

MINIMISING RESISTANCE TO REFORMS AND THE INTEGRATION OF SERBIA

There is no doubt that the existing resistance to reforms in Serbia and to its re-integration into the international community are not a result of past or present activities by individuals, political parties and overt and covert lobbies. This resistance also enjoys mass support, sometimes structural in nature (fashioned by interests or values), at other times created, sustained or at least partially eroded by manipulation and propaganda. The objective of the project is detecting the exponents of the mass resistance to reform and drafting a plan for an efficacious campaign of minimising their magnitude and influence. Diverse political, criminal, economic and other factors in the country resisting reform and Serbia's world re-integration communicate with their "mass base" in different ways. Certain social groups, in particular unskilled labourers, suburban dwellers, rurally-based workers who also manage their land holdings and elderly people in general were seen in the past decade as the main opponents of Serbia's modernisation and linkage with neighbouring western-Balkan countries and the international community as a whole. These are biologically and economically uncompetitive strata whose attitudes are according to their electoral orientations and the results of numerous studies characterised by outdated communist egalitarianism, ethnic nationalism, xenophobia and an anti-market bias. As a rule these traits are not isolated, but mainly structured as a relatively solid xenophobic-egalitarian syndrome in which the individual characteristics are interwoven and inter-supportive. The people in question have always served as the mass base of support for those segments of the Serbian society (parts of the former federal authorities and the military establishment, the extreme right- and left-wing parliamentary opposition, the Serbian Orthodox Church, independent centres of power) whose interests lie in drawing out Serbia's hibernation. Minimising resistance will only be achievable through a broad media campaign adapted to the receptive characteristics of the aforementioned target group. It is necessary to find the channels of media and informal communication through which these socially uncompetitive groups fashion their attitudes in order to exert influence on them and weaken the support enjoyed by the anti-reform forces.

The project is based on a study covering the suburban and rural worker population, and pensioners of a relatively lower educational level, conducted on a quota-type sample with the following aims:

- observation of the existing situation in regard to the magnitude and extent of the resistance to Serbia's opening;

- detection of significant differences between firm opponents of reform and re-integration and those partially or wholly receptive to political and other influence;
- detection of the factors and formal and informal channels of communication which serve to strengthen or weaken resistance to a policy of reform and re-integration, especially during the periodic crises situations;
- detection of factors of effective conditionality which could reverse the views of at least some of the opponents, i.e., assessment of the level of readiness to pay a certain price for persevering in resistance to reform;
- identification of the most suitable channels of communication for organising a pro-reform campaign aimed at minimising resistance.

It needs to be kept in mind constantly that two decades ago a huge segment of the lowest social strata in Serbia and the other former socialist countries became the victims of new technologies and that there is a constantly falling need for their labour. This means that resistance to reform is often the result of realistic interests, even if only short-term. But these interests are not only temporally limited, they are usually also in a latent conflict with the interests of other groups in the same social stratum.

The planned sample

The use of a quota sample was determined by the aim of the project, which was not the conducting a cross-population study, but collecting information which would make possible the aforementioned action. The plan called for surveying a total of 1,000 respondents (all of them of Serbian nationality, so as to eliminate deviations generated by ethnic factors). One-quarter of the sample was to be made up of pensioners of a lower educational level, another quarter of unemployed persons, a third of skilled workers and the last quarter of unskilled labourers (or their spouses, should they be at home during the field interviews). One-half of the contacts were conducted in the suburbs of Belgrade, Niš, Kragujevac and Kikinda, and the other half in surrounding villages, where a large segment of the Serbian working class live. Efforts were made to include among the unemployed and retired persons as many respondents as possible who have no qualifications, as this group is of especial significance for the project and also one very difficult to “catch” during work in the field. Skilled workers were treated as an analytically significant separate group, with a special role in the dissemination and modification of relevant conceptual content; this will be discussed later. With the exception of Kikinda, surveying suburban dwellers and those of rural settlements attached to industrial towns called for the selection of big cities, where these types of settlements have relatively clearly defined characteristics attended by specific traits of their populations. It is disputable whether the working-class rural populations of the greater Belgrade area can be regarded as typical working-class

populations in the full sense of the term. No major differences were seen between these groups and those who live around the other towns covered by the study.

Given that in the cognitive sense the aim of the study was orientational rather than descriptive or experimental and that the intention was not to test preconceived assumptions but to acquire knowledge intended to help resolve a concrete problem, the sample covered areas with the most pronounced problems related to the subject. The aim was not to carry out an assessment of behaviour in the immediate future, which would call for a probability sample, but to obtain reliable and usable data on the basic problem. It was also kept in mind that all probability samples have a tendency of growing into quota samples.

Collection of data took place in February and March 2003. The specific circumstances surrounding the dramatic events of 12 March were not seen by the interviewers to have a significant influence on the reactions of respondents. This fact is important not only from the point of view of comparisons with data collected before and after the said period, but also on account of the numerous debates in the professional public about the impact of the state of emergency on respondents' answers in other contemporary studies.

The sample realised

A total of 962 questionnaires passed the strict logic control, done both manually and through an SPSS package data-base. The characteristics of the realised sample were defined by the aim of the project and manner of planning. The respondents were 61% men and 39% women.¹ Classified by age, 41% were over 50, 30% aged 32 to 50 %, and 29% were born in 1971 or later. All declared themselves as ethnic Serbs, although interviewers noted that the mother-tongue of some was certainly Romany. Classified by profession, 27% were pensioners, 22% skilled or highly-skilled workers, 14% unskilled or semi-skilled workers, 13% unemployed skilled or highly-skilled workers, 10% unemployed unskilled or semi-skilled workers, 5% housewives, 3% workers who also have agricultural holdings, and 6% others, mainly persons with no profession or education. The share of skilled workers appears excessive compared with that of those without qualifications; it was not possible to iron out this bias during the field work, regardless of the quota character of the sample. The problems interviewers had in locating unskilled workers, persuading them to talk and completing interviews could fill a book. But this does not affect analyses, as the absolute shares of both employed and jobless unskilled workers were statistically quite sufficient. Matters differ somewhat in respect of workers who also own land, whose total number in the study is borderline for statistical purposes; it should be noted that the majority declared themselves in accordance with their basic non-agricultural profession, as socially

¹ All percentages are rounded off to the nearest whole number.

more prestigious. Some 47% of the sample are rural dwellers, 42% live in suburbs and 11% are others. It is fully justified to assume that a large number of the rural dwellers have at least vegetable plots and/or some livestock.

Only 9% have no formal education, 30% completed primary school, 27% workers' schools and 23% vocational schools, and the rest secondary moderns or even higher education. This last group is certainly not of importance for the realisation of the aims of the project - their participation in the sample could not have been avoided. Unfortunately, the share of illiterate respondents could not be higher. It should also be noted that we know of no other study which succeeded in obtaining such an unfavourable respondent structure yet one very favourable in the context of the realisation of the aims of the project.

Regional representation was not taken into account in the planning of the sample or the analysis. General experience has shown that differences between the province of Vojvodina and central Serbia are small and diminishing, except in the ethnic sphere. Earlier studies have shown Vojvodina to have a slightly higher standard of living. One rigid variable, such as electoral preferences, indicates that compared with the rest of the country Vojvodina has an excess of extremists, particularly right-wing radicals.

On the subject of informal links, as a rule respondents associate with people slightly above them socially. More accurately, when asked about the profession of their best friends, most choose someone one step higher than them on the social scale. The structure of our respondents' friends includes 36% skilled and highly-skilled workers, 15% pensioners, 10% unskilled and semi-skilled workers, 8% housewives etc. If we disregard housewives, who are often designated as the best friends of women old-age pensioners, it is very important that most respondents pick someone just slightly higher than they are on the social scale. This is of course psychologically completely understandable, but also sociologically and practically significant, as it points to one of the channels of influence thought with some justification to be active in the shaping of personal opinions. Declarative designation of one's best friend also points to the choice of those one respects in one's circle. It is evident without any special analysis that pensioners and unskilled workers opt disproportionately for skilled workers. This group is believed to represent the nucleus of changes or resistance to them; it is up to the analysis to prove or disprove that assumption.

Respondents are well linked in functioning informal groups. Asked whom they would approach if they needed a loan or help to solve problems such as employment or medical needs, 47% listed their extended families, 36% friends, 5% neighbours and another 5% colleagues at work. The number of those who had no one to ask for help was negligible. Informal group linkage may explain why many of the people surveyed have no reserves whatsoever; however, most are able to at least cover their basic needs, if not more.

Most respondents are religious believers: church-going (22%) or ritualistic (58%); this finding mirrors those of other polls in Serbia covering the adult population. In Serbia's ever turbulent present, the problem of identity is one of the biggest and most important in practice, and (whether declarative or genuine) faith has for years held a place whose importance cannot be ignored.

