

30 YEARS

OSLOBODENJE



Moja priča.



investiramo
gradimo
doniramo
podržavamo
razvijamo
unapređujemo...

spajamo

Dobre priče nastavljamo.

BH Telecom d.d. Sarajevo

Writer: **VILDANA SELIMBEGOVIĆ**

We assembled this special issue as a war time memento, but also with special dedication to the late editor of Oslobođenje Kemal Kurspahić, after whom our prize will be named and which we will award in an open call for all colleagues from Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian language speaking area, as well as to reporters whose translated texts will be published in this region

The Thirty Years

Do we remember and how? Where we were when it all started, did we believe it was the end? Why images from Ukraine look so familiar and cause anxiety? After more than 100,000 dead and millions displaced, have we not learned a lesson? Does it just seem to us or is it that democratic west finally realized how perilous are the dangers of authoritarian regimes, capable of killing in the name of denazification and for prevention? Each of us – even those born in this century – have their own war story. And geography really has no importance in that regard. The proof are the lines that follow, delivered to Oslobođenje from New Zealand. They were written by Đenana, the sister of Suada Dilberović, a twenty-four-year-old student from Dubrovnik who joined thousands and thousands in the city on Miljacka to protest the war.

“April 5, 1992, Sunday ... As in the movies, moments from that day flash. An open book on biology because the exam is the next day. The reason why I did not go with Sutka is something I will never forgive myself. If I had gone, who knows. Maybe something would be different.

As it is, just memories, pictures of that day. Sutka leans on the door frame while putting on her shoes saying she will not stay long. It was difficult to study while the protests were broadcasting on television. I should have gone, too, I thought. Of all the hours spent watching TV that day, I remember one sentence only, a girl fell. Fell? I approached the TV, but it was hard to see anything. A sea of people. A girl fell. How do I see who she is in that mass of people?

Someone is knocking on the door. Sandra, Tija and Allen. An unusual combination. I do not know which of them said what, because after that it is just dark and emptiness. One girl fell. Sutka. Why her? Did someone on the other side of the gunpoint knew he was shooting at a human boulder in a small body, into a heart so large that the whole world could fit in. He turned off the light of life in the eyes that smiled at each well-meaning person. It is not fair, there was so much good ahead of her.

Why?

I still remember that day with the same disbelief and pain. If time heals wounds, it seems that this wound takes much more than thirty years.

A hundreds of thousands of sisters, mothers, fathers, brothers, sons and daughters have memories of the moment when someone knocks on the door and seeks an answer to that a million times asked question in one's mind: why? For more than a month now, thousands of Ukrainians are also suffering the same torment, and their families, fellow citizens and all those who have sought salvation throughout Europe share that refugee fear that many Bosnians and Herzegovinians remember all too well.

Our colleague Ron Haviv, the author of the photo from Bijeljina that

petrified everyone with a bit of humanity in them - whoever saw it once didn't forget: a member of Arkan's paramilitary army kicks dead bodies – these days and weeks, Haviv is in Kiev, from where he sends warning photos again. For this issue of Oslobođenje, along with photos of Kiev, Haviv also sends his memory of the one he took in Bijeljina, but it should be said that we received response for participation in the special issue

dedicated to the memory of a time 30 years ago not only by Roy Gutman, but also from Ed Vulliamy and Tom Gjelten, who came to war-torn Sarajevo to write a book about the Oslobođenje.

Yes, Oslobođenje has its own war story that we are still proud of today - the newspaper, despite the proximity of the front line and despite the fact that it was a regular artillery target of the invaders on the besieged city, managed to reach its readers every day. I dare say its relationship to the reality of war is even greater and more important. Oslobođenje namely, in those most difficult days of Bosnia and Herzegovina, made the profession proud while preserving its dignity and retaining critical thought. That was the reason why the newspaper was awarded with the prize “The Paper of the Year in the World” in 1992, and that during the 1,425 days of siege this newspaper received numerous international recognitions for media freedom, contribution to democracy and preservation of human rights, including “The Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought” in 1993. And there are no doubts: the greatest foundations for such an attitude towards the war were laid in peace time when the editor-in-chief of Oslobođenje Kemal Kurspahić came to the forefront of the paper.

Kemo died last fall and his first associate Gordana Knežević reminded of the difficulty of decisions often a complete editorial board was faced with. He himself, writing to Oslobođenje on the 65th birthday of the newspaper, the jubilee which was also the occasion for us to award him with the lifetime achievement prize on August 30, and at least show how proud we are of his engagement and the legacy he left behind, pointed out the eternal journalistic dilemmas. In the article “My story about Oslobođenje” he wrote some unforgettable lines about the newspaper that refused to die, but also about the people who made that paper in an underground shelter of the burned, demolished, and bombed buildings, about Kjašif Smajlović, executed in the correspondence office in Zvornik, wounded Salko Hondo, the accountant Zuhra Bešić, who was killed by a sniper bullet while returning from work on the bus, the great journalist and person Vlado Mrkić, who wrote the most touching war reports on the pages of Oslobođenje. Kemo's lessons in journalism, as witnessed in this special issue of Oslobođenje, along with his legendary book “Prime Time Crime: Balkan Media in War and Peace”,

and Kemo himself - everyone who knew will witness that - knew how to look ahead.

That is the reason why this special issue, as a war memento, was compiled with a notable dedication to the editor of the Oslobođenje Kemal Kurspahić, and on Tuesday at 1 pm, on April 5th, at the Chamber Theater 55 in Sarajevo, we will gather to remember Bosnia and Herzegovina from 30 years ago and to remember Kemo's lessons in journalism. So important and applicable to Ukraine. Universal and warning. It will also be an opportunity to establish the Oslobođenje award that will bear the honorable name of its war time editor Kemal Kurspahić. Professionalism with a human face, the search for truth and the need to separate truth from the flood of lies and deception, loyalty to principles and faith in journalism, all those qualities that characterized Kemo throughout his career will remain in the propositions of the competition which will be announced on Oslobođenje's birthday, August 30, for all journalists from B/C/S region, so that the first prize would be awarded along with marking the 80th anniversary of our newspaper.

The publisher and the Management of our media group have decided to inaugurate one more recognition that will have an internal character and will bear the name of our colleague Hamza Bakšić. Oslobođenje, O Channel and our website, thanks to the strategic partnership with USAID and Internews, formed an integrated newsroom, the first in this part of the world. Print, television, and digital journalists work together, create stories, research and share information. At times it seemed like mission impossible. Today we live the story with pride and share our experiences with younger colleagues ready to learn. Hamza Bakšić, a notable name in Oslobođenje, spent a good part of his life on television, and with special zeal he was devoted to young people ready to bite into journalism themselves. He even wrote a manual for them. That is why he is the symbol of activism for today's journalists from the Group.

This Oslobođenje special issue, thanks to the engagement of “The World Association of News Publishers - WAN IFRA”, will be marketed worldwide and is therefore it will be published in English as well. With gratitude to colleagues from WAN IFRA and the hope that the suffering of Bosnia and Herzegovina - as witnessed by our pages - will not repeat in Ukraine in the same intensity, here comes a warmhearted recommendation: journalists and colleagues, both local and those from around the world, pay attention to articles published here that speak of suffering, but also of personal experiences which document the incredible strength of the struggle for truth and principles, as well as equally important role of journalists and the media. Bosnia and Herzegovina and Oslobođenje share the living proof for that. Long live Ukraine!



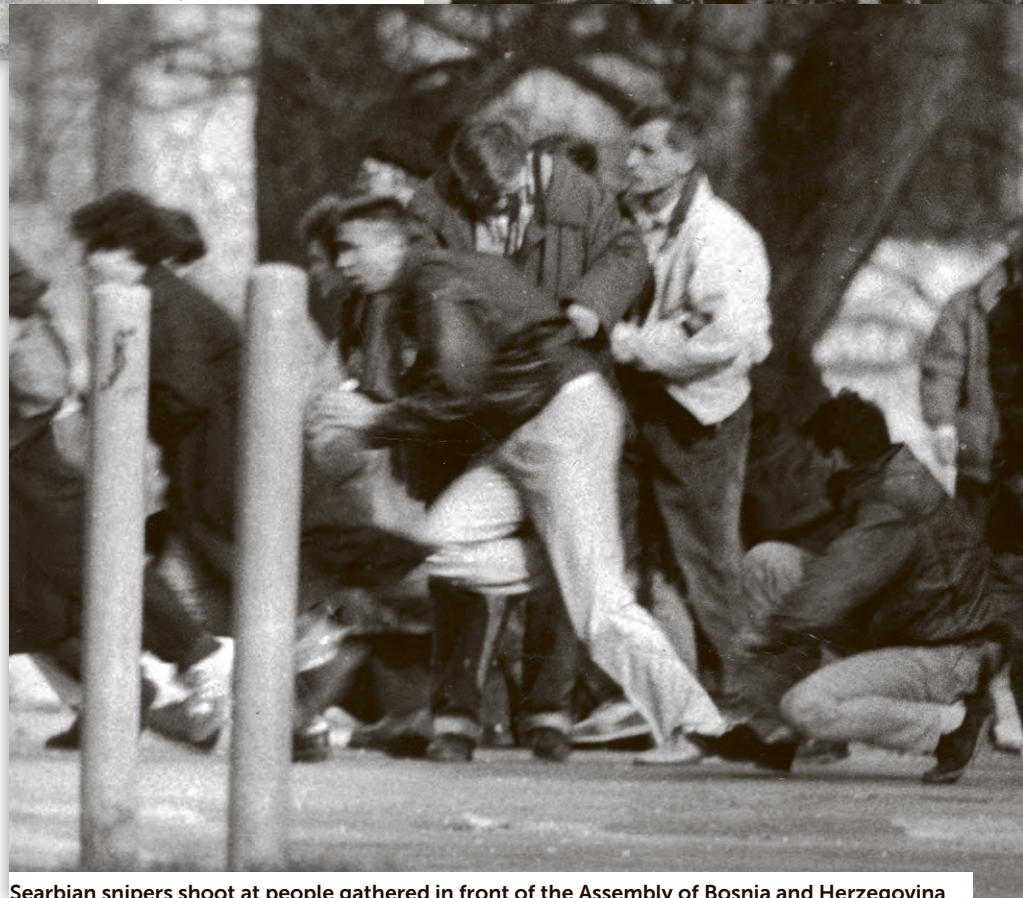
Sarajevans on the barricades



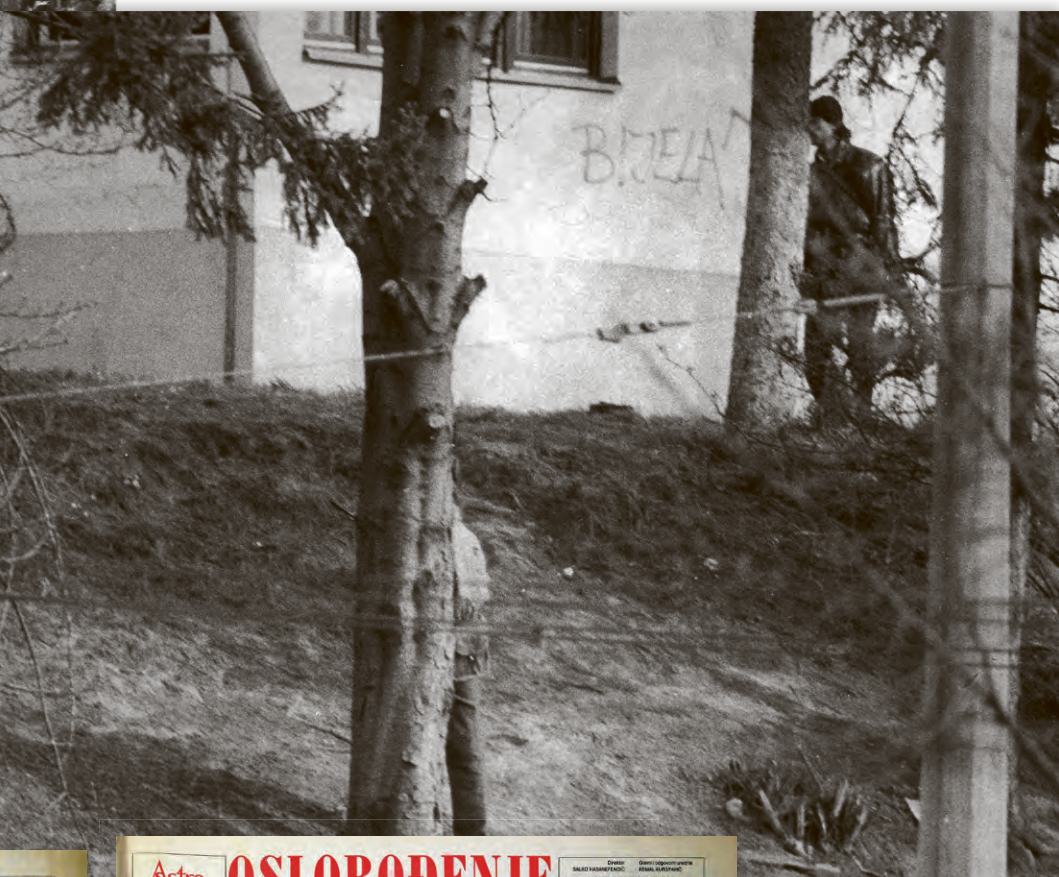
Barricades, March 2, 1992



March 6, 1992



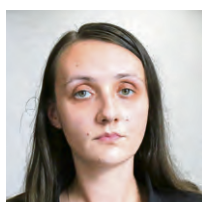
Serbian snipers shoot at people gathered in front of the Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina



Sarajevo, April 6, 1992

30 memories of the beginnings of the war 30 years ago

There was never a consensus about the time of the beginning of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Some say the aggression started in autumn of 1991 with the attack on Ravno. Some also say it started with former JNA digging trenches around Sarajevo, for others, it started in Bijeljina with coming of Arkan's Tigers, while some say war started in days of barricades around capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina, i. e. attacks on MUP's school at Vrace... Nevertheless, all of us have our personal remembrance of the moment we faced the war in our homelands, on roads, courtyards of our homes. We asked Bosnians and Herzegovinians to share their memories with us



Writer: **MATEA JERKOVIĆ**



Prof. Dr. Franjo Topić

I was in Sarajevo. I was regularly giving lectures at Faculty of Catholic Theology and that day, we were supposed to move Croat Cultural Society HKD Napredak into Napredak's palace. I must say that for me, war in Sarajevo was not surprise, because before that, I was engaged into helping Vukovar and other places in Croatia. Napredak and I also organized help for Ravno in east Herzegovina. We registered Napredak also as a charity organization very soon and started gathering more organized humanitarian help.



Prof. Dr. Jasna Bakšić-Muftić

At the beginning and throughout the war, I was in Sarajevo with my whole family and my daughter, who was 18 months old at the beginning of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. When Ravno was attacked, we were watching the news. We were returning home down empty Tito's Street and I was calculating in my head how long it would take the tanks to get to Sarajevo. The sound of footsteps down the empty street and fear of uncertain future were the prelude to war for me.



Prof. Dr. Azra Hadžiahmetović

I was in Sarajevo. I shared the same destiny throughout the war with all the citizens of Sarajevo, my fellow citizens. Of course, at the very beginning, I had a lot of fear, vagueness, a lot of disbelief that it can not be happening. It took me some time to realize that it actually is a real aggression on Bosnia and Herzegovina and I shared the same destiny with all the other citizens. I can't remember exactly where I was at the time the war started, but anyway, it was in Sarajevo, probably in home environment. At the very beginning, heavy shelling also reduced movement, yet I worked in college all the time.



Dr. Mirjana Marinković-Lepić

I had realized that war began in the vicinity of Tuzla. That May 15, 1992, I was returning from business trip when we were stopped by patrol in unidentified uniforms with weapons, and a few hundred meters away, we saw an interrupted army convoy leaving Tuzla. Looking at vehicles, we could see that there was a gunfire. One of them was wounded and that was the moment when I realized that the war had started. We didn't even return to Tuzla then, we took a turn to one nearby place and came to Tuzla on foot the next day.



Dr. Neven Anđelić

After we broke into the building of the Assembly in the noon hours, during the evening I received the message that professor Zdravko Grebo can't come due to the barricade in Đure Đakovića Street at that time. I headed there with other three physically fit guys, only to find out at the barricade that professor certainly did not come and they would not stop him in any case. A little further on, in the building where the radio was located, where professor was spending considerable time these days, and which was once the seat of the Central Committee, some armed men opened the door for me, let only me in and then, in the dark, pointed a rifle barrel at my back, and led me to the room where the professor and his associates were captured. I never found out who were these people that "took over" the building that night and let us go a little later.



Sead Đulić, president of SABNOR

I was in Mostar. The explosion of a cistern near Sjeverni Logor, JNA barracks, this officially marked the beginning of the war in Mostar. It is, if I'm not mistaken, April 2 or April 3, 1992. That evening, I had a rehearsal at the Theatre, a general rehearsal, because the premiere was scheduled for the next day. But that meant we are stopping with the work, that some other, uglier time is about to begin. The period of care for young people I worked with and questions about what will happen to them.



Josip Pejaković, Bosnian actor

On April 6, I was in front of the Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina, calling on the people to defend Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is in all archive. I know I am the only survivor of all the speakers who were there.



Milan Dunović, vice president of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

The beginning of the war caught me as a student of the Second Gymnasium of Sarajevo. As a high school student, and later as a faculty student, I simultaneously participated in the defense of Bosnia and Herzegovina, believing that both freedom and education are necessary for our homeland.



Diana Kajmaković, prosecutor of the Prosecutor's office of Bosnia and Herzegovina

My first memory is when my sister was wounded at the first barricades. I was two meters away from her, and bullets were whizzing.... And the next thing I remember were grenades. It was May 1 or 2. I lived in the municipality of Stari Grad at that time. I stayed there throughout the war, married, gave birth and worked all the time.



Mirza Ibrahimpašić, painter

I was in Sarajevo. I was there both on April 5 and 6, when it started at Vrace. And when the war started is another question.



Zlatko Berbić, founder and owner of Radio Kameleon

At the beginning of March, voluntary police units were organized in local communities in Tuzla, in organization of the Municipality of Tuzla. At the beginning, I signed up as a volunteer in Slatina local community, where I temporarily lived. We were on duty in night shifts on the Kicelj hill above the city center, where the JNA / volunteer brigades were under tents, fully armed, having party time with occasional bursts of fire! We naively thought that when they see us watching them, this would prevent them from carrying out their intentions. And the four of us on duty had only one pistol, my private 35 mm pistol. The beginning of the war in Tuzla, on May 15, was a caused conflict of drunken soldiers who fired from the trucks of the row that was leaving the barracks through Skojevska Street towards Brčanska Malta. A passer-by was killed in Brčanska Malta. Police returned fire, which turned into an armed conflict in Brčanska Malta, a conflict in which I didn't participate, but later I was actively retrieving weapons from burning trucks and drove all to the civil protection, believing that it would save the city from war... In June, Mayor Bešliagić gave me approval to bring purchased equipment for Radio Kameleon from Slovenia, because I recieved the permit from Belgrade back in 1991, and paid for the equipment in Slovenia, naively believing that there would be no war. That summer, we brought equipment under humanitarian packages and Kameleon started working.



Academic Mirko Pejanović

The war caught me in Breka neighbourhood where I lived at that time. Personally, like many of my acquaintances of my generation, I rejected the possibility that there could be war in Sarajevo and Bosnia and Herzegovina. At the beginning of April 1992, we formed the Center of opposition parties with headquarters in Daniela Ozme Street. I acted as a president of Democratic Party of Socialists in that center. Late academician Muhamed Filipović was coordinator of that center. The shelling of the office we were meeting followed soon, so we switched to the new way of meeting, the only possible one in Sarajevo, which was already under shelling in those days.



Adil Osmanović, member of the Parliament

At that time, I worked as a secretary in the Municipality of Teslić. The situation at the beginning of 1992 already indicated that there could be certain armed conflicts in Bosnia and Herzegovina. At the beginning of May, reserve forces, JNA reservists and tanks already entered Teslić. All Bosniak and Croat employees were fired. On May 26, through the woods with my 8-month old son, I somehow managed to sneak through those guards set up by JNA reservists on the territory of Tešanj municipality. There we formed our war branch in exile and our Teslić territorial defense, and later a brigade.



Prof. Dr. Adamir Jerković

The aggression on Bosnia and Herzegovina caught me in Zenica. At the beginning of the war, I became the editor-in-chief of Radio Zenica, and then of TVBiH-ITC Zenica or TV Okrug Zenica. I immediately started working on breaking through the imposed informative barrier. I started preparing the famous radio show "Susreti svjetova (Meetings of the worlds)" in which I gathered well-known domestic and foreign journalists from world capitals, including late Vlastimir Mijović, correspondent for Oslobođenje from Moscow



Damir Uzunović, Bosnian writer

It can not be said that there was one beginning of the war. For me, there were at least two. One in March, on the first barricades, when I realized that something serious is going down, that people were lying down under those barricades, and forces coming from Vraca side, bearded people, they were nothing more than Chetniks, they had some logs of their own, at the underpass I passed to go to college, because I had to take an exam. It was a significant beginning of the war. The second time, I saw it from the window, on April 5 or whatever. Sowers of death passed under my window, machine guns on special wheels, heavy, as a small cannon. These machine guns passed under the window, and then, a little behind them, a group of guys in sneakers and jackets. Those were us, and those carrying sowers of death were the enemies of Sarajevo, and it remained so in the end. Of course, I was soon the one in the sneakers and that's how the war started for me.



Dr. Sc. Tatjana Neidhardt, B. Arch.

It was not easy to leave Ilidža in 1992, to leave everything behind. But to escape into the besieged Sarajevo, it was a lot worse. But, I could not imagine myself as a refugee, alone, somewhere in someone else's world. If I am going to suffer and perish, let it be in my city. And I suffered like all my fellow citizens during these four hard and humiliating years. The thought of my daughters escaping this horror was my only and constant consolation.



Jakob Finci, president of the Jewish community in Bosnia and Herzegovina

April of 1992 surprised us all, of course. First, we were surprised by president Izetbegović, when he said on April 4: "Sleep peacefully, we have agreed on everything, there will not be a war." And then, when it started on April 6, from the demonstrations in front of the Assembly, an all-night session, shootings, sniper fire and everything else. It was clear that the war had begun. Unfortunately, we were not ready, but we managed to defend ourselves. I hope that we will never be in the same situation as we were in April 1992.



Faruk Kapidžić dia

The massacre began at the time I was in my second year of study at the Faculty of Architecture in Sarajevo. The defense of our bare lives started in June 1992 when I joined the Army of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which began to form. The real warfare started on Treskavica in 1994, when I was assured that we formed the Army of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Warfare stopped when we started liberating our homeland. Warfare stopped by the end of 1995, but the war, it seems, never stopped, it only changed its form.



Prof. Mr. Amra Zulfikarpašić

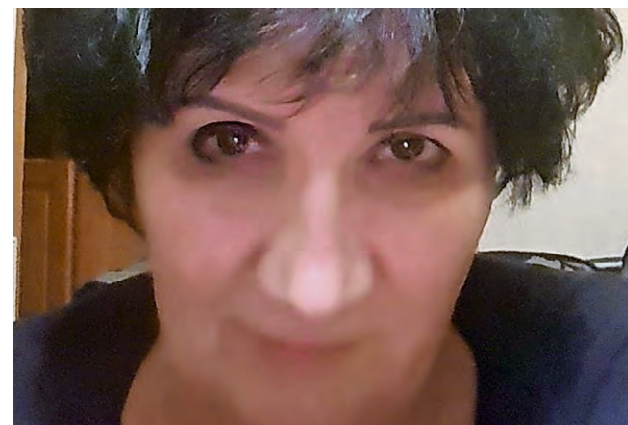
I was in Sarajevo, in my parents' apartment, across from Police station of Stari Grad. The famous "Stari sat" cafe was working, and the police, fighters, neighbors were often there. Everything was known. From day one. The war has come to our street!

Looking at the time we live in, I am truly proud of my war experience in Sarajevo. I always think with sentiment about the time of the struggle for freedom and justice, love and friendship, the time of mutual respect, the time of hope and great expectations. Today, as I watch my neighbours struggle, somewhere in Ukraine tanks and jets kill people who are trembling hungry in the basements of burning houses, as I watch shelters... waiting for "the referee to signal the end". I spread my arms towards the end!



Goran Mikulić, owner of the Publishing House Art Rabic

When 1992 arrived, I had no idea what was in store for us. At the end of February, I opened a warehouse for construction materials with my friend Nebojša Perić in front of the Pioneer Valley, which was later almost a dividing line, and 20 days later I bought a business space in Pošalići neighbourhood. This is how much I knew about the war that was going to happen. The planes were really flying over us, we were shouting "down with the government", down with these and those, but I could not believe. I even took my 12-year old son to those demonstrations, so he could see how people are protesting, what it looks like when people are not satisfied, and a few days later the first grenades started falling. I immediately went to the local community and signed with the volunteers. I was eighth on the list, I remember that well, and we founded a unit by the local community. At that time, that was the so-called territorial defense and we were assigned to the protection of the Blood Transfusion Institute. Then started our clash with those who were above the city, and then I was convinced that, of all those 200.000 people that were with me, one part, let's say most of them, simply disappeared. They were not there with me, with us, and we stayed alone in that city, trying to defend it, to defend the city from some who want to impose something on us, which we don't know yet, but they are simply shooting at us. I wasn't sure that they also knew what they wanted in the beginning. And everything was found out later. My wife and I stayed in the city throughout the whole war. I don't think there is a type of grass we didn't eat, because we were so hungry, we didn't have anything, no reserves, nothing. I was severely wounded several times in the defense of the city.



Zdravka Bago

It was my daughter Ivana's birthday on April 4 1992, at shopping center in Grbavica neighbourhood. She turned 12. I remember that Eid was the same day. Bag ready for shelter stood in the hall. The shooting started and frightened parents were coming to pick their children. I was in disbelief: Is it another misfortune? Less than half a year has passed since the sudden death of my husband and the father of my daughter.

I thought, when he died, that it could not be worse. And it was unbelievable, horrible... During the war, I often remembered my wonderful neighbours, the Sandžakarevićs. When I cried after my husband's death, Seka was telling me: "Don't cry, we may regret not being in the place of the dead." I mourned in exile with my mother in Ruma, with my Bosniak friends - Muslims from Zvornik (Mustafa Kamišalić's family), who fled to my mother's in Ruma before me, and few months later to Slovenia. I returned to Sarajevo after the reintegration of Grbavica as the "first constitutive", although the constitutiveness was recognized only later. I returned in 1996 to a devastated apartment in Grbavica.



Prof. Dr. Mustafa Hiroš

War had started with the first barricades, and for me, it started on April 17, 1992 when my family (wife and daughters who were 7 and 4 years-old at that time) left Sarajevo and went by bus to Croatia, and I continued to the Clinical Center, to my job.



Boris Kožemjakin, president of the Jewish Municipality in Sarajevo

Although I know today when and how the war began in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in April of 1992 I saw the first war grenades as incidents and provocations, and I became aware of the real war on May 2, with an attack of united forces of then still JNA and paramilitary forces of the later Army of Republika Srpska. And then I realize that my country is attacked by aggression from the outside and the destruction by the "domestic" forces from the inside. I can not say I didn't know in April that the war is beginning, but I didn't want to believe that it is possible for one to attack his neighbour. Whether it was naive or I was optimistic, believing that people were all those I loved and I was convinced that we are all equal, living in the same idea of peace and freedom. Perhaps my anti-fascist family upbringing was also the cause of my delusions and belated acceptance of the war in our country.



Prim. Dr. Dragan Stevanović

Since I was an active military person in the former Yugoslavian National Army (JNA) and, by coincidence, I witnessed the internal change of JNA, first into the Serb and later into the army with Chetnik ideology, for me, the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina began somewhere during the second half of 1991. Since that moment, I had a firm decision to return to Sarajevo as soon as possible, to be there when it escalates throughout entire Bosnia and Herzegovina.



Prof. Dr. Suad Arnautović

At that time, I was an official of the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, that is, at the Republic Ministry of Defense in SFRY was called at the time. It was from that position that I was analyzing the situation in the former Yugoslavia and, together with my colleague Matija Dobrinić, I wrote an analysis Military question in Bosnia and Herzegovina and with a proposal for what the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina should look like. I published that in Feuilleton in five or six sequels and then in Slobodna Bosna of that time. Already in the first days, I joined the preparation of the resistance as a volunteer, forming the Vratnik unit in Vratnik, Municipality of Stari Grad. Later, it will grow into the 12th Brigade "Hadži Lojo", i.e. Second Mountain Brigade. My third engagement is about music. I wrote the first patriotic song called "Procvjetali zlatni ljiljani (Golden Lillies Bloomed)", sung by late Faruk Jazić, immediately after the international recognition of the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina.



Prof. Dr. Dževad Drino

I was in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in my native Bugojno. The war here began with battles in neighbouring Kupres, earlier than in Sarajevo, and no one needed to convince me whether there would be a war or not... Fortunately, the defenders organized quickly and well, which eventually resulted with the first liberated cities in our neighbourhood - Kupres and Donji Vakuf.



Suada Kapić

I lived in Grbavica neighbourhood, and for me, the war had started three times: First time when barricades were set in Grbavica from March 1 to March 2, second time in the dawn of April 21, 1992 when paramilitary formations took turns in front of our building on Grbavica, some of them were falling out of the tanks and surrounded us, and the third time was when the city was attacked and completely closed on May 2, 1992 (at that time, my sister and I were already refugees from Grbavica in our own town).



Ahmed Žilić, lawyer

I left Sarajevo for my native Visoko on April 4 to celebrate Eid. I returned to Sarajevo on April 6, 1992, in the time when big convoys of cars were leaving it, and only a few were entering Sarajevo. I thought about the then current difficulties and challenges of functioning of the new democratic government in wartime conditions: whether the Presidency of (Socialist) Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina will know and have the political will to declare the imminent war-danger and the state of war, in order to name the aggressor and identify the enemy - which is the most important task of politicians in all countries at war.



Kristina Ljevak, independent journalist

I was less than 12 years old and I was in Sarajevo. My first memory is the barricades that prevent us from going to school, war would be a term that would be placed in our lives a day later. If the adults thought that it would only last for two weeks, no wonder I believed it would last shorter. I remember most intensely my own childly dedication while keeping up with the broadcast of demonstrations in front of the Assembly. Unfortunately, that image remained with me for the next thirty years as a permanent reminder that it is difficult to fight against anti-civilization principles with reason and civilization.



Ognjenka Finci, Prof. emeritus of the University of Sarajevo

For me, the war began on the night of April 27, 1992, when the Olympic Museum, which is located near my house, was set on fire. Due to the force of the shelling, all the windows on the south side of the house shattered instantly. The smell of burning and the crack of broken glass. Hidden in the basement, I was overwhelmed with a sense of shiver and uncontrollable trembling. I realized that war has come to my doorstep.

End of the post-wall era



Europe and Bosnia
between post-war
and pre-war

Piše: **CHRISTOPHE SOLIOZ**

While the horror of war, epitomised by Russia's slaughter of Ukrainian civilians, is inescapably unfolding in Ukraine, I am reminded of the siege of Sarajevo, of the bombings, destruction, war crimes and the genocide committed in Bosnia. Here, the wounds and the traumas are not yet healed; and there, in Ukraine, the worst is again underway.

While Ukraine resists, the Russian warmachine launches hypersonic missiles and also opts for the strategy of the urban siege, notably in Mariupol, Kharkiv, Sumy and Kyiv. The formula coined by Aron in 1948 'peace is impossible, war is improbable' is henceforth obsolete. From a patient waiting based on hope we have rushed to a waiting based on despair.

Spheres of influence

This represents an abrupt, bewildering end of the post-wall era. Ukraine at war has 'unexpectedly' thrown Europe into a new world and prompted a totally new consideration, albeit as yet unformulated, of the post-1989 period. To say the least, we are back to a world order based on spheres of influence. We have to face that we have never been closer to World War III; and that war in Ukraine will change the face of Europe.

Since February 24, Putin has unexpectedly achieved Russian isolation, driven Ukrainian identity, rearmed Germany, united the EU, revitalised EU-US relations, rejuvenated NATO, paved the way for Finland and Sweden U-turns on NATO – with even Switzer-

land opting for a different sort of neutrality – and accelerated the green transition. Our economies will significantly change as a result of this, as well as our understanding of freedom and democracy.

hydrocarbon war; and economic war in Europe and the United States. Putin demonstrates that he intends to achieve his objectives, to bring back 'White Russia', by any means necessary. We have moved 'unpredictably' beyond the point of no return, but the security threat is real and Putin's actions seem to have no limit. How far will he go?

The next step might well be the non-NATO but close-to-NATO countries, notably Sweden and Finland where Russia's air force and navy has already been testing reactions and defence capacities. Further targets might be Moldova and Georgia. Additionally, the fallout from Russia's attack on Ukraine in the Western Balkans will most certainly be massive – particularly in Bosnia where Putin might well be tempted to reward the blind support that, up to now, he has received from Serbia's leadership.

What is to be done?

Via the voice of Russia's Ambassador to Bosnia, Igor Kalabukhov, the Kremlin – which has been meddling in Bosnia for years – made its threats open on March 17 by warning that Bosnia could suffer the same fate as Ukraine if it decided to join NATO. The Ambassador further gave to understand that his country may have 'plans for Croatia, Hungary and Poland.' Albeit undiplomatic, such a statement tends to illustrate that Russia considers Bosnia, and central Europe beyond it, to be part of its zone of influence.

In 2014-2015, the international community put itself in 'stand-by' mode with minimal measures that scarcely made an impression on Putin. Contrary to the Yugoslav wars in the 1990s, the return of war is now forcing the US and Europe to take the threat seriously, show unanimity, enact unprecedented sanctions and to direct significant military support to Ukraine. Finally, Europe seems to be showing that it is capable of commanding the emergency register. The robust response of the West has been a surprise to everyone, including Putin.

Yet the question remains open as to whether this newly-crafted consensus can last, notably whether the EU will be able to cope with the multiple consequences of this U-turn for its policies of political cohesion, defence and energy autonomy. Further, we may well ask how the EU will counter the cyclical emotional economy: today's euphoria (supporting sanctions and welcoming refugees) may well become tomorrow's resentment. Furthermore,



From the time of the siege of Sarajevo

individual countries' interests and incomplete or incoherent strategies, notably in the fiscal area, might well undermine the current broader unity and policy on Russia.

As diplomacy has given way to the balance of power, we have to consider moving beyond sanctions which, on their own, will not put an end to the war. An effective rethinking of the military and political stances of both the EU and NATO is urgently needed. To state the obvious, it is high time to discuss

different ways of strengthening the defence of the entire Baltic and Nordic region as well as the western Balkans.

As for the EU, firstly, it is high time to envision a new security policy. Germany has taken the first convincing steps that must be followed by enactments. Secondly, it matters to close the gap of the East-West divide and achieve in practice the convergence around which there is otherwise so much hot air. Otherwise, the unexpected unity will rapidly fade away. Thirdly, a new

regional central European framework must be driven by democratic values instead of retrograde populism. The new geopolitical context opens a window of opportunity for a resolute counter to illiberal politics and for a true reorientation of the EU's enlargement and neighbourhood policies.

Bosnia back on the radar

There is a certain 'indecenty' in this sudden – of course absolutely welcome since it is long overdue – mobilisation in

Didn't Bosnia deserve the same outpouring of solidarity years ago, including military support to defend itself? Is Bosnia not part of Europe?

land opting for a different sort of neutrality – and accelerated the green transition. Our economies will significantly change as a result of this, as well as our understanding of freedom and democracy.

While the world is increasingly moving away from democracy and the liberal order, Russia is cold-bloodedly tripping down the road from 'sovereign democracy' (Vladislav Surkov) to authoritarianism and a totalitarian police state. Following a strategy driven by an attempt to divide the EU by isolating and bribing 'greedy states' (Charles L. Glaser) – i.e. individual countries (or organisations and key individuals within them) or entities such as Republika Srpska – Russian President Putin has chosen the all-or-nothing strategy of outright war in its various post-modern forms: warfare in Ukraine; cyberwar;



Mariupol, Ukraine these days / EPA

favour of Ukraine's territorial integrity. Nevertheless, didn't Bosnia deserve the same outpouring of solidarity years ago, including military support to defend itself? Is Bosnia not part of Europe? Putin faces a determined and unanimous Europe. Alas that this was not the situation which confronted Milošević.

The Bosnian crisis of 2021, engineered by the Serb member of the Bosnian state presidency, Milorad Dodik, threatens to undo the Dayton Agreement that ended the war and redraw the country's borders along ethnic lines. As in the past, Bosnia has been supported only rhetorically with initiatives that are mostly cosmetic. And worse, following the same policy of negotiating with the three nationalist and corrupt overlords, negotiating notably changes to the election law that would secure disintegrationist agendas and that benefit most of all the Kremlin's local clients, could only be doomed from the start.

During her visit to Sarajevo on March 10, German Foreign Affairs Minister, Annalena Baerbock recognised – what has long been obvious – that the EU and Germany have not been very active players in the region for quite some time. Beyond this admission, however, the remarks were far too generic to deduce any change of direction.

Most worryingly, on March 18, the EU Council amended the decision concerning the possibility of restrictive measures in view of the situation in Bosnia – i.e. the adoption of sanctions targeting Dodik – introducing a requirement for unanimity instead of the qualified majority voting procedure; a manoeuvre permitting the retention on board of Hungarian autocrat Viktor Orbán concerning sanctions on Russia. Bosnia deserves better than horse-trading.

The new geopolitical environment sparked by war in Ukraine may, however, possibly offer Bosnia a way out of its 'quagmire'.

Past mistakes should finally be acknowledged and, above all, the ongoing strategy which de facto pushes for the division of Bosnia on ethnic lines should be swept away. It is time to re-engage in Bosnia, but much differently than in the past. The paradigm shift and robust strategies, now being enacted for Ukraine, should also be applied in Bosnia.

The ongoing reinforcement of the European military force EUFOR Althea is welcome and should be bolstered and made more visible in Republika Srpska. Noteworthy, the Operation Althea is backed up by NATO under the 1999 Berlin Plus agreement – thus the EU can use anytime NATO's

capabilities. This must be supplemented by a process of profound political reforms involving non-nationalist stakeholders as well as civil society with the task of strengthening Bosnia's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Further, it is high time to review, adapt and speed-up the EU integration process. Finally, it seems obvious that the time has now come to close the Office of the High Representative and thereby get rid of the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board – systematically used by Russia to support Putin's ally, the secessionist Milorad Dodik.

Lessons to be learnt

In his 1993 address to the International Academy of Philosophy in Liechtenstein, Alexandr Solzhenitsyn pinpointed that the 1989 mantra – 'the end of history', 'peace', 'the eternity of democracy' – was nonsense. In his view, if there was a lesson to be learned from the horrifying 20th century, it was that it is up to each individual to limit themselves, to limit the murderous impulse of which that century was the illustration. Unfortunately, the 21st century is proving itself unable to extricate humanity from self-destructive and automatic collapse.

To state the obvious, it is high time to discuss different ways of strengthening the defence of the entire Baltic and Nordic region as well as the Western Balkans

More urgent than ever is what Václav Havel termed 'postdemocracy'. In the footsteps of 'non-political politics', postdemocracy meant nothing more, and nothing other, than a democracy that has once again been given human content – a revolution of 'head and hearts' (Tomáš Masaryk); a general awakening.

This is precisely what we may learn from Ukrainians. They resist; they fight stoically. Naturally. But they also tell us that a nation is not about a story of the past. Having a nation means asserting its own existence on a day-to-day basis and directing action towards its future. Democracy is not a state, it is a practice aimed toward the future.

From here on, instead of 'Waiting for Godot' we must rekindle the sort of waiting related to the hope of finding a way out, via a sense of being able to act and having the will to do so.

(Author is Professor of Philosophy at Collège de Genève)



Bosnia in the 1990s



«Passages à Sarajevo»

Artbook by Christophe Solioz and Milomir Kovačević Strašni for the photography. The book is dedicated to the victims of the siege of Sarajevo

Passages à Sarajevo (Geneva, Georg, autumn 2022) follow the logic of collage and brings 21 sequences, each one combining short autobiographic urban miniatures (snapshots of urban spaces), quotes and photography. Among the 40 photography by Milomir Kovačević Strašni, the artbook features portraits of Joan Baez, Christian Boltanski, Ferida Duraković, Louis Jammes, Edin Numankadić, Abdulah Sidran and Susan Sontag.

City-sketches

Not only for a foreigner, Sarajevo's streets and districts are written in a "foreign language". Like a hieroglyph, a text, a dream, they request to be deciphered: "The knowledge of cities is

the marginal, the liminal and the transient, to that which escapes the everyday perceptual realm. The knowledge will emerge from the juxtaposition of the deciphered surfaces, the respective texts, and pictures.

Such a perspective opens the way to new understanding of history and of the relation between past and present that might show Sarajevo's surface in another way. The mosaic of urban miniatures seeks to disclose what is more enduring from the ephemera. Furthermore, they will attempt to capture things and people as they are about to vanish or are remembered only after they have already gone. While highlighting the visual character of the urban miniatures, the pictures will underline this dialectic of disappearance.



bound up with the deciphering of their dream-like expressive images." (Siegfried Kracauer)

In one of his famous city-sketches, Kracauer emphasizes the relation between construction of a space and dream interpretation: "Spatial images are the dreams of society. Wherever the hieroglyphics of any spatial image are deciphered, there the basis of social reality presents itself." — Kracauer plays here with the words Raumbild (spatial image) and Traumbild (dream image).

These urban miniatures pay attentiveness to that which lies at the edge of our conventional field of vision and/or which fleetingly crosses it. Distraction involves here a particular openness to

The book includes quotes by: Ivo Andrić, Jean-Christophe Bailly, Walter Benjamin, Maurice Blanchot, Bogdan Bogdanović, Dževad Karahasan, Ozren Kebo, Lewis Mumford, Jean-Luc Nancy, Isak Samokovlija, Mesa Šelimović and Abdulah Sidran.

From the Book

A part of the text from the book "L'homme-Sarajevo", Espirit, 1995, of author Bogdan Bogdanović, was written next to the 1994 photograph of Christian Boltanski, a French artist.

...The images of Sarajevo that television shows us every night reveal that it's all the opposite: a labyrinthine city you can't get out of, not even in theory..

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As I sit in Kyiv



The world, stunned by the violence of the break-up of the former Yugoslavia, kept repeating to itself: "How is it possible for another war in Europe in the 20th century?" Today, the world, stunned by Russia's violence against Ukraine, utters (almost) the same phrase

Writer: **RON HAVIV**

As I sit in Kyiv, the Russian bombs strike the city intermittently, echoing the more serious attacks happening elsewhere in Ukraine. The beginning of this war had similarities with what I saw

30 years ago, in another part of Europe. Bosnians are set to acknowledge the anniversary of the beginning of their war of independence, with the commonly known date of April 6th, 1992.

In Bijeljina

I have always thought the war actually started days earlier in the town of Bijeljina, which towards the end of March had split into two different ethnic sides. I had arrived on the Serbian side and like the war previous in Croatia, the combatants, in the beginning, were the townspeople, fighting against the others. Civilians were being killed by other civilians, armed with hunting rifles, shotguns, and some with more serious weaponry.

After a few days of fighting with no obvious change in position or real understanding of what was to come, the next level of fighting arrived in the form of the Serbian paramilitary unit, the Tigers, led by the infamous or heroic (depending on one's point of view) leader, Arkan. Sweeping through the city, the Tigers solidified Serbian control. I witnessed executions and documented them. My image of Abdurahman and Hamijeta Pajaziti and Ajša Šabanović, lying on the ground, came to represent



People flee Russian forces in Irpin, Ukraine, March 7th, 2022 / VII PHOTO / RON HAVIV



Tigers in Bijeljina, April 1st, 1992 / RON HAVIV

My image of Abdurahman and Hamijeta Pajaziti and Ajša Šabanović, lying on the ground, came to represent the concept of ethnic cleansing that continued throughout the war

celebrate the hatred depicted in the frame. It has even reached the point where the image is used as a symbol of cruelty and ethnic cleansing in other conflicts. The suffering of the Bosnian people is seen as experienced by all.

the concept of ethnic cleansing that continued throughout the war. In the documentary film, *Biography of a Photo*, that Lauren Walsh and I are co-directing, we explore the life of that image: from its beginnings in 1992 to the ways it operates still today, thirty years later. At first, that image had little to no geopolitical impact; the warning of what was to come wasn't heeded by global leaders.

But the image took on new roles and meanings over time. It is known throughout Bosnia and much of the world. The photograph, referenced in the opening of the Hague Tribunal as one of the inspirations for its creation, has served as evidence in war crimes trials, it has been used in peace and reconciliation programs, and it has inspired much art, including paintings, film, and literature. Yet it has also been called 'mis-captioned' by some who don't want to confront this past, and there are others who continue to

The brutality of the War

Thirty years on the image is powerful; it continues to appear and reappear. And thirty years on we also have to ask about the limit of that power. As we now witness some imagery that can easily be exchanged between Ukraine and Bosnia, I am confronted with the idea that the photographs I showed the world of the Bosnian sacrifice were limited in their ability to remind people of the brutality of war.

