

BiH Media Round-up, 4/3/2002

BiH State-related Issues

- Sunday meeting on Constitutional Changes bears no fruit
- Croat parties dissatisfied with the outcome of the Sunday session
- Ivanic says inter-party constitutional talks abused
- Executive authority dissatisfied with judicial reform in BiH and Federation
- Chairman of the BiH House of Peoples: We need to reduce the number of judges, deputies and ministers
- Ivanic calls on international institutions to reform judiciary in a more decisive way
- Elections doubtful because of money

Federation

- War veterans protest the new draft law on veterans' rights; Parties condemn Lagumdzija's statements comparing extremist veterans with aggressors
- Slobodna Dalmacija: Interview with Ante Jelavic

Republika Srpska

- RS President Sarovic: SFOR oversteps its mandate
- SDS party condemns attempt to capture Karadzic
- RS Prime Minister says RS government expresses readiness to cooperate with the ICTY
- Controversies on the form of RT RS Law
- FRY Foreign Minister to visit the RS

International Community

- Wolfgang Petritsch: I am leaving BiH as an optimist
- Paddy Ashdown – the new High Representative: My task is to work with BiH citizens
- Leader of BIH Liberal Democrats: I respect Petritsch, but I love Ashdown
- Djindjic: All war crimes indictees will be arrested by May

- FRY Interior Minister says FRY Government has not received any request from Banja Luka

Editorials

- Dnevni List: Croat self-rule and Pakrac
- Vecernji List : Charismatic Petritsch- expert for removals of politicians
- Oslobodjenje : War resistance to the Constitution

Headlines

BiH State-related Issues

Sunday meeting on Constitutional Changes bears no fruit

The most recent in the series of meetings about constitutional changes in the Federation and Republika Srpska failed to produce any results. At the talks between representatives of eight ruling parties in BiH which was held on Sunday evening in Sarajevo, there was a general agreement that positions of entity leaders can still not be reconciled or, at least, brought closer together. The chairman of the Council of Ministers, Zlatko Lagumdžija, expressed his dissatisfaction with the meeting, saying that he is very pessimistic about the possibility of adopting identical constitutional solutions in both entities. Lagumdžija repeated that there is a strategic disagreement between entity leaders about the mechanism of protecting the vital national interests of peoples. He said that RS and Federation officials could not agree about the role and the potential introduction of the House of Peoples in the RS National Assembly.

RS National Assembly Speaker, Dragan Kalinic, stressed that the establishment of the Constitutional Commission in the RSNA was a big step for the entity and added that leaders should

move slower towards the formation of a special council which would guard the vital national interests. He categorically dismissed the demands of Croat parties which insisted on the establishment of the House of Peoples in the RS as the only feasible institution for this purpose. Kalinic stressed that such solution could not be implemented in a timely fashion and that parties should be satisfied with the only adequate solutions for now – Council for protection of national interests.

RS Prime Ministers, Mladen Ivanic, was even more resolute about the situation. He strongly dismissed the possibility of establishing the House of Peoples in the RS, arguing that such institution would be used solely to block legislature. "This refers to both the RS and the Federation," he said, adding that the present situation should not be made absurd by such demands. Ivanic also stressed that the Council for protection of National interests would be quite sufficient in the RS. SDA president Sulejman Tihic was also very disappointed with the outcome of the last night's meeting, saying that he will probably withdraw from further consultations. (Federation Television carried the statements by officials)

Croat parties dissatisfied with the outcome of the Sunday session

In relation to the Sunday meeting of eight political parties held in Sarajevo, Dnevni List carries an interview with a member of the HDZ BiH Presidency, Niko Lozancic. Lozancic said that the parties are yet to make a step forward in the matter saying that the parties from the RS are reluctant to introduce a House of Peoples in the RS Parliament. When asked as to what would be the future steps in the process like, Lozancic said that the next step would be a meeting with the High Representative's scheduled for next week. "Participants of the meeting agreed to inform the HR about the level of consensus reached so far. I do not know what they would inform him about because I have to say that we did not manage to reach a

consensus about a single key issue i.e. implementation of the CoCo's Decision", says Lozancic. When asked whether one could expect the HR to impose decision that would bind the RS, Lozancic said that the question should be redirected to Petritsch adding that he does not believe that even Petritsch has an answer the question. When asked as to how to protect interests of the Croat if the RS survived as an entity, Lozancic says that any solution which provides special rights to one people only is not a good solution which could open a series of processes. "I believe that each people will find ways to protect their interests", says Lozancic, reads Dnevni List.

