

**IN MEMORIAM ZORAN DJINDJIĆ**

**ON BEHALF OF DEMOCRACY**

Perspectives of Democratic Developments in Serbia

Welcome and Introduction:

**Rudolf Scholten**

Introductory Lecture:

**Vesna Pešić**

Panel:

**Vesna Pešić, Tanja Petovar, Wolfgang Petritsch, Branka Prpa**

Moderator:

**Melita H. Šunjić**

Guest of Honour:

**Boris Tadić, President of the Republic of Serbia**

In the presence of:

**Ružica Djindjić, President of the “Fond Dr. Zoran Djindjić”**

**Friday | March 10, 2006 | 19.00 h**

**Bruno Kreisky Forum for International Dialogue | Armbrustergasse 15 | 1190 Vienna**

**Vesna Pešić**

President of the Center of Peace and Democracy Development. Ph.D. in Sociology at the University of Belgrade. 2001-2005: Ambassador of Serbia and Montenegro to Mexico.

**Tanja Petovar**

As Director of Oxford Leadership Academy Operations in the Balkans she delivers programs to support the transitional processes of government, non-governmental institutions and various organisations in Serbia. As a trial lawyer she specialized in human rights cases in the former Yugoslavia.

**Wolfgang Petritsch**

Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Austria to the UN in Geneva. 1999-2002: High Representative of the International Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Member of the Board of the Bruno Kreisky Forum.

**Branka Prpa**

Head of the Historical Archives of Belgrade. Ph.D. in history. She was cultural editor of the news magazine *European* until its owner was murdered in 1999.

**Melita H. Šunjić**

Publicist and political scientist. During the Balkan wars she was founding member and Secretary General of Mirovni Dialogue. Since 1994 she is working for the UN in humanitarian activities, and currently lives in Budapest.

Gefördert aus Mitteln der Republik Österreich.

**Rudolf Scholten**

Let me extend a warm welcome to Ms. Ružica Djindjić. It is a great pleasure for us to have you here. It is a great honor for us to welcome the President of the Republic of Serbia, Mr. Boris Tadić. I also welcome our former Foreign Minister, Mr. Willibald Pahr, the Ambassador of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and what we call der deutsche Botschafter. It is a great honor for us to host an evening which is dedicated to the memory of late Prime Minister

Zoran Djindjić. *On Behalf of Democracy, Perspectives of Democratic Developments in Serbia* is the title that we chose. And this was Mr. Djindjić's main goal during his life and political career. We as a nation lost the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we did not win anything in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we made huge mistakes, and we must focus on the future. This focus on the future was a motto of the late Prime Minister and it was the motivation for us to invite academics and professionals from Serbia to discuss future democratic perspectives.

Let me welcome now the guests of our panel. Ms. Vesna Pešić, President of the Center of Peace and Democracy Development and the former Ambassador of Serbia and Montenegro to Mexico. Ms. Tanja Petovar who as the Director of Oxford Leadership Academy Operations in the Balkans delivers programs to support the transitional process of government, non-governmental institutions, and various organisations in Serbia. As a lawyer she is specialised on human right cases in the former Yugoslavia. Wolfgang Petritsch, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations in Geneva, and from 1999 to 2002 High Representative of the International Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In this building his main function is to be Member of the Board of the Bruno Kreisky Forum. Ms. Branka Prpa, Head of the Historical Archives of Belgrade. She was cultural editor of the newsmagazine *European* until its owner was murdered in 1999. And Ms. Melita Sunjić who won the Bruno Kreisky Prize, also a political scientist. During the Balkan wars she was founding member and Secretary General of Mirovni Dialogue. Since 1994 she is working for the United Nations in humanitarian activities and currently lives in Budapest.

Let me also thank very much Ms. Mira Plessl and Ms. Anica Dojder-Matzka for their most welcomed assistance to prepare this evening. I was told that they were very crucial to get this evening together.

In the aftermath of Mr. Djindjić assassination the former German Foreign Minister, Joschka Fischer, said this crime was aimed not only against Djindjić as a person but also against democracy and stability in the region. I am sure that democracy in Serbia has excellent partners who are ready to take the challenges to open positive perspectives. And we want to show at least to our audience how the democratic progress in Serbia develops, realising the political will of Zoran Djindjić.

**Boris Tadić** (übersetzt von Melita Sunjić)

I am going to make my speech in Serbian language. Right now here we have media from Serbia. I am trying to use this opportunity to say some things, to create some statement for our country. And for that reason I have to talk in Serbian language.

First of all I would like to say that it is a great privilege for me to be here tonight in the Kreisky Forum with you, Mr. President, and the other participants in this meeting to speak about the role and the visions of Zoran Djindjić. And I am particularly glad that today in this memorial meeting we have amongst us Ružica Djindjić who is an eyewitness of Djindjić's work.

