

Balkan

HORIZONS

BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER ON DEMOCRACY AND CIVIL SOCIETY ISSUES

Issue nr. 4, Winter 1999

***Protection of environment
has to be a priority***

The current issue of *Balkan Horizons*, dedicated to the environmental problems of the region, was ready to go to press before the recent events in Kosovo.

The hostilities which overshadowed life in the region for several months led us to defer publication of the newsletter. Fortunately, military activity has now been suspended and some sort of peace, albeit fragile, has been established.

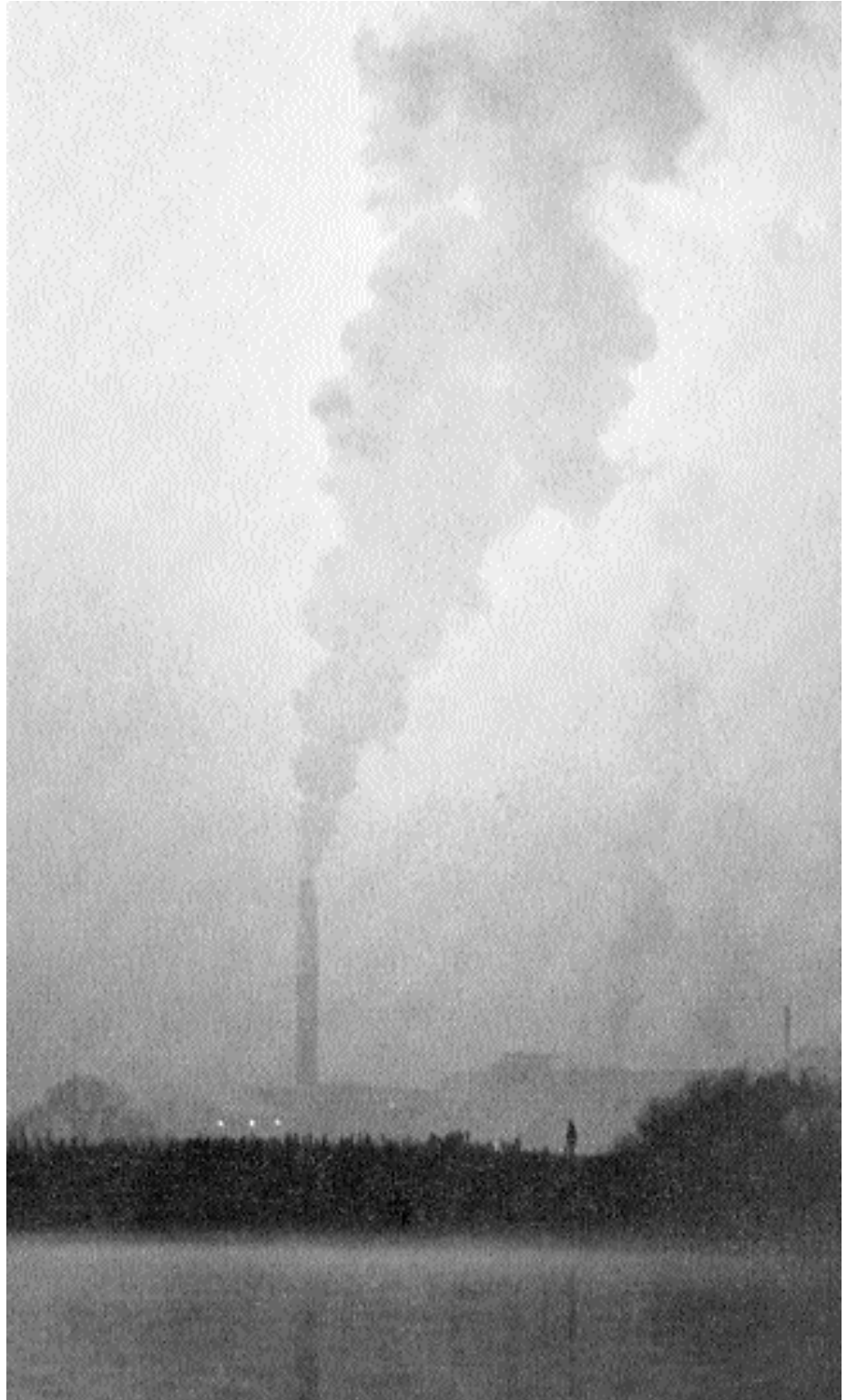
Balkan Horizons will devote one of its forthcoming issues to the recent events in Yugoslavia. It will endeavour to present a sober evaluation of the conflict by those who experienced it at first hand.

The material contained in the current issue is of inestimable value. It demonstrates, precisely and methodically, that the concepts of environmental protection and improvement are still almost unknown in many countries of the Balkans. Socialist-style development, with its exclusive emphasis on heavy industry, has led to the devastation of whole areas. Moreover, no measures have been taken to secure a decent quality of life for those living in the cities of the region.

The collapse of the socialist system has led to a state of sheer anarchy, in which all other values are ignored in the name of the «free market». Unauthorized building development has proliferated, whole forests have been felled and turned into firewood, those heavy industries which remain operate with virtually no control being imposed on the damage they do to the environment. State spending on environmental protection is almost non-existent, and those who care about the environment feel helpless to prevent the destruction which is occurring before their very eyes.

There can be no denying that these environmental problems are one of the many time bombs presently ticking away in the Balkan region. Can we afford simply to sit back and wait for the explosion?

Petros Papassarantopoulos



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Pollution, overpopulation and a dream: «Clean and cultural Tirana»

By FRROK CUPI

The cleaning and protection of a cultural environment in the capital was the focus of a meeting that the Albanian PM, Pandeli Majko, held recently with leaders of several ministries and representatives of the prefecture and town-hall of Tirana. PM, Majko, hailed the cooperation with the mayor of Tirana, Albert Brojka in sensitizing the central ministries and respective local bodies to cleaning the city of Tirana, whose population is expected to become soon half of that of Albania.

Addressing the participants in the meeting, Majko urged them to take urgent measures for the solution of problems having to do with the cleaning of Tirana, but also with the regulation of Tirana city planning.

The Albanian army will also contribute to the urgent cleaning of the capital, and 10 vehicles and water-pumps, as well as experienced foreign experts, will be put at their disposal, Minister Hajdaraga told in the meeting.

Measures against pollution

The town-hall of Tirana has decided to take tough measures against all the construction firms which pollute the environment. The last meeting in the town hall discussed the problem of cleaning and the emergency created right after the holidays.

According to an order issued for this purpose, all the construction companies should have taken measures to clean and tidy up the ground around their project, the spokesman reported.

The town-planning council will not examine the request for new sites to those companies which have finished their projects and have not cleaned the ground where they have constructed. This meeting also decided to send the respective proposals to the Ministry of Public Works and Transports for the

examination of licenses to those firms, which have violated the rules.

332 million lek is the investment fund of the National Agency for the Environment (NAE) for the year 1999, 80% of which is provided from foreign donations and 16% from the budget. According to NAE Economics Director Ermira Basha, the fund of the budget

From the recent data of the National Environment Agency, a constant pollution of the environment is noticed, due to the increase of the population in the capital, beyond the average of the Republic.

is predicted to be spent mainly on daily expenditures and NAE strengthening, and reviewing of the existing structure as well.

Foreign donators will accord 280 million lek from the total sum for realizations of the objectives and planned projects.

During 1999 an increase in number of the foreign projects and the participation of NAE different international convents is predicted.

The environment of Tirana faces increasing overpopulation day after day.

From the recent data of the National Environment Agency, a constant pollution of the environment is noticed, due to the increase of the population in the capital, beyond the average of the Republic.

Overpopulation in Tirana

According to the data, published by the Institute of statistics, INSTAT, the population of Tirana was 243.000 inhabitants in 1990, some 401.493 inhabitants in 1995 and 480.000 inhabitants in 1996. While in 2005, the population of Tirana is expected to be 600.000 inhabitants and in 2010 some 700.000 inhabitants.

According to the specialists, we should expect a rate of increase of 2.8 per

cent from 1996 to 2010.

As the current demographic situation is facing a period of deep modification, characterized by an intensive flux of migration towards the capital, the overpopulation has surpassed its capacity regarding housing, infrastructure, and other activities which create new jobs and make money. For these reasons, the specialists think that the development of the city is likely to be beyond the control of organization and planning authorities.

Air pollution in Durres

The Regional Environmental Agency in Durres has rased the alarm over the stocks of locally produced or imported pesticides which have not yet been removed from there and which are a great danger to the environment and the health of the people.

The chairman of the REA Ilir Qesja said that some 2500 kg of natrium arsenic are left at the mercy of fate in the storehouse of the former agro-technical enterprise of Fushe-Kruje.

Despite the efforts made, according to Qesja, still this problem is not being solved.

A concern in the environmental situation is the zone of Porto Romano in Durres. Although some 500 tons of active linden were removed from there some time ago, still the air pollution is considerable. Qesja added that amounts of expired pesticides are still out of control in some former enterprises of agriculture.

Toxic substances

The effects of these toxic substances have been noticed in the past year in many children and adults living in the zones close to the location of pesticides. Evading some 130000 tons of iron-nickel which have been stored for more than 10 years in one of the quays in Durres port has stirred up a quarrel between the directorate of the port and the Regional Agency of environment

(ARM).

The removal of this quantity of mineral is the major condition for the start of work on the reconstruction of quays estimated at \$23 million, a fund accorded by the World Bank.

Merita Brati, the ARM specialist, said that the removal of iron-nickel would be made possible by World Bank funds.

So far ARM has been tough towards the port directorate which has tried to remove a minimal quantity of low quality mineral to asphalt roads. It has also fined the directorate warning it that it is the agency which decides what to do with the cargo that can pollute the environment.

Cutting wood

The alternative proposed by the port on depositing the quantity of low-quality mineral in a pit near Rrashbull hill, 5km from Durres city, has got no official response from AKM.

Prefectures of Shkodra, Vlora, Durres, Elbasan, Korce, Gjirokaster and Fier will be included in a project on stable economic development, sources of the national agency of environment said to ATA.

The project involves construction of

The «Interborder Nature» association had found out in its study that some 263500 cubic meters of wood were burnt in just one year while the possibility of exploitation of forests per year is some 38000 cubic meters.

industrial complexes, block of flats, functional infrastructure which are going to be carried out bearing in mind the need for environmental protection.

Coordinating these projects in every city would help make evident possible damages to the environment.

The agency, representatives of UNDP, World Bank and local government had discussed a project on meeting the economic need now and in the future but with the aim of protecting the environment, Drita Date, agency specialist.

Cutting fire wood in the Korca district is seven times more than the annual safe ecological limit, according to a study.

The «Interborder Nature» association had found out in its study that some 263500 cubic meters of wood were burnt only in a year while the desirable limit is some 38000 cubic meters.

The study says that some 70 percent of wood in the forests has been cut within the last 25 years mainly for heating and raw material for the wood processing industry. There was also great damage to forests during '91-'92 and '97.

Safe mode of living

Over 100 hectares of forestry have been stripped in these years in the hills overlooking the city of Korca, 80 hectares in the habitant of Maliq and the national park of Dranova, while the forests of Voskopoja, Strolea, Liqenas and Sherez have been heavily damaged.

A survey conducted by the association for environmental protection showed that 90 percent of those interviewed thought that the law on forestry was not applied due to corruption, lack of other means for heating and lack of procedures on punishment against wrongdoers.

Work has started in the Albanian Ministry of Health on drafting the fifth agreement of cooperation between Albania and the World Health Organization (WHO).

The spokesman of this ministry, Artur Rada said to ATA that this document, which will be signed every second year, is being drafted by the WHO Regional Office in Albania and representatives of the Albanian Health Ministry. The attention is focused on three main fields: a safe mode of living, creating of a safe environment and proper services to prevent diseases, train the staff and for medical care.

Priorities of public Health

The agreement will determine the priorities in the field of public health for 1999-2000. During 1989-1991, the WHO Regional Office for Europe worked out a special program of intensive cooperation in the medical field named EUROHEALTH. In this context, in 1992, the WHO Regional Office was established in Albania and since then four agreements of cooperation have been signed between Albania and WHO.

In mid 1999, the fifth agreement is expected to be finalized with this organization.

Some 18 building companies, out of 44 which operate in the capital, have been fined recently for environmental pollution.

The Ministry of Public Works and Transport, after the controls exercised recently in the framework of the action «For a clean and cultural Tirana» fined 18 building companies and proposed to revoke the licences of 4 other building companies, which during their work have created problems for the environment, according to a statement by Tirane Prefecture.

In the framework of the action «For a clean and cultural Tirane», the Minister of the public Work and Transport, Ingrid Suli,

Some 18 building companies, out of 44 which operate in the capital, are fined recently for environmental pollution.

has issued an order for taking tough measures regarding the building companies, which pollute the environment with their work and create problems in the aqueduct and electric system.

Despite the cleaning, systemizing and repairing of Tirane infrastructure, one of the priorities of the workgroup which leads the action, has been the polluting and damaging of Tirana.

Damaging Streets

Several of Tirana's streets have lost their shape by being covered with mud. They have become unused as a result of the work the building companies do in the streets.

These firms have not encountered tough measures so far, despite the damage and pollution of environment in Tirana.

Tirana, the Albanian capital might be considered as a «hot environmental point» due to the fact of the high population concentration in this town.

The lack of a systematization program to respect the demands of the town population is one of the factors of the actual demographic situation.

There are no villages in Bosnia

By ZORAN MUTIC

«When elephants fight, it is grass underneath their feet that gets destroyed».

This ancient Chinese proverb was used as a motto for the book «Elephants and Grass», a combination of a war-time diary from Sarajevo and an ecological study, written by Reimond Rechnitzer, the late professor of Urban Planning at the Sarajevo Faculty of Architecture. Professor Rechnitzer left Sarajevo at the end of 1992, never to return, although his lectures at the Universities of Vienna

Professor Rechnitzer formed an ecological party, which, like most of those with a civic society in their program, lost ingloriously to the nationalist strategies.

and Prague, as well as his political activities abroad –right up to his death– were devoted to the future reconstruction of the post-war Bosnia. But at the time he was leaving Sarajevo –as his manuscript, published in many countries, from France and Japan to the Czech Republic and England shows– he was not so much disgusted as disappointed by the behaviour of the people. A truly Renaissance man, who in many ways foresaw some sort of catastrophe from the ways people treat nature, he still never allowed his science to turn into some sort of religious obscurantism -his attitude was in fact only a pessimistic acceptance of reality.

A ecological party

A couple of years before the war with the first multi-party elections (I refrain from calling them «the first democratic elections», since the people emerging from a non-

democratic regime had no political awareness to choose the best, but opted for the parties which they imagined would protect their national interests), together with several hundreds of enthusiasts, Professor Rechnitzer formed an ecological party, which, like most of those with a civic society in their program, lost ingloriously to the nationalist strategies.

However, from the onset, apart from the progressive political programs, this party had little in common with Green parties elsewhere in Europe, not to mention radical Greenpeace or British activists. On the other hand, we must confess that only in Slovenia, and partly in Croatia - otherwise the most developed republics of the former Yugoslavia - was there any strong consciousness about the importance of environmental protection.

Cancer diseases

Nevertheless, it seems that here, as elsewhere in the Balkans, everything has to be learned the hard way, through our own personal experiences. As if the causes and consequences have no common denominator, one has only to remember too many cases of people -in other aspects true adherents of «natural food» - who went gathering wild strawberries and mushrooms several weeks after the Chernobyl disaster, despite repeated warnings, and the consequent growth of all sorts of cancerous diseases.

The same people who would comment on the «ozone hole» after reading or hearing about it in the news, would spend hours in the summer sunbathing, and a couple of years before the war not only the statistics one read in the papers but also the growing number of skin cancer cases among one's acquaintances and relatives demonstrated that something was

wrong.