The world stunned by the violence with the breakup of the Former Yugoslavia, repeated to itself, "How can there be another war in Europe in the 20th century?" Today, the world stunned by the violence that Russia is applying to Ukraine, utter the same but different phrase, "How can there be a war in Europe in the 21st century?"

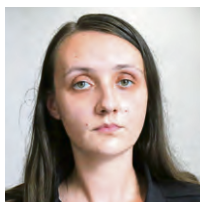
(Author is the co-founder of the VII Photo Agency and The VII Foundation)



Memorial plaque on the bridge / SENAD GUBELIĆ

Is This Sarajevo?

Today, we are writing new stories on the Bridge which preserves the history of Bosnia and Herzegovina's capital, the Bridge of Suada Dilberović and Olga Sučić, the Bridge of heroism, defense and the soul of Sarajevo



Writer: **MATEA JERKOVIĆ**

"We won't give you away, Bosnia", tens of thousands of Sarajevans and friends of Bosnia and Herzegovina chanted while walking down the streets of Sarajevo on that fifth day of April, 1992. It was a response to the imminent war and barricades that the aggressor set up during the night between April 4th and 5th. At the crossroads in Pofalići, citizens chanted in unison: "We don't want Vukovar, we don't want Vukovar..."

Columns of people were moving while the sound of sporadic gunfire reverberated through the city. The crowd responded by singing: "My Bosnia, wonderful, dear, beautiful, gorgeous...inside you is Sarajevo, the city of sevdah..." Shortly afterwards, a river of citizens arrived in front of the Assembly of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Then, gunshots were fired from Hotel Holiday Inn, directly onto the crowd...Screams...More and more people were moving towards the Vrbanja Bridge. Then came more gunshots...

Two bodies, both female, lied on the bridge pavement. Several meters away lied a wounded man. An exact number of wounded people was not known...

The loss of a most loved one

Suada Dilberović, a 24-year old student of medicine in Sarajevo, who was born in Dubrovnik, lying on the ground, asked before she died, "Is this Sarajevo?" Severely wounded Olga Sučić breathed her last on the way to hospital. Milomir Vučijak, also known as Uncle Mišo, as his neighbors at Obala 27 July Street in Sarajevo (what is today Aleja Lipa Street) nicknamed him, died that same night from serious injuries. The siege of Sarajevo began.

On April 6th, 1996, the Vrbanja

Bridge was renamed the Bridge of Suada Dilberović and a memorial plaque was put on the Bridge in honor of the student who had given her youth to the city that she had genuinely loved. On May 9th, 2018, a memorial park dedicated to Suada Dilberović was opened in front of the Faculty of Medicine in Sarajevo, as a permanent testimony to the killed youth. Every year, the Sarajevo University awards scholarships to talented students from the "Suada Dilberović" Fund. Suada was buried at the Bare cemetery, in Sarajevo, the city she had loved so dearly, on April 8th, 1992. Hundreds of people and numerous reporters attended her funeral. Her mother Sanija, nicknamed Sana, and sister Mirza live in Dubrovnik, her sister Edina lives in Sarajevo and sister Đenana lives in New Zealand. Her father Atif died in 2016, having never recovered from grief over the loss of his child's hug he had been robbed of.

"It has been thirty years since the saddest day of our lives. It is extremely hard to describe what life has been like all these years since the awful day which changed everything. Only parents who have lost a child can fully comprehend what it is like. The sudden loss of a sister, forever, can only be felt by those who have experienced such loss themselves. It is simply impossible to describe grief, as the power of words fails to describe the depth of emotions of such kind.

Sorrow does not cease over time, pain does not weaken, the intensity of missing her does not decrease as the days go by. We simply learn to accept and live with it this way. Every Spring, as April approaches, our pain intensifies, the wounds and vivid memories reactivate, and so it goes on in circles, in waves. What we strongly wish for, form the bottom of our hearts, is that other people do not live to experience the sor-

row and pain of a loss of a loved one, so young and innocent. At the same time, we know that as we write this, it is exactly what someone out there is going through. And that in itself is devastating.

Throughout her brief life Suada embodied all she believed in: truth, fairness, solidarity, honesty and respect. Since the early age and all the way through to her student days, she was the first to stand up for those who were weak, the first in line to offer help to those in need. She nurtured love and friendship with all people alike - inclusively, equally and unconditionally. Choosing medical profession made it possible for her to put all her values in practice and to serve all those who needed help - not only in terms of medical care, but also kindness, empathy and a human touch", members of the Dilberović family told us on the eve of the 30th anniversary of her murder.

The values nurtured by the young student are also taught by her closest family members.

"Thirty years on, Suada is represented in all the little things which carry her values and all that she stood for. What we are teaching our children and new generations now is exactly that which Suada promoted and lived for. This way, we hope that their future will be brighter than the past and present our generation has lived through. We hope that they will build a world based on values of good, humanity and peace, where no young lives are lost in vain", it is stated in the letter of the Dilberović family.

Olga Sučić, a 34-year old woman, left her handbag on that fifth day of April, 1992 in her office at the Executive Council of the Assembly of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and told her colleagues: "I will be back soon". She never came back to collect her bag.

A reporter asked her why she was on the Bridge, and she replied, "I am the mother of two children, and I will defend this city".

The Sarajevo heroine gave her life for freedom. Ante Sučić, the famous mayor of the City of Sarajevo from 1975 to 1981, when Sarajevo was chosen to host the 1984 Winter Olympic Games, was her uncle. But Sarajevo ignored her sacrifice for many years. Olga's ex-husband Goran and their family were trying to prove for many years that Olga too was killed on that fifth day of April, 1992. His outcries sounded like a whisper.

Only few heard him. With the support of Edina Kamenica, an Oslobođenje journalist, the Suada Dilberović Bridge was finally renamed the Suada Dilberović and Olga Sučić Bridge, on December 3rd, 1999, and a new memorial plaque carrying the names of both victims was erected on April 6th, 2001.

Permanent Warning

March 20th, 2022. There are flower bouquets and wreaths laid at the Suada Dilberović and Olga Sučić Bridge. There is also a woman, wearing a white jacket, staring off in the distance. Nora Trifković, a 33-year old woman, lost her mother on that fifth day of April 1992. She was 2, and her sister Jelena was 9. Severely wounded during the war, Jelena was evacuated from Sarajevo to a receiving hospital. She now lives in Denmark. Nora stayed behind in Sarajevo - to defy, warn and tell. She is often told that she looks just like her mother. Today, she is mother herself: she has a nine-year old son, Nidal. Nora's first memory is that of a girl who could not accept the killing of her mother.

"I did not accept it the way it was, that my mum had been killed, that my mum had died, that my mum was not around...Being a child who craved love and mother's affection, I was imagining, so to speak, I was hoping that she had gone somewhere, perhaps, with another man, to live a different life somewhere else, that she was going to come back one day, that it was not the way it was, that my mum was alive... But, over time, when you grow up, listen to the news, watch news on television, you hear all sorts of things...With the years passing by, and the war that is going on, you come to understand that it is killing, death, that it is a normal process for individuals who are leaders of states. So, over time, I came to realize what had happened. Of course, my grief has never gone away as I still miss that love and affection, perhaps, because, first of all, my parents got divorced before she died, and then, on top of everything, she was killed. But, you accept it with some pride, and also with some sadness and yearning because she is not with you, because today, I have a son who, unfortunately, has only one grandfather, my father, and nobody else - all of them died. Of course, he will miss a grandmother, everybody will be talking about their grandmothers, and their visits their grandmothers, and he will have nothing to say. He has only one grandfather, which makes it even more difficult for me as he is probably longing for their love", Nora shared with us her deepest sadness.

She also recalls the day when her father took her to the Bridge and showed her where her mother had been killed, and also a memorial plaque carrying only one name. As a girl, she did not know what was going on.

"After an initiative was launched to change the plaque, after all those requests, petitions and letters sent to the municipal authorities and various institutions, which I do not remember, since my father and my grandmother launched it, the newspapers began



Awarding scholarships from the Fund "Suada Dilberović" / FENA



Suada i Olga

Dilberović (1968 - 1992) Sučić (1958 - 1992)

su bile prve žrtve agresije na BiH, koje su poginule na Vrbanja mostu u Sarajevu tokom mirovnih demonstracija ispred Skupštine Republike BiH 5. aprila 1992. godine. Suada Dilberović je iz Dubrovnika došla u Sarajevo studirati medicinu. Olga Sučić je bila službenica Skupštine, koja je izašla s posla da učestvuje u demonstracijama. Suada Dilberović se smatra prvom žrtvom rata, dok Olga Sučić u tom kontekstu dugo nije spominjana. Obje su sahranjene 8. aprila 1992. na groblju Bare, gdje je stotine građana/ki ispratilo Suadu, dok su na Olginom grobu bili/e samo njeni/e najbliži/e. Vrbanja most u Sarajevu je 6. aprila 1996. preimenovan u Most Suade Dilberović. Nakon dugotrajnog zalažanja Olginog bivšeg muža Gorana Trifkovića i novinark Edine Kamenice, ploča je promijenjena 6. aprila 2001, te danas uključuje imena i Suade Dilberović i Olge Sučić.

writing about it, something was going on, and, eventually, the plaque was changed. I felt proud, somehow. I remember the day when the plaque was unveiled, I was a fifth or sixth grader. My elementary school, "Vladislav Skarić", is close by, and I remember that the whole class and our homeroom teacher came to attend the ceremony. I had not known that they would come, so it was something great to me. I realized that the people had accepted the truth, that she had been on that Bridge, that she had been killed, because it had been hushed up, covered up, hidden, until photos and videos were shown on television. Imagine how I felt when I saw a photo showing my mum being carried, with a caption beneath saying it was Suada Dilberović. These are the things that you cannot explain to yourself, but, thanks God, there is a different plaque now, and it was much easier, you know that it was accepted. But I still meet the people who say it is the Suada Dilberović Bridge. I do not mind it, but it jars on my ears that word, Olga, is missing, it is simply missing, and it is annoying and it hurts. In the past, I reacted, but I no longer do that, it is not their fault, I cannot blame them, particularly younger generations, they do not know it. I do not think I should explain who my mother was, why the Bridge did not have that name since the very beginning. I could not explain it to myself, let alone to them. Once I said, the worst feeling I get is when I realize that if her name had been Fatima, perhaps, it would have been engraved on the plaque right in the beginning, that is the worst feeling, it always hurts me, that nationalism, ethnically based divisions, which, I think, was the main reason for all that", Nora recalls.

In the past, she used to be angry because crowds of people were silent. She wandered why nobody thought it necessary to say that Olga had been killed on that Bridge.

"A woman called me once, and she never called me again, probably out of fear. She told me, 'I took your mother from the bridge to the nearby stone wall, from where they took her away.' I wonder why those people were silent all those years, why nobody thought it necessary to say after the war: 'That woman was killed there, put her name on the plaque'. It was somehow concealed. This was why, I was angry, it was not clear to me, but I can still understand, those people too might be afraid of everything that happened during the war, I can understand it", Nora says.

Perhaps, she was a bit angry at her mother for running out of office straight into the river of people, which was rash, she says, and for not thinking about

Nora and her sister at home, or that she might be killed.

"This was the reason why, perhaps, I was a bit angry at her since I am mother now, and I am thinking, I would not have rushed out just like that, I would have stayed with my child. But I am no longer angry. Anger is not my problem, because, if she had not run out and had not been killed on that day, I would not have been here, she might have saved ten lives in a sea of people, because only the two of them were shot", Nora explained.

She is happy that her neighbors still remember her mother.

"There are a few neighbors from before the war, who still live in the same building, and who remember my mother from the period when she was married to my father, and they say, 'You look exactly like your mother, you are just the spitting image of your mother'. When they see me carrying shopping bags, they say, 'Your mother did exactly the same, she washed carpets when she was 9 months pregnant.' Such stories fill my heart, because I know that she was noticed, appreciated, that people loved her, that she was valuable. Some women who had shared office with her at the Executive Council called me, and it means a lot to me when they say some nice words to me, when I know that my mother is remembered, that they know who she was, and that she is not only known for being killed on the bridge. She is remembered as a nice person,

which means most to me", Nora says.

She has a vivid memory of her fraternal grandmother and reintegration of Grbavica.

"That was also painful, since my grandmother was in Grbavica, she lived in the red "Metalka" residential building, across the OHR, and right on a demarcation line, and we did not see her for 4 or 5 years, until Grbavica was liberated. I remember, we went to the bridge in Pofalići, the Liberation Bridge, and we met with her there", Nora recalls.

She is telling her son stories about this grandmother whom he did not meet, the grandmother who became a symbol of the siege, a symbol of the defense of Sarajevo. Her son Nidal's homeroom teacher, who was also Nora's homeroom teacher, made sure that Nidal and his classmates know the history of the city. She often takes them to the Bridge and tells them that it is the Bridge of Nidal's grandmother. But Nidal is not concerned about the war.

He is mature enough to understand it, but also young enough to believe in a happy and nice future. But stories about a new war make that bright boy worried. He often says, "Please, do not frighten me".

"It is so sad that after so many years my child is afraid of war. It is too sad, since I went through that hell, and now, I have a child at home watching the war in Ukraine, thinking that it will happen to us here tomorrow", the young mother speaks frankly.

That her mother's sacrifice was not worth it, Nora says, is shown by the current political situation.

"You see the current political situation in BiH, it was obviously not worth it. Not only my mother's life, but the lives of all veterans, disabled people in this country, were not worth it, obviously, and I only hope that the photos from Ukraine and Russia will bring people back to their senses. I hope that our politicians will understand that our people do not care about weapons or another war. Our problem is that a bottle of cooking oil costs BAM 5, this is what we are thinking about, we are thinking about its price tomorrow, and not about fighting a war", says Nora who is afraid of another war mostly because she is the mother.

Even her father told her that their passports should always be at hand, because in 1991 he was the first one to say that there would be no war, but the war broke out. Based on that experience, she thinks that there will be another war because the minds of the people on all sides are poisoned. If a new war breaks out, Nora will leave, although she has always lived in Sarajevo.

"Trust me, I would be the first one to grab my child and leave because my mother was killed and I have nothing today, literally nothing, and I really believe that I would not achieve anything by staying behind with my child; he goes to school and should finish his education one day, and then find a job, while I, at the age of 33, do not have a permanent job. I have not received anything from this state for the past 33 years, and the saddest thing is that when I get a job for a few months, I get it only because of my mother, and nobody asks me about my education", Nora said, adding that some people, who were willing to help, called her but were unable to do anything because of the political situation.

She identifies as a Bosnian and Herzegovinian because this is how she was brought up, and "ethnically mixed marriages" are quite normal in her family.

"So long as we believe that we have to be divided along religious lines, there will be no progress. All those pictures from Ukraine are so painful to me: although I was a small child, I saw so many things, and I would not like my child or any other child to have the same experience and see the same things. I hope that everybody will understand that a war does not bring good to anybody. I think BiH is a small coun-

try which has survived so many years because of its ethnic and religious diversity, and we have always been good hosts, and people still appreciate us, remember us by the Olympic Games, they are telling stories about us, and today, we are dealing with Bakir, Dodik, Čović and their ilk, and it hurts me a lot. I would not like anybody to experience what we experienced", Nora says with tears in her eyes, adding that if the current situation continues, she will be forced to emigrate in order to secure a better future for her son.

Her Mother's Legacy

But her love for this city is huge, and although she had many opportunities to leave, she remained here.

"After the war, many people asked me why I had not left the country... I did not, I feel a need, I feel a duty to be here, because it is my mother's legacy, because she was killed here. She died for me and a million of other children, people, who live here, so, can you image me leaving? No way. However, the financial, economic and political situation in BiH is forcing me to pack my bags and leave with my child. Immersed in make-believe, deceiving myself year after year, but I think I will be forced to leave if not by a new war, God forbid, then by my financial situation, because I have two pensioners at home who find it hard to make ends meet, plus me with my child, divorced, with a measly alimony, permanently unemployed, with an unsolved housing problem, I do not know where to start from. I would prefer staying here, but I think I will leave because I have been trying to find a permanent job, but there are always contracts, uncertainty, I work two months, then I have no job for the next three months, then again I work two months, then I have no job for the next five months, it has been like that for many years, and then I just comfort myself. The worst thing you can tell your child is, 'When mum gets paid, we will go somewhere', and then mum has no job. It puts pressure on me, it is painful in my chest because if I did not have anything during the war, and it is so sad that in peacetime I am unable to afford certain things to my son. If it is a luxury to take your child to the cinema, to buy your child an ice cream.... These are the things that prey on me, and hurt me. I would be sad to leave, I would regret that decision, I do not feel like leaving. I have a deep connection with this place; the Statehood Day, the Independence Day, all that is the same to me, April 5th, 6th, I always feel the same, I have a very strong bond with my home country, and I would not like to leave, because my roots are here. Ante Sučić, my mother: I did not come here from another planet, I have a strong bond with this city and country. Everything hurts me. When I see the mayor, I feel sad, she was a child and lived in Grbavica during the war, and today she is the mayor. My mother's uncle served as a mayor, and then I realize that I am not a newcomer, that I have my roots here... But, sadly, it means nothing today, so... I should grab my suitcase and my child, as if there was a war...", Nora says and walks away towards Wilson's Promenade, towards the Bridge on which her mother stood at the forefront of defense against fascism.

The river Miljacka still flows under the Bridge. Today, some other children, mothers and fathers walk across the Bridge. We are eternally grateful to all mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers, daughters and sons, husbands and wives who stood up and stopped the evil.

"A drop of my blood is spilled, so the river Bosnia may never run dry".



Nora, daughter of Olga Sučić / DIDIER TORCHE

Najbogatija riznica tradicionalnih recepata

“Klas” kao simbol bh. ponosa

Sigurni smo da se većina vas nikad nije zapitala kako je ulica Paromlinska u sarajevskom naselju Dolac Malta dobila ime. U istoj toj ulici, punih 120 godina smještena je kompanija “Klas”, a temelje za izgradnju njene Velepekare postavio je Paromlin. Odatle i ime ove ulice! 1902. pokrenuta je inicijativa za izgradnju Sarajevskog „Paromlina“. Oko ove inicijative okupili su se sarajevski uglednici i marljivo radili šest godina na njenom ostvarenju, tako da se ovaj značajan i planski rad na pokretanju prvog paromlina s pravom uzima kao godina osnivanja “Klasa”.

Ako pogledamo današnji rad i proizvodnju kompanije “Klas”, pa se malo osvrnemo na prve godine postojanja, vidjet ćemo impresivan historijat, rast i napredak jer su počeci rada čuvenog „Paromlina na valjke“, davne 1910. imali jednu poslovnu zgradu sa četiri sprata, silos i automatske uređaje, strojamu sa parom mašinom, kotlovcu sa dva velika kotla, ekonomiju i stolarsku radionicu, magacin, industrijsku prugu, jednu kuću za činovnike i 10 radničkih stanova. Godišnja proizvodnja “Paromlina” iznosila je više od 1.000 vagona.

Četiri godine od pokretanja proizvodnje počeo je Prvi svjetski rat. Cijelim tokom trajanja Prvog svjetskog rata Paromlin je proizvodio brašno, a zbog teške ekonomske situacije prodajne cijene i potrošnja po glavi stanovnika bila je strogo kontrolisana od Vladinog povjerenika za zemaljski glavni grad Sarajevo.

Značaj Paromlina u bivšoj Jugoslaviji

Sarajevski Paromlin bio je jedan od 30 najvećih mlinova u sistemu koji je zajednički nabavljao pšenicu iz inozemstva za vrijeme bivše Jugoslavije. U to vrijeme jedan dio upravne zgrade Paromlina služio je i kao VI osnovna škola. Većinu opreme razmontirao je i odveo u Mađarsku tada većinski dioničar Paromlina – Peštanski mlin „Viktorija“.

Preživio je prvi, ali ga je „stigao“ i Drugi svjetski rat. Raspoloživi kapaciteti Paromlina u tom periodu radili su samo povremeno i ograničeno. Vlasti NDH su, kao i u ranijim ratovima, uredbama ograničile opskrbu građanstva hranom, a Gradski aprovizacioni ured dijelio je posebne iskaznice sa kojima su stanovnici mogli dobiti dnevne obroke krušne hrane od 150g kruha, žitarica, odnosno 110g brašna proizvedenog od žitarica.

1945. godine u objektu sarajevskog Paromlina osnovano je preduzeće „Ishrana – trgovinsko preduzeće“, a na nivou grada formira se Gradsko narodno preduzeće “GRANAP” koje u svom sastavu ima mlin i pekara. Samo tri godine nakon toga, osnovano je Gradsko mlinsko preduzeće „Mlinar“ Sarajevo. Pogoni su potpuno rekonstruisani i modernizovani, a ugrađen je i silos koji može primiti šest vagona žita. Za potrebe proizvodnje kruha, osnovano je Gradsko pekarsko preduzeće „Pekar“, proizvodnje tjestenina Gradska tvornica tjestenina, zatim Gradska tvornica bombona “Zora” itd...

Zahvaljujući prije svega brojnim humanitarnim programima, samo u ratnom periodu iz „Velepekare“ Sarajevo je isporučeno 114 miliona komada hljeba za potrebe racionalnog snabdijevanja, 230 g dnevno po stanovniku. S druge strane, ratne štete mjerile su se milionima DEM. Obavljajući svoje poslove tokom ratnih dešavanja i opsade Sarajeva, poginulo je 24, a ranjeno više desetina uposlenika „Klasa“



Sarajevski „Paromlin“ DD snimljeno 1910g.



1950. godine počeli su radovi na instaliranju novog električnog mlina u zgradi nekadašnjeg paromlina na Čengić Vili, a pet godina kasnije osnovan je TP „Žitopromet“ koji je tada zapošljavao 158 radnika. Formiran je laboratorij za ispitivanje kvaliteta žitarica i brašna, te kvaliteta hljeba pečenog u novoizgrađenoj parnoj pekari – Velepekari. „Žitopromet“ Sarajevo sastojao se tada od Velepekare

– industrije hljeba i peciva, te Tvornice suhog tijesta „Bosanka“ Sarajevo koja se bavila proizvodnjom tjestenine. Kroz godine rada „Žitopromet“ Sarajevo širi svoju mrežu prodavnica kako u gradu Sarajevu, tako i u Ilijašu, Brezi, Visokom. Prodajni asortiman je uključivao brašna tip 400, tip 600 i tip 1.000, bijeli i polubijeli hljeb... Prosječna godišnja meljava „Žitoprometa“ u periodu od 1957. do

1966. iznosila je preko 53.000 tona godišnje, dok je godišnja meljava svih mlinova u BiH u tom periodu prosječno iznosila oko 221.000 tona.

Bosanski lokum, rolat Sarko, čuveni Tost i hljebovi...

Jedan od proizvoda kojeg i danas imamo na policama nastao je 1972. kad je puštena u rad fabrika „Sarko“ Sarajevo, prva tvornica kolača u RBiH. Osnovni proizvod kojim se predstavila potrošačima bio je rolat – kolač „Sarko“ nazvan po imenu same fabrike. Opremu je isporučila renomirana londonska firma „Baker Perkins“, a jedna smjena je mogla proizvesti 14.400 komada rolata. Asortiman je ubrzo proširen novim vrstama biskvita, te izuzetno primamljivim „Bosanskim lokumom“.

Ubrzo nakon toga “Velepekara” pušta u prodaju svoj novi hljeb, poznat pod nazivom „TOST“, specijalno pakovanje bijelog hljeba, već narezanog u kriške koji se upotrebljava prepečen u tosteru ali se može koristiti i svjež. I onda kreće ekspanzija u proizvodnji raznih vrsta hljebova, te asortiman “Velepekare” čini više od 30 vrsta hljeba i peciva, a dnevno snabdjeva više od 500 prodajnih mjesta.

1978. izgrađeni su novi silosi i kapaciteti za preradu žitarica tada najsavremeniji na svijetu.



Novi „kula mlin“ imao je kapacitet proizvodnje 2.400 tona brašna dnevno i bio najveći objekat ove vrste u bivšoj Jugoslaviji. Uporedo sa izgradnjom mlina izgrađeni su i novi silosi za uskladištenje pšenice projektovanog kapaciteta 29.000 tona.

A onda se desila opsada Sarajeva...

Period 1992-1995 bio je jedan od težih za kompaniju “Klas”. Sve nade i oči su bile uprte u snage ove kompanije. Kako preživjeti, da li će biti hljeba, da li će se narod moći prehaniti...

“Klas” je imao izuzetno dugu tradiciju dobro organizovane kompanije i početkom rata raspolagao značajnim vlastitim zalihama sirovina, energenata, repromaterijala, rezervnih dijelova, što će se pokazati ključnim u održavanju ratne proizvodnje, snabdijevanju i preživljavanju građana opkoljenog Sarajeva. Angažovani su agregatski kapaciteti za proizvodnju električne energije, doveden zemni gas kako bi se proizvodnja odvijala uprkos nemogućim uslovima.

Zahvaljujući prije svega brojnim humanitarnim programima samo u ratnom periodu iz “Velepekare” Sarajevo je isporučeno 114 miliona komada hljeba za potrebe racionalnog snabdijevanja, 230g dnevno po stanovniku. U Mlinu u Sarajevu samljeveno je ukupno 44.226.000





Brda i tada su potpuno uništena dva sprata. Sve se ponovo saniralo i mlin je stavljen u funkciju. Ljudi su radili i po desetak dana, a da nisu išli svojim kućama, sve za dobrobit Sarajlija. U oktobru '92 godine je uvedeno racionalisanje hljeba, pola kilograma za svakog građanina je raspoređeno po mjesnim zajednicama prema spisku Skupštine grada", objašnjavao je Mešak.

"Klas" je na raspolaganju imao 24 hiljade tona vlastite pšenice u Sarajevu, a osim toga stvorili su i zalihe soli, jaja, lož ulja, goriva. S vlastitim sirovinama mogli su raditi samostalno, dok se nisu stvorili uslovi za pomoć međunarodne zajednice i tada je dolazilo sve što je nedostajalo. Od 1. aprila 1992. do 31. januara 1997., proizvedeno je više od 131 milion komada hljeba, a svaki dan je izlazilo 77 hiljada kilograma proizvoda.

Osim hljeba za vrijeme rata proizvelo se šest i po miliona kilograma makarona te oko 17 miliona kilo-

proizvoda i tjestenina. "Klas" u 1997. godini zapošljava 827 radnika, od kojih preko 460 u vlastitoj maloprodaji.

Pet godina nakon rata, završena je potpuna rekonstrukcija Mlina i on je pušten u pogon 25.09.2002. Mlin je u tom vremenu, u tehničkom i tehnološkom smislu bio među najsavremenijim u Evropi. Istovremeno, imao je i najveći kapacitet od 450 tona dnevno u Jugoistočnoj Evropi. U okviru mlina instalirani su i silosi za brašno, uređaji za homogenizaciju brašna i silos za mekinje. Mlin je potpuno automatizovan i kompjuterski vođen i njime se praktično moglo upravljati i sa daljine. Pored ovog projekta, u "Velepekari" je instalirana nova linija za proizvodnju kapaciteta 3.500 kom/h hljeba od 400g, linije za proizvodnju peciva, krofnji, čabate, jufki i lisnatog i dizanog tijesta. U okviru "Klas" Centra u Mostaru instalirana je i puštena u rad industrijska pekara, diskont, veleprodaja i kafe slastičarna. Nabavljeno je i 20 novih dostavnih vozila.

Sve je krenulo da raste i da se ravija u pravcu koji je bio nezamisliv 1995. godine. 2007. godine "Klas" zapošljava ukupno 1.475 stalno uposlenih. Kupljen je savremeni informacioni sistem „Oracle“ i počinje potpuna modernizacija svih sistema.

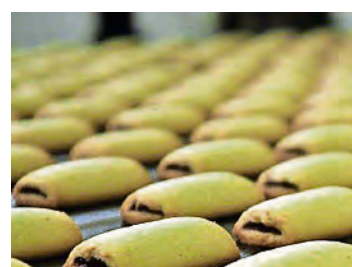
Prekretnica za kompaniju "Klas" desila se kupovinom njihovog većinskog paketa dionica 22. februara 2014. godine od strane AS Grupacije. Tada je jedna od najvećih bh. grupacija sa većinskim privatnim kapitalom, akvizirala ovu prehrambenu industriju. Akvizicijom "Klasa", AS Grupacija je postala većinski vlasnik još dvije kompanije: „Sprind“ d.d. Sarajevo i „Mlin i pekara“ d.d. Ljubac – Tuzla. Uz druge firme i brendove, iz prehrambene divizije AS Grupacije, kao što su AS Jelah, Vispak, Oaza, Solana AC Food sa brendovima Kent, Master, Maza, Tops i mnogi drugi, nastao je veliki prehrambeni sistem koji danas predstavlja simbol pokretača rasta i razvoja ukupne bh. ekonomije. Za samo dvije godine od akvizicije prihod "Klasa" uvećani su oko 50 posto, a osvojena su i nova tržišta u inozemstvu.

Iako je danas vodeći, "Klas" nastavlja razvoj

Danas je "Klas" vodeći proizvođač u mlinsko-pekarskoj djelatnosti, te među vodećim proizvođačima tjestenine, slastičarskih i konditorskih proizvoda u BiH i regionu. Godišnje "Klas" proizvodi oko 80.000 tona hrane, a upošljava 940 radnika. Spada u jednu od najvećih i najbogatijih čuvara tradicionalnih recepata za somune, pite, jufke, baklave, hurmašice i sva ostala ukusna domaća jela.

Svaki segment proizvodnog procesa, počev od nabave sirovina i repromaterijala, preko njihovog skladištenja, do proizvodnje i isporuke gotovih proizvoda, savjesno prate vrhunski tehnolozi i radnici s dugogodišnjim iskustvom. "Klas" godišnje u sigurnost, zdravstvenu ispravnost hrane i kontrolu kvaliteta uloži oko pola miliona KM.

Savremen i automatiziran proces proizvodnje, tradicija, neprocjenjivo iskustvo, široki asortiman proizvoda i njihov vrhunski kvalitet, te povjerenje i zadovoljstvo potrošača, formula su uspjeha ove kompanije kako na domaćem tržištu tako i van granica BiH.



kg pšenice, a fabrika „Sarko“ proizvela je 620 tona biskvita.

S druge strane, ratne štete mjerile su se milionima DEM. Obavljajući svoje poslove tokom ratnih dešavanja i opsade Sarajeva poginulo je 24, a ranjeno više desetina uposlenika "Klasa".

Direktor Velepekare za vrijeme rata u Sarajevu je bio Kemal Mešak, koji je u ovoj firmi počeo raditi 1972. godine. Prvo je bio tehnolog, zatim šef proizvodnje, a kako je istakao za jedan portal, '80-ih godina je počeo raditi kao direktor Velepekare.

"U ratu smo proizvodili u nenormalnim okonostima, bez brašna, soli, kvasca, plina, nafte. Uprkos tome, nijedan dan nije se desilo da nema hljeba, a u prvom planu nam je bilo snabdijevanje bolnice. Sarajevska Velepekara je nekoliko puta granatirana za vrijeme rata, a poginula su 24 radnika od '92 do '95. godine. Mlin je pogođen tenkovskom granatom s Hrasnog

grama brašna i drugih proizvoda. Sarajevska "Velepekara" sedam dana u toku cijelog rata, nije bila u mogućnosti da hljeb isporuči bolnicama i domovima za djecu i stare. "Velepekara" je za vrijeme rata morala redovno plaćati utrošenu struju i gas (iako je bila uključena u tzv. humanitarni program) i na račun je uplatila 1,7 miliona maraka.

Nakon svih ratnih nedaća, ponovo "staje na noge"

Nakon završetka opsade Sarajeva, Uprava "Klasa" i njeni uposlenici ulažu maksimum napora u obnovi porušenog, remontu oštećene i ratnom proizvodnjom amortizovane opreme i traženjem rješenja za nastavak još dinamičnijeg razvoja i uvođenja novih najsavremenijih tehnoloških rješenja. Na posao se vraća oko 200 predratnih radnika, primaju se novi uposlenici i stručne radne snage. Nastavlja se i veliki broj humanitarnih projekata zahvaljujući kojim dolazi do konsolidacije i stabilizacije proizvodnje pekarskih





FAMA collection: Map of the siege of Sarajevo, 1992 - 1996

rajevo

1994 1995



VRIJEME RATA

Posljednji ručak Ristovića

U Gornjim Velešićima je ubijeno šest članova porodice Ristović dok su ručali u kući

Na desnoj strani uskog i strmog puta koji vodi ka samom vrhu Huma i dalje prema Kobiljoj glavi, na dalekoj gradskoj periferiji, nalazi se kuća porodice **Ristović**. U njoj danas nema nikoga, a do prije dva dana tu je živjela cijela jedna velika porodica: majka **Radosava**, (61), njena dva sina, **Pero**, rođen 1951. i **Obren**, rođen 1955. godine, njihova sestra **Bosa**, rođena 1961. Majka Radosava i njeno troje djece ubijeni su 8. jula, a to se, prema zvaničnom saopštenju Ministarstva odbrane i Glavnog štaba oružanih snaga BiH, dogodilo oko 13.20 sati. U ovom saopštenju pogrešno su navedena neka imena i broj i srodstvo ubijenih. Porodica Radosave i njeno troje djece, na istom mjestu i u istom času ubijeni su još 14-godišnji **Danilo Ristović** i **Mila Ristović**, dok su teško ranjeni njen muž **Duško** i djevojka **Stojanka Mastilo**, koji su se takođe u tom trenutku zatekli u kući u Gornjim Velešićima broj 144.

Pokošeni jednim rafalom

Prema zvaničnom saopštenju, zločin su izvršili »trojica neidentifikovanih ubica u vozilu marke 'golf' bez registarskih tablica sa oznakom TO.«

U Stanici milicije u Velešićima rekli su nam da možemo posjetiti mjesto događaja i kao pratilac sa nama je pošao **Mušan Balović**, najbliži, dugogodišnji komšija ubijenih Ristovića i ostalih srpskih porodica koje žive u ovom dijelu Velešića. Prošli smo jednu stražu i došli do velike kuće odakle je pogled dopirao do Poljina, Mrkovića, ostalih brda oko grada a duboko dolje u dolini vidio se i dobar dio samoga grada. To je kuća u kojoj žive sa porodicama braća **Božić**, **Mirko** i **Trifko**.

— Srba ovdje ima desetak odsto — pričao nam je Mirko. — Niko se nikada nije ogriješio o komšije, ni u jednom ratu, i uvijek smo živjeli s njima komšijski. Mi smo ovdje starosjedioci, tu je naša djedovina, 300—400 godina, kako koje porodice. Nekada je ovdje bilo podjednako Srba i Muslimana, mi smo se svi poznavali, naš je otac radio kod prvog komšije Hasage Česovića, čuvao ga u ratu od četnika, ovaj njega od ustaša. Da je takvih ljudi sada više, ne bi se ovo sve događalo.

Božići su nam ispričali nešto više o porodici Ristović, sa kojom nisu bili u rodu, ali su gotovo sve srpske porodice koje ovdje žive vezane međusobno nekim bližim ili daljim vezama. Pero Ristović bio je poslanik u Skupštini BiH jedno vrijeme, bio je na rukovodnom radnom mjestu u »Bosnalijeku«. Njegov brat Obren bavio se poljoprivredom, majka Radosava bila je teški bolesnik vezana za postelju. Bosa, Perina i Obrenova sestra, radila je u »Astri«. Dani-

lo je bio njihov rođak i on je sve te kuće snabijevao hljbom i tako se dogodilo da se nađe u kući. Danilov stric Duško i njegova žena Mila, takođe su bili u kući, a s njima je bila i Bosina kolegica Stojanka. Ostali su živi Duško i Stojanka.

Idući uskim putem, prema kući Ristovića naši sagovornici **Mirko** i **Trifko Božić**, i **Mušan Balović**, pričali su nam detalje do kojih se moglo doći odmah nakon ubistva. Po njihovom mišljenju, zločin nisu izvršile komšije, ali je čudno da su ubice ušle u kuću tačno u času kad je ona bila puna, iako je riječ o ljudima koji se bave poljoprivredom i najveći dio dana provode napolju. »Kao da je neko pratio da li su svi ušli unutra da bi ih mogao jednim rafalom pokositi« — kaže jedan od sagovornika.

Zločin iz osвете?

Pred kućom smo našli **Todora Ristovića**, oca Danilovog. On nam je otključao kuću i uveo nas u sobu u kojoj je ubijeno šestoro a ranjeno dvoje ljudi. Ubistvo se dogodilo za vrijeme ručka. Svi su sjedili oko stola, na trosjedima i kaučima, u polukrug, duž zidova kuhinje, u čijem je jednom uglu šporet, na kojem je još stajala šerpa sa jelom, a svuda oko bilo je komadića razbijenih tanjira. Od



Todor i Dragan Ristović i Mušan Balović pred kućom u kojoj je izvršen zločin Snimio: Salko Hondo

obezbjedenje ove kuće i pomogao sam komšijama da se ovo bar malo sredi, da ih fino položimo, da ih prekrijemo, meit se brzo hladi, treba ih staviti u sanduk. Pružili smo ih fino. Ovaj masakr koji je izvršen, neza-

ovdje, do Danila, naslonjena glava na Danila, e sad, ko je ovdje sjedio ne znam, Obren ili neko drugi...

Todor Ristović je radio u »Pretisu« a ima još jednu kćer-

nam rekli sagovornici, bile su mješovite. Srbi iz ovog dijela Velešića bili su sve doskora u sastavu rezervne milicije, ali im je oružje oduzeto i više nisu učestvovali u zajedničkim strazama u naselju. Sve srpske kuće i ranije su pretresane, neke i više puta, a u blizini Huma izgorjela su prije mjesec dana tri srpska imanja, porodice Buha, Nikolića i Marića, a u jednoj od zapaljenih kuća izgorio je 80-godišnji Krsto Buha.

Kuća Ristovića ostala je potpuno prazna. Dvojica braće nisu bila oženjena, a njihova sestra Bosiljka nije bila udata. Na njihovoj kući je sada »mrtvački ključ«, kako reče jedan od komšija. Samo dva psa čuvaju stražu. Njihove njive i livade pružaju se prema gradu. Na livadama je visoka trava koju su bili dali jednom komšiji, Muslimanu, da pokosi »napola«.

Šestoro ubijenih sahranjeno je na groblju »Kod Lava«. Sahranjeni su, njih šestoro, u tri groba: majka Radosava je sama, dva brata i sestra su u drugom, a Danilo i njegova strina Mila u trećem grobu.

— Da je mene neko pitao, ja bi ih sahranio ovdje, na njihovoj zemlji, i svako treće veće palio svijetle — kaže Mirko Božić.

Nakon ovog događaja dio Srba iz Donjih Velešića pošao je sa porodicama sa svojih ognjišta. Zaustavili su ih ljudi iz Kriznog štaba i, nakon razgovora, osim dvojice braće **Simića**, svi su se vratili. Iz Gornjih Velešića niko nije ni pokušao da ode. Na odlasku, u blizini kuće Ristovića, vidjeli smo stražu. Rekli su nam da od juče ponovo dežuraju zajedno Srbi i Muslimani.

Vlado MRKIĆ

Osuda gnusnog čina

SARAJEVO, 11. JULA (BH-PRESS) — U vezi sa ubistvom petočlane porodice Obrena Ristovića, Ministarstvo odbrane Bosne i Hercegovine u saradnji sa Ministarstvom unutrašnjih poslova BiH izdalo je saopćenje kojim se najoštrije osuđuju izvršioce ovog gnusnog čina.

»Svi nadležni organi vrše intenzivnu potragu za počiniočima zločina i u najskorije vrijeme mogu se očekivati konkretni rezultati potrage o čemu će javnost biti odmah obaviještena. Bez obzira na motive, nacionalnost ili vjersku pripadnost izvršioaca ovog nedjela, ono je direktno usmjereno protiv zajedničkog suživotu na ovim prostorima i na liniji je onih snaga koje žele da ugroze osnove sistema suverene i nezavisne

Republike Bosne i Hercegovine«, kaže se u ovom saopćenju.

»Uvjeravamo domaću i svjetsku javnost, a posebno građane srpske nacionalnosti, da će državni organi Republike Bosne i Hercegovine zaštititi njihovu ličnu i imovinsku sigurnost i to svim mjerama koje joj stoje na raspolaganju. Pozivamo sve građane Republike Bosne i Hercegovine da osude ovo nedjelo i da učine sve da se spriječe i onemoguće ovakva i druga zločinstva koja idu jedino u prilog neprijatelja Bosne i Hercegovine«, stoji u saopćenju koje su potpisali ministar unutrašnjih poslova Bosne i Hercegovine Jusuf Pušina i ministar odbrane BiH Jerko Doko.

jednog do drugog ugla, od ulaznih vrata, pa preko cijelog suprotnog zida, ispod prozora, do sljedećeg ugla sa šporetom, ostali su tragovi metaka u visini glava ljudi koji su sjedili. Po svim uglovima, po podu, tragovi krvi.

— Oni su sjedili za ručkom, tanjiri su bili, kašike — kaže Todor.

Mušan Balović stigao je ubrzo poslije zločina na mjesto događaja.

— Ja sam u rezervnom sastavu milicije. Došao sam na

pamćen je u Velešićima. Meni je bilo teško, jer sam odrastao sa ovim mojim komšijama, kuća mi je 50 metara iznad njihove šume. Slika koju sam vidio u kući bila je užasna. Kako je ko uhvaćen da sjedi, samo što je

glavu bacio na stranu. Bosa je sjedila iza vrata, prekrštenih nogu, prvo sam nju vidio, preko prsa je bila prekošana i ispod vrata. Pera sam našao pokojnog između stola i kauča, majka je bila na kauču, bila je nepokretna, vidio sam da joj je noga prebijena ispod koljena, vjerovatno rafalom. Danilo je bio tamo, do babe, onda je Mila bila

ku. On kaže da niko od njegovih ubijenih rođaka nije bio stranački opredijeljen. Oružja nisu imali. Todor misli da zločin nisu počinile komšije nego neko ko je došao sa strane da zavadi ljude a »možda je i osveta.«

Između dvije straže

Istraga će reći svoje o ovom zločinu. Činjenice su sljedeće: šest ljudi ubijeno je za stolom, u vrijeme ručka, u kući koja se nalazi tačno negdje na pola puta između dviju straža, jedne koja kontrolise prilaz od Kobilje glave, druge na putu uz Velešić prema Humu. Te straže sve do prije 10-ak dana, kako su

Hadžići među deset najrazvijenijih općina u FBiH

Agresija na Hadžiće je započela relativno kasno u odnosu na početak sukoba u gradu Sarajevu. Ona se ogledala u oružanom napadu snaga JNA, srpske TO i srpske milicije na legalne organe opštine Hadžići 9. maja 1992. godine.

Prema riječima načelnika Općine Hadžići Hamde Ejubovića, separatistički SDS Hadžića uz pomoć JNA je planirao osvojiti dio teritorije hadžićke općine sa granicom od Oštika, preko Koščana i Ormanja, na kasarnu Pazarić, obuhvatajući i kasarnu Krupanjska rijeka i izaći na Bjelašnicu u rejonu Mrtvanja, a po dubini se spojiti sa opštinom Ilidža. Taj plan im se nije ostvario. Na raspolaganju su imali dobro opremljene jedinice JNA smještene u pet kasarni raspoređenih u krugu od nekoliko kilometara oko Hadžića, paravojne jedinice srpske TO i milicije kao i rezervne jedinice JNA smještene u TRZ Hadžići i kasarni Žunovnica.

Kako su Hadžići izgledali neposredno pred agresiju u pogledu vojnih i artiljerijskih kapaciteta?

- Samo u krugu TRZ Hadžići, neposredno pred agresiju, nalazilo se 30 tenkova. U kasarni Pazarić se nalazio jedan artiljerijski divizion JNA. Kasarna Žunovnica sa 68 podzemnih tipskih magacina predstavljala je jedno od najvećih skladišta naoružanja, municije i opreme JNA. I pored svega, nakon početnog napada JNA i srpskih snaga na zgradu SJB Hadžići, legalne vlasti su se uspjele konsolidirati i uspostaviti linije odbrane zatvarajući na taj način 3/4 teritorije općine Hadžići koju su držale pod svojom kontrolom snage ARBiH i MUP-a (9. b. br i SJB Hadžići) sve do kraja rata.

U čemu se najviše ogledao značaj političke i vojne odbrane Sarajeva kroz slobodan teritorij opštine Hadžići?

- Slobodni teritorij opštine Hadžići je predstavljao ključ za uspješnu odbranu BiH. Preko njene teritorije je glavni grad BiH Sarajevo imao vezu sa svijetom, preko nje su vodili putevi za srednju i sjevernu Bosnu, preko nje je postojala veza sa istočnom Bosnom, preko njene teritorije je bio jedini put za Hercegovinu i Hrvatsku, preko njene teritorije, a potom Igmana i Hrasnice je vodio Put spasa koji je spasio Sarajevo itd. Za odbranu slobodnih prostora hadžićke općine, ali i drugih područja širom BiH svoje živote je dao 261 pripadnik 9/109/191. brdske brigade, i 40 pripadnika policije SJB Hadžići i drugih jedinica policije. Naravno, za odbranu ovih prostora živote su dali i borci drugih jedinica koje su učestvovala u tome, i svima njima dugujemo dužno poštovanje i ogroman pijetet. Mi koji smo preživjeli, činimo i činit ćemo sve da se nikad ne zaborave ti naši heroji, naše gazije. Izgradili smo značajan broj spomen-obilježja koja će vječno opominjati na zlo koje nam se desilo, na naše heroje čijom žrtvom mi uživamo blagodeti današnjeg i budućeg života. I nastaviti ćemo



graditi i nove spomenike, a sjećanja na gazije svake godine kontinuirano omasovljavati gradeći kulturu sjećanja na njih kod svih uzrasta našeg stanovništva. Mladi naraštaji moraju nastaviti tu tradiciju, a mi ih moramo naučiti tome.

