

OHR BiH TV News Summary, 18 February 1999

With Serbia still strongly opposing any [NATO](#) presence in the troubled province of Kosovo, TV BiH allocated 6'30" to the blockade of the Rambouillet negotiations and the subsequent consequences. The latest Kosovo-related news bloc comprised of three reports – the opening report maintained that the [NATO](#) "is ready for action" and that the negotiations were not showing any progress. The second report focused on the "tensions that could be felt in the skies over Yugoslavia", and said that the British and the US Embassies in Belgrade were getting prepared for evacuation. The third report conducted a vox populi among ethnic Albanian refugees now living in the BH Federation. Most hope that Kosovo will be granted independence, and say that they would return home should the KLA (Kosovo Liberation Army) be declared legitimate and given authority in the province.

6:30

With the completion of the series of hearings in the arbitration process for Brcko, TV BiH carried different views of the possible solution for the disputed town. TV BiH quoted the head of the federal team, Ejup Ganic, as expressing his belief that Arbiter Owen would not reach a decision that would provide legal grounds for ethnic cleansing. The SDA believes that Brcko will be awarded to the Federation. The Center Coalition opposed these views and maintained that the Federal Government failed to make use of the advantage that it had in comparison to the RS. Stjepan Kljucic repeated that Brcko should be declared a district, under the jurisdiction of the CoM.

2:30

The Federal Government will urgently submit proposals that it

adopted at its today's session to the BH Parliament. Most interesting is the proposal that the deadline for the submission of claims for the purchase of apartments with occupancy rights be extended for a year (March 6, 2000). The Government also suggested that the holders of occupancy rights be given a chance to purchase the abandoned property after a five-year period. The Ministry of Urban Planning claims that this would prevent misuse and that these proposals are not in contradiction with Annex 7 of the [DPA](#). The reporter also briefly noted that "four Croat ministers" voted against the proposal.

3:05

Financial police started the inspection of the Tuzla-Podrinje canton budget. The TPK Finance Minister, Muhbija Delic, expects the canton's accounts to be de-blocked today, following a nine-day blockade. The inspection will be completed by February 24.

2:00

The economic news bloc first explored the recurrent nature of strikes in Zenica-Doboj canton (forge in Vares, company Zrak, Krivaja in Zavidovici) and concluded that workers strike most due to the character of the canton's economy, and the consequences of war. The succeeding news item was more cheerful – USAID signed a 73 US \$ contract with two BH entities. This sum will be invested in the reconstruction of infrastructure in the whole of BH, as well as to commercial credits. It is expected that this will result in a speedier implementation of Annex 7.

5:15

Livno is again covered with posters. This time, due to an internal conflict in the local HVIDRA. An absurd event – announcement of the upcoming concert of a Serb entertainer – resulted in beating up of the local HVIDRA President, Zdravko Ivanovic. Ivanovic was beaten up by the organiser of the concert, another member of HVIDRA. The HVIDRA reacted by

issuing a press release, strongly opposing any future concerts of the (Serb) folk music in the area of Livno.

1:20

Highest [NATO](#) officials, Javier Solana and General Wesley Clark attended the Standing Committee for Military Matters session today. The Committee convened on Solana's initiative. Solana told a press conference after the session that [NATO](#) would wish to see the SCMM a "respected institution" in the BH. Solana joined General Clark in stressing that the integration of BH to Europe greatly depends on the future functioning of this Committee.

1:10