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press release

**Romani Rose: Nothing understood. An answer to Jan Fleischhauer. (Focus 34/19)
And on "DPolG Bayern: Criticism of" political correctness "of the Bay. Country Commissioner for
Data Protection "dated 19.8.2019.**

After Jan Fleischhauer in his column "Police should hide perpetrator origin: blindness makes the world is not fair" emphasis on the fact that the descent of suspects of course should be named in the work of the police and in public, Romani Rose replied for the Central Council German Sinti and Roma. This answer was shortened by the FOCUS only published as a letter to the editor (Focus 35/19).

Since it is repeatedly stated, also by the Bavarian DPolG, that the terms "Sinti" or "Roma" are not discriminatory and therefore the complaints of the Bavarian Data Protection Commissioner should not be taken seriously, the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma now publishes the complete reply Jan Fleischhauer.

That through the column of Mr. Fleischhauer Sinti and Roma are made a lump sum to the perpetrator group, show online comments such as:

"To name the problem by name is essential to classify groups of offenders (sic!) And also to create appropriate preventive measures that such incidents no longer occur."

75 years ago, prevention measures against groups of offenders ended in the gas chambers of Auschwitz-Birkenau. The Nazis have denied Jews, Sinti and Roma citizenship and replaced it by the descent. That is why the rule of law prohibits labeling with criteria of descent. With Jan Fleischhauer, the descent and not the citizenship is exactly the criterion again, and Mr. Nachtigall of the German Police Union must realize that the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany with Article 3 Paragraph 3 forbids that state institutions make ethnic criteria to a benchmark of their action.

Herbert Heuss
Senior Advisor

Beitrag von Romani Rose für FOCUS

20.08.2019

Nothing understood. A reply to Jan Fleischhauer.

It seems as if Jan Fleischhauer in his FOCUS column dated August 17, 2019: "Police should hide perpetrator's origin: Blindness does not make the world fairer", did not understand why Article 3 paragraph 3 of the Federal Republic of Germany's constitution explicitly forbids government institutions to make ethnic criteria standards of state action.

This principle of the rule of law, anchored in the fundamental rights, is intended to prevent discrimination of the state against minorities for reasons of their descent, skin color or religious affiliation, and this indeed is based on the historical experience in Germany.

Instead, Jan Fleischhauer propagates a number of inaccuracies. For example, he writes that police officers must "now connive at the origins of suspects." Of course, the origin can and may be referred to, the reference to a citizenship is not affected by the named Bavarian decree. On the other hand, however, so is the reference to ancestry, whether as Sinti or Rom or as Jew.

Here Jan Fleischhauer quite consciously mixes "descent" with "origin" and thus with "citizenship".

What Jan Fleischhauer really did not understand is that there is a difference between concepts and the context in which these concepts are being placed. The terms "Sinti" and "Roma" are the self-designation of the minority in Germany and of course non-discriminatory. Sinti are generally known as the group that has been resident in the German-speaking world for over 600 years. Roma is the internationally used generic term for a wide range of groups in their respective home countries. Accordingly, the umbrella organization is called the "Central Council of German Sinti and Roma".

Not the terms are discriminatory but the racist contexts in which they may be used.

These include, for example, media reports that ascribe criminal allegations ("Roma clan") to the entire minority solely based on origin.

Sinti are - just like Jews - German citizens and shall be perceived as such. Roma in Germany are usually either German citizens or citizens of their respective home countries.

Already in 2017, the President of the Federal Police, Dieter Romann, declared that "of course the citizenship of every citizen must not be called into question by making descent the criterion of police work".

This is exactly what happens with Jan Fleischhauer.

First, there is a lengthy discussion about Sinti and Roma, then about the fact that many journalists no longer write "where (exactly!) someone comes from" in order to then debate social prognoses of foreigners in Germany. In other words: From the topic of German Sinti and German Roma who have lived in Germany for generations and are German citizens, the focus is moved to immigration problems. Problems that concern the Sinti and Roma as a national minority as much and as little as any other national minority, such as Frisians or Sorbs or Danes, as well. Only with Sinti and Roma does Fleischhauer make an arbitrary connection.

It is discriminatory when, in reports on Roma, pictures of rats are repeatedly used to illustrate the situation of Roma in their countries of origin, as recently shown on the SAT 1 TV station under the title "Roma: A people between blatancy and poverty". This film is an example of deliberate discrimination and criminalization of an entire minority through language and image selection alone,

and can be placed in the racist tradition of a "Jud Süß" or the Nazi propaganda film "Der Führer schenkt den Juden eine Stadt" (The Fuehrer gives the Jews a city). As in the Nazi film about Theresienstadt, the SAT 1 film is repeatedly interspersed with sequences in which Roma are associated with rats in different ways, especially the housing situation in the ghettos in Romania is so characterized. Thereby this inhumane situation is presented as a way of living allegedly corresponding to the mentality of Roma - without naming the massive racism in their home countries as the cause of the desolate situation of large parts of the Roma population.

The Central Council explicitly welcomes the decree of the Bavarian Police inspector, Harald Pickert, especially against the background of the new Bavarian Police Task Act, which is to allow, among other things, DNA material to be examined for external characteristics and biogeographical origin. This would automatically and specifically affect minorities. Even more important, therefore, is the current decree in Bavaria, which prohibits discriminatory terms and thus necessarily the collection of potentially discriminatory data as well.

It is therefore not a matter of making the world fairer through blindness, as Jan Fleischhauer suggests, but of taking the principles and fundamentals of a constitutional state seriously. This is exactly what Harald Pickert as inspector of the Bavarian Police does and for this, he deserves recognition and respect. The media are free to form their own opinions within the framework of existing laws, and the fact that the freedom of the press is also enshrined in the fundamental rights of our constitution is a consequence of the German history, namely the forcible coordination of the press under National Socialism.

Besides, the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma has always declared that criminals must be prosecuted and punished, without regard for the person and in accordance with the laws that apply in our country and which must be respected and observed by all. Columns as those by Jan Fleischhauer ensure that this matter of course must be explained time and again by the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma.