

SIDELINING SLOBODAN:

Getting rid of Europe's  
last dictator

## Table of Contents

I.	INTRODUCTION .....	1
II.	THE MILOSEVIC DICTATORSHIP .....	1
	1. Ceausescu 2001? .....	1
	2. The Last Stages .....	2
III.	GEOGRAPHY AND OPPOSITION .....	3
	1. Opponents Bearing Arms? The Kosovo Case .....	3
	2. Montenegro .....	4
	3. Milosevic to Take On 'the Fifth'? A Dress Rehearsal for Sandzak and Vojvodina .....	5
IV.	NON-PARTY OPPOSITION .....	7
	1. October-November 1998 .....	7
	2. Winter of Discontent .....	8
	3. An Ancient Rival? .....	9
V.	INDIVIDUALS .....	11
	1. Old-School Opponents .....	11
	2. '101.559' .....	12
	3. 'Otpor' .....	13
VI.	POLITICAL PARTY OPPOSITION .....	14
	1. The Road to .....	14
	2. DEPOS Deposed .....	14
	3. Where Are They Now? .....	15
	4. Political Wolf .....	16
	5. Reasoning Democrats .....	17
	6. Calmed Radicals .....	18
	7. Together -- One Last Hurrah? .....	20
	8. Djukanovic's Rise .....	21
	9. Another Coalition .....	22
	10. New Changes, For a Better Life .....	23
	11. Learning from Past Lessons? .....	24
	12. Future Problems? .....	26
	13. The Sticking Points .....	27
VII.	CONCLUSION .....	28
VIII.	RECOMMENDATIONS .....	29

### Annexes:

- **LIST OF ACRONYMS**
- **SELECTED LIST OF "WHO'S WHO"**
- **ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP**
- **LIST OF SELECTED ICG REPORTS**

## SIDELINING SLOBODAN: Getting rid of Europe's last dictator

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With just over two years to run before the end of his term as Yugoslav President, Slobodan Milosevic remains entrenched in power in Belgrade. The Yugoslav constitution currently prevents the President from running for re-election in 2001, but while Milosevic may leave the presidency he shows no sign of forfeiting control and is in the process of purging both the army and secret police of all opposition. He also retains some residual influence over such cultural institutions as the Orthodox Church. Individuals who oppose his views and who are potential political opponents are invariably intimidated, often through brute force. Political party rivals are both attacked in the state and pro-regime press and also courted with the prospect of sharing power. The latest to succumb to that temptation has been Vuk Draskovic's Serbian Renewal Movement (SPO).

Milosevic is giving every indication that he intends to stay in power well beyond 2001 as an elder statesman, and to govern by controlling the instruments of force. His intention appears to be that he will preside over a military dictatorship bereft of all opposition; he may even be willing to sacrifice territory, content to rule over the *Pasalik* (from Ottoman or Turkish administration, meaning a small administrative district or region) of Belgrade<sup>1</sup>. Any comprehensive analysis of opposition to the Milosevic regime must address his dealings not just with political parties but also with institutions and key individuals.

In the past, opposition parties have attempted to form electoral coalitions to challenge Milosevic. For a number of reasons, including infighting and the ability of the authorities to co-opt some key players, these efforts have floundered. Some of the factors that have plagued previous coalition attempts may be current at this time, but the most recent, Alliance for Changes (*Savez za Promene*, or SZP), along with Montenegrin allies For a Better Life, appears to be more stable and has the advantage of having national, as opposed to merely Serbia-wide, appeal.

If the international community is serious about bringing an end to the Milosevic regime then the most promising means of doing so is through sustained international support for this Alliance coalition. Milosevic's ability to establish his iron grip over various institutions such as the military should be counteracted by offering support to key figures such as former army head Momcilo Perisic. Milosevic is in a position to generate considerable regional instability, largely by whipping up conflict in areas such as Montenegro, and even regions such as Sandzak and Vojvodina. If these areas are drawn into conflict, then neighbouring countries may rightly fear for their internal stability. Given that Milosevic can still play these destructive cards, the international community needs to develop a plan for regional Balkan stability, and to stop viewing the current crisis in Kosovo in isolation.

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<sup>1</sup> See *Vreme* (front cover), 2 January 1999.

In order to govern unhindered, Milosevic will have to curb the influence that his own Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS) and his wife's, Mira Markovic's Yugoslav United Left (JUL), can bring to bear on the domestic political scene. This dynamic between the ruling couple and the ruling parties will be the topic of another, forthcoming, ICG analysis.

**15 March 1999**

# SIDELINING SLOBODAN: Getting rid of Europe's last dictator

## I. INTRODUCTION

Any analysis of Serbia's opposition must begin from the observation that Federal Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic appears to be preparing to stay in power for many years. A substantial body of evidence suggests that the Yugoslav dictator is in the process of eliminating remaining sources of opposition to his regime. He has employed, in his characteristic fashion, both carrot and stick to this end. On the one hand, there have been classic resorts to violence and repression, aimed particularly at students who have proven their ability in the past to organise anti-government mass demonstrations. On the other hand, Milosevic has seduced and enticed rival political leaders into joining his government. In the past, he has succeeded in doing this with minor parties and the ultra-nationalist Serbian Radical Party (SRS). In 1998-1999 he has shown his skill at luring the SRS back into the fold, as well as another major opposition party, the Serbian Renewal Movement (SPO), led by the charismatic Vuk Draskovic. The case of both the SRS and SPO will be taken up at length in a later section of this analysis.

## II. THE MILOSEVIC DICTATORSHIP

### 1. Ceausescu 2001?

Within the past year it has become fashionable to compare Yugoslav President Milosevic with former Romanian strong-man Nicolae Ceausescu. At first glance, the parallels are striking: both Ceausescu and Milosevic ruled with an iron fist, and both leaned heavily on the political advice of their spouses. In both communist Romania and present-day authoritarian Yugoslavia, the leaders came to be reviled by the public. In both cases, they had significant, highly-placed opposition within state institutions.

However, the analogy is not complete. In Romania, Ceausescu ascended to absolute power in a communist nation in which all major institutions were already subsumed under the control of the ruling party. With Milosevic, this is not the case. His ascendancy has taken place in the context of the decay and destruction of the Titoist socialist state. Milosevic's dictatorship is still in a (lengthy) building phase and he is only now coming to terms with either eliminating political rivals within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), or bringing them to heel. For example, there does appear to be opposition to his government within the military, but he is actively moving to neutralise it.

Milosevic's political career since 1987 has been directed toward achieving a highly centralised dictatorship, which is not yet complete. As one report notes "...a process of privatisation is [merely] in progress in Serbia. It is being conducted by controversial businessman Bogoljub Karic, who is a confidant of the Milosevic couple and is now also a minister without portfolio in the Serbian Government. The strategic idea of the ruling establishment is to buy all the sound companies in Serbia for peanuts through a process of privatisation and by saddling large and potentially profitable state companies with huge debts. Milosevic's old dream is to transform himself and his cronies from the political rulers of the country into its owners. Even within the ruling Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS) there is resistance to the avariciousness of the Karic brothers"<sup>2</sup>.

The analogy with Ceausescu is valid in another respect. In the 1960s the Romanian dictator received backing from the Western powers, largely for what was perceived as his independent foreign policy stance in relation to the Soviet Union. Similarly, the international community is currying favour with Milosevic by including him in regional Balkan peace talks, although in this case the reason is a perceived lack of anyone else within the FRY with whom to conduct business. The international community has gone so far as to suggest it would consider lifting sanctions against Belgrade in exchange for a Kosovo peace deal<sup>3</sup>. One diplomat has said, bluntly, "As much as officials in Washington publicly revile Milosevic and call him the main problem in the Balkans, he is also the solution.... The West needs Milosevic to settle Kosovo, and Milosevic needs the pressure of the West to be able to do it. All the rest is hypocrisy."<sup>4</sup>

## **2. The Last Stages**

Milosevic is now in what appears to be the final phase of exerting his control over those remaining institutions within the FRY that afford real and potential challenges to his administration. Ironically, when Milosevic achieves his final objective of becoming lord of all he surveys, he may no longer be formally the holder of any governmental office. In that event, a mild comparison with Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin may be apt. Throughout most of his career, Stalin set the pattern for classic communist dictatorships by holding only the non-governmental post of Secretary General of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

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<sup>2</sup> *V.I.P.*, 29 January 1999. The Karic Brothers also control Serbia's independent but rabidly pro-regime BK Television. BK TV, or Brothers Karic TV, has lent itself to the witticism *Bogu Karic TV*, or *For God, There's Karic TV*.

<sup>3</sup> *V.I.P.*, 3 and 8 February 1999.

<sup>4</sup> *The New York Times* [on the web], 2 February 1999.

The signal that Milosevic may consider a Stalinist model in the sense of ruling from outside of holding government office occurred during a Washington Post interview of December 1998. One exchange was as follows:

Washington Post: *You'll be the President until 2001?*

Slobodan Milosevic: *Yes, I was elected in 1997. My mandate runs out in 2001.*

WP: *You can run for the [federal] presidency only once?*

SM: *Yes, in accordance with the Constitution.*

WP: *Can't you change the Constitution to stay for a second term?*

SM: *Well, I really didn't have the idea to do that.*

WP: *But certainly you plan to remain in political life?*

SM: ***Well, I am the president of the strongest party. And not only the president, I am also the founder of that party.***<sup>5</sup>

### III. GEOGRAPHY AND OPPOSITION

#### 1. Opponents Bearing Arms? The Kosovo Case

Since Milosevic became President of Serbia more than a decade ago, Serbia's state-run, pro-regime media have produced seemingly endless propaganda that there are armed fifth columnists, within the borders of the FRY, who can and must be dealt with by overwhelming force. At present, the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and the reform-minded President of Montenegro, Milo Djukanovic, are portrayed as integral threats to state security.

