

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 19/5/2003

CROAT RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (18,00 hrs)	BH TV 1 (19,00 hrs)	FED TV (19,30 hrs)	RT RS (19,30)
Lawsuit against RS government before ICTY	EU not satisfied with the agreement between BiH and US about immunity of US citizens before the ICC	World news	Actions against trade with illegal goods in RS
Defence Minister Nikolic proposes BiH army with 3 components	OHR welcomes RS willingness to cooperate with the state court	ICTY Chief Prosecutor Carla Del Ponte to visit Belgrade tomorrow	OHR welcomes co- operation of RS MUP with BiH court
OHR welcomes co- operation of RS MUP with BiH court	ICTY Chief Prosecutor Carla Del Ponte will visit Belgrade tomorrow	11 companies, individuals sue 7 former and current RS officials	Carla del Ponte to visit Belgrade tomorrow
Conference on missing persons continues in Sarajevo			Unsatisfactory conditions in prisons in RS

Oslobodjenje	Peter Nicholl to be replaced by Kemal Kozaric in 18 months
Dnevni Avaz	Belgrade offers RS abolishment?
Dnevni List	Participation in reconstruction of Iraq strongly connected to agreement on non-extradition

Vecernji List	Dragan Covic, Croat member of BiH Presidency: BiH wants strong ties with America
Slobodna Dalmacija	Voice of America: We genuinely carried what del Ponte said
Glas Srpske	Construction works at Fatnik polje tunnel discontinued: Millions in dark; Teslic: Mines all over the place
Nezavisne Novine	Report of the Republika Srpska Chief Auditor: Orao collected payment from Iraq of US \$ 4.6 million; Population of Cvijetnici near Bihac wrote to Stjepan Mesic: Returnees demand from Croatia to repair their totaled houses; Ante Colak: BiH Mafia has its state
Blic	500 workers without job; Nikola Spric: Authority accepts the BiH defence law; Savo Cvjetovic: irregularities in paying war damages
Ljiljan	'Safet – I do not need awards from those who were bombarding me'

Political developments

**Another
scandalous
statement by a
Serbian Prime
Minister**

Dnevni List (page 10, unsigned, "Secession of Kosovo – 'accession of Republika Srpska to fatherland'") reports that the Serbian Prime Minister, Zoran Zivkovic, told a German weekly "Der Spiegel" that Kosovo was a part of Serbia and that there was not a single international-legal document that "can justify independence of Kosovo". According to DL, which carries B92's report, Zivkovic hinted that in case of secession of Kosovo, there could be accession of the Republika Srpska to the fatherland. "Such a scenario (secession of Kosovo) would represent a dangerous precedent. That would again put in question borders in the whole Balkans, not only the borders of the Republika Srpska in BiH", said Zivkovic.

In light of the report/statement from above, the same daily carries an editorial by Miso Relota (page 2, "Déjà vu from the East") who says as soon as BiH thought the neighbors from across the Drina river stopped dreaming the dream about accession of "Serb lands" to Serbia, there is a wake up call in form of a statement by Zivkovic to "Der Spiegel" Magazine. Saying that the statement should not come as a surprise, because his predecessor (Djindjic) gave similar statements to the same magazine, Relota notes that the international community tacitly approves of such statements. He goes on to say: "These days one can hear ever so loud announcements about Dayton 2, where, it would appear, BiH would become the biggest loser. It is high time we sober up, until it's too late." Oslobodjenje pg. 3, mentioned on the front page 'Haris Silajdzic: They did not succeed with slaughtering, they will not succeed with word either' carries the disputed Zivkovic's statement for Dier Spiegel with reactions. Haris Silajdzic, the founder of the Party for BiH, said that this was just about unrealistic wishes of those who still could not realize that not a single part of BiH including RS would never again be unified with Serbia. "They did not succeed to achieve that with slaughtering, genocide, and ethnic cleansing and they will not succeed in that with words either," said Silajdzic. Adnan Terzic, the Chairman of the BiH Council of Ministers, was pretty surprised by such a statement. He said that during his recent meetings with Zivkovic he had not recognized or noticed such the rhetoric.

