OHR BiH Media Round-up, 3/3/2003

CROAT RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (18,00 hrs)	**BH TV 1** (19,00 hrs)	**FED TV** (19,30 hrs)	**RT RS** (19,30)
Fire in Egypt	War against Iraq	Sheik Mohammad arrested	Fire in Brcko
Iraq destroying missiles	Iraq destroying missiles	Unification of Mostar	Car insurance cards
Pope on Holy Wednesday	BiH Eurosong	Turkey-US relations	RS Ministry for Veterans
Chirac in Algeria		BiH Eurovision contest	FRY – BiH dual citizenship

Oslobodjenje	First class spectacle, but shameful telecom; Big fire in the centre of Brcko – 10 families without a roof over their heads; A barrack or castle of justice?; Nadarevic – first loans for veterans at the end of April; Seselj – I was a slave to Duke Aleksic
Dnevni Avaz	Halilovic – illegal surveillances have to stop; Hafizovic – I do not want to be anyone's flower arrangement;
Dnevni List	Interview with seriously injured Arman Hrnjcic – the bomb was in working trousers and everything after that was just strong explosion
Vecernji List	Mobile telephony – despite of ban coming calls in so-called roaming are being paid: monopolists keep plundering
Slobodna Dalmacija	Private accommodation up to 50% more expensive
Glas Srpski	Following fire at a Brcko four-story building – ashes instead of apartments; Srebrenica – veterans beyond budget

Nezavisne Novine	The last floor of building in Brcko destroyed – ten families without roofs over their heads; Following appointments at the RS EP – personnel announce denial of access to the new director
Vecernje Novosti	Usurpation of Serbs' property in Sanski Most takes a form of ethnic cleansing – top officials dispossess everything
Blic	Srpska in electro-shock; Donald Hays – if I were RS citizens I would set Elektroprivreda building on fire; Cavic's new car costs like 10 apartments; Cvijetin Nikic – I am ready to be a minister
LJILJAN	US Ambassador Clifford Bond – let the court determine if Pogorelica was a terrorist camp

Political Affairs

Hafizovic	Avaz pg. 1 and 8 – a statement by RS Deputy Speaker, Sefket Hafizovic, that constitutional amendments adopted last year only existed on the paper in the RS. As the most recent example of his claims Hafizovic mentions the case of the RS Elektroprivreda Steering Board election, which, according to him, is one-national as are boards in over 30 more public companies and institution in the smaller entity that should be under the jurisdiction of the Agency for State Service. "There is no national equality not only in steering boards of national companies, but also on all other levels of the state administration. The reason surely being the avoiding of the constituting of the Council of Peroples." He further stated that he would request that the HR be informed of the problems. "I will not agree to be nothing more than a flower arrangement in this post just for the sake of portraying so-called multiethnic society and the respect of other peoples rights."

Commentary in Avaz on Mostar explosion	Avaz pg. 3 'BiH public keeping quite about Mostar tragedy' by Edina Sarac – "The BiH public is keeping quite. No one is condemning the criminal and terrorist act in Mostar West. There is non-comprehensible silence," start off the author. Sarac asks why is it that there is no swift police reaction the kind that that we witnessed after the Kostajnica murders. Furthermore, the author notes that one cannot ignore the fact that this time many of those who condemned the terrorist act in Kostajnica failed to raise their voice this time. The absence of reaction by local and international officials who raised their voice against the crime in Kostajnica when Topalovic brutally killed innocent people 'on the night of love and peace'. "This time they neglected their duty. Everyone is keeping quite. Smail Hrnjacic is gone. Arman seriously injured. Three members of Andjelic family are gone. The writing and the aim of the killer the same. Both in Kostajnica and in Mostar. The same victims. Innocent people. Yet, there is nothing but silence. And such thing should not happen. A crime is a crime, regardless of where it takes place, who did it, and has to be condemned. No selection."

Law on State Administration	Avaz pg. 4 ‘The commencing of the administration reform in FBiH’ – the FBiH government will most probably at the next session (planned for Thursday) discuss the Law on State Administration as a key material for commencing a broad administration reform. They plan to establish a special agency for state service at the FBiH level. The agency would be in charge of both cantonal and municipality administrations. The new regulations should be adopted by the end of this month.

