

OCCASIONAL PAPERS

19

EVALUATING SERBIA

*Morton Abramowitz, Thomas S. Countryman, Tim Judah,
Alex Rondos, Christian Thimonier, Susan Woodward*

Edited by Dimitrios Triantaphyllou

INSTITUTE FOR SECURITY STUDIES - WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION
INSTITUT D'ETUDES DE SECURITE - UNION DE L'EUROPE OCCIDENTALE

43 AVENUE DU PRESIDENT WILSON, 75775 PARIS CEDEX 16

September 2000

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Evaluating Serbia **L'evaluation de la Serbie**

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Dimitrios Triantaphyllou

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EVALUATING SERBIA

L'ÉVALUATION DE LA SERBIE

*Edited by / Sous la direction de
Dimitrios Triantaphyllou **

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PREFACE

In its continuing effort to better understand and assess developments in South-Eastern Europe and their implications for the European Union and its policies, the Institute for Security Studies of WEU has launched a task force on South-Eastern Europe. The first session of the task force, held in Paris on 26 May 2000, focused on 'Assessing Serbia'.

The continuing stalemate in Serbia and its impact on regional security with the enduring power of Slobodan Milosevic and the inability of the opposition to espouse a common plan of action were among the main issues discussed. Discussion also centred on the policies of the international community with regard to Serbia and possible future policy options.

This paper contains some of the contributions to the seminar in their original language, as well as a report on the meeting in English and French by the editor. The Institute would like to express its sincerest gratitude to all the participants in the seminar and the authors for their contributions. The editor would like to thank Anne Asselman, Sophie Divet and Tobias Heider for their assistance.

Dans son effort permanent pour mieux comprendre et évaluer les développements dans l'Europe du Sud-Est et ses impacts sur les politiques de l'Union européenne, l'Institut d'Etudes de Sécurité de l'UEO a mis en place un groupe de travail sur l'Europe du Sud-Est. La première session de ce groupe, qui s'est tenue à Paris le 26 mai, a porté sur « L'évaluation de la Serbie ».

Les sujets essentiellement abordés ont été : l'impasse actuelle en Serbie et son impact sur la sécurité régionale, le pouvoir résistant de Slobodan Milosevic ainsi que l'incapacité de l'opposition d'adopter un plan commun d'action. La discussion s'est également centrée sur les politiques de la communauté internationale à l'égard de la Serbie et les éventuelles options politiques futures.

Le présent document regroupe quelques-unes des contributions au séminaire dans leur langue d'origine, ainsi qu'un compte rendu de la rencontre, en anglais et en français, écrit par le responsable de cette publication. Nous souhaitons exprimer ici notre gratitude à tous les participants et aux auteurs pour leur contribution, ainsi qu'à Anne Asselman, Sophie Divet et Tobias Heider pour leur assistance.

Dimitrios Triantaphyllou

SUMMARY

The recent developments in Serbia are indicative of a change in the political makeup of the country. The regime is becoming more repressive. A spate of highly publicised assassinations has sparked wider debate about the ability of the regime to maintain order. Many military officials refuse to obey orders or are switching camps, especially in Montenegro. And finally, the opposition has been showing signs of (faltering) cohesion with a massive rally in Belgrade on 14 April under the umbrella organisation ‘Alliance for Change’ and a number of other demonstrations led by ‘Otpor’, a student organisation.

From these developments a number of questions arise with regard the choices of the regime, the impact of these policy choices on the wider neighbourhood, the policies of the international community and the ability of the regime, the international community, and the opposition to bring about change in Serbia, at what cost and with what consequences.

It is within the aforementioned context that the Institute held its first meeting of the Task Force on South-Eastern Europe on ‘Assessing Serbia’. It was attended by representatives of national governments and international organisations, as well as European and American experts.

The discussions primarily centred on the following points:

- **Credibility of the opposition** – The opposition’s credibility is on the line primarily due its inability to maintain a unified front. Its rallies do not inspire, its leadership is divided, its support is waning, and its programme is non-existent as the unorganised but highly effective student organisation ‘Otpor’ has emerged as the beacon of protest and hope against the regime. ‘Otpor’ has managed to coalesce opposition outside Belgrade in the heartland at the cost of arbitrary beatings and arrests. The demonstrations in Pozarevac, Milosevic’s hometown, in May are indicative of widespread discontent. It was suggested that ‘Otpor’ participants are beginning to show parallels to possible ‘martyrdom’ by their ability to get arrested en masse by the authorities.

In light of this dichotomy between a bereft opposition and the dynamism of the student movement, it was suggested that ‘Otpor’ should not be given open support by the international community (especially the West) lest its close affiliation with the West could be used by the regime as a pretext to delegitimize and denounce it as a tool of ‘NATO and the West.’ With regard the opposition, it was suggested that it might be that it and its leadership have reached their logical end and that closer attention should be given to emerging parties such as the G17+, among others. As one participant suggested, the mobilisation of the opposition is not as strong as it used to be, while the repression by the regime is getting harsher.

- **Longevity of the Milosevic regime** – There was consensus that the Milosevic regime has entered into its final phase as its legality is challenged both internationally (with the indictments of the ICTY) and domestically (with its growing dependence on repressive measures to quell opposition and the probability that a series of draconian laws – including the Anti-Terror Act, the Act on Weapons, as well as legislation banning foreign funding of NGOs – could soon be implemented. The only option for Milosevic in these

circumstances is to go down fighting as the ICTY indictments have provided Milosevic with no other exit strategy. The problem is that duration of his staying power cannot be measured – it could be a matter of weeks or years. In light of the above, the formulation of policy by the international community is severely hampered.

- **Short or long-term policy options** – The assessment of how to deal with the Milosevic regime has been negative to date primarily because of lack of consensus by the international community on a variety of policy options (sanctions, for example); thus, the task of designing a coordinated policy in light of the current situation remains complicated. The difficulties persist for a variety of reasons ranging from the inability to evaluate the longevity of the Milosevic regime and whether municipal and federal elections will be held in the fall as planned, or whether current policy in support of the opposition needs to be continued or reassessed. In other words, beyond the short term policy objective of trying to get Milosevic removed from power, there are no long term policies in place. These are needed to tackle questions such as the eventuality of disengaging from the opposition in its present form to supporting a more credible alternative when it emerges.
- **Scenarios for Serbia** – Because of many of the factors presented above, it is difficult to fathom the course of events in Serbia. With the regime's credibility seriously damaged as it reverts more forcibly to repressive tactics, the lack of political will for change, the difficulty in gouging the effectiveness of 'Otpor', and the absence of any serious debate on the national question and the treatment of other ethnic groups, the path toward self-destruction continues.
- **Russia policy** – The mixed signals emanating from Moscow recently are also a cause for alarm. What is Russia's policy *vis-à-vis* the Milosevic regime? Are Ivanov's explanations, at the recent NATO ministerial, that the Yugoslav Defence Minister (and indicted war criminal) visited Moscow without the sanctioning of the President and the Foreign Ministry, sufficient? The discussion revealed a lack of consensus on whether Russia's role is really relevant in the debate over what policy options the international community has in dealing with Belgrade.
- **Sanctions policy** – The streamlining of the sanctions policy or its eventual riddance were also discussed. As expected there were divergences among the two sides of the Atlantic about the efficacy of sanctions. Though, it was undisputed that sanctions have crippled the Serbian economy, the verdict is still out as to whether they help or hurt the Serbian regime. Sanctions bother economic oligarchs by complicating their financial transactions at the risk though of institutionalising criminal economic structures. They also block the diversification of contacts with cities run by opposition groups and other opponents of the regime. On the other hand, proponents of the current sanctions regime suggest that their lack of efficacy stems from the fact that the financial sanctions in particular are not enforced by many governments.
- **Montenegro** – With regard to Montenegro, the question arose as to whether the current tactic of not encouraging Djukanovic toward the path of independence might in fact stifle the indigenous movement for democratic change there. Proponents of enhancing the development of civil society seem to suggest that Montenegro could become the only successful model of democratic change from within after Croatia in the region. Opposing the independence of Montenegro would not only lead to the downfall of Djukanovic (if he

fails to deliver on economic reforms) but would seriously damage all efforts toward democracy both in Montenegro and Serbia.