Dnevni Avaz pg. 4 'Colak: BiH Foreign Minister should send a protest note to Serbia' also carried Zivkovic's statement and political reactions. "Unfortunately, the statements by the current and late Serbian Prime Ministers, Zivkovic and Djindjic, say that our country is still treated as enemy," SDA Vice-president Elmir Jahic said. HDZ BiH leader Barisa Colak said he was surprised with such the statement since it was quite different from what Zivkovic had been stating during the recent meetings with BiH officials in Belgrade. "This might be a sign of a political weakness of the current Serbian Prime Minister, who now needs larger support by nationalists," President of the Party for BiH Safet Halilovic said.

<p>Dnevni Avaz: Belgrade offers abolishment of RS?</p>	<p>Dnevni Avaz front page, pg. 3 'Belgrade offers abolishment of RS?' – Announcements that by the end of this month the Hague-based International Court of Justice will make a decision on when the main hearing will start before the Court with regard to the BiH lawsuit against Serbia and Montenegro for genocide and aggression, has again initiated a number of signals being sent from Belgrade to Sarajevo seeking for a settlement to be reached out of the Court. New in these signals is readiness of some political circles in Belgrade to even accept the abolishment of RS in exchange for the settlement of the inter-state dispute out of the court. Vecernje Novosti pg. 3 'There will be no compromise' – Member of BiH Presidency and president of the SDA Sulejman Tihic says that BiH will not withdraw the lawsuit against Serbia and Montenegro. Reacting on some statements from Belgrade that it would be possible to find a compromise solution regarding BiH lawsuit against S&M, Tihic says that in order to withdraw the lawsuit Bosniak member of the BiH Presidency should vote for it, and as he emphasises that will never happen. Dnevni List (page 3, <u>unsigned</u>, "Tadic: All charges must be 'dropped' simultaneously") reports that the Defence Minister of Serbia and Montenegro, Boris Tadic, stated that it was a position of Serbia and Montenegro that the country's lawsuit against NATO is connected to the charges BiH and Croatia pressed against Belgrade and that "if the charges were to be dropped, they should be dropped at the same time".</p>
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<p>Nikolic proposes establishment of a BiH Army with three ethnic components</p>	<p>Oslobodjenje pg. 4 'Units like in Belgium, Switzerland', Dnevni Avaz pg. 2 'Ethnic units in our country would not be precedent' – BiH must have its army and that army has to reflect the situation in the state. Three constituent peoples live in BiH and it is natural for the army of BiH to consist of three ethnic components, Federation of BiH Defence Minister Miroslav Nikolic told the Federation Radio on Sunday, according to Fena. He added that the brigades should not be closed to other peoples and minorities which want to serve in them as conscripts or professional soldiers. "Ethnic units would not set a precedent as they already exist and function very well in other states such as Belgium and Switzerland. We can implement their experiences to a great extent in our conditions," Minister Nikolic said. Asked if a small efficient army could be set up in BiH, Minister Nikolic replied positively. He said that "goodwill of the three peoples is necessary for this and nothing should be done to the detriment of one of them". "None of the sides should make maximum demands and they should be prepared to give up certain things to achieve joint goals," Nikolic added. Commenting on the financial situation in the Federation Army, Minister Nikolic said that it was barely making ends meet and that it was "in dire straits". He said that in comparison to neighbouring states the expenditure per soldier was six times smaller and in some cases even 30 times smaller. Asked to explain the tender sale of weaponry belonging to the Federation Army, Minister Nikolic said that the army wanted to sell its surplus weapons. He added that the weapons were of older type – from pistols to guns and adequate ammunition. "Initially we wanted to destroy the surplus but then, because of the difficult financial situation, we opted for a tender sale. It will be good for us if we earn something," Nikolic said.</p> <p>Dnevni List (front and page 8, <u>by D. L.</u>, "Form national units in BiH like in Belgium and Switzerland") also carries the interview with Nikolic.</p> <p>Nezavisne Novine, page 3, 'Recruits will be serving four-months military service' – Miroslav Nikolic, Defence Minister of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, stated that the recruits at the reformed armed forces will be serving a four-months military service. According to him, this was agreed at the meeting of the Defence Reform Commission. Also, the meeting agreed that BiH recruits should be trained according to NATO standards.</p>
<p>Proposal for establishment of joint defence system in the Balkans</p>	<p>Vecernje Novosti pg. 3 'Balkans' joint army' – Blagoje Grahovac, the advisor to the Serbian and Montenegrin President, has proposed to the Balkans' countries to establish a joint defence system and its beginning would be establishment of a joint battalion. Due to high level of distrust, Grahovac has proposed that NATO officers command over battalions and units. According to Grahovac a joint defence system would contribute to a quicker restoring of trust and establishment of NATO standards and regulations. Grahovac says that after that a joint brigade should be formed and by the end of 2007 a joint corps.</p>