Less fertilizers, less potatoes

The slogan «Think globally-act locally» smelled of «elitism», and a local peasant actually had to witness with his own eyes his irrigation well going dry to realise that maybe those people, who warned him that cutting the forest on the hill above would affect the surroundings, were right. Professor Rechnitzer and his like tried to persuade farmers to use less fertilizers, despite the fact that this might mean less potatoes per acre. At the same time, they never criticized technology as such. They only stressed the fact that peasants have to be taught, just like everyone else, to make the best use of it. The village population once used to live harmoniously with the land and their behaviour corresponded to their habitat -their houses were built not only in accordance with the

Among the youth there was a rather wide and popular movement called «Gorani» (Highlanders), who on regular basis went foresting hills and valleys and the legislation was reformative and broad-minded.

climatological conditions, but also from the materials available from their surroundings, and they produced what was most appropriate. Far from being a romantic view of village life, this was based on evidence from previous experiences of many generations.

Socialism and ecology

But it would be wrong to assume that in socialism nobody worked on awareness raising in the field of ecology. School textbooks in natural history were full of endemic examples like Durmitor Lake with its

flora in Montenegro, Panchich's Juniper Tree from eastern Bosnia. Ohrid Lake trout, migratory birds from Hut's Marshes in Herzegovina, or the famous «human fish» (proteus anguinus), salamander with human skin colour from Slovenian cave Postojna.

Among the youth there was a rather wide and popular movement called «Gorani» (Highlanders), who on regular basis went foresting hills and valleys and the legislation was reformative and broad-minded. The protection of extinct species was enforced with such strictness that occasionally, one could hear stories of a Bosnian dark bear slaughtering half a flock of sheep - or even attacking a human - and peasants complaining that the law protects animals and not people. Montenegro was the first Yugoslav territory that was proclaimed an «ecological Republic», under the protection of UNESCO. Generally, the consciousness of man's need to preserve Nature was growing, especially in the years immediately before the last war.

Factories and plants

But it is also true that immediately after World War II, following the Soviet model, factories started being built all over the former Yugoslavia, even in the most unsuitable places. The famous formula applied was: «Industrialization plus Electrification equals Socialism». At that time hundreds of beautiful landscapes and probably thousands of valleys, forests and villages were mercilessly flooded by the overall construction of hydro-energetic plants. It is also true that until very recently factories were built that meant not only duplication of capacities, but also production of losses, simply in order to preserve the illusion of total employment, which in its turn meant that those few industries that did well in the internal or in the world market had to pay the price - often covering losses or

paying debts of the unsuccessful ones.

For example, every Republic had a conglomerate of steel mills, although their total production was less than two million tons of steel (whose quality was far below that of Swedish steel for instance)- in Japan they do not even consider opening a steel mill if it will produce less than four million tons per year.

Industrial giants

Several towns, like Bosnian Zenica with its 80.000 inhabitants, lived entirely on such projects termed at the time «Industrial giants». This also

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implied not only that just few of these could actually find a buyer, but the competition between the economies of individual Republics, depending heavily on such large producers, because, we should remember, as the entire Yugoslav system of «self-management», here we did not have a centrally directed economy as in other communist countries, but it was still far from being a market one. At the same time, industrialization on such a large scale implied - especially immediately after the World War II - paying less attention to by-products: remember that use of filters, preventive measures, awareness of the environmental destruction became a global issue only in the early seventies.

Urban culture

This also meant a huge influx of the rural population into town areas,

which, at least in the Yugoslav case, caused a dichotomy in the psychology of those arriving in towns. In a way, part of this population never accepted «urban culture»: instead of residing in apartment buildings they usually built small houses in the suburbs, bringing after them their relatives and friends and thus creating small clusters of their previous communities - which is not an unknown phenomenon (Little Italy and China Town in New York, etc.) - but more importantly, they stuck to their old habits, which, sometimes, were irreconcilable with their new surroundings.

Garbages into the streets

Even if they did accept living in apartment houses, they kept these habits - feasts and loud music, sometimes even domestic animals on the balconies, throwing garbage into the streets or on the stairways. At the same time, they also maintained their fields in the country, thus leading double lives and never really deciding where to belong definitely. From them cheap labour was recruited, but also the employees in the professions that the «townfolks» despised - policemen, for example, but often also the abundant membership of the omnipresent and omnipotent Party.

No wonder that members of the lumpenproletariat were also recruited from this category and no wonder that they played the most negative role in the last war, the one that the regular army avoided - the worst crimes and lootings were performed by them.

Well-off middle class

The first generation of their offspring born and brought up in the towns was merely starting to accept their milieu's principles and standards when the war broke out. At the same

time, the relatively small town population –in fact, those to whom communist ideology referred as the «petit bourgeoisie»– looked down upon them. The speakers of Serbo-Croat use the same word for «farmer» and «peasant», so both received a negative connotation, like when in the US one speaks of «rednecks».

However, there was yet another paradox. This process seemed to be reversible. As the standard of living rose, urbanization of the rural took place. The middle class, having become reasonably well-off, started building their small villas, «vicendicas» (week-end houses), in the country, and, paradoxically, it was finally the «townfolks» who protected the surroundings more than the village people.

At the same time, television, which - due to the generally better living standard - in the meantime had entered every household, educated peasants as well: sometimes the objective of education programs missed the point, since individuals tended to select from the information they received, and there were negative effects, like in the already mentioned extensive use of fertilizers.

The land cultivates us

When in the late seventies the first

One remembers nostalgically the long series of TV programs on ecology, organised, recorded on the spot, directed and led by the journalist Ni jaz Abadzich, one of the first Nature enthusiasts.

severe economic crisis broke out, the «townfolks» turned their hobbies -food production on a smaller scale - into a supplementary source of savings. Instead of the slogan used in the late forties by the communist youth brigades, «We build the country, the country builds us»

(meaning: educates us in return), one could apply a new one: «We cultivate the land, the land cultivates us».

But disregarding this piece of sarcasm, on the whole, before the war started, the overall picture did not look bleak. One remembers nostalgically the long series of TV programs on ecology, organised, recorded on the spot, directed and led by the journalist Ni jaz Abadzich, one of the first Nature enthusiasts. Severely criticising the abuse of the environment, he pointed simultaneously to the positive examples in local tradition, in the cultural heritage of all the Yugoslav peoples, in the religious legacy. He would insist on the moslem cult of water, with hundreds of fountains in every community; on the Orthodox ideal of accommodating places of worship to the landscape; on the Catholic use of the same landscapes to point out the beauty of architecture of their temples.

Garbages for four years

Fortunately Abadzich has returned from wherever he spent the war as a refugee, has formed an NGO dealing with ecology again and is working frantically to start his radio and TV programs again. And there will be a lot of work for the people like him. Unfortunately, the war has both stopped some processes and changed a lot in those under way. The general neglect has intensified -it can be understood if not justified.

After the re-integration of Serb-held Sarajevo suburb Grbavica, it was discovered that in most of the streets garbage had not been collected for almost four years. Luckily, there were no epidemics. Strong winds, unusual for Sarajevo due to its location (a narrow valley surrounded by high mountains), now blow daily and one can only attribute it to the devastation of the thousand-year-old forests on the town outskirts. With no gas or electricity during most of the four years, the town population had no other means to survive strong

Sarajevo winters, with temperatures falling to 30 degrees below zero. But the situation in Bosnia is the same elsewhere as well.

Licences to cut down trees

During the war in the Republic of Srpska soldiers spent months without salaries and their final pay mainly consisted in licences to cut down entire mountains of coniferous trees. These activities are slowly passing under the state control, but even today, when travelling from Sarajevo to Banjaluka, one can see

Bosnia might easily become Europe's garbage site. In the general chaos following the war and with almost no control over import companies (only in May 1999 was the law passed regulating custom taxes, and it will take months to be implemented).

hundreds of small, improvised saw-mills on the side of the road. Naturally, what has happened on such a large scale is beyond repair. Years will be needed for the most fundamental things in Bosnia to start functioning normally, and nobody sees foresting as one of the priority tasks.

