

G20-REPRESSION

SUMMARY FOR OUR INTERNATIONALIST COMRADES

Prisoners | Conditions in the prison | Trials Video- and Photo-Publications | Houseraid

The G20 summit and the euphoric days in the streets of the Schanzenviertel were shaped by the massive anger and motivation to attack, which we did not expect since Heiligendamm and Frankfurt. The wave of repression that followed afterwards, and actually had already started before the summit with the implementation of the new §114ff and preventive policing, reached its climax with the publication of dozens of mug shots, by the special commission „Soko Schwarzer Block“ on December 18th, 2017.

The wave of repression, remained rather unnoticed from comrades in other countries who fought with us on the streets and euphorically followed the riots in the media. They told us, that they did not receive any information on the prisoners, the sentenced and the persecution mania by the state.

Part I: Prisoners

The situation in december 2017

The cops implemented a 40 man strong Soko, which searched the internet for pictures and videos, in order to further criminalise activists. About 200 cops are currently sitting in front of their computers, watching special face detection softwares do most of the investigation work. Even when you think, you have nothing to hide or you are sure, you always changed in a dark alley: Solidarity doesn't just start, when the repression hits you or your friends. The state, including the media, cops and active citizens, is clearly trying to redefine the riots. We managed to dominate the discourses of these days during the summit, but we have to recognise that in the face of brutal sentences, denunciations and public agitation, we are being pushed back into a position of simply reacting: Day X demos, prison rallies and a couple of broken windows here and there.

Prisoners and the trials: After the three days of riots in Hamburg, 51 people had been taken into custody. Ultimately 28 remained in the JVA Billwerder, Hanhöfersand and Holstenglacis until their trials. Being mainly non german, the prisoners came from the Netherlands, France, Switzerland, Austria, Spain, Italy, Poland, Hungary and Russia. Additionally several hundred people had to stay in the GeSa (custody) for a short time and had to give their fingerprints and pictures.

The remaining G20 prisoners are accused of various crimes, which in many cases would not justify longterm custody. The charges go from violating the law of gathering in public spaces and breach of the peace, to resistance and assault against officers. The last one can, after the laws were tightened last year, be punished with up to three months in prison, in severe cases with up to six months. **Currently, in the beginning of January 2018, 7 people are still imprisoned in Hamburg.**

Additionally, many comrades are going to appeal their sentences. For example Peike, who was sentenced to 2 years and 7 months prison, in the first G20-trial.

The conditions in „Gesa“ (short term/provisional prison) and „U-Haft“ (detention while awaiting trial)

Over 100 lawyers worked in 24 hours shifts at the GeSa in Hamburg-Harburg. 250 people were attended to during the summit. Several prisoners said, they were denied basic hygienic articles, even though they asked for it repeatedly. In one case, the request from a young woman was met with the statement: „Demonstrators don't get periods.“ In another case a young woman said, she had to insert a tampon in front of police officers. It was burning up in the cells, there were up to eight prisoners in one cell, instead of five, even though not all the cells were occupied. The prisoners got two slices of bread in 24 hours, access to restrooms was granted very scarcely. There were few mattresses and no blankets. With kicks against the cell doors, the prisoners were kept awake. Some cells had constant light, while others had none at all. An injured woman, who was taken to the GeSa on Friday (July 7th) with a suspected nose break, did not receive food for 15 hours. Her injury was not x-rayed. She was only seen by a judge 40 hours after her arrest, who released her at 11pm that same day. The prisoners in custody are generally only allowed visitors with a permission from the judge. These visits were being strictly surveilled (letter from Fabio's mother to her son from August 7th, 2017). Additionally, it was impossible to send packages with clean clothes to the prisoners for weeks. The continuance of the custody was justified with „Defending the law“.

Fleeing or hiding evidence, which is usually the reason for enforcing custody, did not play any role. Therefore the custody itself presents as a preventive measure. A non german passport, strengthened the accusation, of being a potential enemy to society, leading to longer custody and harsher sentences. Additionally many released prisoners received letters, asking them for a voluntary DNA analysis.

