation, at a symposium organised by the SPD in Hannover on 10-4-1978 with the theme "Gegen einen neuen Faschismus - für den sozialen und demokratischen Rechtsstaat" in : Gegen einen neuen Faschismus - für den sozialen und demokratischen Rechtsstaat, SPD Unterbezirk Hannover-Stadt, p. 18.

140. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1978, p. 55.

141. Cit. Joachim et al., Auf dem wege zur 'Vergangenheitsbewältigung' ..., op. cit., p. 316.

142. Fragen und Antworten..., op. cit.

143. Cf. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1975, 1976 and 1977.

144. Joachim et al., Auf dem wege..., op. cit., p. 316.

145. Stern, Nr. 8/1979.

146. Cit. Horchem, Zum Entwicklungsstand des Rechtsextremismus..., op. cit., p. 208.

147. Cit. Frankfurter Rundschau, 24 August 1978, Nr. 196.

148. Cit. Meyer/Rabe, Unsere Stunde..., op. cit., p. 66.
149. Cf. Frankfurter Rundschau, 24 August 1979, Nr. 196.
150. Cit. Meyer/Rabe, Unsere Stunde..., op. cit., p. 66.
151. Wille und Weg, 6 July 1977, p. 25.
152. Cit. Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1977, p. 37.
153. Stern, Nr. 8/1979, p. 128.
154. Meyer/Rabe, 'Ohne dass ich sagen würde...', op. cit.
155. Horchem, Rechtsextremismus in der Bundesrepublik..., op. cit.
156. Thies Christophersen, Letter to the author, dated 28 July 1979, Mohrkirch.
157. Cit. Süddeutsche Zeitung, 13 February 1979.
158. Cit. Die jungen Braunen mit den alten Parolen in : Stern, Nr. 5, 26 January 1978.
159. Fragen und Antworten..., op. cit.
160. Cit. Meyer/Rabe, Unsere Stunde die wird kommen..., op. cit., p. 67.
161. NS-Kampfruf, Nr. 2/1977, see Betrifft : Verfassungsschutz 1977, p. 48.
162. NS-Kampfruf, Nr. 30/1979 see : Meyer/Rabe, Unsere Stunde..., op. cit., p. 265ff.
163. According to neo-Nazi activist Andreas Kirchmann during Bückeberg trial, see Frankfurter Rundschau, Nr. 163, 17 July 1979, p. 4.
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CHAPTER 2

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