I would like to focus on Zoran's work and on his intentions. Zoran Djindjić was in my view the greatest visionary in Serbia's recent political history and was especially efficient in turning these visions into political actions. Today as President of Serbia I have the opportunity to talk to many, many counterparts, but I rarely meet a person with such a strength of ideas as Zoran Djindjić had them. Today, of course, people do respect Zoran Djindjić, but sometimes people with such a powerful mind and such practical skills are not respected enough while they are still alive. Among my people Zoran Djindjić was finally accepted by the people after his death only. And it is very interesting that exactly those people

who are trying to adopt his ideas and continue his work are meeting exactly the same problems in the Balkans as he did. This is not characteristic for Serbia alone but for all societies in the Balkans. But exactly this fact requires that a new generation of politicians come up that is prepared to take the responsibility and to use all their strength to change the direction.

I would like to quote Zoran Djindjić:

“I did not come here to be popular, but I came to fulfill the historic task to bring Serbia in order. And the first person who tries to bring order into a country is always unpopular.”

It is very important that a politician understands his mission, that he has the tools to pursue it, and that he sees the consequences of his acts. It is a thin pass between the visionaries who are often dreamers and those people who have the ability to turn these dreams into politics. Zoran Djindjić did not always take the shortest path to solution understanding the complexities and intricacies of politics in the Balkans. But he always knew that Serbia needs to be modernised, that it needs continuous internal criticism, that it has to face its history in an open way, but also needs to know about her potentials. He was a symbol of this Serbia of great potential. His way of criticising Serbian past could amount to the chronic problem that Serbia continuously has. He said that Serbia suffers from inclosure, and from waiting that someone starts finding solutions, and a pessimistic preoccupation with her own history. He turned Serbia into a completely different direction, the direction of the future. He expected from people who are responsible to take on this responsibility but also the disadvantages of this responsibility. One of his most famous sentences among our people is the one where he said, if you have to swallow frogs start with the largest. In fact, all these people who were favoring a European orientation of Serbia throughout the recent years have constantly been doing just that, swallowing frogs. This was not a nice job, and it is not a nice job today.

Zoran Djindjić and those who are continuing his work always insisted on taking decisions, taking over the responsibilities and not enjoying the advantages that come with such a job. So Zoran Djindjić took the decision that Serbia should take large steps towards the European Union regardless of the problems. Zoran Djindjić took over the responsibility of cooperating with The Hague Tribunal and the enormous responsibility of arresting Slobodan Milošević, and he carried this responsibility on his own shoulders. Zoran Djindjić took a great personal risk, knowing that he was in conflict with the military, with para-military formations, with security services, and para-security services. It is Zoran Djindjić's achievement that today the majority of the people in Serbia are all in favor of a cooperation with The Hague Tribunal. While he was alive there was a majority against that. Zoran Djindjić also took over the responsibility for an economic modernisation of Serbia, for the development of all its capacities as a motor of development in the Balkans. His message was, we want a modern Serbia that is going to be competitive, that is going to play a modern, a leading role in the Balkans, where there will not be many drones, but a lot of bees working.

Another important sentence of his is, “we still did not destroy the bridge that leads to our past.” And this past is still full of destructive power, and it is still not sure that we might not fall back. In Serbia we are still asking the question whether in a political sense the 20<sup>th</sup> century is over, yet. Is this struggle against the destructive potential of Serbia, of the Balkans over? We thought on the 5<sup>th</sup> of October 2000 that this is the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and that we won this struggle. Then we thought that the 20<sup>th</sup> century was over with the assassination of Zoran Djindjić and this greatest sacrifice a family can bring.

But, in fact, I am convinced that the 20<sup>th</sup> century will come to an end in Serbia only this year, in 2006, when Serbia has to face many, many challenges. The negotiations on Kosovo, the

referendum about the status of Montenegro, the finalisation of the cooperation with The Hague Tribunal, the negotiations about a stabilisation and association with the EU and the signing of that document, and the constitutional changes in Bosnia-Herzegovina. *Original: Serbia is one of the guarantors of this agreement, and so am I personally as the Serbian President.*

These are challenges like no other country in Europa has to face today. When I think about the roles that my colleagues play in other countries in Europe I sometimes think they might be bored. But life in Serbia is full of unbelievable challenges which have been going on now for nearly twenty years. From a psychological point of view and from the experience that people have in Serbia maybe it is like living two lives. Zoran Djindjić said, if it were an easier task maybe someone else would have gotten it.

We have no choice. We have to resolve these problems. And the whole region is looking at Serbia as there is no stable Balkans without stable Serbia. Even those who don't like us too much hope that we will stand powerfully. Serbia has exceptional potentials. The potential of Serbia are like the potentials that Zoran Djindjić had. As it was in the former Yugoslavia in a future Balkans Serbia will be one of the motors of its development. Those who have the responsibility today are continuing Zoran's work, but they are also taking on completely new challenges.

Serbia will be member of the EU. Serbia is a country that will quite surely have well shaped democratic institutions. Serbia is always strong when she is challenged. And 2006 is maybe the greatest challenge. Sometimes when you are not happy with the speed of change in Serbia try to imagine how your country will look with such paramount challenges. And then you will understand why things develop sometimes at a slower pace.