At first sight, respondents weren't overly pessimistic when describing changes in their standard of living in the preceding year's time. Some 40% said little change had happened in that period, 38% said their life had worsened, 15% that it had improved, and the rest were undecided. It should be borne in mind in the assessment of these findings that social reforms in Serbia only picked up pace in the past two years and that the first years of reform are those in which the uncompetitive groups pay the highest price. This period can be said to have begun after 5 October 2000, although the first steps in implementing economic privatisation, introducing political pluralism and giving in to globalisation trends were taken by the preceding regime, albeit with much reluctance and constant resistance to change. In any case, the question of continuity or lack of it in the development of Serbian society before and after 5 October is a separate subject requiring a completely different approach.

The material status of respondents and their position in informal structures of importance to their survival were investigated through two indicators used in a series of earlier surveys. Whether or not those studies were based on probability or quota samples, in the past two years their findings had been more favourable than those which will be set out here. Asked how their families would fare if compelled to gather a large sum of money (say, 50,000 dinars) in one week, 11% of the respondents said their savings would cover such a sum and 46% that they could get a loan, 11% would have to sell some of their belongings and 32% would simply not be able to obtain such a sum, even in an emergency. It should of course be kept in mind that the sample covers mainly unskilled and uncompetitive adults. Nevertheless, the findings indicate that a considerable segment of the sample exist on the very brink of genuine poverty, however it may be defined. The threshold, as defined in the manner given above, has been passed by only one-third of those polled, while the rest are teetering on it at bare survival level. Asked what they or their family members had had to forgo in the preceding year's time, 27% of the respondents said they had not had to give anything up, 39% forewent luxury items and 23% non-essentials, and 12% said that they were unable to cover even their vital needs. It is quite obvious that making any new radical steps further reducing the standard of living - seen by many as unavoidable for effecting successful reforms - would inevitably push many people off the rope on which they are delicately balancing their lives while meeting their basic needs. Conversely, it is evident that the group of people who are by all indications not prepared for the onset of reforms contains an unexpectedly large share of those able to maintain a relatively high level of meeting their needs. But when the responses to this question are compared with those to the preceding one, we can see that even this last group consists of people who spend what they've got, without the benefit of any

reserves or any prospects for reacting to a possible altered situation without a further fall in the quality of living. The conclusion is that there are in fact now far fewer of those who are immediately threatened than of those whom further negative changes would place in that same situation.

Plan of the Analysis

The intention was to observe attitudes to the country's integration into the world community through the incidence of xenophobia and bias against certain states deemed hostile, attitudes towards reforms by evaluating the measure of egalitarianism expressed through preferred personal income ratios and views on privatisation, and the incidence of nationalism through attitudes towards the Tribunal at the Hague and, even more directly, through opinions about the future of the Bosnian Serb Republic (RS). It is of course not in doubt that the link between ethno-nationalism and the attitude towards the Tribunal is far from crystal-clear. But the attitude towards the Tribunal indicates the measure of readiness to give some way or to resist the pressures of the international community (policy of conditionality) as the most important external factor of reform and integration of Serbia.

This readiness to yield or to resist makes it possible to determine the relevant differences between strong opponents of reform and integration and those who could be persuaded to partly or wholly alter their views and political orientation.

It is especially important to distinguish the factors and channels of informal communication which affect to any major extent the attitudes in relation to the fundamental problem. The duration of the rule of Slobodan Milošević is often seen as a result of media manipulation. While not intending to minimise the influence of the media on the attitudes of those who make up the foundations of the resistance to change, other public and informal factors are often also very important: political parties, various public figures, employers, neighbours, co-workers... When the realised sample was described, it was seen that the people covered were well linked in informal groups, which in fact allow them to exist amidst the inevitable but also very social painful changes.

Economic Problems as Paramount

Like in many preceding surveys, respondents belonging to the social strata encompassed by this study are burdened by economic problems. Asked to list the most important problems encumbering the country, in 15% of all cases unemployment was ranked the highest, in 14% poverty, and in another 15% various other economic problems. Domestic politics, usually the topic of discussion among the professional public and those close to it, were listed as the most important problem by just 9% of the respondents (who are certainly not in the group of those fighting for the

spoils of the 2000 political change), under 2% pointed to the problem of Kosovo, and a like number to foreign relations, including those of Serbia with the Hague Tribunal. It is understandable that the people polled mention the problems that pain them; more interestingly, the rankings they gave in their responses to this question show little knowledge of the link between economic problems and domestic politics, and almost no awareness at all about the link between their personal circumstances and the country's position in the world. This is very important, if only because the biggest successes of the post-October government have arguably been achieved in the foreign policy sphere and its effects in easing the pains of economic transition. Even more interestingly, the most often mentioned individual problem was crime (34% of the respondents). This is partly the consequence of the 2003 state of emergency, seen in public as a response mounted by the state to organised and other crime. But in general, the two main problems perceived by the people are the economy and crime. The lack of insight into the links that exist between these problems and domestic and foreign politics (some analysts say the very state of Serbia and Montenegro was in fact created so that foreign factors might have an at least potentially efficient partner for contacts in connection with the suppression of economic and classical crime) is grounds to talk about the existence of much room for either manipulation or political advancement. The very infrequent reference to Kosovo as a key problem once again proves the absence of ethnic solidarity in a situation where an economic price is paid directly or where people feel that their security is threatened. Judging by the responses, ethnic questions are history, although one should not be too precipitate here. Views expressed about the future of the RS show the concealed virulence of ethnic nationalism. In any case, the ethnic dimension of political life in the Balkans can always easily be interlinked with the opening up of other social issues, something which needs no special argumentation. It might also be noted that surprisingly few respondents listed corruption as a pressing problem. This not only shows that corruption is taken for granted, but also represents a warning signal about the expected impact of anti-corruption campaigns among the target group of this study, or at least about the need to modify those campaigns appropriately. On the other hand, numerous respondents were seen to be informed about the privatisation process.

Asked what they believed were the biggest obstacles to the resolution of the problems they had listed, participants gave very diverse responses, which is not surprising, given their relative education level and the fact that political issues, let alone those relating to the structural limitations of social changes, are very complex and incomprehensible. Few (3%) pointed to the remnants of the former regime, while many more (19%) opted for the current authorities. It should be noted here that the survey was conducted in the period immediately before but also after the imposition of the state of emergency, when the spirit of the moment and the overall media picture were on the side of the authorities, which were nevertheless blamed by one-fifth of all respondents for society's crucial

problems. Another 19% said the biggest obstacle was the country's poverty, 8% chose disrespect for the law and the legal state, and only 2% pressures from without. The Milošević epoch can be seen to be bygone history in the minds of most respondents, whether it is viewed through its still active protagonists or the thesis about the existence of a world conspiracy against Serbia. Attention is focused on the incumbents, and they are blamed. It is relevant to list here some of the actual answers given: our government, lack of unity, our authorities, the age structure of the employed population, reinvigoration of the stalled economy, the non-involvement of the state, existing legislation, our bad economy, money, a shortage of will, inefficient institutions, a lack of resolve, the absence of effective laws, the government, money, disinterest, the existing legislation, abysmal laws, laws dating from before the times of Christ, politicians, a lack of resolve among politicians, the power struggle among politicians, a shortage of wise people, a shortage of authority, replacement of those in power, government policy, laws and their enforcement, general apathy, missing will for progress, a power struggle, misguided privatisation, an inefficient state, bad government policies, the incompetence of the leadership, the state is not functioning, the state leadership (incompetence, lack of will), underdeveloped democracy, disrespect for the Constitution and the law, a struggle among party leaders, the authorities do not heed workers, a lack of unity in the Parliament, a leadership which supported criminals, the poor performance of the police and courts, politicians are unwilling to compromise, etc. Regardless of the often naive wordings, it is surprising to note the distance between the responses and the media content that swamped the country in the first few days of the state of emergency, when the questioning was completed. The people, or at least those groups we surveyed, are clearly very, very tired. Their pessimism is not surprising in the circumstances, and their attitude towards those who shape Serbia's life will be clearer after the interpretation of the responses to the next questions.

