

Rail line in W. Germany sabotaged

By Robert H. Reid
Associated Press

BONN, West Germany — Supporters of 26 jailed terrorists staging a hunger strike to dramatize their demand for prisoner-of-war status were blamed yesterday for the sabotaging of a rail line, the latest incident in a string of violent protests backing the prisoners.

State authorities in Lower Saxony said they found handbills supporting the hunger strikers strewn in the area where a cable was placed across an electrified rail line late Sunday, delaying a U.S. military train bound from Hanover to Berlin.

The train ripped out 1,500 feet of overhead power lines when it hit the cable. U.S. Army officials said there were no injuries but that the train was delayed for 2½ hours.

Earlier Sunday, hundreds of ram-paging youths smashed windows in more than 200 shops and overturned cars along a fashionable street in Berlin after rumors spread that two of the strikers had died. Police arrested 20 rioters, 13 of whom were released after spending the night in jail.

The strikers rumored to have died are Sigurd Debus, a member of the Red Army Faction, better known as the Baader-Meinhof Gang, and Andreas Vogel, a member of the gang's allied Movement of the Second of June.

Debus' condition in Hamburg was listed as "very serious" yesterday, and his lawyers said he had "scarcely a chance of survival." Yesterday was his 65th day on the strike.

Vogel, on strike for 71 days, was reported on the critical list at a hospital in Berlin.

The terrorists are demanding to be treated as POWs in accordance with the Geneva Convention, which would outlaw their solitary confinement, segregation from other prisoners and special restrictions on mail, visits and other privileges.

One striker, Bernd Roesner, ended a 67-day fast yesterday and asked for food, officials at Straubing Prison in Bavaria said.

In Stuttgart, a state justice ministry official said strikers Knut Folkerts, Siegfried Haag, Guenther Sonnenberg and Sieglinde Hoffman were being watched by doctors, and that while "force-feeding is not taking place . . . it could be at any time." Force-feeding could mean intravenous feeding or tubal feeding through the nose.

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Niger Says It Sold Uranium to Libya, Use for Nuclear Weaponry Feared

NIAMEY, Niger (UPI) — The government of Niger has sold about 450 metric tons of unenriched uranium to Libyan leader Muammar Kadafi and may sell him more in the future, President Seyni Kountche has disclosed.

What Libya has done with the uranium is not known. Western sources said some of it could have gone to Arab nations thought to be developing nuclear arms, and nuclear physicist Tom Cochran said Pakistan also was a likely recipient.

"That's where the Pakistanis have been getting their uranium from," said Cochran, of the Natural Resources Defense Council in Washington.

Western sources said Niger's "yellow cake" fuel could be processed to make nuclear weapons but the process would be difficult and the sources were reluctant to predict how much explosive power could be achieved.

Kountche said in an interview that his government observes "a moral code vis-a-vis proliferation" which requires buyers to accept United Nations safeguards. But he said the responsibility ends there and, because Niger needs money badly, "if the devil asks to sell him uranium today, I'll sell it to him."

Niger, an impoverished African desert nation of 5 million people, is the world's fourth largest producer of uranium. It turns out 4,000 metric tons a year of "yellow cake" reactor fuel from two multinationally financed mines near Arlit in its northern desert, about 500 miles from the Libyan border.

"To my knowledge, we have sold about 450 tons of uranium to Libya," said Kountche, the austere head of Niger's military government who seized power in a 1974 coup.

Kountche's statement was the first public disclosure of exactly how much uranium his government has sold Kadafi.

Niger banned uranium shipments to Tripoli last January when it suspended diplomatic relations because of Libya's invasion and occupation of neighboring Chad.

There have been numerous reports in the last two years of uranium going to Libya from Niger, either through clandestine sales or hijacked shipments. But Niger officials say there has been no secrecy and Libyan cargo planes have landed openly to load unenriched uranium packed in bright blue barrels; sales agreements have been published in government documents.

Kountche said he does not rule out resuming sales to Libya.

He said Niger's share of the mines' 1981 production — Niger's partners are from France, West Germany, Japan, Spain and Italy — will be 800 tons at a time when world prices have fallen 30 percent. "It goes without saying that for the development of our country, we cannot store 800 tons of uranium."

Niger government announcements show other sales of at least 60 tons to Pakistan, which is believed to be building an enrichment plant to make weapons grade material, and 100 tons to Iraq, whose nuclear program has also caused concern.

Before Niger's latest suspension, deliveries to Libya were twice halted over Kadafi's attitude to international safeguards.

The International Atomic Energy Agency, according to Western sources, has been unable to find out what Kadafi has done with much of the uranium.

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COMMUNIST PARLEY CAUTIONED ON POLES

Special to The New York Times

EAST BERLIN, April 13 — Italian and French Communists at the East German party congress here warned today against any outside intervention in Poland and said they were convinced that Warsaw could settle its own affairs.

Addressing the conference as the representatives of the two largest Communist parties in Western Europe, Gaston Pliassonier of France and Giovanni Corvetti of Italy spoke of widespread concern in the West at the events in and around Poland.

"For the past six months the media in France have reported that a military intervention is imminent," said Mr. Pliassonier, who is a member of the French politburo. "Naturally this has led to violent attacks against the Communist Party."

He said his party was "deeply convinced it is the affair of the Polish party, the Government and the Polish people to solve their problems through realization of economic, social and democratic reforms that will enable them to go forward on the road to socialism."

Mr. Corvetti, a member of the Italian party's national leadership, used even stronger language, saying his party firmly believed "that the respect for independence and sovereignty of every country and every nation is an unrenounceable principle for every socialist force, for every progressive force, and is also a basic condition for the continuation of détente."

The Poles themselves, he said, should "solve and overcome the crisis and the tensions by political means, with their own strength and without outside interference."