Sarovic	Glas Srpski pg. 3 'Lawsuit – the seed of discord' – Mirko Sarovic, BiH Presidency Chair, stated that the partnership, which the local authorities supported in relations with the international community officials in BiH, was not at the expected level. Commenting on a decision by HR Paddy Ashdown on ID cards, Sarovic said that local authorities, namely the BiH Council of Ministers, should have resolved the problem. On the RS EP audit report, Sarovic said that he was not familiar with it, expressing the conviction that the RS government would present its view on this issue. Sarovic also expressed support to the introduction of a single customs administration and VAT at BiH level. Responding to a press question why, as Chairperson of the BiH Presidency, he is not interested in BiH getting compensation from FRY via the lawsuit, Sarovic said there were two reasons. "The first reason is of a procedural nature and is reflected in the fact that Serb representatives did not participate in the process of compiling and filing the lawsuit. The second reason concerns numerous qualifications of the lawsuit, which directly concern Serbs in BiH. "

IC protectorate in BiH	Glas Srpski pg. 3 'Protectorate in act' – A representative of the BiH Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, Srdjan Dizdarevic, and officials of the leading Bosniak, Croat and Serb political parties, yesterday assessed that BiH was placed under the protectorate of the international community, which took over all authorities, but failed to take any responsibility. They were particularly critical of HR Paddy Ashdown saying that he underestimated the local authorities. "High Representative tends to issue orders to BiH officials instead of trying to establish partnership with BiH authorities," said Dizdarevic. He further added that Ashdown obviously underestimated domicile authorities and their legitimacy.
Nikic	Blic pg. 6 'I will deal with problems' – President of Bijeljina SDS, Cvijetin Nikic, intends to announce his candidacy for finance minister in Mikerevic's government. Nikic says he hopes that RS PM will appoint someone who has knowledge and courage and who will be able to face certain problems and to solve them in the best possible way. He claims that for the previous candidacy he had support of his party, and that he did not believe the OHR would oppose his appointment as finance minister.

Finci	Ljiljan pg. 9 'CSA Director Jakob Finci: we do not have too many employees in the administration but we have too many levels of authority' – In a short interview for the magazine, Finci reiterated that the BiH Civil Service Agency had been established on the basis of the Law imposed by the High Representative, which was then adopted by the both houses of the BiH Parliamentary Assembly. "It is not easy to reform the state administration, to actually change the state from inside. From outside, the state is dictated by the Dayton Agreement, but we can improve it in terms of its inside structure for the benefit of all of us," Finci replied when asked why the Agency was necessary.
US Amb. Bond	Ljiljan pg. 1, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22 – an interview with the US Ambassador to BiH, Clifford Bond. "I do not have the knowledge of any direct terrorist danger here in BiH, but there are individuals who are extremists and who are approving terrorist actions. These include the people who are practicing radical forms of Islam, and I must add that such practicing of Islam is in the opposition to a traditionally tolerant Islam of BiH. I am also concerned about ethnic and political extremists like those belonging, for example, to the Ravnogorski Chetnik Movement," Bond said.

Economic Affairs

Bulldozer Commission	Avaz pg. 2 'The removal of obstacles to more efficient businesses in BiH' – HR Ashdown and six BiH businessmen should present today in the OHR building 50 reformist measures that would pave the way for investors to open more easily new working places. According to OHR Spokesperson, Julian Braithwaite, certain well-devised measures will be forwarded to CoM Chair Adnan Terzic near a bulldozer, which is to symbolize the IC and BiH businessmen are ready to for serious reforms. He added that reforms would not be successful if the authorities were not to engage in their implementation.
Brankovic	Avaz pg. 9 'The situation at the telecommunications sector has to be reviewed' – Nedzad Brankovic, FBiH Minister for Traffic and Communication, said the incident with the BH Telecom that took place during the BiH Eurovision contest (TV voting had to be cancelled since the BH Telecom system 'crashed' once people starting making phone calls) indicates the time has come for a thorough, well-organized review of the entire BiH telecommunication sector.
Oslobodjenje commentary about RS Elektroprivreda	Oslobodjenje pg. 2 'On the edge' by Ibrahim Prohic – the author recaps on the recent events in a very few sentences. The audit reports on the RS Elektroprivreda, the loss of 160 million Km and the announcing of audits of the BiH Elektroprivreda and HB Elektroprivreda. "The electricity has been charged double of the export price at the local market. 'They are robbing you,' the eye-opening statements from the OHR. Thank you, we did not know that. 'They are using the monopoly. Acting under the political patronage. Really?" As for the local officials, the author says that they, on the other hand, are trying to persuade the citizens that foreigners are only saying the above things to open the door for foreign buyers. "How can we stay normal and avoid the 'experimental neurosis'. What is better, or rather what is worse? To be ripped off by internationals or locals? What a poor choice!"

