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Media News

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A s s a s s i n a t i o n A t t e m p t

Democracy in Lamentable State

Zeljko Kopanja, journalist from Banja Luka, is struggling for his life. His biggest “guilt” consisted in writing openly, bravely and outspokenly. The bomb that exploded under his car on 22 October is the very image of the lamentable state of democracy and freedom of spirit that reigns in these territories. Almost cynical seem the statements expressing compassion for the heavily injured journalist and angry outbursts of indignation on the part of representatives of governmental authorities in the Republic of Srpska (and in the Federation) over this “cowardly,” “monstrous”, “fascist” act.

Who is most responsible for journalists being under duress? Threatening letters are sent to them, their phones are bugged, while information about their conversations is slipped to “those concerned”. Relays are being destroyed, editorial offices raided. Data, photographs and notes from secret police dossiers and in we feature litary and state archives are being palmed off unto journalist lobbies as “pure truth”, and thus the war of power-wielders behind the scenes is started via media.

The present authorities bear great responsibility for the assassination of Banja Luka journalist. Least of all because they did not provide the journalist with bodyguards when he was receiving threats, for wretched would be such journalism that would perform its job under police protection. The real responsibility lies in that the authorities are doing so little to make all people, including journalists, feel safe. The worm of corruption, internal squaring of accounts and denunciation gnaws at these parts. Those who refuse to play the “game” will have their knuckles rapped, their bones broken. Or will themselves get entangled into a spider web of intrigues.

Intensive Talk Program

Radio FERN from Sarajevo was founded thanks to funds of international community on the eve of the first multi-party elections in BH in 1996, and recommenced working with a renewed broadcasting schedule on 4 October this year. It was the first radio network in BH, to cover by its signal a considerable part of the territory of both entities. After the 1998 elections FERN lost its character of a station specialised in “free elections”(FE) and began transforming its program with an ambition to remain long time on this media scene.

On Monday, 4 October, the channel opened with renewed schedule. Strengthened in terms of human resources and inspired by fresh program concepts, this station set as its aim to be the most listened-to and, in terms of information, the most reliable radio program in BH. The management and designers of the new program are probably expecting that they will this way quickly win the popularity with their listeners and present themselves to potential advertisers as attractive and widely listened-to radio station.

The Monitors of Media Plan Institute have on Tuesday, 19 October followed the whole-day program of Radio FERN in order to gain impression about its radio-phonetic features, attractiveness of its content, originality of ideas concerning the medium, and the way it balances the themes presented.

Who Is the Genius?

On 19 October, the broadcast started at 5.30 a.m. by review of daily press. All dailies from both entities were reviewed. The presentation is reduced mainly to quoting the headlines and titles, without further ambition to read or paraphrase certain exclusive passages from the papers.

At 6.00 a.m. there is the first news review. In the morning and afternoon program the news appear every half hour and take three to five minutes, while in between there are one-sentence flash news, composed mainly of the previously presented information. Every hour there is a block of news from culture, sports and business. These short “specialised” broadcasts comprise the information from BH, neighboring countries and world.

The morning program “A New Day”formally starts at 6.00 a.m. It is an open program, packed with ample information. However, the central place that day was given to listeners who called in to vote on the issue: “According to you, who is the most ingenious person of the 20th century?”This day at least, 19 October, the input of listeners was politicised, often falling off the Media News, No44, Vol I



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intended aim of the editorial staff (if the aim was to obtain answers about the personalities that most strongly marked this century). Some listeners even replied that the most ingenious persons of 20th century were Haris Silajdzic (“for he is fighting for Bosnia”), Bogic Bogicevic, (“because he preserved Bosnia”), Alija Izetbegovic, Mate Boban... Josip Broz Tito won the highest number of votes that day. To the point was a remark of one listener who said that many people do not know at all what does a genius mean; she said that the editors – hosts should have more precisely defined the whole voting framework and should have given it a more universal character in terms of civilisation. Later on it was announced “that from that point on the personalities who distinguished themselves by something remarkable after 1992 would not be taken into account”. This instance shows how great is the responsibility of media in conducting polls and surveys, which should be based upon correct methods and techniques.

