

The Last Days of a Free Serbia?

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Although it may not seem this way, Serbia is in fact in a far more fragile condition than visitors may imagine.

Elections to the parliament will be held in several days, but the outlook of the country is not expected to change. The incumbent president's party, that is sure to receive over the 126 seats of 250 in total, has been consistent and steadfast in his path towards EU membership, despite the fact that this very membership resulted in untold suffering to the people of Greece, Italy, Spain, and even Croatia.

He has allowed and accepted EU's dumping of cheap goods into the economy, that inevitably hurt deeply Serbian industries. And he is precisely the type who can bring the Serbs into the EU and seal their serfdom: He is not from the Left, he comes from the nationalist right, he uses nationalist terms to justify his capitulation, he presents the path towards the EU as inevitable, and he is the only candidate who can present sacrificing Kosovo, the heart of Serbian c, as a necessary evil, leading to the much bigger prize, prosperity in the EU.

The prime minister says Serbs will soon get a 900 Euro salary per month. Talk never cost anything, but he is not entirely in error. There has been a growing strata of professionals in the high-tech and other industries who are making fat checks and seeing their life quality grow. Their reality does not reflect the majority, but they are eager to join the EU. Meanwhile, the EU has been pouring billions into the country with various honey traps of multiple kinds. A European company operating in Serbia receives free money from the government which it can then pocket as it sees fit and move out of the country when it deems appropriate after 2 or 3 years, for instance. The justice system at the top level is quite corrupt, allowing government officials to get away with far more than what meets the eye. This includes, but is not limited to, money laundering and drug trade by some of Belgrade's inhabitants. But this expanding grey economy will not be what prevents Serbia from joining the EU. As colonial powers of the past, the core of the EU has no problem with outright ugly scenes of corruption as long as they are away from sight and do not take place in the centre but in the periphery.

Is Serbia's Facing Pressure from the United States' Deep State?

At first, despite having a wife from Slovenia, perhaps because if it, possibly due to a general isolationist tendency, thanks to the need on focusing in rekindling US labour market, or due to bad relations with the German Republic's Chancellor Angela Merkel and a refocusing on igniting a trade war between the United States and the People's Republic of China, President Trump refrained from meddling in the Balkans, thereby ending a long standing tradition of the Democratic Party.

But at least a year ago the bad omens seem to have started.



First, calls from the White House to pressure Serbia into recognising Kosovo began to be heard about a year ago. They may have quite possibly not been initiated from President Trump personally, but from the all-prevalent Deep State. Then, in March, the Serbian and Kosovar presidents met in the White House. Jared Kushner also attended. The major deal maker was Richard Grenell, the former US ambassador to Germany who fell out of odds with Berlin. There seems to have been intense dialogues behind the scene on how to solve the Kosovo issue. One possible solution proposed may have been to convince Serbia to recognise it, with the carrot being a speedy entry into the European Union. Most recently, Richard Grenell said that on June 27th, both sides will meet again. There is an attempt, it seems, to take Kosovo off the table. Grenell phrased it nicely: “temporarily pause the derecognition campaign and the seeking of international membership.”

While there will be parliamentary elections in Serbia in several days, there has been an ongoing campaign to boycott Serbian goods in Kosovo. The campaign knew ups and downs and was supported by various figures in Kosovo, both from the opposition and the government. Such a boycott was probably a move meant to pressure Serbia to reach an agreement that would recognise Kosovo, an area rich in history and meaning for the Serbian people, that has declared independence against international law by with the support of the Clinton administration. But Kosovo is not strong enough to pressure Serbia.

Serbia remains a stumbling block for the European Union and the NATO alliance. Its military, deeply weakened by the current government as funds have dwindled, is pro-Russia. Its citizenry, backward and primitive in the eyes of some. The Balkans is sure to become one of the next zones of a geopolitical battle between the west and Russia and China. China has been developing good relations with Serbia, to the benefit of both countries. While Serbia was desperate for medical equipment during the coronavirus outbreak, China stepped in to help. The EU did nothing. But the EU is currently facing a major economic crisis. Coronavirus crippled the German economy, which, though strong, is likely to decline by at least 10% in the next quarter. The EU, a major neoliberal project, is suffering economically. The EU needs to expand to solve its own internal contradictions. Taking Serbia into the EU,

is a sure way to both limit Russian and Chinese influence in the region, cut off Serbia from Russia, dump more good into Serbia, suck out its resources and industries, and destroy whatever is left of the Serbian economy.

