



Power Mad – How to be a responsible politician

1. This episode was filmed in **Cacak**.

The topic – What happens when officials breach the law?

The story – The local Directorate for Construction began the reconstruction of the town square without a building permit required by law, saying that the Serbian Minister of Infrastructure wanted TV cameras on the day of his visit to Cacak to record the start of works. Opposition parties have submitted a criminal complaint, but the prosecution decided not to initiate proceedings because the license had been subsequently obtained, “and there was no harm done”.

Interviewees: Director of the Directorate for Construction, Mayor of the City Administration for inspection, two members of the opposition democratic parties (from the political parties LDP and G17), PR of prosecution, the citizens of Cacak, while the mayor canceled at the last moment, on the day of recording, with the explanation that he had to travel to Belgrade on urgent matters. At our insistence, mayor’s secretary provided the substitute for him, assistant Mayor for the area of local governance and infrastructure.

2. This episode was filmed in **Vranje**.

Topic – Political parties as "employment bureaus"

Story – Director of the Public Company “Water supply” has employed in that company, without competition, his son who had just graduated architecture, while the Bureau has unemployed architects with experience. Two directors of local public companies hired each other’s wives, albeit for a short time because of the reaction of the public and their parties too. Actors of this story, but also other officials in Vranje, do not conceal the fact that there is nepotism and hiring on political grounds.

Interviewees: Director of Directorate for Construction in Vranje, the leader of a local Committee of the Democratic Party, the Deputy Chairman of the City Assembly and local officials from the Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS), the editor of newspaper Vranjske, representative of the local branch of the National Employment Service, the citizens of Vranje, while the Director of the Public Company "Novi Dom" and Director of the Public Company “Water Supply” refused to talk for the program (thus archival recording of his statement was used).

3. The episode was filmed in **Bor**.

Topic – Justification of decisions under the principle – confusion reigns supreme

Story – Workers’ Union of the municipal administration in Bor made a 5-year lease agreement with a private company for 10 four-bed apartments on the Montenegro coast, citing the Conclusion of the Municipal Council to provide financial support to the Union. In September and October, some citizens of Bor spent a 7-day vacation in these apartments, which were offered to them free of charge. Now the Union is asking from the Municipality to cover the missing money from the budget. The case caused a turbulent reaction of opposition parties and the public; the municipal leaders disclaim the whole story and it is not known who will pay the rent of these apartments, which amounts to 440 Euros per day.

Interviewees: the President of the Municipality of Bor (from the Serbian Radical Party – SRS), Deputy Mayor (Party of Vlachs), two members of the opposition democratic parties (LDP, DS), president of the Library Union, citizens of Bor. The president of the said union refused to talk.

4. The episode was filmed in **Nis**.

Topic – How local authorities protect loss-making public companies

Story – The local authority in this city entrusted the organization and control of public transport to Public Company Nis Airport as an additional job (due to lack of basic operations). To avoid blocking its account, the Airport had not been paying money from season tickets to private companies for public transport for two months, so the debt was eventually paid from the city budget.

Interviewees: Director of Public Company Nis Airport (from the political party G17 Plus), member of the City Council (from the Democratic Party – DS), two owners of transport companies and citizens of Nis, while the head of the City Administration for traffic failed to show up at the prearranged time for the recording, without giving any notice or explanation.

5. This episode is recorded in Belgrade municipality **Zemun**.

Topic – Spending of budget money on services under the contract

Story – In 2008, a lot of money was spent on services under the contract in Zemun municipality, and the largest amount was paid in a short period of time to two officials of the Serbian Radical Party (SPS), in power at that time. For services of business advisory of the mayor in communication with foreign media and the monitoring of their reporting on Zemun, a person was engaged who, after the split in the party, appears as a donor of the Serbian Progressive Party. Is this the way how the money from the budget is relocated to the political parties?

Interviewees: Deputy Mayor (SPS), an opposition member (DS) who was the president of the temporary body of the municipality for three months and citizens of Zemun. The current mayor of Zemun from the Serbian Progressive Party (formerly the SRS) refused to talk for the program and did not allow the municipal council member from the same party to do the interview, but had "delegated" his deputy (from the SPS). The interview was also declined by the former mayor (in 2008) from the Serbian Radical Party.

6. This episode was filmed in **Mionica**, near Valjevo.

Topic – Get-around-the-law decisions made by the method “let’s give it a go and see what happens”

Story – In August the Municipal Council accepted the request of the Managing Board of the Public Communal Company Mionica to increase the price of water and introduce unusual tariff system. Hence during this year the water price rose 100% for most citizens. The rise and tariffs are not in accordance with the Decree of the Government of Serbia and Law on prices, so the market inspector based in Valjevo overturned adopted prices on the intervention of citizens. After that, at the same session (which was held at the exact same time of the recording of this episode) the Municipal Council annulled the earlier price list and accepted a new request of the Managing Board to increase the water price for 30 %, but this time with the note that these new prices would be applied when (and if) the Trade Ministry gave its consent.

Interviewees: President of the Mionica Municipal Council (from New Serbia – NS), Director of the Public Company Mionica, a farmer from the nearby village, citizens of Mionica.