Stanovnici općine Hadžića su hrabro stali u odbranu grada Sarajeva i države Bosne i Hercegovine. Osim toga, pružili su utočište mnogim izbjeglicama. O kojem broju je tačno riječ?

- U toku agresije na slobodnim prostorima općine Hadžići pruženo je utočište, privremeni ili stalni smještaj, te pomoć u tranzitu za oko 30.000 prognanih i raseljenih žena, djece i staraca sa privremeno zauzetog teritorija hadžićke općine, te iz istočne Bosne i jugoistočne Hercegovine. Veliki broj njih nastavio je put u potrazi za smještajem u pravcu Konjica i Jablanice, te Visokog, Fojnice, Kiseljaka i Zenice. Dva puta veći broj od broja domicilnog stanovništva. Na ovom području su organizovani svi oblici društvenog života. Uspostavljena je efikasna civilna vlast, pokrenuta privreda, uspostavljen željeznički saobraćaj, obezbijeđeno snabdijevanje električnom strujom stanovništva, poljoprivredna proizvodnja se višestruko povećala, zdravstvena zaštita i obrazovanje su funkcionisali u punom kapacitetu, uspostavljena je i Ratna bolnica Suhodol itd.

Kakav je bio epilog djelovanja agresorskih snaga na području Hadžića?

- Nakon devetog maja paravojne snage SDS-a (srpski TO i Milicija) su sa područja hadžićke regije protjerale većinu nesrpskog stanovništva, a u pet logora na području Hadžića (zgrada Socijalnog, garaža Opštine Hadžići, Sportski centar Hadžići-KSIRC, magacin TO i podrum u zgradi Hotelka) zatvorili 715 muškaraca, starijih osoba, žena i djece bošnjačke i hrvatske nacionalnosti. U junu 1992. godine 300 logoraša je premješteno u logor u Kasarni Slaviša Vajner Čiča u Lukavici i KPD Kula na Ilidži, te 80 logoraša u oktobru 1992. u logor Planjina kuća u Semizovcu. U navedenim logorima ubijena su, umrla ili strijeljana 94 stanovnika Hadžića, a od tog broja tijela 74 logoraša ni nakon 28 godina nisu pronađena. Najveći broj njih, ukupno 46, odvojen je u Lukavici u Kasarni Slaviša Vajner

Čiča u noći 23/24. juna 1992. godine i od tada pa do danas o njima se ne zna ništa. Jedanaest logoraša iz Hadžića strijeljano je na brdu Žuč. Na lokalitetu Bunjevaca kuća, 12. decembra 1992. iz spomenute grupe logoraša odvojeno je devet logoraša s područja općine Hadžići, nakon čega su brutalno likvidirani strijeljanjem iz neposredne blizine. To je epilog sistematskog i planskog djelovanja agresorskih snaga i paravojnih jedinica SDS-a na istrebljenju bošnjačkog naroda hadžićkog kraja.

Kada je počeo period povratka prognanog stanovništva, kako je tekao taj proces i kako Hadžići izgledaju 30 godina nakon agresije?

- Nakon četiri godine, 6. marta 1996, prognani stanovnici sa područja hadžićke regije su se konačno mogli vratiti u svoje predratne domove. Na njihovim ognjištima zatekli su samo zgaristi. Agresor je spalio i porušio sve kuće, gospodarske objekte, porušio džamije, privredne i industrijske objekte opljačkao i uništio, a zgrada Opštine je još gorjela kad se stiglo do nje. Štete su bile ogromne. Od oko 10.000 Hadžićana, koji su se prijavili za povratak na predratne adrese stanovanja u Hadžićima, ni trećina ih se nije imala gdje smjestiti, a da prostorije imaju bar minimalne uslove za to. Nije bilo nijednog stana ni kuće sa čitavim staklima, većina vrata i prozora povadena je i odnesena, elektro i vodoinstalacije počupane i odnesene itd. Štete na privrednim objektima procijenjene su na 500.000.000 DEM. Telefonska centrala sa preko 3.500 brojeva demontirana je i odnesena, kao i sve vodovodne pumpe i sve armature iz devastiranih stanova i kuća. Zapaljeno je ili minirano i porušeno 1.250 privatnih kuća i još toliko privrednih i drugih objekata s oštećenjima preko 60%, što zahtijeva rušenje i novu gradnju. Oštećeno je preko 2.500 privatnih kuća čija su oštećenja u I kategoriji. Usljedile su godine obnove i podizanja privrede. Danas imamo jednu od najljepših lokalnih zajednica, koja se svrstava među deset najrazvijenijih u FBiH. Kreirali smo odličan ambijent za privredna ulaganja. Firme koje imaju sjedište na našoj općini godišnje ostvaruju milijardu i 150 miliona KM prometa i taj podatak dovoljno govori sam za sebe. Otvorili smo vrata i za novu oblast privrede, a to je turizam i izgradnja turističkih kapaciteta. Tako danas imamo dva ponajbolja hotela visoke kategorije u našoj državi, a to su Tarčin Forest Resort i Monty Igman. Tu su i pravi mali turistički gradovi, rezidencijalna naselja Crepljani, Lokve i Sarajevo Resort Osenik. Kada je u pitanju infrastruktura, rekonstruisali smo i izgradili preko 90 odsto puteva na našoj općini. Vodovodna i kanalizaciona mreža je izgrađena u više od 93 posto općine, dok je rasvjeta urađena u 98 posto općine. Obnovili smo Dom zdravlja Hadžići i izgradili nove ambulante u Binježu i Tarčinu. Velika sredstva ulažemo u poboljšanje zdravstvenih usluga na svom području kao i u razvoj sporta i sportske infrastrukture. Hadžići su tek jedna od nekoliko općina u BiH koja ima veliki fudbalski teren sa vještačkom travom i reflektorima urađen po svim UEFA i FIFA standardima. Ostajemo predani našem cilju da uspostavimo standarde koje imaju ljudi u drugim razvijenim evropskim gradovima. Nastojimo gostima i partnerima omogućiti optimalne uslove poslovanja, a putnicima namjernicima otkriti atribute kojima se naša općina ponosi. Svoju i energiju svih uposlenih u općini Hadžići bezrezervno ću posvetiti dobrobiti i razvoju naših Hadžića. Srdačno pozdravljam sve ljude dobre volje.

The art for living

182 premieres were staged in Sarajevo theaters, which were seen by more than half a million Sarajevans. The theater under siege showed how much art means to every man in hard times



Writer: **DINO MUSTAFIĆ, DIRECTOR**

During the siege of Sarajevo, which lasted 1425 days and became the longest one in modern history, the cultural life of the besieged city has spawned a very dynamic art scene. It is easy to show that Sarajevo defended itself with culture too, since there is a record of 3.102 works of art, 48 concerts and more than 170 exhibitions. In Sarajevo theaters, 182 premieres were staged, and were seen by more than half a million of Sarajevans. The theater under siege showed how much art in hard times means to every person and how much it can help to endure the impossible.

Visitors' Book

We had a visitors' book for theatrical performances during the war in which a female viewer wrote: "Thank you for not letting me go insane." I think in that sense art has done an awful lot in terms of healing. My first directing professional steps are related to that period - "Theater under siege" is a phenomenon that has become a subject of serious scientific studies in which eros defeats death and barbaric politics, not only with the numbers of premiers held and reruns, but with its exceptional creativity.

Art confronted the challenge of death as a game of life. Classical music pieces were played in the streets next to the ruined buildings, dramatic replicas of the cosmopolitan repertoire echoed from Sarajevo theaters in aesthetically thought-out directorial concepts,

with a clear artistic intention to capture the substance of life that Sarajevo represented in those years - "laughter and crying, wisdom and sorrow, man and comprehension". A parallel reality was created that guarded the soul of Sarajevans to prevent them from contamination with hatred, and to help them avoid falling into self-pity and victimization.

The war theater at the time was a space of freedom, because when it

was besieged, we were liberated inside theater both as people and as artists. There are few such honorable pages of our collective memory in which people were willing to sacrifice themselves for freedom, but there was also the audience that filled the halls day by day making a theater, concert, or exhibition through an urban ritual of resistance to fascism.

The creative energy of the artist is always a possible basis for

establishing a new quality of sensibility and existence. Its declarative, interactive, and practical activity, other than "producing" works of art is also a process of unleashing human potential. Art is born through the strong will of the human psyche and emotions or remains forever tamed in the sphere of its ineffability. In that way the creator expresses its engagement in eternal bridging contrasts between "feeling" and "understanding".



Sarajevo String Quartet plays in the ruins of the City Hall, winter 1993
/ PAUL LOWE / VII PHOTO

It is easy to show that Sarajevo defended itself with culture too, since there is a record of 3.102 works of art, 48 concerts and more than 170 exhibitions



SARTR



New Year, Coast Art Center, 1994. / PAUL LOWE / VII PHOTO



Miss Sarajevo 1993 / PAUL LOWE / VII PHOTO

Art cannot be appropriated, alienated or destroyed, although throughout history we have witnessed such insane attempts. Art is literally a durable, impenetrable, though breathable membrane, no matter how fierce and numerous means are by which it is attacked, especially in war. However, its idea is indestructible. The engagement of artists in war is based, above all, on ethical humanistic and enthusiastic principles, which, perhaps, had



It was played in the middle of the war



Setting the play "Waiting for Godot" directed by Susan Sontag, summer 1993 / PAUL LOWE / VII PHOTO



never before been manifested to such an extent, either in individual or collective terms, in a sense of belonging to a community.

Therefore, artists did not succumb to the inertia of the events, but they consistently with an increased motive for proving their vitality, followed the nature of their art - to be continually open both in permanently tolerant speech as well as in self-critical reexamining of one's own engagement in a time of physical domination of aggressiveness and mental cancers cemented by ethnonationalism. In that respect, a unifying characteristic of the largest number art projects created in the war is their authentic dynamism which can be called a movement or some new sense of the world.



A teenage rock band rehearsal in Dobrinja, summer 1993 / PAUL LOWE / VII PHOTO

This feature, thanks primarily to theater workers, has also become a leading, recognizable force in the activities of creators from some other fields, too (film and fine arts, for example). In this way the artists protected, more spontaneously than consciously articulated method, the ethics of one's own profession, without becoming a victim of deceptions and passionate, pathological ecstasies. Happiness is not in

A parallel reality was created and it guarded the soul of Sarajevans to prevent them from contamination with hatred, and to help them avoid falling into self-pity and victimization

artists of that time was not critical enough; however they were happy to come to the theater, galleries, concerts, movies and to they enjoyed it, and we artists were happy to play for such an audience and enjoyed it. The relationship between the audience and art at the time was relieved of other motivations, of interest, completely existentially stripped and the only motive was to truly participate in an artistic ritual, the motivation was pure: to see a play, a film, a painting, a sculpture, to see a temporary or permanent act of creation with deeper and more complex consequences, where the truth about man, relationships and destiny is told, in which there is an exchange of sensibilities and insights, joy and sorrow, laughter and crying.

An unusual sponsor

It couldn't have been any different because my story is how, working on my first professional play "The Wall" by Jean Paul Sartre during the siege, I needed some wooden planks, and the only reliable and possible sponsor in such circumstances for a play was - a local funeral home "Pokop." It is probably the only theatrical poster in the history of the theater which has a funeral society sponsor logo. And that's why it is interesting from today's perspective to understand oneself, the people and the community I was surrounded by; no doubt then we were in a bare state, where indeed life itself was the essence. Regardless how horrible it was to live for years in complete darkness and without electricity, it was nice to live, real life, or essential life with artistic truth.

The uniqueness of the phenomenon of art in besieged Sarajevo goes beyond what happened in former Leningrad, since it was a real uprising from creators who remained in Sarajevo in order to raise morale, to avoid spiritual submission to those who have been ruthlessly destroying that city, burned it day by day, and killed, too. It was an artistic defense of the right to freedom and life, which for me personally as an art beginner at the time changed attitude towards reality, defining me as director and socially engaged cultural worker. When I summarize the experience from the siege period, I realize that many concepts and things for me have a different meaning now and before the war. I feel and live that other meaning: what is life, what is love, what is separation, what is death?! Today, death is no longer terrible for me. In the war I lived with death, became intimate with it and together with my fellow citizens overcame fear; I accepted it as part of life in the arts and in real experience.

building a better and more beautiful future on corpses, but to keep the living, to respect the values and works of art, to fit into the planetary system and to stay mentally healthy. We will often hear how we're exaggerating in dealing with our recent past, however, there are rare texts in newspapers or web sites to be found that talk about what the art meant for the creators but also for Sarajevo audience at the time.

It was an unusual relationship which, and it can be said without exaggeration, it had a love character. The actors and the audience were simply loving each other in the most beautiful sense of the word. Everything at the time seemed harmonious, solidary and loving. Perhaps the attitude of the audience towards the



Uspostavljanje ratnih PTT ve

Međunarodno priznanje Republike Bosne i Hercegovine 6. aprila 1992. godine bio je početak otvorene i potpune agresije na njen suverenitet, a pored vojnog udara na njen teritorijalni integritet, uslijedio je također i izuzetno snažan napad na njen PTT sistem. Kreatori agresije počeli su u potpunosti realizirati plan prekida informacija i komuniciranja među ljudima. Ukinuti informacije, ugasiti signal, isključiti električnu energiju, prekinuti promet, značilo je uništiti čovjeka modernih bosanskohercegovačkih gradova, osobito Sarajeva kao političkog, administrativnog i upravnog centra države.

Pred početak agresije na našu državu 1992. u BiH su postojale ukupno 854 poštanske zgrade sa ukupno 267.000 kvadratnih metara prostora. Nemoguće je opisati sve žrtve i stradanja koje su uposlenici PTT-a Bosne i Hercegovine podnijeli obavljajući svoj posao, a sve u nastojanju da se odupru agresiji. Međutim, moguće je djelomično naznačiti put kojim se ovo preduzeće kao kolektiv uspjelo izboriti sa nedaćama ratnog vremena. Sjećanja na te dane još su živa, a radost uspostavljanja veza sa svijetom bila je puno više od tehničkog uspjeha, jer se time vraćalo dostojanstvo napaćenog stanovništva.

Moć znanja, stručnosti i želje za opstankom učinili su da se najosnovnije veze Bosne i Hercegovine sa svijetom uspostave i u najnevjerojatnijim ratnim uvjetima 1992.-1995. godine. Neprijatelji bosanskohercegovačke države počeli su sistematski ubijati ljude, uništavati gradove, a osim vojnih ubojitih sredstava, u projektu okupacije planirali su uništenje radiorelejnog sistema, zatim mreže koaksijalnih kablova, poštanske infrastrukture, transportnog sistema, energetskih jedinica, zaliha reprodukcionog materijala, dokumentacije, zgrada, odnosno svega što bi moglo poslužiti uspostavljanju veza među ljudima i prodiranju u svijet istine o ratu. Prije rata,

PTT sistem Republike Bosne i Hercegovine sastojao se iz tri autonomne mreže i to: telegrafske, telefonske i mreže za prijenos podataka sa komutacijom paketa. Od aprila 1992. godine agresor je paralelno onesposobljavao komutacione sisteme za telefonske i telegrafske veze, kao i sisteme za prijenos podataka. Već 3. aprila 1992. godine agresor je isključio koaksijalno-kablovski sistem posredstvom kojeg se odvijao telekomunikacioni



saobraćaj sa Hrvatskom i Slovenijom i prekinuo magistralni prijenos između tranzitnih centara Sarajeva i Banje Luke. Proljeće 1992. bilo je vrijeme najsnažnije destrukcije. Agresorska vojska zauzela je radiorelejnju stanicu Paljenik na Vlašiću i prekinula koaksijalne kablove na mostu preko Vrbasa u Donjem Vakufu. Osim uništavanja PTT komunikacija, okupacije releja i predajnika, izvršeno je prekidanje i preusmjeravanje radio-televizijske trase. Ovladati radio-televizijom značilo je kontrolirati prostor plasiranjem vlastitih informacija, a onemogućavanjem PTT komunikacija uskratiti njihovu provjeru, čime se, uz dodatne mjere gladi, žeđi i hladnoće, nastojalo pokoriti i dezorijentirati stanovništvo.

Planom nasilnog uništavanja modernih PTT komunikacija nije bilo pošteđeno ni kulturno naslijeđe, za što je, između ostalih, bio očit primjer diverzija, paljenje i bombardiranje zgrade Glavne pošte u Sarajevu, arhitektonskog djela austrougarskog majstora graditeljstva Josipa Vancaša, napravljene u stilu secesije u vrijeme autorovog traganja za bosanskohercegovačkim graditeljskim stilom. Paljenje Pošte na Obali je simbol pokušaja uništavanja postojanosti bosanskohercegovačkog urbanog bića. Osim uništavanja međunarodne telefonske centrale u Sarajevu, u ratnim dejstvima stradale su glavne centrale u Goraždu i Bihacu, čvrne centrale u Bugojnu i Mostaru sa 8.500 priključnih tačaka.

U Bosni i Hercegovini je bilo uništeno oko 100.000 priključaka, komutacioni čvor i upravljački centar za prijenos podataka u Sarajevu, zatim veliki broj građevinskih objekata, a ukupna šteta je procijenjena na blizu milijardu dolara.

Početa zaprepaštenost stepenom barbarstva na kraju 20. stoljeća i malodušnost su zamijenjeni razmišljanjem šta učiniti da se barem neka veza sa svijetom ostvari. Sarajevo je, kao politički centar Bosne i Hercegovine, i bez vode i bez struje i bez hrane imalo svoju duhovnost. Planovi među zaposlenima u PTT-u su stvarali nadu u pobjedu koja je u glavama običnih ljudi očekivana vrlo brzo, međutim, u očekivanju kraja rata prošle su pune četiri godine. S jedne strane, agresor je sistematski uništavao sve pred sobom, a sa druge, angažirano se radilo na mnogim i bitnim organizacijskim poslovima na unutrašnjem i vanjskom planu.

U tim ratnim uvjetima, u Sarajevu je odlukom Predsjedništva Bosne i Hercegovine 31. jula 1992. godine zvanično osnovano Javno preduzeće PTT saobraćaja Bosne i Hercegovine (kao pravni sljedbenik nekadašnjeg SOUR-a PTT saobraćaja Bosne i Hercegovine).

Sam nastanak preduzeća u teškim vremenima pred sve uposlenike je stavio kompleksan zadatak. Trebalo je odgovoriti komunikacijskim potrebama države u vanredno teškim ratnim uvjetima. Već 3. septembra 1992. godine, odlukom predsjednika Predsjedništva Republike BiH, gospodina Alije Izetbegovića, imenovan je Upravni odbor JP PTT BiH od devet članova. U razdoblju od njegovog konstituiranja do decembra 1995. na održanim sjednicama, sa oko 240 tačaka dnevnih redova, stvarani su preduvjeti za funkcioniranje JP PTT BiH u ratu i nastavka rada u miru, usvajanjem Statuta preduzeća, Odluke o privremenoj organizaciji JP, o formiranju PTT Štedionice i PTT Inženjeringa, zatim načinima obnavljanja PTT saobraćaja, uspostavljanja veza sa svijetom, imenovanja direktora, cijena, tarifa, o štampanju poštanskih maraka, reklama i ostalih neophodnih zadataka. Najbolji primjeri za uspješno vođenje pravne procedure tokom rata bili su realizirani poslovi u vezi sa članstvom Bosne i Hercegovine u međunarodnim asocijacijama.

Najveći ratni gubici su uvijek u ljudstvu, i oni su nemjerljivi u odnosu na materijalnu štetu. Ali ono što ljudi



eza bilo je pitanje opstanka...

imaju kao nasušnu potrebu jeste da u toj borbi za opstanak rade, stvaraju i pronalaze načine da prežive, pa su tako i uposleni u PTT-u nastojali pomoći sebi i svojim sugrađanima, bez obzira na žrtve.

Probijanje telekomunikacijske blokade počelo je još tokom rata, svakako u mjeri koliko su to dozvoljavali uvjeti ratnih operacija, zatvorenosti gradova i nemogućnosti normalnog transporta ljudi i roba. Upravo zbog takvih okolnosti života i rada rezultati su važniji od onih postignutih u normalnim uvjetima. Predano i uporno se radilo na povezivanju prekinutih međugradskih veza i važnih međunarodnih komunikacija sa svijetom. Međutim, od izuzetnog značaja za suverenu državu Bosnu i Hercegovinu bilo je povezivanje međunarodnim vezama sa svijetom.

U drugoj polovici 1992. i početkom 1993. godine tražila su se tehnička rješenja, a zatim i način transporta opreme u potpuno blokirano Sarajevo. Međutim, tada su se pojavili dodatni problemi, jer je, sa zadatkom da ugovore satelitsku telekomunikacionu opremu, otišlo iz Sarajeva nekoliko timova stručnjaka, koji se nisu vraćali mjesecima, a realiziranje projekta je bilo urgentno. Upornosti u radu nije nedostajalo. Bilo je više pokušaja da se oprema uveze u Sarajevo. Na kraju je oprema ipak stigla u Sarajevo kao lični prtljag predsjednika Predsjedništva BiH Alije Izetbegovića u augustu 1993. godine. Naredna poteškoća je bila da se nađe adekvatan prostor za smještaj opreme. Prostor je morao biti u blizini PTT objekata, sa mogućnošću napajanja električnom energijom, blizini priključka za telefonsku centralu i, što je bilo najteže, da je prostor što sigurniji od napada neprijateljskih granata koje su padale po cijelom Sarajevu.

Odluka je pala da se satelitska stanica postavi u podrum PTT Inženjeringa, a da antena "gleda u nebo" kroz podrumski prozor. Oprema je postavljena u rekordnom roku i veza je uspostavljena 3. septembra, a puštena u javni saobraćaj 5. septembra 1993. godine. Ovo su ujedno i datumi koji se mogu označiti kao Dan telekomunikacione deblokade grada Sarajeva i države Bosne i Hercegovine. To je bio nesvakidašnji podvig zahvaljujući stručnjacima koji su radili na realizaciji ove veze. Sve pomenuto svjedoči o velikoj požrtvovanosti i stručnosti zaposlenih u JP PTT saobraćaja BiH, ali i o obimu destrukcije koja je zadesila Bosnu i Hercegovinu tokom rata. Alternativa rješenja u uspostavljanju veza bila



su vrlo urgentna, ali i perspektivna za godine mira koje su dolazile, jer se većina obnovljenih sistema mogla kasnije nadograđivati.

Godine 1995. oprema je zamijenjena digitalnom radiorelejom opremom kapaciteta 140 Mbit/s (1920 telefonskih kanala), a 1996. godine između Sarajeva i Zagreba je u funkciji bila jedna 34 Mbit/s grupa (480 telefonskih kanala sa A/D konverzijom) sa dodatnom mogućnošću proširenja za tranzitiranje veza prema drugim zemljama. S obzirom na činjenicu da nisu imali prethodnog iskustva iz oblasti satelitskih komunikacija, stručnjaci JP PTT saobraćaja BiH su uspjeli u najtežim ratnim uvjetima montirati i pustiti u rad međunarodnu satelitsku vezu Bosna i Hercegovina

– Švajcarska (Sarajevo – Bern), koristeći EUTELSAT, sa početnim kapacitetom 2 Mbit/s (30 kanala), sa DCME – opremom (kasnije proširena na 150 kanala).

Pod udarima granata i ubitačnom vatrom snajpera, tih ratnih radnih dana i noći, svi oni koji su nastavili raditi u JP PTT saobraćaja BiH – rukovodstvo, malobrojni inženjeri, monter i drugi – uz nadljudske napore nastojali su i uspjeli uspostaviti najnužniji sistem veza i time omogućiti probijanje informativne blokade. Danonočno su se borili da stave u funkciju potrgane dijelove telekomunikacionog sistema koji se mogao iskoristiti, a nakon ponovnih granatiranja nanovo ih revitalizirati, makar i u improviziranom obliku. Osim vojnih udara, postojali su i mnogi

drugi problemi, kao npr. malobrojnost tehničkih terenskih ekipa, nedostatak potrošnog i reprodukcionog materijala, nedostatak goriva i transportnih sredstava, blokirano puteva, gradova, sela, naselja i slično.

Revitalizacijom sistema JP PTT saobraćaja BiH tokom rata pravili su se planovi i podloga za poslijeratni razvoj ove privredne oblasti. Godina 1995. bit će zapamćena kao godina potpisivanja Dejtonskog sporazuma, a u historiji JP PTT saobraćaja BiH kao godina potpune telekomunikacijske deblokade zemlje, zatim uspostave redovnog odvijanja međunarodnog poštanskog saobraćaja, priznavanja bosanskohercegovačkih poštanskih maraka od strane UPU-a, i daljnjeg moderniziranja telekomunikacionog i poštanskog saobraćaja u Bosni



i Hercegovini. Dolazak mira za ljude JP PTT saobraćaja Bosne i Hercegovine predstavljao je, pored ostalog, i pravi profesionalni i radni izazov. Završetak četverogodišnje prisilne blokade otvorio je mnoge mogućnosti, ali se trebalo suočiti sa mnogim ograničenjima koje je rat ostavio za sobom i krenuti dalje. Izgubljeno vrijeme je trebalo nadoknaditi, jer je svijet mimo Bosne i Hercegovine grabio žurnim koracima naprijed u svemu, pa i u usavršavanju telekomunikacija.

S posebnim pijetetom moraju se spomenuti šehidi i poginuli borci, prema kojima je potrebno čuvati najdublje poštovanje i sjećanje. Nedostatak radnika svih profila bio je evidentan, jer je uoči rata bilo 12.500 zaposlenih, a iz rata je preduzeće izašlo sa oko 4.000 zaposlenih.

Usavršavanje se nastavilo i u poslijeratnim godinama pa sve do danas. 7. januara 2002. godine uspostavljeno je samostalno Javno preduzeće BH Telecom – Sarajevo, sa tri hiljade zaposlenika. Već u početku kompaniju obilježavaju nizak nivo zaduženosti, razvijena tehnološka infrastruktura u svim mrežama i vlastiti ljudski i stručni potencijal. Poslovna politika BH Telecoma je svakako nastavak dobro promišljene i uspješne politike JP PTT saobraćaja BiH.

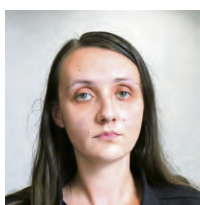
Možda je jedna od najvažnijih činjenica i uspjeha firme samostalni razvoj tehnoloških rješenja, postignut etapnim razvojem mrežne i servisne infrastrukture, praćenjem najmodernijih tehnoloških trendova i, ponajprije, kontinuiranim prilagođavanjem cijeloga tehnološkog sistema potrebama i specifičnostima bosanskohercegovačkog tržišta. Upravo ovo opredjeljenje jeste uvijek bilo garancija uspjeha i putokaz za budućnost. Značaj BH Telecoma za razvoj industrije i privrede u Bosni i Hercegovini, kao i cjelokupan razvoj bosanskohercegovačkog društva, nesumnjiv je i neupitan i 30 godina nakon rata. U izvjesnom smislu, rast i uspjehnost ovog uglednog preduzeća može biti samo uzor za mnogobrojne poslovne poduhvate i projekte onih čija je ambicioznost jednaka želji za boljim životom. BH Telecom svoju uspješnost duguje oslanjanju na vlastite kadrove, uvažavanju njihovog znanja i permanentnom samoispitivanju i samoprovjeri svojih vlastitih planova; praćenju savremenih tokova u svjetskim razmjerama i vizijama u budućnosti. Zbog toga i ova priča o BH Telecomu ne može imati definitivni kraj, jer je to priča koja traje i koja će trajati.

Pripremila: Indira Hamzić



A lesson from the first hand: With journalists and editors of our Newspaper / SENAD GUBELIĆ

A reporter has to determine the ground truth



After a week of questioning about 60 refugees, I found victims from Omarska and Banja Luka and wrote my own story. Published on August 2, 1992, and it resounded like thunder, Roy Gutman recalls

Interviewer: **MATEA JERKOVIĆ**

This is a report by a journalist about the most horrible crime against a European nation since the Nazi Holocaust. Serbian authorities and rebel Bosnian Serb leaders call it "ethnic cleansing," and Western governments and institutions have embraced the euphemism as if they had degenerated it. However, the facts show that this is genocide - a deliberate attempt to exterminate a nation just because of its belonging to a certain religion.

This is what the introduction to the book "Witness to the Genocide Roy Gutman" says, an American journalist who sent reports from the occupied parts of the Bosnian Krajina to the world about the existence of concentration camps. It was August 1992. As early as 1993, Gutman was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for International Reporting, won a number of other awards, and in the same year his book was published in New York at the Macmillan Publishers. It first appeared in Zagreb in local languages in 1994 in the Duriex edition, and several publishers printed in Sarajevo in 1995.

The aggressor always invents an excuse

Gutman was born in 1944 in New York City, and in 1966 he graduated in history from Haverford College, graduated from the London School

of Economics and in 1968 received a master's degree in international relations. He worked for Reuters, reporting from Bonn, Vienna, Belgrade, London and Washington. He was head of the Office for Europe, State Department correspondent and chief reporter on Capitol Hill. Since 1982, he has been on Newsday, writing about the fall of the Polish, East German and Czechoslovak regimes, the opening of the Berlin Wall, the unification of Germany, the first democratic elections in the former Eastern Bloc and the break-up of Yugoslavia.

You have said many times that Manjača and Omarska were a shocking discovery and changed your understanding of journalism. How?

- One of the hardest tasks for a journalist at the start of any war is to understand the big picture - what's really going on and who's committing aggression. The aggressor always invents a cover story which has the victim provoking the war in the first place. A reporter has to determine the ground truth by checking the rhetoric of both sides and seeing who's lying and who's telling the truth. It took months of reporting before I figured out the war in Cro-

atia, and by the time I determined it was a war of aggression carried out by the federal army under Serbian manipulation, my editors and those of many other publications had lost interest in the story.

There was even less interest when war began in Bosnia, and that was profoundly frustrating because we all knew it would be far bigger and far worse than Croatia. I decided that telling the story by quoting government spokesmen would never really interest the reading public. But after determining who was the aggressor in Croatia, it was a small step to focus on the victims of aggression and tell their story in Bosnia. It meant talking to refugees and spending time in the provinces where the aggression was occurring, rather than in the capitals. That is what led me to get on the first bus from Belgrade to Banja Luka after the federal Army opened its "corridor" along the Sava river. I had heard from refugees who reached Croatia that there were detention camps around Banja Luka, and on arriving there I stopped by the military headquarters and asked to be taken to them.

The best journalism comes not from quoting government officials but from the testimony of the victims about what happened to them

And that's how I got to Manjača. The Serb-dominated federal army took me to the camp on the day the International Committee of the Red Cross was admitted, and luckily, I had a great photographer with me.



Manjača camp

My story and Andree Kaiser's photographs established that civilians were being taken to detention camps, mistreated and often dying. I heard from the local Bosniak and Croat political parties about Omarska, which they described as a death camp, but when I asked to be taken there, the authorities refused.

The knowledge that Omarska existed but was off limits gnawed at me, and I decided to organize a search of Bosnian refugees in Zagreb to see if anyone had been to Omarska or other reputed death camps. After a week of interviewing possibly 60 refugees, I located victims from Omarska and Brčko Luka and wrote my story. It appeared August 2, 1992 and had a thunderclap affect.

The very capable diplomat representing Bosnia at the UN, Muhamed Šaćirbey delivered copies of the newspaper I was writing for, New York Newsday, to the desks of every UN ambassador. The UN organized a fact-finding mission. Reporters in Washington questioned the Bush White House. At first it acknowledged that it was aware of the camps, but that raised many questions about why the White House remained had silent. The administration then withdrew its statement and said it hadn't known, which added to the public uproar.

From my base in Zagreb, I interviewed survivors of other camps up and down the Sava valley. Each story added to the overall image that a network of concentration camps had been set up systematically. After a UN factfinding delegation went to Bosnia, the Bosnian Serbs had to close down the camps.

The life lesson is that Journalism can make a difference. You have to make every effort to get to the scene even if you're denied access, you must report in a timely way and you have to get your facts right. The best journalism comes not from quoting government officials but from the testimony of the victims about what happened to them. Camps began to close after my story appeared, amplified by Sky News and the Guardian's visit to camps.

The UN set up a commission of inquiry, leading to the ICTY, and my interviews (and those of my colleagues) with victims and officials responsible for the atrocities later provided evidence in the war crimes trials.



Omarska camp, 29 years later / ANADOLIJA

That experience drove me to report the war in Syria and the crimes committed against the Syrian people. Syria was like Bosnia, a war crime masquerading as a war.

How do you see the war in Ukraine today?

- The wars in the former Yugoslavia were launched by Milošević and his ethnic Serb allies in other republics to fulfill of the nationalist fantasy that history has chosen one ethnicity to rule all the others. That was exactly the opposite of the design that Tito created for a federation of equals with rotating leadership. Milošević's timing was at the end of the cold war, a decade after Tito's death, just as Communism was sinking as a one-party rule. Milošević had no alternative to offer the population of Serbia such as a western-style system of open markets, constitutional checks and balances and multiple parties, so he turned to nationalism, pandering to the worst instincts of the Serbian population. Nationalism has been defined as promoting a misunderstanding of the history of your ethnic or religious group for political gain. It relies on the big lie, on reinventing the past, and it inevitably leads to war.

This was the path Milošević took in Yugoslavia, and Putin has followed his footsteps. The only way Putin can achieve his aim of creat-

The life lesson is that Journalism can make a difference. You have to make every effort to get to the scene even if you're denied access

ing a single unified nation of Russia and Ukraine is by expelling the population of Ukraine or destroying the country. Putin's scheme is as mad as Milosevic's. Putin so underestimated Ukrainian resistance and overestimated the strength of the Russian military that I don't see how Putin can conceivably win.

And if he doesn't, he should look to Milošević to see where he'll wind up. Rump Yugoslavia came apart, with Kosovo becoming an independent country, and Montenegro as well. Now it's rump Serbia.

Could that happen to the Russian empire as well? It all depends on how much damage the Ukrainian army manages to inflict on the Russian army.

There's one big difference between Bosnia and Ukraine: I think the lesson was learned from Bosnia that people trying to defend their country against an aggressor have to be provided the weapons they need to survive. The U.S. and its western partners withheld weapons in Bosnia, an enormous mistake that wasn't repeated in Ukraine.

Can you draw a parallel with Bosnia and Herzegovina?

- Ukraine was much better prepared for the Russian invasion than Bosnia could have been for the war in 1992, but the main reason is the Russians organized only a partial incursion into Ukraine in 2014, in which Russian proxies seized the Donbass region and Crimea. Ukraine had eight years to prepare for the next battle, acquiring arms and training, revamping its military, holding elections, addressing corruption and building a society. Bosnia didn't have the advantage of time, and it had Yugoslav troops stationed in the major cities and towns that turned into the enablers of genocide.

What strikes me is that both Bosnia and Ukraine were internationally recognized states when war broke out, with seats at the UN and an apparatus that could deal with major powers. I reported the war in Syria from 2012 to 2018, where the regime's brutality was identical to that experienced in Bosnia and in Ukraine. But in Syria the opposition, even though it represented more than half the population, was never united, had no constitution, no parliament and no state.



Roy Gutman visits the editorial office of Oslobođenje, 2017 / SENAD GUBELIĆ

Has the world learned the lesson from Bosnia and Herzegovina?

- In the period after the 9/11 attacks in 2001, the United States abandoned humanitarian law, pulling away from international tribunals and staying silent in the face of crimes against humanity. I wrote several journal articles bemoaning this very real setback.

But the war in Ukraine has revived interest in humanitarian law. In Syria, the U.S. government was almost silent during the Russian bombing that led to the fall of Aleppo, but in Ukraine, the President of the United States and European leaders suddenly are clamoring to denounce the Russian assault as war crimes and a crime against humanity. The U.S. and its European allies are putting the spotlight on the war crimes in real time and labeling them for what they are. So perhaps the lesson of Bosnia-Herzegovina was learned after all -- after a 20 year pause.

What are you doing today?

- About three years into the war in Syria, the U.S. government stopped paying attention to the atrocities oc-

curing daily and stopped supporting the rebels trying to protect the civilian population. Instead, it decided to fight a new group called the Islamic State or ISIS that sprang out of nowhere and took over vast tracts of territory. But I kept on hearing from defectors from the Syrian regime that ISIS had doing this with the support of the Syrian government.

One chapter short of completion

It is something the U.S. government never acknowledged and to the best of my knowledge, never even investigated. I've spent the past five years researching and writing a book on the relationship between the regime and ISIS. I am one chapter short of completion.

But recently I was approached by the trustees of the Baltimore Council on Foreign Affairs, who were looking for a new president for the group. I began the job March 1. It's a great organization which tries to define and discuss the major issues in foreign affairs. I commute to Baltimore (from Washington) several days a week.



From a Symbol of Plight to a Symbol of Success



Writer: **FAHRUDIN BENDER**

Serbian authorities will later justify their crimes with controversial information that the reason for the attack on Kozarac was a conflict between Muslim extremists and a patrol in Jakupovići, where they allegedly wounded a JNA soldier. But the facts speak otherwise

May 25 will mark the 30th anniversary of the attack on Kozarac. Many cities and local communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina fell under a similar scenario in which never-before-seen crimes were committed against civilians.

Kozarac, lying on the outskirts of Prijedor, with municipality status during the Austro-Hungarian rule, comprises 11 settlements among which the largest are Kamičani, Kozaruša, Brđani and Babići.

According to the 1991 census, 21,993 people lived in the area of Kozarac, the majority of whom were Bosniaks, who would become victims of war crimes and persecution during the war.

Death in camps

"There was a comprehensive pattern of atrocities against Muslims in Prijedor in 1992 which has been proved beyond reasonable doubt", reads the trial judgment of the International War Crimes Tribunal against Milomir Stakić, former political leader of Serbs in Prijedor, who was sentenced to 40 years in prison for his responsibility in exterminating, killing and persecuting thousands of non-Serb civilians in the municipality.

After an independence referendum in BiH, the Serb parties accused Bosniaks of dismantling Yugoslavia, and the media propaganda was getting worse day after day, especially after the "Wolves from Vučijak" militia occupied a transmitter on Mt. Kozara,

took down the TV Sarajevo programming and replaced it with the propaganda broadcast programs from Banja Luka and Belgrade.

The SDS made a decision in Prijedor in December 1991 to overthrow the legitimate local authorities, with the intention of bringing in those who were loyal to their cause. To implement their decision, they staged a coup on January 7, 1992, and named Stakić speaker of the Assembly of the Serb People in the municipality of Prijedor.

In the next days and months, they formed a series of Serb secret police stations and armed over 1,500 men. Towards the end of April 1992, those reserve police forces, deployed in five detachments, occupied the buildings of the municipality, police, the postal office, banks and the court. The coup turned into hard reality.

The Serb forces occupied the municipality of Prijedor on April 30 and banned Muhamed Čehajić, the municipal leader, from entering his office. Only three weeks later, they arrested Čehajić, detained him in Omar-ska camp, and killed him.

"It seems to me that everything that is happening to me is just an ugly dream, just a nightmare, I simply cannot understand how something like this is possible. I just keep wondering whom I offended, and how much, so that I have to go through all this. But I still believe in justice, I believe in truth, and I believe that this will all be cleared up", Čehajić wrote from the concentration camp to his wife Mina. She read out the letter she had received from her husband to the court during her testimony at the Hague tribunal.

Čehajić, just like Nobel Prize winner Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn in the Gulag, spent his last days wondering what had made him deserve guilt which did not have a cause.

The entire non-Serb population of Prijedor, and of Kozarac in particular, felt a similar absurdity.

The police station in Kozarac, the territorial defense command, prominent citizens of the local community, including local Serbs, gathered in meetings as they were concerned about overthrowing a democratically elected government.

They had only two options: to resort to civil disobedience or to maintain the status quo with the expectation that the crisis would be solved at the state level.

It was then that an idea was born to restore temporarily the municipality status to Kozarac. This initiative still exists.

But the Serb authorities did not allow it. They gave an ultimatum to the



Trnopolje camp

people in Kozarac demanding that the police in Kozarac be disarmed, that all hunting guns be handed over, and that the Serb tricolor flag be displayed on all buildings and houses.

Professor Jasmin Medić, of the Institute of History in Sarajevo, describes in his works how Serbs were superior in the talks, which they clearly demonstrated by setting demands.

During some talks, the Serb side demanded a shift in loyalty from the legitimate state to the Serb republic.

"Colonel Vladimir Arsić and major Radmilo Zeljalo requested that Bosniaks in Kozarac hand over seven thousand barrels, otherwise, 'Kozarac will be levelled to the ground'", Medić wrote in his articles.

Mevludin Sejmenović, a negotiator on behalf of the SDA, testified about it during the trial of Stanišić and Župljanin.

"We knew that we could not fulfil the demand since we did not have that many guns, and if we had returned fewer guns, they would have still accused us of not fulfilling the ultimatum. The major said, 'Gentlemen, it is your problem'", Sejmenović said.

On May 20, the Presidency of the Serb Republic of BiH issued a decision on general mobilization, and the next day the First Krajina Corps of the RS Army issued that order also in Prijedor. Everything was prepared for an attack on Kozarac. Already on May 22, 1992, the Serb authorities cut off all of Bosniak telephone cables. That same night, Kozarac fell into a deep sleep which turned into a nightmare.

Later, in an attempt to justify their war crimes, the Serb authorities claimed that their attack on Kozarac had been provoked by what is still a controversial conflict between Muslim

A father was beaten to death in front of his son. The men shrieked with pain. There was blood on the walls and on the ground. The men who came out of there alive had open wounds



Survivors returned and rebuilt their houses / DIDIER TORCHE



Kozarac – Memorial / DIDIER TORCHE



troops. When the town was occupied, the Bosnian Serb forces began to assemble all non-Serbs and then forced them to leave. The Bosnian Serb military and militia beat, robbed and killed many more civilians during the ethnic cleansing campaign in Kozarac.

The Bosnian Serb forces kept thousands of Muslim and Croat civilians in Omarska, Keraterm and Trnopolje concentration camps. There, more crimes were perpetrated and their details are best explained in the ICTY judgments.

For example, the panel of judges of the ICTY said that it had been documented for the leader of the SDS in Kozarac, Duško Tadić, alone, that in ten separate cases he had beaten, attacked with a

would be called. They knew, however, that when their name was called, it was not so much for interrogation as for beating. Women were not beaten, although some women were molested, others, or even the same, were raped. In other words, there was no area of Omarska camp where a detainee could feel safe or, quite simply, hope not to be beaten or subjected to some form of violence. A father was beaten to death in front of his son. The men shrieked with pain. There was blood on the walls and on the ground. The men who came out of there alive had open wounds, could not stand or were unconscious. The corpses removed from there had open wounds to the skull, severed joints, slit throats. Some of the victims were ultimately executed with a bullet", judge Rodrigues described the horror.

In addition to the crimes committed first in Kozarac, and then at the camps, the Korićanske stijene crime, which was committed on Mt. Vlašić on 21 August 1992, was particularly brutal.

A refugee convoy carrying Muslim and other non-Serb civilians from Tuzkovi and ex-camp inmates mainly from Trnopolje near Prijedor to the free territory of Travnik municipality pulled over on the road along the Ilomska brook, between Skender Vakuf and Mt. Vlašić. Darko Mrđa and other members of the police emergency squad carried out an order requesting that all men fit for military service be separated from the convoy; they selected around 200 men; they loaded them onto two buses and took them to Korićanske stijene. The men from one bus were ordered off, escorted to the side of the road above a deep abyss, and were told to kneel; then, they were shot dead. The men from the other bus were taken off in smaller groups of two or three, and were killed in the same way.

A significant number of residents of Kozarac eventually reached Travnik where they joined the BiH Army 17th Knights Brigade, which was one of the mainstays of defense of BiH.

Renewal of life

The people of Kozarac, former camp detainees, veterans, survivors and refugee families returned to their homes after the war. They restored their lives, the economy and hope in the future of Kozarac. Their initiative to declare Kozarac a municipality, which would be the first municipality in the RS with the Bosniak majority, has always been met with hostility and rejection from the authorities in Prijedor.

They still have a long way to go, but they are not giving up on their goal. This heroic place and its persistent and dedicated people paid too high a price to be deprived of what they are entitled to.

Kozarac as a municipality is the only way to grow from a symbol of plight to a symbol of success of Bosniak returnees to the RS. The authorities in Prijedor and the RS know it just as they know that it would be the only way for them to confront their ugly and criminal past.

Their initiative to declare Kozarac a municipality, which would be the first municipality in the RS with the Bosniak majority, has always been met with hostility and rejection from the authorities in Prijedor



Remembrance of Victims



Kamičani, Kozarac, July 2019: Collective funeral and burial of 68 Victims / ANADOLIA

extremists and a patrol in Jakupovići, alleging that a JNA soldier had been wounded. But, the facts simply prove otherwise: their attack was prepared and planned long before.