Let me quote, "Reforms are always like swimming upstream. Reforms are conflicts with mentality, with bad heritage, with interests, and with the entropy of a system." This was Zoran Djindjić as I tried to present him to you in a few sentences. Thank you very much.

### **Rudolf Scholten**

Before I ask Ms. Djindjić to take the floor I would like to welcome Mr. Herbert Stepic. He is CEO of Raiffeisen International. He is Man of the Year of the Austrian Trend magazine. And he is sponsor and supporter of the Bruno Kreisky Forum. I attended a ceremony a couple of days ago where he said that he does not know the criteria why you become a Man of the Year. An answer which I could not give you at that occasion, but today is the precondition is to be supporter of the Kreisky Forum.

### **Ružica Djindjić (übersetzt von Melita Sunjić)**

Ladies and gentlemen,

As I prepared for this trip, I reflected on all the numerous links and threads between our two cities – Vienna and Belgrade and between our two countries, Austria and Serbia.

As the plane was ascending above Belgrade I could spot the mighty Danube, this eternal line that links us together. And, on its shores, the old Fortress on Belgrade, the gate of the Austrian military leader Prince Eugene of Savoy. It is one of the rare buildings from the Baroque era which survived all the war damages Belgrade had to endure. Eugene of Savoy came as a mighty warrior, but left behind a legacy of great arts.

This is how people's intentions and deeds transform and, in the face of history, acquire completely new dimensions. And it is not at all a coincidence that the fates of Austria and

Serbia and of their peoples, their traders, soldiers, scientist, artists and priests but also their great military leaders and rulers, kings and emperors are intertwined so deeply that they cannot be separated. The powerful Habsburg monarchy as well as small Serbia were amazing mixtures of nations, cultures, faiths, customs and characters. They were countries of great ideas of tolerance, enlightenment, and cooperation between people but also at some stages of their development strongholds of xenophobia, conservatism and absolutism. Austria went through such periods in its past, but Serbia unfortunately has experienced them at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. She is still trying to find her identity which has been shaken gravely by the tragic mistakes in recent history.

And now, like in the past, democratic and urban Serbia is trying, and I hope successfully trying, to find support in Austria on its path of re-learning democracy. And it was non other than Austria that played a key role in the formation of the first modern Serbian elite. The majority of young Serbs was educated in Vienna, Salzburg or Graz and brought the spirit of an urban Central European society back to their country, introduced new tastes and styles in literature, fine arts and music, the latest achievements in medicine, philosophy, architecture and banking; new technical patents, the latest fashion in ladies' hats as well as contemporary political reasoning and acting.

Of course, sometimes over-towering role models turn into their antonyms as has been described by another great Viennese, Sigmund Freud. Mutual attraction sometimes transforms into a destructive impulse. This used to happen between Austria and Serbia which at times were standing on opposite sides.

But all of this is part of the inevitable, though not always explicable nor understandable process called history. In everything that happened to us and is still happening we need to see what we have in common instead of searching insistently what is dividing us. There is so much that links Austria and Serbia, and again I am coming back to the Danube and the fact that Austria was the country that as early as 1829 founded the First Danube Steamboat Company (DDSG) whose vessels connected the cities of the Monarchy with Serbia and her cities.

And Zoran Djindjic, I am sure of that, tried to renew that eternal link that connects all that is modern, democratic and European, all that is our joint civil values and which are a pledge for our future. He was fully aware of the risks and dangers ahead of him but he was courageous and determined to carry on, even for the price of the most valuable thing that a man has - his own life. But his life was not sacrificed in vain. I am more and more convinced in that, and meetings like this one support me in that as much as your understanding and your regard does.

Thank you.

### **Vesna Pešić**

It is a really great privilege for me to speak tonight. I am very grateful to the Bruno Kreisky Forum to have been invited here.

I decided to speak about democracy in Serbia in the context and concept which we in sociology call consolidation of democracy. That concept is very suitable for our country because it can measure how far away we are from an authoritarian system. It is suitable to measure whether we really passed the Rubicon of the past in terms of acquiring more and more democracy. This is the context in which I am going to evaluate and overview our way to democracy.

I will answer to three important questions. The first is, what have we achieved during these more than five years since October 5, 2000, when we ousted Milošević from power. The second is, whether we really accept democracy, whether we passed the point of no return to the past. Then I will also see what are the possibilities of Serbia and what are the problems, how we explain our difficulties to develop more profound democracy.

When we evaluate our achievements, I would say that Serbia conquered the first stage of democratic development which is called electoral democracy. Now in Serbia, every four years we have free and fair elections, which means we can change government every four years. That also means that our citizens enjoy a corpus of political rights: the freedom of assembly, the freedom of speech, the freedom of press, the possibility to present problems in fair competition, and finally, what we did not have before, the counting of votes is now correct.