In reality, it is Belgrade which is in a position, through the preponderance of arms, to intensify or scale down the level of violence in Kosovo. The state press continues to produce inflammatory propaganda, probably to prepare the Serbian public for any full-scale military action against Kosovars. Such action may be delayed but is unlikely to be prevented by any internationally-brokered peace deal<sup>6</sup>.

In recent phone-tap evidence the Belgrade regime itself was heard ordering the massacre of 45 Albanians in the Kosovo town of Raçak, which took place in mid-January (1999). According to one account, officials gave the order for the action as

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<sup>5</sup> Translation of excerpted interview published in *Nedeljni telegraf*, 16 December 1998. Emphasis and bold added.

<sup>6</sup> See ICG Yugoslav Briefing, *Fear and Loathing in Belgrade: What the Serbian State Media Say About Kosovars*, 26 January 1999.

they were "angered by the killing of three policemen in Kosovo"<sup>7</sup>. Then, towards the end of the same month, 24 ethnic Albanians were slain in southern Kosovo in what international observers dubbed a "mass killing"<sup>8</sup>. According to one source, "some of the dead appeared to have been killed by shots to the head"<sup>9</sup>.

## 2. Montenegro

There is little doubt that President of Montenegro, Milo Djukanovic, is in opposition to Milosevic and is in fact one of the greatest barriers to the Yugoslav President's ability to consolidate his dictatorship in the FRY. What is untrue, however, is Milosevic's assertion that Djukanovic's agenda is the disintegration of Yugoslavia. For his part, Djukanovic has steadfastly argued in favour of the territorial integrity of the FRY<sup>10</sup>. Where he has parted company with Belgrade has been over economic policy, advocating liberalisation and closer ties with the west, and over the means of resolving the Kosovo conflict. Djukanovic's view is that differences with Kosovo can only be resolved "through the democratisation of Serbia and Yugoslavia"<sup>11</sup>.

Serbia's state media have invariably portrayed Djukanovic as public enemy number one, with Deputy Premier Vojislav Seselj usually on the attack<sup>12</sup>. In recent weeks and months it has been Yugoslav Prime Minister Momir Bulatovic vilifying Djukanovic.

In one particularly pointed statement, Bulatovic dubbed Djukanovic's defence of democratisation of relations with Kosovo "a historic sin". Bulatovic said: "I have this habit of saying, and I really believe I'm not alone in this, that the Montenegrin authorities have committed a historic sin, first and primarily over the issue of Kosovo-Metohija, but also on the matter of Yugoslav unity...even if every last word they have said about the present federal and Serbian republican authorities were [gospel] truth, even if their analysis of what's going on in Kosovo were dead on accurate, there is a reason for them keeping their opinions to themselves and for not talking publicly and to people abroad....I have had a great many opportunities to tour all around Montenegro, both as federal premier and party leader, not to mention in the capacity of ordinary citizen. Therefore, I am fully aware that the great fear that has gripped the Montenegrin authorities has been caused by no such thing as any threat from the military or otherwise. There have been no threats of any sort from Serbia, or from any federal institution. It is from the simple fact that

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<sup>7</sup> *The Washington Post*, 28 January 1999.

<sup>8</sup> *Washington Post Foreign Service*, 30 January 1999.

<sup>9</sup> *Id.*

<sup>10</sup> See, for example, *Danas*, 5 January 1999.

<sup>11</sup> Cited in ICG Balkans Report N°53, *Milosevic: Déjà vu All Over Again?*, 23 December 1998.

<sup>12</sup> See, for example, *Politika*, 8 January 1999.



their policy threatens the vital interests of the people and citizens of Montenegro that they have no public support”<sup>13</sup>.

In even blunter terms, Seselj suggested publicly that Djukanovic's well-being was at risk, thus resurrecting speculation about his SRS's control over vigilantes or paramilitaries and about the party's influence over Serbia's security and military forces<sup>14</sup>. “I believe that his [Djukanovic's] political fate will be just like judgement awaiting those Serbian traitors with whom he wishes to have close ties,” Seselj said<sup>15</sup>.

### **3. Milosevic to Take On 'the Fifth'? A Dress Rehearsal for Sandzak and Vojvodina**

Just how will Milosevic address relations with the trouble spots? If past behaviour is any indication, the international community must expect him not to compromise on the use of force, if it serves his interests. Both Kosovo and Montenegro are areas which may be scenes of full-scale conflict.

In relation to Kosovo, the international community is involved in peace negotiations. While concern is focussed on whether Kosovo will remain within the borders of the FRY, this question is not of paramount importance for Milosevic. He sees territory as a means to an end, and that end is retaining power and jurisdiction within an area in which Milosevic can be sure of no serious opposition.

It is not altogether clear that Milosevic's objective is to retain both Kosovo and Montenegro within the borders of the FRY. In fact, recent evidence has surfaced hinting that lands occupied by ‘separatists’ or dangerous ‘terrorists’<sup>16</sup> may be little more than bargaining chips in a process intended to redraw the political map of the former Yugoslavia. According to recent reports, “Milosevic agrees to the partition of Kosovo,” but “in exchange seeks the RS [Republika Srpska]”<sup>17</sup>. Accounts stress that Milosevic is in fact prepared for a lengthy territorial ‘barter’ -- which sources familiar with his behaviour describe as ‘nothing new at all’<sup>18</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup> Interview with Prime Minister Momir Bulatovic, conducted by chief director of Radio Yugoslavia, broadcast 5 January 1999.

<sup>14</sup> See interview with SRS leader/Deputy Premier Vojislav Seselj aired on Palma Plus TV, 7 January 1999.

<sup>15</sup> Cited in *Glas javnosti*, 8 January 1999.

<sup>16</sup> See, for example, *Borba*, 28 December 1998.

<sup>17</sup> *Dnevni avaz*, 3 February 1999. *Dnevni avaz* reports on a trial balloon floated by the Yugoslav President, appearing in the *London Times*.

<sup>18</sup> *Dnevni avaz*, 3 February 1999.

However, Kosovo and Montenegro do not exhaust the list of territories where Milosevic may engineer conflict, using the ploy of a fifth column which must be dealt with by resort to force of arms. Next in line may be the region known as Sandzak.

Sandzak is a stretch of territory that straddles Serbia and Montenegro and has a predominantly ethnic Muslim population<sup>19</sup>. According to the last reliable data, the 1991 census, roughly 54% of the Sandzak's population of 420,000 is Muslim. The possible link between Sandzak's future and the events in Kosovo and Montenegro is Sulejman Ugljanin, who heads just one of several parties known as the Party for Democratic Action (SDA).

In the past, Milosevic has used Ugljanin as a scapegoat, arguing that his advocacy of 'special status for Sandzak' and 'cultural autonomy' are thinly veiled calls for separatism. Thus Milosevic has been able to achieve his dual objectives of winning public approval in Serbia for repression in the area, and of portraying Ugljanin as a threat to state security. It's unlikely that Milosevic has gone beyond pointing to Sandzak as a threat to FRY security. According to ongoing reports, he is apparently reserving his option of broadening the Balkan conflict into the Sandzak area, and is maintaining only marginal pressure and provocations. Recently, the Bosniak [Muslim] National Council urged the international community to take 'preventative' measures and ease tensions in the area<sup>20</sup>. The Council believes that Serbia's state-run and pro-regime media are currently at the forefront of fanning anti-Muslim hysteria and it has called on all area residents not to overreact "to the flagrant insults against the Bosniak people"<sup>21</sup>.

What presently appears an inconceivable nightmare may yet take place: namely, the multi-ethnic and once-autonomous province of Vojvodina may provide Milosevic yet another pretext for employing the fifth column argument. The area also has a multiethnic history, and recently signs have surfaced suggesting that Milosevic may find his counterpart to Ugljanin in the form of Nenad Canak, leader of the League of Social Democrats of Vojvodina [LSV]. Recently, Canak went on record demanding that "a republic of Vojvodina [be formed] with its own police and finances"<sup>22</sup>. While stopping short of arguing for anything approximating independence for Vojvodina, Canak did observe that "I hope that our demands are not just a poke in the eye of the Serbia regime, but also a stab in the back,

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<sup>19</sup> See ICG Balkans Report N°48, *Sandzak: Calm for Now*, 9 November 1998.

<sup>20</sup> Radio Montenegro, 4 January 1999.

<sup>21</sup> Radio Montenegro, 4 January 1999. According to the Bosniak National Council, the media most responsible for disseminating anti-Muslim hate propaganda are Radio and Television Serbia (RTS), as well as the papers *Blic*, *Glas javnosti*, and *Vecernje novosti*.

<sup>22</sup> BETA and *Jutarnji list*, 9 January 1999.

because the current regime in Serbia is the worst human sausage machine that Europe has seen in the second half of this century"<sup>23</sup>.

Recently, some political leaders have openly begun to speculate that should Milosevic seek yet another crisis to shore up support for repression, he will inevitably turn to the remaining dormant problem spots. Nebojsa Covic, co-ordinator of the opposition Alliance for Changes (SZP) which is to be discussed below, has noted that "potential theatres or centres are both Vojvodina and Sandzak. That's where Milosevic can, with a bad policy, do a great deal of harm and cause many problems, which are the stuff that provide him [with his political] lifeblood. Milosevic never made a single error in judgement by mistake."<sup>24</sup>

#### IV. NON-PARTY OPPOSITION

##### 1. October-November 1998

27 October 1998 may well go down as one of the most important dates in Milosevic's political career: the date that Jovica Stanisic, head of the secret service, was sacked. Within a month, on 24 November, news surfaced that army chief of the general staff, Momcilo Perisic, had also been forced to retire. What the two men shared was opposition to Milosevic's handling of the Kosovo crisis, and alleged connections with the West<sup>25</sup>. It was at that time that some analysts began to speculate that Milosevic would move to consolidate his regime by removing the last institutional vestiges hostile to his administration. To date, it is the army within Serbia which harbours the greatest number of malcontents. Milosevic appears to be ousting perceived opponents and promoting die-hard loyalists or personal family friends.

