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Senior Executive Intelligence Brief

The SEIB must be returned to CIA within 5 working days



Thursday, 28 September 2000

National Security Information

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Regional Notes

EUROPE

FRY:
Analytic Perspective

Public Reaction Crucial to Ousting Milosevic

The Serbian opposition's ability to galvanize demonstrations against the regime will determine whether opposition leader Kostunica can secure his election victory. The Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS) is calling for a "national blockade" to force the regime to recognize Kostunica's first-round victory and is counting on massive public protests to drive President Milosevic from office.

- The campaign is off to a good start—more than 200,000 people attended the opposition's victory rally in Belgrade yesterday, and tens of thousands participated in rallies in provincial cities, according to press reports. 

Army General Staff Chief Pavkovic yesterday publicly vowed that the Army would never move against the country's citizens. 

Opposition United for Now


 If the DOS fails to sustain large demonstrations, however, its credibility will be shaken and fissures could appear within the opposition.

- Lack of sustained public support for opposition protests would force Kostunica to reconsider his boycott of a second round or to risk losing the presidency by sticking with a failing strategy. 

Milosevic Playing for Time

Milosevic is gambling that demonstrations will ebb after a few days. Decreasing participation in demonstrations could convince Milosevic that stealing the runoff election might be feasible without leading to uncontrollable protests.

- Milosevic's wavering supporters within the ruling parties and security services would be encouraged to stick with him if protests quickly dissipated. 



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FRY:
Analytic Perspective

Loyalty of Security Forces in Doubt [Redacted]

[Redacted] President Milosevic will be unable to count on the unquestioned loyalty of the police in a showdown with the public. Milosevic can count on police and some Army units to put down initial demonstrations, but violent confrontations would fragment the security forces, especially the Army.

- Milosevic has never been popular with the officer corps, but they have gone along with him because they have viewed him as the country's legitimate leader.
- It is unclear whether Milosevic is aware of the extent of these problems. [Redacted]

Uncertainty by Interior Ministry Over Police Loyalty [Redacted]

[Redacted]

Army Loyalty on Decline [Redacted]

A failure by the Interior Ministry to maintain order during protests would force Milosevic to call out elite Army units. The popular momentum for change created by the elections suggests that many of these forces no longer may be willing to carry out his orders.

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