

# Terrorist Blast Kills Executive

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BONN — A senior executive of Siemens AG, the giant West German electronics group, and his driver were killed Wednesday by a terrorist bomb as they rode to work in their armor-plated car.

The killing of Karl Heinz Beckurts, 56, a noted nuclear physicist and head of Siemens' research and technology division since 1981, appears to mark a new offensive by the leftist Red Army Faction (RAF). Last year, the group committed 221 terrorist acts in West Germany, police said.



In a note left at the scene of the slaying, near Beckurts' home in the Munich suburb of Neuperlach, the RAF claimed responsibility for killing him and his driver, Eckehard Groppler, 42.

The note said the RAF killed Beckurts because Siemens was negotiating a role in the U.S. space defense program known as "Star Wars."

The note said the attack was carried out by the Mara Cagol commando unit of the RAF, which also is known as the Baader-Meinhof Gang.

Mara Cagol was a member of Italy's leftist Red Brigades terrorist group and the wife of Renato Curcio, one of its founders. She was killed in 1975 in a shootout with police.

At a news conference in Karlsruhe, the country's chief federal prosecutor, Kurt Rebmann, said Beckurts had been involved in secret planning on "Star Wars," President Reagan's space-based Strategic Defense Initiative. But Werner Osel, a spokesman for Siemens, denied the report, saying Beckurts had only taken part in talks with Bonn officials about participation in the program.

Rebmann also said Beckurts' name was contained in a document found by police in July, 1984, in a terrorists' safe house in Frankfurt.

Government spokesman Friedhelm Ost said Chancellor Helmut Kohl had received the news with shock and indignation. The government has offered a 100,000-mark reward (\$46,000) for the capture of Beckurts' killers.

Some officials suggested a link between the Munich bomb attack and the wave of antinuclear demonstrations that has swept West Germany since the Chernobyl nuclear accident last April in the Soviet Union. A Siemens subsidiary, Kraftwerk Union, is West Germany's major builder of atomic power stations.

Police said the bomb, which contained the equivalent of 22 pounds of TNT, had been placed at the base of a tree on the roadside and was ignited by remote control when Beckurts' armor-plated BMW passed by.

Both Beckurts and his driver were killed immediately in the blast, which tore a deep crater in the road and sent flames 65 feet into the air. Another car carrying security officials was slightly damaged. Police were looking for a white car that witnesses said sped from the scene after the explosion.

Before joining Siemens, Beckurts was director of the Institute for Nuclear Physics at the Nuclear Research Center in Juelich. He earlier headed an institute for neutron physics and reactor technology at the Nuclear Research Center in Karlsruhe.

In his latest report on internal security, West German Interior Minister Friedrich Zimmermann said the number of terrorist attacks in the federal republic had grown to 211 last year from 148 in 1984. Three Americans were among those killed by German terrorists last year.

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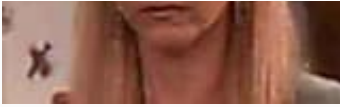
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