

## CONFERENCE ON EMPLOYMENT IN BIH

# Jobs Have to Be Created

**Task of the government to be a service of the business sector and create a climate in which it is desirable to work and make profit. BiH introduces European business standards**

Employment is top priority and key job of all those taking part in the conference today, and I am positive that we will analyze the current state of and circumstances in the sector, and that we will be able to identify new solutions and mechanisms to create more jobs in BiH, BiH Prime Minister Adnan Terzic said in opening speech at the Conference on Employment in BiH on Monday.

"I believe that we will all agree that creation of new jobs is the essential issue for all citizens in BiH, as well as for economy and prosperous future of BiH," added Terzic.

The conference has been sponsored and organized by the BiH Council of Ministers and entity governments, and it will be devoted to analyzing past activities taken to resolve the employment issues in BiH as well as to identifying concrete solutions for optimal utilization of resources aimed at reducing high unemployment rate in the country.

This will also be an occasion for representatives of companies to get an insight into new credit deals offered by commercial banks, which could help generation of new jobs by providing lower interests and longer repayment deadlines.

"The Council of Ministers maintains intensive cooperation with the entity governments, and, together, we are try-

ing to develop and implement economic policy that will ensure that employers can create new jobs and hire new workforce. Government cannot create jobs, but our task it to be a service of the business sector and create a climate in which it is desirable to work and make profit,"

said Terzic.

He went on to add the BiH Council of Ministers had in past 20 months taken a lot of activities to facilitate business possibilities in BiH and to create thus conditions for increase in employment.

"The number of days needed to register an enterprise was

being reduced for two years in a row, and this year's successes in privatization of BH Steel in Zenica and the Holiday Inn Hotel in Sarajevo have put BiH back on the map of countries interesting to investors. A corporate restructuring program is being prepared, and, together with assistance provided by the World Bank, it will prepare BiH companies for modern market demands," said Terzic.

Activities on creation of a single economic space in BiH and on passage of a law on turnover, a law on excises and a law on value added tax in BiH, will considerably improve business possibilities throughout BiH.

According to Terzic, it has often been said that pension and social insurance contributions employers have to pay to

the state are an obstacle to creation of new jobs.

Concluding his speech, Terzic stressed BiH was introducing European business standards, adding that that system did not allow for passivity and expectation that jobs would be just handed to everyone. European standards provide for activity and creation of jobs.

Jobs will not be given, they will have to be created, underlined Terzic.



Adnan Terzic

## Assets of Karadzic, Mladic to Be Frozen

Bosnian Serb President Dragan Cavic pledged Monday to implement a EU decision to freeze the assets of top fugitive war crimes suspects Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic.

"That decision is obligatory ... It will be definitely done, but I cannot say in which form since the EU is defining it," he said.

EU foreign ministers agreed at a meeting on October 11 that the bloc would freeze the assets of former Bosnia Serb political Karadzic, his military commander Mladic and Croatian war crimes suspect Ante Gotovina.

All three men are on the run from the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) over their roles in the Balkan conflicts of the 1990s.

Mladic is allegedly hiding in neighbouring Serbia-Montenegro and Karadzic in eastern Serb-run parts of Bosnia, although local authorities deny any knowledge of their whereabouts.

The Bosnian Serb entity of Republika Srpska remains the only territory in former Yugoslavia that has not arrested a single war crimes suspect.

Republika Srpska and the Muslim-Croat Federation make up post-war Bosnia.

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## Conference on Investments in Western Balkans

The Regional Investment Conference on possibilities for investing in the Western Balkans countries took place yesterday in Rotterdam.

The Conference, organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Netherlands, was attended by 180 businesspersons, was announced by the BiH Foreign Investment Promotion Agency (FIPA). In his opening remarks, BiH Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations Dragan Doko underlined the efforts BiH has taken with the aim of creating a single economic space.

The BiH stand, organized by FIPA, at which the interested parties were given the promotion materials about FIPA, the Tourist Community, chambers of commerce, and the regional development agencies, was very welcomed.

FIPA Director Mirza Hajric presented the investment projects in BiH to the interested businesspersons.

A delegation of businesspersons from Holland has announced a visit to BiH November 22 to 26, which is an opportunity for further development of cooperation.

## Conference on "Youth for Europe" Ends in Sarajevo

With the adoption of a statement, the two-day regional conference of young parliamentarians and representatives of youth departments of political party-members of the European National Party ended on Monday in Sarajevo.

The conference on "Youth for Europe - experiences, challenges and goals," organized by the Konrad Adenauer and Eduardo Frei Foundations, was attended by representatives from BiH, Croatia, Macedonia, and Serbia and Montenegro. One of the conclusions of the conference is that an organization of youth departments of political parties from Southeastern Europe should be formed. Participants of the conference agreed that young politicians in the region must increase their cooperation.

## New Srebrenica Mass Grave Reveals More Than 70 Victims

Forensic experts have exhumed from a mass grave in eastern Bosnia the remains of more than 70 people believed to be the victims of the 1995 Srebrenica massacre and a few dozen more are expected to be found, an official said Monday.

"We have exhumed 42 complete and 32 incomplete skeletons," from the grave located in the village of Snagovo, Murat Hurtic, a member of the Commission for Missing People, told AFP.

Documents found in the grave suggested it contained victims of the massacre of over 7,000 Muslim males by Serb forces at the eastern town of Srebrenica in 1995, in Europe's worst post-World War II atrocity, he said.

"We believe that the total number of the victims in this grave would reach one hundred." The bodies were initially buried somewhere else and had been moved to Snagovo to cover up the crime, Hurtic added.

Many of the victims had a blindfold and bullets found with the remains indicated that they had been shot. The grave is located in a yard of a house belonging to a Muslim family that returned to Snagovo after being expelled by the Serb forces during the 1992-95 war.

The exhumation from the Snagovo mass grave started last week. The commission has information on another mass grave containing the Srebrenica massacre victims in the same village, some 35 kilometers (22 miles) north of Srebrenica, Hurtic said.

According to the International Committee of the Red Cross, there are still some 16,000 people missing from Bosnia's war, which claimed more than 200,000 lives. Around 96 percent of the missing are Muslims.

So far some 18,000 bodies have been exhumed from over 300 mass graves throughout the country, over one third of those belonging to the Srebrenica massacre victims.

## Topic Takes Part at Conference on Democratic Administration

BiH Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Lidija Topic is taking part in a regional ministerial conference on Democratic Administration on Local and Regional Level, to be held in Zagreb on Monday and Tuesday. The organizer of the conference is the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe, in cooperation with the Council of Europe and the Croatian government.





❖ Republika Srpska (RS) President Dragan Covic expects the BiH Parliament to soon adopt the law on higher education in BiH, with a compromise and a consensus of all sides. After a meeting with new Head of the OSCE Mission to BiH Douglas Davidson in Banja Luka, Covic said he informed him about expectations that the RS will fully implement property laws by the end of the year. He said that the return of Serbs to Croatia and their property problems were also discussed at the meeting. Davidson, who officially visited Banja Luka yesterday for the first time, emphasized that the issue of return is very important for all sides.

