

Yugoslavia

Response to Information Request Number:	YUG99003.ZLA
Date:	02 July 1999
Subject:	Yugoslavia: 1.) Information on risk factors for those with connections to the United States, especially those who have been in the United States through the NATO bombing. 2.) Current information on compulsory military service.
From:	INS Resource Information Center
Keywords:	Yugoslavia / Serbia / anti-American / US / asylum / violence / Deserters / Military Service / Conscientious objection / Compulsory Military Service

Query:

Would a Serb living in the U.S. for the past five years be at risk should he return to Belgrade due to the recent events in Yugoslavia?

Response:

Resources consulted by the RIC did not indicate that there had been reports of incidents in which citizens of Yugoslavia had been harmed because of any presumed connection to the United States.

However, several sources did indicate that there existed a pervasive anti-American sentiment among many in Yugoslavia, even before the bombing started. One report indicates that for the last year, the media in Yugoslavia has engaged in daily anti-American rhetoric (Associated Press. 18 March 1998). More recently, the US State Department and other sources see the US involvement in the Kosovo crisis as a spark for anti-American violence and sentiment (*The Boston Globe*. 23 February 1999; Agence France Presse. 19 February 1999). None of these sources indicated who in Yugoslavia was likely to harbor an anti-American sentiment or who would be at greatest risk of violent attacks.

In October of 1998 Radio "B92" quoted Vojislav Sesilj, Deputy Prime Minister, and leader of the Serbian Radical Party, as stating that Serbs who worked for U.S. interests were traitors and would be dealt with more harshly than the enemy. In addition, Gary Rimmel, the USRP Supervisor for IOM in Belgrade from April 1997 to March 1999 reported that several of his Serbian case workers had been threatened by other Serbs because they "worked for the Americans."

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the RIC within time constraints. This response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum.

References:

Agence France Presse. 19 February 1999. "US Urges Citizens to leave Serbia, Warns Against Travel to Bosnia." LEXIS/NEXIS.

Associated Press. 18 March 1998. Jovana Gec. "Yugoslavia Starts Anti-US Campaign."

LEXIS/NEXIS.

The Boston Globe. 23 February 1999. Kevin Cullen. "Kosovo Talks are on the Brink of Failure." LEXIS/NEXIS.

Attachments:

Agence France Presse. 19 February 1999. "US Urges Citizens to leave Serbia, Warns Against Travel to Bosnia." LEXIS/NEXIS.

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Last Modified 06/14/2002