

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 10/7/2002

Print Media Headlines

Dnevni Avaz: What is Council of Ministers hiding about CIPS project?

Oslobodjenje: AM-SPED – Bralo offered Lagumdžija and Behmen 21 million KM to settle the scandal; First *nisan* in Potocari

Jutarnje Novine: Political Parties and Customs officials most corrupt in BiH

Glas Srpski: Clinton under investigation by the ICTY because of the “Storn”; Radovan Stankovic surrenders to SFOR; Ashdown is imposing himself

Nezavisne Novine: Clifford Bond: BiH will remain the US priority in the Balkans

Blic: Predrag Radic: Possible division of BiH and disappearance of Republika Srpska; Nebojsa Radmanovic, SNSD: Without agreement with the PDP

Dnevni List: Imported livestock brought Anthrax to BiH; Ivic Pasalic sacked from the HDZ

Vecernji List: Anthrax on its way to Croatia because of porous borders; Pasalic sacked

Financial Affairs

CIPS

In a lengthy article on the front page of **Dnevni Avaz**, Edina Sarac argues that at least three ministers in the BiH Council of Ministers have violated the Law on Conflict of Interest in their dealing with the CIPS (Citizens Identity Protection System) project. According to Sarac, the brother of **Mirko Skrbic**, the director of the project, has a hardware and software company which will be involved in the implementation of the CIPS, despite clear regulations passed at the 56th session of the Council of Ministers which stipulate that

experts working on the project cannot have any direct or indirect interests in companies implementing the same. Sarac notes that Skrbic's brother **Miodrag** was also **Zlatko Lagumdzija's** best man. Moreover, the daily claims that the companies which were entrusted with designing the software for CIPS – Ping and Optima – are co-owned by **Jandranko Prlic**, a deputy Minister in the CoM, and **Neven Tomic**, the former minister and mayor of Mostar. *"The entire story about CIPS has been marked with controversies since its conceit – corruption, illegal activities, the lack of transparency...For a country which is fighting against corruption, this is a sufficient reason for concern,"* concludes Sarac.

Dnevni Avaz also reports that, at a session held on Tuesday, the Council of Ministers did not accept the information about the implementation of the CIPS project and asked the relevant ministry – the Ministry of Civil Affairs and Communications – to provide a more complete report about this matter. BiH Minister for Refugees and DP's, **Kresimir Zubak**, said that the issue will be discussed at the next sessions which is scheduled for Thursday. (**BHTV 1, FTV** also report on this item)

AM-SPED

In an exclusive front page story in **Oslobodjenje**, Azhar Kalamujic writes that the true owner of the Orasje AM-SPED company, **Tino Bralo**, had on several occasions tried to offer a 21 million KM bribe to the SDP leader, **Zlatko Lagumdzija**, and his party colleague and the Federation Prime Minister, **Alija Behmen**, in exchange for de-blocking the 42 million KM of his funds, which were frozen in various criminal activities. Kalamujic argues that Bralo made his offers immediately after he managed to persuade the former Federation Finance Minister, **Nikola Grabovac**, to secure a 1,7 million KM customs deposit to AM-SPED. Moreover, the information submitted to the Cantonal Prosecutor's Office in Sarajevo indicate that Bralo "awarded" the NHI for a job well done with 400,000 KM. According to Kalamujic, the Croatian Office for Money Laundering is also

engaged in the investigation of this case.

BHTV 1 also reported last night that the AM-SPED affair has reached a turning point after it was revealed that **Mirko Anic** was not the actual owner of the company and that Bralo paid 400,000 KM to NHI for its help. In a statement for the prime time news, the president of the party, **Kresimir Zubak**, denied all the allegations.

