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Bulletin of the International Federation of Resistance Fighters (FIR) – Association of Antifascists

Magdalenenstr. 19, D - 10365 Berlin,
Phone +49 30 – 55 57 90 83 - 2, Fax +49 30 – 55 57 90 83 - 9
E-Mail: office@fir.at Internet: www.fir.at

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We remember September 1st, 1939 - 2019 Disarmament instead of armament – We need a new international peace policy!

On the occasion of the 80th anniversary of the attack of Hitler Germany on Poland on 1 September 1939, which marks the military beginning of the Second World War, the International Federation of Resistance Fighters (FIR) - Association of Anti-Fascists calls for initiatives for a new international peace policy.

We experience with large concern that by the acting of the NATO and in particular the USA achievements of the détente politics of past decades are destroyed. The permanent stationing of NATO combat units near the Russian western border is in contradiction to the agreements at the beginning of the 90s. The termination of the INF Treaty by the Trump administration and the test series with new medium-range missiles are another visible expression of the intensification of international crisis. The United Nations and its institutions are now only considered “when needed” for conflict solution.

In the Middle East, the United States and its allies are attempting to act as “world police”, taking no account of the sovereignty of individual states. Even international treaties are terminated unilaterally if they appear to serve the interests of the USA. Sovereign states are urged to subordinate themselves as “vicarious agents” to the ideas of the US administration, as the example of the confiscation of an Iranian tanker has shown.

Such action is legitimized with an alleged “fight against terrorism”, but in fact increases the danger of military escalation. In Latin America, targeted military threat scenarios are being developed in order to promote the policy of “regime change”. However, in Europe, too, we have military areas of conflict in the Balkans and Ukraine that can become a conflagration far beyond their respective regions.

The survivors of the Second World War and the fighters for the liberation of their countries from fascist barbarism demanded in 1945: “Never again fascism! Never again war!” They wanted “a new world of peace and freedom”. Today more than ever this legacy must be filled with life.

The FIR and their member federations use themselves therefore for a new international peace policy. To it belongs in particular the obligation of all states to create an actual armament limitation and disarmament by international agreements instead of new weapon systems and armament. The danger of nuclear weapon systems can be reduced by supporting the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty negotiated by the United Nations 2017. International law and the sovereignty of states must be restored. The political effectiveness of the United Nations must be strengthened again by pursuing non-military conflict solutions under the control of the UN more clearly than in previous years.

As “ambassador of peace” - appointed by the United Nations - the International Federation of Resistance Fighters (FIR) - Association of Anti-Fascists appeals to peace initiatives, parties, trade unions and critics of globalization to engage in actions, votes and declarations for a new international peace policy. The FIR calls its member federations to take part with their historical experiences in it.

Regular FIR congress end of November 2019

As informed in the last Bulletin, the coming regular FIR – congress will happen in Italy. Supported by our comrades of ANPI the congress will be hosted in **Reggio Emilia**. It is the center of a very interesting region from the historical perspective of the resistance fight.

The date is fixed from **November 29 to December 1, 2019**. Because the opening of the congress will be at 5:00 pm the arrival is possible on Friday. The end of the official program is fixed on Sunday 1:00 pm, so the depart is possible on the same day.

Reggio Emilia is quite good reachable with public transport from Bologna, Venice and Milan (airports). All delegations will receive a description how to reach the town and the meeting place.

The proposed time table of the congress will start with an **official opening on Friday 29 November at 5:00 pm** in a representative room of the city. At the night we plan a cultural event in a former church. The whole Saturday 30 November we will have the working session with debate of our work in the last three years, the coming tasks, declarations and election of our leading body.

During this part of the congress, we invite all member federations to present documents and material of their own work in a “market of possibilities”. If you want to present your best practice examples, please inform us in advance, so we can organize a place in the lobby for you.

On Sunday morning we will visit the Casa Cervi (15 km to Reggio Emilia). Most of you know the history and tragedy of the seven Cervi sons in the Italian Resistenza. There we will get information about the regional partisan movement and the valuable history of the region.

Because of the help of our comrades from Reggio Emilia we will have good accommodations in the city center. For fixing the hotel capacity we need to confirm the rooms until the beginning of November 2019. That is why we ask all member federations to send the application form – also on electronic way – until the end of October 2019 to our office (**deadline**).

As it is used, the member federations are responsible to cover the costs of transportation and accommodation. We hope that we will have enough support and sponsoring in the region that we don't need further money for congress, meals and program.

The number of delegates with the right to vote depends on our financial regulars (“All member federations they paid their membership fees in the last two years, have the right to vote.”). Of course you can take further guests with you. Because of the number of rooms, please let us know the number of delegates and guests from your federation as soon as possible.

