

EXTERNAL

AI INDEX NUMBER: EUR 41/03/92

**Amnesty International
International Secretariat
1 Easton Street
London WC1X 8DJ
United Kingdom
Tel: (44) (71) 413 5500
Fax: (44) (71) 956 1157**

3 November 1992

ESPAIN: @THE ALLEGED ILL-TREATMENT OF ANTONIO COPETE

Antonio COPETE González, a 34-year-old trade union leader, alleges that he was assaulted by Civil Guards at a peaceful demonstration on 28 May 1992 in Palma Nova (Mallorca) and then taken under arrest to the headquarters of the Civil Guard where a plainclothes officer slapped and punched him, bursting his left ear-drum. He was released without charge two hours later. Amnesty International is concerned about his allegations of ill-treatment and is seeking information from the authorities about the steps taken to investigate his formal complaint of ill-treatment.

On 28 May 1992, Antonio Copete, a member of the Executive of the Hotels and Tourism Syndicate, affiliated to the major Spanish trade union, Unión General de Trabajadores (UGT), was with a picket of approximately 20 to 30 members outside the Mercadona de Megaluf hypermarket in Palma Nova. This picket was part of a general strike on the island. At 6.30pm he ordered the pickets to disperse using a megaphone. The union members intended joining the main demonstration in Palma de Mallorca, the capital city of the island.

According to press reports, the pickets peacefully dispersed into the hypermarket car-park but were unable to leave in their cars because Civil Guards were blocking their exit. Antonio Copete asked the Civil Guards to move and at this point it is claimed that they baton-charged the pickets and Antonio Copete was beaten by officers. In the course of the charge Antonio Copete suffered serious bruising to his back and shoulder from baton blows. He states that he offered no resistance but was arrested, handcuffed and taken to the Civil Guard headquarters. Antonio Copete identified a plainclothes officer there who had been among those who had hit him when he was arrested in the Mercadona car-park. While still handcuffed the officer slapped him around the face. This took place in front of witnesses including a member of the local town council and a uniformed lieutenant of the Civil Guard. One of the blows he received from the plainclothes officer was to his head, bursting his left ear-drum. The uniformed lieutenant did not intervene to stop this assault on a handcuffed prisoner.

He was eventually released without charge and later that evening received medical treatment at the Emergency Service of the Residencia Sanitaria de Son Dureta. Antonio Copete was found to have suffered a burst left ear-drum, as well as bruises and weals to his shoulder, back, wrists and chest.

On 29 May Antonio Copete made a complaint in person to the Judge of Instruction Nº 2 of Palma de Mallorca. He described the picketing, the peaceful attempted dispersal of the pickets followed by the violent charge by Civil Guards and the subsequent assault on him in the Civil Guard headquarters. He accused the plainclothes officer of causing him serious injuries [un presunto delito de lesiones graves].