Asked who they could rely on to resolve the said problems, 41% explicitly said either “no one” or “myself”, 31% listed the state and its authorities, 3% mentioned opposition politicians (mainly Koštunica), less than 2% politicians from the past regime, and almost no one mentioned by name any ruling political figure. Conversely, backing the state often implies confidence in those who head the state administration or some of the state's organs: no subtle differentiation exists here (e.g., responses fashioned in this way: the Government, the authorities, institutions, it should be the authorities, the state organs of authority, the ministry of justice, our army and our police etc.). Among the respondents' second choices, Koštunica and other figures close to him gained another 5% of the votes, mainly among those whose had opted for the state as their main choice. Although it would be wrong to interpret these responses as a direct expression of confidence in political figures or institutions, they do indicate the disappearance of the once ruling extremists as an option respondents can trust to resolve their problems. As to the chief obstacles to the resolution of the said problems, the incumbents were the first choice of 23% of the respondents, followed by "politicians" (12%), the political opposition

(11%), criminals (8%), foreign powers (7%) etc. Viewing all three choices, the authorities are seen as an obstacle to the resolution of the country's problems by 35% of all respondents, the opposition by 17%, foreign powers by 10% etc. The once common belief in a foreign conspiracy is obviously no longer convincing. But perception of the government as a national problem is clearly widespread. The formulations of the responses are also interesting in themselves; the following are seen as the main obstacles to the resolution of key problems: politicians and their missing resolve, the Government, the authorities, the ruling structures, the indolence of the authorities, the DOS, the authorities and criminals, segments of the authorities, the police, the minister of police, the state by its misguided affairs, disrespect for the law, the entire ruling apparatus, politicians in power, the executive, laws which weren't adopted and enforced, people who infiltrated the new authorities, leading groups, some high-ranking people, etc. Those who have power obviously also have responsibility; there does not appear here to be an intention to either defend or attack the authorities. The point is that the many of the respondents who are part of the surveyed group distrust a pro-reform government. The reasons for this will not be sought through cadre policy or the behaviour of the elites and their members, but in certain structural factors. Given that the respondents are more worried about economic than other problems, the focus will be on testing the assumption that egalitarianism is a dimension of the anti-reform syndrome and on the prospects for effecting a practical action in that area.

Egalitarianism as an Anti-reform Factor

Respondents were asked what ratio between the highest and lowest personal incomes they thought was justified. In most earlier surveys performed on probability samples, which make it possible to calculate estimates for the adult population of Serbia, there were about equal percentages (slightly over one-third of the samples) of those who believe in egalitarianism (a flat-wage policy or a ratio of no more than 3:1) and those who support a market economy (no income restrictions); the others were undecided. In this study, 19% supported equal wages for all and 35% said a 3:1 ratio was permissible. No personal income ceilings were supported by 29% of the respondents, and the rest chose solutions between the two extremes. Therefore, an absolute majority in our target groups support an extreme left-wing economic option rather than reforms; this finding should make only communists and crypto-communist happy.

Asked for their position on the manner in which privatisation is being effected in Serbia, one-half condemned it, a quarter expressed support, and the others are undecided or have a more moderate view. An effort to comprehend the grounds for the opposition requires quoting some of the actual responses given to the privatisation query: absolute rubbish, inopportune (too fast), both good and bad (good for the rich, bad for the poor), it is needed - but is too hasty (probably also unfair), it should last

seven or eight years, it's no good-they sold everything, all my worst, the circumstances are suspicious, the greatest evil - not effected well, unfair, it is bad - they just do what they want, they sold off the economy and left people without their jobs, f..k it!, it's just grabbism - grab what you can, selling off somebody else's property for a pittance, daylight robbery, deceit, theft, it should be done better - we may not privatise what is somebody else's, it's not good that people are losing their jobs, just a few people are buying up the entire economy, yes to privatisation - but no to laying off workers, companies should not be sold off for peanuts, not good - people are losing their jobs, workers are not properly protected when they work for a private employer, not privatisation but robbery, ideology - people lose their jobs, the source of the capital used for privatising social property is suspect, proceeding in an unfair manner, the problem is that firms are sold for a pittance, I'm not well informed - but it does not seem to be going as it should, unfair assessment of the value of companies, it's bad - property is being bought for a pittance, it is going on in an unfair manner, I think it isn't good because it means selling off for next to nothing, not good because people are losing their jobs, I don't like it because they've sold everything, etc.

Respondents were asked if they had heard of any cases of malfeasance in the privatisation process: 43% had not, 28% listed concrete cases of alleged or real abuses, and 18% said they believed there were some. Many did not want to answer this question. It is both interesting and significant for our purpose that respondents very often pointed to alleged or real abuses that had happened in other towns, even in distant parts of Serbia, leading to a conclusion that there is a well-developed common perception of this issue in the target groups. The cases listed included the following: the sugar factory (the origin of the funds is unclear - firms were deliberately ruined by their managers), Agroživ, Metalna industrija (Metal Industry) – a shambles, doesn't know exactly - unsure - maybe the Edible Oil Refinery, there are many, people are buying firms with money obtained through crime, Velež - the origin of the funds and their destination are unknown, Cementara (cement factory), Crvenka (sugar refinery), pretty much all of them - because they're selling them off for free, MK komerc, heard of some but declines to specify, Zaštita bilja - bought by a thief, several firms in my town, Zorka, sugar refineries in Vojvodina, Boje i lakovi, Dekor, Kostić paid 3 euros for the entire sugar refinery, 3000 euros for a whole factory in Aleksinac, Utva was sold for 50,000 euros, the nouveau riche are buying factories for next to nothing, abuses by workers, 3 euros for the sugar refinery, the Beočin cement factory, first they bankrupt them then they buy them, people from the criminal circles are buying up the economy, construction of flats in Karaburma in Belgrade, a factory in Kruševac was sold for 1 euro, I hear of new abuses every single day, the ordinary man is ill-informed about such abuses because he has no access to such things, Telekom Srbija etc.

Asked how they had learned about the privatisation abuses, 40% of our respondents (somewhat less than he preceding question) said they had heard of no such cases, 22% had heard on television,

17% from colleagues and neighbours, 11% on the radio, and 3% said they had seen such cases themselves etc. Although they had been asked to list the concrete sources of information, most respondents avoided to answer directly, instead using wordings such as: TV, newspapers, nothing can be hidden from the people, from colleagues, in conversation with others, I used my own intelligence, from the ether, *Novosti*, *Politika*, *B92*, I saw it myself, *RTS*, *Blic*, TV - can't remember the channel, I don't want to say, a TV station, neighbours, *Studio B*, *Radio 202*, *RTS* - parliamentary debate coverage, friends, out in the street, *BK TV*, in business contacts, *Danas*, neighbours, acquaintances, *TV Pink*, friends, family members, relatives, a relative, friends, I read *Svedok* and *Svet* - everything you need is in there, from neighbours who are employees of Dekor, what you can hear on any TV station, etc. The diversity of the sources is quite evident.

In spite of the overwhelmingly negative attitude to privatisation, respondents do see it as being inevitable and a part of a wave impossible to stop in the long term. Asked what they would change in the ongoing privatisation, just 6% would like it stopped completely and 3% slowed down, while 14% think the workers must be the main factor to be taken into account in the privatisation process. The others gave very diverse answers. Although mainly opposed to privatisation, few respondents were able to offer an alternative to it, as a part of the overall process or in respect of the way in which it is being performed. (One said: "I don't know, I guess that's the way it has to be; my own slogan is 'Optimism Towards Cataclysm!'") It should be recalled here that the question who those polled could rely on to resolve the biggest problems (mainly economic ones, as we have seen) elicited very few responses in favour of the once ruling extreme left wing. Regardless of their dissatisfaction with the government and its policies, those respondents who oppose reforms (an absolute majority) see no alternative, which of course does not mean that they could not become the mass base of an anti-reform alternative, should one appear in a more organised form.

It is worth quoting here some of the respondents' answers to the question of what they would change in the manner of privatisation: it should be managed by honest people like professor Čulić (?), workers' rights should always have precedence, workers must have greater insight into the process because they are kept out of it, it should be gradual - not so rapid, it should be faster and much more open, I would abolish it, you cannot have one man buying up everything, it should last longer, socially-owned firms should remain in that sector (firms buy one another), individuals should not be the only beneficiaries, it should be more realistic - sell "Zastava" and sell "Sartid", the source of the money of the buyers should be investigated, we should be realistic towards workers who have 20-30 years' service, workers should not be laid off, the owners should be investigated, workers must be granted benefits, I would replace the people who are managing the privatisation, we should not have the same people buying and selling, privatisation should be fair and the prices more realistic, I would never sell off enterprises for nothing, sell to domestic and not foreign investors, I would not lay off so

many workers, I would sell unprofitable firms to strong ones - not strong firms to mafiosi, more firms should be sold to our nationals, the workers should have primacy in the purchase, I would never allow profitable firms to be privatised, fewer firms should be sold to foreign buyers, a firm's employees themselves should be able to buy it, I would look into the source of the capital of those who are interested in buying state and socially-owned firms, I would never allow enterprises to be sold far below their real value, I would never sell successful firms which could remain under our control, a comprehensive social programme must exist, gradual privatisation - first workers' needs should be attended to, the economy should not be sold to foreigners, a stronger social policy - solve the problem of surplus labour, attitude towards the workers – redundancies, there must be security for workers, I would provide more public information, the source of the property of the buyers should be established, I am against privatisation, the unemployment problem must be solved - particularly for young people, declined to answer, fewer redundancies and more workers' rights, we should know who are the people who are buying the firms, nothing should be sold to criminals, workers should also have their say, privatisation should not be carried out - the economy must remain socially-owned, workers must be taken care of, privatisation should be halted - what is ours is ours, people should not be allowed to lose their jobs, there is nothing I could do if the privatisation is as they describe it on TV, more workers' participation, I would abolish it - maybe in some areas - but NO to all-out privatisation, I would abolish all property - even social property. Many of these statements might easily be employed as left-wing extremist party slogans; in fact many respondents surpassed party ideologues in respect of their ability to present their views in a concise and sharp fashion.

