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**Slobodan Milošević's Rule:
An Attempt of Typological Definition**

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Slobodan Milošević's rule can be analyzed in several ways and from different angles. But, the primary object of this paper is the question: into what type can Slobodan Milošević's rule be categorized? Therefore, we will present the main features of his rule in the first part of the article. In the second part, we will analyze the usual typology of personal rule and, following a more precise definition of (some of) the terms, categorize Milosevic's rule into one of these types. Finally, in the third part, we will try to verify our classification by comparing Milosevic's rule with another historical example of an identical type of personal rule.

The Basic Characteristics of Slobodan Milosevic's Rule

In Serbian political science and sociology, there is a certain level of agreement about the main characteristics of Milosevic's rule, or, more precisely, about the political system in today's Serbia, with the figure of Slobodan Milosevic at its center.

First, it is generally considered that, according to the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia of 1990, Milošević, as President of the Republic, provided himself with such broad competence that his rule is practically equal to that of a sovereign. Consequently, the President's activities, which are particularly important at the international level, do not have to be ratified in any way by Parliament. Presidential acts cannot be challenged by the Constitutional Court and do not have to be counter-signed by the Government. The Constitution also gives the President very wide powers in the most sensitive moments for the democratic order. He has, for example, wide powers to introduce a state of emergency in which his decisions have force of law (Article 83). The President can also easily dissolve Parliament (Article 89), and the Constitution gives him great freedom to decide for himself the reasons for such a decision (in other East European countries, the cases in which the president can exercise this power are strictly defined). But not even this was enough. The Law about Measures in Case of a State of Emergency (enacted on March 28, 1991) broadens these authorizations even further, so that the President can declare a state of emergency even in case of the smallest worker's strike (Article 2.1). The same law, quite unconstitutionally and by deftly making the state of emergency equal to the state of war, authorizes the President to curtail and cancel basic civil rights and political freedoms (Article 6.1) even in a state of emergency. Therefore, these clauses make the President of the Republic in Serbia practically equal to Schmitt's sovereign.

However, the main political and institutional strengths of the President in a system like that established in Serbia arise from the manner of his election and

the possibilities of his dismissal. Presidents are elected in direct elections in many other former socialist countries (Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Slovenia, Russia, Montenegro, and others), and the direct election of the President of Serbia is not in itself controversial. The problem is that in Serbia alone the President is not answerable to any institutional body and the preconditions for his removal are effectively unattainable. A decision to recall the President cannot be made by a judicial authority (such as a constitutional or supreme court) or by Parliament, but only by the electorate in a referendum, which is unique in East European constitutional practice (Kutlešić, 1994: 352-353). This process is made still more difficult by additional clauses, so that more votes are required to remove the president than to elect him! To be elected president, a candidate needs to win a majority of the votes cast in the election, but the votes of a majority of all the electors is needed for his recall (Article 88).

Such constitutional gymnastics have provided for "the absolute superiority of the president over Parliament" (Goati, 1991: 58), and in practice led to a situation in which "the President makes the key political decisions instead of Parliament" (Goati, 1992: 545). Actually, the whole parliamentary system was "warped" beyond recognition by such "rationalization" (Nikolić, 1994) because the President became "the constitutional center of government, with no controls and responsible to no one" (Basta-Posavec, 1991: 114-115), thus "completing the constitutional basis for the personal rule of an individual, embodied in the President of the Republic" (Basta-Posavec, 1991: 115). "Modeled after the person of the current President, this system practically cleared the way to establishing a regime of personal rule" (Nikolić, 1994: 328).

Second, Milošević's regime is authoritarian. Not only does he make all the key political decisions, but, even in the realm of daily politics, decisions are not made without involving him. When the boss of some provincial county has to be named or replaced - they ask Milošević; when a rally of an opposition party has to be permitted or prohibited - they ask Milošević; when the citizens are to be informed about a news item in the television program with the highest ratings - again they ask Milošević; and so on, and so forth. The Parliament, "an obedient tool in someone else's hands" (Jovičić, 1992: 37), votes for anything that Milošević needs, while Cabinets play the role of "mere transmission belts" (Jovičić, 1992: 38) whose only task is to smoothly move the machinery of state in the direction Milošević wants it to go. Finally, the governing party itself, the Socialist Party of Serbia, represents only a lever for carrying out Milošević's decisions. "Not even Tito had such control and influence on his (party) subjects like Milošević does. Even during the times of under-cover work and the first years after coming to power, the old Communist Party had factions - among the Socialists, such things are unknown. There is no second or third personality among the Socialists, like Kardelj, Ranković, and Đilas were beside Tito. There is only the irreplaceable leader" (Đukić, 1994: 304-305). The best illustration of Milošević's authoritarian way of managing the party is the manner in which he replaced some of the foremost figures in the SPS on November 28, 1995 (Mihailo Marković, Bora Jović, etc.). Milošević came to the Main Board meeting over which he was to preside, simply read out a list of those to be removed or appointed to duty, and, without asking whether anyone present had anything to say and

