

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 3/9/2002

Headlines in Print Media

Oslobodjenje: NDI poll – Silajdzic ahead of Behmen

Dnevni Avaz: Brutal negating of the genocide – Ivanic's lies about Srebrenica

Jutarnje Novine: Schooling did not start in 11 secondary and 22 primary schools in the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton – Teachers went on strike while accusing the BiH Federation Government (for their unresolved status)

Dnevni List: Betting-shops damaged the BiH Federation Budget for six million KM

Vecernji List: NDI predicts – Covic, Silajdzic and Sarovic to be new BiH Presidency members?

Glas Srpski: The RS Government's Bureau for Cooperation with ICTY to send to the Tribunal documentation on the war crimes committed over Serbs in the Sarajevo Dobrovoljacka Street

Nezavisne Novine: News school year started in BiH – Teachers went on strike in three Federation cantons

Blic: Milutin Pejic: Pension payments without provisions until a new Government is elected"; Trial in Ferhadija case starts; Banks in Prijedor are facing bankruptcy

RS-related developments

Following three postponements, the trial of 16 people accused of provoking clashes on 7 May, when the laying of the foundation stone for **Ferhadija** mosque was prevented, began before the District Court in Banja Luka. At the beginning of the trial, Presiding Judge **Mirela Jagodic** said that all the accused were present in court. The suspects are accused of conspiring to provoke a criminal act and, according to the RS Penal Code, if they are found guilty they could be sentenced to spend one to five years in jail. However, **ONASA** quotes

Dragan Jokic, one of the suspects, as saying that Mustafa Ceric, the Head of the BiH Islamic Community, is the main culprit for the incidents since, by his "horrible" statements about Serbs he provoked a justified citizens' revolt. (**FENA**, **Oslobodjenje**, p 3, announced on the front page, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 27, announced on the front page, **Jutarnje Novine**, p 3, **Nezavisne Novine**, front page, p 3, **Blic**, p 17)

SRNA news agency carried a reaction of the SRS Chairman to the Ferhadija trial. The agency quotes the SRS Chairman and the candidate for the BiH Presidency, **Ognjen Tadic**, as saying that in the name of patriotism and national solidarity, the people of Banja Luka should gather outside the Banja Luka court and send a message – if you are trying them, then you have a reason to try us too.

The **Republika Srpska Government** has issued a **report** on the events in **Srebrenica** during the war, which states that the number of Bosniak victims which perished in Srebrenica after 11 July 1995 was slightly above 2,000, a Banja Luka television station reported this evening. The station said that this report on Srebrenica, which was compiled by the RS Government Bureau for Hague Tribunal Liaison, would be made public at a press conference scheduled for Tuesday. The government's first official report concerning the events in Srebrenica says that the claim that 6,000 to 8,000 Bosniak men were killed by the RS Army "was tendentious". "Only around 100 soldiers of the BiH Army were killed by Serb soldiers for reasons of personal revenge or unfamiliarity with international law after the fall of Srebrenica," reads the first part of the government report which was obtained by Alternative TV. The report adds that "around 1,800 soldiers of the BiH Army were killed in operations as they were fleeing, and probably another 100 succumbed to physical exhaustion". "The former commander of the RS Army, Ratko Mladic, is mentioned in the context of organizing the evacuation of civilians and of his call on the BiH Army to surrender within 24 hours. This did not happen, instead, very intense battles were fought in which the RS Army lost more than 300 soldiers" the report says. The RS

Government further adds that "more than 1,000 Serbs were killed in the Srebrenica area in the period between May 1992 and January 1994 by the BiH Army led by Naser Oric". The Government Bureau for Hague Tribunal Liaison did not wish to confirm or deny the existence of this report to Alternative TV. (**FENA**, **Oslobodjenje**, p 4, **Dnevni Avaz**, front page, pages 3 and 9)

Glas Srpski reports on its **front page** that the RS Government Bureau for Cooperation with the ICTY will forward to the ICTY the Dobrovoljacka Street case (an incident which took place in May 1992, in which several conscripts of Yugoslav National Army were allegedly killed by the Bosnian Army). The today's news conference will focus on this case as well as on the first RS Government's report on 1995 Srebrenica events.

"Mladen Ivanic, the alleged leader of the democratic and pro-European public in the Republika Srpska, has taken off the last mask from his face. His Government, dominated by the SDS ministers, denies in the first official report on the Srebrenica developments that the genocide against unarmed Bosniak civilians was committed in 1995 in the town. The biggest crime committed in Europe following the Second World War has been minimized by Ivanic's authors and brought down to a classic military conflict," Fadil Mandal wrote in the **Dnevni Avaz** Commentary of the Day (p 3).

Glas Srpski carries on its **front page** a press statement, issued by the RS President's Office, in which the **RS President, Mirko Sarovic**, condemned the statement, made by the **Bosniak member of the BiH Presidency, Beriz Belkic**, who said that the RS is building its false statehood on army and police forces and that because of its hard-line stand points, the RS is an obstacle for BiH accession to the Partnership for Peace program. The RS President's Office statement says that that Belkic's statement is inappropriate and unacceptable. The statement further reads that the Belkic's statement is a product of frustrations, which some politicians and political

parties from Sarajevo have. *"The RS does not build a false statehood, but only respects the DPA, according to which the RS has its army and police forces. Therefore, it is unreasonable of Belkic to questions this fact. It is also unreasonable that we from BiH set some new conditions for Pfp to ourselves when no one asks us to do it"*, says the statement.

Glas Srpski quotes (p 3) the **Parents' Forum Chairman, Borko Dzajic**, as saying on Monday in Banja Luka that the Parents' Forum filed criminal reports against principals of all schools because the students were illegally charges scholarships. According to Dzajic, the criminal reports have been filed against the RS Education Minister, Gojko Savanovic and the Banja Luka High School Principal, Slavica Ivosevic-Njezic, because the students were illegally charged 40 KM fees and the Banja Luka High School asked students to pay another 15 KM for certificate issuance. Dzajic said this was illegal because according to the law, the students in the RS are entitled to free of charge education. The RS Education Minister did not want to comment on this and his deputy, Bosko Stojkovic, said that the decision was made by schools and that the money was intended for insurance and certificates. The paper also quotes principals of three high schools from Banja Luka who all raised the question of the RS Parents' Forum motives to file criminal reports. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 8)

The RS Prime Minister, **Mladen Ivanic**, accompanied by Industry Minister **Pero Bukejlovic** and Deputy Energy Minister Slavisa Krunic, met on Monday in Moscow with members of the Russian Ministry for Economic Development and Trade on accelerating cooperation in fulfilling capital investments in RS. The RS representatives particularly discussed with Deputy Minister Roald Piskopelj on the construction of a gas-line from Zvornik to Novi Grad. (**Blic**, page 3)

The director of Srpske Poste, **Milutin Pejic**, said he would propose to the managing board to decide that Srpske Poste

issue pensions without any charge until a new government is elected, one which with it would be possible to negotiate. Pejic says in a press release that such a decision is necessary in order to clear up certain things, protect the interests of the most devastated population in the RS and to create space for an optimal solution to this problem. Pejic assessed as "crushing" the statements by Prime Minister Mladen Ivanic saying that the stories on the existence of a banking lobby in the RS are a "maximum stupidity" and that "Srpske Poste earn KM 4,5 million a year through payments of pensions for only 12 days of work". (FRY Nacional, page 11, Blic, page 16)

The director of the RS Banking Agency, **Dusanka Novakovic**, stated that the consequence of the decision of former employees of the **Prijedorska Banka** to lock the bank doors could be bankruptcy instead of the present liquidation. "If the employees do not re-open the bank, the next forced move of the Agency will be to propose bankruptcy, in which case the employees will be those who will lose the most," Novakovic warned. (FRY Nacional, page 11)

The SNSD party councilor, **Gordana Dukic**, says that the councilors of the opposition parties at the RS National Assembly do not have the access to the **Main Auditor's Report** even ten days before the National Assembly session. She points out that it is the aim of the RS Government to hide budgetary expenses for 2001. She says that, in principle, the Main Auditor's Report should have been delivered to the councilors at least 15 days before the session, which will take place on September 12th and 13th. According to Dukic's information, the Ministry for Refugees and DP's has spent 5,5 million KM more than planned, the Ministry of Defense has spent 37 million KM more than planned, and according to Dukic, the situation with the Ministry for Veterans, Victims of War and Work Issues is very specific. Apparently, this Ministry has spent 15 million KM more than planned in 2001 while, at the same time, these

categories of the population have been damaged for 14 million KM. (**FRY Nacional**, p 11)

NDI survey – Covic, Sarovic and Silajdzic are leading in the presidential run; other pre-election news/statements

According to a survey, conducted by the National Democratic Institute (**NDI**) in August this year on a sample of 1,200 people interviewed throughout BiH, **Dragan Covic** (HDZ), **Mirko Sarovic** (SDS) and **Haris Silajdzic** (SBiH) have best chances of becoming BiH Presidency members, **Nezavisne Novine** reports (p 5). The most uncertain run will be amongst the Bosniak candidates for BiH Presidency member, because Silajdzic enjoys the support of 13% of voters, while **Alija Behmen** (SDP) and **Sulejman Tihic** (SDA) can expect to be supported by 6-9% of voters. (**Oslobodjenje**, front page, p 3, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 12, **Jutarnje Novine**, p 4, announced on the front page, **Vecernji List**, front and p3 by Eldina Medunjanin)

Slobodna Dalmacija (pages 14-15, conducted by Dino Mikulandra) carries **an interview with Dragan Covic**, candidate of HDZ-HD-HNZ coalition for position of Croat member of BiH Presidency. Covic states that the coalition that backs him up for Presidency would not give unrealistic promises like some parties who promise to employ hundreds of thousands of workers. Covic also adds that he is not leading any faction within HDZ BiH, because *"there are no factions at all, there are only people who think differently, which is normal for party that is as big as HDZ BiH"*. Covic also announces a possibility of partnership with the International Community: *"I am convinced that there is nothing more logical than establishing partnership relations between HDZ BiH and representatives of international community. In any case, I express full willingness to discuss it now and after the elections, on behalf of HDZ and on my personal behalf. I hope that unjust treatment of HDZ BiH from the international community will stop and misunderstandings will be solved in a dialogue. Croats are and will be a constructive factor, just*

as **Paddy Ashdown** said 'a driving force in progress of economy'", Covic said.

The presidential candidate of the Serb Radical Party, **Radoslav Kanjeric**, has said that High Representative **Paddy Ashdown** "is skillfully exploiting the fact that the Serb Republic judiciary and police are inefficient in combating crime and corruption and he wants to use this to introduce joint police and judiciary in BiH which will lead to its unitarization." "The Serb Radicals want to preserve the Serb Republic with all the statehood attributes, as defined by the Dayton Agreement, because this is the only way the Serbs can survive in this area," Kanjeric told an SRS meeting in Ugljevik last night. (**FRY Nacional**, page 11)

Cvijetin Nikic, a member of the SDS main committee said at a press conference in Bijeljina that SDP leader **Zlatko Lagumdzija** "should not be preoccupied with Serb nationalists – he should try to justify himself before the Hague tribunal for his activities during the war when he was a deputy prime minister in the BiH government headed by Alija Izetbegovic". (**FRY Nacional**, page 11)

Regarding a press release by the HKDU (Croat Christian Democratic Union) in which the party apologized to the Croat people for the establishment of the Croat National Assembly (HNS), **Dnevni List** (page 11) carries a comment on the statement by the President of HKDU, **Mijo Ivancic**: "It means that we are definitely leaving the project of HNS (...) There was not a consensus within this sort of HNS. It was in function of a small group of people from HDZ", says Ivancic and stresses that the project was a failure. Ivancic goes on to say that his party is for BiH without entities through abolishment of RS and cantonization of that entity and further cantonization of the Federation of BiH.

The same daily (p11) carries a report from an Economic block HDU-Za Boljitak election rally held in Banja Luka two days

ago. **Mladen Ivankovic**, the coalition's candidate for a seat in BiH Presidency, said at the rally: *"Economic block is a new option on our political scene. We put a man and his benefit, regardless of his national or religious affiliation, at first place, because people are our biggest resource"*.