At the same time, one should not forget the state of primitive capitalism here. The transformation process is slow and local level Mafia -always with powerful connections with the State authorities - determine what should be bought, sold, produced, imported, built, etc.

Nuclear waste

Recent rumours from Livno, a small town in Herzegovina, about nuclear waste from some western European countries being buried in one of the abandoned coal mines, were denied on the local level, but at the same time the federal inspectors were denied access to the site. Since even the Federal Government exists only on paper



Normalizing daily life in Bosnia

The office of Carlos Westendorp, the UN High Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina, using his prerogatives, intervened several times in some issues crucial for the normalization of daily life here.

Although some of the political parties have been accusing both him and the international community for turning Bosnia and Herzegovina into a protectorate, and although they have been denying this, the

general feeling among the majority of the population is that the de facto status should be definitely accepted as the de iure protectorate.

The prevalent opinion is: «Our politicians cannot agree on

→ (continued from page 7)

and cannot exercise its authority unless having support from the international community bodies - sometimes including the IPTF, the International Police - this means that Bosnia might easily become Europe's garbage site. In the general chaos following the war and with almost no control over import companies (only in May 1999 was the law passed regulating custom taxes, and it will take months to be implemented), some members of the Parliament have asked repeatedly: «There is hardly enough cattle-breeding for all the enormous amounts of meat on Bosnian markets. Is it possible that somebody is clandestinely importing 'mad cows' to Bosnia?». And, above all, some scientists, researchers and independent politicians both from Bosnia and abroad, whose credibility cannot be questioned, have recently started putting forward a horrid theory: the war in Bosnia maybe could not have been prevented, but it could have been stopped much earlier, probably after several months. It seems, according to this theory, that the entire population of Sarajevo, Mostar and several other towns took part in a morbid experiment: how long can an entire town population survive with no medical supplies and on minimum food, water and heating, and what sorts of diseases -physical and psychological - would affect them afterwards: it was all a part of a war laboratory, the exposure of thousands tests of endurance.

Apathy and pessimism

What is the general outlook today? One cannot even talk about pessimism, but rather about apathy. One of the consequences of the war has been unprecedented: there are no villages. Those that have not been burned down are still empty of their inhabitants. There are smaller settlements near towns, but what was usually called a village, sometimes several hours from nearest towns, has been abandoned. The majority of the Bosnian population now lives in several towns and the demographic picture has changed like nowhere else before in human history, not only regarding the ethnic profile, but the character of the town population as well.

Most of those who are returning -if they are returning at all - are older people, too tired of refugee life elsewhere, too old to worry about being threatened and too exhausted to care about anything but to die. And the question is whether this desertion will ever be amended. Who will return, for example, to a village less than fifteen kilometers from Mostar, underdeveloped even before the war and with only some twenty-thirty households?

No security, no schools

To breed sheep for what - there is no security, no communications, no market even if they managed to produce, let us say, milk or cheese, no schools for their children (if there are any children who return) and no ambulances for the sick -all

those commodities they have grown accustomed to in socialism, however minimal they might have seemed.

The legislation is of no big help either. There are other priorities.

Nevertheless, first rays of optimism have started appearing. Recently the Electro-distributing Company of Bosnia and Herzegovina, one of the rare ones that do function and do function well here, decided to build a huge dam, in fact an entire hydro-energy complex, near the small town of Konjic, halfway between Sarajevo and Mostar, on the mountainous river Naretva, thus flooding beautiful canyons leading this wild river to the Adriatic sea.

Revolt of the population

Then the local population revolted; the members of sport fishing associations, revived after the war, and ecological NGO'S started sending protest letters to the Federal Government in Sarajevo, and Mr. Abadzich and his supporters started covering this widely for the State TV. They have no chances of winning-electricity is a commodity that can always be sold for hard currency abroad, and especially here it is a part of the bargaining in the power struggle. But maybe the beauty is not only in winning. Appalling as things might seem in present-day Bosnia, it is consolatory that this awareness is wakening again.

anything, and the first chance they get to start a war again, they will use it. It is better to have foreign troops, with our own confined to their barracks, and foreigners deciding on crucial issues, since our own people are obviously unable to organise anything». So, what has Westendorp done? First, he has introduced a common currency.

The general feeling among the majority of the population is that the de facto status should be definitely accepted as the de iure protectorate.

The so-called «convertible mark» was fixed to the Deutsch mark on the exchange rate one to one and in several months its has pushed Bosnian dinars and Croatian kunas from the Federation and Yugoslav dinars from the Republic of Srpska. For more than a year it has been stable and if there are any fluctuations, they follow the German mark. In this respect, there has been no inflation at all.

On the other hand, since the German mark is still used simultaneously with the convertible mark and can be acquired anywhere at any time with no extra charges, this move actually not only destroyed the black market, but also made it possible for the convertible mark to be accepted in Austria, England, Germany and Italy as a relevant and trust-worthy currency, something which Croatian kunas and Yugoslav dinars will have to wait for long time. Next, Westendorp introduced common driving plates. It took some months, but now everybody travels freely all over Bosnia, and this has helped immensely the slowly growing number of refugees at least visiting their former places of living, if not their entire return. Before this, with

cyrillic letters on the cars from the Republic of Srpska and different Latin plates from predominantly Croat or Moslem parts of the Federation, the cars and their drivers were easily identifiable.

Now the six numbers and one neutral letter on the plate tell nobody –not even the policemen belonging to one or other of the entities– where the car is registered as only two central computers, one in Sarajevo and one in Banjaluka, possess the relevant data.

The third move was introduction of a common passport. Quarrels about the type of letter and the order in which it will be written whether the bearer comes from the Federation or the Republic of Srpska lasted for almost a year, until finally Westendorp cut them short by declaring the existing passports valid only until

Westendorp introduced common driving plates. It took some months, but now everybody travels freely all over Bosnia, and this has helped immensely the slowly growing number of refugees at least visiting their former places of living.

the summer of 1999. Whoever wanted to travel after that –and Bosnia is so small that in whichever direction one moves one will encounter a border within 150 kilometers– was obliged to possess a new passport.

Adding to this visa problems –Bosnians do not need visas for only some five or six states in the world– it was understandable that the politicians rushed to agree. Needless to say, this was immediately connected to another financial scandal: the new equipment for the printing of new, modern passports was bought

second-hand and it produces less than 600 passports per day. But as we have mentioned before, apathy governs here and very few people

As we have stressed–everybody is tired of politics and people just want to return to their homes and their jobs.

actually protested asking for the resignation of the Minister in charge. They probably do curse him and his family in the early morning hours, when they queue in front of the police buildings that issue passports.

More than 150.000 are currently waiting: Due to the war, there is almost no Bosnian family without relatives all over the world whom they want to visit. The final and probably the most important move for the normalization of life in Bosnia was the replacement of hard-liner Bosnian Serb politician, the radical Nikola Poplashen, from his position in the Republic of Srpska. This replacement was followed by tensions in this entity and foreign consulates in Banjaluka and offices of foreign NGO'S were attacked in other towns. But the situation slowly calmed down.

As we have stressed–everybody is tired of politics and people just want to return to their homes and their jobs. If losing Poplashen means imposing of the international community will and disrespect for the election results, it is bad and highly unprincipled. But if he was an obstacle –which due to his non-cooperativeness, arrogance and narrow-mindedness he surely was– not only to the normalization but to further foreign investments, then we could simply accept the fact of the protectorate.

The Danube is not blue anymore, and the Black Sea is red

By EMIL KUMARISHKY

If Johan Strauss had lived nowadays, he would not have composed a waltz about the beautiful «blue» Danube. Probably even at the end of the last century the Danube had not crossed Vienna with its blue waters, but now it is a muddy, greying-beige river, flowing down to its mouth with an enormous amount of poisons –mainly pesticides, insecticides and other chemicals, used in agriculture and stock-breeding, washed away by the rain in brooklets and rivers, running into the Danube.

