

## **Pointless Opposition**

**Author:** [IWPR](#)

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After months of fanfare the grand, decisive, subversive, ultimately democratic, most significant, historical, unifying ... rally of the United Serbian Opposition (the what?!) finally went ahead.

The rally earlier this month was, allegedly, a success. To rouse 200,000 people onto the streets of Belgrade (well 20,000 if you believe the arithmetically illiterate state media), to gather them in one place and hold their attention for two hours is no small achievement.

Especially, for the twenty-odd tiny factions that make up the United Serbian Opposition.

These are the people who can agree on nothing - not even in theory. Only their fantastical, sci-fi ambition to somehow become the new Milosevic binds this bunch together.

And now the worst thing that could have happened to the United Serbian Opposition has happened. The rally was a success. Now what?

Judging by the shallow-minded speeches from Vuk Draskovic, Vojislav Kostunica and others, high hopes are pinned on free, fair and especially democratic elections. Only an idiot could believe Milosevic will allow any elections, never mind "fair" elections.

Especially at the moment when, isolated from the world, he enjoys the freedom to do exactly what he pleases in his Serbian concentration camp - shutting down television stations, bankrupting newspapers with his spurious fines, arresting, sentencing and assassinating whomever he sees fit.

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One need look no further than the meetings with that unfortunate write-off, crown prince Alexander and his royal council, a comedy troupe of impotent nationalists and, last but not least, representatives of the Serbian diaspora, who boast the catchy motto - "Without a Crown, Serbia's Down".

Such meetings are the acts of desperate men, or at best a propaganda exercise aimed at local royalist morons.

The very same United Serbian Opposition, as illustrated by the speech of Vojislav Kostunica, was outraged by the sole sensible speech delivered at the Belgrade rally. Nenad Canak dared to warn that the Milosevic regime would not escape punishment for leading Serbs to wars without end.

The majority of Serbian opposition leaders can find only one major fault with Milosevic - he lost the wars. Had he led the country to victory, then there would be no problems!

This fascistic logic leads naturally to resistance to The Hague Tribunal. Surprise, surprise - it is anti-Serbian, a NATO stooge, lacks legitimacy, is pro-American and anti-Orthodox. The regime and the opposition both agree not one Serb is guilty of war crimes, there were no war crimes, and if there were, Serbs did not commit them. Serbs are always the victims, never the killers!

War criminals walk freely around Belgrade - those wanted by The Hague and those who wouldn't even venture to the toilet without bodyguards. But there are others too. Those who work as journalists and editors at Radio Television Serbia, in Borba, in Politika. Then there are the government ministers and deputy premiers.

The opposition, whether united or divided, needs to make a few decisive, painful steps: to voice support for The Hague court and promise the extradition of all those accused; to co-operate as much as possible with western countries; to set aside the Kosovo question for the next couple of decades and to publicly acknowledge there is not even the remotest likelihood of Serbian soldiers and police returning to the province; to support the diplomatic recognition of all our neighbouring states, especially Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia.

We should finally establish normal relations with Slovenia; speak publicly about the war crimes in Srebrenica and expose the true nature of that great war hero - Ratko Mladic; we should destroy the stereotypes, which paint Albanians as people of inferior race; and opposition leaders should challenge the political trials orchestrated against Albanians.

Without such developments, Serbs face a stark choice - Slobodan Milosevic or Prince Alexander.

And what happens in the meantime?

Nothing. The opposition will continue to pronounce a million statements for us to listen to on TV and read about in newspapers. They will continue to "resolutely protest", "demand" and "condemn"... Meanwhile, life in Serbia grinds on to Milosevic's tune, a people isolated and reduced to scrounging in dustbins.

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