

Macedonian Diplomatic Rhapsody



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Translated from Macedonian to English and Edited by Risto
Stefov

*A neighbour is like salt and a relative is like sugar. You can't do
without salt!*

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IN PLACE OF AN INTRODUCTION

In 2025 Macedonia is indeed in a very difficult position, which can even be considered tragic. The next year 2026 will again be decisive in many ways for the survival of both the state and the Macedonian people. The reasons are numerous, and the extremely negative role of the international factor is not at all in dispute. However, the responsibility for why everything is so bad is – ours, and ours alone. In our country, for example, it was not understood, and it is still not understood, that the key problem the state is facing is foreign policy, which means diplomacy. If this is true, and it absolutely is, it means that the solutions, not only can, but must be diplomatic. And they are specific and special. If you take a different path, like we did – you will not get anywhere. And the basic rule of diplomacy is – reciprocity. If you abandon that principle, as we constantly do – defeat is guaranteed. Our tragedy is that we are constantly led by incompetent, very often dishonest people. Just remember what happened with the privatization of the huge social capital? In order for politicians to argue everything among themselves and buy them for little money, they deliberately impoverished them and practically destroyed the largest companies. A good part of them remained – unusable (OHIS, MZT, Staklara...). The national wealth created over decades was destroyed for a small profit.

At the same time, our incompetent and insecure leaders allowed foreigners to do whatever they wanted to us. The foreigners, on the other hand, did not miss the chance, fulfilled the interests of the institution they represented and thus built their careers - at our expense. And some of them, after their mandates ended, to ease their conscience - became our friends. Back then, they openly told us that they had no choice because they were doing their job, and they did not put a gun to our temple, but we ourselves, voluntarily, accepted their dictates.

Our main problem is that, after the collapse of Yugoslavia, we never had real leaders or our own policy, let alone a strategy. All the time, we

blindly fulfilled the demands of foreigners. And without our own policies, based on precisely developed strategies for each segment of social life, no country has a chance for sustainable, let alone rapid, development. While foreigners knew precisely what they wanted regarding Macedonia, we had no idea what was happening to us.

At the very beginning of independence, in fact, it was not entirely easy to discover. No one could have even guessed that the real goal of the foreign factor was the annihilation of the Macedonians and their Bulgarianization! Now, it is an indisputable and visible final procedure, with a single intention – definitive closure of the “Macedonian Question”.

In that process, a critical period was the government of SDSM and DUI from 2017 to 2024, when treacherous agreements with Bulgaria and Greece were signed, followed by the catastrophic protocols with Sofia. The Tirana platform was the cover for everything.

Now the new government does not have much choice and we are on the move. Radical steps are necessary but also inevitable. The extremely negative and destructive tendencies for the Macedonian people must be cut off. Otherwise, both as a people and as a Macedonian state, we will end up – in the dustbin of history.

Practically, Macedonia must cancel the second protocol with Bulgaria, signed in July 2022, as soon as possible. That is the only way out to eliminate the medieval ultimatum for an absolutely unacceptable change to the Constitution, by including non-existent Bulgarians in it. Only in this way will the negotiation framework itself become unusable, with which Macedonia will never even get close to the EU, let alone become a member.

Our fate is in our hands. If we are not ready and capable of facing the challenges, we do not deserve a state.

We have reached that point.

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Generally, whether a state will fulfill its foreign policy ambitions depends on diplomacy. If it was known that, all these years after the collapse of Yugoslavia, Macedonia's key interests have been concentrated on foreign policy, the logical question should have been – have we at least tried to build and structure an appropriate diplomacy?

The answer is, categorically - NO!

In fact, given the conditions in which the country objectively finds itself, our diplomacy should not only be engaged in the realization of some foreign policy ambitions but, above all, must fight to defend the survival of the Macedonian people, and even the Macedonian state itself, which are seriously threatened. A more difficult task - health.

For these objective reasons, we must be aware that the imperative tasks faced by our diplomacy exceed its objective capacities and that its urgent staffing is inevitable. To begin with, this is only possible by hiring foreign experts. We absolutely need help, and that is no shame. On the contrary. How many Real Madrid players are not Spanish?

The best solution, which must not be postponed, is to ask certain countries for reputable retired career ambassadors, or top experts in international law, retired from the UN, EU, NATO, OSCE, the Hague Court... who could help us.

Macedonia has no choice - it must succeed. Otherwise...

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Here is a small illustration of how Macedonia has behaved on the international stage so far.

Crying profusely, little Trajche came home and his mother, visibly worried, asked him - what happened? Sobbing through tears, Trajche replied - Petre beat me. First, his mother consoled him not to cry, and then she told him – you know, son, we must behave in a Christian

manner, and that means that bad things should be returned – with good. Only in this way can the world move forward. Therefore, you will give Petre a cookie! It was out of the question, Trajche screamed, continuing to cry. He refused persistently but his mother was more insistent and forced him to do so. Even though Trajche did not want to, he gave Petre the cookie but soon came back with more tears. He explained to his astonished mother that Petre really liked the cookie, and – in order to get another one, he gave him another beating.

This story seems to symbolize the role that Macedonia has been playing on the international stage for 35 years. Macedonia constantly takes beating and in return continues to offer cookies (the flag, the constitution...). Macedonia had no idea what is happening to it. We Macedonians never slammed our fist on the table, even though we had many reasons to, but also it had to be because almost all the arguments were always on our side. Everything they threw at us, like dogs – we swallowed and did not protest. Cases, just a miracle.

When we were admitted to the UN, for example, unacceptable blackmail was imposed on us, which ignored the Charter (Constitution) of the world organization, and we remained silent; a destructive Interim Agreement at Greece's insistence was imposed on us, with the sole purpose of paving the way for a permanent Agreement in Nivitsi, with which they have now crushed us... and we, as if we were - absent; the whole time they blocked us politically, but also physically - they closed the border on us, in order to force us to capitulate, and we did not retaliate; they blackmailed us and gave us ultimatums to destroy us, and we did not seem to notice that this applied only to our state and not to anyone else; at the NATO summit in Bucharest (2008), however, they made it clear to us that first we must cross ourselves and be nationally beheaded, and only then will we be able to join the alliance and the EU... Again, nothing for anyone. We, absent.

After NATO in Bucharest (2008), however, as if we temporarily came to our senses, we filed an application against Greece in court of the

Hague. We received an excellent verdict. And instead of banging it on the table everywhere, we put it in a drawer and forgot about it. Again, under the dictates of foreigners, of course. As if we were afraid of the victory because all the main international factors ignored it. It did not correspond to their intentions and plans regarding Macedonia. Our admission to NATO and the EU, without changing the country, and that means the people did not allow for the erasure of the Macedonians. The Americans, however, called the verdict – “the opinion of the Court”! Who knows, maybe their courts issue opinions, not verdicts?

The scariest thing about all this, is that we consider the USA to be our great friend and partner, even strategically, while the Americans pursue their interests all the time, and are destroying us as a people!

Unprecedented amateurism and incompetence. Macedonia is an excellent example of how, when you take a beating in return you give out cookies – you risk a new punishment. If you continue like this, it’s only a question of when you will definitely be crushed. We are moving in exactly that direction. Our fight for EU membership is exactly such a case. When you behave amateurishly on the international political stage, which is painted with all colours, you risk defeat.

The treacherous agreements with Bulgaria and Greece, and the catastrophic Tiranac platform, hit us on the head with their full weight. In return, we once again offered – cookies to the foreign creators of these policies, who shamelessly imposed disastrous solutions on us! It is first-class stupidity to respond to evil with good, although it may seem – Christian. In politics, and especially in diplomacy, a key rule in relations between states is reciprocity. When this is skipped to one’s own detriment, it shows supreme incompetence that leads directly to ruin.

The world is very far from the time when evil can be met with good, and when problems can be solved that way. We are still in a period in which force rules, in which the powerful and the rich dominate, and democracy, human rights and similar phrases are just empty words,

massively exploited by the strong. Nothing more. Everyone must know this, especially politicians and diplomats of weaker countries.

Like diplomacy, politics is a complicated task. If you don't understand it, you easily lose and often end up looking ridiculous. The problem is that you always have to read between the lines. Without that, you are illiterate. Exactly. It always has a secret or hidden part. Most often – a hidden intention. It is not uncommon for the real goal of a particular policy to have no connection with the publicly proclaimed one. That is why it is said that politicians say one thing, think another and do something else. That has been the case, and will remain so for a long time to come. Even today, Machiavellianism is as relevant as it was 100 or more years ago, which means that the end justifies the means. However, the end should determine, not justify the means.

The Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with Bulgaria (2017) was signed under an open blackmail from Sofia, and under the fierce pressure and dictates of Washington, Paris and Brussels, which is a marginal factor, but for us significant – at the expense of Macedonia's fundamental interests. This is especially true for the protocols that followed, emphasized for the second one. This is a classic example of the situation in international politics. Macedonia is humiliated in an indecent way, and this is not only tolerated by "our" politicians but is also highlighted as a wise move! That certainly suits the foreign factor, and whether someone is treated in an unworthy manner, ignored, and whether their universal interests are threatened – that is not important at all. After all, if we are not capable of defending ourselves, who should? Others? Such a thing is only possible if you are someone's vassal.

When we look back analytically, it becomes quite clear that our historical mistake was that we never had our own policy, let alone a strategy, for what we wanted to achieve, but always did what foreigners told us and imposed on us! That is our tragedy that has brought us to this state. It shows that we did not and do not have leaders, and without them – there is no progress in the right direction.

There is no problem in the world that cannot be solved relatively quickly. The key question is always – who will give in, who will make concessions, who will give up their (legitimate?) rights? This is what all the disputes are about. Quite logically and correctly, everyone fights for what they believe belongs to them, on whatever grounds. Nobody wants to bend their back, to sacrifice their interests. A compromise is always a way out, but it is difficult, very difficult to find. A balance that will suit both or most of the parties involved, is almost impossible. Therefore, there is always a victim.

The most common definition of compromise is that everyone gets what they don't want. It's good if that is the case, and if it is not one-sided and asymmetrical, which most often it is. However, the question remains how functional it is, how much it solves problems, whether it will stand the test of time... The fact is that mediators in almost all disputes are representatives of the great powers. As a rule, always and everywhere, they proceed primarily from their own interests and are never fair to the opposing parties. Classic proof of this was Matthew Nimetz when he acted as a mediator between Macedonia and Greece.

DIPLOMACY AS A CRAFT - WHAT IS DIPLOMACY?

Along with prostitution, diplomacy is considered one of the oldest professions. Society is certainly not the happiest, but such is the tradition. Several thousand years ago, people appeared who solved problems between existing structures. Over time, they were called diplomats. There are numerous historical sources that claim and prove that, in numerous serious and difficult situations the world has gone through, their role was extremely important. Many such events even bear the name of the diplomat who helped resolve the problem. One such case is the “Ichko Peace”, concluded between Serbia and Turkey, in 1806. Ichko was a Macedonian.

There are many definitions of what diplomacy is. Extensive scientific works are hidden behind the term, and numerous theories have been developed. In practice, however, diplomacy is reduced to a pure – craft. After all the books, studies, dissertations, debates and theories read, the most important thing is – experience. At the end of the day, this is because only (a small!) part of diplomacy is routine, while the majority of the challenges that diplomats face are – unique. Theory certainly helps, but most often it does not offer concrete solutions. Those lie in practice.

In recent centuries, it has been shown that the international stage requires constant and emphasized engagement of diplomacy. Today, however, the world is deeply divided by all the foundations and, slowly but surely – it goes down. The overall conditions are deteriorating and differences of all kinds are constantly deepening. Due to different interests, confrontations and misunderstandings are constant and create increasingly difficult problems. Injustices are everywhere, in every segment of international relations. They are so present that peace, security and equal cooperation between states are becoming impossible, despite all the international agreements reached so far to be different (the UN Charter, diplomatic conventions, the Universal Declaration of

Human Rights...). It is certain that the overall conditions will continue to deteriorate. According to all indicators, the world in 2025 is not only not concentrated on finding solutions to the enormous challenges, but there are no thoughts, let alone attempts, projects, roadmaps... to overcome this impossibility. The best proof that this is so is the fact that the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer. This cannot last, and it is because diplomacy has failed.

Recently (2025), part of a study by a team of American doctors and psychologists appeared on the Internet, and was published in The New England Journal of Medicine. The attached statistics also claim the following – the world has about 7.8 billion people; 11% are in Europe, 5% in North America, 9% in South America, 15% in Africa and 60% in Asia; 49% live in rural areas; 12% speak Chinese, 5% Spanish, 5% English... and 62% in their own language; 23% have nowhere to live (that's 1.8 billion people!); 15% are malnourished; 13% do not have clean drinking water; 70% do not have access to the internet but 75% have mobile phones; 17% are illiterate; 33% are Christian, 22% are Muslim, 14% are Hindu, 7% are Buddhist, 12% are of another religion and 12% are non-religious; only 8% of people are older than 65...

Imagine that as many as 92% of people do not live to be 66!? The figures are not deeply worrying but alarming, although the other side of the coin is not given – how is the world's wealth divided? And from that data, the headache will be even worse!

This is a good illustration of the world we live in.

But let's return to our topic. In the 21st century, diplomacy is very developed on a global scale, and is asserting itself as an important factor, although adequate attention is still not paid to resolving key issues, which were briefly elaborated earlier, and mainly ecology and climate change are missing. That is dictated by the needs assessed as priorities, which are imposed by the richest. The reason, but not the reason for this, is the rapid technical and technological development, which also includes new nuclear weapons which, in turn, also threaten

general security. Because of all this, diplomacy is gaining increasing importance on a multilateral level. Security is emerging as a key issue and, within it, terrorism is emerging as a contemporary challenge. Ecology is also a constant topic but, all in all, it seems to be more of a reason for rhetoric than for taking concrete actions, although the situation is extremely worrying. There is also the energy crisis, which appeared decades ago, but is now becoming more urgent as a result of the Russian intervention in Ukraine, which has had enormous consequences, not only in Europe. Nuclear power plants that have already been written off are being reactivated, the use of fossil fuels, such as coal and the like, continues. And all of this is anti-ecological!

Disarmament, which has long been an important topic even though everyone has been constantly arming themselves, is now rarely mentioned. But the arms race continues at an unabated pace. The return of Donald Trump as president of the United States has marked a direct call to NATO members to increase defense spending from two and a half to five percent of gross domestic product. The reason for this is the American-economic needs, calculated in the huge military sector. This means a new and unimaginable arms race. In parallel, in the context of the war in Ukraine, the EU has also begun to allocate huge sums for new weapons. These indicators do not in any way portend good times for the world. Weapons are bought to be used. Not to be kept.

The fact is that the multilateral part, embodied in the United Nations, the European Union, NATO, OSCE, ASEAN and many others, is also transforming into a kind of international bureaucracy, which is difficult to control. These are comfortable, extremely well-paid positions, and the diplomats involved are making moves to defend their own personal interests. Half-jokingly, but not far from the truth, it is said that the main task of the multilateralists is to organize a new international conference, and in the most distant and exotic place possible! The topic and the goal are not important. They will be invented. What is important is that there is movement. This is of course a caricature, but it is not in dispute that there is some truth. Proof of this is the fact that the

EU Commissioner (Minister), former Prime Minister of France, employed her own hairdresser as an advisor!

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Diplomacy is a tool for implementing the foreign policy of every state and that is not in dispute. The fact is, however, that it is also an open channel for the widest communication for every country with the world. Diplomatic and consular missions (DCMs), cultural and information centers, which are part of diplomatic networks, are a channel through which states create broad opportunities for mutual communication. This is often supplemented by trade and tourist missions.

The main task of diplomats is to build the widest possible network of contacts, in order to provide as much relevant information as possible. That is creative diplomacy. Conversations with officials of the host country are always sought on a specific topic, either on their own initiative or at the request of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Before each such conversation, detailed preparation is required. Depending on the interest that exists, one should also go into details that are not available in the media. It will depend on the interlocutor what and how much he or she says. These do not have to be any big secrets, but in any case, these conversations carry a certain confidential character. The same applies to the information that we give to the interlocutor. Again, it does not have to be about any secrets, but only about a qualified analysis of our policies, with details that are not circulated in the public. This is how we arrive at substantive information useful for both sides.

In doing so, the assessment is important – why a certain policy is being implemented, what its essence is and most importantly – its goal. Thus, all the information that is being circulated through the media is thoroughly completed, but without the key indicators. Here is where the ability and readiness of diplomats to clarify precisely those details comes to the fore. The answers received depend on the severity and complexity of the questions asked, which stems from knowledge of the subject matter.

In the continuation of this section, we will elaborate on several components of diplomacy, which are important and little or insufficiently known to the public, we will present specific cases, and dwell more broadly on details of the functioning of the diplomatic service, with a special focus on our (Macedonian) diplomacy.

THE IMPORTANCE OF DIPLOMATIC PROTOCOL

As a rule, diplomatic protocol is underestimated as something technical and unimportant. In fact, it is the nervous system of the service. Through it, the most delicate issues of relations between states are manifested, demonstrated and even presented. Through the protocol, it is easiest to read whether there are misunderstandings, disagreements, open issues between certain states... The relations between two countries, for example, can best be assessed through the level of the delegations exchanged and through the dynamics of visits. When relations between Turkey and Israel became strained because of the Palestinians, the Turkish ambassador in Tel Aviv was deliberately seated on a lower chair in their Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Ankara immediately severed relations. There are several such cases.

International protocol, on the other hand, regulates many formal issues of relations between countries. This does not at all mean that the protocol is just a form, although such an impression is often given. It plays an extremely important role, behind which the content of diplomacy is practically hidden. The protocol has a pronounced significance in international communication because, in a precise manner, it precisely defines many specific issues of exceptional importance for cooperation and relations between countries. Without protocol norms, international relations would be in chaos, left to improvisations, which would lead to misunderstandings and conflicts. This is reminiscent of the joke about the train timetable. Someone asked – why do we need a timetable when all the trains are late? That is why, they answered him – if there were no timetable, how would we know if and how late they are? To a large extent, the same applies to protocol. Without it, there would be no order and no one would know about mistakes being made.

The way a country treats representatives of another country, whether diplomats or delegations, is the easiest way to see its overall attitude

towards the other side. At first glance, it may not seem very important how guests are welcomed and by whom, who receives them, where they are accommodated, what they visit..., but these are key facts by which everything else is evaluated. At the end of the day, in a very subtle way, it is protocol that helps to understand all aspects of relations between countries. It also determines the framework of relations, and when it is known everything else is easier.

According to the protocol, and so it is in the Charter (Constitution) of the UN, all states are equal, whether they are the smallest or the largest. In practice, however, it is not exactly so and, as in socialism, some are more equal than others. For such a situation, the small countries are largely to blame, which voluntarily give more rights to the larger and more developed ones. The big and powerful, on the other hand, abuse this and impose themselves as if they were inviolable, and behave as such. Objectively, some kind of complete equality in practice is not possible because the differences in power, size, importance... are enormous.

According to protocol, when a foreign delegation comes to the country, the host should be a person of the same level as the head of the delegation, and should also be received at least at one level higher (if a minister comes, he should be received by the deputy prime minister or, possibly, the prime minister; if a deputy minister comes, then he should also be received by the competent minister...). In principle, this rule does not apply in countries like Macedonia. This is because it is a question of whether and when a president (except for those who are mainly “British queens”), a prime minister, and even a minister will come to Macedonia - whether from the USA, France, Great Britain, Germany...? Very rarely. From large and important countries, they come to us only if they need to convince us to commit suicide, with changes to the name and Constitution, to promote the agreement in Nivitsi... On such occasions, a dozen prime ministers and ministers came. Therefore, when from the main world factors some deputy, assistant, director and similar official comes to Macedonia, who is not

even among the top 100, let alone a thousand people, in our country, and those like us, everyone receives him - the president, the prime minister, the speaker of the House, ministers...

The fact is that small countries, due to low self-confidence and lack of self-esteem, very often unnecessarily humiliate themselves with their attitude towards foreigners. How many times has it happened to us, and still happens, that someone comes to us, let's say - a small reference from one of the important centers comes to us and all the highest officials receive him. It is obvious that we should be tolerant and flexible, but there must be limits. We are not going to change the world, but... Otherwise, humility is being demonstrated.

By our flirting with some references at the highest level, we only let their top managers know that there is no need for them to come to us because they will receive the same treatment as the references. The accessibility of our top managers to numerous foreign low-ranking officials shows what our level is, how far our reach is... All of this is a clear signal to the centers outside our country – of exactly what we deserve. Based on this knowledge, they will continue to treat us the same way.

The conclusion is that – we are as equal as we are not, and we will remain so for a very long time. This is because the argument of force will rule the world for a long time to come, and not by any democracy or similar platitudes. We will have to live with that, but we will also have to make some attempt, to establish some order, so as not to appear inadequate. We cannot be equal to the great powers, but some order must be established based on dignified principles, and those principles must be respected.

At multilateral events, formal equality between states is respected a little more, but even there not much. At a summit, for example, the first among the presidents or prime ministers is the one who has been in office the longest, not the president of the largest, strongest, or richest country. Formally, he or she may open the event, but immediately

afterwards all the advantages and conveniences are once again enjoyed by the most powerful.

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Since we are analyzing the protocol, we will also mention a few subtleties that even very experienced diplomats do not know. Namely, if an embassy is left without a single diplomat in the host country, this means a formal severance of relations. Therefore, in cases where the embassy has one diplomat – ambassador or chargé d'affaires – who needs to leave the host country for any reason, either a diplomat from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should be requested to replace him or, in the worst case, a temporary chargé d'affaires from among the administrators should be appointed (if there are any!). An illegal way to avoid this situation is to not inform the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the host country that the sole diplomat will temporarily leave! But let's not fool ourselves. The hosts will certainly find out and it will be a shame for the country that did so!

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And another rule is important, which many people may not know either. It is generally known that ambassadors, when in official capacity, have the right to display the flag of their country on their vehicle. However, when the president of their own state, the prime minister or the minister of foreign affairs is on an official or working visit to the host country, they have the right to have the flag on their vehicle, not the ambassador!

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Here is a ceremonial “trifle” that is extremely important for diplomats. Given that the devil is always in the details, protocol should pay attention not only to ambassadors but also to all other diplomats, that the wine glass is always held by the stem! Never by the glass. On the contrary, a glass of cognac is held by its base! The explanation is that the cognac is warmed up this way! Technically speaking – it is chamberer, in French – it is brought to room temperature (chambre –

room), and thus it becomes even more pleasant to drink! This is certainly taught in large diplomatic missions but not in “small” ones. These are not unimportant trifles. Quite the contrary. Experienced diplomats immediately notice when someone does not know these general rules, and immediately consider them an amateur.

CONSENT

The term “consent” is often mentioned in public, which certainly knows little about what it is. After all, the procedures are very interesting and have extraordinary nuances, probably unknown even to a good portion of diplomats! When a state designates a candidate for ambassador, it must seek the consent of the other state that its candidate is acceptable. It is not always a pure formality, although in a huge number of cases it is. Most often, the requested country has nothing against the proposed candidate and gives its consent. Then, the accepted candidate can take office.

A general, although unwritten diplomatic practice is to get consent within a period of about four weeks. If this is not done, the request is considered to have been rejected, i.e. that the candidate was not acceptable. Everything happens silently. There is no obligation to notify the applicant about the rejection of the consent. The expired deadline is sufficient. The rejected party, however, cannot demand an explanation. That is the discretionary right of the state from which the consent was requested, and everyone respects that. In such a case, a new candidate for ambassador should be proposed, that is, a new consent should be requested.

Another rule is that the requesting country must not publish the name of its candidate for ambassador until the candidate has been accepted. By publishing his or her name, it is made known that the problem has been resolved for the requester and the ambassador is (already) – appointed! In such a case, although it does not happen often, the country from

which the consent is requested – will not accept it! By announcing the candidate, its function is violated. Its right to decide is challenged.

There are indicators that, at least recently, there has been a greater tolerance in granting consent, although the unwritten rules remain. For example, it is not uncommon for the deadline for granting consent to be extended to the fifth, sixth week, or even longer, regardless of whether it concerns already announced names of ambassadors, or for other reasons. Procrastination with the consent is almost always some kind of message for the applicant. We too have had a negative experience in requesting consent. That was the case with L. Frchkoski. He was appointed ambassador to the USA, and publicly promoted in the media, but he did not get consent. There is a strong impression that Washington's discontent was not due to the premature publication of his name, but rather due to his involvement in previous affairs. This reason was also mentioned in our media, after the rejection of the consent.

The case reminded me of the information I received from the first British ambassador to Macedonia, Tony Milson. At the beginning of 1997, after the end of his mandate, he returned to London, shortly after the dismissal of Frchkoski from the position of Minister of Foreign Affairs. I was still working in London and when we met, the first thing I asked him was - why had Frchkoski been replaced? Without blinking, he answered - because of crime! If that is true, and Milson knew it too, could the Americans not have known it? He certainly found out about it - from them.

There were similar cases in the neighbourhood. In the 1990s, the name of the new ambassador to Germany was announced in Croatia and when they asked for consent, they were left empty handed! The Germans, offended by the procedure, did not accept the proposal. A precise message – the rules must be respected.

There is another example, from the former Yugoslavia, which is particularly interesting for our country. Even now Sofia is carrying out

unprecedented political and diplomatic aggression against Macedonia, but this is nothing new in mutual relations. That is why we are going through a period of extremely tense relations. They have long refused to acknowledge that we exist as a people, claiming that the Macedonian language is a dialect of Bulgarian, and similar nonsense. The following episode shows that this was the case years ago.

At the time, Professor Kiril Miljovski was proposed as the new Yugoslav ambassador to Bulgaria. Due to the well-known attitude towards Macedonia and the Macedonians, Bulgaria was dragging its feet and did not give its consent. They did not accept Miljovski just because he was Macedonian! But Tito clearly told the Bulgarian dictator Todor Zhivkov – if he wanted to have a Yugoslav ambassador in Sofia, it would be Miljovski! If he didn't want to, that was his decision! The consent was immediately granted and, from 1967 to 1971, Miljovski was the Yugoslav ambassador in Sofia! Fortunately for us, Tito was a world leader and knew how to act.

This topic about consent was started in Moscow, on March 18, 2006, and was inspired by the request for consent for the new Macedonian ambassador to the Russian Federation, who was to succeed me. On January 31, 2006, the embassy received a telegram from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs requesting approval for the new ambassador and, previously, as would be normal, there had been no notification from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that my mandate was being terminated and that I should return, after less than 20 months in office! Logically, the telegram should have been returned, with a comment that it was probably some kind of mistake because we have an ambassador in Moscow, and the Russians will certainly not accept that we have – two! My (the author of this book) mandate was terminated prematurely, without being notified at all! Formally, it was due to retirement, although the condition was met only in May. The real reasons were – political. After all, not a single ambassador had been returned either before or after – due to retirement. The conflict was started before my departure for Moscow, and this outcome was expected. It was not

known what reason would be used as an excuse. The rush, however, and the obvious lack of coordination were the result of the 2006 elections. The ruling party SDSM, which was sure that it would lose the elections, which it did, wanted to send its own man to Moscow before leaving power.

So, from the request for consent, I learned that my mandate was being terminated! Macedonian miseries, what else! I had reasons to ignore the note, but I immediately ordered the request to be forwarded to the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). But Moscow was not pleased that the ambassador was being changed after less than two years. It suited them that I was a career diplomat, the kind of ambassadors they prefer to have accredited to them, while consent was being sought for a novice, without any diplomatic experience. Frequent changes of ambassadors are a problem for any state, and especially for a superpower like Russia. For them, this is not just a protocol procedure. In addition, a reception with President Putin needs to be organized to present the credentials!

More than four weeks had passed and there still was no consent! They were getting nervous in Skopje. The chances that they would refuse were slim, but by delaying the Russians made it clear that they were not satisfied with our actions. They certainly didn't mind much that our media also published the name of the candidate. The main reason, of course, was that an ambassador with a long diplomatic career was stepping down and being replaced by – a beginner. In principle, this is an insult to a country like Russia.

Around the same time, L. Jordanovski, who was previously the Speaker of the Parliament, which means the second person in the state, was appointed as the Ambassador of Macedonia to the USA. The logical question is – can Moscow, which is also a large and important world power, be satisfied with – a beginner while a high-ranking political figure was sent to Washington? When everything was put on the table, it was clear why Moscow did not give consent for a long time. And

when Skopje was concerned about why there was no consent, it was explained to them that they would provide it, but by saying so, they were expressing their deep dissatisfaction.

After a long wait, the consent was given.

Sending an ambassador to another country is a message, and an important one. With the person you have chosen, you show how you treat the other country and, more precisely, the importance you attach to it. The new Romanian ambassador to Moscow told me this: In January 2004, the newly elected president of his state, Basescu, during a visit to Moscow, assured Russian President Vladimir Putin that relations with Russia were a priority for them and that this was why he was there, on his first visit in his mandate. If that is so, Putin reacted, why are you sending us ecologists and cosmonauts as ambassadors? The fact is that at that time the Romanian ambassador was their first cosmonaut, who had spent a long time in Russia before his space flight and spoke excellent Russian. But that was it. Immediately after Basescu's visit, the cosmonaut was recalled and an experienced career diplomat was sent, who was closer to the 70th year of his life than to the 60th. This is his story.

He also said that Basescu told Putin that never in history, except after World War II, had Moldova belonged to Russia. He emphasized that historically, it is Romanian territory, which will have to be returned. And, he concluded – when, is another question. There are indicators that this is becoming relevant.

DIPLOMATIC PEARLS

Kocha Popovich was a top Yugoslav politician. He came from a wealthy Belgrade family, completed his studies in Paris, and participated in the Spanish Civil War... Leftist ideas led him early to the communists, and to the partisans under Tito. He was a military commander and after the war he held several top positions, including president of the Federal Assembly (Parliament), which means the second man in the state. And then, he drove around Belgrade in a Spachek (Citroen). For the younger ones, who don't know what that is, let us say that it was a small, charming French car, in the class of a Fiat 600. From 1953 to 1965, Popovich was Minister of Foreign Affairs of Yugoslavia.

In September 1961, immediately after the first founding Conference of Non-Aligned Countries, held in August in Belgrade, the Federal Secretary (minister) of Foreign Affairs, Kocha Popovich, left for the General Assembly of the United Nations in New York. Every year, it begins on the third Tuesday in September, when numerous presidents, prime ministers, ministers... gather there and it lasts a whole year. A meeting with American President John Kennedy was also planned. The meeting was supposed to last 20 minutes. The American interest was – the summit of the Non-Aligned Countries and the role of Yugoslavia.

The journalists in the White House ignored the meeting, not expecting anything significant, and continued playing cards. Half an hour passed, 45 minutes, an hour, an hour and a half... the meeting was still ongoing. Journalists were anxious - what was happening? Popovich came out after an hour and 35 minutes and did not give any statement to the now extremely interested journalists who surrounded him. Many years later, the case was clarified by a well-known journalist from Belgrade's "Politika", a friend of Kocha Popovich.

Kennedy greeted him with the words - Mr. Minister, you are a communist and you seem to have solutions to all your problems. Help

me solve the American ones! Without hesitation, let's not say confusion, Popovich replied - You are a Catholic, Mr. President, and you do not need my help. Religion offers you salvation and a way out of every situation!

Kennedy saw that he had a person and a top interlocutor in front of him, which meant that various topics of conversation were possible.

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I also have personal experience on this topic. According to the protocol, when I presented my credentials to the British Queen Elizabeth II at the ceremony in Buckingham Palace, in addition to my wife, I was allowed to be accompanied by four other diplomats. In May 1994, however, when this took place in London, apart from the ambassador, who was the first Macedonian in the United Kingdom, our Embassy, which opened in December of the previous year after Britain's recognition of Macedonia, there was only a technical secretary! There were no other diplomats there. Therefore, at the presentation, only my wife Susanna was with me, the ambassador.

After receiving my credentials, the Queen began the conversation with a question - Mr. Ambassador, when do you expect the Embassy to be completed with other diplomats?

Your Majesty, I said, I feel like the best Macedonian diplomat in the United Kingdom, because there are no others! Naturally, the Queen did not expect such an answer and began to laugh! It did not last long! She was always serious and, practically, no one from outside had seen her laugh. No such picture exists. The reaction obviously surprised her.

That changed the whole ceremony, which usually lasts 12 minutes, down to the second. My wife joined in, and the conversation went on for a long time. The Marshal of the royal court, responsible for protocol, kept knocking on the door, but the Queen ignored him.

The audience lasted a full 28 minutes! When we left, three more guests were waiting in front of the salon, including a new ambassador. The Queen's reception day was disrupted.

At the end of the mandate, although it was not common practice at all, we requested a farewell reception from the Queen. As usual, the request was denied with the explanation that it was not standard practice. The secretary wrote a new note, saying that we were aware of the practice, but stating that it was about the first Macedonian ambassador. I was received on June 10, 1997, the birthday of her husband, Prince Philip! During the reception, the Queen said that at 12:00 o'clock there would be a cannon salute in his honour. At the end, I received a framed picture of her with Prince Philip, which also had their signatures. There should be no doubt that she remembered the joke and that it was the basis for violating the practice that they strictly adhere to. These are good examples of how in any situation one should have self-confidence, react in a direct and original way, no matter what is at stake on the other side. That is appreciated.

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I also had the experience of meeting Margaret Thatcher, the Iron Lady, a former long-time Prime Minister of United Kingdom (1979 – 1990). During that period, in many ways, she was the world's greatest stateswoman who left deep marks! While serving in London, at the beginning of 1995, I requested a meeting with her. Although she was out of power, her social influence was still strong. The meeting was planned to last about 20 minutes, but I left her office after a full 100 minutes despite the frequent knocking on the door, by her Chief of Staff remind her that my time was up.

Thatcher greeted me with a text on the table in front of her, from the "New York Times", dedicated to the problem with the Albanian university in Tetovo. She said that Albanians in Macedonia wanted to study, but the government did not allow them! A nice welcome, wasn't it? She was told that this was our big mistake. That the illegal

university, which she was now reading about, would certainly be legalized soon, that the diplomas issued would be recognized, and the damage that was now being done to the country was enormous. I emphasized that, very logically, just like her, everyone reduced the problem to the fact that someone wanted to study, and someone else did not give them the opportunity. I concluded: however, Madam Thatcher, basically the problem is not educational but political! It is a matter of skillful manipulation and abuse of education. The issue is Greater Albanian tendencies and these are just attempts to break up Macedonia, in order to unite all Albanians from the region into one state. I pointed out that, after the collapse of Yugoslavia, this is one of the most dangerous tendencies in the Balkans, which will continue and expand.

Thatcher was obviously bored at the beginning of the conversation, when I was not trying to defend my country, but rather critically presented the issues that were developing with the “Tetovo University”.

The conversation continued about the situation and the wars in the former federation. The extreme policies of Milosevich and Tudjman were openly condemned, as carriers of the collapse of Yugoslavia, and the positive role of Macedonia, which I emphasized, received nothing for its constructiveness. In that context, Thatcher assessed that Yugoslavia was an artificial creation, created after the First World War. I agreed that there was some truth in that, but I added that it must be borne in mind that after the First, and especially after the Second World War, the creation first of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, which later became Yugoslavia in 1929, was the only solution both for the region and for Europe. Without it, there would be no peace on the old continent. And the irreconcilability of the Balkan “tribes” was also seen in the wars that followed the collapse of the federation.

Then Thatcher moved on to criticize communism and assessed that more people were killed by the communists than died in the two world wars! I agreed that this was so and that, precisely because of this and similar nonsense, that system had recently collapsed, like a house of

cards. However, I added, one must not forget that that system was designed to win in the richest countries, and succeeded in the poorest; that, as a rule, power in communist countries was taken by dogmatists, bureaucrats and careerists, and that is why it was extremely abused; the wrong people distorted the essence of the system, and in a catastrophic way. It is not in dispute that the overall results of communism are unacceptable and tragic, however, what is indisputable, and also most important, is that the ideological position of the system itself is comparable to Christianity!

The conversation was undeniably interesting, argued by both sides with indisputable facts, even though we had completely opposing ideological positions.

After the meeting, already as a acquaintance, Thatcher and I talked at several receptions. I even have a photo with her from one such event.

It is undisputed that the overall results of communism are unacceptable and tragic, however, what is indisputable, and also most important, is that the ideological stance of the system itself is akin to Christianity.

We also met at a dinner hosted by Queen Elizabeth II at Guildhall, the beautiful building of the London municipality, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the victory over fascism. At that time, an impressive celebration was held in London, at which our president, Kiro Gligorov, was also present. We were at dinner together, and while we were waiting in the hallway in front of the hall, Madam Thatcher arrived and immediately approached us, even though there were many people. Again, an interesting conversation took place. She was truly a worldly person.

At dinner, at the table opposite us sat US Vice President Al Gore, the would-be American president, who lost the 2000 elections in a dishonest way, through fraud in Florida, although he had 500 thousand votes more than George Bush, the younger. At dinner, the Scottish Guard played the bagpipes, and when I told Al Gore that we also have

bagpipes in Macedonia, he was surprised and asked if their origin had anything to do with Scotland?

After dinner, Gligorov recounted that in 1979, shortly before Thatcher became Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, as Leader of the Opposition (1975–1979), she had visited Yugoslavia. As President of the Federal Assembly, Gligorov had hosted her. He emphasized that Thatcher would certainly never forget the reception she received from Tito, who had given her a lesson. At that time, the main world event was the situation in Rhodesia, today's Zimbabwe, when the white man Ian Smith, at the head of apartheid in the country as Prime Minister, was under strong pressure from the indigenous population, led by Nkomo, for a change of power. The whole world was against Ian Smith, and only the United Kingdom supported him.

That is why Tito began the conversation with a question - how, Mrs. Thatcher, do you explain your support for Ian Smith? She began to say that the situation in Rhodesia was fragile, that if there was a change of government it would be difficult to maintain stability in the country, that... Tito interrupted by saying - I don't understand you, Mrs. Thatcher! She began to explain what had been happening in South Africa recently and that, in those conditions, the development in Rhodesia is of importance for the entire region, that one must not take risks... Tito interrupted her again with the words – I don't understand you, Mrs. Thatcher!

Then Thatcher began to elaborate on British interests in Rhodesia, and Tito immediately told her – now I understand you, Mrs. Thatcher! So, when Thatcher approached us at the Guildhall, she probably recognized not only me, with whom she had been “arguing” for a long time a month ago, but also Gligorov, who had witnessed her reception by Tito.

AN ATTEMPT TO REORGANIZE AND PROFESSIONALIZE THE MFA

While I was working in Tirana (1998 – 2002), at a regular regional meeting, Ilinka Mitreva, the newly appointed interim Minister of Foreign Affairs, came to visit. It was during the military crisis in 2001. We had known each other from before. Aware that she had no diplomatic experience, I asked her on one occasion – if she wanted, I could state my views in a memorandum on how the Ministry should function. I would try to specify the priorities and main elements that she must pay attention to as a minister, as well as the key tasks that she should be dedicated to for the normal functioning of the institution, and all in the interest of the state. She accepted without thinking.

I quickly sent her a text of four or five pages.

Her ministry at that time lasted a short time, less than seven months (from May 13 to November 30, 2001), but it was clear that in the upcoming elections in 2002, her party SDSM would certainly win and, most likely, she would again be the Minister of Foreign Affairs. That happened and she took up her post again on November 1, 2002.

After four and a half years, on September 1, 2002, I returned from Tirana and was without formal engagement in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Shortly after her appointment, Mitreva called me and proposed that I be State Secretary. That is the third position in the ministry, immediately after the minister and his deputy. While these two are representatives of the political parties in power and are appointed by the Parliament, the state secretaries, who were previously called undersecretaries, are, as a rule, professional staff from the ministries. They are appointed by the Government. According to world practice, they should not be representatives of the political parties in power, but the most professional people from the ministries themselves. I had already been an undersecretary in our Ministry of Foreign Affairs (from 1992 to 1993), during the period of the fiercest struggle for

Macedonia's international recognition. Mitreva immediately told me that it was her choice, that there were more people interested in that position in the party, but that she was persistent and managed to fight to secure her solution.

There was no room for thought. One could only be grateful for the choice and the trust shown and, in the interest of the institution and the state, to specify the manner of cooperation. That is exactly what was done because during the time of the previous minister, not only major abuses of all kinds occurred, but also serious crimes, which had to be cleared up. Here is an example of what happened. In the previous period, Mercedes vehicles were purchased for all DCPs. I don't know how, but we accidentally discovered that one of those vehicles remained in Skopje! We managed to find it! It was being driven – illegally! With false license plates! Unbelievable, right?

It was agreed with Mitreva that we would work to overcome all weaknesses, and we would structure the MFA to be the top institution in the country, as it should be. It was agreed to create top professionals who would be able to handle all the world's diplomats.

That's how we started. The problems and abuses were numerous and it was not easy to clear them up. Here is another shocking fact – a real wonder “diplomats” were sent to our Diplomatic Consular Representation without knowledge of a single foreign language! Worse diplomacy – health. It's the same as appointing someone to be a driver who doesn't know how to drive! That's why one of the first actions would be a knowledge check of foreign languages for everyone in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs - whether they were in Macedonia or abroad. The second action was to assess the quality of work of all Diplomatic Consular Representation (DKPs). The third...

Of course, problems began immediately. All those who were threatened by their incompetence, and there were many, turned against such intentions. And all of them had not come here by the regular means, but had been brought by someone. This took on such proportions that it

even included the very top of the ruling SDSM! The pressure not to raise dust became unbearable and Mitreva, certainly against her will, had to give in. She had no room to maneuver and had to follow the interests of the party, which made the agreed personnel professionalization and crackdown on crime impossible. Thus, the resistance against me as the bearer of change grew, and, slowly but surely, I became increasingly more isolated.

It was shocking to realize that a huge portion of those “stuffed” into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not meet the basic qualification - to know a foreign language! It would have been better if they were illiterate, but at least spoke English! God knows if those people had any other values, besides connections with important politicians. And sending a diplomat to London who does not know English is like putting a goalkeeper in a football match who has never seen a ball before, let alone caught one!

Here is an episode from that period. One evening, I had just returned home from work, around 8:00 p.m., as was usually the case, when the phone rang. Crying, an employee from the Foreign Ministry’s financial service called and told me that her name had been published in the news on A1 Television, that she had been suspended from work for a crime. She begged that the news be stopped, that it not be repeated in future news, because she had not stolen anything.

I immediately sought out Biljana Sekulovska from the Television and explained to her that there were indications of crime, which needed to be investigated and proven, and that is why I signed suspensions for several officials. I emphasized that the main perpetrators of the crime were people from the top of the Ministry, not employees in the financial service. I assessed that what they had done by publishing the news was beyond all rules and ethical codes, that it was a matter of presumption of innocence, that if they were sued they would pay huge damages... I pleaded that the news not be repeated because it did not benefit them.

Sekulovska replied – what if Minister Mitreva had given the news? Whoever gave it, I told her, such news should not be published in a normal state. The news was not repeated.

The next day Mitreva called me, and the head of her Cabinet was with her as a witness. She started talking vaguely about someone having prevented the news about the fight that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (and the party, of course) is waging against crime and asked – who could it be?

I said that I had prevented the news from being repeated and I gave her my reason which was indisputable. She was nervous and, in a sharp tone, asked – who had I asked to do that? I replied that I hadn't asked for something that was legally sound, indisputable and honest to be

This is where the situation started to crack.

Somewhere in the middle of 2003 I was already aware that there was no room for professional and efficient action. The end of it all was when they brought in a representative from the Bosniak party as deputy minister, who had no idea how diplomacy worked. Later, as ambassador to one of the Arab countries (Qatar?), they recalled him for having committed financial crimes.

What strategic stupidity. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs appointed a representative of a small and insignificant party as ambassador during a crisis period when Macedonia was fighting for its survival. When the main problems of the state – the name, recognition... the survival of the Macedonian people... all depended on competent diplomacy, the MFA appointed a person illiterate on the issues. This was sabotage to say the least.

However, this was not an isolated incident. Such follies have been repeated many times and everywhere, all during the 30 or so years after the collapse of Yugoslavia. The finale was when Bujar Osmani, an Albanian, apparently under directives from the outside, was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs! But that was not the end of it, of

Macedonia's attempts of self-destruction. An Albanian was also appointed as his deputy, who had previously been an English teacher, if I am not mistaken – in some village school! Fools don't have horns – just like us!

This kind of decision by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are absolute confirmation that foreigners are directly involved in organizing our elimination on an international level, but also on an internal level, through classic sabotage of the fundamental interests of the Macedonian people. There should be no doubt that the USA is firmly behind all this. There is simply no other powerful force that could behave like this. With Albanians at the head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Macedonia was fully prepared for capitulation and erasure of everything Macedonian. Who would make such a betrayal easy and painless, if not the Albanians?

This was not sabotage. That is too mild a qualification. These are small coups, managed from the outside, to more easily definitively close the "Macedonian question". The consent of the Macedonian imbeciles, however, to manipulate us like this, does not need to be commented on. Let us remind you that in no ministry has there ever have been nor should there ever be Albanians – both minister and deputy minister. They were placed in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where a war should be waged to save the Macedonian people! In order to surrender more easily, right? That is exactly what happened when the second protocol was signed by Bujar Osmani with Bulgaria.

These are serious Macedonian miseries, but that is also our intellectual and professional level. That is why we are still at this level. All that remains for us is to try to define the motives that allowed our "politicians" to behave in a manner diametrically opposed to our fundamental interests, contrary to even the simplest logic. All our nonsense, made during 30 years of independence, is in no way the result of mere ignorance. The role of the foreign factor is undeniable, but their goals would in no way have been achieved if it were not for our

incompetence, lack of dignity and self-respect, complexes and willingness to accept other people's dictates, ultimatums and blackmail.

Today it is undeniable that even before the collapse of Yugoslavia, the foreign factor had a precise scenario for the annihilation of the Macedonian people, aware of our indisputable, above-listed "qualities". The goal is also indisputable – definitive closure of the "Macedonian Question". The fact, however, that we did not understand this in time is only our problem and is not, and cannot be, any justification.

That is how my resignation came about in June 2003. It was a blow to the government. In order to get revenge, they tried to publicly discredit me. Through the media, they began to plant fabricated things on me, among other things that I had negotiated the name with an American delegation without authorization!

I wrote a letter to Mitreva saying that they could not find me at fault anywhere, and therefore they should immediately stop trying to defame me in public. I emphasized that, officially, I had resigned for personal reasons, but if they continued with fabricated attacks, I would inform the public why I had really resigned. The arguments that I would present, I emphasized, would not be very pleasant for the government. That's how I got them to stop.

However, the mention that I had negotiated the name without authorization is not without basis. As Secretary of State, I had a meeting with an official American delegation, led by their former ambassador in Tirana, with whom we cooperated well. They came to ask us to sign a mutual agreement, by which we would commit that their citizens, primarily military personnel, who commit criminal acts on our territory, would not be handed over to the International Criminal Court in The Hague. It was a non-reciprocal, one-way agreement, which the USA imposed on countries like Macedonia, in order to protect its citizens.

The conversations I had were only superficial, and I told them that since they are asking us for such a not-so-principled request, which is in

contradiction with international practice, it is only fair for them to show understanding regarding our constitutional and historical name, which has been extremely illegally challenged.

They were not at all happy that I mentioned the name, as some kind of reciprocal concession, and, apparently, they complained at a higher level about my “disrespect”. And, after our wise men “accused” me in public that I had “negotiated” the name without authorization, I reacted and publicly explained that it was all nonsense. I stated that it was a fact that in a conversation with an American delegation I had mentioned the name issue and had asked for their understanding and support, however, not only I, as an official, but every citizen not only has the right, but also the obligation at every opportunity to fight for our name, which is being violently disputed. That was a new challenging position for the government.

After my resignation, I was left unassigned, without duties, they gave me some kind of useless office... But I did not waste time. After some time, I again had the opportunity to deal with serious issues, and not with daily fire-fighting, and battling the inexperienced. I began to write memoranda with analyses of the most current topics of our foreign policy and delivered them to all the top figures in the country. The name problem, Nimetz’s mediation, relations with neighbours, the development of the situation in Kosovo, the position of our minorities and what our state should undertake, cooperation with the diaspora, European integration...were addressed.

After about a year, at the end of the summer of 2004, Mitreva called me again and proposed that I be ambassador to Moscow! It was a bolt from the blue and again an offer that could not be refused! In the meantime, the government was fiercely criticized in the media for sending amateurs and not professionals as ambassadors. It was known to the public that, specifically for Russia, as many as three high-ranking SDSM officials, total diplomatic amateurs – had refused the offer.

WHERE ARE WE AND WHAT DO WE HAVE TO DO TO GO FORWARD?

It is a sad fact that even in the 21st century, after the collapse of Yugoslavia, Macedonia is still fighting for the survival of the Macedonian people, who are under attack. This is a key problem to which our diplomacy must be fully dedicated. This is also a major task for state policy. In the period from 2017 to 2024, it was not like that at all. Macedonia, led by SDSM, which was, in turn, controlled by DUI – capitulated! The state and the people were betrayed, humiliated and embarrassed in numerous situations (agreements and protocols with Bulgaria, Nivitsi, Tirana platform...). Their successors, VMRO DPMNE, will have to make enormous efforts if they want to get the country out of the impasse and the dark tunnel with no exit, into which it has been thrown in terms of identity issues and attempts to become a member of the EU. There is certainly a way out, but only through radical measures. There are no hopeless situations. There are only people who feel that way.

These challenges will persist, and it is up to us when we start to energetically remove them. Once they are resolved, our diplomacy will have to concentrate almost entirely on economic needs. When we are politically fully established on the international stage, diplomats will have to seek – foreign investments, increase our exports, all kinds of assistance for our companies, develop scientific and technical cooperation, ensuring as much foreign aid and funds for the development of our country... It is a field that has no borders and the engagement of our diplomats will be of immense importance for the country. Then their concrete contribution will be more easily appreciated.

Our permanent determination must be to copy other people's experiences, which can be useful to us. Even today, when a problem is defined in the country, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should send a

circular telegram or e-mail to all diplomatic and consular missions, with specific and detailed questions for which answers should be sought from institutions in the host countries, about their experiences and the ways in which they have solved or are solving our challenges. This is one of the roles that our diplomatic network abroad should permanently play.

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Unlike all other civil services, diplomatic work takes place both at home and in other countries, through diplomatic and consular missions around the world. It is an old practice for states to recognize each other and establish diplomatic relations. These are technical issues, if there are no reasons for different behaviour. Diplomatic relations do not have to be established immediately if, for example, we are dealing with distant countries from different hemispheres. If they are already established, and there is interest, then a diplomatic and consular mission – a channel for official communication – should be opened. The USA, for example, has 290 diplomatic missions around the world, while France has even more – 332. Macedonia has – 62! The number of missions is the result of foreign policy interests and ambitions of each country, but financial capabilities are also a factor. Diplomacy is an expensive business.