Of course, we can ask how much (electoral) democracy is accepted by the people and how much it is accepted by the elite. Usually when measured how deeply this first stage of democracy is legitimised and accepted by the people, we encounter disappointment in democracy. I got some data from Strategic Marketing research for December 2005. When you ask people in Serbia the question what is more important “to have one capable leader or to have a democratic electoral system with at least two parties competing”, the results show that 52 per cent strongly agreed that it is better to have a strong leader than to have an electoral democracy; only 23 % agreed to have democracy. Among the population, there is a confusion about economic development and democracy. When the same sample was asked what were the main aspects of democracy they would usually say that it was not the freedom of the citizens, it was not electoral democracy, that it was a high standard of living. This too close connection between democracy and an economic development is something which is not very conducive for democratic development. In theory, economic development is a strong support for democracy, but democracy should be perceived as having its value by itself. So with this first test, which shows that more than 50% of citizens would exchange democracy for a strong and authoritarian leader and a higher standard of living, lead to the conclusion that the population in Serbia has not yet accepted democratic elections as legitimate and best practice to chose its own representatives. I would not jump to the conclusion that Serbia will return to the past. Simply, the point of no return is not evident, we are not over the fence, and we still have to work on the consolidation of democracy.

The second criteria that I take to measure democratic development is not only attitude toward democracy. I don't have to convince this audience that for democratic development the best measure is where we stand with democratic institutions. When we look at this indicator of democracy we come to a rather gloomy situation in Serbia. Our institutions are rather weak, not functional, not accountable, not transparent, and very much corrupted. Sometimes they are captured by some other agent like money or tycoons who can have influence on decision making for their own, private interest. The key question is whether we have some underground, non-transparent, influence on public institutions. Our police and military have not yet passed through democratic reforms and are not under the rule of law and civil control. We have old cadres from the past still working in our main institutions undermining good governance, accountability, transparency and independent courts. The public sector has not been converted to public service and is not accountable to the citizens. Like in the old days, police, military, courts, governments are under direct political control and influence. For example, after the assassination of Prime Minister Djindjić, when the new government was elected and headed by Mr. Koštunica, 700 people in the police force were dismissed and blamed for implementing the emergency measures after the assassination of Zoran Djindjić. In the past we called such a regime a “police state”. The military is still a state in the state, especially its intelligence agencies are free of independent and civil control. As I already

mentioned, money and business exercise their influence on the government which also gives an opaque picture of decision making in Serbia. In conclusion, in today's Serbia institutions are highly problematic, we still don't have independent courts, an independent judiciary, and the rule of law. Saying this, I am aware that the development of really strong democratic institutions is not an easy work to do. It cannot be done overnight. We need time to create democratic institutions, but the questions remain whether we could have achieved more during last five years and whether we are committed fully to such a development.

To understand the basic preconditions for true democratic development and to demonstrate whether we have them now in Serbia, I will use an idea that Prime Minister Zoran Djindjić used in his philosophical work. When he wrote about democracy he used to say that democracy is a world view, "democracy is our image of the world". This goes beyond indicators and tests that I have used up to now. To understand democracy as a world view, we need to make a difference between two basic types of world views. How do we understand ourselves? What is the interpretation of our state, nation and society? And what is the basis of our integration? One world view is when societal integration is based on essentialist ideas. Essentialist ideas are absolute ideas which always stand as higher goals and which, by definition, are above the law and above individual rights and liberties. This type of societal integration was characteristic of all the ex-communist societies, where "building communism" was a goal that could not be questioned and stood above the the law. The same type of integration is when the natural, organic theologies overtake the integrative role. It can simply be the ethnic community as an organic world view. And then again, as religion or any other absolutist value, this organic world view wins over the rule of law. This is what had happened to Serbia, but nationalism is still our dominant way of integration. Therefore, in the very fundament, there is no room for the rule of law in the true sense of the word. Nationalism does not go together with democratic institutions. And this is why we do not go more rapidly towards democracy.

The second world view is when there is no colonizing ideology; integration is based on rational-formal framework. The problem of Serbia is that we don't have such a framework. We are still divided in two camps: "patriots" and "traitors". After the assassination of Zoran Djindjić nationalist rethorics came back again. When facing the problem of Kosovo, the cooperation with the Hague Tribunal, the decision of Montenegro to have a referendum for independence, it is visible everyday in every television debate that the debate of these issues is taken over by nationalistic rethorics preventing Serbia to articulate its own chances by resolving the old problems.

I do not think that Serbia is doomed to nationalism. When Zoran Djindjić was prime minister the economic situation was worse than today, but we felt much better because we had an open future. He changed our understanding of ourselves and made us believe in our European future. To give you some proves that this is not my imagination, it is worthwhile mentioning that in 2001 Zoran Djindjić changed the program of the Democratic Party. He threw out old ideas about "Serbian national interests" and offered an "empty" framework of integration based on the rule of law and human rights. He clearly said that Serbia's goal was to raise the capacities of our institutions so that we can answer in the best way to the possibilities and chances for our development.