after only 12 minutes of session, closed the meeting! (*Naša Borba*, December 1, 1995: 9) Meanwhile, not one member of the Main Board, the only body that has the right to appoint or replace functionaries by party statute, dared utter a single word, let alone ask for a vote!

And third, even with such marked personal rule and authoritarian features, Milošević had, and still has, important support from the people. During the last part of the eighties, Milošević's nationalist movement managed to bring hundreds of thousands of people to the town squares of every larger Serbian town: on rallies in support of Milošević, 100,000 people gathered in Užice, Valjevo, Šabac, Kruševac and Kraljevo; 150,000 in Vranje; 200,000 in Leskovac and Kragujevac; 300,000 in Niš; and over a million in Beograd (Đukić, 1994: 104-105). On the first multiparty elections held on December 9, 1990, Milošević won over 63% of the votes and convincingly beat all the candidates of the opposition. Even during the times when his regime was in crisis, he never lost support of the greater part of the electorate. While Beograd shook from civil and student protests in March 1991, Serbia's interior stood faithfully by its national leader, supporting all the means of repression he was ready to implement. While activists of the Democratic Party, under the slogan "your vote can save Serbia", collected signatures on a petition for Milošević's resignation in February 1992, a research then conducted on the territory of Serbia by the Institute for Political Studies, showed that, in comparison to the elections of 1990, lost only 1.9% of the electoral body! While, during the demonstrations of June 1992, a mass of people (sometimes numbering several hundreds of thousands) rolled through the streets of Belgrade day and night, while the Serb Church, the Academy, the University, nearly all the intelligentsia in the nation's capital, students and even school-children unanimously demanded Milošević's resignation, a research of the same kind showed that the number of those in favor of his resignation is only 0.3% greater than the number of those against it (Antonić, 1993: 33). And it was enough for Milošević to pull his forces together and regroup them, to win 56% of the votes on the next presidential elections five months later (December 20, 1992) and eliminate his opponent Milan Panić in the first round. In addition to this, all public opinion polls carried out during the period 1993-1995 showed that, regardless of the depth of the crises, Milošević remained the most popular politician among the Serbs (Đurić, 1995).

Therefore, if we wanted to give a short evaluation of Milošević's rule to date, we could point out, as its basic characteristic, *a distinct personal rule in a parliamentary envelope, with the plebiscitary support of the people.*

The Type of Milošević's Rule

Having described the basic characteristics of Milošević's rule in the first part of this paper, we are left with the task of classifying it into one of the known types of personal rule. We will begin by using the simple method of successive elimination: first considering, one by one, every type of personal rule known to classical political theory, then examining whether Milošević's rule could be classified as such.

As a start, we can immediately eliminate all kinds of *monarchical rule*, for very understandable reasons. We can then also eliminate all forms of *totalitarian personal rule* (in both the nazi-fascist and the communist variant). If totalitarianism is characterized by the party-police apparatus' complete control over every aspect of public and private life (Friedrich, Brzezinski, 1961: 130-149), then it cannot be said of Slobodan Milošević's Serbia that it was a classic totalitarian state, not even during the period of a single-party system at the end of the eighties. There were wide enough areas of social autonomy (mainly in the arts and sciences, but in economy and the media as well), ideology was nearly extinct, the Party "watered-down", and police terror a thing of the past; the regime thus rested on *authoritarian* rather than totalitarian presumptions. There is even less reason to call the period after 1990 totalitarian, for it was then that areas of political freedoms were widened and certain characteristics of a parliamentary system introduced, regardless of all its shortcomings.

In the same way, *tyranny* is not an adequate name for Milošević's rule, either. Namely, tyranny is characterized not only by personal rule unbound by law, but also by the rule of an individual *against the will of the majority of the citizens* - this was particularly stressed by classical political thinkers (Xenoph., *Memorabilia*, IV, 6; Plato, *Resp.*, 567c, d; Arist., *Pol.*, 1285a, 4; Polyb., *Hist.*, VI, 4). But, as we have already pointed out, not only did Milošević not rule against the citizens' will, but he also, at least up to the present time, always had the support of a majority of the electorate, a majority that did not experience him either as a usurper or as a tyrant.