On a bilateral level, diplomatic and consular missions serve as a direct link between the two countries and work to develop mutual relations. Embassies are opened first, and if necessary, consulates, ordinary or general, and possibly also opening cultural and information centers. Once the embassies are opened, it is logical to exchange ambassadors as well.

Personnel-wise, diplomatic and consular missions are dimensioned according to the importance of the country in which they are located. If we know that diplomacy is primarily a privilege and tool of large and developed countries, it becomes clear that small and poor countries have a limited number of diplomatic and consular missions and,

usually, they have a small or minimal number of diplomats and support staff. This also determines their real capacity to perform everyday tasks.

The larger American embassies around the world, for example, have more employees than our Ministry of Foreign Affairs in total! Such is, for example, their Embassy in London. When you know this, everything else becomes clear. However, this does not mean that small and poor countries are decoration in the international diplomatic arena. This in no way diminishes their role and importance for their own countries. Even a small, but well-trained professional diplomacy can be of great benefit. After all, the needs and interests of small and poor countries are smaller and easier to fulfill.

A key condition for successful diplomacy is the ministries of foreign affairs. The results of the diplomatic mission directly depend on their organization and functioning. After all, that is where diplomats are trained. It must be known that powerful and developed countries, or rather, all well-organized ones, send their diplomatic missions daily short but rich reviews of the most important information from their own state, about the main events in the world, as well as a selected parts of telegrams received from other diplomatic missions, which may be of interest to them. Among the information provided, most often there are reviews of events at the UN, in New York, which is considered the world diplomatic center. These are events of interest to the whole world, which diplomats should be clearly aware of, although the UN is slowly losing its role in world politics.

Given that being informed is the main characteristic of every diplomat, the advantage enjoyed by colleagues from powerful countries is clear. Good information is the first characteristic through which interlocutors and friends are selected, both in the host country and among foreign colleagues, which is the key to success in every job. The second necessary characteristic is analytics. After the first conversation, and after the first assessments expressed, experienced diplomats know who

they are dealing with. And, immediately – they either register you or write you off.

The advantage of diplomats from large and developed countries is not only in their information but also in being well informed by their MFAs on what they should pay special attention to, what to investigate in the country of accreditation, what to check, what initiatives to launch, what to seek support for... In general, when diplomats from these countries are on duty at the Diplomatic and consular missions, they do not have to show initiative because they are constantly asked for appropriate analyses and information and so they are engaged all the time.

In small and poor countries, like Macedonia, the situation is completely different. We not only have few resources but, most importantly, we do not have enough experience to compensate for this because we lack appropriate organization. For many things, through which our diplomats could increase their objective capacities by even 50 percent - it is not a matter of money but, above all, good organization. For example, in countries like Macedonia, it is not difficult to organize the supply of all Diplomatic Consular Relations with appropriate information – you just need to know how. It would be extremely useful to distribute the prepared information for Diplomatic Consular Relations to members of the Government and other high-ranking officials. It would be a huge help and a time saver for all of them.

Without proper organization, things can become duplicated. Instead of one person in the MFA reading the world-famous “Economist”, and selecting the most current information from it and sending it by e-mail to all Diplomatic Consular Missions, for whom it may be important, everyone must read the magazine separately! The key problem is that most of our diplomats will not read this world-famous and useful weekly, which deals with topics from all over the world. Thus, they will not know about current affairs, but also about facts and arguments, which should be known to them. That is a handicap. And financial possibilities dictate that not all Diplomatic Consular Missions can

subscribe to the magazine! I am not even sure whether the MFA is subscribed, so that the diplomats there can read it? Now electronic subscription is possible, which would be used by employees of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Diplomatic Mission?

At first glance it may seem that these are minor obstacles to more efficient and quality work. On the contrary. The essence lies in them, that innovative engagement is needed by all employees of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Diplomatic Mission. Therefore, it is crucial, first of all, to select the highest quality personnel to work in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Only with the best can one succeed – in everything, and now diplomacy is key for us.

It is very likely that our diplomats in the Diplomatic Mission do not receive any selected information. It is almost certain that they have no idea what is happening in the UN. Instructions, on the other hand, on what to do, what to pay attention to, what to ask the authorities in the country of accreditation... are probably rare, even - unimaginable. Except in exceptional cases.

It is extremely important that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regularly evaluate the work of the diplomatic and consular posts. To know where we are, whether there are results and how much each is worth. Without that, there is no progress. The evaluations should be at least annual. The work of each employee should also be evaluated, which is the task of the supervisor. Each Diplomatic Consular Mission costs the state serious funds, and therefore results must be sought. In our situation, Diplomatic Consular Mission employees are privileged, and therefore their work must be monitored. They have decent incomes, free apartments, everything is almost free of customs and taxes... Therefore, results should be expected and delivered... Moreover, in today's conditions, the future of the country also depends on their engagement.

There is a strong impression that, at least in large part, in our country, everything is left to the diplomats themselves. They have to manage on their own, which is a serious handicap. However, it is also a strong

challenge for them - to read as much as possible to be informed, to tirelessly research topics that are current both in their own country and in the country of accreditation, but also globally... How many of our diplomats do this is another question. A key problem is that some of our ambassadors lack experience and are not prepared for properly performing their duties. This also applies to (a good?) part of diplomats, and is directly reflected on the Diplomatic Consular Mission, but also on diplomacy as a whole.

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While information is the capital of diplomats, analysis is their main tool. More precisely, it is – speech. On that basis they value each other, and that is the main criterion on which they choose each other. At the very first meeting, it is clear who is well informed and who is a good analyst. Thus, useful interlocutors are immediately selected, whether among representatives of the host country or among other diplomats.

Public information is an excellent indicator of the topics of interest in a particular country. If you thoroughly monitor the public media, you can find almost everything that is relevant to the host country. Through them, one also arrives at things that are considered confidential, although for that purpose one must read between the lines and create a mosaic of multiple elements. Usually, these are segments that have gone beyond the control of the authorities, and can be a direction in which to investigate. These elements are an excellent basis, but also an occasion for discussions at an official level in order to specify and further elaborate on the leaked information. Of course, this applies if they are of special interest to one's own country.

When monitoring the public media, in addition to the strict selectivity of the available information, one must also take into account its usability. Events or affairs that are current, even dramatic for the host country, should not impress and should not be reported at length and widely to one's own Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This should be noted briefly, an appropriate analysis should be given of the purpose and the

actors, whether a foreign factor is involved... Then, developments should be monitored. If those events have no significant connection with one's own country, the treatment must be appropriate. If those events are in any way connected with one's own country, then the treatment must be adequate. Otherwise, even top diplomats have "fallen" into strong affairs that shook the host country, which had no connection with their own, and they reported extensively about them.

In addition to contacts with officials of the host country, including from political parties, connections with journalists, analysts, intellectuals... are also extremely useful... The exchange of information and analysis with colleagues from the diplomatic corps is also of particular importance.

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As a result of the level of our diplomacy, every diplomat must be aware that, whoever is an ambassador, for the most part, his work tasks should be determined by – himself, and according to his job description, but also more broadly. In our Diplomatic Consular Mission there are few diplomats and more or less, everyone has to work on – everything. This means that self-engagement and self-initiative must be the main mobilizers. One should not only wait for tasks from the ambassador.

In rich and powerful countries, as well as in those with a longer state-building tradition, as a rule, diplomacy is a profession that is respected and recognized. Diplomats are mainly professionals, who build life careers in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and thus learn the craft. In a good part of countries, in diplomatic corridors, there are almost no attacks from the outside, on any basis. This very often applies to the ambassadors themselves, who, for the most part, are career diplomats. Exceptions are possible but they are not frequent. In the USA, for example, there are ambassadors who are political appointees, often by the president himself. Trump, it seems, is doing it even more massively. However, in principle, in their Diplomatic Consular Missions, there many top professionals who make the newcomers' job easier. After all,

the American ambassadors thus elected are not plucked from the woodworks, but are recognized and proven social workers with extensive and practical experience, ready for any position. They are certainly not medical professionals. The kind we have here.

Quite the opposite, in small, underdeveloped and poor countries (mostly in terms of spirit, experience and knowledge), where diplomacy is an attractive position, ambassadors are often not professionals. Among the “newcomers”, usually, you can find anything and everything, mainly unrealistically ambitious people. Macedonia is an example of such diplomacy. An objective personnel policy is lacking, one that is free of personal and party interests and similar abuses when choosing the best candidates. At the time, it was known that ambassadors were appointed by political agreements between parties. This was a direct disregard for the role of the state, which is enshrined in the Criminal Code. It is called – abuse of office! That is why we have had such shameful scandals. In Ankara, for example, we sent the director of the Bitola post office as an ambassador! Imagine his conversation with the “sultan” Erdogan! If they had filmed it, which is likely, they should at least show us the film.

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True diplomacy is not in the ministries of foreign affairs, where the majority of the staff are civil servants, but in the diplomatic corps, where real diplomats are trained. That is where you learn the craft. However, before going to the diplomatic corps for the first time, good prior preparation is needed at home. Every MFA must have a developed system for preparing diplomats, whether through exams, courses, lectures...

It is known that in the USA, diplomats are assigned to where they will work about a year before they leave for duty. In addition to other preparations, they are also obliged to learn the language of the host country! In the preparations, no improvisations are allowed. They must

be planned, and diplomats must be assigned their new duties at least six months before departure. This reduces the period of lost time.

Before being sent on duty, for example, ambassadors who are not career diplomats but are thrown into the service, it would be necessary to send them to intensive preparations, lasting at least a week. These preparations would be led by former ambassadors with more experience, perhaps best of all – already retired! A specific, well-thought-out program would be implemented. These preparations should be organized on a practical, not a theoretical basis. It would be best to reduce the system to improvising one embassy, by simulating its activities. This could be organized for several ambassadors at the same time.

It would not be a bad idea to organize such workshops for lower-level diplomats, and not only for those who are serving in the Diplomatic Consular Mission for the first time. If this were to be introduced as a permanent practice, which all diplomats would undergo, it would be of great benefit to invite prominent ambassadors from abroad, including retired ones, as technical assistance. Part of the activities could also be in the form of debates on certain topics.

However, personal self-development cannot be replaced by anything. For this purpose, one must read many diplomatic books, primarily memoirs of world-famous diplomats, foreign ministers, and politicians. Here are just a few - Lee Kuan Yew, Kissinger, Baker, Holbrooke, Ahrens...

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Yugoslavia was a special case. Its diplomacy was of a world class level. The Federal Secretariat for Foreign Affairs had a developed system for training diplomats, with exams for each higher category. The best proof of this were the top experts who were also recognized and appreciated in the United Nations, where a large part of the world's problems were being addressed at the time. Regardless of whether it was legal aspects,

disarmament, economic development, agriculture... representatives of Yugoslavia participated in all relevant areas, generally recognized and highly appreciated. The state was not large, but it conducted an active international policy and even asserted itself as an important world diplomatic power. Tito's personality contributed to such a status of the state to a large extent, including his role in the Non-Aligned Movement. He was truly a world-class leader, and as such, everyone accepted and recognized him. It is little known that Tito traveled without a passport, as he was considered a citizen of the world. One can only imagine what a problem that was for the United States – to allow him to enter without a passport!?! And yet, they invited him!

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Since concrete examples are always the best, here is an example of my personal experience. At the beginning of my career in the Federal Secretariat for Foreign Affairs (FSFA) of Yugoslavia, in Belgrade, which began back in 1971, I spent a whole year taking various diplomatic exams. In addition to English, I also passed French at the required diplomatic level.

After a year of intensive study, at the end of 1972, I was preparing to go to work at the Diplomatic Consular Mission. I was thinking about where and what, aware that it was difficult to get to one of the largest Diplomatic Consular Missions, which are usually in the main and, most often, the most developed countries. The competition was great and, unlike the other republics, which resolutely supported their candidates, Macedonia showed no interest in us, the smaller “fish”. Skopje only got involved when it came to ambassadors. Or, “its” children. That was a serious mistake.

Here is a concrete example: when I asked an assistant minister, a Croat, about a certain position in a large embassy, advertised in a competition, he resolutely, not to say rudely, replied – it was planned for a Croat! Such a “reservation”, let alone “planning”, was not even imaginable for any Macedonian in a high position in the Secretariat, if another

Macedonian was involved. All of them were first and foremost – bigger Yugoslavs than anyone else and, crucially, they were afraid for their careers, lest someone declare them Macedonian nationalists!

Complexes, what else!

The point is that I was interested in a large embassy only because of the opportunity to learn the trade there. In the search for an appropriate solution, it became clear that there was an opportunity to go only to China, where the Embassy had 10 diplomats, just like in London, Paris, Washington... It was known that the living conditions in Beijing were difficult, and therefore the interest in going there was – small. The position was third secretary, although I could have easily applied for the second one.

At that time, the SSNR was also preparing the new ambassador for Lagos, Nigeria, a Serb from Vojvodina. He came from a political background and was not a career diplomat. We met and established very good communications. The man was in every aspect beyond reproach, except that he had no diplomatic experience or knowledge. Finally, he suggested that I go with him to Lagos, as first secretary. That position was vacant and he was looking for a suitable candidate to work with. The challenge seemed great – but it wasn't really. Instead of the first position – I decided to go for the third secretary!

Aware that there was nothing to learn about diplomacy from the nice Serb from Vojvodina, nor from the other diplomat, who was already working in Nigeria, and that was my main task at that time, I decided to go to Beijing. The difference in salary was not small, not to mention the status with which you started. In any case, it was an extremely wise move. In Beijing there was much to learn from many people. Many other colleagues from the generation, for the sake of a higher status, went to smaller Diplomatic Consular Missions where they had no one to learn from, and never developed into true diplomats.

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We have already emphasized that the main task of diplomats is contacts, especially with officials from the host country. When these are at a higher level, and when they are carried out on the basis of instructions from one's own country, they must be thoroughly prepared. It is best to prepare a reminder, in which the priority issues that need to be raised are noted. It would be optimal if the interlocutor were left with a short document, for example in the form of a one page memo, in which the expressed positions are clarified as well as the expectations after the conversation, if there are any. That is top-notch diplomacy, without improvisation. As a rule, at high-level meetings, the ambassador is accompanied by another diplomat who takes notes on the conversation. Upon returning to the embassy, he or she then prepares an appropriate note on the main elements and, if necessary and in agreement with the boss, a telegram for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

And in all such and similar situations, the ability to ask appropriate questions is key. As the people say – it is difficult to get wise answers to clever questions! In a discreet and sophisticated manner, the interlocutor should be led to elaborate their views as precisely as possible. For this purpose, if appropriate, compliments should also be shared either for the interlocutor or for their policies. After such conversations, subsequent analysis is extremely important, when a detailed note is made of the conversation. In doing so, many important details can be observed that were not previously noticed. All this is important because experienced politicians are very skilled at avoiding giving a concrete answer.

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The practice of leaving a document after a conversation with a high-ranking official should also be used by politicians. Especially in the situation in which Macedonia finds itself today (2025), regarding the blockades and blackmail by Bulgaria, the EU policies regarding our membership, and similar topics. Practically, we are under fierce Bulgarian aggression against the fundamental interests of the

Macedonian people, which is widely supported by foreigners, and our struggle is reduced to an attempt to survive. Therefore, after all formal meetings in Brussels, Washington, Paris, Berlin... after talks with important guests from abroad, all interlocutors who are in high positions should be given either a Memorandum or a memoir, in which our positions, demands and expectations are clearly specified. Only in this way can we fight for justice and a way out of the impasse in which we have been thrown, largely with our own active, yet treacherous - role. Only in this way will the other side have some role/task/obligation... to monitor our problems and expectations and, possibly - to help, within the framework of their possibilities and interests. If no documentation is left, the meeting was largely a waste of time. Afterwards the interlocutor will certainly not return to our challenges.

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If the ambassador is alone in a meeting, or if he is talking on some other occasion (at a reception, dinner...) with a high-ranking official or fellow ambassador, and the information received is relevant to his own country, then the basic elements **MUST** be noted immediately after the conversation, or at the first possible opportunity. If something is particularly important, it should be written down on the spot. If necessary, and with temporary separation to the side. If that is not possible, it should be written down at the latest when you get to the car, before you leave, or by stopping at the first possible place... The same applies to all other diplomats in similar situations. It is extremely important to note the original wording of the interlocutor because, despite the best memory, the finer points of what was said are lost and diluted over time. This is crucial, especially when it comes to sensitive issues. It is not at all inconvenient even on the spot, immediately, to write down the exact wording. On certain occasions, one can even ask – would you mind if I write down what you told me. All experienced diplomats do this.

On such occasions, when it comes to important messages, in order to avoid possible misunderstandings, one can also ask – if I understood you correctly, can I inform my Government that you agree/support/have no objections/advocate for...

Several hours after the conversation, or the next day, there is no chance to precisely note the main elements that may be extremely important for one's own country. There will be hesitation – whether he said immediately or soon; whether they just understand or support it; whether they will engage in the same direction or follow the development with interest...

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The Diplomatic Consular Relations should select the information received according to the degree of usefulness for their own institutions, and then according to its level of confidentiality. The level of confidentiality is determined by the boss. Telegrams marked confidential or strictly confidential must be sent with cryptographic protection. Without that – there is no confidentiality. It is ridiculous when telegrams marked confidential are sent openly!

It is also pointless when information obtained from the public media is marked with a degree of confidentiality. This is not a rare case, but it is pure amateurism! This also applies to cases when confidential documents have already been published in the media. As a result, they lose their degree of confidentiality.

In principle, no telegram sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should be longer than one page. The information should be truly telegraphic! Otherwise, the meaning is lost. However, if it is necessary to move on to a second page, then a short summary should be given at the beginning of the text, in five or six lines. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs must not be overwhelmed with irrelevant information. Therefore, it must be informed briefly, with an assessment and clear points, which will enable efficiency in the functioning of both

diplomacy and the leadership of the country. Priority must be given to the quality of the information, not quantity.

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When encrypted, but also other telegrams and electronic messages from the Diplomatic Consular Mission arrive at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, their selective distribution is carried out. According to usability, they should reach the highest officials for whom the information may be relevant in their work. A general practice is for everyone who has read a confidential document to sign it. This also applies to embassies. This is a way to ensure confidentiality and to be able to search for the source, if the secret “leaks”.

In organized countries, the top leadership of the country receives a selection of the most important telegrams received by the Diplomatic Consular Protocol every day. Most often, this is in the form of one or more bulletins. During Yugoslavia, a red bulletin was distributed, with the most important telegrams, and there was also a blue one, with less important ones. There was also an economic bulletin. Periodically, statistics were made on the telegrams published in the bulletins. This was a certain indicator of the level and quality of the work of the Diplomatic Consular Protocol, and their kind of categorization. It is not known whether we have such a practice? If not, it should be established.

I know for a fact that, at least at the time, on the desk of the Prime Minister of Bulgaria every morning there was a selection of the 10 most important telegrams received from the embassies.

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The fact is that diplomats communicate with their headquarters, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through telegrams, notes and analyses that must be as concise as possible! They need to be read by the busiest people in the country who do not have time to even glance at them, let alone read them. If they are not concise, they lose their function. This is

not advice only for diplomats: write as briefly and concisely as possible, but – understandably!

There is also a story on this topic, related to Lenin, which may not be true. He was writing a letter to someone and emphasized – sorry, I don't have much time and so I'll be – extensive! The explanation is absolutely correct.

The plea for short, but understandable reporting, recalls the practice of the Japanese daily newspaper Asahi Shimbun, which in the 1970s had a circulation of over 10 million. The newspaper's practice was that all texts should be – short. I think they also had a limit on the number of characters that could be used in one text.

The explanation was very characteristic of this Far Eastern giant – it is better, and more economical, for a journalist to spend two or three days more condensing the text than for one, two, three... million readers to unnecessarily to spend a few more seconds reading it! Not minutes, seconds! The logic is clear and indisputable. There, time is – money. It is not at all surprising that the Japanese thought of this! In the 1960s, Japan created the world's first economic miracle in the Far East. After the Second World War, in which it was on the losing side and badly damaged, Japan quickly consolidated and began to develop rapidly. This was thanks to the human capital at its disposal. At the beginning of the 1960s, it was estimated that Yugoslavia was on the same level as Japan in terms of economic development. Where they ended up afterwards is well known.

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One of the regular obligations of all Diplomatic Consular Protocols is to monitor the treatment of their country in the local media, and to report on it regularly and with an assessment. It must be known that the authorities in all countries have a special relationship with the media. There is no completely free media anywhere! The question is only about the percentage of – (self)control! The pinnacle of censorship is

precisely – just control. In certain countries, the treatment in the media of countries like Macedonia is the result of specific briefings from politicians, even of directly given tasks on how to write. Emphatically, this is the situation in neighbouring countries. In the case of Macedonia, it is the case in Albania, Bulgaria, Greece... Generally, not much is written about Macedonia anywhere, but this must be carefully monitored. There are also appropriate press clipping services, which provide a complete insight into the domestic public media, on any topic. It is advisable to subscribe to this service. This must be an obligation, for example, in the USA, but also in Canada, as well as in all European countries. All texts published about our country, individually or as part of topics for the region, should be archived and kept by our Diplomatic Consular Protocol. Copies of the more significant published texts should be immediately forwarded to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. After some time, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, these texts should be sent to the Archives of Macedonia.

The treatment of our country in the media is (most often!) the best indicator of the host country's attitude towards our country. To a large extent, the media manifest the thoughts, attitudes, assessments, plans... of the leadership of the host country, or of significant and influential circles, lobby groups... This emphasis applies to neighbouring countries, and the possibility should not be ruled out that certain messages for our country, even as an announcement, especially about more subtle problems, may be sent to us precisely through the local media. This is an old and traditional diplomatic practice. As the saying goes - I tell you daughter, remember your mother-in-law.

Thorough monitoring of the public media in the host country also presupposes a quick reaction to all inaccuracies, whether intentional or not, that are published in them, regarding one's own country. This can be in the form of a denial, further explanation, further clarification... even in the form of a protest, if there are indicators that this is being done intentionally, or is being repeated. According to what is published, it is decided whether the head of the Diplomatic Consular Mission or

one of the other diplomats should react, especially if there is an official press attaché.

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There is another ongoing task for diplomats of countries like Macedonia. That is to occasionally check in local bookstores to see if a book dedicated to our country or the Balkans has been published, regardless of whether the book contains a section about us. If such a thing appears, several copies should be purchased and delivered to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. One copy can remain in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs library, one should be given to the University Library and one, possibly, to the Library of the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Macedonia. When a book about Macedonia is published somewhere, it would be best to assign someone from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to make a short review of it, and distribute it to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and relevant institutions (president of the state, speaker, prime minister, to certain ministries, INI...). It would be useful to publish a short review in the public media, so that it would be more widely known that such a thing exists. That would be a success for both the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the relevant embassy, and beneficial for the country.

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The great powers, and others, do not choose ways to strengthen their international position. Their diplomacy works at high speed, on every level, and provides their countries with valuable assistance in realizing their national interests. It should not be disputed that they very often use, or rather - abuse, their secret services in order to achieve their goals. In depth, they follow every step not only of their opponents and rivals, but also of their partners. It was discovered, for example, that the American services tapped the phone of German Chancellor Angela Merkel! Thus, based on all available elements, they build an unmistakable picture of the attitude of any other country towards them. The USA, for example, keeps strict records and statistics on how each

country votes in the UN, in relation to their initiatives and interests. It can be said that for Washington this is a key indicator of who is their friend and who is not. At one time, this indicator also determined the level of assistance they provided to other countries. It is probably still the case now. Little is known, for example, that the head of the US Mission to the UN, with the title of ambassador, is a member of the US Government, which is headed by the US President! This is most often the case, although not with all presidents. Therefore, it is no coincidence that the US is the main factor in both the UN Security Council and the Organization as a whole. This was also demonstrated by the illegal suspension of our name in the UN Security Council.

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It is well known that all countries also wiretap foreign diplomatic missions, especially ambassadors and diplomats who are engaged in intelligence activities. Everyone is already accustomed to it. Some try to protect the information they have obtained, i.e. its transfer to their own country, while the host country tries to find out as much as possible about the work of the foreign Diplomatic Consular Protocol.

There is a well-known example from many years ago, when the newly built American embassy in Moscow, which they built themselves with materials specially brought from America (each brick was packed separately), was never occupied because the Russians managed to install listening devices.

Or, another case from Moscow, from the time of bipolarity and Soviet-American rivalry. On some occasion, Nikita Khrushchev gave the American ambassador an expensive pen, which he kept on his desk. But the pen was not ordinary: it had a built-in transmitter! The ambassador, probably proud of the gift, did not carry out the mandatory security procedure and when the American security discovered what was in the pen, it caused a big scandal.

WHO AND WHY DEVALUATES OUR DIPLOMACY?

(October, 2014)

Diplomacy is an elite service of every state. And in conditions when we are internationally challenged, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs must be a leading institution.

For large countries, diplomacy is a strong tool for realizing their influence on the world stage. For small ones, however, it is a way of survival and existence. The case of Macedonia is extremely specific, and will certainly be studied at the world level because our constitutional name has been illegally suspended, some kind of reference has been imposed on us and, without any basis, we have been left without full international legal legitimacy. This gives the impression of the state being temporary, and on top of that we have a blockade and blackmail from Brussels, which forces us to the logical conclusion that – nothing is accidental! That is why, in the most energetic way, we must do everything to get out of the deadlock as quickly as possible.

Our challenge is – to be or not to be! And for the state, and even more so for the Macedonian people. And what are we doing? We are cutting diplomacy to save money! Simply unbelievable! And to overcome the fateful challenges we are facing, we must invest as much as we need, without counting, to overcome the deadlock in which we have been thrown, and through our own fault.

We should have no doubts that, at the moment, for the state of Macedonia, there is no higher priority than resolving the name issue. Without it, the future of the country is threatened, both from outside and from within. The ultimatum coming from Washington and Brussels – first (changing) the name, then NATO and EU membership – hides their vision for our state, which is absolutely unacceptable to us. There

are no longer any doubts and there should not be any – the renaming of the state is for the purpose of destroying the Macedonian people.

This problem is more serious, more dangerous and more threatening than poverty, unemployment and troubled interethnic relations... All of this is also a function of the name, because if this is not resolved, the same issue will intensify even more, which is already happening, and the country will go into a state of no return! That is precisely why our “partners” are keeping the name issue open! For these reasons, its solution or, at least, bridging it requires concentrating all available human, political and financial capacities. There is no room for saving here.

The name problem is extremely complex and has therefore been current for almost a quarter of a century. It is defined as political among the main factors, in order to ignore its legal dimensions. This is because the law is on the Macedonian side, while in politics it is power that decides – power which, naturally, is with others. Since Greece and its friends have deliberately internationalized the problem, and it now has an international character, the solution must be sought in the most extensively expanded diplomatic way, which is our serious handicap. Therefore, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs must be the bearer of all our activities.

And, instead of everything being concentrated in our diplomatic service, for it to strengthen every day and be constantly on the offensive, we are devaluing it! How can it bother anyone?! We are working directly to our own detriment. How else can we interpret the fact that for a long time we have not had ambassadors in Washington and Moscow, and recently in Berlin, and in a large part of the diplomatic missions there are only one or (even!) two diplomats, who cannot accomplish anything substantial! Paying huge rents, drivers, secretaries... with one diplomat is a waste of money. Embassies should either be functional, which means staffed, or closed. There is no third

option. The current situation leads nowhere. You bought an expensive car, but you don't drive it - to save gas!

In our circumstances, keeping ambassadors and diplomats in Skopje just to save on salaries is pure stupidity. Back in the day, the ingenious Emerick Blum, who turned a few garages from Sarajevo's "Energoinvest" into a system of over 50 modern and world-renowned factories, when he spoke about saving, appealed - yes, we must save, but not on toilet paper! Otherwise, we will spread rumours and everyone will avoid us! As if he wanted to tell us something too?

After the outbreak of the crisis around Ukraine, which completely changed the security and geopolitical picture of Europe, in a conversation with a high-ranking representative of the Russian Embassy in Skopje, the need for Moscow's increased interest in the region was initiated. It was emphasized that if they until now they had any reservations about the total American domination of the Balkans, there was no longer any room for abstinence. It was concluded that this would be beneficial both for them and for Macedonia. Dead cold, the diplomat asked - and what are you doing in relation to Russia? You don't have a single diplomat in Moscow! End of story.

In the given conditions, when everything depends on the international factor, when the basic and main problem and challenge for the country is of a diplomatic nature, we can neither, nor should we cut the budget of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In a situation where the fate of the country is at stake, even if half of the budget is spent on opening up the prospects for survival – it would not be heresy. On the contrary. It would only save from spending two, three... five... budgets in the future - for military and similar needs. Whether that is reasonable or not, let the readers decide, but without forgetting 2001.

As a matter of urgency, it is imperative for Macedonia to staff all our relevant embassies and missions with the most capable personnel and to close the others, which are neither needed nor have any results! In Cairo, for example. The entire diplomatic staff that can help must be

engaged. For the fastest and most qualitative solution or, at least, bridging our international isolation, it is high time that foreign experts be engaged in both the Government and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. That is a key condition if we want to succeed. Just as we did with the application to the court in The Hague. And, we won brilliantly! Otherwise...

Of course, the above is only on condition that we are ready to simultaneously build a policy, but also develop a strategy – what and how we need to take action to succeed. In advance, as Misirkov would say. Without a strategy, we will go around in circles. We should not forget that since 2008, since the NATO summit in Bucharest, time has no longer been working for us. Fate is in our hands yet our Ministry of Foreign Affairs seems to be asleep. Macedonia cannot overcome its extremely serious, urgent and decisive international problems for the fate of the country, by sending party soldiers as ambassadors. Like in Croatia, for example. A postman (even if he was a director) cannot be sent to Turkey. The appointment of consuls as ambassadors in Moscow and Berlin is an insult to those countries. On one occasion, Moscow did not give consent for our new but inexperienced ambassador for three months, which is usually done in a month. They demonstrated dissatisfaction.

Objectively, our international position is slowly but steadily weakening. This limits our already narrow space for maneuvering to find an acceptable solution to the problem of the country's name. And we, instead of sounding the alarm and doing everything possible to change such a development – acted like we were on another planet. Before it is too late, we must pay the necessary attention to this key problem of ours, by urgently changing this foolish policy of indolence.

P.S. It is interesting that our “globalists”, who are aggressive towards everything the government does, do not mind at all the castration of our diplomatic capacities! If they raised their voices against this self-destructive practice as well, the authorities would probably realize they

need to do something! It is (completely by chance!) that their silence coincides with the interests of Washington and Brussels – so that our diplomacy does not make waves, so as not to cause them additional problems? For them, in fact, just like for the USA, NATO, the EU... it is indisputable that we should cross ourselves, bend our backs, which logically also assumes that we do not need diplomacy. Especially efficient ones.

P. P. S. This column was published in 2014. Even today (2025) the situation with our diplomatic missions is almost the same! In many of them there are no ambassadors, the number of diplomats is minimal, and the problems that the country faces on the international level, if not more serious – are the same as back then.

**MISCONCEPTIONS OF THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN
AFFAIRS N. DIMITROV ON ALSAT**
(December, 2017)

Nikola Dimitrov, as Minister of Foreign Affairs, is part of a government that seems ready to solve the Greek problem at any cost to our name. Attempts to break the deadlock are certainly positive, but in no case should this be at the expense of the fundamental interests of the Macedonian people. Some politicians have already stated that one should bow down, which is unacceptable when it comes to the national identity of their own people. This applies to those who feel Macedonian. For others, there is no problem. In a long interview on TV Alsat, Dimitrov said many things that are extremely debatable.

1. When asked whether the identity determinants are affected, Dimitrov replied – “the subject of this dispute – our name, implies fear and precisely because of the ambiguities that have been expressed, we must find a way to cover that fear, because there will be no solution.”

Dimitrov is right that the name problem implies fear due to identity issues, but there is no ambiguity here. The goal is indisputable. Everyone should be clear that the name is the identity. If you change it, the identity is gone. Fear objectively exists because the threat is absolutely real. What is Dimitrov advocating – that fear should be covered up in order to reach a solution? How should it be covered up? Should we close our eyes and bow down, or pretend to be incompetent in order to resolve the case? That is how the thought sounds. If that’s the case, we have already given up. Macedonia must not deceive itself because the consequences will be fatal for the people.

2. Dimitrov says – “it is in Athens’ interest to make a distinction between the state of Macedonia and its province Macedonia and that distinction should be as acceptable as possible for us, and acceptable for

them too. It is also a question of where exactly that distinction will be applied?”

In Greece, there is NO province named Macedonia and most people use that term incorrectly. That should happen least of all to Dimitrov! There are a total of 13 regions there, three of which are: Western Macedonia, Central Macedonia, and Eastern Macedonia and Thrace. In an administrative sense, a province is much more than a region. These regions, however, were named in August 1988, when Greece officially began using the name “Macedonia” for the first time. The goal was more than clear – after the collapse of Yugoslavia, which was already certain, to question our constitutional and historical name! First, all regions have geographical designations (Western, Central...), which means that they are already sufficiently different from the state of Macedonia and no additional distinction is needed at all. Second and crucially, the names of neither regions nor provinces can be in any way in conflict with the name of any state. Especially emphasized in our case, when the country has been using that name much, much longer than the regions. The state and the region have no connection whatsoever. So, the Greeks have already solved the problem with a geographical addition (Western, Central...) and now we are all wasting time unnecessarily. Third, the political designation “republic” precisely defines the borders of the country...

3. Dimitrov, in turn, absolutely must not agree to discuss - “where and how that distinction will be applied”. Such manipulations by Nimetz, as well as the games of Athens, show that there are hidden intentions behind the scenes. These are the mediator’s “packages”, which can only refer to a discreet, albeit indirect, change in the national identity of the Macedonian people, to the ignoring of the Macedonian language, and everything else that logically follows. The accepted “distinction” should in no way refer to, and end only with the name of the country, but much more broadly. That is actually the main goal of the imposed name problem - to erase the Macedonian people. No one should be blind to that, least of all the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

4. At the same time, Macedonia must not tolerate the Greek maximalist erga omnes position. It should be immediately and publicly said to them that there will be no talks on that basis. We are not a nation defeated in war so that we have to endure everything and our only option is complete capitulation.

5. Dimitrov said – “not resolving the issue creates uncertainty, and for stability, for the future of the Republic of Macedonia, it is important to open the doors to NATO and the EU. Fighting with Greece will not succeed. We have tried that in recent years.”

Part of that is certainly true, but why did the minister not mention a single word about why this is so? Who is creating the uncertainty and instability? If he no longer wants to blame anyone, which is an unforgivable mistake in itself, he should at least mention that – our name is being illegally disputed, that the Hague ruling is not being respected, that NATO and the EU, ignoring Greece’s internationally accepted obligation resulting from the Interim Agreement, imposed a blockade, blackmail and an ultimatum on us, using brute force... Why are our key arguments not mentioned? Why do we only emphasize the strength and capabilities of our opponents, while ignoring our own tools? The uncertainty is not created by Macedonia, but by the USA and the EU. They are also blocking our future, wanting to achieve uncivilized gains through our renaming. After all, we never fought with Greece. We were only severely beaten by Athens and its allies. We are a classic victim, not a conflict initiator, as it seems, but also appears, according to Dimitrov’s words.

Unlike Dimitrov, who is obviously ready to capitulate and therefore seems to be walking on eggshells, Kotzias does not leave us in doubt. He says that the name has four segments, including the identity of the people, the language...

6. Dimitrov must know that in UN Security Council Resolution 817/93 it is nowhere stated that there must be a solution that will be in accordance with Greece’s will. There, it is demanded to “overcome the

difference over the name”. Why don’t we inform the Security Council that it has proven impossible to overcome the difference and that our name does not pose any threat to the security of the region? Twenty-five years have passed and there has not been a single security incident between the two countries. Mediation has been completely exhausted and it is high time to stop it and return our constitutional name to the UN, because Macedonia suffers enormous damage every day.

That is the way to resolve this issue because an agreement with Greece, which would include even the minimal interests of Macedonia, is simply not possible. They only want our renunciation of ourselves and nothing less.

7. Dimitrov says – “the mediator may have a dilemma whether to initially come up with a framework, which will be flexible and can be supplemented, or with a more final form of proposal as a document that will exert direct pressure, but will also carry a greater risk due to the possibility of being rejected by one of the parties.”

The mediator may have a dilemma about that, but Dimitrov must not. We already have a “framework agreement” that has been destroying the Macedonian character of the state for 16 years and such stupidity must not be repeated at any cost. Unless, of course, someone wants and is ready to accept that we be destroyed in installments. Nimetz’s proposal will come not from the UN but from the State Department, just like the Interim Agreement and the Ohrid Framework Agreement. That means the goal can only be the same – to bring Macedonia to its knees. The same thing has been happening to us for a quarter of a century and if we have not learned the lesson, we deserve – punishment. There is a saying – if someone stumbles on the same stone a second time, they should break their leg. Any “framework” solution from Nimetz can only be an endless horror for our people. Its gradual destruction, with the proven American strategy.

8. Dimitrov says – “I have previous personal negotiating experience...” Is it possible that the minister does not know that it is a matter of

mediation and that he, like the others, was only a liaison officer with the mediator? More precisely – a postman. He and all of them have a nomination from the president of the country as delegates to the mediator, and not as negotiators. Nothing more. If they were “negotiators”, after all, according to all the rules they should have had a platform for negotiations. Without that, they would be barefoot on thorns. In diplomacy, negotiations without a platform are conducted only by the illiterate. And ours neither had such a thing, nor could they have. No one can authorize them to negotiate for the name of their own state. Mediation is a completely different story.

Secondly, in resolution 817/93, on the basis of which the mediation is conducted, the word “negotiations” is not mentioned anywhere. The interim agreement, in which the then Foreign Minister Stevo Crvenkovski accepted that term, is our catastrophic mistake. It has no connection to the mediation determined by the UN Security Council. The interim agreement, agreed upon by S. Crvenkovski in New York, undermines our fundamental interests. It was rudely imposed on us by the USA (even the bulldozer Holbrooke was involved) in order to ruin our position in the dispute, and is now being abused, as if it were stronger than the UN Security Council resolution. In diplomacy, the key thing any minister should do is choose the vocabulary that is more favourable to his country, and not the one that suits his opponent. The terms “negotiations” and “negotiators” are to our detriment and to the direct benefit of Greece, and are a great shame for Dimitrov.

It is obvious that our liaison officers with Nimetz, formally - the president’s envoys, call themselves negotiators because it raises their role and they become important figures. And if it is true that Dimitrov was a negotiator, as he claims, then he was negotiating with the Greeks, right? Why then did he never tell us what they had agreed upon, but had no idea what proposal the mediator would come up with? If he had agreed upon something, he would have at least told the government what was in the mediator’s bag, if not the people. Simply put, his role, and the role of his predecessors and successors, was and remains to

convey the Government's positions to Nimetz and from there his suggestions or questions, without any authorization to negotiate anything. They don't care at all about the interests of the country.

9. However, these "postmen" of ours also had a responsible role - to convince Nimetz to seek a solution that was favourable to us. Unfortunately, they achieved nothing compared to their Greek colleagues, who took Nimetz on tours around Greece.

UNNECESSARY DIPLOMATIC MISTAKES

Diplomats must be aware that their main tool is words, and crucial to their success is the way they use them. This applies to both the written and spoken word. The diplomatic vocabulary is extremely precise, and does not allow any improvisation. After all, that is how diplomats are distinguished from others. Our practice so far has been – none. Extremely bad. Not only among diplomats, but also among politicians. There are countless examples of this. The main reasons are immaturity, inexperience, the unwillingness to constantly learn...

There are several diplomatic mistakes that should not have happened to us. In this way, we both demonstrate amateurism and discredit and embarrass ourselves. Here are some examples - it is reported that our Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs... “met” with the American ambassador. They received her, like all other ambassadors. That this practice is not accidental is also evidenced by the fact that other ambassadors do not receive such treatment! So, the principle is clear to them, but when it comes to our unelected governor, the American ambassador, it does not apply.

On one occasion, when Zaev as prime minister “had a meeting” with the American ambassador, although it was not specified in the news, it was clear that it took place in their Embassy! The news should have read - “the ambassador received Prime Minister Zaev”! Like a true governor, indeed.

The third case is when Pendarovski, as president, visited Athens in October 2021. The visit was called - historic, although it was hardly that. Among other things, and because of the incident that no one commented on, it wasn’t even noticed by us. Prime Minister Mitsotakis, absolutely deliberately, welcomed Pendarovski on the stairs of the Government and greeted him while he was three steps higher! The President himself, if he’d had enough experience, would not have

extended his hand until he had climbed to the same step. The scene was offensive but carefully staged.

For comparison, I remember the time in the early 1990s, when we fought fiercely for any diplomatic recognition of our Macedonia. I too was on several missions, as President Gligorov's envoy – to China, Japan, Indonesia, Great Britain, Spain..., just like Dimitar Mirchev and other colleagues, in other countries. When Mirchev was in Zagreb and was supposed to meet President Tudjman, Croatian protocol drew his attention to the fact that he could not wear a bow tie because Tudjman had a plain one! In other words, the President cannot be dressed inferiorly to the guest! They gave him another tie to be on the same level!

After full independence, for example, a common mistake even among the highest officials was and still is that Macedonia is a young, new state! In this way we directly devalue ourselves. Macedonia has been a state since 1944, with the fact that until 1991 it was part of a federation, and after its dissolution - it became an independent state. Nothing less than that. A state that has existed for about 80 years cannot be new or young.

A similar case is Nimetz's mediation regarding our name. With a Security Council resolution for our admission to the UN, in a highly illegal and aggressive manner, our historical and constitutional name was first suspended, replaced with a reference, and at the same time we were imposed, or rather – tricked into discussing our name – with another country. The name, in no way, was something that the world organization could interfere with. However, the politics of power made it possible. Soon, the talks turned into mediation, arbitration by Nimetz, which is not disputed. However, our uneducated politicians, journalists, experts... began to call the process – negotiations! Greater stupidity on our part, cheers. And with the UN Security Council resolution we were asked – “to talk in order to overcome the manifested difference”. It suited everyone that we negotiate about our name, except – us. After all,

that was also the goal of the international factor (the USA) to rename the country and divide the people. And instead of us using all our strength to avoid that expression and challenging and forbidding it to everyone – we used it ourselves! Fools don't have horns, right?

A similar case was our use of the offensive abbreviation of the UN reference – FYROM. We were not allowed to use the entire reference – “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”, because by doing so we were violating our own Constitution, even though it contained our constitutional name! Instead, its meaningless and offensive abbreviation was used massively! And all in capital letters, instead of the first two “p” and “j” being lowercase. This is a key difference that shows that the reference is not a substitute for the name. Lowercase letters, as stipulated by the UN Security Council resolution, cannot be part of the name. And when capital letters are used for the entire abbreviation, it implies that the reference is – a new name for the country! Diplomacy is a precise matter, and small minds cannot understand it. The enemies, on the other hand, turned the reference into a meaningless abbreviation in order to erase the name Macedonia and not mention it at all. And our “geniuses” – politicians, journalists, “experts” and similar dunces started using it too. Devastating, isn't it?

And one more thing. With the Interim Agreement (1995), which the USA imposed on us, our position in the dispute was completely decimated. Everything that they couldn't fit into the Security Council Resolution 817, upon our admission to the UN, they stuffed into this agreement. And what did our amateurs do? They ratified it in Parliament, although there was no such obligation in the agreement! Greece didn't do such a stupid thing, they are smart and experienced enough. Most likely, our “strategic partners” insisted on this capitulation, the very ones who planted the agreement on us. That was our unforgivable historical mistake. With that paradoxical act, brilliantly devised by our manipulators, in the most official way, the Macedonian state agreed and accepted that its name was - disputed! Thus, practically, the way was opened for its change.

Foreigners, especially the Americans, know what they are doing. It was simply incredible how this could have happened to an experienced politician like Stojan Andov, who was at that time the President of the Parliament? How could he have put the agreement up for ratification? It is undeniable that there were numerous political and diplomatic amateurs in the country, but Andov was not one of them. Such was, for example, the then Minister of Foreign Affairs Stevo Crvenkovski, who may have had other values, but had no idea about diplomacy. On several occasions, I have personally witnessed this, although he skillfully concealed it. He also negotiated the Interim Agreement in Washington which, among other things, opened up the way for our capitulation in Nivitsi, for a final agreement with Greece. If there is an interim agreement, right, it must be followed by a permanent one. Our amateurs understood nothing of all this.

PRESIDENT GLIGOROV IN LONDON

In May 1995, the 50th anniversary of the victory over fascism was being commemorated. It began in London, from where world politicians left for Paris, and continued to Moscow, where the procession ended. Preparations in London began sometime in February, but without any information for the public. Then they invited the presidents of the participants in the anti-fascist coalition. In an informal conversation, the Slovenian ambassador, Shinkovech, mentioned that their president Kuchan had been invited! The next day, the first task was to seek information from the Foreign Office (MFA) – why wasn't the Macedonian president Kiro Gligorov invited, even though he was the only one who had participated in the war? They gave us detailed information about the planned event, but without a clear position on the invitation of our president, although we insisted on exactly that. They had no arguments not to invite him, but something remained unclear. Our questions whether there were any reasons, or obstacles, for not inviting him, although repeated, remained unanswered.

We immediately informed Skopje, with a recommendation to discuss this with their ambassador Tony Milson, and to exert pressure to have an invitation sent to us because there was no reason for Gligorov not to participate. In London, we began a broad campaign to mobilize our friends to help as lobbyists.

We quickly concluded that the presidents of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia – Izetbegovic, Tudjman and Milosevic – were not invited either. Parliamentarians wrote letters to Prime Minister John Major, prominent public figures made phone calls and tried to persuade in various places... all with the aim of inviting Gligorov, since it was already clear that he was being put in the same group as Milosevic. We, again, went over the heads of the Foreign Office, through visits at various levels and with a message that they were making an

unforgivable mistake and injustice towards Macedonia, which our people would never understand and justify.

The war in Bosnia was raging, Tudjman was behaving dictatorially in Croatia, Milosevic was the main enemy of the West... Time passed, and Gligorov was still not on the list of invitees. Our concern grew, along with the uncertainty. Under no circumstances should Macedonia be allowed to be absent from such an event, since there were no reasons for it. I personally wrote a letter to Prime Minister Major.

It was like that until a meeting at the Foreign Office, when diplomat David Slinn, who was escorting the ambassador after the conversation, when we were already outside the building, said in confidence that Gligorov would be invited and that a favorable moment was being sought to do so. He confirmed that the three other post-Yugoslav leaders would not be attending the event. It remained unclear whether Slinn was authorized to tell me this, or if it was his own initiative? It is indicative that he did it in front of the building, where there was certainly no eavesdropping!

That was the case, but the problems continued. In determining the protocol details surrounding Gligorov's stay, they made it clear to us that the car he would use would not be able to carry our flag (with the Macedonian Sun, which the Greeks call Vergina), which was disputed during our admission to the UN in 1993. They found themselves unprepared, when they were immediately told that in that case, the president would use the ambassador's car – with a flag! They could not dispute that.

But that created a new problem – the Embassy did not have a driver. We were saving money! The ambassador drove himself, and for protocol duties, he was driven by the technical secretary, Krste Ropajkov, who, however, was not an experienced chauffeur and it was not expected that he would drive the President. Quite understandably, the Foreign Office refused to let the driver from their car drive ours.

What now? There was no time to look for a driver from outside, and it was risky. The choice fell on my son Aleksandar, an excellent and experienced driver, and I took full responsibility - myself. No one in the delegation knew who was driving the president, although they knew why the ambassador was driving in the vehicle provided by the hosts, and the president was in the ambassador's car. In the end, before they left, we were sitting in the hotel where the delegation was staying, and it was then that I told them about the problems with the driver and who was driving the president. And Aleksandar not only met the expectations of the task, but even surpassed himself. I wrote about this in more detail in the book "Diplomatic Reflections".

MFA MITREVA VISITS MOSCOW

At the end of December 2005, MFA Ilinka Mitreva came to Moscow on a working visit. The Russians were restrictive regarding our high-level visits because, as they told us: you will come, take pictures and – nothing after that! They made it clear to us that our attitude towards them was condescending, unlike the EU, the USA and other Western countries, to which it was completely different. After the meetings with them, as they told us, you will carry out everything you agreed on! With us – nothing!

That was largely true and was the result of our constant and continued ignoring of Russia, due to being “blinded” by the EU, NATO, the USA... However, in contacts with them, we defended our positions. In attempts to organize visits, for example, we presented arguments that the level of relations depends on both countries, that neither does Russia show much interest in Macedonia, nor initiates activities that would bring the two countries closer together...

Mitreva’s visit, although delayed and conditioned on certain issues (signing agreements...), was carried out because Moscow also wanted to maintain contacts with us.

Aware that the pronounced cooling of relations and a lack of high-level meetings did not suit them either. They were not ready for a visit by our president or prime minister, for example, although we almost insisted that Buckovski come to visit. And the meeting of foreign ministers, although significant, can also be considered routine and therefore does not necessarily have a wider impact on relations.

Shortly before Mitreva’s visit, at the initiative of the new pro-western president of Ukraine, Yushchenko, in agreement with the Georgian president Saakashvili, who was installed in office by the USA, a meeting of the presidents of the - “new democracies” was held in Kiev.

The scant information indicated that the idea was carried by NATO structures. Russia was not (accordingly) invited.

Moscow's reactions to this conference, which was also attended by President B. Crvenkovski, were emphatically negative. For the Kremlin, it was an anti-Russian action that was meant to unite all the forces that have unresolved issues with Russia. Overall, Macedonia had no place there.

Although it was clear from the very beginning that this was an unusual meeting, and therefore careful consideration should be given to possible participation, this was not the case with us. In such situations, through confidential channels, all relevant embassies, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the president's office request assessments and comments on the meeting, investigating who will participate, etc. The embassy in Moscow, although it sent information about the Russian positions, was not consulted at all by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs about the relevance of our possible participation in the conference. Most likely, no other embassy was consulted either. This is a wrong and bad Macedonian practice.

After the conference, which is right, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not in any way show us that they were dissatisfied with our participation in the conference in Kiev, although this was clear to us.

Only the director of the GP "Mavrovo" in Moscow, while he was in negotiations for the construction of a facility in St. Petersburg, was told by a high-ranking official of the local government that if Macedonia wants to work in the Russian Federation, it should not participate in conferences that are anti-Russian! That says it all! They did not consider it necessary to officially express their dissatisfaction because, after all, everyone participates where they think they should, but they sent us the most subtle message. Business.

In a sophisticated way, the Russian Federation's dissatisfaction was also manifested during Mitreva's visit. First, they accommodated the

delegation in a hotel, although it was customary for foreign ministers to be accommodated in a villa. They justified it by saying that the villa was under renovation! When the program began to be implemented, without any explanation, Foreign Minister Lavrov avoided a face-to-face meeting with Mitreva, although it was planned.

