

Money laundering

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Petek, 16 Junij 2017 08:22 -

Money laundering for Iran amounting 1 billion US\$ over Slovenian NLB bank

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Would You believe that there is a country where all of the government and the police were informed about money laundering of 1 billion US\$ for Iran which was at that time blocked by international sanctions and perpetrators peacefully finished their business and left for Russia? Welcome to Slovenia in the year 2010.

Chairman of Commission for Supervision of Security and Intelligence Services, Mr. Branko Grims, on 1st of June revealed in Slovenian Parliament a story concealed from domestic public for seven years about money laundering for Iran that was sanctioned due to purchase of weapons of mass destruction technology. Through NLB that is the largest state owned bank in Slovenia in years 2009 and 2010 about 1 billion US\$ was laundered for Iran. Money was flowing from Export Development Bank of Iran which was on Black list of European Union because of payment for material weapons of mass destruction, proliferation and spying for Iranian regime and also for suspicion of money laundering in connection with terrorism. Money, which was sent via accounts of Iraj Farrokzadeh companies, was fragmented and sent to about 9000 addresses, many of them in USA some in tax heavens. More than 400 foreign banks protested before perpetrators left for Russia. It is a great possibility that besides proliferation and spy purposes for Iranian regime the money was also dedicated for terrorist organizations under influence of Iran (HAMAS etc.).

At least in one case this controversial transfers via NLB were a subject of FBI investigation in USA, as evident from an article in Military Times in 2016. One of the transfers sent to USA was sent to account of James R. Baker, employed in US Navy – Naval Sea Systems Command. Through NLB he received 133.902 US Dollars in 2009. Besides suspicion of other criminal acts he was sentenced in 2016 only for fraud, because he concealed that he is an Iranian citizen and

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he should never had access to confidential data.

Iraj Farrokzadeh was on the list of Interpol most wanted criminals from 2006 when he operated from Switzerland. After he was barred from that post he opened an account in NLB on December 2008, only few days after leftist government of Social Democrats by Borut Pahor took the power in Slovenia from right centre Janez Janša government. Although there was an information in 2010 about »all indices of money laundering« sent to following officials: Danilo Türk, (then) President; Borut Pahor, Premier (now President); Katarina Kresal, Interior Minister; Samuel Žbogar, Foreign Minister (now chairman of EU Mission to Macedonia); France Križanič, Finance Minister; Aleš Zalar, Minister of Justice; Andrej Plaustejner, Chairman of Money Laundering Bureau; and Janko Goršek, General Director of Police; but nothing happened and a billion US\$ of money laundering act remained without epilogue. This arises unequivocally a question of responsibility of all persons mentioned above and of heads of NLB in that period who were successively: Marjan Kramar, Draško Veselinovič and Božo Jašovič. Many analysts are looking for an answer how it could happened and remained concealed for 7 years without judicial epilogue. They point to those persons who are a members of Old Boys Network from the former Communist regime. This fact explains why this massive operation of money laundering remained concealed so long and why the police didn't investigate it even after 2010 when they were »officially notified«.

Soon after disclosure the Slovenian police published a public statement that on the session of Commission for Supervision of Security and Intelligence Services they »learned new facts« which will be a base for new investigation in connection to justified suspicion of money laundering of 1 billion US\$ in the largest Slovenian bank. But at the same time they stressed that they »didn't find any criminal activity« until now (in 7 years!). Therefore there is reasonable doubt that there is a willingness that the perpetrators of this story will be brought to justice and without a serious pressure from abroad the 1 billion US\$ money laundering operation will not see any justice epilogue.