Dnevni List (page 5, by Ivica Glibusic) speculates that **Haris Silajdzic** and Party for BiH are trying to rise to power with help of Kuwait money. The daily says that Silajdzic had a secret plan to win the power at any cost. According to the daily, Silajdzic ordered his cadres in Federation institutions to get rid of Croats, but also Bosniaks that do not act in accordance with Haris and Alija's (Izetbegovic) will. As an illustration, the author reminds readers about a case of former Minister of Interior of Federation BiH **Muhamed Besic** who stated that Silajdzic requested him to resign within one hour because he did not remove Federation Police Commissioner **Dragan Lukac**.

Vecernji List (page 4, by Radoslav Dodig) carries an editorial in which the author renders the issue of liberal democracy and its status in BiH. Reminding that liberal democracy is close to developed societies and democracies and that liberals have taken power in Bulgaria, Hungary and Slovenia as well as that the High Representative for BiH, **Paddy Ashdown**, is a liberal too, Dodig notes that in the sea of democratic and peoples' parties in BiH, there is one liberal party – Liberal democratic party of BiH of the former youth activist *Rasim Kadic*. To show what kind of liberal Kadic really is, Dodig reminds that Kadic did not vote for the referendum on independence in 1992 and that he was "mates" with SDA during the last mandate..

Slobodna Dalmacija (page 15) carries an editorial by Blanka Magas in which she analyses the election campaign so far. Magas notes that Peoples Party Working for Prosperity (NSRZB) are the most aggressive, something like HDZ during the 90s and wonders whether the money spent during the campaign (including

high-profile singers, billboards and food at election rallies) will result in election points for the party. *"Voters believe that the millions that Lijanovics spent during the campaign could have been spent on more useful and humane issues"*, says Magas. The author goes on to say that there is a war between the SDP and SBiH and that SDA and HDZ are conducting their campaign almost unnoticed although the surveys show that they are to be clear winners.

Federation affairs

Slobodna Dalmacija (page 13) carries an interview with **Bozo Misura**, a recently removed acting Director of the Federation Pension and Disability Fund, but this time in the on behalf of DAR association, in which he said that the message that DAR is sending to Croats is that they should all participate in the elections and vote. Misura states that without massive support of voters Croats have no chance to make anything in Federation or BiH. He warns that if Croats don't participate in the elections *"there will be Prime Minister **Alija Behmen**, or some other behmen, who will take millions of KM from the Federation budget and recognize 208,000 of years of service of Bosniaks with his 'decisions', but without paid retirement taxes"*. Talking more about his rapport with Behmen, Misura said that instead of going to prison Behmen is trying to become a head of state. Regarding the elections Misura said that *"government in BiH could not be formed without coalitions, and it is unbelievable that coalitions are being made with Bosniak and other parties, and not with parties within the Croat corpus. In other words, Croat parties that pass the threshold must sit down together and agree what to do. The lesson should be learned from the Alliance and **Nikola Grabovac, Franjo Franjic, Mijat Tuka, Mijo Anic** cases. When Anic was breaking Croat self-rule he was good, but when he started dealing with Bosniak affairs, than he is no good any more, he should be removed"*, Misura said ironically.

Vecernji List (front and page 2, by Gorden Knezovic) carries a story about the **life insurance deal** that the Federation Army had with the "Hercegovina Osiguranje" (HO) of Mostar insurance company. The 10-year deal started in 1999 when 11.000 HVO

soldiers were insured with H0 and according to **Robert Gavranovic**, Federation Assistant Defence Minister for Financial Issues, most soldiers were not aware that the Federation MoD was paying H0 the money for life insurance. VL goes on to say that the contract was terminated after one year because the MoD stopped with the payments and reminds that the contract stipulated that the money had to be paid in for a period of at least three years in order not to lose the money. The end result is that some three million KMs were lost.

