



The Portuguese media increasingly reports on alleged preparations of violent actions around the NATO Summit in Lisbon. What is the ICC „No to War – No to NATO“’s position on these rumors?

Reiner Braun: The network No to War – No to NATO commits itself to non-violent actions and only prepares actions that are international, non-violent and peaceful. We operate in the traditions of Gandhi and Martin Luther King and condemn violence as a means of politics and a means towards social change. Our aim is a world in peace and without violence and our actions and methods are within the line of this aim: we have a strictly non-violent code of conduct. Many of the organizations in our network have been successfully practicing these means for decades and are well-known for their non-violent aims and objectives. Thus, the rumors spooking in Portugal are nothing else but false accusations.

Why is the discussion on violence hyped in the media just now, right before the NATO Summit?

Reiner Braun: This hype is being created by our political opponents: namely NATO, the oppressive institutions of the state and their submissive media journalists. The reason of this discrediting behavior can only be the fear of our success in conducting non-violent, peaceful and huge counter NATO activities.

This media hype is aiming at a self-fulfilling prophecy: public reports on alleged violence beforehand the counter NATO activities is part of the legitimization strategy of violent police actions against the the protesters itself.

The “violence”-discussions in Portugal also refer to the so called “black block”. What is this block in your opinion?

Reiner Braun: From our experiences in Strasbourg 2009 the so called “black block” is clearly being utilized as a instrument of the militaristic strategy of the state power and its oppressive sub-organizations, namely secret service and security institutions, to take undemocratic actions against peaceful demonstrators. We know that many youth dressed in black think that violent actions are the only way to fight the capitalistic system. These youths neither have a strategy for change nor adequate acting. Violence does not change anything but only reproduces violent structures. This is the contradiction of the so called “black block”. Often agent provocateurs initiate violence against police to give them a reason to use brute force against the demonstrators. Violence does not show the true character of the protests but is utilized to reach a hegemony of pictures and words around the NATO Summit weekend. It is used by the oppressive to produce their propaganda and to legitimize their repressions. As soon as violence towards police and the “responding” police violence against peaceful and non-violent protesters starts, the strategy of the oppressive forces succeeds as the hegemony of pictures and words remains in their hands.

Please resume your thoughts on the discussion on violence:

Reiner Braun: The discussion on violence is always brought up when successful actions are being prepared and the ruling politics is being delegitimized in the eyes of many people. Support of

violence – even coming from an subjectively honest anti-capitalistic feeling - is a legitimization of dominant politics. We reject violence strictly and fundamentally. We remain faithful to our aims of non-violence, even in conflicts.

Reiner Braun is a member of the ICC No to War – No to NATO.