

Hooligans Attack Women in Black Activists

From the Danas Newspaper, January 23, 2007

Brutal skinheads attack on election night

Belgrade ‐ Violeta Djikovic, a Women in Black activist, was injured in an attack by skinheads on the night between Sunday and Monday. She had a contusion on her head and bruises and was beaten. On her face, there were visible marks from falling down the stairs. She was in pain and worried about her safety.

A half an hour after midnight, on the night between Sunday and Monday, Violeta Ä•ikoviÄ†, her daughter Ljubica, and Milos Urosevic were returning from the election night party of the Liberal Democratic Party-Social Democratic Union-Citizen’s Association of Serbia-The Social Democratic League of Vojvodina coalition in Dom Omladine (a youth cultural center). In Sremska Street, they were attacked by three skinheads, men with buzz cuts dressed in black and wearing combat boots. One of them said to UroševiÄ† ‘Look at that faggot. I know him. He is in Women in Black. Because of him, I have a criminal record!”

“Violeta said, ‘did you say something to me?’ and they turned to her. We were already in the pedestrian passage between Sremska Street and Prizrenska Street. One of them came up to me, grabbed my hair and twisted it. She tried to defend me. The other two became involved and one of them pushed her down the stairs and she rolled down and fell on her face,” Urosevic told Danas.

After this, the attackers left, Urosevic called the police, and Djikovic went to the emergency room.

“I heard that they called Miloš names, including a curse. He grabbed Milos’s hair. I sprayed deodorant in his face. During that, one of them ran away. We tried to run away, but the third attacker grabbed my left arm and pushed me down the stairs that lead to Brankov Street. I tumbled and for a moment lost consciousness. The first thing that I saw when I regained consciousness was the two men who lifted me into the ambulance. In the emergency room, they took pictures of my head, registered my injuries and took my statement,” Djikovic told Danas.

They assume that the attackers are the same people who threw tear gas at the Women in Black’s protest vigil marking the tenth anniversary of the Srebrenica massacre in Republic Square in July 2005. Then, the police arrested some hooligans who were yelling “Knife, wire, Srebrenica” and then threw tear gas.
The Physical Continuation of the Demonization of NGOs

“This situation only confirms the position of peace activists and defenders of human rights in Serbia. Our security is endangered by the state as well as by neo-Nazi and clero-fascist individuals and groups. The logical continuation of media campaigns and public demonization usually is physical attacks to which the authorities do not react. Serbia continues to be a place of unpunished violence, in which violence against those who think differently is excused,” said Women in Black in a public announcement.
To Find the Attackers

‘The coalition of the Liberal Democratic Party, Social Democratic Union, Citizen’s Association of Serbia and Social Democratic League of Vojvodina most severely condemns the skinhead attack on the activist of the nongovernmental organization Women in Black and her friend that happened late Sunday night. The attacks of racist and fascist groups, inspired by hate towards everyone who thinks differently, are a reflection of a deformed anti-democratic values system and is one of the biggest problems of our society” was in the announcement of the LDP-GSS-SDU-LSV coalition.

The coalition expects “the authorized institutions to find and punish the perpetrators of this newest attack on human rights activists and that they help to establish a democratic values system as the basic foundation for the recovery of Serbia.”

From Danas, January 27, 2007

Two attackers of Women in Black activists identified

Attackers Known as Skinheads

Belgrade - Yesterday, while leafing through a notebook of photographs in the police station on November 29th Street,

Violeta Djikovic and Milos Urosevic, Women in Black activists and victims of a skinhead attack in central Belgrade, identified two of their three attackers. As the activists previously told the police, criminal charges were brought against one of the identified attackers because of his participation in offenses in July 2005. At the Women in Black protest vigil, he was in a group that chanted "Knife, wire, Srebrenica." One of the hooligans threw a canister of tear gas at the protesters from this group. This identification agrees with the witness Urosevic, who said that one of the attackers said to him, "because of you I have a criminal record."

"We looked at three big notebooks with photographs of people that the police told us were skinheads. We identified the attacker who pushed me down the stairs," said Violeta Djikovic, who still has a bad headache and difficulty speaking because of jaw injuries.

Urosevic says that with complete certainty he can state that the attacker who grabbed his hair has been identified.

"We will persevere and we will not calm down as long as those who attack our activists are not brought to justice. During discussion with a representative of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, I knew that they know about all of the previous attacks on us, but I told them that they have not done anything. No one has been punished. We informed international human rights organizations; we will inform all domestic institutions because the terror which we endure is unbearable and endangers our security," Stasa Zajovic, the coordinator of Women in Black, told Danas.

Report of the Visits to the Ministry of Internal Affairs on January 23 and 30, 2007

On January 23, Ljubica Duvnjak, the daughter of Violeta Djikanovic, together with Milos Urosevic and Ljiljana Radovanovic went to The Ministry of Internal Affairs office on November 29th Street in order to search through photographs of suspects in hopes of identifying those who attacked Violeta Djikanovic and Milos Urosevic.

On January 30, 2007, Women in Black activists Ljiljana Radovanovic and Milos Urosevic went to the Old City office of the Ministry of Internal Affairs on Majka Jevrosima Street for the notes from the meeting on January 22, 2007 in the Women in Black office taken by Inspector Krsta Kujic.

To receive those official documents, we waited in the hallway even though the inspector told us when he took our statement that we would be able to come for the notes the following day.

In the police station, we were given the official documents about the attack. Before that, a member of the police in the hallway asked us, "Why do you need the official documents?"

To our confused question, "Why do you ask why?"

The police officer asked, "are they for personal needs, to show someone, to collect an insurance payment, to bring charges against him, to criminally prosecute him, to look for him, to kill him, to slaughter him? I don't know what you need them for."

Later, we received the official documents from the chief of staff, Sladjan Stojkovic.

This afternoon, Violeta Djikanovic, Milos Urosevic and Ljiljana Radovanovic will go again to identify people at the Ministry of Internal Affairs office on November 29th Street.
Belgrade, January 30, 2007

for Women in Black

Milos Urosevic