The evidence continues to mount that Milosevic is moving to neutralise the military. On 5 February 1999, reports surfaced that Belgrade had disbanded elite special units. According to one account: "The disbanding of the Special Corps will represent the realisation of the plan of the political and new military establishment to terminate the only unit that was under the direct command of the VJ [Yugoslav Army] General Staff and independent of the VJ Armies. In this way a powerful, well-trained and mostly professional VJ unit, with an autonomous status and great fighting power, will be neutralised"<sup>26</sup>. What the account also underscored was that

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<sup>23</sup> BETA, 9 January 1999.

<sup>24</sup> *Blic*, 31 December 1999–3 January 1999.

<sup>25</sup> For a full analysis of the significance and timing of the Perisic and Stanisic firings, see ICG Balkans Report N°53, *Milosevic: Déjà Vu All Over Again?*, 23 December 1998.

<sup>26</sup> *V.I.P.*, 5 February, 1999.

members of certain Special Corps units were planning in the winter of 1996-97 to act against government intentions to crackdown against peaceful mass demonstrators. "Later, during the 1996-1997 winter protests, a group of officers from this unit [The 1st Armoured Brigade] planned to take tanks to downtown Belgrade to protect protesters against the police. Some independent papers wrote about this<sup>27</sup>".

## **2. Winter of Discontent**

A considerable thorn in Milosevic's side has been the student movement. In November 1996, the regime had nullified electoral results which saw opposition parties scoring victories in twelve of the country's largest municipalities, including Belgrade. In response, students organised mass demonstrations which called for the recognition of the election outcomes. At first, crowds of thousands appeared in several cities, but within weeks the numbers skyrocketed, and some reports observed that over a million people were marching in sympathy. What began as a simple demand for the government to recognise opposition victory evolved eventually into a call for Milosevic's resignation from the Serbian Presidency.

Students and academics were key to the mass protests. In fact, the campus of Belgrade University became the unofficial headquarters for the rallies, which continued for some 119 days. According to one account: "Student leaders at the University of Belgrade demanded recognition of the local election results and removal of the rector (who had supported the police actions against the protesters). 3,450 professors, assistants and researchers, some two-thirds of the staff at the university, signed a petition supporting the students' demands<sup>28</sup>".

In mid-1998 Milosevic saw his moment for revenge. In May that year the Serbian legislature passed a statute effectively politicising the university system and revoking academic freedoms. In essence, the new law turned all academic posts, from the top professorial down, into purely political offices. All existing academic staff contracts were cancelled, and instructors wishing to retain teaching posts were forced to sign new contracts approved by the regime. Moreover, all top managerial posts and governing offices were staffed by members and supporters of Milosevic's own Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS), or the party headed by wife Mira Markovic, the Yugoslav United Left (JUL).

The only exceptions to this rule have been ultra-nationalist politicians who have secured their posts. Thus Vojislav Seselj, ultra-nationalist leader of the SRS, accused war criminal and current deputy premier in the Serbian parliament, is

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<sup>27</sup> Id.

<sup>28</sup> *Deepening Authoritarianism in Serbia*, Human Rights Watch Report, January 1999, volume 11, no. 2, p. 8.

among the highest ranking university officials. Observers have remarked that the timing of the regime's move to stifle campus opposition was not accidental: "The de facto government take-over of the universities is part of a broader effort by Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic to shut down dissent, autonomous inquiry, and free expression in Serbia. With the attention of the international community focused on preventing further bloodshed in conflict-ridden Kosovo, Milosevic and his political allies have used their control of the Serbian parliament to enact and implement draconian new laws..."<sup>29</sup>.

Since the passage of the legislation, serious attacks against students, in some cases by suspected 'officials', have increased dramatically. In at least one incident, 'several dozen' student protesters from the school of philology were assaulted and viciously beaten by suspects thought to be 'security members from *studentski grad dormitory*'<sup>30</sup>.

### 3. An Ancient Rival?

In early 1999, on the occasion of Orthodox Christmas (celebrated on 7 January), Milosevic appeared to extend an olive branch to an institution that has in the recent decade played a crucial political role in the FRY and throughout the Serb-populated areas of the former socialist Yugoslavia. It was Milosevic's first direct and public 'compliment' to the Orthodox Church and to its Patriarch, Pavle. "Your eminence, on behalf of the government of Serbia and in my own name, I wish Merry Christmas to you, your clergy and Orthodox believers. I also wish to you good health and personal happiness", said Milosevic<sup>31</sup>.

That his intent was motivated politically cannot be doubted. What remains unclear is the timing and purpose. Perhaps Milosevic wishes to reconcile with believers who have broken ranks with the SPS and who have in recent years and in growing numbers apparently defected to other nationalist parties. Milosevic may be engaging in the first stages of what could evolve into a campaign of attempting to win Church tolerance, if not outright support, for a post-presidency in which his authority over public life would be legitimised by his party dictatorship and public appearances as an elder statesman figure. On the other hand, Milosevic could be playing to some moderate elements within the Church hierarchy, who may have been involved in a rapprochement with the SPS leader since the time of the Dayton peace accord.

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<sup>29</sup> *Deepening Authoritarianism in Serbia*, Human Rights Watch Report, January 1999, volume 11, no. 2, p. 3.

<sup>30</sup> Radio B 92, 4 February 1999.

<sup>31</sup> Cited in *Borba*, 8 January 1999.

At least some clergy would have serious reservations about engaging in an open and protracted feud with the governing authorities likely. In Orthodox countries, churches have a long history of serving state authorities and autocratic rulers during which they have opened themselves to direct political manipulation. The contemporary Orthodox Church in FRY is no exception. While Milosevic has himself refrained from openly meddling in the affairs of the clergy, he has relied on his political henchmen to undermine church authorities publicly. Perhaps the finest example of such politicking was demonstrated by then-President of Montenegro and current FRY federal prime minister, Momir Bulatovic, when, in mid-1995, he condemned the pro-Karadzic clergy for displaying their political 'amateurishness' by continuing to articulate their support for the accused Bosnian Serb war criminal and former Bosnian Serb president, Radovan Karadzic<sup>32</sup>.

In even blunter terms, Bulatovic subsequently underscored his loyalty to the Milosevic dictatorship by saying that he would not tolerate an independent Montenegrin Orthodox Church, which was little more than code for saying he would not allow a potentially anti-SPS coalition of clerics to consolidate a foothold in Montenegro. There would be no independent Orthodox Church in Montenegro because, Bulatovic said in late 1995, "90% of our citizens want Montenegro to be....in Yugoslavia"<sup>33</sup>.

What remains inconceivable is that Church relations with Milosevic can ever be problem-free. During the war in Bosnia, the Orthodox Church tolerated his government, given its advocacy of the greater Serbia ideal, but it never trusted the SPS and specifically not Milosevic, given his socialist politics and communist pedigree. Some of the strongest church sympathies were with Karadzic. The Church stood by the credo that, whatever his sins, at least Karadzic was never involved with Marxism. While Milosevic articulated support for Karadzic, the Church refrained from attacking then Serbian President Milosevic.

Arguably the lowest ebb in church-state relations came in November 1995, when Milosevic accepted the terms of the Dayton Peace Plan. Those members of the clergy committed to Serbia's conquest of ethnic Serb-populated areas of Croatia and Bosnia were livid. At the same time, it was also the first occasion that some members of the clergy accepted in principle the idea of a peace, perhaps signalling co-operation with Milosevic.

In fact, it was Pavle's unwillingness to denounce unequivocally the peace accord terms that triggered an open rift in the ranks of the clergy, which has yet to heal. Near the end of 1995, a bishop's conference met in Belgrade where radical clergy members demanded Pavle's resignation in light of his purported defection from the

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<sup>32</sup> TV Montenegro, 22 August 1995.

<sup>33</sup> Montena-fax, 31 December 1995.

Serbian cause and ethnic Serb national interests<sup>34</sup>. But almost just as quickly, other voices within the Church defended Dayton, underscoring the split. For his part, Hrizostom, Bishop of Banja Luka, urged his followers to see the Bosnian Serb leaders as having 'cheated' and thereby endorsed Milosevic's position<sup>35</sup>.

The rift within the Church continues to surface. While clerics are reticent to offer their support to the Milosevic government, they have in some cases reserved the harshest words for other politicians, and at least in one case for a leader allegedly directly accountable for atrocities in Bosnia and Croatia<sup>36</sup>. For his part, Serb Orthodox Bishop Artemije of Raska and Prizren, commenting on Belgrade's recent position on Kosovo, underscored that he had no faith in Milosevic's ability to resolve the crisis in the once-autonomous province in such a way that the outcome would be a safeguarding of the interests of the local Serb population<sup>37</sup>. "The only possible solution is for Serbia to become democratic. And that cannot happen while Milosevic is in charge. We want a solution that will prevent a Serbian exodus from the province," he said<sup>38</sup>.

Yet Artemije has also been adamant that a support of 'democracy' insofar as Kosovo is concerned does not mean endorsing the conflict politics of previous warlords. In early January, Artemije reportedly 'attacked' SRS leader Seselj, observing that "where Mr. Seselj 'defended' Serbian interests, [only] Serbian graves were left behind, but no Serb land, and no Serb people"<sup>39</sup>. According to Artemije, the politics of expansion, of creating an enlarged Serbian state, or great Serbia has "yielded an attenuated, impoverished Serbia, where, in the name of patriotism, free speech and free thought are brutally repressed..."<sup>40</sup>.

