

OHR BiH TV News Summary, 2 November 1998

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Having begun the news of the day with the story of the mudslide in Nicaragua that obliterated a village, the presenter went straight into the news from Banja Luka, with a description of visit by US Special Envoy to the Balkans, Robert Gelbard. Gelbard, after visiting RS PM Milorad Dodik, RS President Plavsic and President of the Presidency Zivko Radisic, gave a short statement to the press, on negotiations ongoing between leaders of the Fed. and RS, regarding the resolution of 'various political situations.' Gelbard said he would return tomorrow, and hoped the constitution of the RS govt. would be resolved in 'a special way'. The presenter added he had travelled to Sarajevo 'but there is no further information on what he is discussing in the Presidency.'

In the same bloc the presenter reported further information on the expulsion of Ostoja Knezevic from the SNS – officially because of failure to obey party regulations – at the main committee session of the SNS yesterday. Unofficial reports say he refused to return his mandate, when this was demanded of him. Knezevic showed himself to be differing from his party colleagues at the inaugural session of the RS assembly. Rumour had it that he was a potential candidate for the post of PM.

4:30

'It seems that constituting the authorities after the elections last year was less difficult than this year', said the presenter, adding that representatives of 18 political parties who will be present in the Fed. HoR met today and agreed that the inaugural session would take place on Wednesday 4 November at noon. The basic question, which today remained unsolved, is the demand by 13 parties that the leading positions in the house should be allocated in strict accordance with the election results. This initiative was opposed by the KCD BH and the HDZ. There will be one more attempt to resolve the issue at a meeting to be held just before the inaugural session.

3:00

In Tuzla today the constitutional session of the Tuzla-Podrinje canton assembly 'finally' took place. The assembly chose an assembly president and canton governor. Dr Izet Zigic of the KCD BH was chosen for assembly president, and Dr Tarik Arapcic for the canton governor.

2:30

The constitutional session of the Bosanska-Podrinje canton assembly, ran into difficulties, as the SDP and the BH social democrats and independent candidates walked out – thus no posts for the Canton administration were filled.

3:00

Kosovo news involved a report on difficulties being encountered by Albanians in returning to their homes. The foreign news bloc was interrupted by: The first meeting of the council for special cooperation between BiH and Croatia, at which the Ploce Neum agreement should be considered, may, according to a Croatian suggestion, be held in Zagreb, on 7 or 9 November. President Alija Izetbegovic spoke about this session with Croatian Ambassador to BH Darinko Bago. Croatian FM Mate Granic announced that Croatia expects the already initialled agreement on special relations could be signed at the session, but Ambassador to Croatia Hasan Muratovic said the agreement still hasn't passed the full procedure and that technical problems remain.. Principle Deputy High Representative Jacques Klein was quoted – from an interview given to Croatian newspaper Jutarnji List. Klein said that the special relations agreement was most advantageous to Bosnian Croats because of their status as a minority, and they should be protected. He also said that the end of the 4 years of negotiation on this topic would be finished on 6 November when the agreement on Ploce-Neum and the Special Relations agreement should be signed.

3:00

The next item was obstruction of returns to Martinbrod: 'we must repeat that because of still unsolved questions

about the border, territory which belongs to Bosnia is patrolled by the police of a neighbour state. This has prevented the return of 30 Serb families,' said the presenter, describing how the police stopped 31 families who tried to return to their villages in this area three days ago. Representatives of both countries will, at an upcoming meeting to be attended by SFOR, try to 'cut the Gordian Knot.'

2:00

The next item was successful reconstruction and returns in a village near Dobož – Sevarlije. Without incident over a hundred heads of families returned. Very positive commentary from the regional committee for return's representatives was carried, and, cooperation with Serb neighbours, many of whom are engaged in assisting the returnees, was said to be exceptionally good.

1:30

The BiH association of DPs and Refugees held a session, and members expressed disappointment with the 'Year of Return' and have established a plan for two-way return of 30 000 people for 1999.

1:30

More foreign news was followed by a description of how Cardinal Puljić held an All Souls service at the cemetery of Bare in Sarajevo today.

1:00

The last item was a book exhibition, which involved textbooks. Farudin Rizvanbegović, of the Fed. ministry of culture and education gave a speech: 'our textbooks have the goal of straightening out the students' generation in their feeling of pride in belonging to Bosnia and the Bosnian people. This is why the process of self-awareness through education is not only a political but a life question.'

2:30