Part II: Trials and Sentences

In general one can say, it became pretty obvious through all the trials, that no matter which person was in front of the judge and no matter what the charges were, every single one of them was blamed for the riots, especially those on Friday night and ultimately sentenced for them. This type of mass participation during street fights and attacks on cops should be prevented in the future. The fear of the power hungry advocates, became clear in the politically motivated pleas, in which they tried to paint the activists as isolated criminals, without any political identities. A technique used worldwide. In order to understand the outrage about the sentences and their justifications, it is important to explain how German police is regularly trying to get sentences with the use of „Tatbeobachter“ (Tabos), loosely translated as crime witnesses, as well as isolated video scenes. Arrests, especially during demonstrations, are often only based on alleged observations by Tabos. In the past, their statements could usually not stand the cross examination in court, so that few people (excluding especially Kurdish activists), were placed on probation, but very rarely received prison time.

Another issue can be found in the German so called left scene: In the 80s a campaign arose from the German left scene: „Anna and Arthur shut up“. A campaign, which was based on the right to refuse any statements. According to this right, anyone who is arrested or on trial can refuse any statement in front of the cops or the judge, except stating the details on the passport. Understanding this right as a weapon - as a way of protecting structures or other people - but also as an act of resistance - in the sense of withdrawing yourself from any dialogue with the state, is sadly not a given anymore. A

decision of making a statement in court or not, is often an individual one or left up to the strategy of the lawyers.

The strategies from the lawyer often focused on reaching deals, which can be described as an understanding between the judge and prosecutor and the defense attorney, which usually forces the defense to agree to certain points brought up by the judge in exchange for a softer sentence and in confessions, which under certain circumstances can be justified. Though there were not only deals and confessions within the prisoners, that could under certain circumstances be a valid choice, but it went as far as prisoners apologizing to the judges and cops, as well as to the HASPA bank and Budnikowsky (store). One Example: A 28 year old guy from Hamburg read his confession out loud. He said, he did not know what possessed him that evening. It was simply his curiosity that drove him to the Schanze, after he saw pictures of the riots in TV. Upon arrival, the crowd swept him along. „If I could turn back time, I would just stay home that night and watch everything on TV.“, he said on Tuesday. He was actually on his way to Barmbeck that night, where he now lives, when he coincidentally passed the riots at Pferdemarkt, where he was attacked with pepper spray, which made him angry, additionally he had taken cocaine that night as well. The verdict: 3 years of prison.

Fabio marks a clear exception here, he wrote a political statement, which he read out in front of the court. This is not only a sign of bravery and political knowledge, it is also an important step for all of us to fight against the repression, not buckle in the face of danger and fight against the criminalisation of our struggles.

(<https://unitedwestand.blackblogs.org/en/statement-by-fabio-v-on-the-trial-in-the-district-court-of-hamburg-altona-on-7th-of-november-2017/#more-1495>)

There are several examples of the G20 trials at the end of the article. Until today, Konstantins, Christians and Fabio's trials are still ongoing and their documentations can be found on the „United we stand“ web page. Some are also in English. Keeping the raids and the recent publication of mug shots in mind, more trials are probably soon to follow.

Part III: First raids before and after the summit

During the evening of July 1st, the apartments of two comrades were searched by police. As far as we know up until now, the raids were carried out due to „danger prevention“. During the raids, USB sticks, computers, private cell phones and clothes were taken. One affected person was charged with planning crimes in the context of the G20 summit. Observations were noticed in the days before the raids. The second person was released that same evening.

Raids on July 8th

After the G20 Summit, Hamburg police raided the international center B5 in St Paul. At 10:45 AM, riot police stormed the center and attacked the people who were present at the time. Without stating any reason, people were handcuffed and the rooms on the center and two adjoining private apartments were searched. Also the cellar and the adjoining B-movie and FoodCoop was ransacked. Allegedly, the police suspected Molotov cocktails in the center, which turned out to be a complete defamation.

Raids concerning the looting

The Hamburg police raided 14 residents, shortly after the summit in Hamburg and Schleswig-Holstein. Reason for that, was the looting of the Apple Store during the riots on Friday night. Several cell phones were located and the owners were charged with concealment of stolen goods. Also one cellphone store was searched, where allegedly several of the „illegally possessed cell phones“ were sold.