❖ Republika Srpska Minister of Interior Darko Matijasevic and Police Director Radomir Njegus departed on Monday for Brussels to partake in this week's work of the BiH Police Restructuring Commission. Ministry spokesman Zoran Glusac said that the models of future police organizations in BiH will be discussed.

❖ Representatives of the BiH European Integration Direction will on Tuesday organize a lecture on "BiH en route to European integration" in Zenica. The lecture is aimed at informing the officials of the Zenica-Doboj Canton on the process of stabilization and admission of BiH into the European Union, CARDS assistance program, and bilateral assistance programs with EU member-countries. A meeting between the cantonal authorities and Direction representatives will also be held on the occasion of October 25, the Day of European regions.

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# National Thieves Image

If the voice that came to me is true, Dragan Covic will be removed from his position within two days. That way, it will be possible for this member of the BH Presidency to easily go through prison gates and for these gates to be locked. In case that happens, no one will be surprised, journalists will write few articles, and I'm not sure people will talk much about it. We got used to arrests of our wise leaders. And in case Dragan Covic doesn't end up in prison these days, no one will be surprised, we are completely used to suspects for all kinds of frauds walk around us, or better to say, drive around us in limos.

Insensitivity of our citizens on arrests of our people's tribunes speaks much about this country, about the Balkans, about these peoples. It tells me more about what kind of the world we live in then about how used-to-be loud high officials finally faced the law. Why did we get used to the fact that those who are followed by the masses, those who are listened to, who are elected goes to prison at some point and why are we completely indifferent to that fact? In most European countries, when a minister resigns, it becomes a first-class sensation.

In our understanding of righteousness, when one half of officials would sit on the bench for the accused ones, it would be normal and entirely OK.

Let us remind ourselves that prisoners from one time took us to future in other time. Prisoners, convicts, suspects are our pride! I will not talk much about Josip Broz Tito, who did time in Kingdom Yugoslavia, because we must understand that his work was a rebellion for social justice, but he still broke laws of the Kingdom, no matter how retrograde they were. And when Tito came to power, there were many of those who found themselves behind bars because of politics, which tells us that there were no political freedoms in former system on one side, and on the other side is the fact that the former authority was right to keep those people in prison because most of them led this country to a bloody war when they got out. Let us remind ourselves that Radovan Karadzic, Vojislav Seselj, Momcilo Krajisnik, Franjo Tudjman, Alija Izetbegovic and many others were imprisoned back then.

I remember when Radovan Karadzic war released from prison so he could defend

himself from freedom. He came to the Association of Writers of BiH to help him because he was a member of this Association. I remember that some people were very eager to help him, and those were not Vojislav Maksimovic, Miroslav Toholj or Todor Dutina. Lawyers told us that the proves that he committed business crime will be hard to deny and that he will surely be convicted. War was a good opportunity for him to escape from that trial. But it is questionable why Serbs followed this criminal in such a number. As if people here appreciate thieves more than those moral people, without any stains in their biography.

And if people are insane and do not know that national heroes are common criminals, or to be milder and say that they are in conflict with the law, why political organizations, parties force exactly these suspicious members? Like HDZ didn't know what

Ante Jelavic does and how suspicious his money transactions were? Ante

Jelavic was just one mandate and the leader of the state of Bosnia and

Herzegovina and he ended up in prison like a plain thief. And the one who presented the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the world, Muhamed Sacirbegovic, put a million dollars in his pocket. Imagine, a thief represent us to the world!

Jadranko Prlic went to Hague because of war events and prison-camps, but his assets are more questionable to me than that, because he couldn't buy all that from his salary. We would easily forget that if he was the only one, but those who swear in their people collected and still collect their wealth. They are the ones who decide that the proposal of the law on the origin of property shouldn't even be presented to the parliament. And how to suspect various national liberators when Alija Izetbegovic as the leader of the state shared money from donations how he liked and to whom he liked.

People vote for their national thieves, but just the same, the judges silently approve criminal in the highest level. Because of the laziness and cowardice of our prosecutor's offices and courts we have the image of the state in which criminal flourishes. Why did those lawyers rush into law practice when they don't have the guts for it? If the thieves are not being punished, they rule.

**NEZAVISNE  
novine**

By Sead Fetahagic  
Nezavisne Novine,  
Banja Luka

# Cliff Says British Government Expects Stable Authority in Mostar

After the local elections, the government of the Great Britain expects a stable authority in Mostar, strengthening of integration of this city and development of economy as a key for its further progress, British Ambassador to BiH Ian Cliff said on Monday in Mostar. After a meeting with Mostar Mayor Hamdija Jahic and Deputy Mayor Ljubo Beslic, Cliff said he came to this city to assess a political situation after the local elections. He emphasized that the British government hopes that authority in Mostar will be stable. Possibilities of industry and agriculture, Mostar-based enterprise Aluminij and rec-

conciliation among peoples in Mostar were discussed.

Cliff said that the process of implementation of new Statute of Mostar has been functioning relatively successfully.

Asked why the international community is interested in events in Mostar and not in events in Banja Luka and the status of Bosniaks and Croats there, Ambassador Cliff said that Mostar is an important city for BiH, but that it is not true that there is no interest in the status of Banja Luka's Bosniaks and Croats.

"The Great Britain, as a member of the European Union (EU) and Peace Implementation Council (PIC), has a spe-

cific role here in Mostar, but it is not true that we are not interested in Bosniaks and Croats in Banja Luka. We support program of integration of Bosniak and Croat returnees to the RS. We are interested in BiH, and Mostar is an important part of the country," said Cliff.

Mostar Mayor Hamdija Jahic said he is satisfied with a political situation in the city after the elections and he pointed out the importance of the fast constituting of a new city council and the election of a new Mostar mayor.

Beslic said that it was concluded at the meeting that the economic issue is a crucial issue for development of trust in Mostar. 3

## US Expert Believes Bin Laden Network Active in Bosnia

Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden (news - web sites) is actively directing terrorist cells in the former Yugoslav republic of Bosnia, a top US terrorism analyst told a local daily.

Yossef Bodansky, director of the Task Force on Terrorism and Unconventional Warfare of the US Congress, told the Glas Srpske daily that terrorists responsible for the bombing of the UN headquarters in Baghdad last year were trained near the central Bosnian town of Zenica.

"There is a terrorist network in Bosnia,

composed of several well-trained and connected groups, which are directly or indirectly responsible to ... Osama Bin Laden," he was quoted as saying in the Serbian-language paper. He said the cells were using Bosnia as a training ground and a gateway to send terrorists to western Europe or to hide them on their way to the east if they were on the run.

"The network in Bosnia ... is training and controlling terrorists who later travel to Western European countries," Bodansky said in comments translated from Serbian.

