

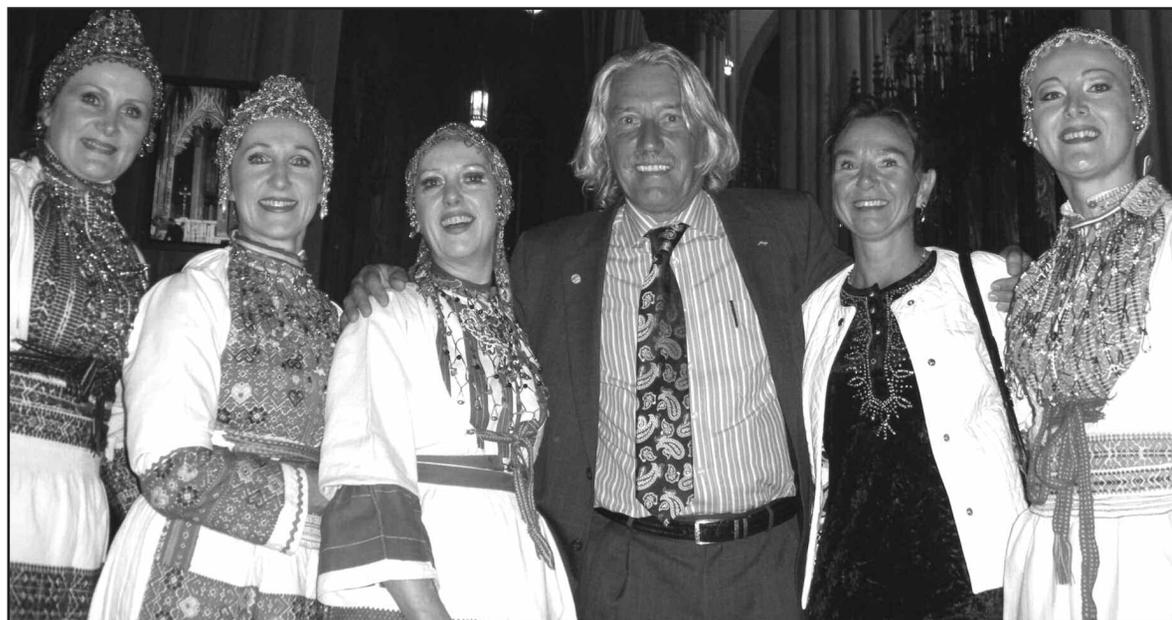
BORIS MIKŠIĆ; “I am The Right Man for the Job of Croatia’s President”

By Josip BOGOVIC

Choosing a president for any country is a very important social event because he/she is a figure that out of the many functions that cross their office sets the tone for the country. Croatian Chronicle caught up with **Boris Miksic** and his wife **Ines**, at a Lado concert in St. Patric Cathedral in New York City, to ask him why he's the right man for the job. This of course is his second run at the office of the presidency of Croatia. His first attempt was stifled by HDZ and their friends he believes and thus Jadranka Kosor beat him for second place and thus the run for the presidency against the now president Stipe Mesic. "I had twenty five percent of the popular vote in 2005 presidential run, thus I came in second ahead of Ms. Kosor. Then I got a phone call from Ivo Sanader, as the votes in Croatia were tabulated, Sanader told me that I did not beat Ms. Kosor for votes had to be counted from abroad, namely those of Bosna-Hercegovina. I intuitively knew what Sanader was saying, the fix was in, they were going to make me lose. After they fixed the vote, I tried to fight the system but as an independent you have less leverage, the rules of the game are not in your favor and thus I lost. No one in the opposing parties imagined that I was going to be a threat but as soon as I became a strong second they had to do two things: eliminate me from the race and discredit me as a politician, businessman and person. So the invasion began and what did they find and propagate in the Croatian media, that I had marital problems 18 years ago. Of course they could not discredit me on my accomplishments and the issues I was running on. Although I was divorced 18 years ago I am on friendly, speaking terms with my ex-wife. We both accompanied our daughter on her wedding day, recently. It is important to note that my divorce 18 years ago has nothing to do with anything especially the presidency of Croatia.

Boris Miksic is about realizing a vision for a better Croatia

People should not be fooled by politicians and their media friends who are afraid of me because of my accomplishments as a successful entrepreneur whose companies compete and do business globally. Gossip is for the helpless. Our politicians made their careers out of making speeches. You know just talking, spewing out words that are just that words and nothing more. I employ hundreds of people and compete with all of China, DuPont, Dow Chemical and the like and have survived such business challenges. I have built a company in Croatia and currently employ over thirty people with potential of expanding and hiring hundreds more. I produce a biodegradable kind of product in Croatia that simulates plastic properties but my products are made from edible sources such as corn and soy and do not pollute our Croatia or our planet. We export 95 percent of what we produce. So you see I have a record of building concrete products which are used by many industries in the world including NASA. This is a fact. My opponents have