The attitude towards the economic reform, of which privatisation is an important segment and for our targets groups one of the most significant, is certainly not unconditional. Respondents were asked if they would support privatisation if it meant higher incomes but also a higher risk of being laid off; 43% replied positively, 36% were against. There were also quite many who were undecided or unable to answer. For the advocates of economic reform, this is a far better finding than many seen in the past. It seems that the respondents, however much they complain about unemployment and manner and outcome of the privatisation, have accepted, at least in public, the inevitability of job uncertainty. But having in mind their answers listed above, there is some doubt about their honesty when they voice views nowadays seen as politically correct and virtually sacred, almost as much as social ownership was 15 years ago.

Support for reforms undoubtedly depends on real interests and the real strength of the protagonists and the opponents. But we must also keep in mind that these phenomena are rarely isolated, but can rather be “packed” into various more complex political and social programmes and behavioural patterns. Delaying privatisation, as the former government practised, showed clearly how an anti-market orientation, xenophobia and ethno-nationalism can mutually strengthen each other.

Before we pass on to the interpretation of findings linked with these dimensions of the basic problem, we should also look at the responses to the following question: “Would you support privatisation if it brought about better wages, but also placed our economy in a position inferior to that of the larger economies?”. Faced with such a dilemma, support for privatisation dropped to 25% of the sample, while opposition to it grew to 51%; the rest were undecided and unsure. It is quite obvious that there still exists room for patriotic rhetoric and that the target groups can still be influenced by those who could be employing economic and allegedly patriotic ideological content put up resistance to the current reform course in Serbia.

Xenophobia and ethno-nationalism

There is no doubt that the foreign factor played a major role in speeding up the process of social change after 5 October 2000. Given the meagre resources of the country, it is natural to expect it to play such a role not only on the foreign-policy plane, but also Serbia's domestic policy and economy. The former regime pursued an unrealistic isolationist approach on the foreign-policy plane combined with mini-imperialism in the western Balkans framework; after its fall, the results achieved by the new government were of course far better, but were also easier to achieve. Conversely, the burden of the recent past, which was dominated by isolationism and xenophobia, without a doubt influences current feelings, and not just on the foreign policy plane.

Like in some other surveys, respondents were asked to name the three countries they believed were the most hostile towards ours. Mirroring the findings of the other surveys, the first choice of 48% was the United States. This number is very close to that obtained by applying the probability sample and has been relatively stable for a number of years. Neighbouring countries were the first-choice answer for 27% of the sample, western European countries for 13% etc. Just 6% said that no country was an enemy of Serbia. Among the second choices, the USA was chosen by 14%, western European countries by 36%, the neighbouring countries together by 20%. Among third choices, the USA was selected by 5%, western Europe by 30%, and the neighbouring countries by 17%. Some regularity is obvious. Most people view the West (without going into any exact definition of the term and linked associations) as a far bigger enemy than the Balkan rivals, where Croatia and Albania are ranked far higher than the other countries.

This survey mirrors all others in detecting a pronounced anti-American bias. Anti-Americanism exceeds anti-Western feelings as a whole, although adding up the incidences of all three rankings in this survey comes nowhere the scale of the loathing expressed for the USA in surveys covering elite groups. In the elite groups, general anti-Western feelings are less pronounced and anti-Americanism dominant; in this survey, however, the difference between the two is smaller, although the latter still

prevails. In the elite, anti-Americanism is often an expression of the rejection of cosmopolitanism, the contemporary replacement for internationalism, as that the USA, given its role in the processes of globalisation, has in many ways become a symbol of the denial of one's own ethnic and/or national tradition. Among the elite, anti-Americanism has therefore in many ways become a functional replacement for denying cosmopolitanism. On the other hand, members of the social elites exhibit little of the egalitarian tradition so characteristic of the respondents of this survey, because of their group affiliation, but also because they are probably more aware of trends which cannot be avoided.

Although they are certainly subject to the influence of the social elites, our respondents focus their condemnation on the USA, with a more pronounced tendency to link it with general anti-Western feelings. It is worth repeating that this conclusion is borne out by adding up the percentages of the three rankings. Circumstances have led the elites to forgo a broad anti-Western orientation, which is proving to be an anachronism and unproductive in many ways; our respondents, however, persevere in it. Before the reasons respondents give for their selection of countries hostile to Serbia are shown, it needs to be stressed that their responses indicate declining animosity towards the Balkan neighbours and once adversaries. Although those countries are still regarded as hostile by almost two-thirds of the sample (if all three rankings are viewed), they are nevertheless now far less so than in earlier surveys. Most respondents are less happy with the USA than the West as a whole, they separate the USA from the rest of the West less than the elite groups and their hostility to the Balkan neighbours continues, albeit lower in intensity than in other studies conducted in the past couple of years.

Asked how the said countries were showing their hostility towards Serbia, respondents specified a policy of conditionality and constant pressures (24%), followed by the 1999 NATO bombing (21%), hatred of the Serbs (17%), conflicts of economic interests (3%) etc., featuring numerous diverse answers. Some are worth quoting, as they point to the general manner of thinking: first they drive you into the ground then they pull you out of the mud, they are out to destroy us, they have territorial and religious and other claims, they don't like us - the German does not like you, they are working against Serbhood, we are their servants, they are blackmailing us, the war did what it did and he will never be a friend, they constantly veto us, the bastards killed everyone and bombed everything, that's how they punish disobedient peoples everywhere, they don't want co-operation on an equal basis and they extort and bully us, America is the enemy of the whole world, the Albanians and the Croats are jealous of us, the USA and England blackmail us and impose ultimatums and insane conditions, constant extortion and pressures, economic pressure, they demand too much, they set conditions which are impossible to fulfil, it is a conflict of cultures and religions, they dictate conditions, they keep issuing demands and blackmailing us, those countries' politics and economies are not suitable for this country, we are Orthodox Christians and they are Catholics, they pretend to like us but they don't, resist the Americans and you get a bomb down your throat, etc.

The question of integration is also one of ability and readiness to persevere in resistance. During the 1990s, Serbia held out in its resistance, albeit never unwaveringly, alternatively resisting and yielding. During that period, its government signed the Dayton Accord, the Paris Peace Agreement and the Kumanovo Agreement. The present wriggling of the Serbian Government in the face of conditionality to some extent represents continuity in this context, understandable for a country of diminished means which has so far entered into no efficient association with its neighbours, regardless of the fact that within that continuity foreign policy is an area with the biggest amount of visible discontinuity from the past. Asked if and how all the countries they regarded as hostile could be won over to improve their attitude towards our country, 48% of the respondents said that the said countries could never be persuaded to reverse their attitude, 7% think that this could be done if we accept their demands, 27% believe that they can be won over in other ways, and the incidence of “don't knows” is quite high. The responses of those who see an alternative to the acceptance of a policy of conditionality are mainly quite undefined: it is possible but I cannot say how, it is possible but the price is high, maybe through some sort of economic linkage, not now but maybe in the future, they want too much but could be won over if they asked for less, it is possible when people are in agreement, through a better economic policy, concessions – accords, diplomacy and economic ties and money, if our government were to change - the right people in the right place, if they themselves change something, when relations with them improve, through political compromise, through normal dialogue with compromises on both sides, through enhanced economic co-operation and mutual understanding, what happened in the past should be forgotten, it is possible by using the diplomatic route that did not exist for ten years, we could but we don't have anything we can use to win them over, by our country's admission to the EU, probably through an improvement of the media and embassies outside our borders, burying the hatchet is the path to friendship, pamper the lion but get out of its cage etc.

The lack of understanding of the limitations of foreign policy forced on the country by its meagre resources is not surprising, as the average adult in Serbia (who is a little more educated than our target group) has trouble understanding domestic politics, let alone its links with foreign policy. Conversely, a very important fact is that almost one-half of those polled believe that it is completely impossible to improve our international relations. With all due respect for the government's foreign policy and its efforts to inform the public about it, this finding calls for the consideration of an efficient action aimed at upgrading political awareness. The links between foreign and domestic policies should not be disregarded, but neither should the views of various social groups about the one and the other. Pessimistic perceptions of our position in the world can only serve to strengthen resistance to reforms.