To help the work of our translators (we will have translation in three languages English, Italian and Russian), we would like to ask all delegates who want to present a longer intervention, to send the text in one of these languages in advance (latest November 15, 2019).

Via Memoria Mauthausen

A memorial project of the Comité International de Mauthausen

Since summer 2018, the international camp communities - supported by ANED - have intensified their practical cooperation and developed concrete ideas for future-oriented projects in three meetings. As a practical result, the Comité International de Mauthausen presented a new European memorial project in July 2019. The idea refers to the **Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe**, which are an invitation “to travel and discover the rich and diverse heritage of Europe by bringing people and places together in networks of shared history and heritage. They put the values of the Council of Europe into practice: Human rights, cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and mutual cross-border exchange”. So far, there are 38 such Council of Europe cultural routes. For CIM, these cultural routes also include one based on one of the most terrible crimes committed during the Nazi regime, namely the negation of human dignity through deportation, forced labour and genocide.

Mauthausen was an international concentration camp (1938-1945) in which people from all over Europe were rounded up - against their will - and in which the diversity of languages and cultures was appreciated by the prisoners, who all fought in their own way for a new, peaceful and united Europe. The Comité international de Mauthausen has decided to submit a new cultural route called VIA MEMORIA MAUTHAUSEN to the Council of Europe for certification. This new route should be cross-border, as people from all over Europe have come together in Mauthausen. Mauthausen will be the central place: Some prisoners had come to Mauthausen from other concentration camps, others from their home town, from prisons, or from camps for forced labourers or prisoners of war.

The main aim of this new cultural route is to make the historical experiences connected with it accessible to a wider public: places that lead to Mauthausen from numerous European countries are to be connected: from Germany, France, Spain, Italy, Slovenia, Serbia, Poland or Russia. The centre of this European cultural route will be in Austria and will include Mauthausen and its 50 or so satellite camps, as well as other historically significant sites.

The second goal will be to tell the life stories of the prisoners: This project aims to connect people from then and now. Life stories and individual biographies of prisoners will be told. In the past decades, many people have already followed the traces of these routes, but so far often without much information about the respective locations and their connections to each other.

As a first step towards implementing this European Cultural Route, CIM has outlined the following routes to and from Mauthausen:

(1) The core route:

The core route is located on Austrian territory and begins/ ends in Mauthausen. It includes all external warehouses of the Mauthausen and Dachau systems on Austrian soil, including Gusen, Ebensee, Melk, Loibl, Steyr, Schloss Hartheim, etc. Included are the numerous camps for forced labourers*, the camps of the Hungarian Jews who had to erect the South-East Wall and many other places.

(2) The north-east Route:

This route runs from Moscow via Belarus, Ukraine, the Baltic States, Poland (including Auschwitz) and the Czech Republic.

The connection to Mauthausen is obvious. Nevertheless, we as FIR see bigger problems with this route. We have to face that especially in the Baltic republics, in Poland and the Ukraine historical revisionist forces have massive influence on the social politics of remembrance.

(3) The south-east routes:

This route starts in Belgrade and continues on two different routes: one from Belgrade via Croatia (including Jasenovac) to Slovenia. The other route also starts in Belgrade and continues via Novi Sad and Subotica to Hungary (including Budapest) and via Vienna to Mauthausen.

(4) The southern routes:

These routes also consist of two junctions to Slovenia and Italy. One route starts in Ljubljana (Slovenia) and crosses the Austrian border at Loiblpass/ Ljubelj, where Mauthausen's southernmost satellite camp was located. The second route starts in Rome (Italy), passes through all the important towns in northern Italy and the former camps in Fossoli, Bolzano and Trieste/ Risiera di San Sabba.

(5) The north-west routes:

The north-west routes shall have three different branches:

- One route starts in Stuttgart and crosses the southern part of Germany (including the former camps in Dachau and Flossenbürg) and reaches the Austrian border at Passau, where there were two Mauthausen satellite camps.
- The second route starts in Paris and crosses France in several directions. One of these possible routes deals, among other things, with the fate of the Spanish republican prisoners imprisoned in southern France after their forced escape from Spain.
- The third route starts in Holland (Vught/Bois-le-Duc, Westerbork) and crosses Belgium (Breendonk, Dossin barracks, Malines), Luxembourg (Fünfbrunnen monastery, Neumünster Abbey), Germany (Hinzert, Dachau), France (Natzweiler-Struthof) and Mauthausen.

In a first step, this new cultural route will link more than 140 locations. As "Work in Progress", the routes will be continuously expanded.

CIM is convinced that this Via Memoria Mauthausen, with the establishment of a network of many different routes as a new cultural route according to the specifications of the Council of Europe, will take on an important task for democratic education and remembrance. CIM is convinced that the people who go on the Via Memoria Mauthausen will attach even more importance in the future to living in peaceful, just and integrative societies in which the rights and dignity of all are protected.