The conversations with both Lavrov and the chairman of the Duma (Parliament's) Foreign Affairs Committee, Konstantin Kasatchev, were a story in themselves. It is difficult to say what the reasons were, but in both cases, Mitreva did not show a willingness to have an open conversation... She recited our EU and NATO ambitions, which she apparently often repeated, without taking into account that she was in Moscow.

At the meeting with Foreign Minister Lavrov, in her presentation, she did not mention the Albanian factor at all, neither in Macedonia nor in the Balkans, except for the brief statement that we will support any solution for Kosovo, as agreed by Belgrade and Pristina. Lavrov immediately asked her specifically about the Albanians. That was logical because if there was anything the Russians wanted to hear from us, it was our assessments of Kosovo, the Albanian factor in the Balkans, the Albanians in Macedonia... After all, in the preparation of the visit, the embassy suggested that this was precisely the main Russian interest. And to the directly posed question, Mitreva said nothing. As if she didn't understand it!

The exact same situation was repeated in the Duma. After the presentation on the situation in the country and the region, in which the Albanian factor was not mentioned at all, Kasachyov asked almost the same question as Lavrov. Again, she evaded without saying anything that would have any political or analytical weight.

What can be concluded from the above? First, the Russians are dissatisfied with our attitude towards them because, blinded by the EU, NATO and the USA, we completely ignore them. The fact is that they treat us the same way, but that is the other part of the story. The key

question is – who needs whom more? Secondly, in political cooperation with us, their main interest is our assessments and positions regarding Kosovo, and the role of the Albanian factor in the Republic of Macedonia and in the region. And, if you ignore those (legitimate, normal, objective and direct) interests of theirs and are not ready to say something, assess, evaluate, think out loud... then the question arises – what is the purpose of the meeting? What is mutual trust if you don't want to say anything about an issue that interests your interlocutor? After all, what is the logic of maintaining a political dialogue at a high level?

Although the assessments given in public, according to the usual pattern, were positive, the visit only confirmed the previous realization that Macedonia has no interest in Russia, and that it is far from our horizons.

A very wrong policy, from every possible aspect.

..*

As chairman of the Foreign Policy Committee of the Parliament, Teuta Arifi, a serious Albanian extremist and nationalist, also came to Moscow on a separate visit. From the entire visit, I only remember her sincerity. She said to me - I tell Ali Ahmeti, it's a pity that we don't have the conditions to do something similar in Greece as in Macedonia, with the war in 2001!

Scary, isn't it? We don't even need to mention that, even if they had the conditions to do something similar in Greece as they did here in 2001, it is absolutely certain that they would have suffered a severe and well-deserved defeat there.

Since we already mentioned Teuta Arifi, through a remark that reveals her as a person, let us recall that she was also the Deputy Prime Minister, when she also published columns in "Dnevnik". In them, she publicly advocated that Macedonia recognize Kosovo as an independent state, even though it was illegally seceded from Serbia by use of force,

and for Pristina, we were supposed to stay with the UN reference! So, Kosovo for us – is a state, and Macedonia for them - an undefined territory! And, nobody cares! Neither the government reacted, nor did anyone else publicly oppose such a serious provocation, and that from a person holding the highest state position! That is why we are in this position.

And, something else about her. After her position in the government, she became the mayor of Tetovo. Her successor, Kasami, publicly announced that during her mandate there were over 200 people who received a salary from the municipality, but did not go to work! He said that some of them were even working abroad! A catastrophe, what else?

And, what do you think? Did something happen afterwards? Absolutely nothing. You can only imagine how much public money was paid to those “over 200 people” who, for who knows how long, were paid for not working?! First, the person who made this possible should have rotted in prison and, secondly, everyone who illegally received money should have had to return it, and with interest. Okay, you’ll say, that applies to serious countries, not ours! How else would we continue to decline?

DEFENDING OUR INTERESTS

When I worked in London, the newspaper “European”, which was simultaneously published in several EU centers, constantly used the meaningless abbreviation for our country, derived from the UN reference. I wrote them a letter twice about it, but they did not react. I assumed that there was a strong Greek influence there.

Seen or not seen I asked to meet with the chief editor. He accepted. After greeting him, I asked - how do you feel at UKOGBANI? Of course, I said it with an English accent. He looked at me confused and reacted with - sorry, but I do not understand you. I was persistent - nothing special, I continued, I am just interested in how you personally feel at UKOGBANI? An uncomfortable silence ensued. The man was already looking at me confused, probably not knowing what to think. I let an uncomfortable minute or two pass, looking from one to the other – before continuing.

Then I explained to him – UKOGBANI means United Kindom Of Great Britain And Northern Ireland. As his face lit up, I continued – Mr. Editor-in-Chief, you have seen for yourself how incomprehensible and meaningless the abbreviation of the country you live in is. You know, the same goes for the abbreviation FYROM, for my country, the Republic of Macedonia, which is even more meaningless because it was forcibly imposed on us and means nothing, but you unscrupulously often use it in your newspaper. I think that now you understand how I, and all other Macedonians, feel when they read your newspaper.

The man stood up and asked me to wait. Now, I was confused. He returned with a dozen journalists from the newspaper and told everyone, before me, about our previous conversation. From then on, and as long as I was in London, the newspaper “European” never used the offensive abbreviation. After that - I don't know.

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Our embassy in Moscow didn't even look like a bus station in some remote village. It was embarrassing to receive anyone there, and ambassadors from big countries would come to visit. The predecessors, who rented the premises, clearly had no idea what an embassy was. By the way, I rented the initial premises in London and furnished them with furniture purchased from sponsors. I am confident that today, the furniture, which was of top quality, purchased at factory prices, is more beautiful and representative than it was then. The premises were at such a level that even the British Queen could be welcomed there.

The specific reason for this text is, however, something else. Besides the official vehicle for the ambassador, we also had an old Lada, for the daily needs of the Embassy. After some time, I discovered that the Russian State Administration, which works for their Ministry of Foreign Affairs and rents the premises to us, also charges us \$100 every month for parking the Lada in the yard of the building where the Embassy was located. The secretary wrote a note to the Administration informing them that their Embassy in Skopje does not pay for parking and that there is no reason for them to charge us. They replied that this was not possible and that we would have to continue paying.

We wrote a new note informing them that there was 24-hour police protection in front of their Embassy in Skopje and that, if we had to pay for parking for our second vehicle, out of reciprocity, we would also request police protection in front of our Embassy. A few days later, they informed us that the parking fee was being waived. For the previous 10 years, it had been paid unnecessarily.

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In March 1999, a “Granit” construction site was opened in Albania, on the Korcha – Greek border road. Both Prime Minister Ljubcho Georgievski and Foreign Minister Aleksandar Dimitrov were present.

After the ceremony ended, we returned to Ohrid together. We walked through the city and sat down in one of the cafes on the square. On the

way, our Prime Minister told me that the American Ambassador in Skopje had conveyed the Albanian leadership's dissatisfaction and concerns about my activities with the Macedonians in the country.

I explained to the Prime Minister in detail everything I was doing for and with the Macedonians in Albania, emphasizing that none of this was in contradiction to any international standards and practices related to minority rights; that I was doing nothing secretly but everything was open and public; that all of this was normal diplomatic action, and appropriate for any democratic society. I also explained that all of this was within the framework of universal human rights and added that, unlike the Albanians here, the Macedonians in Albania enjoyed less than minimal minority rights. And those few rights, they enjoy only in the nine villages in Mala Prespa, while Tirana does not recognize that Macedonians live on Golo Brdo and on Gora... In fact, the few rights are given on a territorial basis, for the villages in Mala Prespa, along with Vrbnik, while the majority of Macedonians live in the cities of Tirana, Durres, Korcha... There, they are treated as Albanians! I concluded that the Macedonian state is not doing anything for this part of the Macedonian people.

After I finished explaining, I asked the Prime Minister - tell me if you think I am doing something wrong? Tell me if something needs to be changed? I am only implementing state and national interests. Nothing more. I believe that the attention I pay to Macedonians and the activities I carry out are absolutely indisputable, from any aspect, and are of great benefit to our people there. Many things have changed for the better, many of their traditional manifestations, whether religious or cultural, have been and will be renewed, both personal and communal problems are being solved...

Just continue as before, concluded Georgievski.

UPS AND DOWNS WITH THE UN REFERENCE

In my diplomatic career, I never sat behind the designation “former” after our admission to the UN. I stuck with “Republic of Macedonia”. Whenever I went to any wider meeting, I carried an inscription in large and black letters – REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA, written on a sheet of A4 paper, folded in half lengthwise, and with it I covered the designation with the reference. It was always placed in front of the place designated for me. At the majority of such meetings, Greek ambassadors or diplomats were also present, who always reacted.

I will start from London. It is a practice in all major centers to issue ambassadors a kind of identity card, which is called – diplomatic identification. I went to London on September 3, 1993 as a diplomatic representative, since we did not yet have diplomatic relations, which were established on December 16 of the same year, and I soon became an ambassador. I immediately made it clear to the head of protocol at the Foreign Office, their MFA, that I would only accept their diplomatic credentials if they said that I represented the Republic of Macedonia. I pointed out to him that I had presented my credentials as such and that it would not be at all correct for them to change my “status”. His reaction was completely diplomatic, meaning vague, but it was obvious that he had received the message. A few days later, the credentials arrived – with our constitutional and historical name.

A second characteristic case was when the AUDI 100 vehicle arrived. We started the registration procedure and the first thing we checked was whether the plate was available – 1 MAK? In London, it is the practice for ambassadorial cars to carry registrations 1 FR, for France, 1 IT, for Italy, 1 ND, for the Netherlands... They replied that it was available and we asked them to keep it for us because the procedure was ongoing. By the way, in Great Britain you can also buy license plates with letters and numbers of your choice, for which you have to pay a good price.

When we thought the procedure was almost over, the Foreign Office told us that we could not get such a plate! There was no explanation, although we asked for one. Since we had other information that the Greek Embassy was closely monitoring our steps, it was immediately clear to us that they had reacted and blocked the receipt of the agreed license plate. There was absolutely no other explanation. After several telephone conversations, made in an attempt to resolve the case, and after we received a decisive response that the case was closed for them, we sent a new note to the Foreign Office. We emphasized that the Embassy had arranged a license plate with -1 MAC, that for reasons we did not understand, it had been cancelled, although it was not in use, and that we would use the ambassador's vehicle without registration, until the already agreed plate was delivered to us.

We received it in a day or two.

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The cases from Tirana are more interesting. Shortly after our arrival, in February 1998, there was a meeting at the OSCE Mission. Their ambassador was the German Gert Ahrens, whom we knew well because he was also active in our country, in the years after Macedonia's independence, concerned about the position of minorities in our country. More precisely, about the Albanians. We had known each other personally since the period 1972 – 1976, when we both served in Beijing, China. At the round table, Alexandros Mallias was sitting next to me, whom we also knew because he was the Greek ambassador in Skopje. As usual, even before I sat down, I covered the inscription with the reference with REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA. Mallias reacted immediately. He told Arens that our country was recognized under the reference, that it was also conducted in the OSCE and that he asked that this be respected. Arens, who chaired the meeting, repeated the same.

I replied that the state with the inscription that was placed in front of my seat – did not exist. That was some kind of illegal practice that, possibly, could only be used within the framework of the UN. I

represent the country whose historical and constitutional name is the Republic of Macedonia. As such, I have also presented my credentials to the Albanian President. Any different behavior on my part, and sitting behind some invented reference, means that I am seriously violating the Constitution of my country. I am convinced that none of those present in this hall, including the respected colleague who raised the issue, would support someone denying the constitution of their own country. Here, if there is one, let him raise his hand.

Of course, no one raised his hand. Ahrens had no room for any reaction and simply continued the meeting as if nothing had happened. At the following OSCE meetings, I continued to cover up the reference, and Mallias no longer reacted.

At another NATO meeting in Tirana, to which we were also invited due to our participation in the Partnership for Peace program, I continued the same practice. The chairman was a Greek, who had probably come for the meeting, since we did not know him. He insisted that I remove the “cover” from the reference, and after I refused with the same explanation, he was not ready to give in. He would not open the meeting and threatened not to hold it. After I saw that it was no joke and that a more serious incident could occur, I got up from the round table, took the inscription REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA, threw it with the reference under the table, and sat down on a chair that was by the wall, where there were other diplomats.

The Greek opened the meeting and I, without any need – spoke six times. He could not refuse me. On all six occasions he nodded – the Republic of Macedonia considers that this is a very good initiative, sincerely supports it and hopes for its complete success. Macedonia is also interested in a greater involvement in the project... In all six discussions, I repeated three or four times Macedonia, the Republic of Macedonia. The Greek almost exploded, and most of the ambassadors nodded their heads at me, hiding so that it wouldn't be seen that they were smirking.

At another NATO meeting, also in Tirana, I came after some unpleasant incident and, when the meeting was opening, when they introduced us with the reference – I didn't react, although that was my regular practice. Whenever anyone would use the reference – I reacted that such a state does not exist and asked them to specify which one they meant. This time I kept quiet and the Turkish ambassador Murat, with whom we had excellent cooperation, called. Gentlemen, he said, Turkey recognizes Macedonia under its constitutional name and I ask that this be respected. Then he turned to me and continued – Risto, the Macedonian Government is paying you to defend your interests, not me! I immediately called back and said – respected and dear colleague Murat, you have my great gratitude for letting everyone know that the name of my state is Macedonia, and not some meaningless reference. Dear Murat, that also speaks for you that you are a man of dignity who respects the dignity of others. Ignoring the constitutional name in any state, it cannot serve anyone's honour. That speaks volumes about those who do that. Unfortunately, in the case of Macedonia, this happens often.

It was also interesting when, at the beginning of 2002, Prime Minister Ilir Meta, accompanied by several ministers, gathered the ambassadors to brief them on the upcoming local elections in Albania. After his presentation, questions followed, and among the first to speak was the German ambassador, with whom we were good friends. He asked when the initial results could be expected, so that it wouldn't happen like in the "former..." when the results were announced after two, three months? The fact is that this had happened in our country! I immediately reacted – Mr. Prime Minister, I would ask my respected colleague to explain which country he is referring to, since such a country does not exist! The German, who was sitting about a dozen seats to the right at the round table, was now looking at me and gesturing apologetically.

When it became clear that there were no more questions, I raised my hand and asked – Mr. Prime Minister, regarding the question posed by

my respected colleague who also represents the former German Democratic Republic, or East Germany, can I ask for your assessment of the expected outcome of these elections? There was general laughter. Meta hid almost under the table so that no one could see that he was laughing. The German, again, this time threatened me with his finger.

With that, the meeting ended. In the lounge in front of the conference hall, I stood with a large group of ambassadors, including those of the USA, Greece, Italy, France... The German joined us last and immediately, in front of everyone, addressed me – Risto, please excuse me! By using the reference, I committed an unprecedented stupidity. Please forgive me and as an apology, I invite you to lunch tomorrow at the Hotel “Rogner”! I am glad, I replied, that you are aware of the mistake, everyone makes mistakes and I accept the apology, and I gladly accept the invitation to lunch.

COOPERATION WITH PRESIDENT GJORGJE IVANOV

After Gjorgje Ivanov was elected President of Macedonia, I was a member of his Foreign Policy Council. I regularly sent him memoranda, with analyses of certain current topics in foreign policy, most often related to the denial of our constitutional and historical name. See the memorandum that follows. When reading this memorandum, which I sent to the President on August 10, 2009, please note the following:

1. It was sent after the NATO summit held in April 2008, when the United States for the first time openly took over the management of the name issue, and gave us a clear ultimatum – first (change of) the name, then membership in the alliance, which automatically meant membership in the EU. At the same time, Philip Reeker came to Skopje as the American ambassador, who harassed us with this blackmail on a daily basis. Since then, the United States has no longer hidden that the renaming of Macedonia and the erasure of Macedonians was purely their project.

2. As a result of the new situation, the Americans had already been directly telling us that their main objection was – we know what you don't want, but we don't know what you want. Tell us. Our people did not come up with any proposals because it was a period when Macedonia had no policy, let alone a strategy for this key problem of ours. Everyone was aware that they could only lose and gain nothing over the name issue. That's why they kept quiet and kept the problem under the table. There was no worse solution.

3. Then Prime Minister Gruevski visited Washington, at the beginning of 2011, when then Vice President Joe Biden, together with Hillary Clinton, openly told him - either you change the name of your country (and therefore the identity of your people) or you're done. He was not ready to capitulate and be remembered as a traitor to his people, and we know how it ended. His removal was a classic coup d'état, directed by foreign hands. Whose, you guess for yourself.

4. If the proposals contained in the attached Memorandum had been taken into account, there would have been at least room for talks and, at least partially, time would have worked - for us too.

5. Objectively, the possibility of accepting “north” by name, even in parentheses, was nil. Just like the additions “Skopje” or “Vardar”, which were mentioned as a solution in the media. All of them were unacceptable to Washington, and to Athens, although it did not decide. However, it was up to us to insist on them. Those options were out of the question because they did not allow for a modification of the national identity of the Macedonians. The name change had to be made in such a way that the term (name) “Macedonia”, from which the “Macedonians” also derive - would be devalued and relativized. From “North Macedonia”, the fictional “North Macedonians” inevitably arose, which in no case escaped us. It is only a matter of time before this will be imposed on us. Our stance, however, with the aforementioned proposals, would put us in an active position and that would maximally reduce the room for maneuver of both the United States and Greece.

6. Our ignoring of the problem was our biggest handicap. Let us recall that one of our prime ministers, before Gruevski, had said that the name issue was not among his 10 priorities. A catastrophic mistake! And he had to be the first, at least formally, while in parallel, without delay, all other daily state obligations are carried out. That is exactly why we got stuck in Nivici.

7. Let us also mention that the cooperation with Ivanov ended after I assessed in a column I wrote that the American ambassador in Skopje, Philip Reeker, was behaving like an unelected governor! That was not at all controversial, but it was unacceptable to the United States! Reeker knocked on the table of both the prime minister and the president, demanding that they react and distance themselves from my column, in other words – to defend him! Of course, they refused. Aware that the

President was being pressured, I resigned from his Foreign Policy Council.

MEMORANDUM

To: The President of the Republic, Prof. Dr. Gjorgje Ivanov

Subject: What is optimal if the term “northern” is inevitable?

According to numerous announcements, the “northernization” of the country seems inevitable. If so, this requires timely, or rather urgent, activities so that the bad experience of the Ohrid Framework Agreement is not repeated. In order to avoid any unpredictable consequences, the proposed solution must first be examined from all possible aspects. Otherwise, our people and state may remain permanently handicapped on the international stage. Unforgivable historical mistakes may be made.

In order to prevent all possible negative implications, from the acceptance of “northern” (in any version), relevant domestic experts should be consulted, and professional opinions must also be obtained from renowned individuals and institutions abroad. The solution to the problem has a pronounced international dimension that, for now, no one here knows well enough. The problem is of fundamental importance for the country and nothing must be left insufficiently researched or undefined. With maximum discretion, these opinions should be sought immediately, not when our feet are burning and the pressure is unbearable. No matter how much it costs, money must not be spared.

According to the available information, Nimetz’s old/new proposal will be the “Republic of North Macedonia”. That is an extremely bad and humiliating proposal, which will make us fictional “North Macedonians”. Even worse would be the combination “Northern Republic of Macedonia”. Fortunately, Athens is not aware of this, and many here believe that it is a better solution. With such a solution (for sure) we would remain nameless: the meaningless name would be the three words together. The republics can be democratic, independent,

socialist... not northern or southern. As a meaningless fabrication, that phrase, all together, would turn into an insult – stupidity.

So, an authoritative position must be taken that changing the name according to the two aforementioned solutions is out of the question. And this must be clearly stated to Nimetz (above all to the USA), because it is far above our red line, calls into question the national identity of the Macedonian people and offends their dignity. A strong argument can also be the fact that it has no chance of passing a referendum, which is inevitable, even if the entire government praises it.

Therefore, and with our maximum flexibility, the solution must be sought only with the addition of the name “Macedonia”, which must in no way be their part. Their goal is to geographically specify the location of the country, in the region of the same name. That is already a huge concession on our part.

The additions at the end (Skopje) and (Vardar) are certainly the best solutions. Both have their own background and are realistic: the first is the capital city which, although absolutely unnecessary, redefines the country geographically. The second confirms that the country is located in the Vardar part of the region of the same name.

If Nimetz, and especially those who hide behind him, stubbornly insist on “northernization”, then it should be insisted that it, possibly, can also only be in the form of an addition to the name (not part of it), such as - (north). No (northern). (Northern) which one? - Macedonia? Indirectly, again, it would come down to “North Macedonia” and the Greeks of course would insist that it be used that way everywhere. If it is the suffix (north): which (north)? There is no clear answer. The explanation would be that the state of the Republic of Macedonia is located (north) in the Macedonian region. That is correct, and indisputable. It should also be insisted that (north) be with a lowercase letter. And in English, that would automatically mean that it is not part of the name, but an addition!

In the argumentation, it must be insisted that this addition (north) is also virtual, invented and imposed because the Macedonian region is not divided into northern and southern. However, it is the least bad compared to other possible (“northern”) proposals. In that context, in order to strengthen our position, in the talks we should also insist that Greece use the suffix - south, for its part of the region Macedonia. This would make our part logical. That will put them on the defensive and if they accuse us that it would open the way for our claims, it must be shown to them that it is absolutely the opposite – their irredentism towards our part is much more realistic, from every aspect. There is also relevant evidence for that. It should be emphasized to them that it is a fact that the region is divided and only their insistence on (north) leads to the need for (south). We are against the designation of “north” and “south” of the region, but they want to. That would be our offensive position that would insist on their flexibility, not only ours. If only they demand, then only we will have to give in. They need to be forced to defend themselves as well.

Our insistence that they geographically specify their part of the Macedonia region is not only logical but absolutely realistic and necessary. They are demanding that a state be renamed without any basis and cannot defend the geographical location of their regions of the same name with arguments.

These considerations are relevant only on the condition that there is not and cannot be any additional package that would devalue and distort everything. A package with additional explanations, transcriptions and restrictions means only direct interference in our internal affairs (what kind of passports and the like). Instead of a package, there would be a new Permanent Agreement, in exchange for the one from 1995, which would only specify that it is about adding the historical and constitutional name of the state, as a geographical designation. This should be said most authoritatively to the USA first, and in parallel to Nimetz.

Nimetz must urgently be asked to explain what he meant by his last statement: "... the name is the only thing being discussed and Macedonian citizens should be calm about the information that negotiations are also being held on the identity and language of the nation. I know that the country has its own identity and language (did he accidentally use: the country, not the people?) and no one can dispute that." However (according to "Forum" from July 10, 2009, p. 7), he continued: "there are certain questions about the references in this regard, about the English transcription, but in no way about nationality or language itself"... If this is true, then either he doesn't know what he is talking about (and he does), or he considers us idiots (more likely). He tells us that we will be amnestied from the guillotine, but they will cut off our heads!

A possible solution, only for (certain!) international use, which will not prevent our most widespread use of the name "Macedonia", as all other countries do (at conferences, on the jerseys of sports teams, at fashion shows...): English: Republic of Macedonia (north)

French: Republic Macedoine (nord)

Russian: Република Македонија (север)

Spanish: Republica Macedonia (norte)

Skopje, August 10, 2009

ON MACEDONIAN AFFAIRS - MACEDONIA AND THE DISSOLUTION OF YUGOSLAVIA

The dissolution of Yugoslavia clearly showed that, outside of the Federation, a Macedonian state was not acceptable to the major international powers. Above all others, obviously – to the USA. It was not at all a coincidence that we did not find normal and logical international recognition, although we were the only Yugoslav republic that gained independence without war. On the contrary, they immediately began to blackmail us with our name, organized to prevent our international establishment, to block our border... All of this was outside international rules, practices, principles... They drove us to the point where, in an extremely illegal and barbaric manner, they suspended our constitutional and historical name from international use! This flagrantly violated the Charter (Constitution) of the United Nations – and no one reacted.

As confirmation that this is true, the fact that the preparations to prevent the international establishment of an independent Macedonian state began even before the collapse of Yugoslavia speaks for itself. In August 1988, with a new administrative division, Greece for the first time officially began to use the name - Macedonia. At that time, three regions of Aegean Macedonia were given the names Western Macedonia, Central Macedonia and Eastern Macedonia and Thrace. The names of those three regions were the basis on which our name - Macedonia - would be challenged!

Let no one deceive themselves that Greece created the problems for us then, or that Bulgaria is now the main actor. They are just tools in the hands of Washington, extremely unprincipledly supported by Brussels. From the very beginning, the goal was evident – definitive closure of the “Macedonian Question”, although we did not have the capacity to immediately understand and comprehend it.

However, this should not apply to the very top of the state. In “Focus” from 24/4/2025, in his “Notes from the Years of Independence”, Denko Maleski published a conversation with Brent Scowcroft, then National Security Advisor to President George Bush Sr., from the visit to Washington, carried out from 8 to 11 November 1992, when he was accompanied by President Kiro Gligorov. At the White House, Scowcroft began a conversation about changing the name, stating that – “many countries have done it”. He took a short break after Maleski told him that – “everyone, except one, did it of their own free will, not under duress.” Scowcroft concluded – “That is done when the survival of a state is at stake.”

Although at the time, as Undersecretary, I was the second person in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, right next to Maleski, since there was no Deputy Minister, I had no information about these talks. Practically, Scowcroft spoke on behalf of President George Bush, and with his warning – “for the survival of the state”, he maximally specified the US policy towards Macedonia. The message was clear – you must change the name if you want to survive. And that is an indisputable American policy – which has been persistently and dedicatedly implemented to this day.

This American policy became even clearer upon our admission to the UN when, in the Security Council, they completely illegally suspended our constitutional and historical name from international use. Only the USA could have done that, and no one else. Our strategic partners, did this.

Today (2025), we can proudly say that despite all the efforts, fierce pressures, uncivilized obstacles, blackmail, ultimatums, blockades... that the main world factors daily posed to us, they failed to destroy the Macedonian identity. On the contrary, they experienced a serious failure, although they were fully supported by our neighbours, who are their proxies and satellites,

That is precisely why, aware that time was working in Macedonia's favour, they adjusted their regional policy. It all started in Kosovo, in 1999. Then, the USA decided to quickly complete the process of post-Yugoslav settlement in the Balkans. It was a question of a trilogy. The first part was the secession of Kosovo from Serbia, which ended successfully. The second part was the attempt to secede the three municipalities with an Albanian population from Southern Serbia in 2000, which ended in complete failure.

The end of the trilogy was here, in 2001. It should be crystal clear to us that if there had been no war in Kosovo in 1999, there would have been no theoretical chance of 2001 happening here. They are purposefully linked. It was classic aggression from Kosovo which, in the end, was relatively unsuccessful for the organizers, if we take into account the first five statements of the NLA. Their initial goal was "the liberation of Albanian territories from Macedonian occupation", and opening the way for Greater Albania, which was not immediately achieved!

That is one side of the coin. The other side is our unseen shame and humiliation that we experienced with the defeat in the war. The Macedonian Army, with an officer cadre inherited from the Yugoslav People's Army, which had a world rating, was defeated by a handful of terrorists. There is no justification and there cannot be. However, most of the blame falls on the shoulders of the then President Boris Trajkovski. As Commander-in-Chief of the military forces, he allowed our catastrophic defeat to happen. He was greatly influenced by the American generals who roamed Macedonia (MPRI) and uncompromisingly manipulated him. He trusted them, for which there is no justification, and in the end, after being maximally exploited – to let him go down the drain! Both him, and us with him.

His religious beliefs certainly had an influence on the absolutely wrong actions of the President and Commander-in-Chief. Perhaps he thought that – God would save us? In any case, his role in the war was extremely negative, and one day this will have to be determined. The

war and the Ohrid Framework Agreement are the milestones after which the country went downhill in a way that is almost irreversible. The fault lies mainly with him.

Everything that happened to us after 2001 is the result of our shameful military defeat.

MACEDONIAN GOLGOTHAS

(August, 2017)

The topic is over 25 years old and is worn out but still current because a small state like Macedonia is a victim of the interests and aggressive policies of a superpower, whose goal is the destruction of the centuries-old Macedonian people. It is simply incredible that someone would be so persistent and try to achieve something that is unnatural, uncivilized, inhumane, illegal and with unpredictable consequences that could be catastrophic for the peace and security not only of Macedonia and the Balkans, but also for the whole of Europe. The old continent cannot be stable if its south is boiling. Is that perhaps the goal of the power from across the ocean?

What has been happening to us all these years is not being done to us by anyone but the United States, in an attempt to achieve the impossible. To destroy a nation, no matter how small, really has no logic, let alone any sense at the beginning of the 21st century. Regardless of the interests that lie in the background. But such is the policy that is based on the argument of force. It is as old as the world, and there is no doubt that it will last for a long time. Thus we come to the key question – why do they want to destroy us as a nation by changing the name of the country? What are the reasons that lead to such madness, which is more like the 19th or 18th century? What will be gained, but what can be lost by wiping out the Macedonian people?

Although unacceptable, the reasons are clear. They are part of world geopolitics as a direct reflection of the region, specifically Macedonia. The “Macedonian question” is on the agenda, which they believe should be definitively closed. For a long time, Macedonia was the powder keg of the Balkans. The aspirations towards the Macedonian people, which logically means towards its territory, were and still are, actual, by almost all of its neighbours. Therefore, although completely wrong, Washington believed that the problem would be solved by

rechristening the Macedonians and their Bulgarianization. At the same time, it would also guarantee long-term American domination of the Balkans! In principle, it may seem so. But, in practice, we can be sure that this will be the opening of Pandora's box. There is already confirmation of this.

That alone can be the background to all our Golgothas, to which we have been exposed since the collapse of Yugoslavia. Another reason – there is not and cannot be. Since Yugoslavia disappeared, Washington obviously believed that the independent Macedonian state would vampire all the old dreams and aspirations of its neighbours, which, in one way or another, happened. Therefore, the logical question is – who started first? Or, whose idea was it not to recognize the independent Macedonian state, or rather the Macedonian people in it? Was the occasion, and the reason, Greece? Or was it an original American policy, created by its political planners, and based on the assumptions that the aspirations and historical syndromes of its neighbours would inevitably return? Or did the policy of neutralizing the independent Macedonian state, and implicitly this means also the destruction of the Macedonians, appear and grow in parallel, initiated by several sides, for the sake of common interests?

But let's not forget the secret services. The CIA, for example, long ago had analyses of the breakup of Yugoslavia, in which there was certainly a section dedicated to Macedonia, and the "consequences" of its independence. This is a kind of demonstration that the MME that started first - nevertheless originated from across the ocean.

There is no precise answer, and perhaps never will be. In any case, it needs to be investigated. For now, based on a huge amount of evidence, we can only claim that the main managers were in Washington, and not in the Balkans. In a way, this is confirmed by the moves that have been made since the very beginning, related to the recognition of the independent Macedonian state. This was done with perfect precision, starting with the circus in the Security Council, upon Macedonia's

admission to the UN. It paved the way, and everything after that was just routine.

It is indisputable that among our neighbours, even before the breakup of Yugoslavia, the combinatorics against the inevitable independent Macedonian state began. In Greece, for example, this happened in August 1988 when, with the new administrative division of the country, the official use of the name Macedonia began, which had been banned until then. That was the basis on which our name was disputed.

At the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, Bulgaria itself was also in turmoil and there is no evidence that it began to prepare earlier for the post-Yugoslav period. Sofia was the first to recognize independent Macedonia, but not out of any political pragmatism, but with the sole aim of preventing its eventual return to some new Yugoslav federation, and to prevent the influence of Serbia. To avoid misunderstandings, Sofia immediately reactivated its old historical syndromes and, in parallel with the recognition, aware that the Macedonian story was not over, declared on the same day that it did not recognize the Macedonian people and language. And if for them there was no Macedonian people, that meant that they recognized a second Bulgarian state! They did not immediately establish diplomatic relations, which is most normal in such situations. They were waiting to see if the new state would hold up, and they didn't want to rush, so as not to reduce their chances of participating in the division, if Macedonia were to be dismembered.

Under Milosevic, nationalism flourished in Serbia and the appropriation of Macedonia was massive – both in the public and among politicians. It was claimed that there were 500,000 Serbs in the country, and that Macedonia couldn't do it alone, primarily because of the Albanians. Thank God – one of Milosevic's key mistakes was the belief that Macedonia would fall into their laps, like a ripe pear! Otherwise, he would certainly have taken appropriate steps! Macedonia was his great defeat.

Albania was also not in a position to expose itself too much, due to the deep turmoil in the country, but there should be no doubt that they were also calculating and planning. They were doing this in agreement with the Albanians in Macedonia. As a result, they emphatically and unprincipledly insisted on the reference from the UN, thus directly denying the state. In Tirana, both officially and publicly, they constantly and emphatically talked about Albanian territories in Macedonia. Their five minutes came in 2001, when the military aggression against Macedonia from Kosovo began. The first five statements of the NLA were that the aim of the war was the liberation of Albanian territories. All this was in agreement and under the management of the USA, and after Washington became convinced that it would not succeed, they changed the aim of the war – for human rights. Nowhere in the world, until now, has there been such a war. Wars are either for liberation or conquest. There is no third option.

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The key problem facing Macedonia as a state, and the Macedonian people as an ethnic group, is the lack of unity. The Golgothas that we have been going through for a quarter of a century are primarily the result of our deep national division. There are neither leaders nor a motivating force that will unite the people, and will be an inspiration for everyone to fight together for themselves and their rights, and will move forward in creating an atmosphere of self-respect and self-confidence. There is no such thing. It is certainly a direct consequence of the history that we have been going through, but there is no justification for us still hating each other. The fact is that we have always been under someone's slavery, under threats from our neighbours, because of their unconcealed aspirations towards both our people and our territory. It is indisputable that a direct consequence of this is the deep divisions among Macedonians. Foreign secret services also played an important role in the divisions of the Macedonian national fabric for the sake of their own interests, however, we should have overcome all of that a long time ago. They divided us to make it

easier to control and exploit us, but why do we allow those manipulations to still be present and strong today? Those times are gone, and there is no longer any justification. Disunity speaks of our primitivism, our immaturity, selfishness, narrow-mindedness, lack of dignity...

Now, when we have our own state, our priority must be the maximum promotion of our achievements to date. We must have a clear strategy for strengthening national feelings, for creating conditions for appropriate upbringing and education, for creating a national program for strengthening self-esteem... We have accepted the leadership of others quite a bit. We have been impressed by what is foreign to us, at the expense of our own. We have preferred foreign products rather than domestic ones. We were much more Catholic than the Pope... Let us be proud of the years spent in Yugoslavia, when the Macedonian people experienced full affirmation and enormous development, let us rejoice in the independent Macedonian state, when we have our own currency, national teams...

It is simply incomprehensible that, after so many years of being an independent state, we have no remedy for overcoming historical divisions. It is unacceptable that no one is dealing with these problems that are, in many ways, essential. One of the ways to overcome these situations is to promote sports. The results achieved are incredibly motivating, deeply emotional, most comprehensively unifying and with the widest reach. They reach everyone.

At the time, East Germany, which was not widely internationally recognized, did something similar, as did Cuba, which was under constant American threat. It can be freely assessed that, through sports, these countries conquered the world. Their results were talked about, written about, broadcasted... At the Olympic Games, at the World Championships... they were among the best. Macedonia should learn from their experiences. Of course, we cannot achieve their

achievements, but we should try. We must invest a lot in sports because it can bring us self-confidence.

At the time, someone had assessed that Macedonians have a strong national feeling, but do not have a sufficiently pronounced national consciousness. I am not an expert to analyze this, but it seems that there may be some truth in it. Here is an opportunity for those who understand each other to develop an appropriate strategy for strengthening Macedonianism through a strong national consciousness.

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States are social communities with strict rules of conduct. If everything is not regulated in them, through a Constitution, laws... chaos follows that does not lead to good. Now, Macedonia has its own state and can solve all its problems on its own. However, with the 2001 war, which was basically an aggression from Kosovo, under the direct direction of the USA (MPRI...), the Macedonian state was recomposed in a way that was supposed to change the position of the Albanians in the country, from a minority to a state-forming people, alongside the majority Macedonian people. That is the essence of American policy in the Balkans. They are playing the Albanian card and in order to permanently secure their loyalty, in return they are giving them Greater Albania. Just like Mussolini did in World War II. It is a project that will have long-term catastrophic consequences for the region. Washington, however, does not give a damn about it. It is important for them to achieve their current short-term goals, and let others think about the dangers that will follow.

The current American policy will inevitably lead to a confrontation of the Albanians with the Greeks, the Montenegrins, the Bosnians, and even the Bulgarians, not only with the Serbs and Macedonians. Their appetites will certainly grow, and this will bring real dangers to the entire region. The Americans will also pay a high price because, at the moment when they feel that they are no longer needed, the Albanians will write them off. There is historical evidence for this claim. During

and after World War II, Tirana's main friend was Belgrade. With the Inform Bureau, that alliance was broken and Albania's main trump card became the USSR. And that idyll ended and Albania found itself in the arms of China. After that ended, it was the Americans' turn. How long this romance will last, no one knows.

Miraculously, with the 2001 war, the USA and the Albanians (UCK) did not achieve their initial tasks and goals. They were reduced to – “liberation of the Albanian territories in Macedonia”, which meant the disintegration of our state. Therefore, “Plan B” followed, formulated in the Ohrid Framework Agreement (Ohrid Framework Agreement). The goal remained, only the technique and tactics for its implementation were changed. There should be no doubt that, according to the available information prepared by the secret services of the USA and Great Britain – a) the 2001 war in our country was part of the war for the liberation of Kosovo, from 1999. The goal was to resolve the “Albanian national question”; b) viewed from the other side, if it had not been for the war for Kosovo in 1999, there would have been no chance of 2001 happening here. That was only the third phase, after the unsuccessful attempt in Southern Serbia, with Medvedje, Preshevo and Bujanovac; c) the Ohrid Framework Agreement (Ohrid Framework Agreement) is an American document, brought by their agent Frovik and first planted as an all-Albanian agreement in Prizren, between the terrorists of the NLA, DPA of Xhaferi and PDP of Imer Imeri.

With the Ohrid Framework Agreement, the Macedonian character of the state was largely devalued. This happened both formally and legally, and even more so in practice. The Macedonian state was fundamentally redefined, but the ultimate goal, the formal equalization of Macedonians and Albanians in the governance of the state, and thus opening the way for federalization, with a parallel Bulgarianization of Macedonians – was not achieved. That is why the “Tirana Platform” (2017) appeared, which was only a logical continuation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement.

Albanians, wherever they are, when it comes to the national issue – know what they want and are all on the same page. There are no disagreements and they are not possible. Both in Macedonia and beyond, they are achieving the resolution of their national issue – millimeter by millimeter. Macedonian politicians, on the other hand, interested only in power, whether to gain it or not to lose it, constantly make unprincipled concessions that, most often, are – irreversible, and catastrophic for the Macedonian identity. One of the most blatant examples of this is the legal regulation of the use of the national flag of Albania! Now, in an open and brazen manner, the “Albanian territories” in the country are being marked, through partial implementation of the law – without the parallel use of Macedonian flags. And no one bats an eye! The law, however, should never have been accepted as it is. There is no control and the Albanians abuse it to the maximum. For the sake of peace at home, the Macedonians are silent and keep their seats.

Now (2017), President G. Ivanov reminds us that two former presidents of Bulgaria and Greece told us that with Macedonianism we will not be able to reach Brussels. If so, why did we sign the Ohrid Framework Agreement then? Or, more directly, why did we sign a meaningless agreement on “friendship” with Bulgaria? The Bulgarian person was Plevneliev, but who was the Greek person?

The agreement with Bulgaria is our Macedonian capitulation, but it is not the end of the world. After all, it can be revoked. There is a one-year notice period. Whether anyone will dare to do that is another question. In principle, it is difficult, and perhaps even out of the question? However, the eventual acceptance of the announced law on the Albanian language is much more frightening. With it, albeit informally, the state could be federalized.

The demand in the “Tirana Platform” for bilingualism on the entire territory of the state was a mere political bluff. Albanians do not need their language to be used in Berovo and Shtip. By doing so, they were only misleading the public, in order to get what they want. Their goal is

for Albanian officials to use the Albanian language when speaking on behalf of the state! Albanian ministers to speak Albanian in, and on behalf of the Government, for the President of the Assembly to use it in managing the legislature and in all other similar occasions. When they achieve this, and they are on the right track, then the state will become bilingual. And since there is no unitary state in the world that is bilingual, then, formally and legally, Macedonia will also be a federation. A state of two equal peoples who also have the right to secede. The next steps, to make this official, will be just ordinary technique and tactics.

Looking back, everything is clear – everything the Albanians did after the collapse of Yugoslavia, through Ilirida, the 2001 war, the ORF, the “Tirana Platform”... all the time they had only one idea – “Greater Albania”, dictated and managed by Tirana, but with great support from the USA. Washington played the Albanian card in the Balkans, and they made the most of it.

It is thanks to the USA that this dream is coming true. With the independence of Kosovo, the project is already over 70 percent realized. And in relation to the Albanians, Washington, as our great “strategic partner” – is sacrificing Macedonia as an unnecessary pawn in a chess game. That is right, because we all sleep like the slaughtered. If this wasn’t sad, it would be funny. In any case, it is – tragic.

Where is Frchkoski now and our other geniuses who made themselves important while the Ohrid Framework Agreement was being structured in Ohrid, and it was rudely planted on them by American CIA agents, headed by Frovik? Frchkoski assured us that the chairmen of the committees in the Assembly, in the event that they are Albanians, will lead the sessions in the Macedonian language. That was absolutely normal because the official language in the state, both according to the Ohrid Framework Agreement and according to the Constitution – is Macedonian. Since the chairmen of the committees speak on behalf of the state, they must use the Macedonian language. When discussing in a

personal or party name, there is no problem at all with using their native language. But, not in the name of the state.

Slowly, slowly, as we have already mentioned, that key rule was eroded. In an aggressive manner, Teuta Arifi and others changed that essential rule, destroyed the position of the Macedonian language, and ruined the constitutional character of the state. They achieved their goal, while all the Macedonian sheep in Parliament, and at the top of the state – were sleeping. It is understood that it was only a transitional stage. Now – the bill has come. Both the speaker and the ministers... will all speak in Albanian. There is no longer a Macedonian state, whether we have admitted and understood it or not.

“Ours” are still absent and nothing is clear to them. At least that is how they behave. However, their sponsors from Washington and Brussels have probably convinced both Zaev and the gang around him that the ministers and the speaker should speak in Albanian and that this is not a problem at all?! And they are right – while a woman is slightly pregnant, nothing is seen or noticed. But, has anyone wondered what this law will mean after some time?

IT CAN BE STATED WITH FULL RESPONSIBILITY THAT BILINGUALISM, OVER TIME, WILL MAKE MACEDONIA A NON-FUNCTIONAL STATE. In such conditions – the federation will even be a solution. Albanians no longer have any obligation to learn the Macedonian language, and that means not to speak it. Or, more precisely, it will inevitably be – the more they learn Macedonian, we will have to learn Albanian just as much, if not more. If we want to understand each other. If not, nothing to anyone. The two languages will be equal and the rights and obligations of everyone will be – the same. Quite deliberately, the American creators of the Ohrid Framework Agreement did not define the role of the Macedonian language in it. It had to be specified as a unifying factor. Of course, if its creators imagined Macedonia to exist as a unitary state. Obviously, that was not the case. And what were our “experts” doing while the

agreement was being prepared is a question that has no answer. They had no idea what was happening, and what policies and solutions were being implemented, crucial for the future of Macedonians.

As a result of this law, in any state institution, an Albanian will have the right to speak and write in Albanian and if the boss wants to understand him, he will have to know that language as well. If not, the boss will not be qualified for the function. In a word, the state will not be able to function normally because mutual communication will not be possible. That will mean that we cannot work together, and that we will have to look for a cure. Albanians have an option, we do not. If the parts where Albanians are in the majority are separated, the rest of the state cannot function as a whole. And let us have no illusions – all this that is happening to us is not at all accidental. It is an American policy outlined in the late 1980s, which has been persistently and dedicatedly implemented after the collapse of Yugoslavia. Our Bulgarianization is a logical part of all of this.

It is an indisputable fact that everything that is happening in this country, after the collapse of Yugoslavia, is dictated by the USA, and we do not know their final plans for and around Macedonia. For now, it is only clear that Macedonianism is not acceptable to them either. Nothing more. They have already managed to politically equalize the Albanian minority with the Macedonian majority, but it is not clear what they will impose on us next? An artificial federation, after the state is renamed? How will it function? Will it be Albanian-Bulgarian? Will the same borders be maintained?

The option that was current in the late 1990s, defined through the official Albanian document – “Platform for Solving the Albanian National Question”, has failed. It was planned that, through the increased birth rate, massively supported by mosques and politicians, Albanians would gradually become the most numerous in the state and thus solve the problem. However, firstly, their birth rate decreased and, secondly, they emigrated en masse. Most likely, they are now under 20

percent of the total population, which means that all their illegally acquired rights on that basis are in vain. But, they are not giving up, and the USA is persistently working on the erasure of the Macedonians through their Bulgarianization.

While the agreement with Bulgaria is changeable and can be canceled, the law on the Albanian language can easily be executed for Macedonia and the Macedonians. When it is adopted, there will be no turning back. The acquired rights, especially by the Albanians, are - irreversible. These days, when that atomic bomb is being prepared for Macedonia, no one is bothered. MANU, does not even need to be mentioned. They brushed off the agreement with Bulgaria and promised to make an announcement - when they see the text signed?! What nonsense! Why not make a statement a year after the signing? Then they will have plenty of other reactions, so that they do not get tired! The temple of sciences and experiences should provide guidance, direction and orientation, and not analyze someone's scribbles. Perhaps it is better that they do not express themselves about languages. How can they know why the Albanian language should not be the first in the country? If those from BAN have been successfully dragging them by the nose for a long time, why should they not allow the Albanians to do the same?

It is difficult to bear that the modern Macedonian state, after 73 years of existence, under the baton of the new government is slowly but surely expiring. Hundreds of thousands of lives have been given for this freedom that we enjoy but which, apparently, we do not know how to preserve. The Albanians in Macedonia are not asking for human or civil rights, which would be perfectly fine, but a third Albanian state. They want to become its masters, and according to no international law, practice or principle, they have no basis for such a thing. This means the federalization of Macedonia through a back door, a project they are working on persistently, with open, wholehearted and direct American support and assistance. No more, no less, such a status will open up the

possibility of secession by political means, if such a move suits the Americans.

Precisely for this purpose, the Albanians want a complete redefinition of Macedonia, for which there is no basis in domestic, much less international law. The basic intention was to annul the unitary character of Macedonia, which was guaranteed by the Ohrid Framework Agreement (OFA). It is a creation of the USA, but now they are silent because it does not contain any basis for bilingualism. They are working contrary to what they promised in Ohrid. That is nothing new. They did the same to us with the Interim Agreement with Greece. Through it, they have utterly devalued our position in the name dispute, and our only benefit – that Athens should not hinder us in integration – they themselves abolished it. That happened at the NATO Summit in Bucharest (2008)! We tolerate unprecedented shamelessness and Machiavellianism on the part of the USA, which has been treating Macedonia this way for 25 years. We, on the other hand, persistently consider them “strategic partners”. More stupidity, cheers.

The basic rule of democracy is majority rule, with normal respect for the rights of minorities. An unprecedented experiment is being conducted in Macedonia to the detriment of the majority, and to no one’s benefit. Macedonians, more divided than ever, will devour each other, and the ship will sink. In the struggle for power, even the devil himself is a good partner, if he helps them achieve their goal. They do not even want to think that the punishment for their treacherous behaviour will catch up with them.

It is an unprecedented deception that bilingualism is part of the Ohrid Framework Agreement (OFA), which is now being invoked by all those who manipulate the state. Where are Frchkoski and our other “smart people” who pretended to have structured the OFA, while it was rudely planted on them, like a cuckoo’s egg, by CIA agents, Frowick, Perdue and similar types, and has catastrophic consequences for the country? Frchkoski publicly assured us (was he consoling or lying?) that in the

name of the state, as stated in the Constitution, Albanians would speak in the Macedonian language. If that is the case according to the Ohrid Framework Agreement, and according to the new Constitution, the use of the Albanian language could not reach that point. According to the Constitution, the official language in the state is Macedonian. Therefore, in the name of the state, only Macedonian can be spoken.

That key rule is already being ignored in Parliament. That key practice has changed and the position of the Macedonian language is being devalued, through a flagrant violation of the Constitution. The Albanians achieved the unattainable goal, while the Macedonian MPs were sleeping. All of them, starting from the Speakers of the Assembly, together with the party leaders who allowed it, should be held criminally accountable for complicity in disrespecting the Constitution and destroying Macedonianness. Tirana and Washington have now delivered the bill to us: both the Speaker and the ministers... will all speak Albanian. If the Government is bilingual, so is the state. There can be no dilemmas here.

Introducing bilingualism in Macedonia inevitably means the end of its Macedonian character. After all, that is precisely why it was conceived. Macedonianism will go down in history. Bilingualism unequivocally means that the unitary character is irreversibly transformed into a federative one, of two equal peoples, and that means two states. That is why it is being introduced. There is no unitary state with two languages. Only federations or confederations, such as Belgium, Switzerland... Thus, the minority in our country gets a third Albanian state, which is outside all international usages. When the American bulldozer pushes its interests, legal norms do not apply anywhere. Our Hague verdict, for example, is completely ignored. The Americans called it - "the opinion of the court"! They illegally bombed Serbia, Syria, Libya...

The law opens a technical process of legally establishing the federal status, which will formally follow in a short time. Its implementation will inevitably lead to a change in the name of the state, which will

have to reflect the new reality (Albanian-Slavic Federation, for example), and will inevitably impose a replacement of all symbols – the flag, the coat of arms, the anthem... up to a bicameral Parliament... All domestic policies will also be revised, starting from the structure of the Budget... This is just a stage towards the final collapse of the Macedonian state. The details will follow. Naturally, the appetites of the Albanians will grow. The difference between a unitary state and a federation is enormous.

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The friendship treaty with Bulgaria represents a severe defeat for Macedonian national aspirations, for which a huge number of lives have been sacrificed. But it can be canceled and cease to be valid after a year. Whether a hero will be found for such a move is another question. It can also be ignored, as was the case with the 1999 declaration, which had a similar content, although the Bulgarians, supported by Washington and Brussels, constantly wave it at us. The Albanian language law, however, although it is called the “language law” to deceive the public, is something much scarier than the agreement with Bulgaria. It destroys the single Macedonian state. The illegitimate rights of the Albanians will have a permanent character, and this means that the federal character of the country will be irreversible, just like the third Albanian state.

Macedonia was already heading towards a totally dysfunctional state, thanks to the Ohrid Framework Agreement, but now this will be maximized through bilingualism. After a long time, we will become a second Bosnia. The minority will dictate to us how to organize the state, which is unprecedented and unheard of on a global scale.