- **Kosovo** – Here the debate dealt with the timing of granting a solution to Kosovo’s final status. Some called for immediate independence of Kosovo on the grounds that such a solution would place Serbian politics in an all-Serbian setting and that any post-Milosevic regime in Serbia would not have to suffer the political cost of ‘losing’ Kosovo (Milosevic would be charged with it). Others, though, suggested that there is no international support for an independent Kosovo at this stage as long as the Kosovars do not shape up and offer a viable democratic alternative to the present ethnic and political divide there. An independent Kosovo was also perceived to be an anathema to wider regional stability.

Some of the principal conclusions from the debate could be summarised as follows:

- No matter the duration of Milosevic’s staying power, he is even more a pariah today than he ever was.
- The lack of policy coherence by the international community does not allow for the establishment of an effective anti-Milosevic policy in the short term and a post-Milosevic policy in the long term. There is a need for consistency and fewer ambiguous messages.
- Any plan of action on the part of the international community has to consider the regional implications of such a policy (this is especially true with regard to the independence option for Montenegro and Kosovo).
- It is imperative that any effective policy adjustment attempts to drive a wedge into the Serbian political system in order to weaken the one instrument Milosevic has under his control – state power (federal police, state radio and television).
- The option of a ‘road map’ of what the international community expects from the opposition and what the opposition could expect in return should be seriously considered.
- A careful assessment of Russia’s role is necessary. For example, could the inclusion of Russia in the trilateral talks between the EU, US, and Serbian opposition be an effective policy option in further alienating Milosevic?
- The credibility of the European Union is at stake in the region in a way that it is not the case for the United States which can afford to disengage if it so decides (as the messages from Congress seem to suggest). This divergence in outlook between the EU and the US needs careful assessment lest the Union is unpleasantly surprised in the future.

Dimitrios Triantaphyllou

RESUME

Les récents événements en Serbie sont significatifs de l'évolution de la situation politique du pays. Le régime devient plus répressif. Une série d'assassinats très médiatisés a intensifié le débat sur la capacité du régime de maintenir l'ordre. De nombreux officiers militaires refusent d'obéir aux ordres ou changent de camp, notamment au Monténégro. Enfin, l'opposition a montré des signes de cohésion (chancelante) avec un rassemblement massif à Belgrade le 14 avril sous les auspices de l'organisation « Alliance pour le Changement » et plusieurs autres manifestations dirigées par « Otpor », une organisation estudiantine.

Ces évolutions soulèvent un certain nombre de questions en ce qui concerne les choix du régime, leur impact sur la région, la politique de la communauté internationale et la capacité de celle-ci, du régime et de l'opposition d'opérer des changements en Serbie, ainsi que les coûts et les conséquences qui en découlent.

C'est dans ce contexte que l'Institut a organisé la première réunion de son groupe de réflexion sur l'Europe du Sud-Est intitulée « Evaluation de la Serbie ». Les participants étaient des représentants des gouvernements nationaux et des organisations internationales, ainsi que des experts européens et américains.

Les échanges de vues ont essentiellement porté sur les points suivants :

- **Crédibilité de l'opposition** – L'opposition semble moins crédible dans la mesure surtout où elle est incapable de conserver un front unifié. Ses rassemblements sont stériles, sa direction est divisée, son audience est de plus en plus faible et son programme est inexistant alors que l'organisation estudiantine « Otpor », qui n'est pas encore structurée mais extrêmement efficace, émerge comme le porte-drapeau de la protestation et de l'espoir de voir le régime capituler. « Otpor » est parvenu à rassembler l'opposition en dehors de Belgrade, au cœur du pays, au prix de violences et d'arrestations arbitraires. Les manifestations de Pozarevac, ville d'origine de Milosevic, qui ont eu lieu en mai témoignent du mécontentement général. Il a été suggéré que les participants d'« Otpor » commencent à avoir une image de « martyrs » potentiels compte tenu de la facilité avec laquelle ils sont massivement arrêtés par les autorités.

A la lumière de cette dichotomie entre une opposition mal en point et le dynamisme du mouvement estudiantin, il a été suggéré qu'« Otpor » ne devrait pas être soutenu ouvertement par la communauté internationale (en l'occurrence l'Occident) pour éviter que le régime n'utilise cette relation comme un prétexte pour le délégitimer en l'accusant d'être un instrument de « l'OTAN et l'Occident ». S'agissant de l'opposition, il se pourrait qu'elle soit arrivée, avec sa direction, à sa fin logique et il conviendrait d'accorder une plus grande attention aux partis émergents tels que le G17+ entre autres. Comme l'a suggéré un participant, la mobilisation de l'opposition n'est pas aussi forte qu'elle l'était autrefois, alors que le régime est de plus en plus répressif.

- **Longévité du régime Milosevic** – Les participants se sont accordés à reconnaître que le régime Milosevic est entré dans sa phase finale puisque sa légalité est mise en cause aussi bien par la communauté internationale (avec les mises en accusation du Tribunal pénal international sur la Yougoslavie - TPIY) qu'au niveau national (il est obligé de prendre

des mesures de plus en plus répressives pour contenir l'opposition et il est probable qu'une série de lois draconiennes, entre autres la loi anti-terreur, la loi sur les armes ainsi que la législation interdisant le financement étranger des ONG – soit prochainement appliquée. La seule possibilité pour Milosevic dans ce contexte est d'aller jusqu'au bout car les accusations du TPIY ne lui laissent aucune autre stratégie de sortie. Le problème est qu'il est impossible de savoir combien de temps il restera au pouvoir – il peut s'agir de semaines ou d'années. Il est donc extrêmement difficile pour la communauté internationale de formuler une politique appropriée.

- **Les options politiques à court ou à long terme** – Le bilan des politiques suivies jusqu'ici à l'égard de Milosevic est négatif car la communauté internationale n'est pas parvenue au consensus sur toute une série d'options politiques (les sanctions, par exemple) ; il reste donc extrêmement difficile de définir une politique coordonnée dans le contexte actuel. Ces difficultés sont dues à différentes raisons allant des interrogations sur la longévité de ce régime et la tenue effective à l'automne d'élections municipales et fédérales comme prévu, à la question de savoir s'il faut poursuivre ou réévaluer la politique menée actuellement pour soutenir l'opposition. Autrement dit, il existe un objectif politique à court terme – écarter Milosevic du pouvoir – mais pas de politique à long terme. Celle-ci serait pourtant nécessaire pour se désengager, par exemple, de l'opposition actuelle et soutenir une autre option plus crédible susceptible d'émerger.
- **Scénarios pour la Serbie** – Compte tenu de tous ces éléments, il est difficile de prévoir le cours des événements en Serbie. Avec la crédibilité du régime mise à mal vu sa propension à recourir à des méthodes répressives, l'absence de volonté politique de changement, la difficulté de canaliser l'efficacité d'« Otpor » et l'absence de tout débat sérieux sur la question nationale et le traitement d'autres groupes ethniques, le processus d'autodestruction se poursuit.
- **La politique envers la Russie** – Les signaux mitigés émis récemment par Moscou sont également une cause d'inquiétude. Quelle est la politique de la Russie à l'égard du régime de Milosevic ? Les explications fournies par Ivanov lors de la récente réunion ministérielle de l'OTAN, selon lesquelles le ministre yougoslave de la défense (inculpé pour crimes de guerre) s'est rendu à Moscou sans l'autorisation du président et du ministre des affaires étrangères, sont-elles suffisantes ? La discussion a révélé une absence de consensus sur la question de savoir si le rôle de la Russie est un facteur pertinent dans le débat sur les options politiques possibles pour la communauté internationale à l'égard de Belgrade.
- **La politique des sanctions** – La teneur de la politique de sanctions ou son éventuelle suppression ont également été examinées. Comme on pouvait s'y attendre, il y a eu des divergences entre les deux côtés de l'Atlantique sur l'efficacité de ces sanctions. Bien que tous aient reconnu leur effet négatif sur l'économie serbe, il est légitime de se demander si elles aident ou si elles gênent le régime. Les sanctions gênent les magnats économiques en compliquant leurs transactions financières au risque d'institutionnaliser les structures économiques criminelles. Elles empêchent également la diversification des contacts avec les villes dirigées par les groupes d'opposition et d'autres opposants au régime. Par ailleurs, les partisans du régime actuel de sanction pensent que leur manque d'efficacité est dû au fait qu'un certain nombre de gouvernements n'appliquent pas les sanctions financières.