FIR has already promised its support for this ambitious project and will give CIM the opportunity to present this idea at the FIR Congress in November, so that the member associations of FIR can see what opportunities they have to get involved in the design of this Via Memoria Mauthausen.

Based on the material of the CIM



A new President of the European Parliament

At the beginning of July 2019, Italian MEP David Sassoli was elected as the new President of the European Parliament. After his election, he thanked with a remarkable speech from which the following extract is taken:

“In recent months, too many people have fomented dividing and conflicts that we thought had long since become history and were part of the memory of sad chapters in the past. Nevertheless, the citizens have shown that they still believe in this extraordinary European path, in this European project, the only one that will enable us to meet the global challenges we face. ...

The European Union is not an accident of history.

I am the son of a man who fought against other Europeans at the age of 20 and of a mother who also in her twenties, left her home and found refuge in other families.

I know that this is also the story of many of your families... and I also know that if we were to share our stories and tell them to each other over a glass of beer or wine, we would never say that we are the children or grandchildren of an accident in history.

But we would say that our story is written on the pain, on the blood of young British people exterminated on the beaches of Normandy, on the desire for freedom of Sophie and Hans Scholl, on the anxiety for justice of the heroes of the Warsaw Ghetto, on the springs repressed with tanks in our Eastern countries, on the desire for brotherhood that we find every time our moral conscience requires not to give up our humanity and obedience cannot be considered a virtue.



We are not an accident of history, but the children and grandchildren of those who have managed to find the antidote to that nationalist degeneration that has poisoned our history. If we are European, it is also because we love our countries. However, nationalism that becomes ideology and idolatry produces viruses that stimulate instincts of superiority and produce destructive conflicts.”

Appeal of Auschwitz

on the Occasion of the 75th Anniversary of 2 August, European Roma Holocaust Memorial Day 2 August 2019

Today, 75 years ago, the last 4,300 Sinti and Roma still alive in Auschwitz-Birkenau were murdered in the gas chambers. Auschwitz symbolizes the Holocaust of the 500,000 Sinti and Roma as well as the six million Jews in Europe. Auschwitz is the conscience of the community of values of democratic states.

For the first time, the representatives of the American Civil Rights Movement and the Civil Rights Movement of Sinti and Roma in Europe are jointly appealing from this place to the governments of the global community and supranational organizations to combat consistently any form of racism, antigypsyism and anti-Semitism.

We call on parliamentarians in national parliaments, in the European Parliament and in parliamentary assemblies of international organizations to establish a transnational Parliamentary Coalition against Antigypsyism in order to counter this specific form of racism as the root cause of exclusion, marginalization and forced migration.

We demand political and social justice and thus dignity for all our people. We demand from the international community the actual recognition of minority rights, which must be implemented effectively in access to education and employment, to housing and health. We demand the establishment of a European History Museum of Sinti and Roma, just as there is the National Museum of African American History and Culture in the United

States of America. All of us have to carry the legacy of the millions of Holocaust victims. At any time, we have to put the moral and ethical values of our democracy at the centre of our actions. We must stand together for democracy and the rule of law, we stand together for our humane values.

First Signatories

Reverend Jesse L. Jackson Sr, Rainbow/PUSH Coalition

Romani Rose, Central Council of German Sinti and Roma

Roman Kwiatkowski, Association of Roma in Poland

Problematic historical-political memory in Poland

The reference to Polish history is a central theme of the current election campaign in the country. Commemorations of the Upper Silesian uprising 100 years ago will be organized, the Warsaw Uprising will be commemorated with public events, and big celebrations for 1 September 2019, the 80th anniversary of the German invasion of Poland, will be prepared.

The director of the Museum of the Second World War in Gdansk had already experienced that these commemorative events not only have a historical dimension, but should also be in harmony with the historical-political ideas of the current Polish government. Shortly after the museum opened in spring 2017, the founding directorate was replaced by the Polish PiS government by a new, politically pleasant crew. The crew had changes made to the content of the museum, which drew a more heroic picture of Poland than in the previous concept.

The memory of the Warsaw Uprising of the Armia Krajowa (AK = Home Army) on August 1, 1944 was also particularly overshadowed this year by historical-political settlements.

As is well known, the Polish fighters began the uprising without consultation with the Soviet armed forces, which were still bound on the eastern side of the Vistula. The aim of the AK fighters was to liberate the city of Warsaw before units of the Red Army approach and to derive from this a claim to power for the future shape of Poland. The German fascist units succeeded in laying a military belt of strong SS units between the insurgent forces in the city and the Red Army troops.