<p>VL: Interview with Dragan Covic</p>	<p>Vecernji List (front “BiH wants strong ties with America” and page s 6 and 7 “BiH as an European state wants strong ties with America”) carries an interview with the Croat member of BiH Presidency, Dragan Covic. Talking about the signing of an agreement on non-extradition of the US citizens to the ICC, Covic expect the agreement to be ratified in the Parliament by end of this month or early next month. “Because of many objections, especially because of the EU, at one moment it appeared it would be very difficult. But, we assessed that we had to observe all the norms from the DPA which, in many of its points, explicitly stresses the protection of those who come to BiH to help”, said Covic. Talking about the current organization of BiH, Covic says such a set-up with five levels of authority is untenable. “There’s too much bureaucracy. In seeking the solution, one should think about the state that would have two to three levels of authority (...) Three peoples can agree on what kind of organizational set-up in BiH we want to have in a quality manner. I believe we will have such a re-organization by end of 2004 and it will coincide with municipal elections. That will be the true path of BiH entering the EU”, says Covic.</p>
<p>DL says BiH rewarded after signing on agreement on non-extradition with US</p>	<p>Dnevni List (front and page 17, by <u>V. Vidic</u>, “Participation in reconstruction of Iraq strongly connected to agreement on non-extradition”) reads that it looks likely some BiH companies will be involved in the reconstruction of Iraq. According to the daily, the main pre-requisite for such an engagement – political suitability, was met after BiH signed an agreement of non-extradition of the US citizens to the ICC. In that context, the daily reports that the Director of US AID, Howard Sumka, received the entities’ Prime Minister only after the agreement was initialed, which, in DL’s opinion, represents a green light worth billions of US\$ to BiH companies. (Vecernji List, page 2, by <u>G. K.</u>, “BiH helps in reconstruction of Iraq”)</p>
<p>EU: Still no comment on agreement btw. BiH and USA</p>	<p>Nezavisne Novine, page 4, ‘European Union still restrained’ – European Union has not still presented its official stance over the signing of bilateral agreement between USA and BiH, in regard to exemption of American soldiers from jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court. Frane Maroevic, Spokesperson of the European Commission to BiH, stated that: “We still can make no comment on the agreement, because we are not familiarised with its content.”</p> <p>OHR also abstained from giving any comment on this matter. Namely, the OHR Spokesperson, Mario Brkic, said that OHR has nothing to do with the BiH foreign policy.</p>