- **Monténégro** – En ce qui concerne le Monténégro, la question a été posée de savoir si la tactique actuelle consistant à ne pas encourager Djukanovic sur la voie de l'indépendance pourrait étouffer le début de transition démocratique que l'on peut y observer. Ceux qui prônent le développement de la société civile semblent suggérer que le Monténégro pourrait être, après la Croatie, le seul modèle de transition démocratique réussie à l'intérieur de la région. S'opposer à l'indépendance du Monténégro conduirait non seulement à la chute de Djukanovic (au cas où il ne parviendrait pas à mettre en place les réformes économiques) mais aussi handicaperait sérieusement tous les efforts en direction de la démocratie au Monténégro et en Serbie.
- **Kosovo** – Les discussions ont porté sur le temps nécessaire pour trouver une solution quant au statut final du Kosovo. Certains étaient favorables à l'indépendance immédiate du Kosovo dans la mesure où une telle solution placerait la politique serbe dans un cadre entièrement serbe et où un régime post-Milosevic en Serbie n'aurait pas à souffrir du coût politique que représenterait la « perte » du Kosovo (Milosevic en serait tenu pour responsable). D'autres ont néanmoins suggéré que la communauté internationale ne soutiendrait pas à ce stade un Kosovo indépendant tant que les Kosovars n'auront pas élaboré et proposé une alternative démocratique viable à l'actuelle division ethnique et politique. Un Kosovo indépendant a également été considéré comme un risque de catastrophe pour la stabilité régionale.

Les principales conclusions du débat peuvent être résumées de la manière suivante :

- Quelle que soit la longévité de Milosevic au pouvoir, il est plus que jamais considéré comme un paria.
- L'absence de cohérence politique de la communauté internationale ne permet de mener ni une politique anti-Milosevic efficace à court terme ni une politique post-Milosevic sur le long terme.
- Il est nécessaire d'être plus cohérent et de transmettre des messages moins ambigus.
- Tout plan d'action de la part de la communauté internationale doit tenir compte des implications régionales d'une telle politique (à plus forte raison pour l'éventuelle indépendance du Monténégro et du Kosovo).
- Il est indispensable que tout ajustement politique vise à fissurer le système politique serbe afin d'affaiblir le seul instrument que Milosevic a sous son contrôle – le pouvoir d'Etat (police fédérale, radio et télévision d'Etat).
- Un « mode d'emploi » de ce que la communauté internationale attend de l'opposition et de ce que l'opposition pourrait espérer en retour est une option à examiner sérieusement.
- Une évaluation très précise du rôle de la Russie s'impose. Par exemple, est-ce que l'inclusion de la Russie dans les discussions trilatérales entre l'Union européenne, les Etats-Unis et l'opposition serbe serait une option politique efficace pour écarter Milosevic ?
- La crédibilité de l'Union européenne est en jeu dans la région beaucoup plus que ce n'est le cas pour les Etats-Unis, qui peuvent se permettre de se désengager s'ils le décident

(comme les messages du Congrès semblent le suggérer). Si cette différence de perspective entre l'Union européenne et les États-Unis ne reçoit pas l'attention qu'elle mérite, l'Union pourrait avoir à l'avenir des surprises désagréables.

Dimitrios Triantaphyllou

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CHAPTER ONE: THE SITUATION TODAY IN SERBIA / LA SERBIE AUJOURD'HUI

Tim Judah

'Evaluating Serbia' is of course a thankless task. It is a little like being, or rather observing an for the moment, endless roller-coaster, which you know must crash, but just have no idea when it will do so. At the moment, the dramatic events of the past few weeks have put us in one of those modes where we are observing the carriages shooting down at high speed again. But whether we see a repeat of last summer, when the long talked about fall of Milosevic failed to happen and the opposition failed to capitalise on popular discontent, remains to be seen.

Let us have a look at some of the elements we are dealing with here. At the top a relatively small layer of people, connected one way or another with the regime. The regime itself, clearly rattled by the recent assassinations and the growth of the 'Otpor' student movement, feeling weak, lashing out and closing the opposition media. I am not using the term independent media because most of it, not all of course, is not really independent, it is, as I say, opposition. Studio B was Vuk TV, not what we would understand by independent, though, of course, that is not a legitimate excuse to close it all down. This top layer, of course, includes all the important security chiefs, of whatever ilk, army, police etc., regularly purged over the years, and showing no visible signs of discontent.

On the other hand, for those that believe that Milosevic's end will come about along the lines of the 'Ceausescu Scenario' - that is to say top people jumping ship at a crucial point in time - taking advantage of genuine street up protest, the fact that we cannot see any dissent from within the hierarchy means nothing. There are always unprovable rumours of discontent emanating from within the SPS but when change comes, it usually comes as a surprise - as when three generals recently jumped ship in Montenegro to side with President Milo Djukanovic. In other words, the lack of visible dissent from within the hierarchy is to be expected, because otherwise those making dissenting noises, would, by definition, no longer be in the top hierarchy

Of course, another point to bear in mind is that those closest to power have everything to lose. And, with the Hague indictments against the very tops, the only way out - is down. Milosevic knows that, when the time for him to depart finally comes, his exit, Ceausescu or Mussolini style, swinging from a lamppost on Terazije, would not just be the result of spontaneous outrage, but precisely, as in the case of Ceausescu, an expedient way of disposing of a real problem. No post-Milosevic government wants the problem of debating his extradition.

So, in brief, a small layer at the top, with, for most, a lot to lose, including their lives and for many others, their lucrative sources of income. Because of this, they are prepared to resort to extreme measures.

So who else have we got?

The traditional opposition leaders: Vuk Draskovic, Zoran Djindjic etc., I am sure most of you know them far better than I do. They are still arguing after all these years and having failed to move since last year. In my view their credibility was shattered, I hate to say irrevocably, but

certainly very badly by the events following the demonstrations of 1997 - 98. Let's recap: After 88 days, in which hundreds of thousands had marched on the streets, Milosevic gave in - the opposition were given the stolen local council seats. What happened next? Quarrelling about the next elections Draskovic teamed up with Seselj and Milosevic to oust Djindjic as Mayor of Belgrade. The other vitally important factor was that the opposition soon gained a reputation for being as corrupt as the SPS bureaucrats they had replaced. The bribe needed to open a kiosk in Belgrade was reputed to be \$3000. Anyway the result of these two factors, perpetual squabbling and corruption have I feel, utterly undermined the traditional opposition leadership, making it vulnerable to Milosevic - threats of revelations about the extent of the corruption for example - who knows? But, even more importantly this has simply sapped people's energy and made it easier for Milosevic to run a divide and rule strategy.

In turn this has meant, until now, that you have a relatively small segment of the population, especially in Belgrade prepared to come out on the streets. In the countryside, things may be different. I suspect that, proportionally speaking, some of the recent protests outside of opposition Belgrade are stronger than in the capital and this is a factor that should not be overlooked. See what happened recently in Pozarevac, the Milosevic hometown and, while all eyes have been fixed on the well-publicised media shut downs in Belgrade, they have of course been happening all over the country. Also, the most serious charges against any one single journalist - espionage - are not being directed at any media stars in Belgrade but one Miroslav Filipovic from Kraljevo.

So, although we have a weak opposition leadership, we also have a nation that is in general widely antipathetic to Milosevic and his cronies now, but, having experienced opposition failure and corruption may not, apart from a relatively small number of people, be disposed to do anything. I would like to point out another factor here. That is that the demonstrations of 1997 - 98 could have taken on another dimension entirely if the predominantly middle class protesters had been joined by the industrial workforce. It did not, of course, despite, the fact that it was barely working then, and even less so, of course now. Why? Simple! Better the devil you know than the devil you don't. An unfortunate fact of life is that any serious post-Milosevic leadership will have to begin the long postponed task of economic restructuring. As you know, I am sure, surplus workers, over the last few years, have not been sacked. They have simply rotated through the system while many of them are paid 'holiday money' and left to get on with their second jobs and market gardens. They know, as well as anyone, that this system cannot survive in the post-Milosevic era and probably most of them will be sacked. So, until now, what you have had is a de facto alliance of industrial workers, managers who get fat off the system, big businessmen who are part of the crony system and Milosevic and the regime tops. It remains to be seen whether this holds through this year's protests. Thus far, there have been no signs of change on this front.