"On the other hand, terrorists for whom arrest warrants have been issued in the west are coming back to Bosnia where 'liaison officers' welcome them and provide accommodation and hiding places, and they are later transferred to the east."

He said the Zenica region had provided a training ground for terrorists who conducted a series of suicide attacks in Baghdad in August last year, including the UN bombing which killed 22 people.

"Literally, they were trained in Zenica's milieu, and from there they were sent out through Italy to Iraq (news - web sites) to fight American forces," he said.

Bodansky, who met Bosnian officials last week, complained that the international community and local authorities were aware of terrorists' activities but had failed to do enough to stop them.

"Representatives of the international community in Bosnia and (local) authorities are aware of this but they do not work enough to fight international terrorism," he said.

NATO (news - web sites) peacekeepers are still deployed in Bosnia under peace accords which ended the country's 1992-95 war, during which hundreds of foreign so-called mujahedeen, or holy warriors, fought alongside Bosnian Muslim forces.

Foreign Muslim fighters were ordered to leave Bosnia under the 1995 peace accords, but some of them stayed and obtained citizenship either on the basis of their army service or by marrying local women.



Holiday Spirit  
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UNITIC Towers, Saturday, the 4th of December 2004

The main fundraising event of the year, the Holiday Spirit Bazaar, presents different cultures and products from the international participants currently residing in Bosnia and Herzegovina and highlights the best of local arts and crafts.

The purpose of this event is to raise funds for the most vulnerable and needy in this country. Help us to continue supporting the Kosevo Hospital Paediatric Ward, to initiate joint welfare projects with Soroptimist Sarajevo, an international club of professional women and to get involved in sponsoring talented children and youth through the AidNet Foundation, as well as workshop activities of the Kid's Festival.

Your support for this year's Bazaar could be a cash donation that would go directly to the Humanitarian Action Committee, or any other gift item that could be sold or used as a prize in our Grand Raffle or Tombola. You might also consider reserving a table with the Bazaar Committee to either promote your organisation and/or sell your products.

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**Lucy Bosscher, President, IWCS, 033-236-508**

**Mairead Ennis, Fund-raiser, IWCS, 033-217-310, 061-503-266**

# Development of BiH Constitutional System Necessary for EU Accession

Development of a constitutional system in BiH is essential for accessing the European Union, said the Special Coordinator of the Stability pact in South-east Europe, Erhard Busek.

Talking about the subject "South-east Europe on the road to European integration – five years of the Stability pact", Busek said that he is not in favour of changing the Dayton Accords, because it is a part of history. He added that the development of the constitutional system is necessary for the country's future.

The general perspective for the entire region is the admission into the EU and NATO, and a positive sign for the region is the fact that the new composition of the European Commission will include a commissioner for South-east Europe and Turkey.

However, said Busek, it is necessary to establish "regional ownership". Historically viewing, all important decisions from the region were issued from the outside, and now the governments of the region's countries need to take responsibility for their countries and the region.

Although he did not wish to prejudice when certain countries of the region could join the EU, Busek stressed that in the case of BiH this will depend on when the OHR will complete its work, and in the case of SCG, when the Kosovo issue would be resolved.

"These issues must be resolved before the admission", he stressed.

Talking about the past results of the Stability pact, Busek said that all the past elections have developed in a fair atmosphere, and concerning the laws on minorities and the media - they are good, but their implementation is a separate matter. On the other hand, it is difficult to "measure" the results accomplished in the field of reconciliation in the region.

A great deal of work has been done in the

fields of infrastructure and economic development, and without this the region would never be capable of joining the EU, said Busek, adding that 3.6 billion euros have been raised at two donor conferences.

According to him, 80 percent of the projects have been completed, and 20 percent have not been completed due to local problems. Moreover, there have been enough funds for the infrastructure programmes, but there have been a few projects that fulfill the criteria.

Concerning BiH, Busek said that "we always get pretty ideas", which are not well elaborated.

"Pretty titles are not enough for infrastructure projects", said Busek, adding that BiH currently does not have new projects on the table.

Among the successes of the Stability pact, Busek stated the concluding of 28 agreements on free trade between the countries of the region. However, problems occur in connection with certain industries supporting protectionism, because it is difficult to convince them that free trade brings benefits.

Busek declared that privatization in the region is being completed, and that it will no longer be a source of investments. Thus, in order to attract direct investments, it is necessary to improve legislation, which is frequently changing in region, which does not work for companies.

He declared that unemployment in the region is also linked with the problem of lack of investments.

"Stability of the region depends on economic development. At the global plan, you must represent the region as an entirety, because the companies must see how many consumers they have", said Busek, adding that this is sometimes impossible in the region due to competition between the countries.

"We now need to move more strongly towards the fulfillment of the remaining requirements from the Feasibility Study and to give strong support to the BiH Council of Ministers and their efforts to push through with the reforms and ensure our own funds for the financing of the feasibility study for the Vc Corridor and the signing of the agreement for its implementation"

**Seada Palavric**  
SDA Vice President

"Data on 14, 012 missing persons in BiH have been gathered in the ante mortem data base. Thanks to the ante mortem data base 1, 434 persons have been identified so far who were registered as missing with ICRC. For the first time ICRC provided training for volunteers and professionals who will work on gathering ante mortem data in other countries"

**Elvira Sisic**  
ICRC representative

"The goal of my visit to BiH is to encourage representatives of NGOs dealing with the problems of disabilities to work on improvement of the position of these people in BiH. Also, the goal of my visit is to get informed about concrete problems and challenges which these persons are facing, in order for the WB to be able to offer technical and other assistance. It is very important that we find out the exact number of disabled persons living in BiH, then secure that children with disabilities attend schools, enable them to get a job and review the needs of these persons and what do they think how could they live in the future without depending on social incomes"

**Judith Heumann**  
WB's Adviser for the Disability and Development in the Human Development Network

"Members of the Commission for Police Reform have departed to Brussels in order to get informed about the model of single police force. The Commission members are familiar with that model and I see no reason for them to go to Brussels and inflict additional costs. If the single BiH police is imposed, meaning if this decision is implemented without an approval from the Republika Srpska Assembly, that will mean that the international community can transfer authorities in an unconstitutional manner"

**Nikola Spiric**  
Member of the Main Board of SNSD

## Bosnian Writers Join Humanitarian Action Against Cancer

Over 50 writers, authors and institutions from Bosnia and Herzegovina answered the invitation to participate in the humanitarian-literary event "From the Writers – Heart for Children with Cancer".

More than 300 books were received by the Lands Museum in Travnik. The books will

be exhibited and sold in the humanitarian event that will be held on Saturday, October 30, at 10:00 hours. The final deadline to apply for participation in the auction/exhibition and submit the books was prolonged to Thursday, October 28, due to the great interest of Bosnian writers.



## International Conference on Fibrous Plants Starts in Banja Luka

The fourth international conference on fibrous plants, attended by more than 100 experts from 22 countries, opened in Banja Luka on Monday.