When the ministers already start speaking Albanian in the Government, and that will certainly happen soon, no one will be able to make the other Albanians speak Macedonian anywhere, nor to learn the language. It will suit them if we do not understand each other, so that they have an open path for secession, or for complete federalization of the state,

depending on the interests of the United States and the situation in the region. Let there be no doubt that one of the main goals of the law on the Albanian language is to create a dysfunctional state out of the modern Macedonian state. Let it be clear that we cannot do it together. Given that the Albanians have an option, we are theirs too, but emphasized as an American collateral victim. This is the final phase of the process that began with the Ohrid Framework Agreement in 2001. The fact that we act like we are being beaten, for all the manipulations that the United States is doing to our country, is our problem.

Considering that the Albanians have an option, we are theirs too, but emphasized as an American collateral victim. This is the final phase of the process that started with ORD, in 2001. The fact that we act offended for all the manipulations that the USA does to us with this country is our problem.

The presidents of Bulgaria and Greece, who publicly told us that we can only be part of the Euro-Atlantic systems without the Macedonian identity, probably did so intentionally, in order to reveal to us the policy pursued by Washington and Brussels, and to prepare ourselves, at least psychologically. That this is true is most directly and specifically confirmed by the parallel action of the Albanians and the USA for the bilingualism of Macedonia. Automatically, it also erases Macedonian as a basic characteristic of the country. With the new law, when the Albanian language is equal to the Macedonian, the state will rebrand itself into something new. And that is a new step towards its rechristening, the annihilation of the people and the formal write-off of the Macedonian language, which will inevitably follow. After all, Albanian ministers have long been communicating with the world – in Albanian. And, no one says anything.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF NIVITSI

This is not an in-depth analysis of the Nivitsi disaster. It is about one of its consequences, which affected a huge part of our population, and our diplomacy was completely and historically disgraced. After the treacherous agreement, the government's extremely irresponsible behaviour followed. They did not lift a finger, although a huge part of the citizens were left without personal documents - ID cards, passports, driver's and traffic licenses. The capitulators, who signed it, and the competent institutions, seemed to forget that it must also be implemented after it came into force (February 18, 2019). This meant that all personal documents of our citizens had to be changed, in accordance with the new name of the state, within five years, or rather by February 17, 2024. On that day, hundreds of thousands of citizens had not received new documents.

Due to catastrophic mistakes by the government, people could not travel abroad! Passports, for example, with the old name of the country were issued until June/July 2021, with a validity of 10 years! This is what the Ministry of the Interior did, even though they had to know that in February 2024, after about two and a half years, they would be thrown in the trash! And people paid – for 10 years!

This is the first part of the story, and it is only an introduction to diplomacy. I publicly suggested to illiterate Macedonian politicians that the problem could be solved easily and simply by sending a note to Athens! With it, in a professional diplomatic manner, it would be explained that we are not able to replace the personal documents of citizens within the deadline stipulated by the agreement because we do not have the technical capabilities to do so. And, with a note, that we will fulfill the undertaken obligation as soon as possible, for which we will inform them in time! No one could dispute that.

The proposed solution, along with a draft note, was published on the Internet portal “plusinfo.mk”, and in the daily newspaper “Nova

Makedonija”. The columns also indicated the possibility of consulting experts from other MFAs - whether the proposal holds water, or whether the author had gone off track. In any case, the proposal and the draft note were sent by e-mail to the offices of the President of the state and the MFA.

No one reacted. If they did not believe that this could solve the extremely difficult problem facing our citizens, they could have checked with a friendly state. They did nothing and, extremely unnecessarily, a large number of people were mistreated for a long time, while the authorities behaved like elephants in a glass menagerie.

If the proposed note had been sent to Athens, the Greek side would have had no room for any objection or any challenge to our reaction, although it is certain that they would have been outraged. And if they had reacted, it would have been pointless. Without any problems, we would have ignored it and/or informed them that we had no other choice because we could not leave citizens without documents! And, according to the Nivitsi agreement, for any problem in the implementation, both sides can request either the intervention of the UN Secretary General or go to the Court in The Hague. If Athens had taken such steps, it would have lasted a longer period and, in the meantime, we would have solved the problem. After all, the Greeks are experienced diplomats who know what is what. And if they reacted uncontrollably and aggressively, we could and should have reminded them that they had not implemented any of the aforementioned agreement, from even their minimal and symbolic obligations. They do not change the road signs, they do not ratify the three memoranda... In fact, without protesting, we need to remind them to fulfill their obligations...

In this case, our entire diplomacy has been embarrassed. Be it the diplomats from Skopje, and even more so those from the various DCMs. If there was at least a little professionalism among them, they should and must have taken an interest in the countries of accreditation,

asking for advice on how to proceed. Thus they would have been involved in solving the problem, which was of a purely diplomatic nature. After all, it should have been immediately clear to diplomats who understand something about the craft that everything can be solved with a single note. Therefore, this is a classic failure of our diplomacy, and proof that it is utterly incompetent.

If our diplomacy, at least through personal initiatives, had been involved in consultations with the competent legal experts in the foreign ministries there, the same conclusion would inevitably have been reached on how we should act. No instructions from the foreign ministry are needed for that, although that would also have been absolutely logical and normal. If there had been professionalism. Thus, all dilemmas would have been overcome. And everyone would benefit. The government would have gained points, and the citizens would have been freed from a miracle of unnecessary and severe harassment.

Instead of acting professionally, did the foreign minister Bujar Osmani call the Greek ambassador for talks!? That was an unacceptably shameful mistake, the result of miserable amateurism. The move resembled a subservient attitude, if not something more terrible, which should not be surprising from the leadership at the time, especially from the minister himself, who did not defend Macedonian interests. One could even say that there were elements of sabotage in all of this! What did Osmani, for example, demand from the ambassador? Or what did she expect? Neither she, nor anyone else in Greece could accept any, even the most official request for an extension of the term of our obligation! In similar situations, no one has such a mandate, not only in Greece. It is an international agreement and Athens has no room for maneuver for any interpretations, especially to their detriment. The agreement is ratified in their Parliament and any changes or adjustments require a long and difficult parliamentary procedure, which must be preceded by diplomatic steps coordinated between the two countries, with the signing of some kind of annex... That is an impossible task, even if Greece were completely ready to meet our expectations. And it

certainly was not. Therefore, Osmani's request was - utterly senseless, and beyond reason. Total diplomatic illiteracy was demonstrated. We can only imagine how the conversation with the ambassador went and what lesson Osmani received. Whether he understood it is a completely different question. It is only certain that we embarrassed ourselves, as a state that does not know what it is doing. With our note, however - we would either have put them in front of a fait accompli, or left them without room to maneuver, or the problem would have been solved. Notes are diplomatic missiles, drones, cannons...

That's right, because with the note we were only informing them, and we did not demand - anything from them! Their possible reactions did not bind us at all. We would only be using our legitimate right and indisputable diplomatic technique. However, our traitors did not want to offend their "friends" in Athens. Maybe they had a reason?

In countries with diplomatic experience, the MFA sends a circular to all DCMs requesting that advice be sought from the countries of accreditation on how to proceed.

ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY

The possibilities of diplomacy in the field of economy are endless. These days (March, 2024), probably the most expensive commercial facility built in the country so far, the FENI factory, in Kavardartsi, was sold. I am not sure under what name it operated in the end, but it was bankrupt and the new owner became Komercijalna Banka. It was built sometime in the late 1970s, and cost over 500 million dollars at the time. A rough estimate, that is probably at least a billion in today's dollars. According to the available information, a Turkish company bought it, certainly for a small amount of money. If we were an organized state, our entire diplomatic network would have been included in finding a buyer for FENI. That would also have meant a possibility for a more successful completion of the case.

What could have happened if our Diplomatic Consular Protocol in the most developed countries, and others, had forwarded the advertisement for the sale of FENI to the ministries of economy, industry and trade, to the chambers of commerce, to investment funds, to various foundations and similar institutions...? After all, among the world's largest nickel producers are Russia, Canada and Australia, where we also have embassies, and where it was even possible to visit the main companies, in order to stimulate their possible interest in buying. The possibility that more people would show interest in the deal is not to be underestimated. It is certain that advertisements were also placed abroad without that, but this way, the possibilities for a better market are much greater.

Diplomats in our Diplomatic Consular Protocol can themselves initiate similar procedures, if they follow what is happening in the country. The problem is that there is a lack of diplomatic knowledge and experience, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is not playing its role properly. The fact is that, for now, our Diplomatic Consular Protocol have to engage mainly politically, regarding the blockades of Bulgaria, EU

membership... Whether this is happening is another question. However, considering that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is now also for foreign trade, the economic dimension must increasingly come to the fore. In the meantime, we need to communicate directly with chambers of commerce, associations, and even larger companies. We should also ask them for suggestions on what specifically to focus our research and contacts on.

THE ROLE OF FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS

So far, we have not mentioned foreign correspondents, although they are compatible with diplomats and complement each other. They are extremely important for our country, and we have very few of them. The need for them is dictated by the conditions in which we live. Given that our media are poor and cannot afford their own foreign correspondents, the state, through its information agency MIA, must play a very proactive role here. It, in turn, should and must have at least 20 professional correspondents from the most important world centers for us, starting with the neighbouring countries and Turkey. We all want to be in the EU – both as a public and as a state, and often we do not know about many things that happen in Brussels. Often, much easier than diplomats, journalists can obtain important information. At press conferences, for example, especially through journalistic questions, extremely important things are learned there, which cannot be reached otherwise. If you are not there, you are left short of something important.

Macedonia must open its purse strings and, through MIA, organize correspondents from Brussels, Washington, Paris, Rome, Berlin, Vienna, London... It is crucial that MIA does not work only on commercial logic, but that news from abroad is accessible and cheap for the media. Why not even - for free.

When I worked in London, in the mid-1990s, I was interested in their Foreign Office (MFA) in how we, as correspondents could get important information about everything that was happening in the Union? I was also looking for a channel for communication with them, because I witnessed that we were not up to date with the events there. The answer was that almost everything that was current was presented at the press conferences in Brussels. Now we have three embassies in Brussels, but we must also have a strong journalistic team there.

The fate of both the state and the people is now being shaped in Sofia. Mainly with our consent. Athens used to be our judge. And we did not and do not have permanent correspondents there, and we did not know what was happening there. For a while, there was an MRT correspondent in Athens, but that was not enough. That is the task of MIA, with direct state funding, and the information from the correspondents should be used as widely as possible in the country. Only in this way will politicians, but also a large part of the people, be sufficiently informed and able to take the right stances. Commercial logic must not dominate. This is an important issue for our future.

Key information of interest to the state, whether from Athens and Sofia, or from Tirana, Belgrade, Pristina, Brussels, Washington, Paris, London... cannot come to us by chance, or from a third party. It will also be an advantage that the correspondents will specialize in the relevant country and issue and upon their return will be extremely useful analysts. This is how quality personnel are built on a long-term basis, which we traditionally lack.

THE ROLE OF SECRET SERVICES IN THE COLLAPSE OF MACEDONIA

The secret services, stationed in other countries, mainly monitor what is happening behind the scenes. Not publicly. For this purpose, they have informants from whom they receive first-hand information. And that is, more so about interpersonal relations, about misunderstandings and conflicts at the top of the state, about the reasons for them, who stands for what, who protects what and whom, who is at odds with whom, who is involved in crime... Of course, also about the way power is exercised. The interest in the abuses that are being committed is always emphasized. This is valuable information that can only be obtained from insiders. That is why spies exist.

Based on the assessments of the secret services, the direction in which the state is moving is determined and, crucially, whether it is in the interests of their countries, whether it corresponds to their expectations and needs, or not. When those tendencies are positive for their countries and suit them, the role of the secret services is passive and mainly observational. However, when those movements and development directions do not correspond to their interests, they begin activities aimed at hindering and changing them. The goal is to get the “deviants” back on the right path, or to change. Then both “colour” and “velvet” revolutions occur and secret, as well as public steps are taken to secure their own interests. What do you think, how many legitimate governments have the secret services of major world powers overthrown, just in the last 20 years?! One of those overthrown governments was Nikola Gruevski’s government.

A classic example of the role of the secret services are the events in Kosovo in 1999. In 2000, they continued first in Southern Serbia (Preševo, Medvedje, Bujanovac), and then in our country in 2001. It was a war waged in three stages. A key turning point in the history of Macedonia, after the collapse of Yugoslavia, was precisely 2001.

Independent Macedonia has two main historical periods – one, from the collapse of Yugoslavia to the war in 2001 and the second, after it, which can be divided into several sub-stages. For example – from 2001 to the NATO summit in 2008, then from 2008 to 2017, when the agreement with Bulgaria was signed... After Bucharest (NATO summit, 2008), the US openly took the lead in the re-christening of Macedonia. Greece lost its leading position.

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Briefly about the war in 2001. We must be clear that the events in Kosovo in 1999 were not only accidental but were also planned with broader implications. Although everyone pretended not to know what was happening in Kosovo before the war began, in the meantime, intensive preparations were being made there for its “liberation”. Later, it became clear that the main carriers were the respective American and British secret services. However, one of the main roles was played by the American association of war veterans, MPRI (Military Professional Resources Inc.). It is a private military organization that operated around the world, under the directives of the US State Department and the US Department of Defense. They were sent to crisis zones, where the US had its own interests, and was not allowed to get involved as a state. They were also sent to us, with a formal task – to reform ARM according to NATO standards, but also with a precise role in the Kosovo aggression in 2001.

I think they came to us sometime in 2000. They started the project in late 2000 and early 2001, with the practical disbandment of our operational military units. By the greatest “coincidence” (?!?) it happened just before the aggression from Kosovo began!? An even greater “coincidence” is the fact that the MPRI had been in Kosovo since 1997 or 1998, preparing the UCK to liberate. And what happened in 2001? In Kosovo, where the aggression against Macedonia came from, military issues and operations were in the hands of the MPRI. In our country, the victim of this aggression, the army was once again

commanded by individuals from the MPRI. There should be no doubt that better “coordination” of the military actions against Macedonia in 2001 - could not be imagined. As the saying goes – the judge sues you, the judge judges you. Even the thought of a mistake is excluded!

So, we should have no doubts that the war in Kosovo in 1999 was both planned and intended to continue first in Southern Serbia, and then in Macedonia. It is not known what their ultimate goal was, and that will probably be found out 20 or more years from now (2025), when the American secret documents are published... if they are published. Now, we can only assume that the idea was to examine all possibilities for the faster creation of Greater Albania, which is obviously the main American project in the region, but also to close the “Macedonian Question” as soon as possible! It remains unclear whether the intention was to immediately change our borders as well? That is imposed as an imperative, but (it will) depend on regional conditions. Confirmation of these plans is the huge American military base in Kosovo – “Bondsteel”. The outstanding American analyst Jeffrey Sachs even claims that Kosovo was seceded from Serbia only because of the US need to have a base like “Bondsteel” in the region.

As is well known, Belgrade defended itself in 2000, although a massive mobilization of Albanians was carried out in the three municipalities in Southern Serbia, Preševo, Medvedje and Bujanovac. With enormous help from Kosovo and Albania, and direct American support, their separation from Serbia or, at least, securing some broader autonomy failed. The Albanians treated these three municipalities as “Eastern Kosovo”, and not as Southern Serbia, which they are. That says everything about their ambitions.

The fate of Macedonia was obviously included in the plans for Kosovo. At least its endurance for survival was to be put to the test. Numerous indicators confirm that the organizers, and not the Albanians, expected a quick disintegration of Macedonia, which did not happen. Confirmation of this is the fact that in the first five NLA

announcements, the goal was – “liberation of the Albanian territories in Macedonia”. It was a precise task to disintegrate the Macedonian state. After some time, however, the aggression took on a completely different character and became – “a fight for human rights”. That was “Plan B” – the gradual collapse of the state, but this time through the Ohrid Framework Agreement. It was a test that, at least for a certain period, defined the future of this part of the Balkans.

The transformation from “liberators” to “fighters” for human rights could not have been imagined, let alone expected, by the terrorists of the NLA, as George Robertson, the NATO Secretary General, initially called them. If they were deciding, the “liberation” intentions would not have been so easily changed to a fight for human rights. It was a clear confirmation that the entire operation was dictated by the USA, and no one else.

Although with serious complications, the war achieved its main goal – the independence of Kosovo. Illegally, without the consent of the UN Security Council, Belgrade and Serbia had to be bombed. With the independence of Kosovo, the Greater Albanian project has already been realized by over 70 percent. Southern Serbia and Macedonia, which were also part of a wider regional reshaping in favour of the Albanians, have not yet fully succeeded. However, their finalization continues. Especially in Macedonia.

Given that we do not have any indicators, let alone information, documents, facts, or appropriate in-depth analyses, we can only assume that the US expected Macedonia to fall apart like a house of cards, and then do whatever they want. Fortunately, they miscalculated! Quarrelsome and divided as we are, about everything and anything, in 2001, however, we showed that we are not exactly useless. It became clear that the collapse or some kind of division of the state was not possible, probably without a third Balkan war. Therefore, the aggressors from Kosovo had to change their intentions. They imposed a war of human rights.

We can be sure that the Ohrid Framework Agreement was prepared as “Plan B”, at least in draft form, even before the aggression from Kosovo began. It is known – where. It is part of the broader scenario.

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Here is more proof of how the USA is destroying Macedonia. First, the Albanian extremist, Artan Grubi, was appointed as the first deputy prime minister, and then he was promoted to the head of the Government. Of course, not by chance. In his office, the Albanian ministers, all under his control – played political football and basketball, in order to maximally degrade the Macedonian state. When this was happening, the Macedonian politicians were staring out the window, and the Macedonian people were sleeping. About 100 of us went out to the “name” protests. When the problem of stray dogs appeared, they came out – several thousand. Everything is clear, right?

The story of the criminal Grubi is long. Here we will focus only on one of his catastrophic moves, which is not at all clear or explained – in what capacity he made it? Officially, he had no authority in that regard. He had a competent minister. It is about the catastrophic contract that he signed with the American company “Bechtel and Enka” for the construction of roads in Macedonia, for a price of 1.3 billion euros! This could not have happened without the direct management of the American ambassador! Haven’t we already concluded that their ambassadors are our unelected governors? Here is proof. Although the contract was signed without any documentation, and without projects, with a price that could only be pulled out of a sleeve, the Macedonian state was given a set conditions that it had to do to implement them. Several laws had to be changed, just for the possible implementation of the disastrous contract. This is a case that has certainly not been seen anywhere else in the world. If anyone could, and should, set such conditions – it is certainly the state that ordered it, not the company that executed it. And one of the conditions that was set for us is that the contract should be – secret. Otherwise, the huge fraud would have been

seen. The contractor could set conditions only if he built the roads – for free. Not for a huge sum, which was fabricated. Grubi was getting his revenge on the USA for his situation! It is interesting, however, that shortly afterwards Grubi was let down – the USA put him on the blacklist! His elimination is certainly not accidental. It is clearly a case of a major crime, and a witness who could be inconvenient! Traitors always end up like that.

It is known that “Bechtel and Enka” were not listed on any stock exchange. The reason is clear – stock exchanges strictly monitor whether their companies are corrupt and punish all cases decisively. Most often, and very likely in our case, Bechtel and Enka got work through the State Department and American embassies, which is already a corrupt practice in itself. It is a way to impose something on small and poor countries. Previously, they built projects in Kosovo and, in the end, the initially agreed price was more than doubled! We should not have the slightest doubt that, in the end, in our case too, the total price will certainly be twice as high!

VMRO DPMNE, which as an opposition was fiercely against the agreement – when it came to power, had no room to maneuver to cancel it. They announced that the damages that we would have to pay in case of cancellation – would be too great. They thought that it would be less harmful to implement the agreement! Americans are masters at signing agreements.

ALBANIAN AFFAIRS – AT THE EXPENSE OF MACEDONIANS - THE MACEDONIANS IN ALBANIA

The Albanian state does not recognize minorities in the country in a universal way, as is the case everywhere else. They are recognized only in the places or zones of birth, and only if they are the majority there. All other members of national minorities, who live in larger cities, where the largest part of them is concentrated, have no rights! Thus, the minority rights of Macedonians in Albania are recognized in eight villages in Mala Prespa and in the village of Vrbnik, which is near the Greek border (belongs to the Aegean part of Macedonia), which are completely populated by Macedonians. The same rights are recognized for Greeks in a number of villages in southern Albania.

Both Golo Brdo and Gora are also inhabited mainly by Macedonians, who are predominantly Muslims, but the Albanian state does not recognize them as a Macedonian minority. After the Second World War, they were recognized in Golo Brdo and had three Macedonian-language schools, which were abolished by the Inform Bureau, after Yugoslavia broke relations with the USSR, in 1948. At that time, Tirana followed Moscow's policy.

The minority rights are extremely limited, and therefore Albania is under a certain international pressure, which is deliberately not strong. However, there is some, and the reason for this is the Greeks there who are well organized, and the key is the support they have from Athens. Unlike them, the Macedonians do not have their mother country behind them.

Macedonians in Albania are a story, left to their own devices. They have their own organizations, which are trying to fight for their rights, but they are without any support from Macedonia. For Skopje, they seem to not exist. The exception was their abuse during the elections, which was extremely unnecessary, by the government of Nikola Gruevski. They were brought on buses to vote for VMRO DPMNE

candidates. The fact is that this party is the only one that shows interest in both our minorities and the diaspora, which is respectable, but the episodes with the organized voting was – shameful.

All in all, the minority rights of Macedonians in Albania are almost – nonexistent. While in Mala Prespa they have some small recognition, the rest of the Macedonians are totally deprived. In Tirana, for example, there is an entire neighbourhood where Macedonians are settled. It is similar in Durres, Elbasan, Pogradec, Korcha... However, the Macedonians from Golo Brdo and Gora are in the worst situation. There are dozens of villages there with a pure Macedonian population, who speak the original Macedonian language, sing our beautiful songs, practice the same customs...

Considering that the other Macedonians who, after the division of Macedonia in Bucharest in 1913, remained in Bulgaria and Greece, are not recognized and have no rights, the recognition of the Macedonians in Mala Prespa by Enver Hoxha was imposed as a positive solution, although in an extremely reduced framework. This must be respected and, in the given conditions of our general denial, it has a broader political significance for us!

Overall, Albania is implementing a sophisticated policy of minority assimilation, especially the Macedonian one. Without minimal education in the mother tongue, national belonging is gradually lost. This has become especially evident in recent times, after the grandparents, with whose help the language and identity were maintained, are passing on. I personally know cases from Gora and Golo Brdo, where the older women did not know Albanian at all, because they did not go to work in the cities. In contrast, the men were mainly construction workers and worked throughout the country. There, Macedonian children are educated in the Albanian language, which they learn at school, because they did not know it beforehand. At home, Macedonian is (was) spoken.

For a very long period in Golo Brdo, and the same is largely true for Gora, the people lived in very difficult socio-political conditions. Until 1944, they did not have their own native, Macedonian state, and Macedonians were not accepted as a separate people. As a result of historical injustices, in the then Vardar Banovina, Macedonians were treated as Serbs and subjected to Serbianization.

Therefore, until the Second World War, our people from Golo Brdo and Gora, as well as from Mala Prespa, could not declare themselves Macedonians. This kind of thing was not accepted anywhere in the world. The compactness and according to religion of the population in Mala Prespa made the situation easier for them. In Golo Brdo and Gora, however, the population is religiously mixed. There are both Orthodox Christians and Muslim Macedonians. Even though everyone spoke pure Macedonian and had no problems among themselves, challenges came from outside. The only thing common to all was that they were not Albanians.

The Orthodox could not declare themselves as Macedonians, and they did not feel close to the Serbs, who had occupied Macedonia and were traditional opponents of the Albanians. Bulgaria was far away and, at least at that time, did not pose any threat to them. It was also not insignificant that the Bulgarian language was the closest to them of all the other languages, which certainly played a role. Thus, having no other choice, in order to distance themselves from the Albanians, a good number of Macedonians, when asked what they were, answered – Bulgarians. In an effort to preserve national identity, even if through such a quasi-form, it was a kind of resistance towards the silent Albanian assimilation, which was carried out in parallel and persistently.

The Muslims, on the other hand, knowing that they were neither Albanians, nor Serbs, nor Bulgarians, and not able to declare themselves as Macedonians because they were not accepted as such, and forced to “settle” somewhere, often declared themselves - Turks.

They did not know a single word of Turkish, except for the Turkicisms that are common in both the Albanian and Macedonian languages.

The cunning of the people of Golo Brdo and Gora is impressive, who could not declare themselves as Macedonians because no one recognized them as such, and therefore called themselves – “Nashi” (ours)! Thanks to their cunning, in the long period between the two world wars, they managed to maintain their national identity. Objectively, the biggest danger for them was and remains Albanian assimilation, especially because of Islam, which is quite widespread in Albania. At the time, there was no Bulgarian, and even less Turkish, threat of assimilation. That is why they were ready to be anything but - Albanians. It was better to be a Bulgarian, a Turk, and best of all, a “Nashi”, than to be indeterminate. That would inevitably lead to Albanization.

However, the “cunning” also had its negative side. Declaring themselves “Bulgarians” and “Turks”, whether people liked it or not, left traces in their consciousness, especially in children. These traces are still there today. Most often, these people feel their belonging to the Macedonian people, but there are also manifestations of a certain hesitation about – what are they really by nationality? Fear, however, remains in their bones from Enver Hoxha’s regime, which is present among all Macedonians, both Orthodox Christians and Muslims. Fear emphasizes these ambiguities.

I have personal experience with cases when people who spoke pure Macedonian, sang beautiful Macedonian songs, and were undoubtedly Macedonians... mentioned that when they were small children their parents and grandfathers spoke of them as “Bulgarians”! Although they had nothing Bulgarian, neither then, nor even now, they remained a trace of the “ingenuity” of their ancestors to survive – as Macedonians! “Turkish” traces were more rarely encountered in people’s subconscious, left over from the time, although there were such cases. On the other hand, these declarations, which were intended to “save”

them from Albanization, later opened up space for aspirations towards them, especially from Bulgaria. Recently, Sofia has been abusing this to the maximum. We, of course, do not interfere!

Between the two world wars, the Albanian state was weak. After the First World War, Golo Brdo was annexed by Albania thanks to an international demarcation carried out by the American Carnegie Commission, apparently in 1921. According to the stories shared by the elders of Golo Brdo, American emissaries came to the region and talked to the people they met. In Golo Brdo, although they were all Macedonians, they happened to come across an Albanian woman and decided that this part should belong to Albania! These claims have no additional confirmation, but there are also explanations that the Albanian woman was deliberately brought there, or rather - planted!

With the creation of the Macedonian state in 1944, the situation of the Macedonians in Albania changed radically. Relations between the then SFRY and Albania were very friendly, as a result of the joint war against the fascists, which opened up space for solving the problems of the people of Golo Brdo. The borders between the two countries were opened, the Macedonian spirit fully returned to the people, and three Macedonian schools were opened, in Krchishta, Pasinki and Vrnitsa. There were almost no positive changes in Gora.

In Golo Brdo too, the “Macedonian Spring” lasted very briefly, only a few years. With the Inform Bureau in 1948, this process was rudely interrupted. The terrible dictatorship of Enver Hoxha followed, which erected a Chinese wall between the two countries. The conditions on Golo Brdo were sent back many years. Contacts with relatives across the border were cut off, Macedonians on the Albanian side were not even allowed to look across the border, which was covered in barbed wire. The distance of 100 meters became more than 100 kilometers.

But even under those conditions, people managed. Human genius is indestructible. A system of message exchange across the border was developed, which functioned perfectly. While they were cultivating the

fields or tending the cattle on both sides of the border, people informed each other about the latest news. That way they knew who was born and who died, who got married, and so on.

Due to the danger that existed, since this communication was strictly prohibited and people were not even allowed to look across the border, and spies on the Albanian side were everywhere, the exchange of information was limited to the most necessary, to the most important events: births, deaths, weddings...

The most frightening thing that remained among the people from this unfortunate period is - fear, which has penetrated deeply into the bones of the people. And that was the goal of the totalitarian regime, which was merciless. Even the smallest mistakes and disrespect for the established norms were followed by rigorous punishments. Not infrequently, people lost their heads or were subjected to (long-term!) isolation in penal camps. Fear even penetrated the souls of people, and according to universal experience, it is difficult to eradicate. This abuse was confirmed both in Gora and Golo Brdo: the people carry it deep within themselves - to this day.

Fear has always been the main tool of dictators and their “success” can most authoritatively be measured by the level of fear instilled in the bones of their subjects. From that aspect, Enver Hoxha is probably one of the most successful perpetrators!

Although the conditions in Mala Prespa were significantly more bearable than those in Golo Brdo and Gora, the Macedonians there also lived in fear, which exists to this day. By the way, the Albanians themselves also lived in fear but, with the fall of the tyranny, their position completely changed, which is not the case with the minorities in Albania. The government changed its attitude towards them only a little. That is the difference.

On several occasions I have had the opportunity to see for myself that the people of Golo Brdo, even after a dozen or more years since the fall

of the dictatorship and the beginning of democratic processes, live in fear. These are honest and hardworking people, completely loyal to the Albanian state. They respect it as their own, and, even though they know they are Macedonians, they are still afraid to declare themselves clearly and publicly. And the state, in one way or another, directly or indirectly, openly or covertly... does not give them any space for normal ethnic expression, which is not at all accidental. On the contrary, the goal is not to manifest it if it does not have to, and to leave it to time to erase it as quickly as possible.

Their current fear is not only a result of the tortures from the time of the dictatorship. During my service in Tirana (1998-2002), it was clear and visible that, just like at the end of the last century or at the beginning of this one, in the years since democracy came, the essential changes were almost symbolic. It had not fully penetrated even in the big cities, let alone in the interior of Albania. There, the local police and, especially, the representatives of the secret service, who were everywhere, still dominated. This was emphasized in the areas where minorities live, especially the Macedonian ones. During visits to Trebishte, Golo Brdo, while talking to the locals in one of the cafés, there would be someone sitting at the next table with a leather jacket, characteristic of the representatives of SIGURIMI, their secret service.

The main reason for the fear among the Macedonians was the fact that the Albanian state, as a whole, still viewed them with enormous reservations, or rather with distrust. In this regard, Tirana had practically no intention of fundamentally changing anything since the time of Enver Hoxha. It was just wisely using tactics to avoid criticism from its Western partners. Therefore, it can be safely said that in the regions of Golo Brdo and Gora, where the villages of Macedonians are concentrated, the government was still implementing a special regime, similar to the previous tyranny. This could also be defined as a way to maintain fear among the people, as a preventive measure against their possible louder national declaration. In other words, everything was done to continue the silent process of assimilation.

The vast majority, both in Golo Brdo and Gora, had no doubt that they were Macedonians. Things obviously changed when Bulgaria started offering various privileges, including passports, while Macedonia did not lift a finger for the needs of these people. A key, but also legal, problem is the fact that, except for the minimalist recognized minorities, all residents of the country, according to the Albanian Constitution and laws, are – Albanians, without the possibility of declaring themselves nationally differently. The most deprived are mainly Macedonians and Greeks, as the most numerous! According to the widespread interpretation of the authorities, this means that all other residents, who do not have the status of a minority recognized, are prohibited from declaring a national identity other than – Albanian! That's right – they are prohibited! The message from the authorities to members of the minorities that are not recognized, and who for the most part live in the cities, is clear – you have no choice! You are – Albanians. If you declare yourself differently, you are violating the Constitution!

Here are a few concrete examples of the true Macedonian situation in Albania. In our Embassy in Tirana, when we asked people from Golo Brdo and Gora, who came to us to obtain visas – what their native language was, they, without thinking, hesitation or dilemmas, answered – Macedonian. But, to the next question – what their nationality was, the answer was no longer spontaneous, direct, normal. They would say that they are Macedonians but that they do not have the right to choose because, according to Albanian laws, they can only be – Albanians! They know that this right is recognized for those in Mala Prespa, but not for them. They are not allowed, nor enabled, to declare themselves Macedonians and therefore they were afraid that any different declaration by them would mean a violation of the Albanian Constitution and laws! This confirms that the Albanian campaign in that direction was enormous.

This reaction of the people, which was massive, confirms that this was not at all a coincidence, but that, in these two regions, the government is implementing direct assimilation with dedication and persistence. That

is why the secret services are so present there. After all, it is absolutely impossible for people to have come to the conclusion on their own that they are violating the Albanian Constitution if they declare themselves Macedonians! Is there a more terrible way to instill fear in people's bones than with such warnings, insinuations and threats? And, let's not forget, this is being done at a time when there is no longer tyranny in Albania, and so-called democrats are in power. People in Albania have not forgotten that they lost their heads even for minor offenses, let alone for things of this caliber. This means that after the fall of the dictatorship, in relation to minorities, very few things have changed.

These are experiences from over 20 years ago. It would be interesting to examine the current situation, in light of the Bulgarian aggression against the Macedonians in Albania. We have already seen that in the last census almost eight thousand declared themselves as Bulgarians with, apparently, tolerance from Tirana. They are mainly from Golo Brdo and Gora. Probably in Tirana they think that the Bulgarians are far away and cannot cause more serious problems?!

Our country is also to blame for these conditions, which did absolutely nothing for these people. No one from Macedonia was interested in their fate. During my service in Tirana (1998 – 2002), numerous activities were undertaken, many initiatives were launched to help them. In Skopje, however, there was no sense of it. Macedonia could and should have at least demanded and insisted that the Albanian state provide freedom of national expression to the people of Golo Brdo and Gora, which is the minimum of democracy. There was room for much more, considering that the Albanians in the country were given everything, both what they needed and what they did not need. No one had any regard for that.

The conclusion is self-evident – the Albanian state's policy towards Macedonians so far, both during the dictatorship of Enver Hoxha and afterwards, is largely the same. It is positive that the minority was recognized, but that's it. Nothing more. And the goal is undeniable –

quiet but persistent assimilation of the Macedonians in Golo Brdo, in Gora and in the large Albanian cities, where the majority of them live. The fate of Mala Prespa will be determined by tactics. On the one hand, Sofia's tolerance of the attempts to Bulgarize the Macedonians will continue there, and on the other hand, time will work towards gradual assimilation. In parallel, some of the Macedonians from Mala Prespa have already moved to Resen and further across Macedonia, which is our strategic mistake. The lake, on the other hand, is a tourist destination. For now, there is no appropriate infrastructure, which will inevitably develop. If that starts, it is only a matter of time before the region will be flooded with Albanian businessmen. That will not bother the majority of Macedonians, who will thus get jobs in the new hotels. This will end the Macedonian character of the region. For now, they are left to their own devices and have no prospect of any development.

Albanian entrepreneurs will appear on the ground and, in an honest or dishonest way, through public or hidden agreements with the local inhabitants, will begin a process of mixing the population. Gradually, the Albanian newcomers will change the demographic picture of Mala Prespa. Everywhere, assimilation projects are being implemented over longer periods. From that aspect, Macedonia's policy of resettling Macedonians from Albania is a serious mistake. They should have been helped in every way to remain in their centuries-old homes, and not to move to Macedonia. The part that is indisputably Macedonian territory is being emptied and it is only a matter of time before the national composition of the population in Mala Prespa will be completely changed.

This is how it is when a state, such as our sad Macedonia, has no, let alone permanent and sustainable policies, let alone strategies, for any of the key national issues. As if we have not heard of the word strategy.

As an independent state, Macedonia did nothing not only for our people in Albania, but also for the other parts of our people who remained in Bulgaria, Greece... Not to mention the treacherous agreements with

these two neighbouring countries, with which we officially gave up on the Macedonians there!

During my years spent in Tirana, the Macedonian embassy made significant efforts to help our people in Albania. They were already organized into several societies, which later united into the Union of Societies of Macedonians in Albania. The embassy was always open to representatives of these societies. Their leaders sought to articulate demands for minority rights, according to European practice and standards, cooperating with representatives of other minorities, especially the Greek minority, which was the most organized and widely supported by Athens.

The Embassy's main task was to reduce, if not prevent, the process of assimilation of Macedonians by preserving and strengthening their national feelings. In this direction, Macedonian language courses were organized, old religious and cultural traditions were renewed both on a macro and micro level... The tradition of mass celebration of Christmas and Vasilitsa (Old New Year), St. George's Day and Ilinden was renewed...

One of the most significant activities was the renewal of the traditional church-folk gathering on the occasion of Ilinden, on the site of the former church of St. Elijah, near the village of Ginoets, on Golo Brdo. On August 2, 1999, exactly after 32 years, a truly large church-folk gathering was held there. In 1967, it was banned by the Enver Hoxha regime. At that time, Albania was declared the only secular state in the world, all religions were banned and religious temples were destroyed or turned into warehouses. The clergy were thrown into prisons.

Numerous Golo Brdo residents from Tirana, Durres, Elbasan and other places came to the gathering in buses and vans organized by the Embassy. Many also came from Trebishte, Klenje and other villages of Golo Brdo.

Several hundred people experienced these unforgettable moments with deep feelings. The elderly did not hide their tears of joy that this centuries-old tradition had been renewed. The young were also excited. They said that they had heard so much about the gatherings that had been held in the past that now they could not believe that it was coming back!

On Mount Dajti, which is close to Tirana, for St. George's Day, the tradition of a joint picnic of all Macedonians from Tirana, Durres and other places was renewed. Several hundred people gathered. The buses and vans were once again organized by the Embassy. Macedonians now also invited their Albanian friends to the renewed traditions. The "Mir" society in Tirana had a great deal of credit for all these activities. Kimet Fetahu, as president of the society, Vita Koja, Tsvetan Mazniku and the others deserve sincere congratulations for their tireless and constant engagement for the Macedonian cause.

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In the period from 1998 to 2002, the errors for Macedonians in Albania that existed in our visa regime were also corrected. To achieve this, it did not take much wisdom, but simply to monitor what the Albanian state was doing for Albanians living outside the country and, especially, in Macedonia.

In the mid-1990s, President Sali Berisha issued a decree allowing all Albanians by origin to enter the country without a visa! Although this was contrary to the bilateral agreement on the visa regime between Macedonia and Albania, no one in our country thought about giving similar treatment to Macedonians in Albania. These things usually go on a reciprocal basis and our state could have done the same without any problem. But there was no one! In Skopje, no one was dealing with key national issues.

Based on the bilateral agreement, Macedonia could even challenge Berisha's decree, although that would not have been wise at all. A

responsible state would have responded with a reciprocal measure. In our country, however, there were reactions regarding Berisha's decree, but of an extremely peripheral nature. They related to cases when our delegations traveled to Albania. In such situations, Albanians entered the country without visas, while Macedonians, Turks..., all others who were part of the delegation - had to obtain and pay for visas in advance. Thus, travelers from Macedonia, at the Albanian border, encountered unequal treatment.

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Immediately after taking up my post in Tirana in 1998, our Embassy launched an initiative to ease the visa regime for Macedonians in Albania. The motive was to improve communication between our people and their home country. In the period from 1998 to 2000, profound changes were made to the visa regime. Macedonians in Albania were treated completely differently by their mother state.

Firstly, unlike the previous practice of issuing one-month or, much less frequently, two-month multiple-entry visas, six-month visas were issued. If we know that the main beneficiaries of these visas were the people from Mala Prespa, who worked for us for a piece of bread, and a multiple-entry visa cost 20 dollars, then it becomes clear what kind of relief was in question. With the previous visa treatment, our state directly punished Macedonians, or rather, taxed people who did not have any conditions for any kind of earnings in Albania.

At the same time, we started issuing three-month multiple-entry visas to the people of Golo Brdo, as the beginning of a new practice. Previously, they rarely received even a one-month visa.

Until then, everyone who requested our visa had to come to the Embassy in person. We introduced a system of so-called postmen or couriers, who carried 20, 30 or more passports. This was organized by the Macedonian societies, which charged a small fee for their service, which also included the travel expenses of the "postman" to Tirana.

First, of course, all visa applicants had to be members of the societies to which they paid a symbolic membership fee. All this was an extraordinary privilege compared to the previous expenses, when everyone had to travel to Tirana for a visa in person. In addition to the money, people lost at least one day for the trip, and most often two, because the work could not be completed on the same day. In large part, this was due to the bureaucratic attitude of the Embassy towards our Macedonians. And, don't forget, this happened while Albanians from Macedonia could travel to their home state without visas, free of charge, and whenever they wanted.

It should not be underestimated that, in order to get involved in the mechanism for obtaining a visa through the "postmen", all interested parties had to be members of Macedonian societies! This helped their organization, and the people from Golo Brdo and Gora who formally declared themselves as Macedonians.

In 1999, we also started holding consular days in Mala Prespa. Our team went there and issued visas to people on the spot. Consular days were organized several times a year, taking into account when their issued visas were expiring.

And instead of people coming to Tirana, being harassed, spending money and facing our bureaucrats, the Embassy went to them! The next major step was the abolition of the visa fee and they became free for Macedonians from Albania. At the suggestion, request and insistence of the Embassy, the Government in Skopje adopted a decision to make these visas free of charge.

While we were leading this action, some of the ministers in the then Government, whom we asked to support our proposals, openly told us not to rush into such a step, not to cut off the branch we were sitting on, etc. They told us that because the Embassy was self-financing from consular revenues! We even sent part of those revenues to finance our other Diplomatic Consular Missions around the world! We rejected those remarks with indignation – if the work of our Embassy in Albania

should be financed from the money of poor Macedonians for visas, then it would be better to close it!

The action to abolish the visa fee was not easy, and especially not fast. But the determination in our Embassy in Tirana to push it through was firm, and we did it.

After all, nothing goes quickly in our country, and that is why we are in this situation (and today, in 2024, as well as 10 and 20 years ago). Things that can normally be resolved or completed in just one day, we are drag on for at least a week. And so on. For everything that takes a week in the world, we need – a whole month! And what others achieve in a month, we need – six months... That is why the country is progressing slowly. Such an attitude is manifested in all spheres of life. In Macedonia, time is still not money!

Finally, after long interventions, persuasions and writing letters, including personal ones to the ministers in the Government, to support the proposal, towards the end of 1999 a decision was made to abolish the visa fee for Macedonians from Albania. It was a great event for all of them, and for us at the Embassy as well.

Previously, we had numerous cases when Macedonians came to the Embassy and informed us that their lifelong wish, especially for the older members of their families, was to visit Macedonia. Since there were at least four, and usually five, six or more family members, when they calculated how much money they needed just for the visas, everything became unrealistic.

With the introduction of free visas, new perspectives opened up, especially for our people from Mala Prespa and Golo Brdo who, located right next to the border with their home country, earn a good or most of their living by working here. In principle, they are all extremely poor and every expense is a problem for them. However, in addition to the financial part, the psychological moment was even more important, the people's feeling towards their motherland.

Although free visas were also valid for our people from Gora, their interest in working here is not so present. They are further from our border.

Our people from Albania work here mostly in construction and agriculture. They participated massively in the construction of the church of Saint Panteleimon on Plaoshnik, in Ohrid, which can even be said to be the work of the masters from Mala Prespa.

The older residents of Mala Prespa, who due to expensive visas, did not have the opportunity to come to their motherland, could now afford this pleasure. For the oldest, a visit to the country was organized just when Plaoshnik was opening. They attended the ceremony and right then and there, many of them were also awarded our citizenships. It was a wonderful event.

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In 2000, the festival of Macedonian folklore groups in Mala Prespa was also renewed. It was traditional until 1977 and was held in the village Shulin, except for the last one, which was held in the village Dolna Goritsa. The tradition was continued in Pustets, where the first two festivals were held, and then it was returned to where it had been interrupted – in the village Dolna Goritsa.

As soon as we found out that there had once been a folklore festival, we got involved in renewing it. However, it was not an easy task and required both great commitment and a lot of funds. So, throughout 1998, and especially during 1999, we insisted to the management of the “Prespa” society in Mala Prespa that they do everything they can to revive the festival and that the Embassy would help them. We failed.

It was difficult in 2000, until my wife Susanna untied the “Gordian knot”. She suggested the sooner we determine the day of the festival, the more likely it will be that everything would go in that direction, because there would be a firm commitment – a precise date! She was right. We set it for October 20, a Sunday, and we said that there should

be no deviation from that date. And so it was: the festival took place on October 20, when we had beautiful weather, although a bit chilly. Everything was very successful.

As a guest, we brought the unforgettable and unsurpassed Vaska Ilieva, who delighted the Macedonians from Albania. When her truly wonderful patriotic songs thundered, no one could remain indifferent. An endless dance (oro) unfolded, the people sang, and there were also tears of joy from the older, much-suffering generation. The renewed ties with their homeland and the revival of their own culture awakened the deepest feelings of joy and satisfaction in them. For them, as they often told us, all these manifestations meant the renewal of life, a renewed pulse, the awakening of self-esteem, which is fundamental for every living being.

The festival continued to be held in the following years.

An interesting detail is related to the second festival, in 2001. After we, together with the representatives of the Prespa Society, had set the date and finalized the financial arrangement, I sent a telegram to the then Minister of Culture, Ganka Tsvetanova-Samoilovska, inviting her to the festival. At the same time, we also published news in our public media that it would be held and when.

The next morning, Minister Tsvetanova-Samoilovska called me to ask how she could help with the festival! She had read the news that there would be a festival, but she still hadn't received the telegram – an invitation. Truly a rare gesture from our politician! Usually, on such occasions, even when the national interest is at stake, you have to beg for everything and, most often, you don't encounter any understanding. Contrary to all that, Minister Tsvetanova-Samoilovska herself came forward to offer help! Not that the Ministry of Culture was overflowing with money and didn't know how to spend it, but purely out of professional and patriotic feelings. Truly, kudos to Ganka!

I thanked her most sincerely for the offered help, informed her that the Embassy had managed to close the financial arrangement and that additional help was not needed. I also told her that an invitation to the festival had been sent to her and that it would be really nice if she could come. The minister immediately replied that she would certainly come and – she kept her word. It would have been very awkward if the minister had found out about the festival from the media. It was important that we informed her and invited her to come.

At the festival in Pustets, Minister Cvetanova-Samoilovska said that she still wanted to help somehow. Then we took her to the church in Pustets, which had been demolished. We explained to her that the people were very unhappy that they were without a church. Samoilovska said that she would do everything she could to help.

That was in October 2001. In December, she informed us that she had managed to allocate one million denars, about 33,000 German marks, for the reconstruction of the church!

And not only that. Immediately after returning from the festival, the minister informed us that the Ministry had allocated about 1,100 dollars in denars as aid for the festival that had been held. The money was a great help to cover the costs of the festival, but the most important thing was the gesture. Bravo to the Minister!

It was a nice feeling that it is not only the Embassy that cares about our people in Albania, but that the authorities in the country also understand this and want to help.

CONFLICT WITH THE MFA, PASCAL MILJO

Within the framework of the Embassy's activities to resolve the problems faced by Macedonians in Albania, and all according to positive and universal international standards in this area, an initiative was launched before the Albanian official authorities to reopen schools in the mother tongue for the Macedonians from Golo Brdo. Since it was a major, primarily political issue, prior consent was requested from our Government. Our consent was quickly followed up by the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Aleksandar Dimitrov. Otherwise, we decided on our own about all other initiatives launched by the Embassy, since they were not at all controversial according to international practice. This issue could also be classified as such, but care had to be taken regarding the Albanian reaction.

Immediately afterwards, a discussion was held with the Minister of Education and Science, Ethem Ruka. At the beginning of the conversation, it was emphasized to Ruka that this was an official request supported by our Government. Then, the arguments for reopening the Macedonian-language schools on Golo Brdo were presented to him in detail. First, the universality of the right to education in the mother tongue was elaborated upon, which has long been a benefit to the entire civilized world which, in today's conditions, no one can deny. Then, which is a particularly significant fact, Ruka was reminded that after World War II, three Macedonian-language schools were already operating on Golo Brdo, in Vrnitsa, Pasinki and Krchishta. Accordingly, it was concluded that we appreciate that it is necessary to begin activities to restore this right to the Macedonians on Golo Brdo, since, among other things, this will contribute to strengthening trust between the two neighbouring and friendly peoples.

Ruka listened carefully to the arguments, did not take any position, but only said that he would inform the higher authorities about all of this,

because in this particular case, however, it is not only an educational issue, but also an issue with a broader connotation.

The issue was also raised with President Recep Mejdani, who is a staunch nationalist. That was his (strong) card that he played in politics because, probably, there were no others? It was emphasized to Mejdani that it is not logical in a state like Albania, which strives for Europe and in which a democratic society is being built, for minority rights to be exercised only in certain regions and not on the broadest basis.

Conversations with Mejdani were never pleasant, especially when we touched on some more substantial and subtle topic of our interest. He was always preoccupied with the position of the Albanians in neighbouring countries and his ideal, judging by his numerous statements and expressed views, was and remains the creation of a Greater Albania. He never had any understanding for others! Therefore, it is a good thing for Albania that Mejdani, as a candidate for president of the Socialist Party, at the congress in December 2003, received only 61 votes, out of a total of 570.

An official discussion on this topic was immediately requested with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Pascal Milo. Since he was informed about the topic of the conversation, Milo tried to postpone the meeting as long as possible. We were in no hurry, but from time to time, we reminded his office that we were still waiting for the meeting. The conversation, however, did take place. The conversation was extremely unpleasant. Milo was not ready to discuss that topic. After I elaborated on the problem and informed him that it was a position, that is, a request of our Government, extremely nervously, Milo said that for them the issue was – closed. He was told that there are no closed issues, only resolved or unresolved ones. This is an unresolved issue that requires resolution. We reminded him that the practice of the former system was to close issues without resolving them and that is why the end of that system was quite predictable.

Then Milo, who is otherwise a historian and is undoubtedly very aware of all the injustices and abuses of historical science in the Balkans, took up another thesis. He said that Bulgaria also claims that Bulgarians live on Golo Brdo and that they do not want to interfere in the problems that exist between us and them. It was immediately emphasized to him that, first, there is no logic whatsoever for Bulgarians to live in the entire Macedonia, where Macedonians live, in the Golo Brdo region, 300, 400 km away from Bulgaria. Second, as a historian, he is undoubtedly familiar with all the historical processes that took place in this region and now it is (high) time to overcome certain abuses and manipulations. Third, there were already Macedonian-language schools in Golo Brdo and this makes all artificial dilemmas around this issue irrelevant. Fourth, his conclusion that Bulgaria also has aspirations towards the people from this region, as alleged Bulgarians, is good because this confirms, ipso facto, that they are not Albanians. Accordingly, their mother tongue is not Albanian and they should be able to learn in their mother tongue. Make it possible for them! And whether they are Macedonians or Bulgarians, it will be easy to determine on the spot! It was clearly emphasized to him that we, after all, understood each other very well and that in a democratic country, such as Albania claims to be, those people should have the right to study in their mother tongue!