Respondents were asked which national interests or values should be defended at all costs in the face of foreign pressures. None of the possible choices gained an absolute majority, which is not

surprising, given the confusion which exists following the changes for which people had not been socially programmed. A total of 24% of the sample picked out the preservation of Kosovo, preservation of the country's territorial integrity (almost identical to the preceding option) was chosen by 16%, preservation of our language, religion and culture by 14%, etc. The unification of all Serb lands is an objective that seems to have been abandoned, as it was chosen by just 1%.

Two-fifths of our sample therefore see Kosovo's preservation as a part of Serbia (more correctly, its return) as a vital national interest. But when asked if there were any national interests or values important enough for them to accept diminished personal standards over several years, no fewer than 32% of the sample said that no such interest existed; the defence of Kosovo was the choice of 8% and the preservation of the country's territorial integrity just under 6%. Readiness to accept some belt-tightening in order to protect the language, religion and tradition was expressed by 2%. This means that two-thirds of those who think saving Kosovo is a vital national interest would be willing to abandon the province if they had to pay a price for its defence (reintegration). This is not surprising, given the evidence we have already given on the material status of our respondents, who are on the brink of poverty; taking into consideration experiences gained during the past decade, one could hardly expect ethnic solidarity to exist in any considerable degree. Members of the target group want no more hardship; although mainly dissatisfied with the country's position in the world, they are unwilling to make any more personal sacrifices for it. It is also quite evident from the findings that the conditionality policy is still effective, especially if the target groups surveyed here were better informed about the price to be paid for resisting.

The findings also show the true extent to which the respondents value their religion, traditions and ethnic culture. These aspects of the national culture have lately gained importance both in the public and private spheres, most probably as a replacement for the territorial losses. The national programme, defeated in the political field, is being shifted to the cultural field. But the findings show that our respondents do not value national cultural values enough to be willing to make sacrifices to protect them.

Here are some of the responses to the question about national interests or values vital enough to deserve personal austerity: so that workers can return to their jobs, if there were enough for everybody and if it were really better, for reviving the economy, I would accept a personal sacrifice for better economic conditions in the future, economic interests, natural resources, increasing the standard of living, anything that would make possible a better life for the coming generations, none such exists because the standard of living is already very low, prosperity - better living standards and a better life, economic growth, everything to ensure a better life for our children and young people, my family have to eat, such an interest does not exist because Kosovo was surrendered by the Serbian communists and the others who wormed their way into the government, etc. The respondents are very much involved in

ensuring their survival; judging by their replies, the policy of conditionality could only be threatened by a policy which would succeed in convincing the people in the relevant social groups that they would have a better life if they resist foreign pressures. No such policy seems to have appeared on the political market since 5 October 2000.

The respondents have an egalitarian and xenophobic orientation, but are personally unwilling to pay a price for it; their resistance to reform is still passive in many respects, albeit with a visible anti-reform action potential. Are they also nationalists? The accepted view is that since the early 1990s xenophobia, egalitarianism and nationalism have gone hand in hand in Serbia. Ethno-nationalism was operationalised according to the attitude about the desirable status of the RS, the Serb-populated part of neighbouring Bosnia and Herzegovina. Asked to specify a permanent solution for the RS, 43% of those polled said it should unite with Serbia, another 37% are in favour of upgrading links between the two, 9% favour a *status quo*, and 6% think the RS should be integrated even more in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The choice of indicator for the operationalisation of ethno-nationalism can be questioned; in any case, this indicator is politically correct as it expresses the position of the international community on the questions of Balkan nationalism. Without doubt, the views expressed by the respondents show poor perception of the prerequisites and significance of regional integrations. Without co-operation with the key regional factors, Sarajevo and Zagreb, Serbia will remain a tiny coin in the throat of European politics and suffer greatly in the re-distribution of resources. Respondents are focused primarily on economic problems, without realising that Serbia's prospects for their resolution would improve if it were to become a participant in regional associations which would up its value on the European political and economic exchanges. The absence of an awareness of the link between regional politics and the creation of the necessary preconditions for resolving economic problems is an extremely important finding suggesting various courses of action.

Regional politics is the area in which Serbia holds good prospects for fruitful and basically autonomous action, given the presence of the historically rare readiness of the great powers to help Balkan integrations instead of enhancing divisions. Certain other foreign policy aspects are an expression of the so-called policy of conditionality in which the room available for autonomous action is much restricted. One of them is the Hague-based International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), a focus of complex interaction between Balkan-based and outside factors. Without seeking to make ethical or legal evaluations of that institution's nature, the Tribunal objectively does represent an indicator of extant pressures on Serbia and the attitude towards it is an attitude towards the fulfilment of the unavoidable precondition - the country's re-integration into the international community.

Probability sample surveys conducted in the past two years representing Serbia's adult population showed an overwhelmingly negative attitude towards the Tribunal. With some slight

oscillations, the anti-Tribunal total was about two-thirds of those polled, the rest being equally split between pros and undecideds. In a survey conducted in 2001 before Slobodan Milošević's arrest and handover to the iCTY in which respondents were asked if they would accept resistance to the ICTY if it meant a drop in their personal incomes over a couple of years, the two-thirds opposition plummeted to just 22%. In the same poll, if the austerity period were to be extended to 20 years, only one out of nine was still ready to persevere.

In contrast to that survey, ours does not allow forecasting, but does produce results relevant for practical purposes. Asked for their views on the Tribunal, 75% of our respondents came out against it, 15% were undecided and 10% supported its work. Asked to expound, no less than 63% said in various ways that the ICTY had in fact been set up only to prosecute Serbs. Here are some of their statements: their prosecutions are not based on the law - they have no legal right [to exist], an unrecognised court should not be allowed to exist, [it is an] instrument used by the great powers [USA] to implement its interests, by its activity it turns criminals into heroes, an illegal institution, they are asking for too many people and blackmailing us all the time, it is just a circus, an instrument of pressure, those responsible should be tried before domestic courts, the truth is coming to light but the court is at the Hague and not here, Roman-Catholic hypocrisy, innocent people are also prosecuted there, it is a frivolous institution - it exists only because of all these wars, the conditions they set are unacceptable, a ridiculous institution, they are trying the people who defended us, the leading figures of the Serbian people are at the Hague, we should prosecute the criminals here, those at the Hague are Serbian heroes, the court follows America's dictates, it is unjust, it is incompetent, when I look at our courts Carla del Ponte seems better, etc.

Asked if they would accept putting up resistance to the ICTY over several years if it meant continued pressure on Serbia until circumstances changed and Serbia gained more powerful foreign allies, 40% supported that option, 32% were undecided and 32% said it was not a good idea. The findings indicate a greater level of readiness to pay a price for resisting pressures by the international community made concrete in the form of demands to co-operate with the Tribunal than that established in probability sample surveys, whose results are certainly more cross-population representative. It should be noted here that the question was formulated somewhat less strongly: it did not specify any direct consequences which opposition to the demands of the international community would have on the standard of living. But respondents still showed a high level of opposition to the said pressures, as well as the expected lack of awareness that regional co-operation is only possible through co-operation with the ICTY. Most respondents do not see any link between the absence of more intensive regional co-operation and the resolution of the economic problems which burden them. It should also be noted that the surveyed representatives of the target groups assumed contrasting views to the question of

(not) giving in to outside pressure and the reform orientation of the Government. This finding points to a major practical problem.

Nationalism often seek to establish its base in the national church, especially in the Balkans, the home of many resettled ethnic groups which are incomplete nations sharing the same language. Respondents were asked what role the Serbian Orthodox Church should have after the recent democratic shift. A majority (56%) support the separation of church and state, and 30% the church should be more politically active; the rest were undecided. In a situation where a Government seen by itself as well as others as pro-reform assumes an ambivalent attitude towards the role of the church in social life, this finding cannot be regarded as unfavourable.