The resistance of the AK against the military superiority of the German units was heroic, but ultimately unsuccessful. On October 3, 1944, the AK units had to surrender. The balance is alarming: At least 15,000 AK fighters lost their lives. Through grenade fire, bombardment and punitive actions of the German troops after the capitulation, more than 100,000 civilians were murdered and the city itself was almost completely destroyed. Instead of self-critically thinking about heroism and the reality of the front situation, the Polish government blames the Soviet Union (and at the same time indirectly Russia) for the defeat of AK. This is only the visible expression of a historical-political attitude that has been questioning the liberation of the country by the Red Army for years. On 21 October 2017, a law came into force allowing the demolition of Soviet monuments in Poland. Previously, the Polish House of Lords had presented corresponding changes to the ban on communist and other totalitarian propaganda in the names of buildings, objects and rooms for public use. The Polish Institute for National Memory has prepared a list of 75 Soviet monuments, the demolition of which is recommended. This is a desecration of the memory of the more than 600,000 soldiers and officers of the Red Army, who died in the struggle for the liberation of Poland from Nazi occupation.

The current highlight of the revision of history is the preparations for the commemoration of the 80th anniversary of the beginning of the Second World War. The Polish government has invited Germany of all countries, but not Russia, to this event. In addition to the German Chancellor, an invitation was also extended to US President Donald Trump and Ukrainian President Vladimir Zelenski. Warsaw justified the actual unloading of Russia at the memorial service with the "violation of international law in 1939", when Soviet units invaded Western Ukraine and Western Belarus after the Polish government's flight to Great Britain on 17 September 1939. That these territories had been conquered by Poland during the Soviet-Polish War of 1919-1920 is not mentioned in the declaration.

Polish Deputy Prime Minister Jacek Sasin said that another reason not to invite Russia was the current military front: "It would be inappropriate to celebrate the anniversary of the armed aggression against Poland with the participation of the leader, who today acts in the same way with regard to his neighbor". He "forgets" the responsibility of the Polish government that is exacerbating military tensions by calling for US and NATO combat troops to be stationed on Poland's eastern border.

The FIR condemns such political instrumentalization of the memory and warns against all forms of national history falsification, which are closely connected with political tensions in Central Europe.

Ulrich Schneider

French resistance liberated Paris from German occupation on 25 August 1944

One of the most important historical events in everyday French consciousness is undoubtedly the liberation of the French capital on 25 August 1944 by French units and the Resistance.

A military condition for this was the landing of the Western Allies in Normandy on 6 June 1944. This led not only to the upswing of the armed resistance struggle in France, but - as a bloody reaction of the German occupiers - to mass murders of the civilian population. Especially the SS division "The Reich" under brigade leader Heinz Lammerding excelled at mass murdering which on 9 June 1944 carried out a massacre of nearly 100 civilians in the city of Tulle and whose units were responsible for the massacre of the population of Oradour-sur-Glane on the following day. The place was destroyed on 10 June 1944, only a few inhabitants managed to escape. A total of 642 men, women, old people, children and even babies were shot, shredded by hand grenades or burned alive.

Nevertheless, such terror could not break the resistance will of the French. The changed political situation became visible for the German occupiers on 14 July 1944, the national holiday, when some 35,000 French gathered in public in several districts of Paris - despite all bans. Now it was also possible in the factories to call openly for resistance against the occupation. In mid-August 1944, strike actions began in important Parisian factories and utilities. Within a few days, these took on such a dynamic that on 19 August a "Comité Parisien de Libération" (Paris Liberation Committee) called for a general strike, which actually paralyzed the entire supply of the capital - and thus of course also of the German facilities and institutions.

However, the situation was not yet decided. At the beginning of August, after the failure of the "Walküre" campaign on July 20, 1944, Hitler personally ordered the newly appointed city commander of Groß-Paris Dietrich von Choltitz to keep the city at all costs. To this end, bridges and other strategic facilities have to be destroyed in order to stop the Allied marching. Against the background of the increasing armed attacks of the Résistance and the Marquis, the commander-in-chief of the West Front, General Gerd von Rundstedt, had given the order to shoot all partisans who fell into the hands of the Wehrmacht immediately. Thus, on 17 August 1944, 35 Resistance fighters were shot dead at the Bois de Boulogne waterfall, 7 others in front of the Gestapo headquarters in Rue Leroux and 26 in the Vincennes fortress. Nevertheless, the breadth of the resistance and the anchoring of the Résistance fighters in the population would have meant that the German occupiers would have had to recapture the city in a house war like the one that took place in Warsaw in all brutality at that time. However, the German army command lacked the readiness to do so, even though 20,000 Wehrmacht soldiers were still stationed in the city and another 20,000 Waffen SS units were announced to support them. However, a military support would have been possible only at the expense of the fights against the advancing American and British troops.