In a commentary in today's **Dnevni Avaz**, Fadil Mandal argues that the newly revealed details clearly show that the AM-SPED affair has more implications than was expected. According to Mandal, Tino Bralo is said to have very strong connections with the Yugoslav mafia, in particular with **Marko Milosevic**, the son of the former Yugoslav president. In addition, the daily notes that the role of some of the Federation officials, including the Prime Minister Behmen in this scandal is also of dubious nature. *"The AM-SPED affair must be resolved. Everyone is put on a test: the Federation government, judicial authorities and the public which should demand proper responses."*

Federation Finances

Commenting on the Federation government's decision allowing the companies that were not paying contribution for the disability and pension insurance, to pay debts during the next five years **Ivica Marinovic**, the President of the HDZ Caucus in the BiH Federation Parliament, stated for **Vecernji List** (p 3, signed by Z. Jurilj) that he believes that this decision it has been finally confirmed that **Party for BiH** and **SDP** have a complete control over finances in the BiH Federation. Marinovic said that in this way these two parties are trying to win better positions in the pre-election period, without the knowledge of a new Croat Minister of Finances, whose appointment has been stalled on purpose.

Glas srpski (front page) reports that Radovan Stankovic, indicted by the ICTY for the rape of Bosniak women in Foca, crimes against humanity, violation of the Geneva Convention and customs of war, surrendered yesterday to German SFOR. According to the paper, Stankovic, whose name is on the ICTY public list, surrendered in the village of Trebicina near Foca. All other media, including the **RTRS, Nezavisne Novine, BHTV 1** and the **FTV** also report on this item, however say that Stankovic was arrested by SFOR after failing to voluntarily turn himself in.

Oslobodjenje (p. 3), **Nacional** (p.4) and **Vecernje Novosti** (p.6) carry the statement of the US State Department's spokesperson, **Richard Baucher**, in connection with Belgrade's promotion of **Radovan Karadzic's** book of children's poetry. *"I think that if he wants to go on a promoting tour of his book, he should start with SFOR, and I am sure we can provide transport for him. We have possibility to do it, and he can sign as many books as he wishes while waiting for a trial in the Hague,"* Baucher said.

State-level issues

BHTV 1 reports that the BiH Presidency will adopt a joint statement on the contents of the meeting between the president of Croatia, Stipe Mesic, and Yugoslavia, Vojislav Kostunica in two days time. *"It is my obligation as member of the Presidency to stand by the interests of BiH. I have to stand by the intention to build a future and good relations. I understand that we cannot live in self-isolation and so forth. But it would be good if Mr. Kostunica expressed his regret for what happened in BiH. I have the intention to suggest this to Mr Kostunica, and it will be up to him to decide,"* said **Beriz Belkic**, the chairman of the Presidency. Meanwhile, **Nezavisne Novine** carried a statement by **Kostunica** who said that he has no intention of apologizing for the events in BiH 1992-95 during his visit to the BIH capital on July 165.

"A statement of Yugoslav President Vojislav Kostunica that he will not apologize for genocide and war crimes committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a diplomatic slap to the initiator and hosts of the meeting in Sarajevo," the BiH **SDA** said in a

press release on Tuesday. (carried by **Dnevni Avaz** and **Oslobodjenje**)

The High Representative at the end of last week delivered to the Council of Ministers a draft of the Criminal Code of Bosnia and Herzegovina and urged the Council's chairman to ensure the urgent adoption of this law before the summer recess. (Oslobodjenje p. 3, Dnevni Avaz p. 4, Jutarnje Novine p. 3, reported very prominently in all electronic media)

At yesterday's session, the BiH Parliament's House of Peoples passed amendments and changes to the **BiH Election Law**, thereby clearing the way for elections to take place in October this year. The amendments and changes pertain to the election of president and vice-president of the BiH Federation, deputies in the BiH Federation Parliament House of Peoples and deputies in the RS National Assembly. (**Glas srpski** p.3, **Nezavisne novine** p.5, **Dnevni Avaz** p.8, **Oslobodjenje** pp. 4-5, reported quite prominently by all electronic media)