Crossing eight countries

The Danube is 2850 km long, its water-supply basin is 817000 km², with more than 300 tributaries, 34 of which navigable. Starting from Germany, it flows through Austria, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Roumania, between Slovakia and Hungary, between Roumania and Bulgaria, between Ukraine and Roumania and runs into the Black Sea by a big delta. The Danube is connected to the rivers Rhine and Main by canals. It is obvious that nature endowed eight countries with this enormous wealth. But is this wealth esteemed by the people? Do they do their best to keep it as clean as God created it? Definitely not yet. The cleanness of the Danube is really an international problem and even if only one country along its basin pollutes the river, the efforts of the rest are useless.

Keeping Danube's cleanness

There is an International program and convention about keeping the Danube clean. There is also a system for early notification of pollution. But this is not enough, because in this system there is a «hole» and it is called Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia is not a member of the system of pollution notification and as it is not obliged to conform to it, there is a logical

suspicion that some of the biggest sources of pollution of the river come just from Yugoslavia.

Such was the case at the beginning of this winter when in the Bulgarian-Roumanian sector of the river large oily spots appeared repeatedly.

River pollution

As in Yugoslavia there are neither places for systematic observations nor anybody who can give information, the suspicion of both Bulgaria and Roumania naturally fell on Serbian Prahovo, where there is an installation for fuel loading and where probably the spills come from. No doubt this is the source of the river pollution in its lower course. As a

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result the two countries –Bulgaria and Romania (the delta is entirely in Roumanian territory) have to spend money and bear the consequences of Yugoslavia's irresponsibility in the upper part of the river.

Danube and Black Sea

Bulgaria has signed the Danube convention and soon it will be ratified. Bulgaria is an active member of the notification system. But the convention does not provide sanctions for the violators, so the Bulgarians and the Romanians did their best to neutralize the fuel oil spills' effect on the river and the environment.

It is logical when we speak about the Danube to mention the Black Sea as well. If the Danube is not blue any more, the Bulgarian Black Sea coast does not correspond to its name

either. It becomes bright red in some seasons – sea weeds, unknown until recently, come out red and the scientists explain this by the chemicals, flowing into the sea through the Danube and its tributaries.

Thousands of industrial polluters

In the Black sea (420843 km²) some rivers, the Danube, the Dnepr, the Dnestr, the Bug and others are exposed to thousands of industrial and agricultural polluters. It is known that because of the sea specificity (life is limited only to the upper 200m layer and below it there is a strong hydrogen sulphide concentration) the fish has never been inexhaustible. And the fish in the Black Sea, as far as its taste qualities are concerned, is not comparable to the fish in the Aegean, the Mediterranean and the oceans. Unfortunately today the Bulgarian Black Sea coast is something like a fish desert. No tunny, (so famous in the past) no mackerel, no turbot, no grey mullet and blue– fish for which people all over Europe came to spend their holidays in Bulgaria. The scad shoals are a rarity too.

Uranium mines depot

The Black Sea ecological cleanness is certainly quite another question but I could not help saying a few words about it. And finally one more problem which our neighbour Greece is strongly interested in – the pollution of the river Mesta. The main pollution source till now was named Eleshnitsa. It is an uranium mines depot, containing higher than average radiation background waste matter. Bulgaria is now receiving help from the European Union (the Phare program) and in 1999 this depot will be drained and covered. The mine Eleshnitsa itself is closed and in this way the river Mesta will enter Greece clean.

Trying to establish an ecological culture

(An interview with Bulgarian Minister of Environment Evdokia Manova, by PETKO BOCHAROV)

You have been a minister of the Ministry of Environment for 2 years. What are the achievements for that period and do you consider them a success?

There are many negative phenomena accumulated all through the years and we will need a lot of time to cope with the matter. Despite the problems I can definitely say that we have success and it is due to several reasons. First, the companies started accepting two very important European standards –109000 and 114000. These are standards by which the ecological culture of the

Every year we give credits to companies and free money subsidy to municipalities to solve their ecological problems. This we consider a success of the National fund of protecting the Environment.

company directors is estimated, standards by which is characterized and estimated the ecological state of the technologies and the production. Without observing these standards none of the companies can be allowed into the European market, so the companies are interested in observing them. At the moment we are working on a national system of certification, attesting the observation of ecological requirements.

Ecologically clean produces

There is enough evidence that people work on this matter –there was an exhibition of Intereco '99 in the National Palace of Culture in Sofia. At this exhibition many companies, producing ecologically clean products with ecologically clean technology, were represented.

This means that they have the necessary equipment and do not create risks to the natural environment. Generally these are companies from the food and detergent producing industries.

Ecological standards

Another problem we solved, and it is helping us to overcome the negatives of the past, is the requirement in the process of privatization for an ecological estimate of the enterprise to be made and the new owner is obliged to have two programs –the first will deal with the elimination of old pollution and the state undertakes it; the second program aims at helping the enterprise reach accordance with the ecological standards and it is the obligation of the new owner. The biggest enterprises were privatized in line with this scheme and we have positive examples –the copper plant in Pirdop and Sodi in Devnya. These are two big plants causing quite serious pollution. We follow the same scheme for the privatization of Neftochim, the steel plant Kremikovtsi, the lead-zinc plants. As far as the copper plant in Pirdop is concerned, I can say that the old department for sulfuric acid will be cleaned up; also the use of the «Blue lagoon» will be stopped (this is a lake with garbage, which will be covered).

Credits to companies

These are two very essential steps against pollution, which has been a threat to the people and the environment for decades. And there is another direction we are following: every year we give credits to companies and free money subsidy to municipalities to solve their ecological problems. This we consider a success of the National fund of protecting the Environment.

How do you get the money for this fund?

We get the money from several sources. Mainly from the ecological

taxes on fuel. Last year we got about 43 billion leva in this way. Apart from this we collect fines from people and companies breaking the law –about 1,5 billion for last year. Up to 1999 there were deductions from privatization money, but now this item has been stopped. We also get money from different administrative taxes, connected with ecological services. For this year we already have about 65 billion leva. Usually we use this money –about 97% of it– for ecological projects and investment. Last year we gave 58 credits to companies having ecological problems. I can mention the steel plant Kremikovtsi. We gave money for solving two essential problems –one of the contracts is connected with the ceasing of pollution from agglomeration production, and the second is about financing, together with Denmark, a new filter for the steel production.

Leather enterprises

Another example can be given, mentioning some of the biggest water polluters –the leather enterprises. Since the end of last year such a plant in Sevlievo, which was an exclusively strong polluter of the river Yantra, is working with a purification station, a result of the financial help of our ministry. Along with our efforts to help the plants in the solving of their problems, they themselves, willing to

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reach the ecological standards (this is not only a question of good will, but also an economic compulsion) strive to keep pace with the times, knowing that otherwise they cannot enter the European market. In many enterprises the problems have been

solved. For example the lead zinc plant near Plovdiv solved all questions connected with air pollution, which means that the soil around Plovdiv is not lead polluted anymore. The situation is similar in Kardjali but there the two plants have to solve the problem with cadmium. With the privatization of the copper plant the ecological problem in the region will be solved in up to 3 years.

Green book

A lot of serious ecological questions in Devnya lowland will be solved, but that will be done together with the privatization. At the end of February the Ministry of the Environment prepared the so called Green book, in which we sum up all the problems of the Environment and we can confirm the tendency, characteristic of recent years, that in Bulgaria the air and water pollution is decreasing.

You in fact started talking on the next question. I wanted to ask – What are you to solve in future?

At the moment the essential priority of the Ministry is not only concrete activity (although it is very important too), but the complete reform of the ecological legislation. We look hard in order to make our laws accord with European legislation. This is a prerequisite for our joining the European Community and as I said, for the competitiveness of our production, because the ecological standards are some of the most important indices to be controlled.

