

CIVIC

Not to oblivion

By: Daliborka Uljarević

The common message of these people of different nationalities and different life paths, but with major life tragedies can be summarised as follows: forgive, but never forget.

It was a great historical misunderstanding which, unfortunately, ended in a bloodbath”, explains the master ideologue of the “War for Peace”, **Svetozar Marović**, referring to the crimes that happened in our recent history, and in which Montenegro participated under the leadership of himself, the eternal Prime Minister **Milo Đukanović** and **Momir Bulatović**, now a political pensioner.

In his particularly brusque manner, Đukanović used to say that “we will finish with them for good”, speaking about Croats whose chequered flag, he admitted, even made him dislike chess. He was, however, supposedly not informed about the camp in Morinj or about deportations of refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Today all these politicians are ready to talk about those times from a distance of independent analysts and explain their “disorientation” with the fact that **Milošević** directed the whole thing, while they had no decision-making power. Even if this were all true, they should have in the least then all stepped down long time ago, for it would only testify to their utter inability to lead the country.

It is a little hard to believe, though that all these “young, smart and handsome” guys were so uninformed and powerless to have fervently supported Milošević until they could already see him fall, and some of them even to his bitter end. It is the same pattern of winning and retaining power, for the sake of own interest and interest of a narrow circle of friends, partners and cousins, regardless of the means, which they shared with Milošević. This is why they understood each other so well and supported each other for so long.

Đukanović and Marović, politically still active, were only lucky enough to switch to the track that did not lead into the abyss and began instead another, equally detrimental process – making a different history and their place and role in it. This is why they have needed so badly that scandalous prize for humanism and peace, awarded to them by an organisation whose name is no more worth mentioning.

Citizens who, at the time, raised their voices, refusing to accept this entry into parallel reality, this grafting of a new version of history, and insisted instead on truth and responsibility, were dubbed “frustrated”, “unfulfilled” and “shameful”.

The laureates felt no shame. They have lost these human feelings long ago.

Last Saturday, in the same place where they received their false prize, although without the presence of renowned guests who should have given the shine and credibility to this farce, victims and witnesses of war crimes shared their personal tragedies with several hundreds of people from all over the region in order to preserve them from oblivion and contribute to the efforts to tell the truth about the past. In the organization of the Centre for Civic Education and Human Rights Action on behalf of the RECOM Coalition at the Fifth regional forum on transitional justice in post-Yugoslav countries spoke **Šekeret Krasniqi**, who survived a firing squad, **Mario Lučić**, former inmate of the camp in Morinj, **Anđelko**

Kvesić, prisoner in KPD Zenica, **Nikola Šašo**, whose parents were killed during the operation Oluja in Croatia, **Cvetko Ristić**, who was twelve when his parents, brother and sister were murdered, **Husnija Avdagić**, who was held in several camps in BiH and **Nenad Mihajlović**, whose two sons were taken by the KLA in Kosovo and never found again.

The common message of these people of different nationalities and different life paths, but with major life tragedies can be summarised as follows: forgive, but never forget.

But in order to forgive the victims must receive something in return.

The goal of RECOM, whose foundation is supported by a Coalition of over 300 non-governmental organisations and individuals from the region, is to compile a precise, public and objective record of war crimes and other violations of human rights committed on the territory of former SFRY, including recognition of the victims and their suffering, and preventing crimes in the future.

We ought to face our past in order to construct a viable European perspective and a road to the future, because there is no European integration without effective regional cooperation, and effective regional cooperation cannot be built upon falsifications of our own and the history of our neighbours.

Until all of them can say “the justice is now satisfied”, we will be living in a gap between verbally declared democratic values and principles and a reality marked by weak institutions and strong, uncontrollable individuals whose only guiding principle is their own interest, but whose bills we all have to pay.

For the sake of our own future, it is time to use the power we have responsibly. We have no excuse not to do it.

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