In an interview with **Dnevni Avaz** (p. 5), the chairman of the BiH Council of Ministers, **Dragan Mikerevic**, said that BiH will fulfill all 18 EU Road Map requirements by the set deadline. *"We believe that practically we have fulfilled 17 out of 18 requirements. The only one that has not yet been met is the BPS Law...We have concluded that we have to put in extra effort in lobbying the deputies in both chambers of the BIH Parliament in terms of meeting this requirement. There are realistic chances that we succeed."*

BiH-International Community

UN Security Council will discuss in an open session on Wednesday the controversial US demand to exempt US peacekeepers from jurisdiction of the new International Criminal Court. Kim Sengupta in today's **The Independent** warns that European nations are deeply concerned that Britain may 'sell out' to the US in an attempt to reach a compromise with Washington. *"Tony Blair's Government has been one of the most*

vociferous proponents of the world's first permanent war crimes tribunal. However, Britain, which has this month's presidency of the Security Council, is now said to be of the view that an accommodation is inevitable if the peacekeeping missions are to be saved," Sengupta writes.

Members of the **BiH Presidency**, Beriz Belkic, Jozo Krizanovic and Zivko Radisic, met on Tuesday with the High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, and discussed with him the extension of the UN mandate in BiH and the upcoming summit of presidents of three ex-Yugoslav countries, BiH, Croatia and Yugoslavia, which is scheduled for July 15. *"We are confident that the actors involved in this process (the extension of the UN mission's mandate) will give a strong consideration to the stability in the Balkans and that the UN Security Council members, with a strong role of the EU, will find the best possible solution for BiH," Belkic said following the meeting. "It is almost certain that the issue of the UN mission's mandate in BiH will be resolved even before July 16. However, if this does not happen and if we do experience a vacuum of sorts, I am confident that the BiH authorities, together with the EU, will be fully ready and willing to fill the gap so as to avoid any development which would be detrimental to the security in the country," said Ashdown. (Dnevni Avaz p. 2, Oslobodjenje p. 3, Jutarnje Novine p. 3, Nezavisne Novine p. 5, second or third item on BHTV 1, FTV, RTRS prime time news.*

During his visit to Banja Luka, the US Ambassador to BiH, **Clifford Bond**, said that the US is determined to stay in BiH in order to keep the stability in the region. *"Regardless of all discussions, which are currently taking place in New York about the extension of the UN mandate in BiH, there is no way that our support to the further presence of SFOR, OHR as well as our support to the ICTY can be questioned", said Bond after the meeting with the RS Prime Minister, Mladen Ivanic. He also said that the executive and legislative authorities should improve the cooperation with the ICTY by forwarding the information on the 21 Prijedor police officers case (Note: The case of Father Matanovic who was murdered in Prijedor in 1995)*

to the ICTY. (**Glas Srpski** p. 3, **Dnevni Avaz** p. 4, **Oslobodjenje** p. 3, **Nezavisne novine** published an interview with Bond with a similar content)

"The international community represented by the EU and the USA must strive to reach an optimum solution which would ensure the completion of the UN Mission and other international organizations in BiH", it was said at a meeting between BiH Foreign Minister **Zlatko Lagumdžija** and the EU High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, **Javier Solana**, held in Greece on Tuesday. **BH Radio 1** reports that once the UN Mission mandate ends in BiH, the EU will be ready to assume the responsibility in the field of police reforms, strengthening of the state border security and the rule of law, it was concluded at the meeting.

"The EU plays an important role in this matter [relating to the UN Bosnia Mission]. The EU does not participate directly in the negotiations in the Security Council, but through other channels, it is trying to influence the US position. In Brussels and New York, EU members have been consulting on a daily basis. I am pleased that so far EU members have been united on this issue," Danish Foreign Minister, **Per Stig Moeller** said in a statement issued by the **Danish Presidency of the EU**. *"If these efforts [in the Security Council] fail, the EU will do its share to avoid a vacuum in the international presence in Bosnia. The EU is preparing itself to step in if the UN Mission should terminate sooner than expected, that is on 1 January 2003."*

Both Banja Luka dailies, **Glas srpski (p. 3)** and **Nezavisne novine (p. 5)**, quote the **PDHR Donald Hays** and the **RS NA Speaker, Dragan Kalinic**, as saying after the meeting in Banja Luka, that the next two years are crucial for the refugee return process and the implementation of property laws. According to the media, Kalinic conceded that issues of refugees and land allocation are "huge" problems in BiH, which should be resolved in the next two years with the help of the

International Community. *"The OHR will review the land allocation process in order to work out a satisfactory solution. The entity and local authorities should, along with the IC, find ways to compensate people in case some complications regarding the land allocation arise",* said Kalinic.