Milo's nervousness was growing. He had no arguments with which to object. It was repeated to him that it was completely clear to both of us that they spoke Macedonian, but if the people of Golo Brdo, nevertheless, chose Bulgarian as their native language, I assured him that the Republic of Macedonia would provide at least symbolic assistance for their education in their native language! Even if it is Bulgarian!

Milo was now not only helpless but also furious. We both stood up and he almost pushed me, the ambassador out the door, out of his office.

In the conversation, despite being a historian himself, Milo emphatically held a sharp, unyielding line, taking into account his

political career. None of the Albanian leaders can, nor should they, have any opinion or flexibility on two basic issues: when it comes to the Albanian national question, which inevitably leads to Greater Albania, and when minorities in Albania are on the agenda. Milo directly confirmed that it is not at all a coincidence that the claim that the only future historians know is the past.

Actually, the fact is that God tolerates historians, and there is a precise explanation for that – because they are the only ones who can do something that even he cannot – change the past!

After returning to the Embassy, I wrote Milo a letter in which I elaborated on all the above-stated positions, since it remains an official document. The main point was – there are no closed issues, only resolved or unsolved ones. Everything that is unresolved and is being closed will inevitably explode one day.

With these moves, the issue of educating Macedonians in Albania in their native language was opened, but the Macedonian side showed no interest in having it on the table and on the agenda in mutual relations, as long as it has not been resolved. In my opinion, no one has mentioned this issue! Macedonian diplomacy and politics – they do not have such a dimension! In relations with Albania, there are several examples that confirm our misery when it comes to the fundamental interests of our people. While Albanians in Macedonia were given concessions in all segments and were given rights that no other minority in the world enjoys, our government had forgotten the Macedonians in Albania. At least a minimum of reciprocity could and should have been sought. But who would seek it? Leaders are needed for that, and we do not have them. All in all, it is the result of the wrong personnel policy – the wrong people, in the wrong places. That was the main reason why socialism collapsed. The personnel policy in independent Macedonia, however, is many times worse than that in Yugoslavia.

THE Ohrid Framework Agreement AS THE FINAL ACT OF THE GREATER ALBANIAN PROJECT

(November, 2016)

Zaev was in Switzerland when, during a meeting with Macedonian citizens of Albanian nationality, he said – “We must go through the Ohrid Framework Agreement if we believe in equality and equity. The framework is not enough and the framework should be abandoned. Why in the 21st century, after 25 years of Macedonian independence, should there be frameworks and limitations.” Zaev was with Zijadin Sela when he said this which was an unforgivable mistake, stupidity, like many other stupidities. In the past local elections, Sela called on the Albanian people to: “Vote en masse so that we can concretely state the fact that Struga is Albanian.” That is how he became mayor.

Zaev was certainly fully aware of what he was saying, but he may have been listening to his foreign mentors, who brought him to power to destroy the Macedonian state. He needs to answer the following questions:

- a) In what ways are Albanians not equal, as they constantly claim? More precisely, in what ways are Macedonians, Turks, Serbs, Vlachs, Bosniaks... more equal than them?
- b) Why do they demand an upgrade and revision of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, even a new agreement, which means redefining the state, if federalization is not in question? More precisely - a third Albanian state and the right to secession?
- c) Why did Artan Grubi, at a pre-election rally, yell - UCK, UCK...? For coexistence?

Zaev certainly would not be able to understand why Kosovo has been seeking republic status all this time, by creating constant political and security problems in the former Yugoslavia? And it had its own government, parliament, national bank, academy of sciences... everything that the six republics in the SFRY had. The answer is simple

- only because of the right to secede. And the Albanians in this country have no other problems, except for the sick ambitions for the federalization of Macedonia. It is not about any equality, no human rights, but about great-state ambitions and the right to secede. We must learn from other people's experiences. Our own can be too expensive.

Zijadin Sela is not alone in his attempts to Albanianize the country. Albanian leaders - a) ignore the law on flags and put up huge Albanian flags on 30-meter poles, which only mark (Albanian) territory; b) ministers and other officials persistently and constantly use the Albanian language in official use, even for international communication, which is a flagrant violation of the Constitution and laws; c) illegal monuments are being erected throughout the country and the Minister of Defense (Besimi) paid tribute to the dead NLA fighters without authorization and with uniformed personnel from the ARM; d) names of schools and streets were changed in the same way; e) in several schools, the Albanian anthem was played at the beginning of the school year; f) Musa Xhaferi, as Deputy Prime Minister, stated that the future of the state lies in federalization! He wanted to organize a conference of all Albanian mayors from the region at our expense; g) Ermira Mehmeti stated that it is natural for all Albanians to want to live in one state, without clarifying whether it is also natural for Macedonians, Serbs, Croats, Bulgarians, Turks... and what that would mean for the region; h) Ahmeti, who has not spoken Macedonian publicly, which is a grave insult and open chauvinism, demands that Macedonians learn Albanian! He does not even think of calling on Albanians to learn Macedonian... These are only a small part of the indicators of the policy pursued by Albanian leaders in Macedonia. What more is needed for Zaev and those like him to understand this?

As Prime Minister of Albania, Sali Berisha declared that Albanian territories are from - "Preveza to Presevo and from Skopje to Podgorica". He initiated a football league of Albanian clubs from the Balkans... These Greater Albanian policies are absolutely part of the

same (American) scenario that we are in. We pretend to be absent and that is precisely why they rechristened and denationalized us.

The ORFA has been signed and the commitments undertaken should be respected. However, we must be extremely careful and not accept anything more than that, because a good portion of Albanian leaders openly pursue Greater Albanian policies. They poison their compatriots and do not show even a minimum of loyalty to Macedonia as it is – with a Macedonian majority. By the way, have you heard anyone, from the top in Tirana or Pristina, even during visits to the country, tell our Albanians to be loyal to Macedonia? Such a thing has not happened, nor will it happen. And all our wise men, when they visit the Macedonians in Mala Prespa, the first message they give is to be loyal to Tirana! That is why there should be no doubt that the political basis of all requests for the upgrade or revision of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, due to invented and false inequality, leads to the erasure of Macedonia and the Macedonians, and the finalization of Greater Albania. With the independence of Kosovo, it is already over 70 percent realized. For now, only our part remains.

If it were not so, there would be no obstacles to breaking down all the limiting frameworks, which Zaev allegedly advocates for. Of course, if there are any. But he does not realize that those who led the war in 2001 are continuing with the same policy aimed at destroying the Macedonian character of the state, although they have replaced the wolf's coat (ONA) with a lamb's coat (DUI). Our key problem is that they are doing this with the wholehearted help of the USA, which also managed 2001. Macedonian politicians, however, do not have the strength to say this publicly or, even better, to clarify it directly with Washington. Thus, the Americans, who have been trying to erase the Macedonians as a people for 25 years with their policies, are considered by "our" people to be - partners!?! Even strategically.

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What is, in fact, the Ohrid Framework Agreement?

First, it was conceived as a “Plan B” after the failure of the 2001 war. That’s right - although we shamefully lost the war, it failed to achieve the set goals, which was the liberation of the “Albanian territories” in Macedonia. The key point, however, is that as a state, Macedonia was defeated by a handful of terrorists. That opened the way for the Ohrid Framework Agreement. Historically, the Ohrid Framework Agreement is harmful because it ignores the fundamental interests of the majority people and the future of the state. The absurdity is complete because with it, Albanians have gained rights beyond all world standards for minorities, without assuming a single obligation. It is formulated in such a way that it allows both the minority to manipulate the majority and the state to become increasingly dysfunctional. As an obviously well-planned consequence of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, Albanians constantly insist on its upgrade! This only reveals why the Macedonians were subjected to an agreement of the Ohrid Framework Agreement type.

The fact is that certain injustices towards Albanians, inherited from the former SFRY, needed to be corrected, but the Ohrid Framework Agreement reshaped the state in a way that allows the minority to block its functioning and issue ultimatums, which happens every day. Albanians, on the other hand, respect the Ohrid Framework Agreement only when it suits them, everything else they ignore.

The unitary character, for example, is constantly under attack, and is being narrowed almost on a daily basis, which represents a serious challenge for the future of the country. And, instead of Macedonians demanding strict implementation of the Constitution, resulting from the Ohrid Framework Agreement, in order to overcome such negative tendencies and abuses – Zaev demands expansion!?! Catastrophe! The Albanians, on the other hand, insist on bilingualism, consensus, a coalition of the two winning parties... which has no connection with the Ohrid Framework Agreement and leads directly to federalization, albeit step by step. And, imagine, these clear Greater Albanian policies receive public support from Prime Minister Zaev!

Secondly, the essence of the Ohrid Framework Agreement is the erasure of the Macedonian character of the country through the derogation of the majority people into an “ethnic community”, thus equating them with all minorities. This opens up space for federalization, in order to enable the legal secession of the Albanians and the finalization of the Greater Albanian project. This plan, persistently implemented by Washington, relativizes, and even annuls the role of the majority, which is the dominant pillar of democracy.

It is no coincidence, for example, that the Ohrid Framework Agreement was signed by two Macedonian and two Albanian parties. That is supposed to indicate parity between them, even though the Macedonians are almost three times more numerous. The reprise in Przhino, again by two parties, is intended to be a new “proof” of the functioning of the “new system”. In order to achieve this, this crisis that we have been going through for too long has been planted on us. By rechristening the country and destroying the people, Washington will close the “Macedonian question” both from the outside and the inside, by erasing the Macedonian character of the country.

Third, at its core, the Ohrid Framework Agreement is a peace agreement that ended the war in 2001, which we shamefully lost, even though the “insurgents” did not sign it. Those responsible for this defeat, as well as for the Ohrid Framework Agreement itself, will not escape the judgment of history, which is merciless, although in our country it is usually too late. In world history not a single peace agreement has been officially upgraded. In our case, it was deliberately planted as a “framework” so that it could be spread, and in fact its role ended with its implementation in the Constitution and laws. The Ohrid Framework Agreement no longer has any importance, except for historical value.

We are already feeling its catastrophic consequences, and new ones will follow. Therefore, all demands for some kind of revision or upgrade of it are simply meaningless. History cannot be changed. We can talk

about changes to the laws and even the Constitution, but without any reference to the Ohrid Framework Agreement. Its frequent mention by Brussels and Washington is pure manipulation and additional fierce pressure on the country, although completely without any basis. Our unforgivable mistake is that this is allowed and tolerated. Federalization is a terrifying challenge, resulting from this fatal agreement, which was designed for us - precisely for that purpose.

Fourth, the existence of some kind of secretariat in the Government, headed by a deputy prime minister, which should take care of the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement is absolutely pointless! It is an unprecedented anachronism that speaks of our inadequacy but also of the cunning of others who keep us in perpetual check. And, imagine, that fictitious secretariat employs thousands of people who sit at home and receive a salary, in the name of the fair representation of Albanians! The tolerance of such unimaginable stupidity creates an unrealistic and unhealthy political climate and stimulates detrimental activities.

Fifth, there are various peace agreements. The Americans have dubbed this one “framework” - with the sole purpose of the Albanians, supported by them, constantly seeking to expand the “framework”.

Zaev, again, fell into the same trap for the following possible reasons: a) probably, this is what his foreign mentors are asking him to do. Aware that he will lose in the next elections, their goal is to tie the hands of the winner. Thus, an Albanian party will be able to make as many unprincipled coalition demands as it wants, in order to prolong the crisis. That is why all Albanian political entities have now come out with the most extreme nationalist platforms, with threats and blackmail – either their devastating conditions for Macedonia will be accepted, or there will be no government. Both they and Zaev believe that – now it is his mother’s turn; b) if the winner does not have enough MPs, Zaev should come to the forefront and form a government through a coalition, if necessary with all Albanian parties; c) knowing that he will

lose the elections, which will mean the end of his political career, Zaev wants the country to collapse, along with him; d) in despair, he is grasping at straws...

It is simply incredible and unforgivable that we allow a political straggler to tailor our cap and the entire region. However, the strangest thing is that none of his party members react. This is a great shame for everyone. It is clear to Zaev that the USA is tailoring the cap for us and that, within their scenario, our security is threatened only from within – from the Greater Albanian nationalism that, after 2001, has been gaining momentum. It is no coincidence that this is being done through the abuse of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, which is the symbol of the contemporary Macedonian national catastrophe. The efforts for any of its upgrades are actually attempts to tear the Macedonian national fabric again. Zaev has been brought in to realize this, which is nothing new. Our key mistake, in all the years of independence, is that we never had our own foreign policy, let alone a strategy, but always listened to foreigners on what to do. And always wrongly, and to our detriment. That is why we are in this situation.

In Switzerland, Zaev had other “pearls”. He assessed - “And it is not possible for everyone around us to be bad and for us to be the best. If everyone is at odds with Macedonia, the problem is in Macedonia.” I don’t know about you, but I haven’t heard more stupidity than this in many years. The victim becomes the culprit. Elaboration is not necessary. This is an insult to every one of our citizens. The person is not with everyone.

His advocacy, however, that it is “important to understand each other whether in Chinese, French, Albanian or even Macedonian” is such human, political and intellectual misery, that it does not deserve comment. All in all, Zaev has turned out to be a bigger Albanian extremist nationalist than all the others. Fools don’t have horns!

Zaev must be punished in the elections on December 11, 2016. Unequivocally and convincingly. Otherwise, we will prove that we are not worthy of our own country. Each of us has a move and the right to make a mistake – we do not. It is a plebiscite –will we exist or not. If you love your state – vote.

FIFTEEN YEARS OF THE OHRID TRAGEDY

(August 2016)

The title may indeed shock you but, unfortunately, it is very much in line with the true dimension of the event and the consequences that followed, which will yet manifest their true weight and totality. We have signed the Ohrid Framework Agreement and it has been transposed into the Constitution and laws, and there is no escaping it. However, it is high time that Macedonians critically and deeply analyze the results, take energetic steps to stop the illegal negative tendencies and give everything its rightful name, if we want Macedonia to succeed.

It is believed that the Balkans live with old myths that hinder faster social reforms. There is certainly some truth in that. However, our same Western “partners”, who criticize the old myths, create new ones for us due to their operational needs. A classic example of this is the Ohrid Framework Agreement. Signed on August 13, 2001, after the unsuccessful military intervention in Kosovo, organized and managed by the USA, whose goal was to “liberate Albanian territories”, it became a symbol of Macedonia’s vulnerability, a way to constantly hold us by our ears and a method for our country to collapse from within.

The Ohrid Framework Agreement ended the 2001 war, which we shamefully lost. If so, and it is, like any agreement of this kind, it is for one-time use and in this particular case it has been completely exhausted and realized through its incorporation into the Constitution and the laws of the country. Now, as an act and a document, it is part of history and nothing more. Today we can only talk about whether this part of the Constitution and the laws is being implemented in practice, and nothing more. After all, has anyone heard of any upgrading or supplementing a peace treaty? Such a thing has neither existed nor will exist, it is unthinkable and beyond reason. Such documents can only be revised, completely or partially, as happened with the Bucharest Peace

Treaty of 1913. During the Second World War, Belgrade agreed that our part of Macedonia would become an independent state, even though in 1913 it had been acquired by Serbia.

The Macedonian Helsinki Committee (July/August report), according to “Dnevnik” from September 9, 2005, believes that the Ohrid Framework Agreement - “is neither a law or regulation, nor an international agreement, and it is not a legal act at all. It has not been certified by a notary or in a court and thus does not produce any legal effect. It has not been adopted by the Parliament, nor published in the “Official Gazette”! So, it remains as a (private?!) document signed by four political parties and initialed by the president of the country, together with some foreign factors (otherwise organizers of the war) and - that’s it. The Ohrid Framework Agreement has no official or state dimension and is outside the political system.

Washington, again, together with Brussels, Berlin, Paris... arrogantly, and without any scruples, constantly beats us over the head, as if we were the aggressors. They tell us that the Ohrid Framework Agreement is the key to progress towards the EU, and even to our survival, that it should be implemented as quickly and completely as possible... Any mention of the Ohrid Framework Agreement is unacceptable pressure on Macedonia and should be rejected with indignation. No one behaves like that here. Unfortunately, that reflects the level and capacities of our politicians. It is sad and funny that we constantly allow the Ohrid Framework Agreement to be slapped in our faces at every meeting, even by Tirana and Pristina, who were part of that aggression! At the very least, we behave as if we were to blame for the war and that is why we must keep our heads down! These people should be given a stern answer that their hands are dirty for the aggression, that they should mind their own business and not interfere where they should not.

The Ohrid Framework Agreement is part of the war, or rather the “Plan B”, with which the USA is realizing what was missed - “liberation of the Albanian territories”. Now without weapons, through the

mechanisms of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, with new (constitutional) recompositions of Macedonia. That is exactly why the agreement was called “framework” and not otherwise, so that it could be abused. However, the basic mistake was that the Macedonians were convinced that the Ohrid Framework Agreement had resolved all interethnic issues, while the USA conceived and formulated it only as the beginning of new, often unprincipled, demands of the Albanians for the finalization of the Greater Albania project.

The text of the agreement is American. Just like - a) the resolutions of the UN Security Council that illegally suspended the name of our state (1993); b) the Interim Agreement (1995), which maximally devalued our position in the imaginary name dispute; c) all of Nimetz’s proposals, which erase the Macedonian people, language...; d) Przhino 1 and 2, which are new essential concessions of the Macedonian people...

It is now obvious that the Ohrid Framework Agreement is formulated in a way that satisfies the maximalist appetites of the Albanians, which completely coincides with the interests of the USA in closing the “Macedonian Question” and creating a Greater Albania. Space has been opened for the permanent posing of new Albanian demands which are always, of course, quite coincidentally, openly supported by Washington, although sometimes – tacitly! We have been witnessing this for all these 15 years. It is absolutely certain that we will continue to do so – even more intensely!

Let us recall that the Ohrid Framework Agreement was an absolutely one-sided document in which the Macedonians were treated as the defeated side, almost, even as an aggressor. In the Ohrid Framework Agreement, not even the elementary and minimal interests of the Macedonian people were mentioned, let alone emphasized. Everything that could be put in such a “column” was completely ignored. Reading the Ohrid Framework Agreement, one gets a crystal clear picture of the American plans for the future of Macedonia. The main goal is the

devaluation of the Macedonian language. If the USA wanted the Macedonian state to exist, they would have proclaimed the Macedonian language as a unifying factor, and everyone would have to speak and learn it. Absolutely not by chance, it was left as something undefined and - unimportant.

The proclaimed unitary character in the Ohrid Framework Agreement, as a kind of *modus vivendi* of the completely constitutionally recomposed state, which was the only positive element for the Macedonians, is almost unsustainable in the long term and certainly non-functional - without the Macedonian language. In fact, that was the intention of the initiators of the aggression from Kosovo. Our amateurs, but also bluffers at the Ohrid negotiations, “proud” of the “guaranteed” unitary character of the country, did not notice that the rabbit lies in the Macedonian language and that through it in the future they will destroy Macedonia, including unitarism. It is not at all accidental that the Macedonian language was not specified as a unifying factor.

The Ohrid Framework Agreement completely changed the constitutional order of the state. It annulled the role of the majority people and, in various ways, promoted the Albanians as a factor without which nothing can be resolved. The hands of the majority were tied, and the minority was enabled to (almost!) block everything! Some of these methods were immediately introduced through the so-called “Badinter principle”, while others were left for gradual implantation, so that the Vlachs would not notice it! What followed was – a) a new administrative division (with Albanization of parts) of the country; b) the practice of automatically forming a government coalition of the so-called “winners” in the Macedonian and Albanian blocs in the elections (which is pure federalism); c) blackmail for the election of a consensual president; d) a request for a budget divided by ethnic basis... and similar confusions.

The absurdity is complete: instead of the Macedonians coming to their senses and demanding a revision of at least certain practices that

originated from the Ohrid Framework Agreement and are outside the agreed upon or even contrary to it, we have complete silence on our part, and constant new illegitimate demands from the other! How is it that none of us are dealing with this problem?! A few, who are critical of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, are demanding its annulment, which is pointless. Even if we declare the Ohrid Framework Agreement invalid, we have not achieved anything. We are left with the Constitution, the change of which, under the given conditions, is – impossible!

And the Albanians, although they have received the maximum, beyond all international standards, demonstrate dissatisfaction, trumpeting that the Ohrid Framework Agreement is dead, that its revision and upgrading are needed, and even a new agreement! Why? For a new reshaping of the country, according to their wishes. From the conference in Popova Shapka, organized on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, the message is – “the framework agreement is a factor of peace and will continue to be supplemented”! Of course, they do not mean the agreement itself, but the practice, the Constitution, the laws..., which have nothing to do with the Ohrid Framework Agreement.

This is pure irredentism. That is precisely why the new Deputy Prime Minister Festim Halili said – “the spirit of the Ohrid Framework Agreement is embedded in the Constitution...”! Thus, “ghosts” and “phantoms” have become our everyday life... And, if there was any “spirit” in the Ohrid Framework Agreement, it was absolutely not for new demands of the Albanians but, on the contrary, for respecting the Macedonian language and people, for the unitary character of the state and, above all, for the role of the majority in the country. Nothing remained of this “spirit”, but it was resurrected - a monster!

The Ohrid Framework Agreement far exceeded the dimensions of the war. It caused essential political changes, for which there was no basis, nor a real need. The fact is that there were open issues related to the

status of the Albanians, but they should and had to be resolved in a completely different way, for which there were real conditions, and work was already being done on it. This is just more proof that the Ohrid Framework Agreement is part of a broader (American) scenario. In parallel, this confirms that on our side it was negotiated by ordinary amateurs, while the Albanians also had foreign advisors. After all, the responsibility for the shameful defeat in the war lies primarily and above all with the president of the state and the supreme commander of the ARM. No one yet understands this, but it is also being deliberately kept quiet.

With the unreserved support of Washington, a gradual Albanianization of parts of Macedonia is taking place. So Musa Xhaferi, as Deputy Prime Minister, hired his old friend Peter Feith, who is very likely a CIA agent, to propose a new Ohrid Framework Agreement. On behalf of the USA, he helped them at the beginning of the aggression in 2001, during the period when Robertson, the NATO Secretary General, was still calling and treating the NLA as a terrorist organization. Surely the Albanians paid Feith handsomely back then, but now they are throwing state money away – against key Macedonian interests. The so-called “analysis” that Feith made can be freely titled – “How Macedonia should adapt to the needs and aspirations of the Albanians (and Americans)”! Everything else is secondary. After all, just like in the Ohrid Framework Agreement. It is a document that is beyond the mind because it openly shows the ambitions of the USA, but also of Ahmeti, Xhaferi... to completely erase everything that is Macedonian, that is still left of the character of the country.

On the one hand, we have the Macedonians, who fight amongst themselves, conducting high politics or are temporarily absent, and therefore do not notice anything, while things are going downhill. On the other hand, the Albanians openly ignore the several solutions of the Ohrid Framework Agreement that ensure peace (the unitary character of the state, for example) and what suits them and which drives the water of their Greater Albanian mill, they shamelessly deepen, spread,

interpret as it suits them - they abuse it... For now, they are doing it meticulously and are on their way to realizing their dream, for everyone to live in one state.

And, no one reacts!

To make things clearer, let's look at the Ohrid Framework Agreement from several aspects and in a broader context. The following questions arise by themselves: a) why did the Ohrid Framework Agreement happen? b) who was behind it, why did they impose it and with what intentions and goals? c) why was it not confirmed in the Parliament? Only if it had been, could we talk about its implementation, and only if it had not been incorporated into the Constitution and laws; d) whose basic text was it? e) who organized the war in 2001 and why? f) was the Ohrid Framework Agreement some kind of "Plan B" after, miraculously, the war failed? e) what was sought with the first five statements of the ONA, which are nowhere to be found? h) why were false statements of the ONA given to the Court in The Hague, when Macedonia was being tried through Ljube Boskovski? Who tolerated that and why? h) what does "ONA" mean? If it is a "national liberation army", can it fight for "human" or "ethnic rights", as Washington and Brussels have assured us? i) what is the Ohrid Framework Agreement in essence? If it is a peace agreement, how can we still talk about its implementation? Peace agreements are for one-time use, they are implemented and the implementation ends. With Bucharest (1913), they tore Macedonia apart and the story ended. The same with Versailles... and with all the others...

And, let's not fool ourselves: the key question is - who is behind all this? Albanians are in no way the driving force of all these processes against Macedonian interests. Greece even less so, although the name of the state is all the time in the background, in the background of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, and Bucharest (2008), and the wiretapping, and Przhino... If we do not clearly and loudly point the

finger at Washington about the name, and about everything else, we have done nothing.

There are countless questions, but the answers, which are clear and simple, no official wants to articulate. That is why we are spinning in a vicious circle and steadily declining as a people.

We must not forget that Macedonia is still not an equal part of the international community of nations because, quite deliberately, the state has been left without a name. Within the framework of that scenario, with which we have been living for 25 years, the Ohrid Framework Agreement must also be seen, because now it is precisely through it that the erosion of the state is being carried out.

WITHOUT UNITARITY CHARACTER THERE IS NO MACEDONIAN STATE

(August, 2017)

The unitary character of Macedonia has long been called into question. Currently, it is only manifested through the role played by the Macedonian language, which has remained its sole pillar. That is why it is now under attack. Step by step, it is being eliminated. On the one hand, consciously and planned, and on the other (Macedonian), without understanding the essence. That is why now all the attention of the Albanians, but also the Americans, is now focused on bilingualism. It inevitably leads to the federalization of the country, for which there is no legal basis. To achieve it, it is only a matter of time.

Albanians no longer learn the Macedonian language, they deliberately isolate themselves in ghettos, on the other hand, they (will) want to get jobs in the state administration, without knowing Macedonian... Mutual communication will be impossible, which (will) make the common state dysfunctional. Thus, it inevitably leads to federalization. That will be fatal for Macedonians because they have no other options. The (majority) of Albanian politicians, however, since the collapse of Yugoslavia, through Ilirida, the 2001 war, Ohrid Framework Agreement, the “Tirana Platform” ... until today, all the time, have had only one idea - Greater Albania. Thanks to the USA, that dream is coming true for them. And Washington, as our great “strategic partner”, sacrifices the Macedonians without blinking. Their ambassador Bailey is destroying Macedonia from Skopje, and he is doing a great job for which he is paid. And why “our” people allow him to make a fuss over us is not his problem.

In history, changing the character of a state has always been done either through war, as the Albanians did to us in 2001 with the help of the USA, or through revolution. What they are now trying to achieve, again with open American engagement, is something unprecedented in world

politics and diplomacy. The same, for example, does not apply to the Hungarians in Romania and Slovakia, to the Russians in Estonia and Latvia... For the Roma and Turks, and even to the Macedonians in Bulgaria... By the same logic, the Turks in Germany can demand that the Turkish language be equal to the German language. Or the Arabs in France, Arabic being equal to French... In the USA, about 60 million, or 19 percent of the population, speak Spanish as their native language, which has no status. The only official language is English! Under the dictates of the USA, an unprecedented experiment is being conducted here to the detriment of Macedonians, and to no one's benefit. The ship is sinking and we, more divided than ever, will devour each other.

It is an undisputed fact that Macedonianism does not fit into the American plans for the Balkans. We do not know the specific reasons, and we can only speculate. That is why they treat us as something unsaid or, more precisely, as an open question - which should be closed! With the humiliating Ohrid Framework Agreement (2001), they almost completely erased the Macedonian character of the state. Now (2014 – 2017), in a rude and uncivilized manner, they replaced Gruevski's government because it was not ready to capitulate and accept renaming. They have brought in followers who do not give a damn about the historical, strategic and fundamental interests of the Macedonian people. Following American dictates, they have accepted a shameful and insulting agreement with Bulgaria and, most frighteningly, are on their way to completely destroy the Macedonian character of the state through a new law on the Albanian language.

What is happening to us now should not surprise anyone. This is the scenario that the USA has been implementing with persistence and incredible dedication for 25 years. A key part of this is the renaming of the state, which, under the given conditions, will impose itself as a logical and inevitable act because the new federation can in no case remain with its current name or symbols. With one stroke, the US will close the "Macedonian Question", which they believe has been plaguing the Balkans for centuries. At the same time, they will finalize

the largest part of the Greater Albania project, which is almost 70 percent complete with the independence of Kosovo. After the collapse of Yugoslavia, the Albanians are the main American partners and allies in the Balkans who, in return for their local services, receive the bonus called “Greater Albania”. In the same way, during World War II, Mussolini reciprocated for their cooperation: he gave them the Greater Albania project, which extended to Grupchin.

The reshaping of the former Yugoslavia is approaching its end. Macedonia is next. First, they dissolved Bosnia and Herzegovina, which went from a unitary state to a federation, and the question is – are they now applying the same formula in Macedonia? Then, Kosovo was separated from Serbia and a second Albanian state was created. Contrary to all international postulates, all of this was done by force. The Helsinki Principles, which the OSCE supposedly protects, were ignored, while the OSCE itself was an active participant in the abuse of power according to the interests of the USA. Serbia lost Kosovo, but still gained Republika Srpska, which is a solid compensation. The story of Bosnia and Herzegovina is not over and it is difficult to predict what will happen next. They could even treat us in parallel – as two dysfunctional federations!

It is safe to conclude that all of this is a continuation of the post-Yugoslav reshaping of the Balkans, according to the plans of the USA. The Albanians are getting the main premium – to live together, while the Macedonians lose their state. This is how the “Macedonian question” is being closed, which will neutralize the historical syndromes and aspirations of our neighbours towards our people and towards this piece of land. A major handicap is that we do not know, and no one is researching, why Macedonianism is not acceptable to the USA? Why did the USA do everything to rename the Macedonians and why have they not succeeded so far? It is not clear, for example, what are the ultimate plans and ideas of the USA for Macedonia? Will they keep the artificial federation they are creating, already converted, within the same borders? How will it function? What are the other options on

the table? Numerous questions are unanswered. Now they are trying to neutralize us through the Albanian minority, which they politically equate with the Macedonian majority, which cannot give positive results, but only create chaos.

The plan, that Albanians will eventually become the majority in the country and thus, through an increased birth rate, completely take over it, is no longer realistic. Their birth rate has decreased, and they have also emigrated en masse and are now probably below 20 percent. That is why they do not allow a census. The attempts of the USA to create some kind of political nation that, over time, would become dominantly Albanian has no chance.

It can be argued that the USA will not dare to physically divide Macedonia because this is not possible without a new Balkan war, more terrible than all the previous ones. All the neighbours have their own interests and in the event of a division they will all be activated. Both the Serbs and the Bulgarians have begun to sharpen their knives. Fortunately, fear will guard the vineyard, which is the best guarantee for the territorial integrity of Macedonia. However, all other options are open.

After the collapse of Yugoslavia, the US policies for the Balkans are – deeply flawed. They are not aware that the biggest problems in managing the region will be with the Albanians. The Greater Albania project, which they are persistently implementing, will create insurmountable challenges. All security risks for the Balkans will come from there. The Albanians are united on the national issue, which is impressive, but on the domestic political level, all their political leaders, in Albania, Kosovo, and Macedonia, in the struggle for power, see each other through the crosshairs. This will escalate more and more because among them, uncompromising, personal and party interests dominate, which are to the serious detriment of the state. This was recently the case in Albania, and now it is in Kosovo (summer, 2017)...

The regional ambitions of the Albanians are already worrying. With a third Albanian state in Macedonia on the horizon, they will explode. Albanian municipalities in Montenegro and Southern Serbia (or Eastern Kosovo, according to Albanian terminology), but also Chamiria in Greece, will inevitably be part of their political aspirations. In Greece, there are already about 1.5 million Albanian immigrants who, sooner or later, will also become a political factor. There, the Albanian mafia generates huge income, which can easily be channeled politically. The danger of new Albanian wars, like ours in 2001 and the Kosovo one in 1999, will be a real threat. In order to divert attention from domestic political confrontations, they will create problems in the region. In the new conditions, the United States will also lose its role. The Albanians will not need them so much, but their interests will be different. There is a great possibility that the US will burn its fingers from the exclusive partnership with the Albanians. The sooner they realize this danger, the better for everyone. First of all – for them.

In all this nonsense in the Balkans, the role of the EU is – deplorable. While the region is under complete American political and security control, Brussels seems to be from another planet. The EU certainly has its own reasons for stopping the enlargement process, but there are numerous indicators that Washington does not want the remaining Balkan states to quickly become part of it. The situation in the region, however, would change diametrically with the opening of the Union's doors. Thus, perspectives will open for everyone, and the manipulative space of the United States will be reduced.

The law on the Albanian language can easily be executed for Macedonia and Macedonians. When it is adopted, there will be no going back. The acquired rights will be irreversible. Bilingualism is an atomic bomb on Macedonia, and MANU is nowhere to be found. We pay its members for nothing.

Under the leadership of the new government (2017), after 73 years of existence, slowly but surely, the modern Macedonian state is singing its

swan song. Hundreds of thousands of lives have been given for this freedom that we enjoy but which, apparently, we do not know how to preserve.

It is unfortunate that we do not have a leader, a statesman who will lead and say – NO! to the injustices to which we are exposed.

DETAILED ANALYSIS OF THE TIRANA PLATFORM

(March, 2017)

The Albanians assure us that the platform is a legitimate political step within the framework of the Constitution. If so, why do they not implement it through the institutions of the system but with an ultimatum? Zoran Zaev says that he views the platform positively, which should not be surprising! A serious analysis of the Tirana Platform shows that it is completely unconstitutional, with clear Greater Albanian intentions, which must not be tolerated under any circumstances. They are nothing new. Macedonia has been a victim of such overt ambitions since the 1990s. After the aggression from Kosovo and the Ohrid Framework Agreement, this is already being done openly, step by step, millimeter by millimeter, while the Macedonians sleep. Now the cards have been opened. Surely, in agreement with their American partners, it has been assessed that the time has come for execution. The crossing will be - the finale.

Albanian leaders do not hide that the election results give them a “golden chance” to condition (blackmail!) Macedonians. The “golden chance” was also the main reason why Tirana, directly and ruthlessly, got involved in the game. It should not have been missed. It is sad, but many in our country do not understand this.

If you read only the first point of the platform, out of a total of seven, everything is clear: Macedonia as it is today should be irreversibly redefined through the marginalization of Macedonians. They insist on “achieving full equality in accordance with the Ohrid Framework Agreement” and the “Constitution”, which is pure deception. The state should become binational, more precisely – a federation, because of the right to secede. Now they have all the rights, like all other citizens, except for the possibility of secession.

They claim – “Albanians are considered a state-forming nation”, but they do not say on what basis? That has no connection with reality. In the Constitution, which Albanians also voted for in 2001, they are treated as “part of the Albanian people” which implicitly means – a minority, but let them also be a community, according to the vocabulary used in the Constitution. International practice dictates that a part of a people in another state is, and can only be – a minority. Except in federations, such as Belgium, Switzerland, Bosnia and Herzegovina... The intention of the foreigners was to advance the position of the Albanians with that formulation, at the expense of the Macedonians, but that automatically excluded any of their “statehood”! They calculated!

In Macedonia, the Turks, Vlachs, Serbs, Roma and Bosniaks also have constitutional status as “parts of another people”. This means that the Albanians do not have any exclusivity. In the Preamble, it is precisely stated that in the state there is one people, the Macedonians, and “citizens who are parts of other peoples”. The difference between them is enormous.

These facts show the absurdity of the platform that either ignores or manipulates the Constitution. The state can become binational and a federation, either with a new war (2001) or with a revolution. A regular change to the Constitution is possible only upon a proposal by the President, the Government, or at least 30 MPs, as well as by collecting 150 thousand signatures to hold a referendum. That is not a party matter. And a change to the Constitution, by declaring Albanians a constituent people, Macedonians will never vote for.

The first point of the platform also demands – ... “supporting any legal and constitutional initiative that strengthens the national equality of the Albanian population”!? What does that mean? To organize a mass movement? It continues with a request for – “achieving full linguistic equality”, i.e. to establish bilingualism in the country in the Constitution. This is new confirmation that this is an anti-constitutional ultimatum for a complete change in the constitutional position of the

Albanians, or rather – federalization. There is no unitary state in the world that is bilingual. In the USA, there are over 60 million (19%) who speak Spanish, and they do not have a single state university in their language, let alone bilingualism! They are, aren't they, the most democratic state in the world?

They also insist on – “a comprehensive debate on the flag, the anthem and the national emblem”, in order for the symbols – “to reflect social multi-ethnicity and ethnic equality”. This is a direct disregard for the majority people and the Macedonian character of the state. After all, why don't we take the double-headed eagle as a common symbol? Together we will fly it, and everything will be fine?! And this is nothing but an attempt at federalization. Despite the formulation used, the Albanians certainly do not think of including other minorities in the symbols.

The first point ends with an insistence on a resolution in the Parliament that “will condemn the genocide against the Albanian people in Macedonia from 1912 to 1956”. This is a serious nebula from several aspects: according to the Constitution, there is no Albanian people here, but only a part of it, and that since 2001. This means that the terminology is pure fabrication, with cowardly eggs planted; there are no historical facts about any genocide against Albanians, not only in Macedonia but also more widely, and there is much evidence that it was precisely the Macedonian people who were victims of genocide and forced assimilation, including in Albania. There was also violence from the Albanian Ballists towards Macedonians, and never vice versa; Macedonia has no right, much less an obligation, to evaluate the history of a people whose small part lives within its borders, and it is an unprecedented folly to do so for a period before it existed as a state! Those things are completely invented, and beyond rational thinking.

Like everything else, this is not at all accidental. Zijadin Sela explained that the purpose of the platform is to officially verify that they are indigenous to Macedonia! In other words, while Tirana, politically

calculated, does not recognize our constitutional and historical name, while they claim that Macedonians did not exist (the same Z. Sela) a hundred years ago, they want us to confirm that they are indigenous to this country! A masterful idea but hardly offensive to Macedonians.

It can be responsibly concluded that in the first point of the platform, all key Greater Albanian interests are sublimated, which are reduced to the abolition of the single Macedonian state and its transformation, at least for the beginning, into something like Slavo-Skripriya. The content of the other points is completely complementary to the first.

The second point demands – “achieving economic equality” for Albanians by creating unnecessary new institutions. Following the Ohrid Framework Agreement and Badinter, they should make the state completely dysfunctional. They also insist on – “fair representation in the security, military, intelligence and justice bodies” as well as in – “all levels of central government, public services and enterprises”. They try to portray Albanians as disadvantaged, as if they are not an active part of the system through which they must realize their interests and not through other people’s platforms. The blackmail with which the platform is imposed is the best proof that Albanians are aware that all of this is not only unconstitutional, meaning illegal, but also illegitimate.

The third point is about – “strengthening the rule of law” including “the impartial performance of the work of the special prosecutor, without ethnic and political prejudices”, implementation of reforms, including Priebe, and ending with – “complete clarification of the judicial proceedings of ‘Sopot’, ‘Brodets’, ‘Monstrum’ and ‘Kumanovo’, through an inquiry commission or an independent international body”. Simply incredible. Albanian parties act as if they are not from here, as if they are some marginalized segment of society, something like a “plenary of high school students” who want to have their opinion heard! Do they forget that almost half of the Government are their ministers, and the departments of justice and European integration have long been

covered by – Albanians? If they were not good, why didn't they change them? The laws must apply to everyone.

In point four, they appeal for – “creating a spirit of trust in the function of good interethnic relations...” for the sake of the stability of the country. In that direction, they demand measures for financing Albanian cultural institutions at the central and local levels, a central institution for the promotion of the languages of the communities and the training of translators, editors and lecturers. What hypocrisy! On the one hand, they advocate a spirit of trust and good interethnic relations, and with all the proposed measures they erase the Macedonian character of the state! They demand a special status and set conditions that need to be met outside the system, thus ignoring the state.

Point five is for – “resolving the name dispute, in accordance with European values and the principles of international law”. The Assembly should have passed a binding resolution for the Government to actively resolve the dispute, by – “involving the Albanians in the working group for direct negotiations with Greece”. They do not provide any support to the Macedonians in defending the name, which also symbolizes their ethnic affiliation! Surely – quite by chance! In fact, the name is the key interest of the Albanians – Macedonia to be renamed as soon as possible and, once there is no Macedonian people, they will most easily federalize the state in order to secede and everyone to live in Greater Albania. That is why the process should be accelerated.

Point six is the neighbours. It is requested – “inclusion of Albanians in the working group for direct negotiations with Bulgaria” and “cooperation with Albania and Kosovo for integrated border management” and opening new border crossings. This is a new way of ignoring institutions and elevating Albanians above them. It is a classic treatment of the state as a binational or federative entity. The proposal for borders with Albania and Kosovo means the unification of the so-called “Albanian territories”.

The last, seventh point is – NATO and the EU, and with a clear conclusion – “fulfillment of all the above points will unblock Macedonia’s path to NATO and open negotiations for EU membership”. That is correct. If the Macedonian character of the state is erased, as the platform insists, the path to Brussels will be – open. The constant insistence of the Albanians for faster membership in the alliance and the EU is not at all accidental. The goal is to re-establish the state and destroy the Macedonians. This is how their Greater Albanian aspirations are realized.

The platform ends with a conclusion – “the fulfillment of these goals will be monitored by organizing a round table of Albanian parliamentary parties” and “will serve as a platform for harmonizing political action and transparent communication with Macedonia’s international partners, seeking support from the EU...”

This no longer leaves doubt that this is a parallel state structure that will pursue its own policies and communicate with the world. The platform is planned as a key step in the federalization of Macedonia, a process that is being intensively implemented with the support of the United States. It undermines the foundations of the state and thus interethnic relations, which must be decisive. By ultimately setting only their own extremely nationalistic demands, and completely ignoring the aspirations and needs of all other citizens, the Albanian parties have shown that they do not have even a minimal state-building capacity in relation to Macedonia. Instead, they are a “Trojan Horse”, whose task is to destroy Macedonianism.

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The platform is just new evidence that Macedonian Albanians treat our state as a - “Swedish buffet”! They take from it what they need and what suits them, when the state is of use to them, and ignore everything else. For them, laws are valid when they coincide with their interests, and ignored when they do not. The law on flags is the best example. They declared themselves a constituent people, they equated the

Albanian language with the Macedonian language; they promoted their own symbols but do not recognize the Macedonian ones; they practically federalized the state... and Macedonian politicians act like they are absent. For narrow personal and party interests, to come or stay in power, they sold Macedonianism. Albanian politicians have been blackmailing them all the time and they, without blinking, are swallowing dumplings at the expense of the key interests of the Macedonian people.

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There should be no doubt that the “Tirana Platform” is a Greater Albanian and unconstitutional document, which means it is also anti-Macedonian. Behind it are political manipulations that must be worrying because their goal is the complete reconstruction of the Macedonian state, according to Albanian needs. The most common “message” from Albanians was that if bilingualism is introduced, Macedonians will have nothing to lose!?! Nothing else, except – their state! A bilingual unitary state – there is no such thing. Only federations are like that, and if such a thing is allowed in our country, it will no longer be Macedonia, the state of the Macedonian people and all other minorities. All this only confirms that everything that is happening to us is part of a well-prepared (American) scenario.

It is crucial to clarify that the platform has no connection whatsoever with expanding the personal, or human, rights of Albanians in Macedonia. And that is what they most often call for. Albanians are absolutely equal to all other citizens in the state and, in some cases, even more equal than everyone else. The platform is a big step towards federalization, which also implies the right to secession. It is about a complete change in the constitutional character of the state. That is why the platform has been prepared. They want the gradual creation of a third Albanian state, so that later they can all unite into one. If we allow this process to continue, in the end, the Macedonians will be left without their only state. Fortunately for us, the secession of the

Albanians is not possible without a major Balkan war, which the USA will not allow for the sake of Russia.

These are the intentions behind this hubbub, hidden behind phrases about some invented inequality of the Albanians. If we do not come up with the broadest explanations for the real Albanian aspirations, we will go around in circles. Without this, the Macedonians, who defend their fundamental rights, will be considered as bullies and occupiers. As such, we have already been declared by the UCK, the NLA, the Albanian MP Doda, and many other extreme Albanians. For them, there is no Macedonia, but – Ilirida. These Greater Albanian ambitions are openly supported by the USA, which, for that purpose, bombed Belgrade.

What is happening to us now is nothing new. Thanks to American regional interests, which are contrary to ours, Macedonia has been in a process of redefining and erasing the Macedonian people for 25 years through rechristening. The crisis caused by the wiretapping and the platform are a completely logical continuation of the long non-recognition of the state, the suspended name in the UN, the blockade, blackmail and the ultimatum from Bucharest (2008) – first the rechristening then membership... The platform, in fact, should mark – our capitulation. Through the strategic partnership with the Albanians, the US wants to cement its dominance in the Balkans and, after Kosovo, the last obstacle left for them – is the Macedonians. With the negative role of the opposition SDSM in the disastrous scenarios, the story has become our national tragedy.

The immediate roots of the current platform are the 2001 war and the Ohrid Framework Agreement. This is just a new stage that Washington, extremely wrongly, considers final. The wiretapping was also carried out for this purpose, which is absolutely under the direction of the CIA, regardless of who is the perpetrator, including the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The goal was to eliminate Gruevski. This was a forced step for the US because with all other measures implemented over 20 years -

they failed to rename us. Now their plan was extremely insidious - they were going for a direct confrontation between the Macedonians themselves, which worked perfectly. They easily found and recruited unscrupulous politicians and various cheap mercenaries. Although they have been fiercely shaking the foundations of the state for several years, they still have not managed to bring us down!

Even a superficial analysis shows that, from the very beginning of the crisis, efforts were made to re-incorporate and actualize the Greater Albanian demands. Ali Ahmeti and Menduh Thaci, on the unconstitutional pieces of paper they signed in the so-called Prizhno agreements, insisted that their aspirations be included. Yes, but without success. Their American allies understood this, but they could not allow the confrontation between the Macedonians themselves to be relativized, before they bled irreversibly. That was a priority, and everything else was in the background. Washington's management, which created the crisis, was infallible.

The terrorist act in Kumanovo (May, 2015) was to make up for what was missed. There are indications (from the trial) that the May Kosovo invasion was coordinated with Albanian political leaders from the country. There should be no doubt that Tirana also played a role. They certainly did not do it alone, since Washington's interests are absolutely compatible with Albanian aspirations. In fact, the whole situation is too reminiscent of 2001 when, through aggression from Kosovo, everyone together would have liberated the "Albanian territories" from Macedonia. Fortunately, although with great casualties, the police quickly cleared Kumanovo and the attempt failed. The terrorists' goal was to block part of Kumanovo, like in the Tetovo era, and then to open negotiations similar to the Ohrid negotiations in 2001, after which new unprincipled Macedonian concessions would be obtained. If that had happened, the platform would have been on the table even then. So, they had to wait a while.

Our elections were the last chance to “complete” the crisis with an interethnic dimension. And that’s what happened. First, an incredible set-up was made when between 50 and 70 thousand Albanians voted for the Macedonian opposition (SDSM). Their idea was masterful. Zijadin Sela clearly stated that these were golden moments for the Albanian cause in Macedonia, which must not be missed. There is talk among Albanians that the slogan on which this idea was realized was - vote for SDSM, and then we will divide Macedonia! Such information exists, but what exactly happened, and whether money was really distributed to mosques, which is also rumoured, we will never know.

The Tirana platform that followed absolutely confirms such intentions: it is a classic attempt to divide the country. All of its points, without exception, destroy a unitary Macedonia and create a third Albanian state. There is nothing in it that benefits other citizens, and Macedonians seem to not exist. Everything is so simple that even a blind person can see it and a deaf person can hear it. This applies to all those who have no hidden intentions. Although they lost a lot of MPs in the elections, the Albanian parties found themselves in a position to shape the future government and, through it, the state. And that is what happened. In return for the votes, SDSM gave DUI and Taravari the main ministries in the Government – European integration, economy, justice, health... and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs!

Those who want to convince us that over 2,000 voters from Arachinovo, for example, opted for civil society (sic!) by voting for SDSM, truly underestimate us both as people and as a nation. A greater absurdity than that is hardly possible. After all, the main leaders of the Macedonian Albanians publicly warned in advance that there were no conditions for building a civil concept in Macedonia. They were right because, quite deliberately, the Ohrid Framework Agreement did not leave any room for it. The reason was simple – the USA did not want to deprive itself of the opportunity to manipulate the state. And they can only do that through the ethnic Albanian parties. With civil structures, Albanian parties would be impossible, as would the renaming of the

state and the disintegration of the Macedonian people. It is extremely regrettable that SDSM, which hates its rival, VMRO DPMNE, more than it loves its homeland, has also joined this dirty game.

Unfortunately, the opposite is also true.

After all, how is it possible for 50 to 70 thousand Albanians to vote for a “civil” society, while the remaining 150 thousand support Albanian parties that propose a platform for the destruction of the state? This is not at all compatible. And we all know that Albanians live in a traditional hierarchy, although family voting is now rare. Until recently, they were the rule. With the same system, in the second round of the presidential elections (1999), instead of Tito Petkovski who had over 150 thousand votes in the first round, Boris Trajkovski won! He received his support from the Albanians. Not from the Macedonians. There is no better proof of the capacities of their organized voting.

The question will always remain open – did Trajkovski, in the aggression from Kosovo in 2001, with his erroneous command of the army, actually take revenge on the Albanians for supporting the elections and enable Macedonia to be shamefully defeated by a handful of terrorists? However, that is unlikely because he was an indisputable patriot. He was a victim of American generals, who openly worked for the Albanians, and who perfidiously abused him.

Why do the Albanians, helped and stimulated by the USA, want to take us overboard, are they stunned by the nonsense that “our” “politicians”, “experts”, “intellectuals”, activists are spouting...? It is clear that some of them are mercenaries, that others have greater political appetites than their own capacities, others... It is surprising that there are enough of them, and it is clear as day that a strong Albanization of Macedonia is being imposed on us, which should be finalized by rechristening the state and destroying the Macedonian people, by its Bulgarization. And, in such evident conditions, Zhernovski, for example, who has been in the political leadership for a long time, said in the Telma debate - “I am always for equality. Why shouldn’t Arben from Tetovo be equal to

Andrej from Skopje”? And he doesn’t explain in what way Arben is discriminated against? Doesn’t he understand that Arben, for the sake of fair representation, can sit at home and receive a salary, just because he is Albanian? However, it is good that Andrej cannot even dream of such foolishness! And who is “more equal”? However, the statement should not be surprising. The man probably has no capacity, but he has great political ambitions, which he cannot realize without the support of the Albanians! For personal gain, Zernovski is selling out national interests!

In 1998, Tirana came out with almost the same document, but with much broader ambitions – “Platform for resolving the Albanian national question”. It led directly to the war in Kosovo and its subsequent independence. And let us conclude – even if this time there was no “Tirana Platform”, the very fact that Rama got involved in the “unification” of Albanian political leaders in Macedonia is a flagrant interference in our internal affairs. In short, it is an attempt by Tirana to shape the Macedonian political map! Primitive paternalism, what else? And the American Embassy in Skopje openly tried to unite the Albanians in the country, which was also unacceptable. The goal was the same – strengthening the Albanian factor – against the Macedonians.