Although I say that there has been this effective collusion of the industrial workforce, this does not mean that they are prepared to fight for Milosevic. I bring this up here because there has been much discussion about the possibility of civil war. Personally, I do not buy this. There really are not two major sides in this. There is Milosevic and the regime tops, a small layer of active opposition and the bulk of the rest of the country, disillusioned, disoriented, suspicious and of course much of it hating the West too now, in the wake of the bombing. So, I discount the possibility of war, though I do not discount the possibility of widespread violence. Remember the chaotic days of the Romanian revolution.

Now, the new element, which I have not discussed, is 'Otpor'. The student based 'resistance' movement. Clearly, it has alarmed the authorities otherwise, they would hardly spend so much time denouncing it and arresting its members. But, can it bring things to a critical mass? There are two schools of thought here. One is that by bringing in well-known figures, including Dobrica Cosic they will create what is being called the 'celebrity shield' and attract support. The other is that this is fatal and that it will rapidly become just another opposition party, bogged down in internal quarrels and quarrels with the rest of the opposition. Clearly 'Otpor' has filled a void, but the question is whether, especially without a visible compact leadership, it can capitalise on this and succeed where the old opposition has failed over the last ten years. That question, will, of course, be answered over the coming weeks and months.

So, let us begin to sum up: A frightened leadership moving from authoritarianism to a much tighter form of control, if not outright dictatorship. Traditional opposition leaders, still at each others throats, though, to be fair, making some little effort to coordinate their actions for the moment but never quite knowing what to do. A new opposition movement whose measure has not been tested properly until now, but, one which clearly frightens the regime. Milosevic has his eyes on the future. If he can get through a summer of protests his aim is to win autumn's federal and local elections - by fair means or foul obviously. He has already found a solution to his job question by amending the constitution so that he can be president of Yugoslavia again.

Of course, it is the \$64,000 question as to whether Milosevic will make it through to next year. I have made the mistake before of predicting his fall so I will not make it again. My hunch is that this may well be beginning of the end, and it may well come this year but, if I had \$64,000 I would not place a bet on it.

I think it is best if I stop here, although there are many other things to discuss, but we can do that afterwards. There is the Kosovo factor, the need to have a serious aid package ready to roll immediately after the change comes and, of course, there is the question whether the current embargo helps Milosevic and whether western policy should not be to lift it as soon as possible so as to help the opposition. Of course, I know that there is not too much chance of that happening. However my feeling is that we may well be in a dead end situation at the moment, vis-à-vis sanctions. In this case enlightened self-interest may be better than sticking to the policy of isolation, which I believe is having a counter-productive reaction, in particular by consolidating a hatred of the West and by fuelling ever more outlandish conspiracy theories which help keep people in ignorance and prey to regime propaganda about the fiendish intentions of the West towards Serbia.

Before I finish though I would just like to make a plea to those whose countries may retain some influence in Belgrade - Italy perhaps? Miroslav Filipovic, whose articles have been appearing via the Institute for War and Peace Reporting (www.iwpr.net) has produced some of the finest journalism from Serbia in the past few years. Because of that he is now been arrested a second time and the authorities are talking about charging him with espionage. They should not be able to intimidate journalists in this fashion and get away with it, so, if you or any of your colleagues have the power to do something, please do.

Susan Woodward

What I am going to say reproduces almost exactly what Tim said, in a different way although we agree on our analysis. Let me start with a folk saying, a proverb, from the former Yugoslavia. 'We will vote for the opposition when it comes to power.' That is, it is very difficult to say anything new about Serbia. The problem is that we know too much, except the key – how to change such a regime.

I strongly recommend the analysis of the Serbian regime in the book *The Culture of Power in Serbia: Nationalism and the Destruction of Alternatives* by Eric Gordy, an American sociologist. Gordy argues, correctly in my view, that Milosevic's primary basis of success has been his ability to make alternatives to his rule unavailable. It is not, as conventional wisdom holds, that he unleashed national passions or has huge popular support, but rather a situation of apathy, resignation, and exhaustion – in other words, a feeling among most citizens of Serbia that there is no alternative.

Let me outline the means by which this stifling of alternatives is done:

First, *repression*: Serbia has recently entered another cycle, familiar to all of you, whereby the regime uses the police and the mass media to create fear and uncertainty in the population.

Second, *the interlocking patronage network*. I remember 1994 when there seemed to be real hope with the economic platform of Dragoslav Avramovic that there might actually be political change, but the best minds – economists – were still with Milosevic. Although that is no longer the case, there is, at a level we all know, an entire network of business people, local political leaders, judges, and others, who depend personally on Milosevic for their power and their access to economic resources. This network is very powerful, and it stifles alternatives. Belonging to it gives special access to capital and property. Many are engaged in the vast informal criminal networks that we hear about. It sustains the current economic situation, such as it is, and provides the protection that the state is no longer able to provide. (Ivan Krastev has just finished a study on corruption in Yugoslavia and discovers that the overwhelming proportion of what we call corruption is money people are spending on security – personal, professional, political, business security – to fill the vacuum left by the state.) But this personal dependence on the Milosevic regime also includes average people who are not being paid but who still have jobs, and therefore have access to the benefits of social property, including their apartments, on which they depend more than ever because they are not being paid.

Third, *ideology*. Milosevic rules on the basis of a black/red coalition, which gives him enormous flexibility, allowing him to maintain power by switching between left-wing rhetoric – based on that of the Partisan period and its shibboleths – and that of right-wing nationalism. This is reminiscent of the Popular Front during World War II and the immediate post-war period. By encompassing both extremes of the political spectrum, and alternating between the two, he squeezes the democratic opposition forces into the liberal centre, and is able to throw them off guard repeatedly as to what argument and constituency to challenge, thereby keeping the advantage of initiative.

But the most important method preventing the emergence of alternatives to the current regime concerns governmental *effectiveness*. Consider even when you ask anyone in Washington,

London, or here in Paris, ‘whom would you vote for in Serbia?’ There is no easy answer. Seselj? Leaders of the squabbling opposition such as Draskovic or Djindjic? People do not know. And the reason is that Milosevic appears the most capable of governing, even now. Industrial workers provide a good example. They really do not want Milosevic any more, and they say so to opinion pollsters, but their notion of who else is able to replace him, who holds the bases of power, who has the experience, who is the interlocutor of the international community, does not go beyond Milosevic. Gordy cites a journalist with sterling opposition credentials who says: ‘It does not seem to me that anybody in the opposition would be any better, only less effective’ [although he adds that this may be ‘an advantage’].

Ironically, the ability of Milosevic in particular to prevent war in Serbia proper has always provided him with electoral support. There is a great fear that if war itself comes to Serbia, then it is all over. The NATO bombing has reinforced this fear, having left people with the feeling that they cannot survive a future war. This, too, is an aspect of effectiveness. And the tactic of the democratic opposition to focus on street demonstrations and protests to end the regime does not in any way contribute to improving their image as more ready to take over the reins of government.

Let us move to what could be an alternative. To do so, I would like to examine the two models we currently have in the region: Montenegro and Croatia/Kosovo.

In the Kosovo/Croatia model, it was really money from outside that made the difference. In the Kosovo case, Albanians in Geneva, Germany, the USA, and Canada sending support to the KLA made all the difference. It is hard to imagine that Franjo Tudjman would have done as well without Croatian émigré support, including the decade-long power of the Herzegovinian lobby in Zagreb and Gojko Susak. There is no such émigré or *Gastarbeiter* financial support in the Serbian case.

What about Montenegro? In Montenegro, challenge to the Belgrade regime is also based on independent sources of revenue, although in this case the source is what one might call ‘foreign trade’ revenues on domestic sales and control over imports into the country. But there is a parallel of sorts in the autonomy from Belgrade that Podgorica has been able to craft.

How do these models help us analyse the possibilities and next stage in Serbia?