HZ Elektroprivreda	Dnevni List pg. 1 and 15 – learns from its sources that funds of two Elektroprivreda companies in the FBiH have been managed similarly to the RS Elektroprivreda, i.e. the money circulated between companies of persons close to the SDA and HDZ leaderships. A DL source alleges that, by means of fictitious insurance of workers, Elektroprivreda CCHB money was transferred to accounts of companies, which then directed it to Croat self-rule institutions. It seems that companies who assisted the transfer were 'Hercegovina osiguranje' and 'Croatia osiguranje'. Personnel devoted to Dragan Covic and his associates played a key role within the Elektroprivreda CCHB. Elektroprivreda CCHB workers are said to have double insurance through the basic insurance policy with the above-mentioned companies. In order for the workers not to have any benefit from the payments they were insured as a group and not individually. Thus Elektroprivreda CCHB paid 93,000 KM to Hercegovina osiguranje and 82,000 KM to Croatia osiguranje monthly, which meant that around 200,000 KM a month and over 2 million KM a year was directed to companies controlled by persons close to HDZBiH leadership. DL sources close to the OHR audit team reveal that this information is just a tip of the iceberg when it came to embezzlements in the company, and that a final report would show the additional expenditures made in the interest of privileged political structures and aborted political projects. The paper also adds that HR Paddy Ashdown has not announced any political sanctions against persons politically responsible in the case of the RS Elektroprivreda – if he could remove Nikola Grabovac due to 'chain of command' responsibility, then he should have removed the entire former RS government, or at least its leader Mladen Ivanic. However, it is hard to believe that the High Representative will ever make a decision to remove reformers such as Ivanic, Sarovic, Covic, Cavic and Hasan Cengic. Considering the current OHR administration, and regardless of the fact how schizophrenic it may sound, it is more possible for HR Ashdown to remove Komsic from the vice-presidential post at the SDP due to the affair in BiH embassy in Belgrade, or maybe Neven Tomic who pointed out the OHR as one of the culprits for his resignation.

BH Elektroprivreda	Nezavisne Novine pg. 3 ‘Frauds should have been revealed earlier’ – commenting on extracts from the audit report on BiH Elektroprivreda, Mesud Krljes, President of the BiH EP Syndicate, told NN that the Syndicate of Elektro-energetic system of BiH condemned all irregularities in the work of the BiH EP. Krljes further raises an issue as to whether these irregularities have not been disclosed previously, when the Syndicate pointed at certain illegal activities by former administration six years ago.

VL and Vjesnik on telecom in BiH	Vecernji List pg. 1 and 6 by Gorden Knezovic – at the request of a few journalists, the CRA passed a decision according to which the charging of incoming calls in so-called roaming by three BiH GSM operators was banned. The three GSM operators, however, do not respect this decision and they keep charging beneficiaries of their services. According to VL, CRA is drafting a proposal on possibilities for offering fixed telephony services in order to reduce the monopoly of the three GSM operators. This decision is being expected after a session of the Council for Telecommunications scheduled for March 10 in Banja Luka. VL thinks that having in mind the current practice, domestic power-wielders will swindle again an attempt to break down the monopoly, which is the aim of the IC. "Instead of creating new telephone exchanges and other telephone infrastructure, simply thanks to their political connections with Telecom, which are controlled by political parties, they will rent out existing telephone exchanges and collect revenues from them." VL says that Principle Deputy High Representative Donald Hays concluded that monopoly was the main reason of failure of the economic recovery in BiH. Vjesnik pg. 2 by Alenko Zornija 'Scandal in BiH: the most expensive telephone system in Europe 'burnt down' at Eurosong' – local telecommunication companies disgraced themselves during the Eurosong competition, which was held in Sarajevo two days ago. Vjesnik says that although BiH citizens are paying the most expensive phone calls in Europe their telecommunication companies could not carry out the TV voting for the aforementioned competition. "Telecom in BiH are charging too much and they offer too little," said PDHR Hays. "There is no doubt that scandal with the voting for Eurosong has shown and confirmed the inexpertness of the BiH Telecom leadership. Besides, now they will not be able to accuse the international community of wanting reforms of BiH telecommunications in BiH for the sake of the IC's interests only."