A positive aspect of these contacts is that the announcer uses the opportunity to obtain the information from listeners: what is happening in their places of living, how are they living there, how is the weather...

The lady host of “A New Day” is eloquent, has a pleasant voice and her relaxed, occasionally casual style of hosting is appropriate to such designed show (in several instances she converses with the sound engineer, thus filling in the voids and making the show more colourful).

At 10.00 a.m. there is a show “Radio Revolution” on the air. It is a two-hour political show made of two parts and with two different guests. In the first part of the show, the professor of sociology from Sarajevo, Jusuf Ziga, appeared as guest and spoke about the topic of “truth about Bosnia”. Ziga tried to refute the allegations of some (mainly Serb and Croat) historians about the existence of “three ethnic Bosnias”, confronting them with arguments in favour of his view of Bosnia as one organic being “in which people always used to live in harmony”. The show would have been far more interesting had Ziga had someone in the studio who would not think in the same way and who would be able to oppose Ziga with his own arguments. This way the show looked like a settling of scores with “certain enemies of Bosnia”, identified in a quite generalised way (e.g. “various anti-Bosnian lobbies”, “certain Serb and Croat nationalistic forces”). In the second part of the show, guests from the International Red Cross appeared, to speak about sociological researches in connection with war in BH.

The host is professionally hosting the show. One objection that could be given springs from the fact that in this show the listeners are also given the possibility to vote, this time for the most significant person in the history of Bosnia, this being similar to the previously raised question about the most ingenious person of 20th century. By voting, the listeners undermine the serious nature of the topics spoken about. We are of opinion that the calling-in listeners should be kept within the confines of the discussion about the topic of the show.

It is interesting to note that one female listener called in to vote for Radovan Karadzic and Slobodan Milosevic. The host disregarded her vote, with explanation “that they can appear on the list once the voting is about those who are to be held most accountable for the biggest destruction of Bosnia”.

After the news at 12.00 a.m., there follows a show “Step by Step”, about the issue of refugees. The topic is the request of the Helsinki Committee from Bijeljina to strike off the election lists the candidates who are using several apartments. The theme was dealt with by correspondent from Bijeljina. Both the host of the show and correspondent appear very professional, giving example of how a good radio show and good journalistic story should be made.

Knowledge Builds Quality

From 12.30 p.m. on, there is a show “Through the Eyes of an Artist” on the air, dealing with themes from culture. On the occasion of the Sarajevo festival of Croatian choirs, the

representative of the Croatian Cultural Society “Napredak”(Progress) from Sarajevo and a representative of one women’s choir are invited as guests to the studio. During the show we are witnessing a school example of how important it is for a journalist to have a broad knowledge about the topic dealt with. During the discussion, one listener who called in accused BH Croats of organising ethnic cultural events, as compared to Bosniaks who approach the culture from the multi-ethnic side exclusively. The host perfectly reacted, remarking that Muslim Cultural Society “Preporod”(Renewal) had recently also held its own festival in Gradacac.

In the second part of the show we heard lengthy reports from correspondents from Banja Luka, who spoke about the theatre life in that city and about the visit of the authors of French theatrical performance about Srebrenica, which had been played in Sarajevo.

From 2.00 to 3.00 p.m. there is a show entitled “Femina”on the air, announced as "show for health of women". The show surpasses the limitations posed by the title, because it speaks about influenza, a disease that hits the males also. A guest in studio, a doctor, specialist in general practice, talks with the listeners and gives a number of medical advises. Along the way there are ads for private doctor’s offices and herbal pharmacies. In essence, this is a useful and radiophonically well-designed health magazine.

At 3.00 p.m. there follows a show entitled “Let me ask you...”. The Guests are the persons from the Pension Scheme Fund of BH. In parallel to the information presented about the activities of this fund, with focus being placed on the co-operation with Pension Scheme Fund of the Republic of Srpska, the listeners can participate in the show as well. This indeed is the purpose of the whole show.