"The next two years are extremely important for the refugee return process. It is necessary to create jobs and provide accommodation for returnees, while important laws have to be passed as soon as possible so as to enable BiH to enter European integration processes," said Hays after the meeting.

Anthrax in BiH

Under title *"Contagious diseases carried through imported cows"* **Dnevni List** (p. 3) reports that seven persons in Sanski Most were infected by Anthrax when they were taking hide from an infected cow. According to **Zlatko Puvacic**, Chief Epidemiologist in BiH Federation, all cows on which anthrax was discovered were imported as donation, mainly from (western) European countries. The daily says that Federation Ministry of Agriculture is complaining about lack of money for veterinary protection and the Law on Veterinary is still not adopted because of obstructions by RS politicians. **Vecernji List** carries a similar article on its front page, noting that the fatal disease could easily be transferred to Croatia due to porous borders between the two countries.

International Press on BiH

In the **BBC** program **Hard Talk** aired today (Wednesday), the former BIH Foreign Minister and the Party for BIH candidate for the Bosniak member of the BiH Presidency, **Haris Silajdzic**, said that a great deal has been done in BiH thus far, however stressed that the project of ethnic cleansing is still well and alive. *"The project advocated by Radovan Karadzic is still ongoing. This is the project of ethnic cleansing. I want this project undone,"* said Silajdzic, adding that he has high hopes since the new High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, arrived in BiH. *"With the new High Representative in place, we can have*

proper institutions, we can have refugee return and economy."
Commenting on the relations between BiH and the neighboring countries and the concept of collective guilt for crimes committed in BiH, Silajdzic said that the FRY President, Vojislav Kostunica, should apologize for the genocide against Bosniaks. *"The Yugoslav president should apologize for things that have been done in the name of the Serb people. This simple apology would have greatly improved the cooperation between the two countries and give us the sense of justice."*

Glas Srpski carries on its front page today excerpts of **The Washington Times** article about the ICTY allegedly investigating the role of the former US President, **Bill Clinton**, in the Croatian offensive "Storm" in Krajina. In addition, the daily – also on its front page – quotes Tuesday's **Guardian** article (by David Chandler) about Paddy Ashdown. **Glas**'s title is "Ashdown imposing himself" **Vecernji List** (p.3) also carries this article.

Electronic Media Headlines

BHTV 1

- NATO troops arrest Radovan Stankovic, and indicted war criminal, near Foca
- No evidence that the arrested Adnan Kadric planned assassination of General Sylvester
- Journalist association protests against the recent attack on journalists of FTV, DANI and Denveni Avaz by a group of hooligans in Zenica
- BiH Election Commission reviews dossier of Fikret Abdic and concludes that he is not eligible to run in the elections

FTV

- NATO troops arrest Radovan Stankovic, and indicted war criminal, near Foca
- Members of the Presidency meet with Paddy Ashdown to

discuss the extension of the UN mandate in BiH and the upcoming summit of three presidents from FRY, BiH and Croatia

- BiH Council of Ministers defines the draft law on movement of foreigners and immigration
- The High Representative delivers to the CoM a draft of the Criminal Code of BiH and urges them to adopt a final version

RTRS

- NATO troops arrest Radovan Stankovic, and indicted war criminal, near Foca
- Members of the Presidency meet with Paddy Ashdown to discuss the extension of the UN mandate in BiH and the upcoming summit of three presidents from FRY, BiH and Croatia
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