Experts in the field will present at the conference the most recent scientific achievements regarding flax, hemp and similar fibrous plants as well as impact that artificial and natural fibers have on the human body.

The conference was opened by Republika Srpska President Dragan Cavic, who said that the RS's priority was to introduce European standards of protection of natural resources, especially of soil, water and energy capacities.

RS Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management Rodoljub Trkulja said that healthy food, drinking water and clothes made of natural materials were not a fashion style, but necessity in

the modern world.

He said he hoped businessmen in the RS would recognize the interest and devote more time to production of fibrous plants in the future, since huge profits could be made in the field.

"BiH is a small and underdeveloped country to be able to manufacture airplanes and luxury automobiles, but it can produce top-quality fabrics for car and plane seats," said Trkulja.

BiH Federation Agriculture Minister Marinko Bozic commended the Institute of Agriculture in Banja Luka for launching test production of fibrous plants at farmers in the FBiH.

The international conference on fibrous plants has been organized by the Institute of Agriculture in Banja Luka, in cooperation with the Institute of Natural Fibers in Poznan Poland.

## Pensioners Request Obligatory Harmonizing of Pensions with Salary Growth

The FBiH Pensioners' Association requests from the FBiH Government and Parliament to fully and efficiently realize the Programme Measures in the field of Pension-Invalid's Insurance, which the Parliament adopted in December last year, which would result in creating the preconditions for improving the social and health positions of this category.

This request on behalf of 295.00 pensioners in Federation was addressed yesterday by the Association's Executive Board President, Jozo Ljiljanic, at a press conference dedicated to October 25 – the Pensioners' Day.

The FBiH Government is requested to obey and implement the conclusion adopted by the FBiH Parliament in March this year. The pensioners request that the Government insure additional fund sources and pay one late pension from 2000 by the end of the year.

The pensioners also request that the FBiH Government and Parliament give up on those proposals for amending the Law on Pension-Invalid's Insurance (PIO), which could jeopardize the current level of pensioners' income and their standard.

The Pensioners' Day was established seven years ago, when over 100.00 pensioners in Federation BiH demonstrated their dissatisfaction with their material and social status and the relations of the current authorities and international representatives towards them by walking the streets and protesting in front of the FBiH Government and Parliament buildings.

"We cannot believe that the domestic officials and representatives of the international community do not understand the position of pensioners", said Ljiljanic.

He reiterated that over 110.000 pensioners are receiving the minimal pension of 154 KM, that there are over 200.000 pensioners with a pension lower than 200 KM, and that the average pension is 205 KM, which is 38 percent of the average salary. It would be more normal for the pensioners if this percentage was doubled, i.e. 75 percent.

## UNDP Raises 90,000 US Dollars for Craftsmen in Srebrenica

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Office in Srebrenica, which implements funds pledged at international donors conference for the Srebrenica region, raised 90,000 US dollars in aid to craftsmen in the center of Srebrenica.

The UNDP will procure equipment for craftsmen who have just registered, or are about to register their shops.

Those craftsmen who have registered

their shops earlier will be refunded four-figure amounts for the taxes and contributions for their workers, which they paid to the state. However, amounts distributed to individual craftsmen will not exceed 7,500 dollars.

UNDP manager Alesandro Prieto said the project is aimed at providing support to development of crafts and trades in Srebrenica.

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# Glimpsing the Future

You shouldn't need reminding, but don't let your judgment be beguiled by Belgrade's smart restaurants and new shopping centers

Tim Judah  
Transitions Online

Looks are deceptive, you shouldn't judge a book by its cover, etc. All true, of course, and I should know this after all the years I have been coming to Serbia. Yet I still get excited when I've barely set foot in the country and can see that even Belgrade airport is changing. "Good news, things really are happening," I think.

Half of Belgrade airport is closed for renovation. New customs gates, red and green, just like anywhere else in Europe, have been opened, and the old X-ray machines to check your bags as you come into the country have been consigned to the dustbin of history.

In the city, ever more cool, designer-style restaurants are opening. When I visit a friend in the suburb of Banovo brdo, he tells me that the local council is about to dig and resurface his street. Recently I have even begun buying clothes in Belgrade. A few years ago, I would never have done that, not just because there was much less choice, but because I never wanted to carry so much cash with me. Now that Serbia is slowly reconnecting to the rest of the world I can pay with my credit card or just get cash from a machine with my British debit card—just as if I were in London or anywhere else.

To be sure, designer restaurants and smart clothes shops are still far beyond the reach of most citizens, (even though they always seem to be packed) and life remains hard for most people, but in Belgrade it is possible to glimpse the future.

A foreigner who shops in Tesco in Britain, Geant in France, or the Coop in Italy might fail to see what the big deal is with the new giant Merkator shopping center and mall in the New Belgrade area, but to anyone in Serbia the significance is clear. Merkator has put its cash where its mouth is. The investment seems to say, "There is a future here." Ironically, the Slovene company has re-created Yugoslavia on its shelves by getting its products from all over the old country—but that is another story.

The question remains, though: Is all this not a glimpse of the Serbian future but only that of Belgrade and the rich lands of Vojvodina to the north?



Belgrade

Recently, I headed to Zajecar, 350 kilometers from Belgrade and close to the Bulgarian border, to write a story for the Economist. With Serbian journalist Daniel Sunter, I stopped to eat at a new Austrian gas station on the motorway. In the shop you could actually buy the Economist! Such a thing would have been unthinkable only a couple of years back.

In Belgrade I had seen an economics professor, Bosko Zivkovic. He said the outlook was mixed. On the one hand, his best students were still leaving the country. On the other, growth was up. But not by much. If you look at a graph of GDP, the rate of growth seems remarkably constant from about mid-1995 onward.

Between 1989 and 1994, GDP collapsed by some 55 percent. (In the years of the Great Depression, Zivkovic said, the U.S. economy contracted by a mere 21 percent.) You need more than a steady pace of growth to recover from that type of plunge.

But now, years after the end of the wars, people in Serbia do expect their economy to have recovered. More than that, they believe that if things are great in Slovenia and better in Croatia, then Serbia should be well on the way to catching up.

"I am a pessimist," he told me. "We haven't the strategy, resources, or political will to solve our problems."

Optimists, such as Ivan Vejvoda, who heads the Balkan Trust for Democracy, say that in the rest of the ex-communist world the fourth year of transition was the worst and, from then on, the only place to go was up. He says that if you calculate that Slobodan Milosevic fell four years ago, then that is where we are now. Yes, of course, it is true that Serbia has a few extra problems, Kosovo, the war crimes tribunal in The Hague, Montenegro, to name but a few, he explained, but still, things can only get better.

But, perhaps precisely because of these few extra problems, it seems to me that while Belgrade and Vojvodina are turning the corner, most of the rest of Serbia has not even hit rock bottom yet. Those prob-

lems are real brakes to growth (and others could be added to the list).

I asked Zivkovic about the fate of Serbia's old industrial cities—for example, Nis, Kragujevac, Bor, and Zajecar—to which he replied simply that they were just like those dying cities "in the middle of Siberia."

A few months ago, I flew over Siberia. All you could see below was ice, oil pipelines, snow, and forest. Occasionally you could see a town. The scenery remained unchanging for hours on end. Zivkovic exaggerates, but his point is well-taken.

When you enter the Hotel Konj in Zajecar the first thing you see is a neatly framed display of pictures. Naturally, being new to this little eastern Serbian town, you assume that the photos are there to point you in the direction of the most interesting sites on the local tourist trail. Instead you are treated to a series of pictures of a collapsing industrial plant contrasted with a series of well-kept, even luxurious bank buildings. This, says the caption, is Zajecar's economy in 2004.

You don't even need to visit Zajecar's barely functioning industrial zone to see the past and—perhaps—the future of this town. The market bustles with activity, but much of it is pensioners and the unemployed selling pitiful piles of old clothes and bric-a-brac, bits and pieces of old machines and other items more suited for the dustbin. When I talked to a woman selling mushrooms (which, incidentally, would sell for a fortune in London), she looked as though she were about to burst into tears. Danica Stevanovic, 50, had worked for 20 years, until 1994, in Zajecar's crystal factory. Now she is on the scrap heap, selling the mushrooms to help her son through university.

A man selling brilliant-green cabbages and broccoli, and piles of bright-red peppers told me, "Everyone who can is leaving." In the past, he said, the town's big companies had bought all the local agricultural produce for their canteens to feed their workers. For that reason there was no tradition of exporting from here. Now, perhaps, even more people are involved in agriculture than ever before because, with the collapse of the big employers, more people than ever must grow their own food.

But surely, with a market stuffed to the gills with such fresh and fantastic-looking peppers and onions, tomatoes and apples, agriculture and food processing must be

one of the ways to reverse the decline in Zajecar and places like it? In Belgrade I asked people at the EU's European Agency for Reconstruction if there was any reason why Zajecar's fruit and vegetables could not end up in Tesco or Geant. The answer was that they could, assuming that certain standards were measured and met. The problem, then, is that no one has yet created any infrastructure to support such exports. There is no one to buy produce in bulk, no organization behind the farmers, no warehousing, packaging, or transportation facilities. That is not to say that sometime all of this won't come. Indeed, one of Serbia's most successful companies is Fresh&Co, a fruit juice company founded in Subotica in 1996 that exports to a number of countries,

particularly in the EU. But Subotica is on the Hungarian border and thus close to one of its main export markets. Business like this needs to move on southward. But with Serbia's governments constantly losing time—indeed chained down by disputes about the Hague tribunal, Kosovo's status, and the relationship with Montenegro—it may take an age before new industries and enterprises take root in places like Zajecar. In the meantime, we can only expect more stories like one that recently appeared in a Serbian newspaper about how the local authorities in Kragujevac, home to once-mighty and now dying car and firearms industries, are trying to stop desperate people in town from keeping pigs and hens in their houses and flats. In a cold and

clinical fashion it is possible, even correct, to argue that Serbia's painful transition is necessary and unavoidable and that the Siberian comparison is wrong, especially since Serbia lies along one of Europe's major transport arteries. But the human dimension—in fact the long-term and enduring cost of the Yugoslav wars—is measured not in statistics but in the toll it has taken on people's lives, even those who lived far from the battlefields, real people like Danica Stevanovic, the lady selling mushrooms. As Braca Grubacic, a Belgrade analyst and publisher of the newsletter VIP put it to me so succinctly, the 15 years of turmoil and war plus the four since the fall of Milosevic may be nothing but an instant for historians, but “for one life, that is a lot.”

**ILIJAS BOSNJOVIC, A RESPECTABLE BIH DEMOGRAPHER, ABOUT THE REGISTERING OF THE POPULATION**

# Bosnians Today Make One Half of the Population

**The register is needed, but without the bases from 1991.**

**The largest demographical losses suffered the Croats**

A respectable BIH demographer, Ilijas Bosnjovic, whose “predictions about the white plague in RS from five years ago has now been confirmed by the statisticians; today he is in the center of the campaign for making of the register of the population and he estimates that the Bosnians make up to 50 percent of the entire population in BIH.

According to his analyses, the Serbian population in BIH makes up to 35 percent of the population, and the Croats make barely up to 15 percent. Comparing these analyses with the register of the population with the one from 1991 when there was 43.5 percent of Bosnians, 31.2 percent of Serbs and 17.4 percent of the Croats we can conclude that the Croats have suffered the biggest demographical losses, while the Bosnians who suffered the most as the victims of war, increased their number in regard to other people.

From the point of view of the science, and from the necessities of the BIH governments, Bosnjovic finds that there are needs for making the register of the population. Bosnjovic does recognize the claims of a part of the political public who say that the register would be a reward for Karadzic and the likes of him from “Herzeg-Bosna” because it would ‘cement’ the results of the ethnic cleansing in BIH and give ground to the new rules of the power distribution according to the national key. At the same time he thinks that with a good legal back-

**By: A. Kalamujic  
Oslobodjenje, Sarajevo**

up with a Law about the population register in BIH, such fears would be unnecessary. The respectable BIH demographer thinks that the law should be set in such a way that the population register can not be the bases for making changes on political plan. Besides, he says that there is no need to tie the process of return with the register of the population. It would be a special register the results of which would be necessary for the relevant for the determination of the Gross National Product, making of the precise social and economical programs in the state, says Bosnjovic. But, for this demographer, who has a completely different view of the issue of

change of the population than the creators of the ethnic changes, a far bigger problem is the drop in the rate of the Birthrate in BIH. His predicaments from before the war stated that BIH will by the year 2040 fall into the process of depopulation. Behind this official Latin word hides a cruel reality then in 35 years from now there will be more people dying than babies being born in one year.

Bosnjovic says that the process of the negative demographic changes has, in the meantime, become faster, and that this sort of a “Judgement Day” for the population of BIH will actually happen in 8 years. This is confirmed by the data from RS about the appearance of the “white plague” that will, according to the assessments, soon spread on the Federation of BIH.

## It is Not True That There are 3.5 Million People in BiH

The fact that the Bosnjovic's predictions about the participation of all three of the nations in the total number of the BIH population is not far from the truth is confirmed by the data from the Federal Statistics Agency from 1999. The Statisticians made a conclusion five years ago based on several calculations that the population of BIH consists of 49.5 percent of Bosnians, 31.2 percent of Serbs and 14.6 percent of Croats. The five percent that is left is made of nations that are in minority, and part of the population that could not be classified as Bosnians, Serbs or Croats. Bosnjovic says that there are new discoveries that indicate that there aren't 3.5 million people in BIH, which is the number that was heard most often in the last five years when spoken about the BIH population. He reached this conclusion according to the official data about the number of the voters, but he didn't wish to speculate about the exact number of the BIH population.



