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- **Editorial**:"Globus" finds out: HNS, headed by Ante Jelavic, for the summer session (of the HNS), is preparing a Draft Constitution of the Croat Republic which would become a new entity in Bosnia and Herzegovina if the local Croats support the idea at the referendum which will be held in autumn: **HDZ is forming a Croat state in BiH: According to Draft Constitution, Croat Republic will be "a Federal unit of BiH, a state of Croat people"**

Written by Darko Hudelist

Bosnia and Herzegovina is boiling again. The HNS goes further and currently is picking-up the momentum for new determined and radical moves which will take place during summer and in early autumn, reads Globus. A new session of the HNS will be held during the summer with two items on the agenda. The first item will be a discussion on the Draft Constitution of the Croat Republic (of a new, Croat entity in BiH) under which the Croat Republic will be defined as "a Federal unit of Bosnia and Herzegovina, a state of the Croat people and all its citizens, with the constitutional rights of the Bosniak and Serb people and rights of national minorities which will be determined by the Law on National Minorities (in accordance with European standards)".

The second item on the agenda will be a formulation of the n of the referendum question for the BiH Croats: are they in favour of such a Croat, federal unit in BiH, which will be determined by the (future) Constitution of the Croat Republic in BiH. After that, most probably late this summer or in the early autumn, the referendum will take place. What proves that the things are not harmless, is the appeal of the BiH Bishops

sent to the signatory states of the Dayton Agreement, dated 14th of May, 2001. The key message in the appeal is that “the Croat national issue, (Croats being) a constituent people in Bosnia and Herzegovina, has not been solved”. It also says that the position of Croats has not been this bad ever since the signing of the Dayton Agreement. The appeal was signed by four of the highest Church prelates in BiH: Cardinal Vinko Puljic, the Archbishop of Sarajevo, the Metropolitan and the President of the Bishop’s Conference in BiH; Ratko Peric, the Bishop of Mostar-Duvno and Trebinje-Mrkanj; Franjo Komarica the Bishop of Banja Luka, and Pero Sudar, Assistant to the Archbishop of Sarajevo. The claim of the Catholic Church in BiH that the “the Croat national issue, (Croats being) a constituent people in Bosnia and Herzegovina, has not been solved”, undoubtedly carries a lot of weight. It is for sure that Ante Jelavic had this on his mind when he, together with his like-minded fellow fighters, made the decision to organize the referendum on the Croat federal unit in BiH. The question is whether, and to what extent, Cardinal Puljic and the prelates will go along with the decision of the HNS on further strengthening of the Croat self-rule (outside the institutions of Federation and the State of BiH) and especially about the calling of the referendum for the Constitution of the Croat Republic in BiH, reads the article.

According to what the Globus reporter was told by Ante Jelavic, Marko Tokic and many other individuals, most of them being from the HDZ, gathered around the project of the “Croat self-rule”, including some people from the Church, one can establish, with a high degree of confidence, that when it comes to the Croat national issue in BiH, a consensus on two items has been made: Bosnia and Herzegovina without entities, and, if possible, cantonized. The HNS had problems, until recently, as to which concept to go for when it comes to the solving of the Croat national issue.

The HNS are hesitant because they are not certain as to how

Cardinal Puljic would react to possible radicalisation of the "Croat self-rule" project. Globus reads it is known that he is not in favour of radical methods because any further radicalisation of inter-ethnic relations in BiH would intensify the problem of Croat migration from Central Bosnia, which, reportedly, is Puljic's grgreatest fear.

The Globus reporter says that the radical option prevailed in the HNS during his visit to Mostar and Herzegovina in mid June. Jelavic told the reporter: "I think that the Muslims, that is Izetbegovic, would rather accept BiH as a Federation consisting of three Federal units, i.e. total demarcation, than our going for a complete account settling in the BiH Federation!"

Globus says it is quite uncertain (or certain?) how the International Community representatives will react to these new decisions and moves of the HNS. As far as the Globus reporter managed to gather, ordinary people are of the opinion that 80% of BiH Croats at the least will support Croat Republic in the referendum, and most of Croats believe that Croat self-rule is supported by the entire Catholic Church as opposed to Boban's Croat Republic of Herceg-Bosna which was not supported by the Catholic Church leadership. The point is, reads the paper, that the "Croat self-rule" project advocates the national rights of all Croats in BiH, including Croats in Central Bosnia and Bosanska Posavina. The reporter says he found Marko Tokic, Croat self-rule President and HDZ BiH Vice President, in his office in an extremely pessimistic disposition. The impression that the reporter got is that Herzegovinian Croats are depressed, which he thought was at variance with the big ambitions an and goals of the HNS and Croat self-rule leaders.