First, the case of Croatia. The widely welcomed change of government in January would never have occurred without three essential characteristics:

- The first and most important one is that the border issue had been settled. This meant that the opposition could focus on the economic issues that matter to people and on which they might win votes, and they were freer to have a pro-European foreign policy. Western pressure and support was also freer to focus on domestic issues like the controlled media and failure to fulfil commitments on the return of Serbs without being anti-Croatian (although it was accused as such). And Tudjman’s ability to throw the opposition off guard by doubting their national loyalty, the tactics of divide and rule that also kept the opposition weak in Croatia as Milosevic employs in Serbia, thus declined. The less he could play the national card, the stronger the opposition became. Yet, it still took five years after the final settlements of Croatian sovereignty in 1995 before the opposition could overcome their weaknesses and win;

- The second characteristic was the success of the opposition parties, hard fought in local arenas over five years with many reversals, in forming coalition governments that could persuade a sceptical public that they could work together and rule. The fruits began to show only in 1999;
- And third was increasing popular anger against widely reported abuses and corruption of the Tudjman regime, combined with the banking scandals, rising unemployment, and a myriad of other economic ills that led many to forecast an imminent financial collapse. Even then, we do not know what would have happened in January had Tudjman not died. His ability to outfox the opposition seemed to be working again in the weeks leading up to elections. His death seems to have been necessary to their victory.

This list is a lesson of how difficult it was to bring about change even in Croatia.

An alternative scenario may be provided by Montenegro because it demonstrates the means by which change has occurred internally within former Yugoslavia. The independence option for each republic was a way for those who were in power in the republics to maintain the institutional status quo. We did not get the regime change that took place in the rest of Southern and Eastern Europe. Threatening independence was the easiest way to get political change under those circumstances. The concern now in Montenegro is very interesting in that the Liberals have finally left the ruling coalition, for it is they who have been pro-independence all along and have disagreed with Djukanovic on tactics, knowing that Djukanovic is only a nationalist for tactical reasons. Montenegro is now having local elections on June as a result, which suggests that the independence option still is the one political strategy that actually works in this region. It worked for Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Macedonia.

It will be interesting to watch Montenegro because the independence scenario might work before you get any change in Serbia itself.

Now, are there any possible sources of change internally? Tim already mentioned 'Otpor'. There are two ways that 'Otpor' might bring about some change, but only in the long term. The first is that over time if they are able to sustain their efforts, the students will provide the middle class – the people who usually lead change – with a sense that alternatives to the regime are possible. The old self-management theory prevails: you can do it yourself; just look at us.

The second way is what happened in Poland. The foreign threat posed by Solidarity – that the Soviet Union might intervene as in 1956 and 1968 – created a serious generational divide, between parents who feared intervention and their children who welcomed it as a means to overturn the system. That challenge of youth to their parents could be happening now in Serbia, forcing parents to think about how they are viewed by their children and whether to end their apathy and resignation. But both of these results of 'Otpor' will not happen over night.

The other alternative source of change internally is the role of minorities. Take the case of Kosovo. The autonomy option has proved successful over the last ten years. That is exactly the one that most generates fear in Serbia today, that this is not the last region to break away, and why Milosevic still has tacit support -- namely the fear of civil war.

Let me turn in conclusion, to two questions:

- how long can this last?
- what about our policy?

I think that the current situation can continue for a long time and that people are beginning to see that. If you look at the criminalised bases of power now in Serbia and then, just across the Adriatic sea, at southern Italy and how long the Mafia lasted, it is clear that they can last a long time. What is happening today in towns like Pozarevac and Kraljevo – even in the Tito period, take Smederevo in the 1980s, for example – towns could always use the principle of self-government to opt out of federal or republican policy and get a great deal of autonomy and space from Belgrade. The Byzantine model lasted a thousand years.

If you look at Moldova or parts of Cyprus, elite circles using criminalised networks for access to resources, despite enormous poverty and decline in the general population, can last a long time. In Serbia, this game between people trying to keep open alternatives through the media, through demonstrations, through travel, and access to Europe, on the one hand, and Milosevic periodically trying to clamp down on all those possible alternatives, on the other, is one that has been going on for ten years. That political game is one of a stable, negative equilibrium. Neither side can really win this game but they can keep it going for a very long period of time.

What about our policy? I think that the difficulty is, even if we can get changes now, that this particular dynamic has no outcome for either side. First, the effect of the sanctions regime – and I say sanctions regime because it is really the isolation that is key – has been disastrous. The consequence of sanctions on Serbia has been to reinforce all the bases of Milosevic's power that I listed earlier, never mind the specific technicalities of targeted sanctions because they do not change the sense of isolation. The sanctions regime provides Milosevic with an excuse to keep the police well paid and strong. It justifies all the economic control he has and the sources of patronage because it allows him to work through informal, personalised networks. It continues to make individual workers dependent on him because they do not have any alternative access to resources. The sanctions regime allows Milosevic to maintain an ideological monopoly by shifting back and forth between the nationalist right and the parties on the left (his black/red alliance), between right-wing xenophobia and the Partisan experience of self-reliance against international blockade.

Finally, the sanctions regime reinforces the psychological makeup of the opposition that it really cannot beat this system. With today's Serbian population being older, less educated, more rural, and poorer than it was ten years ago as a result of emigration, it is more passive to Milosevic's political machinations. That passivity can still be translated as support for Milosevic.

Briefly, the models of Croatia, or even better, Montenegro, demonstrate that change has to come from within.

Wherever and whenever possible, support for an alternative through elections is the best way to get out of this stalemate. It is also a better strategy than what has been done over the last few years, where, by trying to get more direct links to the opposition people, we have brought them out of Serbia to meetings of the Stability Pact working tables and sub-groups and the like. What we have done, in effect, is refocused those elements of the opposition who might

be real alternatives to Milosevic toward sources of support outside Serbia rather than keeping their focus within Serbia on what needs to be done to bring about change. By providing the opposition with access to the West and thus giving them the psychological confidence that breaking isolation will do, we may have long-term positive effects, but it also undermines the idea that change has to come from within and that people have to have a reason, a self-interest, a strategy for getting rid of Milosevic.

Two more points. One is that our policy toward Kosovo and Montenegro, which comes out as 'do not move guys, we are going to keep you in,' actually reinforces the uncertainty and fear supporting Milosevic -- that this 'hold' on conflicts in Yugoslavia will eventually lead to war at some stage. The view one gets from democratic opposition people all the time is that there is a consensus throughout Serbia that forces are at work to break up Yugoslavia further and that that has to be averted at all costs.

Finally, in conclusion, what we could do now is to prepare the transition, not just focus on how to get rid of Milosevic or on building up the opposition. We need to find ways to get technical assistance to all of the people who have a chance at being effective rulers after the Milosevic regime. In so doing, we might also be creating the bases for internal change within Serbia and Montenegro.

CHAPTER TWO: EVALUATING THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY'S POLICIES / EVALUATION DES POLITIQUES DE LA COMMUNAUTE INTERNATIONALE

Christian Thimonier

Nous sommes plus ou moins tous d'accord pour dire que le régime de Milosevic est sur la voie descendante. Quand, c'est une autre question. Toutefois si nous devons procéder à une telle évaluation aujourd'hui, c'est que les choses n'ont pas marché comme on l'aurait souhaité. Un mot en passant, surtout dans ce cas « communauté internationale » est un mot à utiliser entre guillemets. Les Russes sont absents de cette salle, or la Serbie ne joue pas seulement avec l'Europe ou les Etats-Unis. A divers moments assez stratégiques, la Russie se montre présente. Naturellement, son aide possible au régime de Belgrade n'est pas susceptible d'empêcher sa disparition à terme mais tout de même sur les délais d'autre part, même parmi nous Occidentaux, il y a des différences, pas sur le but mais sur les moyens sur lesquels nous ne sommes pas toujours d'accord. Tout cela ne facilite ni la lecture ni l'évaluation. Je crois qu'il faut commencer par notre déception initiale, qui a été le maintien du régime serbe. Face à cela, nous avons pu constater qu'il y avait 3 causes :

- inculcation, qui rendait la discussion avec Milosevic impossible, nous avions un régime qui était dos au mur et non seulement Milosevic mais peut-être également l'alternance qui était la plus probable dans un premier temps, soit le Président serbe Mulatinovic ;
- la Serbie était encore sous le choc des bombardements, tout ce qui peut venir de l'extérieur est considéré avec méfiance, voire rejet ;
- mobilisation très insuffisante de l'opposition.