The attack on Kozarac began on the afternoon of May 24, 1992 and was launched by the units of the First Krajina Corps of the Army of the Serb Republic of BiH, parts of the 343rd Motorized Brigade, police structures of the Public Security Station in Prijedor, the Fifth Kozara Brigade and members of the Security Service Center in Banja Luka.

On the other hand, the units of the Territorial Defense of BiH, led by Sead Ćirkin, and the police in Kozarac lacked manpower and weapons to stave off the attack.

"At the beginning of the attack, civilians were exposed to concentric fire delivered by artillery, tanks and other firing

weapons; encouraged by the 'success' of their initial attack, the Serb forces invaded the region. The shelling of Kozarac continued unabated. After the Serb forces intensified their attack by deploying extra troops and weapons, systemically destroying everything in front of them, and systemically attacking civilians, numerous civilians started moving towards Mt. Kozara where, again, they were exposed to attacks by Serb military and police. Many civilians, who had failed to reach Bosanska Gradiška, were captured and taken to the Benkovac barracks. There, they were tortured and then moved to the concentration camps", historian Jasmin Medić wrote in his academic paper.

Some civilians were deported towards the city of Prijedor. After intensive shelling and military occupation of Kozarac, the Serb forces conducted a "cleanup" campaign: many civilians

were killed, their properties looted and destroyed; others were forced out of their homes and taken to Omarska, Keraterm and Trnopolje concentration camps.

According to the report of the chief of the Public Security Service Prijedor of May 26, 1992, "around 70 percent of the territory was cleansed within the cleanup campaign conducted in Kozarac, Kozaruša, Trnopolje and Kamičani". Having realized that the Serb forces were mercilessly perpetrating large-scale war crimes against civilians and that the authorities were not allowing even wounded children to be evacuated, the Police Station in Kozarac decided to surrender on May 26, 1992, in an attempt to save the lives of the remaining civilians.

In Kozarac, around 800 civilians were killed after two days of artillery fire and attacks by armored brigade

The memory on the Bosnian leopard pattern fades

There are no precise numbers of the ethnically cleansed, or even "only displaced" persons during the four years of the aggression, but the ethnic map of today's Bosnia proves that Karadžić's first war goal, the separation of peoples, has been realized.

Writer: **SAŠA RUKAVINA**



Three decades after the beginning of the aggression, 26 years after the Dayton Agreement, there is, in fact, no precise number of the "ethnically cleansed" in those four years in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The number of the "only displaced" has not been determined exactly.

Dr. sc. Senija Milišić from the Institute of History of the University of Sarajevo states three numbers from three different sources in the paper "Ethnic cleansing of the Bosniak population 1992-1995 (methods, directions, statistical indicators)".

Milišić writes that until the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement on November 21st 1995, according to the BiH Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees, "about 2.2 million people were displaced from their pre-war homes in BiH." The second source are the reports of Tadeusz Mazowiecki, the rapporteur of the UN Commission on Human Rights, which speak about 2.1 million, and the third figure mentioned by Milišić is 1.8 million, as stated by Darko Dukovski in his work "The History of Central and Southeast Europe in the 19th and the 20th century".

Cleaning vs. purification

- Of that number (2.2 million), about 1.2 million people "sought refugee protection" in more than 100 countries

around the world. Of the total number of the expelled and refugees, about 63 percent are Bosniaks. Additionally, Bosniaks were expelled from more than 70 percent of the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Dr. Milišić said.

The statistics on the demographic changes which were calculated in 2008 for the series "The history of the Croats of Bosnia and Herzegovina", and divided according to the contemporary regions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, may help to understand the extent of ethnic cleansing in BiH. In this, the data from the 1991 census and estimates of the worldstatesmen.org portal for 2008 were used.

According to these data, in today's Federation, the number of inhabitants decreased from 2,720,074 in 1991 to 2,321,897. There were 1,423,593 Bosniaks (then Muslims) in 1991 and 1,625

million in 2008, the number of Croats changed from 594,362 to 650,000, the number of Serbs dropped from 478,122 to 33,000. In the Brčko District, the population decreased from 87,627 to 70,471. In 2008, there were 31,000 Bosniaks compared to 38,671, 33,000 Serbs compared to 18,128, and 8,000 Croats compared to 22,252. Republika Srpska had 1,569,332 inhabitants in 1991, and 1,494,912 in 2008. In 17 years, the number of Serbs increased from 869,854 to 1,315 million, the number of Bosniaks dropped from 440,768 to 120,000, and the number of Croats from 144,414 to 60,000.

The figures from 2008, of course, should be taken with a grain of salt because, again, these are estimates, but they are some indicator. Not only, of course, for the magnitude of the crime, but also for the degree of preservation

of the results of that crime. Researchers are not the only ones who will say that this crime is basically called genocide and that it is part of the complete story of aggression in BiH at the beginning of the last decade of the last century.

And those who think that the term genocide was replaced by the term "ethnic cleansing" because then the unprepared international community would not have to react in accordance with international law, probably have right. However, this is another topic, within which the claims of Šimun Penava from the Croatian Institute of History, who once spoke to Radio Free Europe about the role of the international community in the ethnic cleansing of the non-Serb population, will be verified.

- Specifically in Bosanski Novi (Novi Grad), UNPROFOR placed almost the entire city in buses and expelled them, and brought them to Karlovac to the UNHCR premises. Another example is Kotor-Varoš, where the International Red Cross signed an agreement and expelled 90 percent of the population in an organized way by bus to the area of BiH which was then under the control and authority of the BH Army, RSE reported in November 2015 Penava's words.

American professors Gerard Toal and Carl Dahlman, in a paper presented in 2005 in Sarajevo during an international conference dedicated to the tenth anniversary of the Dayton Agreement, remind that the phrase ethnic cleansing was "first used in American media on April 15th 1992 by journalist Chuck Sudetic, quoting a Western diplomat in a report from Sarajevo for the New York Times."

- The others back then still preferred the notion of ethnic purification. However, following a visit to Washington by



Srebrenica 1995: Men went through the forests, women and children were crammed by VRS into buses and trucks

In Bosanski Novi, UNPROFOR placed almost the entire city population in buses, expelled them and brought them to Karlovac. In Kotor-Varoš, the International Red Cross organizedly expelled 90 percent of the population



Leaving northern BiH across the Sava river / ARHIVA

BiH Foreign Minister Haris Silajdžić in April and May 1992, the term ethnic cleansing became widely accepted as part of the story of the war in BiH as a European genocide, they state in a paper whose translation was published in 2007 in the Journal for social and humanistic studies Pilar.

Karadžić's goal of war

More or less all the researchers agree that ethnic cleansing, primarily of Bosniaks and Croats from the territories that Slobodan Milošević and the SDS in BiH denoted as "Serb", was not just a crime, it was the goal of the war.

Professors Toal and Dahlman recall, among other things, the famous session of the Assembly of the Serb Republic of BiH on Pale in May 1992, during which the war goals of the then formed RS Army were determined.

Who else than Radovan Karadžić introduced them, and, the authors write, the first goal was “primordial: separation of ethnic communities in BiH”.

The other goals were the military geography of that separation, say the professors.

To avoid confusion, the JNA, Serbian paramilitary and territorial defenses did not wait for politics. Ethnic cleansing in BiH, according to Dr. Milišić, began in September 1991, when Serbian-Montenegrin reservists came to BiH and attacked the village of Ravno. It was intensified until the end of that year on the entire territory of BiH, which the SDS delineated into “Serb autonomous areas”.

Dr. Milišić writes about three cycles. The first began as soon as the new government was inaugurated, mostly in the Serb-Croat and Croat-majority areas of BiH, where the SDS and HDZ won in 1990.

The thing is that the most responsible people in companies, administrative bodies and other important positions in municipal bodies were fired or removed from office. In the second half of 1991, calls for mobilization were made periodically on both the Serb and Croatsides, to which most Bosniaks did not respond. Failure to respond to the mobilization meant loss of employment and loss of tenancy rights, which meant loss of livelihood. Various pressures in the workplace and frequent harassment on the street must be added to this, especially after the establishment of the SAO, and after the start of the war in Croatia, she writes.

She writes that this “forced the affected people into exile, while sowing fear among the masses of Bosniaks”.

People and families, exiled at this time, went (fled) to larger cities within BiH (Sarajevo, Travnik, Tuzla, Zenica, Mostar), but also to the countries of Western Europe. Thus the ethnic cleansing began, Dr. Milišić writes.

Turbe, March 1995.

The second cycle, in her opinion, is essentially the first great wave of ethnic cleansing and persecution that took place in late March and early April 1992. A large number of those who realized that aggression was happening, fled in front of the JNA and Serb forces, saving lives and expecting that “the crisis will end quickly”.

During the reconstruction of the third cycle, we distinguish two phases, which differ both in time and intensity. The first phase, thorough and brutal, began in the first half of April and lasted until the end of August 1992, when most of RS territory was completely ethnically cleansed.

During this period, the JNA and Serb forces carried out mass executions, the population capable of military service was taken to camps, and women, children and the elderly were expelled in an organized manner through battle lines to territory controlled by legal authorities or neighboring countries, Dr. Milišić writes.

“The best example of this phase is” she said, “eastern Bosnia (Podrinje), where about 131,498 people were killed, imprisoned in camps or expelled.” The second phase of that cycle lasted “from the end of 1992 until the end of the war, when the RS authorities organized the expulsion successively, depending, among other things, on the need for exchange and the need to organize various forms of forced labor.”

An example of ethnic cleansing and directions of expulsion, that is, the planned expulsion, is northern BiH. According to the 1991 census, the region had 625,000 Serbs, 356,000 Bosniaks and 180,000 Croats. At the beginning of 1995, northern Bosnia had 719,000

Serbs, 37,000 Bosniaks and 30,000 Croats. The number of Bosniaks decreased by 90 percent, and the number of Croats by 85 percent, with a simultaneous increase in the number of Serbs by about 17 percent. In the first three months of 1995, about 3,000 people were expelled from the area, while hundreds of people were displaced throughout Bosnia, including about 300 Muslims who came to central Bosnia via Turbe, writes Dr. Milišić.

I was in Turbe in, I think, March 1995, when one of the convoys arrived with part of those 300 “exchanged” persons or, as they were already called at the time, Banja Luka Bosniaks. I used the fact that they were being transported from Turbe to Bugojno, where they would be housed in the center for displaced persons, to transport myself to the part of Novi Travnik under the control of the HVO.

I remember the silence in the bus, unbroken by Travnik, where the first complete, undamaged minaret appeared. I don’t know what broke out



Eastern Bosnia: Different methods have been used to clean cities and villages, the result is one

ОСЛОБОЂЕЊЕ

Државно издање: Сарајево, 13. јуни 1992. Цена: 50 динара

ДРАМА У ВИШЕГРУДУ СЕ НАСТАВЉА

Пријетња катаклизмом

Мурат Шабоновић и даље пријети кинираним Хидроелектраном, а Адем Хуџић да ће исто учинити и са „Азотром“ - Захтев за тотални прекид ватре и приједлог Аркану - Војни савјетници у Вишеграду?

ЗАВРШЕНА СЕДМА РУНДА РАЗГОВОРА О БИХ

Прекид ватре

Седмични разговори о прекиду ватре и о другим питањима из области безбедности и стабилности у БиХ завршени су у Сарајеву. Учесници разговора су били представници Српске Републике, Хрватске Републике и Федерације БиХ. Разговори су се одржавали у Сарајеву, а учесници су били: Милош Ђељевић, Председник Српске Републике, Драво Пантић, Председник Хрватске Републике, и Мухамед Ђаџић, Председник Федерације БиХ. Разговори су се одржавали у Сарајеву, а учесници су били: Милош Ђељевић, Председник Српске Републике, Драво Пантић, Председник Хрватске Републике, и Мухамед Ђаџић, Председник Федерације БиХ.

УЗНАЈАМА КАТАКЛИЗМ

У Сарајеву се одржавају разговори о прекиду ватре и о другим питањима из области безбедности и стабилности у БиХ. Учесници разговора су били представници Српске Републике, Хрватске Републике и Федерације БиХ. Разговори су се одржавали у Сарајеву, а учесници су били: Милош Ђељевић, Председник Српске Републике, Драво Пантић, Председник Хрватске Републике, и Мухамед Ђаџић, Председник Федерације БиХ.

ОСЛОБОДИОЦИ ОСТАВИЛИ ПУСТОШ

Припадници ТИФК-а који су се повукли из Сарајева оставили су пуштајући грађане на милост и немилост. У Сарајеву се одржавају разговори о прекиду ватре и о другим питањима из области безбедности и стабилности у БиХ. Учесници разговора су били представници Српске Републике, Хрватске Републике и Федерације БиХ. Разговори су се одржавали у Сарајеву, а учесници су били: Милош Ђељевић, Председник Српске Републике, Драво Пантић, Председник Хрватске Републике, и Мухамед Ђаџић, Председник Федерације БиХ.

ИЗБЈЕГЛО 10.000 ЉУДИ

На Црпачкој страни је избијело српско дејство, а са западне стране националне четничке формације. Тога је дана из Сарајева побегло 10.000 људи. У Сарајеву се одржавају разговори о прекиду ватре и о другим питањима из области безбедности и стабилности у БиХ. Учесници разговора су били представници Српске Републике, Хрватске Републике и Федерације БиХ. Разговори су се одржавали у Сарајеву, а учесници су били: Милош Ђељевић, Председник Српске Републике, Драво Пантић, Председник Хрватске Републике, и Мухамед Ђаџић, Председник Федерације БиХ.

ОТВОРЕНО ПИСМО ГЕНЕРАЛУ КУКАЊУ

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СТАВАЈА СЕ ФОНАКСА ДРАМА

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ИЗ БИХ

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ПОРЕДИ ИНТЕРИЈЕТА - НЕБИ БИТИ ТОРАНИЈЕ

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АМЕРИКА ПРИЈЕЋА ЕКОНОМСКИМ И ДРУГИМ САНКЦИЈАМА

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ОСЛОБОЂЕЊЕ • ПОНЕДЈЕЛКАС, 2. ЈУНИ 1992.

МЕЂУНАРОДНИ ПРЕС-ЦЕНТР

Предсједништво врховни командант

У изјави из Сарајева данас је објављено да је Предсједништво врховни командант у Сарајеву прихватило предлог о прекиду ватре и о другим питањима из области безбедности и стабилности у БиХ. Предсједништво је такође објавило да је прихватило предлог о прекиду ватре и о другим питањима из области безбедности и стабилности у БиХ.

СИЛАЈИЋ - У ИМЕ МУСЛИМАНА

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ДОМОВЕ У БИХ НАПУСТИЛО 1,897.000 ЉУДИ

Пацици на 22. јуна напустили су своје домовине у БиХ. У Сарајеву се одржавају разговори о прекиду ватре и о другим питањима из области безбедности и стабилности у БиХ. Учесници разговора су били представници Српске Републике, Хрватске Републике и Федерације БиХ. Разговори су се одржавали у Сарајеву, а учесници су били: Милош Ђељевић, Председник Српске Републике, Драво Пантић, Председник Хрватске Републике, и Мухамед Ђаџић, Председник Федерације БиХ.

ЧУДНИ ЈУНАЦИ

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The people of Banja Luka were expelled to Travnik on July 7, 1993 / MIKHAIL EVSTAFIEV

of one woman, was it a scream, fear, disbelief... “People, we are safe, we are on our own, among our own!”.

The Hague lessons

The non-Serb population in the territory under the control of the RS authorities was daily exposed to all kinds of oppression and torture. Every exit from the house to the street was associated

with the risk of being taken to prison, beaten, etc. The houses did not provide any protection either, because the police, the army and armed civilians could invade whenever they wanted, which is what happened, and they could take away whoever they wanted, beat, rape and kill, writes Dr. Milišić.

The harassment and torture were regularly intensified, she recalls, “af-

ter every loss and defeat on the battlefield. At that time, the number of murders increased especially.” According to her, Bosniaks did not receive rationing cards, most often they could not get medical help or medicine, and Serbs often used humanitarian aid as a kind of a “weapon of war”.

All this was calculated to force the Bosniak population to leave the territory under the control of Serbs and their homes, but also in general, to leave the territory of BiH and “scatter across the world”. Bosniaks were forced to sell everything in the territory under Serb control in order to provide the money needed to buy tickets, various certificates and approvals so that they could apply to leave, writes Dr. Milišić.

That March of 1995, we had heard all this so many times from people we had

According to the 1991 census, northern Bosnia had 625,000 Serbs, 356,000 Bosniaks and 180,000 Croats. At the beginning of 1995, northern Bosnia had 719,000 Serbs, 37,000 Bosniaks and 30,000 Croats

welcomed on these “exchanges” since 1992, so that the woman from the bus in Travnik did not have to explain anything more.

For those who did not know or refused to admit it even when they watched it, the last chance to understand were the Hague and domestic trials for the organizers and perpetrators of genocide. However, judging by the results of the implementation of the Dayton Annex 7, which related to returnees, hundreds of years of imprisonment for the ethnic cleansing (given to the perpetrators) have done little to annul its results.

In July 1995, the military and police forces of Republic of Srpska in Srebrenica committed genocide in which, according to available information, 8,372 Bosniaks were killed.

Years earlier, Bosnian Serb authorities had subjected the enclave's population to inhumane and life-threatening conditions that would have led to its annihilation even without liquidations and forced displacement. Years of exhaustion, then persecution and finally mass execution took place in an area which the United Nations Security Council had declared a UN safe area by Resolution 819 of April 1993 and which under that resolution it was obliged to protect. The International Court of Justice in The Hague (ICJ) and the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) declared the crimes in Srebrenica as acts of genocide.

Extensive operations

The end of the genocidal operation, which began after the fall of Srebrenica on July 11th 1995 and ended five days later, was the most demanding action carried out by the Bosnian Serb military and civilian leadership with Serbian support during the aggression against Bosnia and Herzegovina. All political and military activities were subordinated to that goal - the destruction of the Bosniak population in the Srebrenica enclave.

Such an extensive operation required the participation of the whole society. The closeness between the murderers and the victims, created during their life together in the same area, makes the crimes even more frightening. The victims were taken to the shooting by buses that used to take them to work or school, before the execution they were detained in their former school classrooms, gyms, factory halls... Part of the executions were committed by the military and police units whose members were not from the East Bosnia, but most murders were committed by former friends, neighbors, colleagues, schoolmates, teachers...

The decision to physically destroy "only" the male population of the enclave Srebrenica was enacted with a goal to avoid accusations of destroying the whole community.

However, the end result was the same, as the Muslim community in eastern Bosnia was traditional and patriarchal, with men playing a leading role in both public and private life. Men were better educated, they were breadwinners and protectors; they made decisions in their families. The removal of male members of the community and the simultaneous forcible transfer of women and children had identical consequences - the complete destruction of the pre-war Muslim community in eastern Bosnia. The people we knew as Bosnian Muslims or Bosniaks are today a disenfranchised minority in that part of the country.

The annihilation of Bosniaks in eastern Bosnia is charted and announced in "The resolution of strategic goals of Serb people in Bosnia and Herzegovina" adopted in Banja Luka in May 1992. Radovan Karadžić explained the war goals of Serbian people to the deputies of the so called Assembly of the Serb Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina as follows:

"It seems that we do not even need to agree on a goal. The goal is written deep within us. It is sacred because it is divine and by the fact that human hand did not place it there. It is the goal that Serb people feel and cultivate in themselves and which they never give up, no matter how difficult it is. We had to agree on tactics, we had to agree on practical steps, but we did not have to

The killings started in the night on July 11th 1995 in Potočari

Years of exhaustion, persecution and, finally, mass executions took place in area which the United Nations Security Council had declared a UN safe haven by UN Resolution 819 in April 1993 and which, according to that resolution, it was obliged to protect



Writer: **DR. EMIR SULJAGIĆ**

agree on the most far-reaching strategic goals because everyone had the same thought. And that is the surest guarantee that it is from the deepest being of the Serb being, from the deepest being of each of its members.

There are national communities in the middle of Europe that cannot live together. They cannot because they hinder each other's development. There are species in the plant world that cannot grow together. They have to be removed to make progress."

In April 1992, the units of the Novi Sad Corps of the JNA and Serb paramilitary forces occupied the town of Srebrenica without a fight. Only a few hundred of its pre-war inhabitants remained in the city. The one-month period since Srebrenica was controlled by Serb authorities was marked by robberies and crimes.

A group of self-organized Srebrenica volunteers in the late April in 1992 clashes for the first time with the JNA, paramilitary forces and the local

the enclave. Its boundaries were not stable and were constantly shifting. Already in the summer of 1992, famine became central to the life of every inhabitant of the enclave. At the end of that period, in April 1993, the so-called Safe Area Srebrenica was formed.

Safe area

The second period of the siege lasted from April 1993 to July 1995 and it was a time when the enclave was nominally under the UN protection. The establishment of a UN "safe area" did not stop the exhaustion of the enclave's domicile population in Srebrenica, internally displaced population from the villages of the Srebrenica municipality that had been occupied by Serb forces and refugees from other parts of eastern Bosnia who had been already withdrawing from Serb forces for an entire year.

However, the territory under the control of the units of the Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina

settlements continued in eastern Bosnia. By the spring of 1993, the effect of that persecution was that the population of Srebrenica had reached between 50,000 and 60,000.

When pre-war food supplies were depleted, the population began to eat rye and oats, whose flour could not be finely ground; the bitter flour of the seeds cut their throats. The feeling of hunger for some residents of the enclave was worse and heavier than the fear of grenades and sniper bullets. The hunger changed people terribly; because of hunger people did to each other what was unthinkable only days before - because of a piece of yellow corn, hard as a stone, they were willing to risk their own lives and the lives of others.

Money quickly became worthless; a barter market was established. The ratio

of the value of the most important traded items dictated the war, ie. power ratio at the front. Only cigarettes could still be bought with money. By the end of the winter of 1992, cigarettes, which were particularly in short supply, had reached a price of a staggering 150 to 200 German marks per pack.

In early 1993, when it became clear that the RS leadership would not let a single convoy to Srebrenica, then-US President Bill Clinton decided to

The removal of male members of the community and the simultaneous forcible transfer of women and children had identical consequences - the complete destruction of the pre-war Muslim community in eastern Bosnia



Serb police. A month later, a meeting of all armed, hitherto unrelated groups, was held in the village of Bajramovići, and the Srebrenica Territorial Defense Headquarters was formed. Naser Orić was appointed as the commander. On May 19th 1992, Serb forces withdrew from Srebrenica under pressure of the Territorial Defense of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The siege of Srebrenica can be divided into two periods. The first lasted from May 1992 to April 1993, and it was the time when the Bosniak population that survived the first wave of violence in the Drina valley found refuge in Srebrenica. Since the beginning of the siege, Serb forces have been constantly attacking

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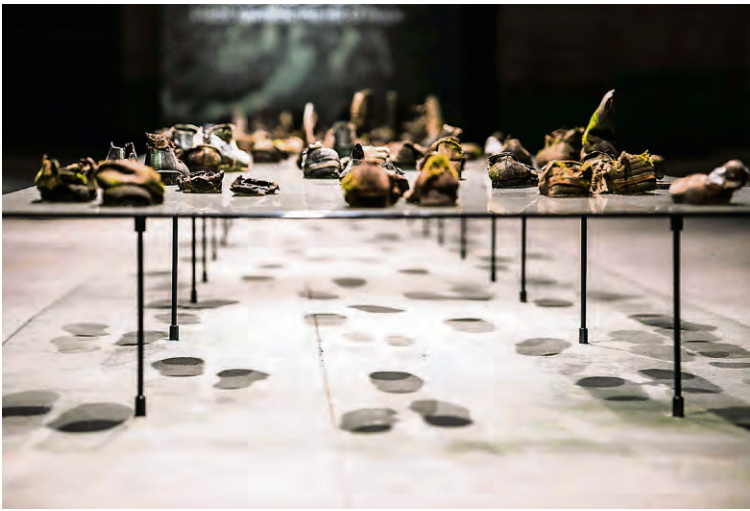
in eastern Bosnia during the summer of 1992 grew and spread to the north, in the direction of Tuzla. In the following months, the fighting intensified and until the fall, they took control of the areas along the Bratunac-Konjević-Polje road.

As a result of the direct involvement of Serbia, i.e. the Yugoslav Army, the persecution of non-Serbs from other





Srebrenica - Potočari Memorial Center / AHMEDIN DOZIĆ



Srebrenica - Potočari Memorial Center / AHMEDIN ĐOZIĆ





deliver food to enclaves in eastern Bosnia from the air. Pallets of food and refund packages were thrown from American planes on the surrounding hills. Thousands of people moved towards the hills, with or without torches, in groups or alone, guided by instinct. The search for food became a lottery for life. Until April 1993, when the then-UN Commander Philippe Morillon arrived in Srebrenica, everything was eaten: corn cobs, hazelnut and everything that seemed digestible in the slightest. Columns of hundreds of civilians passed stealthily through Serb positions around the enclave all summer and autumn at night and returned before dawn from the burned and destroyed Muslim villages, looking for food in them, kilometers deep in the territory under Serbian control. It was a competition with death, darkness, ambushes and inconceivable physical exertion. No one will ever know how many people did not survive the "search for food".

The only thing that could be compared to starvation was the absolute lack of salt. Almost anything could be bought in a back channelled way except salt. Those who had it until the spring of 1993 did not want to sell it. Sometime in the middle of that winter, someone discovered salt reserves for sprinkling roads - after several hours of overcooking, instead of a black lump, a thin, snow white crust of salt would appear.

Operations without anesthesia

Perhaps worse than the death in besieged Srebrenica was the wounding. The hospital had only six doctors compared to the pre-war 44 that worked in the city. Most surgeries were performed without anesthesia. People offered everything they had for medicine. Most of the time, nothing was enough. Contact with the outside world was maintained thanks to radio amateurs. Their first job was to publish the names of the exiled Podrinje citizens that found the refuge in Tuzla and other places in northeastern Bosnia, who survived the attacks or were deported. Every day hundreds of people searched for their families, relatives, friends on the lists at the entrance of the post office building... Radio amateurs were the only way to make contact with family members.

Sadako Ogata, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, sent a dramatic

report on the situation in the Srebrenica enclave to the UN Secretary-General Bouthross Bouthross Ghali on 18th of March 1993:

"Thousands of people enter the city from the surrounding areas, which are being systematically attacked and occupied by Serb forces. Thirty to forty people died of starvation and lack of medical care. Considering all that, a massive humanitarian tragedy is happening in the Srebrenica enclave."

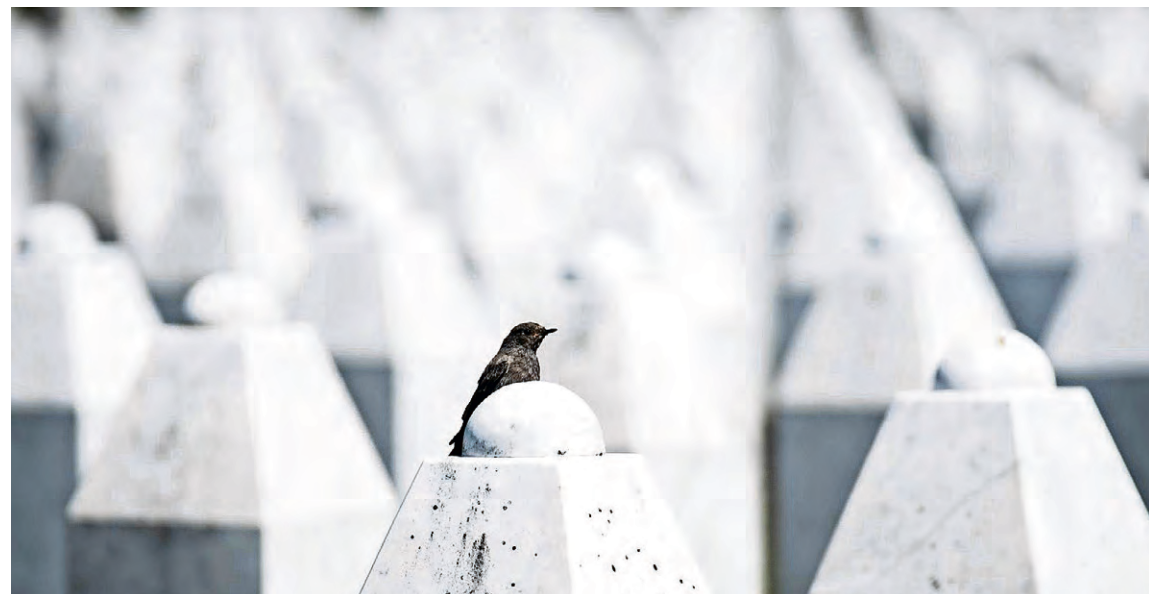
It was at this time that General Philippe Morillon, the UNPROFOR commander for Bosnia and Herzegovina, arrived in Srebrenica from Konjević-Polje, which had been occupied by Serb forces. After being prevented from attempting to sneak out of the enclave, Morillon addressed the panicked citizens of Srebrenica from the second floor of the Post Office building, through a window, telling them that the city was under the UN protection. The UN Security Council adopted the Resolution 819 on April 16, 1993, formally declaring Srebrenica a "safe zone" of the UN, in response to the "accelerated deterioration of the situation in and around Srebrenica".

Despite declaring Srebrenica a UN safe zone, the humanitarian situation was still hopeless. During a visit to the UN Security Council mission in April 1993, Ambassador Diego Arria, Venezuela's representative of the UN Security Council, called the situation in Srebrenica a "slow genocide under the protection of UN forces".

The summer and fall of 1993 were spent in mild euphoria due to feeling of protection, for the first time since the beginning of the war. Convoys of humanitarian aid began to arrive regularly and at least briefly allayed the fear of famine.

There were no large-scale attacks during that period, but sniperists continued to shoot at the city. The security officer of the VRS Bratunac Brigade, Momir Nikolic, defined the situation as "...making life difficult in the enclave, not allowing civilians to do their job".

In late July 1994, the VRS Main Staff informed the commands of corps that the Ceasefire Agreement of 18 April 1993



By the end of the winter of 1992, cigarettes, which were particularly in short supply, had reached a price of a staggering 150 to 200 German marks per pack

was "no longer valid". The Drina Corps was ordered to reduce the range of the enclaves to the city in the case of Srebrenica and a village with a three-kilometer zone in the case of Žepa.

By the spring of 1995, the RS authorities were growing more aware that a war had to be finished quickly. In March of that year, the RS President Radovan Karadžić issued the Directive 7 of the Supreme Command. Karadžić's strategy was simple: to end the war by force and force the international community to acknowledge the factual situation on the ground. The Drina Corps was to carry out this strategy.

A general rehearsal of the attack and a test of the will of the international community to protect the "safe areas" was conducted in early June 1995. Namely, on June 3, on the orders of Drina Corps Commander Milenko Živanović, units of the Bratunac Brigade and the Special Forces Detachment "Wolves of the Drina" took control of the UN observation checkpoint in Zeleni Jadar. According to a Drina Corps combat report sent to the General Staff that day, "the population of Zeleni Jadar [...] moved out in panic", and "it was noticed that people from the wider Zeleni Jadar area were moving towards Srebrenica after the withdrawal of UNPROFOR". As a result of that attack, the number of inhabitants in the city itself increased from 36,000 to 42,000 people. Approximately 85 percent of the population were exiles. The noose was tightened.

Miroslav, all this must be killed

Two days before the attack on Srebrenica began, Radovan Karadžić called on Miroslav Deronjić to Pale as the most prominent SDS official in Podrinje. After a brief discussion of the possible consequences of the enclave's military occupation, Karadžić said: "Miroslav, this should all be exterminated."

At three o'clock in the morning,

Pallets of food and refund packages were thrown from American planes on the surrounding hills. Thousands of people moved towards the hills, with or without torches, in groups or alone, guided by instinct

on July 6, 1995, the attack began on Srebrenica from all locations around the city. The shelling was intense and continuous. Five Dutch Battalion observation checkpoints in the southern part of the enclave fell one after another in an attack by the RS Army. By the morning of July 11, Serb forces had begun occupying some parts of the city. By four o'clock in the afternoon, Dutch soldiers had begun the evacuation of four to six thousand civilians from the town towards Potočari.

During the night of July 11, RBiH Army soldiers and male civilians began to gather in the area of Šušnjar and Jaglić, which were the starting points on the way to Tuzla. According to some estimates, there were between twelve and fifteen thousand people in the column.

Old men, women, children and about two thousand men gathered in Potočari seeking refuge at the UN base. The actual number of refugees who arrived there on July 11 and 12 will never be known. The Dutch battalion estimated that there were 17,500 people in Potočari, while the UN military observers estimated the number to be much higher - between 30,000 and 35,000.

Today it is known that the political and military leadership of RS in the next 24 hours made two strategic decisions with tragic consequences: the first - to deport women and children from Potočari, and another to kill the entire male population of the enclave.

In the morning hours of July 12, outside the hotel Fontana in Bratunac, Momir Nikolić met with his superior - Colonel Vujadin Popović, Assistant Chief of Security in the VRS Drina Corps. Popović presented him with a plan according to which several thousand of women and children would be deported from Potočari to RBiH Army-controlled territory near Kladanj, and that the men would be separated, temporarily detained in Bratunac and then executed. According to the later testimony, Popović told him: "All 'balijas' should be killed."

The men and boys who were separated from the crowd in Potočari were taken to the Vuk Karadžić school and the old school in Bratunac. Miroslav Deronjić says that Bratunac was in the state of siege that night:

"At that time, buses and trucks with captured Muslims came to Bratunac from Konjević Polje. The buses were parked in the very center of the city so everyone knew about them. People were taken to the stadium, the hangar and the Vuk Karadžić primary school. Many young or old people were mobilized during the night. They were given rifles and told to guard and secure the buses. In the evening, Ljubo Simić reported that there were murders, shootings..."

Between eighty and a hundred people were killed that night in Bratunac. In the morning a large number of prisoners, in a column of buses and trucks longer than a kilometer and a half were taken in the direction of Zvornik. They were taken to several different locations and detained in schools and gyms.

The VRS military security services were in the heart of the organization of the systematic killing of Bosniak men population from the Srebrenica enclave. A group of officers from the Security Directorate, led by Ljubiša Bear, organized the planning, identification and mobilization of resources, the selection of people to commit crimes, and the subsequent burial and destruction of evidence of the crimes. Members of the Military Police and other units subordinate to the military security service also took part in the conduct of the crime.

The killings started on the evening of July 11, 1995 in Potočari, but organized mass executions took place from 13 to 16 July in the municipalities of Bratunac and Zvornik. The five major execution sites in Zvornik are: a school in the hamlet of Grbavci near Orahovac, a dam near Petkovci, the Branjevo military farm, the Pilica Cultural Center and Kozluk. The largest single mass execution site in Bratunac was a warehouse of the Agricultural cooperative in Kravica.

Secondary tombs

The process of hiding and destroying evidence of a crime began parallel to the mass executions. The majority of the work was done by the engineering units of the RS Army.

The operation to erase traces and cover up the committed crimes carried out by the civilian and military authorities of the RS was codenamed "Asanacija", which is a term that means taking hygienic and sanitary measures on the battlefield. The criminal operation of moving the bodies of those killed from the execution site to smaller ones, the so-called secondary graves was supposed to be secret, but in the end it had to be done with the use of civilian resources and the manpower of utility companies in Bratunac and Zvornik, because military resources were not enough.

The Prosecutor's Office of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the International Commission on Missing Persons found 73 mass graves of Srebrenica victims by March 2009, when the search for the missing was left to the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina: 31 primary, 37 secondary and five for which no information was available. The number of mass graves discovered to date exceeds 100.

(The author is the director of the Srebrenica - Potočari Memorial Center)

OSLOBOĐENJE
BOSANSKOHERCEGOVAČKI NEZAVISNI DNEVNIK
Sarajevo, 6. januara, petak
1993. godine
Cijena 3000 BHD

ALIA IZTJEBGOVIĆ O ŽENEVSKIM PREGOVORIMA

RAT NEĆEMO IZGUBITI

U slučaju da ne bude vjerna interpretacija prirode ratnih događaja, izjavila je Alia Izetbegović, predsjednica BiH, da BiH neće izgubiti rat. Ona je izjavila da BiH neće izgubiti rat, jer BiH ima pravo na samostalnost i nezavisnost.

Završena prva faza

U Sarajevu je završena prva faza pregovora o mirovnim pregovorima. U Sarajevu je završena prva faza pregovora o mirovnim pregovorima. U Sarajevu je završena prva faza pregovora o mirovnim pregovorima.

Agresor odbio Vensov i Očenov "paket"

Delegacija BiH prihvatila je od tri ponuđena dokumenta, tuđman i Boban su ih, dok su Čović i Karadžić odbili kompletan paket koji su ponudili Vensov i Očenov "paket".

U žizi

Plamen života

U Sarajevu je završena prva faza pregovora o mirovnim pregovorima. U Sarajevu je završena prva faza pregovora o mirovnim pregovorima. U Sarajevu je završena prva faza pregovora o mirovnim pregovorima.



OSLOBOĐENJE
BOSANSKOHERCEGOVAČKI NEZAVISNI DNEVNIK
Sarajevo, 13. januara, petak
1993. godine
Cijena 3000 BHD

ZAPOVEDNIK SNAGA UNPROFOR-a ZA BIH BORAVIO U SREBRENICI

MORIJEON SVJEDOK ZLOČINA

Kao što sam se bojao, našao sam na vrlo dramatičnu situaciju koja se još više pogoršava nadiranjem srpske vojke — rekao general Filip Morijon.

Sutra zasjeda Skupština RBH

U Sarajevu će sutra zasjedati Skupština Republike Bosne i Hercegovine. U Sarajevu će sutra zasjedati Skupština Republike Bosne i Hercegovine.

U žizi

Dani odluke

U Sarajevu će sutra zasjedati Skupština Republike Bosne i Hercegovine. U Sarajevu će sutra zasjedati Skupština Republike Bosne i Hercegovine.

Pakleno u Srebrenici

U Srebrenici se odvijaju intenzivni borbi. U Srebrenici se odvijaju intenzivni borbi. U Srebrenici se odvijaju intenzivni borbi.



OSLOBOĐENJE
BOSANSKOHERCEGOVAČKI NEZAVISNI DNEVNIK
Sarajevo, 13. januara, petak
1993. godine
Cijena 3000 BHD

POČELA AKCIJA - NEGRIRANJE LETJELICA

POLETJELI ČUVARI BH. NEBA

Komandir akcije napustio je na avionu NATO-a oboriti srpsku letjelicu koja ne bude poštivala njihovo naređenje da napusti vazdušni prostor iznad BiH.

NATO u Bosni

U Sarajevu će sutra zasjedati Skupština Republike Bosne i Hercegovine. U Sarajevu će sutra zasjedati Skupština Republike Bosne i Hercegovine.

U žizi

Atina i Pale

U Sarajevu će sutra zasjedati Skupština Republike Bosne i Hercegovine. U Sarajevu će sutra zasjedati Skupština Republike Bosne i Hercegovine.



OSLOBOĐENJE
BOSANSKOHERCEGOVAČKI NEZAVISNI DNEVNIK
Sarajevo, 5. marta, subota
1993. godine
Cijena 3000 BHD

PREDSEDNIK PREDSEDNIŠTVA RBH O NAJNOVIJOJ OFANZIVI ČETNIKA

ŽEPA - ISPIT SVIJETA

Napadi je izložio više od 40.000 ljudi, od čega su većina izbjegnili u Srebrenicu i okolnim mjestima, među kojima je i oko 8.000 židova. Oči su izbjegnili u Srebrenicu i okolnim mjestima, među kojima je i oko 8.000 židova.

MORIJEON U PREDSEDNIŠTVU BIH

U Sarajevu će sutra zasjedati Skupština Republike Bosne i Hercegovine. U Sarajevu će sutra zasjedati Skupština Republike Bosne i Hercegovine.

U žizi

Atina i Pale

U Sarajevu će sutra zasjedati Skupština Republike Bosne i Hercegovine. U Sarajevu će sutra zasjedati Skupština Republike Bosne i Hercegovine.

OSLOBOĐENJE
BOSANSKOHERCEGOVAČKI NEZAVISNI DNEVNIK
Sarajevo, 13. januara, petak
1993. godine
Cijena 3000 BHD

BOSANSKOHERCEGOVAČKA RATNA HRONIKA

OLOVO - GROBLJE ČELIKA

Jutro se bori Armija BiH kod Olova uništiti jedan od najvažnijih srpskih logora. U jutro se bori Armija BiH kod Olova uništiti jedan od najvažnijih srpskih logora.

Mostar - zona smrti

U Mostaru se odvijaju intenzivni borbi. U Mostaru se odvijaju intenzivni borbi. U Mostaru se odvijaju intenzivni borbi.

U žizi

Priznavanje nemoci

U Sarajevu će sutra zasjedati Skupština Republike Bosne i Hercegovine. U Sarajevu će sutra zasjedati Skupština Republike Bosne i Hercegovine.

OSLOBOĐENJE
BOSANSKOHERCEGOVAČKI NEZAVISNI DNEVNIK
Sarajevo, 13. januara, petak
1993. godine
Cijena 3000 BHD

BOSANSKOHERCEGOVAČKA RATNA HRONIKA

KRVAVI BOŽIĆNI DANI

Napad na srpske civile u blizini grada Zepa. Napad na srpske civile u blizini grada Zepa. Napad na srpske civile u blizini grada Zepa.

U žizi

Paralelni Sarajevo

U Sarajevu će sutra zasjedati Skupština Republike Bosne i Hercegovine. U Sarajevu će sutra zasjedati Skupština Republike Bosne i Hercegovine.

OSLOBOĐENJE
BOSANSKOHERCEGOVAČKI NEZAVISNI DNEVNIK
Sarajevo, 13. januara, petak
1993. godine
Cijena 3000 BHD

BOSANSKOHERCEGOVAČKA RATNA HRONIKA

OPET PAKAO U GORAŽDU

Ozbišnog granatiranja Mostara poginulo četvero, a ranjeno desetak osoba. Ozbišnog granatiranja Mostara poginulo četvero, a ranjeno desetak osoba.

U žizi

Trgovina

U Sarajevu će sutra zasjedati Skupština Republike Bosne i Hercegovine. U Sarajevu će sutra zasjedati Skupština Republike Bosne i Hercegovine.

/ ARHIV OSLOBOĐENJA



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Izet Nanić in the trench

1.201 days of the siege of Bihać



Bihać was a strategic bridge for connecting the Autonomous Region of Krajina (ARK) and the SAO Krajina in Croatia, all motorized JNA units that - withdrawing from Slovenia and Croatia - went to Bosnia, passed through Bihać

Writer: **FAHRUDIN BENDER**

The citizens of Bihać realized that there would be a war as early as the beginning of 1991, when written notices of the Crisis Staff began to be distributed to the Serb population of the city.

“Strict alertness until Friday, every window should be a watchtower, shut down lights at 22.00, avoid incidents. Provide a bus. Establish a connection

with the JNA army hall, cars should not be used. Mandatory response to the call of the TO and JNA. Anyone who gets a weapon is a military conscript.”

That is how the war in Bihać was prepared.

Death in the corn field

Until the beginning of the aggression on Bosnia, the term crisis staff was almost unknown, until the self-proclaimed Serb areas began to introduce it, in parallel with the addition of the prefix Serb in almost all cities of BiH. The Serb municipality of Bihać was proclaimed on December 28, 1991 in Pristoka near Bihać. Bihać was a strategic bridge for connecting the Autonomous region of Krajina (ARK) and SAO Krajina in Croatia, and all the motorized JNA units, that were retreating from Slovenia and Croatia to Bosnia, passed through Bihać.

Although in the city lived just a bit more than 17 percent of the Serb population, SDS and JNA wanted it for themselves.

They secretly dislocated the weapons of the TO and used them to arm formations loyal to the Serbian Krajina.

In the fall of 1991, the first civil killings on the area of municipality of Bihać happened. Gospa Halkić was killed during the corn harvest in the settlement Vikići. According to the eyewitness statements, people who harvested corn were shot from the direction of the SAO Krajina. By spring, several more incidents had occurred.

The neighboring Bosanska Krupa was attacked in April, and Bihać only

two months after, the reason for the delay in the start of the war in Bihać has not been clarified to date.

It was not until June 1992 that most residents of the Bihać settlements of Dobrenica, Spahići, Jezero, Brkići, Golubić, Čekrlje, Vinica, Založje, Orljani and Ribić had to seek safety outside their houses that were on the siege line.

Ripač is the first place where the arrests of the Bosniaks began and their closure in the IMT service area, which housed the headquarters of the Serbian police and which would later become a camp. Along with it, there were also the Račić, Orašac and Kulen-Vakuf camps, while the remote Kamenica building near Drvar was designated as the central camp.

Bihać was attacked on June 12, and in the siege that lasted 1201 days participated units of the First and Second Krajina Corps of the VRS, Banija, Korčun and Lika Corps of VRSK. The most engaged were the units from the Second Krajina Corps, 15th Light Infantry Brigade from Bihać, 3rd Light Infantry Brigade Bosanski Petrovac, 17th

of Bihać became a battlefield of the largest number of offensives, terrible battles and destructions, but also tactical operations like nowhere else during the wars in the Balkans. The Fifth Corps also performed the largest number of successful war operations, especially since the middle of the war when they began to bring glory to the entire Bosnian army. These are just some of them.