## V. INDIVIDUALS

### 1. Old-School Opponents

When key individuals appear on the political scene who have the capacity to make inroads against the regime, Belgrade quickly deals with the threat in one of three ways. Firstly, it summons all the propaganda machinery at its disposal to wage a

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<sup>34</sup> BETA, 21 December 1995. See also Open Media Research Institute (OMRI) draft research paper titled 'Orthodox Church-State Relations in Rump Yugoslavia,' 26 February 1996.

<sup>35</sup> *Vecernje novosti*, 20 February 1996.

<sup>36</sup> *Danas*, 8 January 1999.

<sup>37</sup> FoNet, 4 February 1999.

<sup>38</sup> Reuters, 11 February 1999.

<sup>39</sup> *Blic*, 9-10 January 1999.

<sup>40</sup> *Id.*

campaign of libel and slander intended to tarnish the image of anyone in the public consciousness. Secondly, it uses force, routinely some form of police brutality, to silence opposition. Thirdly, it employs a combination of the first two tactics.

Perhaps the quintessential example of a political figure tarnished beyond electability is former federal prime minister, Milan Panic. Panic became premier in May 1992, serving for roughly half a year. It was in the context of a campaign for the Serbian presidency that challenger and sitting President Slobodan Milosevic used the media to play up Panic's weaknesses, which included a poor command of the Serbian language. Panic, who had spent much of his life in the United States as a successful business man, was portrayed as the tool of foreign powers with no capacity to communicate with and understand the needs of the average Serb. His career in Serbian politics came to a grinding halt in December 1992.

Even the hint of violence in some cases has been enough to halt political aspirations. One example is the case of the immensely popular Dragoslav Avramovic, the elderly former central bank governor, who is credited largely with ending the crippling hyperinflation in the FRY. In January 1994, by introducing the so-called 'super-dinar', then pegged to the German mark at an exchange rate of 1:1, he came to be lionised by many Serbs who saw him as providing the solution to the reigning chaos. Avramovic was allegedly frightened out of seeking political office when rumours and unconfirmed reports circulated that the regime would make it difficult for the elderly official to obtain essential medicines.

## 2. '101.559'

If nothing else, the winter of 1998 showed that for Belgrade regime, one is never too young to attract Milosevic's attempts to discredit a political career. According to an account provided by Srdja Popovic, a 25-year old Democratic Party (DS) youth activist, it was on the afternoon of 15 December 1998 that interior ministry police officials stopped him in his private vehicle and effectively made an arrest. According to Popovic, the incident was like "something out of the movies"<sup>41</sup>. The suspect was reportedly beaten, as police officers "kicked and punched mostly to my ribs and back"<sup>42</sup>. It was never made clear at the time why the arrest was made and, as if to underscore that the nature of the detention was political rather than criminal, most of the questioning concerned Popovic's activities in the Democratic Party. "The most brutal police officer was one with the badge number 101.559", reported the DS youth<sup>43</sup>.

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<sup>41</sup> *Blic*, 16 December 1998.

<sup>42</sup> *Id.*

<sup>43</sup> *Id.*



The state media came to the officers' defence, largely by calling into question Popovic's integrity and suggesting the police were merely doing their job. Pro-regime media accounts of the incident tended to play up Popovic's car - a Mercedes, perhaps designed to suggest affluence gained through criminal connections. They also claimed that that it was "during a routine control" that "4.91 grams of cocaine" turned up in the vehicle<sup>44</sup>. According to government press coverage, Popovic "refused" to answer questions about "who owned the cocaine and how the little bottle with the powder managed to find its way into the Mercedes"<sup>45</sup>.

At least two factors suggest that the state press coverage of the incident is little more than fabrication aimed at character assassination and the concealment of politically motivated harassment. Firstly, the mention of the alleged drugs came nearly three days after the incident and followed Popovic's own efforts to get judicial remedy. Secondly, independent medical evidence suggested that Popovic was not, contrary to some allegations, addicted to cocaine, or a any other drugs. The 26-27 December issue of *Danas* reported that Popovic in fact "never used cocaine". According to two prominent Belgrade physicians who were willing to go on the public record, toxicological testing revealed there was "no trace of cocaine" or any other addictive substance in Popovic's system<sup>46</sup>.

### 3. 'Otpor'

In a similar case, Boris Karajic, an activist in the 'Otpor' or 'Resistance'<sup>47</sup> movement was attacked on 29 December 1998 by what appear to be regime thugs. According to independent press reporting of the event, those who beat Karajic appeared to do so in response to political orders, attacking the philology student in front of his residence. The assailants, apparently well aware of the political nature of the assault, reportedly fled the scene of the crime with the comment, "Hey [Karajic], give regards to your friends in 'Otpor'"<sup>48</sup>. Karajic remarked he was aware of the political nuances of the crime. "In this way, they can neither frighten nor silence me," he said. "They can do that only if they kill me. They want to terrify anyone who is fighting against present conditions in this country"<sup>49</sup>.

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<sup>44</sup> *Vecernje novosti*, 18 December 1998.

<sup>45</sup> *Id.*

<sup>46</sup> Dr. Danica Srnic and Dr. Slavko Cusic were the physicians in question who signed a medical certificate attesting to Popovic's condition. See *Danas*, 26-27 December 1999.

<sup>47</sup> For coverage of *Otpor's* work organising the student movement and peaceful public protest see, for example, *Blic*, 19-20 December 1998.

<sup>48</sup> *Blic*, 31 December 1998-3 January 1999.

<sup>49</sup> *Blic*, 31 December 1998- 3 January 1999. See story under headline, *Motkom seju strah [Spreading Fear with a Hoe]*.

## VI. POLITICAL PARTY OPPOSITION

### 1. The Road to...

The history of political party opposition to Milosevic's government is characterised by consistent failure to shake Milosevic from authority. Some of the attempts to oust the regime have managed to win widespread popular support and fostered wishful thinking that the dictator's hold on political life was waning. Those efforts were unsuccessful for two reasons. The first was the collapse of coalitions which had brought together divergent party interests, owing to inter-party rivalries. The second reason that some opposition efforts have failed is due to Milosevic's patience at wearing down his detractors and effectively silencing dissenting voices by co-opting them into government.

Falling out of favour with the Yugoslav dictator does not necessarily consign opposing voices to the political wilderness for all time. Three main opposition leaders that have successfully carved out a niche for themselves are Vuk Draskovic of the Serbian Renewal Movement (SPO), Vojislav Seselj of the Serbian Radical Party (SRS) and Zoran Djindjic of the Democratic Party (DS). What all three have in common is a history of, at times, openly flirting with the notion of entering into a coalition with the SPS. To date, only the DS retains the distinction of not entering into a power-share arrangement with Milosevic and his loyalists.

### 2. DEPOS Deposited

Without providing a detailed history of the opposition movement, one can examine the efforts of each of the main parties to challenge Milosevic's regime. For his part, Draskovic had emerged as the driving force behind a movement called the Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DEPOS), which was always a coalition effort, but one dominated by Draskovic's own SPO. Its founding took place on 29 May 1992, and the charter membership that surfaced consisted of the SPO, Vojislav Kostunica's Democratic Party of Serbia (DSS), the Serbian Liberal Party (SLS) led by Nikola Milosevic, Dusan Mihajlovic's New Democracy (ND), and the Peasant Party (NSS) led by Milomar Babic. It was DEPOS in this incarnation that backed Panic's bid at the Serbian Presidency in December 1992. When Panic was unsuccessful and DEPOS' showing in parliamentary races was disappointing, intra-coalition wrangling set in.

In October 1993, Milosevic used political chicanery to prorogue the Serbian legislature, call for new elections, and effectively destroy the governing SPS-SRS coalition<sup>50</sup>. Back then a new DEPOS surfaced. This time, Kostunica balked at

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<sup>50</sup> The SPS-SRS coalition held a total of 174 of 250 seats in the Serbian parliament. Seselj's Radical's, holding the balance of power, represented 73 deputies.

joining; the SPO, ND, the Citizen's Union of Serbia, and a faction within the SLS dusted off the coalition banner. The returns were again disappointing, with only 45 seats being netted. The SPS claimed 123.

For Milosevic, however, it proved a windfall. No longer was forging an alliance with the SRS feasible, but a reformist or 'democratically' inclined party would serve Milosevic's interests at the time -- namely, presenting himself as moving towards reformist and democratic objectives. And so the SPS turned to DEPOS. Since the Socialists had fallen just short of a majority<sup>51</sup> and the DEPOS coalition was rife with internal divisions, finding a partner posed almost no challenges.

It was ND which filled the role. It broke ranks with the 'democratic' opposition at the prospect of sharing the spoils of office, and carries the distinction of being the first 'democratic' party to sell out to the regime. Back in early 1994, as talks at forging a coalition government continued, pro-regime media reported that ND were prepared to join the socialists merely at the prospect of having some influence over the finance and culture ministries<sup>52</sup>. For about four years, the six ND deputies continued to back the SPS, effectively functioning as a wing of the Socialist Party.

### **3. Where Are They Now?**

Mihajlovic neglected to calculate that selling out to the regime of Slobodan Milosevic leaves one as powerful as cutting a deal with the devil. In today's political climate, Milosevic appears to be able to pick and chose allies, thereby leaving ND in the political cold for possibly an indefinite period. Some reports say openly that Mihajlovic is angling for a return to at least some cabinet influence at the federal level,<sup>53</sup> where his party supported Milosevic's bid for the federal presidency in 1997. In fact in 1996 ND ran federally in a loose coalition with the SPS and Milosevic's wife's, Mira Markovic's, own Yugoslav United Left (JUL)<sup>54</sup>.

