

Andrea Stauffacher reacts to ultimatum

From June 30 until July 6, Andrea Stauffacher and Marco Camenisch were on a hunger strike as an act of solidarity with and a part of the international days of action for Georges Ibrahim Abdallah (Lebanese communist who has been in jail for almost 30 years now).

On the fourth day, Andrea was issued an ultimatum by the Amt für Justizvollzug: she could either distance herself clearly in a written notice from the hunger strike or she will be relocated to another prison. After that she was sent to the Bezirksgefängnis Zurich and transferred back to Winterthur on Wednesday, July 10. The explicit and written distancing from the hunger strike would not only have meant the ending of the strike itself but also a political distancing. There we can see the class character of Swiss justice by suppressing political initiatives of prisoners explicitly.

As a reaction to the ultimatum, Andi added another day of hunger strike after the expiration of the 7 days. Her separate statement is made public in the text attached. A similar situation is found with Mehmet Ergezen. He is on a hunger strike since Monday, July 8 as a form of protest against the brutality and inhumanity against migrants. Mehmet is at the asylum center in Rheineck (St. Gallen), which is managed by the ABS AG. In his statement to the hunger strike, he describes the prison-like conditions of the center. As a reaction to the hunger strike, the ABS AG issued an ultimatum similar to the Amt für Justizvollzug: he either quits striking and the media attention on his case stops or he will be pressed criminal charges against him.

These political attacks should restrain and prevent measures of action which prisoners can initiate. Various false pretenses and argumentations of obligation of care are revealed as hypocritical since the measures taken only mean a change for the worse of the situation of the hunger strikers.

Red Aid Switzerland, July 12, 2013.

“No distancing within class war” – inside and outside of prisons!

Additional Statement to the hunger strike June 30 until July 7.

In the middle of the international and collective hunger strike – as an act of solidarity with Georges Ibrahim Abdallah -, the ‘Sonderdienst des Amtes für Straf- und Massnahmenvollzug Zürich’ issued an ultimatum (direct quote): within 24 hours, a clear and written distancing statement from the hunger strike must be sent to the department – if the hunger strike is to be continued, there would be an immediate relocation, which means a worsening of the conditions in prison until the end of the sentence. Later, they used the term “fulfillment of care duty of the state” – the closer and more controlled the conditions are, the more they can guarantee medical supply etc. In short: I stayed in a pretrial custody prison cell for the rest of the hunger strike and had to wait for a doctor for two days, who then asserted that I’m in a very good shape.

Thanks to the intervention of a lawyer, who advised them of the right of prisoners to go on hunger strike, I was transferred back to Winterthur. The threat of immediate and permanent relocation into a stricter prison regime remains! The public distancing from the strike, which was asked for ultimately, had nothing to do with medical reasons but rather with political ones. It is an attack against the political identity of prisoners notwithstanding their revolutionary orientation.

A brief look back at the history of class struggle, liberation fights and revolutionary struggles show, that there are different levels of repression: the open, direct, military or by the police repression and the political repression, which aims at attacking the movement at its core and triggering a process of uncertainty and demoralizing and finally dividing and destroying. Not only in Italy, the movement faced various projects of the intelligence service which had the same strategy in a moment of weakness: distancing, swearing off up to betrayal... acts as defined by and in favor of repression of the state. It bypasses a line of demarcation when -in the middle of one of our actions (of various prisoners from Greece, Morocco, Italy, Germany) and other forms of action on the outside (Arabic countries, Canada, Belgium, Italy, Germany, France and Switzerland) – a distancing and backing of from the hunger strike in favor of the state is made. Ulrike Meinhof said aptly: “To break resistance is the same as destroying the health of the person resisting”

With the added day of hunger strike on July 7, I reacted to the ultimatum within the good hands of the “care duty of the state” at BGZ along with this independent statement:

No to distancing!

Collective class solidarity instead of care duty of the state!

Construct solidarity – turn the tables on capitalism!

BGZ, July 8, 2013.

Andi Stauffacher