Croatian Chronicle caught up with Boris Miksic and his wife Ines in St. Patric Cathedral in New York City at a concert of Croatian folk dance ensemble Lado, whose big supporters they are.

never seen a NASA building never mind explaining the benefits of my companies' product to some of the smartest people on Earth. Words are not what I'm about, Boris Miksic is about realizing a vision for a better Croatia. Such a vision includes supporting people with fresh ideas, new technologies that in turn translate into jobs for Croatian people. America is successful and a global leader because they have a system in place that supports the entrepreneur, this is also a fact. I am an example of that kind of process and everyone is better off as a result of it. American business always speaks of innovation, it is on top of the corporate and educational priority list. So why can we not have such policies in Croatia were educational institutions, government and motivated individuals work together," said the charismatic entrepreneur and presidential candidate.

What did you learn in your run for the presidency?

"I learned that the cross section of Croatian society, from people in small towns to those in the cities, realizes that change is needed. Croatians are well informed and they realize that the present political establishment and political elites are only about rhetoric. Rooting out corruption is not in their interest because they are a part the problem. Croatia ranks 73 in the world when it comes to corruption, that's simply unacceptable. I'm not aligned with any political party, I'm an independent, I have all the money I need, I can't be bought. If you are a voter the way in which to look at my run for the presidency is that I've decided to use my life-long experience in business and negotiations to help the citizens of Croatia have a better life, through employment and by using Croatia's vast resources to benefit the countries citizens. It's important to remember that the resources of Croatia are there to benefit the entire populous not just the few manipulators. Example: What happened to the 500 million euros that INA "supposedly" received from the sale of its assets to Hungary's MOL. The question is why was the move made and where is the money and the purchase agreement? These types of games that

go on in government and business will destroy the future of all Croatians except those that pocketed the 500 million euros. INA is also the largest employer in Croatia, so you can also imagine what will happen to INA's employees during economic difficulties or as a result of the above crime. This is uncontrolled national criminal activities by people in strategic positions of power and the president should use his authority to put an end to it.

"I don't belong to any interest group or lobbyist"

Look at the recent affairs that took place in Podravka. I say there's plenty of room in jail for people that perform on a daily basis what can be best described as treason. The point also is that illegal privatization can be negated (reversed) and the president can initiate the process. The current president has not used the authority of the presidential office for such actions and that's both irresponsible and time lost. It also tells you a lot about the current president and the state of the presidency. I would not let that happen in my presidency, we should all try to stand for something that is honorable and good. Why should we privatize companies that are doing well like HEP for example. These mysterious privatizations are breathing grounds for corruption on the largest scale possible.

What can you say about your competitors for the office of the president?

"As you know, I'm serving on the city council of Zagreb for a number of years. Eighty percent of the countries budget passes through the city counsel. I voted on various issues not along party lines like my opponents but on the issues themselves. Presidential candidate Josipovic who also serves on the same city counsel only raises his hand on issues never speaks up as to why he voted the way he did. The strongest opponent is Mr. Bandic but the rest are weak with unfavorable track records. The president should not belong to a party and represent the interests of the party the president supposed to represent the interests of the people. I don't

belong to any interest group or lobbyist, I haven't taken one Kuna from anyone. I'm investing my own money and time to make a difference in Croatia. The only way to make a substantial difference in Croatia unfortunately is through politics," said the experienced candidate.

"My two points of focus is the economy and corruption. Then there are small changes I also would like to make including cutting the presidential advisors by more than 60 percent, there are 200 right now. The money expanded on these advisors are in excess of 10 million dollars. The area around Pantovcak should be turned into a garden/park for the people."

Bavarian born Ines Miksic accompanied Boris on his trip to New York. She is intelligent, open minded, a woman who has a complete sense of herself is outspoken mostly from a common sense kind of a perspective. What do you think about your husband running for president and what influence would you have? "Boris wants to give his time and worldly experience to the presidency of Croatia. We only have good intentions. My job is to take care of Boris when he comes home from the office, that will be my main contribution to the presidency should he get elected. I do have one request from the Croatian people and that is that I would ask them not to paint their homes along Croatia's wondrous coast using neon colors, I like the more traditional ones," said the pleasant and energetic potential first lady.

"When we speak about the presidency of a country we are talking about a person that will unifies its citizens, have a vision for the country using a fair and moral compass. At present Croatia has no strategic plan. I don't want its citizens to be second class citizens, a colony of the European Union. My model for Croatia is more like Switzerland. I don't think it's a good idea for Croatia to enter the European Union on our knees. Let the people decide this issue. As far as ZERP goes, if they can fish in our waters at the very least we should be able to fish in their waters," said the capable potential president.

When I asked some people as to why they voted for president Mesic, they said that it's because he drinks coffee with regular people. It's important to keep in mind that if a painter came to these same peoples house to do a job they would judge him on the work, not on how well he drinks coffee with them, for we Croatians are fair and want to get our money's worth. The question is with whom would you invest your money and your future? That is the real question when it comes to voting, the rest are just words.