Imagine what a storm Washington and Brussels would have raised if we had created platforms for the Macedonians in Bulgaria and Greece?! They do not have any minority rights, not even universal ones, unlike the Albanians in Macedonia, who have much more than them.

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The constitutional order of every country is a sacred thing and all institutions are obliged to defend it. From the president to the last citizen. That is the basic task of the secret services. Anyone who questions it – bears criminal responsibility. It is like that all over the world, but not in Macedonia. For example, in our country, a political

entity (BESA) is registered whose program is absolutely contrary to the Constitution! And it passes. The case is not isolated!

The constitutions of countries, on the other hand, are changed either violently, through revolutions and wars, as was the case with Macedonia in 2001, or by agreement between the main political forces. Often however, it is not easy to achieve a two-thirds majority in the Assembly, required for changing the Constitution, which also seems to be a kind of guarantee against errors or abuses. The redefining of the state, as the Albanians are now illegally demanding, must in no case be put on the table without a prior general referendum. The people must vote on such changes. For minor constitutional amendments, a two-thirds majority is sufficient.

The current attempts, with an ultimatum called a platform, to blackmail the person in charge of the government by redefining the state is an unacceptable way that must be rejected without discussion. No one has such constitutional authority. Any negotiations about this are illegal, and any government that accepts a program contrary to the Constitution commits a serious criminal offense. The first person who must not allow such a thing is the President, and after him the Assembly. However, this does not apply to us either. The ultimatum and blackmail are put on the table, discussed and treated as legitimate. At the same time, some of our morons, called “intellectuals” or similar, from the most primitive political interests consider the platform to be real and acceptable! That is our tragedy. And whether they are paid handsomely by someone, or have some of their own interests – it does not matter. Unlike one Gjorge Spasov, Stojan Andov was correct this time and assessed the key demands of the Albanians as unacceptable.

All this nonsense, which smells of an attempted coup, is not accidental at all. After Prizhno and the shooting in Kumanovo, such a step forward by the Macedonian Albanians is expected. After the US, by wiretapping, put us in a crisis, there were no conditions in Prizhno to include the illegal demands of the Macedonian Albanians, although that

was their plan. The atmosphere was heated, unimaginable concessions were demanded from the government, and a conflict was at stake among the Macedonians themselves. The terrorist attack in Kumanovo in May 2015 was an attempt to repeat 2001 and to open new interethnic negotiations, following the example of Ohrid. This was also an aggression from Kosovo. It failed because the terrorists were immediately liquidated. The formation of the government, however, was the third chance that the Albanians could not miss. Thus the platform emerged. It shows unprecedented organization and persistence, which confirms that the Albanians are not alone, but that someone else is behind them. From across the ocean.

It is extremely important that with its preparation in Tirana, and the consultations in Pristina, the cards were completely opened that the finalization of the Greater Albanian project was in question. Although we already knew that its main manager was Washington, and the subcontractor Tirana, assisted by Pristina, now even the most naïve had to understand it. It became clear that the leaders of the Macedonian Albanians were our “Trojan Horses” in a broader project - which aims to destroy the state. They took pictures in Tirana, proud of implementing a common - greater state policy.

There is no unitary state in the world that is bilingual. This is a characteristic only of federations and confederations, which is inevitably what the efforts for bilingualism in Macedonia are leading to. The goal is to enable the Albanians to legally secede, although it is questionable whether they will be allowed to do so. That is why they avoid learning the Macedonian language. They want to ghettoize themselves and make the state dysfunctional. Bilingualism will speed up the process.

The platform is a heavy defeat for all our previous policies towards Albania and, especially, towards Kosovo. We have been playing the role of correctness, goodwill and, God forbid, excessive flexibility, even pretending to be naïve, and it was time for them to hit us on the

head. Closing our eyes most often leads to an abyss. We recognized the illegal independence of Kosovo in a hurry, at an inconvenient time for Serbia, but, although under fierce American pressure, the decision and responsibility was ours. Naturally, for our amateurs, no conditions were imposed. We did not insist on the status of the Macedonians from Gora, and even less on any obligation of Pristina to be fair to the country. The Vice President of DUI, and the Government, Teuta Arifi, even insisted that we recognize Kosovo and they should use the UN reference! So, they are a state, we are a former one! Such shameful claims, published in columns in “Dnevnik”, were tolerated. She lacked nothing.

And we, with our heads in the sand, accepted a second Albanian state that sends us platforms in the form of blackmail and ultimatums. Other states take care of their interests in advance, whatever they may be. Greece, for example, has been illegally obstructing our international integration for 25 years, without any condemnation.

This Albanian pamphlet is nothing new. It is a continuation of the Greater Albania strategy called the “Platform for Solving the Albanian National Question”, prepared in 1998 by the Albanian Academy of Sciences, at the request of the President of the State. The current one is only a clarification of its part for Macedonia. It is along these lines that Edi Rama revealed to us that the Macedonian Albanians were not seeking seats and told us that it is not important who will form the government, but that it is crucial to realize their platform. Logical! He publicly explained to us that their goal can only be – Greater Albania. Nothing else. The initiator made it known to us that there is no deviation from the outlined policy. The message could not have been clearer, and if this is not interference in our internal affairs, then – what is it? That this is a “mega” project, BESA also confirmed to us. They announced – “After consultations with representatives of the Albanian state, in order to produce a joint declaration of the Albanian parties in Macedonia, all in order to show commitment that the Albanians are ready to support a common cause...”! Greater Albania, right, what else?

Such aggressive interference by Albania in Macedonia is not possible without a green light from the USA. Most likely, the signal was given from there. Otherwise, Washington would have come out with criticism. Brussels, as their blind follower, would not have remained silent either. The USA, for example, condemned the Serbian train to Kosovo as a provocation! However, the problem is with us: we did not take any action in self-defense. We must demand a stance and condemnation from both the USA and the EU. We know that they are behind Tirana and the pamphlet, but as long as we remain silent, we will not expose their hypocrisy. Until we knock on the table, they will have their way. Support should be sought in Moscow, Beijing... Vienna, Paris, Berlin, London... It is not too late for an official demarche in both Tirana and Pristina. Unfortunately, we do not have such political and diplomatic capacities. More precisely, we do not know what we want.

The platform, which completely ignores the Ohrid agreement, in addition to finalizing the Greater Albania project, aims to accelerate the rechristening of the state. Brussels, as a spokesperson for Washington, has already announced that they want us to solve the “bilateral problems”. After they brought us to our knees, that is normal. The game is taking place in parallel – on two tracks, and the intentions are compatible: a) the formation of the government is being blackmailed in order to exclude the ruling VMRO DPMNE party, which does not want to bend its back; b) the opposition SDSM enters the scene, which is ready for anything; c) a majority is being created that accepts the Albanian ultimatum; d) together they will rechristen the country, supposedly for the sake of NATO and the EU; e) without the Macedonian people, there are no obstacles to a third Albanian state...

That is well conceived but, for several extremely serious reasons, despite the full engagement of Washington and Brussels, it is unrealistic and unfeasible. Widely supported by the people, quite rightly, the ruling party will not allow that. SDSM and DUI will hardly succeed in forming a government. The opposition is also aware of this, and will have to think three times what to accept from the Albanian ultimatum.

The more it enters into illegal waters, the higher the price it will pay. The leaders of SDSM have caused enormous damage to the Macedonian people and history will harshly condemn them, along with their servants.

A Russian poet, a great man, wrote – Bad deeds will be revealed / Even if the whole country hides them. And he was absolutely right. Nothing can be hidden. It will spin, it will dry up and, in the end, everything will come to light. Including the CIA's "democratic" actions against Macedonia, even after 20, 30... years, after they publish even the most secret documents.

In politics, that period is usually significantly shorter. All manipulations and abuses are relatively quickly exposed, with the exception of – of course – secrets! The same is true of the Greater Albania project that the US has been persistently pushing since 1990. It cannot be realized if Macedonia remains whole and intact. It is precisely for this purpose that Washington organized and managed a war for us in 2001, then devised the Ohrid Framework Agreement for us, and now, after 15 years, wants to finish what it started. Carefully and very well thought out, they deepened the schism among Macedonians, so that they would eat each other up, bribed a whole fifth column of journalists, experts, professors..., organized wiretapping, devised and prepared Przhino, fired again in Kumanovo, did everything they could to ensure that the opposition won the elections... and everything was ready for the completion of the project. The only thing missing was the "Tirana Platform". Without it, the finalization could not have begun.

This platform was necessary for several reasons. First, all the attempts of the USA to divide the country and divide the people – did not bear fruit. Neither the non-recognition, nor the suspension of the name, nor the Interim Agreement (1995), nor the war in 2001, nor the Ohrid Framework Agreement, nor the blockade of the southern border, nor the blackmail and the ultimatum from Bucharest (2008)... Nothing helped them to definitively close the "Macedonian issue". They were forced to

launch a new, even final, offensive. That is precisely the platform. The USA is absolutely standing behind it! After all, if someone in this country really believes that the US wants us to join NATO (without crippling us with a name change) and Greece does not allow it, that only shows complete political and diplomatic illiteracy. It is a sign of supreme amateurism and absolute misunderstanding of the international position of the country.

These are historical moments that Washington has been meticulously creating for a quarter of a century, in order to tear the Macedonians apart. We have endured so far, but the bite is becoming too big. We can no longer do this. For Macedonia to survive, decisive steps are necessary. At home, a “Macedonian Platform” must be prepared, in order to achieve at least a minimal national consensus. On the international level, however, broad diplomatic action is needed to defend our legitimate and universal rights. Almost all the arguments are on our side. We are on the move.

WHY IS BILINGUALISM REQUIRED?

(April, 2017)

States can function and survive only if normal communication between citizens is enabled. This means that everyone should understand each other in one language. This of course does not apply to federations that are divided into separate entities. In them, usually, one language is spoken and at the federal level some modus vivendi is found for the realization of common interests. India is an excellent example, although it is a federation. Over 200 languages are spoken there, the most used is Hindi, but everyone understands each other through – English! It is the key to mutual communication. In this huge country, it is one of the few positive consequences of colonialism.

In Yugoslavia, however, the Serbo-Croatian language was accepted for use in the bodies of the federation, in the army and in diplomacy. At the same time, Macedonian was spoken in Macedonia, Slovenian in Slovenia... If we and they had spoken our languages in Belgrade, Yugoslavia would have collapsed much earlier as a dysfunctional state.

With the collapse of Yugoslavia, absolutely not by chance, the Macedonian Golgothas began - non-recognition, suspension of the name and political blockade... The Golgothas, however, turned into a tragedy after the aggression from Kosovo in 2001, as well as through the Ohrid Framework Agreement. It is the milestone from which the accelerated destruction of Macedonia began and there is no doubt that history will harshly condemn its signatories.

Their responsibility is - enormous. First of all, they did not understand that the agreement was deliberately called - “framework” because the plan was to expand it. Therefore, at least for now, we must stick to what was signed, and it must not be allowed to spread with new illegitimate demands. The Ohrid Framework Agreement was a kind of peace agreement and its role ended with its transformation into the

Constitution and laws. Everyone keeps repeating to us, Ohrid Framework Agreement, Ohrid Framework Agreement... and we allow ourselves to be blackmailed with something that is wasted and pointless.

After the Ohrid Framework Agreement, all Albanians who are at the head of state institutions or public enterprises, without scruples, maximally Albanize them. Although this was evident all along, the Macedonians did not lift a finger to prevent it or, in any way, control it. In parallel, the Albanian ministers use the Albanian language in communication with foreign countries, at least with Albania and Kosovo. In doing so, they directly ignore the Constitution and laws. Through a back door, they introduce bilingualism as a strong step towards federalization. All Albanian officials, without exception, behave in this way, which is the crowning confirmation that this is a strictly defined party policy of DUI, and not isolated personal abuses. The government turns a blind eye to this behaviour of theirs, in order to remain in power, and the Macedonian opposition panders to them by criticizing the Macedonian party in power for being – anti-Albanian! All in order to come to power! This is more proof that the Macedonian self-destruction syndrome – functions flawlessly.

The examples of the Albanianization of institutions are countless, and are applied every day. Besimi, as Minister of Defense, even addressed the soldiers in Albanian, which is pure shamelessness, and no one reacted. He also published a White Paper on ARM, intended for NATO – also in Albanian! The name of the Tetovo State University is first in Albanian, and then in Macedonian. The memoranda of the Albanian ministers are also in Albanian, or only in Albanian... We also have the latest examples (April 2017): the incident in Ohrid with the illegal inscription in Albanian that was torn down, and an advertisement in the newspapers of the Ministry of Ecology – in both languages... These directly disregard the legal order of the state, to which no one reacts. And, naturally, after the pulse of the Macedonians was tested, and it

was seen that they did not care to understand anything, the “Tirana Platform” followed.

The conclusion was easy: bilingualism is a process that was illegally started after the Ohrid Framework Agreement and is being persistently implemented, although there is nothing like that in the Ohrid Framework Agreement, and the “Tirana Platform” is an attempt to legalize it. The equalization of the Albanian language with the Macedonian language, for which there is no legal basis, except for Greater Albanian aspirations, will destroy the Macedonian character of the state. The goal is for the Albanian minority to become a state-forming people and the state to be binational and bilingual, which practically means – a federation. A bilingual state – cannot be unitary.

We should have no doubts that the Albanian parties are doing all this with direct support from Washington. Let us recall that the USA recognized our constitutional name with the sole aim of preventing the referendum against the new disastrous administrative division (November 2004) from succeeding. Historically extremely wrong, it allowed the Albanianization of Struga, Kichevo, Skopje... In this case, before the referendum, the USA played a chess game: they recognized our name only partially – for bilateral communications, and temporarily, until the case was definitively resolved, that is, until they rechristened us! In return, they forced us – parts of Macedonia to irreversibly Albanianize.

Washington did the same in Serbia, only in a more brutal way – in order to achieve independence for Kosovo, they bombed Belgrade. This is crystal clear evidence that Washington is playing the Albanian card in the region and, in that context, is fully behind the federalization of Macedonia. Only those who do not want to see it do not see it.

What will bilingualism mean in practice in Macedonia?

If this is allowed, in the state administration, in public enterprises and in all institutions of the system (education, culture, health...), Albanians

will speak and write in Albanian everywhere! And if any of them want to speak Macedonian, the others will certainly prevent them. Moreover, they will completely stop learning the Macedonian language, which will pave the way for the complete dysfunctionality of the state, which will inevitably lead to its recomposition. Macedonians will become foreigners in their own country. They will have to learn Albanian if they want to understand the minority.

According to the law, quite rightly, as doctors, Albanians will address patients – in Albanian; counter clerks – to customers; curators in museums – to visitors... And, naturally, they will expect to be answered in the same way. Or everyone will look for translators! That will mean that we are two worlds that cannot understand each other. Real chaos will arise in the institutions of the system. It will not be known who is doing what and why. The hierarchy will not be able to function. Traumas will be everyday. Normal life will cease. A process of complete, definitive and irreversible division of society will begin. Both Macedonians and Albanians will be forced to communicate mainly among themselves. In such conditions, federalization and secession will even be imposed as the only SOLUTION! And here is Greater Albania. Wise, isn't it? Macedonia destroyed without war, dead, ruins...! With cunning and subterfuge. But - destroyed!

A long-lasting hell will follow that will destabilize the whole of Europe. If that is what is wanted, the current policy of Albanization and federalization of Macedonia will be really good. But it will be to the detriment of everyone. Many years will be lost, with huge victims and material damage. Most likely, the Albanians will lose the most! Everyone will be against them – the Serbs, the Bulgarians, the Greeks, the Macedonians, the Montenegrins and the Bosniaks...

The Greater Albanian chauvinism gained intensity after the collapse of Yugoslavia (Illirida, paramilitary...) but, until 2001, almost everyone learned and spoke the Macedonian language. It was a unifying factor. After the Ohrid Framework Agreement, the Albanians stopped learning

it in an organized and massive manner. They are closing themselves into a ghetto as a stage in creating conditions for gradual federalization. With the “Tirana Platform”, however, they are showing that the time has come to make this official.

Our great “friends” the Americans, during the violent imposition of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, could not in any way dispute the unitary character of Macedonia. Without that, the agreement had no chance of passing. That is why they formulated the Ohrid Framework Agreement in a longer way, which would enable bilingualism and federalization in the near future, which is coming.

Precisely for this purpose, quite deliberately and planned, they did not place the Macedonian language in the Ohrid Framework Agreement as a key pillar for mutual communication and a condition for the survival of the completely redefined state. And they had to. That did not suit them, because its Macedonian character would be retained. They opened a wide space for the “Tirana Platform” and the question was when, not if, it would appear. The name did not really matter. It was simple manipulation, invisible only to the Macedonian “experts” and “politicians” who negotiated in Ohrid. The American “mediators” openly worked for the Albanians, who, in turn, also had their own mainly American advisors, who certainly coordinated among themselves. The Macedonian side, in turn, had the gifted Frchkoski, who knew everything, but had no idea of anything that was happening to (us). And a heavy defeat was inevitable.

The Ohrid Framework Agreement could easily prove to be the beginning of the end for Macedonians. Fortunately, we still have the opportunity, if not completely, at least sufficiently, to correct those historical injustices and mistakes. To that end, the Albanian aggression, outlined with the Tirana platform, also has a positive side. It gives us an unexpected chance, before it is too late, to come to our senses and decisively say – enough is enough! We must not lose our homeland

without taking any action! We must fight for what naturally belongs to us and what our great-great-grandfathers left us as a legacy.

The first task must be a detailed control of the implementation of the disastrous flag law, which accepted a foreign state flag as the national flag of the Albanians in this country. The consequences are terrible. They ignore the Macedonian flag and, wherever and however they can, they fly the flag of their home state, thus directly marking Albanian territories! A way must be found to prevent this. The first step must be – the use of the Albanian flag must be fully in accordance with the law, which is absolutely not the case now. Apart from the right to use that foreign flag, everything else from the law is completely ignored.

The terrible fact is that the Macedonian opposition, SDSM, is on the wrong side. But even without it, we must go on the offensive. All the facts and arguments are on our side and we should use them. The frequent statements of the Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama, with which he vulgarly interferes in our internal affairs, using reckless lies, are direct confirmation that the platform is tyrannical and that the Greater Albanian project is being realized with it. There are no human rights at stake at all, but rather a complete constitutional reorganization of Macedonia. If we allow them to continue these extremely unfavourable tendencies in the development of Macedonian society, we ourselves will be to blame for the loss of our own state.

Who knows which way – we are on the move.

STATES AND OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

(“In Europe there is no unitary state with two official languages on the entire territory”,

“Dnevnik”, February 17, 2017)

Branko Giorgievski gave an excellent analysis of the official languages in European states, which clearly showed the absurdity of the blackmail and ultimatum of the Macedonian Albanians, which are completely unconstitutional. The conclusion is clear – unitary states are not bilingual! Here we will dwell in a little more detail on the nine multilingual states, plus Kosovo.

Some of these states are (con)federations, and it is normal for them to have multiple languages. Such are Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Switzerland, while Luxembourg is a Voivodeship. The last three are also cantonal. In Belgium, the three official languages create permanent problems between the two national groups, the Flemish and the Walloons. They are constantly in conflict and because of this, the disintegration of Belgium is a frequent topic. It is no coincidence that our Albanians regularly mention Belgium as an example of how to organize Macedonia. It is, after all, a federation and is often on the verge of disintegration. Is a better association needed - why do our Albanians insist on the example of Belgium? Disintegration, what else and, here is Greater Albania!

Belgium is, however, completely different from Macedonia. There, the Flemish, Walloons and Germans are part of other nations and all have their own mother country. So, if Belgium disintegrates, all its nations will join their mother countries. God forbid, that will be the case with the Albanians here too, but what will the Macedonians do? This is their only state. That is precisely why the Bulgarianization of the

Macedonians was invented – so that they would have somewhere to hide!

The same background is also when the Albanians advocate that we follow Switzerland because it is a confederation, with cantons. Switzerland has existed since 1291, when three cantons united in a defensive league. The others joined gradually and today there are 26. The official languages are German, French, Italian and (Rhaeto)Romance, which has no connection with Romania but is some kind of heritage. The three other languages are from neighbouring countries, for parts of their peoples. When we talk about Switzerland, let's not forget that since 2009 the construction of mosques and minarets has been prohibited there. A referendum was held for this purpose. Luxembourg is made up of 12 cantons and has three official languages – Luxembourgish, German and French.

The fact is that in Finland, despite the fact that the Swedish minority is small, only 6 percent, their language is official. This is in a way only formally because the WORKING language in the state, officially and mandatory for everyone, is Finnish! At the very least, this had to be the solution in the law on the Albanian language. It had to be emphasized that Macedonian is a working language on the entire territory of the state. For Finland, however, it must be known that for centuries, until the end of the 19th century, it was a Swedish colony, with Swedish as the official language. For a long time, until the 1930s, the struggle for the use of Finnish lasted, and even today there are debates about the role of Swedish, which is actually some kind of dialect, a mixture, and is called Finnish-Swedish. Of the 336 municipalities in the country, only 49 are bilingual.

Ireland is a special case. It was over 700 years under British occupation and one part of it, Northern Ireland, is still part of the United Kingdom. All those years the Irish language was banned and today few people speak it. It is already a national problem. Due to their indifference, because with English the whole world is theirs, the Irish are joking at

their own expense – if we want Irish to be learned on a mass scale, we will have to ban it! Massive measures are being taken to learn the Irish language, but the results are not great. The elected presidents of the country must take an Irish language test before taking office, as proof that they are qualified!

In Northern Ireland, however, a war was waged for a long time for secession from the United Kingdom (Sinn Fein) and unification with Ireland, until an agreement was signed under American mentorship. According to it, the Irish will unite, it is only a question of when? Catholics, who are in favour of unification with Ireland, are slightly under 50 percent of the population, and it is expected that they alone will be in the majority. In a referendum, they will then outvote the unionists, who are mainly Protestants and want to remain in the United Kingdom.

In Belarus, as many as 72 percent speak Russian at home, while 11% speak Belarusian. Only 29.4 percent write, speak and read in Belarusian. That is why the Russian language is also official.

Until the separation from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 2006, the official language in Montenegro was Serbian. With the new constitution, the Montenegrin language was inaugurated and its standardization is underway. However, the Serbian language also remained official.

In Kosovo, Serbian is also an official language as a result of the illegal secession of the new Balkan state. It is a kind of “consolation prize” for the Serbs, to make it easier to swallow the defeat. Over time, the Albanians will certainly revoke this privilege.

The Papal State of Vatican City, where 812 inhabitants live, unless someone has died in the meantime, does not have an official language. Italian is the most widely used but many others are also used, according to religious needs.

All other European countries, a total of 37, use only one official language throughout their territory. Macedonia should not be an exception.

Finally, when it comes to languages, let us also mention that in the USA there are over 60 million people whose native language is Spanish. They are over 19 percent of the total population. The fact is, however, that the Spanish language does not have any official treatment in the USA, and there is not a single state university in this language!

PHOTOGRAPHS



After presenting credentials to the British Queen, Elizabeth II, at Buckingham Palace, toast from the Marshal of the Court, 1994



Elizabeth II

1997

Philip

Dedication by the British Queen, Elizabeth II, and Prince Philip, during their farewell visit to Buckingham Palace at the end of their term, in London, in 1997



Tuesday
24 May
1994

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London

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for Independent
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See page 12 for details



MR NIKOVSKI'S BIG DAY

**How green is your borough?
A city-wide survey** *page 5*

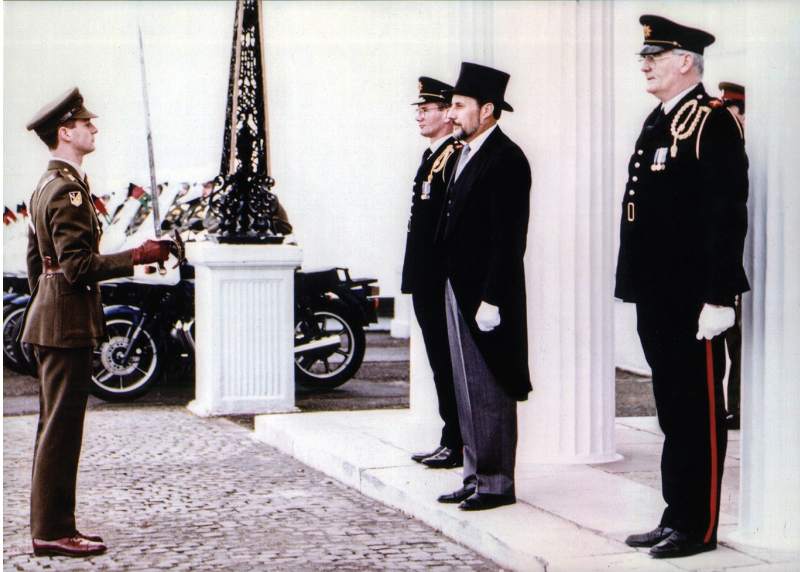
**Them hopeless 2.30am
underground blues** *page 7*

FULL ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENTS LISTINGS START ON PAGE 8

On the occasion of the presentation of the credentials at Buckingham Palace, the weekly magazine of one of the most influential British newspapers, The Independent, published a four-page report, with several pictures, one of which was on the cover, in 1994.



Above: Presentation of credentials to the President of Ireland, Mary Robison, in Dublin, 1994 Below: Military honours in Dublin, during the presentation of credentials





Sendihesra Makedoniu, Hr. Risto Nikovski -
17. XI. 1995. *Vigdís Finnbogadóttir*

With the President of Iceland, Vigdís Finnbogadóttir, after presenting her credentials, in 1994



In 1977, in Beijing, with Tito and Deng Xiaoping, the man who took China from the 19th to the 22nd century, as the greatest world wonder of all time



Dedication by Tito, in Beijing, in 1977



Above: In Havana, Cuba, at a meeting of President Tito, with Syrian President Hafez El Assad, in 1979

Below: The Yugoslav delegation, which participated at the 6th Summit of the Non-Aligned Countries in Havana, Cuba, together with Tito, at the end of the summit, in 1979





With Russian President Vladimir Putin in the Kremlin, after presenting his credentials, in 2004



In Ohrid, in 2003, as host to the Bulgarian Prime Minister, former Emperor Simeon II of Saxe-Coburg, on a trip through Macedonia



METODIJA ANDONOV-CHENTO AWARD

presented to

The Honourable Risto Nikovski

**For exemplary diplomacy as the Republic of Macedonia's
Ambassador to China, United Kingdom, Cuba, Ireland,
Albania and Russia.**

Toronto, February 7, 2015



UNITED MACEDONIANS ORGANIZATION OF CANADA

*The United Macedonian Organization of Canada awarded the author
the "Methodology Andonov - Chento" award in 2015.*

Ристо Никовский

США
И
НЕЗАВИСИМАЯ
МАКЕДОНИЯ
(1991–2013)

The book “The Role of the United States in the Macedonian Golgothas (1991 - 2013)” was published in Russia, by the Department of Slavic Studies, of the Russian Academy of Sciences, in 2017, under the title “The United States and Independent Macedonia (1991 - 2013)”

ЛЮБОВЬЮ И ЕДИНЕНИЕМ СПАСЕМСЯ



VIII МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ СЛАВЯНСКИЙ
ЛИТЕРАТУРНЫЙ ФОРУМ

ЗОЛОТОЙ ВИТЯЗЬ

ИРКУТСК, 2017

«БРОНЗОВЫЙ ВИТЯЗЬ»

НАГРАЖДАЕТСЯ

Ристо Никовский

(СКОПЬЕ, МАКЕДОНИЯ)

за книгу «США и независимая
Македония (1991–2013)»

Президент МСЛФ «Золотой Витязь»
Народный артист России

Н.П.БУРЛЯЕВ

In Irkutsk, in 2017, at the Russian “International Slavic Literary Forum”, the author was awarded for the book “The USA and Independent Macedonia (1991 - 2013)”



*Президентъ Ресѣублики
Македонии
Бранко Црвенковски*

*Его Превосходительствѣ
Господину Владимиру Владимировичу Пуѣину
Президентѣу Россійской Федераци*

Ваше Превосходительствѣ,

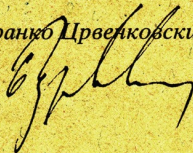
*Желая развивать и укреплять дружественные
отношения между нашими странами, я принял решение
аккредитовать господина Ристѣо Никовскоѣо в качестве
Чрезвычайноѣо и Полномочноѣо Посла Ресѣублики
Македония в Россійской Федерации с резиденцией в
Москве.*

Ваше Превосходительство, подтверждаю искренние пожелания счастья и благополучия Вам и народу Российской Федерации, которые я передаю через него от имени Республики Македонии и от моего имени, любезно Вас прошу оказать господину Ристю Никовскому полное доверие при сотрудничестве с Вами.

Скопье, 10 сентября 2004 года

Президент Республики Македония

Бранко Цвельковский



Министр иностранных дел

д-р Илинка Мийрева



The letter of credence, for accreditation in Russia, in 2004



CONSULAT GENERAL DE GRECE
SKOPLJE

No.F.800/21/AS 186L

NOTE VERBALE

Le Consulat Général de Grèce à Skopje présente ses compliments au Comité sur les Relations avec l'Etranger de la République Socialiste de Macédoine et a l'honneur de porter à sa connaissance ce qui suit:

Au cours de l'été dernier ont été endommagées les voitures suivantes, appartenant aux membres du personnel de ce Consulat Général dont les nommes suivent:

1. Konstantinos Assimakopoulos voiture immatriculée 47.M.001
2. Emmanouil Malelis 47.M.007
3. Theodoros Pavlides 47.A.003

Le 6 Décembre 1990 des inconnus ont brisé la vitre arrière de la voiture immatriculée XF 6120 appartenant à M.Vassilios Varnis, lui aussi membre du personnel du Consulat Général.

Il est à noter que tant la voiture de Messieurs Malelis, sur laquelle avait été inscrit en filigrane le mot "V.M.R.O.", ainsi que celles de Messieurs Varnis et Assimakopoulos n'ont pas été cambriolées. Par contre la voiture de Monsieur Pavlides avait subi un cambriolage.

Il s'agit sans doute de signes de vandalisme et par conséquent une meilleure surveillance de voitures des fonctionnaires est indispensable.

Le Consulat Général de Grèce à Skopje saisit cette occasion pour renouveler au Comité l'assurance de sa haute considération.



Au Comité sur les Relations
avec l'Etranger de la République
Socialiste de Macédoine

Note from the Consulate General of Greece, in Skopje, addressed to the Secretariat for Foreign Relations (MFA) of the Government of Macedonia, using our constitutional and historical name, in 1990

AHMETI ANSWERS TO SHEKERINSKA – THE MACEDONIANS WILL BECOME A MINORITY

(November, 2016)

Recently, the leader of DUI, Ali Ahmeti, openly told us – “Macedonians will become a minority. I am convinced that that time will come” (“Either full equality, or no government”, “Dnevnik”, November 1, 2016). This assessment by Ahmeti is not at all accidental. On the contrary. Explicitly, it reveals to us that this is a covert policy behind which both the leader and DUI stand. And not only them. How else could Ahmeti be so sure that this will happen? After all, this was elaborated as a goal in the “Platform for Solving the Albanian National Question”, published in Tirana in 1998. This national-chauvinistic and fascist threat of Ahmeti, accompanied by five “oaths”, almost all of which are outside the constitutional order, is certainly an answer to the question that Radmila Shekerinska, leader of SDSM, asked back in 2008. Here are the details.

Then, at the proposal of the Government, the Parliament passed a law that stimulated the birth rate in municipalities where it was low. It was a masterful move by the government to overcome the extremely negative demographic tendencies, without delving into the always fragile interethnic relations. It is generally known that the high birth rate in Albanian environments, characteristic of Macedonia and Kosovo, is in fact strictly controlled, carefully stimulated and not at all accidental. This was due to the Albanization of both Kosovo and Macedonia.

The aforementioned “Platform...”, at the request of President R. Mejdani, was adopted by the Albanian Academy of Sciences in October 1998. A strategy was developed for Macedonia that, with their high birth rate, Albanians would succeed in becoming the majority in the country and thus take control. Let us also recall that, precisely on the same platform, the war in Kosovo in 1999 followed, and then the rebellion of the Albanians in the Presevo Valley, in Southern Serbia in

2000, to end it all with the aggression from Kosovo on Macedonia (2001).

This is irrefutable evidence that making Albanians the majority in Macedonia is a long-term plan. The birth rate was stimulated by mosques. Back in the days of Yugoslavia, in a holiday newspaper of “Nova Makedonija”, on the occasion of May Day, there was a detailed factual analysis of how newly married Albanians were not allowed into mosques in Macedonia until they had their fifth child! It only took four years for that!

Such a practice, for example, did not exist in Albania because the birth rate there is at European levels. There was no need for a demographic explosion there because Albanians are an indisputable majority. This is great proof that the high birth rate in our country, but also in Kosovo, is not (only) a result of poverty but has a political connotation. In our country, however, the problem is in the municipalities where Macedonians live, who give birth to few children and the purpose of the law was to stimulate them. For these reasons, the law was supposed to prevent certain extremely negative demographic tendencies in the country with unforeseeable consequences.

Given that demographic policy being one of the important tasks of every government, in our country – emphasized, due to the processes that are underway, this law had to find full support among Macedonians. Albanians, on the other hand, could not challenge it because it was set on a principled basis that does not tolerate objections.

And, as usual, at key moments, our self-destruction syndrome comes to the fore. Shekerinska, then leader of SDSM, at a conference organized by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, criticized the law – “In my opinion, this is a project to create poverty. In Macedonia, children should be born everywhere”, to ask – “What will the Albanians and other ethnic communities think about this program, that it is an attempt to prevent demographic changes in Macedonia”? This was published in “Nova

Makedonija”, on 18/9/2008, under the title – “How will the Albanians perceive the program for a higher birth rate?”

Shekerinska was clear about the demographic changes in Macedonia, which she supported!? So, she did not have to wait for Ahmeti, years later, to explain to her that “Macedonians will become a minority” in their own country. But it was even clearer to her that she could not become prime minister, and she certainly had high hopes, if the Albanians opposed it. Without their support, she would not have had such a chance. The non-recognition of President Ivanov by the Albanians is a concrete confirmation of that. And, apparently, becoming prime minister was much more important and dearer to Shekerinska than the unacceptable demographic destruction of the country.

The Albanians have imposed a practice – any Macedonian, if they were against their key demands, would be prevented from achieving a high position! Thus, all Macedonians depend on them. They constantly court them and act as “globalists”, most often at the expense of vital Macedonian interests. Shekerinska’s example is just one of a million such examples.

Thus, Shekerinska, who is now the second person in the opposition, but is most likely also their spiritus movens (carrying force) and who would have brought us into NATO in six months, has personal merit for the demographic destruction of the Macedonian character of this country. Therefore, today, in general it should not surprise us that her party advocates bilingualism as a key step towards federalization. Basically, it is the same policy from 2008, only now upgraded and in a higher phase of destroying the Macedonians. Apparently SDSM believes that they can only come to power by selling out the Macedonian character of the state.

As usual, a bad thing does not go away on its own. It was the same in 2008. After Shekerinska’s statement, the next move was made by the Constitutional Court, which repealed the law! The explanation was ridiculous, as if it came from a nursery, and not from a top institution:

some kind of equality was being destroyed?! The comments in the bazaar were that the Constitutional Court was occupied by people appointed and/or close to SDSM and that they destroyed the law under the direct influence of the party! Terrible!

The explanation of “violated equality” is pure nonsense because the law was ingeniously conceived - it applies to municipalities with a low birth rate! The criterion is indisputable. The government is obliged to solve all problems wherever they arise, and there is no such thing as “violated equality” here! By the same logic, the Constitutional Court can annul perhaps over 60 percent of all government decisions, laws of the Assembly... Here’s why. In the same way - a) social assistance is also distributed (it is received by people with incomes below a certain amount, which makes those who are even slightly above it unequal); b) numerous incentives are distributed (... if you have land over three hectares, if the plantations are older than three years... Thus, everyone else is “discriminated against”); c) all tenders are announced with a certain condition (that an income of 10 million euros has been generated in the last three years... and all those who do not meet the condition - are not equal!).

In any case, this particular move by the Constitutional Court is shameful and is to the long-term detriment of the state and the people. If it is the result of political influence, which it probably is - the disgrace is the greatest.

With his statement, however, Ahmeti only confirmed that the high birth rate of Albanians in Macedonia is neither accidental nor spontaneous, and that he is behind it. The “Platform...”, which was a clear Greater Albanian strategy, was developed by the Albanian Academy of Sciences in cooperation with - “(Albanian) experts from Macedonia, Kosovo...”. It was precisely elaborated in it that Macedonia would be “conquered” demographically, through high birth rates. Such a strategy was not invented in 1998, it was only officially verified and promoted,

and the practice had been functioning for a long time. Ali Ahmeti, who “came down from the mountains” in 2001, has no merit for that.

It is noteworthy that in Tirana, in personal conversations with the American ambassador Limprecht, he openly supported the “Platform for resolving the Albanian national question...”. This shows that it was not indigenous, but that American regional interests were behind it. His explanation was - The Platform does not advocate any violence!?! Albanians are not afraid to invoke violence!?! However...

The events that followed (the Kosovo war in 1999, the bombing of Belgrade, 2001 in our country...) confirmed that violence followed because it was inevitable for the realization of the set goals, and with American participation. It was a “scientifically” developed plan for the realization of the Greater Albania project. The Albanians’ gain is historical, and is the result of the same interests as the USA! With the independence of Kosovo, Greater Albania is already over 70% - realized.

Shekerinska waited for the answer because both the Albanians and their strategic partner (the USA) needed time to open their cards. The current crisis, with the wiretapping, was not created by Washington just like that. Their main goal was to force the country to definitively capitulate, to make it easier to be rechristened. Shekerinska and her SDSM colleagues have played a prominent role in erasing the Macedonians. She and her boss have a key role in the destabilization of Macedonia, whose foundations have been shaking for two whole years. Practically since after the 2014 elections.

Regardless of the government, the way they want to overthrow it is unacceptable and extremely dangerous for the survival of the Macedonian people. The illegal wiretapped materials may have been recorded entirely in our country, but the “project”, which lasted for several years, was certainly not financed by Verushevsky. And Zaev, when he says - “now he it’s his mother”, may be revealing the truth! Apparently, Washington also thinks so, which has been working

intensively for 25 years to close the “Macedonian issue”, but without complete success. The same words – “when, if not now” (to finish the Macedonian), was recently used by the US ambassador in Skopje. So there should be no dispute about who instructed Zaev to say so! There are no coincidences in politics.

On the other hand, there should be no doubt that, just as in the 2001 war, now, in general, the USA is behind the DUI messages. If that were not the case, Ambassador Bailey would have had to speak out about Ahmeti’s unacceptable “visions” contained in the “oaths”. If Bailey can tell us every day that the SPO must work to fight crime, why is he silent now? There is no greater crime than calling for the overthrow of the constitutional order of the country. This means that the US agrees with the demands of DUI, Besa... for a new redefinition, or rather, the disintegration of Macedonia. To make up for what was missed in 2001, which is the complete erasure of Macedonians. Nothing else.

Now Shekerinska is certainly not asking herself – what will Macedonians say if the country becomes bilingual? The question would not be logical because her party is publicly demanding it – to become bilingual. The problem is that their ideas are diametrically opposed to the aspirations of the vast majority of Macedonians, as well as to international practice. The elections in December (2016) must verify that fact. Otherwise... it will be seen that we do not deserve our own state.

History always gives the final verdict. As usual, this happens with a delay in our country, but it will come. The readiness of Shekerinska and her like-minded people to unconditionally follow American interests, which are catastrophic for Macedonia and Macedonians, will sooner or later receive the deserved condemnation. This in no way relativizes the incompetence of the government, which, in turn, constantly repeats the nonsense that the United States is our “strategic partner”

DIPLOMATIC SPICES - HOW THE WORLD WORKS – THE CIA COUP IN UKRAINE

(August, 2017)

The roots and foundations of American policies towards Russia were laid by Zbigniew Brzezinski, one of the main ideologists of their foreign policy. They were defined long before the collapse of the USSR and Yugoslavia, more precisely in the late 1970s, when he was the national security advisor to President Jimmy Carter (1977 – 1981). At that time, he created the American anti-Soviet and anti-Russian policy, which continues to this day. Although, recently, he has not been very assertive in public, it should be known that in both election campaigns of Barack Obama (2008 and 2012), Brzezinski was his main diplomatic advisor. That says it all.

Under his direct control, the main diplomatic steps of the current US administration, which has been in power since 2009, were formulated. After all, the same policy was pursued before Obama. However, his period is exceptionally significant due to the classic coup d'état in Kiev in 2014, organized by the CIA. This opened a new page in the attempts to completely isolate and control Russia, and keep it out of world movements.

According to the Wall Street Journal – in 2022, five days before the Russian attack on Ukraine, Chancellor Scholz convinced Zelensky for neutrality, which would be signed by Joe Biden and Putin. He refused – the people wanted NATO! However, although he did not say so, the dictate was not from the people, but from the USA.

“Nova Makedonija” on 1/12/2025, however, published a text by a foreign author that, according to OSCE data, the Ukrainian army shelled Dombas more than three thousand (3,000) times in January 2022 alone! And, according to the Minsk Agreements, it was a period

of ceasefire! Ukraine deliberately and systematically ignored the Minsk 1 and 2 agreements. The war soon began.

Ukraine represents a complete turnaround in terms of American geopolitics in Europe, and the destruction of all hopes that, after the collapse of the USSR and the end of the Cold War, we are entering a period of stable cooperation and accelerated development. If we look at Brzezinski's basic views, it is crystal clear in his cult book - "The Grand Chessboard", that almost all American actions on the foreign policy front are imposed as logical and inevitable. With its policy directed against Russia, the US is clearly showing that it does not want a stable and prosperous Europe. Without cooperation with Moscow, such a Europe is unthinkable. From this segment key questions arise for us too – what kind of Balkans does the US want? Do they want to control Europe through the Balkans? Do they expect emigrants to neutralize Europe?

It is often said that the fate of the world is programmed by the Bilderberg Group, the Trilateral Commission and the American Council on Foreign Policy. The Rand Corporation and several other similar institutions also play a role, but the first three are considered the main and dominant ones. That may not be true but the way they function is fascinating. Although it may sound controversial, in essence, their actions are maximally democratic! They do not impose anything on anyone. It is the most sophisticated mutual and reciprocal brainwashing, in the direction of realizing common interests. In their maximally open exchanges of opinions, especially within Bilderberg, they crystallize models, methods and policies – how to realize their narrowest interests. When they return to their jobs, they do just that. And these are the top people from politics, from institutes, from think tanks, from the largest corporations, from the media... More precisely, from all the moving elements of Western societies...

The only remark that can be made about them is that they only take into account their own interests, through short-term goals, without

burdening themselves with long-term solutions. And, more importantly, they neglect the needs, aspirations and perspectives of the remaining 90 percent of the world. They ignore the fact that injustices in the world are increasing. The differences between the rich and the poor are deepening, which cannot lead to good, because it cannot last forever.

SINGAPORE, INDONESIA... AND OUR MISERIES

Singapore, in many ways – is a world wonder. The main credit for this goes to former Prime Minister and creator Lee Kuan Yew. Lee had a clear vision of what he wanted to do and he did it with great dedication. Thus, Singapore achieved an unprecedented economic boom. This can be illustrated by the following data (for 2000): Singapore had 4.45 million inhabitants; a GDP of 108.9, imports of 127.0 and exports of 137.0 – billions of dollars! Or, GDP per capita – \$24,500. In the same year, for comparison, the EU had slightly less than \$17,000 per capita.

One example, perhaps marginal, will show us very clearly how he and his government solved the problems. I know this firsthand because from 1986 to 1988 I worked at the Yugoslav Embassy in Jakarta, from where we were accredited to Singapore, and from 1988 to 1990, I was in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and from both destinations I regularly traveled to Singapore, especially from Jakarta, on official duty. In those years, gasoline in Malaysia was (much) cheaper than in Singapore. Other products were also cheaper, including restaurant food. Therefore, Singaporeans went to Malaysia to fill up on gasoline, to have dinner...

This was possible because Singapore, which is actually an island, is connected to Malaysia by a causeway like the one between Sveti Stefan and the mainland in Montenegro. Gasoline is an excise duty. Its cost price is very little (20 percent?) of the selling price, which is dominated by taxes that fill the budget of every country. Therefore, the Singaporean government, although it is one of the richest countries in the world, was concerned about the outflow of budget revenues and was looking for a solution.

The government is the one that solves problems, right, and Lee was efficient. Thus, shortly after the new “habit” of Singaporeans was established, the government decided that it was not possible to travel to Malaysia unless the car’s fuel tank was at least half full! That the government was not joking could be seen on the road leading to

Malaysia, where traffic signs with a fuel tank and an arrow indicating that it was half full were placed! Of course, this was also controlled at the border itself!

And the problem was solved! A large number of trips that were initiated by the desire to fill up with cheaper gasoline were interrupted. The state defended its interest. Malaysia did not like the measure taken by Singapore, and it was sharply criticized in the public media. However, there was no room for anger on the part of the government, nor for counteraction. It had to be respected that Singapore was protecting its interests.

Another interesting thing. In Singapore, a single system of fines was established, which included all offenses. All residents were registered on a single list, and the first fine for anything - throwing garbage on the street, speeding, parking illegally... was 50 Singapore dollars, the second 100, the third 200, the fourth 500 and each subsequent one - 1,000 dollars. Whoever wants to, let them go. In January 1986, while in Singapore, my wife and two children and I were traveling in a van to the airport, on our way to Jakarta, where I was assigned to work at the Yugoslav Embassy. We had bought all our equipment here, as it was cheaper. It was not rush hour and the highway was almost empty. The taxi driver was driving at the permitted 60 km/h. We were in no hurry but I asked him anyway why he wasn't driving faster. He told me that there was a red light on the roof of the van, and if he drove faster than 60 km it would light up! Anyone who was caught with the light on would be fined. If they already had four fines, they would have to pay 1,000 dollars! The goal with the fines – was achieved!

This entire introduction is aimed at seeing where we are. How we react and how we solve problems. In general, everything is the opposite here, both from Singapore and from normal life at home. We know or have all the diagnoses for bad things, but we do not go for therapy. Or if we do something, it is after a month, two, six... Usually – too late.

At the time when Ljubcho Georgievski was prime minister, in Macedonia there was chaos with imported used cars from Bulgaria, which were driven here with Bulgarian license plates. It was said that over 40 thousand cars were imported in this way. Macedonia spent hundreds of millions of euros on used cars! And, for a long time, no one did anything. Everyone knew, about it but did not care to do anything. All to the detriment of our country. So, the question is – was it all a coincidence?

A second case. I think that in 1994, the building of the former French consulate in Washington was purchased for about a million dollars. The building was quite damaged and required (major) reconstruction. We bought it and left it. A decade passed and the building, even more damaged by time, was repaired for a huge amount of money.

In the meantime, the neighbours living near our building protested because we had destroyed their surroundings. The US State Department also issued a statement, warning that the facility protected by law, was our duty to repair... By neglect we destroyed part of their history and part of their capital! This meant that by our sloppiness and incompetence we acquired a bad reputation which had an international political dimension! It certainly hasn't raised our ratings with the USA, the world's largest power! However, some may even be proud – that we have become an American problem!

There is another, perhaps even more regrettable side to all of this. After we bought the building, which is supposed to house the embassy and two to three more apartments, we continued to pay (high) rent for the facilities we used. According to some information, over two million dollars were paid in rent for a period of 10 years for another building while our building was falling apart. It is not difficult to calculate how much we would have saved if we had repaired the building on time. There is no one to blame for this but ourselves.

There is no one else to blame. Obvious mismanagement, obvious irresponsibility. The most visible – and incompetent were our

authorities. However, there is another side to this problem, which does not at all reduce the previous irresponsibility. The mistake is that someone conceived and bought a magnificent building for our Embassy in Washington! A poor country with a huge number of unemployed people, like ours, a country that has been surviving all these years in crisis situations, thanks to foreign interference, does not need this kind of building in Washington. The solution for the embassy should have been modest and functional.

It should not be forgotten that maintaining such a facility, in an expensive country like the USA, means high regular annual costs. Where was the money going to come from? From our poverty? In the US, however, from whom we constantly ask for help, we also show ourselves to be unrealistic megalomaniacs. The solutions for all our embassies in the world should reflect our capabilities. The fact that one of our recent ambassadors, precisely in the USA (UN), lived in an apartment/residence for which we paid 11,200 dollars in monthly rent only speaks of our inadequacy. Not only of the ambassador, who thereby legitimized his frivolity, let alone ran away not only to the government, but also to others in the country, who with the same excuse gave him their consent to rent the apartment. The responsibility of the one who gave the consent, which is the minister, is even greater than that of the ambassador who, probably, got lost in the glamour of the big capital or was used to living in luxury, at the expense of the people, from his previous diplomatic mission, for which there are indications.

The same ambassador could have lived a little further from the city center and paid three times less rent. If he had done that, all normal people, including his colleagues, would have appreciated him and his – our – country more.

Based on a longer diplomatic experience, it can be suggested, or proposed, that every more modest and not very rich country, like Macedonia, should have representative buildings for its embassies only in neighbouring countries. And that's it. In large, developed and rich

countries, there should be decent solutions but not with special buildings like in Washington. If we don't know how to act anymore, we should be interested in how countries like Sweden, Finland, Denmark... Latvia, Estonia... solve their problems and everything will be clear to us. Most of these countries have embassies in collective buildings where several institutions work, and not in separate buildings.

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Many years ago, a very instructive example of efficient problem solving was in Indonesia. Jakarta is a huge city, spread out in a tropical lowland, polluted, and the temperatures and humidity are unbearable all year round. But, as with everything, there was a way out of that: less than an hour and a half's drive from Jakarta (about 60 km), on the road to the interior of the country, in the direction of Bandung, famous for the conference held there in 1955, which is in a way a precursor to Non-Alignment, towards Yogyakarta and Bali, there are beautiful mountains, with an ideal climate of around 20 degrees Celsius and normal humidity. In Puncak, for example, which is also a botanical garden, in the wider area there are hotels and countless holiday villas that are rented out for short or long term leases, all of which are at an altitude of 1,200 to over 1,500 meters above sea level. Therefore, everyone who could, especially foreigners, fled Jakarta during the weekends.

But it wasn't all that simple. Walking to Bogor, a small town at the foot of the mountains and connected to a highway, was no problem. On Friday afternoons and Saturday mornings, there were no problems on the relatively narrow road that climbed towards Puncak and other places. The problems started on Sunday afternoons, when everyone was heading towards Jakarta. The narrow section of the road would get congested and blocked, and returning home became a trauma for all travelers. The 20 kilometers between Puncak and Bogor, which usually took about 15 minutes to cover downhill, took three, four... hours on Sunday afternoons. From early afternoon on Sundays until late at night, it was impossible to travel. The road was jammed with cars.