We could not designate Milošević's rule as a *dictatorship*, either. Under the influence of Neumann's important book *The Democratic and Authoritarian State* first published in 1957, his rather broad definition of dictatorship (as a rule of one or more individuals who usurp and monopolize state government with unlimited executive powers) is accepted by a majority of political, and other, encyclopedias (such as Stammer, 1968: 161; and Curtis, 1987). But such a broad definition makes dictatorship practically equal to all the other kinds of autocratic regimes (tyranny, despotism, absolutism, totalitarianism, *etc.* -- Stammer, 1968; Curtis, 1987), thereby losing the characteristic implications of this term. Since political science has the task, among others, of delimiting the meaning of key terms, the concept of dictatorship that was worked out by K. Schmitt (Schmitt, 1921) is especially important. Dictatorship differs from mere tyranny or blatant despotism in two aspects: the first is a time limit to the suspension of the legal order (be it a shorter or a hazily defined longer period); the second is precise action plan and a more or less determined social and political vision of the society that is to be realized by this action (Schmitt, 1921).

Even though some elements of such a dictatorship are present in Milošević's rule, we must notice that he never resorted to suspending the legal order even though he truly had enough opportunities to do this, with the breakdown of the Yugoslav federation, war, and a hyperinflation nearly equal to the one in Germany during the twenties. What is more, he never admitted the existence of a certain systematic lack of civil rights and freedoms, necessary "at the present time" in order to achieve this or that goal in the future. No, even during the communist period, Milošević maintained that the order in which he

ascended to power was "the highest level of democracy known to mankind" (Milošević, 1989: 258). After the transition to a multiparty model and the introduction of some basic forms of parliamentarism, he took nearly every opportunity to point out that the level of democracy achieved in Serbia was in no way inferior to the one achieved in the most developed countries of the West. Therefore, it would really be wrong to classify Milošević's rule, at least the forms it took until now (1987-1995), as a dictatorship.

We are left with a type of personal rule called *caesarism* in classical political theory. While examining the conditions in Serbia, many Serb authors already used this concept to designate Milošević's rule (Čavoški, 1991: 88, 151; Mihajlović, 1992: 45; Podunavac, 1993: 158; Mimica, 1991; 1992). Namely, if by caesarism we imply an authoritarian type of personal rule in which the ruler has the support of the people, enabling him to secure "a rudimentarily democratic (most often plebiscitary) form of legitimacy" (Podunavac, 1993: 156), then *Milošević's regime can be called caesaristic without a doubt*.

In political theory, the concept of caesarism, in its ontological sense of course, is much older than Caesar himself and its basic outlines can be traced back to Aristotle. Speaking about the two basic forms of personal rule - the kingdom (Gk. *basilikos*), ruled by the power of law and the citizens' consent, and the tyranny (Gk. *tyrannos*), ruled without law or the citizens' consent (Arist., *Rhet.*, 1366a; Arist., *Pol.*, 1285a: 4), Aristotle warned that somewhere in between these two there is an order characterized by the rule of an *aisymnetes*, i.e. an "electoral tyrant" (Arist., *Pol.*, 1285a: 5). Aristotle writes that this form of government "represents both a *basilikos*, because it is based on law and the subjects submit to the rule of a single individual of their own free will, and, at the same time, a *tyrannos*, because this individual rules as he wants, like a master" (Arist., *Pol.*, 1295a: 2).

We find this note of the people's consent with a personal rule, which is not the classical kingly rule, in the roman principate as well (*Iustiniani Institutiones*, I, II, 6; *ibid.*: 1912; Hammond, 1931), but this differentiation between personal rule carried out lawfully and with the citizens' consent, and the one without law and against their will, is practically lost during the mature and late Empire. As far as theory is concerned, this differentiation was maintained during the whole medieval period as a delimitation between kingdom and tyranny. On the other hand, modern political theory, in its early phase, not only ignores such a finely distinguished concept like caesarism, but even questions the difference between kingdom and tyranny. Machiavelli's *Prince* (1513) is characterized by an intentional disinterest in the difference between king and tyrant, while Hobbes openly rejects this difference in his *Leviathan* (1651).