# Hadzihasanovic Lawyers Voice Scapegoat Concerns

**Court told that former Third Corps commander should not pay for alleged crimes of mujahedin**

Lawyers representing former Bosnian army general Enver Hadzihasanovic launched their defence this week by warning that their client should not be turned into a scapegoat.

They also presented their first witness, who discussed the Bosnian army's command structure and spoke of the accused's attempts to maintain discipline amongst his troops.

Hadzihasanovic and his former subordinate Amir Kubura are charged with failing to take measures to prevent or punish war crimes committed by men under their command during clashes with Croat forces in Central Bosnia in 1993.

It is the first case to be tried at the tribunal that is based entirely on the notion of "command responsibility" – the idea that in wars commanders can be held personally responsible for the crimes committed by their subordinates, even if they did not order them.

But in his opening statement on October 18, defence counsel Stephane Bourgon said Hadzihasanovic in fact battled in "impossible" circumstances to fulfil his responsibilities as a general and ensure that his men acted within the law.

The incidents listed in the indictment against Hadzihasanovic and Kubura include the alleged murder and mistreatment of non-Muslim civilians and fighters, and looting and destruction of homes. Hadzihasanovic is also charged with responsibility for damage done to two Croat churches.

One key prosecution allegation is that in 1993 the two accused were in charge of a significant number of "mujahedin" – foreign volunteers who travelled to Bosnia to help defend the country's Muslim population. These mujahedin are named as having been involved in a series of crimes listed in the indictment, including severe beatings of detainees.

But Bourgon painted a different picture of the relationship between the mujahedin and the Bosnian army from that offered by prosecutors. He claimed the radicalised fighters, far from being an integrated part of Hadzihasanovic's Third Corps, actually "had no links to the army" and that their behaviour had caused problems for the defendant.

"Hadzihasanovic shouldn't pay for what

By Michael Farquhar  
IWPR

the mujahedin did, simply because he was in Bosnia and Herzegovina at the same time as [they] were," he said.

Bourgon also said the prosecution, in mounting their case against his client, had tried to draw attention away from the context in which he was forced to act during his time as commander of the Third Corps.

He pointed out that Bosnia was unprepared for the war that broke out in 1992 and "an army was set up with all the pitfalls and difficulties one can imagine", including a lack of qualified personnel and a severe shortage of weapons caused by a United Nations arms embargo.

Under the circumstances, he said, Hadzihasanovic had been working 20 hours a day every day of the week and had "almost died of exhaustion" towards the end of the summer of 1993.

Defence counsel attacked prosecution claims that such factors are irrelevant to the case, saying they would have had a significant effect on the everyday life of a commander involved in the war.

"The prosecution tried to close the debate," he said. "We will try to open it."

Bourgon also used his opening statement to list the charges against his client and outline how he will respond to each one individually. He plans to show that some alleged crimes did not happen, that the perpetrators of others were not Hadzihasanovic's subordinates, and that in some cases the defendant simply was not aware of what had happened.

He also said he will show that in many cases either Hadzihasanovic or others further down the command chain did in fact take measures to punish those who had violated international law.

Proceedings on October 19 and 20 were taken up with the first witness to be called by the defence in an effort to back up the claims made by Bourgon in his opening statement. The first member of the Third Corps to testify before the chamber was Zijad Caber, who led a brigade under Hadzihasanovic's command, during the time period in question. He told judges about the problems faced by his brigade in 1993, including a lack

of weapons and food, and friction with local Croat forces, which they had hoped would be an ally against the Serb enemy. The witness told the court that he had insisted that troops under his command respected the lives and property of civilians. He said his troops had prevented looting in villages abandoned by their Bosnian Croat inhabitants and that "measures were taken in order to prevent anything being done that might be a violation of the Geneva conventions".

But the witness admitted that he couldn't remember if he had received orders relating specifically to the Geneva conventions and international law, although he said he thought he "must have received something to that effect".

Caber also discussed a number of documents presented to him by the defence counsel, including orders from the Third Corps command relating to discipline in the ranks.

When asked about the mujahedin, Caber said none had been present in his own zone of command but recalled discussing the subject with former Third Corps' head General Mehmed Alagic, who was originally indicted along with Hadzihasanovic but died before the case came to trial.

He said the foreign fighters had refused to be put under Alagic's command and recalled that the general had said they were problematic and worked by their own rules. Caber himself described them as "a cancer that was present in [Alagic's] zone of operations".

On October 19, judges announced their decision to allow defence counsel to press on with part of an appeal against their decision not to acquit Hadzihasanovic and Kubura on all charges after the prosecution closed its case.

The judges dismissed a number of arguments in the original appeal - including that they had failed to consider evidence favourable to the defence and that three of the charges listed in the indictment are ambiguously worded and invalid.

But they said Bourgon and his colleagues are free to go to the appeals chamber with concerns that the same three charges do not come under the jurisdiction of the tribunal. In the meantime, the defence will continue to call witnesses.

# Brueghel in Bosnia

By Kristine McKenna  
LA Weekly

When Art Spiegelman chronicled his father's experiences under the Nazis in his critically acclaimed 1992 comic, *Maus*, it was clear that comics had the capacity to handle big subjects. No one has blazed further into the territory Spiegelman pioneered than Joe Sacco, a political reporter who has used his cartooning skills to document his experiences in the Middle East and the Balkans. Born in Malta in 1960, Sacco spent his childhood in Australia and his early teenage years in Los Angeles. After earning a degree in journalism at the University of Oregon in 1981, he hit the road and lived in Europe as he worked toward finding his own creative voice. In 1991, he made his first trip to the West Bank, and at that point the form and content in Sacco's work coalesced into his mature style. Sacco's experiences in the occupied territories resulted in *Palestine*, a deeply moving account of daily life during wartime that was published by Fantagraphics in 1995. That same year Sacco visited Sarajevo and its surrounding areas just as the Bosnian war was winding to a close. His experiences there can be found in *Safe Area Gorazde: The War in Eastern Bosnia, 1992-95*, a wrenching study of a Muslim enclave in a state of siege.

Sacco's new book, *The Fixer — A Story From Sarajevo*, examines the aftermath of the Bosnian war as embodied in a man named Neven, a former member of one of the paramilitary groups that simultaneously protected and terrorized Bosnian civilians during the war. Also out this year is *Notes From a Defeatist*, a collection of Sacco's early work that serves as an illuminating chronicle of his artistic evolution. In September, Sacco returned to Portland, after having spent a year living in a small Swiss farming village. He's presently working on a story about a Chechen refugee, and a longer piece about Gaza.

**L.A. Weekly: Why are comics a better vehicle for your work than straight journalism?**

Joe Sacco: I've been doing comics since I was 6 years old, so it's a medium that's been with me for a very long time, and I think there are advantages to it. It's accessible and immediate — right away, the reader is thrust into a small town in Bosnia. I can make the crane that allows me to hover above a city — I don't have to hire a helicopter to get the picture — and I can take the reader into someone's past. I can ask visual questions that allow me to render it as faithfully as a film director.