<p>Opposition in Republika Srpska on early elections</p>	<p>Nezavisne Novine, page 7, 'Opposition calculates that elections would make a gain to the state' – The opposition parties in the Republika Srpska are of the view that the money necessary for the holding of early elections in BiH should not be hard to collect, stressing that the resources should be financed from the budget.</p> <p>Although the last years elections of 5th October cost BiH KM eight million, the opposition parties (DNS, SNSD, SPRS, SRS) are convinced that this amount is insignificant in comparison how much the state loses with the current authority on the top.</p> <p>According to NN inset, Zlatko Lagumdžija, SDP President, is of the view that the potential elections should be financed from the budget and some international donations as well.</p>
<p>PDP Main Board Session</p>	<p>Nezavisne Novine, page 4, 'Petar Kunic still PDP member' – At its weekend session in Teslic, PDP Main Board discussed some party related issues, including the voting of Petar Kunic for Nikola Spiric. However, Kunic has not been excluded from party membership. After the session, Mladen Ivanic, PDP President, denied the claims that the session made any reference to the case of Kunic.</p>
<p>Interview with Ante Colak, HSS President</p>	<p>Nezavisne Novine, pages 1 & 3, 'BH Mafia has its state' – Ante Colak, Vice President of the Croatian Peasants' Party of BiH (HSS) and delegate to the House of Representatives of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, says that each state has its mafia, only BiH mafia has its state. In a short interview to NN, he also comments on threats addressed to Zelimir Rebac, saying that the BiH mafia is not organised only at micro-plan, but also at the international-wide level. He also explains that: "There is no organised crime in BiH, because nobody has so far been tried for that."</p> <p>He also said that BiH had its own Zoran Djindjic, which was Jozo Leutar, former Deputy Interior Minister of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The difference between these two cases that nothing was done following Leutar's murder in BiH.</p>
<p>Ljiljan interview with SDA's Seada Palavric</p>	<p>LJILJAN pg. 9 'We have to stop the process of Satanism of Bosniaks' by <u>Fuad Kovac</u> – a short interview with Suada Palavric SDA Vice-President. Asked about the revision conducted by the State Service Agency and the fact that directors of the customs and tax administrations were not subjects to the revision, Palavric replied that their status was regulated via the MoI Law, Financial Police Law etc. Added that administration established by the Alliance won't be able to preserve the current posts unless they were installed via regular public vacancy announcements. She stated the revision would give chance to people, who were dismissed without valid explanation, to be re-admitted. As for the behavior of the opposition, Palavric stated that it's the opposition's wishful thinking to hold extraordinary elections. "This could only come true if we do not work hard enough, and if parts of the IC fail to respect the will of voters from the October elections." Finally, on the issue of judiciary, Palavric stated the court processes were still being staged, they drag on for years and people live in uncertainty. Gave an example of the Pogorelica case.</p>

HNZ unhappy with relations with HDZ	<p>In light of the first session of the HNZ's Main Board, held last Saturday at Ljubuski, Dnevni list (front page & p 4, "Brkic: I am dissatisfied with the relations between the HDZ, Croat Christian-Democrats and HNZ within the Coalition", by <u>Miso Relota</u>) carries the clarification of the recent HNZ Presidency's Press Release on the relations in the Coalition. Milenko Brkic, the HNZ President, elaborates: "At the last HNZ Presidency session, we concluded that we would declare ourselves on the relations within the Coalition, i.e. on whether we should preserve those relations or break them, at the next Presidency session due this September. Personally, I am quite disappointed and dissatisfied with those relations as I think we should rely on each other more. But, the HDZ has become totally independent, has completely taken all the business into its own hands so that it does not consult the other 2 Coalition parties at all, and the Coalition Councils do not meet regularly".</p>
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Economic affairs

**Fatnik Polje
works
discontinued**

Glas Srpske, cover page story, 'Millions in dark'; Nezavisne Novine, page 2, 'Construction works at Fatnik Polje tunnel discontinued' – Both dailies report that Pantelija Dakic, Acting Director General of the Republika Srpska Power Utility, ordered the construction works at Fatnik Polje tunnel be discontinued. The things now left to be done are as follows: to register the works completed so far, to close construction site. The destiny of around 500 workers, who were employed, still remains unknown.

Blic pg. 7 '500 workers without job' and Dnevni List page 17, unsigned, "Works on construction of Fatnicko Pole – Bileca Lake stopped" also reported on the issue. Vecernje Novosti pg. 20 ('Herzegovina in shock') reports on interruption of works on the tunnel but asking what happened with the Republika Srpska officials' statements that this job is the greatest perspective for this region and that its interruption would have far-reaching consequences.