In this situation, Colonel Henri Rol-Tanguy, Communist and former officer of the International Brigades in Spain, Commander-in-Chief of the Resistance Forces (FFI) in the Paris region, ordered the general mobilization from his headquarters in the catacombs of Paris on August 20. The Resistance fighters called on the inhabitants of Paris to barricade all the major streets of the city to impede the mobility of German tanks. At central points of the city, armed groups positioned themselves to defend these barricades against possible attacks.

The fighting with the German units in the city ended when General Leclerc with French tank forces came to the aid of the resistance fighters in Paris. Thereupon von Choltitz capitulated on August 25. The surrender document bears the signatures of General Leclerc and the commander of the F.F.I. Colonel Rol-Tanguy.

The following day, an impressive victory parade took place on the Champs Élysées, in which General de Gaulle also took part.

The liberation of the French capital did not end the war in France, Alsace, for example, was liberated only in February 1945 and the last German bastions on the Atlantic coast capitulated only on 8 May 1945. However, this victory was of great moral importance. The French had liberated Paris themselves from German occupation.

Ulrich Schneider



75 Years of Distomo Massacre

June 10, 2019 marked the 75th anniversary of the Distomo massacre. This year, too, it was the occasion for commemoration ceremonies and political activities for the compensation claims of the victims and survivors of the murdered.

A group of German anti-fascists had travelled to the commemoration events and presented the compensation claims with a banner and leaflets in the tourist center of Delphi the day before.

In conversation with the political committees of the city of Distomo, they promoted the project of an anti-fascist network of martyr towns, which originates from Sant'Anna di Stazema. The Greek martyr towns, which traditionally meet on the eve of Distomo Day, were also to be won. Since political differences in the past months overlaid this co-operation, this union will have to find itself again. The conditions for this are given, since all political forces of the left and the conservative Nea Dimokratia (ND) have a recognizable agreement on this question.

On 10 June 2019, the inhabitants of Distomo and numerous anti-fascists who supported the cause gathered in the morning at the upper village square. The ceremony began with a service, followed by the procession to the memorial, the laying of the wreaths and the reading of the names and ages of the victims of the massacre. This year there was no dispute as to whether the deputy ambassador of Germany was allowed to lay a wreath there. Instead, the demand for compensation was presented in all clarity. At the beginning of June 2019, the Greek government sent a diplomatic "note verbale" to Germany and called on the German government to negotiate reparations from World War II. The report of a Greek parliamentary committee put the amount of reparations at 270 billion euros. This report was the basis of a parliamentary decision, also with the votes of the ND, which today provides the government in Greece, which demands the payment of reparations from Germany to Greece. Even if the German side categorically rejects all concerns, the crimes and the injustice that continues to this day have been the subject of public debate.

In May 2019, the new mayor of Distomo Ioannis Stathas was elected. He will be sworn in in September 2019.

For many years, Ioannis Stathas has supported the demands for compensation and reparations. As mayor he will continue to support the demands and publicly draw attention to the crimes and the scandal of the refused compensation.

Based on a report of the group AK Distomo Hamburg



Support the political work of the International Federation of Resistance (FIR) - Association of Antifascist!

The political work of international anti-fascist organization requires large resources. Since civil society organizations do not have national or institutional grants, the organization depends on contributions and donations.

Bank-account: Postbank Berlin IBAN DE 04 1001 0010 0543 0541 07, Owner: FIR
Donations from foreign countries only with IBAN DE 04 1001 0010 0543 0541 07 and
SWIFT-BIC: PBNKDEF

Protest against Italian refugee policy

At the beginning of July, about 250 people demonstrated in front of the Italian consulate in Frankfurt's West End against the arrest of the captain of the rescue ship "Sea Watch 3" Carola Rackete. Pro Asyl and the Hessian Refugee Council had called for the protest. "We do not accept that sea rescue is criminalized", said the head of the European department of Pro Asyl.

The 31-year-old Rackete was arrested for having entered the Italian port of Lampedusa with 40 refugees on board despite a ban by the Italian Ministry of the Interior. The demonstrators protested that Italian Interior Minister Matteo Salvini had closed Italian ports to sea rescue NGOs. They called it a "deadly sealing off policy". At the same time, the demonstrators demanded that Germany also fulfil its responsibility for receiving the refugees. The representative of the Hessian Refugee Council explained. "We are not only demanding something from Italy, not only from the Italian government, but also from the European Union and the Hessian state government".

Picture © Peter Jülich



Neofascism in the USA

The subject of racism and neo-fascism is also booming in the USA. It is not only historical shots of white Americans who take violent action against colored people, stagings of the Ku Klux Klan movement with its white cowls and the more than symbolic burning of wooden crosses, the appearance of WASPs (White Anglo-Saxon Protestant), who see themselves as American "elite", that evoke this image. Also terrifying are the pictures of American neo-Nazis marching openly through the streets with swastika flags and SS runes, whose marches are protected by American police against democratic protest actions. Moreover, when you see the pictures of the police officers, you cannot really be sure, if the police officers only protect the march dutifully or if they do not see themselves as part of these fascist forces. How deeply the racist and neo-fascist thinking is anchored in the heads of the security forces could be seen a few weeks ago, when two white policemen on horseback dragged an arrested colored man with a rope behind them to the guard. Pictures from the time of slavery in the southern states woke up even in the US-American public.