On the same issue, Vecernji List reads that the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch could make revisions to the RS Constitution as the last move before he leaves BiH. He has allegedly suggested to the Federation principles to be the first ones to implement the constitutional changes which would secure equality for the Serbs in the Federation. That would create enough room for pressures to be exerted on the RS authorities. If Petritsch really does exert such pressure and if it bears fruit, that would start a process of reorganization of the RS if not even the abolishment of it.

Ivanic says inter-party constitutional talks abused

SRNA news agency quotes RS Prime Minister, Mladen Ivanic, as saying on Saturday that the key problem of inter-party talks regarding constitutional changes is that they are being used as an excuse to impose other aims, larger and more long term, for a different set up of BiH "Matters must be brought back to basics, which is protection of the interests of individual peoples, and not what is intended," Ivanic said, emphasizing that there are instruments which are there to provide protection. Speaking for Prijedor Radio-TV last night, Ivanic concluded that some progress was achieved during the inter-party negotiations in terms of individual questions,

emphasizing that some will always be dissatisfied. Commenting on the possibility of the High Representative imposing the Constitution, Ivanic said that the Constitution was a "Holy Act" which could only be amended by a two-thirds majority in the RS NA. If the RS Constitution is still imposed, Ivanic said that he had "no intention of giving legitimacy to such solution with his presence", concluding that "constitutional changes were the basic principles of democracy".

Executive authority dissatisfied with judicial reform in BiH and Federation

Commenting on the pre-elections promises by the Alliance that new authority will do its best to uproot the crime and corruption in BiH, the chairman of the Council of Ministers, Zlatko Lagumdžija, said that this is not doable in the present judicial system. "For this reason, I expect clear and decisive measures to be taken in order to resolve these deeply rooted problems and I will ensure to support them (measures) when needed in a partnership with the International Community," Lagumdžija said on Thursday. According to him, international officials in BiH fully share this concern about judicial system with domestic authorities in the country. Dnevni Avaz notes that this was also confirmed by the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, who, at the last session of the PIC Steering Board, invited representatives of the Council of Europe to take an active role in the ongoing discussion about judicial reform in BiH.

Federation Prime Minister, Alija Behmen, stressed that this reform is urgently needed, noting that without an efficient judiciary, there is no efficient filling of the budget. "It should not even be mentioned that without such a judiciary, we cannot reach our goals, such as the prevention of extra-legal and uncontrolled transfers of money, corruption and other forms of crime," Behmen said.

SDA's Adnan Terzic shares this opinion, adding that the reform

needs to encompass the judiciary on the whole territory of the Federation as well as RS. Terzic, however, said that he cannot support the ongoing efforts of the International Community and the Alliance, stressing that they do not represent judicial reform, "but a clash with judges, prosecutors and others working in the legal system in BiH."

Safet Halilovic of the Party for BiH told Dnevni Avaz that the judicial reform is not only needed, but also necessary. He stressed that one of its main tasks was precisely to review the present judges and prosecutors and determine their eligibility to perform the assigned duties. "We have been insisting that a chance is given to younger people who could start the process of reform in a more serious manner," said Halilovic, adding that the Independent Judicial Commission has often supported this approach, but remaining "rigid in now wanting to change the situation within judiciary."

The view of the most Federation and international officials is certainly not shared by RS and Croat politicians and judicial workers. The chairman of the RS Association of Judges and Prosecutors, Mirko Dabic, welcomed the calls for judicial reform, but rejected the possibility of establishment of the Joint High Judicial Council for BiH, as proposed by the PIC Steering Board. Dabic explained that that the formation of such a body is not in line with Constitutions of BIH, Federation and the RS.

Nada Dalipagic, a judge in the Cantonal Court in Mostar also objected to the manner in which reform is being conducted and strongly criticized the recent statement by Zlatko Lagumdzija who said that the judiciary in BiH is a "den of corruption." Dalipagic said these attacks were incomprehensible and stressed that "qualified judges need not worry about losing their jobs."

Chairman of the BiH House of Peoples: We need to reduce the number of judges, deputies and ministers

Commenting on Thursday's conclusions by the PIC Steering Board in Brussels, the chairman of the BiH Parliament's House of Peoples, Sejfidin Tokic, expressed his support to the initiative to have Council of Europe representatives better engaged in the process of judicial reform in BiH. "It is not a secret that a large number of judges, with a few exceptions, came from the former ruling national parties or are under their influence," said Tokic, adding that the Brussels decision could enable BiH to get a judiciary independent from any political option and judges who will efficiently resolve a large number of cases of corruption and crime. "I believe that not only the number of judges should be reduced, but also the number of deputies in the parliaments and ministers," Tokic said, expressing his general support to the latest conclusions by the PIC Steering Board.

Ivanic calls on international institutions to reform judiciary in a more decisive way

Weekend edition of Nezavisne novine reports that the RS Prime Minister, Mladen Ivanic, called for the international institutions in BiH to enter judiciary reform in a more decisive way and increase its efficiency, since the effects of the reform achieved so far, were not satisfactory. Ivanic stated: "Not even one case of corruption was brought to an end. Still, there is significant inefficiency of judiciary in all segments. Such a situation is unacceptable for the RS Government." Ivanic added that it was obvious that the international community put a lots of effort in the reform of judiciary but, apart from enabling material independence of judiciary and significantly increased salaries for judges, nothing else was achieved.

Elections doubtful because of money

“Process of funding of elections should be transferred to the local governing bodies, but they are not financially ready for it”, said a member of the Legal Council of Association of Election Officials (AEO), Anica Nakic, at a press conference in Mostar, reads Slobodna Dalmacija. According to the Manager of the AEO, Emin Novalic, if the funds for the elections are not secured, the elections will be in jeopardy. Novalic informed the journalists that the AEO signed a Memorandum on Cooperation with the BiH Election Commission. The Memorandum envisions holding of series of round tables on topical issues in the election process, better communication between the BiH Election Commission and Municipal Election Commissions and training of local election staff. The journalists were also presented the project of registration and re-registration of voters which should be carried out between April 1 and May 31 this year. Novalic is of opinion that the project is one of important pre-requisites for having successful elections, reads Slobodna Dalmacija.

Federation

War veterans protest the new draft law on veterans' rights; Parties condemn Lagumdzija's statements comparing extremist veterans with aggressors

About 8,000 war veterans and families of fallen soldiers held a mass demonstrations on Friday protesting against the new draft law on veterans' rights and the overall status of this social category in BiH. Although the protests were by and large peaceful, a small but loud group of individuals standing directly in front of the stage, was, at times, getting violent and prevented the Federation and state officials from addressing the crowd. According to media reports, nearly all

Federation and some state representatives were present at the demonstrations, but were not allowed to speak by the protesters who were shouting threats and insults at them. The Federation Prime Minister, Alija Behmen, told the Federation TV that a small group of protesters standing close to the stage tried to politicize the gathering, while the Bosniak member of the BiH Presidency, Beriz Belkic, also expressed his disappointment with the behavior of some segments of the veterans' population. After being hit by a rock thrown from the crowd chanting "This is Algeria," the chairman of the Council of Ministers, Zlatko Lagumdzija, reportedly exclaimed that he was "attacked by the same people when he was attending the corner-stone laying ceremony for Ferhadija mosque." "They are all the same – they are just like those who were throwing rocks at me in Banja Luka," Lagumdzija was quoted as saying. This remark and the later statement by the press issued by the SDP, in which the party criticizes the group of "half-drunk aggressive individuals who were trying to abuse the gathering to manipulate the veteran population", were met with fierce condemnation by nearly all Bosniak parties. The SDA asked for Lagumdzija's resignation, BPS (Bosnian Patriotic Party) for a public apology, while BOSS (Bosnian Party) threatened to initiate a move of no confidence to the Federation government if the SDP fails to support the new draft law on veteran rights.

Dnevni Avaz reported on Sunday that representatives of two main veterans organizations will send letters to the Federation government and the Council of Ministers apologizing for the behavior of a "group of people who prevented the entity and state leaders from addressing the crowd." Zahid Crnkic and Izet Ganic said that they understand Lagumdzija's angered statement, but nevertheless argue that he should not have made such an inappropriate comparison.

Monday newspapers quote Lagumdzija as saying that it should not be him or the SDP who ought to apologize to the war

veterans, but the SDA, for “it has lied to them for years and, together with its coalition partners, brought them to this poverty and social misery.”

(The protest and the aftermath were perhaps the most dominant news items over the weekend in electronic and print media in the Federation)

Slobodna Dalmacija: Interview with Ante Jelavic

(provided by OHR Mostar)

Slobodna Dalmacija carries on Saturday an interview with the unrecognized President of the HDZ BiH, Ante Jelavic, in which he mostly reiterates his previously known stances about the forthcoming constitutional changes. When questioned to comment the latest speculations about his successor at the helm of the HDZ and to declare himself in the matter, Jelavic said that he had not given it much thought saying that the current leadership would lead the party in the elections, regardless of a fact whether it is a formal or informal leadership. When questioned to comment the latest statements about abolishment of the RS and to pick one of the three scenarios (abolishment of RS, establishment of a Croat entity or a new DPA with a completely new organizational structure of BiH), Jelavic said that this was the key moment, i.e. implementation of the CoCo's Decision on constituency of peoples in the establishment of a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic state, saying that this moment had to be seized to open the process of consistent federalization of BiH with three federal units or to have BiH cantonized. Jelavic added that if the Decision was not to be implemented and if only facelifts were going to be carried out that would be a reason good enough to justify their requests on establishment of a Croat federal unit in BiH. Regarding the denied visa for the USA, Jelavic hopes that next time he applies for it, he will not be rejected. With regards to his future role in the politics, Jelavic said that politics was his destiny and that time was on his side saying

that even if he was to spend ten years in the Sarajevo or Zenica dungeons he would still be young enough to be politically active. Finally when asked as to what would be his attitude towards the HR, Wolfgang Petritsch, when he leaves the country and what were his expectations of the new HR, Paddy Ashdown, Jelavic said that he did not feed animosity towards Wolfgang Petritsch, despite the history the two have had, wishing Petritsch all the best in his future diplomatic career. With regards to Ashdown, Jelavic said that he had no prejudices towards the man.

Vecernji List carries on Saturday an article titled 'HDZ will not lodge appeal to Supreme Court' quoting Ante Jelavic, a removed HDZ President, as saying that they respect a Judiciary system and decisions of the Mostar Cantonal Court, no matter as to what extent they were in accordance to the BiH Constitution and Law and European Human Rights Charters. Jelavic also said that within a set deadline they would hand over acceptable solutions. He added that, at the moment, they are not thinking about the possibility to lodge an appeal to the Supreme Court. An anonymous HDZ source stated that, certainly, in public HDZ will not make an impression that they are withdrawing or that they were defeated, especially since HDZ initiatives have fallen on fertile ground when constitutional changes are in question. He added, that, most probably, in order to please the IC appetites, Jelavic would continue to run HDZ from shadow, as Silajdzic does in Party for BiH.

Republika Srpska

RS President Sarovic: SFOR oversteps its mandate

The RS President, Mirko Sarovic said on Friday that, in its action in Celebici, the SFOR went beyond its entrusted mandate. "What SFOR did in the area of Celebici, was keeping 7

year-old children as hostages, violently entering private houses, school and the church. This was a disgrace for the international forces," Sarovic said, denying that SFOR found any secret weapon storage in the area of Celebici. He added that this weaponry was collected before, in joint action by SFOR and local police called "The Harvest". Sarovic's statements were strongly denied on Sunday by the SFOR spokesman, Darryl Morrell.

SDS party condemns attempt to capture Karadzic

The Serb Democratic Party (SDS) issued a press statement which states that the SDS is shocked by the manner in which the key RS authorities and institutions were ignored during the "dramatic hours in Srbinje", alluding to failed the SFOR action to arrest Radovan Karadzic. "This is about the dignity of the democratically elected authorities in the RS and the international community's readiness to cooperate with them in helping the RS to meet its international obligations, including the cooperation with The Hague tribunal," the statement says. "Since the government is objectively speaking responsible for maintaining peace and security of its citizens, the SDS expects SFOR to compensate the citizens for the damage, both material and otherwise." The SDS also called on the RS Ministry of Internal Affairs to issue a statement on the circumstances under which "this unwelcome and brutal event took place, especially the intimidation of children, harassing of the civilian population, raiding religious buildings and schools, causing material damage, and the rest".

RS Prime Minister says RS government expresses readiness to cooperate with the ICTY

Today's edition of Nezavisne novine quotes RS Prime Minister, Mladen Ivanic, as saying that the RS authorities do not know the whereabouts of Radovan Karadzic. Ivanic expressed readiness of the RS government to cooperate with the ICTY. "If they tell us where he is, we shall act in accordance with the

RS law on cooperation with the ICTY", Ivanic told an Athens-based newspaper. When asked about arrest of persons indicted by the ICTY, the RS Prime Minister replied by asking: SFOR has been searching for them for years. Why did not SFOR find them? They have more information about them, they have more money, more people, better equipment, but SFOR still did not arrest them. We do not know anything about them and I called for those who have any information about them to tell us the information and we shall have the obligation to make sure they go to The Hague", said Ivanic.

Controversies on the form of RT RS Law

Nezavisne novine quote OHR Spokesperson Oleg Milisic as saying that the draft law on the RTRS, proposed by the RS Government discredits the principles of the independent public television due to the fact that it contains several disputable provisions which have to be resolved. The RS NA passed the draft law on the RTRS which is significantly different from the proposal made by the joint working group, comprised of local and OHR experts, on adoption of which the OHR insisted. According to Milisic, the draft law, proposed by the RS Government, does not fulfill criteria on the independence of RT RS Board of Governors and independent editorial policy. As Nezavisne novine learnt unofficially, the main difference between the Government and OHR lies in the way of appointment of the RTRS Board of Governors. OHR insists on the appointment of members of the Board of Governors from the Journalist Associations, by direct nominations, while the RS Government wants the NA to take position on the proposed members. Disputes on the RTRS law caused strong reactions amongst the RTRS employees and RS journalist associations. Chairman of the RS Independent Association of journalists, Radomir Neskovic, stated that the association sees some of the solutions suggested as unacceptable. Neskovic, as well as the Association of Journalists of the RS, welcomed the public discussion on the law. Branislav Bozic, the Chairman of the Association of

journalists of the RS stated that journalists' associations, RTRS and OHR have to find *a way to put an end to the interim arrangements due to the fact that RTRS was the only TV in Europe that functions on such a principle.*

FRY Foreign Minister to visit the RS

Yugoslav Foreign Minister Goran Svilanovic is to meet leaders of the Republika Srpska (RS) during a one-day visit to the entity, the RS said Monday. Svilanovic will travel to Banja Luka, the capital, on Tuesday to meet RS President Mirko Sarovic, Vice President Dragan Cavic, Prime Minister Mladen Ivanic and RS NA speaker Dragan Kalinic, the RS said in a statement. He is also to meet Zivko Radisic, the Serb member of BiH presidency.

Svilanovic said after a failed NATO raid to capture Bosnian Serb wartime leader Radovan Karadzic last week that the suspected war criminal's capture would be "a good development for everyone in the region" and would mark "the beginning of a closure process."