From 4.00 p.m. on there is a three-hour broadcast of open, patchwork show “World Today”. The show is, like the morning program, interspersed with numerous informations from the domain of politics, culture, sports. In this show too, the phone lines are open for listeners, with theme being - "How Are You Surviving?". As occasion for discussion serve statistical data from the Republic of Srpska which speak about disproportion between the salaries and the average consumer's needs. However, during the first hour of the show the listeners did not call-in, although the host kept constantly inviting them to do so. It would be worthwhile to analyse (if this situation keeps repeating other days of the week too) whether this abstaining from calls at that time is the result of great interest of the listeners for a show of some other station. After one hour the listeners started communicating.

In the framework of this show there is also “Fern Magazine”broadcast, which is an informative political show, which deals in depth with topical events. The themes are being professionally developed by a network of on-the-spot correspondents who are at the very center of the events.

“Swatch Sport”is a one-hour sports broadcast, given at 7.00 p.m. apparently named after the sponsor. Apart from ample information given from international and home sports, it deals far and wide with a bad situation in domestic football, with sport workers from BH first football division speaking.

From 8.00 p.m. on, there is a music show “For an Octave Higher”on the air. The host is presenting a most wide variety of pop and rock music variations. In this show, the music fans can hear even some old songs which had long time ago disappeared from programs of radio stations here.

At 10.00 p.m. the central broadcast of Radio Free Europe in South-Slavic languages is transmitted, after which comes the night program, to be followed by a satellite program.

For Updated and Concise Information

In this part of the monitoring we will mention only the lead (traditional) news broadcasts, which are being broadcast every half-hour (or, during specialised shows, every hour). On 19 October, we have recorded 21 editions of the news. There were 156 information presented. The

major part of the information referred to Bosnia and Herzegovina as integral whole (69), and next in number were the news from the world (34). After that follow the news from BH Federation (22) and Republic of Srpska (13). Croatia was mentioned in 10 information items, and FRY and Kosovo only in 8 of them. This is somewhat surprising, because this concerns a vast, crisis area, of politically pressing importance.

Reading agency news is the basic method of presenting information. Sources are mainly not mentioned. However, on several occasions, within the news there were references to Onasa, Beta and BH Press agencies. To a lesser extent, reporting from the spot is also used within news. These are mainly concise, up-to-one-minute reports. On the day of monitoring, reporter from the Parliament of BH Federation reported on regular basis about the Parliament session. For every new edition, there was a newly updated report, which is a positive development when contrasted with a practice of other stations, which in several editions keep repeating the same report, frequently already stale and obsolete. We noted that there were reporters from Banja Luka, Mostar, Prijedor and Drvar too, apart from those from Sarajevo.

The news broadcast is short and precise. It takes three to five minutes. An exception to this is 12 a.m. broadcast, which takes 15 minutes. As it does not contain reporter's stories, sound recordings of statements or other forms that enrich the broadcasting services, we have to say that this is a monotonous broadcast where the attention span of the listeners does not last more than five minutes.

We have remarked that in the morning hours the editors fumble somewhat when establishing the hierarchy of news. For example, at 6.00 a.m., the news on resignation of US Attorney General Kenneth Starr strayed among the news speaking of crisis in these parts. At 7.00 a.m. there were first read the news referring to Bosnia and Herzegovina, after which, in world news, there followed the information about the Pact for Stability, the member of which is BH as well. Next was the news from Columbia, and then only one sentence – statement of Bulgarian President about the Stability Pact – which was probably a remnant of previously presented news. Early morning hours should not be taken as excuse for such editorial failures.

Program For Whole of BH

Radio Fern has a markedly intensive spoken program, as never previously recorded in the history of wavelengths here. This is really a revolutionary change, the effects of which are to be analysed only after some time. From 7.00 in the morning until 8.00 p.m. there were only seven or eight complete music cuts. Although FERN started applying this scheme only since 4 October, it is surely the strongest station in BH in terms of current production. The overall quality of the program is higher than with the vast majority of radio stations in BH. This is a logical consequence of the fact that presently there are experienced radio journalists working for FERN, who were battle-tested in other media, particularly in former State Radio.