<p>Orao case</p>	<p>Nezavisne Novine, pages 1 & 3, 'Orao collected the payment from Iraq of US \$ 4.6 million' – The report of the Republika Srpska Chief Auditor reads that: "The Aviation Centre Orao was illegally co-operating with Defence Ministry of Iraq through the Belgrade firm "JugoImport". The amount of around KM 8 million (US \$ 4.6 million) was collected through these dealings in 2001 and 2002."</p> <p>The report further says that Orao did not perform any dealing upon direct agreement, stressing that there was no written approval from the Republika Srpska authorities to Orao, in regard to any co-operation with Iraq.</p> <p>According to NN inset, Orao officials were submitting bi-annual and annual reports (with financial addenda) to Air Force Administration at the Republika Srpska Army General Staff. The GS was then reviewing those reports and accepting them as such.</p>
<p>Kemal Kozaric to replace Peter Nicholl in 18 months</p>	<p>Oslobodjenje front page, pg. 7 'Peter Nicholl to be replaced in office by Kemal Kozaric in 18 months' – Peter Nicholl, the current BiH Central Bank Governor, will remain in the office by December 31 2004. After that, he will be replaced by the current Vice-Governor Kemal Kozaric, learns the newspaper.</p>

<p>OHR welcomes RS readiness to cooperate with State Court</p>	<p>Oslobodjenje pg. 3 'RS started to cooperate with the Court of BiH', Dnevni Avaz pg. 2 'OHR welcomes RS readiness to cooperate with State Court' – The OHR welcomes the RS Ministry of Interior close cooperation with the international community and the BiH State Court in recent days in the fight against crime, according to an OHR press release issued on Sunday. The Ministry of Interior has played a particularly constructive role in bringing the Milakovic case to court. Action by the RS Ministry of Interior's in recent days has led directly to the release of six Eastern European women held, it is alleged, against their will in a Prijedor nightclub by its owner Milorad Milakovic. This case is an example of effective cooperation between the law enforcement agencies, the international community and the courts. The initial information was passed from SFOR to the RS Police who then acted vigorously and promptly. Importantly the RS Ministry of Interior, recognising that human trafficking is an international crime, transferred the case together with the individuals detained, to the BH Prosecutors Office. This case will now processed before the Court of BiH.</p> <p>Dnevni list (p 10, "The OHR welcomed the work of the Republika Srpska's Ministry of Interior") and Vecernji list (p 2, "The HR welcomed the RS MoI's cooperation with the BiH Court – struggle against crime", by <u>Eldina Medunjanin</u>), Nezavisne Novine, page 3, 'Milakovic case as an example"; Glas Srpske, page 3, 'Police as an example'also carry the OHR press release.</p>
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<p>Schwartz Shilling on problems in BiH entities</p>	<p>Glas Srpske, page 2, 'Distrust amongst municipalities' – Christian Schwartz Schilling, International Mediator for Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, is of the opinion that "BiH will be capable of resolving its problems by on its own as political, economic and administrative reforms are implemented".</p> <p>He also said that the Livno Canton is brimming with problems, owing to distrust amongst three municipalities, Drvar, Glamoc and Grahovo.</p>
<p>OHR request the Government to allow privatisation of all nationalised apartments</p>	<p>Dnevni Avaz pg. 2 'OHR request the Government to allow privatisation of all nationalised apartments' – The Office of the High Representative has sent to the Federation of BiH Government a request to change property laws and allow privatisation of all nationalised apartments. The letter of request was sent to the Federation Urban Planning Minister Ramiz Mehmedagic by Head of OHR's RRTF Peter Bas-Backer. According to the current regulations, these apartment are being excluding from the privatisation process until the adoption of the law on restitution.</p>