International Community

Wolfgang Petritsch: I am leaving BiH as an optimist

In an interview with SENSE news agency, the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, talked about the most recent session of the Peace Implementation Council (PIC) Steering Board which was held on February 28 in Brussels. Petritsch told the agency that one of the most discussed issues during the meeting was the ongoing constitutional reform in BiH and the streamlining exercise of international organizations operating in the country. Talking about the constitutional changes, the High Representative said that this area ought to be determined and organized by local politicians

in BiH. "It would be unacceptable that this issue turns into one more tasks for the High Representative. In the year of BiH's accession to the Council of Europe, she needs to start facing its, often challenging, problems," said Petritsch, explaining that the latest PIC SB meeting was of historic importance, for "BiH now is entering the final phase of the peace implementation."

Asked about the prospects of the streamlining exercise of international organizations, Petritsch explained that this process will result in a more united and better focused international presence in BiH. Petritsch also noted that the new High Representative will also assume the role of the EU special representative. "This was done because of practical reasons. The High Representative is proposed by the EU, which will take over the police mission in BiH, and as the High Representative should have control over this mission, this integration of functions had practical and technical purpose," said Petritsch. He also noted that he is leaving BiH as a bigger optimist than he was when he assumed the role of the High Representative in 1999. "Now you can finally see the shaping up of the sovereign, strong BiH. We have moved farther than I could even imagine when I came to this post," Petritsch said in an interview with SENSE, which was carried in full by Oslobođenje.

ONASA, Oslobođenje and HINA news agency quote the OHR Press release saying that the PIC has warned the BiH politicians that, unless constitutional changes are implemented in the near future, there will be no BiH's accession to the Council of Europe. The PIC has urged political leaders in both BiH entities to finalize the discussion on constitutional reform by the mid-May and reach solutions acceptable for all sides.

Paddy Ashdown – the new High Representative: My task is to work with BiH citizens

Federation dailies paid a good deal of attention to the newly

nominated High Representative in BiH, Paddy Ashdown, who was named to this post on Thursday at the session of the PIC Steering Board. Oslobodjenje and ONASA carry excerpts from the BBC interview with Ashdown in which he stressed that he will inform the BiH citizens first about his plans on the new post. "I know what my task is and that is the work with BiH citizens in order to set the country irreversibly on the path towards Europe. If I could help that happen, I would certainly be proud of it," Ashdown told the BBC. He added that constitutional changes are presently the biggest problem in BiH and stressed that one of the obstacles for their implementation are the different interpretations of the Dayton Peace Agreement. "Dayton was necessary and I naturally believe in it. Dayton is a foundation which needs to be built upon. In this country, every ethnic group needs to feel safe and not threatened. That is important. I am Irish and I understand the need to preserve one's identity," said Ashdown for BBC.

Dnevni Avaz selects Ashdown for its Person in Focus in Sunday's issue, calling him a "true friend of Bosnia" and an "experienced politicians" who will come to BiH with new duties and powers.

Dnevni List carried a short biography of Paddy Ashdown, while Banja Luka media also reported on the PIC SB decision to appoint the former leader of the British Liberal Democrats to the post of the High Representative.

Leader of BiH Liberal Democrats: I respect Petritsch, but I love Ashdown (original Oslobodjenje title)

Speaking at a round table in Bosanska Krupa on Saturday, the leader of BiH Liberal Democratic Party and the deputy Minister for European Integration, Rasim Kadic, said that he has a difficult time forgiving the current High Representative his "collaboration with Serb nationalists after the events in Banja Luka and Trebinje." Kadic said that the main Petritsch's

task before he returns to Vienna will be to impose the decision on constitutional changes which will "bring harmony of equality on the whole territory of BiH." He also noted that Petritsch's successor, Paddy Ashdown, should be a better partner to domestic authorities in resolving the outstanding issues in BiH.

Djindjic: All war crimes indictees will be arrested by May

Serbian Premier Zoran Djindjic said on Friday that among the persons in Serbia indicted by the ICTY there were five "all-gold" names in the FRY and a dozen less important ones he did not know personally and who had mostly come from the RS, Belgrade media reported.