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<sup>51</sup> At the time of the elections, some conspiracy minded observers had speculated that Milosevic might stuff the 'ballot box in reverse' so as to have the SPS fall just short of majority, thereby forcing a coalition with a 'reform' party. The question circulating after the balloting was; 'did Milosevic engineer this outcome so as to be able to co-opt a coalition partner?'

<sup>52</sup> *Politika*, 3 March 1993.

<sup>53</sup> *Svedok*, 29 December 1998.

<sup>54</sup> In November 1996 federal elections, the SPS-JUL-ND alliance took 42.4% of the vote, winning 64 of 138 seats. This was the legislature that elected Milosevic to the federal presidency. *Zajedno* won 22.2% of the vote and 22 seats. The SRS took 17.9% of the vote and 16 seats, the *Demokratska Partija Socialista Crna Gore* scored 3.4% of the vote and 20 seats (based on their performance for apportioned federal seats for the Montenegrin republic). The Party of Vojvodina Hungarians (SVM) picked up 1.0% of the vote and 3 seats. *Narodni Sloga* (NS) took 1.5% of the vote and 8 seats. *Lista za Sandzak* (LzS) got 1.4% of the vote and 1 seat. The *Koalicija Vojvodina* (KV) won 1.3% of the vote and picked up 2 seats. *Socijaldemokratska Partija Reformi* (SDPR) registered 0.6% support and claimed a seat, while the *Stranka Demokratski Akcije* (SDA) won a seat with 0.3% of the vote.

For his part, Mihajlovic appears to have learned little from his previous dealings with Milosevic, justifying past decisions and apparently pining for another opportunity in government. In a recent interview, he spoke about the political landscape, reiterating that ND was a pro-Western party, and hinting that it would reconsider joining the government, provided that co-operation with the SRS were ruled out, and relations with the West and Montenegro improved<sup>55</sup>. Instead of acknowledging a political error in judgement and using the chance to go on record as saying that working with Milosevic's party had been a mistake, Mihajlovic said:

"I don't think that ND would have any reason to reconsider its decision to contest [any upcoming] elections on its own...I don't have any contact with any functionaries of the SPS, but I have many, many friends among the party rank-and-file. And I can only say that I never met or worked in the past with any SPS functionary who would support the idea of co-operation with the Radicals... I can say that the SPS is a victim and the biggest political loser because its co-operation with Seselj cost it [with voters]"<sup>56</sup>.

#### **4. Political Wolf**

ND defection to the government side may not have caused the disintegration of DEPOS, but it was, at the very least, the first death knell. Rumours have long persisted on the streets of Belgrade that Draskovic was primed to sell his soul to the devil, and that he would seek co-operation with Milosevic in exchange for the opportunity to become President of Serbia following the dictator's formal departure from that post. While those remain rumours and while it has yet to be seen whether Draskovic makes it to the president's office without a formal invitation, it has become clear the Yugoslav dictator was successful in enticing the SPO leader into the government fold. In mid-January, reports surfaced that Milosevic and Draskovic had in fact reached an accord on 'restructuring' the federal government<sup>57</sup>. Within days, Draskovic became a federal deputy premier<sup>58</sup>.

Perhaps the question remains why Draskovic held out for so long. One may speculate that until this year, the spoils were too small, and that Draskovic could hold out for more. That he secured himself a sinecure cannot be disputed. With the regime's blessing, his SPO seized control over the once-independent broadcaster Studio B; in fact, back on 30 September 1997 the SPO had already joined forces with the SRS and SPS in ousting Studio B management, which had been critical of the dictatorship<sup>59</sup>. Moreover, his new high-profile ministerial role has given him a

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<sup>55</sup> *Danas*, 26-27 December 1998.

<sup>56</sup> *Id.*

<sup>57</sup> Radio B 92, 15 January 1999.

<sup>58</sup> BETA, 18 January 1999.

<sup>59</sup> See *1997 World Press Freedom Review*.

soap-box for spouting his own brand of nationalism, which serves Milosevic's tactical interests.

It is likely that Draskovic will use the Kosovo issue to attract a nationalist audience,<sup>60</sup> and should the province achieve independence, he will be hard pressed to criticise Milosevic. The dictator has now given the SPO a prominent role in the federal government and that entails being made responsible for the future of the FRY's borders. Draskovic has risen to the occasion, wasting no time in announcing that: "First, there will be no greater Albania in the Balkans. Second, there is [and will be] no independent Kosovo. Third, Kosovo will not be a third republic within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia."<sup>61</sup>

That Draskovic's priority was the safeguarding of his political career and gains, and not the ousting of the dictatorship, was in fact clear years earlier. 13 February 1995 might have become a significant date in the evolution of the opposition movement. Instead, it quickly floundered as disunity and inter-party squabbling torpedoed efforts at coalition building. It was on that date three party leaders -- Kostunica, Djindjic, and Seselj (still not having reconciled with Milosevic) signed what was in effect a letter of intent to co-operate in local elections. However, while no specifics were established, the three signatories at least saw the need to consider and endorse the idea of "a united list of candidates" in "upcoming republic-wide and federal elections"<sup>62</sup>. Draskovic balked immediately at the notion of casting SPO's lot with the three parties. According to Draskovic, the proposed deal was non-negotiable, and in fact stood to cost SPO representation on local councils<sup>63</sup>.

## **5. Reasoning Democrats**

The DS, led by Zoran Djindjic, has laboured for years, cultivating the image of a centrist, middle of the road political alternative. Well into the mid-1990s this effectively meant the DS would not take that one last step of formally and publicly breaking with Milosevic.

In the Serbian parliamentary elections of 1993, Djindjic campaigned in part by refusing to rule out the post-election likelihood of a coalition arrangement with the SPS, in the event that voters put the DS in a position of holding the balance of power.<sup>64</sup> Rather than striking out against the SPS, the DS campaign had the odd tone of rapprochement and of reconciliation with the dictatorship. Following the balloting, in which the DS won 29 seats, Djindjic lashed out at fellow opposition

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<sup>60</sup> *Vecernje novosti*, 30 December 1998.

<sup>61</sup> CNN remarks cited in *Srpska rec*, 4 February 1999.

<sup>62</sup> *Nasa Borba*, 14 February 1995.

<sup>63</sup> *NIN*, 17 February 1995.

<sup>64</sup> *Vreme*, 27 December 1993.

leaders for suggesting that efforts be made to block an SPS administration. While claiming the DS would not by itself join with the SPS in coalition, Djindjic also stressed he could feel comfortable in a multiparty-party government, saying "we can form a government of all parties, provided the foundation is that broad" and attacked fellow leaders for failing to realise the Socialists had won the most seats, and therefore could not be excluded from power<sup>65</sup>.

Djindjic's overtures to the Socialists continued well into early 1995. In April of that year he gave an interview during which he held out yet another olive branch by indicating that the door to some sort of alliance with the SPS was wide open. "It simply isn't the case that everything the government does is wrong and that the opposition is right. They are not Saddam Hussein, and we are not Saint Sava. They're not devils, and, simply, we are not angels," said the DS leader<sup>66</sup>.

The key point in DS evolution came with the signing of the Dayton Peace Accord towards the end of 1995. Although Djindjic probably did not realise or understand it at the time, he was about to be left out in the political cold. The DS maintained that the Dayton Peace was a sell out of Serbian national interests; it had, in short, abandoned the Bosnian Serbs. This DS opposition to the accord effectively made it impossible for the DS to compromise with Milosevic. For reasons to be discussed shortly, the other major opposition parties either accepted Dayton or learned to live with it.

## **6. Calmed Radicals**

The most spectacular break with the SPS came courtesy of Seselj's Radicals. Not simply a politician, but a paramilitary leader of his own band known as the Chetniks, Seselj is accountable for some of the worst ethnic cleansing atrocities in Croatia and Bosnia. While he has never denounced the practice of ethnic cleansing, he has defended his own actions in the field by simply saying that he has never committed any war crimes.

In 1992, with Milosevic backing the military aggression of Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic, a tactical political alliance with Seselj was useful. Milosevic fondly described Seselj as his "favourite opposition politician". But by mid-1993, with growing international outrage at Serb atrocities, Milosevic perceived the need to put some distance between himself and Karadzic. That also meant abandoning close relations with Seselj. In October 1993, Milosevic cancelled the parliamentary arrangement with the SRS, and called for early elections. As mentioned above, the new legislature was one that kept the SRS from power.

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<sup>65</sup> *Borba*, 28 December 1993.

<sup>66</sup> *NIN*, 21 April 1995.

Seselj did not, at least at first, see any need to alter his course, and he continued with his rabid defence of Karadzic. With each signal Milosevic sent to the international community of a willingness to stop the fighting in Bosnia, Seselj intensified his rhetoric in defence of a greater Serbia and of annexation of Bosnian Serb territory. When, in early August 1994, Milosevic went public with his break with Karadzic, going so far as to lend support to a peace proposal that would effectively divide Bosnia along the lines of a 51%-49% territorial split, Seselj called this a sell-out of Serb brethren<sup>67</sup>. When Milosevic, later the same month, declared he would be willing to let international monitors patrol Serbia's Drina River border with Bosnia so that the international community could see that Belgrade had indeed broken relations with Pale, Seselj again stated his commitment to a greater Serbia. With a flourish, he added his SRS "would drink dry the Drina, if necessary,"<sup>68</sup> to confuse the monitors and undermine Belgrade's policy.

The years 1993-1995 were the low point for SPS-SRS relations. Seselj, at times unable to control his temper, took out his frustrations physically, at one point assaulting the speaker of the Serbian parliament. For these and related acts, Seselj earned short prison sentences.