Protected territories

Last year we managed to prepare two laws and they were passed in the Parliament – the law about waste and the law about the protected territories– they are already a fact. We have also worked out other laws concerning definite problems in Environment protection. We have to put our ecological laws in accordance with 80 European requirements, which in the short term is quite a serious task and we have to create a new legislation which will guarantee our activity in future.

What is the state of our Black sea

coast?

The most essential problems there are two. First, there is the unlawful construction. As far as the environment is concerned, it is important to state that this unlawful construction is not carried out by the necessary equipment and it creates a lot of problems.

Lack of draining equipment

The landslides along the Black Sea coast have usually resulted because of the lack of draining equipment. The same is true of the mountains as well. The second problem is the everyday garbage pollution, I can mention the South Black Sea coast where during the summer an unthinkable pollution is typical. The same is valid for the mountains and the resorts, where the the garbage gathering is very unsatisfactory. Unfortunately we still cannot find a common language with the mayors because they obviously think that they can get deductions from the resorts and don't care about garbage gathering, which speaks quite badly of our country. I think that if we do not stop this vicious practice it will certainly affect tourism development as well.

Mayors' responsibilities

My colleague the Minister of Trade and Tourism Valentin Vassilev and I will soon have a meeting with the mayors to talk about their responsibilities in that direction. In this issue there are two elements: One is money, which we can give to the mayors, but the other is culture. We have to work very seriously and systematically and use sanctions as well. It is obvious that we cannot cope with this problem only by suggestion. There are a few clean towns where it is obvious that the people care about their birthplace.

Kozloduy's problem

It is not a secret that strong outside pressure is exerted on our country against the Atomic Power Station Kozloduy. A

disaster, like the one in Chernobil, in Kozloduy would be much more than an ordinary case of pollution. What is your attitude to the problem?

In our country there is a special organization engaged in Kozloduy safety and this is the committee for atomic power use for peace purposes. At the same time the Ministry of the Environment cannot be indifferent to radiation pollution. The National system for control of gamma rays background works together with us. In fact the gamma rays background is the indicator by which it can be judged if there is radiation pollution somewhere. This system is connected with the committee for atomic power use for peace purposes.

I would like to state that for these two years I have been in the ministry of the Environment there has not been even one exceeding of the gamma rays background, and I think that there are no grounds for anxiety as far as Kozloduy is concerned. Our system includes the territory of the whole country but Kozloduy has got its own measurement system in a 3 km radius around the atomic station.

A technical bond

We measure outside this 3 km zone and now we have announced a competition to have a technical bond between Kozloduy system and our system. In this way we would be able to measure in very short intervals, let's say every 10 minutes. Connecting the two systems we would have information about the situation in the 3 km zone and in the Atomic Power Station itself. We have asked Kozloduy Power Station to work out an estimate of the station's impact on the environment. This report will be presented to the public, there will be public discussions so that even the least doubts that information is being hidden should disappear.

There is ecological awareness, there are no ecological habits

By ANITA STOJANOVSKA-
BUHOVSKI

Mr. Toni Popovski, Minister for the Environment, believes that if the law for environmental protection is rigorously applied, then there is sufficient reason to close down as many as 80% of the industrial facilities in Macedonia.

A documentary film was shot about the ecological catastrophe in Veles. Babies born with genetic mutations. The experts in Veles suppose that such symptoms especially during the last six years, are the result of the huge pollution caused by the smeltery.

Due to late submission of the ecological and technological documentation, which is often the case with small and industrial facilities, these facilities could be penalized in the same manner as if causing an ecological accident. Out of the twenty-one million of cubic meters of water that annually come out from the non-ferrous metal works, only fifty three percent are filtered.

Explosive gases

The dumping grounds in Macedonia are not well designed, so that the dissolving components are not drained, and there is danger of creating explosive gases on the site itself. The dumping grounds in Tetovo, Berovo, Mavrovo, Ohrid, etc. represent a danger to the environment and to the underground waters.

The epidemiological data indicate that the population living around the Metallurgic and Chemical Combine «Zietovo», ie, the popular smeltery for lead and zinc in Veles has above-average of lead in the blood. A documentary film was shot about the ecological catastrophe in Veles. Babies born with genetic mutations. The experts in Veles suppose that such symptoms especially during the last six years, are the result of the huge pollution caused by the smeltery. The consequences of ignoring the configuration of the terrain, especially of the specificity of the climate phrase of the so-called rose of winds, seen from today's aspect, by locating the smeltery in downtown Veles, are and will be felt by many generations. Ms. Marija Jordanova, a local gynecologist, says that the number of spontaneous abortions, and pathological pregnancies has been very high recently.

Veles is a dying city

«People say that Veles is a dying town. We are all aware of the situation, with regard to the pollution of our town. The citizens themselves say that there is no more life here.

The appearance of deformed babies i.e. babies born with genetic mutations has been very frequent in recent years. We suppose that these appearances are a result of the overall pollution of Veles. Last year, for example, there were three cases of babies born with so-called frog heads, i.e. born without the skull», explains Dr. Jordanova. Dr. Jordanova further mentions the worrisome fact that the smeltery

has been polluting the town for a longer period, since the 1970's.

«So far, nothing has been done with regard to protection. Even in the period when the town was economically booming the protection of the environment was never on the agenda. Now, the concentrations of the polluting agents, that destroy the human body in an insidious manner, are on the increase», explains Dr. Jordanova.

Circulatory diseases

A high mortality rate is also found in Valandovo, Demir Hisar, Bitola... Circulatory diseases cause fifty one percent of the mortality, followed by malign neoplasm and respiratory disorders.

According to data from the National plan for the protection of the environment of Macedonia (NEAP), the main source of pollution is represented by the industrial facilities that emit gases containing sulfur, carbon and nitrogen.

Several metallurgical combines pollute the environment with heavy metals and it is estimated that the

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output of harmful gases by the Skopje Iron Works, the Factory for Steel and Nickel FENIMAK in

Kavadarci, the Veles Smeltery and by others amounts to 10,000 tons of sulfur dioxide per year.

The poor quality of air in Skopje is the result of various mobile and stationary polluters. The maximum daily concentration of smoke surpasses the allowed concentration by 123 times, and of sulfur by 35 times.

Heavy metals in Vardar

In winter, the pollution is even greater due to the use of fuels with high percentage of sulfur and the effects of the temperature differences. Discharging sulfuric acid into the Vardar River was on several occasions the cause of the death of the fish in the river, and experts from the Biology Department at the Faculty for Natural Sciences and Mathematics in Skopje even registered the presence of heavy metals in the mud layers of the Vardar River. The industrial facilities discharge more and more non-filtered effluents into the rivers, causing serious consequences for the ecology of some river beds.

In winter, the pollution is even greater due to the use of fuels with high percentage of sulfur and the effects of the temperature differences. Discharging sulfuric acid into the Vardar River was on several occasions the cause of the death of the fish in the river.

For example, chrome, iron, cadmium, lead and zinc produce a very harmful impact on our biggest river, Vardar, more precisely starting at its legunovec and Veles locations. The quality of the water is low because of the nitrates and solid particles while pollution with

heavy metals is a serious problem. «If concrete action is not taken, the Vardar River will rapidly be transformed into a main sewer. Nobody is indifferent to the disastrous condition of the biggest river in Macedonia.

Therefore the Ministry for Environment will quickly commence the realization of the project for construction of filtering stations. The problem of the Vardar River and its tributaries is seventy percent of all ecological problems in this country.

Filtering stations

According to the analyses, the recovery of the Vardar River needs about 700 mil DM. Filtering stations should be constructed in at least twelve towns. If we can realize this project with the assistance of Greece, as planned, then we shall solve seventy percent of the ecological problems in this country», says Minister Popovski.

In the mining industry, the refuse from the flotation dumping grounds is a real threat to the underground waters, with whole villages sometimes being flooded by the slag.

Two accidents

A fine example of this is the gold and copper mine Budim in Radov. In a period of just six months, there were two accidents in the sewage system of that mine whereby the nearby village of Topolnica was flooded each time. The damage incurred is reported to be enormous.