Ban of linksunten.indymedia.org

On August 25th, Bundesinnenminister Thomas de Maiziere, banned the online platform „linksunten.indymedia.org“ on the grounds of society laws. For the German left and radical left scene, linksunten was the platform, where all the Call ups, daily political news and explanations for attacks were published. It was as important to the left scene as it was apparently to the cops, intelligence service and media, since it was obviously seen as a reliable source and ‚early-warning system‘ for pending riots. The operation of linksunten since 2009 as an open network for left media activists was declared a crime by de Maiziere. This led to several raids in Baden-Württemberg, which luckily did not leave anyone arrested. Currently the BKA is searching for the location of the servers, that were being used by the platform. More raids are to be expected. The timing of this whole action can only be speculated about. It is possible that the Ministry of Interior wanted to polish up their image, after the weekly press releases about the massive police violence against the anti-summit demonstrators.

Part IV: Nationwide raids on December 5th, 2017; „Rondenbarg“ investigation

In the early morning of December 5th, 2017, over 600 cops raided 23 private homes and 2 social centers in Nordrhein-Westfalen, Niedersachsen, Baden-Württemberg, Hamburg, Berlin, Hessen, Sachsen-Anhalt and Rheinland-Pfalz. According to police statements, mainly laptops, cellphones and USB sticks, but also several legal weapons were upheld. None of the affected activists were arrested. All the raids were concerning the events during the first day of the summit. Approximately 200 militant comrades, were on their way to the inner city in the early hours of July 7th, when they met riot cops at Rondenbarg, after which the demonstration was destroyed and left many injured. Several dozen people were arrested right there on the spot, their details were recorded and Fabio sat in prison since then. Almost all the raided people, were within the arrested group from that day.

They are being charged with severe breach of the peace, attempted physical assault and resistance. Since, this particular group of arrested people represented the majority of the arrested overall and the cops were not able to arrest many organized militants, they together with the help of the media, tried to paint a picture of the „Rondenbarg- group“ as extremely violent and probably responsible for all the destruction and direct actions during the summit. Also the raids can be connected with that attempt, the „success“ of these raids, were presented by the cops during a press conference on December 5th.

We clearly see the raids as a public spectacle as well as an attempt to uncover the alleged organisational structures behind the actions, rather than collecting evidence concerning alleged individual participants. Not

confirmed by official sides, but published in several press releases, the cops were mainly searching for evidences on structures, which prepared militant actions and made them possible in Hamburg. Especially around the area of the Elbchaussee, the cops allegedly discovered containers with masking material, fireworks and clothes, which the police interpreted as evidence for the theory, that local groups organised the logistics for international comrades. Though the police suspects mainly international comrades for setting over 20 cars on fire in the Elbchaussee during July 7th.

Part V: Mug shots from Hamburg police:

During the night of July 8th, the Hamburg police established an online portal for tips and leads. They appealed to the curious crowd, to upload any picture or video material from their own smartphones and cameras. Only 12 hours later, they celebrated the fact, that they had already received over 1000 files. With this call out for denunciation and betrayal, the police provoked an online cursing. The Soko „Black Block“, is working on 12 terabyte of picture files. In total 163 cops are working on 3340 cases. On Monday, December 8th the Hamburg police published 104 pictures of 104 alleged criminals and 5 videos concerning the „Elbchaussee“, the „G20 not welcome demo“, „looting“, „attacks with bottles and stones“ and „Rondenbarg“. (here you can find an anonymous link to the pictures <https://anon.to/wGv9tm>). Additionally several pictures made it into the German media. The Hamburg police announced: „There will be more mug shots, because we have a lot of material, which has not yet been evaluated.“

Explanations:

„*Tatbeobachter*innen/Tabos*“ (Crime Observer):

Tabos are dressed as demonstrators, sometimes they would be dressed colorful, sometimes with a beerbottle in their hand, sometimes they would be masked. They run side by side with us in the demonstrations and they can be hard to detect. They watch alleged crimes, without intervening. Later they are called as witnesses in front of court. *Tabos* are cops from a certain unit. On the contrary, there are cops dressed as civilians, the so called PMS. These civil cops usually move around in bigger groups, very obviously next to the rows of cops, they carry earphones and weapons and they pass on information about well known activists to the BFE (unit, responsible for arrests and securing evidence).