Other issues

<p>Charges against 7 former and current RS officials</p>	<p>Dnevni List (page 3, by <u>D. L.</u>, “Charge for genocide pressed against Sarovic, Cavic, Ivanic and Kalinic”) reports that Faruk Balijagic, a lawyer representing 11 physical persons and legal entities, has pressed charges against 7 former and current Republika Srpska (RS) officials, namely Dragan Cavic, Mirko Sarovic, Mladen Ivanic, Dragan Kalinic, Perica Bundalo, Vladimir Tutes and Dobro Planojevic, accusing them of genocide. The charges that have been forwarded to the Chief ICTY Prosecutor, Carla del Ponte, accuses the seven officials of organizing people which expelled Bosniaks who intended to return to Banja Luka on May 7, 2001. On that day, the Bosniaks wanted to attend the ceremony of placing of corner stone for the Ferhadija mosque in Banja Luka but were chased away by rocks, fiery cocktails and arms. In Balijagic’s opinion, the seven committed an act of genocide punishable by article 2, paragraph 2 of the Geneva Convention on prevention and punishing of genocide. (Dnevni Avaz pg. 8 ‘Charges filled against 7 RS officials’, Oslobodjenje pg. 5 ‘RS leadership sued for genocide’)</p>
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Charges against Semso Mehmedovic (SDA)	<p>Vecernji List (page 20, by <u>rs</u>, "Former minister in MoI 'swindled' with documents") reports that the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) Ministry of Interior pressed charges with the FBiH Prosecution against a former Minister of Interior of Zenica- Doboje Canton and current President of SDA Caucus in the FBiH Parliament, Semso Mehmedovic, and Jasna Mehmedovic from Zenica over abuse of office and authority. Reportedly, Semso Mehmedovic during the year 1993 forwarded Jasna Mehmedovic already filled out requests for issuance of BiH passports and other documents to foreign nationals who did not have a place of residence in Tesanj. Apparently, on basis of these personal IDs with fictitious residence, these foreign nationals got BiH passports and other documents.</p>
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<p>Dnevni Avaz: Dragica Miletic violated the Law with a note of corruption</p>	<p>Avaz pg. 8 ‘Dragica Miletic violated the Law with a note of corruption’ – A member of the BiH HoR, Tihomir Gligoric, at a last session requested an explanation as to how Dragica Miletic could be appointed as State Prosecutor following the OHR request that she be removed from the post of the Public Attorney (they monitored the work of the Commission for the verification of contracts in Banja Luka). Gligoric referred to a letter from the Banja Luka OHR from July 15 last year signed by John Glasebruk, Regional RRTF Head, and Renata Frisch from the OSCE Office in Banja Luka. An insert ‘The CoM must act adequately’ – OHR refused to comment the mentioned letter. OHR Spokesman Oleg Milisic just stated OHR had info that the RS refugee Ministry undertook certain steps and removed Miletic from her former post.</p>
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<p>DL: “Around 100 thousand Serbs live in Federation of BiH”</p>	<p>Dnevni list (p 10, unsigned) reports that statistics estimate that only around 100.000 Serbs live in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH). The data published by the FBiH Statistics Bureau show that 2.319.000 people live in this entity, 72.9% of which are Bosniaks, 21.8% Croats, 4.4% are Serbs and 1% belong to the category of Others. The Bureau director, Dervis Djurdjevic, explained these figures do not include FBiH population currently living in foreign countries. According to statistics, total demographic loss in FBiH, compared to the pre-war period, is estimated to 296.950 inhabitants.</p>
<p>Returns to Bihac settlements</p>	<p>Nezavisne Novine, pages 1 & 2, ‘Returnees demand from Croatia to repair their houses’ – The Serb returnees to the village of Cvijetnic (which was at Drvar municipality before the war, and is now within municipality of Bihac, as stipulated by Dayton Agreement) addressed a letter to the Croatian President, Stjepan Mesic. They call on his assistance in the reconstruction of their houses, “which were mined, set afire or destroyed after the operation Storm and entry of Croatian troops in this village in September 1995”.</p>

<p>Teslic problems with mines</p>	<p>Glas Srpske, cover page story, 'Mines all over the place' – A large quantity of mines, grenade launchers and ammunition, which the local population threw at river Ukrina has been collected over the past years in the municipality of Teslic. And new ones keep surfacing every now and then, which represents a great jeopardy to the local population.</p>
<p>Carla del Ponte visiting Belgrade today</p>	<p>Dnevni List (page 2, by <u>M. R.</u>, "Hartmann: It is not questionable whether Mladic is in Serbia") announces that the Chief ICTY Prosecutor, Carla del Ponte, is visiting Belgrade today where she is to talk to Serbian officials about access to military archives and arrest of ICTY indictee, Ratko Mladic. The daily quotes del Ponte's spokesperson, Florence Hartmann, as saying: "The issue whether Mladic is in Serbia, that is not questionable any more. It is about political will and technical elements of the arrest", says Hartmann. (Slobodna Dalmacija, back page, by <u>Matko Franac</u>, "Carla del Ponte comes to get Veselin Sljivancanin")</p>