

## **OHR BiH TV News Summary, 4 March 1999**

Federal Government fixed the value of the privatisation vouchers to 19 KM. TV BiH's reporter declared that in practice this "automatically means that every citizen of age can count with 1,900 KM that he will be in a position to use for the purchase of state-owned property". The reporter was also enthusiastic about the fact that the length of service would also help this total multiply. However, that not everything is that ideal, TV BiH involuntarily illustrated by disclosing that prior to the adoption of the fixed value, Deputy Director of the Privatisation Agency, Marinko Bosnjak, maintained that the value was improperly calculated. Privatisation Agency Assistant Director disputed Bosnjak's statement, while the reporter declared such disputes and current situation as the reason for the delay in the privatisation. The report also included a rather long actuality sound of Premier Bicakcic. Bicakcic expects that the distribution of vouchers will, without delay, start on Monday, "even though details on HVO-holders of vouchers are still missing.

3:30

RS Parliament session discussed Poplasen's initiative concerning the dismissal of Dodik. In two separate reports, TV BiH first presented reactions to the initiative (OHR: there is no government crisis in RS, but presidential crisis; SDA: the initiative will further destabilize political circumstances in RS; SDP hopes that KCD BiH delegates in the RS Parliament would not side with nationalist parties in the eventual dismissal).

2:10

The second report (which was aired after the bloc on refugee returns) was in fact a phone-in that presented the audience with the conclusions: the Parliament decided that the initiative was "not in accordance with the RS Constitution". The initiative was labeled as a "completely failed... political act". The RS Government also said that they are not the "generator of crisis in RS". TV BiH's anchor interpreted the RS Government statement by saying that Poplasen's initiative was no more than a "shot in the dark."

0:30

In a brief piece of news dedicated to protocol activities, TV BiH reported that BiH Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jadranko Prlic received the newly appointed Ambassador of the Republic of Croatia to BiH, Damir Zoric.

0:33

The exhaustive Kosovo-related bloc in essence told the viewers that conflicts and humanitarian crisis in Kosovo continue, parallel to unsuccessful diplomatic activities aimed at finding a peaceful solution for the troubled province.

4:00

Next were two reports that dealt with refugee return issue from a nearly identical aspect. The first focused on the Conference on Return to Eastern Bosnia, which was held under the auspices of Hans Koshnik's office. The Conference, that took place in Gorazde, was organised by the BiH Union of Refugees and DPs. The brief report was, however, followed by TV BiH anchor's comment: "The intentions are good, but the question remains how much influence this and similar conferences have, and how much they result in efficient and real refugee returns...". The second report discussed the meeting in Mostar that concentrated on the realisation of the BiH Presidency initiative concerning the return of 6,000 refugees to Mostar, Banja Luka and Sarajevo. The meeting was attended by the Head of regional UNHCR, HNK Minister for Urban Planning and Mostar Deputy Mayor Safet Orucevic.

1:50

Ambassador Farrand appealed to the citizens of Brcko to accept the arbitration decision on this town "peacefully and responsibly". He disclosed that the decision will be based on evidence and that it would be fair.

0:30

Reconstruction of RTV BiH, according to the station's interpretation, was the most prominent topic of today's SDP press conference. The station paid this issue substantial attention, highlighting the SDP view that "the pre-orientation to public RTV" was most visible. SDP's call upon the state and entity authorities to secure financial support for RTV BiH during its reconstruction was also stressed.

2:10

The SDP activities definitely generated most of TV BiH editors' interest today. Other highlights from today's SDP press conference followed in the bloc dedicated to political parties' activities. The bloc was introduced with the SDA comment on the SDP unification (the SDA said that the unification would be useful for BiH should the party succeed to confirm in practice that it would advocate the interests of all three peoples in BiH). The Republicans were critical of the composition of BiH Parliament – the party said that no initiatives that would lead to positive changes in the Federation can be passed, due to the fact that national parties hold majority in the Parliament. Saving the best for last, TV BiH concluded with a live report from Skenderija. The report focused on ongoing preparations for the BiH competition for the Euro-Song Contest. The reporter interviewed Senad Hadzifejzovic, TV BiH Editor-in-Chief. In an optimistic tone, Hadzifejzovic maintained that the BiH competition will surely be the most-watched post-war TV broadcast, since it would be re-broadcast by virtually all TV stations in the country.