

Holger Meins' Report on Force-Feeding

Since September 30 (12 days) force-feeding has been occurring here daily. It takes place in the sickbay (in a one-storey building in B wing—a sort of annex—I am celled in A wing, in the middle of the first floor). I am escorted by 5-6 of the greens.¹

During the first week, I attempted different forms of *active resistance* every day. Selective and timely.

5-6 greens, 2-3 medics, 1 doctor. The greens grab, push, and drag me to an operating chair. Really it's an operating table with all the bells and whistles: it can be swiveled in any direction, etc., and can be folded into an armchair with a headrest and foot- and armrests.

Strapped down: two pairs of handcuffs and foot shackles, a 30 cm wide strap around the waist, two leather straps with 4 belts from the elbow to the wrist on the left arm, on the right arm another two at the wrist and elbow, and one across the chest. Behind me a green or a medic who holds my head firmly against the headrest with both hands on my forehead. (In the case of active resistance at head level, two others, one on the left, one on the right, hold on to my hair, my beard, and my neck. In this way, my entire body is immobilized, and if it's necessary another holds my knees or shoulders. The only possible motion is muscular movement "inside" the body. This week they tied the belts and straps very tightly, so that blood accumulated in my hands, which turned bluish, etc.).

The mouth: On the right the doctor on a stool with a small crowbar about 20 cm long, one end a curved needle, the other a curved spatula wrapped with adhesive tape. This goes between the lips, which are pulled apart with fingers at the same time, and then between the teeth (that's pretty easy in my case, given that I'm missing three teeth) forcing them apart, either by applying pressure or by pushing the spatula against the gums.

(Biting the teeth together is still relatively difficult—a strong point of resistance—and leads to minor injury to the teeth or gums. Against the strength of the jaw they use three different grips: forcing them apart with fingers under the lips while simultaneously pulling on the beard both above and below the mouth; applying heavy pressure below the ears and the jaw joint, which really hurts; sharply pressing a stiffened

¹ German police wear green uniforms.

finger against the muscles that run forward from under the ears, while using a stiffened finger to push the carotid artery, the windpipe, and the vagus nerve against the muscle and kneading and squeezing them against each other, which, in fact, was not the most painful method, but took more than a day to heal.)

When the jaws are pulled far enough apart, the medic on the left sticks—shoves—the clamp between the teeth. It is a shear tongue-like rubber-coated object, 2 fingers thick with a wingnut at its joint, with which the jaws are pried open. The tongue is pulled forward and forced down with forceps, or the doctor uses a finger with a steel sheath on the fingertip.

Force-feeding: A red stomach pipe (not a tube) is used, about the thickness of a middle finger (in my case between the joints). It is greased, but doesn't manage to go down without causing me to gag, because it is only between 1 and 3 mm narrower than the digestive tract (this can only be avoided if one makes a swallowing motion and remains completely still). The slightest irritation when the pipe is introduced causes gagging and nausea and the cramping of the chest and stomach muscles, setting off a chain reaction of extremely intense convulsions throughout the body, causing one to buck against the pipe. The more extreme and the longer this lasts, the worse it is. A single gag or vomiting reflex is accompanied by waves of cramps. They only abate or decrease if one is very focused and remains very still, forcing oneself to breathe deeply and normally. Under the circumstances, resistance makes this completely impossible. It is only possible through quiet concentration and self-control, which in these conditions of direct compulsion always means self-repression and self-discipline. This is the reason for the restraints used in this form of force-feeding, because the body "naturally" reacts.

When the pipe is in the stomach, a wider funnel is attached to it and a normal cup (about a quarter-litre capacity) is used to gradually force down small amounts of the sludge. It is some type of meat slop, murky, slimy, and fatty—in any event, it contains vitamins, glucose, eggs, and finely chopped stuff—with a thick, brownish, greasy residue (about 1 or 2 tablespoons). The intake lasts about 1½ to 3 minutes. A full cup is always poured in, even when the gagging is extreme, causing the entire body to cramp for at least 5 to 6 minutes each time without any relief. The funnelling is only possible with "relative calm." During heavy gagging and/or cramping, the slop pours out of the funnel at the top. When the pipe bucks up in the throat—and in the digestive tract as

a result—it can lead to choking fits, which have occurred twice so far (but didn't pose a serious health risk). The gagging, the cramping, and the swallowing are of course painful, particularly to the larynx, which is pressed against the pipe with every swallow and gag. The iron lever has led to small injuries to the gums, the inside of the lip looks as if it has been bitten in one place and has a whitish inflammation as a result of the clamp, and the back of the throat is "irritated." The larynx constantly hurts a little bit, and I have a sore throat.

It is about 3 to 5 minutes before the pipe is taken back out, all depending. (With extreme resistance, I can make it last as long as 20 to 30 minutes, but I am not strong enough to prevent the force-feeding altogether.)

Afterwards, I remain strapped in with my head pressed down for at least 10 minutes (sometimes it is longer), "to calm me down."

The doctor has up to this point refused to give his name (his name is Freitag). A green (he's named Vollmann) generally holds my head

and presses it with all his strength against the leather headrest (until his hands start to tremble from the effort)—yeah, a real sadist—this takes place inside a 190 cm cubicle. Another one—he's named Gomes or Komes—tightens the straps so much that they cut into



my ankles and leave marks on my wrists that are still visible over an hour later. As I have, from the first day, offered occasional and partial resistance, I have a few bruises on my legs, arms, etc. The whole thing is always conducted rigorously so as to be over in 10 minutes.

As of this week (since Tuesday, October 8) I have offered almost no further active resistance, only passive resistance—no voluntary movement.

In this way it is more bearable. I can control myself so there is no gagging, etc., like today, for example, but that depends on me, not on the style of force-feeding. The pipe is, REGARDLESS OF CIRCUMSTANCES, TORTURE.

As they are now generally conducting force-feeding with a tube through the nose, I favor a public statement against the doctor (P. should do this, as he has already prepared a motion for a ban on the pipe, which can serve as an ultimatum: “If you don’t ... by ... then ...” It should also definitely be raised at the press conference, but only briefly, and only against the doctor, nothing against the greens.)

Shit: Today, after the force-feeding I had a brief short circuit, nothing extreme, only 5 minutes, total flickering, but fully conscious, only the eyes and ears.

Holger Meins
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