Serbia understood Djindjić' intention. In March 2003 when asked to evaluate political leaders, 70% of the Serbian population answered that the best leader was Zoran Djindjić, while Vojislav Seselj, the leader of the Serbian Radical Party, was much below, with only 15%. Six months after Zoran was killed, that picture was already changed. Nationalists started to grow and are today the strongest and the most popular political party. Zoran was killed to prevent

the changes of Serbia and the Serbs. Our open horizons closed again. Strong anti-European forces in the police, in the army, in church did not want Serbia to become a normal and modern state.

I would not conclude that there is no future for Serbia. We have not forgotten Djindjić' enormous energy to leading Serbia into Europe. The direction where to go was strongly open during Djindjić time. It will stay and will be remembered despite resistance of the old forces. We will say, okay, let us solve our problems, converting them to new chances and new opportunities for Serbia.

### Šunjić

Thank you Vesna. Now I would invite Branka Prpa to give us her answer to this lecture, her statement. Again I will read the translation that I prepared in advance.

### Branka Prpa (translated by Melita Šunjić)

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen.

Analogies are without doubt the most primitive way of thinking. Consequently applied they would mean for example: If a man called Peter slaps a man called Mark in the face, then he should think that all persons called Peter are bad. This drastic example is the beginning of a story of man and of a nation who experienced the tragic epilogue of their history.

For a historian there are no two identical periods in history, but there are processes of long duration. Even if we look at two important dates in Serb history on a merely symbolic level: 1903 and 2003 – what do they have in common? Two politically motivated assassinations. One of the legitimate Serb monarch, Alexander Obrenović, the other of the legitimate Serb Prime Minister Zoran Djindjić. The first murder is carried out by conspiring circles within the Army; the second one by conspiring circles within the State Security Service. In both cases the assassin was the State. What was so unacceptable to the past and present day political cliques? Above all it was the direction of foreign policy. Obrenovic was well-known for his pro-Austrian orientation as were the Radicals – at that time the most powerful group in the Serb Kingdom – for their pro-Russian course. Djindjić was Pro-European as much as his assassins were oriented against Europe. It is also common knowledge that the Obrenovic dynasty were reformers in the spirit of modern 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe. We can equally look at Djindjić as the leading reformer of Serbia's post-communist society.

If we return to our initial assumption and refute the analogy that seems so irresistible for this one-hundred-years period, what then – from the historian's point of view – is the continuous factor? There are two word representative of the two key players in Serbian political history: Modernists and Traditionalists; pro-Europeans and anti-Europeans.

This sounds common place and yet it is the cause of a deferred, hazardous and incalculable history. This is not only about an unexpected death and the insecurity of succession; it is also about the lack of any viable *modus vivendi* between polarised factions. Therefore the clichéd phrase of “political fighting”, which describes antagonist approaches of parts of the population becomes a matter of life and death. I emphasise that this is not a metaphoric expression nor a linguist charade but the reality in Serbia which is bloody and decapitated and does not recognise the benefits of productive of political diversity.

Often even the historian has difficulties to understand Traditionalists with their infantile projection of Fatherland, their collective “me” of a Serb nation that annihilates all individualism. Even in face of the notorious examples of the 20<sup>th</sup> century – the terrible century, as Agnes Heller would put it. The thinking of Traditionalists takes on theological



dimensions and therefore must not and cannot be questioned. Thus even the notion of the Enemy becomes a key distinction and is being treasured and used not only for affectionate speeches but develops into a hatred that is heart-felt as it is aggressive.

After drawing this general picture, let me return to Zoran Djindjić. Why did the described forces find it necessary to kill such a man? If I tell you that it was about stopping Serbia from moving on towards Europe in great strides, I am not telling you anything that is particularly new or particularly clever. But still, I have to say it. – Why? Europe today has become a meta-nation in a political and societal sense – or is at least heading there, be it real or unreal terms or in an eschatological sense. What matters is that that aspiration is there, omnipresent and dominant. To commit to it means refuting all totalitarian ideas, respecting human rights, a state based on the rule of law and accountability or – to use a Kantian definition – to develop the state as a rational community of free people.

What was Serbia on the 5 October 2000? I am not exaggerating if I say it was a Mafia State, not a state that is in cahoots with crime, but a state run by criminals and shaped by them after their own needs. This does not only encompass massive crime made possible in a state of war, but also massive looting. These two issues are organically mixed and mingled into a new, totalitarian, seemingly civilised barbarianism. Starting from the goods on offer in Belgrade's shops and the silicone boom of female beauty to Jeeps and Porsches and other status symbols of young male power parked in front of cafes and the villas in Belgrade's noble precinct of Dedinje and so on. In this civilised barbarianism you pay for your status in blood while millions of citizens are kept in hunger and misery.