But they are not only marches, but an increasing readiness to use violence, which is expressed in frightening blood deeds. American neo-Nazis are part of a racist mainstream that has repeatedly produced mass murderers in recent years, such as the massacre of Mexican immigrants by a white Texan in El Paso at the beginning of August. According to media reports, the 21-year-old perpetrator published a manifesto on the Internet shortly before he shot and killed 22 people in a Walmart store in the Texas border city, in which he rushed against immigrants from Latin America, warned of a "Hispanic invasion of Texas" and announced an attack. Moreover, the Sheriff of El Paso, who questioned the assassin, left no doubt in his statements that, according to his findings, there is a political, racist motive behind the act. The attacker wanted to kill Mexicans. As things stand at

present, the investigators therefore classify the attack in El Paso as a “right-wing extremist-motivated terrorist attack”.

Moreover, it should not be forgotten that the massacre in El Paso represents the third major act of violence by a white neo-fascist in the USA within a year. In autumn 2018 and spring 2019, extremely right-wing perpetrators of violence attacked synagogues in Pennsylvania and California - because, according to their crude justification, it was a Jewish plan to displace the whites in America by immigrants.

The fact that such violence is not only directed against migrants and Jewish institutions had to experience American anti-fascists already in 2017 bloody, when in Charlottesville (Virginia) with protests against a violent march of the right a supporter of the neo-Nazis raced with his car into a group of demonstrators, whereby a young woman was killed.

These acts of violence are only the brutal expression of a social situation shaped by a multitude of “hate groups”, as it is called in the USA. The civil society organization Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), which has been following the extremely right-wing scene in the USA for 20 years, lists over 1000 active hate groups in its annual report for 2018. Among them are the Ku Klux Klan (51), neo-Nazis (112), white nationalists (148), racist skinheads (63), fundamentalist evangelicals (17), supporters of the Southern Confederation (36), black nationalists (264), Enemies of all immigration (17), LGBT opponents (49), anti-Muslims (100), and other hate groups (163, including neo-fascist music groups, Holocaust deniers, ethnic groups, and extremely religious groups).

While in the USA one would have now recognizably every reason to proceed against the violent American neo-Nazis with justice and police, also there the enemy picture anti-fascism applies. When parallel to the massacre in El Paso a murder action happened in Dayton, the background of which is still unclear, the Breitbart media spread their speculation that the murderer was an “antifa activist”. This could not be confirmed, but the image of the enemy was right again. Also US President Trump, who is notorious for his crude views and his shortened Twitter statements, recently expressed both to the antifascist movement. In the election campaign, he called - according to media reports - anti-fascist activists “sick, bad” people. In addition, on one of his many Twitter messages he wanted to classify the Antifa movement in the USA as a terrorist organization.

He followed his republican fellow party members, Senators Ted Cruz and Bill Cassidy, who wanted to classify the Antifa movement as domestic terrorist organizations because they allegedly attacked and injured conservative journalist Andy Ngo. What the Republican senators did not mention is that the incident took place during a march of the neo-fascist “Proud Boys” and “Patriot Prayer”, where the journalist got caught between the fronts of the attacking neo-Nazis and the defending Rose City Antifa.

With the “Proud Boys”, an attempt has been developing for three years to network different directions of the “hate groups” with ideology centers and the “alt-right” movement. One expression of this was the “Unite the Right” demonstration in Charlottesville in 2017, in which an anti-fascist demonstrator was killed.