The operation Lightning (“Munja”) happened on January 11th, 1993, when the shock Bužim brigade occupied the wider Bajan area, as well as the earlier operation Fire (“Oganj”), where they liberated Čorkovača by taking over the part of the state border. This battle confirmed the strategic genius of young general Izet Nanić. Although the operation Birch (“Brezja”) was led by general Ratko Mladić, the fighters of Fifth Corps resisted attacks on Grmeč-Srbljani and Bužim-Otoka battlefield. In the counter-offensive, Hasin vrh and Alibegovića kosa were liberated. The operation “Grmeč” was led by general Atif Dudaković, on October 24, 1994, in the direction of Kulen

While people of Bihać barely survived, the smugglers were selling bags of flour for a thousand German marks each, the enemy began to deliver poisoned food to weaken them in the operation „Mač” (Sword)





Vakuf and Vrtoče. In a counter offensive from the other side of battlefield, the aggressor went down to Zavalje, Vučjak, Žegar and Vedro Polje above Bihać. The operation “Grabež” started on October 25, 1994, when the glorious 502 brigade liberated the barrack on Grabež. Then happened the great operation Tiger freedom (“Tigar sloboda”) when the units led by Hamdija Abdić Tigar staged a rebellion in the city of Bihać in mid-July 1994, so they used operative intelligence methods to extract huge military aid through Fikret Abdić, who believed it to be a real rebellion. This operation is also considered to be the first break of the Autonomy.

Then, in November 1994, the operation Spider (“Pauk”) ensued in the assistance of the autonomous and Serbian forces, designed at the SDB headquarters in Belgrade. With the collapse of the enemy offensive, the hopes of the aggressor to destroy the resistance in the Cazin region and the Bihać district through Abdić were lost. Then the forces of SAO Krajina and VRS carried out the largest pressure on Bihać in the winter of 1994. The city of Bihać was worn out by the war and starved. The general Atif Dudaković just then rejected the offers of the UNPROFOR’s generals to lay down their arms and become a protected zone like Srebrenica, and thus similar fate was avoided. A turning point in the war happened after two operations of Croatian Army, operation Winter 94 (“Zima 94”) and Summer 95 (“Ljeto 95”) that were small in the size of warfare and in the quantity of the conquered strategic territory, but were the

basis for the next action Storm (“Olujja”) after which Bihać was liberated from the besieging environment. Croatian army has with the help of the Fifth Corps broken SAO Krajina, after which the Fifth Corps liberated Velika Kladuša forever, breaking the Autonomous district Western Bosnia. After that, the Fifth Corps started the action “Sana 95” and they finally liberated Bosanska Krupa, and after that Bosanski Petrovac, Ključ and Sanski Most. The progress of the Heavenly Forces (“Sila nebeska”), as the Fifth Corps was called, was stopped by the signing of the Dayton Agreement and the end of the acts of war in BiH.

Bihać survived all those terrible offensives, but just from one (operation Sword (“Mač”)) it still today has consequences in the form of multiple cancerous diseases and short lifespan of the population. The people of Bihać would not wish such dark days to anyone.

The intensity of the combat operations in 1994 is best seen in the losses in the units of the Fifth Corps of the AR-BiH and among civilian population of Bihać district. These losses are significantly higher than in the previous two war years. The total number of killed fighters and leaders in 1994 was 1,041 of which 56 were officers, 76 non-commissioned officers and other soldiers. The largest number of the fighters and leaders died in July 107, in November 294 and in December 187 - states the Bihać historian Mujo Begić in the book “In the siege of 1.201 days”.

In those days, while people of Bihać barely survived, the smugglers sold a bag of flour for a thousand German

marks, the enemy began to deliver poisoned food to weaken them in the operation Sword (“Mač”).

In the confiscated documents with the label of military secret, the colonel Petar Borić, the commander of the 15th Corps of Knin, writes:

- On the day 25.5.1995, I was informed by the 15 K reserve captain Drakulić Mimo, to be at the last checkpoint (border of 21 and 15K) and take over two trucks reg. 68-45 and 68-46 (without city signs) and to secure the passage, through the checkpoint of the civilian police of Ličko Petrovo village, which goes on to Bihać. The commander of the 15. K regiment Sevo Stevo emphasized that it is an action of a strictly closed character, and that the goods are poisoned and that the passage should be secured, and all in order to inflict losses to population and fighters before the offensive begins. It took the task seriously and I accomplished it during the day. However, instead of two, three large trucks came, to which I secured the passage. At the checkpoint, I later talked to an unidentified person in a new Renault-clio vehicle with Belgrade registration, but I lost the piece of paper with his name on it, so I do not know which drivers or road leaders are involved, and I was not even interested, given the task I received - described the colonel.



Fifth Corps



The Fifth Corps started the action “Sana 95” and they finally liberated Bosanska Krupa, and after that Bosanski Petrovac, Ključ and Sanski Most. The progress of the Heavenly Forces (“Sila nebeska”), as the Fifth Corps was called, was stopped by the signing of the Dayton

The actors of this operation engaged in a deliberated poisoning of citizens of Bihać, hoping to be promoted for it and get a medal, so they carried out orders without conscience, considers historian from Bihać, Mujo Begić.

That event is a proof that Belgrad wanted to poison Bihać. Then the problem with money occurred, which was the reason for writing that report, so we found out about the whole story-told us Begić.

The colonel Borić was called later in the night, because a problem arose during the return of the convoy from Bihać. A policeman nicknamed Raćina, searched the convoy and found a huge amount of money from a person from Belgrade (the trail boss).

At the police station in front of Raćina, there was an open briefcase full of foreign currency and a pistol in a holster; he said that he does not allow vehicles to pass back. The trail boss said that he received 607.000 DM of



Atif Dudaković, commander of the Fifth Corps

foreign currency for sold (poisoned op.a.) goods. The trail boss stated the following: Policeman Raćina asked for half of the foreign currency to let them go, which he did not receive. He asked for one percent of foreign currency we agreed on, to which the trail boss did not agree. He asked for a gun to be given to him and for them to pass, to which he did not agree either - describes colonel Borić, who had to go to the police commander and others to explain the purpose of the passing of these trucks, and finally to compile a report which, unfortunately late, fell into the hands of the Fifth Corps. The colonel further states that on May 27, 1995, in Korenica with the commander of the 15th Corps, in the presence of colonel Zimonje and lieutenant colonel Krković. N., the trail boss arranged the second tour with 3-4 trucks of poisoned goods for Bihać, and that they got involved in smuggling and that they made a lot of money. In order to prove that it was not smuggling, he submitted a couple of criminal charges,

documented the action of poisoning Bihać and at the end imperiled the secrecy of the entire operation.

We asked prof. Mujo Begić, since all this is well documented, how come these people are not prosecuted by the courts for the gross violations of the customs of war.

“If there was a justice it should be so, however, no one has ever paid for it, nor do I know that this case exists in investigations at all. So we (Fifth Corps) during the liberation

of the barracks and camp in Račić, which was a camp for the liquidation of captured citizens of Bihać, found documentation and log books of artillery fire, lists of civilian targets and so on, and still no one from the artillery regiment or the Second Krajina Corps was held responsible for it” Begić replied.

Although the Prosecutor’s Office of the USK Bihać works well, especially when it comes to the War Crimes Department, they have not been able to prosecute all crimes in Bihać, especially after the head of this department, Jasmin Mesić has left the Prosecutor’s Office, according to Professor Begić. Furthermore, it is not just a matter of war crimes prosecution.

Thirty years has passed, everything that happened is falling into oblivion, witnesses have long since moved to another world.

Accurate and up-to-date information, well known in the immediate end of the war, have been enmeshed with a multitude of misinformation, propaganda, unprofessional work and malicious revisionism whose goal is to further cover up the truth about the crimes.

The truth is watered down

So the real truth about heroic organization and resistance of Army of BiH is watered down slowly, with constant humiliation and persecution of the officer cadre in efforts to revitalize crime and equalize guilt, Professor Begić thinks.

Even algorithms on the internet are not in favor of preserving the truth about the war events, while the books, documents and knowledge contained in them have become an obsolete thing. And moreover the VHS tapes on which historical recordings were made, fade and disappear like old photographs.

Only individuals keep some of it, or finance themselves to do their work like Professor Begić who says that he does not know that in BiH there are some funds to help academic studies or researchers of objective truths about the war in BiH. Thirty years has passed. After the war, it was popular to say how a serious time distance needs to pass in order for the history of war to be considered objectively. However, that was just another deception, because when the evidence disappears, there is nothing to consider, especially when there are generations who don’t even care about it.

On the other hand, passionate nationalists, party bots or patriots from the diaspora are not in deficit. On the contrary, their hyperbolic and ignorant attitude does not help at all.

As if the paint ball weapon, which they are obsessed with, helps in the case of a new war.

And with the increase in fuel and food prices, no one has more experience than the citizens of Bosnian cities that were under the siege, because they know that the price of flour can go up to a thousand marks, and that this flour can be even poisoned too.

No one checks, no one persecutes, no one is held responsible for wrongdoings, and no one survives long enough.



Tuzla – Trijumf jedinstva različitosti

Političko jedinstvo i odlučnost odbornika Skupštine opštine Tuzla 4. 4. 1992. godine pretvorilo se u političko jedinstvo skoro svih građana i njihovu odlučnost da po svaku cijenu odbrane Tuzlu i Bosnu i Hercegovinu

Odbornici Skupštine opštine Tuzla su u junu 1991. raspravljali o problematici bespravne izgradnje. U toku ove, mjesecima pripremane sjednice, saznali su da je rat počeo u Sloveniji. Od tada, kroz čitavu 1991., naročito 1992. i ostale ratne godine, odbornici raspravljaju i odlučuju o problemima koji se tiču zaštite svih ljudskih i građanskih prava, a prije svega onog osnovnog – prava na život građana Tuzle i Bosne i Hercegovine.

U ljeto, jesen i zimu 1991. godine, Skupština opštine raspravlja o čitavom nizu teških pitanja, usko vezanih za političku pripremu odbrane suverenosti Bosne i Hercegovine.

Početkom 1992. godine Skupština opštine Tuzla i njeni izvršni organi provode značajnu aktivnost organizovanja referenduma za suverenost Bosne i Hercegovine. Prvog marta, nakon što su građani Bosne i Hercegovine izglasali nezavisnost i suverenost države, maskirani ekstremisti SDS-a blokiraju Sarajevo. Bosna i Hercegovina je pred teškim i krvavim ratom. Ugrožena su sva prava njenih građana, pa i na život.

Tuzlanski Savjet za narodnu odbranu bio je u danonoćnom zasjedanju. Pošto je oružje u vlasništvu Opštinskog štaba Tuzle i dvije okolne opštine bilo u magacinima lociranim u kasarni, Skupština opštine Tuzla na sjednici od 3. 4. 1992. usvaja prijedlog da se od JNA zatraži oružje koje je u vlasništvu Teritorijalne odbrane i preda opštinskim vlastima, tj. Štabu TO Tuzla. Istoga dana se saznaje za brutalni napad Arkanovih vojnih, policijskih i paravojnih snaga iz Srbije, potpomognutih Karadžićevom paravojskom, na Bijeljini. Postaje jasno da Tuzlu, ukoliko se hitno ne naoruža i ne organizuje odbranu, čeka sudbina Bijeljine.

Zato, četvrtog aprila 1992. godine, oko 13 sati, predsjednik Skupštine opštine Selim Bešlić, sa saradnicima, odlučuje da za 17 sati istog dana sazove vanrednu sjednicu Skupštine opštine.

U to doba, Skupštinu opštine je sačinjavalo 100 odbornika iz: UBSD-a (tada Reformisti), SDP-a, SDA-a, HDZ-a, Liberala, MBO-a, Demokratske stranke i SDS-a. Pošto se tražilo od JNA da Opštini Tuzla preda oružje u vlasništvu Teritorijalne odbrane, kao gosti su prisustvovali i visoki oficiri JNA.

Četvrti april 1992. godine bio je dan velike napetosti.

Već danima prije toga, kroz Tuzlu prolaze prijetuće kolone razuzdanih ratnika, pripadnika bivše JNA, koji pucaju na sve strane. Naročito u džamije. Ljudi su se sa strahom zavrtačili u „sigurnost“ svojih domova ili u grupe, koje su počele odvojeno planirati način svoje samoodbrane. Oko Tuzle se počeo stezati i radioobruč.

Službenici Centra veze danonoćno su slušali i analizirali jezive prijetnje o tome kako će Tuzlake klati, ubijati i granatirati. Građani su na televiziji gledali stravične prizore rata. Iz pravca Podrinja nadirale su i kolone izbjeglica. Činilo se tih dana da je situacija bezizlazna. Onima koji su vodili ovaj grad bilo je jasno da će, ukoliko uspješno organizuju odbranu Tuzle, spasiti i Tuzlu i čitavu regiju. U suprotnom, biće krvi za propast onog što nisu mogli spasiti.

Tog dana skoro svaki odbornik i član izvršne vlasti Tuzle, svi su znali da ugrožavaju ličnu sigurnost i samim prisustvom na sjednici. Jer, u sali su zajedno s njima sjedili predstavnici SDS-a i predstavnici JNA, jedne od najvećih vojnih sila u Evropi. Na sjednicu je došlo 69 odbornika (od ukupno 100), što je s obzirom na način njenog sazivanja (telegramom upućenim tek u 13.53 sata), bio zadovoljavajući i za kvorum dovoljan odziv.

Još veću hrabrost predstavljalo je na sjednici govoriti i otvoreno zagovarati odbranu grada pred onima koji će ga napasti. Svako od onih koji su uzeli riječ bio je svjestan tog prevelikog rizika. I, konačno, izglasati Odluku, kakva je donesena, bio je u tim satima hrabar politički čin. Tuzlanski parlament je tog dana donio odluku koju, u to doba, nije mogao, niti je donio, nijedan drugi parlament u Bosni i Hercegovini. Najviši organ tuzlanske vlasti kazao je u pravo vrijeme prave riječi.

Sam tok sjednice bio je više nego dramatičan. Niko u sali nije bio siguran da u toku sjednice,

ili odmah nakon nje, neće biti uhapšen od strane Jugoarmije, koja je u to doba u Tuzli imala jednu od svojih najvećih kasarni. U toku sjednice jedan od vozača je neoprezno i uspaničeno utrčao u salu i viknuo da je „neka vojska na Korzu“.

Treba napomenuti da je sala u kojoj se održavala sjednica u neposrednoj blizini Korza. Mnogi su pomislili da je otpočela okupacija grada. Nastalo je komešanje među odbornicima i gostima. Sjednica je skoro prekinuta. Predsjednik Selim Bešlić, njegovi saradnici i većina odbornika uspjeli su održati red,

savladati paniku i nestrpljenje. Skupština je nastavila sa radom i ubrzo izglasala Odluku o prihvatanju prijedloga Savjeta za narodnu odbranu, odnosno Odluku o organizovanju odbrane Tuzle i pružanju otpora agresiji na Bosnu i Hercegovinu.

Odluka je donesena jednoglasno. Poslije sjednice se pokazalo da na Korzu nije bila „neka vojska“ kako je rekao vozač, nego specijalna jedinica MUP-a Stanice javne bezbjednosti Tuzla.

Četvrtog aprila 1992. godine odbornici Skupštine opštine Tuzla su, kao članovi osam različitih stranaka, kao odbornici iz osam različitih nacionalnosti, obezbijedili potpuno političko jedinstvo u cilju odbrane grada Tuzle i Bosne i Hercegovine. Odluka je donesena jednoglasno.

Političko jedinstvo i odlučnost Skupštine opštine Tuzla pretvorilo se u političko jedinstvo skoro svih građana i njihovu odlučnost da po svaku cijenu odbrane Tuzlu i Bosnu i Hercegovinu. Kolektivni strah pretvorio se u kolektivnu hrabrost. Na osnovu takvog jedinstva, stvorena je nevjerovatna disciplina svih građana, koji su se masovno odazvali pozivu za formiranje jedinica MUP-a, Teritorijalne odbrane BiH i civilne zaštite. Postignut je maksimalan

stepen bezbjednosnog angažovanja svakog građanina.

Čak su uspostavljena danonoćna dežurstva u svakoj zgradi i na svakom ulazu. U rekordnom vremenu formirane su jedinice branilaca Bosne i Hercegovine i Tuzle i već krajem aprila i početkom maja Tuzla je uspjela ovladati sobom i biti spremna da se brani i odbrani Tuzlu i Bosnu i Hercegovinu.

Ta spremnost bila je na ispitu već 15. 5. 1992. godine. Tog dana paravojska tzv. srpske republike (osnovana u Banjoj Luci, 12. 5. 1992. godine i stavljena pod komandu ratnog zločinca Ratka Mladića), sa pripadnicima strane vojne sile - Vojske Jugoslavije (28. 4. 1992. godine, Ustavom Jugoslavije ukinuta JNA i osnovana Vojska Jugoslavije), oko 19 sati, započinje napad na Tuzlu. Pripadnici Ministarstva unutrašnjih poslova Bosne i Hercegovine - Stanice javne bezbjednosti Tuzla su, vršeći svoju Ustavom SRBiH i Zakonom propisanu obavezu, postupajući u nužnoj odbrani, odbili napad na sebe, građane i Tuzlu i na taj način odbranili ovaj grad i time sudbonosno doprinijeli odbrani Bosne i Hercegovine.

Tuzla je do kraja rata ostala slobodna, a Tuzlaci su kao pripadnici oružanih snaga Bosne i Hercegovine učestvovali u oslobađanju i odbrani mnogih drugih gradova i sela. Mnogi građani Tuzle su u odbrambeno-oslobodilačkom ratu izgubili živote. U odbranu naše slobode živote su uložili i vojnici i civilne žrtve rata. Ne treba zaboraviti da su zločini nad civilima bitno uticali na intervenciju NATO-pakta i aktivno učešće međunarodne zajednice u zaustavljanju rata.

Samo jedinstvo, zasnovano na principu jednakosti i zaštite ljudskih prava svih građana, bez obzira na njihovu nacionalnu, vjersku, političku, polnu i svaku drugu pripadnost, može biti uslovom očuvanja društvenih i političkih vrijednosti bosanskohercegovačkog društva. Tuzla je to potvrdila.

Tuzla u miru, očiglednim pokazateljima, iz godine u godinu dokazuje da su tolerancija, talenat i nove tehnologije sigurna formula razvoja. Građani Tuzle su i danas svijetli primjer uspješne harmonizacije odnosa među bosanskohercegovačkim različitostima.

Jasmin Imamović
gradonačelnik Tuzle



OBILJEŽAVANJE 30 GODINA OD OPSADE SARAJEVA



Grad Sarajevo
City of Sarajevo



Grad Sarajevo, Informativni centar Međunarodnog krivičnog suda za bivšu Jugoslaviju (MKSJ), Centar za postkonfliktna istraživanja, Memorijalni centar Srebrenica i Modul memorije imaju čast pozvati vas da prisustvujete **programu obilježavanja 30 godina od opsade Sarajeva 1992 - 1995**. Program će se realizovati 4. i 5. aprila 2022. godine u sarajevskoj Vijećnici, a agenda događaja je ispod.

PROGRAM OBILJEŽAVANJA 30 GODINA OD OPSADE SARAJEVA

DAN I: Izložba fotografija „Opsada/Siege“, autor Paul Lowe
sarajevska Vijećnica, 4. april 2022.

16.30 – 17.00	Dolazak zvaničnika
17.00 – 18.00	<p>Izvođenje muzičkih numera na klaviru – Zlatan Božuta (Ludwig van Beethoven – Sonata op. 27 br. 2, Moonlight sonata, Adagio sostenuto) i violončelu – Isak Haračić (Tomaso Albinoni - Adagio u g-molu)</p> <p>Otvaranje crno-bijele izložbe „Opsada/Siege“, britanskog fotografa Paula Lowea</p> <p>Pozdravni govori:</p> <p>Benamina Karić, gradonačelnica Sarajeva</p> <p>Paul Lowe, autor izložbe</p> <p>Velma Šarić, osnivačica i direktorica Centra za postkonfliktna istraživanja</p> <p>Neil Kavanagh, zamjenik britanskog ambasadora u Sarajevu</p> <p>Moderacija: Hana Sokolović, aktivistkinja i psihologinja</p> <p>~ Mladi studenti čitaju izvještaje o opsadi Sarajeva ~</p>

Na sarajevskoj Vijećnici će u 20 sati biti upriličena videoprojekcija pod nazivom „Sarajevske ruže“.

„Sarajevske ruže“ su videoprojekcija Centra za postkonfliktna istraživanja sa imenima i crtežima djece ubijene tokom opsade Sarajeva uz fotografije Velije Hasanbegovića i grafički dizajn Šejle Bratić.

DAN II: Međunarodna konferencija „30 godina poslije - Sarajevo“
sarajevska Vijećnica, 5. april 2022. godine

12.00 – 12.45	<p>Otvaranje konferencije i pozdravni govori:</p> <p>Benamina Karić, gradonačelnica Sarajeva</p> <p>Carmel Agius, predsjednik Međunarodnog rezidualnog mehanizma za krivične sudove</p> <p>Serge Brammertz, glavni tužilac Međunarodnog rezidualnog mehanizma za krivične sudove</p> <p>Emir Suljagić, direktor Memorijalnog centra Srebrenica</p> <p>Moderator: Ismena Čaušević, stručni savjetnik u Informativnom centru Međunarodnog krivičnog suda za bivšu Jugoslaviju (MKSJ) u Sarajevu</p>
12.45 – 14.15	<p>Opsada Sarajeva, bosanskohercegovački rat i procesuiranje ratnih zločina: međunarodna iskustva i perspektive</p> <p>Panelisti:</p> <p>Prof. James Gow, profesor na Kraljevskom koledžu u Londonu</p> <p>General sir Rupert Smith, bivši komandant UNPROFOR-a u Sarajevu</p> <p>Dr Ilana Bet-El, novinarka i bivša viša savjetnica UN-a za Balkan</p> <p>Rada Pejić-Sremac, Međunarodni rezidualni mehanizam za krivične sudove</p> <p>Sean Maguire, bivši ratni reporter za Reuters tokom opsade Sarajeva</p> <p>Remy Ourdan, ratni reporter za Le Monde tokom opsade Sarajeva</p> <p>Moderacija: Dr. Paul Lowe, profesor na Londonskoj školi za komunikacije</p>
14.15 – 15.00	Ručak i kafe-pauza
15.00 – 16.30	<p>Kultura sjećanja i otpor kulture u periodu opsade Sarajeva</p> <p>Prikazivanje dokumentarnog filma „Kultura otpora“ koji istražuje otpor kroz kulturu kao specifični fenomen koji je karakterizirao otpor građanki i građana opsadi Sarajeva i BiH, u produkciji Modula memorije.</p> <p>Panelisti:</p> <p>Dr. Ivo Komšić, bivši gradonačelnik Sarajeva i član ratnog Predsjedništva BiH</p> <p>Dr. Elijas Tauber, savjetnik za kulturu i religiju Jevrejske zajednice u BiH</p> <p>Amra Abadžić Lowe, autorica knjige o opsadi Sarajeva, prevoditeljica i novinarka</p> <p>Miodrag Trifunov, glumac</p> <p>Hana Bajrović, autorica knjige o kulturnoj historiji BiH</p> <p>Moderacija: Nihad Kreševljaković, pisac, historičar i direktor festivala MESS</p>
16.30 – 16.45	Kafe-pauza
16.45 – 18.00	<p>Budućnost u miru i predstavljanje magazina Mir</p> <p>Panelisti:</p> <p>Benamina Karić, gradonačelnica Sarajeva</p> <p>Johann Sattler, šef Delegacije Evropske unije u BiH i specijalni predstavnik Evropske unije u BiH</p> <p>Tatjana Milovanović, urednica magazina Mir</p> <p>Mirnes Bakija, dopisnik magazina Mir</p> <p>Kristina Gadže, dopisnica magazina Mir</p> <p>Matija Krivošić, dopisnik magazina Mir</p> <p>Benisa Bibuljica, dopisnica magazina Mir</p> <p>Alem Bajramović, dopisnik magazina Mir</p> <p>Moderacija: Dr. Rachel Kerr, profesorica na Kraljevskom koledžu u Londonu</p>

Not that it is not good in Brčko

Unlike the rest of the country, the town on the Sava river has somewhat regained its pre-war demographics. Return was possible. Donations have been used to renovate housing. If someone worked in the civil service before the war, he was offered to return to his job



Writer: **EDVIN KANKA ĆUDIĆ**

On the last day of April 1992, Serb forces in Brčko blew up the Sava Bridge. It is still unknown how many civilians were killed on that occasion. Body parts of dismembered people lay in front of the Municipality, but also in other parts of the city. It was the beginning of the occupation of the largest city in Bosnia and Herzegovina on the Sava River.

Two days later, Serb units led by Ljubiša Savić aka Mauzer crawled through Kolobara, occupying the park around the White Mosque. Those who remained in their homes watched naively. Some from a nearby solitaire tried to resist unsuccessfully. Soon, a large Serbian tricolor was raised on the central Brčko mosque. A symbol of alleged victory. The Bosniak-majority settlement has fallen. That is how the war in Brčko began.

The city as a camp

After taking the place, serious crimes were committed: murders, various forms of torture and ill-treatment. Property was looted, religious buildings and illegally detained non-Serb civilians were destroyed. Three city mosques - Bijela, Drvena and Savska - were demolished on July 17th. The Catholic church in the city remained intact.

Residents of Kolobara were taken to the nearby house of Dr. Jusuf Sajdović. It is located across from the mosque. It used to be used as a dwelling space and gynecological surgery. Men, women and children were brought there. In the absence of space, they were



Memorial plaque, Luka Camp / EDVIN KANKA ĆUDIĆ

crammed. It was hot and stuffy. There was still electricity. It was cut off from time to time. However, people did not stay there long. They were taken to other addresses. Women and children to Brezovo polje, men to other locations. Eventually to Luke. In the most infamous camp, commanded by Goran Jelisić, also known as "Serbian Adolf", non-Serb civilians were brought from various parts of the city and Brezovo Polje.

Apart from Luka, crimes were committed in other locations. During May, DTV Partizan was used to detain Bosniaks and Croats. Two minutes walk from this building is the hotel Galeb (today Jelena). From May to July 1992, the facility was used to detain and rape non-Serb women and girls. The rapes were also committed in the Hospital, the Westphalia restaurant, and the Oslobođenje cinema. Civilians were detained in the JNA barracks, but also in the Laser bus company. Crimes were also committed in the Medical Center and the Wooden Mosque. Members of the Serbian TO and paramilitary formations from Bijeljina, Brčko and Serbia took part in the illegal detention of civilians at the Police headquarters. The most famous among them were Goran Jelisić and Monika Simonović. Together, the two also took part in crimes and the Brčko port.

From May to July, more than 3,000 non-Serb detainees passed through Luka. The detainees were placed in three hangars. Unlike the third hangar, which was mostly occupied by older men, the second housed a lot of women and children. Within the camp there was also an administrative building with offices. Investigations were carried out there. There was a concrete pillar in front of that building. It served to bind detainees before the beating. At the beginning of May, Goran Jelisić, Ranko Češić and others tied Ramiza Naza Bukvić to him. They beat her. They eventually killed her. In those days, Jelisić brought Stipe Glavočević to the main hangar. He was covered in blood. His ear was cut off. He made him kneel in the middle of the hangar. He beat him. He then ordered the guard to shoot the martyr.

The inmates slept on cardboard boxes, on their clothes, or on the concrete floor. There was a toilet outside the room. It was not allowed to be used without the permission of the guards. They often defecated in a vessel in their hangar. They did not have enough food and water. In May 2014, a memorial room was opened in one of the hangars in memory of the victims of war crimes, the first museum of detainees in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Apart from Luka, "Serbian Adolf" brought and killed civilians in one alley. At the entrance to the Crafts Center. There he executed Husein Krša and Hajrudin Muzurović. The place of execution has not yet been marked.

District as a 'solution' for everyone

Brčko was destroyed by the end of the war. As Serbs set up camps in their area, so did Bosniaks and Croats build their detention centers in the territories they controlled. According to the data of the Association of Detainees of the Republika Srpska, there were also camps in Gornji Rahić, Bijela, Maoca, Palanka, but not in Brčko. It was under complete control of the Serbs.

Returnees to the settlements of Rijekina and Brod could not recognize their



Alley 1992 / THE HAGUE ARCHIVE

houses in ruins. They were razed to the ground. With the formation of the Brčko District of BiH, the international community has offered a model of a multiethnic local community with a high degree of autonomy. Numerous opportunities have been given to make the life of citizens as better as possible. An example of how differences can work nicely. With each other or next to each other. Everything is divided into three. However, there is a state flag on every state facility. There is no other symbol than the flag and coat of arms of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The children go to school together. Pupils learn their mother tongue, no other language is imposed on them. Everyone knows about Meša Selimović and Ivo Andrić. Until recently, every educational institution had its own police officer. The place of worship was guarded by the police for a long time. Now there are cameras. Ajvatovica and Vidovdan are celebrated. The Hijrah and the Orthodox New Year used to be celebrated outdoors.

Unlike the rest of the country, the town on the Sava has somewhat regained its pre-war demographics. Return was possible. Donations have been used to renovate housing. If someone worked in the civil service before the war, he was offered to return to his job. Everything seemed to overcome the tragic past. To say that Brčko is a small-scale homeland.

According to Edin Jašarević, a Bosnian language professor at the School of Economics, "not much has moved away from the original idea." Partly because, he says, "the idea of Brčko outgrowing the Balkan and Bosnian frameworks has not been taken more seriously" and partly because, he adds, "certain political options suited Brčko to retain the status of an insignificant provincial town on the roads connecting some more important regions for them".

In the most infamous camp, commanded by Goran Jelisić, also known as "Serb Adolf", non-Serb civilians were brought from various parts of the city and Brezovo Polje



Luka camp, opening of the Memorial room in 2014 / JUSUF HAFIZOVIĆ

, but it could have been better



There is no mention of war crimes committed in this area. According to the Central Register of Missing Persons, 79 missing persons are still being searched for in the Brčko area. 298 people were identified. The oldest victim is Vasva Pešalić. The youngest is Elizabeta Čeliković. At the time of her death, Vasva was 91 and Elizabeth was 11. There is no such data in education materials. Friends of different nationalities do not discuss this. It is known who goes to which part of the city, who visits whose tavern.

The river Brka divides the city into two parts. The left bank is dominated by Bosniaks. Almost all Islamic religious buildings are stationed there. On the right side there is only one place of worship. The Majlis of the Islamic Community of Brčko has been looking for space for years to build a mosque on the right bank, in the "Š" settlement. Serbs refuse that. In the end, the Majlis agreed that the facility should not be built in that settlement. But it has to be in the city zone. Near the site of the Dizdari

The children go to school together. Pupils learn their mother tongue, no other language is imposed on them. Everyone knows about Meša Selimović and Ivo Andrić. Until recently, every educational institution had its own police officer

mosque, which was demolished by the communist authorities in 1956.

Although Bosniaks were the majority in the "Š" area before the war, the main imam of the Majlis, Mustafa-ef. Gobeljić points out that is not the case today. That is why, he says, a concession was made to move the mosque to the part of the city where Bosniaks are the majority. He also believes that the construction of a mosque near the original location from which it was forcibly removed, the historical injustice done to the faithful would be amended.

Despite all the arguments, Serb politicians are not ready to support this



Monument to martyrs and fallen soldiers of the Army of RBiH in Brčko
/ JUSUF HAFIZOVIĆ

idea. There is still no Islamic place of worship in the area.

Brčko is still a positive example

In 1997, the local veterans' organization, with the support of the municipality, erected a monument to the Serbian defenders of Brčko in the city. For the living and the dead. It is known as a monument to the Serbian liberators of Brčko. When the District was established, in 2003 the Assembly passed



Monument to Serb defenders of Brčko
/ JUSUF HAFIZOVIĆ



Monument to the fallen members of the HVO / JUSUF HAFIZOVIĆ

the Law on Monuments and Symbols of the Brčko District of BiH. Thus, it was possible to erect monuments to members of the Army of RBiH and the HVO on the same scale as a monument to Serbian fighters.

Civilian victims did not have such a privilege. The local government did not erect a monument to them. There is a memorial plaque on Luka, which does not state the context of the events from the beginning of the story. That is the format that Sarajevo Mayor Benjamina Karić copied from the locals. She also did not allow the perpetrators of the crime to be written on Kazani. Neither in the District, a member of the commission of the Serbian ethnic group did not allow the truth to be written on the symbolic plaque, which is located on the wall of the hangar. That his fellow Bosniaks and Croats were killed by neighbors wearing Karadžić's uniform. Denial of crime on both sides.

However, the government managed to remove the monument to Dragoljub Draža Mihailović from the public area. A monument to the Chetnik commander was brought from Vukovar and installed in the city in 1998. It was

made in Belgrade in 1990. Damaged several times, demolished at least once. It was located in front of today's City Library. He was removed and transferred to Višegrad. Due to that, the Serbian Orthodox Church gave a plot of land in the Brčko cemetery for the construction of a new memorial to this controversial person. That is how the criminal was resurrected in 2004. At the Orthodox shrine in Srpska Varoš. But it is private land. Those who will rest in that place with Uncle Draža must think about that.

Despite all this, Brčko is a positive example. But it could have been better. To attract more investors. To employ more youth. To start a dialogue about what was happening in those unfortunate 1990s. There will be no consensus. Things have to be talked about. Offer the young people better today. To get as few of them out of town as possible. The district gave hope to the returnees. It is a symbol of the victory of good over evil. Anything dividing people is petit bourgeois. Anything that connects is the worldly. I believe that Brčko connects. If we lose that faith, then Bosnia and Herzegovina would not make any sense either.



Alley, crime scene / EDVIN KANKA ČUDIĆ

BiH was liberated in 1992



Two hundred square kilometers in the Gostović River Basin, which were liberated by Zavidovići fighters and fighters from the future III Corps of the ARBiH in the fall of 1992, is the largest liberated territory of BiH in the first year of the war

Writer: **MIRZA DAJIĆ**

The Third Corps was the backbone of the Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. By reason of its organization and position, it was also the Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina General Staff reserve force.

Two out of three major operations of the Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina - Krajina, liberation of Vozuća, the unblocking of Mt. Vlašić and Donji Vakuf and the creation of conditions for the Third Corps to link up with the Fifth Corps - were organized and led by the Third Corps.

Bosnia and its resistance are mentioned at numerous military academies of the world and prestigious strategic research institutions. Most of the credit for resistance, organization and establishment of an outstanding military structure goes to the Third Corps of the Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, its soldiers and officers and to unselfish support from the people in those regions.

Comparison with Ukraine

- As a member of the Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, I do not think there is a better compliment than the frequently made comparison between Ukraine and the resistance offered by the Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the Third Corps as one of its most credited corps", said Jasmin Šarić, the last Third Corps commander, who was assigned a duty to return, together with his colleagues in the unit, the weapons and equipment to citizens and businesses, and to prepare the military for their role in peacetime.

At the outbreak of war, Šarić was a commander of defense of the City of Zenica.

- Zenica faced a number of challenges: to vacate the barracks in Zenica peacefully, with the least loss possible, and to try to keep as much equipment and weapons as possible, to preserve integrity and safety of every citizen, and to make sure not a single inter-ethnic conflict happened. We were aware that BiH was defended at every place where it was attacked, including Zenica. We were aware of the passable route for tanks from Teslić and Blatnica straight to Smetovi. If the RS Army had taken Smetovi, Zenica would have been yet another enclave. I am happy that there were no camps in Zenica nor were there any violations of human rights and freedoms. The units, which had been mobilized and prepared in Zenica, were the backbone of the Third Corps, Šarić emphasized.

The Patriotic League units, formed in the second half of 1991, were the forerunner of the Zavidovići units. Their vision was based on the necessity for people to remain in their homes.

- After general mobilization was declared in April 1992, 5,218 persons reported to the Municipal Secretariat of



Jasmin Šarić, former commander of the 303rd Knight Brigade



War units from Zavidovići took part in all battles in the zone of the 3rd Corps, and on the Sarajevo battlefield / MUHAMED TUNOVIĆ



508 fighters were killed in Zavidovići units, and 1,135 fighters in the entire municipality / MUHAMED TUNOVIĆ

Defense, and they were deployed to eight detachments of the Territorial Defense Staff in Zavidovići Municipality. The detachments were filled on a territorial principle because the soldiers' strongest motive was to defend their villages, city and houses. Special units were formed as military support to maneuver units, which were formed later, said Ahmet Odžakčić, retired colonel of the Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, former Chief of Territorial Defense Staff in Zavidovići Municipality and Chief of Bosnia Operations Group.

On 19 December 1992, the 318th Mountain Brigade was formed. Initially, it comprised three, and later five battalions. Some troops remained within the Municipal Territorial Defense Staff, and in November 1993, those units were merged into the 320th Mountain Brigade. In September 1994, the 4th Maneuver Battalion was formed out of the best fighters of Zavidovići and during the same month, the 328th Mountain Brigade was formed. During the war, the war hospital, defense industry and police as well the command posts of the Bosnia operations group and the 35th Army division played important roles.

Haris Čatić was an active servicemen before the war, a tank crewman with a degree from military academy.

At the beginning of aggression against BiH, he left JNA, came to Zavidovići and was given an unenviable role: he took upon himself to set up a special unit of the municipal territorial defense when no organizational structure existed. When the Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina was formed and the 318th Mountain Brigade was created in Zavidovići, he was the first commander of the Brigade. One year later, Jasmin Šarić, of Zenica, was appointed commander. Later, he was appointed commander of the 4th Maneuver Battalion; he was honored with the Golden Lily; after the war, he served as a chief of the Defense Department in Zenica.

Podsjeblovo, Vozuća, Ozren

Čatić said that the colonel Ahmet Odžakčić served at the Municipal Territorial Defense Staff and was, together with the late Mido Mujanović, from the Military Security Service, the most literate commander in Zavidovići.

- Thanks to them, nobody in Zavidovići has been prosecuted for war crimes. They educated people and did everything right. Everything was prepared in advance, written down and paper-based, and they always made suggestions to help others perform the tasks relating to the creation of the Patriotic League and

other formations in Zavidovići. Apart from the military structure, there was also a civilian structure, and there was unity between them. The defense industry, police reserves, police, civilian leadership, all of them functioned. This was how the defense was organized in Zavidovići, Čatić said.

During the war, the total number of military service members in Zavidovići was 9,335 soldiers and commanding officers, of whom 229 were women. Simply put, it was roughly an equivalent of three brigades or one division. Most of the credit for successful lives and survival of the people and army in this region goes to the civilian authorities, various organizations and individuals. Zavidovići used all of its potential to resist the aggressors and to save the lives of the people and military in that region.

- Let me mention the most important combats during the war. In 1992, we conducted targeted operations to defend Smailbašići and to liberate Klek and the river Gostović basin, totaling 200 square kilometers, which was the largest freed territory in BiH during the first year of the war. In 1993, we defended the city area in the battles fought against joint aggressor. The defense of hill 715 at Podsjeblovo is a synonym for the numerous

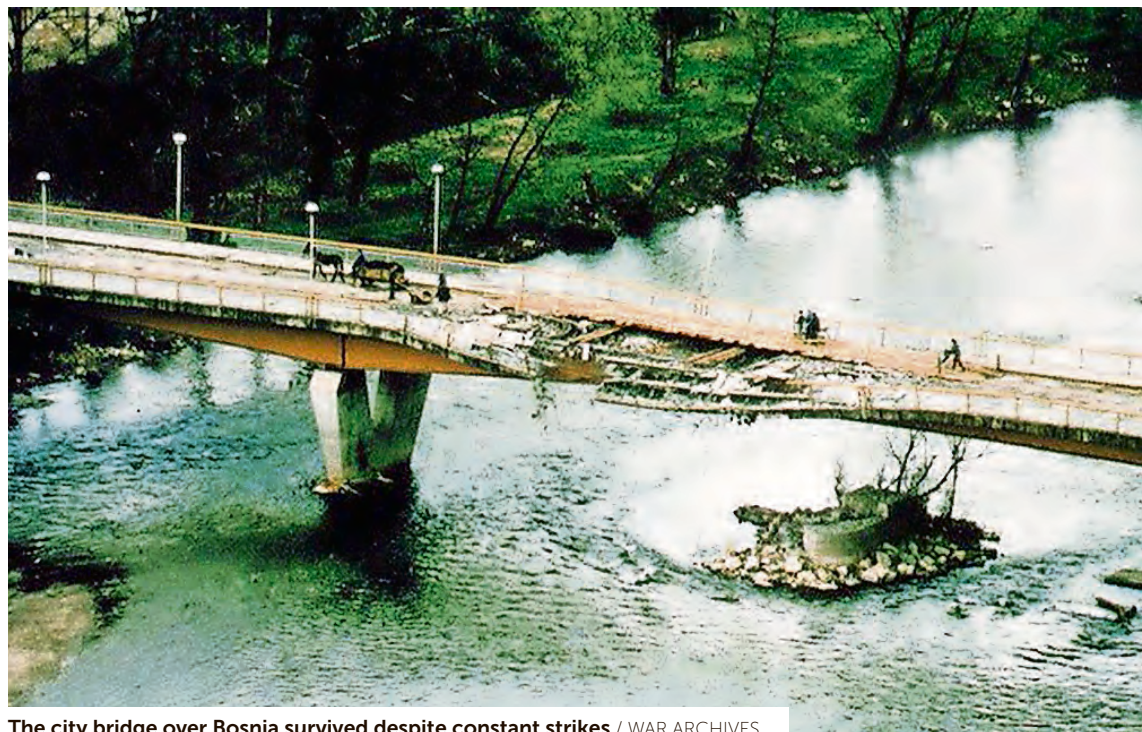
battles waged throughout 1994. The defense of that hill became a legend and an example of persistence and heroism, and its significance went far beyond the local community level. Liberation of Vozuća and parts of Mt. Ozren, as well as of the road between Zenica and Tuzla in September 1995 was perhaps the most important victory of our units during the past war. The Zavidovići units were supported by almost all units of the Third Corps, and our troops fought on all battlefronts in Maglaj, Vitez and Sarajevo, Odžakčić said.

The Zavidovići units are proud of having 36 recipients of the highest military decoration, Golden Lily, for their significant achievements and demonstrated courage, and the 328th Mountain Brigade is the "Glory Brigade". It was with lots of blood, sweat and tears that the enemy's intentions and plans were thwarted, that the territory of the municipality was defended, and that people remained in their homes.

During the war, the Zavidovići units lost 508 members, and a total of 1,135 soldiers were killed in the municipality. More than 1,400 soldiers were wounded, among them 113 amputees and five paraplegics. There were over 100 civilian victims of war, among them 22 children.



Haris Čatić and Ahmet Odžakčić, Zavidovići war commanders / MUHAMED TUNOVIĆ



The city bridge over Bosnia survived despite constant strikes / WAR ARCHIVES



Ferić: They heard about volunteers late / MUHAMED TUNOVIĆ

People were compact



Maglaj, which was in a complete blockade from June 21, 1993 to March 18, 1994, would never have fallen, he was maintained by patriotism, love for the state and the defense of the family, Salem Džonlić recalls The memory on the siege on Maglaj and its defense

Writer: **MIRZA DAJIĆ**

In a specific geographical and demographic view, Maglaj was, tells us Hajrudin Ferić a war reporter from Maglaj, a microimage of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The compactness and unity of the people defended it, says Hajrudin Ferić, a war reporter from Maglaj. "In a specific geographical and demographic view, Maglaj was a microimage of Bosnia and Herzegovina. - We watched the war in Slovenia and later the war in Croatia from a distance, thinking that it would not come to us. Certain activities of the then-JNA suggested that it would not pass us by" said Hajrudin Ferić, a war correspondent from Maglaj.

He explained that they later learned

from Ozren Views ("Ozrenski vidici") and the Crown ("Kruna"), newspapers published by the Army of the Republika Srpska, that in 1991, Serbian volunteer units were sent to Vukovar from the Maglaj area.

We did not believe that there would be a war

-When Doboj fell on May 2, 1992, when a large number of refugees from there found refuge in Maglaj, then we saw that something was happening. We did not have any armed formations. The Territorial Defense Headquarters fell apart. Personnel of Serbian nationality went to Doboj and Teslić. The wartime presidency of the Municipality of Maglaj had been in office since



Džonlić lost a child in the shelling of a water pump / MUHAMED TUNOVIĆ

April 1992, and it was headed by Aida Smajić, who was 30 or so, the first and only woman president of a municipality in BiH. She was looking for a person to form a TO Headquarters (Territorial Defense Headquarters) that would be the backbone, around which people could gather. We also had the police, but they also split off in May 1992, when Serb members separated and formed the Serb Public Security Station in Paklenica, that is on Ozren. Volunteers applied en masse since April 1992, but we had no weapons other than hunting rifles held by individuals and some handguns. In May, an agreement was signed between the TO Headquarters and the HVO Brigade Command on the joint defense of the town of Maglaj, and it was headed by Robert Brešić from the HVO, Ferić recalled.

Ferić said that until September 21st 1992, there was a period in Maglaj when there was neither war nor peace, and that at the beginning of June, the Bosniak population was expelled from Rječica, and also from the local community of Jablanica, from Ozren, Parnica and a good part of Bijela Ploča. He says that there were several hundred refugees who came to Maglaj from those places, and dozens of people were taken to the camp in Modriča.