Did the citizens understand that the real Enemy is among us? Of course, this is why unrest and Serbia's greatest uprising of the 20<sup>th</sup> century took place. It was led by Djindjić and the united democratic opposition of Serbia. But is this a sure sign that after one hundred years Traditionalists are finally losing the battle? Yes. And not only them, but the whole criminal elite that was established by the regime of Slobodan Milošević. Trying like Hercules to clean out the Augean stables, Djindjić's Euphrates and Tigris Rivers were the citizens of Serbia. But the opposite side held something more powerful - the State. It sounds paradoxical, but is nevertheless true. As Prime Minister, at the helm of the first democratic government, Djindjić and his ministers were only in control of the tip of the iceberg. A state as a complex mechanism with all its multifaceted ramifications cannot be changed overnight. It takes time to reconstruct it. Djindjić did not have that time, Serbia did not have that time. Unfortunately, no one understands that, not even the international community.

The outcome is quite logical. This is not the lunatic degrading of a state, personified in the person of a Zvezdan Jovanović, a murderer who had a good laugh at the scene of crime during the reconstruction of the assassination, thus insulting all values that are human. This was a planned act, made possible through the collaboration of many different forces and the murderer is the State.

Sixteen years ago Serbia sang the following song

*He who says that, is a liar*

*Serbia isn't small.*

*She is not small. She fought three wars.*

*And with some luck will fight one more.*

The song was not a result of brainless humour but the upcoming nightmare of ideologically justified evil. To go back to my initial metaphor - it was that man called Peter who turned slapping others in the face into government policy.

In my unrewarding and conflicting roles as eyewitness and historian I often asked myself how THIS was possible. How does all that is human in us disappear? I may say that I found the answer with Albert Camus, in his book *Man in Revolt* and it goes like that:

*He who kills or tortures only sees a shadow of his victory. He cannot feel innocent. He therefore needs to load guilt on the victims themselves, so that in a world without orientation, general guilt justifies the use of violence and sanctifies the success. Once even the innocent abdicates the idea of innocence, the value of blind force finally rules a desperate world.*

Slobodan Milošević did rule over a desperate world which – in paraphrasing a thesis by Edgar Morin about nihilism – would seem an incurable loss for the Universe and for Humankind. Under the given circumstances the oppressive human stage and the finite and unfulfilled fate became acceptable and Slobodan Milošević personified a life in the presence that gave up on the concept of future. Even the innocent abdicated the idea of innocence. Prometheus death also marked a new beginning. Shamed and guilty we stood up on the 5 October 2000. Djindjić, this real product of European civilisation and rationalism forced a whole nation to start thinking again and to reconsider and define the questions: Who are we? What are we? Where are we heading?

For those reasons the assassination of Zoran Djindjić is the loss of a man who formed our notions and ideas, the assassination of our Pathfinder. It is the assassination of everything that is good in us. But will this time Prometheus really be dead? Thank you.

### **Šunjić**

Thank you. I would now like to ask Tanja Petovar to give us her statement.

### **Tanja Petovar**

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. I am very honored to be here and to take part at this very special event. I also appreciate an opportunity to meet Ružica Djindjić.

The title of my discussion paper is *Visionary Leaders v. Self-serving Politicians*.

Societies as people have a potential to change profoundly and reinvent their lives. Recent examples of Ireland and Slovakia prove it. For that to happen societies need leaders with a clear sense of direction and a strong vision of the future conveyed to the people who are informed and motivated. Self-serving politicians who misuse power to look good, get popular and promote only personal well-being are not such leaders. By demagogy they may succeed for a time being to corrupt and impress disillusioned and impoverished people. However, to quote Abraham Lincoln: *«If you once forfeit the confidence of your fellow citizens, you can never regain their respect and esteem. You may fool all of the people some of the time; you can even fool some of the people all the time; but you can't fool all of the people all of the time.»*

Trustworthy leaders who have ability to communicate a vision of where their country needs to go, to focus on priorities and to take strategic decisions are very rare in to-days world. Serbia is not an exception.

What makes Serbia relatively specific is an accumulation of difficulties and challenges, some of them with the historical consequences. According to the Great Events Theory of leadership a crisis or important event may cause a person to rise to the occasion, which brings out extraordinary leadership qualities in an ordinary person. For this to happen everyone in society should be responsible. In his address to Parliament (11/30/54) on his 80th birthday Winston Churchill said: *“I have never accepted what many people have kindly said—namely*

*that I inspired the nation. Their will was resolute and remorseless, and as it proved, unconquerable. It fell to me to express it.»* A society where majority of population is indifferent or against everyone will hardly be able to “deliver” such a good leader.

Problems in Serbia are so big today that the majority of population, together with politicians, tend to sink into obliviousness rather than face threatening facts. The Kosovo case illustrates this active, even aggressive capability to deny in thought and word the matter of the fact. Any talk about Kosovo is full of “discretions” and deceptions, the deliberate falsehood and the outright lies. At the same time most of our fellow citizens implicitly demand of the politicians to sacrifice the truth to preserve the illusion about Kosovo. For a time being it is easier to go along with the silent agreements that keep the unpleasant facts «of the record».

