



CENTAR ZA GRAĐANSKO OBRAZOVANJE
CENTRE FOR CIVIC EDUCATION

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TRUTH ABOUT THE MILITARY ENGAGEMENT OF PUBLIC FIGURES CAN BREAK THE VICIOUS CIRCLE OF BLACKMAILS

Centre for Civic Education (CCE) believes that the Croatian Television (HRT) made a crucial step towards intensifying the process of facing with the past in Montenegro.

In the prime news time, HRT broadcasted a piece confirming participation of Slobodan Leković, former deputy minister of tourism and current president of the Commission for the Prevention of the Conflict of Interests in the Dubrovnik battlefield.

CCE has been emphasizing, for months, the need for the public figures who participated in the war in former SFRY to admit their engagement. Our motive for this action is our belief that the public should know these facts about public persons and state officials: whether they participated in war operations in and what way; as it is the only way to strengthen those institutions which they are leading. **People who have been blackmailed in any way, and one of the ways is certainly to threaten them that their military engagement might be made public, cannot perform their work independently.**

CCE insists on the disclosure of the way in which those persons participated in military operations. We believe that many people were forced to join the army, or they did it out of conviction that they were doing the right thing, and such people most likely did not err against the rules of the national or international humanitarian law. However, those who have contributed to the suffering of others, who severely violated human rights which have been, and still are, a matter of interest to international criminal tribunals, those who plundered and otherwise acted to the detriment of the credibility of the Montenegrin state, should be held responsible for it, regardless of whether they will at the same time gather the moral strength for asking for a public apology and withdrawing from their functions.

CCE therefore insists that the public should, instead of partial excerpts, gain access to a full list of names with complete explanation of the military engagement of all officials.

CCE hopes that these issues will be also addressed by the public service of RTCG which has a special responsibility towards its citizens for the consequences the actions by public officials. We therefore expect the representatives of the civil sector in the RTCG Council (Dr Serbo Rastoder, Ljubomirka Arsović, Esad Kočan and others) to contribute to the creation of a programme that would encourage the board of editors to open certain issues within the process of reconciliation with the past. We believe that you will be fully supported in that by Branko Vojičić, director of RTCG, whose biography suggests that he is a man who is aware of the necessity of such a process.

CCE urges other media in Montenegro to direct the content of their programs and their research journalism towards overcoming the heritage of the past, thereby effectively supporting the process of European Integrations in Montenegro.

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