Information

Respondents were asked to list some of the scandals linked to the authorities. Given that the survey was conducted in February and March 2003, it is understandable that 19% specified various affairs involving links with organised crime. Affairs which arose in the complex Koštunica-Djindjić political power play were chosen by 5%, those involving the privatisation process by somewhat less than 4%, affairs linked to the handover of indictees to the ICTY by 3%, and those linked with other prominent past and present DOS members (Gen. Perišić, Vuk Obradović and others) by 5%. Just over one-quarter of the sample said they could not think of any such scandal, and there were very many dispersed answers. Some of the replies provide insight into the context in which the perception of the target groups on day-to-day politics is shaped, with the particular aroma provided by Serbia in the 21st century: [Interior Minister] Dušan Mihajlović's company "Lutra" (arch-criminal), the handover of our citizens to the Hague, privatisation of some industries, [Radical Party leader] Vojislav Šešelj's handover, deputies of other parties were bought off to keep the government afloat - an abuse of the Constitution, they drove out Milošević, the biggest scandal is surrendering our own people to the Hague, treason, compromises with the Mafia - the murder of the Prime Minister, people are losing their jobs, they are killing each other, cigarette and narcotics smuggling, white slavery, selling off state-owned firms for a pittance to western capitalists, bugging [the office of President] Koštunica, the surrender of Milošević to the Hague, the bugging scandal, scandals around the rivalry between Djindjić and Koštunica, the assassination of the prime minister, the Vuk Obradović [alleged sexual harassment] scandal, the Djindjić – Subotić scandal, links between political figures and the mob, the bugging of the office of the former federal president, the authorities seem to be relying on "filthy" deals to keep themselves afloat but so far it has been just gossip, mass redundancies, the tax policy of the Government, the government's links with the Mafia, privatisation scandals, the arrest of Gen. Perišić, Gen. Pavković, the failure to punish those responsible for the "Ibarska magistrala" murders,

the assassination of [police general] Boško Buha, the murders of police generals, [Djindjić assassination suspect] Bagzi's release from jail, politically-motivated murders, cigarette smuggling with [Montenegrin Prime Minister] Milo Djukanović, the ejection of DSS deputies from the Serbian Parliament, links with the mob, Čedomir Jovanović's property on the Pančevo Highway, they are bugging each other's offices, [folk music star] Ceca's involvement in the Djindjić murder, the arrival of a “semi-skilled” person - Zoran Živković - at the post of Prime Minister, the fuel and cigarette trade, links between the state authorities and organised crime, the tobacco scandal, the murder of the Prime Minister, Djindjić's links with the mob, privatisation of the economy for a pittance, the delay in adopting a new constitution, the judiciary, only time will tell everything, the “Orao“ scandal, [the pharmaceutical firm] ICN Galenika, the “tobacco affair“, [police general Radovan Stojičić] Badža's assassination, Djindjić's links with the Surčin Mafia etc.

The responses indicate some aspects of the empirical social consciousness which are very different from the public opinion content seen during the state of emergency. “Patriotic”, anti-reform and anti-crime motives are intermingled in a way which can on the political propaganda plane be resolved through a series of clever slogans serving to mobilise members of the target groups to resist reforms. Conversely, the interlinkage which exists in practice of the diverse dimensions of Serbia's public and non-transparent social life and of its leading figures hinders activities aimed at successfully countering perceptions of this kind.

Asked about the sources of their personal knowledge of the scandals of the aforementioned type, about 0.5% said they had personally observed such occurrences, 36% relied on television, 16% on newspapers, 11% on neighbours, co-workers and relatives, etc. Respondents listed concrete TV stations mainly in the already established order of their popularity; leading *TV Pink* gained, however, noticeably fewer votes than expected. *Večernje Novosti* and *Blic* led the list of newspapers, followed a long way back by *Nacional*, which stopped publication during the survey. Asked which media they trusted in their reporting on the aforementioned subject, respondents gave answers considerably deviating from the usual media popularity ratings. Given that the methods employed by those surveys make them more reliable than ours and enable population-wide estimates, the results will not be given here. We could only say that in the sphere of electronic media little confidence was expressed in local TV stations, *TV Pink* was quite surprisingly underrepresented and *BK TV* and *B92* above their usual positions, while among the printed media *Blic* appears to be a very popular newspaper yet one rarely rated as trustworthy.

Asked who were their most frequent partners in debates on political questions, 18% of the respondents said, perhaps not absolutely convincingly, that they did not discuss the subject. Some 30% converse with friends, 24% with family members, 13%, with neighbours and 11% with colleagues at work. Asked whose opinions on political problems they valued the most, 13% mentioned family

members, 12% friends or co-workers, 11% ruling political figures, 10% figures from the former regime, just under 7% value the opinions of leading members of the DSS, etc. Informal networks are apparently very important; this must be taken into account in planning any sort of media activities, as people need not only be targeted directly, but can also be influenced through those in their circle whose opinions they value.

Responses about the respondents' newspaper reading habits should perhaps be taken with a grain of salt. The very focus of a set of questions on knowledge and perceptions to some extent influences answers. About one-half of those polled say they do not read newspapers regularly; in reality this share is noticeably higher. Given the characteristics and the possibility of using the sample, frequencies will not be listed but only the order by popularity: *Večernje Novosti*, *Blic*, *Politika*, *Nacional*, *Ekspres*; *Glas* and others, which are far behind. Among dailies which are read from time to time, *Blic* is far ahead of *Večernje Novosti*, with *Politika*, *Glas* and *Nacional* way back. Few of the respondents peruse anything but daily newspapers. Some 7% say they regularly read and 9% occasionally read papers which are generally seen as being suspect in content and purpose (*Svedok*, *Reporter*, *Nedeljni telegraf*, *Identitet*, *Revija 92* etc.), relevant more on a propaganda and motivational rather than informational plane. Given the said weeklies' profile and role, the influence exerted by their readers is believed to be higher than their actual number would indicate. Among those who bought *Nacional* regularly, 10% also read the said weeklies regularly, as do 8% of those who read *Nacional* from time to time. Of this latter group, 16% read the said weeklies occasionally. The absolute numbers are small and the crossovers should not be viewed in an overly bright light. But it is nevertheless visible that our target group contains a relatively solid core of readers of those newspapers which by their reporting or scandal-mongering compromise the orientation towards reforms.

Given the sample's characteristics, the data collected about the TV news intake should be treated with much caution. They differ from the findings of numerous purpose-designed TV ratings studies done on more reliable probability samples. In our group, the state TV (*RTS*) was ahead of *BK TV* news, with *B92* way in the back, followed by *TV Pink*. These findings can be used for practical purposes if they are combined with those of general TV viewing polls, especially those on news programmes.

HETEROGENEITY BENEATH APPARENT HOMOGENEITY

The quota sample necessitates the performance of some crossovers in keeping with the criteria which determined the formation of the quotas in the drafting of the survey's plan. These are not *post hoc* analyses which would be quite weak in the cognitive sense. Serbia's social structure is widely held to be disjointed or almost dismembered and that the population is sharply divided into new elites the homogenised and impoverished masses. Some studies have disproved this and shown that in spite of the demolition of the structure, there is a relatively distinct gap between the middle and lower strata. The differences seen in the sample surveyed were viewed in accordance with their assumed practical significance for the realisation of the project's aims.

Some cross-referencing findings were almost banal. Data on living standards viewed by respondent profession indicate that pensioners and both groups of employed workers are in one group, the other being jobless and other people without regular income, who are visibly poorer. It is also not surprising that when they are asked about the country's biggest problems, the people who hold jobs, regardless of qualifications, point to crime, while the unemployed are focused on economic problems. The authorities were the first-choice answer of 19% of the sample in reply to the question about the biggest obstacle to the resolution of the country's most pressing problems; the authorities were, however, picked by no less than 48% of all housewives, and 24% of all unskilled jobless. This answer was less represented among the other groups. The completely unqualified and uncompetitive groups clearly identify the proponents of the reform programme, whom they hold to be their political enemies.

Conversely, answers to the question used to calculate the measure of egalitarianism gave different results; its supporters (those who would like to see the ratio between the lowest and highest salaries of no more than 1:3) are 38% of all jobless unskilled and semi-skilled labourers, 41% unemployed skilled workers, 76% of all employed unskilled and semi-skilled workers, 51% of the employed skilled workers and 56% of all pensioners. The unemployed lean less towards egalitarianism than people with jobs, proving the liberal thesis according to which the insecure (and in the case of the members of these groups given their unemployed status at least temporarily unsuccessful) position on the resource market (in this case labour) increases the readiness to take risks. Unemployment appears here as a factor undermining egalitarianism and in a sense beneficial to the process of carrying out reforms. This is also worth thinking about. By far the biggest supporters of egalitarianism are employed unskilled workers; those unskilled labourers who have no jobs appear far more ready to accept new rules of the game. Attention should perhaps be paid in the practical actions to this last and less privileged group, endeavouring to win their support for reforms. Their only real competition are their pro-egalitarian also unskilled but employed colleagues. Unemployed manual labourers might even, if it isn't too bold to assume, represent one of the echelons of reform, as they can be used

effectively for breaking up common perceptions and possible joint actions by groups of physical labourers.