According to Mr. Toni Popovski, Minister for the Environment, the bad economic situation in the country is a reflection of the low level of economic development. Countries, that are economically strong, invest in a healthy

environment.

Unfortunately, continues the Minister, this is not the case with us. However, Mr. Popovski says that with regard to the problematic sites, the Ministry for the Environment will inform the community, and an appropriate financial assistance shall be requested for the most critical regions. At this moment, this represents the fundamental operational doctrine of the Ministry of the Environment.

It is a matter of habit

«It is usually said that the awareness of our population with regard to environmental issues is rather low, but it is not so. People in Macedonia are very well informed about the significance of a clean environment.

I even think that there is no need for some intensive ecological campaign. Greater discipline is just necessary, especially for the city refuse.

It is a matter of habit. Finally, the attitude towards the garbage issue is not well organized thus leading to a carefree behaviour by the citizens.

In any case, I am convinced that our people do know how to appreciate and value nature. It is also the impression of the donors.

The non-governmental organizations have also made a great contribution. It is the NGO's that have imposed themselves in an exceptional manner in the whole civil sphere and have conducted aggressive publicity campaigns and thus made the environmental principles closer to the Macedonian public.

Every initiative related to the environment is of interest to every citizen. If we had better standards and conditions of living, I believe that we would behave better and in a more responsible manner» explains Minister Popovski.

Between Taiwan and Reality

By BOBI HRISTOV

Out of the promises for a penetration into Europe as the Taiwanese miracle of the Balkans for the time being there remains only the catapult of the diplomatic exhibitionism of the authorities in recognizing Taipei in the breaking news of the foreign media. When at the end of last year, the new Government converted its election promises into a concrete program for the first 100 days in office, promising millions of US dollars for economic reconstruction and development, the majority of the voters started to look forward to the realization of their, small million of wishes skillfully detected in the promises of the new Government.

Amnesty for mayors

However, many people recognized their own initial disappointment already in the first moves of the new Government at the start of this year, as well as in the series of actions that followed soon.

First, the quickly conceived and not thoroughly elaborated amnesty for the sentenced mayors of Tetovo and Gostivar. Alajdin Demiri and Rufi Osmani, otherwise members of the now ruling DPA party, and afterwards, also the secret recognition of Taiwan, disturbed not only the opposition parties and their supporters but also the great majority of those who had previously voted for the winning Coalition for Changes.

Many intellectuals, prominent experts in criminal and interational law, had serious objections to the arrest of the

For being recognized by Macedonia, Taiwan promised an economic assistance worth several hundreds million of US dollars, according to the information given by the negotiators.

two mayors belonging to the Albanian minority, thereby demanding the renewal of the legal procedures. However, they had also similar reactions to the amnesty that was initiated by the ruling coalition VMRO-DPMNE - DA – DPA in mid January, and was realized on 6 February when Demiri and Osmani were released. Not

because they did not agree with their release, but rather because of the manner in which the whole action took place.

Reduction of prison sentences

The amnesty for the mayors was followed by a general reduction of prison sentences for about 1000 prisoners, among whom were also hard core criminals, drug dealers and killers. But using such unskillful tactics, even contrary to the wishes of the mayors for a repeated legal action, the Government laid the groundwork for new doubts in the majority of the Macedonians, sometimes oversensitive even at small positive steps forward towards the so-called Albanian requests, that it has really made a great step forward in the relaxation of the inter-ethnic relations.

In the commotion of dissonant debates on the amnesty, the new Government made the greatest surprise yet –on 27 January Macedonia recognized Taiwan. The news about this diplomatic scandal reached the public through the foreign news agencies together with the stories of the secret trips– of the Foreign Minister Aleksandar Dimitrov and his party patron, Tupurkovski to Taipei, accompanied by the Taiwanese delegation with which previously in Macedonia, secretly under the auspices of the state villas in Ohrid, the details were arranged about this diplomatic and commercial act.

Hundreds million of dollars

The only arguments with regard to this move of the Government that made very angry the People's Republic of China, one of the first superpowers to recognize Macedonia under its constitutional name, were of an economic nature. For being recognized by Macedonia, Taiwan promised an economic assistance worth several hundred million US dollars, according to the information given by the negotiators.

This so-called Taiwanese affair solved the mystery of the election promise of a billion US dollars, made by Tupurkovski to be used for the reconstruction of Macedonia. However, not even 1/10 of this billion dollars have been brought into Macedonia as of today. No one

now believes the statements that Macedonia will be a Taiwanese miracle in the Balkans. This country has started to feel the first negative effects of that spectacular experiment of the new Macedonian diplomatic virtuosi –the People's Republic of China suspended its diplomatic relations with Macedonia, while at the same time vetoing at the

Euphoric personnel changes in all structures in the Government that have affected even the doormen in the state administration announcements for revision of the employment of the civil servants, the series of blunder statements of some ministers.

UN the presence of the preventive UN forces on the Macedonian northern state border with Federal Republic of Yugoslavia that is still unofficially demarcated.

If we take also into consideration the euphoric personnel changes in all structures in the Government that have affected even the doormen in the state administration announcements for revision of the employment of the civil servants, the series of blundering statements of some ministers in charge of various departments calling for a revision of our history, language and alphabet..., or to put it briefly, hundred days, wasted on the satisfactions of personal interests and for healing up some personal historical frustrations, it seems that the promises for changes that would be felt by every citizen –remained only promises.

Taiwanese dragons

In February this year, an exhibition was opened in Paris, entitled: «From the Medieval Treasures of Macedonia». This exhibition included the originals of the most significant works of art of medieval wall painting in Macedonia. It stimulated great interest and long lines of visitors before the Paris museum, waiting to see it. It is obvious that Macedonians still produce excitement with their rich historic heritage. Taiwanese dragons do not prosper in this climate of ours.

Violating EU legislation

By **MICHALIS TREMOPOULOS***

Nature has been generous to Greece: standing at the crossroads of three continents, she combines in a unique manner natural features of Europe, Asia and Africa. Six thousand different species of plant have survived here down the centuries – from the fir trees of the lofty Pindus mountains to the palms of Crete. Many of the rare or endemic animal and plant species find safe refuge on the country's innumerable islands, which, together with the unrivalled shore of the mainland, make up a total coastline of no fewer than 16,000 kilometres. The

The decline of the urban environment, atmospheric pollution, destruction of open and green spaces both within and outside the cities, the production and – often uncontrolled – disposal of solid and liquid waste.

country has inherited an irreplaceable natural wealth which unfortunately over the last few decades has begun to diminish, to be destroyed, to fall prey to a frenzy of development.

Urban and industrial environment

The mass emigration from countryside to town which characterized the first few post-war

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decades led to massive expansion of the main urban centres, particularly Athens and Thessaloniki. The decline of the urban environment, atmospheric pollution, destruction of open and green spaces both within and outside the cities, the production and – often uncontrolled – disposal of solid and liquid waste, the management of urban waste, unplanned and unauthorized building, the domination of the cities by the private car and the ensuing traffic congestion – these are problems which have now assumed such vast dimensions that they are not susceptible to any immediate and painless solution.

Houses without building permit

Sprawling housing development, often constructed without building permit – especially in coastal resort areas – goes hand in hand with a growing number of forest fires, unauthorized construction in green areas and pollution. Already 60% of the Greek population reside along the country's coastline, along with 90% of tourist facilities and 70% of the country's industry. This concentration of activity has dire consequences for the coastal environment.

Greece compares poorly with other EU countries, especially in the quality of the urban and industrial environment. Greece ranks first in per capita consumption of cement but last in energy saving.

We emit most carbon dioxide per kilowatt/hour of energy produced and lag behind the rest of Europe in developing rail transport. Athens

and Thessaloniki have fewer green spaces than other European cities, while the smog which afflicts Attica has become notorious.