**L.A. Weekly: Which artists have been important for you?**

Joe Sacco: Robert Crumb and Brueghel the Elder — he's a big influence on me. I love the solidity of the people in his paintings, and his work provides a window into daily life in Flanders during the 16th century in a way the Italian Renaissance simply doesn't. When I first got to Gorazde, it looked like the Middle Ages because there were hardly any cars running and the electricity was mostly off, and I thought, "Wow! I can draw just like Brueghel!" I really got into drawing people doing things like chopping wood.

**L.A. Weekly: Why are you so sensitive to global politics?**

Joe Sacco: It could have to do with the fact that my parents went through World War II



Joe Sacco

in Malta, and I grew up hearing about it. We lived outside Melbourne when I was a kid, and all their friends in Australia went through the war, too. Whenever they got together that's all they talked about.

**L.A. Weekly: Fantagraphics recently published a collection of your early work, much of which is quite lighthearted compared with the work you're known for. When did you turn the corner into the serious work you do now?**

Joe Sacco: From 1988 to 1992, I did a comic series called *Yahoo*, and in the course of that series I went from short, satirical pieces that were supposed to be funny, to more involved autobiographical pieces, to autobiography mixed with politics, and then eventually to telling the story of my mother's experience during World War II. I found out what my strengths were doing that series. However, the first time I visited Palestine, I didn't have some notion in my head that from then on I'd be doing "important journalism."

**L.A. Weekly: What compels you to spend time in war zones as a source for your work?**

Joe Sacco: It's not as if I want to be in places where there's shooting going on. Those particular situations — Bosnia and Palestine — are of great interest to me, and I want to put in my two cents because the media hasn't portrayed those situations very accurately. I don't blame the media for perpetuating this conflict, but in failing to fully inform the electorate, they prevent people from bringing their influence to bear on these situations, because they don't know what the hell is going on with them to begin with.

**L.A. Weekly: Your first book of political reportage was *Palestine*. Prior to actually going to Palestine, how did you know the media was portraying that situation inaccurately?**

Joe Sacco: With Palestine, that was easy to know because there are so few Palestinian voices in the media. The obvious reason for that is U.S. interests lie with Israel, and our media reflects that.

**L.A. Weekly: Having spent a good deal of time there, what do you think it will take to resolve that conflict?**

Joe Sacco: I don't see it resolving anytime soon. I was there several times over the past year, and during that year the level of violence went way up on both sides. It's no longer a question of police in Jeeps coming around shooting a few rubber bullets — it's tanks and aircraft now. It looks increasingly likely that there won't be a viable Palestinian state, and that these two peoples will be forever conjoined in some way that might result in an apartheid situation. Israel knows that removing the settlements would do a great deal in terms of moving toward a just solution, but it would take considerable will among the Israelis to do that, and it would be messy — at least 15 percent of the Israeli population would oppose it tooth and claw. The U.S. has played a lousy role in this situation all the way through, and should be pressing Israel harder to make concessions.

**L.A. Weekly: For decades different ethnic communities lived side by side in the former Yugoslavia, then a fierce sense of tribal identity flared up and separated people. What caused this to occur?**

Joe Sacco: It occurred because some politicians saw it could be exploited in their quest for power. For all the good Tito did [when he ruled communist Yugoslavia until his death in 1980], he created problems in not allowing people to talk about crimes that had been committed among these ethnic groups at various points, particularly during World

War II. There was no truth-and-reconciliation commission, and many people weren't brought to justice. These are things politicians can use, and that's what Milosevic and Karadzic did.

**L.A. Weekly: How do you explain the atrocities committed during wartime? Do some people have the capacity to switch gears and take pleasure in killing?**

Joe Sacco: There are always a limited number of sadists in any war, and a few hardcore sadists can turn a group around. They tend to make sure the people around them get blood on their hands, too, so everyone has a vested interest in continuing the killing. It's hard to get anyone involved to speak openly about those things, of course. Every now and then a journalist is around one of those people whose star is rising, who feel like they can do anything they want. But when I was there in 1995, the Serbs appeared to be on the losing end of the Dayton Accord and the Hague tribunal had been set up, so people weren't bragging about things they'd done during the war.

**L.A. Weekly: What finally made the Serbs and the Croats stop killing one another?**

Joe Sacco: Sheer exhaustion was part of it, but international pressure also had a lot to do with it. And, a lot of what the Serbs wanted out of the war was accomplished in that they cleared vast areas of the Muslim population.

**L.A. Weekly: You returned to Gorazde in 2001. Has the city begun to recover?**

Joe Sacco: No. They've fixed up some houses at the center of town and painted them garish colors, but the outskirts of town are still wrecked. Gorazde is a dying city, and the ethnic cleansing continued to go on there long after the war ended in that, little by little, all the people are leaving Gorazde.

**L.A. Weekly: Are people capable of recovering from the extreme trauma they often suffer during war?**

Joe Sacco: There are always individuals who are just too fucked up, but generally I think people do recover. In Gorazde, there are two girls who dream about a new pair of 501 jeans, and that's a beautiful thing — the fact that they're hanging on to anything as normal as that is good, because it shows that people just want to be a part of the world, in all its silliness.

**L.A. Weekly: Your new book is about a fixer named Neven. What is a fixer?**

Joe Sacco: There are many kinds of fixers, but generally they're people who can translate well, are knowledgeable about the local scene, and can make introductions and make things happen for you. With

Neven, I could've said, "Take me to the 5th Army Corps and get me an interview with a general," and he probably could've arranged it. A fixer can really influence a journalist's story in that his or her politics can determine which stories they introduce you to. They can steer you in a particular direction or not translate specific things, and there's no way you can know they're doing it. One point I wanted to make with this book is that journalists are dependent on these people, for good or for bad. I can't know for sure if Neven was telling the truth, but my tendency was to believe him, and I think he gave me an accurate overall picture of what happened. However, I always had to remember that it was through Neven's filter.

**L.A. Weekly: Why does someone become a fixer?**

Joe Sacco: They're often people who enjoy talking to foreigners and want to improve their English, but mostly it's money that makes them do it. When I was in Bosnia a fixer could make \$150 a day, which was



more than most people there were seeing in a year.

**L.A. Weekly: Do you consider Neven a sympathetic figure?**

Joe Sacco: It's hard to describe him with a single adjective because he's complicated. I didn't know anyone in Sarajevo on my first visit, and Neven was the first person I spoke to. In his way he took me under his wing, and I appreciated that because he was a tough guy and I was a little afraid when I was there. It was good to be around this guy because it felt like his street credibility was rubbing off on me on some level. It wasn't until later that I learned he didn't have street credibility with everyone.

Sarajevo didn't have an army, so when it came under attack it needed people like Neven to step into the breach. He admitted to me that he'd been a sniper, but without people like Neven, Sarajevo probably would've fallen, and who knows what the consequences of that would've been. Neven considered it a tragedy that the paramilitary groups that defended Sarajevo were crushed, but

they definitely had to be stopped. Ultimately, Neven was someone who was able to thrive for a time in a very chaotic circumstance, and then it turned against him and he was back to being caught up in it.

