

Germany: Left Party state government organizes brutal deportations in Thuringia

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A new peak of brutality has been reached in the deportations carried out by the Left Party state administration in Thuringia. This was made clear in a press statement by the Thuringia Refugee Council two days ago. Since December 2014, the state has been governed by coalition of the Left Party and Green Party under state premier Bodo Ramelow (Left Party).

According to the Refugee Council, a five-member Albanian family living in Obermehler were torn apart early Wednesday morning; the father and one of his daughters were deported immediately.

At 5 a.m., police officers and an official from the Aliens Office entered the apartment of the Musta family. When they realised that the 17-year-old daughter was not present, the police and the official decided “spontaneously” (as described in the press statement) to “deport the father and the 11-year-old daughter Klavia.”

The mother remains in Germany in a desperate state. She has now received an official demand to inform the authorities, by Monday, if and when the rest of the family will leave the country “voluntarily”. Otherwise, she also risks being deported under cover of darkness. As the Refugee Council rightly states in the press release, “the fundamental right to protection of the family and children’s rights [are being] fundamentally violated”.

But this is by no means an isolated incident in which a “massive breach of the law has been carried out, in order to force people out of the country using state force”, according to the press statement.

On March 22, the seven-year-old Sadija Miftari was deported. The little girl, “who had been taken from her family due to child endangerment and placed in a sort of foster family,” was then picked up from there in the middle of the night to be deported to Macedonia along

with her birth family.

The Refugee Council “criticizes the way deportations are carried out in Thuringia in the strongest terms,” reads the press release. “We are appalled and shocked by these scandalous actions that breach all legal and moral guidelines,” said Ellen Könneker for the organisation.

In a telephone interview, Könneker told the *World Socialist Web Site*: “We are dealing with a whole new dimension. There are mass deportations happening in Thuringia, even in cases that are clearly unlawful.”

In the case of the little girl, the authorities first removed the child from her family due to “child endangerment,” then tore her away from the foster family and then deported her with the same family that had been previously considered a danger to the child’s welfare.

Those responsible for the deportations are the government of Thuringia, its Prime Minister Bodo Ramelow (Left Party) and Thuringia Minister for Migration, Justice and Consumer Affairs Dieter Lauinger (Alliance ‘90/The Greens). They have been systematically intensifying deportations for half a year.

At the beginning of 2016, Migration Minister Lauinger boasted that Thuringia had deported 460 persons in the previous year. Altogether, 1,600 people had “gone,” almost 1,200 of them supposedly “voluntarily,” he said. According to the *Thüringer Allgemeine*, Lauinger had criticised the “reluctance of some districts” in January because they had registered “no requirement for deportations,” and called on the district administrators to “do their homework.”

How “voluntary” these departures were in most cases can clearly be seen from the most recent example of the deported family: The mother is being put under massive pressure to follow the father to Albania

together with her 16-year-old daughter and three-year-old boy. They can choose whether to go “voluntarily,” or risk being deported in the dead of night.

Since the end of last year, the Left Party-led state administration has organised regular mass deportations. At the end of 2015, the *Thüringer Allgemeine* wrote, “Recently, several mass deportations were carried out at night in which nearly 200 people had been flown back to the Balkans. This mainly affected families with children, some of whom had already lived in Germany for several years.”

In December, the organization “Roma Thuringen” described the brutal collective deportations of several Roma families with children from Erfurt to Belgrade. “Those affected were awakened in the night by police officers who were suddenly in their room next to the bed and turned on the light. They had neither rung the bell nor knocked on the door beforehand. Their phones were also removed when they tried to notify others of their deportation. Thus they were denied any contact with lawyers.”

Pro Asyl has repeatedly demanded that the German government reverse the classification of the Western Balkans, including Albania, as “safe countries of origin.” Such generalizations about entire countries—depending on political discretion—were not compatible with constitutional guidelines, the organisation said. The examination of individual cases was being bypassed and numerous people deported who were previously protected from it by the “toleration” policy.

Thuringia has implemented the decision of the federal government with particular severity in order to act even against families with children. How cynical the Green Party state minister is can be seen from the repatriation decree published by Lauinger on his ministry’s web site two months ago.

It concerns an instruction on the “Organization and execution of deportations,” which is aimed at the “immigration authorities and the Thuringia State Police.” It states, according to the constitution, “the family shall enjoy the special protection of the state ... in all actions concerning children ... the child’s wellbeing is a factor which is to be given priority ... deportations of families or single parents with minor children must always be organized so that the pick-up time is not between 21:00 and 5:30 the next day.”

It adds that the implementation of deportations is to be organized so that minors are not “collected from schools or day care centres for the purpose of joint deportation with the family members. In so far as this is exceptionally unavoidable in individual cases, collection shall be made so that classmates and other children are not scared in the day-care facilities.”

In deportations of Roma families, “with regard to the experiences of discrimination and violence of this ethnic group, adequate sensitivity in enforcement by immigration authorities and law enforcement officers should be accorded.”

Notoriously, last October, in an “open letter” to Chancellor Angela Merkel and state Premier Ramelow, the state chairman of the Social Democratic Party in Thuringia, Andreas Bausewein, demanded that refugee children be kept from school.



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