RS media on telecom operators in BiH	Nezavisne Novine pg. 4 ‘Monopoly and politics dictate the price of phone bills’ – According to NN source, close to the European Commission, BiH Telecom and Telecom Srpske, instead of common world standards, use four elements to set the prices of its services – the political influence, historical development, estimates and monopoly. On political influence, the source stressed the fact that the entity government appoint members of the Steering Boards at state owned telecommunication operators. The historical development includes the logic that the users are ready to pay the same price they paid before.

RS Elektroprivreda

RS EP staff	Nezavisne Novine pg. 1 and 3 – NN learnt at the RS EP Syndicate in Trebinje that it was possible that RS EP system personnel in Trebinje would deny access to the newly appointed Director General, Dusko Mijatovic. President of the RS EP Syndicate, Branko Djordjevic, yesterday stated that the Syndicate would not organize anything on this, stressing that 'it was possible that the personnel agitates'. According to an NN source, the threats followed the appointment of the new leadership at the RS EP. The source claims that 'the threats against new leadership of the RS were made from political circles who wanted to maintain the current state within the RS EP'. According to Djurdjevic, all power transactions from the RS were performed via Electro Energetic Centre in Belgrade, whose President is Dusko Mijatovic. He further claims that Drago Skulic must be involved in these activities, noting that he was also a member of the Steering Board at the Nova Banjalucka Banka (the Bank owned by Milenko Vracar former RS Minister of Finance), through which the RS Elektroprivreda carries out all its money transactions. According to OHR Chief Spokesperson, Julian Braithwaite, the appointments of Dusan Mijatovic, Milenko Cvbijanovic and Dragan Andjelic represent a good start. "The appointments reflect the positive achievements made by Mikerevic's government following the publication of the audit report."

Hamovic	Nezavisne Novine pg. 3 'We do have a monopoly over the power export and we will keep it', Glas Srpski pg. 4 'Far from the truth' – Vuk Hamovic, a member of the Steering Board and one of the founders of the EFT, stated that the London EFT did not get illegally new jobs at tenders in the region. In a statement given to NN, Hamovic stressed that the EFT was buying power from several electrical industries (Elektroprivreda) in southeast Europe, and even in Austria and Slovenia. It then sells it to states that cannot produce enough electricity for their needs. As for the privatisation of the RS EP, Hamovic did not hide an intention of the EFT to do that, claiming that other bidders would not be excluded from the selection. He further denies accusations that thanks to contacts with Mladen Ivanic the EFT got new jobs in BiH. He also denied any connection with Radovan Karadzic. According to Hamovic, the EFT controls 80% of trade in electricity surplus, which is a monopoly, and according to him, they will try to maintain it. "We have achieved this monopoly through victories at tenders, and we do not get licences (to trade in electricity surplus) from the states or through a bribe." According to GS, Svetislav Bulatovic, Executive Director and member of the EFT Steering Board (who attended the Saturday's press conference in Sarajevo together with Hamovic), said that the EFT responded to tender issued in May last year for Buk Bijela. In its offer, the EFT provided a guarantee of US $ 5 million, and also accepted the conclusion that the deadline for the bid submission should be prolonged until mid March this year. Blic pg. 7, Nacional pg. 11 – Hamovic denied allegations from the audit report.

SDS	Vecernje Novosti pg. 15 'The government is also responsible' – the coordination Board of the SDS for eastern and old Herzegovina claims that due to the latest events surrounding the RS Elektroprivreda 'political situation in Herzegovina has been worsening'. It further says that the auditor's report is full of controversial facts and asks the RS Auditor or some international auditor's firm to conduct an additional revision. The Coordination Board of the SDS for eastern and old Herzegovina thinks that the auditor's report is a pressure to privatise this company in accordance to the IC concept and contrary to the Trade Unions' and RS political structures' stands.
Mikerevic	Blic pg. 7 – quotes RS PM, Dragan Mikerevic, as saying after the meeting with Herzegovina's municipalities' mayors and a part of dismissed EPRS's leadership that the removal of EPRS's leadership will not cause a dramatic situation, because individuals are not important but institutions. He added that the decisions that might provoke damages to electric power system in the RS should not be made.

