

'Dark ages' defeated in German courts

That quintessential oligarch, the honorable Prince Johannes von Thurn und Taxis of Regensburg, has miserably failed in yet another attempt to misuse the West German courts to harass the Anti-Drug Coalition and its magazine *Krieg dem Rauschgift* (*War On Drugs*). The Munich Federal District Court

an injunction against the charge, that the Thurn und Taxis family "aims at destroying the modern republican state, based on technological process, and throwing the world back into the dark ages."

The Prince was appealing a Feb. 15 decision by the Munich State Supreme Court, which likewise found that it was legal to tell at least some of the truth about his family's dark doings. In view of this, the judge in the federal suit expressed his astonishment about the Prince's obvious obsession on the point.

This was one of the statements which appeared in the April 1983 issue of *Krieg dem Rauschgift*, which von Thurn und Taxis felt were aimed against him personally. The Prince has attempted to get the courts to prohibit these characterizations as "slandorous defamation," incredibly basing his complaint on the concept of "family honor"—a feudal relic which no longer exists in the republican legal lexicon—which he claimed entitled him to defend the clan in his capacity as the "current head of the family" ("pater familias").

The Thurn und Taxis family is synonymous with feudal oligarchy. Originally called Torre e Tasso and based in Lombardy in northern Italy, in the 15th century they were appointed postal directors for the Venetian empire—absolutely "nouveau riche" when compared to the old Roman and Venetian families. Today they are the largest landholders in Brazil, and the prince is thought by some to be the world's wealthiest man.

Thurn und Taxis, Fatima, Lefebvre

The Munich State Supreme Court decision fully upheld a previous lower State Court decision, not finding it fitting to grant the multi-millionaire the compensation he had sought. However, the decision continued to prohibit any statements that Johannes von Thurn und Taxis is "the real proprietor" of the Bayerische Vereinsbank; or that the Pope's unsuccessful assassin "Ali Agca [had] received three million deutsche-marks via the Bayerische Vereinsbank, in order to carry out

the murder attempt on the Pope"; or that the Thurn und Taxis family were promoters of the "Fatima cult" and religious cultist Lefebvre. Even though plentiful proof was supplied on these latter points—including court-accepted evidence on Thurn und Taxis family members' participation in Fatima pilgrimages, and statements from a representative of the Lefebvre Seminar in Zaitzkofen near Regensburg, speaking hypothetically about support for the Lefebvre movement—the court could not bring itself to intervene into the verbal testimony.

Shortly before the State Superior Court verdict was announced, Thurn und Taxis made yet another attempt to influence the outcome in his favor. On Jan. 28, 1985, his lawyer presented a telex message from the West German embassy in Caracas, Venezuela, addressed to the Thurn und Taxis Joint Trusteeship (whose existence in itself is a scandal). The background of this telex is as follows. In early January the author of the article in *Krieg dem Rauschgift* and the chairman of the Anti-Drug Coalition had presented to the court an article appearing in the Venezuelan daily paper *El Universal*, reporting on the background of the Lefebvre-linked sect "Tradition, Family, Property" (TFP), which had just been banned from Venezuela because of criminal activities. In connection with reporting on the Brazilian-Portuguese noble Braganza family, which had given substantial support to TFP, it also mentioned how the Braganzas had blood-ties with the house of Thurn und Taxis.

The Jan. 28 telex message, apparently in response to an inquiry from the plaintiff Thurn und Taxis regarding this article, in effect denied the existence of the article in question, instead giving the impression of a slander campaign conducted solely by "LaRouche" and *Executive Intelligence Review*. The statements of Dr. B. Zimmermann, deputy ambassador and author of the telex, make no mention of the fact that over the preceding six months, the entire Venezuelan press had been running countless prominent, often full-page articles on the machinations of the subsequently banned TFP and its funders.

The board of the Anti-Drug Coalition immediately protested against this scandalous behavior on the part of a West German embassy, and directed an official letter to the foreign ministry and the parliamentary oversight bodies, accusing the embassy of intervening into ongoing court proceedings on behalf of a private citizen. "This transgression by a foreign legation of the Federal Republic," the letter reads in part, "is all the more scandalous, given that an open battle has broken out in Latin America against the powerful drug mafia, a battle in which the Anti-Drug Coalition there is acting in full support of the governments of such countries as Colombia, Venezuela, etc. Our members are therefore now asking the question: whose directives does the embassy actually heed and obey? Up to now, we had thought that the House of Thurn und Taxis' authority over Germany's foreign and intelligence affairs had been brought to an end many centuries ago."