



Media Monitoring

Situation Report January 14, 2010

1) The reception center in Eberau

- *Kurier* and *Krone* publish similar articles about Eberau with the opinion of architects about the designed plan. The "military-like" style is criticized, against the "treatment in dignity of asylum-seekers but also that the life in common is respectful of humanity.... Associations to quarter and prison... people will be here mainly observed... "
- The Freedom's Party has issued a press release inviting to the demonstration of tomorrow in the village of Eberau to protest against the asylum-seekers center.
- Concerning the reception center, a discussion has taken place between the Human Rights parliamentary committee and the Minister of Justice, Claudia Bandion-Ortner. She asserted that the "obligation of presence" of asylum -seekers is a suitable way as "to stop the fears."

2) Situation of asylum-seekers in Austria

- Der Standard publishes an article written by Gerda Mackerle, and Peter Mayr about asylum-seekers in Traiskirchen that, without factual support, reproduces many of the discriminatory views on asylum-seekers: "It is not possible to see them. Many would go during the day to Vienna or Baden. On the tracks of the train some meet. In the main square or the nearby shopping center Arkadia the local population is alone. As a difference with previous times, the duration of the proceeding is shorter, the contact to the local population is zero, asserts the major Fritz Knotzer, than 'Earlier their children went to the school with our children...'. [Note: asylum-seekers cannot opt for sending the children to this school, as Traiskirchen is considered temporary placement] 1350 Meter of fence and 48 video cameras ensure

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that the radium is not left by anybody without being observed...Who stays outside for more than 48 hours is deregistered, 'night calm' reigns from 22.00 h to 6.00 in the morning. In case of continuous violations the pocket money can be taken away- they receive 40 Euro every month... Concerning the proposed 'Obligation of presence' [one of the authorities of the camp asserted] that in the reception center there is 'protection against persecution'. If somebody is unhappy in this 'island,' you should ask: 'was the wish of asylum sincere?...' [Commenting of a talk of the same authority with an asylum-seeker]: "To his question about his age the asylum seeker asserted: '17.' At a first sight he is a bit older [SIC]. The reason is simple: asylum-seekers under age fall under the Law of the Protection of the Minority of every province in which they are-though since January 1st, 2010 there are stricter proofs of age...Inside the center the problematic fields are the fights and the harassment of women ...There are always cases in the Baden Train. Young girls are recommended: 'always to step in the rail car.'"

- *Der Standard* publishes also an article on the reception center in Thalham, entitled "We are discriminated, not the foreigners" "Since the prohibition to leave the center during the night has been established things get somehow better... business people complained about thefts, women informed about sexual harassment, hotel administrators feared the depart of hosts...'it was completely and simply the horror' [asserts the major] After some weeks the concrete movements of protest were constituted. The Platform of Citizens St. Georgen has gathered avidly signatures, the initiative 'St. Georgen - a second Traiskirchen?' preferred to march as protest near the West Highway (A1). And the Social-Democracy, the People's Party and the Freedom's Party called together the project 'humanitarian-effective-determined Building Block Health Center Thalham.' The inhabitants were requested to buy bricks at five Euros 'because we Attergauer we want that Thalham has a working Health Center, for that the village needs money'. Until now there are still 55.000 Euro at a trust account. ... 'We have nothing else to lose, because the inhabitants will soon throw us stones. We

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became the hotbed for the criminality, do the inhabitants of St. Georgen have any human right?... [talking in favor of the 'presence obligation']: 'The asylum-seekers can promenade freely inside the reception center ... For the inhabitants the situation would be in any case easier'...'Yes, it is true, it is better now. They steal not even once per week a pair of shoes' asserts Cynthia Simai from the local shoe-shop... For the pensioner Rupert Binder ...'we are discriminated, not the foreigners. The inhabitants of St. George are people of second class. Every day half-blacks [SIC] and dark blacks [SIC] -OK, they cannot change that- in the banks of the park and they spit around...that such a louse person [SIC] as Arigona terrorizes Austria is to vomit.' "

3) Freedom of religion

- During the meeting of the Justice Minister and the parliamentary human rights committee, the Minister was asked about the decision of the European Court of Human Rights concerning crucifixes, she referred to the decision of the National Senate, asserting that crosses should still stay in classrooms, asserting that this is a question of weighting. The Member of Parliament Gerhard Kurzmann revealed concern of the effects of the effects of the decision in Austria, that is, in his opinion, linked to the Christian tradition. The Member of Parliament Gerald Grosz qualified the decision as a limitation of the freedom of religion for the majority, and in clear opposition to human rights.
- The People's Party of Burgenland has gathered more than 6.200 signatures for "The Cross must stay" as to keep crosses in public buildings and issued a press release asserting that this people and "the People's Party are engaged for Christian values." Declaration made by the Vice-Governor Steindl. The action will be expanded to public offices and judicial court-rooms. "They are our Christian roots"; it is also about "values and tradition." They want that this is discussed within the EU.



4) *Anti-Semitism*

The Director of the Jew Museum Hohenem Mr. Hanno Loewy revealed himself hurt in a press release after a critique of the Freedom's Party against him and the museum. "I had the hope after fall that the men come to reason and, for example, request an excuse; however, all of the opposite has happened". During the provincial electoral campaign Mr. Dieter Egger, from the Freedom's Party of Vorarlberg, called him "exile Jew sayer." Last weekend, the major of Lustenau (Freedom's Party), Hans-Dieter Grabher asserted during an interview that the same Loewy had recognized that his parents were "Jewish exiles" from the USA [as to justify Egger]. Last Wednesday, the major of Hohenem and candidate to major for the Freedom's Party Horst Obwegeser criticized the cost of the museum that would have been thought as "Heimatmuseum." It would be not with the money of the tax-payer to pay presentations such as 'How do I build a conventional minaret?' Visitors would have been students obliged to attend, the same person would have asserted...

5) *Homophobic Expressions*

Krone publishes reportage to Mr. Mair, who was insulted with homophobic expressions by a Freedom's Party Member of Parliament. He has asserted: "Insult reminds the cowardice of the neo-Nazi in the anonymity of internet. He does not dare to tell that in front of me." He expressed his disappointment of the President of the provincial legislative, Mr. Herwig van Staa, who has made no declarations until now about this issue. Interviewed by *Krone*, Mr. Van Staa asserted that the expressions are "inadequate." Some members of the Green party are intending to organize a conference against homophobia.

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