With time, the SRS leader seems to have reconciled himself with the belief that Milosevic's abandonment of the Bosnian Serbs was and remains purely tactical, owing to an inability to construct a greater Serbia given international constraints. By 1996, the SRS leader was sending his own messages of reconciliation, suggesting that co-operation with the SPS could again become a real possibility. During a 13 October 1996 election rally in Montenegro, Seselj said, for the record, he had abandoned his own dream of a greater Serbia, stressing perhaps what Milosevic could not do tactically; namely, that the withdrawal of support for Serbian expansionism was merely a deferral<sup>69</sup> until such time as international conditions rendered it a possibility. Seselj said "the construction of a unified Serb state, the liberation of Serb Krajina, of Serb Dubrovnik, of Serb Bosnia and Serb Macedonia" was a central feature of SRS policy. But, he noted, that day would have to wait, at least until "Great Russia will lift herself up, she will thunder across Europe and the world, she will return to the Balkans and when she does, day will dawn for the Serbs"<sup>70</sup>.

By the end of the year, Seselj was aping Milosevic's *modus operandi*, straining to portray himself a politician of moderation and coming remarkably close to disavowing his violent past. At a press conference about the *Zajedno* demonstrations, Seselj made some astonishing remarks. According to the SRS

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<sup>67</sup> *Politika*, 3 August 1994.

<sup>68</sup> *Borba*, 16 September 1994.

<sup>69</sup> *Dnevni avaz*, 3 February 1999.

<sup>70</sup> Statements made by Seselj at an election rally in Niksic and cited in AFP, 13 October 1996.

leader, *Zajedno* demonstrators behaved in the fashion of unruly anarchists while he “appealed for peace.... We [unlike *Zajedno*] will not [advocate] throwing bombs all over Serbia.”<sup>71</sup> While claiming he was no supporter of the SPS, Seselj reiterated his particular loathing for *Zajedno* a number of times. Stressing his party stood in the centre of the political spectrum, the SRS leader also promised his party would contest no political issue through unsavoury means, only by adopting tactics “within the confines of the law.”<sup>72</sup>

## **7. Together -- One Last Hurrah?**

The same old faces and largely the same old parties got together again to contest elections in 1996. Yet another coalition was formed with the intention of defeating the socialists, and it went under the banner of *Zajedno*, or Together. The *Zajedno* leadership, consisting of Draskovic, Djindjic and Vesna Pesic (leader of the small Serbian Civic Alliance or GSS) managed to accomplish what previous coalitions had failed to do: it defeated the Socialists soundly at the polls, albeit in municipal elections.

When the votes were counted, following 17 November 1996 municipal runoffs, it was determined that the opposition had won 12 of the Serbian republic's largest municipalities. In Belgrade, preliminary returns showed that *Zajedno* controlled a total of 60 out of 110 seats.

The regime's prompt response was to declare the balloting illegal, triggering the largest wave of demonstrators to hit Serbia's streets. The only comparable protest was that which took place on 9 March 1991. What distinguished those early anti-Milosevic protests from the winter of discontent was primarily the duration. Moreover, the protests at first began rather slowly, gradually gaining momentum until eventually millions of people joined in.

At first, protesters demanding that the regime recognise opposition wins came out only in small numbers. On the first evening in Belgrade, only a reported 5,000 people showed. When a rally was organised in Nis on the evening of 19 November, about 35,000 were present. Within weeks, the event had gained a life and momentum of its own, with hundreds of thousands turning out in support.

What also was also a feature of the 1996-1997 rallies was the limited demands initially placed on the system. At first, the demonstrators sought not to overturn the regime -- although the protests eventually evolved into calls for Milosevic's resignation -- but an acknowledgement of the voting results which had seen the

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<sup>71</sup> Cited in 'Two Serbs, Seselj and Ugljanin — A Contrast in Outlook and Temperament'. Posted on website <http://suc.suc.org/~kosta/tar/polluters/1/0083.htm>.

<sup>72</sup> Id.



opposition parties taking the lion's share of electoral spoils. Nevertheless, the regime tried to paint the protesters as dangerous subversives, as 'terrorists' aiming at 'the violent seizure of power'<sup>73</sup>.

The rallies were peaceful in nature. While the political leadership received most of the media attention, the student movement emerged as responsible for the organisation of events, and for generating the public participation needed to maintain momentum over the period of 119 days. For their part, the students went to great pains to emphasise that the essence of their protest was peaceful in the manner of the 'Velvet Revolution' of 1989, which saw the incident-free collapse of communism in Czechoslovakia. During the demonstrations, students imitated some of the images of the Velvet Revolution, making peace offers of flowers and small gifts to police officers.

The *Zajedno* demonstrations were also important as they established Djindjic, at last, firmly in the opposition camp. It was Djindjic who had effectively won the mayoralty race for Belgrade, and eventually did become the first non-communist mayor of the capital since 1945. However, his tenure in office was short-lived. Part of the reason for *Zajedno's* mayoral collapse was the all-too familiar inter-party rivalry, which led to a rapid deterioration of the coalition. Not long after ascending to the mayoralty post, tensions between Djindjic and Draskovic surfaced. Draskovic claimed he could call in the debt, and demanded support for a run at the Serbian presidency. As infighting over this issue continued, Djindjic found himself without any SPO backing and his tenure as mayor came to an abrupt end.

## **8. Djukanovic's Rise**

13 January 1998 was really when Montenegrin President, then president-elect, Djukanovic made his splash on the international scene. Djukanovic was about to be inaugurated, but that date represented the last-ditch effort by Bulatovic and Milosevic supporters to oust the reformer. What took place amounted effectively to a coup attempt.

When all was tallied, an estimated 40-50 people, mainly police and security officers, were injured in violent clashes centred in Podgorica. That was the first wave of mass violence to hit the tiny mountainous republic in decades. In the malaise which ensued, which saw Milosevic supporters attempting to seize control of government buildings, police officers and security officials were seemingly the preferred targets of Bulatovic's allies' rounds and grenades. Not only were the demonstrators claiming to demand the nullification of Djukanovic's electoral victory, but many, seeking to tar Djukanovic a traitor to Serbian national interests and once and for all end his political career, signified the objective by carrying placards

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<sup>73</sup> *Vecernje novosti*, 2 December 1996.

openly supporting Bosnian war criminal and former Republika Srpska President Radovan Karadzic.<sup>74</sup>

In reality, Djukanovic had laboured for years to widen the distance between himself and the oppressive Milosevic regime. Djukanovic's ascendancy to the presidency, which followed a tenure as the republic's prime minister, was marked by an intra-party row, which ultimately split Montenegro's Democratic Party of Socialists (DPS) into one group loyal to Djukanovic and the other to the pro-dictatorship alliance led by Bulatovic and backed by Milosevic. But Djukanovic's struggle to win recognition as a reformer began at least as far back as early 1996.

Perhaps the first real public acknowledgement of his intentions came in April, and specifically on 21 April 1996. It was then that local Montenegrin and international media reported then-Premier Djukanovic had arrived in Washington for what was roundly described as a "working visit." Only three days later, as a sign of the conflict and tension that lay ahead over the next years, official Belgrade denied any knowledge of Djukanovic's trip, while embassy officials in the US capital refused to make contact with the Montenegrin premier. While in Washington, Djukanovic signalled squarely his support for, if not outright alliance with, the growing reformist *Zajedno* coalition.

The *Zajedno* parties had and would court Dragoslav Avramovic, national bank governor, to offer his candidacy in upcoming Serbian parliamentary elections for the reform side. On 23 April the regime signalled it had broken relations with the senior bank official by removing him as the FRY's chief negotiator with the International Monetary Fund.<sup>75</sup> Djukanovic responded to developments from Washington, noting that it underscored Belgrade's lack of commitment to Western values, and attacking as self-destructive Milosevic's refusal to deal in good faith with international bodies such as the IMF and World Bank until they recognised the FRY as the sole successor to Tito's socialist Yugoslavia.<sup>76</sup>

## **9. Another Coalition**

The year 1999 promises to hold out some, if not many, prospects for political change in the FRY. Once again, the main effort is spearheaded by a coalition. There are many common features linking this with previous attempts. For instance, many of the opposition faces are the same, except of course for those that have been co-opted into government ranks. One of the mainstays of the most recent

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<sup>74</sup> Reuters, 15 and 16 January 1998; AP, 17 January 1998.

<sup>75</sup> Avramovic was removed from the post of bank governor weeks later, on 15 May.

<sup>76</sup> See Open Media Research Institute (OMRI) draft research paper "Tensions Rise Between Serbia and Montenegro," 27 June 1996.

effort is DS chief, Zoran Djindjic. Many of the smaller players are also back on stage, including such eminent personalities as GSS leader Vesna Pesic.

Rumours surfaced in late 1998 that Pesic herself was contemplating retirement, and should she leave the political landscape without incident, that in itself could produce a minor political revolution<sup>77</sup>. Pesic's departure may in fact provide the first example of a political party leader willingly bowing out, and also pave the way for the democratic intra-party election of a new leader. Such a development, handled with finesse, may go a long way in demonstrating to the average Serbian voter that a party can be more than a personality-driven vehicle intended solely for advancing the career of its leadership.

## **10. New Changes, For a Better Life**

This most recent coalition is named Alliance for Changes (SZP). Unlike any predecessor, this new attempt has a number of positive and unique features. In the first place, it represents the first time Djindjic is fully on the opposition team, holding out no olive branches for the SPS. In addition, this alliance has the potential of becoming more than a Serbia-centric vehicle. While past coalition efforts concentrated mainly on the Republic of Serbia, much of the Alliance's support comes from Montenegro, where reformist Montenegrin President Milo Djukanovic is playing a key role. Both Djukanovic and the DS leader, having close personal contact, have emerged as the political backbone of the SZP.