**L.A. Weekly: Who is responsible for intervening when genocide is being committed? As the strongest military power in the world, is that America's responsibility?**

Joe Sacco: I don't know if you can make a blanket statement like that because every case has to be judged individually. I don't think America is obliged to be the policeman of the world. However, you could certainly make the case that situations on the scale of what occurred in Rwanda must be addressed, and truth be told, America is the country with the equipment and manpower to do these sorts of things.

**L.A. Weekly: Are there other areas of the world that are of particular interest to you?**

Joe Sacco: Almost any place can interest me, but I have to chain myself to a desk and work right now. I'd be interested in going to Iraq, but I'd have to be sent there because I couldn't finance a trip like that on my own, and I'm not sure who to approach. It's unlikely I'd approach an American paper because they end up hammering you about "their style" and things that seem trivial to me, like how to abbreviate lieutenant colonel.

**L.A. Weekly: Do you go into these projects prepared to lose your life?**

Joe Sacco: No. Obviously, this work is risky on some level, and I know that something can happen, but I try to be very careful. I'm not a war photographer running into streets taking pictures of rolling tanks.

**L.A. Weekly: Does making this work depress you?**

Joe Sacco: Occasionally. When you see a bombing in a café in Tel Aviv, houses being demolished and people getting killed by tank shells, it's depressing as hell. But I channel those feelings into a sense of purpose — I'll think "Okay, I'll sit at my drawing table and start working, and three years from now there'll be a book coming out about this." I'd get more depressed if I wasn't doing this work.

**L.A. Weekly: Having made a firsthand study of war, what conclusions have you drawn about human nature?**

Joe Sacco: You see extremes of humanity in places like Palestine and Bosnia — you see enormously good people who'll give you the shirt off their back despite the fact that they have nothing, and you see incredible cruelty. Mostly what you see is innocent people being crushed beneath the wheels of history.



# Looking for Life's Meaning? Run Backwards

A 22-year-old Malaysian electronic engineer has claimed a national record for running backwards, saying he "wanted to do something meaningful in life".

S. Moganasundar won a place in the popular "Malaysia Book of Records" after running backwards for 30 kilometers (18.75 miles), the official Bernama news agency reported Monday.

He took three hours, 30 minutes and 35 seconds to complete 75 laps of the 400 meter track at the Perak Stadium in the northeastern town of Ipoh.

"I am happy I did this. I always wanted to do something meaningful in life," he told Bernama.

"It was not an easy feat as I almost gave up after 25 laps when suddenly my vision was blurred. But my two coaches kept me going by their constant encouragement." Setting world and national records is a

popular obsession in Malaysia, which once boasted the world's tallest buildings, the Petronas Twin Towers.

Last month, a Malaysian woman overcame 17 scorpion bites to set a new world record by spending 36 days in a glass cage with 6,069 of the poisonous arachnids.

## Britons Want Homer Simpson as U.S. President

Doughnut-guzzling, beer-quaffing Homer Simpson may not be the model father but he has won the hearts of British TV fans who want the nuclear power plant worker to be the next U.S. president.

Former president George Bush notoriously said American families should be "closer to the Waltons than the Simpsons" but Homer was overwhelming favorite in a Radio Times magazine poll on which U.S. TV character should take over at the White House.

As Americans ponder tax and security pledges from President Bush and Democratic rival John Kerry ahead of the November 2 poll, television fans have been considering Homer slogans such as "No big government, just big waist sizes." In a manifesto compiled for the magazine by The Simpsons' writing staff, the bumbling animated TV hero also pledges: "I promise there will be fewer nuclear disasters with me as your mayor than with me as your nuclear safety inspector."

Homer got 24 percent of the vote in the poll of more than 2,000 readers. Second place went to the more obvious choice of Josiah Bartlet, the president played by Martin Sheen in "The West Wing."

### WEATHER OUTLOOK



Estimated temperatures for today

#### Sarajevo

**Today:** Mostly cloudy skies early will become partly cloudy later in the day. High around 21C. Winds light and variable.

**Tonight:** A few clouds. Low 8C. Winds light and variable.

**Wednesday:** Mostly cloudy in the morning then periods of showers later in the day. High 16C. Chance of rain 70%.

**Thursday:** Showers possible. Highs around 15C and lows near 10C.

#### Banja Luka

**Today:** Partly cloudy. High 21C. Winds light and variable.

**Tonight:** A few clouds. Low around 10C. Winds light and variable.

**Wednesday:** Partly cloudy early followed by increasing clouds with showers developing later in the day. High 19C. Winds light and variable. Chance of rain 50%.

**Thursday:** Chance of afternoon showers. Highs near 20C and lows around 10C.

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All puppies have birth certificates (Rodovnike), while their parents are of the highest characteristics (winners of CAC/CACIB).

**Price is negotiable. Please contact Oliver 033 623 328.**

## Road Conditions

Apart from the works in tunnels Vranduk 1 and Vranduk 2, which are carried out on route M-17 Zenica-Karuse, the works on setting up the lights and in tunnels Sikola 1 and Sikola 2, on the same route should commence today. Traffic from the direction of Zenica is developing through Vranduk and Maglaj, while from the direction of Karuse, it is heading through the tunnels.

### CINEMAS

#### TESLA

Obala Kulina Bana 2 443-617

#### TROY

Director: Wolfgang Petersen  
Cast: Brad Pitt, Eric Bana, Orlando Bloom, Diane Kruger  
At 7 pm

#### APOLO

Mis Irbina 2 445-201

#### WHEN I GROW UP I'LL BE A

**KANAGROO** (with English subtitle)

Director: Radivoj Andric  
Cast: Boris Milivojevic, Gordan Kicic, Nikola Vujovic, Marija Karan...  
At 6 and 8 pm

#### IMPERIJAL

Marsala Tita 56 443-021

#### GIRL WITH A PEARL EARRING

Director: Peter Webber  
Cast: Scarlett Johansson, Colin Firth, Tom Wilkinson  
At 6 and 9:15 pm

#### OBALA MEETING POINT

H. Kresevljakovica 13 668-186

#### HOME OF THE RANGE

Directors: Will Finn and John Sanford  
Voices: G.W. Bailey, Roseanne, Steve Buscemi, Cuba Gooding Jr, Judi Dench...  
At 5 pm,  
on Saturdays and Sundays also at noon

#### BOURNE SUPREMACY

Director: Paul Greengrass  
Cast: Matt Damon, Franka Potente, Brian Cox  
At 7 and 9 pm

#### UNITIC

Fra A. Zvizdovica 1 295-031

#### A WONDERFUL NIGHT IN SPLIT (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)

Director: Arsen Ostojic  
Cast: Coolio, Marina Skaricic  
At 6 pm and 8:30 pm