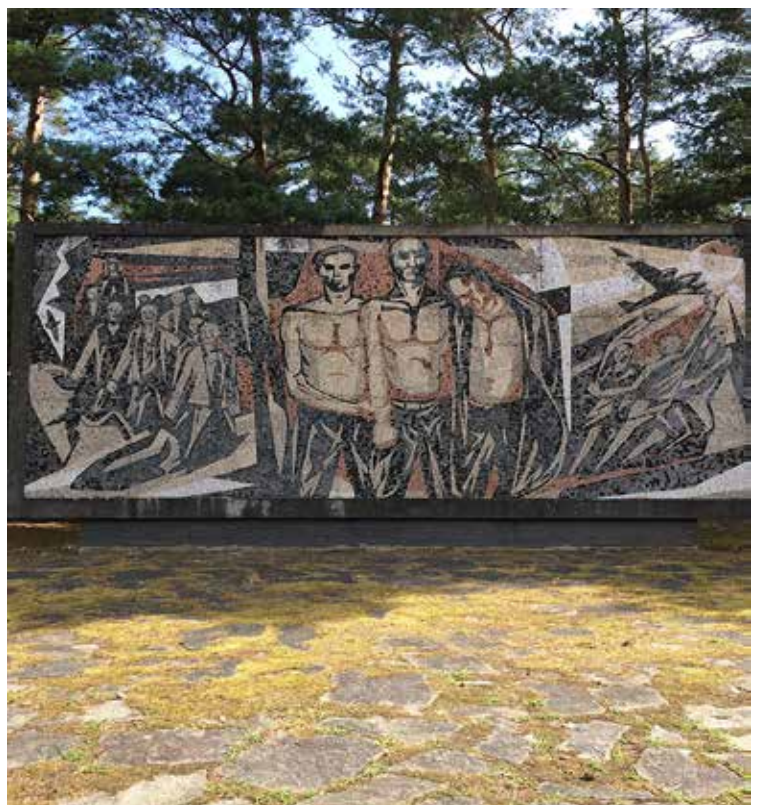
Ulrich Schneider

Antifascist memorials

The Karlshagen Memorial was erected to commemorate the victims of fascism on the island of Usedom and the fate of the concentration camp prisoners who were interned in Peenemünde in the Karlshagen I and Karlshagen II sub-camps of the concentration camps.

In these sub-camps of the Ravensbrück concentration camp, prisoners were imprisoned who were used for forced labor in the Peenemünde Army Experimental Station.

The three-part mosaic wall was designed in 1969 by the Usedom artist Klaus Rößler. Today's memorial Karlshagen was inaugurated on 8 May 1970, the 25th anniversary of the liberation from fascism and war by the GDR.



MEASZ commemorated Endre Ságvári

75 years ago, the Hungarian police killed the famous anti-fascist Endre Ságvári on 27 July 1944. MEASZ commemorated this Hungarian lawyer, communist and anti-fascist activist.

Ságvári was born on 4 November 1913 into a Jewish family in Budapest. He became interested in Marxism as a student, and joined 1936 the Social Democratic Party of Hungary (MSZDP). He became a leader of the All-Hungarian Youth Committee (AYC). In the following year, he was sentenced to eight months in prison for his revolutionary activities. In 1940, he left the MSZDP for the then illegal Hungarian Communist Party (MKP). From the 1930's, Ságvári organized and participated in anti-war demonstrations in Budapest. In March 1942, he was forced to go underground. In 1944, he edited "Béke és szabadság", the illegal newspaper of the Peace Party.

Ságvári was tracked down by the authorities, and on 27 July 1944 he was surrounded by four gendarmes in a café in Budapest. After pulling his gun on the gendarmes and wounding three of them, he was shot to death.



Several times the memorial places for Endre Ságvári have been destroyed. But MEASZ continues to bring the memory to the public.

Who knows the fate of victims of persecution in the Munich-Stadelheim prison?

We received the following request, which we are happy to publish:

From 1942, Munich-Stadelheim prison was the place of execution for the death penalty for the southeastern territory of the Reich and for parts of the occupied territories. The number of executed death sentences is well over 1000.

On the occasion of the planned erection of a memorial for the murdered Nazi victims in front of the Munich-Stadelheim JVA and the remembrance work of the city of Munich, I, a member of the "Second Generation", am looking for relatives of relatives imprisoned and executed in Stadelheim in Austria, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, France.

Please send messages to Heidi Delbeck,
Contact via e-mail: Delbeck8@t-online.de

Fruitful debates with French comrades

In the middle of July, the chief editor and further representatives of the editorial staff of the French newspaper "Patriote Résistant" met in the office of the VVN-BdA and the FIR with the Secretary General of the FIR, the chairman of the VVN-BdA Conny Kerth and Florian Gutsche, leading member of the VVN-BdA for an exchange of experiences.

The meeting took place on initiative of the French comrades, who were interested in the political work of the FIR and the German member organization as well as the possibilities of an international exchange of views. In the conversation, it was first about the work of the newspapers and their editorial concepts, whereby the

German “Antifa” is first a member magazine, while the “Patriote Résistant” is a subscriber newspaper, which is carried however above all by the members of the FNDIRP.

In the discussion it became clear how the two newspapers, as well as the organizations, react to the different political debates in the respective countries. For the German organization, Conny Kerth explained in particular the focus of the political work against the advance of the political right in form of the AfD and the connection of the VVN-BdA with anti-racist initiatives. Using the example of “rising up against racism” and other political conflicts in the FRG, it was possible to make clear, in which forms the political activists oppose the extreme right and the up growing of the right-wing influence in society.



