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# SPOT COMMENTARY

DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

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## The Opposition Gathers Steam

The Federal Election Commission on Thursday morning issued final results denying Kostunica a first round victory. Press reports indicate that the commissioners cheated Kostunica out of 600,000 votes by simply subtracting that number from aggregate vote totals they had reported on Tuesday.

- This transparent fraud became rhetorical fodder as Kostunica and other opposition leaders called on supporters to return to the streets. Djindjic demanded "total civil disobedience" and today called for a general strike.
- Nis Mayor Zoran Zivkovic predicted publicly that street protests will not last long and boasted that the opposition will take power within the next few days.
- *In part, the opposition's rejection of a second round of voting on 8 October reflects its growing confidence that civil resistance will topple the regime much sooner than that.* In a strong show of support, the influential Serb Orthodox Church—a longtime opponent to Milosevic—today addressed Kostunica as the FRY's "elected president."

Milosevic could face a challenge to his control over the government of the Republic of Serbia. Local press reports claim Vuk Draskovic, former leader of the Serbian Renewal Movement (SPO), has called on Vojislav Seselj's Serbian Radical party (SRS) to call a session of the Serbian Assembly to oust the current government.

- *The SPO, which refused to cooperate with Kostunica's DOS coalition, is a major loser in the election and Draskovic likely is desperate to recover some credibility. For his part, Seselj distanced himself from the regime in the last weeks of the campaign and might well sell out a weakening Milosevic. Together, these parties could muster a majority in the Republican Assembly.*

*Other rumors are reinforcing the growing public sense that Milosevic is doomed.*

Prepared by: DCI Interagency Balkan Task Force. Questions or comments may be directed to

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[redacted] The story of Markovic's alleged breakdown also is being reported in the Montenegrin press. *We cannot verify any version of this tale--Markovic has been on television at least once since Sunday's election, according to Montenegrin press.*

- Numerous rumors are circulating in public about officials in the government and Milosevic's Socialist Party who supposedly have quit their jobs or fled abroad. Today, there are rampant rumors [redacted] that Milosevic and his family has fled or is planning to flee Serbia.

- [redacted]
- Deputy leader of the pro-Belgrade Montenegrin Socialist People's Party (SNP) today stated publicly that the party is not sure whether it would stay in a coalition with Milosevic's Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS). [redacted]

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