-The real offensive on Maglaj and the attempt to capture the city happened on September 21st 1992 at 8.20 am, when heaven and earth were burning. They fired from artillery weapons from the slopes of Ozren and long-range ar-

tillery from Teslić. There were corpses on the street. There were attempts by infantry from the direction of the slopes of Ozren to try to occupy the city. Those attempts, those attempts of a breakthrough lasted until November 17th 1992 from three locations: from the direction of Bijela Ploča, across Stari Grad (Old Town) and through the settlement of Jovići. Thanks to the people who went to the trenches unarmed to prevent their infantry from entering the town, the city was defended. There were a lot of victims, said Ferić.

According to his words, apart from Tešanj and Brčko, Maglaj was a place where the relation between ARBiH and HVO was clear. Together they defended the town.

-The insidious betrayal by HVO occurred when they practically handed over to the RS Army their trenches on the south part of the town of Maglaj, in Liješnica, and by that line toward city area. What the RS Army could not do in the September offensive in 1992, they did without a fired bullet thanks to that betrayal of HVO, and they occupied Maglaj. From June 21st 1993 to March 18th 1994, Maglaj was in a total blockade, with no communication with the rest of the world, except with the Tešanj area that was free and likewise cut off in the blockade, pointed out Ferić.

Ferić emphasized that throughout the whole period, the RS Army psychologically tortured the civilian population, randomly shelled the town, fired from snipers on children, women and elderly. In Maglaj during the war there were 120 civilian war victims, among which 50 were children. On October 29th 1993, 15 civilians, among which four children, were killed by a mortar shell near a solitaire in Maglaj. Owing to the radio amateurs, people heard about the suffering of people in Maglaj.

He says that he is especially proud of the fact that there was no revenge in Maglaj and there was no reprisal.

Due to the merits in combat operations, 327th Brigade that had seven golden lilies, earned the epithet of a knightly brigade.

According to Ferić, Radio Maglaj worked throughout the war and informed the population. Radio amateur and people from Medical Centre fought and helped heroically. The Civil Defense constantly worked on the trenches, and the Red Cross and Merhamet distributed the aid.

No one has been prosecuted for the killed civilians

Salem Džonlić, the president of the Association of Civilian Victims of War in Maglaj Municipality, said that no one has been held responsible for 207 civilian victims of war, among which were 57 children.

-Ten years ago, we filed a complaint with the Prosecutor's Office. Everything was done as requested by the Prosecutor's Office. The cantonal Ministry of Interior did its job. Then the case was transferred from the Cantonal Prosecutor's Office of Zenica-Doboj Canton to the Federal Prosecutor's Office. We went twice, they apparently did not take the file out of the drawer.

Therefore, no one has been prosecuted, said Džonlić. Džonlić lost a child in the shelling of Maglaj, when one grenade killed 15 people, among them four children at the water pump near the solitaire. Patriotism, love for this country and defense of family were crucial for the survival of Maglaj and the reasons which kept people going in difficult times of war and harsh environment, says Džonlić. He asserted that Maglaj would never fall because its people were unified.



The aggressors did not spare the Health Center either / WAR ARCHIVE

Fighters from Tešanj passed the exam



Due to the betrayal of the 111th HVO Brigade from Žepče, Tešanj and Maglaj were completely blocked from June 24, 1993 to March 19, 1994. The manner in which Operational Group 7 South ARBiH in cooperation with civilian authorities defended this area is being studied in military schools

Writer: **MIRZA DAJIĆ**

The defense of the Tešanj area can be an example to many in terms of organizing the resistance when the country is under the attack. Although they had a large area of responsibility in the length of a hundred kilometers, there was organization, unity and good cooperation between civilian and military structures.

- Given the intensity of the fighting, we did not have many human casualties. There was unity, synchronization of civil and military power. We have had an organized War Hospital since May 1992, with Dr. Ekrem Ajanović in charge. Operation Group 7 South and all the brigades that were part of it had a multinational character in the command structure. Not a single religious building in Tešanj was damaged by members of the Army of Bosnia and Herzegovina (ARBiH). The 110th HVO (Croatian Defense Council) Brigade in Usora was on the territory of Tešanj. Good relations with the HVO have been preserved both here and with the population, even during the blockade, said Sakib Kurtić, retired brigadier of the Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the war commander of the 202nd Knights Brigade from Tešanj.

25,000 refugees

Before the beginning of the aggression on BiH, Kurtić worked in the Secretariat of National Defense. At the end of March and the beginning of April 1992, he says that he heard explosions from the direction of Derventa, and this was when the war moved from Croatia to Posavina.

- The municipal authorities in Tešanj made a very important decision on April 4, 1992 to reform the Territorial Defense Headquarters. Preparations for purpose-built production in the



Aggressors remained in the same place they were stopped in June 1992 / WAR ARCHIVE

company Pobjeda have begun. This referred to smaller material and technical means such as trombones, vests, small ammunition. In April, refugees began arriving from eastern Bosnia and Posavina. From April 29 to May 2 of that year, refugees from Doboj flooded Tešanj, and on June 10, refugees from Teslić began to arrive, Kurtić recalled.

He explained that in the period April-June 1992, Tešanj absorbed about 25,000 refugees. Many, he says, came, got by and then moved on, as far as possible from Tešanj and the war. But a lot of people remained and made themselves available in the defense of this area.

- Village guards were formed in the villages, and then units were formed from those guards. By the end of May, each inhabited place in Tešanj had formed one battalion. It was important for the population to feel that there was someone to defend this territory. The first combat operations were on June 1 and 2, 1992. By that time, a dozen TO detachments had been formed, and there was also one maneuvering detachment. Tešanj received the fighting quite readily, Kurtić pointed out.

He added that Tešanj is characterized by the fact that almost all company directors remained in their companies before the start of the war, as well as the intellectuals of this city, some

of whom found themselves in trenches on the first line of defense. In addition to Pobjeda, the companies Enker, Napredak, Sloga and Ukus have been transformed into a purpose-built industry. Pobjeda later produced large-scale ammunition, mortar mines, grenades. Enker produced small ammunition up to 14.5 mm caliber. Napredak made uniforms for soldiers.

During the war, schools were open. During the more intense fighting, there were pauses for several days.

- Brigades were created by enlarging the units. The first brigade that was founded was the 1st Tešanj Mountain Brigade in mid-June 1992, later named the 202nd Brigade. It received two awards for outstanding combat successes. One was in April 1993 ("Famous"), and at the end of 1993 the epithet "Knight" was added. This brigade is one of the 18 knight brigades of ARBiH. It was the bearer of the defense throughout 1992 in the entire area. I came to lead the 202nd Brigade in early March 1993 and remained in this position until early 1995. In March 1993, the 207th Mountain Brigade was formed. Later, it will also receive the epithet Knight. This brigade was also called "Pousorska ljuta", and 202nd was also called "Garava Brigade", Kurtić said.

Since a part of the territories of Doboj and Teslić was also under the zone of

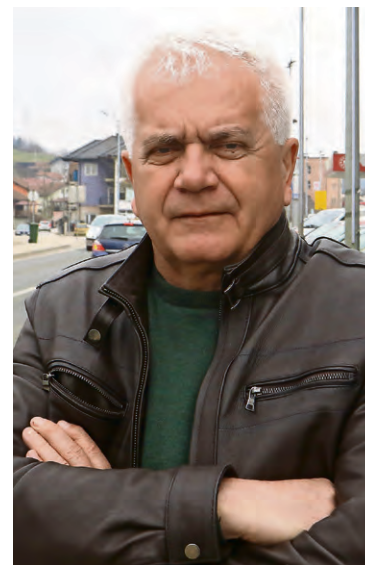
responsibility, the 203rd Doboj Brigade, called Doboj Bosna, and the 204th Teslić Brigade were formed later. Together, the 202nd, 202nd, 204th and 207th, with the 1st Maglaj Brigade, formed Operation Group 7 South. It was founded at the beginning of March 1993. Mustafa Cerovac, the first commander of the 202nd Brigade, was appointed as the head of the Operation Group, and Sakib Kurtić was in charge of the 202nd Brigade.

- At the beginning of 1993, we had five brigades in Tešanj area. During 1994, another brigade was formed, the 275th Tešanj Brigade. It was a liberation brigade by character, it did not have a zone of action, it had a more interventionist character. The number of fighters sufficiently ensured the safe defense of the territory. True, the zone of responsibility was large, about 100 kilometers of the line", said Kurtić.

436 fighters died in Tešanj

Brigadier Kurtić pointed out that "the so-called Army of the Republic of Srpska, despite all it had in June 1992, didn't occupy a single position in this territory further on." Tešanj territory welcomed the end of the war and the preparation for Dayton in a favorable position where they had, he says, all key elevations under their control.

- Due to the betrayal of members of



Kurtić continued writing about his comrades / MUHAMED TUNOVIĆ

the 111th HVO Brigade from Žepče, this area was completely blocked from June 24, 1993 to March 19, 1994. They let the Teslić unit pass. No civilian evacuation took place. The fighter group was together with the population. With the signing of the Washington Agreement in mid-March 1994, the formation of the Federation of BiH was agreed as well as suspension of operations between the HVO and the ARBiH. It has been different since then. Seven days after the unblocking, we managed to improve the tactical positions in the area of Crni Vrh, liberating some elevations", Kurtić pointed out.

This retired ARBiH brigadier published several books on war. His first book was about the fallen fighters of the municipality of Tešanj. It states that Tešanj gave 436 martyrs and killed fighters. After that, he made a monograph on the suffering of Teslić fighters. Teslić had 155 martyrs and killed fighters. After that, he published a book on disabled veterans in Tešanj. There were 595 disabled veterans in this municipality. Of the martyrs and fallen fighters in Tešanj, 569 children remain. The community has taken initiative to take care of them, and a significant number of these children today have a university degree. He also wrote a book on civilian victims of aggression in Tešanj and Teslić. Tešanj has 145 civilian victims of the war. There were 77 civilian victims of the war in Teslić.



Čestitka povodom 4. aprila – Dana otpora općine Tešanj fašizmu

Na današnji dan, 4. aprila 1992. godine, na vanrednoj sjednici Skupštine Općine Tešanj donesena je Odluka o proglašenju stanja neposredne ratne opasnosti za općinu Tešanj. To je značilo formiranje Ratnog predsjedništva, koje će zamjenjivati Skupštinu, i stavljanje Općinskog štaba Teritorijalne odbrane (TO) pod komandu Ratnog predsjedništva.

Tako je formirano organizaciono jezgro ovdašnjih jedinica Armije Republike Bosne i Hercegovine, a određen je i prelazak cjelokupne javne sfere iz mirnodopskog u ratni oblik djelovanja. Bila je to adekvatna i pravovremena reakcija na situaciju i na ono što se tek spremalo.

Ratno predsjedništvo i sve lokalne institucije su bile posvećene očuvanju ljudi i prostora. Iz Teritorijalne odbrane izrasle su brigade Armije RBiH, da bi već u martu 1993. godine bila formirana i Operativna grupa 7 jug koja je okupljala ne samo brigade stasale u Tešnju nego i one koje su u međuvremenu nastale od maglajskih, dobojskih i teslićkih patriotskih snaga.

Uspjeli smo odbraniti tešanjski prostor gotovo u cijelosti, a dati ogroman doprinos u borbama protiv agresora na drugim dijelovima BiH. Cijeneći da je navedena odluka imala izuzetan značaj za odbranu Tešnja i Bosne i Hercegovine, Općinsko vijeće Tešanj odlučilo je da se 4. april proglasi općinskim praznikom - Danom otpora fašizmu.

U povodu 4. aprila – Dana otpora općine Tešanj fašizmu upućujemo iskrene čestitke građanima općine Tešanj. Iskazujemo poštovanje spram svih onih koji su sudjelovali i istrajavali u donošenju i provođenju odluka koje su obezbjeđivale suverenost, slobodu i nezavisnost Bosne i Hercegovine, države ravnopravnih naroda i građana koji u njoj žive. Nadamo se da ćemo i u narednom periodu svečano obilježavati ovaj i druge značajne datume naše historije, te da se ratovi i stradanja više neće ponoviti.

PREDSJEDAVAJUĆI OPĆINSKOG VIJEĆA
Amir Kurtić, dipl. ing. elteh.

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Ravno Municipality, a Desirable Place to Live



An attack by JNA and Serbian and Montenegrin volunteer fighters on October 1, 1991 laid waste to that place. 37 people in total were killed

Writer: **MIRZA DAJIĆ**

Over the past ten years or so, more than 100 families moved to the region of Ravno. Hardly anybody could imagine that the municipality would ever become a desirable place to live after it was ravaged by war in October 1991.

The beauties of its landscape, the Vjetrenica cave, which is a protected natural monument, with over 8 km-long branched corridors and 135 ponds which are home to endemic olms, the numerous cascades, speleothem deposits, many monuments of material culture, and a travel distance to Dubrovnik on the coast of roughly 6 miles, are all conducive to the development of tourism in this region. The Čiro trail is another landmark which runs from Herzegovina, via Croatia and Konavle to Montenegro where it will be revived within the EU-funded Čiro 2 project. Three years ago, the idea of revitalizing the narrow-gauge railway into a cycling trail within Čiro 1 project was implemented. It was a joint idea funded by the EU and implemented through cross-border cooperation of Croatia and BiH for the purpose of maintaining the trail as a historical legacy and developing new tourist attractions.

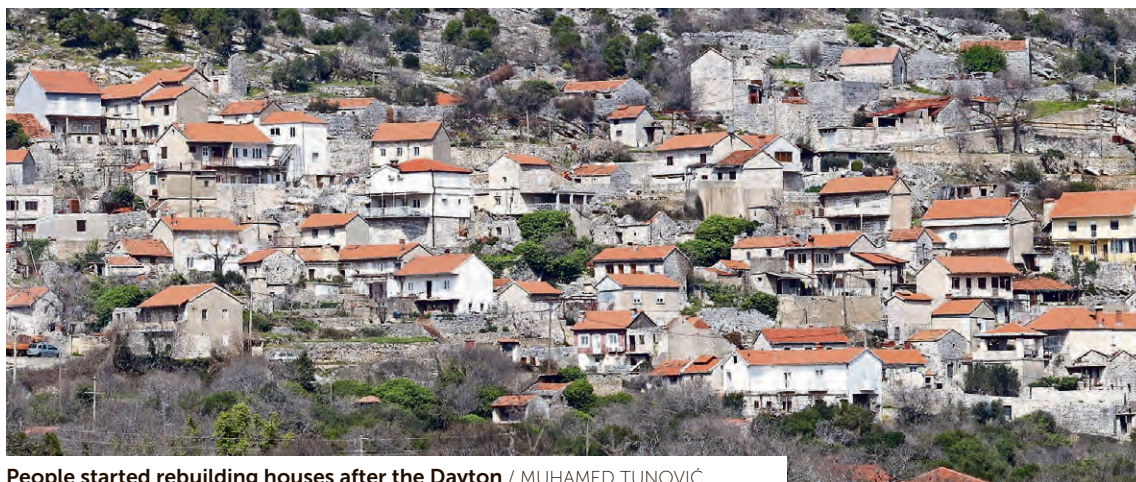
Seven People Slaughtered in One Day

Of course, agriculture is also important. The Popovo Field, with 2,500 hectares of arable land, is the main resource. Two restaurants are opened, and the municipality got also a new municipal building, new roads, an old people's home, a residential building with six apartments and a number of business premises for young families who want to live and work in Ravno.

Ravno belonged to Trebinje. Because of its proximity to Dubrovnik, it was strategically important for JNA's blocking the southernmost part of Croatia. It was attacked on October 1, 1991 and completely devastated. 24 people were killed, 11 were wounded, and 18 were incarcerated for two months. The most bestial was the massacre at Kijev Do, in which seven people aged between 60 and 87 were slaughtered.

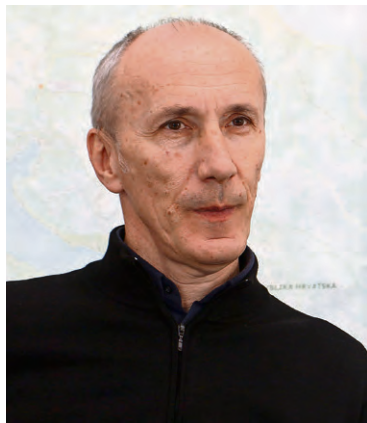
- Last year marked the 30th anniversary of the Greater Serbia aggression against the area of Ravno and later, against a wider populated area of the municipality. In the spring of 1992, with the Croatian support, the area was liberated

Last year marked the 30th anniversary of the Greater Serbia aggression against the area of Ravno and later, against a wider populated area of the municipality



People started rebuilding houses after the Dayton / MUHAMED TUNOVIĆ

and conditions were created for returns. The first war crime in BiH involving mass killings of civilians was committed on November 13, 1991 at Kijev Do. In total, 37 people were killed. I think that area was among the first liberated territories in Bosnia and Herzegovina, said Andrija Šimunović,



Andrija Šimunović / MUHAMED TUNOVIĆ



In the spring of 1992, the municipality was liberated with the help of Croatian forces / MUHAMED TUNOVIĆ



The Municipality building / MUHAMED TUNOVIĆ

major of Ravno, who is serving his fifth term as mayor.

Everything that happened during those eight months was horrific. There were many victims, many atrocities, properties were destroyed. There was no house intact in Ravno.

- During the aggression, people did not receive any assistance. They were

not protected, and civilians were attacked but they did not resist attacks nor was there any military formation in Ravno municipality; the aim was to lay waste to the area with the Croat majority. Luckily, the aggressor did not succeed. After the Dayton, people began to rebuild their houses with small international donations. The reconstruction burden fell heaviest on the owners of houses and buildings who wanted to provide minimum living conditions for their families, Šimunović said.

Over the past fifteen years, progress has been made in securing minimum conditions, building infrastructure and motivating and attracting displaced persons, particularly young people, to return.

- A vision of development, that is, a spatial planning documentation, a development strategy and everything that can bring prospects and ensure their sustainability set the foundation for development of every local

community, and at higher levels, of every canton and the state. We adopted a spatial plan for the municipality in 2007 which includes priorities focusing on the strengths of this region: first, the proximity of the Adriatic coast, almost the entire Croatian south, from Pelješac to Konavli, with Ravno, that is, Bosnia and Herzegovina, lying behind, and second, the region's environment has been fortunately preserved and was not polluted before or after the war. Clean and preserved environment is clearly visible to visitors. The Popovo Field is a great resource of the municipality, Šimunović said.

Earlier, agriculture was based on fruit, vegetable and crop growing and livestock farming. A total agrarian economy was realized through the Hepok Mostar Company. Today, agricultural production is taking place at Popovo Field, which is the main agricultural resource with very fertile soil. It is suitable for growing various fruits and vegetables which can also be grown in greenhouses and glasshouses. Crop production can be commercial or secondary economic activity of the families. Pasture lands indicate that this agroecological zone is suitable for the development of livestock farming, particularly sheep and goat farming, and also cattle farming, to a lesser extent. Land fragmentation is the biggest problem of agricultural development in the Popovo Field. The Ravno municipality is initiating land consolidation projects. A project has been developed for consolidation of about 100 ha of land, and a

similar project is being prepared for another 100 ha.

Along the Neum and Dubrovnik Hinterland

The development of agriculture and livestock farming is imperative for development of the territory of the Ravno municipality, Šimunović said. Ravno counts on revival of the processing industry, and major progress should be expected also in services. Family farms and their interest groups at the level of municipality or agroecological zones will be the mainstay of recovery and development of those activities.

The Ravno municipality is situated at the farthest southeast of Bosnia and Herzegovina, stretching about 80 km along the Neum and Dubrovnik hinterland, from Hutovo in northwest down to Konavli in southeast. Its boundary is delineated by the national border of the Republic of Croatia in southwest and the inter-entity boundary line and the Republika Srpska up in northeast.

How Mitterrand disappointed the people of Sarajevo, and Sontag delighted them



Writer: **DANIEL OMERAGIĆ**

Believing that the arrival of the French president at the end of June 1992 would mark the end of their suffering, the Sarajevans came out of the shelter to greet the guest warmly. Instead of stopping the killing and unblocking the city, they received crumbs of humanitarian aid. But it was different when it comes to the American writer

"My intention is not to encourage the people of Sarajevo, they are already brave enough," the French President François Mitterrand said on June 28th in 1992 when he visited Sarajevo, already badly wounded by grenades backfired from the surrounding hills.

The sudden arrival of the French leader to Sarajevo was considered a diplomatic miracle at the time. Believing that the arrival of Mitterrand will mark the end to their suffering, the Sarajevans came out of the shelters to cordially greet the guest. Many of them shouted, "Long live the France!" and "Mitterrand! Mitterrand!"

The Assembly of the City of Sarajevo, at an extraordinary session on June 28th 1992, made the decision to declare Mitterrand an honorary citizen of Sarajevo. In the decision signed by the President of the City Assembly of Sarajevo, Professor Muhamed Kreševljaković, it is stated that the citizens of Sarajevo

award this recognition to Mitterrand "in gratitude for the support and solidarity of the French Republic and the people of France in the most difficult moments of Sarajevo's five-hundred-year history".

Mitterrand's arrival in Sarajevo was the first meeting of the president of the sovereign state of Bosnia and Herzegovina Alija Izetbegović with a European statesman who decided to visit the most dangerous point at that moment of history in Europe - besieged Sarajevo. After the conversation they had, Izetbegović handed him a television tape showing the destruction of Sarajevo, its main buildings and settlements, Mitterrand himself suggested to the President of the Presidency of BiH to tour the city to be personally convinced of the extent of the destruction of buildings and of human suffering.

Izetbegović's plea

Accompanied by the host, Mitterrand visited the ruined City Hospital, the former Military hospital, where

he was welcomed by the chief physicians' dr. Abdullah Nakaš and Dr. Branko Vujović, in the hospital where 160 wounded were treated and underwent 150 complicated operations. Hospital capacities were damaged 85 percent. They visited the patient Dražen Bošnjak, for whom Dr. Vujović said that his chances of survival were 1: 10,000 based on the severity of the wounds inflicted by the grenade, and then, however, he was out of danger. Another patient Mitterrand and Izetbegović approached was Mladen Tošić, who was wounded by anti-aircraft machine gun (PAM).

"My risk of coming to Sarajevo is nothing special in comparison to the risks you take. What is happening in Sarajevo is unacceptable, transcends all boundaries", Mitterrand said, and to those who intend to level the settlement of Dobrinja, he said that France will oppose that.

France is a permanent member of the UN Security Council, he said, and it will raise its voice in condemning the violation of the ceasefire.

Izetbegović used the conversation with Mitterrand as an opportunity to introduce the guest to the dramatic situation in BiH.

The sympathies of the West are on the side of BiH, but it is strange and disturbing for me as well why there is no adequate reaction from the world of politics, Sontag said in 1993

"I pointed out on the injustice done towards other cities in Bosnia Herzegovina, where the situation is much more difficult than in Sarajevo", he said, noting that he asked Mitterrand to send a group of humanitarian workers to Bijeljina, Foča, Zvornik, Mostar and other towns closed for months.

As a reason for coming, Mitterrand mentioned two things - shock within the international community because of what is happening in Sarajevo, and the great human suffering of the inhabitants of Sarajevo and BiH, which he personally witnessed.

"United Nations Security Council, European Union, The Conference on European Security and Cooperation



Sontag proved to be a true Sarajevan

/ PAUL LOWE

has begun to pass certain decisions regarding the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, you can see something is happening, and these instances are engaged in direction of resolving these problems, of which human casualties are the greatest", Mitterrand said.

He said that he would share his knowledge and view of the situation in Sarajevo towards the implementation of the humanitarian aid.

"This will be just the beginning of the whole process, and Sarajevo should be an open city. If Sarajevo Airport is closed, that process is impossible to start. I came to raise the world's attention to the central problem which is humanitarian aid", Mitterrand said.

A day after he left Sarajevo, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted the Resolution 761 authorizing the General Secretary Boutros Boutros-Ghali to immediately send additional UNPROFOR troops (one infantry battalion of 1,000 soldiers) in order to achieve security, the functioning of Sarajevo Airport and the aid delivery.

Just three minutes before the session, Mladić's army began withdrawing from the airport. After the convoy made of aggressor's armored and others motor vehicles began to leave the building where it had been for months, the airport was taken over by a small group of UNPROFOR soldiers. Not long after the first French plane with humanitarian aid arrived from Split to Sarajevo.

Security Council Resolution 757 implied such a move in its first phase. In the second phase, an artillery withdrawal and unblocking of the entire Sarajevo area was planned, placing it eventually under UN control.

Soon it turned out that the French president had given false hope to Sarajevans. Mitterrand's diplomatic engagement ended with humanitarian aid, and the war and suffering in Sarajevo and BiH continued with even greater force. In the following war years, the people of Sarajevo were bitter remembering Mitterrand's controversial arrival. He delivered breadcrumbs to Sarajevo, with-



U.S. Senator, today President Joe Biden in Oslobođenje



The arrival of Mitterrand in Sarajevo was experienced as a miracle

Mitterrand's arrival in Sarajevo was the first meeting of the president of the sovereign state of Bosnia and Herzegovina Alija Izetbegović with an European statesman



Stambolić bravely opposed Milošević and paid with his life

out which the city under siege would not have survived after all, but he also gave Karadžić the green light to continue the aggression.

Sarajevans had a completely different experience with the American author Susan Sontag. As noted by the director Haris Pašović, she was the first world famous person who has publicly said that what was happened during the war in BiH was genocide. She came to Sarajevo with her son David Rieff in April 1993. In the book "Sontag: Life and Work", by the American writer Benjamin Moser, which is translated by Senada Kreso and published by Sarajevo based publishing house Buybook, the arrival of Susan Sontag to the besieged city was described.

American journalist David Rieff arrived to Sarajevo in September 1992 to report on the hell the city was going through. At the end of his first visit, he had a conversation with Mirsad Purivatra, who later founded Sarajevo Film Festival, and asked him if there was anything or someone he would like to bring with him when he gets back.

"One of the people who could perfectly understand what is going on here is definitely Susan Sontag," he replied.

Purivatra did not know at the time that Rieff - who told him he will do what he can - was Susan Sontag's son. A few weeks later Rieff showed up at Purivatra's door.

"We hugged and he said to me: Okay, you

asked me for something and I brought you a guest. She was standing behind the door. Susan Sontag. I froze", Purivatra recounted.

Only later did he realize their relationship. Sontag has visited the besieged Sarajevo ten more since then. On April 6, 1993, along with David Rieff and the doyen of European journalism and senior official to

UNESCO Leon Davičo, she was a guest of Oslobođenje journalists with whom she talked for three hours in the ruined newspaper building in Nedžarići.

"You need to know that the best world journalists are currently in BiH", Sontag said and also stated that she is following the events here and trying to influence political circles in her country:

"The sympathies of the West are on the side of BiH, but it is strange and disturbing for me as well why there is no adequate reaction from the world of politics, or why that reaction is always late".

Sontag then honestly admitted that she wondered why the prominent writers remain silent, on their safe shores, "while the whole world here is being demolished," and she reminded of Hemingway and the other writers who were the most direct witnesses of the epochal events and horrors of the century.

The famous writer also gave an interview to Oslobođenje journalists for one from the war issues of the Sunday magazine in which she said:

"Please tell people I didn't come here to make statements, especially not to be objective in the 'Wiesel' style, because I am not at all objective, I am totally pro-Bosnian, and I don't want to be telling people here what's happening to them! I came to be here, to talk to people, to give them my unconditional support, to walk through the streets of Sarajevo. Yesterday I walked around the city for a couple of hours, and I was stopped by a finely dressed gentleman (by the way, it is unbelievable how people in these conditions are still neat and elegant) and asked me to sign my book 'On Photography' for him. He said he was carrying the book around since he heard that I had come and that he was very surprised that we already had not met on the streets of Sarajevo. You see, people expect from me the very thing I already did - just to take a walk around the city. I don't understand people who



Pavarotti and Bono Vox sang the planetary hit "Miss Sarajevo"



Joan Baez was the first big star to visit the besieged city

come here for a day, from the transporter to car, and back. That's ridiculous! Even my ten days are ridiculous, but I'll be back again, probably over the summer..."

After the war, Sarajevo repaid Susan Sontag by naming the square in front National Theater after her.

Three days later, the American senator at the time and current U.S. President Joe Biden in his capacity as the U.S. Special Presidential Envoy to Bill Clinton came to the Bosnian capital. Biden talked to Izetbegović at the Sarajevo Airport, and before that with Tuđman, Milošević and Karadžić. He also met with a member of the BiH Presidency Mirko Pejanović and Deputy Prime Minister of BiH Zlatko Lagumdžija.

"I am deeply shaken in my heart with everything I have seen. I have traveled the world, and the last time I was here I had a long conversation with Tito. The world has really changed ever since, and people's suffering has increased. The world would really need to understand what is going on here and throughout Bosnia. Women and children are being massacred - this is the most horrible form of politics for which we thought was long gone. This is real genocide! If the world allows it, and I think Milošević is responsible for everything, that same world will pay a very high price for this and that for others parts of the globe", Biden said on April 9, 1993 in Sarajevo.

He expressed deep admiration for the people he met in Sarajevo and their incredible courage. The U.S. senator also visited Oslobođenje newsroom on the front line in Nedžarići, where his host was the editor-in-chief at the time, Kemal Kurspahić. He paid tribute to the journalists of our newspaper for their joint work in a multi-ethnic newsroom.

Vast experience

That April 1993, the guest of Sarajevo was the famous American singer, folk star and human rights activist Joan Baez. Her trip to Sarajevo was organized by the Open Society Fund for BiH. Her host was prof.dr. Zdravko Grebo. She recorded a concert on RTV BiH, with her guitarist Paul Pesco and guests, the musicians of Sarajevo musical "Hair", where she received the standing ovations from the modest audience. Her guests at the concert in the city under the siege were also Sarajevo rock musicians Srdjan Jevđević alias Gino Banana, Amir Bešo Lazy, Samir Čeremida, Igor Žerajić, Boris Bačvić and Dragana Ilić.

Baez avoided journalists, and on the eve of her arrival in Sarajevo she stated: "When I get back, I'll tell the world about how I tried to bring in support from the outside into this besieged city. And for me, all this is a rich experience, much richer than I could possibly give to Sarajevo."

Journalists at the Holiday Inn begged her to be their guest. And it is there she played until everyone started dancing. Wherever she appeared, even among Sarajevo firefighters, the music began.

Music is the universal language that Baez speaks, nothing was an obstacle, and during one of the hellish days in Sarajevo she said:

"I am aware that the people of Sarajevo are enduring more terrible things and that I am present here when the situation is much calmer". Baez was the first great music star to visit Sarajevo.

The former singer of the British band Iron Maiden Bruce Dickinson came to Sarajevo in secret on December 14th 1994 with his band Skunkworks, and held an unforgettable concert at the Bosnian Cultural Center. The local musicians Almanach and Sikter performed as supporting bands.

The idea for the concert was initiated by Major Martin Morris, a member of UNPROFOR, who had great help with the chief security guard-firefighter Trevor Gibson, then also a UN employee. Bruce Dickinson, guitarist Alex Dickson, bassist Chris Dale and drummer Alex Elena accepted the challenge and headed to Sarajevo where they entered via the cold mountain of Igman.

Although Morris' superior, General Michael Rose, demanded that the performance is canceled due to poor transport conditions, the concert was held in BKC, and tickets were free. According to witnesses and participants of the event, documented in the film "Scream for Me Sarajevo", the concert had a magnificent energy between the performers and the audience. Some stressed that this concert by Bruce Dickinson and his Skunkworks for the residents of besieged Sarajevo marked the end of the war.

Sarajevo also paid tribute to Dickinson in 2019. On April 6th, the City of Sarajevo presented the Honorary Citizen Award to Dickinson.

In December 1994, the famous Zagreb Opera House singer Krunoslav Cigoj who performed at the Ceremonial Academy on the 750th anniversary of the Cathedral of St. Petra, visited Sarajevo.

"You Sarajevans have shown that you have a strong spirit. You act at all levels, not to mention cultural, you have the Chamber Theater, which had more performances in war than in peace. So is the work of music artists such as the Philharmonic Orchestra. In all segments one can witness that Sarajevans are very spiritual", Cigoj told Oslobođenje at the time.

The former U.S. President Jimmy Carter also arrived in Sarajevo on a diplomatic mission. After the talks in the Presidency BiH and on Pale, an agreement for four-month ceasefire was reached and both sides agreed, which was supposed to come into force in the next 72 hours.



Yasushi Akashi, UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy, did not bring peace

Upon his return to the United States, Carter stated that it was also agreed to release all prisoners of war. Carter's mission ended ingloriously, just like that of Yasushi Akashi, the special envoy of the UN Secretary-General, who also visited Sarajevo. Agreements with the parties signed by Akashi have proved to be in vain.

The voice of reason

Arrival of Ivan Stambolić from Belgrade to besieged Sarajevo in April 1995 to the Second Assembly of Serbian Citizens, which was attended by more than 500 delegates, and numerous guests from the country and abroad, was an important gesture, the voice of reason that showed that there are people in Serbia who sympathize with the suffering of the devastated population of the city and at the same time clearly identify the culprit. He sent the request from the Assembly to Milošević for mutual recognition of Serbia and BiH and a proclamation to the Serbian people in the occupied territories to resist the ideology that is leading to misery and hopelessness. Stambolić arrived in Sarajevo with several intellectuals from Serbia on, as he told our journalist Edina Kamenica, a private visit. Although he declined to give an interview, remaining consistent with eight years of silence since the conflict with Milošević, he has agreed to talk.

"My friends treat me the same. Both in Slovenia and in Macedonia, and those from Croatia. Three months ago, for example, I was in Zagreb. Now I am in Sarajevo, among the people with whom I was present in spirit throughout the three past years, I've been around because of the blockade, inquired, feared



Carter's mission ended ingloriously

The former singer of the British band Iron Maiden Bruce Dickinson came to Sarajevo in secret on December 14th 1994 with his band Skunkworks, and held an unforgettable concert at the Bosnian Cultural Center

for them, and stayed awake many nights for them. I don't know how it means anything to them, but I used the first opportunity that presented itself to come to Bosnia."

Stambolić stayed privately in Mejtaš with his longtime friend Hajrudin

Čengić. Their former mutual friend, until the famous Eighth Session of the Central Committee of the League of Communist of Serbia in September 1987, was Milošević. Stambolić did not yield to persuasions to break the silence that April 1995 in Sarajevo.

"I feel there will be time for that soon. But you have to understand me. This what was left in me, what was deposited, and what now wants to come out, should be communicated in Belgrade. My account of Serbs from Serbia will be in Belgrade. Among them. Anything I would have done differently would have been in contradiction with my life principles."

He also said this in a prophetic way: "I don't trust Milošević. Nothing. I will speak about him, honestly and courageously, when I finally decide to do so."

Stambolić was abducted in Belgrade on August 25, 2000, a month before the emergency elections for the President of FR Yugoslavia. His remains were found on March 28, 2003 on Fruška gora. He was killed by Milošević's warrant, and the murder was committed by eight members of the Unit for special operations of the Serbian Ministry of the Interior led by Milorad Luković-Legija.

A group of independent media journalists from Serbia and Montenegro were covering The Second Assembly of Serbian Citizens in Sarajevo. In the group were Rade Radovanović (AIM and Naša Borba), Branka Mihajlović (AIM), Aleksandra Lukić (Radio B-92), Stojan Cerović (Vreme and Radio Free Europe), Esed Kočan (Monitor), Nataša



Krunoslav Cigoj was amazed by the spirit of Sarajevo

Novović (Monitor), and TV cameramen Miloš Radivojša and Nikola Majdan, who also visited our newsroom.

There were also those who did not come to wartime Sarajevo, but whose engagement helped to draw the world's attention to the sufferings of Sarajevo citizens, as did U2 and their singer Bono Vox, as well as the famous tenor Luciano Pavarotti who, together in 1995, performed the planetary hit Miss Sarajevo, and whose proceeds went to humanitarian purposes. In September 1997, U2 held a concert in Sarajevo as part of their world tour. Bono Vox received an honorary Bosnian passport, and the famous concert by U2 at the full sports stadium Koševo marked the return of life into the city that survived the longest siege in modern history.

In 1994, Pope John Paul II wanted to come to Sarajevo to convey the message of peace. That visit was not realized because no one wanted to guarantee security. However, the Pope delivered a speech he intended to give in Sarajevo, broadcast on TVBiH. He visited the capital of our country after the war - on April 12 and 13, 1997, he handed over the Lantern of Peace to Cardinal Vinko Puljić of Vrhbosna, which he had set on fire and placed in the Basilica of Sts. Peter in front of the image of Our Lady so that all those who visit the basilica stop for a moment and pray for peace in our region, and in Koševo in the presence of 50,000 believers from all over BiH held a Mass and called for peace, forgiveness and reconciliation, noting that an essential presupposition of the reconciliation of truth and justice.



Bruce Dickinson: The concert was full of magnificent energy between the performers and the audience in Sarajevo / MILOMIR KOVAČEVIĆ STRAŠNI

Ratna stradanja i agresiju na Bosnu i Hercegovinu većina stanovnika dočekala je nespremna. Neslućena razaranja, destrukcija i ljudske žrtve, koje su bile početak planskih napada, šokantno su djelovali na građane i funkcionisanje privrednih subjekata.

Onemogućavanje komunikacije između stanovništva je bio jedan od strateških ciljeva agresije. Među primarnim ratnim ciljevima su bili transportni kapaciteti, baze i saobraćajna infrastruktura. Objekti i sredstva sa kojima je početkom rata raspolagao Centrotrans bili su ciljevi granatiranja, otimačine i pljačke prevoznih kapaciteta, što je imalo za posljedicu smanjenje ili obustavu prevoznih aktivnosti.

Do samog početka rata Centrotrans je uspio da izbjegne unutrašnje podjele i nacionalizam koji je bio prisutan u svim segmentima društva. Međutim, ratna razaranja su u najtežem obliku pogodila i Centrotrans. Početkom 1992. godine Centrotrans je raspolagao sa 346 autobusa i zapošljavao 1.460 radnika.

U vrijeme agresije zbog ratnih dejstava ubijeno je 60 radnika, 183 ranjeno, 256 autobusa uništeno ili otuđeno, svi kapitalni objekti su pretrpjeli granatiranja, požare i razaranja. Na prvu liniju odbrane BiH stalo je više od 600 naših uposlenika. Grad Sarajevo, u kome je smještena glavna Autobaza i većina prevoznih kapaciteta Centrotransa, bio je blokiran u najdužoj opsadi u modernoj historiji koja je trajala 1.335 dana.

I pored svih nevolja koje je donio rat, Centrotrans niti jednog dana nije prestao sa radom, čak ni u opkoljenom Sarajevu. Organizovan je rad u radnim jedinicama Kiseljak, Olovo i Visoko koje nisu bile pod intenzivnijim ratnim dejstvima, dok su radne jedinice u Ilijašu, Palama, Kalinoviku, Vlasenici, Sokocu i Han-Pijesku nasilno preuzete od formacija SDS-a. U Sarajevu je organizovan prevoz prioritetnih državnih i zdravstvenih institucija i medijskih kuća. Radnici koji nisu bili angažovani u oružanim snagama BiH, pored radnih obaveza na održavanju prevoznih sredstava i objekata, po posebnom rasporedu bili su angažovani u radne vodove radi logističke podrške pripadnicima odbrambenih jedinica Republike Bosne i Hercegovine.

Svi raspoloživi autobusi Centrotransa tokom agresije na BiH bili su u funkciji odbrane naše države.

Autobusi SANOS 415, zaštićeni čeličnim pločama, u toku rata služili su za obavljanje prevoza u opkoljenom Sarajevu, gdje su bila svakodnevna nasumična granatiranja i djelovali snajperisti sa okolnih brda.

Centrotrans 30 godina od početka agresije na BiH



I pored svih nevolja koje je donio rat, Centrotrans niti jednog dana nije prestao sa radom, čak ni u opkoljenom Sarajevu, Svi raspoloživi autobusi Centrotransa tokom agresije na BiH bili su u funkciji odbrane naše države.



Autobaza Centrotransa na Stupu nalazila se na prvoj borbenoj liniji, gdje je sama ograda Autobaze bila linija razgraničenja.

Poredani u koloni jedan za drugim, Centrotransovi autobusi služili su i kao zaštita radnika od snajperista koji su djelovali po Autobazi iz obližnjih objekata koji su se nalazili na neprijateljskoj teritoriji.

Sama Autobaza Sarajevo je pretrpjela 187 dana granatiranja. Centar svih poslovnih aktivnosti van Sarajeva bio je u radnoj jedinici Visoko, odakle je bio organizovan prevoz na slobodnim teritorijama Bosne i Hercegovine, kao i međunarodni saobraćaj sa Republikom Hrvatskom i zemljama Zapadne Evrope.

Nakon potpisivanja Vašingtonskog sporazuma, 1994. Centrotrans je otpočeo novu borbu za obnovu i revitalizaciju objekata i voznog parka. Koncem te godine vlastitim sredstvima kupljeno je šest autobusa MERCEDES O 303 i jedan O 305 koji su bili nagovještaj kraja rata i početak obnove Centrotransa.

Krajem 1996. godine potpisan je ugovor o kupovini 16 novih autobusa Neoplan N 116, što predstavlja ključnu prekretnicu u obnovi i razvoju Centrotransa.

Konvoj od prvih šest Centrotransovih autobusa MERCEDES O 303, kupljenih u Njemačkoj, ušao je u Bosnu i Hercegovinu 24.12.1994. godine.

Radnici i menadžment Centrotransa su obnovu voznog parka u poslijeratnom periodu i nabavku preko 600 voznih jedinica izvršili iz vlastitih poslovnih sredstava bez ikakvih donacija i bilo čije pomoći. Ova činjenica, da su vlastitim snagama i sredstvima obnovljeni objekti autobaza i autobuskih stanica te kupljeni svi autobusi razlog je opredjeljenja svih radnika da sačuvaju firmu i da sa posebnom domaćinskom pažnjom koriste novonabavljena sredstva.

Danas je Centrotrans sa svojim voznim parkom, koji broji više od 200 autobusa koji zadovoljavaju stroge sigurnosne evropske i svjetske tehničko-eksploatacione standarde, vodeća firma za autobuski saobraćaj u Bosni i Hercegovini. U našem vlasništvu su savremene autobaze, pet poslovnih jedinica, osam autobuskih stanica te četiri savremeno opremljene turističke agencije.





Journalists at the UN briefing in the PTT building / PAUL LOWE

The International Media in Besieged Sarajevo

A number of experienced journalists, such as Martin Bell of the BBC and Pulitzer Prize winner John F. Burns of The New York Times, have made significant contributions, but also the younger generation of correspondents and photojournalists such as Christiane Amanpour, Allan Little, Remy Ourdan, Ron Haviv, Paul Lowe and Gary Knight



Writer: **PROF. KENNETH MORRISON**

As the war in Ukraine enters its second month, images of the devastation of cities such as Mariupol and Kharkiv or shells being fired into apartment blocks in Kyiv are stark reminders that we cannot take peace in Europe for granted. The war has received significant media coverage. The international press corps, based in various cities across Ukraine, try to make sense of what is happening on the ground in a fast-moving conflict which have already had far-reaching consequences for European security, though the full extent of these are not yet known.

A turning point in journalistic practice

This month also marks thirty years since the beginning of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the siege of Sarajevo, during which the city was militarily encircled and subjected to daily sniping, mortaring and shelling, first by the the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) and subsequently by the Army of Republika Srpska (VRS). The siege, which was not formally lifted on 29 February



Holiday Inn during the siege / JOEL BRAND



Only eight years earlier, the city hosted the W

1996 (four years after Bosnia's independence referendum) lasted 1,425 days, making it the longest siege in modern history. More than 11,000 people were killed and many of the city's most important cultural institutions, historical monuments, sporting venues and the wider social and economic infrastructure were destroyed or seriously damaged. Ordinary citizens, already suffering the privations caused by no gas, electricity or water and limited food supplies were subject not only to indiscriminate shelling but were deliberately targeted by snipers.

The siege of Sarajevo became world-wide news. The international media portrayed it as a compelling struggle between the lightly-armed defenders of a city encircled by the might of the VRS. And this in a city that had, just

eight years before, hosted the Winter Olympics. For those foreign correspondents who reported from Sarajevo during the siege, it became the most important story of their careers. While a number of experienced journalists, such as the BBC's Martin Bell and the Pulitzer Prize-winning John F Burns of the New York Times, made significant contributions, a younger generation of correspondents and photojournalists such as Christiane Amanpour, Allan Little, Remy Ourdan, Ron Haviv, Paul Lowe and Gary Knight, among others, made their names documenting the war in Bosnia and the siege of Sarajevo.

The siege marked important shifts in the practice of journalism. Digital technology began to change the way they worked; the use of armoured cars, flak jackets and helmets became more

widespread; live satellite broadcasts became more commonplace. There was also a demonstration of remarkable solidarity between journalists in the form of the 'Sarajevo Agency Pool' (SAP), which facilitated the sharing of footage so that TV crews, in particular, could limit their exposure to unnecessary risk.

