



CENTAR ZA GRAĐANSKO OBRAZOVANJE
CENTRE FOR CIVIC EDUCATION

Podgorica, 20 December 2008

TO EACH ACCORDING TO MERIT

Centre for Civic Education (CCE) congratulates the new general director of RTCG Branko Vojičić on the appointment to that office and request, in line with the Law on Free Access to information, a copy of the “poem” Mr Vojičić submitted as his programme for this company and which earned him the office. CCE believes that the public, and not only a handful of managers of RTCG has the right to be acquainted with the vision of development of RTCG proposed by its new general director.

CCE shares the opinion of one part of the public that the new Law on RTCG is not likely to make this media establishment any more independent. It is a notorious fact that RTCG was never independent in its work, nor guided by the public interest or standards of professional journalism, which was the ambition of the one time pompously announced media reform and the adoption of a series of “European media laws”, as the politicians liked to call the Law on Media, Broadcasting Law and Law on Public Broadcasting Service RTCG.

The new Law on RTCG formalises the past practices of the violation of rules and spirit of the previous Law and renders senseless all the effort invested by the international and national actors over the past years to help Montenegro acquire a genuine public service. While the OSCE is still “waiting to see” what will happen, one can only wonder what they hope will happen, since their “waiting and seeing” for the last several years only brought us the reversal of the entire process. Instead of securing the influence and participation of all citizens, regardless of their differences in political affiliation, the new legal arrangement gives us once again a Council of RTCG which is merely a transmission belt of the will of ruling political circles.

The citizens refuse to finance RTCG in its existing form, which was only proven by the failure of the system of direct collection of subscriptions. The question is, why did the Parliament decide to ignore the will of the citizens? Also, the citizens of Montenegro are not in a position to appoint those who manage RTCG and are thus not in the least responsible for the situation in which RTCG has found itself. RTCG programmes are only watched by those who are professionally obliged to do so or by those who can listen to odes to themselves on this programme. The latter should thus be the ones to finance it too, otherwise what it comes down to is the citizens, whose economic situation is far from rosy, covering the costs of someone’s free advertisement.

CCE emphasises that this is just another reactive act to the unwanted consequences which does not contribute to public interest. Instead of acting upon the causes of the problem, i.e. creating a legal solution that would provide for genuine participation of the citizens through their elected representatives in the managing boards and thus strengthening the link between the citizens and this medium, as well as the sense of responsibility among the citizens for the future of what ought to be their public service, the ruling parties chose to do exactly the opposite. To the detriment of all of us as well as RTCG.

Daliborka Uljarević, Executive Director