Dnevni List (front and page 3) carries a press release of the Federation Tax Administration which reads that the **inspections of betting shops** conducted so far showed that the bookies did not have proper authorisation of the Federation Ministry of Finances and that they have not honoured their financial obligations which in turn damaged the Federation budget by approximately 6 million KMs. The PR also rules out any possibility that the inspections were conducted illegally saying that all the inspections were carried out identically and at the same time also refuting all attempts to exert pressure on the inspectors on the ground. According to the PR, the Tax Administration continues with a more detailed control of the betting shops during which it should be established whether other activities within the betting shops, such as employment of workers, running of business books etc. were done in accordance to the relevant laws. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 10, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 3, **Jutarnje Novine**, p 3, announced on the front page)

Oslobodjenje reports on page 8 (**Jutarnje Novine**, p 7, announced on the front page) that the new school year did not start on Monday in the part of the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton with the Bosniak majority due to the general strike of educational workers there over the unpaid salaries for four months.

Vjesnik (page 2) reads that Croatian President **Stjepan Mesic** met with Chairman of Council of Ministers of BiH **Dragan Mikerevic** and other representatives from BiH at UN summit in Johannesburg, SA. The daily carries a statement by Mesic's political advisor Tomislav Jakic: *"Both countries expressed their satisfaction with the fact that solution for the Kostajnica border problem was found relatively quickly"*. Jakic added that there is good will with both sides to solve other bilateral problems such as Ploce port, return of property and dual citizenship.

Brcko District

The Principal Deputy High Representative, **Donald Hays**, said there was a good economic potential throughout BiH, which did not require drastic changes or accommodation to Europe, and he called upon politicians to be more determined in reforms. "Recent months have noted a visible improvement in the economy; therefore make use of advantages and begin reforms immediately," Hays said, who met with representatives of Italprojekt and people from the Brcko District Development Agency and the Port of Brcko. After the visit to the Brcko Port on Monday, Hays stated that since the visit of the Chairman of the BiH Council of Ministers, **Dragan Mikerevic**, the cooperation between the Brcko District and BiH joint authorities have intensified, and he pointed out that both sides would feel benefits of this cooperation soon. (**SRNA, Glas Srpski**, p 2)

The results of the **State Department Survey**, recently conducted in Brcko, show that public does not support the politicians of this region. Upon the question of "Glas Srpski" to which extent he would support the individuals that do not have a support of Brcko citizens, Supervisor of Brcko Henry Clarke answered: *"According to this Survey, Mayor Kisic and Assembly President Mirsad Djapo have more support than any other politician in Brcko. Other members of the Government and the Assembly also have the support of public"*. However, if we analyze the results of the Survey more extensively, we would reach a conclusion that only those who receive their salaries from the budget trust the politicians on power. Because of this, it is unrealistic to expect them to support the

elections, when they know in advance that they would not stand a chance in the elections. A possible reason for this distrust is not related with high salaries, but with very bad results, especially in economy. (**Glas Srpski**, p 5)

*"The Association of the Private Landowners at the **Arizona Market** have asked the Brcko District Government members, who are responsible for the happenings at the Arizona Market to resign, because they are not respecting the BiH Laws", the press release, issued by the Association of the Private Landowners and Shop Owners at the Ravne land, reads. The Association claims that the inspection services are still shutting down the shops and handing out the decisions on banning the work, although even complaints that have followed the previous decisions are not processed yet. "The representatives of the authorities still threat with expropriation, so it is necessary that Supervisor Henry Clarke and the responsible members of the Government resign, i.e. to be dismissed because they do not respect the BiH Laws, as well as the Laws of their State, in which a private property is the base of human rights", the press release, signed by **Toma Tomsic**, reads. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 3)*

Headlines in Electronic Media

BHTV 1 (Monday, 1900)

- Due to protest of professors, school did not start in some parts of BiH
- Trial in Ferhadija case started
- At least 20 persons killed in South Korea
- New incident in Piranski bay

FTV 1 (1930)

- Beginning of the school year marked with strikes of professors in Central Bosnia and Herzegovina-Neretva Canton
- First cycle of the third public recording of shares ends tonight at 20.00 in FBiH
- Mass grave discovered in pit Tihotina near Bihac, ninth in that area

- Trial for last year's riots during the ceremony of attempted beginning of Ferhadija mosque reconstruction started in Banja Luka