

Inspired by the premise of the article — that a sliced watermelon has been discussed in a German intelligence context as a possible extremist symbol in certain political uses — here's a surreal, absurdist, bureaucratic sketch in the spirit of Monty Python, focused on the logic of overclassification and bureaucracy, rather than targeting any protected group or real-world tragedy directly. The article concerns a recent German intelligence classification debate.

Deborah Foulkes

The Ministry of Suspicious Fruit

A Monty Python-style sketch

Setting: A vast, echoing, excessively tidy German government office. Signs everywhere read:

FEDERAL OFFICE FOR THE DETECTION OF POTENTIALLY CONCERNING PRODUCE

A man enters carrying groceries.

SCENE 1: THE CHECKPOINT

OFFICER KLAUS

(gravely)

Papers.

MAN

I'm just buying lunch.

KLAUS

Exactly what a lunch extremist would say.

He opens the shopping bag.

KLAUS

(reading inventory)

One cucumber. Neutral.

One yoghurt. Mildly suspicious.

One watermelon—

(Alarm instantly blares. Red lights flash. A tuba begins playing ominously.)

VOICE OVER TANNOY

Code Crimson! Code Crimson! Possible Fruit-Based Ideology Detected!

MAN

It's just fruit.

KLAUS

(to assistant)

He says it is "just fruit."

ASSISTANT

Ah.

(Writes in notebook: "Classic Fruit Deflection Technique.")

KLAUS

Whole watermelon or sliced?

MAN

Sliced?

Silence.

A portrait of a melon slowly descends from the ceiling.

SCENE 2: THE EXPERT PANEL

A panel of absurdly specialized bureaucrats assembles.

- Chief Analyst for Symbolic Cucurbits
- Deputy Minister of Ambiguous Shapes
- Professor of Semiotic Anxiety

PROFESSOR

(showing slides)

Historically, circles are suspicious because they imply completion. Triangles imply intent. Fruit implies nutrition, which raises morale.

MAN

I wanted something refreshing.

CHIEF ANALYST

Refreshing for whom?

MAN

Me?

(Gasps.)

SCENE 3: THE SYMBOL TEST

A table is wheeled out covered in objects.

PROFESSOR

We shall determine your ideological alignment.

He holds up an apple.

MAN

Apple.

PROFESSOR

Interesting.

Banana.

MAN

Banana.

PROFESSOR

Predictable.

Watermelon slice.

MAN

Watermelon.

Entire room freezes.

A military band suddenly enters and plays three dramatic notes.

KLAUS

You recognized it immediately.

MAN

Because... it's a watermelon?

PROFESSOR

Exactly what someone familiar with watermelon discourse would say.

SCENE 4: ESCALATION

Charts appear on screen:

"THREAT MATRIX OF FRUIT"

Fruit	Threat Level
Pear	Beige
Kiwi	Confusing
Grapes	Organised
Watermelon	"Needs Discussion"

MAN

This is ridiculous.

DEPUTY MINISTER

That's what they said about avocados.

MAN

What happened with avocados?

DEPUTY MINISTER

We still don't know what millennials wanted.

SCENE 5: THE RADICALISATION UNIT

A man in a trench coat bursts in.

AGENT

Sir! We've intercepted coded produce at the market.

KLAUS

What kind?

AGENT

Fruit salad.

Entire office stands.

KLAUS

My God.

AGENT

And... someone was carrying mixed berries.

(Thunder sound effect.)

PROFESSOR

Hybrid symbolism.

SCENE 6: THE TWIST

An elderly woman storms in carrying shopping bags.

ELDERLY WOMAN

Excuse me, are you idiots holding up the queue?

KLAUS

Madam, we are investigating produce-related ambiguity.

She removes a giant watermelon.

Everyone recoils.

ELDERLY WOMAN

I'm making fruit salad.

PROFESSOR

Or so you claim.

ELDERLY WOMAN

(shouting)

I survived three governments and two currencies. You think I'm explaining melons to civil servants?

Long pause.

KLAUS

...Fair point.

FINAL PYTHON-STYLE ENDING

Suddenly, a gigantic animated foot descends from the sky and squashes the office.

Cut to narrator:

NARRATOR

"And so the Federal Republic narrowly survived the Great Melon Incident of Tuesday, though officials remain deeply concerned about papayas."

ROLL CREDITS OVER SERIOUS ORCHESTRAL MUSIC

TEXT ON SCREEN:

No fruit was forcibly ideologically aligned during the making of this programme.