However, with the ascent of the masses onto the political scene and with the appearance of a new way of legitimizing personal rule "directly from the people", i.e. by means of a plebiscite (especially used in France during the whole nineteenth century), political theory again needed a term to denote this specific form of *authoritarian personal rule carried out by the consent of the majority*. Tocqueville tried with *democratic despotism* in his *L'ancien regime et la Revolution* (1856), but the term *caesarism* finally prevailed, at least in Germany, after Roscher's study (Roscher, 1892: 588). Neumann carried this term over into

the English language with his book, published in 1957, so that, during the next decade, we already find it among encyclopedic entries (Stammer, 1968: 161).

But not every caesarism is the same, so we must make a distinction between the three known sub-types of this form of personal rule in order to classify Milošević's rule precisely. We can call the first sub-type *post-constitutional caesarism*. Some authors (Voegelin, Strauss) tend to make this sub-type equal to the whole concept of caesarism itself, but we maintain that it represents only one (and not even the most frequent one) of its forms. The phenomenological history of post-constitutional caesarism is simple: constitutional order is in crises because it no longer conforms to the true distribution of political power, so a prominent political or military figure uses his popularity among the people to undermine the existing order and establish his own personal rule. A classic example of this sub-type is, of course, the case of Caesar himself.

The second sub-type of caesarism can be called *republican caesarism*. Its phenomenological history is typical, too: the republic is in a deep crisis because, after several unsuccessful solutions, it finds itself torn between the danger of a restoration of the "old regime" on the one hand, and general, unbearable anarchy on the other; someone is needed (most often a soldier) to bring peace and save the fruits of the revolution; in this situation, a Caesar emerges to the forefront; the people love him and, to everyone's relief, all power ends up in his hands. The rules of Oliver Cromwell and Napoleon Bonaparte can be considered as examples of republican caesarism.

We will call the third kind of caesarism *transit caesarism*. This sub-type, which could also be called post-authoritarian or pre-democratic, can be found in societies that are on their way from an authoritarian to a democratic social order. We will classify Milošević's rule into precisely this category. The regime of Louis Bonaparte (Napoleon III) is a historic example of transit caesarism. In the third part of this paper, we will consider it in greater detail by (1) accepting it as a typological model, and (2) comparing it to the rule of Slobodan Milošević.

Louis Napoleon - Slobodan Milošević: a Comparison

Considering the way they gained and legitimized their power, there are really numerous and quite astonishing similarities, in appearance as well as in content, between Slobodan Milošević's rule and that of his historical - typological predecessor, Louis Napoleon (lived 1808-1873; President of the Republic 1848-1852; Emperor of France 1852-1870).

First of all, both Louis Bonaparte and Slobodan Milošević utilized the same means in order to win power - a *populist movement*. Both of them started with a vehement campaign of personal propaganda in the press (for Louis Napoleon, see: Simpson, 1925: 284; and Guedalla, 1922: 164-165). When the press completed an appropriate "artillery preparation" for assault, numerous rallies were organized all over the country and a semi-legal populist movement created (in the case of Louis Napoleon, it was the *Societe du Dix-Decembre*). In both cases, this populist movement had two basic features: *national sentiment* (as Napoleon Bonaparte's nephew, Louis Bonaparte symbolized the former

greatness and power of France; see Guedalla, 1922: 111), and *social demagoguery* (Louis Napoleon to present himself as a socialist and "Saint Simon on a horse"; Guerard, 1943: 214).

At the same time, the structure of Louis Napoleon's rule is the same as the one we saw characterizing Milošević's regime.

First, as President of the Republic, Louis Napoleon gave himself the widest constitutional powers, too. According to the Constitution of November 1848, similar to the American model, all executive powers rested in his hands (Simpson, 1925: 296-307). He was given even greater powers by the new Constitution of January 14, 1852, at the expense of the legislative arm of government: the President (later Emperor) could actually carry out any administrative or political decision he wanted by decree. The legislative arm was practically denied any power by the introduction of a State Council, whose members were appointed by Louis Napoleon himself and who submitted new laws at his request, and a Senate, whose members were also appointed by the Emperor and who judged the laws' compliance to the Constitution (Zeldin, 1963).