Tokic said they were in a no-way-out situation and were experiencing a collapse in financial and economic terms. "The Republic of Croatia no longer supports us, moreover, it turned against us. The International Community, through the Alliance,

wants to integrate Bosanska Posavina and Central Bosnia into the BiH Federation, which is the Muslim part of BiH, and is isolating us in Herzegovina at the same time. If Alija Izetbegovic did what the International Community has done to us, everyone would call it fascism. This way, it works, under the multi-ethnic and multi-cultural guise. We are in a difficult situation, practically without a way out. We have no allies for anything. However, the situation is as it is. If the International Community is looking to create some sort of Western Balkans, BiH Croats are the obstructing factor, which is why we must be cut down. The Russians have most understanding for us, but it is not because they like Croats but because they care for preservation of the RS so they want to be on good terms with us. The final objective of the International Community is clear: destruction of the constituency and sovereign rights of the Croat people in BiH. The international administration is against us and we are in conflict with it, and not with the one or the ones who are our real enemies. That is what makes our situation paradoxical and desperate," said Tokic. Jelavic said: "In one half of the State of BiH, there are no Croats, and in the other half we are becoming a minority. Sarajevo has become a new Belgrade for us. While in some parts of the former Yugoslavia some national minorities are becoming constituent peoples, such as Albanians in Macedonia, Croats in BiH have been reduced from a constituent people into a national minority. It is a nonsense, but it is true."

Globus comments, for the International Community in BiH, the HDZ's formula "destroy Dayton" equals "destroy the BiH Federation." The formula of the International Community, is extremely opposed to that of the HDZ, and could be expressed by the syntagm "review Dayton." The article reads, as far as the International Community is concerned, the Dayton Agreement as such is unquestionable, but its results in daily political practice are disputable, since, as the IC holds, those results are not optimal due to the obstructions from the HDZ and other

national or nationalistic parties in BiH. The article further says that the International Community has undoubtedly made a firm decision to dethrone and destroy the HDZ BiH politically and economically, which the author substantiates by mentioning the part of an ICG report pertaining to "abolishment of illegal revenue inflow," the He Hercegovacka Bank action and the recent appointments of new Steering Boards in Herzegovinian public companies. The article also refers to the ICG report in stating that the International Community is openly playing the card of sowing dissension in the Catholic Church, by mentioning the part of the report which says that moderate priests did not attend the HNS session of March 3, in which Bishop Peric gave an emotional speech.

During his visit to Herzegovina, the reporter conducted a small survey among a few well-known priests and asked them what they thought of the "Croat self-rule" initiatives.

Fra Tomislav Pervan, the Provincial of the Herzegovinian Franciscans, spoke of the HNS policy and Jelavic in superlatives. "What the HNS is demanding, is the minimum, or to be precise – the optimum at this moment! What is happening to Croats, and I primarily mean their migration from BiH, is pure Bleiburg! Croatian Foreign Minister Tonino Picula opened Croatian Consulate in Banja Luka, but would not come here. President Mesic rather went to Sarajevo than here, which is pure racism towards Herzegovina!," said Fra Pervan. Don Zeljko Majic, Bishop Peric's Secretary and the Parson in Blagaj, said that Jelavic is currently the only true leader of the Croat people in BiH. Fra Petar Krasic expressed the most vehement support to Jelavic and said that the position ofn of Croats in BiH is very similar to the position of the Jewish people in the Nazi rule. He said he cannot see any major difference between Hitler or Stalin and the current representatives of the International Community, with the one difference being that they are not killing people like those of 50 or 60 years ago. In his opinion, the Croat people are being eradicated in

BiH and the goal of the International Community is to establish a full protectorate in this territory in order to take control of the strategic positions in the Mediterranean. Fra Krasic believes that the current circumstances are not favourable for realisation of the "Croat self-rule" project, but that it "could work" in the long run. "The concept of Croat self-rule corresponds the modern democracy trends in the world. The Croat people in BiH must organise themselves. The situation is getting too hot for Croats because they are facing the threat of even more massive migrations. The Croats gathered in the Alliance for Changes, the leading coalition in BiH (he meant primarily Kresimir Zubak and Jadranko Prlic, says the author) are the biggest traitors of Croats. Their treason equals the Bleiburg treason from 1945. Those Croats betrayed their people in the worst possible way, worse than UDBA did back in 1945, and that was only for personal, purely material interests," said Fra Krasic.

The faamous priest and missionary Fra Jozo Zovko said that the "Croat self-rule" project is to draw attention to what is currently the major concern of Croats in BiH, but he is not sure how acceptable and sustainable it is. He is of the opinion that cantons in which Croats could attain their basic rights, would best suit Croats in BiH. However, Fra Zovko shared the concern of his colleagues and said "we are an occupied country. The International Community has control at all levels. They have not shown to accept us as those who were not doomed to exodus." He said the IC is creating another Yugoslavia by recruiting whoever suits them from each of the peoples. "When other people tell you what freedom is and how large your living space is – what is it if not occupation, what is it if not slavery?," concluded Fra Zovko.

