

3 August 2021

Dear Comrades,

We informed you at the beginning of July that Stefan Engel had been classified as a danger to public safety. Today we are happy to report about a complete success at court! More than 50 solidarity messages that came in from 22 countries contributed to this success.

Many thanks, also on behalf of Stefan himself, for this international solidarity!

Monika Gärtner-Engel

Internationalism Secretary



MLPD Press Release

Administrative Court Meiningen:

Complete success for Stefan Engel and the MLPD

'Potential danger' classification struck down

The proceedings in the lawsuit of Stefan Engel against the Free State of Thuringia ended today before the Second Chamber of Meiningen Administrative Court with a complete success. The court ruled that the "potential danger" letter of 15 May 2018 against Stefan Engel was unlawful. The Free State of Thuringia must pay the full court costs. *"This verdict is at the same time a major success for the movement 'Don't give anticommunism a chance!'"* says Gabi Fechtner, MLPD Chairwoman.

Lawyer Peter Weispfenning, who together with his colleague Frank Jasenski represented the plaintiff, reports: *"The representatives of the Free State of Thuringia attempted during the trial to play down the 'potential danger' letter as a harmless information letter. The court in contrast emphatically determined that the 'potential danger' letter of 15 May 2018 was an unlawful letter. The letter was refuted point by point by Associate Judge Wimmer. She said, 'It might sound harmless when first read, but it implies far-reaching accusations such as terror supporter, et cetera.' She raised the question why such a letter had been addressed to Stefan Engel in the first place, as he was not responsible either for the festival or for the appearance of the band Grup Yorum. The court also clarified that Stefan Engel is not a 'danger to public safety' from any viewpoint."*

The representatives of the state government could not produce a single convincing argument to explain what the real reason was for taking such action against Stefan Engel. After all, the letter was followed later by the termination of his bank accounts, and a wanted notice even was issued for him by the Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA) on the instructions of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, the domestic intelligence agency.

The plaintiff, Stefan Engel, who is also one of the initiators of the movement "Don't give anticommunism a chance!", was very satisfied with the outcome. *"I welcome that I have obtained justice with my lawsuit against the Free State of Thuringia. ... I was criminalized and defamed by secret services and the police. The prosecutor's office in Gera and the Prosecutor General refused to even follow up on my complaints against those responsible. That makes today's judgment all the more important."*

During the trial Stefan Engel also made it clear that it was not only about him. The whole treatment of progressive people as potential dangers he attacked as being an expression of the rightward development.

Around 250 persons from all over Germany personally conveyed their solidarity in the morning, before the court session. In the evening, more than 700 people celebrated the success with a rally and demonstration in the state capital Erfurt. The success underscores – according to the MLPD – that if you fight anticommunism offensively, you can win!