Second, Louis Napoleon's regime was only a form of personal rule hiding behind a mask of parliamentarism, too. The legislative body, being the only elected body that corresponded to the concept of a parliament, was so weak that it served only as a transmission for carrying out Louis Napoleon's decisions. Namely, he was in a position to fully supervise elections for the legislative body because only official candidates of the government had the right to an election campaign. In the parliamentary elections of 1857, the government candidates won 5,471,000 votes, while the opposition gathered only 665,000 votes (Guerard, 1943: 219). Louis Napoleon also limited the freedom of the press as much as possible, and, by introducing the *General Security Act* (February 19, 1858), gave the police such wide authorizations that he practically turned France into a police state: the police could intern or deport anyone they considered suspicious for any reason without a court order, and anyone could be suspicious, if only for remaining silent when the police considered this silence seditious (*silence seditieux*; Payne, 1966).

The third common feature we find in both regimes is that Louis Napoleon, like Milošević, enjoyed *true popularity among the people* for quite a long time, in spite of the authoritarian nature of his regime. His popularity was constantly confirmed by diligently organized elections and plebiscites. In the presidential elections held on December 10-14, 1848, Louis Bonaparte won over 5.4 million votes out of a total of 7.4 million votes cast and, with such a convincing majority of votes, became President of the Republic (Guerard, 1943: 92). The plebiscite on the question of extending Louis' presidential mandate to ten years, held on December 20-21, 1851, resulted in 7,439,216 *ayes* and only 640,737 *noes* (Denquin, 1976: 60). When he declared himself Emperor, Louis Napoleon organized another plebiscite and triumphed again, winning 7,824,189 votes in favor, as opposed to only some 253,145 votes that were cast against him (Denquin, 1976: 230). Finally, less than four months before the disgraceful collapse of the Empire at Sedan, Napoleon III organized and won another plebiscite: in May 1870, the people were called to decide about Napoleon's new liberalization measures. Of the 10.8 million registered voters, 7,336,000

supported the Emperor's reforms, 1,560,000 voted against them, while 1,894,000 voters abstained (Guerard, 1943: 247).

Hence, if we wanted to present a phenomenological history of transit caesarism, too, we could say the following: in this case, the Caesar ascends to power by utilizing the nation's collective frustration caused by a prolonged and rigid rule of an authoritarian, in every way outdated, regime; he skillfully implements a democratic charge that already exists in society to overthrow the old political oligarchy - not in order to democratize the system, but to extend his own powers as far as possible; when the accumulated civil energy in his pseudo-democratic, essentially nationalist-populist, movement wears down, the people who are unused to truly democratic institutions become easy prey to political deceit: seemingly democratic institutions are introduced, but behind them, essentially, stands the rule of a single person - the Caesar; he provides apparently democratic legitimacy for his rule by organizing a plebiscite (or an election with all the characteristics of a plebiscite - we described Milošević's case in Antonić, 1993: 38). Beside tight control over the public media, this illusion is furthered by social demagogy, *i.e.* socio-demagogical politics, as well as by propaganda for "peace, order, and discipline". This last point does not stop the Caesar from occasionally refreshing his original nationalist-populist source of legitimacy with military adventures and megalomaniac foreign policies. All in all, the result is an authoritarian rule, but this time an authoritarian rule that has - the support of the majority.

Instead of a Conclusion: the Future of Milošević's Rule

After describing and classifying a phenomenon such as Slobodan Milošević's rule, the question is whether we can somehow predict the future of this phenomenon, *i.e.* when and how Milošević's rule will end. Can we rely on our knowledge of the present circumstances and circumstances surrounding the rule of Napoleon III to predict how Milošević's rule will further develop and finally come to an end?

Judging by the history of Napoleon III, it seems that Serbia can look forward to quite a few more years of Milošević's rule. In time, his rule will develop more and more democratic traits, with a parliamentary order finally establishing itself in Serbia after he leaves the political scene. Because if we look at what happened with Napoleon III, we can see that his regime "softened" during the years and that, towards its end, it was so liberal that it did not differ much from other parliamentary systems (Guerard, 1943: 242).

However, in our opinion, there are two crucial differences between Napoleon III and Milošević which disable us from carrying out this kind of inductive reasoning about the future of Milošević's rule with absolute certainty: first, *the two regimes have different socio-economic bases*, and, second, *the two rulers have different characters*.

