OHR Local News Issues, 28 January 1997

The OSCE PEC accepted at a meeting in Sarajevo the rules and regulations for the local elections in B&H scheduled most probably for 12 and 13 July this year. The most important question of this election – the P-2 form , which enables voters to cast ballots in places different from those they have lived in since1991, has been modified in these regulations. Though, according to the general feeling of journalists who attended a Press Conference give by Ambassador Robert Frock, Chief of the OSCE Mission in B&H, even in this amended form P-2 has stayed in power although Frowick denies it strongly.
2'30"

At the meeting of Dr. Christian Schwartz-Schilling with representatives of the Croat and Bosniak people of the municipality Jajce, there was good news. An agreement has been reached on several points, among which the most important, after a long time, holding of a meeting of the Jajce Provisional Community Council. An even more important issue of the meeting has been confirmed – an obligation to enable refugees and displaced people to return to their homes.
2'00"

For 10,5 hours uncertainty relating to the constituting of a Bugojno Provisional Community Council existed. Despite the fact that many elements were already agreed and signed in December's session, new confirmation of deputies at the meeting brought about confusion and irregularities and was discontinued. "Since there is no wish for co-operation and that obstruction of the session's work is obvious, I think that my mission, relating to Bugojno, has been finished with this meeting" the Mediator Schwartz Schilling said clearly angry and disillusioned.

Yet stays a question why neither the Mediator nor the Ombudsman Vera Jovanovic did not demand that the Arbitrage Commission for interpreting of decisions respects the explanations if they were already agreed and signed, and why no one pointed out who is to blame for a failure for which causes only the suffering of the Bugojno citizens.
2’00”

Safet Orucevic, the Mostar acting Mayor met today with the representatives of Donja Mahala to talk over safety problems in this part of the town. Among others it was decided to demand moving the HVO bunkers, which are still present in the zone of separation, and stepping up of the road control in D.Mahala.
0’30”

Over 8.000 evicted Bosniaks from the municipality Stolac who during the clashes between HVO and B&H Army were evicted by the Croatian authorities, should start an organized return to their home by 31 January. The return of the first 40 families is included in a pilot project of 100 families home returnees, which should have started last year. The reason for delay was the obstruction of the Croatian authorities, which are against this return.
2’30”

Ejup Ganic, the Acting Federation President, has been paying a visit to U.S. for 3 days. He talked with Kofi Annan and representatives of Clinton’s administration. Peter Tarnhoff also received him. He will meet with John Kornblum and the Council for National Security.
1’30”

A B&H TV team visited Brcko and talked with refugees waiting to go back to their homes. Some of them were interviewed. “This people, none of them do not even think that the Brcko Arbitrage decision could award Brcko to anybody but them and Federation”, a presenter said.

2’00”

A result of a meeting of OHR, SFOR and IPTF representatives with Biljana Plavsic, in short can be summarized into condemnation of an incident in Gajevi and who knows how many times another promise that everything will be done to punish the culprits will be made. The HR Carl Bildt announced to meet Biljana Plavsic once more. Meanwhile everybody is aware that there exists very realistic possibilities that behind all incidents stays war crime indicted Radovan Karadzic. Colum Murphy, the HR’s Spokesman, confirms it. “It is true that we sometimes notice an influence which Karadzic has in RS. This is not acceptable. OHR has already introduced a sort of the economic sanctions against RS for their non co-operation in accordance with the Dayton Agreement provisions. They have received, as you know, only 2% of the economic help which was granted to B&H”. An economic even disaster in RS will not help Bosniaks to return to their own homes, said a presenter.
2’00”

The U.S. examines forming the special units for arresting of the war crime indicted persons. This was confirmed by the White House after Madleine Albright clearly announced that it is not a task of SFOR, but that the other options are being examined in order to strengthen a role of ICTY.
(Follows a lengthy B&H TV correspondent’s report from Washington).
2’30”

Protocol report:
AI met with James Perdew and his associates,
KZ received a delegation of the Croats from Usora region,
HS talked with Francesco Monteressi and told him that B&H is expecting Pope not only as the Head of the Catholic Church, but as the fighter for the human rights.
1’30”

Co-Chairman of the CoM, Haris Silajdzic held a working meeting

today with the representatives of the expert commissions tasked with harmonizing the set of laws dubbed the quick start package, which were prepared by the OHR Carl Bildt. These drafts concern the foreign trade, foreign Government, custom taxes, foreign investments and debts, citizenship, passport and immunity. Relating to what was said at today's meeting, the Serb commissions' representatives make a clear obstructions in a bid to slow down passing of these key laws for B&H. Hasan Muratovic pointed out to the commissions that "their work is based on their professionalism and not on the national balance". It has been decided that the commissions prepare their reports until Thursday, 29 January with concrete suggestions for the CoM to discuss it. A Commission charged with deliberating of drafts on the B&H foreign trade got a suggestion to finish its work as soon as possible so that possible delay would not postpone the Donors conference for B&H reconstruction. The HR Carl Bildt conditioned a start of the economic reforms process in B&H, by passing of these laws.
2'30"