Djukanovic has much to bring to the coalition. In the first place, he is the democratically elected leader of a full-fledged republic within the FRY and is very popular. This popularity extends into Serbia and among the country's ethnic non-Serb voting public. In fact, it was the Muslim and Albanian vote in Montenegrin presidential runoffs that secured the victory for Djukanovic over arch-rival and Milosevic loyalist, current FRY federal Premier Momir Bulatovic, and catapulted Djukanovic to the presidency in January 1998<sup>78</sup>. This raises the question of just how popular Djukanovic is throughout the country. If he is acceptable as a national figure, that may greatly ease frictions in trouble spots such as Kosovo and potential problem areas such as Sandzak and Vojvodina.

Secondly, Djukanovic brings with him a government of reform-minded politicians. Together, they have helped prevent Milosevic from extending his dictatorship throughout the entire FRY. That is no small accomplishment, and must be supported by the efforts of the international community. Among the most influential figures in the Montenegrin government are Premier Filip Vujanovic and deputy

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<sup>77</sup> For speculation on Pesic's retirement and the possibility of the GSS amalgamating into the DS, see *Blic*, 6 January 1999.

<sup>78</sup> BETA 20 October 1997 and 16 February 1998; Reuters 21 July 1998.

premiers Zarko Rakcevic and Novak Killibarda, who are the key players in the Montenegrin counterpart to SZP, calling itself 'For a Better Life'<sup>79</sup>.

Thirdly, there seems, from the Serbian side, to be room for new blood in the coalition<sup>80</sup>. This appears to be best represented by Nebojsa Covic, a former Belgrade mayor<sup>81</sup>. To date, Covic is among a handful of SPS members to quit that party and to state publicly that Milosevic and his SPS are destructive. Covic has said for the record: "I have always been for change, for real change and for the democratisation of Serbia. I spent a certain amount of time in the SPS, but even there I was pledged to these principles. I am Christian and Orthodox...That's what I was in the SPS, and even before that. Our faith tells us that people, more or less, are sinners. It is human to err, but it is also human to recognise one's mistakes and to make amends. Before joining the SPS, I didn't belong to any party [I've since founded the Democratic Alternative]. I sincerely believed that some things could be accomplished within the SPS...but [that] estimation was simply wrong."<sup>82</sup> Perhaps because of individuals like Covic, Milosevic is making a concerted effort to keep under control or neutralise 'reformers' and Orthodox faithful within the SPS.

## 11. Learning from Past Lessons?

The past few months have suggested that the SZP and their Montenegrin allies have learned some hard lessons from previous failures. While SZP members and their allies speak openly about the need for democracy, this time at least some greater effort is being directed toward the tedious but necessary tasks of organisation. In the past, coalitions were invariably hastily arranged paper accords, just as quickly shredded by adherents as soon as it seemed that their individual interests were being threatened.

The formal unity of the Serbian and Montenegrin reform movements has been established, following many indications that ties would be formalised<sup>83</sup>. On 8 January 1999, after a meeting of the two coalitions, Nebojsa Covic, chair of the Democratic Alternative and one of guiding forces of the Alliance, said: "We agreed to implement changes in the federal state through establishment of firm links between the two coalitions. The working groups will harmonise details of this co-operation."<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> BETA, 6 January 1999; Radio B 92, 7 January 1999.

<sup>80</sup> *Vreme*, 19 December 1998.

<sup>81</sup> *Washington Post Foreign Service*, 20 February 1999.

<sup>82</sup> *Vreme*, 19 December 1998.

<sup>83</sup> *Blic*, 30 December 1998.

<sup>84</sup> BETA, 8 January 1999.

It was in fact the previous day, 7 January 1999, that a delegation of SZP members met with their Montenegrin counterparts in Podgorica to discuss 'strengthening of democratic forces throughout the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia'<sup>85</sup>, suggesting that organisational tasks were paramount, and giving priority to the work of 'harmonising.' While the DS has a sound infrastructure and organisation, there appears to be an awareness that these institutions may need to be maintained and combat-ready for some time.

A coalition victory is not an end in itself but the start of a long term process of fundamental institutional reform. Covic has said already that "the defeat of the current Serbian authorities was **the main precondition for change**".<sup>86</sup> For his part, Djindjic has noted: "**We need credible institutions born out of free and fair elections**, we need media which will tell the truth and we need an economy based on equal opportunities for all citizens and not monopolies, privileges, and crime."<sup>87</sup> On another score, it seems the coalition faithful have learned a key lesson. According to reports from the end of 1998 and from news circulating prior to the 7 January Podgorica meeting, efforts by former federal premier Milan Panic to become coalition leader have failed<sup>88</sup>. Rumours and speculation suggest that Panic, who heads the Washington office of the Alliance for Changes, has been discredited by the Milosevic-controlled media, and would prove a tough candidate to sell to the voting public. At any rate, any 'parachute' candidate would be likely to have a more difficult time in the face of the propaganda barrage than someone who is already in place and attuned to the intricacies of the continual media manipulations. SZP officials have clearly considered the issue of appeal to the domestic electorate. In response to observations that he is viewed among Western analysts as a possible leader for the coalition, Nebojsa Covic said point blank: "It isn't the most important thing who the West supports. Rather, what's paramount is who the citizens of Serbia support."<sup>89</sup>

Reports say that the SZP is growing at a remarkable rate. In late 1998, about 20 opposition parties had joined with the SZP<sup>90</sup>. By mid-January, at least six additional had joined the Alliance, including the Conservative Party, the Progress Party, the Yugoslav Democratic Centre, the Old Radical Party, the Tenants' Association, and the Association of Defrauded Hard Currency Savers<sup>91</sup>. Within days, some dailies announced the number of adherents was up to 30 parties<sup>92</sup>.

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<sup>85</sup> BETA, 6 January 1999.

<sup>86</sup> BETA, 8 January 1999. Bold and emphasis added.

<sup>87</sup> Radio B 92, 7 January 1999. Bold and emphasis added.

<sup>88</sup> BETA, 28 December 1998 and 6 January 1999.

<sup>89</sup> *Blic*, 31 December 1998-3 January 1999.

<sup>90</sup> BETA, 6 January 1999.

<sup>91</sup> Radio Montenegro, 10 January 1999.

<sup>92</sup> *Blic*, 11 January 1999.

## 12. Future Problems?

The recent rapid growth of the SZP has been much like that of over-fertilised plants, where lush foliage gives place rapidly to sudden death and decay. In fact, among the dangers the Alliance may encounter is precisely that of rapid expansion. Some parties may come, others are likely to go. By and large, many that have adhered are rather small and represent narrow special interest groups, and their departure may not prove especially significant. As long as this is seen as part of the process, the Montenegrin backers and members of the larger parties, notably the DS, need not panic. Much smaller coalitions, such as DEPOS, which comprised a relatively small number of members, have shown that cohesion within the structure is difficult to maintain.

Milosevic may be expected to try and entice a number of such parties into his coalition. The larger question is not whether any small party will drop out of the Alliance to duplicate the example of ND, but concerns the larger and most influential parties. None of the Montenegrins are at present likely to set that example, given that Djukanovic has become public enemy number one in Belgrade circles<sup>93</sup>. The question remains open, then, for the DS.

At present, it is inconceivable that Djindjic could contemplate such action. Through recent public statements he has placed considerable distance between himself and Milosevic, and has cultivated publicly warm relations with the Montenegrin government; this is not an action calculated to endear himself to politicians in the Yugoslav dictator's company.

Moreover, viewed from Milosevic's vantage point, improved relations with the DS is simply redundant. The Yugoslav dictator has found, in the SPO, a major party that he can claim holds a pro-Western orientation and stands in juxtaposition to the SRS. While in the past Milosevic has relied on the services of individuals, such as former bank governor Dragoslav Avramovic or former federal President Dobrica Cosic, or minor parties such as ND, to take on the role of appearing favourable to the West, the Yugoslav dictator now has the combination of a charismatic leader along with the backing of that leader's entire political party. For his part, Draskovic has been more than willing to perform the task expected of him. Almost immediately upon becoming deputy federal premier, Draskovic wasted no time announcing that his mission and that of an additional four new SPO cabinet members was to improve Belgrade's image in the international community<sup>94</sup>.

Keeping control of the SPO may become a challenge for Milosevic. Relations with the SRS erupted back in 1993, forcing Milosevic to terminate the political

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<sup>93</sup> *Politika*, 29 January 1999.

<sup>94</sup> *Danas*, 19 January 1999.

arrangement and call elections. A few signs have surfaced indicating that dealings with the SPO and the SRS may be strained.

In-mid January, the SRS and subsequently the SPS claimed they had stumbled onto a secret CIA document which allegedly outlined Washington's interest in toppling the Belgrade regime. Subsequently it became clear that these so-called CIA documents, and the entire affair, had been a clumsy hoax by Belgrade. At the time the news broke, the SPO went very public with its condemnation of the Radicals. Party Spokesman Ivan Kovacevic point blank accused the SRS of "planting a forgery of a document on the toppling of the Serbian regime."<sup>95</sup> Kovacevic went further, saying the SPO "assume that Seselj planted the document taken from the Internet in order to deceive Serbian Deputy Premiers Ratko Markovic and Milovan Bojic, in order to spoil further relations between Serbia and the United States. This is unacceptable, and the state should protect itself from this."<sup>96</sup> The possibility cannot be ruled out that the SPO and SRS were simply playing the good-cop, bad-cop political routine, and all the while fully aware of each other's intentions. Seselj and Draskovic, after all, maintain the Balkan family tradition of being *kum*, or godfather to each other's children. Alternatively, if party tensions continue, relations between the two may deteriorate, forcing Milosevic to break the political arrangement. It would then be conceivable that Milosevic may approach the Alliance with an olive branch of his own<sup>97</sup>.

