

EXTERNAL

AI Index: EUR 70/38/96

Please limit appeals to 15 per Section.

12 December 1996

Further information on UA 281/96 (EUR 70/35/96, 3 December 1996) and follow-up (EUR 70/37/96, 9 December) - Possible prisoners of conscience / Legal concern / Ill-treatment / Health concern / Prisoner of conscience

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA Darko Pajko, Oliver Pajko, Saša Petrovi_, Ivan Uroševi_ and Branko Opa_i_ [all men] and others (names unknown) Dejan BULATOVI_
new names: Gojko Baleti_, actor
Lambros Hutelidis

On 10 December 1996 the Justice Ministry denied that Dejan Bulatovi_ had been ill-treated by police; in an official statement the Ministry reportedly said he had been treated in the same way as any other prisoner and "did not have any objections to the way he was treated". It also said, however, that he had been examined three times by doctors and that if necessary he would receive further treatment - apparently without specifying why treatment was necessary.

Dejan Bulatovi_ saw his lawyers on 10 December and reportedly told them that at the time of his arrest he was beaten by police in the street and later at a police station, where he was questioned about the effigy of President Miloševi_ he had been carrying during the demonstration. He said he had been brought, covered in blood, before a magistrate, who before convicting and sentencing him to 25 days' imprisonment, remarked: "What happened? You slipped on a banana skin?" and when he asked to see a doctor, replied that he would receive medical care in prison.

The magistrate also allegedly refused his request to be defended by a lawyer. The lawyers reportedly noticed bruises and injuries to his face and neck, and two broken teeth; their requests to see his medical documentation were allegedly denied. Dejan Bulatovi_ was found guilty - apparently on the basis of statements he made to the police - of holding up cars to enable demonstrators to pass and being rude to a police officer; it is not clear whether in court he confirmed these statements.

It is reported that on 11 December 1996 Gojko Baleti_, a Belgrade actor working for the National Theatre, was arrested in the street by four police officers. He was allegedly beaten in the street until he lost consciousness and then driven away, handcuffed, in a police car. Gojko Baleti_ had reportedly taken an active part in demonstrations in Belgrade in protest against the annulment of local election results which had given the opposition control of Belgrade and other major towns. He had been due to travel to the town of Niš to address demonstrating students there on 12 December. (On 10 December theatres in Belgrade did not hold performances, as a mark of support to demonstrators).

Lambros Hutelidis, who has dual Greek and Yugoslav citizenship, was reportedly arrested on 30 November 1996 and sentenced to 25 days' imprisonment for writing graffiti on the building of the Serbian Broadcasting Organization. Demonstrators have frequently protested against the pro-government media, which have generally ignored the demonstrations or described them as violent or even "pro-fascist". Most observers, however, agree that although in the first 10 days of demonstrations eggs and sometimes stones were thrown at buildings,

since then demonstrators have generally followed the opposition's requests to refrain from such action.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in English, French, German, Russian or in your own language:

- expressing concern about reports that the actor Gojko Baletić was arrested and beaten by police officers in Belgrade on 11 December;
- stating that you are all the more disturbed by these allegations in view of the severe injuries that Dejan Bulatović reportedly received at the hands of police following his arrest on 6 December;
- calling for a prompt, thorough and impartial investigation into these allegations and for any officers responsible for ill-treatment to be brought to justice;
- expressing concern about further reports that people have been arrested or convicted and sentenced to up to 25 days' imprisonment on charges of disturbing the public peace in connection with demonstrations;
- urging a review of all such cases, and calling for their release of Dejan Bulatović and any other persons who has been detained as a result of exercising, non-violently, their rights to freedom of assembly and expression;

if possible also:

- emphasise that Articles 19 and 21 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (which the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia recognizes as legally binding) guarantee the rights to freedom of expression and freedom of peaceful assembly, and urging the authorities to uphold these rights.

APPEALS TO:

President of the Republic of Serbia

Predsednik Republike Srbije
Slobodan Milošević
Andrijevićev venac 1
11000 Beograd, FR Yugoslavia
Fax: + 381 11 682 167 or 656 862

Telegrams: Predsednik Srbije, Beograd, Yugoslavia

Salutation: Dear President

Minister of Internal Affairs

Zoran Sokolović
Ministar unutrašnjih poslova Republike Srbije
Kneza Miloša 101
11000 Beograd, FR Yugoslavia

Fax: +381 11 641 867 or 11 685 937

Telegrams: Ministar unutrašnjih poslova Srbije, Beograd, Yugoslavia

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia

Zmaj Jovina 7/III
11000 Beograd, Yugoslavia
Tel/Fax: +381 11 639 481

Council for human rights

Centre for Anti-War Action
Gospodar Jovanova 44 (correct address)
11000 Beograd, Yugoslavia

Fax: +381 11 635 813

and to diplomatic representatives of Federal Republic of Yugoslavia accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 7 January 1997.