

solidarnost je naša snaga

Solidary visit to war refugees

REPORT

October 29th 2016

Economics University Park (12:00)

There were a regular number of people in the park, and the usual amount we would expect around noon. Two families passed through, but without any bags or luggage, meaning they are likely not newly arrived. One person walked through the park in on a t-shirt on top which is a worrisome sign considering it was only 9 degrees Celsius at the time, and temperatures do not get much warmer than that throughout the days anymore. There were two aid workers from humanitarian organizations, and the Jehovah's Witnesses that are in the park every day, all day, were giving people literature that they mentioned in English was to be "studied". This is the fifth day since Info Park has not been serving regular warm meals. On the periphery of the park, it is very obvious when observing conversations of people huddled in groups who the smugglers are and who the refugees or undocumented peoples are. The distinction between them is evidently reflected in their clothing.

Abandoned Storage Facilities (Behind Bus Station) (20:00)

While the main place for refugees to gather throughout the day is in the park next to the Economics University, in the evening refugees return to their shelters, many to the abandoned storage facilities located behind the Belgrade Bus Station. This is where they spend their nights. There were many refugees going to and from the abandoned buildings. Through the doors and broken windows you can see the faint flickering lights of the small fires that keep people warm. As you approach the buildings, you can smell smoke, which means that inside of the buildings, there is a high concentration of smoke. The decrepitude of the abandoned buildings are, in a dark way, an advantage in this case, because the smoke is able to escape from holes in the windows and ceilings, so people are at the very least, able to stay in the building overnight without suffocating.

The Gendarmerie forces that are sometimes on foot around these buildings, other times passing in their SUVs, this time were at the entrance of the train station, which is also directly behind the abandoned storage facilities, next to the bus station. Police officers that work in the smaller police station attached to the train station, who are otherwise not special forces but are still armed with guns, have recently been armed with automatic rifles.

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