Serbia is facing an increasingly complicated geopolitical reality

The current geopolitical arrangement is not the best for those who wish to see a strong and independent Serbia. Trump's popularity has declined from 49% to 44%. Not that he did not begin to meddle in Serbia, but a Joe Biden presidency may be far worse from Serbia's perspective, if to judge by the history of the Democratic Party's engagement with the region. The current ongoing uprising in the United States against police brutality and the murder of African Americans, the coronavirus debacle, and the chaos resulting from different policies being taken regarding a lockdown, placed Trump in a vulnerable position. His re-election is not to be taken for granted.

Russia, Serbia's long time partner and ally is also in retreat. Oil prices are in historical low. The lockdown decimated the Russian economy, especially its Middle Class. Russia has long hoped for Trump to win the second elections. But now, with chaos engulfing US cities, 116,000 deaths, a mailed in ballots subject to possible manipulation, Trump may well lose to Joe Biden. This would mean that Biden, who played an active role in promoting the war in Iraq, may now decide to go for the Balkans and even start a conflagration with Russia.

In Montenegro, a major nationalist campaign against Serbs has been taking place. It is somewhat unsafe for Serbs to visit the region. Montenegro is a NATO member.

The possible honey trap

The various liberal think-tanks have had decades to analyse the Serbian society and mentality. They know that most Serbs will not be coerced by force or intimidation. Instead, the honey trap is a far better option, though it requires patience. Serbia could be offered a speedy-track to EU membership, easy lines of credit, and major investments from the EU. But all these would be short-term. In the long run, the economy would be impoverished. The issue of Kosovo could be put off by a few years, it need not be decided now. With enough carrots for the Serbs, Serbia can become a supposedly prosperous EU member if prosperity means growing unemployment, the ability to travel and a higher cost of living. Then, after 10 years, when Serbia is well inside the EU and cannot possibly issue its own money, it will be forced to accept both Kosovo's independence and entry into the EU. By then, there will be nearly nothing Serbia can do to resist.

Joe Biden, as part of the Obama school of thought, if it can indeed be given that name, and as a follower of Clinton, may have a weak spot for Kosovo and a strong animosity towards the Serbs, perpetuated by the late ambassador, Richard Holbrook. The contours of a potential scenario can already be seen: Biden winning the presidency, and getting a Germany on board. EU needing to expand. Serbia's government willing to join the EU as it has already allowed EU to dump cheap goods into the market weakening the local industries and its food and cosmetics production. Serbians told that they can be rich and wealthy members of the EU superstate and can go to relocate to Paris and Rome, resulting in an even deeper brain-drain for the country and its loss of young potential. Whatever is left will be looted.

Ever since the NATO attacks, the expulsion of Serbs from Bosnia and Croatia, the severe

ecological damage caused to the environment by NATO bombs, the lack of clean water, the promotion of EU postmodernist education, the Serbs have gradually become insecure and lost their touch with their roots and power. Their heart, Kosovo, has been taken from them at gunpoint in contravention of international law. All that is left for them is to join the EU, where they will finally lose their independence. Now they may face a long and slow death, metaphorically and perhaps even realistically, as they are gradually positioned by EU austerity, adopt an obese lifestyle due to fast food and a loss of agricultural production. As the numbers die out, the proud country that once provoked World War I by daring to assassinate a foreign ruler, may now face slow extinction.

Who Will come for the Rescue?

Since the dissolution of Yugoslavia egged on by the US and Germany, the NATO bombings, the expulsion of Serbs from Bosnia and Croatia, the severe ecological damage caused to the environment by NATO's aerial blitzkrieg, the lack of clean water, the promotion of EU postmodernist education, and the demonisation campaign in the western media, the Serbs have gradually but surely lost touch with their roots and power. If they join the EU, they may finally lose whatever is left of their independence. They may face a long and slow death, metaphorically or not, as they will be gradually poisoned by EU austerity, adopt an obese lifestyle due to fast food and a loss of agricultural production, and an even more extreme neoliberal regime than the one that they are currently facing. As the numbers die out, the proud country that once provoked World War I by daring to assassinate an Austrian ruler, may now face slow extinction.

If Serbs are looking for allies, they may be wise to turn to Turkey. Russia has too many of its own problems after President Putin decided to opt for a total lockdown, decimating the economy in the process, unlike Belarus whose President Lukashenko wisely kept the economy going and with the Soviet-era vast epidemiological network left in tact. Turkey, on the other hand, may also not want to see Kosovo join the EU, as this would mean a loss of influence in the Muslim region. No one likes to be left outside of a party for the entire night, waiting in the cold. But ultimately, as in earlier battles, the Serbs may have to fight for their freedom and independence on their own.

A graffiti in Belgrade stated that the future is yet to be written.

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