The Secretary General of the FIR described in brief words the current state of the work of the FIR and reminded at the same time of the important contributions, which representatives of the FNDIRP, as for example Federic-Henry Manhes or Alixe Lhote played as representatives and in the ranks of the FIR. He appealed to the French organization to return to the FIR as active comrades-in-arms. As an example for the work with the youth in the sense of the antifascist legacy he presented the project “Train des Mille”, with which in 2020, as already in 2012 and 2015, about 1000 young people from all over Europe will visit the memorial place Auschwitz from 5th to 10th May. French young people are also invited to take part in this memorial political action.

Finally, appointments were made to exchange information and materials for the newspapers. In this way, the exchange of experiences should also be fruitful for the members of the organizations.

U. Schneider



Vilmos Hanti at the SZPB - Congress

The congress of the Slovak anti-fascist alliance takes place in Poprádon. In the name of the FIR and personally I welcomed the participants and gave the FIR medal to the 80-year-old president. In my speech, I stressed that I am from Budapest. Both the Hungarian and the Slovakian right-wing extremists want to create hatred between the two peoples. Only on the basis of the anti-fascist values we can strengthen the friendship between both countries. The regional, neighborly relations between the two organizations have been deep over the last four years. I wish you success for further years in which you represent the humanistic idea.

Concentration camp photographer Viertlböck “Another form of memory”

The Munich photographer Viertlböck has set himself the task of photographing all Nazi concentration camps in Europe. He already has a good 350. In a conversation with the journalist Kai Spanke, he explains how he came up with the idea for the project.

Mr. Viertlböck, how did you come up with the idea for the series “Structures of Extermination”?

At the beginning of the considerations, there were only the big camps. In 2012, I photographed Auschwitz as part of another work and three years later, I made a book about Munich that also includes Dachau. One year later, I had photographed in Flossenbürg and Theresienstadt. In addition, when I saw the pictures, which were taken from an elevated perspective, side by side, I realized that this was the only way to recognize the dimension of the camps. Moreover, the Holocaust has always been a major theme for me.

Which camps have you already photographed?

I have photographed everything that is commonly known, the 30 or so large camps, including complexes, such as the Emsland camps, which already consist of 15 units. At a certain point in the work, when I had the first journeys behind me, the network of satellite camps first became visible to me. From then on, the project actually developed into a mammoth project.

What exactly is a satellite camp?

Each main camp had between 40 and 160 satellite camps. From 1943 on, the prisoners were increasingly employed in armaments production and moved from the main camps for administrative purposes, as it were. They came to Company XY, worked there until complete exhaustion, went back to the main camp, and were replaced by new prisoners. The companies paid money to the SS, who in turn took over the guarding.

How many satellite camps existed in Europe?

About 1600, of which between 1000 and 1200 can still be located. For some, it is no longer possible today to determine where they were. The central point of my work is to understand the large camps as spiders in the web and to show this web, which reached geographically but also sociologically into the furthest corners of society. In this way, the whole extermination apparatus of the Nazis becomes visible. Of all these camps, I have photographed, as of today, a good 350.

What was the most moving impression?

The memorials of the extermination camps in Poland touched me largely. In Auschwitz I was tempted to record the reactions of the visitors on photos. There is a lot of post; Selfies are made and so on. Then I set up my camera in the former gas chamber of the main camp. Then a group of Chinese visitors came in, all eager to take pictures with their mobile phones - perfect for a cynical look at concentration camp tourists. Then one of the visitors fell on her knees and prayed. All the others froze in deep devotion and remained silent. For me, that was the point at which it became taboo to photograph people there, because I realized that you could not really measure what these places do to the visitors.

What position should the project take in the discourse of memory?

A turning point is taking place at the moment, because the last witnesses of the time are dying due to their age. I could imagine that another form of memory would take the place of first-hand narratives. These images could make a contribution to this. They could also represent a kind of marking that makes it clear that forgetting is broken. For me personally, the social interdependence only became clear through my work with the satellite camps. My view of National Socialism and the structure of its extermination and exploitation system is now more differentiated.

The Flossenbürg concentration camp memorial presents Viertlböck's photos of the satellite camps of the former Flossenbürg concentration camp as well as selected other motifs from the series from 23 July to 6 October as part of the exhibition “Structures of Extermination”. Further stations are planned.

Imprint :

Responsible: Dr. Ulrich Schneider, (General Secretary)

Secretariat: Internationale Föderation der Widerstandskämpfer - Bund der Antifaschisten (FIR),

Magdalenenstr. 19, D- 10365 Berlin, Fon +49 (0) 30 – 55 57 90 83 - 4, Fax +49 (0) 30 – 55 57 90 83 - 9,

E-Mail: office@fir.at , Internet www.fir.at

The International Federation of Resistant fighters (FIR) has been designated by the Secretary-General of the United Nations as a «Peace Messenger». The Federation is accepted as NGO at the UNESCO, Paris, at the UN standing committee of disarmament, Geneva and the European council, Strasbourg.

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