It is obvious that FERN has the intention to be a station accepted by all three “ethnic parts of BH”, i.e., by listeners from all ethnic groups. There are a large number of informations coming from Republic of Srpska and BH Federation, from the correspondents who have their places of residence there. In the news about culture and sports there are information from both Serbia and Croatia, which is in the sign both of strengthening regional co-operation and satisfying the interests of Serbs and Croats in BH, whose concerns link them more with the two neighboring countries. The ethnic composition of those employed, as judging by first and last names, is mixed. However, at least as could be deduced from the listeners who called-in in great numbers that day, it seems that FERN primarily finds its listeners in the territory of the Federation with Bosniak majority, wherefrom the large majority of the calls came. From the so-called "Croatian territories", the calls are mainly coming from Drvar, while there was not a single call from the Republic of Srpska recorded that day. Only a continuing analysis, for which we hope at least that is conducted by Radio FERN, can establish whether it is a lack of coverage by signal or something else that is the matter here.

Making the program open to listeners at all times, along with interesting topics dealt with (as compared with empty talk which characterises many radio stations), represents a brave, democratic move on the part of FERN. Unfortunately, the culture of communication is not a stronger side of some listeners, who call in even several times in a day. The listeners often politicise and digress, getting off the subject to move into secondary matters and trivialising the theme to the level of kitsch. Open radio is a risky business. A seemingly simple radio form like conversation over phone puts even greater demands on an editor, in terms of knowledge, maneuvering skills and professional competence for communicating via radio.

During the broadcasting of the program, there is a short jingle broadcast, with a slogan: "You are listening to the most reliable source of information in BH!". Maybe this jingle is the only piece of kitsch for which the editors can be held accountable. Whether some medium is the most reliable source of information is something that the listeners have to decide upon themselves, or, in the last instance, some relevant institution. But, to self-proclaim oneself in such a way from the very start, seems boastful and irritating.

(R.U.)

Opinions

We continue to publish the opinions of radio TV experts who analyse possibility of reconstruction of public radio broadcasting system in BH from various angles.

Baggage of Old Habits

(Written for Media News by Boro Kontic, editor-in-chief of Soros Media Center in Sarajevo and former editor of Radio BH)

I spent one year as member of the Provisional Steering Board of RTV BH. In result (as it is usually bureaucratically summed up at the end) we have proposed a Draft Law on Federal Radio TV and gave proposal concerning Public RTV BH. Indeed, both proposals imply that TV houses would be public, which includes that they would be for major part financed from subscriptions, and that they would broadcast the program meant to satisfy the broadest spectrum of needs of citizens of the Federation and BH. This means that significant part in the scheme, apart from news, movies, sports, should be given to educational, children's, documentary and similar programs. The same principle should be applicable for Radio TV of the Republic of Srpska as well.

We are now entering the most critical phase of this job. As for implementation, quite an article could be written containing forecasts as how it would all look like, probably containing a devastating conclusion that we are facing months and months of small steps forward and great backlashes. Is it possible to make a Federal Radio TV with two complementary channels, where Bosnian language would be dominant on one and Croatian language on the other, with ethnically balanced editorial and journalist staff? Or, would it be possible to implement a public Radio TV program for the whole of BH, in which the two entities Radio TV houses would participate? Is it possible at all to do this job, given the present political environment?

The issue of public Radio TV in BH is primarily a political one, and this situation goes on like this for 10 years already. Since the time of first demands, which appeared in early 90-ies, for so-called national (ethnic) channels at the then Radio TV Sarajevo, nothing has changed in essence.

Therefore I feel no less important to speak about yet another issue. What has changed within the house for the last ten years? The thesis that I put forward is that not much has changed in the mind-set of such machinery. The former Radio TV Sarajevo had up until the war about 2,300 employees, and income from subscriptions, which accounted for 90 percent of the overall

income. Half million households paid subscription and this assured relatively stable income. It is less known that the salaries of the employees were in reality very low, almost miserable in comparison with salaries in other media. I recently spoke with one journalist from those times, who is now in London and who told me that in late 80-ties, as probationer in Radio TV Sarajevo, he had a salary which amounted to 100 DEM. True, if you occupied an editor's post, salary would be somewhat better, but all together below the average of other media.