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of reporting on the siege of Sarajevo was, however, the relatively rapid development of the journalistic infrastructure that facilitated the work of foreign correspondents. Between April and June 1992, there were foreign journalists in the city, but they were based either in small hotels or private apartments in Sarajevo or at the Hotel Bosna in Ilidža, where the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) had established their first satellite feed point, until they were forced to evacuate in mid-May 1992. As a consequence, there were only a small number of foreign reporters and photojournalists in Sarajevo throughout much of the following month.

There was little in the way of any reporting infrastructure, though one would emerge and consolidate in summer of 1992. Indeed, by July 1992 buildings such as the Holiday Inn, the Sarajevo TV

building, built in the 1970's but extended in advance of the 1984 Winter Olympics, this large grey concrete structure was among the least aesthetically pleasing, though one of the most solidly constructed buildings in the city

significant hazards and numerous checkpoints to navigate) or, later, the Mount Igman road. However, after the UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) had taken control of the airport, journalists could access the city more easily. Once in possession of a UN press pass, they could fly directly into Sarajevo via UN aid flights - sardonically dubbed as 'Maybe Airlines' - from Zagreb and Split in Croatia or Ancona in Italy. Flying into the city, usually on a Hercules C-130, involved a 'Khe Sanh approach', a technique developed by the US Air Force during the Vietnam War in which the plane would nose-dive into a sharp descent and level off just before landing.

After arrival at the airport, journalists had to travel down the treacherous airport road onto what became known as 'Sniper Alley', the main artery into Sarajevo. Numerous journalists were either killed or seriously injured taking this route, including David Kaplan, the ABC senior news producer, who was fatally wounded by a sniper's bullet on August 13, 1992, minutes after arriving in Sarajevo and the CNN camerawoman, Margaret Moth, who was seriously injured on Sniper Alley on July 23, 1992. Both were travelling in 'soft-skin' vehicles, which afforded little or no protection. By the late summer of 1992, a greater number of journalists were acquiring armoured cars, which were increasingly regarded as necessary for operating within a besieged city.

The majority of journalists were based in the Holiday Inn, which became the home for many foreign correspondents and TV crews (with a few notable exceptions - the Associated Press were, for example, based in the Hotel Belvedere in Višnjik) and a crucial networking node. The hotel, which had been the temporary base for Radovan Karadžić and the leadership of the Serbian Democratic Party (SDS), had been closed after April 6, 1992, when SDS snipers fired shots into a crowd of peaceful demonstrators assembled outside the Bosnian parliament before the hotel was stormed by Bosnian special forces. The interior of the building was badly damaged by the events of that day, but by late May 1992 what remained of the hotel's staff returned to work to prepare for its re-opening in late June.

The Holiday Inn was no haven for its wartime guests, most of whom were journalists. It was dangerously exposed to mortar and sniper fire and located not only within siege lines but directly facing the front line. Many parts

of the building were exposed to sniper fire, the lobby windows were no more than dangling shards of glass or open spaces covered with tarpaulin, and virtually every window on the building had been damaged by gunfire. Nevertheless, by July 1992, the Holiday Inn had emerged as a crucial communications hub for foreign journalists and the local staff - translators, fixers, and drivers - that worked with them. While life there was not necessarily a comfortable one, the guests did not suffer the daily privations experienced by the citizens of Sarajevo. The hotel had an underground car park where vehicles could

be safely kept, and it provided food, a relatively stable supply of water and generators to ensure a near-constant source of electricity.

Like the Holiday Inn, the Sarajevo TV building was also a vital part of the infrastructure used by the foreign press corps. Built in the 1970's but extended in advance of the 1984 Winter Olympics, this large grey concrete structure was among the least aesthetically pleasing, though one of the most solidly constructed, buildings in the city. Throughout April and May 1992, the TV station was the home primarily for Radio Television of Bosnia and Herzegovina (RTV-BiH). But after the EBU evacuated their base at the Hotel Ilidža in May 1992, a small EBU 'special operations team' returned to Sarajevo in June and established a new satellite feed point in the TV station. This became a critical part of the journalistic infrastructure, where TV crews, radio journalists and print journalists would all send their footage by satellite or dictate reports using satellite phones.

The TV station was considered one of the most secure buildings in the city and its robust construction meant that it could withstand the shelling and mortar attacks that it regularly endured better than most buildings in Sarajevo. It remained, throughout the siege, a hugely important part of the reporting infrastructure, without which television images of what was happening in the city could not have been as widely disseminated to international audiences.

Nonsense at 9 p.m.

The Postal, Telegraph and Telephone (PTT) building, where the UN held their press briefings, was also an important part of the broader infrastructure used by journalists. One of the daily rituals of the foreign press corps in Sarajevo was to attend these daily briefings, dubbed the 'Nine O' Clock Follies'. They were often rather fractious affairs, with gathered journalists sometimes critical of the role of the UN. Briefings for the press were also held at the Bosnian Presidency building, and this, too, became one of the key places for journalists to garner information.

This journalistic infrastructure ensured that the story of the siege of Sarajevo, both in terms of military developments and the experiences of the citizens, could continue to be conveyed to worldwide audiences. Creating it was a significant logistical and technological endeavour undertaken in the most challenging of circumstances. The repurposing of key buildings in the city as places where the media could gather official information or use communications equipment to file copy or transmit images, the increasing use of armoured vehicles to navigate more safely within the city and a genuine commitment to the story all combined to ensure that the siege remained, albeit only periodically, on the international news agenda until it was lifted in February 1996.

(Author is a Professor of History at De Montfort University in the UK. He is the author of 'Sarajevo's Holiday Inn: On the Frontline of Politics and War' and co-author of 'War Hotels' (with Abdallah El Binni) and 'Reporting the Siege of Sarajevo' with Paul Lowe)



One of the BBC's armored cars in Sarajevo / SEAN MAGUIRE



BBC journalist Kate Adie reports from Sarajevo / PAUL LOWE



Winter Olympics / OSLOBOĐENJE ARCHIVE

David Kaplan, the ABC senior news producer, was fatally wounded by a sniper's bullet on August 13, 1992, minutes after arriving in Sarajevo and the CNN camerawoman, Margaret Moth, was seriously injured on Sniper Alley on July 23, 1992

station - where the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) established a satellite feed point - the PTT building where UN briefings took place, and the city's airport from where journalists could fly in and out of Sarajevo, had become part of a vital infrastructure that journalists used to send their daily reports on developments within the besieged city.

Getting in and out of Sarajevo was fraught with danger. Those attempting to do so went by car via either the Pale-Lukavica road (and then across the exposed airport runway) or the Kiseljak-Ilidža road (both of which presented



Oslobodenje War Editorial Office: Slavko Šantić, Marina Rodić, Šefik Dautbegović and Fahro Memić

Memory: Kemo and the newspaper that conquered its name



The editorial idea was clear - Oslobodenje will inform, there will be no war trumpet, it will nurture the spirit of interethnic tolerance and cultivate the spirit of the Bosnian tradition. Such an orientation brought the list fame already in the first months of the war

Writer: **EMIR HABUL**

It was sometime in the second half of April. The war had largely begun, whoever could come to the editorial staff in Nedžarići, came there, and the first shots were fired at the Oslobodenje building. At the editorial meeting convened in a hurry, Kemo's idea that Oslobodenje will continue to be published "as long as Sarajevo exists" was accepted. I did not attend the meeting (I was not a member of the editorial board but a reporter) and the news was conveyed to me the same day by Gordana Knežević, who was at that time Kemo's deputy.

The decision was then made to prepare the atomic shelter for the war desk where the emergency duty teams would work, and to find a place in the city for a checkpoint to coordinate the work of the journalists. When asked what would I do, Kemo's decision was that it was more useful for me to write, and that the time and the opportunities will themselves impose the topics on me.

Professional and honest

The Oslobodenje came out regularly and became more important as the

shelling intensified, and the blockade – both physical and communication – became tighter. The editorial idea was clear - the Oslobodenje will inform, it will not be a war trumpet, it will nurture the spirit of interethnic tolerance, and it will cultivate the spirit of Bosnian tradition. Such an orientation brought the wartime glory to the newspapers already in the first months of war. The newspaper became a symbol of the resistance to aggression, a symbol of courage ("this newspaper is made on the very front line) and interethnic tolerance ("the newspaper is made and edited by editors and journalists of all nationalities").

What was the basis of the "phenomenon of the Oslobodenje"? There are two reasons – one has a broader socio-political context (the Agrokomerc affair), and the other is the leadership of Kemal Kurspahić after his election for the editor-in-chief in December 1988, which modernized the Oslobodenje.

The consequences of the bonds affair in 1987 accelerated the process of democratization in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and one of the consequences was the conquest of freedom by the media. From this distance I can confirm that the party elite of those times, which came after the old guard that left the political scene by the end of 1988 under the burden of the affairs, started strongly with democratic practice, which led to the emancipation of institutions. Dr. Nijaz Duraković came to the head of the Party, and introduced a



Kemal Kurspahić, 2009.

more direct way of management and a more relaxed style of work that opened up the space for dialogue and even polemics. It is important to mention that the member of the SFRJ Presidency was elected for the first time by secret ballot among several candidates (Bogić Bogićević convincingly defeated two competitors - Marko Čeranić, who was then the president of the RIV BiH, and Dr. Dragan Kalinić, who was considered a popular politician. For example, the General Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina also chose the successor of Duško Zgonjanin, from among several candidates, an act which was unimaginable before that.

The rejuvenated political elite in BiH accepted the media's request to choose editors themselves. At the gathering of the workers of the Oslobodenje held in the late autumn of 1988, two candidates were selected, both of them with editorial, authorial and international

experience: Zoran Kurtović and Kemal Kurspahić. At the beginning of December, the Presidency of the Socialist Alliance appointed Kurspahić as the editor-in-chief. The leading editors at the Radio and Television Sarajevo were elected according to the same model.

A few days before the election, Kemo turned 42, which is to say, young enough to have the strength and ambition to "work up a sweat", experienced and mature enough to breathe in new life to the newspaper. Shortly before the election, Kemo returned from New York, where he spent four years as a correspondent for Oslobodenje. Curious as he was and with the passion of the first class journalist (he started writing for newspapers at the age of 15), that American experience was decisive for Kemo's journalistic grinding. When he would come on a vacation to "Kožni", as we called the cafe-bar in the building in Nedžarići, we

As it were, I was the first author in that column, because on the day the newspaper was published, the BiH Parliament was supposed to discuss the Neum affair. I did not write a memorable article, but it wasn't so bad either



soaked up his American stories. We wondered how leading politicians at 6 or 7 in the morning go live as guests of a show on the channel Good Morning America, without the presenter giving them questions in the advance; how journalists do not report extensively from press conferences but convey only key statements or information, or how the press conference only serves as the basis for the story development, how topics are searched for, how journalists question politicians, and disregard their reproaches. In the years of a hard party rule, there was no chance for a journalist to request a telephone statement from a leading politician, to ask for a comment or to say that he was not

satisfied with the answer. In the reports from various forums, the care was taken to adjust the number of lines to the "pay grade", that is to the place in the hierarchy of officials, which also applied to the placement of photography. Journalists were ideologically oriented to be "socio political workers", "children of the system". It was neither nice nor risk-free to make an ideological oversight even on the entertainment sites. In the summer 1978, a report was published in the rubric Odmor about a Czech family who were spending their summers in Makarska for years, but complained to the reporter about rising prices. The reporter duly noted that in Czechoslovakia, oil, bread, sugar, petrol, etc. cost the

same for years, and in Yugoslavia the prices were constantly rising, etc. The reporter (Željko Rodić) was suspended for six months and banned from publishing, and the editor of the rubric (Fahro Memić) was suspended for three months, and the editor of the news desk (Juka Arnautović) was punished for "non vigilance". The reporter could not publish even sports commentary in the Naši dani, which became a part of the Oslobođenje Company that fall.

Coming to the helm of the Oslobođenje (I must say that the climate among journalists was in that direction) Kemo modernized the newspaper and democratized work and access to texts. He immediately showed that he is the editor of broad interventions. The first thing he did was to introduce rubrics of open comments and opinions. On Mondays, there was a section Yu-Dnevnik in which the editors of TV daily shows from all eight republican and provincial centers wrote for the Oslobođenje, and on the second day, there was an entire large-format Yu Press page with a review of the most interesting or controversial articles from other newspapers throughout Yugoslavia. In addition, he introduced special contributions that were published every day (Globus on Thursdays, Nedjelja - later 7 days, on Saturdays, etc.).

In the newspaper it was a practise to hear the "other side" which revived the reporting. He made the biggest step forward by initiating the column "U žiži" (In the focus) which went on the first page of the newspaper (the article in focus was later accompanied by a picture of the author) with complete authorial freedom. As it were, I was the first author in that column, because on the day the newspaper was published, the BiH Parliament was supposed to discuss the Neum affair. I did not write a memorable article, but I did not do so badly either. I developed a theory about the abuse of the construction rent, because the top executives received arranged lots for approximately two average salaries.

This rubric became very popular and read. It was short - up to one and a half page of text, with good authors and with an attitude. In his war diary (Sarajevo that no longer exists, 1998), Hamza Bakšić wrote under the date of February 24, 1992, complaining about the difficulty of writing columns and how young people got out of this obligation: "They write a rubric in the focus, which goes to the first page, it is easier to write, everyone reads it. Leading the way in this are Miro Janković and Emir Habul, two of the most popular pens of the Oslobođenje, popular for completely different reasons, with completely different audiences".

This could be discussed, including the fact that for a long time colleagues did not really fight to write in this rubric because journalists were not taught to express the essence in a few words. They were used to writing long and in many details.

Some titles and thesis from the rubric became metaphors for the topoi of Bosnian and Herzegovinian reality. When the head of SAO Krajina, Martić, was arrested in Bosanska Krupa and subsequently released, I wrote the rubric titled: "Stuck in the elevator" to convey a position of powerlessness of the BiH authorities in the pre-war years; I wrote another rubric titled "Going in the middle" to express the atmosphere of governmental tactics to avoid (or postpone) the war, explaining the necessity of refraining from war conflicts of a country that does not have the loyalty of the army and police, and which torn apart by internal separatism

and unprepared for the war.

The Oslobođenje was directed and led successfully thanks to the course which was determined by Kurspahić, in the time of the breakup of Yugoslavia. That orientation could be summarized in two words: it was professional and fair. Printing numbers began to grow (on Fridays when the newspaper published a TV report, the printing reached 120.000 copies), and at the same time the reputation of newspaper and journalists was improved. In the second year of Kemo's editorship, the Oslobođenje was named the best daily newspapers in Yugoslavia. With the achieved self-confidence, growth of publishing, reputation in the guild, and a growing reputation in the region, the leading team did not accept that the national parties take over the newspaper. As early as the spring of year 1991, the story spread that the editorial positions



Kjašif Smajlović

would be distributed. The director position in the Oslobođenje was supposed to belong to Ilija Guzin (he would later become the first director of the newly formed Serbian RTV in April 1992), and he himself spread the news. Once, I asked him in a tavern Stara Rampa on Vrace where journalists (later mostly Serbian journalists) used to come, how he would accept the position of director when he cannot do that kind of job, and that the Oslobođenje would fail with him, to which he replied with a wide grin:

- I was told in the party that it does not matter, so let it fail, answered Guzin giggling.

Together with the leadership of RTV SA of that period, Kemo led the rebellion against the government's intention to nationally divide the three leading media in BiH - the Oslobođenje, Radio and Television and the appointment of the editors. In the spring of 1991, the government passed a law that would allow them to do so. A public campaign against the proposed media law followed, public protests were organised, and the law was disputed before the Constitutional Court. At the hearing before the Constitutional Court, Kemo answered the judge's question why the appointment of editors and directors would imperil the freedom of public speech. Kemo said that "it would not imperil, but would destroy it, because the one who appoints and removes editors has power over editorial policy". This episode is described in more detail in the book The Crime at 19:30

Kemo never ceased to mention Kjašif Smajlović, our correspondent from Zvornik who was killed by Arkan's gang in the correspondence premises on April 8, 1992. For Kemo, Kjašif remained a symbol of courage, sacrifice and devotion to the profession

(Zločin u 19:30). Epilogue: October 3rd, 1991. The Constitutional Court ruled that the proposed law is not in accordance with the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Despite the unity of journalists, this struggle for the freedom of public speech would not have been possible without democratically oriented judges sitting in the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is a result of the personnel policy of reformed communists in the last years of their rule.

More than a newspaper

Let's go back for a moment to Kemo's American experience. He wanted to achieve a deeper contact between the newspaper and readers, he wanted to know what the audience likes, how it reacts to the rubrics, feuilletons, and how it values journalists. An agency compiled a questionnaire that was printed in the newspaper at the end of 1991. Among other things, readers were to state, at their own discretion (no names have been suggested) which journalist they preferred to read, and according to the same principle whose articles they did not like. Kemo was one vote ahead of me with a bit more than 300 votes in his favour, and I did much better with negative votes. This is my favourite professional recognition: it came from readers and I shared it with Kemo.

Many articles have been written about the wartime path of the Oslobođenje abroad and countless TV reports have been made about the newspaper that "conquers its name" (a phrase of the writer Sidran), about a newspaper with countless international awards.

Oslobođenje was more than a newspaper. The newspaper has become a symbol of the idea of Bosnia (and Herzegovina), complete and democratic, a newspaper of hope and faith in the profession and a democratic showcase of the whole Bosnia and Herzegovina.

During every meeting with Kemo, we mentioned this story: "when his book The Crime at 19:30 (2003) (Zločin u 19:30) was promoted at the Media Center in Washington in 2013, or after the promotion of Boro Kontić's documentary 'The years eaten by locusts' (Godine koje su pojeli skakavci) Kemo bitterly sent a message to the journalists who were war mongers only recently: 'I don't think the protagonists of war mongering will be punished'. Boro's film showed that all war propagandists who directly called for ethnic hatred, were rewarded after the war with functions or apartments!

At every meeting, Kemo did not fail to mention Kjašif Smajlović, our correspondent from Zvornik who was killed by Arkan's gang in the correspondence premises on April 8, 1992. For Kemo, Kjašif remained a symbol of devotion, courage and sacrifice to the profession (just before he was murdered, Kjašif sent a report to the editorial office). As for Kemo, Kjašif deserved a street or at least some important journalistic award to be named after him.

(Author is longtime journalist, editor and deputy editor-in-chief 1994-1999)

If we weren't so bad, we wouldn't be so good!



Kemal Kurspahić (Oslobodjenje), Milenko Vočkić (Radio Sarajevo), Goran Milić (Yutel) and I (TV Sarajevo) saw each other regularly, exchanging information, trying to understand what was happening. We were united in our commitment to peace, dialogue and stubbornness when it came to defending the profession

Writer: **NENAD PEJIĆ**

Nowadays, 30 years after the beginning of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, when I say on some meetings that media in Bosnia and Serbia today are less free than in 1989. - 1992. period, people would look at me strangely. How could that be, they ask, if today there's more media than ever?

Pre-war Bosnia and Herzegovina had several influent media houses. Television, radio, "Oslobodjenje", Yutel, Slobodna Bosna, Naši Dani. None of these media was controlled by somebody. There was no internet. All of the decisions we were making, we were making independently. Of course, under constant pressure and with constant accusations.

TV Sarajevo was then one media house with more international media awards than all the other TV stations in SFRY together! The same was true for Radio Sarajevo as well. "Oslobodjenje" was awarded with international awards several times, it had more professional authority than Belgrade-based "Politika" or Zagreb-based "Vjesnik". Neither TV house wanted Yutel, except us in Sarajevo and our colleagues in Skopje. All of this generated the atmosphere of constant competition and the quality was improving day by day. But, when the war was nearing, editors-in-chief were more and more oblivious instead of knowing what was actually happening!

Kemal Kurspahić ("Oslobodjenje"), Milenko Vočkić (Radio Sarajevo), Goran Milić (Yutel) and I (TV Sarajevo) were meeting regularly, exchanging information, trying to understand what is going on. We were unanimous in commitment to peace and

dialogue. We were stubborn about the defence of profession. The idea once came out that us four should address the audience together, calling for peace. We published those appeals in the same day, in the media we were accountable to.

We thought that citizens would understand which media informs them professionally, and which media is lying to them, and that those media of lie and propaganda would lose that battle. We were wrong. In the time of crisis and war, citizens rather believe those media they agree with. They rather read, listen to and watch the same thing they believe in, than these media that would question their attitude. The government were doing everything they could to divide RTSA into national channels and we suffered the strongest pressure. These pressures were also significant on "Oslobodjenje" as well, with aim to divide their pages. Those who were most radical regarding the pressures were from SDS Party. I asked Radovan Karadžić:

"That means, Radovan, that we will need three times as much cameramen, three times as much journalists and three times as much cars. Who is going to pay for that?"

"Serb people will pay, mister Pejić!" Yes, they will, I thought! Karadžić also told me in November 1991 that Serb Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina will choose Serb editors! I told him that it is worse than The League of Communists' rule. They only defined who is a good communist, while Karadžić

wanted to defined who is a good Serb and who is a bad Serb!

What did the division into national channels mean in its essence? It meant that different teams would go to same events but with different tasks. That way, the most important thing on Serb channel would be what Serb representatives said, on Muslim channel

Goran and I left, Kemo and Vočka stayed in Sarajevo. We lost. Even today, I think that, with the editorial policy of tolerance and understanding, we have done more for the state of BiH than the state itself has done for itself

it would be what Bosniaks said, and on Croat channel what Croats said.

That way, Serb editor would send a cameraman with one task, Croat with another, and Muslim with third. Three cameramen on the same event? This also meant that these national channels would exclude each other and there would be no competition between them. Therefore, they would be reduced only to the mere group of novices that would obey what their leaders tell them. According to my beliefs, this meant the postulate for war. Karadžić wouldn't agree. Unfortunately, I was right. Later, Karadžić would succeed in his intention. Even today, as I write this, TV channels are divided and they look more and more like spokespersons of their political sponsors, mostly national ones.

Such division strengthen the separations and now citizens of one and the same country have totally opposite and different interpretations and knowledges of the same events. If it was just a matter of television, it would not be so difficult to get out of everything. But the same policy is pursued in education, sports, kindergartens and colleges.

Milenko Vočkić, Kemal Kurspahić and me (Yutel was not the target of that kind) had two options: to agree to such divisions or to fight them. Agreeing would mean to give them the propaganda machinery voluntarily and not to fight for the ideals we were guided by.

So, it would be a surrender without a fight. The other option was to fight. We decided to lose - by fighting. We did not want to fall without a resistance. We thought, and I personally think the same today, that this was an honorable decision. There was no doubt that we would lose that battle. The only thing that was unclear was how and when. It was absurd, we fought to preserve the freedom gained in undemocratic communism from the onslaught of the parties of a democratic society!

Honestly, I wished to be fired and to leave by force. It would be wonderful to be removed by nationalists. In March 1991, the national parties voted to amend the law, according to which they will appoint the management of RTSA and "Oslobodjenje" by national key. As the national key was widely respected on RTSA and in "Oslobodjenje" for years, this only meant that the national key was not important at all, but the intention was to appoint its own people - one party of the director, another of the editor-in-chief, third of the head of news, etc.

We responded with the campaign against that law, we pointed out the nonsense of that law. We organized a protest in front the Assembly of BiH and also initiated a judicial proceeding before the Constitutional court of BiH and SFRJ. The Constitutional court of SFRY ordered the postponement of the decision until the Constitutional court of BiH rules. Great victory. RTSA and "Oslobodjenje" received hundreds of letters of support. There is no similar example of the media in SFRY successfully resisting the government elected in the legitimate multi-party elections. More precisely, we actually showed resistance twice - first time when only SK BiH was in power and the second time when national parties were in power. As we were constantly under attack by all parties that defined us as bad media because we were "anti-Serb", in to the opinion of one party, "anti-Croat" in the opinion of the other and "anti-Muslim" in the opinion of the third party.

Kemal Kurspahić once commented this topic:

"If we weren't so bad, we wouldn't be so good!"

I read the other day that the BHRT account was blocked. Sadly, the state doesn't even have the strength to preserve its television.

Goran and I left, Kemo and Vočka stayed in Sarajevo. We lost. Even today, I think that, with the editorial policy of tolerance and understanding, we have done more for the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina than the state itself has done for itself.

It was an honor to be on the right side with my colleagues.

(Author is former Editor-in-Chief of TV Sarajevo)

An editor who changed Oslobodjenje



Editor-in-chief of Oslobodjenje from 1994 to 1999 spoke about Oslobodjenje and Kemal Kurspahić

Writer: **MEHMED HALILOVIĆ**

He was an outstanding professional. A journalist who rightly gained the trust of Oslobodjenje journalists and this was the first time in the history of Oslobodjenje, and even in the history of former Yugoslavia, that journalists themselves chose their own editor-in-chief. Thanks to his professional enthusiasm and commitment, he largely managed to

reorient Oslobodjenje from a semi-official newsletter, as it had been until then, into an independent newspaper. To inspire it with a great note and great importance of professionalism and, which was probably the most important in the very beginning, to organize the work of journalists and the redaction in such manner that they can report every day and be at the service of their readers.

Not in entire Bosnia and Herzegovina, we only succeeded in that later, not to the readers in the whole world, we also succeeded in that later when we formed the foreign edition of Oslobodjenje, but at least in Sarajevo, all citizens knew that every morning, no matter how hard bombing and shelling were, they will find a newspaper such as Oslobodjenje at the street colporteurs'.

There are a lot of memories of Kemo



Boro Kontić, a longtime journalist and director of Mediacentar, reminds that Oslobođenje was left without an oath to Tito

Interviewer: **INDIRA ŠAHBAZOVIĆ-KUČEVIĆ**

Where were you when the war started?

- On Sunday, April 5, I terminated the second program of which I was the editor, when these protesters passed from Dobrinja to the Assembly, which would later turn into what is called "national parliament". At that time, hence, I lead that special program on Sunday from two o'clock until Monday morning at nine o'clock. As that program started on April 5, it was not stopped until April 17 sometime, when Radio Sarajevo decided to stop all the programs. There was no more first, no second, no third and no 202. It was all one program - a war program. I was there.

How difficult was to send any picture about events in Bosnia and Herzegovina to the world?

- It was difficult to send any information. I remember in May 1992, when the first massacre in Vase Miskina Street took place, the footage of this massacre came to radio television headquarters, sometimes around May 6 or 7. It was sent by some channels via one protruding transmitter that was still in function, near Čapljin. Through that transmitter, it reached Zagreb television, which then distributed that footage to the world. Of course, all of that became somewhat better later, but before the truth, it was difficult to send any information. The world always has its ears plugged for any information and it took a long time. Now it seems to me that, after 30 years, when Ukraine started, it is somehow better and more precise to understand what was happening in Sarajevo in 1992.

Can you share with us your memories of Kemal Kurspahić?

- There are a lot of memories about Kemo. Of all these, it may be interesting when Kemo was trying to change Oslobođenje. In late '80s, he made one of the moves that was quite revolutionary at that time. Sure, people find it ridiculous today, but it was hard to change that. Sometime after Tito's death, Oslobođenje had the sentence "Comrade Tito, we swear to you, from your path we will never depart" on the front page. This has been the motto on Oslobođenje's front page for almost ten years. And he, while changing Oslobođenje, decided to remove this motto sometimes in 1989. But he said he didn't inform the others in Oslobođenje much. That morning, he went on the



Mediacentar published Kurspahić's capital book "Crime at 19:30"

business trip to Belgrade, but he listened the youth program in his car, in which the question "what do you think about this change" was asked immediately.

The first few who called were like "have they no shame", "how this, how that", but suddenly, others started calling with "let them be", "it is smart" ... Suddenly, Kemo writes in that one book he published in the United States, how that conversation and those people calling gave him the right to do what

he did, because he was somehow afraid of what he did. How will all this symbiosis pass between media then, in late '80s, who were trying to alter that social reality, as guard dogs of the democratic public. We cooperated a lot after that, not to mention in the war and after the war. Mediacentar I run has published his capital book "Prime Time Crime" which is a large, perhaps the most complete description of journalism in Bosnia and Herzegovina, from 1945 to 2000.

Four phases of history



Kemal Kurspahić is unavoidable, one of the leading persons and figures of journalism in Bosnia and Herzegovina forever

Writer: **ZLATKO DIZDAREVIĆ**

Memories of Kemal bind me to my entire career, as the most beautiful days we lived together. We were peers who cuckooed from some other situation. Story about Kemo is the story about my generation, about our mutual generation that was really different than those before us and today's generations. When talking about Kemo, the history will remember him, and he should be remembered. He will be remembered by four different stories that are important in his life.

First story is the one that Boro already mentioned. This happened before war, and this was the phase of Oslobođenje's opening. Dragging in of our generation which was in that time new, young generation. It has become quite normal for correspondents under the age of 30 to go abroad. It was quite normal for us to answer the call from the city committee, whether the city secretary will get his side after his conference, to tell him he has a card and a half and that's it. Therefore, it was a period in which completely new awareness of journalism was being created, new awareness of our role in all this, of the obligation to the public, rather than the obligation to the committees. Kemo was the crest of that generation, the crest of those decisions to make it so.

Second phase is his war-phase, which is also a historical phase. I must say I am confused how Oslobođenje today doesn't have at least one room in Historical museum about Oslobođenje in wartime, because this is something that whole world recognized as great professional and emotional story and as heroism after all. He was the head of that team, made up of these people from this generation, people that enter the wartime together. First day when the bombing started, nobody called us. Half of the redaction gathered in one place, because we were aware of possibility that, in the history of Oslobođenje, it could happen that one day can go without the publishing of the paper.

Then we met and realized we need around twenty people as technological minimum required to make that paper, to avoid that one day in the history without Oslobođenje. It is a great story in which Kemo was a leader. He was the one gathering us, with his sense for understanding and diplomacy in relations. Times were difficult, various characters, of course, surfaced. He managed to gather us and keep us in one place.

Third story is little known here. It is his journalist-story in the United States. Not only as a correspondent, but also later when he went to the

US, he was, which was a unique example in Yugoslav journalism at that time, let alone later, the editor of one group of American newspapers in Washington, where he worked as a man who came from Bosnia, which was very strange at the time. And he succeeded, he achieved a career and reputation. Later, it even spilled over into many jobs and functions in various governmental and non-governmental organizations.

Fourth part of the story about him is also infinitely significant and rounds out that image of personality. His post-war texts are also extremely important for the history of our journalism. After all that, his columns and comments from the United States about our situations, on many occasions were much clearer, sharper and more concrete and, I must say, much more important than the comments of many distinguished commentators here from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Therefore, taking everything in account, it is not only about sentiment, it is not only about private relations we had, we really were friends in many situations, we were meeting before and after that, in the US and after the US. It is simply about one man who is unavoidable, one of the leading persons and figures of journalism in Bosnia and Herzegovina forever.

Kemal takes the floor

Kemal Kurspahić was a believer in the independent thought in journalism

It was 1989. Kemal Kurspahić appointed me as an editor of Saturday's political magazine "7 Dana" ("newspaper in newspaper") in Oslobođenje, on his and accepted suggestion of the Board, when I was relatively young journalist. It was during the time of dissolution of the old socialist self-government system, and uncertainty of what would it be replaced with.

Time when socialism in Yugoslavia is replaced with uncertainty of frenzied nationalism. Kemal then and later found his editorial credo in simple journalist-formula: If you want an independent journalism, rely on educated and free-minded journalists and editors.

After one year of his leadership in "Oslobođenje", we were awarded with European award for the best newspaper in the world.

Beginning of the war, early April. JNA supplies JATA planes to transfer all the families from Sarajevo exclusively to Beograd.

We had a meeting of the Editorial Board. Kemal takes the floor and says simply: "My dear colleagues, the aggression against Bosnia and Herzegovina has started here. This is a war! Please, decide, whoever wants to get their families out of Sarajevo, he should do it. Here will be a journalistic event of the decade. Whoever wants to leave, he should leave. Whoever wants to witness as a journalist about the war that has started, he should stay with us. "Oslobođenje" will be published every day. If we are devoted to our profession and to the truth."

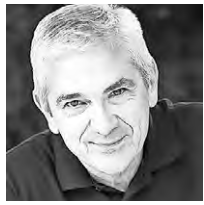
Several editors changed during my time in "Oslobođenje". Most often, those sent by the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The only one who did not care about the official policy of those in power was Kemal. That fanatic, a believer in the independent thought in journalism.

He is the one, but not the only one, who is meritorious for 17 prestigious international journalist awards that Oslobođenje won during that decade.



Rasim Čerimagić

Kemal was the guiding star



I realized that I could tell the story of Sarajevo through the story of Oslobođenje, talking about the people who worked there and their personal struggles and challenges to present the wider experience of Sarajevo

Writer: **TOM GJELTEN**

I went to Sarajevo for the first time in June 1992. I had been in Belgrade, where someone (I don't remember who) told me I should contact a friend of hers, Gordana Knežević, when I got to Sarajevo. I did, and I stayed with her and her husband Ivo for several days. I was very impressed with them. I had spent time in Serbia and Croatia, where I found many people thinking of themselves exclusively in national terms, as Serbs or Croats, but Gordana and Ivo were different. Gordana was a Serb, Ivo a Croat, and many of their friends were Muslim or still called themselves Yugoslavs, but those identities didn't seem to matter. I soon realized this was a common pattern in Sarajevo, and it made me realize that whether this cosmopolitan idea could survive in the midst of nationalist thinking was what made the struggle over Sarajevo relevant to the broader world. This was the story I wanted to tell, and I wanted to tell it in a personal way, with human characters.

Through Gordana, I saw how Oslobođenje symbolized this Sarajevo idea. The paper had a multiethnic staff and as an enterprise it was

committed to multiethnic life. Beyond that, it also symbolized the perseverance and resilience of the Sarajevo people, because the staff refused to give in to the war. With great courage and effort, they managed to publish their paper every day, even after their building was bombed. That's when I realized I could tell the Sarajevo story by telling the Oslobođenje story, using the people who worked there and their private struggles and challenges to represent the broader Sarajevo experience.

The first person I met was Gordana. Through her, I met Kemal Kurspahić, the editor-in-chief, and other editors: Fahro Memić, Rasim Čerimagić, Adil Hajrić and Zlatko Dizdarević; Columnists Vlado Mrkić, Mehmed Halilović, Gojko Berić; reporters Senka Kurtović, Emir Habul, Vedo Spahović, Dželana Pečanin, Vlado Štaka, Tomo Počanić and others. I also became friends with other people in Sarajevo, including

Miro Tadić, Zdravko Grebo, Senada Kreso, Nedžad Imamović, Boris Knežević, Mirza Hajrić, and my grumpy driver, whom I remember only as "Smajo." I know most of these people are no longer in Sarajevo, but in almost every case they stayed throughout the war, because they believed in

The paper had a multiethnic staff and as an enterprise it was committed to multiethnic life. Beyond that, it also symbolized the perseverance and resilience of the Sarajevo people

Bosnia and they believed in Sarajevo.

Kemal was the guiding star of the Oslobođenje community. He, more than anyone, was able to articulate the principles that Oslobođenje stood for and the historical and political context in which it had developed. Like Gordana, he was in an interethnic marriage. He was Muslim and his wife

Vesna was a Serb. Of all the people I knew in wartime Sarajevo, he was the most cheerful and upbeat. He played an extremely important role in maintaining the morale of the staff and persuading them that their communal work and the daily production of their paper was a cause worth their commitment.

There are two categories of reporters in war zones, and their missions are quite different. There are journalists who report for the United States or other countries not directly involved in the war (like my wife Martha Raddatz who is currently in Ukraine as a correspondent for ABC Television). Their responsibility is to communicate to the rest of the world what is going on in the war zone, to make it comprehensible, and to get people to care about what is happening there. That is incredibly important work, and they need to be encouraged. This was myself and other foreign reporters in Sarajevo. There are also the journalists who are from the actual countries involved in the war. In Sarajevo, these were my colleagues at Oslobođenje. Their work may be even more important, but their mission is

different. The people of Sarajevo knew the reality of war all too well. They did not need someone to explain it to them or tell them why it was important. The role of local journalists in a war zone is to connect the people on the front line – fighters, aid workers, diplomats, etc. – with the people they are serving. The people need to know that someone is fighting for them. These local journalists are like front-line fighters themselves. They may not carry weapons, but they have the responsibility of maintaining the morale of the local population, which in wartime may be just as important as fighting the enemy.

I would like to think that the experience from the Oslobođenje Newspaper help them. My book came out a long time ago, and I don't know how many people now reporting from Ukraine are aware of the Oslobođenje story. I know some are. But I think the story I tell of the Oslobođenje journalists is one that should resonate with other war reporters, whether foreign or local, because the essential experience is the same, and the lessons that I drew from Oslobođenje would apply in similar situations.

Kemal Kurspahić: How It All Began



Kemal did not choose the times in which he would endeavour to realize his dream, but the times chose him as the man who would defend the freedom of the press in Bosnia under the greatest pressure imaginable

Writer: **GORDANA KNEŽEVIĆ**

Kemal Kurspahić returned from his stint as Oslobođenje's New York correspondent in 1985 obsessed with one idea: that in Sarajevo and Bosnia, dismissively referred to as the "dark vilayet" in the Serbian and Croatian media, it was possible to have a newspaper not beholden to the Communist Party. In 1989, he became the first editor-in-chief of Oslobođenje not nominated for the post by the Socialist Alliance but elected by its journalists. One of his first acts was to remove the oath of loyalty to Tito that was printed daily on our front page: "Comrade Tito, we pledge ourselves to you". It was not meant at the time as an expression of support for some political alternative, but nearly a decade after Tito's death it was unnecessary to keep reprinting the motto. Around the same time, Kemal fostered the paper's ties with writers and commentators in Skopje, Belgrade, Zagreb, Ljubljana, ensuring that Oslobođenje would not be a provincial but a Yugoslav newspaper.

However, the main battles were still ahead. After the first multiparty elections in 1990, the new nationalist authorities aimed to take control of the Bosnian media – Oslobođenje and TV Sarajevo above all – and to reorganize them along national lines. As a part of this scheme, Ilija Guzina was proposed for the managing director of Oslobođenje. It so happened that Guzina played soccer with Miroslav Janković, who, although a nationalist, valued his job. He asked Guzina how he was planning to run Oslobođenje when he had never been in charge of a publishing company. Guzina replied that he was "not going to run the newspaper, but to bankrupt it", to make way for three national dailies. The rumour inevitably reached Oslobođenje, and strengthened the resolve of those who supported Kemal and the newspaper's independence. Kemal played a key role throughout 1991 in defeating the proposed reforms, beginning with mass public protests and ending

in victory at the Constitutional Court, only a few months before the start of the war.

I remember the first journalist killed during the war in Bosnia, in April 1992. News reached us from Zvornik that Kjašif Smajlović had been killed. We had no details yet. His body had been dragged out of his office and he was buried in a mass grave. Not long before that he filed his last report, knowing that the chetniks were on their way to kill him. The day before he had sent his family across the Drina River, to Serbia. His body was exhumed after the war and given a proper burial.

That month Kemal called us all in for a meeting. We were still inside our building, before it was reduced to rubble. Kemal told us that anyone who felt unable to carry on working under wartime conditions would be allowed to leave, and that Oslobođenje would provide help with that. That was to be our last meeting in our old newsroom, although we did not know it at the time. Despite never having been in a war,

Kemal acted as if he had long experience as a wartime editor. Those staff members who chose to stay he divided into two groups. To minimize the risks, since the road to our building was one of the most dangerous in the city, Kemal introduced a system of weekly shifts. One group was in charge of putting together and printing the newspaper in our bomb-shelter, while the other group, mainly reporters, worked from an office downtown. The first temporary location was the Railway company building (ŽTO). The trains weren't running, so they were quite happy to have someone using the space. The newsroom secretary was Ulvija Ramusović, incredibly loyal to Oslobođenje.

Kemal also continued to write. In a series of articles, he criticized the then Foreign Minister Haris Silajdžić. I remember one of those articles, with the title "One Man Show". It criticised Silajdžić for not forming a team and believing that he could conduct the country's foreign policy by himself. At that time, Silajdžić was surely

the most popular politician in Bosnia, and I was concerned that such a strident critique would not go down well with many readers. I asked Kemal to at least use a different headline. He refused, convinced that he was right and that despite the war we had to hold our own government to account. Perhaps his most important trait was his self-confidence.

Another editor-in-chief might well have said that we are only 200 meters from the frontline, that it's impossible to carry on, and that Oslobođenje's story is finished. However, thanks to Kemal Kurspahić, the story of Oslobođenje endures. He was a true champion of press freedom in Bosnia. He was not only an advocate of a free press from the very beginning but managed to sustain an independent newspaper even in wartime. Kemal did not choose the times in which he would endeavour to realize his dream, but the times chose him as the man who would defend the freedom of the press in Bosnia under the greatest pressure imaginable.

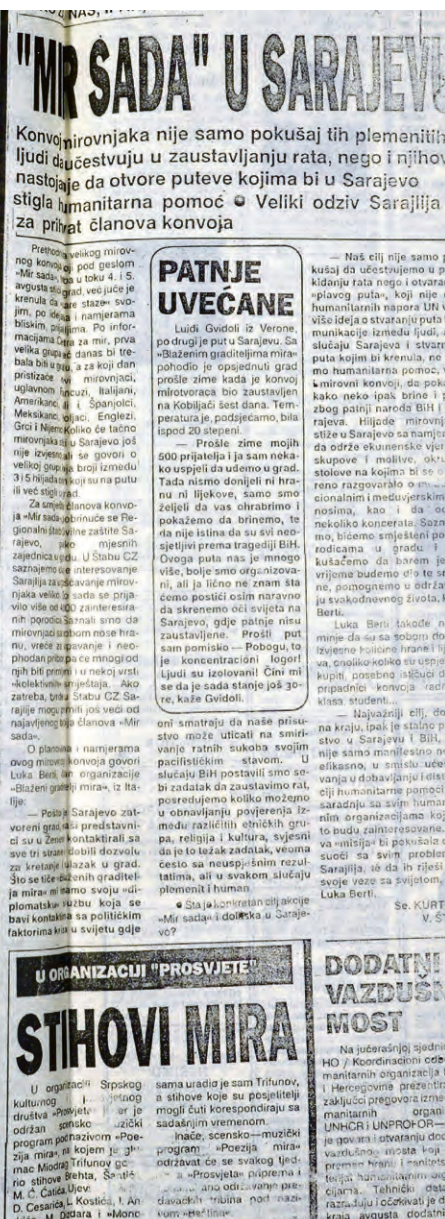
Annie Leibovitz and Susan Sontag visit Oslobodenje's bomb-shelter

We sat and drank coffee after Annie finished filming in Sarajevo. She took the film out of the camera and gave the camera to Senad Gubelić, Oslobođenje photojournalist

Writer: **GORDANA KNEŽEVIĆ**



Oslobođenje, 9. avgust. 1993.



1 drica, m. 8° 11' 11" N, 15° 11' 11" E. An. 9



It was a short century. It began in Sarajevo, in 1914, with the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary and his wife Sophie, and ended with the bombardment of Sarajevo in 1992. That was the verdict given by Susan Sontag (1933-2004) in one of our conversations during her visit to wartime Sarajevo, in the summer of 1993.

Magic rug

On another occasion Sontag was accompanied by a friend, the renowned photographer Annie Leibovitz (1949-). The three of us went to the ruins of the Oslobodenje building, to the underground bomb-shelter where we printed the newspaper every day during the war. I discovered that there was hot water at the shelter. It was a rare opportunity to wash my hair and feel warm water on my skin. Under normal circumstances, Susan Sontag's visit to Oslobodenje and her stay at the shelter would have been a major event. It would have been unimaginable to leave such a distinguished guest alone

for even a minute. But those were not ordinary times.

Before her arrival, Annie had informed us that she wanted to shoot a portrait of Haris Silajdžić, then Bosnian Prime Minister, shirtless and outdoors. I replied that, knowing Haris, as soon as he hears that Annie Leibovitz was involved, he would agree to do the full monty if required. Unlike many photojournalists who had come to photograph only the dead, the wounded, and the scenes of destruction in the city, Annie was also interested in chronicling the war through portraits of people whose lives had been turned upside-down by the war. The exhibition featuring her photographs from Sarajevo later toured the world.

There was no Google for me to search for information about Annie at the time, and I only had my own memory to call upon. I remembered Annie's portrait of Dr. Robert Jarvik, who patented the first artificial heart in the 1980s. Annie wanted to know everything about Oslobodjenje, and in total darkness I took her around the remains of the building,

showing her where our newsroom used to be. She and Susan stayed in the Oslobodjenje building overnight. We sat drinking coffee after Annie was done taking photos. She took the film out, and gave the camera as a present to Senad Gubelić, Oslobodjenje photojournalist. Annie did that without fanfare, handing over her precious camera to a colleague. When I ran into him many years later in Sarajevo, Senad told me that he still had the best camera in the city. That morning Leibovitz left Sarajevo.

Susan was directing Samuel Beckett's play, *Waiting for Godot*. I saw her frequently around the city. She had issues with the actors, who, like everyone else in Sarajevo, were hungry and exhausted. She would sometimes bring them food from the Holiday Inn hotel, where she was staying. There was no water for them to wash their costumes, so they saved them for the premiere. I remember that Oslobodjenje did not advertise the performance, as we had learned through experience that whenever we announced an event, the chetniks would

shell the given location. A friend just showed up at my door to let me know that the play directed by Sontag would take place at a certain time and place (2 p.m. on August 17, 1993.).

