

100 years deportation imprisonment

2019 is the year of several anniversaries. On the one hand, deportation detention as it has been carried out to this day has existed for 100 years. On the other hand, 25 years ago the largest deportation prison for men in Germany was opened in Büren. Rashid Sbaai died there 20 years ago under circumstances that have never been fully explained to this day.

Today we would like to tell you something about the history of deportation detention.

100 years ago, in 1919, the First World War ended, the Weimar Republic was founded and today we associate this time with supposed peace. In 1919 the law on deportation detention was introduced. The aim was to imprison and deport immigrant and refugee Jewish women. These Jewish women had fled from pogroms in Eastern Europe or were brought to Germany in the First World War for the production of weapons. The term "concentration camp" was used for the first time for these internment camps. To this day, Germany's strategy is to get people for work from all parts of the world in order to get rid of them a few years later. This can be seen, for example, in the way in which women guest workers* were treated in the 1980s and 1990s.

During the Third Reich, deportation detention was included in the Aliens Police Ordinance passed by the Nazis and was massively tightened several times. The imprecise wording - quote - "in order to secure deportation, the foreigner can be taken into deportation detention" - end of quote - made extreme arbitrariness possible and created a legal framework that simplified mass deportations. In the two weeks before the Reichspogromnacht alone, 18,000 Polish Jewish women* were imprisoned for deportation, i.e. in concentration camps. We all know what happened to most of these Jewish women.

After the end of the Third Reich, the text of the Nazis' law was literally adopted by the Federal Republic of Germany. It was not until 1965 that the law was revised, however not to put a stop to National Socialist practice, but to extend deportation detention further. This was done primarily to deport guest workers who were recruited after the Second World War to boost the German economy.

Also in reaction to the racist riots in the early 1990s, as in Rostock-Lichtenhagen, the legal situation was further tightened and applied more strongly than in previous years. Since then, according to the text of the law, imprisonment has been legally permitted in the case of - quote - "justified suspicion of deportation being withdrawn" - end of quote. Here again an imprecise formulation is to be recognized, which offers the possibility for an arbitrary detention of fugitives. "Justified suspicion" can mean many things. For example, detention is permitted if a fugitive was not present during deportation. The ridiculous thing is that it is not allowed by law to inform about the date of the deportation and there is no obligation for the person to always be at home. Another reason for imprisonment may be that the fugitive appears to be "mobile". For some civil servants* this is sufficient as a "justified suspicion". - No shit, that's exactly what happened. - To make that clear again: In Germany, people go to jail without having committed a

crime. And more than half of the people in deportation custody sit there illegally, despite this questionable wording of the law.

When Germany opened the borders for SOME fugitives in 2015, this was not only for humanitarian reasons, but also because the state divided the country into supposedly usable and useless fugitives. The shift to the right of society has reinforced this division and led to more and more stricter laws in order to get rid of the supposedly useless fugitives as quickly and easily as possible.

Since 2017, people in Büren deportation prison who wish to receive advice and support have had to register on lists. Only with their signature will they be given the opportunity to seek counselling. This does not mean that they are actually allowed to do so. This fuels fear of repression by the prison authorities among the fugitives. Often it needs the pressure of the counsellors so that people who will soon have a trial date receive counselling. At the same time, however, no other people are allowed to attend the counselling. This means that up to 7 other counsellors cannot work at the same time. To give just one example of how access to help is made more difficult.

At the end of 2018, the NRW state parliament decided to further tighten Büren's prison conditions as the latest measure. These lead to limited visiting rights, even more difficult access to advice, legal remedies and support from associations, institutions and volunteers. Now even more power lies with the institution. The protection of the fundamental rights of detainees and controls from outside are made more difficult. This is despite the fact that the "National Agency for the Prevention of Torture" has already described the situation in Büren as worrying.

Other federal states are also planning to tighten the detention conditions in deportation detention. New deportation prisons, some with more than 200 places, are planned, built and already opened. Deportation detention does not mean "living minus freedom", as the Minister of the Interior of Schleswig-Holstein wants us to know.

What the statement "living minus freedom" suggests: You can go where you want in your apartment, when you want. You can shower, bathe, cook your own meals, surf the Internet for hours, chat with your loved ones, make phone calls, Skype. Watch Netflix or any TV program you feel like watching in a language you understand. Listen to your favorite music, dance and sing along without being forbidden. Look out of an unbarred window, call a doctor, a lawyer, a repair service of your choice who take you seriously and REALLY help you with your problems.

In fact, it means jail. That includes: Only one hour off a day. But only if some* law enforcement officer* doesn't think you've misbehaved. You have little choice in eating. You have to shit and piss in the same room you sleep in. You are only allowed in the bathroom for showers etc. at certain times. You have hardly any "leisure" activity in your room or during the walk. Television in a language you hardly understand or don't understand at all hardly counts as a leisure activity. Your mobile phone can be taken from you arbitrarily. This means that you no

longer have any possibilities to communicate with the outside world. So you can't be in contact with anyone you want, be it your family, friends*, lawyers* or other caregivers. If your medical and heating systems are faulty, you can wait a very long time for repairs. You have no or very poor access to psychological and other medical advice and treatment. Even if you get access, you will rarely be taken seriously. You will not be provided with interpreters, so you will not be able to communicate properly with law enforcement officers, doctors or counsellors. In addition to all this, there is daily racism and oppression by employees, the institution and the state.

Who is in deportation prison? Especially people from supposedly safe countries of origin, in order to be able to deport them particularly quickly and easily. However, this does not mean that they are SAFE or WAY, because they had good reasons to flee for the first time. And just because there are hardly any people arriving in Germany does not mean that there are no more people on the run.

So much for the history of deportation detention. Behind it lies the inhumane and racist practice of deportation. Racist because state structures do not grant all people the same right to a good, safe and livable life. Racist because every reason for flight must first be recognised by the state, instead of assuming that the reason for flight is reason enough. If there were no deportations, there would be no detention pending deportation.

That is why we demand: STOP deportations, STOP deportation detention, for SOLIDARITY WITH ALL FLEEING AND FUGITIVE PEOPLE ON THE WORLD!!!!

We cordially invite you to the demos on 12.5. in Büren and on 31.8. in Paderborn against deportation!