We lived in Jakarta from January 1986 to October 1988. Almost three years. We spent many weekends in Puncak. But the return from there changed our minds and we stopped going. Fortunately, a solution was soon found. Whether it was the Indonesians who thought of it or someone from outside advised them, it is not important. The problem was solved. On Sunday afternoons, from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., the traffic police established a special regime according to which one could drive in one direction: only down, from Puncak to Bogor. With the new regime, thousands of cars were already in Bogor in just ten minutes thanks to this solution, weekenders' interest in Puncak, which, due to the weekly crowds, had almost ceased, was restored. The conclusion is clear – when you want it, anything is possible. There is always a solution, you just have to look for it.

CHINESE (SELF) DISCIPLINE

Serving in China (from 1972 to 1976) was useful in many aspects. The key was that the Embassy was one of the largest Yugoslav embassies. With ten accredited diplomats, it was on the level of Washington, London, Paris, Bonn, New York. It had top diplomats, of world class. It was also important that China is one of the most important countries in the world and, in principle, everyone sends experienced diplomats there. This means that, in addition to learning from your own people, you can also learn from foreigners. You can also learn from the Chinese, who have more than a thousand year civilization behind them.

At that time, the head of the American Liaison Office in Beijing (1974 – 1976) was George Bush Sr., who, upon his return, became first the director of the CIA and then the president of the United States (1989 – 1993). The two countries still did not have full diplomatic relations, because instead of China, the United States had long recognized Taiwan. The United States recognized China only in early 1972, after President Nixon's historic visit to Beijing.

All this introduction is for the sake of Miller's story, First Secretary at the Embassy of the German Democratic Republic, then East Germany. He was highly regarded in the diplomatic corps because he was a prominent sinologist, an expert on China. He had studied at the famous Peking University and was already on duty at their Embassy for the second time. In total, he had spent over 10 years in China! Their Embassy was opposite the Yugoslav one and we occasionally went bowling together at the International Club, followed by a joint dinner. That's how Miller and I became friends, with whom we were also members of the Second Secretaries' Club.

The Club included first, second and third secretaries from 15 countries from all continents. The meetings were every second Thursday followed by a joint lunch, in a new, previously undiscovered Chinese restaurant, and we took turns as hosts according to the occasion.

This is the story of Miller's friend, a Chinese man, with whom he studied international relations and for the entire time (four years) they were roommates in the student dormitory in Beijing. Spending four years with someone in the same room is really not a short period of time. Miller himself emphasized this. They were really very close. After completing their studies, both became diplomats. Miller got a job in the East German Foreign Ministry in East Berlin, and his friend in the Chinese one in Beijing. The Chinese friend was already in a high position in the Foreign Ministry and they continued their cooperation only on an official basis. At that time, the Chinese were not allowed to associate with foreigners. It was forbidden and strictly controlled.

It was precisely at that time, while I was in Beijing, that a congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) was announced and expected to be held. The congress had not been held for a long time because of the Cultural Revolution that devastated the country from 1966 to 1969. Basically, it was a struggle for power and, in one way or another, it was still going on. Until 1975/6. The consequences were terrible. The internal political situation in China remained quite turbulent, in many ways uncertain, and therefore the new CPC congress in 1975 was expected with exceptional interest by both the Chinese and foreigners. Due to the insufficiently settled situation in the country, and the numerous problems and uncertainties, the Chinese treated the holding of the congress as the greatest secret. It was supposed to show how the country had stabilized after the turbulent events that had lasted for too long.

In circumstances of general expectation of the congress, after a reception or similar protocol event, Miller met his long-time Chinese friend on the street, where they could talk freely. There were absolutely no conditions for anyone to eavesdrop on them. As an experienced diplomat, Miller took advantage of the situation and asked him – it is clear that the CPC congress will be held soon, when do you expect it to be held? Sooner or later the congress will certainly take place, his friend replied. Miller did not give up and continued: There are many current

problems at the moment, what do you think, which topics will dominate the congress? All relevant issues of interest to the state will be considered, was the answer. Persistent, Miller still asked: do you expect the congress to bring about major personnel changes in the top echelons of government? If there is a need for any personnel changes, they will certainly be implemented was the conclusion! However, the Chinese told him – listen to the news on the radio, at 8 p.m. in the evening!

Diplomats all over the world, after conversations with high-ranking domestic officials, in most cases wrote encrypted telegrams to their foreign ministries, in which they usually provide precious information, obtained firsthand, which cannot be considered a secret. But what should our East German report? There was not a word from which he could conclude anything, make any assumptions about the congress of the party that runs the country and at which, without a doubt, all the main directions for the further development of Chinese society will be defined.

The conversation took place around 3:00 p.m. In the evening, on the news on Radio Beijing, at 8:00 p.m., the main news was that the congress had been held three days ago! The Chinese knew everything, but he said nothing to his friend. Apart from listening to the radio! Miller, however, was among the first to hear the news! The others did not listen to the radio! It was a matter of unprecedented self-discipline, which was worthy of the highest respect! And how we behaved, you can conclude for yourself. Usually, we say more than we know!

JAPANESE DIPLOMATIC MANIPULATION

In 1987, while I was working in Jakarta, Indonesia, I led the Yugoslav delegation to the World Jute Conference held in Bali. I did not get the role for anything else except that I was nearby. Yugoslavia was not interested in the event. Jute is a tropical plant that is used in the textile industry, from which mats, bags, ropes, decorative objects are made... At that time, the world's largest producer was Bangladesh, now India is mentioned, which means the same region. The largest consumer, however, was Japan.

Many countries were present, as the terms of international jute trade were being negotiated, including prices. The Japanese delegation, as the main importer, was expected to play a major role. And what happened? The head of the Japanese delegation – barely spoke English!

The first impression was confusing, but it soon became clear that this was no coincidence but pure tactics. The main topic was supposed to be the price of jute, and concessions were expected from – Japan, which was not ready to change the terms of trade. Therefore, they sent a man who did not know English and no agreement was possible! No one could understand him! He just kept repeating – that is not expected! Everyone else was helpless because there was no room for discussion, for an exchange of arguments... or even for a fight!

The conference was unsuccessful for producers, but successful for importers, thanks to the almost “silent” Japanese representative.

And that is diplomacy!

SOMETHING ABOUT FIDEL CASTRO

Castro is undoubtedly a historical figure. He established a system on the border of the most powerful country in the world, the United States of America, which Washington has been unable to swallow for more than 65 years. And they could do nothing about it. The fact is that there were numerous assassination attempts on his life, an organized invasion at the Bay of Pigs in 1961... All without any success. Castro allied himself with the USSR, and thus managed to survive. He also placed Soviet missiles 100 kilometers from the US border. That was unacceptable for Washington, just as it is now unacceptable for Moscow – Ukraine joining NATO! In October 1962, it was the occasion for the USA to bring the world closer to nuclear war! The agreement between Nikita Khrushchev and John Kennedy averted the catastrophe.

Although, on the whole, Khrushchev achieved his goal – he received American security guarantees for Cuba, and managed to withdraw the American Pershing missiles from Turkey, which were aimed at the USSR. Moscow did not forgive Khrushchev for this episode with the USA and considered the withdrawal of the missiles from Cuba a defeat for the USSR. Therefore in 1964, a little over a year after the missile crisis, Khrushchev was removed from all positions. If this is true, and I am not sure that Khrushchev's removal was a result (only or mainly) of this crisis, I believe that the precise moral winner of the conflict was Moscow.

Long after that, around 2020, information emerged that Castro was also dissatisfied with how this crisis was resolved. There is certainly some truth to that, since my time in Cuba (1977 – 1981), it was known that Khrushchev completed the entire operation directly with Kennedy, without any consultations with Castro. Although Castro was at the center of the crisis, Cuba was completely excluded from the negotiations for a solution.

Castro was a major figure wherever he appeared. Everyone was interested in him. He also had a positive effect in Cuba, such as in education, healthcare, sports... but, all in all and in many ways, he left the country behind, in the 19th century. In severe poverty. It is undeniable that he was exceptionally charismatic, intelligent, communicative... A true leader. He was a great orator, an exceptionally informed person... but the final result of his rule over Cuba, which lasted from 1959 to 2008, or a whole 49 years - is not positive.

On January 1, 1959, with a group of 70-80 comrades, Castro managed to overthrow the regime of the dictator Batista. They set off from the south of the country towards Havana, and on the way they grew in numbers, and the “band” of rebels managed to overthrow the regime, although it was strongly supported by the United States. At first, the masses broadly supported the changes that Castro was implementing. There was strong enthusiasm among the people, because people gained - freedom and equality. For example, there was no racial intolerance between blacks and whites at all.

At the rallies, in the José Martí Square in Havana, up to two million people gathered to listen to his speeches. You can't bring that many people by force. They will run away from you! At first, Castro spoke for six or more hours. He had an unprecedented gift for that. He knew how to establish contact with the masses and lead them. It is known when he told the million-strong people – American imperialism – will pass! No! – the masses replied. In an even louder voice, he repeated – American imperialism, will pass! No, the square roared. It will pass, Castro continued – to the garbage dump of history! (Passaran a la basura de la istoria!). Delirium in the masses, what else.

During his service in Cuba (1977 – 1981), Castro spoke at rallies for about two hours. He never read his speeches. We noticed that the main party newspaper, Granma, never published his speech in the next day's paper, but only one day later. Curious whether they had made corrections to the speeches in the meantime, I recorded them several

times in a row. After they were published, I compared them with the recorded ones, and absolutely nothing had been changed or tweaked. Not a single letter. Everything was as it was said!

When Castro established communication with the audience, the most interesting part of the speeches was when he spoke. In my time, for example, the energy crisis had already begun, and he would ask, “Do you want me to talk to you about the energy problems?” Everyone would answer in unison, “Yes!” A detailed and top-notch analysis of the energy situation in Cuba and the world followed. There were other such questions.

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In May 1978, the World Amateur Boxing Championship was to be held in Belgrade. Cuba was a superpower in this sport, along with the USSR and the USA. Havana was clearly interested in the championship. A large Cuban delegation was preparing for Belgrade, headed by the Minister of the Interior, who was a member of the Politburo, among the top six or seven people in the country. The ambassador organized a dinner for the official part of the delegation. Arriving at the dinner, in front of the residence I saw a person whom I knew was part of Castro’s closest security.

I immediately told the ambassador, Vejzagić, that we should be ready because Fidel Castro will definitely come! Don’t talk nonsense, he said back. He will come, I emphasized to him – we should have something to treat him with! No matter, the ambassador was persistent. Vejzagić was a former youth leader at the Yugoslav level and, I think, this was his second ambassadorial term. But, he was completely barefoot when it came to diplomacy. And not only that, there weren’t many such failures in Yugoslav diplomacy, but he is proof that, nevertheless – there were some.

A little before midnight, Castro arrived. The ambassador got confused and ran away. We chatted until after 03:00. Fidel radiated relaxation,

communication was as natural as possible, he knew how to listen, and his reactions were always top-notch. Whatever the topic, he had the latest and most authoritative information. An impressive person, in every way.

He also revealed the purpose of his visit – he was worried that the judges in Belgrade might be unfair to the Cubans! Given that boxers from the USA were among their main opponents, he was afraid that the judges would be in their favour. He was looking for a way in which we, as hosts, could possibly help them?

Cuba did great at the championship. They won five gold and three silver medals! They were by far the best.

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There is no doubt that Castro considered Tito his main competitor on the world stage. He was deeply jealous of him because he knew that he was a leader – respected throughout the world. When he was visiting Yugoslavia, he insisted on seeing Brioni. He wanted to do something similar to Cuba. This is an attempt to give personal assessments of the similarities and differences between them, although a complete and in-depth analysis can only be made by a top world political analyst, who knows the biographies of both well.

Both were leaders. Tito, undeniably of great world stature, with serious results, and Castro – world-famous, controversial, but with limited achievements. He played a positive international role – in Africa. According to the available data, in both Angola and Ethiopia, he engaged militarily on his own initiative, without a directive from Moscow. If this is true, it reveals his ambitions to have a broader role on the international stage, primarily to be equal to the Soviets, but certainly to come closer to Tito, if not to surpass him. He was lucky that, for several reasons, Cuba was at the center of American political frustrations, and it was precisely his confrontation with Washington that brought him into the world's public spotlight. After the fall of dictator

Batista, the American blockade of Cuba suited Castro and he knew how to make the most of it. But above all, for personal promotion, without much regard for the people.

It is undeniable that Castro also gained an international role through his close friendship with the USSR. Second, by copying the communist system, which first appeared in that part of the world, on the borders of the United States, as an example and a challenge for other poor countries. Third, by military engagement in Angola, and then in Ethiopia... Overall, these two military engagements in Africa placed him personally in a broader international framework.

If it is true that Cuba got involved in Angola on the side of the communists, on its own initiative, and not on orders from Moscow, which needs to be verified, it is the best indicator of Castro's personal ambitions, but also of the relationship he had built with the Kremlin leadership. This means that Castro, in order not to be a pawn in the hands of Moscow, was ready for serious initiatives, with which he would be one step ahead of the Russians! And that is precisely what the Americans feared the most!

By the way, at the time when I was working in Havana, it was known that the aid that Cuba received directly from the USSR in various ways amounted to about 10 million dollars – per day! Or, in total, about 3.5 billion dollars per year. Firstly, the USSR bought large quantities of sugar from Cuba, at significantly higher prices than world prices, and at the same time sold it oil, at significantly lower prices than world prices. This was the largest transfer of Soviet aid.

But let's get back to Fidel Castro. There should be no doubt that he wanted to become a world leader, similar to Tito, which he failed to do. It is logical to assume that his idea was to realize this through the Non-Aligned Movement. The VI Conference of Non-Aligned Movements, which was held in Havana in 1979, when Tito was already nearing the end of his life, is also proof of this. Tito died the following year, in 1980. It is highly probable that Castro calculated to succeed him,

although he did not show himself more prominently in that regard. He was certainly aware that the circumstances were not exactly favourable for him, for several reasons.

In a superficial analysis, it can be concluded that the key difference between the two was the fact that everything Castro undertook and did was aimed at gaining personal attention, recognition, reputation and prestige. His goal was to distinguish himself, not to do something useful for his country and its people. The impression is strong that Cuba was secondary to his efforts! Tito, on the other hand, was always carried by the vision, the idea, the plan and the project, and he dedicated himself to it, and the recognition came to him for what he had done. Castro was quite the opposite.

Both Tito and Castro were excellent in every situation. They reacted quickly and correctly and usually achieved the maximum. However, there was an important difference in this. It seems that, even in such situations, Fidel's inspiration came from the desire for glory. For Tito, on the other hand, the most important thing was the result, and from a broader perspective, not from a personal one. The rest came by itself, as a consequence of what had been achieved.

One of the main differences is the fact that Tito was not selfish, in the broadest sense. He loved life and wanted, tried and worked to make the people as good as possible. He was drastically different from all the leaders in the Eastern European countries. In all of them, including the USSR, the people were miserable, as in Cuba, and the elites had milk. Castro also didn't give a damn about how the people were doing.

In Havana, during the Non-Aligned Conference, I personally saw for myself Tito's attitude towards the people around him. When he met the people who cared for him personally, he would ask them if they had eaten, if they had slept well... You might say a trifle, but it's not. It shows feeling and care for the other. And you either have that or you don't. Thirdly – there isn't. Tito certainly wasn't acting. There was no need for anything like that.

Tito was also a reformer. He was looking for solutions for the system, so that it would function better in the interests of the people. He abolished the failed cooperatives, introduced self-government, and began a deep reform in 1965... On the international level, he introduced revolutionary changes with the non-aligned...

Castro did not change anything. Surely he was afraid of change? Probably rightly so.

We also mentioned the VI Non-Aligned Conference in Havana in 1979. It was clear that this was the last world event for Tito. Our delegation, in complete secrecy, began preparing a declaration that would recognize him for his historic contribution to the Movement. Since the host country, as the chairman of the Conference, especially at its closing, has great room for maneuver, there was a fear that Cuba, and Castro personally, might try to prevent the declaration. Hence the secrecy.

And precisely at the final part of the Conference, without any prior announcement, the main members of the holding, India, Egypt, Yugoslavia, Indonesia and several others, came out with the Declaration, without the hosts having any idea that such a thing was being prepared. It was a real success for the Yugoslav delegation and a nice recognition for Tito.

By the way, the Conference ended in the morning, after 07:00, and it was supposed to be the previous evening. As usual, there were problems with the harmonization of the final document and in the end it was postponed... In the villa near the Congress Center, the President and I waited to be called to the final session. Somewhere around 22:00, our delegation announced that the end was not in sight, that it would certainly be extended until the morning hours so that the President could rest. By the way, out of habit, the President got up every morning at 06:00.

His doctors immediately began to insist that he should rest. He had been on his feet all day. Tito laughed and said – these are historical moments,

and there is no time for sleep here! But, let us watch a movie, so that the time will pass faster. And so it was. We all settled down in the hall and watched a movie. It was well known that Tito was a great fan of movies and his Cabinet, on all trips, would bring him movies, just in case.

Naturally, on such occasions, time passed slowly, and there was no sign of the delegation for a long time. They, in fact, had their say – there would be no solution until morning. And so it was. Somewhere around 07:00 they called us to come to the congress hall. Imagine, Tito had not slept for 25 hours and was feeling unwell, and all of us could barely keep our eyes open.

We went to the hall, took our seats, and the final session of the Conference began immediately. Soon, without any prior announcement, the President of India asked for the floor and went to the podium. He read the Declaration that acknowledged Tito, to the great and visible surprise of Castro, who was presiding. We, who knew about the this, deliberately analyzed Castro's reaction. And, normally, on such occasions, Tito should have thanked him for the great recognition. Tito went to the podium and began to speak, and Leko Lontsar, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Yugoslavia, sitting a few seats away from me, almost started to groan loudly - wow, what a mistake we made, we didn't prepare a text for Tito! We didn't foresee that Tito would have to speak!

Meanwhile, Tito gave a wonderful speech. In his familiar style. He looked relaxed and was concentrating fully. After 25 hours without sleep!

We returned to the nearby villa on foot. Tito was visibly pleased with the recognition, which he had not known about. Then, several pictures were taken of the entire delegation that was there, which are a fond memory. The doctors again insisted that Tito rest, but he insisted that these were historical moments and that we should all have breakfast together! And so we did.

In the meantime, a terrible storm hit Havana. It was speculated that it was a belated greeting from the CIA. The airport was flooded, and our plane with Tito was the last to take off. The pilots were sure that there was no problem and that they could. When they were already taking off, the plane's rear wheels splashed a little bit of the rising water. Fortunately, without consequences. After that, the airport was closed for two days!

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At the Sixth Non-Aligned Conference in Havana, I had the unprecedented opportunity and honour of being Liaison Officer to President Tito. I also have a picture of him welcoming the President of Syria, Bashar El Assad, which I found by chance at an exhibition in Skopje, years later. At the beginning of the conversation, El Assad said to him – “Mr. President, I have just arrived in Havana and my first thought was to meet you as soon as possible, to ask you for advice on how to solve the problems I am facing in my country”! El Assad showed extraordinary respect for Tito. Many other presidents thought the same. Tito's funeral is proof of that.

During that week, while Tito was in Havana, I had the honour of dining at the same table with him several times; of shaking his hand several times, during which I have an unforgettable impression that his hand was as hard as stone, which certainly reflected his strong character; of watching him talk to the people who cared for him, and seeing him as a humane man who took care of everyone; to make sure that he was always tolerant and attentive to his associates...

The highlight of all this was the moment when Tito had about two hours of free time and the idea was to take a walk around Havana. The head of his Cabinet, General Badurina, immediately started the walk and told me – Risto, you are the only one who knows Havana so it is your turn to take the president for a walk. We quickly headed towards the Mercedes, together with Tito's adjutant, Admiral Kostich. As a rule, he always sat in the front seat, next to the driver. When we got to the

car, I said to Kostich – you sit next to the president, I will sit in the front seat. Tito reacted immediately – no need, you sit here. So, next to him. That’s how it was.

We drove around Havana for about an hour, I gave the driver directions and told the president about the situation in Cuba, about Havana, which is now neglected, that once, during the time of the dictator Batista, was the main destination for rich Americans; about the great poverty of the people and the coupon system; about the dependence on the USSR; about Fidel Castro’s policies; about the popularity he nevertheless enjoys among the people... The next day, I received a watch with a dedication from Tito!

Unfortunately, it was stolen when my house in Skopje was broken into.

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Fidel Castro, who was not a communist, but was forced to be close to Moscow because he had no other choice in order to survive, once correctly assessed – in its essence, socialism is very similar to Christianity! I think it was very close to the real definition of this system. When you read the ideological programs of socialism and communism, they are equal to the values of Christianity! However, the problem was that in reality: in the Eastern Bloc, in the USSR itself, in China, and in other socialist countries – the practice was extremely bad and unacceptable. Not to mention Albania with Enver Hoxha. In all these countries, the values of socialism as a system were denied in the most crude way, and its ideological structure was ignored. The problem was that Marx and other ideologists expected socialism and communism to win in the rich countries, and not in the poorest. Their analyses referred to developed capitalism and the obvious exploitation that was carried out on the workers. Unfortunately, the expected revolutions did not happen there!

AMBASSADOR WITHOUT CREDENTIALS

I began my mandate in Beijing in the fall of 1972, when the ambassador was Bogdan Orescanin. A general, a close friend of Tito and the creator of the concept of a national defense of Yugoslavia. Previously, he was a military attaché in London. His wife, Sonja Dapcevic-Orescanin, was a scientist, a sinologist, a specialist in China, perhaps the best in Yugoslavia. Bogdan was a strategist, he knew how to prioritize and concentrate on what was most important. It was a pleasure to be in the collegiums that he led in an extraordinary way. The following year, when Sonja and Bogdan left China, almost all the ambassadors were there to send them off. They were so popular and appreciated. That had never happened to anyone before or since.

He was replaced by Milojko Drulovich, a famous Serbian and Yugoslav politician and former director of the newspaper “Politika”. It is interesting how we waited for him at the airport, along with the Chinese protocol. No one knew him personally, and the accountant Chuchuz said that he would recognize him. The passengers began to get off the plane from Paris and on two or three occasions Chuchuz pointed to someone and all of us, about twenty, as if on command, headed towards the person indicated, but we soon retreated. Chuchuz was wrong. The passengers thinned out and when another one appeared, Chuchuz told us - there he is! We headed towards him but we quickly saw that we had startled the man - he almost started to run away.

The ambassador did not arrive! There were no mobile phones and similar gadgets back then. At the Embassy, we were told that he would not be coming because his letters of credence were not ready and he would wait for them in Paris! He arrived on the next plane, a week later. Planes from Europe to China were rare. Oh my, again without letters of credence! We explained the situation to the Chinese and they said that there was no problem – we would hand over an empty envelope and we would forward the credentials to them when they

arrived. And so we did. I have a picture of when we pretended to present our credentials to the then President of China, Wu Teh, who I think was already over 90 years old, and handed him an empty envelope!

This is probably the only case in world diplomacy – of being accepted as an ambassador without real credentials.

WHEN THEY LEAVE YOU NAMELESS!

The odyssey of one of our citizens at the San Francisco airport really looks like a parody. Like something out of Gogol's comedies. Our citizen, with proper documents, was returning home after a stay with his son who lived in the USA. Fortunately, although he did not suspect any problems, he arrived at the airport quite early. He handed over his luggage, stood in the long line of passengers and, walking in a zigzag manner, waited to be directed to one of the passport control counters. Convinced that everything else was just a technicality and full of wonderful impressions of the country and his grandchildren, he was already home in his thoughts. He handed over his passport to the officer, not realizing what drama he would experience over the next 60 minutes.

He noticed that the officer was leafing through his passport for a long time and looking at the computer. Until then, everything was fine and there was no reason for any suspicion.

– Excuse me, please, but your country is not in my computer, the clerk told him after a while!

The man was left speechless. What could he say, what could he explain?

– How could it not be there, he replied. I came from there about twenty days ago. I live in Skopje, the capital, where your Embassy is located, where I got my visa, he continued already aware that things had become complicated.

– Sorry but your country is not in my computer, the clerk replied decisively.

– Check for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the salutary idea came to our man's mind!

– It already is, the clerk reacted.

The man was relieved. He thought that the storm had passed. But it was not so.

The clerk continued to leaf through the passport and look at the monitor, and after a while told him that if your country is the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, then you are lying. Your passport does not correspond to (the name of) your country!

A new explanation for the collapse of the SFRY, for the injustice done to us with the name, for the situation we have been brought into through no fault of our own... But the clerk did not show much understanding. And she was right. Something was definitely wrong: either the passport or the name of the country, she concluded! She left the counter, apparently seeking consultation with higher-ups. After a while, she returned with another woman. The unpleasant conversation continued, which continued to unfold in a vicious circle.

- If it is as you claim, said the new one, then why aren't Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina... also former Yugoslav...?

A completely normal and logical question that has no proper answer. Again, explanations followed, their consultations with others who, nevertheless, somehow opened the way for returning home.

But the devil never rests.

The meticulous official found a new problem. You are traveling via Belgrade, she said, but there is no Serbian visa! The computer says that you need a visa for Serbia!

New explanations, that the trip began via Belgrade, that a visa was not and is not needed...

Already on the plane, still confused by everything that had happened to him in the last 60 minutes, the man (rightly!) was thinking about the world's injustices and their consequences for ordinary people!

CHINESE IMPRESSIONS

In Beijing, there was a Second Secretaries Club, which included first, second and third secretaries from 15 countries around the world. Every second Thursday, lunch was organized, as a rule, in a new, previously unknown restaurant. As hosts, we took turns according to the precedence, or rather – the date of membership.

At that time, Chinese restaurants, which most often specialized in food from various provinces and regions of the vast country – were not available to foreigners. The restaurants in large hotels were “left” for them. There was also an International Club for Diplomats, with a large restaurant, swimming pool, bowling alley, grocery store, barbershop... which, however, was not available to Chinese.

When it was my turn to be a host, I took them to a restaurant in the northeastern part of the country, close to Korea, where the specialty was dog meat. It is a top specialty of both North and South Korea. It is one nation. In order to go to that and other Chinese restaurants, we requested special permits from the Chinese authorities. As a rule, we received them.

A good portion of the Club members were sinologists, specialists in China, who spoke Chinese. According to the signs in the restaurant, they immediately read what we were going to eat, but did not comment. As is customary, before lunch began, I greeted the guests, apologized to them that I would not treat them to typical Macedonian or Yugoslav food, but nevertheless we would eat something that is popular in part of China and, especially, in Korea – and that is dog meat! There was a commotion but no one protested.

Chinese cuisine is famous. For many, it is by far the best, most diverse, and most delicious in the world. It was not at all clear what the specialty was – all the dishes were delicious. It was our first time in such a

restaurant. At the end, when they were leaving, some of those present, instead of the usual, greeted with au, au.

Almost as a rule, the first to leave from these lunches were the diplomats from Japan, South Korea and Singapore. That happened this time too and a European diplomat commented – have you noticed, he said, that these colleagues of ours almost always leave first? And he emphasized – obviously, unlike us Europeans, Americans... they have no time to waste! Whether we admit it or not, he continued, this means that they are much more dedicated to work than us, who can hardly wait to chat and chat! To conclude – therefore, it is no coincidence that their countries are developing the fastest!

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In the 1970s, China was under a serious communist dictatorship. Everything was under strict state control. Everyone, both men and women, were even dressed in the same way in the so-called Mao shirts – dark blue blouses, buttoned up to the neck, and the same kind of trousers. There was one television channel, on which there was nothing to watch. Since the Cultural Revolution, theaters had been closed and concerts were banned. The country was in the 19th century, and at its beginning. And today, when we are all in the 21st century, China is already in the 22nd. Modern China is the greatest world wonder of all time. The progress that this country has experienced in a period of 30 years is something incredible and unattainable.

In my time, however, we received important information from radio news and through diplomatic channels, mainly from Hong Kong, either through newspapers or through bulletins of their institutes, which followed China in detail and in depth... Thus, we learned that there was prostitution, although it was unthinkable. The sign of recognition was – the penultimate top button of the blouse unbuttoned! The people are indestructible, even in terrible dictatorships!

Travel outside Beijing, except to nearby tourist attractions – the Great Wall of China, the Ming Tombs, the Summer Palace and the West Bank – was prohibited. For everything else, permission had to be sought. Although I was the 10th, out of the same number of diplomats at the Embassy, our family, namely four, including two children aged 6 and 8, traveled the most through China. More than all the others – together! Our only competition was Ambassador Drulovich, because he participated in the trips that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized once or twice a year for heads of missions.

China did not want foreigners to travel through the country, and that is why everything was too expensive. On private trips, even Sinologists who knew Chinese had to hire an interpreter. It is clear that this was a way to control things most directly. We were also in Kweilin (Guilin on the Internet), a beautiful part of South China, famous for its stone forest. This was sometime in 1973, about a year after US President Richard Nixon's visit to China, who also visited Kweilin at the time.

Directed by the outstanding diplomat, Henry Kissinger, on February 27, 1972, during his historic visit to China, Nixon signed the “Shanghai Communiqué”, with which the US recognized China and accepted that Taiwan was part of its territory. Until then, the US had recognized Taiwan, which, on this basis, was also a permanent member of the UN Security Council (there are five of them), with the right of veto! With its 15 million inhabitants, thanks to American imperialist policy, Taiwan represented the Chinese people, which at that time numbered one billion and two hundred million people.

To get to Kweilin you first have to fly, then take a taxi to the place itself. On the way back, we took a boat down the Lijiang River. All in all, an unforgettable trip. When we were buying the boat tickets, which were enormously expensive, I jokingly asked the translator – shouldn't we compensate for Nixon's stay in Kweilin? She was very bright and laughed.

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The bard of modern world diplomacy, Henry Kissinger, in his memoirs entitled “In the White House”, which are very detailed, over 1,200 pages, and represent a first-class diplomatic textbook, precisely and very accurately states – “the most difficult challenge for the creator of foreign policy is establishing priorities”. In principle, this rule applies to any other work – you either concentrate on the most important thing or you don’t, but in diplomacy it is crucial because corrections and going back, in principle – are not possible. If the main priority is not determined, if you wander along a side path, failure is almost guaranteed. At best, the success will be limited and will not correspond to either expectations or needs.

It is precisely in this context that Kissinger’s contribution to the American opening towards China has historical weight. It can be said that this brought about a revolutionary change in the world.

With a small digression, but in the same context, it can be assessed that very similar to this contribution by Kissinger is Donald Trump’s assessment, in his second term in 2025, that Russia is not to blame for the war with Ukraine, which began in February 2022. He publicly blamed Ukraine, which was absolutely true. Trump was obliged to explain that it was an American-Russian war and that Ukraine was only an executor of their dictates, although that was implied. Trump repeated several times – “if I were president, this war would not have happened.” This is a direct accusation that his predecessor, Joe Biden, started it.

But let’s get back to Kissinger. He defines that there are three principles in diplomacy – concreteness, restraint and engagement. He puts this in the context of relations with the USSR, but, it is not disputed, these principles apply more broadly. During the period when he was in the White House, as the closest associate of President Richard Nixon (from the election in 1969 until his impeachment in August 1974), in relations with the Soviet Union he emphatically played the engagement card. At that time, the key issue for the United States was ending the Vietnam War, due to the enormous pressure from the public in the country. They

had over 650,000 soldiers there and, in that regard, Moscow's help was invaluable. Can you imagine? The United States had over 650,000 soldiers deployed in Vietnam and lost the war! This is key historical evidence that whoever is right and is determined to fight for it, even against such a military armada, wins! By the way, Kissinger, who was undoubtedly the creator of American foreign policy, advised Nixon to link all issues that the Soviets were interested in with their help in ending the Vietnam War. And he succeeded in that.

Today (2025), China is a much greater challenge for the United States than the USSR was at the time. China is not yet a (too) big military power, but it is powerful enough and is progressing in that regard every day. However, it is a major economic power and, according to the purchasing power parity (PPP) system – which means according to the real value, or purchasing power, of its own currency, specifically the Chinese yuan, and if the total gross domestic product is measured in that way – China is already the world's largest economy! Moreover, it is also the fastest growing. In the last 10 years (2015 – 2024), the average annual GDP growth rate in the US was between 2.2 and 2.3 percent, while in China it was around 4.5 percent. This growth rate continues. Americans are most afraid of China's economic power. The USSR was an easier opponent for the US because it was militarily very strong, but economically weak. That was the key advantage for Washington.

In his memoirs, Kissinger recalls that in 1945, the world community consisted of 51 nations, and by 1968 it had reached 130. (Now, in 2025, the UN has 193 member states). He also posed the question – “How can we reach a consensus that will harmonize – our idealism, our responsibility, our security, our values, our dreams and our possibilities?” A million-dollar question, and the answer should be sought by – everyone! Especially – us, Macedonians!

His assessment that the greatest guarantee that there will be no new world war is – nuclear weapons is absolutely correct. He says – despite

the fact that the power (of nuclear weapons) is terrifying, it has also proven to be abstract, intangible and inaccessible!

More precisely – as a guarantor of peace. God grant that it be so!

STORIES FROM JAKARTA, BEIJING, TIRANA AND MOSCOW

While working in Jakarta, I had problems with Ambassador Djordje Jakovljevic, who had previously been Federal Minister of Health for four years, after 12 years as a member of the Vojvodina Government. He was a family friend and personal physician to Vljakovic, then Chairman of the Presidency of Yugoslavia. The conflict escalated so much that a three-member commission from the Federal Secretariat for Foreign Affairs (FSFA) came to clear up the case, which I explained in detail in my previous book “Diplomatic Reflections”.

Here I will just say that Jakovljevic not only had no idea what diplomacy was, but he did not even try to learn about it and do something good for his country. On top of that, he also committed political, and financial crimes. The Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for example, organized a visit for the ambassadors of East Timor, which they had illegally occupied, and Yugoslavia did not recognize. Jakovljevic, however, just for the fun of it, joined the visit without informing Belgrade! It was a gross violation of Yugoslav foreign policy. Jakovljevic also committed numerous financial crimes.

I am returning to the case again with a specific purpose. Soon after the commission’s visit, I was on vacation in Yugoslavia and went to the SSNR to meet with the undersecretary, who was Macedonian. I deliberately did not mention his name. I wanted to introduce him to the whole case in its entirety because, in some way, my name had been tarnished, even though the three-man committee had no objections to my work. One of them, whom I knew, told me in confidence that they had been sent to destroy me!

The “Macedonian” received me but was absolutely not interested in the case. He didn’t even hide it. He didn’t even listen while I was talking! He almost ignored me. If it had been a Croat, a Serb... he would certainly have shown interest! I’m not a vindictive person, but I got

back at him. After the collapse of Yugoslavia, in the 1990s, when I was Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Skopje, he sought admission because he had lost his job in Belgrade. I did not accept him. Revenge is not my practice, but this person deserved it! He was first a Yugoslav, and only a Macedonian if necessary.

The point is broader. At the top of the SSNR there was reciprocity and all the highest cadres were either delegated by the republics, or appointed with their consent. The Macedonian cadres at the top, as a rule, were the greatest Yugoslavs and were not interested in anything other than their own careers. Macedonian interests – the least. In contrast, the Slovenes, Croats, Bosnians, Montenegrins... who were at the top, openly and emphatically took care of all their cadres in the Secretariat. And “ours”, when they met us, the younger ones, even in the corridors, would run as far away as possible, like avoiding the devil. They were afraid that someone would declare them Macedonian nationalists and their careers would be ruined!

All the republics had their own villa in Dedinje. The Slovenians gathered there every Tuesday and everyone went – down to the lowest cadres in the federation. We didn't even know where the Macedonian villa was. If our colleagues from Slovenia wanted to go for a weekend in the country, they just had to call the secretary of one of their high-ranking officials in the federation and choose whether they wanted to go by train or by plane. Free of charge, of course.

We, the few, who traveled to Macedonia every weekend, because our families were there, had to pay our own fare. The Government in Skopje refused to refund our train tickets. Their explanation was the Slovenians had opportunities and we did not. It was our superiors who lacked brains. Later, however, they started to refund our train tickets.

I have many examples such as the above of how “our” top representatives behaved in the SSNR, when it came to us, the younger Macedonians. If it wasn't so pitiful, it would have been funny.

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While serving in China (1972 – 1976), a delegation headed by Prime Minister Dzemal Bijedic came on an official visit. They traveled on an Il-18 plane, and had previously visited several countries, including India and Vietnam. It was a medium-haul plane, specifically for Europe, and certainly not for long-haul tours, such as India and China. Among other things, the plane did not have its own electricity and, while parked, it was plugged into the airport grid.

At that time, during such visits to Beijing, it was protocol practice to first organize a reception for the guests, and then for the guests to return them. For this purpose, our delegation brought a large selection of cold cuts from the famous Croatian factory “Gavrilovich”, as well as drinks. As soon as the guests arrived, we organized the takeover of the provisions and drinks. When they arrived at the Embassy, and we were all there, we saw that the cold cuts were - moldy and unusable! It was concluded that at the airport in Hanoi, during the visit to North Vietnam, there was no accessible electrical grid for the plane to be plugged in and its refrigerators, in which these products were stored, had stopped working!

We were all disappointed, and the loudest was Ambassador Milojko Drulovich – wow, wow, what has happened to us! We will have to throw away all this costly food... Everyone else also commented. I also added my opinion. I said – “we are not throwing away anything!” “What are you saying!” replied the ambassador with a hopeful tone of voice. Everyone turned to me and waited for my answer! I decisively said “we will cook the food” and stopped talking. Everyone looked at me... I then coolly said “we will throw it out!” And continued “there is nothing we can do about it! What should we do – cry? That will not help anything, so, let’s open some of the wine bottles, the wine is fine, and let’s drink to welcome the delegation!”

The atmosphere changed, quality wine was opened and normal conversations began.

The event and the stunt were remembered for a long time.

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In mid-1998, during our service in Albania, we organized a meeting between Prime Ministers Branko Crvenkovski and Fatos Nano in Pogradets and Ohrid. Branko was accompanied by the first American ambassador to Skopje, Christopher Hill. From Sveti Naum, we took a boat to Pogradets and sailed along the coast of Albania, which is empty and there is nothing to see, and then along the beautiful part of our country. On the deck of the boat, sitting in a circle, we had interesting and relaxed conversations on various topics.

At one point, Nano asked my wife, Suzana, “How did you actually manage to adapt to Tirana after the years spent in London?” Previously, from 1993 to 1997, I was Ambassador to the United Kingdom, Ireland and Iceland. Without blinking, Susana said “you don’t need to put it that way. We adapted in London and felt like home in Tirana!”

Nano was surprised by her answer. He was a top politician, of European and world rank. Not only was he educated, well-informed, well-read and with great political experience, but he also spoke six languages, almost all of them as well as his mother tongue. He also spoke Serbian perfectly. Before becoming Prime Minister of Albania for the third time, he had an interview on state television with an excellent journalist. At one point, the journalist asked an uncomfortable question – “Mr. Nano, as Prime Minister, did you made many mistakes!?” Extremely calm, he replied – you are right, but I guarantee you that we will not repeat the mistakes! He waited a bit, to leave an impression, and added – but we will make new ones!

Nano and I had excellent communication. Once, with our wives, we had lunch at the “Rogener” hotel, at that time the best in Tirana. The lunch lasted more than five hours and sometime after 6:00 p.m., the hotel manager, an Austrian by the way, the hotel was theirs, treated us to a bottle of champagne! His intention was in no way to send us off!

At the end of his career, Nano quite rightly wanted to become president of the country. Ilir Meta, who was prime minister at the time, prevented him. As I had with Nano, I also had excellent relations with Meta.

When we met, on various occasions, we always had open and meaningful conversations. During the period when the new president was to be elected, at the beginning of 2002, I directly told him that he had been wrong to block Nano's candidacy. I added that the best combination for Albania was Nano as president and he as prime minister. The president does not have great powers and Nano will perform his function with the highest dignity. He, on the other hand, as a pragmatist, a man of his word and highly efficient in implementing the outlined policies and projects, would be an excellent prime minister. I also told him that if they were to confront each other, both of them could lose. Meta replied that he was young and could wait 10 years. That is exactly what happened.

I knew that he had an unsettled score with Nano, so I asked him – why are you blocking him? As president, there is no way he can harm you! Yes, he answered me honestly. He is ex officio president of the Judicial Council, and he can prosecute me! That was the essence of his answer. I did not believe that the president of the state at that time was also ex officio president of the Judicial Council. That did not seem logical. Did Meta, think that Nano had key influence on the Council, or did I not understand him correctly? In any case, Nano did not become president. General Moisiu was elected, a man who was not close to Nano. Later Meta too lost his position and, completely unnecessarily. About 10 years later Meta returned and became president of the country. In the end, however, he was imprisoned and is still in prison (May, 2025).

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I arrived in Moscow for work on October 14, 2004. The new ambassador of Georgia had arrived about a month before me. He was an experienced politician and diplomat. In recent years, he had held a high

position in Istanbul, at the Headquarters of the Organization for Black Sea Economic Cooperation.

It is a pity that I do not remember his name, but the man was highly educated, eloquent, communicative and, all in all, very nice. We met for dinner at the Turkish ambassador's residence, and we quickly became friends. The Turkish ambassador's residence, on the other hand, was more like a museum, both as a building and especially as a place of a rich collection of extraordinary and rare art objects – paintings, classical furniture, sculptures, beautiful crystals, decorated ceilings... There were about 30 of us at the dinner, mostly ambassadors. The Georgian ambassador was sitting opposite me so that we could talk.

I immediately went on the “offensive”. I told him that Georgia was one of the few countries in this part of the world with which we did not have diplomatic relations due to their unwillingness to accept our historical and constitutional name. I emphasized that it would not be in their honour to be the last to accept reality and stand on the side of justice. I ended the “talk” with the conclusion that I hoped he would get in touch with his president, Saakashvili, that evening, and that we would resolve the problem very soon!

He laughed. He said that he would not wait to go home after dinner, but would immediately, as soon as we got up from the table, call the president! Now it was my turn to laugh. In any case, contact was established. We continued to meet frequently at various diplomatic events, of which there were many before the end of the year. At every opportunity, I raised the issue of diplomatic relations and he informed me that he regularly held talks on this topic with the Ministry in Tbilisi. President Saakashvili was brought to power by the Americans and followed their policy with devotion. Given that Washington is our main obstacle on the path to the international political scene, it was clear to me that this would be difficult!

At a meeting in early December, he told me that he had a serious problem. He was about to present his credentials, and he did not know

what to say to Putin. The practice in the Kremlin is to receive seven or eight ambassadors at once, and each of them has a few minutes to talk to Putin. What advice can you give me, he asked, what should I tell him?

This was the period after the “velvet” revolution in Tbilisi, when, the pro-Russian President Shevardnadze was overthrown with the help of the West, and Saakashvili was brought in. As a result, relations between the two countries fell to a very low level. There was a clear mutual impatience, a whole bunch of problems opened up... Tell him, I said, that problems and misunderstandings do exist, and can only exist between friends, and that they are always temporary! His eyes lit up. Good idea, he said. He then carefully added – I will think about it.

I learned from the media that he had submitted his letter of accreditation on December 26, 2004, but I never saw him again! He soon returned to Tbilisi. In early 2005, the Georgian Prime Minister Zhvania was found poisoned by a gas leak. The event was classified as an accident, although many open questions remained that suggested that it might have been murder. A new government was formed in Georgia, in which my colleague from Moscow became the Minister of Finance.

I didn't find out how his conversation with Putin went, and whether he was satisfied?

DO YOU TURN YELLOW ON THE YELLOW SEA?

Naturally, while I was working in China (1972 – 1976), we were in contact with friends in Macedonia, with whom we corresponded from time to time. Back then, there were no e-mails, internet and similar privileges, and telephone calls were so expensive that calling was a great luxury.

So, in our letters, we informed our friends that we were on vacation on the Yellow Sea, in a beautiful place called Pei Ta X, where the highest leaders of China also vacationed. And do you know what kind of reaction we got? Some of them informed us that they were on vacation too. They boasted that they had had a great time too. They had been to the Black Sea where they turned black. We, in turn, were asked – and you, on the Yellow Sea, did you turn yellow?

We had an unforgettable memory from this vacation related to an extremely unusual tree. I don't remember what they called the tree, but it blooms briefly, only during one night! As God has given us, with their millennial experience and tradition (acupuncture, for example), the Chinese know when that tree will bloom. Even though every year it blooms on a different date.

It was a small sensation. Informed on time, in the evening we settled into a larger hall, where the tree was in the middle and – we waited for it to bloom! It bloomed sometime after midnight and soon after – the bloom closed. Simply incredible. In many ways, China is truly something special!

Mihajlo Sharanovich, a journalist for the Yugoslav news agency, “Tanjug”, a long-time correspondent in Beijing, and a good friend, wrote a book entitled – “China, Planet of the Planets”. That is probably the best and shortest description of this incredible country.

There is another definition of China. It is that anyone who stays there for a week will publish a text about their visit. Anyone who stays for a

month or two will write – a book. But anyone who stays longer – will not dare to write anything!

AT WORK IN CUBA WITH A RUSSIAN “LADA”!

I bought a “Lada” twice in Moscow. The first time in 1976, after my final return from serving in Beijing. I needed it for use in my country. With a diplomatic discount, the Lada was extremely cheap. I covered 3,100 kilometers from Moscow to Skopje, in three days. The first leg was to Warsaw, where I met a school friend who was a sales representative. The second leg was to Budapest and the third to home. In Warsaw, I acquired some camping equipment, which was practically free there because of the illegal exchange rate. In Budapest, there were several congresses and fairs taking place and I could not find a hotel.

I drove a thousand kilometers a day and, at first, the “Lada” could not be driven fast. The engine had to be broken in. While I was driving, I regularly stopped to exercise. I don’t know how many kilometers I drove but I stopped to exercise. I also exercised while driving but to no avail. When I arrived in Skopje, the next day, my neck was stiff and for a week I could not move it. I could only see straight ahead.

The following year, 1977, I went to China again, for three months, for Tito’s visit. During Tito’s visits, the Federal Secretariat for Foreign Affairs in the country where the visit was taking place regularly sent a team of three to five of the most experienced diplomats to help with the organization. The ambassador in Beijing, Milojko Drulovich, however, requested that only I come. Minister Milosh Minich wrote in the telegram – I agreed and found myself in China again.

In the meantime, I was appointed First Secretary at the Embassy in Havana, Cuba, and so on my way back from Beijing, I bought a new “Lada” in Moscow, this time for use in Cuba. Cuba had old American vehicles from the 1950s that were a kind of attraction, while the new ones were mainly Soviet. There was service and spare parts for them, so I decided on a “Lada”. Again, I drove 3,100 kilometers to Skopje, the same way, but this time I arrived without a stiff neck! I was better prepared and knew what to do.

When I set off for Skopje, however, I noticed that the fan in the engine did not turn on and when the car was stationary, it overheated. I paid attention to it and had almost no problems. In Skopje, I immediately went to the “Lada” service center. They told me that the entire engine had to be removed, that the procedure was long and would take several days. But, in a day or two, the car had to be driven to Rijeka, to be loaded onto a ship for Havana. So, I skipped the repairs.

Within the first few days of arriving in Havana, I went to a large and modern Lada service center and asked – who was the best mechanic? His name was Bienvenido, they told me. Can I ask him a question, I continued? Bienvenido and I agreed that he would come to my place that evening to look my car.

I did not take the Lada to the service center because the exchange rate of the Cuban currency, the peso, with the dollar, was unrealistic and catastrophic for us, and so were the prices. That would have cost me at least 100 dollars, and I had paid less than \$2,500 for the entire car.

Bienvenido came as agreed. I took the car out of the garage and started it. He said – give me a stick! I looked at him confused. What does this man want, I thought? He’s not a shepherd! However, I found him a stick. We waited for the car to warm up and then he stuck the stick in the engine and placed it somewhere below. He hit the other end of the stick with his hand once, twice and – the fan started to spin! I looked at him even more confused. He immediately explained – when they assemble the car, the mechanism that turns on the fan needs to be lubricated with a little grease. The workers, however, will dip their entire finger into the grease and thus cover the sensor that activates the fan. With the impact, the grease falls off and the fan can start working! Is there any better proof of the role of experience?

At that time, Cuba was in dire poverty. There was nothing to buy in the shops. Everything was on coupons. There was also a black market exchange rate that was 3 or 4 times higher than the official peso to dollar exchange rate. More precisely – if you got five pesos for one

dollar in a bank, you could get between 15 and 20 on the black market. However, even with the “cheap” pesos you got this way, you could buy almost nothing. As for services, like the one in which Bienvenido worked, we traded their service for things from the Diplomatic Store, and for them this was a great privilege. They didn’t ask for money because pesos had almost no value. This way, the service was much cheaper for us. The Cubans knew exactly what was in the diplomatic store, at what prices, and what they could order in exchange for their services. It was similar to our system back home— get by and live!

Bienvenido maintained my Lada, with which I had almost no problems for the four years I spent in Cuba. Towards the end of our stay, there was a great exodus of Cubans to America, after they invaded the courtyards of several embassies in Havana, en masse. Bienvenido left too. Along with them, Fidel Castro sent all the serious criminals from prisons, as well as the mentally ill.

After returning from Beijing (September 1976), until I left for Havana (September 1977), for exactly a year I worked in Belgrade in the Department of International Organizations, or, professionally speaking – in multilateral affairs. I participated in numerous international conferences – in the UN, New York, Geneva, Nairobi, Vienna... More precisely, together with the three months in China, due to Tito’s visit, I was on the road the whole time. I roughly calculated that in that year I covered a total of over 200 thousand kilometers! On average, about 550 kilometers per day. Of course – it was too much.

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In Havana, in the Cuban Foreign Ministry, there was an excellent diplomat who had served in Belgrade. He was delighted with Yugoslavia and was extremely friendly towards us. At each of the receptions, he would first come to greet us and chat, which was very useful for us as a briefing. But after a while, Arnaud would tell us – I like you very much and I enjoy talking to you, but I can’t stay with you too long because I have to take care of my career!

That was of course half a joke, but also the whole truth. Everything was clear! In Cuba, everything was controlled. There was a mass political organization in the country, CeDeEre, something similar to the then Socialist Union of the Working People of Yugoslavia (SSRNJ). In conversations with them, they not only did not hide, but also boasted that they not only knew what everyone in the country was doing, but also what they were thinking! Scary, in any case.

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At a reception in Havana, we were talking in a large group, consisting mainly of Cubans, including the former Cuban ambassador to Belgrade, with whom we were good friends. Immediately after the victory of the revolution on January 1, 1959, he was a state prosecutor. We also talked about that period, which, especially at the beginning, was by no means very pleasant. At that time, the remnants of the old regime of the dictator Batista were being cleared away. Interesting moments from those days were recounted when one of those present said to the former chief prosecutor – your mistakes from that time are two meters underground!