Tightening of laws:

Since the 30th of May 2017, paragraph 113, is now divided into §113, which includes acts of resistance and §114, which scales assault. The newly structured §114 includes the assault against officers (cops, paramedics) as its own element of a crime. An assault can be any kind of act against the body of an officer, for example when you try to free yourself from the grip of a cop during an arrest. The minimal sentence here would be a three months prison sentence. Additionally, simply carrying a weapon or a dangerous tool, can be defined as a severe act of resistance or assault, independent from your intentions with that tool. You can also be charged, for your comrades carrying such a tool like a glass bottle or another sharp instrument.

Society has failed, when it imprisons those who question it!

FIRE AND FLAMES TO REPRESSION!

The campaign „United we stand“ made a callout for action days from the 28.1. to the 4.2.2018. (<https://unitedwestand.blackblogs.org/en/>)

Four G20-Trials:

The first trial was held against Peike, from the Netherlands. He is being accused of having thrown two bottles at Berlin police in the Schanze on the 6th of July. The only two witnesses, cops from Berlin, had suffered from major memory loss and both described a bottle throwing person, who did not look at all like the defendant. The prosecutor explained his persecution for prison time, by taking Peike into responsibility for the „civil war like circumstances“ on Friday night (where Peike was already in custody!). The judge Johann Krieten, known as a right wing hardliner, proclaimed his judgment as followed: „Police officers are not fair game for the fun society, they are not fair game for action orientated criminals“. He called the riots on Friday night, riot tourism with the aim of hunting cops and smashing the windows of the HASPA bank. The harsh punishment was necessary, due to reasons of „preventing violence.“ The judge proclaimed the sentence of two years and seven months. Peike is appealing against this judgement.

2nd trial: The defendant was stopped and searched on Saturday, July 8th, close to Dammtor train station. He was insinuated with being on his way to the „G20 not welcome“ demonstration. In his bag pack, the cops found pepper spray, diving goggles and small fire crackers. He is being accused of violating the „law of gathering“, and laws against carrying weapons and explosives. Again, the trial ended with an obscene harsh punishment of 6 months within 2 years of probation. Prosecutor Elsner seized the moment to proclaim his personal propaganda: „The attacks on cops with bottles and stones increased dramatically during the demonstration. The defendant should be writing a thank you letter to the cops, who arrested him, had he thrown anything during the demonstration, he would be going to jail for a long time.“

3rd example: The charges: Criminal assault with a dangerous weapon (glass bottle), as well as resistance against police officers. The defendant confessed the charges and regretted his actions. He agreed to a DNA sampling, which took place on a break during the hearing. The TABO Hachmann allegedly followed the defendant after he allegedly threw the bottle and saw him, taking down his mask in a little kiosk and changed his clothes on the next street corner. Verdict: 1 year on 3 years of probation. The defendant, had questioned the monopoly of the state and did not see the human in uniform during his actions. The police deserved respect and honour for their commitment and should not be targeted.

4th example: Fabio was released from youth arrest in exchange for a bail of 10.000 euro. His trial is still ongoing. The charges: Severe breach of the peace in the case of „Rondenbarg“. This is an excerpt of Fabio's declaration during the trial: „*First of all i want to say that the ladies and gentlemen of politics, police inspectors and prosecutors probably believe they can hinder the dissent on the streets if they arrest and lock up a bunch of kids.*

Likely they believe that prison is enough to hold back the rebellious voices that arise everywhere.

Likely they believe that repression will stop our thirst for freedom. Our will to create a better world. I have made my decision and i am not afraid if there, unjustly, will be a price i have to pay for that. Nevertheless is there something i want to say to you, if you believe me or not: i do not like violence. But i have ideals and i decided to fight for them.“