The point is, however, that such Serbia can be sunk by the weight of the unresolved Kosovo status. Without a final status of Kosovo Serbia would not be able to define its own status – to fix its borders and get the new constitution - and to start looking forward to shared values and visions. Somewhere between the two poles – living with vital lies and speaking the simple truth – there lies a skillful mean, a path to the resolution of the Kosovo knot. A great leader would know the momentum when to tell the truth as a counterbalance to the inertial pull of the collective denial. To do it she or he would need to communicate to his people a clear vision of Serbia after Kosovo and made them aligned to that vision.

The other problem that I would like to address is the role of leadership in the ongoing transition. The main directions of this process are guided by the IMF, World Bank and the EU politicians. By stick and carrot the foreigners mitigate the evils of non-development that are plenty and still very powerful. By mechanisms such as the Association and Stabilization Agreement and the Partnership for Peace they are building up a space for new local force that will, hopefully, one day take a lead in developing Serbia from weak and corrupted to a modern and democratic state. Today, we have only a bunch of capable managers able to carry out the foreigners' strategy of transition in Serbia.

The matter is that internationally driven transition makes local politicians even more irresponsible to their constituencies. The citizens become passive and cynical. The consequences are that the most popular politicians are those demagogues who put the blame for unpopular socio-economic measures on the international community and their partners on the ground, while taking no responsibility for their own deeds. It is pathetic, sometimes, to listen to the «lectures» of patriotism by these demagogues whose politics made Serbia a pariah of Europe.

There are many differences between developed and less developed countries, but one that is clearly visible in every case is the quality of the state. To develop modern and democratic state Serbia needs good leader(s) because development is primarily a political process that involves vast changes in society and in the distribution of power. That is why there will be no development without a shift of power from the informal interest groups and party coalitions to democratic institutions. Organising and leading this process needs political skill and will - too fast and there is a backlash from those whose position is threatened. (Vojislav Kostunica knows it.) Too slow, and the momentum to encourage the people to believe in the future and take risks for it is lost. (Zoran Djindjic knew it.)

Serbia can be temporarily guided by Brussels, IMF and the World Bank. They can bring in democratic tools and mechanisms and provide aid. They can choose and advice local politicians how to manage structural changes. But, they cannot bring in real political changes. The society's will must be collective. Only local leaders can mobilise the collective national

will to overcome the difficulties together and to find solutions from within. Because «development does not happen to individuals; it happens to societies».

Serbia is a society that seeks self-renewal and for that it needs good leaders. The *Great Events Theory* is not the only theory how people become leaders. There is the *Trait Theory* that points out some personality traits that may lead people naturally into leadership role; and the *Transformational Leadership Theory* which premises are that people can choose to become leaders, that people can learn leadership skills. It is the most widely accepted theory today.

This is good news for Serbia. Good leaders do not need to be born they can be made. Good leaders are developed through never ending process of self-study, education, training, and experience. To gain respect, leaders must be ethical. People want to be guided by those they respect and those who have a clear sense of direction.

A sense of direction is achieved by conveying a strong vision of the future. The best instrument to fight against corruption and self-serving politicians, against the abuse of public goods and negligence of the public interest would be a development strategy of Serbia with Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely (SMART) goals. Ethical, knowledgeable, skilled and responsible leadership would create such strategy, communicate it to people and set up institutional mechanisms to bring it into life.

Therefore, educating and formatting new democratic leadership class should be one of the prior strategic investments into Serbian democracy. Specialised high schools, courses, scholarships, and exchange programmes should be available to a new generation of politicians. The new culture and political sensibility for ethical and responsible leadership should be developed through TV programs, specialised magazines and other publications. “World cafés” and similar forms of public dialogues should be popularized, maintained and facilitated in every local community. IT technology should be widely used for such purposes.

I believe in the transformational leadership theory, but I wish that a great leader will be born again in the crisis that Serbia has been going through, and that she or he would start with clear values, some realism and modesty; that s/he would know how to bring in change and what the change is about; to try to minimize effects of political demagoguery and populism by telling the truth to the people; to be aware that there is no modern state with poverty; to treat the poor and disillusioned people with respect and dignity and to do the best to make their lives less nasty and brutish; to watch constantly the world around us and to find good strategic partnership and a niche for Serbia. And not to forget the words of Mahatma Gandhi: “We must become the change we want to see.” Zoran Djindjić was the change Serbia wanted to see. Thank you.

**Šunjić**

I ask Wolfgang Petritsch to give his statement.

**Wolfgang Petritsch**

As we are approaching the end of this somber memorial evening for Zoran Djindjić and after having listened to these very impressive speeches, let me at this point just share with you some personal reflexions on Zoran Djindjić.