That was not accepted by the person in question either as a complaint, or as criticism, but as something real and for such a time – inevitable. An interesting feature of Cubans is that, in principle, they do not have vanity, as is the regular case with Europeans, for example. They will tell you when they have made a mistake, they will tell you if something hurts them or if they have an illness, they will openly talk to you about the problems in their own family and the like. It is as if they have no personal secrets. They are very open in conversations and are very communicative. It can be rightly said that positive energy is their main characteristic. Music, on the other hand, is close to everyone's heart. Everyone sings and dances. If three Cubans stand somewhere, one will sing and clap his hands and the others will dance. They are a cheerful and interesting people.

Another characteristic of Cubans is that, after they get to know you they will treat you like they have known you for a long time. I had contacts with several deputy ministers and they were friendly towards me. In fact, five of them came to my farewell reception. At that time, the average marriage in Cuba lasted a little over three years. When the 6th Non-Aligned Conference was held in Havana in 1979, out of 120 foreign journalists, almost 80 were from Yugoslavia. A special reception was also organized for the journalists. In a pleasant atmosphere, which the Cubans were masters at creating, one of our journalists “bragged” - I have had three marriages, is there anyone who is my equal? The Cubans started laughing, while he turned looking left and right in amazement. One of the Cuban journalists asked loudly - whoever has been married six or more times, raise your hand! Three people raised their hands. Who has been married five times? – the journalist asked again. Seven, eight hands went up. Applause followed.

JOKES FROM LONDON AND TIRANA

In most countries, the doyen or head of the diplomatic corps, called the dean, is the ambassador with the longest tenure. In London, in Tirana, and in some other centers, the permanent dean is the ambassador from the Vatican, whose title is – nuncio. I am telling you this so that you can understand the situation that follows. Queen Elizabeth II's birthday was celebrated in London, during June, but not on the same date, for some reason. It was done in a magnificent way, called – “Trooping The Colours”. It was organized in the space behind the Foreign Office, their MFA, which was also the end of the central London “St. James” Park. The royal cavalry was also included, and when the Queen arrived, one of the horses would bow to her. Then the Queen would climb a few steps to stand on a podium from where she would watch the cavalry parade. On both sides, stands were set up for the invited guests.

The moment the Queen stepped onto the podium, the large city clock, which was behind her, would start to strike 11:00! The British are unparalleled in maintaining tradition and, especially, precision. In order to maintain order, people arrive at the event quite early, so there is time for chats with their neighbours in the stands.

At one of these truly unforgettable events, I was sitting between the American and Japanese ambassadors. That was my experience. That meant that one of them was ahead of me handing over the credentials, and the other one after me. Naturally, to make the wait pass faster, they started chatting, with various stories, jokes... A nice atmosphere was created, with a lot of laughter. The American was a big admiral and when he laughed, the whole row shook!

At one point, as if hesitating, I said to them – I would like to ask you something, but without putting you in an uncomfortable situation. Both of them reacted energetically, I mean, we are friends now, how can there be uncomfortable questions! In the same tone I emphasized to them – if you don't think you should answer – ignore the question!

They again insisted that I not hesitate. I want to ask you, I said – would you mind if I informed the Macedonian Government that my treatment in London was between the American and Japanese ambassadors? Who knows what they were expecting, but they both laughed sweetly, and the admiral was shaking up and down in his seat.

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In the period from 1998 to 2002, the main hotel in Tirana was the “Rogner”. The owners were from Austria. It had a beautiful garden, with a large swimming pool, around which many diplomatic receptions were held. At one of them, organized by Croatia, I found myself talking with the ambassadors of Russia and China. Both were experienced, top diplomats and we had developed not only very good collegial but, in a way, friendly relations.

And this time, as usual, we had useful conversations on topics related to Albania, in which we were all interested. After we had combed through the current issues, the conversation somehow died down, exhausted itself. Then I told them - don't hold it against me, but I want to ask you an unusual question. Don't answer if you don't think you should. Ignore it if it doesn't seem to you to be worthy of answering...

The long introduction provoked them enough, and they both didn't chose not to mince words to convince me that I shouldn't hesitate and that I should ask. I acted indecisively for a little while longer, to make it more interesting.

I started off and hesitantly said – you know that I come from a small and poor country, which is no advantage, but on the contrary a great handicap. However, I continued with self-confidence – because of those occasions, I feel like a great man. They looked at me as if they were a little confused by the introduction. I'm embarrassed to ask you, I continued, but you come from huge, strong, powerful and rich countries, how did you feel personally, about the environments you come from?

Both of them, brilliant beyond measure, began to laugh so loudly that many of the guests turned towards us, even though we were at the end of the garden. They were not entirely surprised by my provocative question, for it was well known in the diplomatic corps that the German ambassador and I were the chief jokers.

IF THEY WANT A FISH, THEY SHOULD CATCH IT FIRST!

In the period between 1965 and 1966, as a graduate student from the Faculty of Economics, I spent almost 17 months working in England to learn English. At the beginning, while I was waiting for a work visa, I worked for several months in international student camps on farms, picking strawberries. Then, for over a year, I worked in a hospital as an assistant cook. Those 15 months or so were recognized as my internship and I receive a symbolic pension from England that amounts to about 15 thousand denars (\$300) annually. They send it at the end of each year, when they collect about 250 euros, which is not to be underestimated.

In parallel with my work, I also attended language courses, meanwhile there was no theatre in London, and there are dozens and dozens of them, where I had not been to see a performance. Other Yugoslavs also worked in the hospital and most of them were Italians and Spaniards. At the same time, Ljubica, with whom I was a classmate at the “Cvetan Dimov” high school in Skopje, worked as a nanny for a Jewish family in Hampstead, a wealthier part of London. From time to time, I would meet with her and the others from Macedonia at the Yugoslav Club, which was close to the Chelsea stadium.

I worked all Sundays because the daily wage was 50 percent higher, with a day off on Mondays. One Monday, quite early, Ljubica called me, crying. I got upset and asked her what had happened, how was she? She said she was fine. How is your family doing, I continued. They are fine too. Then why are you crying? I asked. Can I come to see you, she asked, and I'll tell you everything. I lived in Ealing Common, on the other side of London, and it took her quite a while to travel on the tube.

She was crying when she explained what had happened. She said - the Jewish couple had two small children and a house in the country where they spent their weekends. It was the same this weekend. The father caught three fish in the nearby river and, when he returned, the mother

fried them. He took two, gave one to the mother because she had cooked them, and told the children, who asked for one, that if they wanted to eat fish next time, they should catch their own!

Ljubica was choked and in tears after she heard this. The incident had shaken her to a point where she called their father a heartless idiot. She then asked – does that man have no soul? She said she had cried all night and had not slept at all. I cried with her, calling their father an idiot and a heartless person.

On Mondays, as a rule, I treated myself to lunch at a Chinese restaurant. Ljubica somehow calmed down and we went together. The incident kept running through my head. At that time, I didn't know the Chinese wisdom that if you want to feed someone once, you give them a fish. But if you want them to feed themselves for life, you teach them to fish. Obviously, that was the father's goal too, and it became clearer and clearer to me as we walked to the restaurant. In fact, that's exactly why Jews are so successful as a people. The way they raise their children is not simple, it may not even be gentle but the results are excellent, which is most important. It is irresponsible to give children everything without them having any responsibilities, as we usually do in Macedonia.

While we were having lunch, I thought about this carefully and told Ljubica that the father was right after all and that even though the upbringing was cruel, you could be sure that next weekend the children would be fishing too! She didn't accept my explanation and told me that I was an idiot too!

POINTS FROM VARIOUS DESTINATIONS

In December 1992, as Undersecretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the second man in the Ministry, I received the Swedish ambassador, who came to visit on behalf of the OSCE, then still the CSCE, which his country was chairing. Immediately after welcoming him, I told him that I used to be proud of his country but now I am ashamed of it! You can imagine how he looked at me and how he felt, but I paused for a deeper impression. He didn't know how to react, what to ask. He was obviously uncomfortable. Then I continued. Mr. Ambassador, in the 1960s, when the Yankees were wreaking havoc in Vietnam, with over 650,000 soldiers, Sweden was almost the only country that publicly condemned it. I was proud of you. But today, when my country is being thrown into the fire without any fault, when they ignore our name and do not accept that we exist as a people – you are silent! Isn't that a shame? Where has your justice gone? There is no justification here!

He was relieved, although he had no right to be. He began to justify himself that now they are at the door of the EU, then the EC, that they must watch their step, that Greece has the right of veto... I replied that there is no and cannot be any justification for matters of principle. I added that such an explanation could, and only possibly, have some justification from Hungary, or Romania... but certainly not from Sweden.

Then the conversation became normal and friendly. I never met the man again but he became ambassador to Macedonia, covering from Sofia. I know he was very friendly. He certainly didn't forget our meeting.

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At the beginning of the 1990s, when we were fighting fiercely for the recognition of Macedonia, it was clear that the USA would not support us directly. They justified it by saying that it was because of Greece.

That's why I replied to all the American officials I met - okay, we understand that you have obligations to Athens, and you are not ready to help us because of that, although you know that all the arguments are on our side. Okay, then help us indirectly. Your influence in Latin America, Africa and Asia is enormous and discreetly suggest to your partners there to recognize Macedonia! I didn't get a concrete answer from any of them. Now it's clear to me that this could not have been expected. At the time, however, it was not clear to me that behind our "great ordeal" was not Greece, much less Bulgaria, but the USA. I had no idea that the project, but also the scenario for erasing Macedonianism, was American, and that Athens and Sofia were ordinary tools, which also had their own interests.

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While serving in China, the Embassy had an ambassador and eight other diplomats, plus the representative of the Union Chamber of Commerce who, although only formally, appeared on the diplomatic list as an advisor for economic issues. Although I was the tenth of the ten diplomats, I was responsible for doing a lot of work. I was responsible for economic issues, according to the decision with which I was sent to Beijing - "Third Secretary for Economic Affairs". Thus, I was registered in the Chinese diplomatic list, and I prepared all economic analyses for Belgrade. On all economic issues, I communicated with Chinese institutions, while the representative of the Chamber performed his chamber duties. I also covered consular affairs, I was a press attaché, I was a cultural attaché and... everything else that was needed. There was a lot of work and my goal was to learn as much as possible because it was my first destination outside Yugoslavia.

The Federal Secretariat for Foreign Affairs in Yugoslavia (MFA) was a world-class institution. There were diplomats highly valued and respected all over the world. Milan Bartosh, for example, was a lawyer whose advice was sought within the UN. Of course, there were also stray individuals but they were really few in number. One of them was

Dushko Grubor, who came to Beijing after me, but far above me. While he was the Minister Counsellor and the second man in the Embassy, I was the third secretary and, out of ten, the last. The man was useless but he came from a family of Bosnian warriors, which was probably his only recommendation.

When Grubor was about to go to some important meeting in Chinese institutions, it often happened that Ambassador Drulovich would tell me – go with him and make sure he doesn't do anything stupid! He knew that I wouldn't abuse my honesty.

So, Grubor and I went to a meeting with the head of the Chinese Protocol, about some important agreements. Grubor didn't know how to start the conversation and asked his interlocutor – how old he was!? He couldn't have done a greater stupidity, since it is almost impossible to determine the age of the Chinese. For a joke, the head of the Protocol looked very young, which he certainly wasn't. He laughed and replied – how old do you think I am?

From bad to worse. Grubor found himself in a bind and I kept quiet. He thought for a while, and probably convinced himself that the Chinese man was not even 40 years old, but he said – 45! The Chinese man discreetly laughed and said – 65! The conversation started off great! The Chinese man felt called upon to show interest in the guest and asked him the same question – and how old are you? Grubor, with a completely worn out face, thinking that the man figured he was at least 100 years old, asked him – how old do you think I am?

Now, the Chinese man found himself in a bind. Surely convinced that the guest is at least 70 years old, he replied – 65! Grubor was visibly uncomfortable when he said – 53!

You can imagine how much the ambassador laughed when I told him the story. The others did not find out, so that it would not get to where it should not.

In 1999, when I was on duty in Tirana, the period was extremely difficult and full of challenges. Then the war in Kosovo began and immediately followed the exodus of Kosovars, with over 350,000 coming to Macedonia. That was equal to 18 percent of our population. Together with Macedonian Albanians, who officially made up about 25 percent of the population, the newcomers from Kosovo completely changed the national structure of the state. Therefore, quite justifiably, albeit briefly, Macedonia kept the Kosovars at the border, in Blatse, and did not allow them to enter the country.

At that time, the media, but also the government in Tirana, declared Macedonia the most hostile country and their attacks on Macedonia were extremely fierce. Under these conditions, two debates on that topic were held in the large studio of the state television, involving various domestic guests. Macedonia was a major target for attack and it was satanized. The debates were hosted by Blendi Fevziu, probably the best Albanian journalist of the time. He invited me to participate in the third debate. I immediately accepted.

This time, precisely because of my participation, when Macedonia was the black devil for all Albanians, the debate was moved to a covered stadium for tens of thousands of spectators, where about three thousand refugees from Kosovo were now accommodated. In addition to the journalist, seven participants took part in the debate, one of whom was Edi Rama, the current Albanian Prime Minister, then Minister of Culture. Apart from the head of the OSCE Mission, a Dane, who was an almost open Albanian lobbyist, for which he was certainly richly rewarded, the others were prominent Albanians, including a former vice-prime minister.

When the host called my name, the “audience” of several thousand began to shout and whistle. When the announcer used to UN reference to refer to Macedonia I immediately reacted yelling such a country does not exist and that I represented the Republic of Macedonia, and that I ask that this be respected. Everyone was against me, but I was

excellently prepared for the event with irrefutable arguments and dealt flawlessly with all the “opponents”.

I emphasized - a) as a rule, refugees in history have never returned. I illustrated this with the case of the Jews; b) a mass of people from Kosovo has come to Macedonia that represents 18 percent of the population, which has fundamentally changed the demographic structure. This has created space for unforeseeable political and all sorts of other consequences; c) 18 percent of the population for Germany alone represents over 13 million people. Can anyone imagine that Berlin could handle such a number of refugees? For Great Britain, that would be nine million refugees. With such a number of refugees, both Germany and Great Britain would be blocked and would not be able to function normally. In the USA, however, 18 percent means over 60 million refugees!?

I criticized the behaviour of the main European countries, which gave us lessons on what to do and, as “help”, came and selected the small number of highly educated people who spoke their languages and they took them. The others - they left for us to look after!

In the debate, the one who opposed me the most, “jumped in” and made himself “important” was Edi Rama. He tried, but without success, to be the “main person” in the debate. Of course, he criticized Macedonia in front of me. At one point I interrupted him and told him that, whenever he wanted and on which television he wanted, I was at his disposal for a debate just between the two of us because nothing he said was true, and now he was abusing the advantage he objectively had! After that he was a little more reserved. The next day, two of the main newspapers published serious criticism of his behaviour. The titles of the articles, which were a quarter of a page long, were the same - “the pathetic minister Rama”!

When the debate ended, on the way out, I asked who was responsible for the refugee center. They brought someone and I gave him 100 US dollars, as personal assistance for the refugees.

The next day, the technical secretary of the Embassy, Ariana, a Macedonian from Albania, told me – you gave 100 dollars for the refugees! How do you know, I asked her? They announced it on Shijak television, she replied. In fact, the editor-in-chief of that television was one of the participants in the debate and since we were all going out together, he saw what happened and had the virtue to announce it. All the best to him.

On the first occasion when we met, the journalist Fevziu told me that he was deeply convinced that there was no chance that I would accept to participate in the debate!

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Four or five years after returning from Tirana, at the Ohrid market, I was buying short boots for my summer house in Dolno Sonje. I tried on a few and chose one. The woman who was selling them told me they cost three or four hundred denars and I took out money to pay. Then I asked her – where are you from? From Pustec, from Mala Prespa, she answered. You don't know me? – I continued to question her. Then she raised her head and looked at me for the first time. It was August and I – in shorts, a short-sleeved T-shirt, a sun hat... like I had just come off a beach.

Riste, is that you? – she asked me.

It's me, I said.

At that very moment, as if frightened, she raised her hands and grabbed her head, moaning loudly – Oh my God, what did I do? Oh my God, what did I do? I can't take money from you! Oh my God, what did I do?

There's no problem here, I said. If you don't take the money, I don't take the boots! You can't give them to me by force! You can only take them by force! I'm very happy that you recognized me and for me that's the greatest reward, I told her.

She continued to moan about what she would do, but I had no dilemmas. She even wanted to lower the price, but that didn't work either.

One can't get a greater recognition than that! And that was in the market! Recognition is only real when it comes from an ordinary person, like in this case. In Tirana, many things were done for the benefit of all Macedonians. And from Mala Prespa, from Golo Brdo and from Gora, and for those who lived in the cities. I told everyone that for them – I am Riste, not an ambassador. Ambassadors, I explained to them, they will have many more, and they should be addressed as such. And indeed they did, but no one gave a penny for them anymore. They were not interested in the problems of Macedonians in Albania. They were all concerned with global diplomatic problems.

By the way, in Prespa, both ours and in the Albanian part, there is no name – Risto. There, we are called – Riste.

The woman at the market gave me great pleasure. That is perhaps my greatest recognition in diplomacy?! Gratitude from an ordinary person! During my service in Albania, I used to say that I was a “village ambassador”! I often visited the villages where Macedonians lived, and in the three parts where they were concentrated. I visited a large part of their villages. My wife and I went on visits, to weddings and on religious holidays... On Golo Brdo, for example, we slept in a house where the toilet was in the yard... But the people were wonderful, they welcomed us everywhere as if we were their relatives, and that satisfaction cannot be compared to anything.

Before my mandate ended, I went to say goodbye to our people from Mala Prespa, where I used to go most often. They treated me to lunch and gave me a beautiful plaque in recognition of cooperation and friendship. A few days before leaving, however, their delegation came to Tirana and told me that the people wanted to escort me to the border! Don't joke, I said, it is out of the question. Although the intention was

firm, I still asked - how many people would come? Everyone! - they answered! What does that mean? - I wanted to be precise. Two, three thousand, they answered. Everyone who is not at work in Macedonia or Greece - will come!

If I had accepted, it would be a unique case in diplomacy and the border would be blocked for at least a few hours! However, at the Kjafasan border crossing, a dozen or so members of the management of the “Prespa” company came to see me off. They informed me that the people were very sorry that I had not accepted for everyone to come!

Greater professional recognition - health.

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In Tirana, it was well known that I was quite involved in the affairs of the Macedonians in this country. I did it publicly and had nothing to hide. All I advocated for the Macedonians was to have the internationally recognized universal rights and nothing more. I knew that this bothered the leadership of the country but they had no basis to directly object or complain.

The ambassador of the then Federal Republic of Yugoslavia once said to me – I will ask you something and if you think you should not answer me, I will understand you completely. I have no secrets, I replied. Ask whatever you want, and I will answer you as best I can. With some caution, he moved on to the topic. He said – I see that you are doing a lot for the Macedonians in Albania. Are you doing this on your own initiative or are you receiving instructions from Skopje? It is all my initiative, I replied, but I also inform Skopje about everything I do. They know what I do and, if they think I’m wrong, they can dismiss me. I haven’t received anything like that, and even less have I received any instructions about Macedonians. If I had waited for them to tell me what to do and how to do it, I could have stared out the window all day! He was grateful for the honest answer, especially since they also had

their own minority in Albania and, obviously, he was in a dilemma about how to act.

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The main strategy of the Embassy in Tirana was – first to help the Macedonians as a whole, and then each one individually, if we could. In February 1998, when I arrived in Albania, unimaginable poverty reigned in the country. One of the problems we detected among the Macedonians in Tirana was that they no longer socialized with each other. They also skipped holidays, birthdays... The reason was simple – to celebrate a holiday, to invite guests, the main thing is that you have to treat them with something. And they had nothing! Brandy (rakia) and wine were too expensive to buy and, thus, people were alienating themselves, even relatives!

We decided to bring wine and brandy from Macedonia where at that time the export prices of these drinks were extremely low. A bottle of “T’ga za jug”, for example, was about two marks, one euro! The plan was that everyone who had any kind of celebration – personal, family, religious... would come to the Embassy and get something, I think, three bottles of wine and two bottles of brandy. Our janitor Vasil was in charge of the distribution and precise records were kept for this, monitored by internal control.

The result was extraordinary – people were together again!

With the Embassy jeep, several times, I brought maybe 10 crates of wine and brandy! Smuggler, what else!?! The drinks were bought with money from the Embassy budget and one “clever” person one time asked me – what if Skopje disputes those purchases? What will you do? I will pay for them out of pocket, I replied. What we are doing we are doing for the Macedonian cause and that is the obligation of the state, but if there is a problem we will easily solve it. And, in fact, the Embassy was supported by the money received from the visas which, in turn, were used most by Macedonians from Albania. Maybe not those

from Tirana, but certainly most of all those from Mala Prespa, and after them those from Golo Brdo and finally from Gora.

It must be known that the ambassador in any country is most responsible for the relations with it and, especially, for the Macedonians who are there. Emphatically, when our minorities are in question. He must behave that way, and for that he bears all the responsibility. An ambassador cannot expect any recognition for any possible success because, in our Macedonia, things do not work that way. To punish you – easier, although here too there is a lot of unnecessary turning a blind eye. And without being guilty of anything, they will only punish you if you stepped on someone's foot.

With those drinks, we also organized the meetings on Golo Brdo, on Dajti, on the occasion of the Old New Year, on the occasion of... Hundreds of people gathered at all these events. For the events in Tirana, food was prepared by my wife Suzana with the help of a few other women. Apart from the drinks, everything else was under our control.

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After the collapse of Yugoslavia, Albania never accepted our constitutional and historical name but used the reference from the UN Security Council, until our rechristening. I fought with them the whole time on that topic, but their position was solid as a rock. After all, that was completely logical. The rechristening of the Macedonians and the erasure of the Macedonian people was of historical significance, first and foremost, for Albania and the Albanians. More so for Greece. It was the easiest way to complete the Greater Albanian project. Thus, they would most easily “liberate the Albanian territories” in Macedonia, which Tirana often referred to. Not only during the aggression in Kosovo (2001).

Throughout my term, I fiercely waged that struggle, aware that victory was impossible. Tirana would never give up its Greater Albanian

vision. In 2002, Alfred Musliu was elected president. They sent me an invitation to his inauguration with the reference, but I never accepted such invitations in my diplomatic career. I told my secretary to call the President's Office and tell them about my practice. They firmly replied that this was their position, from which they would not deviate.

So that it would not appear that I was boycotting the inauguration, I told the secretary to call the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and explain that I wanted to go, but not as a representative of some former republic. They replied that they would be interested and would call. Then I told her that if the answer was negative again, to tell them that the ambassador would attend the inauguration and if an invitation was sent to him with only his name and position, without specifying the reference. And after an extremely unprincipled concession from the President's Office – they did not accept it!

Of course, I did not go to the inauguration and, fortunately, it was noticed by everyone! In Tirana, it is a practice for the nuncio (ambassador) of the Vatican to be the head of the diplomatic corps, regardless of when he came to office. Otherwise, he is the ambassador with the longest tenure. At that moment, throughout the mandate, I was first on the list and I replaced the nuncio when necessary. The practice, however, at the inaugurations of Albanian presidents is for the head of the corps, or rather the nuncio, to speak at them! However, at Musliu's promotion, the nuncio did not come, nor did he apologize. After they saw that he was not there, they started looking for me – me. I was not there either. My fellow ambassadors knew that I was in Tirana and wondered – what had happened? Immediately after the inauguration, a dozen of them called me on the phone to ask why I wasn't there. So I had the chance to tell everyone about the Albanian side's actions and my principled stance. Everyone reacted positively.

Whether they admitted it in Tirana or not, it was a small blow to them! Most likely, at that moment they didn't even know who was next on the list after me! Something else showed that this was the case. At the end

of August of that year, my term was ending and, according to the order of things, although I assumed that there might be a problem, the secretary requested a farewell reception with the president. They didn't respond! Naturally, I informed our MFA about this and, among other things, suggested that he not be received by our president and the Albanian ambassador at the end of his term. And what do you think, someone figured it out and implemented it? Don't get carried away! We are far from that. And, in diplomacy – reciprocity is the basic rule. But that doesn't apply to Macedonia! We are like that, in many ways, useless.

Previously, in London, the Greek Embassy also invited me with the reference to a reception for their national holiday. I told the secretary to tell them that we would not return the invitation, that the ambassador does not accept invitations under the reference. Shortly after my secretary had left them a message, the Greek ambassador, with whom I had a good relationship, called me on the phone. He said in a friendly way – I want you to come to the reception, how else can we solve the problem? I responded to the goodwill with the same measure – I suggested that he send me an invitation in my name, without other details (the reference). I knew that, at least, they had no theoretical chance of using our constitutional name. Within half an hour, their driver brought the invitation!

This kind of concession made more sense when it came to the Greeks. The problem is with them, and any stubbornness would be wrong, but a gesture of goodwill could help. At the reception, the ambassador told me that he highly appreciated my gesture. In Albania, however, it was beyond normal behaviour, but I thought that it was a neighbouring country, that relations were intertwined... and that such a concession could be made. It turned out to be for nothing.

SHORT DIPLOMATIC MESSAGES, WITH LASTING LESSONS

- ❖ When the grandson asked: “Grandpa, what are diplomats?” – Winston Churchill, the famous British Prime Minister, replied: “They are people who solve international problems that would not exist - if it were not for them”;
- ❖ One of the most common definitions is that diplomats are – honest people who lie for the benefit of their own countries;
- ❖ Unlike diplomats, who represent their country, consuls do not have a political function. They protect the interests of their own citizens in administrative, legal and economic terms, and are also responsible for issues in the scientific, cultural and educational sectors. They are also limited territorially (in the consular area);
- ❖ Diplomacy does not include agency and espionage activities, although they often interfere. Their inclusion in diplomacy is – an abuse. Among diplomats, there may be representatives of the secret services but they must be registered as such. As a rule, this is done on the basis of a mutual agreement for the exchange of such persons, and serves as a direct link between the two secret services. These are liaison officers;
- ❖ In addition to maintaining contacts with the host country and developing relations, diplomacy is the collection of important information, interesting for one’s own country, in an official manner and through available sources, and not through secret channels and agents. Systems have been developed on how to achieve this;
- ❖ In diplomacy, but also in politics, communication is carried out with memorandums, which are thematic and signed, which means that they are binding. Such documents are also signed by states among themselves. It is a practice in the world, that all associates of presidents, prime ministers, ministers... in communication with their bosses, use memorandums for every issue. At the boss’s request, or on their own

initiative, they elaborate on specific subjects in all aspects, provide ideas, advice or suggestions on how to solve or overcome issues. Thus, it is always known that initiatives, solutions are appreciated... We, however, are far from such practices, which must be applied as soon as possible. Instead, there are empty discussions at various meetings that usually have no benefit and no trace or evidence of who advocated for what. Most often, it is a waste of time;

❖ During our visits and talks abroad, as well as during visits of high-ranking foreign representatives to our country, when an issue that is important to us and of high priority (name, identity, language...) is being discussed, a memorandum should be left or handed over in which it would be briefly but in detail elaborated. A Pro Memoria can also be given and left, which is at a lower level than a memorandum. Currently, such issues are, for example, the beginning of our negotiations for EU membership, the Bulgarian blockade, the negotiating framework, the second protocol with Sofia... If no document is given or left, the meeting held and conversations made will hardly bring the expected result. The given and/or left document, the other party will have to read and analyze, and it will contain all our relevant arguments on the topic in question, which they cannot ignore. After the conversation, if there is no document, the other party has no reason to pay additional attention to us. If someone from the other side keeps minutes, that is already something, but not enough for our interests. First - the question is what and how will it be recorded in the minutes? And second, it is only for their formal records. It may or may not be distributed, nor reviewed again;

❖ When it comes to routine meetings, the so-called non-paper can be given or left, in which our assessments and positions, facts and arguments are stated, but which are not binding. They are far from the level of a memorandum, they are informal and are not signed. Neither the pro memoria nor the ed memoria are signed, but they are, nevertheless – formal documents to which the other party is obliged to engage or respond. The non-paper is only for precisely informing the

interlocutor about certain positions, in order to avoid misinterpretations, but no further activity on that topic is expected. These are unofficial reminders, without pretensions;

❖ In world politics and diplomacy, it is force that dominates. In practice, democracy, human rights and similar inventions are stories for small children. A large number of issues are resolved in an illegal manner, contrary to international legal norms. The peak of this is – wars. That is how it is today, and that will certainly be the case for at least the next 50 years. Force will continue to dominate;

❖ Nuclear weapons hide a great absurdity! It is the most terrible thing ever invented, but at the same time it is the best guarantee that there will be no such war! Everyone is aware that if it is used, the end of the world will follow! Everyone will self-destruct. This should prevent its use;

❖ An alternative to force policies are agreements and compromises, where diplomacy comes to the fore. They come to the agenda only in situations when the great and powerful cannot impose their interests by force;

❖ The Non-Aligned Movement, founded in Belgrade in 1961, started by Tito, Nasser (Egypt) and Nehru (India), was an attempt to put an end to the dominance of force over justice and principles. Enormous successes were achieved in decolonization. It is a pity that it has lost its power;

❖ Macedonia made a serious mistake by not being part of the Non-Aligned Movement. The best proof of this is the fact that the vast majority of countries that recognized us under our constitutional and historical name were precisely non-aligned. We ignored them;

❖ The EU was a phenomenon that preferred to use – alternative policies. In principle, Brussels persistently advocated for diplomatic solutions, patiently working to achieve them, without confrontation.

The USA is known as a system that is not willing to waste much time in seeking peaceful solutions, and quickly switches to the use of force;

❖ Recently, with Trump's revolutionary changes in American foreign policy, we see that the EU is the one that has lost its orientation, and that insists on militarization and the continuation of the war in Ukraine. This is beyond the spirit, logic and principles of the EU. We will see how it will be in the future;

❖ The main victim of the increasingly poor functioning of the Union is precisely Macedonia. The blame is largely ours because foreign policy was led by incompetent people, ready to capitulate, planted by foreign secret services. We have been brought to an almost hopeless situation, but a solution is always there, only if (we know how to) look for it;

❖ Our main foreign policy problem, challenge, obstacle... are currently relations with Bulgaria. More precisely, Sofia's negative attitude towards the Macedonian people, language, history... Due to the historical mistakes made by the previous authorities, the country has been put in an extremely unfavourable position. The new VMRO DPMNE administration (2024) has completely changed the rhetoric, which is an excellent step forward but insufficient. Now action is needed to radically change the situation;

❖ When dealing with any important issue, and this with Bulgaria is crucial, a team of experts must be formed, in this case a headquarters. In order to succeed, we also need help from foreign experts. First, the goal we want to achieve must be defined. Second, a list needs to be made of the ways and methods that will be used to achieve the goal. Third, a review of possible activities that would be necessary is needed... Fourth, a precise strategy for solving the problem needs to be prepared;

❖ Given that the fate of Macedonia, as a state, and especially of the Macedonian people, at least publicly, has not yet been defined by the international factor, this requires our maximum concentration on a diplomatic plan, because the problem is also that - diplomatic. The

survival of our people is at stake, and therefore we must work on a daily basis;

❖ Given our limited diplomatic and intellectual capacities for this issue, it is absolutely necessary to engage world experts. The best solution for this is retired top experts from the UN, NATO, EU, State Department, European Court of Human Rights, International Court of Justice in The Hague, OSCE... It is a matter of survival, and no cost must be spared here;

❖ The battle for EU accession must continue, although we do not know whether the Union will expand again? In parallel, relations with Bulgaria must be cleared up without delay. There is a solution, even though the fundamental interests of the Macedonian people were destroyed by the previous government with its betrayals. The first step to get out of the catastrophe we are in is to cancel the second protocol, or withdraw from it, which will nullify both the ultimatum to change the Constitution and the negotiating framework, with which we will never enter the EU;

❖ At the same time, a broad diplomatic offensive must be launched to explain our moves and seek the broadest support. We need to engage maximally in all European capitals, and above all in Washington. All the facts and arguments are on our side and we must use them. Starting from the fact that in Bulgaria there is a large Macedonian minority without any rights, and in Macedonia, according to the census, there are – 3,504 Bulgarians. There must be reciprocity! Everything that is relevant to Bulgaria must be meticulously monitored, as a way to expose their historical syndromes and aggressive policies. All the topics they raise, the articulation they use... should be followed in depth, in order to decisively counter and strengthen our position in the case. We must be as active as possible in the Council of Europe regarding Bulgaria's ignoring of the judgments of the Strasbourg court;

❖ The constant insistence of “our friends” and “strategic partners” that we must respect international agreements are stories for little children.

Fortunately, our first move - the cancellation of the second protocol, has nothing to do with an international agreement. It is an ordinary protocol, which has not been ratified anywhere. The best solution would be for the Constitutional Court, which has already started proceedings, to declare it unconstitutional;

❖ De Gaulle assessed that international agreements are like roses and young girls. They last, while they last;

❖ The US, on the other hand, withdrew – from the global climate agreement reached in Paris in 2015; from the nuclear agreement on Iran; from the TPP, the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which included 12 countries... All of these agreements were signed by their presidents. This confirms that international agreements are not bibles and that every country that is a signatory to an international agreement reserves the right to withdraw. Most international agreements contain such a clause, but even if they do not, such a possibility is not excluded at all. The only possible exception can be international peace agreements;

❖ In the accession negotiations, Brussels forced Montenegro to cancel the agreement with the US, by which Podgorica agreed not to use the International Criminal Court for acts committed by American citizens on its territory;

❖ H. Kissinger in his memoirs, “In the White House”, when he was national security advisor to President Richard Nixon (1969 - 1975), which in terms of political power practically means the second man in the country, wrote - when the obligations undertaken under international agreements come into collision, in conflict with state and national interests, the obligations undertaken are written off, canceled, ignored...

Kissinger concluded this, and implemented it in 1971, during the Indo-Pakistani war. The USA had an agreement with Pakistan and was obliged to help it in the war, but they did not do so. They assessed that they must not spoil relations with India. For the sake of their own

interests, they ignored the internationally undertaken obligations. This is useful experience for Macedonia, how to deal with Bulgaria, starting from the second protocol;

❖ In the same work, Kissinger claims – “nuances, flexibility, and sometimes ambiguity are the tools of diplomacy”. And – “the essence and the key to any policy are – priorities. If they are clear and precise, and if all activities are directed towards them – success will not be absent! Otherwise, it wanders in circles.” Macedonia must build its relations with Bulgaria precisely on such postulates;

❖ It is an indisputable fact that, after the collapse of Yugoslavia, the international community once again put the “Macedonian Question” on the table. It is obvious that the Macedonian people could exist as part of some kind of federation, but it is not acceptable for it to have an independent state, under the name Macedonia;

❖ Bulgaria’s ultimatum means introducing a “Trojan Horse” into our Constitution. The goal is the destruction of Macedonianism. Sofia does not hide that, for them, we are “little Bulgarians” and Macedonia is the second Bulgarian state. Now, they base this on 200 thousand issued Bulgarian passports and, together with the families, they certainly calculate that there are over 600 thousand “declared” Bulgarians...;

❖ In recent years, Bulgarian policies have been open aggression against Macedonia. From all aspects. Goce Delchev, for example, can in no way be both our hero and a Bulgarian one, as some of our imbeciles accept. On the contrary, he separates the two countries to the maximum. If he really fought for us all to be “Bulgarians”, he cannot have any merit for Macedonia, which he undoubtedly has. If, on the other hand, he fought for the Macedonian cause, which is indisputable and easily proven, he can only be an enemy for Bulgaria. Previously, Sofia did not mention him at all. Older generations did not learn about him. He did not exist for them. Now, he is their hero because of very simple logic – if Goce, who indisputably fought for Macedonia, is a “Bulgarian”, there is no better “proof” that we are all – “one people”. Bulgarians;

- ❖ Lately, Macedonia has tolerated and kept silent about the negative manipulations and lies of Sofia regarding the Macedonian people, language... That was a serious mistake;
- ❖ Our historians are not up to the level of their responsibility, and our traitors are maximally eloquent. En masse and daily, they remind that our most renowned fighters for our Macedonia, at the time, when there was no Macedonian state and they lived mainly in Sofia, declared themselves Macedonian Bulgarians! Well, you idiots, that tells you everything. This confirms that they are all pure Macedonians, and so they had to “obey”, due to the given conditions. Otherwise, they would have been persecuted, they would have been left without work... More precisely - if they were really Bulgarians, why would they call themselves Macedonians...? There is no explanation, right? Everything is wonderfully clear. The Bulgarians were Bulgarians and the Macedonians were hiding, just to survive. And it is very smart that they behaved like that...;
- ❖ All our activists who lived in Bulgaria were all Bulgarian citizens and declared themselves as such on various (non)occasions. That has nothing to do with their national identity. And, if all of them, if they only said once that they were - Macedonians, that is enough! They are, and can only be - Macedonians! Why would they declare themselves as such - if they were Bulgarians? There is no logic;
- ❖ With Nivitsi, and the agreement on (un)friendship, we did not solve our centuries-old problems with Greece and Bulgaria at all, as the traitors lie. On the contrary, we only officially legalized their historical syndromes of denying Macedonianism, agreed that they are real and exist, and showed readiness to treat and solve them. Someone forgot that all of them come down to ignoring the Macedonian people! We agreed to put their mental deviations and phantasmagoria on the table, and not our problems with them. A more terrible combination to our detriment, one cannot even imagine. That was the intention of those who imposed and planted the agreements on us, and that was in no way

Athens and Sofia. Therein lies our main and most difficult problem – none of our top politicians dare to publicly and loudly say who our opponent is, who is shaping our destiny;

❖ We see and are convinced that this is so every day. With these agreements, Macedonia has gained absolutely nothing, and lost almost everything. The goal is evident – through the agreements, the “Macedonian issue” should definitely be closed, and that means – erasing the Macedonians! Therefore, the path to returning to any kind of normality will be extremely difficult;

❖ The main historical mistake is that we did not even try to make the key goal of the agreements to be the structuring a common future with our neighbours, through cooperation and development of relations. It is not at all accidental that the priority was placed on the past, in order to redefine our history and origin, and to eliminate Macedonians as a separate people;

❖ Why did we get to this point, at least partially explained to us by the perpetrator of all these disasters of ours, Z. Zaev, who assessed – if Macedonia has problems with all its neighbours, the blame must be ours! You certainly have not heard of a greater stupidity;

❖ After Nivitsi, the “Macedonian question” for Athens has only just begun to be resolved. In their favour, we have given up everything Macedonian – we have renamed our state and as a people, we have “erased” the Macedonians in Greece, we have “annulled” our more distant history... More precisely, we have completely handed over the brand “Macedonia” to the Greeks... They have received almost everything they wanted. But they need to further specify numerous things that they only imposed on us in principle in Nivitsi. They intend to do this during our negotiations for membership in the EU when we are most vulnerable. They will clip the few feathers that are left in our wings. Bulgaria is openly planning this as well. Although they are blocking us, they can hardly wait for the negotiations. Confirmation is the negotiating framework, made to their maximum taste. Athens and

Sofia are closely coordinating against Macedonia. No one in the country understands this;

❖ The asymmetric agreements with Greece and Bulgaria are a grave shame and a deep humiliation for our country. A sovereign state should not sign such agreements. It is not at all a coincidence that both Greece and Bulgaria are implementing the agreements themselves – asymmetrically! They are only implementing what suits them. We are silent, and obediently fulfill everything. With no comments;

❖ The “Tirana Platform”, from 2017, was a logical continuation of the Albanian aggression, from 2001, and the Ohrid Framework Agreement. It was from Kosovo, with weapons, and now it is from Tirana, with other means;

❖ In Macedonia, the heavy national and state defeats and failures are regularly justified as imposed by foreigners. That is, they forced us to unacceptable solutions. That is absolutely not true. No one has ever forced our politician to accept anything with a gun to his temple! The foreigners certainly pressed, because they were paid for it, but our politicians accepted because of incompetence and irresponsibility, but also because of personal interest and lack of dignity;

❖ Brussels’ tolerance of the mass sale of Bulgarian passports to Macedonian citizens is not accidental at all. It is part of the project for the Bulgarianization of Macedonians. We must open the case in Brussels and demand an official investigation. This is a serious crime and an abuse of membership;

❖ Agreements on friendship, good neighbourliness (when two neighbouring countries are in question) and cooperation are top diplomatic and political documents that the states sign between themselves. A prerequisite for such a document is that there should be no open problems between the two countries. Macedonia was forced to sign such an agreement with a state that does not recognize the existence of the Macedonian people, and there is not a single closed

issue between the two countries, let alone all of them being resolved! But the blame and responsibility lies with “ours” who calculated and capitulated;

❖ At the time, on several occasions, Macedonia initiated the signing of such an agreement with Albania. Given that we have almost no open problems with them, and they have undisguised aspirations towards our country, it was appreciated that in this way Tirana would also, albeit indirectly, give up irredentism. But, unlike us, they have experienced diplomats, they know what they want, and - they did not accept our proposal. They justified themselves by saying that the problem is with our name. They remained with the reference until the end. Not by chance at all;

❖ Albanian claims to parts of Macedonia, which they openly call Albanian territories to this day, are an indisputable fact. Proof is also one detail from the UN, when the procedure for our admission to the world organization began. In January 1993, according to “Focus” from 31/7/2025, the then President of the UN General Assembly, the Bulgarian Stoyan Ganev, told Denko Maleski that in the preparations for our admission - “the initiative to guarantee the territorial integrity of Macedonia, which was accepted by everyone except Albania” had special significance! It is not any different today;

❖ Double standards are common practice by the EU, the USA and the international community as a whole. In recent years, Macedonia has been one of the biggest victims of such behaviour;

❖ For the international community, the referendum in Catalonia, when 39 percent voted for independence, was – unsuccessful. In Macedonia, when 39 percent also voted for a change to the Constitution, it was – successful;

❖ In the referendum in Moldova, for EU membership, after 95 percent of the votes were counted, over 55 percent were against. In the end, 53 percent were – for. The counting is more important than the voting;

- ❖ The “democrats” claim that Ukraine should decide for itself whether it will be part of NATO or not. Others should not have interfered. In principle, that is fine. But, according to the same rules, shouldn’t Macedonia also decide for itself about its name? Of course, right? And that should not be controversial, but...;
- ❖ Navalny, may he rest in peace, was freed from the Russians because they are “tyrants”. Assange, on the other hand, was not freed from the British and Americans, even though they are “democratic”. If Assange had revealed Chinese secret documents, and not American ones, he would probably have received the Nobel Prize;
- ❖ Russia’s involvement in Syria, at the behest of the elected government, was aggression. The rebellion, organized by the CIA against a legally elected president, was a fight for human rights;
- ❖ Kosovo can secede by force, Crimea cannot secede even by referendum;
- ❖ If all NATO members, today – 32, allocate only 2.5 percent of their gross domestic product (GDP) for defence, these funds would amount to a greater total than the Russian GDP. Moscow allocates about 6 percent of its GDP for defense but it is a danger to Europe;
- ❖ This is where the unprecedented absurdity comes from – 450 million inhabitants of the European Union, demand security guarantees from 350 million Americans – against 140 million Russians;
- ❖ Our country also has a similar absurdity – if you start from the north of Europe – from Sweden, Finland, Denmark... and you go south, you go south, you go south... And where will you end up? In North Macedonia;
- ❖ A promise without a deadline is just an assumption.

INTERESTING THOUGHTS

- ❖ In Resen, when we played in the street, an adult regularly sat on a bench in front of his house, opposite that of the famous Tatarchevi family, in the center of the city. He kept repeating to us – children, never give up because you will make mistakes. If you are honest, there are dishonest ones; and if you are dishonest, there are honest ones;
- ❖ Some countries are ready to fight for a single border, and Bill Gates conquered the world without firing a shot. He should be an idol for the ambitious;
- ❖ Politics is the art of the possible, and diplomacy of the impossible;
- ❖ The happiest diplomat is the one who has an American salary, a British house, a Chinese cook, and a Japanese wife. The unluckiest, however, is the one who has a Japanese apartment, a British cook, a Chinese salary and an American wife;
- ❖ In the 1970s, when I served in China (1972 – 1976), life was not easy even for foreigners. There was severe poverty everywhere, movement was restricted, there were no concerts, cinemas, theatres... There were only a few restaurants and hotels for foreigners... A business delegation from Yugoslavia arrived under these conditions when one of its members asked the representative of the large Serbian company “Inex”: “How are you doing here?” - “Good” he replied. - “Really?” - the guest then added - “It doesn’t look like it!” “You are persistent,” the host told him, “and that’s why I will tell you exactly. Everything is excellent, only in the morning we have one dilemma: when we get up, we don’t know which is smarter - to ‘wash’ ourselves or to kill ourselves”!;
- ❖ British Prime Minister John Major, during a visit to Moscow, at the beginning of the 1990s, asked President Yeltsin: “Boris - in a word, what is the situation in Russia?” “In a word - good”, Yeltsin replied. Major, however, was not satisfied with the answer and continued - “What is the longer version?” “It’s not good,” said Yeltsin;

❖ A Russian asked a diplomat from tropical Africa: “How do you bear the winter in Moscow?” – The African replied with a question – “Which one do you mean? The white one or the green one?”

❖ A lady said to Churchill “If you were my husband, I would put poison in your tea.” – Without hesitation, Churchill replied – “Madam, if I were your husband, I would drink the tea immediately.”

❖ We have already mentioned Kocha Popovich and his meeting with John Kennedy. He was one of the first Yugoslav foreign ministers. There is an interesting story about him from the Federal, at the time, State Secretariat for Foreign Affairs (MFA). As a minister, he had to look for one of the chiefs (that is, the level of an ambassador) several times and could not find him. Either he hadn’t come or he had already left. He became interested in what was happening to the man and he was reported to have been arriving at work later and later every day, and leaving earlier and earlier. Kocha Popovich called him into the office and told him that he was very worried about him. “Why?” the chief asked in surprise. “I’m afraid that one day you’ll meet me at the front door,” the minister replied!

❖ Pavli Kesku, Albanian ambassador to London, and close to the then president, Sali Berisha, in 1996, when the Serbian Academy of Sciences advocated the division of Kosovo, to my question - whether it was realistic, he directly answered: “It’s too late for division! That could have been relevant 10 or more years ago, but not now. Today, Kosovo is ours and there is no reason for the Albanians to give up part of it!”;

❖ If you borrow money, borrow from a pessimist. He does not expect you to return it. Or, if you borrow money, borrow in bulk. If you face problems, creditors will save you;

❖ Do not take life seriously. No one has come out of it alive;

❖ Logic is the easiest way to confidently reach a - wrong conclusion;

- ❖ S. Gerz, French sociologist, after the fall of the Berlin Wall: “As a system, socialism is – dead. As a movement – in agony. As an idea – the best.”;
- ❖ V. Putin – “The Berlin Wall has not been torn down, it has only been moved eastward, towards Russia”!;
- ❖ The mind is the opposite of money. The less you have, the more satisfied you are;
- ❖ Aristotle: “Plato is dear to me (my friend and teacher), but truth is dearer to me.”;
- ❖ Kiro Nikovski, my father: “Better a gendarme behind you, than a priest in front of you.”;
- ❖ With only your hands, no one has ever gotten far;
- ❖ What is exploitation? A joke from the time of communism: An American worker gets up at around 7:00 a.m. throws three eggs and bacon into a frying pan, has breakfast, gets in a “Cadillac” and drives off to be exploited. An Englishman also gets up at 7:30 a.m., throws two eggs and ham into a frying pan, has breakfast, gets in a “Mini Morris” and goes to be exploited. A Yugoslav gets up at 05:00, throws two eggs – gets on his bicycle and goes to self-govern;
- ❖ In capitalism, there is exploitation from person to person. In socialism, it is the other way around;
- ❖ Why is a coup d’état not possible in the USA? Because there is no American embassy there;
- ❖ Never rush to judge someone. That is easy. Try to understand him first, to justify him;
- ❖ Russian General Lebed: “Whoever does not regret the USSR and Yugoslavia, has no soul. Whoever hopes that they will return, has no mind.”;

- ❖ Karl Marx: “Even the smell of power is intoxicating.”;
- ❖ If there is no competition of ideas – power degrades;
- ❖ Pavel Borodin, Chief of Staff of Russian President Boris Yeltsin: “With us, in the Russian Federation, by ourselves, everyone is a person, but together we are nothing. In America, by ourselves, everyone is nobody! But together, everyone is a state.”;
- ❖ The main weapon in diplomacy is the word. It is the same in politics. The word lifts you to heights, but it can also knock you on the ground;
- ❖ When foreigners insist that we implement the agreement on (un)friendship with Bulgaria, they only need to ask themselves – would you, as a state, sign such an agreement with another state that does not officially and publicly recognize that you exist as a separate people? The answer is clear but the blame is ours;
- ❖ Which Bulgarians should we put in the Constitution? Those who formed fascist clubs in Bitola and Ohrid?

..*

Finally, a few lasting wisdoms:

- ❖ In diplomacy, but also much more broadly, an unwritten rule is that when you are prepared to achieve something at any cost, and you do not hide it and others know it – there is no such degree of humiliation that they will not force on you! (A classic proof of this is the case of Macedonia, with its desire for EU membership);
- ❖ Political commitments undertaken, whether domestically or internationally – are either fulfilled or abandoned. Third – none. (This absolutely applies to our relationship with Sofia, in connection with the inevitable abandonment of not only the Second Protocol);
- ❖ If you want to stay where you are, you need to move forward! Otherwise, others will overtake you;

❖ There are no dead-end situations. There are only people who feel that way;

❖ Abraham Lincoln: “Nothing is finished until it is justly decided.”;

❖ Thomas Jefferson, also President of the USA: “When injustice becomes law, resistance is an obligation.”;

❖ Angela Merkel, German Chancellor: “There are times when disobedience is an obligation.”;

❖ Eleanor Roosevelt, wife of an American president: “Remember, no one can make you feel inferior without your permission.”;

❖ Abraham Lincoln: “You cannot escape tomorrow’s responsibility by avoiding it today.”;

❖ Confucius: “You cannot make plans with people who are striving for a different goal.” (This is exactly what is happening to us, in Macedonia);

❖ George Orwell: “The most effective way to destroy a people is to erase their own understanding of their history.”;

❖ Branislav Nushich: “Knowledge has limits, ignorance has none.”;

❖ Voltaire: “All is not lost if honor is saved.”;

❖ Kosta Racin: “A people that does not have its yesterday, does not have its today, cannot have its national tomorrow!”;

In one way or another, all these quotes directly relate to the situation in which Macedonia is today. However, there is no room for pessimism! Macedonia will succeed, and Macedonianism will win! If it were possible to destroy the Macedonians and close the “Macedonian Question”, it would have been done a long ago. However, we must all on a daily basis, fight resolutely and dedicatedly for our rights and for our survival, which is seriously threatened, and our political leaders

must take on their share of responsibility and prove that they are mature enough to lead Macedonia.