It was a typical media house of that time, where people were occasionally very lax in regard to their obligations. There were quite many people who worked strenuously, spending days and nights in their shifts, but there were also many those who would not turn up for days. What is interesting is that this had no major impact upon the level of salaries, so that, depending on your position in job classification, you could earn much more than those who literally slept in that house. It seemed that when you got your employment contract for, as it was then called, "indefinite time", you could "go easy" until the retirement time. The fact that your show was more listened to, that the broadcasts that you were preparing were favourably received in public, did not matter that much, except for giving you personal satisfaction.

But if we can ascribe all this to the previous system and to total lack of media competition, what could we say today? Has something changed in this description and how much? To say, ten years ago, that the Radio TV house does not have to have more than 2,000 permanently employed people looked like sacrilege. At times, there was a need for so many people, maybe even for more, but this was only during the periods of great campaigns that lasted for only few days. Most frequently, there would be much less obligations for months. Does the Radio TV today have to have 1,200 permanently employed people? Or is it better to try to operate with 300 (?) people who are really necessary for performing regular job, with others hired on basis of a contract which would be renewable and entered into only at times when there is work enough or when there are projects. To leave the safe haven of "state" service seems at first very difficult, for some even dramatic, but for those who know how to do their job there are always enough offers. The fact that it is now upon you to take care of your health and retirement schemes is probably most difficult to swallow. As it is likewise difficult to accept the fact that every job is determined by competition, that is to say, that you have to prove yourself every time anew.

Those who had the opportunity to see how the journalists in western Radio TV companies or papers are working, could also see how heavily demanding is the struggle for maintaining the status. It is nothing unusual, to the contrary, it is a rule that a Pulitzer Prize winner, the same night the news on the award are announced, stays late in the office because he has to finish the story.

There is an interesting fact concerning the BH media. For the last 8 years there sprung hundreds of new radio and TV stations, and as many printed media as well. But, it was only the papers that were closing down. Many of them would appear in kiosks, to disappear after two or more issues. But, not a single one of radio or TV stations which started working in 90-ties disappeared from the air. There are probably several reasons to this, but one of them is unquestionable. The papers always depended on the market, so that if there is interest enough they are being sold. When this interest vanishes, then everything is clear. But, however, there is something encouraging in all this. It is never late to try again.

E t h i c s a n d C u l t u r e o f C o m m u n i c a t i o n (5)

In this section of *Media News* we publish the texts that speak about the ethics and culture of communication, written by well known world authors, as well as by experts deeply familiar with media situation in the countries in transition and countries of south-eastern Europe.

In this issue we feature an excerpt from the book "Ethics of Journalism", written by Dr. Stjepan Malovic, Dr. Sherry Ricchiardi and Gordana Vilovic (Press/Sources Book Collection, Zagreb 1998)

First Suffers the Ethics and Finally the Truth

The Croatian media scene is subject to great turmoil and enormous changes. It is almost impossible to compare the journalism today and situation in media with the one in the previous political system.

Democratic changes have opened the door to such freedom of media as was non-existent in the previous political regime. At the same time, exerting sharp influence, the authorities control part of the media, mostly the ones in state ownership so that a great number of journalists is dissatisfied with restrictions imposed upon them, while the international public resolutely and persistently insists that one of the fundamental preconditions for admittance of Croatia into world integration processes is precisely freedom of media.