7. The episode was recorded in **Zrenjanin**.

Topic – Huge per diem costs for travel abroad

Story – Zrenjanin officials spent about 1.700.000 dinars from the budget last year for the per diem for travel abroad, even more than officials in Belgrade and Subotica. This year, for a period of only 9 months, they have reached virtually the same amount, despite the orders of the Mayor that the cost of travel abroad should not exceed 70 percent of last year’s amount. Moreover, the President of the City Assembly still has no valid explanation why did he travel with his family to Pula, Croatia, last summer, using the administration’s vehicle without travel orders and approval of the Mayor. He thinks that there is nothing wrong in it because

he had merged the official meeting with his holiday, and paid for the fuel, road tolls and driver's lunch from his own pocket.

Interviewees: the Mayor (from DS), President of the City Assembly (from LSV), Chairman of the Council for monitoring the Code of Ethics, the citizens of Zrenjanin.

8. The episode was filmed in Novi Sad.

Topic – Public money and culture

Story – The story about how around 10 million Euros from the budget are spent for the Culture of the City of Novi Sad. It has not been publicly discussed until the Novi Sad group of artists reacted to a statement of the mayor about what was of most cultural importance for the city. Artists demanded to know what the cultural policy of the city was and why the money from the budget went to commercial projects.

Interviewees: City Secretary for Culture (from DS), the Deputy Mayor in charge of culture (from G17 Plus), representatives of artistic associations, citizens of Novi Sad.

9. This program is recorded in the Belgrade municipality Barajevo.

Topic – Public and private interest confusion

Story – At the local Directorate for construction's tender for repair of bus stops, the job has been assigned to a company whose owner is also a municipal official – Deputy Mayor. A few months later, the "whispering" started in Barajevo, and then the story appeared in the media. Exposed to the retort of the public, he decided to terminate the contract on his expense, claiming that he had returned the initial part of the money he was paid. Although he was a high official, he said that he was unaware of the conflict of interest and pointed finger to the Director of the Directorate, alleging that he had asked him several times before he had given his company's offer, if they could apply and that the director gave him an affirmative answer. Mayor dismissed him from the position of the deputy. Attorney General also reacted, who had found some other irregularities in the implementation of the tender and believed that there were more accountable people on the list, including Director of the Directorate.

Interviewees: the owner of the private company and former Deputy Mayor, the Mayor of Barajevo, citizens of Barajevo and Nemanja Nenadic, Program Director of the Transparency Serbia. Director of the Municipal Barajevo's Directorate for construction avoided the contact with our journalists for a long period of time.

10. This program was recorded in Kragujevac.

Topic – How the government justifies the high costs for representation and catering services

Story – In 2008, Kragujevac, by population the fourth largest city in Serbia, was at the top of the list in spending budget money on representation and catering services – a total of around 20 million dinars. Representatives of the dominant political group "Together for Kragujevac" claim that it is not a waste of money because the City of Kragujevac invests in its image through representation and catering services. Most is spent on two events marking the Day of City and the celebration of "October 21", when the city welcomes guests and delegations from many cities around the world with which the city of Kragujevac has agreements on friendship, and to which Kragujevac pays respect by returning the visit. "These are investments, not expenditure", claim the city leaders. Citizens have nothing against cooperation with the world, but most believe that it is not necessary to spend that much money, or say that they personally do not feel the benefit from it.

Interviewees: the President of the City Assembly, member of the Town Hall, Deputy Mayor, the citizens of Kragujevac.

11. This program is part of the recap of the series and contains material recorded in Kragujevac and Belgrade.

Topic – Officials and the problem of conflict of interest

Story – The Anti-Corruption Agency, according to the new law, enforced in January 2010, made the deadline to officials with more than one office to choose only one by May 1. Some of the officials have not acted upon the earlier recommendation of the Committee for

Resolving Conflict of Interest for the release of extra incompatible positions. The examples of Mayors of Kragujevac and Jagodina, also sitting in the Serbian Parliament as deputies, attracted the most attention of the public. Measures of the Committee relied on the conscience and ethics of officials, while the Agency has prepared violating measures for the officials and institutions in which they work. Although they now say that they will respect the decision of the Agency, officials still do not see the problem with their conflict of interest.

Interviewees: Mayor of Jagodina and MP, president of the Kragujevac City Assembly and MP, Director of the Anti-Corruption Agency Zorana Markovic, experts Nemanja Nenadic from “Transparency Serbia” and Dragan Vujcic from SCTM (Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities – SKGO).

12. This program is the final part of the recap of the series and contains material recorded in **Pozarevac, Uzice and Belgrade.**

Topic – Officials and the public

Story – Officials and politicians in Serbia, in this case in local self-governments, are not open enough to the media when it comes to more detailed analysis of their public work. This is especially evident when they are required to explain how the budget money and other public resources are spent. One of the most illustrating examples is the case of a journalist who, instead of being provided with information on salary of director of a local public institution, received a request to previously submit a series of data about herself, even though she requested information which every citizen is entitled to and has the right to know. Privatization of local media has not significantly provided space for objective informing of the citizens, in part because the process has not yet been completed, and partly because the private media remain financially dependent on local authorities and public enterprises due to business interests.

Interviewees: Journalist from Pozarevac; Head of the IJAS (NUNS) Center for Investigative Journalism; editor of the private weekly from Uzice; Ratko Bozovic, culture and media sociologist; citizens.