"These are potential candidates, which is not to say they will be extradited to the ICTY, because some of them will be tried in Serbia, depending on the ICTY," Djindjic said in the village of Grgure near Blace, on the occasion of the 85th anniversary of the First World

War uprising against Bulgarian occupiers. The premier said that March, April, and May would be the months during which cooperation with the ICTY would enter its second phase. "The first phase was delivering former FRY President Slobodan Milosevic, and the second phase is the last, because I hope that after this there will be no further obstacles in relations with the ICTY, since all those who are on the ICTY's list of indictees will be either delivered to The Hague or tried in Serbia," Djindjic said. Commenting on a prospective federal law on cooperation with the ICTY, he said that it could have two or three articles that would stress that the FRY recognizes the ICTY as a body of the United Nations. He stressed that the ICTY's Statute would be applied in the Serbian procedure.

FRY Interior Minister says FRY Government has not received any request from Banja Luka

Today's edition of Nezavisne novine quotes FRY Interior Minister, Zoran Zivkovic, as saying that the FRY has not received any request from the RS Government, for extradition of RS citizens who currently live on the FRY territory and are indicted by the ICTY. "Neither the FRY Government nor the FRY Interior Ministry has not received any written request. It has been published in the media, but we have not been formally notified. Therefore, as far as we are concerned, that request does not exist", said Zivkovic. When asked whether there is a possibility that this request had not been sent to the FRY Interior Ministry and yet reached the Government, Zivkovic reiterated that the official request from the RS Government has not been served to the FRY Government. The RS Government stated on February 14th that it requested that the FRY Interior Ministry extradite all RS citizens, currently living in FRY and who are indicted by ICTY, to the RS.

Editorials

(provided by OHR Mostar)

Dnevni List: Croat self-rule and Pakrac

By Marko Markovic

Dnevni List carries an editorial about the anniversary of the project of the Croat self rule (March 3) in BiH written by its Editor-in-Chief, Marko Markovic. Markovic describes the project by stating his Zagreb colleague's words who said that the project reminded her of a couple who dined and wined, went home, everything basically perfect, and when everything clicked the man decided to turn around and leave the woman. "That's exactly what the leadership of the Croat self-rule did to Croats in BiH", says the author. Markovic goes on to say

that the concept of the third entity has been made topical again and that the Deputy Speaker of the Croatian Parliament, Zdravko Tomac, has been indubitable about it saying that "if the RS survives, the Croats have a right to a third entity". The author says that he personally believes that the RS would survive. With regards to the Pakrac bit from the title, the author says that March 3 should be marked as the beginning of the Homeland war, the day when Serbs started mutiny in Pakrac, Croatia.

Vecernji List: Charismatic Petritsch- expert for removals of politicians

By Dejan Jazvic

Vecernji List carries on Saturday that Petritsch will leave BiH in June and he will be remembered as the most charismatic and the most determined international representative. Petritsch's predecessors, colorless Scandinavian Carl Bildt and smiling Carlos Westendorp, cannot boast with their results since the Austrian diplomat has achieved considerably better results. Petritsch was much more determined when the removal of BiH politicians, who according to his opinion obstructed the implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement (DPA), was in question. This is the main reason because of which Petritsch has made more enemies in BiH than his predecessors. Certainly, the HR has had the biggest number of disputes with the leaders of HDZ BiH. Petritsch was much more determined when he was settling accounts with Ante Jelavic, a removed HDZ President, and his associates, than his predecessor Westendorp when he was settling accounts with Serb politicians, who were characterized as the main obstructionists of the DPA implementation. It will stay remembered that apart from Jelavic, the Austrian removed the whole HDZ leadership. Many local politicians will remember him because he removed them from their positions in Municipal and Cantonal structures almost on a daily basis. Petritsch also sent Edhem Bicakcic, a controversial leader of electric power lobby, to whom Alija

Izetbegovic wanted to apply a role of his successor, that is, a new Bosniak leader, to a sort of a political retirement.

Among positive results of his rule in BiH, Petritsch will certainly include decisions that encouraged Rule of Law in BiH and a part of the DPA that refers to the return of refugees and displaced persons. Also, Petritsch has won sympathies of Bosniak politicians by giving his support openly to the strengthening of the state institutions over the entities' ones. For this reason he has never been too popular in the RS.