There are a number of factors that have a negative influence upon freedom of media in Croatia. Undoubtedly, the most significant one is the firm determination of the party in power to control the most influential mass media, upon which essentially depends the creation of the public opinion. These are primarily Croatian radio TV, Hina (Croatian News Agency), and leading dailies like *Vecernji list*, *Vjesnik* and *Slobodna Dalmacija*. The methods of control of these influential media vary, but the most efficient control is the one exercised through the ownership. HRTV and Hina are state owned and all substantial decisions concerning these media are being passed by the government of Republic of Croatia and the Croatian State Parliament. The fact that the party in power can fully control both the Parliament and the Government means that the most influential media are directly used as instrument of HDZ. The situation is not better concerning the most influential dailies: the ownership, in that case as well, is the essential factor that determines the political orientation of those papers. *Vecernji list*, the largest selling daily which managed to escape the influence of the Communist Party and which proclaimed itself in late 80-ies to be an "independent daily", was first in majority ownership of the Pension Scheme Fund which then, through a whirlwind transaction, shrouded in secrecy, sold it at the end of 1997 to mysterious owners from abroad, unknown to public. It is a public secret that the real owners are persons very close to the ruling party. *Slobodna Dalmacija* was the first to pass the road from state to private ownership, also under scandalous circumstances. The process of its ownership transformation has not yet been completed to date. *Vjesnik* underwent more "peaceful" transformation, keeping mainly, this or some other way, to owners which were either direct state representatives or were so indirectly (Privredna banka (Business Bank), Hrvatska tiskara (Croatian Printing House), funds and similar).

Why is this important? Ownership structure has a direct bearing upon the editorial policy of media. If the media owners are market-oriented and if they want that the success of media depends on the journalistic quality and if they intend them to be the voice of public and critics of social deviations in service of people, than they will provide conditions for such editorial policy which will practice journalism in the best possible way.

Parties, regardless of their political orientation and popularity with the electoral body, do not see media this way. Parties need media to popularise their policy, promote their political opinions, justify their political moves, hush-up their mistakes and glorify their successes. But this does not necessarily have to coincide with the general public interest. Sometimes, it is just the opposite.

The journalists working in media which are under direct control of political party or social groups are faced with sharp moral dilemmas. How to perform a journalistic task if it runs contrary to the policy of the party which controls the medium? Practice gives very clear answers: the journalist must either submit to proclaimed editorial policy or leave the medium in question. The submissive journalists live and work under terrible moral strain; they are frustrated and they become dissatisfied. They try to escape by dealing with issues of secondary importance, they

resort to self-censorship, and very often leave the profession. In their place come young, inexperienced journalists who have no other alternative. They accept the conditions imposed upon them by the owners, happy enough to have a job. Lack of professional knowledge and inexperience do not allow them to fight for better professional status. This unhappy vicious circle lowers the professional level of journalism. Scarce free media are at the same time labelled as enemies, puppets of international organisations selling themselves for “thirty pieces of silver” or are being proclaimed, mildly put, for dubious characters who are looking for some truth without themselves knowing what they really want.

Experienced professional journalists who value highly the standards of their trade can hardly change such a situation. Only a wider social environment, which provides conditions for development of real media freedoms, can improve the situation for better. At the same time, it is necessary to develop professional education of journalists in order that they might use their expertise and abilities to resist suppression of media freedoms.

The first and most frequent victim to fall in such situation in media is ethics and final victim is the truth. Therefore, among Croatian journalists, there are long-standing and often very vehement debates on issues concerning ethical code of the profession, morality and workmanlike preconditions for carrying out their journalist job. If we add war years to this, which for journalism meant a peculiar and extremely demanding challenge, than the picture of Croatian journalism in regard to ethical problems is clearly defined.

I n t e r n e t a n d J o u r n a l i s m (3)

Mostar Journalists and Internet

Many agree that Internet is a kind of notice board upon which individuals or institutions can pin their information. Printed media put the whole contents or a part of it to their Web sites, while the mechanism of Hypertext indicates that there are other information on Internet, the contents of which is linked with what is written in these printed media.

The author of this text could not detect instances of such cases on Web sites in media in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Such a situation seems very strange, to put it mildly, because many media are writing about the same events and persons from opposed points of view. We are used to censorship of conventional editions, and the journalists frequently quote this as aggravating circumstance in their work. On the other hand, it is not possible to censure Internet, either in Bosnia and Herzegovina or somewhere else. Therefore, even when people are afraid, they can easily evade responsibility by building a link, which will enable a reader to see the event, dealt with in a different way.

At the same time, Web editions of conventional media are only a bad attempt at copying the conventional media, which is difficult to understand, since a large number of these media are present on the Internet from times as far back as 1996.

