

"Here was a strange world which resembled no other, here there were special rules, special garb, particular customs and usages. It was a death-house of the buried alive, within which a life was as nowhere else, and the people, as well, were different."

- Dostoyevsky

Thomas Meyer-Falk - Political prisoner in Germany

"Born in 1971, I have been imprisoned since 1996. At first I was kept in isolation in Stammheim prison, then I was kept in Straubing for a short time under slightly better conditions. Since September 1998 i have been in isolation in Bruchsal. I am a so-called "red skin"/rash = red & anarchist skinheads.

I was sentenced for a bank robbery by means of which it was planned to organize money for political projects. In two additional court cases I was sentenced for insult, intimidation, and the threatening of judges and public prosecutors. The expression "perfect example of a fascist-like judge" by itself was worth 7 months of imprisonment.

I am supposed to have described federal chancellor Schroeder as 'bush's bootlicker'. The former provincial justice minister professor Doctor Goll claimed he felt threatened by me and therefore always has a pistol handy. As I am sitting in isolation in (maximum security) prison this claim is scarcely believable.

Because of all this I have to spend 15 years, 9 months and three weeks in prison. due to my alleged dangerousness (during the trial I had offensively pleaded my cause instead of giving in and "regretting") I shall be kept under arrest ("sicherungsverwahrung") afterwards.

The current situation presents itself such that I sit in solitary confinement without pocket money or television. I am allowed to read the paper and have a small radio. Though I reject this (political) system in Germany as such, I take seriously the modest legal possibilities that there are and appeal to various German courts. For instance proceedings are pending whether I have the right to provision with writing paper and envelopes through the social welfare agency, whether the department of corrections may forbid me a correspondence course, or if corrections department staff may search my legal and defense mail in my absence, such as when I'm walking in the prison yard.

Apart from that, criminal proceedings are pending against me. Proscutors from Karlsruhe, Herr Staatsanwalt Leber and Herr Staatsanwalt Zimmerman, accuse me of slandering and threatening politicians and justice ministers.

Since 1996, with a short break in 1998, I have been in continuous isolation. I spend 23 hours a day in my cell, with only a small radio, some books and binders. My postal communication is just as supervised as the visits I receive.

I have already discussed at other times if isolation is an attack to human dignity; spending over 7 years in isolation is definitely not easy, but my mind is stable and the solidarity from outside jail is helpful and does me well."

Thomas welcomes new people to write to him, to learn about new experiences and what is happening in the world. Please remember that all of his mail is read by the authorities, so do not write anything that could get him or you in trouble, but don't be scared out of saying what you feel, or about your life. Writing to prisoners can be hard, it is difficult to know what to write, but a simple card or short letter about your day or funny moment can do a lot to break the isolation that affects prisoners. Thomas is a great guy with a big heart, he's very funny and will try to answer any letters he receives. Remember though that he doesn't have much money to write back, so you might not get an answer, but don't lose heart, he will be pleased for the contact.

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