The performance was at the Sarajevo Youth Theatre (Pozorište mladih), and it was simply wonderful, even though Susan chose to have only the first act of the play performed. The absurdity of the situation – the play’s central characters are waiting for a mysterious “Godot” who never arrives – was heightened by having each dialogue repeated three times, by three different pairs of actors. After a standing ovation, the mayor of Sarajevo, Muhamed Kreševljaković, called Sontag to the stage. As a token of appreciation, he said that she would receive something to identify herself as a Sarajevan. I had no idea what that something might be, or what to expect. Sontag was then presented with a miniature traditional Bosnian carpet. Kreševljaković told her that every citizen of Sarajevo dreams of leaving the city on a magic carpet and that now she would have one of her

own. "From now on you are one of us, a Sarajevan".

The square in the city

For the citizens of Sarajevo, Susan Sontag's commitment to putting on a play in the middle of the war was a confirmation of our belonging to Europe, whose culture and values of tolerance and multiculturalism we shared. It also kept alive the hope that Europe, the outside world, still cared about us, and would put a stop to the aggression against Sarajevo and Bosnia. However, Susan warned us then that Europe "that Europe is and always has been as much a place of barbarism as a place of civilization". She had chosen *Waiting for Godot* precisely because, although written decades before, it struck her as a play written for or about Sarajevo. Like the play's central characters, Sarajevo waited in vain for a military intervention that never came.

The square in front of the Bosnian National Theater is named after Son-
tag, as a sign of gratitude for her soli-
darity with the city in its darkest hour.

August 5th, 1992. Through the back gates of the Omarska iron ore mine near Prijedor, currently put to a different, satanic use: converted into a concentration camp by Bosnian Serb authorities, for the detention of Muslim and Catholic inmates, to be murdered, raped, mutilated and tortured.

Not that we knew anything near the full story, even at the end of that day, when it became the accursed honour of Independent Television News and I for The Guardian, to expose this atrocity to the world. We had come an arduous route, via a week of obstacles in Belgrade and Pale, and a mock gun battle to try and scare us away, on the bizarre and inexplicable authority of Radovan Karadžić, whom we had met two days previously in Pale, ranting madness that would be ridiculous were it not so terrifying.

Behind the barbed wire

Now here we were: to behold columns of men in varying states of decay, emerging from the doorway to a hangar, drilled across the yard under the watchful eye of a machine-gunner atop a guard post, into the canteen for 'lunch'.

There, cowed and terrified, they lined up for watery bean soup, clearly their first meal in days. Some were skeletal, with lantern jaws and shaven heads, devouring this meal like famished dogs, while guards swung



Fikret Alić in the camp

Omarska, August 5, 1992



What does it take, if not Omarska, Trnopolje and Keretern, ethnic cleansing, rape camps, the siege and torture of Sarajevo - to be intolerable to the West? Why was the aggressor, who managed the camps, appeased and supported for three years after our story?

Writer: **ED VULLIAMY**

their guns. The inmates' eyes spoke a silent but articulate terror - there is nothing like the stare of a prisoner who dare not talk. As they were drilled back out, most kept a morsel of dry bread, perhaps for later, perhaps for someone else. And then another 30 were drilled through the same, ghastly routine. One man did say, to our cameras: "I do not want to tell any lies, but I cannot tell the truth".

To avoid us learning that truth, camp commander Meakić and police chief Drljača

bundled us upstairs, past closed doorways to rooms I now know to have contained the quarters where women were kept for systematic violation, for a 'briefing' on this 'collection centre' - a lot of blather about Category A and B prisoners. Back in the yard, the ITN reporters and I urged access to the hangar, where some dreadful secret was obviously concealed, only to be denied. When a pair of us made our way towards it, safety catches were switched off, guns ready. Time to go, insisted their

awful translator, a Mrs. Balaban, to another 'centre', Trnopolje.

In the twisted minds of these people, this place was apparently of no shame. Yet even they had not prepared for - and were too stupid to avoid - our arrival on the same day as that of several hundred prisoners from yet another camp, Keretern, lined up behind a barbed wire fence along the road. We pulled up - not part of the Serbs' plan - to talk to them, including emaciated Fikret Alić, who related the massacre of 130 prisoners in one night at Keretern.

Trnopolje was all chaos and crowded misery, and at the so-called 'medical centre', Dr. Idris Merdžanić and a local vet, Azra Blažević, doing their best to treat beaten inmates, slipped us a roll of film, showing what kind of wounds were inflicted here.

The true purpose of Trnopolje - by definition unknown to the prisoners there at the time - became clear two weeks later, when, with reporters from Reuters and AP, I smuggled myself into a convoy of deportees just outside Prijedor, which was corralled at gunpoint along a terrifying back

road, up towards Mount Vlašić (four nights before the massacre there of a similar convoy on 21 August), where cars were taken, and some 1,600 people sent through shellfire, across the front lines into Travnik, crossroads

Serial, mass rape - by the commander and guards, of women from Prijedor, In a grotesque 'pecking order', so that the leader of the local HDZ party was 'reserved' for the commander

of the war. Out of the long, appalling night of this Exodus into no-man's-land, emerged a fresh, handsome face, and the greeting: 'Welcome to Travnik. We have buses to take you the rest of the way'. This was Emir Tica, adjutant to the commander, and women touched the patch on his arm, in disbelief that a man in camouflage could be on our side. On the crammed floors of Travnik, the deportees joined tens of thousands of others, most of whom had been literally 'concentrated' in Trnopolje before enforced deportation.



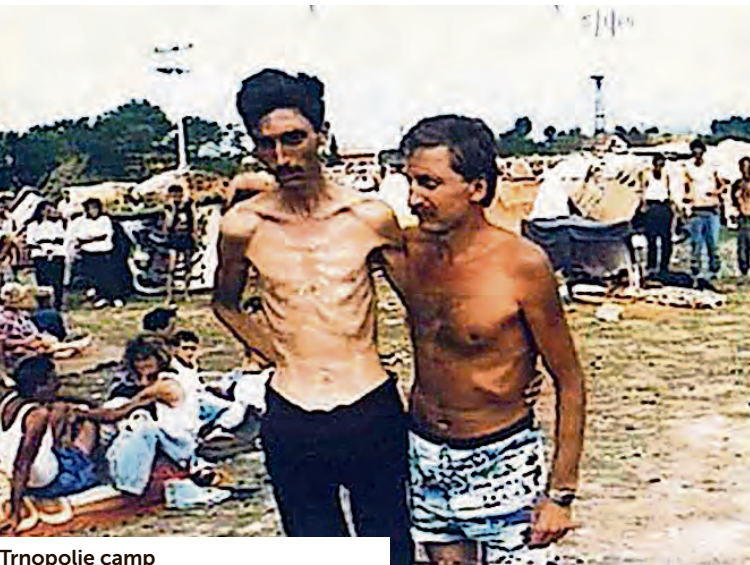
Keretern camp



Omarska camp / TACNO.NET



Marking the 29th anniversary of the dissolution of the Omarska camp / ANADOLIA



Trnopolje camp

The camps followed me throughout the war, and have done ever since. Back in the environs of London, some survivors had been received as refugees, and the full story of Omarska began to emerge. Prisoners kept like sardines, forced to drink their own urine in parching heat, awaiting the call out – to beating, perhaps to death. Serial, mass rape – by the commander and guards, of women from Prijedor, in a grotesque ‘pecking order’, so that the leader of the local HDZ party was ‘reserved’ for the commander. The massacre at Hrastova Glavica of 150 men taken on three buses from Omarska the day we arrived; tied in groups of three and given a cigarette before being executed and dropped into a ravine.

It was not until 2008, at a Bosnia solidarity meeting that a man walked in, who looked familiar. It was he who had been unable to tell the truth – Džemal Paratušić; how I had wondered whether that remark had cost or saved his life. He was now living with his family in the London suburb of Borehamwood; he greeted me; I nearly fell off my chair.

In 1995, I had attached myself to the remarkable Krajiške Brigada of the Bosnian partisan army, made up almost entirely of camp survivors, fighting to go home and

in 1995 finally turning the tables of war, taking ground from which they had been ‘ethnically cleansed’ (to use Karadžić’s own term). One day, after running along a trench under fire, my guide and I reached the commander’s dugout in a forest near Donji Vakuf. A man with a scar on his forehead approached me, and said: “Do you remember the prisoner in Omarska who you asked about the wound to his head, and he said he had fallen over?” How could I forget him, I replied. “That was me”,

We pulled up – not part of the Serbs’ plan – to talk to them, including emaciated Fikret Alić, who related the massacre of 130 prisoners in one night at Keretern

said Šerif Velić, a philosopher, “You could not see the guard behind you, staring at me as I answered”. I saw Šerif again just the other day, promoting his book at an event to mark the 30th anniversary of the Republic’s foundation at the Bosnian embassy to London. His niece, Kelima Dautović (who was held, pregnant, in Trnopolje) and her husband Enver (who survived Omarska) are dear friends, also living near London.

Then, in 1996, trials began at the ICTY, and I volunteered to testify immediately. There we were, at the Bel Air Hotel in The Hague, with its breakfast spread, on day one – and the first person I saw, picking at the croissants, was Azra Blažević

from Trnopolje. We greeted one another, in disbelief, as did many survivors – now scattered and shattered around the world – one another. Most survivors in the witness waiting room were more concerned with how much money the lawyers were making out of their story than expecting justice, and they were right. But

from the witness stand, they spoke with a courage, and in detail, even the journalists had not known. If the ICTY achieved anything, it was for the historical record: Omarska was the kind of place where a prisoner was forced to bite off the testicles of his friend, who then died, a pigeon stuffed into his mouth to quieten the screams of pain, to general laughter among the guards “like a crowd at a sports match”, recalled one witness. This ‘entertainment’ was arranged by a man who had been a friend to both of them before the war: Duško Tadić. If there is one thing that characterises the genocide in Bosnia from too many others, it is macabre intimacy. Victims knew their torturers, rapists and killers – they had gone to school and played football, attended weddings and parties together.

The reaction to our revelation of the camps was overwhelming. Not every story I write gets a response from the President of the United States, but this one did: the world will not tolerate this, declared George H. Bush. But it did, and worse. Omarska was one bookend of a genocide that was allowed to continue, by the West’s connivance, for three long bloody years after

Omarska was closed, until the Srebrenica massacre in July 1995.

And I often wonder, especially now, as Bosnians mark the 30th anniversary of war’s onset in solidarity with Ukraine: what does it take, if not Omarska, Trnopolje and Keretern ethnic cleansing, rape camps, the siege and torture of Sarajevo – to be intolerable to the West? Why was the aggressor, who managed the camps, appeased and supported for three years after our story? Why didn’t – and doesn’t – Bosnia matter, in the way that Ukraine absolutely and rightly does?

Columns are supposed to conclude with answers, not questions, but I have none.

Why was BiH not and still is not important?

For 30 years, I’ve been sleepless in pursuit of them. Why was it okay to collaborate in Bosnia, even after we discovered Omarska, with the perpetrators’ violence, echoed now by Putin in Ukraine? In the aftermath and public sphere, why is it okay for the German writer Peter Handke to be awarded a Nobel Prize, having given the oration at the funeral of President Milošević, architect of the genocide; and for supposedly liberal feminist Olga Tokarczuk to fawningly clasp his hand, accepting hers, while the Mothers of Srebrenica demonstrate outside, tearfully outraged? Why is there no sanction on Noam Chomsky for claiming that the camps were ‘fabricated’ by ITN and I, or Claire Fox, whose ‘Living Marxism’ organisation insisted Trnopolje was a fake, lost in court when sued by ITN, but who was recently honoured by Boris Johnson as a Baroness in the British House of Lords?

Why did and does Omarska not matter? Why did and does Bosnia not matter, as Ukraine absolutely does? The question has baffled – and the answer evaded – me ever since 1992. But, beholding history repeat itself, never more than now.



Omarska camp

When did the war begin for you?

-At the time of dissolution of Yugoslavia I was a commander of a mechanized battalion at the garrison in Varaždin. I was an officer, a professional in the former JNA, and my 32nd Mechanized Brigade of the Varaždin Corps, and my battalion, were engaged during the war in Slovenia. Objectively speaking, my battalion was the strongest of all battalions, it was the major power in the Varaždin Corps – we had 27 APCs, 13 tanks, and 6 120 mm mortars. However, already at that time the military had a hard time recruiting, and we were underpowered. In fact, that was already the beginning of dissolution. In Slovenia, I had a hands-on experience of a border war. Thanks God, all of my recruits and officers survived, we did not suffer any losses. Upon return to the garrison, I openly told my commander whom I trusted, Berislav Popov – later, unfortunately, he was tried in both Slovenia and Croatia, and as many as three times in Belgrade before he was finally acquitted



In position

We Stopped on Doorstep of Mrkonjić and Banja Luka

Fikret Ćuskić, general of the Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, fought on almost all Bosnian battlefronts, took part in defense and operations against both the RS Army and HVO, and is among the few who returned to the country when many were fleeing; and who led a brigade which is remembered as the 17th Krajina Brigade, first as glorious, then as a knights brigade, but throughout the war as a maneuver brigade



Interviewer: **VILDANA SELIMBEGOVIĆ**

of all charges - that it was a border war and that I did not want to take other people's children to that war. When a crisis broke out in Croatia, when barricades were set up and Varaždin was bombarded by JNA, close to my apartment, I went to the barracks and requested a discharge from the military. Soon, I became a free man, and later, on December 1, 1991, I joined a reserve force of the Croatian Army and on January 13, I signed a professional contract with the Croatian Army. When the aggression against Bosnia and Herzegovina began, of course, I could not stand by and watch it on TV.

At that moment, you were a professional officer of the Croatian Army?

-I was a professional officer of the Croatian Army, commander of an Armored Mechanized Battalion in Varaždin. With the approval of the Croatian Army HQ – with some high professionals on board, such as general Stipetić and general Tus, who were chiefs of staff – and in cooperation with Ševko Omerbašić, who was commander of the Emergency Command

During the deadliest conflict in the summer of 1993, there were 27 Croats from the Bosnian Krajina in our brigade. None of them left us. A Croat flag was flown together with the flag with the lilies on our gate and it was never desecrated



Fikret Ćuskić: We had NATO morale



17th Knights Krajina Brigade

for Support to BiH in the Republic of Croatia, I joined the preparations for organization of support to BiH. It was by the end of May and in early June. I was recruiting and registering volunteers from Slovenia, Croatia and other countries, like Austria and Italy, and upon Sefer Halilović's order of June 21st, and, again, with the approval of the Croatian Army which had already made the Klana barracks near Rijeka available to us, I started organizing the 7th Brigade of the Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as Sefer named it in his order.

They Thought We Were NATO

I conducted intensive training and made huge efforts to provide equipment and weapons. I have to emphasize that we received generous support from the Croatian Army which gave up their barracks to us, provided transportation to the shooting ground in Grobnik and instructors to support the training, so I can say that we came to Bosnia as a semi-professional army. I will never forget reactions on Mt. Igman when we arrived. People were stunned when they saw an equipped and organized army with a clear chain of command. I will always remember reactions from the chetniks whom we captured during the liberation of Trnovo: they thought that we were NATO and that NATO had launched an intervention in BiH.

Are you trying to say that the Krajina servicemen looked like NATO Marines?

-We had a similar morale. We had only one woman in our unit – she was a Croat from Travnik who was married to a man from Krajina. There were Croats in our unit, volunteers and others. The structure of manpower reflected the structure of the Bosnian Krajina population. We engaged in the operations to unblock Goražde and liberate Trnovo, upon Sefer Halilović's order.

The liberation of Trnovo and unblocking of Goražde took place in the summer of 1992?

-It was in July 1992. We arrived in Bosnia on July 8, and we were on Mt. Igman on July 10, where I received Sefer's written order to command the operation to unblock Goražde. I walked from Mt. Igman through the territory of Trnovo municipality. There were two Foča detachments at Grebak – Jabuka and Foča. They were under my command. I prepared everything and we re-established a land corridor towards Goražde before July 25, which was followed by an attack launched by the forces on Mt. Igman, aimed at unblocking Goražde, which commander of Operations Group Igman, Mr. Čatić, insisted on. We joined them from north and liberated the facilities above Trnovo, like the Vrbovik repeater, Vis...important hills. Our forces advanced to the trenches where they joined Edo Godinjak's troops. I remember well, he was a commanding officer at Rogoj mountain pass. In my opinion, it was a successful operation of the Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1992, in which an important territory was liberated and the captured booty was significant. I will never forget the position of the howitzer batteries and anti-tank cannons around Trnovo, they were old weapons but meant a lot to us. In my view, it was an extraordinary operation, an offensive operation in which we liberated the territories and inflicted huge losses. The moral impact was huge, as the liberation of the entire territory of Goražde followed in early September.

A rumor circulated through Sarajevo that some troops of the Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina had reached Jabuka above Foča.

-The Krajina units, I mean, the 7th Brigade together with the local units, liberated Jabuka above Foča. The Jabuka detachment was located at Grebak. That period was incredible. It was the first and only time that I met the late Hasan Turčalo, who was a leader of the people, their ammunition was buried in the ground. I still remember his blisters and calluses from carrying weights as heavy as 40-50 kg. When I saw the bread they ate...There was flour in Goražde, but there was no yeast. Goražde did not have the basic medical equipment for combat casualty care. A foreign reporter, who visited Grebak, said that complex surgeries had been carried out without anesthesia. Indeed, all of us were ready to help Goražde, to bring people back to life, to help them get supplies and ammunition. We lost Zaim Bešić recently. This is an opportunity to mention his guides who took displaced people from Herzegovina via Tjentište and Grebak to the free territory of Mt. Igman. There were people of all profiles, and I got Dr. Pašić, a doctor, my relative, my first cousin, dr. Pašić from Kozarac whom chetnik later took from Omarska camp and killed. They were happy to get guns, as spoils of war, from me. Singing, they went away as chetnik helicopters flew above. These are the pictures that I will never forget. To me, they are heroes and such heroes

wearing sneakers who gave their lives for the defense of BiH are numerous.

Then, the Krajina unit moved to central Bosnia?

-At that time, concentration camps around Prijedor were uncovered. Then, we sought permission from Sefer because the troops thought that they should move closer to their native places and try to help. We got his permission, and our unit relocated to the territory of the Travnik municipality. I conducted reconnaissance and then contacted the chief of the municipal staff in Travnik, Haso Ribo – we were the same generation at the Academy – and he gave me the gym in the school in Han Bila since displaced people were accommodated in the remaining school building rooms. Central Bosnia, and Travnik in particular, was already overcrowded, all the people expelled from Krajina poured into Travnik. However,

to create the 17th Krajina Mountain Brigade, comprising my 7th Brigade and the 1st Krajina Brigade which already existed in the barracks in Travnik. This was how a foundation was laid for a genuinely solid military organization. I think that we had two strong battalions already in early January. We formed a third one, and later a fought battalion from our members from Kotor Varoš. In the early 1993, the 17th Krajina Mountain Brigade carried the glory of the Krajina fighters across central Bosnia and the whole of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

It should be said that it was a maneuver brigade.

-Absolutely. At that time, it was the only maneuver brigade, within the 3rd Corps. It means that we had our own territory, and 99 percent of our military members were displaced. Some were from central Bosnia, for instance, Sejo

Brigade, from the best ones – a maneuver unit, was joined by a number of people from Kotor Varoš, from the 27th Brigade with the late Zijo Kovačević, and later also by some men from Jajce. The 17th Brigade's contribution during the conflict with HVO (Croat Council of Defense) was incredibly huge. By the end of August, the 17th Brigade was engaged on eight battlefronts in BiH – Travnik, Vitez, Busovača, Fojnica, Igman....

I remember that, at that time I conducted the first interview with you.

-I do not remember that interview, it was a tense period...But, now, I sometimes watch the videos which Arijana filmed on Mt. Vlašić, and it brings a tear to my eye when I see those young men, those people, that morale. Sometimes I meet some people, now they are 30 years older, they have changed, many

While we fought each other, HVO and the BiH Army controlled 25 percent of the territory, and after we joined forces, we gained control of over 55 percent of BiH at the end of the war. It is redundant to say what would have happened if the international community had allowed us to continue our military operations



Always on the move



17th Knights Krajina Brigade

er, it was only my base, and upon order of the District Command in Zenica, I provided combat support to the Municipal Defense Staff in Jajce. We began preparations in coordination with the municipal staff in Travnik and Jajce, and on September 26 we launched the first attack on the positions of the Donji Vakuf Brigade in the village of Kokići. The chetniks committed war crimes in Kokići in June and killed the Bosniak men who were fit for military service, and expelled other civilians. One chetnik battalion was located there. Thanks to successful planning, preparation and organization, we destroyed it – we killed around 40 soldiers, captured 13, captured a huge war booty, the battalion's entire infrastructure, kitchen, logistics, communications center, mortars, anti-aircraft cannons, and all that was relocated to Karaula. Later, we joined the defense of Jajce. After the fall of Jajce, we engaged in the defense of Karaula, and I was a commander for about 10 days during which Karaula was successfully defended. Unfortunately, on November 15, Karaula fell, just like Jajce, and on November 19, an order was issued

Šaljak, a famous mortarman. Before the HVO attacks, our units had good military experience, they had a maneuvering character, and the people throughout central Bosnia trusted them enormously. They knew: when the military members from Krajina came, frontlines would not change, they felt safe and trusted us. There was some mistrust in the beginning, just like everywhere else, they asked who we were, however, we proved ourselves with our results. On some occasions, our superior command and the 3rd Corps, sometimes even the Supreme Command, sought support from us. In the fall of 1993, during Operation Krivaja, aimed at creating a double siege around Sarajevo, Alija Izetbegović in person insisted that parts of the 7th and the 17th Krajina Brigades come and stop chetniks on Mt. Igman, which we did.

Yes, you literally prevented the fall of Igman.

-At Malo Polje, one detachment, which was formed by the Operations Group Bosnian Krajina from parts of the 17th Brigade and the 312th Travnik

of them died in peacetime, but we are proud that we build an army that fought under all the principles of war under the most difficult circumstances, in a war against two aggressors, in a total encirclement, without logistics, with an arms embargo imposed on us. We did not commit war crimes nor did we destroy religious buildings.

During that fall, I talked to the pastor of the Catholic Church in Travnik and he said that after HVO attacked Travnik, some launched an attack on the church but were prevented by their command, and security guards were provided to the church.

-Yes, that incident happened, a mujahid broke into the church and fired at the statues. The Koran forbids idolatry. Since the church is in the city center, we – Alagić and myself plus military police – arrived there within a minute and we provided physical protection to the facilities in Travnik – to the church and the nuns' living quarters – and later, we did the same in Guča Gora and Dolac,

as combat operations were shifting. Indeed, except St. John the Baptist chapel, which is located on a plateau on Mt. Vlašić, where the HVO troops were deployed and fought back – it was damaged by a shoulder-launched rocket in an exchange of fire – no other church was damaged or destroyed, let alone set on fire. In a few instances the mujahideen painted Arabic letters on the walls, but we hired people who repainted the walls and fixed everything and then brought the military police to guard the buildings. There were fools outside our control, but we really did everything we could to protect the places of worship.

If I am not mistaken, shots were fired at the monastery wine cellar?

-Possibly. They had their own vision of the world, which was primitive and tribal, and they wanted to destroy everything that did not fit in their vision.

However, we resisted it most vigorously, and we succeeded. Let me mention that during the deadliest conflict in the summer of 1993, there were 27 Croats from the Bosnian Krajina in our brigade. None of them left us. A Croat flag was flown together with the flag with the lilies on our gate and it was never desecrated. Only its fabric deteriorated from age and stress over time. No Croat from Bosnian Krajina, Ante, Jure,

to mention but a few, Vinko Dandić from Banja Luka, Tomo Kunovski, who was responsible for transportation and bishop Komarica's closer relative, left us. They stayed with us till the end. It gives us human satisfaction. We respected the rules also during the war. Close to four thousand Croats stayed behind in Travnik and everybody in the city was perfectly safe, although HVO brigade deputy commander put pressure on us to let them go. No, we had not come there to ethnically cleanse the region. They said we wanted to force Croats out of their homes in order to move into their houses. But, as soon as it was possible, in 1995, the Krajina servicemen returned to their pre-war homes, which is the best example. Those who remained in Travnik can be counted on the fingers of one hand.

Those who got married in Travnik.

-Some did, but there were also those who started small businesses, cévapi houses....There is a photo showing the servicemen leaving Travnik, it was incredible, it is always before my eyes. We forged strong bonds with Travnik. More than thirty women from Travnik got married in Krajina, and now they all have children. Friendships in war are closest, their struggle for survival united the mentalities of Krajina and central Bosnia, and we still visit and take care of each other...

The people in Travnik were saying by the end of the summer 1992: chetniks used to say, 'the shelling of Travnik will start at 16:30, for example, while HVO attacked from the rear'.

-Look! The secession staged by Fikret Abdić in Krajina, that act of betrayal, hurt Bosniaks in Krajina, and what happened here also hurt. HVO said they were an ally, and were indeed an ally during one phase of the war, but after the damned Vance-Owen plan, it all changed. Their stab in our back was painful for all Bosnians, and I think that

the lack of trust still exists in that region, although there are some very nice examples that prove otherwise. I compare it with the Autonomous Province of West Bosnia because a stab in the back hurts most. Look! I can testify that the 1st Krajina Brigade and the 7th Brigade and Logistics of the 17th Brigade went through Croatia. We focused on the West, on Krajina. We were not motivated nor did we ever think that a conflict would be possible, regardless of what they unfoundedly blamed us for. All that was painful and we were forced to respond in order for us to be together again. We knew that it was an attempt to divide Bosnia and to annex one part of the country to the Republic of Croatia. A joint criminal enterprise was adjudicated and final judgments were reached at The Hague, but the period of the joint criminal enterprise was not the entire war, but from January 1993 to March 1994, I think. We must be realistic in our assessment of the historical context. There are darkneses, and there are lights. During certain phases of the war, BiH received significant support and assistance from the Republic of Croatia and Croatians, and particularly from some Croatian senior officers. Five Croatian generals attended the promotion of the Monograph at the Islamic Center in Zagreb. I think that at some point, the people around Tudjman gained the upper hand, like Šušak

months. The first time our collaboration had an impact was in Kupres. That was the first step towards restoring confidence and we became allies there. In the next stage of the war, we maintained quite correct military collaboration with the Croat HVO and also with the Croatian Army in final operations, including operations in Krajina, battles for Donji Vakuf and Jajce. Sometimes I send messages to politicians: while we fought each other, HVO and the BiH Army controlled 25 percent of the territory, and after we joined forces, we gained control of over 55 percent of BiH at the end of the war. It is redundant to say what would have happened if the international community had allowed us to continue our military operations.

The servicemen from Krajina regained Mt. Vlašić, liberated Donji Vakuf, and the next was the liberation of Jajce with the Croatian Army and HVO...

-Our units entered Donji Vakuf during the night of September 13, 1995, around 22:00 hours. The next day, we linked up with HVO in Jajce, at the plateau of Dnoluka and Dola we liberated the remaining part of Mt. Vlašić, and we already had an operational plan for further advancement towards Banja Luka. What happened? General Dudaković and the 5th Corps made a military breakthrough towards Bo-

he had lost earlier. He launched an operation and attacked the area towards Ključ with six brigades. The 7th Corps troops remained virtually alone in the region of Ključ. We successfully defended Ključ in the fierce fighting and then, on October 8, Tudman made a decision on the Croatian Army's continued offensive in BiH, and since the entire RS Army focused on Ključ, the Croatian Army entered Mrkonjić. This caused panic in the RS Army. In the meantime, Dudaković pulled out the 501st and 502nd brigades, regrouped them and advanced on Sanice with his troops during the night between October 9 and 10, reached Dabar plateau, entered and liberated Sanski Most. All conditions existed for our advancement towards Banja Luka and Prijedor, however, an ultimatum was issued. Upon order, we had to halt combat operations on October 14, and the inter-entity boundary line remained unchanged.

The RS Army was under international pressure - let's put it this way - on the battlefronts around Sarajevo?

-At that time, NATO decided to launch airstrikes on some RS Army positions in response to Markale 2 massacre, and it was in early September. NATO demonstrated its smart weapons hitting exclusively military targets, junctions, roads, communication

and Alagić tried to spin out of control and continue to advance a bit deeper over a large territory. However, they too thought about it coolheadedly, abandoned that option and, of course, accepted the supreme command's order. On the other hand, objectively, the war took our fellow-fighters, friends, neighbors. Besides, my family returned from Austria to central Bosnia in 1995, after they were forced to leave our home in Varaždin in 1993. I was disappointed that we had not advanced deeper into the RS territory and liberated the places in which the most harrowing crimes were committed in 1992, in Prijedor, primarily those along the river Sana valley.

Excavation of Tomašica mass grave has not yet been completed.

-It has not. More than 700 people from the region of Prijedor are still held missing, and over 3,100 people were killed in 1992. The most bestial atrocities were committed in Prijedor in 1992. The tribunal did not say it was a genocide, although within a short period of time, within a period of two to three months, non-Serbs disappeared from the territory of Prijedor. Under the definition, disappearance of one group amounts to an act of genocide, while two groups disappeared there. Bosniaks and Croats disappeared in

they were packed and placed under JNA's control. The Territorial Defense weapons ended up in our units in a few cases only, there were some weapons in Jajce...

And in Sarajevo, thanks to Jo- van Divjak.

-Divjak was an individual example of personal courage, but we are talking about the system. BiH was in a far more difficult situation because Ukraine has had an organized army since 2004, it has been trained and prepared by NATO instructors, it has its own defense resources and its population. We started from scratch. Territorial Defense existed on paper, but was not armed, we had some movements, such as the Patriotic League, the Green Berets... but those were movements, not units capable of defending the country.

Putin's Defeat

The fact that in 1995 BiH had sovereignty, integrity and continuation is the biggest achievement in our history. This was an incredible example in the history of humankind that a state managed to survive through such difficult times. Another similarity between BiH and Ukraine concerns their former countries. The former Soviet Union and the former Yugoslavia were federations. Under the former Yugoslav Constitution, the Republics were sovereign in Yugoslavia. The largest state, Serbia, invaded Croatia, Slovenia and Bosnia. What do we have now? The Russian Federation, which was the largest state in the former Soviet Union, has invaded its fraternal people in Ukraine. The stories are the same as they were in 1991, about Islamic fundamentalism, threats to Serbs and pre-



Ready for action

and some others, and they imbued politics with their aspirations. However, it cost both them and us.

It means that another agreement was required, which followed in 1994, after the Federation was signed: how did it function?

-Confidence was built step by step just as the conflict or aggression developed in stages. You cannot expect yesterday's enemies who fought each other with all available weapons, equipment, units and resources to become allies. The Federation and the Federation Army were formed under an agreement; however, this could not become a reality overnight. Forces were separated, heavy weapons were withdrawn, and units returned to their barracks. In the fall of 1994, we conducted the first joint operation in Kupres not only with HVO but also with Croatian troops. In addition to HVO, the 1st Croatian Guard Brigade from Zagreb was engaged. I will never forget one scene at the contact point of the units. A Croat from Bugojno, who was a member of HVO, threatened to slaughter our man from Bugojno, and we reported it.

A Three-Month Pay Deduction

-Commander Glasnović, as he was, since those were professionals from Čapljina, I think it was the HVO Guard Brigade, punished him with a 30 percent pay deduction in the next three

sanski Petrovac and Ključ, Ključ was liberated already on September 15, and pressure was put on general Delić to re-deploy some troops of the 7th Corps to the 5th Corps area of responsibility, in order to participate together with the 5th Corps, from the west in the final operations and to advance towards Banja Luka. This was successfully done, and on September 20, the 17th and other units of the 7th Corps marched through the HVO-controlled territory: Livno, Grahovo, Drvar, and it was a famous march. Late at night on September 20, we linked up with the 5th Corps, and at 11:00 hours on September 21 a report was handed over to general Dudaković. He organized the 7th Corps troops into an operations group SOUTH, named me commander of the group and made his two brigades, the 501st and the 511th, immediately subordinate to me. Already on September 23, those troops launched attacks. We had an area of 500 square kilometers, northeast from Ključ, a part of Manjača plateau... We were away from Mrkonjić Grad three or four kilometers, we were near the Kula barracks, and reached the highest point of Manjača. However, our troops were stretched over 25 km wide and 20 km deep front, while war criminal Mladić had left the hospital to command the strategic offensive the goal of which was to retake the territories of Glamoč, Grahovo and all the way up to Bihać which

centers, even some artillery positions around Sarajevo... to millimeter precision. Those were the first NATO airstrikes, and the only ones during the war in BiH, but on strictly selected targets. It was simply NATO's message to Mladić, Karadžić, and Milošević: 'We are ready to intervene with our military. We shall no longer allow such crimes as the Srebrenica crimes to happen'. It happened last in Srebrenica. It was so tragic. There is another interesting thing about international influence. You know that a ban on flights over BiH was imposed. However, the RS Army was allowed to fly during a certain period. They attacked us from the Seagull ground-attack aircraft flying low over the river Sana valley, but, thanks God, we did not suffer any losses. I am still not aware of their motives, whether their motive was to allow Serbs to strike a balance or to stop us, whatever, the use of airplanes was allowed during a period of seven or eight days of final operations.

After all?

-After all, my biggest disappointment was that the numerous 7th Corps troops from Mrkonjić, Banja Luka and Prijedor did not enter their native places with guns in their hands after we reached Kozarac, unlike those from Ključ, Sanski Most and Petrovac. However, soldiers accept orders from their superiors, although Dudaković

NATO demonstrated its smart weapons hitting exclusively military targets, junctions, roads, communication centers, even some artillery positions around Sarajevo... to millimeter precision



Spoils of war

Prijedor. Unfortunately, nobody talks about Croats. Bosniaks organize dignified commemoration to honor the victims at the sites of crimes and on the dates on which they were perpetrated, while HDZ ignores it all, although over 60 Croats were killed in one day.

The war is over. What do you think about what is happening now in Ukraine?

-There are so many similarities, although Bosnia and Herzegovina was in a far more difficult situation: it was under an arms embargo and it had a larger secessionist movement. In Ukraine, there are the Donbas region and Crimea, and the size of those territories is not large. BiH was occupied in peacetime by the former JNA, with its operational development, which had moved from Slovenia and Croatia to the territories of BiH which should have been annexed to the rump Yugoslavia and Greater Serbia. On the other hand, there was the domicile population to whom the BiH leaders appealed in 1991 not to join the reserve force, not to respond to calls for recruitment and not to join JNA. The weapons were taken away from the Territorial Defense,

ventive aggression aimed at preventing an alleged genocide. There are so many similarities. But, until dusk falls for one man, dawn cannot come for another. Aggression and war crimes happened, sadly, however, this is good for BiH because all that was an eye opener for the whole democratic world that has realized what could happen also in the Western Balkans. I think that the mini Western Balkan project in Ukraine was prepared in advance but Putin's plans failed because he underestimated Ukraine, overestimated his own troops, and underestimated even its state-of-the-art technologies. He was amassing superior, modern weapons over the past decade, but all that collapsed like a house of cards under the power of resistance of Ukraine's people and military. My sincere congratulations. They taught the dictator a lesson. I hope that they will be resisting attacks successfully till the end of the war and that it will come to an end soon, but this is already a great defeat of Putin and the Russian empire. It is good for Bosnia that the West is united and that it opened its eyes. Putin has succeeded in one thing: the West united again in their fight against absolutism.



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The guns fell silent more than a quarter century ago. An almost four-year long war in Bosnia and Herzegovina finally came to an end with the support of the U.S. Administration that brokered a peace settlement reached at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base on the outskirts of Dayton, Ohio, United States.

The three-week talks were held between 1 and 21 November 1995. An epilogue: Bosnia and Herzegovina is preserved as a single and independent state, consisting of three constituent peoples and others, and the two entities: the Federation of BiH and the Republika Srpska.

Under the Peace Accords, the BiH Federation covers 51 percent and the Republika Srpska 49 percent of the territory. The Brčko District was formed as a separate territorial unit.

The main participants of the talks and later signatories of the Peace Accords were presidents of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Croatia, Alija Izetbegović, Slobodan Milošević and Franjo Tuđman respectively.



Paris, December 14, 1995: Signing of the Dayton Accords

The End of War, Two Entities and a City Torn Apart

The four-year war in Bosnia and Herzegovina was finally stopped with the help of the US administration by an agreement reached at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base near Dayton, Ohio



Writer: **EDIN BARIMAC**

The chief architect of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which was officially signed in Paris on December 14, 1995, was Richard Holbrooke, former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's Assistant. The Agreement was witnessed by US President Bill Clinton, the United Nations Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, French President Jacques Chirac, UK Prime Minister John Major, Secretary General of NATO Javier Solana, German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, Russia's Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, and Swedish Prime Minister Carl Bildt who co-chaired the Peace Conference on behalf of the European Union.

"It may not be a just peace, but it is more just than a continuation of war. In the situation as it is, and in the world as it is, a better peace could not have been achieved", Alija Izetbegović observed following the General Framework Agreement signing ceremony in Paris.

The main participants of the talks and later signatories of the Peace Accords were presidents of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Croatia, Alija Izetbegović, Slobodan Milošević and Franjo Tuđman respectively

The Dayton Agreement brought peace, as did 11 annexes that came out of the Dayton talks, including the one which defines a completely new constitutional set-up of the country and which has become one of the main problems of internal functioning of the state and also an obstacle to the country's journey to the Euro-Atlantic integration. Although there has been a

need over the past years, and attempts have indeed been made, Bosnia and Herzegovina has not yet seen its Constitution amended. Each attempt has turned into a dispute among political parties over how Bosnia and Herzegovina should look like as a state in the future, and how it should be internally organized. The Peace Agreement defined the responsibilities of BiH and its

entities as well as the relationships between the BiH institutions and the way the BiH Constitution can be amended.

More than two and half decades later, the Agreement for Peace is dubbed by many a straightjacket put on BiH, which is tight to the point of coming apart. Annex 10, which creates the basis for a High Representative, who was later invested with the Bonn powers, is part of the Dayton Accords. The High Representative with his powers should be both a corrective and an assistant. Annex 7, which has never been fully implemented, and the question is whether it can be implemented at all, is also part of the Dayton Accords.

Annex 2 to the Dayton Agreement defines the Inter-Entity Boundary Line. As a result, Sarajevo became a city torn apart. Arbitration on the Inter-Entity Boundary Line in Sarajevo's neighborhood of Dobrinja lasted several years. The Inter-Entity Boundary Line divided even apartments, and, in some cases, under the Agreement, a living room was in the Federation, and a kitchen in the RS, or vice versa. Still, a solution was reached in the end, while the settlements such as Dobrinja 1 and Dobrinja 4 remain divided – one part is in the Federation, the other is in the RS. No matter how complex, Sarajevans turned that situation too into jokes about the residents of Dobrinja



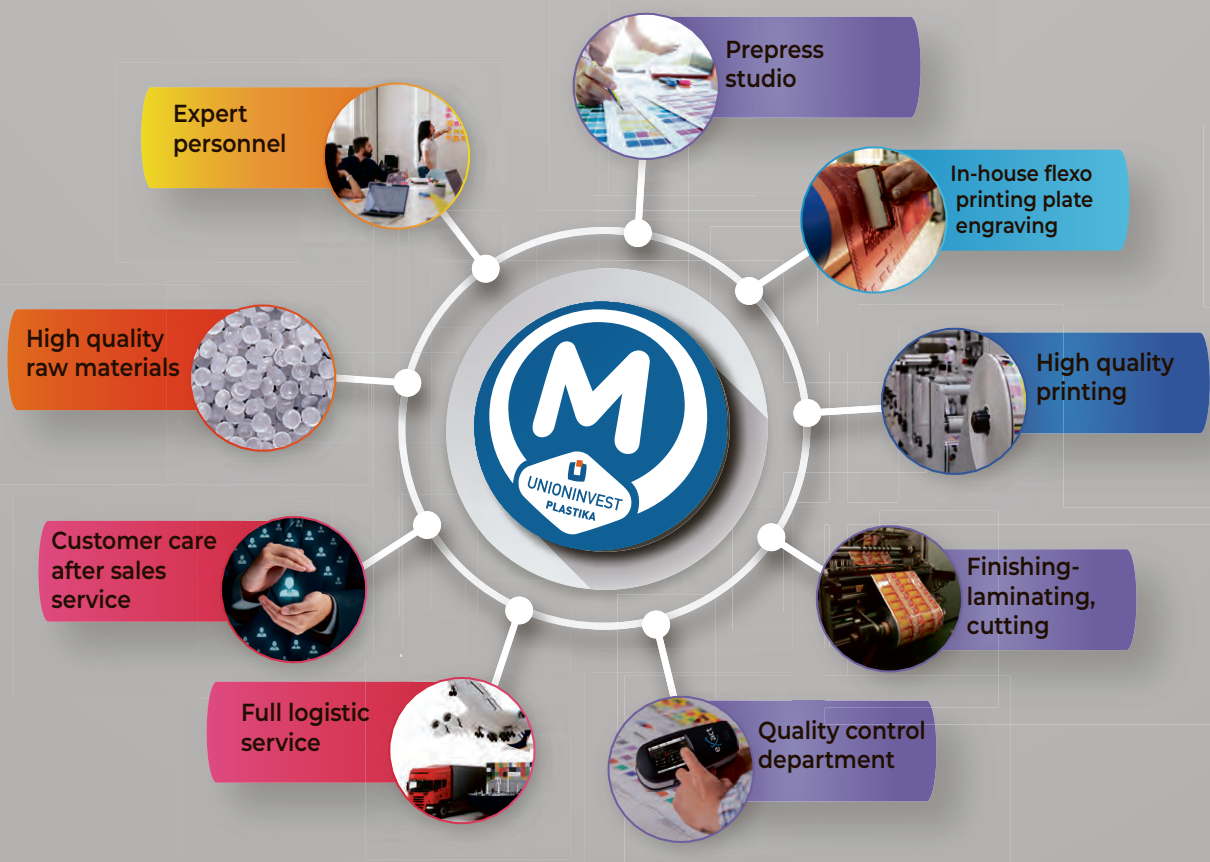


Unioninvestplastika d. d. Sarajevo je savremena štamparija koja u svom sastavu ima pogone za offset štampu, proizvodnju fleksibilne ambalaže i polietilenskih folija.

Osnovana je davne 1970. godine. Za vrijeme rata pogon u Sarajevu je zapaljen, a pogoni u Semizovcu su većinom devastirani, te je postojeća oprema odnesena. Krajem 2000. godine firma postaje članica MIMS Grupacije.

Rekonstrukcija i gradnja infrastrukture i objekata počela je u oktobru 2001. Također je inicirano pokretanje proizvodnje ekstruzije u 2001. godini, a već u februaru naredne godine pokrenuta je proizvodnja polietilena. U narednim godinama izgrađeno je 10.000 kvadratnih metara novog proizvodnog prostora.

Danas, Unioninvestplastika d. d. Sarajevo je najsavremenija štamparija u regiji koja broji preko 100 zaposlenih i vodeća je na tržištu u proizvodnji fleksibilne ambalaže za hemijsku, prehrambenu, građevinsku i industriju pića. Iz odjela roto i offset štampe svakodnevno izlaze najznačajnije dnevne i revijalne novine, periodična izdanja i reklamni materijali iz BiH i okolnih zemalja.

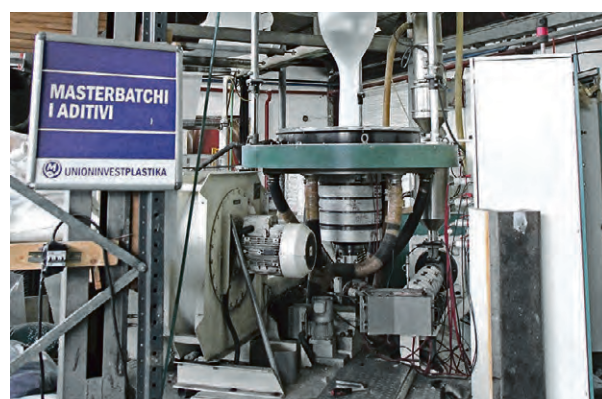


Naš uspjeh mjerimo povjerenjem koje su nam ukazali naši klijenti koji su vodeći proizvođači prehrambenih proizvoda na domaćem tržištu kao i vodeći trgovački lanci. Posebno smo ponosni na projekte na kojima smo radili za inostrano tržište, a koji su potvrda da smo kompanija koja je spremna odgovoriti na visoke i jako složene zahtjeve.

Orijentisani smo prema našim klijentima i fokusirani na poboljšanje proizvodnih procesa slijedeći nove tehnološke procese. U svakodnevnom poslovanju težimo ka ostvarenju najviših poslovnih standarda provođenjem certificiranih sustava upravljanja shodno zahtjevima normi ISO 9001:2015 i ISO 14001:2015.

Poslovni planovi Unioninvestplastike u budućnosti su usmjereni ka jačanju konkurentnosti na domaćem i inostranom tržištu, zadržavanju i jačanju pozicije sa fokusom na dodatno unapređenje proizvodnih procesa s ciljem zadovoljavanja potreba naših klijenata. Snaga naše kompanije je svakako i naš stručni visokokvalifikovani kadar koji će dodatno našoj kompaniji osigurati, kao i do sada, visoku konkurentnost na tržištu i jaku poziciju.

PRIPREMILA: Indira Hamzić



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