Analysing the results of a survey among Mostar journalists, we shall try to find out whether Internet in BH journalism is only a fashionable fad or it reflects the authentic need for using a new medium.

The survey was conducted by the author of this text, with assistance of the students from the fourth year of the Department of Journalistic Studies of the University of Mostar. The survey was conducted in June 1999, in form of a poll. There were 25 Mostar journalists interviewed during the poll, who were given 18 closed and one open question. The purpose of the survey was to see how much the journalists from Mostar use Internet. It is symptomatic that not even one of them uses Internet to collect data. They do not even use the Web pages of other mass media to collect the information, which can be of use in their work. At the same time, the journalists, even the editors, from media who have their own Web sites, do not even know that they have these

sites (or at least have answered so). These would be the most telling findings obtained in the survey, but let us take first things first.

Among the subjects of the survey, 15 of them are women and 14 are men. They are mainly younger persons (6 of them are in the age group below 25 years, 10 are between 26 and 30 years, 2 between 31 and 35 years, 3 between 36 and 40 years, one between 51 and 60 years, while three of the interviewed journalists are in the age group above 60 years). Out of them: 13 are journalists, three are editors-in-chief, 7 are editors, one correspondent journalist and one announcer. As for background: 10 of them have graduated from high school (out of them two are editors), 6 have graduated from collegiate school (pedagogical or business), while 9 of them have graduated from University College (mainly Faculty of Philosophy or Faculty of Political Sciences). The interviewed journalists have in average 9 years of service in journalism. Twelve of the interviewed journalists are employed with TV stations, 11 with radio broadcasting stations and 2 in printed media.

All of 25 interviewed journalists have replied that they use paper copies as method of submission of their manuscripts to the media organisation with which they work.

To question: "Does your organisation have a Web page?" 16 journalists replied "No", 5 replied "Yes", while 4 of them said that they did not know. However, the analysis of the presence of BH MEDIA on Internet has shown that some of the data produced were incorrect.

The answers to the following questions have shown that only one of the journalists participates in making the Web page of his media house, and 2 journalists have their personal Web pages.

The answers to the questions: "do you personally use Internet to collect data", "where do you connect to Internet", "in your opinion, how reliable is the information obtained via Internet", "to what extent the information from Internet can be of use to journalists" and "in which situation does Internet prove most useful", are either mutually, or, in relation to answers to other questions from the poll, contradictory. The answers were given by arbitrarily checking the boxes with answers offered, a fact that could easily be arrived at by analysing the questionnaires as whole, and therefore they can not be taken as credible for the overall analysis of the situation.

According to the results of the poll, in their work the journalists mostly use direct observation (about 45%), then sources from papers and magazines (30%) and personal phone contacts (which the majority of the interviewed journalists deems most useful).

(Marija Putica M.Sc.)

How to Carry out Reform of Public Radio Broadcasting System

Second Phase of Issue of Permits Starts in November

The round table on the topic "Establishment of Public RTV Services in BH", held in Tuzla on 28 October, was not attended by the officials and editors of Radio TV of BH and RTV of Republic of Srpska, whom this topic concerned. Two journalists from these houses, who followed the work of the round table, said nothing. There was some debating about the status of cantonal and municipal RTV stations in the light of reconstruction of big networks.

The Head of the Department for Public Relations of IMC, Dieter Lorain, used the occasion to announce that the second phase of issue of long-term permits for use of wave lengths for periods of two to five years should start in November. In the first phase, permits were issued for the period of six months to all radio and TV stations, which met the anticipated requirements and duly submitted the applications. He also announced that a document about specific issues

concerning media would soon be created, in order that the basic objectives such as “media free of influence of politics” and transparent financing of media might be realised.

“In order for second phase to be successful, it is necessary to perform categorisation into private and public RTV stations, to provide fair competition in obtaining permits and start the process of competing for wave-lengths” said Lorain. In order to obtain long-term permits it is necessary to meet certain requirements such as: technical-legal preconditions, appropriate ethnic structure of employees, and quality program schedules. Instead of auction system (whoever pays more for the permit wins), the competition system (whoever meets the greater number of the anticipated criteria wins) will be applied.