Globus next goes back to Marko Tokic who admitted that the HNS was hesitant until recently about which concept of the "Croat optimum" to go for in order to solve the Croat national issue in BiH. There were three options. One was the introduction of

the institution of House of Peoples in both entities, the second was cantonisation of BiH and the third option was a Croat Federal unit in BiH. According to the weekly, they gave up the concept of “Houses of Peoples in both entities” after the French Ambassador Bernard Bajolet told Karlo Filipovic on Aprill 30 that “introduction of House of Peoples in the RS is unrealistic,” which the HNS interpreted as a continuation of the French support to the RS.

The other concept, cantonisation, was abandoned after the British Ambassador Graham Hand stated decisively that it could only be discussed in 22-25 years. Globus says that the third, “purest” option was left and it is supposed to be called Hrvatska Republika u BiH (Croat Republic in BiH) – HRuBiH. Jelavic claims, reads Globus, Serbs and Bosniaks in this republic will have the rights that Croats do not have in the RS, for instance: they will have their constituent rights.

The leaders of the HNS agreed on defining of the borders of the future (supposed) Croat Republic in BiH. The map of the Croat federal unit is identical to the official map known as “Day After Dayton,” in other words, it comprises of all areas in BiH which were officially declared as Croat areas in the Dayton Peace Agreement in 1995. According to Article 30 of the Draft Constitution of the Croat Republic in BiH, the Croat Republic would include the following towns (and their surroundings): Odzak, Orasje, Usora, Zepce, Jajce, Lasva, Lepenica, Drvar, Livno, Kupres, Tomislavgrad, Rama, Posusje, Grude, Ljubuski, Siroki Brijeg, Mostar, Citluk, Capljina, Stolac and Neum, reads the weekly.

When it comes to the borders of the Croat feder federal unit, the leaders of the Croat self-rule could have, according to them, most trouble with defending the key strategic points in the north and in the south of the future Croat Republic in BiH, namely Drvar and Stolac. In the last local elections in April 2000, the Serbs in Drvar won again with majority of votes, and they are returning back in big numbers. It is

uncertain in the Stolac area too. Before the war, Stolac was dominantly Muslim, and today is controlled by the Croats, although not convincingly. There are 60% of Croats and around 40% of Bosniaks there. The proportion can be changed overnight. It is important, they say, because one who has military control of Stolac and the Dinara Plato, can count on controlling the south of Dalmatia and Dubrovnik. Croats are enhancing the "blood count" of the Stolac Municipality by three ways.

Firstly, they build new settlements where only Croats come as settlers. Secondly, they buy the houses of the remaining Serbs, in which Croats are being settled. Finally, they try to impede the return of the Bosniaks. Bosniaks tried to reconstruct the Careva Mosque but the local authorities objected to that, because it is realistic to expect that the reconstruction would be followed by a greater return of the Bosniaks.

If Stolac falls into the Bosniaks hands, say the HNS people, the route to the seaside will be widede open for Bosniaks. The biggest pessimists among Croats are foreseeing a hell in Mostar, in a few years already. They say that it could easily happen that, the finally unified Mostar, sooner or later, has a Bosniak Mayor. It is possible if the Croats continue to emigrate and Bosniaks continue to re-settle in Mostar and other significant centres, especially in the south of BiH. The number of people who are foreseeing another warfare in Mostar is not small, in 4-5 years the latest. The confrontations, would not be "confrontation line-type" like in 1993 and 1994, but the "terrorist ones". Croats would use the IRA methods and the Bosniaks would use a classic "Islamic terrorism", well known in the world. Mostar could become Beirut. The confrontations could start as early as autumn.

But before all, one will have to see what the reaction of the IC will be on the HNS's decision to call the referendum. The self-rule is gradually coming to life. An internal rule has

already become effective, in the area of the supposed Croat Republic, on a compulsory tax of 0.8 percent on gross income in public institutions and private companies, which would fund the political (and perhaps a future military) struggle of the BiH Croats. Grude has so far opposed the tax, but the rest of the areas have accepted the decision.

“The Croat military component in the BiH Army”, the H HVO, have returned to the barracks which are controlled by the Ministry of Defence of the Federation of BiH, but the Croat soldiers could leave the barracks again and join “the struggle for the Croat Republic in BiH.” v “There is nothing else left for us”, it is unanimously said by the people in the HNS. “We will either have to be tough or there will be no Croats in BiH anymore”. There is no third option.

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