PDHR Hays	Blic pg. 6 headline ‘If I were RS citizen I would set EPRS on fire’ – PDHR Donald Hays praised the moves made by the RS government so far in regard to the RS Elektroprivreda. “They have given a good example to other two elektroprivreda companies in BiH that revision results for should be known in the coming weeks.” He adds that the RS government’s position is not easy because it has to make difficult political decisions. Hays argue against removed Elektroprivreda’s officials’ reactions, saying ‘’they gambled away their chances when the draft report on revision was presented to them’. “They were not credible, they caused the collapse of electric power system. Besides, they invested in projects that were not economically sustainable and acceptable,” Hays said. He also rejected all claims that happenings in the RS Elektroprivreda were a prelude for already planned privatisation. “An ordinary citizen who lives in poverty had to pay electric bills while those with political connection did not do it. Domestic firms received outrageously high electric bills, while the electricity was sold abroad at low prices. If I were an RS citizen I would set the EPRS on fire.” According to Hays, those who robbed the citizens made up the story on the privatisation. Hays says that in the RS there is a policy, which uses nationalism to hide theft. He reminds that he is satisfied with the fact that the RS government has made an important step to solve this problem and undertook responsibility for it. Hays also denies claim that the revision was conducted because of the EPRS’s cooperation with Serbia, although the EPRS distributed more electricity to Belgrade than to Sarajevo last year.

LJILJAN on RS Elektroprivreda	Ljiljan pg. 42 and 43 'Electric shock of 166 million KM' by Ivica Pasic – "The RS Elektroprivreda affair followed the Orao affair, and their common characteristic was the fact they both were ordered and directed from Belgrade by people who had been persistently trying to use the smaller BiH entity and earn as many millions as possible through the export of arms and now through the export of electricity. And they are justifying all these actions with interests of the Serb people," read the article.
LJILJAN on CIPS	Ljiljan pg. 44 and 45 'CIPS and obligations towards Siemens: all this will be paid by the citizens' by Mugdim Hasanovic – "The main argument of the High Representative for a higher price of the new ID card was that the project would become financially unsustainable and that was why he increased the price by 45 percent. One can only presume that the IMF and EU experts had signalled Ashdown to increase the price so that the influx of fresh money ensured successful completion of the project," the article read.

Police Affairs

Halilovic	Avaz pg. 1 and 5 – an interview with FBIH Minister of Interior Mevludin Halilovic. Asked whether there would be removals in the Ministry, Halilovic said they would revise the personnel resources, professional and moral background of each individual, as well as the way they were employed with the FBiH MoI. "Do you really think we should have understanding for certain individuals who, in the past period, used their leading positions to employ their daughters, cousins, nephews without a vacancy notice and necessary procedures." As for the role of the EUPM, Halilovic said a lot could be learned and gained from them. He however added that he also thought the EUPM should not impose themselves as a tutor and unmistaken in each situation, trying to impose their solution where the local authorities could reach them.

Mostar explosion	Vecernji List pg. 18 ‘Autopsy of Smail Hrnjcic was done: When he got killed he had bomb in his – a court expert, Ilijas Dobrac, carried out an autopsy and concluded that at the time the bomb was activated it was very close to Smail’s (the father) hand or that even Smail was holding the bomb in his hand. Dobrac could not answer whether it was a booby trap. Also, allegedly it was concluded that there were no traces of ‘the third person’ apart from Smail’s son. It was also concluded that the bomb was wrapped in abrasive paper. Dnevni List pg. 1 and 35 – an interview with Arman Hrnjcic, who was transferred from the Mostar Clinical hospital to the Juzni Logor hospital. Arman said that one-day before the explosion his father went to the flat to see if everything was fine and the lock at the entrance door was broken and he called locksmiths who changed the lock. “The next day when we came to continue the works on the renovation of the flat we first opened the closet in which our overalls and tools were put. The bomb was in my working trousers and everything after that was a strong explosion.”

Education Affairs

Pingel	Vecernji List pg. 1 and 5 – an interview with Head of the OSCE Department for Education Dr. Falk Pingel. Asked about a temporary agreement on education, Pingel said the following. “A temporary agreement envisages concrete steps in order to meet special needs of children and teachers who are returnees and children who belong to minorities. Integration does not mean assimilation. Integration promotes understanding and respecting of national identities and differences… OSCE does not remove national and religious symbols from schools. OSCE does not have a mandate to do it. However, the implementation of a part of a plan of the temporary agreement is important for children returnees and it is up to ministers of education to make steps in order to remove symbols and things that might be considered as insulting for children returnees, constituent peoples and national minorities.”