Vis-à-vis du régime, la question des sanctions a été au centre des politiques occidentales. Sanction positives (interdictions de visa, sanctions dans le domaine économique pour tuer la base du régime) et négatives (absence de la Yougoslavie dans les instances comme le Pacte de stabilité). D'autre part, nous avons essayé de donner des messages clairs à l'opposition pour qu'elle soit plus unie. Quel est le bilan? Il est nuancé mais certainement pas très positif. Il est certain que nous avons poussé le régime dans une espèce de bunker, ou de forteresse assiégée. D'autre part, pour comprendre mieux son attitude, il faudrait remonter à 96-97, où deux tendances très fortes se sont affrontées dans l'entourage de Milosevic, certains socialistes se sont positionnés pour une solution douce. L'autre tendance étant celle d'une opposition à tout crin aux demandes de la rue. Aujourd'hui, le cadre légal reste malgré tout important pour le pouvoir, même s'il privilégie les moyens de force pour son maintien quotidien. Pour nous, c'est une question très fondamentale qui se pose : est-ce que nous sommes dans une situation où nous devons jouer le jeu de la Serbie de naguère (c'est-à-dire régime autoritaire) et oui à la possibilité de perdre des élections et d'amorcer encore des changements par cette loi ou bien est-ce qu'on est dans une phase cubaine, biélorusse dans lesquels on serait face à un régime où il n'y a que le choc frontal de possible.

Pour l'instant, nous ne savons pas où nous allons, c'est une question fondamentale : avec quelle Serbie allons-nous travailler ? Ce sont des choses sur lesquelles nous devons réfléchir. Vis-à-vis de l'opposition, il faut être très clair, on a réussi plus ou moins à créer une coalition même si des options divergentes demeurent. Le succès est modeste. D'autre part, nous avons eu tendance à faciliter les réunions à l'étranger qui ont eu un effet parfois négatif sur l'opinion

publique serbe. Un profil plus bas et une discrétion dans l'aide est probablement nécessaire. Dans la société civile, il convient de souligner le maintien d'une sorte d'élite européenne qui pourrait préparer un changement.

Un des problèmes cruciaux est lié aux médias : pour l'essentiel il me semble qu'il faut avant tout aider les journalistes serbes sur place. Tant qu'il existera des stations de télévision ou de radio privées, des agences et des journaux privés d'orientation démocratique, il existera une sorte de pluralisme. Il doit se défendre sur place une information faite sur place est infiniment supérieure à une délocalisation, sauf des moyens techniques, si nécessaire. L'autre point est le bilan économique des sanctions qui m'apparaît globalement négatif et contre-productif. Il est sûr que cela gêne le gouvernement serbe, et ceux qui y sont liés : cela augmente le prix des transactions, mais est-ce que cela va beaucoup plus loin et atteint ceux que nous cherchons à atteindre ? D'autre part, ces sanctions sont-elles efficaces pour ce qui reste de l'économie serbe ? On peut en douter. Nous renforçons en revanche le système de fraude sous l'égide de l'Etat et risquons en revanche de voir se créer une sorte de structure criminalisée qu'il sera difficile de ne pas voir survivre, même après l'alternance. D'autre part, l'image de l'Europe n'en sort pas grandie : le régime a beau jeu de reporter sur les sanctions les conséquences de ses fautes. Si l'on ne peut remettre en cause immédiatement la plupart des sanctions déjà décidées, sans doute conviendrait-il que l'on réfléchisse désormais à deux fois avant d'en prendre de nouvelles.

Alors comment amorcer la transition ? Si nous voulons le changement, c'est par la diversification et l'intensification de certains contacts que nous pourrions y aider, afin de maintenir et encourager les forces de changement ; c'est aussi, par exemple, la réflexion sur le travail avec des municipalités d'opposition qui pourra le permettre. Il y a là matière à réflexion autour des questions : Que peuvent attendre les serbes de nous et comment pouvons-nous générer le changement ? A côté de la piste du changement intérieur, il serait peut-être aussi d'ores et déjà utile de penser pour l'avenir à une réinsertion conditionnelle dans certains flux européens et mondiaux de ce pays si nous voulons éviter d'avoir un nouveau Cuba à nos portes ; or la Serbie n'est pas une île mais une partie de notre Europe, et son isolement durable, un danger pour la sécurité de la région. Il reste à se demander si l'oxygène ne serait pas plus fatal à ce régime que le cachot actuel.

Morton Abramowitz

I will focus my brief remarks mostly on Western policy and the Western approach toward Serbia's internal scene. First, we are dealing with many uncertainties. I remember very well two conversations I had in 1996-1997 with my 'cousin', Dragoslav Avramovic, the architect of Milosevic's inflation program. In 1996, he said to me, 'Milosevic has got 90 days; after 90 days he will have no more foreign exchange and he will be forced out.' In 1997, he said the same thing. I saw him last year and asked him what happened to Milosevic? He responded that Milosevic is hanging on pretty well. Predicting Milosevic's fading away with any degree of confidence is very difficult given his sustained longevity in power and his great tactical skill.

Secondly, I believe that it is very important how long he lasts, and there is a lot of difference whether it is one year or five years. He can still do much damage. This uncertainty goes to the heart of some problems of Western democracies. For example, in the United States, the change of administration –should there be a change to the Republicans– is deeply worrying in terms of our present posture in the Balkans. That possible change may be of great interest to Milosevic and may be one of the factors in the way he looks at things and increases his determination to hang on.

It makes a big difference in the way Western publics, and democratic governments act on the Milosevic issue. For the former Yugoslavia, our policy vis-à-vis Serbia is essentially a short term one, to avoid basic decisions until Milosevic is gone. At a minimum, it aims to prevent him from doing any more damage elsewhere, given his capacities still to act in Montenegro and elsewhere. Beyond that short term, I do not think the Western aims in Serbia and Kosovo are very clear.

Currently, there is disagreement within the alliance and within alliance countries as to what should be done. The general belief is that things will be better once he is gone. How they will be better, what would be constructed, remains a very illusive subject. I think our present lines of policy are well known: diplomatic isolation, sanctions, and support of the opposition to Milosevic.

There are differences between the allies on the sanctions, which certainly Milosevic perceives. Sanctions have their detractors particularly now that the Chinese and the Russians are deeply involved. On diplomatic isolation, the support is mixed: you have China, Russia, Australia, Mexico, and a few other countries expressing their reservations over the isolation of Serbia. Many countries are now reopening diplomatic missions at lower levels. Also, clearly the opposition has not been able to mobilise public support, and this has been perhaps the weakest link in our efforts to try to change the situation. In any event, while Milosevic is clearly in trouble, our policy has not been very successful in doing what it has sought to do – to remove him from power.

Let me come to some specific thoughts. Our policy has not been successful and I think we're playing out the last round in terms of the upcoming elections: the hope that by continued support to the opposition they will translate the elections into a referendum on Milosevic and the opposition will come out on top.

If that doesn't work, I think we have to look at some other ways of dealing with Milosevic: Do we move from a short term policy trying to remove him from power to a longer term time frame? Do we (the West) devise a policy that considers him ruling Serbia for a longer period? What would be some of the elements of such a policy if we were to consider Milosevic to have a much longer longevity?

First, it seems to me that there is a need for an absolute disengagement from Vuk Draskovic. I believe that for a variety of reasons, we should totally rid ourselves of dealing with him.

Secondly, we should even think whether its time to disengage from those we have called 'the opposition.' They clearly don't have the support of the people – they have not been able to mobilise the public for many reasons. They have not been able to work together. Do we tell the opposition, 'You are on your own. We wish you the best of luck?' And then, we look for those remaining elements of the opposition which we think are serious about changing the situation – perhaps some local mayors, certainly Otpor.

Third, we continue assisting civil society and independent media supporting people who might generate serious alternatives to Milosevic and secure some public support.

Next, we should consider other sets of measures to weaken his rule. We could, and I believe should, move toward a final status on Kosovo, for example. Whether that is something that would be helpful or harmful is open for debate.

Finally, this may sound crazy – I'm not sure if I believe it myself -, but we should consider to stop worrying about Serbia so as long as we protect ourselves against Milosevic's capacities to creating trouble. The Balkans can survive without the Serbs. I'm obviously not saying that this is a desirable situation. We all like to see Serbia incorporated into Europe and integrated into the Western World. But maybe we can do without worrying about it for awhile. I'm not sure what that means in practice but, I thought, that in reconsidering our approach to Serbia, we should consider whether by detaching ourselves, we can be more effective in bringing about desired change in Serbia. We should consider whether a policy of disengagement is more likely to produce results than what we have been doing for the last two years.