### **13. The Sticking Points**

While the SZP-For a Better Life coalition holds out the promise of reform, and may become the vehicle for a transfer of power, there are some realistic points about its ability to survive that must be addressed. Many major figures in the movement are already on record as saying that this year, 1999, is going to be absolutely central to the democratisation of the FRY. The first priority is victory in municipal elections, which also raises the spectre of mass street demonstrations. "I am altogether certain that 1999 will be a year of change, through elections or through some other means. I am awaiting that local elections, perhaps throughout the whole territory or perhaps even in some [key] localities, will be the trial balloon for elections at all levels," said Nebojsa Covic<sup>98</sup>. Being even more explicit, Djindjic, under the headline of 'People on the Streets', described 1999 as "the year of change."<sup>99</sup>

The risk in placing too much emphasis on the potential for change in 1999 is that the coalition participants may run out of steam. It is important that the coalition

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<sup>95</sup> BETA, 13 January 1999.

<sup>96</sup> Id.

<sup>97</sup> *Politika* and V.I.P., 29 January 1999.

<sup>98</sup> *Blic*, 31 December 1998-3 January 1999.

<sup>99</sup> *Blic*, 11 January 1999.

learns to play a waiting game. It is a long way to 2001, when Milosevic's constitutional mandate expires. Even if local elections in 1999 yield success for pro-democracy candidates, it will be up to the SZP-For a Better Life alliance to sustain a working relationship until the all-critical federal balloting takes place. In addition, the Alliance must sustain public interest over a long haul and overcome substantial voter apathy, a factor which plays into the hands of the dictatorship to no small degree.

Secondly, the coalition has tacitly pledged its commitment to maintain the territorial integrity of the FRY. Montenegrin President Djukanovic has described himself 'an opponent of every sort of secession'<sup>100</sup>. He has said that separatism "would create new regional problems. What would happen if all the countries in the Balkans were to arise out of the ethnic principle?"<sup>101</sup>. In past years, Djindjic has identified vocally with the interests of the Bosnian Serbs and backed de facto the idea of a greater Serbia. He was cryptic in his comments in 1998-1999, and has walked a political tightrope in not alienating potential nationalist voters.

He has said that all the blame for the break up of the FRY, a process he acknowledges as continuing, must be traced solely and only to the Milosevic administration. "I believe simply that the likes of this last year cannot be repeated, because our country is like a man sinking in quicksand. Either he'll pull himself out or he'll go under completely....If Milosevic's regime continues on, in the following two years we'll be left without Kosovo and Montenegro. And that what we have going on in Kosovo-Metohija right now, we'll have in Sandzak."<sup>102</sup>

## VII. CONCLUSION

1999 is shaping up as a key year in FRY politics. The opposition field has become far less crowded. The single largest party within Serbia to present itself as a genuine alternative, with at least some possibility for promoting democratic values, is the DS, headed by Zoran Djindjic. As part of the SZP and in alliance with the Montenegrin counterpart 'For a Better Life', it does hold out the prospect of being able to win elections at the national level, and with Djukanovic, has the potential to make electoral inroads in the ethnic non-Serbian communities.

Handicaps still face the parties of reform. First and most importantly, they must not be made obsolete or forced to feel that their only alternative is to dust off the mantle of ultra-nationalism if it appears that territories such as Kosovo will make

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<sup>100</sup> *Blic*, 4 January 1999.

<sup>101</sup> *Blic*, 4 January 1999. See also Djukanovic's remarks reported in *Danas*, 5 January 1999.

<sup>102</sup> *Blic*, 31 December 1998-3 January 1999.



progress towards independence. The history of previous infighting in past coalitions and the willingness to be co-opted into government ranks demonstrate what pitfalls may still lie ahead.

Some parties appear to be on the path of no return and are in the process of cementing their fortunes to Milosevic's<sup>103</sup>. Vuk Draskovic, leader of the SPO, has opted to take his party down this path. What took place with ND may yet serve as an object lesson for Draskovic.

For his part, Milosevic is showing few signs of a willingness to leave political power behind. In fact, he may be in the process of transforming himself into an elder statesman figure, who could continue to exercise power following 2001 without the formal trappings of any political office. If so, Milosevic's authority will be underpinned by the military and the security forces, which have been purged and are presently undergoing the process of being staffed by trusted Milosevic loyalists. Should this take place, the various political offices in the Serbia, the presidency and the legislature, may in a few years be bereft of any power. Milosevic will then head a military dictatorship, and he is showing signs that he may be willing to give up control of Kosovo and other FRY territory to live comfortably within a jurisdiction that offers him no opponents.

## VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

The International Community should recognise that FRY President Slobodan Milosevic is the root cause of regional discord, and his removal from all posts of influence at the earliest possible time should be a primary international objective. Given that Milosevic has fashioned himself into a key negotiator, this time with respect to Kosovo, it may be unrealistic to see his departure in 1999. Nevertheless, he must be prevented from maintaining a hold on FRY politics past the end of his presidential term in 2001. The following points are necessary to achieve that outcome:

### **(i) Support the SZP-For a Better Life Coalition**

The SZP-For a Better Life coalition must be supported. Organisational support must be offered well past 1999, should Milosevic hold onto power. With the SPO now in government, there may be many Draskovic loyalists disillusioned with their leader's decision to cut a deal with a dictatorship. The SZP-For a Better Life coalition must be aided in efforts to win over such disaffected voters, and this includes backing aggressive public relations efforts intended to bring SPO voters into the Alliance fold.

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<sup>103</sup> See regime media coverage of ND, *Borba*, 26-27 December 1998.

The international community ought to consider backing, for example, through NGOs and other international organisations the day-to-day political tasks that would sustain the coalition past the next rounds of elections.

**(ii) Forge ties with non-party opponents of the regime**

As this analysis has explained, Milosevic is engaged in a process of neutralising all non-party opposition to his dictatorship. He is bringing various institutions under his immediate control, namely the military, the secret police, and perhaps cultural institutions such as the church. The international community should forge ties with the members of these communities and seek to wean them from Milosevic's grip should he continue to hold onto power past 2001. Djindjic has already mentioned that former army chief of staff Perisic would be welcomed into his party as a high profile political player. As Djindjic said, "I would very much like for Perisic to join us. He is a person who carries a certain symbolism, and it is precisely that kind of symbolism that Serbia is in need of today."<sup>104</sup>

The international community should help Perisic and others like him to maintain a high public profile. They must be assisted in their efforts to maintain ties within the military, as part of the move to prevent Milosevic from taking over that institution completely or, even worse, to allow members of his government such as Seselj to infiltrate. In addition, NGOs and the international community should foster ties between the Orthodox Church and the SZP. While the Church is unlikely to nurture animosity with the SPS, given the Church's role of subservience in relation to the state and the presence of loyal church-goers in SPS ranks, the church has signalled a capacity to work with alternatives, including Djindjic<sup>105</sup>. Moreover, ties with the Church may help find disaffected SPO voters find a home in the SZP.

**(iii) Develop a Regional Strategy**

As long as the Milosevic regime is permitted to remain in power in Belgrade the potential for far greater and more widespread instability throughout the Balkans will remain ever-present. Kosovo and Montenegro may yet leave the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as a result of the regime's policies. As Djukanovic pointed out, the regional fall-out from secession and fragmentation would be considerable. Neighbouring countries have already expressed similar concerns<sup>106</sup>. The international community needs to look

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<sup>104</sup> *Blic*, 31 December 1998-3 December 1999.

<sup>105</sup> *Blic*, 6 January 1999.

<sup>106</sup> Bulgarian Foreign Ministry sources are on record expressing "concern over the escalation of violence in Kosovo". Bulgarian Prime Minister Ivan Kostov has stressed that Balkan neighbours must "maintain constant contacts" for the purpose of helping to arrive at a resolution to the instability of FRY.

carefully at the potential effects of further destabilisation and draw up contingency plans for dealing with the consequences. A regional strategic plan needs to be drawn up that recognises Yugoslavia as the main source of instability in the region. Domestic opposition leaders inside Yugoslavia as well as the governments of neighbouring countries need a clear sense of the measures the international community is prepared to support to help further regional instability.

## ANNEX 1

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### LIST OF ACRONYMS

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<b>DEPOS</b>	<b>Democratic Opposition of Serbia</b>
<b>DPS</b>	<b>Democratic Party of Socialists</b>
<b>DS</b>	<b>Democratic Party</b>
<b>DSS</b>	<b>Democratic Party of Serbia</b>
<b>GSS</b>	<b>Serbian Civic Alliance</b>
<b>JUL</b>	<b>Yugoslav United Left</b>
<b>KLA</b>	<b>Kosovo Liberation Army</b>
<b>LSV</b>	<b>League of Social Democrats of Vojvodina</b>
<b>ND</b>	<b>New Democracy</b>
<b>NSS</b>	<b>Peasant Party</b>
<b>RS</b>	<b>Republika Srpska</b>
<b>SDA</b>	<b>Party for Democratic Action</b>
<b>SLS</b>	<b>Serbian Liberal Party</b>
<b>SPO</b>	<b>Serbian Renewal Movement</b>
<b>SPS</b>	<b>Socialist Party of Serbia</b>
<b>SRS</b>	<b>Serbian Radical Party</b>
<b>SZP</b>	<b>Alliance for Changes (<i>Savez za Promene</i>)</b>
<b>VJ</b>	<b>Yugoslav Army</b>