I distinctly remember this snowy evening in December 1997 with Ružica and Zoran attending a dinner at the Austrian Embassy. The democratic opposition of Serbia at the time was pretty much down and out. “Zajedno” (*i.e. the united opposition front* “Zajedno” meaning

“*Together*”) was not any longer *zajedno*. It seemed as if Milošević had regained political power and the democratic strength that for eighty days was demonstrated by hundreds of thousands in the streets of Belgrade by “*Zajedno*” in the fall and winter of 1996 had mysteriously evaporated. Vesna Pešić, the leader of the Civic Alliance and Zoran’s faithful ally, will remember these dark days, when politics in Serbia moved from bad to worse. 1997 was a time when the civic and democratic opposition seemed to be unable to overcome the state’s repressive power, represented by Milošević and his clique.

As the political and social crisis in Serbia deepened, I had other occasions to meet and talk with Zoran Djindjić. When I held the post of EU-Special Envoy and the crisis in Kosovo moved to the top of the political agenda of the international community in 1998 and early 1999, Zoran tried to offer proposals how to square the Kosovo-circle. He proposed to reorganize the province into cantons, in order to accommodate the opposing interests of Albanians and Serbs alike, but still under the roof of Yugoslavia. He, too, realized that time was running out; that a peaceful settlement became ever more elusive and that the brutal suppression of the Kosovo-Albanian rebellion would only exacerbate the already deep divide between the two peoples. The peace negotiations in the French castle of Rambouillet, where I represented the EU – alongside with an American and a Russian mediator – , was a last, albeit slim chance for Serbia to hold on to Kosovo. Unfortunately it did not work out. It did not work out, because Milošević refused to sign up to this compromise proposal. This spelled the end to our peace efforts, which were supported by Zoran and the democratic camp in Belgrade. Because he courageously criticized Milošević for refusing the deal, Zoran Djindjić had to leave Belgrade during the NATO intervention. He had to move to Herceg Novi, the coastal town in Montenegro.

This is where I met him the next time in the spring of 1999 when I was the liaison between the EU and the Montenegrin Government of President Milo Djukanović. Zoran appeared to be depressed about the overall situation, disappointed by the West and the negative effects of this brutal military intervention on the reformers in Serbia. The 74-day bombardment of his country by the North Atlantic Alliance considerably weakened Zoran’s political standing in Serbia, which for the last time rallied around its disgraced leader. Zoran Djindjić was accused by the regime’s propaganda of “betrayal” – a potentially fatal accusation in Milošević’s Serbia.

Clearly, getting rid of Milošević was our shared goal. The military intervention – not backed up by the UN-Security Council – was not to his liking.

It was the Belgrade version of the “October revolution” of 2000 that finally established Zoran Djindjić in Europe as the undisputed leader and face of a new and democratic Serbia.

Zoran Djindjić was the first truly democratically elected Prime Minister of Serbia. A historic departure for Serbia from its autocratic tradition of the past.

Zoran was a European politician in this very civic sense. He was, as President Tadić has pointed out in his speech tonight, both a visionary and a realist. He was also very much a pragmatist who realized that the only way forward for Serbia was “Europeanization”, a thorough democratic, economic and social reform and a new beginning for this morally devastated state and its divided society. He started this process of an already too much delayed transformation with great vigor and verve, at times even with a sense of impatience. Zoran Djindjić was acutely aware of the imminent danger for his democratic experiment. He realized Serbia’s necessity to choose between an outdated and shallow “tradition” and European modernization. I vividly remember a meeting in Sarajevo and our stroll across the Baščaršija, the Ottoman market in the old part of the town. As the newly elected Prime Minister of Serbia he was deeply aware of how important reconciliation between the peoples

of former Yugoslavia was. He reached out to the onetime enemies and courageously delivered Slobodan Milošević, the main culprit in the Yugoslav tragedy, to The Hague.

At one of the last meetings that I had with him in Belgrade, he said to me that there were only a few Serbs who really tried to modernize Serbia and bring it fully into the European camp – but they all failed. Zoran Djindjić, if left with more time, could have been the first to succeed. At his violent and untimely death he was barely more than 50 years of age.

It will be now up to you, Mr. President, and to the democratic forces in Serbia to fulfill Zoran's dream. I am fully aware that this is not an easy task in view of the Kosovo talks, the imminent decision on the future of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, not to speak of the continued cooperation with International Tribunal in The Hague.

In concluding, let me state, that we here in the Bruno Kreisky Forum as well as many Austrians believe in a democratic Serbia, and that we all support an equitable and fair solution to the pending issues. Serbia matters to Europe as it matters to us.

Thank you!

### **Šunjić**

Thank you very much. This memorial evening for Zoran Djindjić is now coming to an end. I think we heard some very strong messages by people who accompanied him in his private life and as politicians. We heard this really compelling and sharp analysis of the state of democracy in Serbia by Vesna Pešić. We heard about the clash of two concepts, one that is oriented backwards and one that is trying to conquer the future by Branka Prpa. We heard about the leadership qualities that might be required today in Serbia to lead her out of this phase of self-deception and illusion by Tanja Petovar. And we listened to the personal memories of Wolfgang Petritsch of the man and the politician Zoran Djindjić. We do not want to dilute this memorial evening in a discussion. So I would like at this point to thank you very much for your attendance and wish you a pleasant evening.