Thomas S. Countryman

It is a great discussion, there are a hundred different things I would like to comment or agree or disagree with. But I will stick to much less than a hundred.

First, not to restate our entire policy but a couple of guiding ideas of our policy that I think are often overlooked, sometimes by ourselves need commenting. *Second*, I will comment on a couple of things happening in Serbia. And *third*, I will focus most of my remarks on the issue of sanctions and to be first provocative and then cooperative on that subject.

1. Guiding ideas of policy

- The *first* of the principles (or assumptions) that guide us is that we do not know the means by which regime change will come in Belgrade. We do not know if it is elections. We do not know if it is a revolution. We do not know if it is a coup. We have to be prepared to support things that move the political dynamic in the direction of change. We would certainly prefer it to be non-violent than violent but the fact is we cannot control nor can we guide the people in Serbia towards one of those results to the exclusion of the others.
- *Second*, our policy of support for democratic forces in Serbia must be both long-term and short-term. It has to be long-term because we know that Milosevic's demise will not immediately result in genuine democracy in Serbia and, therefore, we devote a significant chunk of our assistance to NGOs in Serbia that are building long-term civil society in a variety of areas. At the same time, it has to be short-term because – you can never be certain but the chances are – there will be some kind of elections this year. We do not assume that elections will change the regime but they will change the dynamic. They will either give strength to the democratic forces and take it away from Milosevic or, as is also possible, the opposition could be so weak that Milosevic could win without cheating and that changes the dynamic in a very negative direction. So there does need to be a focus on the short-term as well. Quite frankly, I think, we are not doing badly in our funding choices in keeping those two ideas in front of us, both short-term and long-term. Most of our assistance does not go anywhere near political parties in Serbia; it is going to NGOs, the independent media and a new category we have started giving aid to in the past months, the municipalities in Serbia.
- The *third* principle that all of us must articulate better is that: the regime must be isolated; the people must not be. The regime has chosen isolation. In fact, the isolation that the people in Serbia feel is far more a result of deliberate regime policy and poverty than it is a result of any sanctions currently in place. We recognise as the United States that we probably have a special responsibility to make very clear that the US will not go back to dealing with Milosevic. It simply will not happen regardless of who is Secretary of State or who is President. We need to make it more clear to Milosevic that he cannot expect in the future to try to save himself the way he thinks he did in 1996 and 1997. At the same time, we have to make it more clear through more cultural exchange programmes, through better publicity for the very substantial amount of humanitarian aid that we give Serbia, that the people are not isolated either from Europe or from the US.

2. Developments in Serbia

A couple of quick comments on the political situation in Serbia. There are three problems with the Serbian opposition parties.

- *First*, they appear to spend more time going to conferences than going out door-to-door campaigning and getting ready for an election.
- *Second*, the other great weakness of the opposition is that what they talk about are Milosevic's issues. They talk about Kosovo, they talk about sanctions. Those are not their issues. Those are Sloba's issues. They are not out talking about Europe, talking about democracy, talking about the economy and an end of corruption.
- The *third* comment is on the internal situation. There is some disagreement as to whether OTPOR is quaint and interesting or whether it is a dynamic and very new and powerful variable. I tend towards the latter view. They are so unlike anything that Serbian politics has seen that neither the regime nor the opposition knows how to deal with them. Again I cannot predict how it is going to play out but it sure is a lot more exciting than anything we have seen from either the regime or the opposition till now and I think that they could have a decisive effect.

3. Sanctions

Let me talk a little bit about sanctions. Most of the arguments we hear from the Serbian opposition about ending sanctions right now are very poor arguments. They do not make economic sense and they do not make political sense. And they do not even attempt to address the reasons that the US and the EU and others put the sanctions on in the first place. There have been more sophisticated arguments presented here that I want to react to but let me first start doing it in a more provocative way that I usually use with members of the Serbian democratic forces.

What are the sanctions that we are talking about today? When some people speak shorthand about sanctions, you would think that these are sweeping sanctions like those that the United Nations has imposed on Iraq or like the US has unilaterally imposed on Cuba. In fact they are nothing of the sort, they do not come anywhere near those standards. They do not come anywhere near the sanctions that Serbia has imposed on Montenegro, which the Serb opposition is strangely silent about condemning. These are, in response to our allies in the EU and in response to our own experience in sanctions over the years, the most regime-targeted sanctions the international community has ever employed. They should be even more so and they are gradually becoming more so but they are not generally targeted at the entire population as so many sanctions of regimes in the past have. Whether you are sitting in this room or whether you are sitting with the Serbian opposition, to talk about sanctions in this general sense, as if this is Iraq or Cuba, only serves Milosevic and aids his argument that these are massive, onerous sanctions that have destroyed the Serbian economy, and therefore Serbs must stick together.

What are the real sanctions which are in place today and what is their effect? Let us start with the one that really needs to be discussed, which is the oil embargo. Yes, there is an oil embargo levied. Yet gasoline is cheaper in Belgrade than it is in Paris or in nearly any other

place that any of us live. There is a real effectiveness of that embargo: we know that it is a little harder for Milosevic to keep his army and police running, we know that in some ways it makes it easier for the leading Mafia figure in Serbia today, whose last name is also Milosevic, to keep his supply of black market gasoline running. We can talk about the oil embargo but so far, I have not seen anywhere, and certainly not from some very talented economists in Belgrade, an economic analysis of the real effects of the oil embargo in terms of hardship for the people and in terms of enriching the regime. I did see this latest paper 'Sanctions only hurt Milosevic' from the Institute of Policy Studies which has tolerable economic arguments and very weak political arguments. It does not talk specifically about the oil embargo, it talks about sanctions of the last seven years having a negative effect. We know that sanctions have had a negative economic effect over the years. If you want to change something today, do not talk about the sanctions in effect in 1995, talk about the sanctions in effect now and how you would like to see them change.

Other sanctions which are in place, for example, are those keeping Serbia out of the IMF and World Bank. If Serbia were in those institutions today, there is no conceivable way that there would be any money from those institutions for this regime. That is not what is hurting the economy. The sanctions that count and that we have focused on in alliance with the EU are targeted sanctions: e.g., the visa ban, which is generally well-enforced and has a very significant psychological effect, even though occasionally some people on the visa-ban list get visas to go to some EU countries; and financial sanctions which are going after the assets and the transactions that are at the heart of the Mafia government. Those sanctions are supported by the opposition and they have the effect of weakening the ability of the government to continue with repression. If nothing else, they create a lot of new problems for the government. I simply cannot agree that those have been counter-productive or have had no effect. They have had a limited effect in part – and again to be provocative – because most member states of the EU have done little to enforce those sanctions. The visa ban has been enforced. With regard to financial sanctions, the majority of member states of the EU have no employee of the government dedicated to enforcement of these sanctions. They think that either they are self-enforcing or 'maybe our companies will come to us and report a sanctions violation.' That will not happen; there must be active enforcement.

Let me make two points on which I disagree strongly with a previous speaker. One, sanctions did not create criminality in Serbia. Yes, there is a certain extent to which ordinary people may have to break EU sanctions to get by but that is not what created the criminality which emanates from the top and that permeates every institution in Serbia. Secondly, the sanctions in place do not prevent aid to municipalities and to democratic forces in Serbia. Yes, controls on bank accounts make it a little bit harder but they do not prevent us from giving assistance. They have not prevented 'Energy for Democracy'. The main obstacle there was the Milosevic customs people not the EU sanctions. Sanctions will not prevent any of us from expanding aid to municipalities.

So, with the provocative comments over, let me try to sum up that, yes, there is a need for a discussion on sanctions, there is a constant need to make them more targeted, more focused, make clear what the real effect is in our own minds.

If you would like to see the US change policy, whether you are in the EU, in the opposition, in a think tank or whatever, let me give you three suggestions of how you do that.