Unemployed workers - tradesmen rather than labourers - are in a certain sense a socially partially isolated group. In the capitalism which is being rapidly restored after the October 200 shift, one's position on the market (say, the labour market) also affects one's position in the network of social contacts. Those without jobs are also less well informed. Fully 57% of the pensioners surveyed have heard nothing about various irregularities in the privatisation process; this is also the case with 52% of the housewives, 48% unemployed skilled workers, 39% unemployed manual workers, 37% employed unskilled workers and 33% of all the employed skilled workers. Even more interestingly, 24% of the jobless unskilled workers had heard about the said problem from colleagues and neighbours, as had 4% unemployed skilled workers, 28% employed unskilled workers and 24% employed qualified workers. The jobless skilled workers are especially marginalised; it appears that the difference between employed and unemployed physical labourers is far lower in this context; unemployed unskilled workers can almost always find temporary jobs as they require no special qualifications and are quite well sought after on the black market. This might be more important than it appears at first sight: although studies made over the past decades have named unskilled workers the champions of egalitarianism, they are also a group which is the most susceptible to internal divisions following mass lay-offs. They are therefore not only the champions of mass resistance to reform, but also an important target group.

Co-workers and neighbours might also be worth considering as a relatively homogeneous group from the point of view of spreading ideas shaping pro-reform, neutral or anti-reform feelings. There is a spatial class-based segregation; people from various social strata live in relatively socially homogenised neighbourhoods. The status of employed persons, especially skilled workers, arguably influences their position in their neighbourhoods and their influence on less well-educated people in the same broader social group.

It is important to say that disseminating ideas does not take place only through the media, not even in relatively detraditionalised societies. Media content, however simplified and adapted to the receptive abilities of the target audience, is still too complex and insufficiently unambiguous for the least-educated social groups to be able to take them in without additional processing; this is often performed by just slightly more educated co-workers or neighbours, basically part of the same working class, who modify and apportion diverse content which then spreads to its end-users, concentric circle-style. No group in this process is just a recipient; that is another of the reasons why attention should sometimes be focused on intra-group rather than inter-group differences and why crossovers like these being presented now are necessary.

The importance of intra-group differences cannot be exaggerated. Open opposition to privatisation was not voiced by a single unemployed respondent, but was present among 2% of the employed skilled workers, 13% of employed manual workers, 20% of all housewives and 9% pensioners. Employed unskilled workers are once again seen here as a factor blocking reforms, and unemployment also reveals itself as a school for reform, hence also a remedy for social problems and not just a problem (at least not if one is not unemployed himself).

This prospective potential of the unemployed as possible agents of reform is also visible in the evaluation of the answers to the question if and how the countries seen as hostile could be won over to reverse their attitudes. A firm negative stance was recorded among 69% of the pensioners surveyed, 43% employed skilled tradesmen, 49% employed physical labourers, 31% jobless tradesmen and 26% unemployed manual labourers. The unemployed are currently among those hardest hit by the reforms; they know better than all the others the duration of the "moment" and the price they have paid and will pay for it. But they are ready to have the shortest memory span and forced to accept before anyone else the so-called policy of conditionality, a new name for the corruption of entire societies as an old and well-tested politico-economic mechanism.

This can also be seen from the responses to the question about a national interest or value which would warrant years of belt-tightening. Some 30% of the pensioners surveyed see no such interest, as do 25% of the employed skilled workers, 15% employed physical labourers, 33% unemployed skilled workers and as many as 41% unemployed physical labourers. The poorest segment of society is interested solely in survival, which is of course wholly understandable, but also significant from the point of view of the realisation of the project's aim. Also not surprising was the relatively accommodating nature of the pensioners, whom sheer biological reasons make reluctant to undergo further waiting and misery and many of whose households also have other unproductive members. What has been seen with xenophobia also goes for ethno-nationalism. Unification of Serbia and the Bosnian Serb Republic was supported by 37% of the unemployed physical labourers surveyed, 21% of the jobless tradesmen, 47% of the employed physical labourers, 54% of the employed tradesmen and 39% of all pensioners. In order to appear convincing, ethno-nationalism apparently implies a certain minimal standard of living and security. Serbia is tired of nationalism, and also too exhausted to counter it. But the most vulnerable social groups clearly show reduced readiness to persevere in nationalism. It is a hypothetical question how their members would react if they fell below the poverty line, on which they are now doing a balancing act. Social panic would certainly not be conducive to a successful policy of reform and re-integration.

Reluctance by the poorest strata to resist the conditionality policy is also visible from some responses to the question on relations with the Hague Tribunal. Some 5% of the unemployed physical labourers showed a positive attitude towards the court, as did 20% of the unemployed tradesmen, 4%

employed physical labourers, 12% employed tradesmen and 10% pensioners. But asked if they would support rejection of the Tribunal's pressures over a period lasting several years while Serbia underwent fresh pressures and until it gained new foreign friends, 24% of the jobless physical labourers replied positively, as did 34% of all jobless tradesmen, 46% employed physical labourers, 39% employed tradesmen and 52% pensioners. Serbia's poorest segment has little will to resist, but the various pro-reform forces do not seem to be able to convincingly explain the aspects of this phenomenon and effect necessary mobilising actions.

The various target groups have diverse attitudes to the different types of media. Asked how they gained their information on various scandals, respondents gave answers showing that only employed skilled workers, the aristocracy of the lower classes, read newspapers (34%, if we are to trust their probably not completely honest answers; among the other groups the percentages lie below 13%). It is also important to note that only the two groups of employed workers inform themselves about sensitive questions such as affairs in direct contacts with colleagues and neighbours. All the rest are marginalised in that respect. This can also be seen from the answers to the question about favourite partners for dialogue on political questions. Unemployed physical labourers discuss politics with co-workers in 0% of all cases, and with neighbours in just 1%; corresponding percentages for unemployed skilled workers are 14 and 8; employed physical labourers 28 and 8; employed skilled labour 20 and 6 and pensioners 0 and 24, respectively. The network of informal intra-group communication channels looks quite transparent here; it can be used to support reforms through practical actions, as well as to slow them down or block them.

CONCLUSIONS & SUGGESTIONS FOR THE STRATEGIC PLAN OF THE CAMPAIGN

Resistance to reform enjoys mass and at the same time passive support; although the uncompetitive groups would prefer a trend of development other than reforms, in the given circumstances they see no alternative to reform.

This is valid for the given circumstances. Any major changes in the functioning of the world system will obviously lead to regression; after what we saw happen in the past decade, it could easily go all the way to a fascist-leaning society.

The regional environment now seems favourable. The outside factor is a more powerful engine of reform than the domestic factor. Any new exodus of the Serbs from Kosovo, in the event a recognition of independence for the region, would be met with grumbling but little actual ethnic solidarity. One even wonders how justified are the fears harboured by local politicians that accepting Kosovo's independence would lose them votes. The people are far too busy trying to stay alive, very

many are on the brink of poverty, and the conditionality provokes hatred, but also gives results. The road towards EU and NATO membership is viewed with some pain, but ultimately seen as an inevitability. Most members of the target groups know little of international politics, but they do recognise their own lots. In order to minimise resistance to integrating policies, it is necessary to clarify the link between these two aspects of social life.

One favourable circumstance is that there are at the moment considerably fewer people in really dire straits than the number expected to be created by any further negative change. The reform and integration policy has two objective problems; firstly, its results are not immediate yet it demands constant austerity, and secondly, the convoluted linkage between politics and its impact on the quality of life, and in particular the standard of living, is difficult to explain to the target groups in an understandable and convincing manner.

The poor general literacy of foreign policy and its impact on everyday life is partly a remnant of the Milošević era and its irrational foreign policy objectives and their argumentation. A pro-reform propaganda must be rational, educational and convincing; it should effect a measure of political education. It is made all the more difficult by the fact that instead of seeking to enhance political literacy, most participants in political life juggle with the conservative expectations of the electorate and its segments, thereby also opening up room for manipulation by the extreme options.

The Milošević epoch is seen by most respondents as history; the attention is focused on the incumbents and they are held accountable. The problem does not lie only in the presence of conservative elements in the government, but also in the absence of a modern opposition. There are virtually no strategic differences between the platforms of the DOS (however diverse its membership) and the DSS; political life basically boils day-to-day bickering and a struggle for the available resources.

The problem has shifted from the influence of the once ruling extremists to the passive resistance which exists among numerous social groups, who see themselves as the present or future losers in the process of reforms. But there nevertheless significant differences between those groups. The strong impression is that the orientation of the target groups is more towards the extreme left than the pro-reform forces. This does not, however, mean that the nationalistic extreme right has vanished. But egalitarianism is seen to be a stronger factor of resistance to change than nationalism, which could be revived only by a further deterioration of the economic situation. The left-wing extremists have taken a temporary lead in the historical match - the potency and prevalence of egalitarianism confirm that their legacy is very much alive. One of the key questions is that how to shorten the duration of their success.