Different socio-economic bases resulted in a different distribution of economic power, implying a different distribution of political power as well, and in the case of Napoleon III this distribution favored a democratic solution more than it does in today's Serbia. Namely, the socio-economic order of Napoleon's

France is a classic example of *liberal capitalism* in which, thanks to the dominance of private property, there is an important sphere of civil society autonomous in relation to the state and its ruler - the economic sphere. The economic power of industrial capitalists, the smaller ones as well as the wealthiest, gave this social group autonomous political power, too. At the very beginning, they were satisfied with Napoleon III because he provided them with respite from political turmoil and a longer period of peace and order. This peace resulted in France's huge economic advance, bringing even greater powers and numbers to the ranks of the industrial, financial, merchant and land-owning *bourgeoisie*. And it was these classes who, after twenty years of peace and material well-being, forgot all the hardships of the February Revolution. Tight police control started to seem no longer necessary, so they demanded the return of their political freedoms. The pressure these powerful and independent classes applied on Napoleon III to start with liberalization and democratization grew greater and greater. He could do nothing but comply, since even more rigorous state control certainly had no future.

However, in the case of today's Serbia we have a society of typical *political capitalism*, as Weber would call it (Weber, 1976: 51). As we have exhaustively described already in another paper (Antonić, 1993: 174-177), the greatest profits here are not gained on the market, through rational methods of planning and market calculations (like in Weber's so-called *rational capitalism*, or liberal capitalism) but mainly through the state, by way of state monopolies, system privileges, monetary speculations, machinations, smuggling and corruption - through irrational and illegal methods of doing business. Therefore, the economically most powerful classes in Serbia are not autonomous in relation to the state, but merely represent its parasitic supplement; they are only the state rule's symbiotic partner, making possible a form of economic materialization of the state's political power. Such social classes are not only *not* independent of the state - they are, furthermore, directly connected to it by personal and business ties, and they have practically no interest in liberalization and a democratic transformation of the regime. The state government consistently supervises these classes, allowing them no independence. This is best demonstrated by the *Law on Transformation of Property* (ratified on July 29, 1994), which practically annulled all the previous privatization of socialist property, when 18% of all the socialist companies had already been sold and 52% were in the process of issuing bonds. And without independent economic power, no social class in Serbia is politically capable of applying pressure on the government, long enough and strongly enough, to start with democratization.

But even if such pressure did exist, it is disputable whether the effect would be the same as in the case of Napoleon III. Namely, as we already showed in another paper (Antonić, 1993: 167-173), the ruling elite's loss of self-confidence plays a crucial role in the practical dissolution of authoritarian regimes. In systems based on personal rule, this role is played by *the ruler's loss of self-confidence*, so it is directly connected to the character and psychological traits of the ruler. Historians report that Napoleon III was quite an impressionable and insecure ruler: "irresolute, prone to outside influence, and without clear vision and strategy" with "a contradictory and certainly mediocre personality",

Napoleon III lost composure in critical situations and easily agreed to surrenders - political as well as military (as in the case of Sedan). On the other hand, Slobodan Milošević is a ruler of a completely different mettle: persistent to obstinacy, of a solid psychological build, and with a distinct will for power. In critical situations, he showed himself willing to accept blows patiently, no matter how painful they were, until the opponent grew tired or quit, and then turn to a strong counter-offensive. We must remember June and July of 1992, when everybody was against him - not only the outside world, but also the Serb Church, the Serb Academy and Serb University, practically all of the Serb intelligentsia, students and school children, and hundreds of thousands of demonstrators who tolled for his departure day and night, shouting his name with hate and contempt. In these circumstances, any other politician would have lost his self-confidence and resigned. But not Milošević. Drawing his head into his shoulders and digging in as deeply as he could, he endured stoically all the blows that were showering on him (without repeating the mistake he made in March 1991, when he sent in tanks against the demonstrators) and waited patiently for the storm to blow over. Then he masterfully played his hand with Ćosić and Panić and regained all his lost positions by autumn.

Generally speaking, Milošević displayed an immense capability of learning from his own mistakes and a distinct persistence in enlarging his powers as President as far as possible. The events of 1993 and 1994 testify that he obstinately kept putting under strict control, for caution's sake, the small number of institutions and public media that had managed to maintain their independence from the government, and again taking over any political ground he might have lost to the opposition in earlier crises. And when we look at his rule today, at the beginning of 1996, we see that it is more solid and steadier than ever before. He no longer has to make concessions to anyone – because there is no one strong enough to force him to do so. The time when the opposition, the independent public, and even political analysts (Mimica, 1991; Antonić, 1992) forecast his quick downfall - is long past. He has secured himself on all sides, and if he manages to extricate himself from the Bosnian adventure apparently undefeated, he will be quite free to catch his breath. His rule is well based and well conducted, so it would be a miracle if he gave up any part of it in the near future. Serbia is in strong and dependable hands, the kind of hands it always liked, and it is in these hands that it is sure to meet the end of this century, and probably the end of the first decade of the next century as well.

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