

Can a Bed of Roses Turn into a Coffin?

Everyone outside Bulgaria who tries to write about the events there is facing one major problem: total lack of reliable information. Even if one have the idea what is going in Sofia, no one can tell what the situation in the countryside is.

One thing is clear: Rubicon is crossed and there is no way back. It is easy to manipulate welfare people; but it's not possible to oppress hungry people for a long time.

The question now is not what will happen further but at what price – and which is more important, who shall pay it? Early elections seem to be unavoidable since former communists proved to be totally unable to carry any economic reforms, which Bulgaria now desperately needs.

The problem even is not whether a civil war is needed of just a few fires and clashes are enough. The problem is how will the society get out of the catastrophe it is facing now. For the most important news yesterday was not the clashes, the president Dr. Zhelev's refusal to let BSP's nominee form the new cabinet.

This step has a far-going consequences. According to the Constitution, the President is obliged to meet the nominee and name him as a Prime Minister. There are no exceptions from this rule. That is how Dr. Zhelev's statement turns out to be an obvious violation of the law. Of course, next few steps can be easily predicted:

First, the MP's from BSP shall invoice the Constitutional Court claiming an impeachment procedure to be started. This court is the only institution in Bulgaria which can declare the President's act out of law.

Second, it is well known that the Constitutional Court has proved to be loyal to Dr. Zhelev; his acts have been attacked many times by BSP but never been declared out of law. However, this time the trespassing of the law is too apparent. The only way to handle the situation for the judges will be to postpone as much as it's possible.

Probably, this is exactly on what the President depends. He has got only eleven days more in office and it seems much unlikely that the Constitutional Court will dismiss him within this term.

So, now the opposition has suddenly got a magnificent chance. Why? Because the outgoing government will not dare to take too strong measures against the protesters. Although N. Dobrev is powerful as a Minister of Home Affairs, he still has to obey Jean Videnov; Videnov has lost all his support even within the party and is not going to take unpopular steps (for example, like throwing army against the protesters).

The opposition should use this week and a half the best possible way to force BSP agree on early elections. Many say opposition should have taken people on strike much earlier, immediately after

Peter Stoyanov's victory in November Presidential elections.

Now may be the last chance, because when Stoyanov takes office on January 22nd he will have no other choice but to let Socialists form a new cabinet. Or he will - the choice to totally ignore the Constitution and to lead Bulgaria to the absolutely unpredictable path of anarchy.

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