

Roman Polanski refused bail by Swiss court

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The Federal Criminal Court of Switzerland refused to release Roman Polanski on bail Tuesday, declaring the filmmaker to be a flight risk. Polanski was arrested in Zürich on September 26 and has now been imprisoned for nearly one month.

A statement released by the court on Tuesday read, “According to Swiss law, detention is the rule during the entire extradition proceedings,” adding, “The court considered the risk that Roman Polanski might flee if released from custody as high.” Polanski had previously made a request to the Swiss Justice Ministry that he be released to his home in Gstaad, Switzerland for the remainder of his detention, but that was also denied.

The Swiss court has said that even if Polanski turned over his travel papers and agreed to daily meetings with law enforcement officials, that would still be inadequate to ensure the director would remain in Switzerland during the extradition process.

Last Friday, the 76-year-old Polanski was taken to a hospital to receive “medical treatment” for reasons that have yet to be made public. The episode was carried out with a degree of secrecy. Swiss Justice Ministry spokesman Folco Galli refused to clarify the matter while speaking with the Reuters news service, saying only that “[Polanski] is still in detention. If necessary he has all the medical care (needed). It can be in prison or in hospital, in general.”

Polanski’s attorney in France, Herve Temime, also spoke with Reuters and was himself apparently unaware of his client’s exact whereabouts, saying “All I know is that he has been taken from prison for medical attention. I don’t know where he is or when he will be returned to prison.”

Temime had visited Polanski in prison the previous week, and came away with serious concerns about his client’s health. The attorney spoke with reporters telling them Polanski was “in an unsettled state of

mind” and that he was “depressed” and “dejected.”

That Polanski is suffering under the trauma of imprisonment will elicit no sympathy from the right-wing and middle class liberal elements who have combined to conduct a campaign of vilification against him. It will no doubt delight more than a few who have been calling for Polanski’s head since his arrest in September.

These elements have taken every opportunity to stoke up hysteria in response to the case, rejecting any critical approach to the circumstances of the decades-long ordeal, the legal facts of the case, the victim’s wishes, or the very real tragic element in Polanski’s life.

This sanctimonious “moral outrage” has only helped to clear the way for the United States and Swiss governments to carry out their vindictive assault on Polanski in whatever manner they like, without fear of any significant public opposition to their actions.



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