

“OSLOBODENJE”
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Let Paddy Reign

Newest recommendations of the International Crisis Group were formed on a series of impossible prospects but, as seems, there is no other way out

As I see the legal status of this state has not been yet clarified even though seven years have passed from the time when her first steps to its own growing up were made. A tacit agreement was that it is, more-or-less, a protectorate. However, a new theory has been recently published asserting that the country is a typical 19th century colony led by Maharaja Ashdown. But Ashdown publicly rejected that title which is associated with the English colonial power and he claims that its Presidency and the Council of Ministers manages Bosnia and Herzegovina.

All of its represents a sign that a lost compass has not been found up to now and that the rule of confusion and chaos still goes on. Life seems to come to a stop awaiting that someone finally adjudicates what Bosnia and Herzegovina is and who has the power here. At the surface different opinions exist with regard to the High Representative. His right to the crown was first questioned by the Alliance for Democratic Changes whose leader Zlatko Lagumdžija persevered on the partnership with the International Community. The experiment winded up in the election debacle of the Alliance, Lagumdžija's Social – Democratic Party almost vanished in a dramatic domestic quarrel and Lagumdžija himself became “an expert” for Iraq.

Present state leadership has no uniform standing on Ashdown's interfering with the political process. Paravac sees the High Representative as a necessary evil, Covic seems to come to a conclusion that he has better wisely keep silent while Tihic feels two-fold: he is angry with Ashdown for spoiling his personnel arrangement but if he has been told the next day that the British guy is going back home he would be ready to run to the airport and plead him to stay. And I think rightly so.

Two days ago the International Crisis Group presented its newest report on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina to the public. It should not have done it at this unbearably hot weather especially since it is the matter of a gloomy tale lacking happy ending but hopefully we will outlive it. The writers of the said study called forcing nationalists “who made and fought the war” to take responsibility for reform as “the only option and the best revenge” but they do not forget to proclaim such Ashdown's strategy as more than risky. But so not to waste all the efforts of the international community, even though often belated and erroneously directed, there was also place for the statement that it is still “too soon for despair”.

Whatever the case may be Lord Ashdown is a key figure in this paper. All correlates to his acts on which depend whether he is going to end his mission with a success or to leave Bosnia with a sense of guilt. If I understood the entire matter properly Ashdown is recommended to put the vehicle of his mandate into the fifth gear at the cost of either coming to the finish on time or ending in a abyss. And as to stand any chances he has to turn blind eye to almost all traffic signs on the road. It is the only way how to understand the following instruction of the International Crisis Group: "In order to realise the promise of Dayton the High Representative will have to lift the ceiling of what is meant to be permissible under the Dayton Agreement".

Should Ashdown seriously accept these recommendations, and he seems to have no other way, he is going to face a series of impossible prospects. The High Representative himself claims that the time for the huge apparatus of the International Community to depart from Bosnia and Herzegovina "is increasingly closing". Patience of the West and financial assistance sources are already drying out and it is known who will pay the accrued bills in that case.

But let me go back to the syntagma of "impossible prospects". The International Crisis Group advocates reviewing the constitutional architecture that means to annul the Dayton division of Bosnia and Herzegovina. A hot potato would be first thrown into the hands of local authorities and, if they throw it away, Paddy Ashdown would take it over. In other words: gentlemen either implement reforms or let Paddy reign!