The thing that will certainly taint Petritsch's 'mission' will be his support given to Robert Barry, an untalented American politician, who as a Head of the OSCE brought BiH in a deepest political crises after the end of the war. The goal of his election rules was to make possible the ousting of national parties from power and a victory of Lagumdija's Social Democrats and their political allies. Petritsch did not oppose such behavior of OSCE, although it is completely obvious that his authority and a real political power could influence the creation of the election rules.

Among Petritsch's failures, critics will also include inefficient policy on the reorganization of state electronic media in BiH. Petritsch tasked a British lobby in his office to deal with the issue, and, at the end, it turned out that it was totally wrong because the reconstruction of the state media into public media has not moved from a deadlock by now.

However, it is certain that after two and a half years in BiH Petritsch has contributed considerably to the creation of BiH, that has decent chances to survive. Many things will also depend on constitutional changes, whose great advocator was Wolfgang Petritsch himself.

Oslobodjenje: War resistance to the Constitution

By Zija Dizdarevic

In a column published in Sunday's issue of *Oslobodjenje*, Zija Dizdarevic notes that the debate about constitutional changes should have primarily been a responsibility of legislative organs. Unfortunately, he adds, the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, turned it into a form of a political bargaining.

Dizdarevic argues that the Federation government has made a "damn good move" by adopting the proposed constitutional changes in the Federation without waiting for the RS to do the same. What is necessary now is to see the development of a civic identity and the position of a citizen as an individual, separated from his association with national or ethnic group.

Dizdarevic notes that by adopting the proposed changes, the Federation government has not only pressured the RS government, but also the High Representative. It is certain that Petritsch's "creative and intelligent solutions" can in no way be a substitute for the identical solutions and the equality of all peoples in BiH. The adoption of symmetrical solutions would finally put an end on the identification of the RS as a Serb and the Federation of Muslim-Croat entity and most likely encourage return.

Headlines

Saturday

Dnevni Avaz:

- Veterans asking for their rights
- SFOR Action: Circle around Karadzic getting tighter

Oslobodjenje:

- NATO and USA: Hunt of Karadzic continues
- Veterans: Got their state, lost dignity

Vecernji List:

- War veterans demand greater rights
- Second attempt to arrest Karadzic fails

Dnevni List:

- Stjepan Kljujuc: Blackmailed people cannot represent BiH Croats
- The Hague has prepared the bill of indictment for Haris Silajdzic

Glas srpski

- Another attempt of SFOR to arrest Karadzic – Same target, another disgrace;
- Voice of Russia reports that Al-Qaeda center for Europe is in BiH

Nezavisne novine

- War veterans protested in Sarajevo – War veterans embittered with politics;
- Search for Radovan Karadzic continues in Celebici

Sunday

Dnevni Avaz:

- Ministry of Social Politics ensures timely payment of pensions

Oslobodjenje:

- Strong reactions by SDA after the veterans protest: Lagumdžija needs to apologize!

Vecernji List:

- A new secret service is established
- Lagumdžija to meet Racan on Wednesday

Monday

Dnevni Avaz:

- Lagumdžija: It's the SDA who needs to apologize to veterans!

Oslobodjenje:

- Zlatko Lagumdžija: SDA ought to apologise to veterans and invalids!

Jutarnje Novine:

- Deputies receiving up to 7,000 KM

Vecernji List:

- Karadzic substituted his doppelganger to SFOR
- Croat war veterans to block border with Croatia

Dnevni List:

- Ivanic: NATO should tell us where Karadzic is and we will arrest him
- Nada Dalipagic, CC in Mostar: I cannot understand Lagumdžija's attacks on judicial authority

Glas srpski

- After SFOR operation in the vicinity of Srbinje: No news, no Karadzic
- From several villages of Lijevo Polje: assistance to the Serbs in Drvar
- British blame France

Nezavisne novine

- The action to arrest former RS President continues: The Tribunal awaits for Karadzic
- 4th meeting of BiH politicians about Constitutional changes – Final; solution by 8th March?