N e w s

Festival of Radio-Stations of RS in Prijedor

At the Seventh Festival of Radio Stations of Republic of Srpska in Prijedor on 16 October, eleven achievements in radio journalism in the RS were proclaimed as the most successful in this year and awards solemnly presented.

In the category of informative-political broadcasts there were two first prizes awarded: to Radio Knezevo for “Knezevo News” and Radio Prijedor for informative program “Head News”. In the category of reportage, first prize was awarded for the story “Legend about Valley and Devil” by Milan Pilipovic from Radio Gradiska.

There were also three prizes awarded for commercials: to Radio Doboj, Free Radio from Prijedor and Radio Prnjavor. For free choice of special broadcast up to 30 minutes in length, the prize was awarded for the broadcast “Return” by Obrad Nikicevic and Ljiljana Koscica from Radio Srbac, which was produced within the framework of the project “Let us pull down the barriers, let us break the taboo”. This project was organised by SAFAX agency/Media Plan with 8 radio stations from the BH Federation and the Republic of Srpska taking part in it. The prize for commentary - “To Put a Stop to Black Marketing” was awarded to Mira Zgonjanin, editor of Radio Prijedor.

Slobodni radio Prijedor Went Silent

Slobodni radio Prijedor, which broadcasts its program from Lusci Palanka (BH Federation), ceased operating on 1 October this year because of unpaid salaries to employees. Namely, this radio station, the equipment for which was bought by emigrants originating from Prijedor, owes salaries to its employees to the amount of 34,000 KM, while the unpaid power consumption and phone bills amount to more than 15,000 KM. The employees from this house, primarily displaced persons and refugees, turned to many institutions for help. Unfortunately, the only assistance that arrived up to now was 1,000 KM, given by the municipality of Tuzla.

Belgrade Republika Presented in Sarajevo

“Hidden Pieces of History”, was the title of an exhibition on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of *Republika* (medium of civic self-liberation, oriented against frenzy of fear, hatred and violence from Belgrade) which, with the help of the Association of Independent Intellectuals CIRCLE 99, was organised on 21 October in Sarajevo. The purpose of the event was to present and explain the activities and role of democratic alternative movement in former Yugoslavia, in newly created states, and especially in Serbia, which, as it was emphasised, was offering strong resistance to evil, hate, violence, war and nationalistic hysteria.

“There are active participants, photographs, ideas of citizens, about whom and which the ordinary people know nothing, because the official media were purposely hiding the truth about this kind of resistance and struggle for human rights and democracy. This exhibition documents the story about these active participants who were defeated in their efforts to do something to prevent the terrible war that was coming close” said professor Gajo Sekulic, opening the exhibition.

Radio Stations Drvar and Mostar Continue Broadcasting

Director of IMC, Krister Thelin, passing a formal decision, gave approval to Radio station Drvar to re-start broadcasting on 22 October 1999. This decision came after the radio station accepted to introduce proposed changes in its program in accordance with its permit and IMC Code. These changes include: arranging regular joint interviews with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor in Drvar, continuing the practice of inviting guests from abroad, broadcasting programs dealing with the issue of return, providing possibility to link with BORAM network of RTV stations of BH, and broadcasting children's and other programs from other parts of BH.

Several days later, on 27 October, the Hrvatski Radio postaja Mostar, the broadcasting of which had been suspended on 15 October, was allowed to re-start broadcasting the program. This decision came after this radio station accepted to introduce proposed changes in its program: arrange interviews with BH officials coming from the ranks of all constitutive peoples, arranging regular guest shows of international representatives, and including additional accessible programs from other parts of BH.

Early October, IMC put a ban on broadcasting to Radio Drvar for a period of 90 days because this station had been broadcasting nationalistic songs. Several days later, the same thing happened to the Hrvatski radio postaja Mostar, because it had been repeatedly broadcasting the release of HVIDRA (Croatian War Veterans), which invited people to offer resistance to SFOR troops in the action of confiscation of illegal weapons and documentation in Mostar.

On the Threshold of a New Century



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Look with your eyes!



Think with your head!

Council of Media Plan Institute

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