



CENTAR ZA GRAĐANSKO OBRAZOVANJE
CENTRE FOR CIVIC EDUCATION

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DO NOT FORGET BRANISLAV ČALIĆ

Bearing in mind the importance of the public service for the everyday functioning of a democratic society, Centre for Civic Education (CCE), considers it important for the civil society to contribute to the creation of an environment conducive to the existence of RTCG as a genuine public service in the interest of all Montenegrin citizens, and not a tool of any particular political option.

In this context, we would like to remind that the former and current president of the RTCG Council, Branislav Čalić is a publicly **recognised supporter of the ruling coalition**, as testified by a photograph in the daily “Vijesti” from the 07.09.2006. CCE has already reacted to this fact, considering it entirely inadequate and damaging for the reputation of RTCG that the president of its Council should appear on any party meeting, and moreover display his exaltation with the observed in a frenetic applause of support.

The Law on public broadcasting services RTCG does not forbid the members of the Council to be sympathisers of any political party. However, this is contrary in spirit to the intention of the law-makers whose justification for the Law on PBS RTCG reads: “The basic goal we are trying to reach by adopting this law is to prevent the RTCG from becoming involved in the political processes as an instrument of swaying the citizens’ will in the inter-party and other political conflicts”. They also believed that “RTCG must break from the party boundaries and play the role of a public service to all citizens”. True enough, political partisanship of Mr. Čalića is in direct opposition to the RTCG Ethical Codex which, to give the situation a twist of tragic irony, the RTCG Council itself has adopted, and Mr. Čalića signed (and hopefully read)?!

One of the founding principles of the Law on PBS RTCG is its responsibility to the public which is accomplished on several levels. The law envisages that the RTCG Council represents the interests of the citizens, and alongside a number of clear and formal provisions, it expects its members to “promote and defend democratic principles and the rule of law, creation and strengthening of the constitutional order, protection of human rights and freedoms and protection of the freedom of expression”. It is difficult to recognise these requirements of the law-makers in the person of Mr. Čalić.

Until recently, the Montenegrin public had no knowledge of the fact that **Čalić has been breaking the Law on PBS RTCG for years**, or more precisely its Article 23. He is, as a matter of fact, member of the Board of Directors of the Montenegrin Post, and has been appointed to that position by the Government of Montenegro on the 5 October 2006, based on the Article 42 of the Law on economic association and Article 38 of the Statute of the Montenegrin Post as a “permanent member”, which means that Čalić has been a



member in the Board of Directors of the Montenegrin Post parallel to his engagement as a member of the RTCG Council, and in both of his mandates!!! It is perhaps worth mentioning that Mr. Čalić also act as a member of the Board of Directors of the shareholder company RIVIERA.

The public, and especially the employees of RTCG should be aware that in addition to the obvious efforts by the government to keep RTCG under its control, the heads of RTCG derive substantial financial benefits from breaking the law. In the case of Mr. Čalić, this could amount to some 2 000 EUR per month, only on the basis of his membership in the two boards of directors and the RTCG Council.

On the other hand, the entire operative and managerial independence of RTCG and the legality of all Council's decisions so far because of Čalić's behaviour in relation to RTCG, the law and the Ethical Codex are to be questioned.

In addition to an obvious breach of the Law on PBS RTCG on the occasion of Čalić's appointment, it is important to emphasise that the person in question is evidently a man of the confidence of the Government of Montenegro, which appoints him to the managerial board of one of the biggest remaining state enterprises, while trying to pass him as the "independent" head of the public service.

Unfortunately, despite the warnings of the law-makers, Montenegro has learned nothing from the experience of other transition countries and its public service, or rather the theoretical and legal model of what a public service should be, turned into its opposite, where the ruling structures via various Čalićs command full control over this powerful medium, clearly without worrying itself with such petty matters as is the Law!

Seen that the President of the Parliament, Ranko Krivokapić, has recently expressed great interest in the appointments to the RTCG Council, CCE repeats its earlier question to Krivokapić which still remains unanswered:

- **Whose and which spirit of the Law have you obeyed when you confirmed the appointment of Branislav Čalić to the RTCG Council?**

And adding to this, in the light of the facts revealing Čalić's continued breaking of the law and codes:

- **Which provisions of what law have you followed in appointing Čalić, if it is obvious that he is breaking the Article 23 of the Law on PBS RTCG?**

The question should be equally of interest to the employees of the RTCG and the entire Montenegrin public, for only by joining the forces can we contribute to the rule of law. In this sense, we expect to receive clear answers and immediate adequate reaction from the President of the Montenegrin Parliament.