The representatives of SFOR from Sarajevo and Tuzla paid a visit to Gracanica and talked with the Commissioners of these communities about the implementation of the Dayton Accord, especially about the Annex 7, in this region. "I wish to encourage you to go ahead with your work of returning people to their homes in Doboj", Felix Vargas, a SFOR political advisor said talking to the commissioners in Doboj – East. A general Michael Bezby tasked with the civil aspect in SFOR said that he is in B&H with 350 his experts on the civilian works in order to help this country. We have to connect all economic and financial works with a return process, he pointed out. In the Gajevi case, it is clear that one side doesn't co-operate and we are frustrated that we cannot help more, he added. Hasib Subasic, Doboj municipality Commissioner informed guests that he had a constructive talks with the Serbs authorities of several communities around Doboj.
1'30"

At today's 12th Municipal Council session on the free territories of Brcko, the deputies discussed an actual moment of the Arbitrage process for this town. After the session a Statement was issued which, among others, reads "in the name of around 500 killed Brcko citizens, double so many who were in concentration camps, 500 abused women and 3000 refugees and displaced people who announced their return for the spring this year and in the name of protection of elementary human rights, we appeal to the Arbitrage Tribunal to base its decision on the right and justice and decides to award Brcko to their residents and B&H Federation."

Pale TV News

Summary

Banja Luka – Nikola Koljevic's funeral – Krajisnik's speech at the last gathering: "… Although he belonged to the [civic] elite of Bosnia and Herzegovina of that time… this did not alienate him and made him less a Serb. On the contrary, Nikola belonged to that circle of world-educated Serbs who regarded their erudition and all other abilities they possessed, including their own lives, as the property of their nation…" Obviously moved, Biljana Plavsic delivered the final speech by Koljevic's grave: "Our dear Professor, dear Nikola. Same as the great Ducic, you believed in God and Serbhood. You believed that the world would find compassion for your small nation and help it fulfil its wish to have, same as all other nations great or small, its own state. You believed in the reality of establishing an all-Serb national and political family… You believed that there would be enough room in such a community for people of all political views and distinctions… You believed in the ability of the young Serb state, which is called Srpska thanks to your contribution too…"
5:00
"An Unsuccessful Attempt to Establish Some Bosnia and Herzegovina Tailored to Muslim Standards or How the Meeting with Kinkel Failed to Take Place" – Kinkel's postponing of the

meeting opens a whole range of issues related to the work within the joint institutions. The obstruction of the Muslim side is no surprise, same as the their recent violation of freedom of movement. The international community must understand that the Serbs are right when they say that en a joint delegation. Bosic also referred to the difficult situation inside the Federation, assuming that the Federation partners would have had a hard time explaining it in Germany. He said that the German ambassador in Sarajevo informed him that the Bosniak (this is probably the first time this term used on Pale TV) part of the delegation was not coming thus the Germans regarded it as inconvenient for the the visit to take place.
4:00

RS Parliament Speaker Kalinic will take part in the session of the European Parliament tomorrow in Strasbourg, where the new prospects for democracy in RS and the Federation will be discussed. Italian papers report that the representatives of the Union Parliament will also attend the session.
Robert Frowick announced that the municipal elections in RS and the Federation will take place on July 12 and 13.
1:00

Yanni Lichtenberg, a Dutch nurse who worked in the Pale hospital during the war, sent a letter to the Dutch Foreign Minister, asking him why her government abandoned the principle of equality in the case of Serbs. She wonders if this was due to the new rise of Germany and its old plan to dominate Europe, which is now supported by France and is confirmed by the Blitzkrieg-like offensives of the Croat army in Krajina. Fundamentalists nurtured by Alija Izetbegovic are now emerging in Europe too. She asks how can it be possible to judge fairly in this war when it is an established fact that the media, even aided by mercenary PR agencies from the States, had waged war exclusively against one side and continuously misinformed their public.

3:00

FRY War Crimes Committee's Report on the results of the Croat Operation Storm – By the end of 1996, 1600 Serbs from former Krajina have been reported missing, and up to 250 thousand have been expelled. The committee has full data on all of the missing. Committee reports that the Croats were killing the Serb civilians who stayed behind, which included cases of slaughtering a 90-year-old woman, killing of tied groups of people and then setting them on fire, killing of a blind old woman in the back, beheading, as well as cases of suffocation by pulling a sheep belly over the head.
4:00

Gajevi – encouraged by Carl Bildt's visit to RS yesterday, the Muslims continued with breaking into the borderline area. 10 Muslims violated the agreement on two-day standstill of reconstruction works at the houses of alleged Muslim refugees, but the Serbs followed it and did not gather again, although they had more than enough reasons to protest.
1:00

World News: Sarajevo – The Sarajevo media report that the new Federation President and Vice-president will be Vladimir Soljic, and, most probably, Ejup Ganic, respectively. The SDA did not make a final decision yet, and there is a possibility of nominating Hasan Cengic instead of Ganic, which means that the Federation Government would be headed by the former Defence Minister and Deputy Minister who were ousted by the US.

Mostar – HDZ HQ instructed all its municipality branches to submit plans on setting up of new municipalities, although this is opposed by the Muslim side. The branches are also obliged to endorse proposals on founding of Herceg Bosna, which was up to now frequently established and re-established.