The target groups have a relatively clearly-defined empirical anti-reform conscience. They are well-informed about events in other parts of Serbia. If a foreign power were to see an interest in

offering unambiguous efficient support to the left-wing extremists, their crypto-communist language would fall on fertile ground. The resistance to reforms put up by the target groups is still largely passive, albeit with a noticeable anti-reform action potential.

A particularly difficult problem attached to passivity is pessimism, which, however, also has some positive consequences. The strategic goal of unifying the Serb-populated lands has been abandoned; Kosovo, however, has not. It needs to be carefully considered whether accepting Kosovo's independence would serve to turn many of Serbia's present seven-figure total of enemies into potential partners for cooperation and thereby also to enhance Serbia's political potential on the international plane. Instead of sweeping this subject under the carpet, it should receive more publicity, especially that oriented towards the target groups.

Pessimism really have good sides. The survey showed that two-thirds of those who think holding on the Kosovo is a key national goal would gladly be rid of it if they had to pay a personal price, even if only temporarily, if its continued defence. The same goes for other questions which are the subject of foreign pressures. These issues - except perhaps the Hague Tribunal, and even that only recently - are virtually taboo for most political factors. A wide-ranging action is needed to inform the people about the choices that face the country and to explain the price that should be paid for each of them, and their desired and also their unwanted consequences. Political action and propaganda require courage and a readiness to take risks, which do not seem to exist at the moment.

The pessimism is of course not absolute. Although ethnic solidarity is missing in Serbia and would in fact hardly be expected to exist, given the experiences of the past decade, the target groups, even if they do not have the necessary will-power to resist outside pressures or to face up to their own responsibility for the events of the 1990s, do have sufficient stamina to survive the inevitable hardship needed to ensure a better future for their children. Reforms can be promoted efficiently by showing in a convincing manner how austerity now means a more prosperous future for young people. The character of the dominant family type in Serbia means that such an effort would also reach many older groups.

There are significant differences among the target groups. There is less egalitarianism among the unemployed than those who have jobs, confirming the liberal thesis according to which an uncertain (for the target groups also unsuccessful) position on the labour market enhances readiness to take risks. Unemployment appears here as a factor undermining egalitarianism and in that sense useful for the purpose of implementing reforms. In the social conscience, and even in public speech, unemployment is seen solely as a misfortune, and this needs to be "normalised" by way of propaganda activities.

Employed manual labourers, a very large segment of the working population, are the strongest supporters of egalitarianism. They are no longer the target of job-security promises; this is rational, but

they are also not being offered any alternatives. The problems need to be taken head on and competitiveness needs to be enhanced within this group. One of the key problems of promoting reforms is what to offer this extremely uncompetitive group as compensation (actual or perceived) for losing job security. It needs to be kept in mind that unskilled workers are the widest mass base of the opposition to reforms; they are also a group with the biggest potential for creating intra-group divisions through mass redundancies. This group has for decades been treated as being socially under-age: in exchange for job security, the communists marginalised it completely in society. The privatisation-age employment policy programme is both a problem and at least one of the possible solutions. The key question is how to shape and present in the media productive tensions within the unskilled labour group and how to offer them a path to social maturity.

A particular problem is choosing a suitable channel of communication for promoting reforms and re-integration. The specificities of smaller groups need to be taken into account here. Unemployed workers - jobless tradesmen more than jobless labourers - are to a certain extent a socially partially isolated group. Jobless tradesmen are especially marginalised; the difference between employed and unemployed manual labourers seems to be noticeably smaller; Unemployed unskilled workers can almost always find temporary moonlighting jobs, which are not linked to a certain skill and for which there is always some demand. While the main objective of a pro-reform campaign targeted at unskilled workers is pointing to their own interest in helping the reform, which would by further eroding job security lessen the gap between them and their employed (also unskilled) colleagues, it appears more efficient to juxtapose to the content of the campaign the interests of unemployed tradesmen with those of the interests of the unemployed unskilled workers' group rather than the employed tradesmen. While the still unproductively high job security of employed unskilled workers represents a basis and motive that can be used for putting their interests against those of their unemployed colleagues, the whole corps of unskilled labour appears in the environment of reforms as an over-protected competitor to unemployed tradesmen who are potentially more market-competitive. The aim is not to stimulate an intra-group conflict between its strata, but to work on consolidating a pro-reform social integration, but the campaign should highlight the potential gains of speeding up reform for individual groups. Given that the employed unskilled labourers are the strongest opponents of reforms, the real interests of their jobless colleagues and also unemployed skilled labour should be put up against theirs, and those groups helped to recognise their own genuine interests. The reform not only creates losers, but also potential winners - not only within the higher social strata. But this requires direct promotion of content aimed at presenting to the potential winners (at this moment unemployed workers, both skilled and unskilled) those positive aspects of the reform which are relevant for them. It also necessitates solving the problem of the social marginalisation of the unemployed working population, which burdens communication.

The informal networks appear here as very important; this should be kept in mind when planning any sort of media action, as direct influence goes step in step with that exerted by people one trusts in one's circle. It was seen that all groups within the entire target groups value the opinions of skilled workers in their circle. Given the results of the survey, the most productive path of influence on this group seems to go through one or two of the most widely-read printed media, which enjoy relatively strong reader confidence, rather than through the less selectively monitored electronic media. But it should also not be forgotten that some of the electronic media will soon go under (in the coming distribution of the "national" broadcasting frequencies) and that they will do their utmost to survive; it would be better to make of them allies rather than enemies.

The problem of identifying the most efficient channels of communication for a pro-reform campaign aimed at minimising resistances is strongly linked to the following questions: 1. explaining the advantages of accepting a policy of conditionality; and 2. explaining the gains to be made from the painful consequences of the reforms. These appear to be the problems on which the plan of campaign should be focused.

The key notion is that the campaign must have rationalising, activating and normalising aspects, that it must be bold, selective, positive, invigorating and adapted to the receptive capabilities of its target audiences.

The following is suggested:

1. The pro-reform propaganda should be rationalisatory. A rationalising, educational and trustworthy campaign is necessary; a campaign aimed at establishing political literacy;
2. The conditionality policy needs to be explained; its acceptance is described by public figures as a necessary evil; instead, one must explain, and do so continuously, its benefits for raising standards, in particular material standards;
3. It appears ill-advised to focus the campaign on further inactivating resistance; in the long run, stimulating reform potentials within the corps of opponents is more efficient and cheaper, and also contributes to social stability;
4. It is necessary within the campaign to inform the people about their choices and explain their respective costs; the results achieved thus far by the policy of conditionality contribute to this process;

5. Reforms can best be promoted by showing in a convincing manner the ways in which tightening belts today will give today's youth a better future; this also targets some of their older family members;
6. Unemployment, the key to the success or failure of the reform, is viewed solely as a misfortune; it should be «normalised» through concrete media stories and its advantages highlighted if within the reform process it becomes a challenge for all those competing for jobs;
7. Job security is not a sacred cow; an important step in winning jobless workers over for reform would be making them realise that the entire population of working age is more or less in a similar position; this sort of competition reduces the potential for action of the resistances to reforms and enhances pro-reform perceptions and activity;
8. Unemployment is painful, but remains the only path to social maturity; propaganda should rid it of its stigma; it is possible to live with, it is a disease, but it is curable; it is temporary;
9. The campaign should juxtapose the interests of the employed workers with those of the jobless; there should be no direct focus on the skilled employed group, for the reasons explained above;
10. The campaign should be positive; people are fatigued and frightened, the current situation should be normalised;
11. The promotion of content through which the potentials winners (unemployed skilled or unskilled workers) will be informed about those advantages of the reform which are the most relevant for them should best be effected in the form of stories from real life;
12. The experiences of Djindjić's popular capitalism programme from the mid-1990's are quite good as far as the content is concerned; it was ill-advised to promote them in the form of paid advertisements; given the lack of confidence of the target groups in the pro-reform bloc, this would be seen as unconvincing propaganda;
13. The printed media, in particular *Novosti* and *Blic*, but above all *Novosti*, are unavoidable; they are read by a majority of those within the target group who appear to have the most influence in the area of modifying and disseminating various content and values; the most acceptable type of text is without a doubt a report, with a direct convincing effect, while stories run in instalments could play a background role;

14. Local TV stations do not appear suitable for this type of campaign; the same goes for local newspapers, whose readers mainly peruse its ads pages;
15. The conflict between three privately-owned TV stations for the two available “national” frequency sets represents an advantage; two of the said stations (the only self-financing stations in the country) must by necessity play along with the pro-reform government on account of their support for the preceding regime and the third must kow-tow to the foreign donors which keep it afloat; advantage may be taken of this circumstance for gaining advantageous advertising rates and for engaging their creative potentials;
16. These and all other relevant questions are fully open to debate;
17. The manner of assessing the effects of a campaign which would be organised should be pointed to especially.

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