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DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

SPOT COMMENTARY

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Court Official Claims Election Repeat Needed

A representative of federal constitutional court today claimed that the court's decision to annul part of the election results meant that the first round of elections for the FRY presidency have to be repeated, according to press reports. *FRY President Milosevic may hope that he can ride out the current social unrest and provoke divisions within the opposition before presidential elections—which could again have multiple candidates—are repeated.* The election law indicates that repeated elections must be conducted no later than 15 days after the nullified vote.

- Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS) presidential candidate Kostunica yesterday warned that the court's decision was a "huge trap," *suggesting that opposition leaders are likely to maintain their current strategy.*

Strikes Continue to Spread

The trade union of the Serbian Electricity Board (EPS) yesterday announced that it would conduct a general strike until the "citizens' will" is respected by the regime.

The Trade Union Syndicate of Serbia—the government-affiliated umbrella organization—yesterday threatened to join the strike if the authorities failed to provide "the truth" about the election results. Meanwhile, tens of thousands of demonstrators from throughout Serbia are streaming toward Belgrade to participate in today's opposition rally, according to press reports.

- Discontent within government-controlled media also continues to spread. Several regional offices of Serbian state television have adopted independent editorial policies or stopped transmitting. Many employees of government radio stations and newspapers have signed petitions or gone on strike to demand objective news coverage, according to press reports.

[Redacted]

- Police today used tear gas against protesters demonstrating in front of the federal parliament, according to press reports.

Prepared by: DCI Interagency Balkan Task Force. Comments and queries may be addressed to [Redacted]

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Standoff Continues at Kolubara Mines [REDACTED]

Eight buses and four jeeps filled with police arrived early today at the Kolubara mining complex, but have yet to move against the striking miners, according to press. However, police arrested one of the strike organizers at his home yesterday. Over 10,000 protesters—many of whom broke through the police cordon—converged on the site yesterday after about 100 policemen occupied parts of the complex. Several DOS leaders, including presidential candidate Kostunica, yesterday called on crowds assembled at the mines to defend the opposition's election victory.

- The leader of the EPS trade union yesterday claimed that one power plant at the "Nikola Tesla" thermo-electric plant complex in Obrenovac had enough coal for two days of operation while the second plant had enough for two or three days, according to press reports. [REDACTED]



Kostunica Rejects Mission to Moscow [REDACTED]

Kostunica said in an interview for Russian television yesterday that it would be "irresponsible" for him to leave the FRY given current tensions in the country. He described the goals of Russian President Putin's invitation to Moscow as "insufficiently clear" and criticized the Russian Government's ambivalent stance toward the first round election results. [REDACTED]

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