1. Do not talk about sanctions like it was a simple fact like bombing. It is a lot more complicated than that and to talk about the 1995 sanctions instead of the year 2000 sanctions does not advance the dialogue.
2. Get a specific economic discussion of specific sanctions policies and, in particular, the oil embargo. I would be happy to see a good analysis – I have not seen one yet. Then make a suggestion as to how to modify sanctions in a way that benefits democratic forces and not the regime .
3. If you are the EU, enforce the sanctions that are agreed on, on which we actually spend some resources enforcing them.

If you do those three things, I think that all is possible in terms of further refining the focus of sanctions. I know I have been superficial. I know I have presented a more extreme side than exists. But it had to be done because the argument I hear most often – not so much today – but most often, is usually very simplistic about this big bogey-man called sanctions.

Alex Rondos

Let me compress some thoughts here because we in Greece have one foot in and one foot out and are usually dragged with both feet into the region so we try and convey a sense of how we see some of this.

First of all, I am glad, Mort, that you raised the larger issue because I think there is a choice here: it is 'why bother or how brutal should we be?' I think it has boiled down to that – that is, 'why give a damn?': well, we who are of the region do not have a choice. To us, to use an analogy used earlier, the Balkans is like having ten people locked in a steel room and someone fires a revolver, the ricochet will go on and on and on and a lot of people will get hit along the way. That is a bit how the Balkans tends to be so that any move made unilaterally regarding one entity has an automatic effect, often an effect generated by the perception of others not by the substance of the issue. But that is enough to engage a serious political debate. We live with it in Greece. We are just trying to get over some perceptions of Turkey but we are riddled with them about the Balkans and we are just one part of a set of human prejudices that guide politics. So I think that we have no choice but to bother and be concerned.

Now I would like to make sure that the discussion is not just about how we deal with Serbia because in fact the way we deal with Serbia has to be shaped and conditioned by the degree to which we synchronise what we do regarding the rest of the region and the reverberations of how they all feed upon each other as we act. There is Kosovo: if we move towards independence in Kosovo, we as Greeks would immediately turn around and say that is great but frankly our bigger concern is what are the implications for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia? Will it slither apart further and more quickly – because it is not exactly sticking together very well right now. So there are a whole set of implications for us. Secondly, with regard to Kosovo, are we talking about what is independence as a sort of fig leaf covering some of the uglier parts of a system? Or are we talking about a region, which actually needs to have the real paraphernalia and substance of a democracy? We are all for the idea, for example, that in Kosovo there should be something in place, if not independence, that allows the Kosovars to govern themselves. This is a badly-run colony at the moment, without even the prospect of good decolonisation. Let them show that they can run what they have and be held accountable for it. And then they are welcome to have any future they want. What we do not need is a pretty ugly scene – and it is not just Kosovo, but in Albania as well.

We have not gone even into the subject of organised crime. We are talking about a series of captive states. We use euphemisms like the paralegal and the grey economy and things like this. The fact is that criminals are running amok and they are influencing policy.

Let me then turn now to Serbia where I think that there are some important issues which we should bear in mind. First of all, this is a fin de regime – it could be quite protracted – but it is a fin de regime and that is the important thing to understand. The dogs are beginning to eat each other. It is a bit like the Lord of the Flies. They are isolated, they are among themselves, and they have chosen the path of incivility and beginning to eat each other. And who chooses to do it to whom is part of trying to understand the situation in Serbia better.

Secondly, I do not dismiss 'Otpor'. I think there we should move beyond cold precise analysis and think of the passions involved in the region. These are kids – 18 to 30 year olds. It

reminds me of 1970, 71, 72 in Greece. I know what it took to finally decide to say: 'well, if that is what it takes – some of us will be very badly hurt, severely beaten up, possibly even killed, but it seems that we are going to have to go through with it.' This propensity to martyrdom, which is a very important element culturally and politically, is there for the first time – and I can only talk intuitively – and we cannot simply dismiss this. Nor should one swamp it with all this external patronage and I may say among us – and I did tell him personally - the worse thing that could be done to them was to be given a public seal of approval from Jamie Shea. Let us get serious and let us be responsible. My fundamental point is that we are talking about the emergence of something which looks like a movement as opposed to the sum of a bunch of parties, which in practice have tended to mirror the governing parties in the way they run themselves as parties. This has been the fundamental weakness of the Serbian system. Therefore, if what it takes is that the youth are going to be the chorus of this Greek tragedy then let them hold everyone accountable and enable them to blackmail the rest into behaving more responsibly and more effectively.

Finally, let me try and make some more specific suggestions. First of all, the object here is to drive wedges. If we want to be serious, let us try to drive wedges into the system in order to separate people who at the moment appear to have all the incentives to be joined. That means among the top ruling group, separate the business élite from those who are their patrons and separate the whole élite from the masses. Then separate, perhaps, those within the masses who claim to be party representatives of the opposition but seem to be behaving in a contrary manner. And thus, this discussion about a 'Ceausescu scenario' which is even being echoed in Belgrade by quite a number of people could be more than purely academic.

Secondly, from outside, there has got to be more coordination. Frankly, the approach of the international community if one is sitting in Belgrade is that it is as Balkanised as the Balkans themselves. All we are doing is ironing wrinkles by our own behaviour.

Three, if we are to act, let move quickly. Let us meet targets. When we say we are going to fund something, then let us deliver. We are now talking about a political campaign to unseat a regime; it cannot be run like a normal bureaucracy. People are polite in Serbia as a whole. They will say 'thank you, your assistance helped us'. Nevertheless, the fact is it took up to six weeks to deliver and make the first disbursement under the Energy for Democracy initiative. In those circumstances, six weeks is a lifetime politically. A fundamental principle is that we should disengage from the notion that we should only help those areas which have voted it democratic politicians. The object of politics is to win over the opposition and not to sing and feed the chorus. The strategy should be that it is who you work through which is far more important than where you work and let them try to guide us through what is the most effective way of creating some change.

That leads to the issue of the flexibility on sanctions. I happen to believe that the sanctions policy in place is a bit of a red herring as an issue. The issue is who is isolated and who is not and how effectively isolated they are. We should not waste time on the technicalities. That is not to say that there is not a justifiably strong view on a variety of aspects of sanctions but there is a much larger issue: isolation and non-isolation. Within that context, remember something about Serbia – if you are put on a white list outside, you are automatically put on a black list inside. If you are on the visa ban list, that is actually a badge of loyalty to the regime. This leads me to the much more mischievous notion that in fact we should turn all of this to our advantage.

The concluding remark and observation is that Serbia is living in an isolated bubble of its own where the role of information and the importance of the way in which it is used is in proportion to its very isolation. Frankly, there all sorts of things that one could be doing to confuse the enemy, which we are not doing effectively enough. That is something that could be done only at certain levels, by certain people who are organised and able to do it; but it goes back to the degree of coordination that is needed.

PROGRAMME

TASK FORCE ON SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE SESSION I: ASSESSING SERBIA

Paris, 26 May 2000

Programme

Thursday 25 May

20.00 **Dinner**

Friday 26 May

9.30 – 9.50

Opening and Introduction
Nicole Gnesotto

9.50 – 11.00

Session 1: *The Situation today in Serbia*
Presentations by Susan Woodward and Tim Judah

11.00 – 11.20

Coffee Break

11.20 – 13.00

Session 2: *Evaluating the international community's policies*
Discussants : Christian Thimonier and Morton Abramowitz

13.00 – 14.30

Lunch

14.30 – 16.00

Session 3: *Future policy options*
Discussants : Franz-Lothar Altmann and Dimitrios Triantaphyllou

PROGRAMME

GROUPE DE RÉFLEXION SUR L'EUROPE DU SUD-EST SESSION I : L'ÉVALUATION DE LA SERBIE

Paris, 26 mai 2000

Programme

Jeudi 25 mai

20.00 *Dîner*

Vendredi 26 mai

9.30 – 9.50

Ouverture et accueil
Nicole Gnesotto

9.50 – 11.00

1^{ère} Session : *La Serbie aujourd'hui*
Présentations : Susan Woodward et Tim Judah

11.00 – 11.20

Pause café

11.20 – 13.00

2^{ème} Session : *Evaluation des politiques de la communauté internationale*
Intervenants : Christian Thimonier et Morton Abramowitz

13.00 – 14.30

Déjeuner

14.30 – 16.00

3^{ème} Session : *Les options politiques de l'avenir*
Intervenants : Franz-Lothar Altmann et Dimitrios Triantaphyllou

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