Agriculture and nature

Farming is growing ever more

Greece has ten national special reserves, rich in flora and fauna but abandoned to their own fate. There are still some 400 registered wetlands, with a total surface area of more than half a million acres.

intensive and chemical-dependent. Every year the consumption of chemical fertilizers increases by 2%, that of chemical pesticides by 3-4%. Greek farmers squander more water than their European counterparts and the country ranks lowest in the EU in terms of organic farming. There are already worrying signs of once fertile land becoming barren, although not so serious as in Spain and Portugal.

Virgin areas «developed»

The state of affairs is less gloomy in the uncultivated countryside, but here too there are alarming omens; roads being built everywhere, eco-systems disrupted, virgin areas 'developed'. Greece has ten national special reserves, rich in flora and fauna but abandoned to their own fate. There are still some 400 registered wetlands, with a total surface area of more than half a million acres. Eleven of these are actually protected by the International Ramsar Convention,

and some 300 habitats are incorporated in the Natura 2000 European protection network. The objective of an environmental policy for these wetlands should be to establish their exact boundaries, to secure their preservation in extent and quality and their harmonious coexistence with human activities, for without the wetlands there can be no water, and no agriculture. Another goal of environmental policy should be to curb destructive methods of live-stock breeding and fishing.

Legislative protection of the environment

The country's environmental protection policy has to some extent been delegated by the Ministry of the Environment to the 52 elected prefectural authorities, although substantial powers are also vested in the 16 government-appointed regional executives. Supervision of environmental policy is unsatisfactory since there is no comprehensive and rigorous system of control within the regional

Since 1990 Greek legislation has stipulated the need for Environmental Impact Studies to be conducted and published before work commences on any project or activity.

authorities or other agencies involved.

The protection of the natural and man-made environment is enshrined in the Greek Constitution of 1975. When Greece became a full member of the EEC in 1981 a series of measures and important directives concerning the protection of the environment were incorporated in Greek legislation. Since 1986, moreover, a comprehensive Environmental Protection Act has been in force.

In the Maastricht Treaty of February 1992 the EU made the promotion of sustainable development one of its principal objectives; in 1993 the need to protect the environment was made a key consideration in the sectors of industry, energy, transport, agriculture and tourism, environmental protection being regarded as a necessary constituent of economic efficiency.

Sustainable development

The Greek Presidency of the EU in the first half of 1994 embodied these principles in the measures it sponsored to promote sustainable development – measures which particularly concerned the Mediterranean south and applied to the coastal areas, the marine environment, the islands and alternative tourism. Since 1990 Greek legislation has stipulated the need for Environmental Impact Studies to be conducted and published before work commences on any project or activity. Work still needs to be done on raising the level of these studies and securing the genuine participation and provision of information to citizens and agencies, as well as making sure that the study recommendations are implemented. At the same time every citizen has the right, when he perceives any threat to the environment, to bring the matter to the Greek or European courts, either by means of a personal or collective suit.

Violation of legislation

Of particular importance are the decisions and sensitivity of the country's supreme court of appeal, the Council of State. Certain cases concerning the environment have even gone to the Court of Justice of the European Communities.

Most of the complaints have concerned the management of urban and industrial waste, the existence or adequacy of environmental impact studies or the failure to provide adequate protection for natural habitats. Over the last five years, however,

cases of violation of EU environmental legislation have fallen to one fifth their original level. Complaints on environmental matters are also submitted now to the new ombudsman.

Prospects

Pollution acknowledges no frontiers. This is why Greece must participate and cooperate on the Mediterranean and Balkan level in attempts to combat cross-border pollution and especially nuclear contamination, to which Greece has always expressed fierce opposition. The Ministry of the Environment,

Every citizen has the right, when he perceives any threat to the environment, to bring the matter to the Greek or European courts, either by means of a personal or collective suit.

Planning and Public Works maintains that Greece has the potential to become the 'Land of the Sun', Europe's treasury of both cultural history and natural beauty. It is apparent now to all that the future will not wait. The environment cannot be made to take second place to narrow economic considerations. More and more people are becoming aware that sustainable development will require major changes in the goals and plans of the productive sector, in patterns of consumer behaviour, in ordinary people's conduct and way of life. For many of them, this dawning awareness is their first acquaintance with issues and problems in the field of ecology.

Planting trees in Moldova is a national celebration

By IGOR GUZUN

The problems of environment in Chisinau don't mean only laws of life but political disputes as well.

From May 1998 the Government of Republic of Moldova includes one more Ministry the Ministry of Environment.

According to some Moldavian experts from the mass-media field, the articles, which raise the subjects of environment in Moldova in the majority of cases are being reduced to interviews with the official people while the main factors and the really important problems from this field are mostly neglected by authorities.

The Convention of Archus

Trying to overcome this situation, we'll present here the really conclusive provocations. In April, this year while more than one hundred leaders of Environment organizations from 33 countries all over the world as well the representatives from informal

According to some Moldavian experts from the mass-media field, the articles, which raise the subjects of environment in Moldova in the majority of cases are being reduced to interviews.

Environment organizations from the Republic of Moldova were taking part in the Pan-European Conference of Environment ONG-S in Chisinau, our authorities expressed anxiety concerning the regional ecological disaster, which may be launched by NATO air attacks against the Yugoslavian Chemical industry. Chisinau, the capital of Moldova,

was chosen for this Pan-European reunion because the Republic of Moldova was the first country in the World to ratify the Convention of Archus, signed in June 1996 in Denmark by 39 states of the world.

A cloud of steams

Now, a cloud of toxic fumes, compounded of substances which cause different forms of cancer to people and animals if they are exposed too long to it, is spreading to the south-west of Europe, on the geographical coordinates of Republic of Moldova. The cloud was formed above the territory of Yugoslavia after the petrochemical factory from Pancevo was bombed by NATO.

This new ecologic danger coincided exactly with the 13th anniversary of the Cernobil's disaster, when on the 26 of April 1986 a grave explosion took place at the Nuclear Centre in the Ukraine and its direct results for Moldova are estimated as many more demises and increases in a large number of diseases that the population of Moldova is suffering.

Factories don't work

At the same time there is one fact which make us somewhat happier: the big factories from Chisinau which were in the former Soviet Union of great importance don't work any more, their waste products don't threaten the ecological balance any more in our country.

Nor does agriculture use the large range of necessary chemicals for better harvests, owing to lack of funds, with the result that the ponds and rivers in Moldova are much clearer at the moment. We should now mention two more environmental problems.

Every fourth car in Moldova emits above-average toxic fumes

according to the most recent investigations of the Environment State Department.

The Emission of pollutant substances by the numerous petrol stations according to the Official data amounted to 36,7 tons last year, which is 10% less than in 1995.

The big factories from Chisinau which were in the former Soviet Union of great importance don't work any more, their waste producys don't threaten the ecological balance any more in our country.

Some other official statistics mention the fact of a sharp increase in the cases of illegal felling of trees.

Felling of forests

Many localities from the Republic felt what it means to cut down the forests: in 1999 there occurred the most disastrous landslides in Moldova. And it is in the past times, when Moldova's authorities used to present exaggerated data to the Central authorities of the former USSR about the situation formed after such landslides, in order to get necessary sum of many for reconstruction; now nobody can help the families, which remained without any shelter.

By the way, before achieving Independence, Moldova was one of the most prosperous former Soviet Republics but nowadays, it seems to be the most poor state in Europe. This was the most serious reason which brought to the Moldavian Communists the victory at the election of Parliament in 1998.

In the new Government there are some deputies who assumed the

responsibility of being the ecological leaders in Moldova.

«One tree for our life»

Environmental questions have frequently been discussed by politicians, members of Parliament during the last eight years of Independence. But at the same time politicians can't manage to stop cutting down the forests, they didn't adopt a law on waste, a law on goods circulation, law on dangerous substances, the custom's law concerning the protection of environment.

Anyway the Republic of Moldova celebrates the National Day of Creation of Green Spaces «One tree for our life» on the first week-end of April. This tradition was initiated by the first president of Moldova, Mircea Snegur and it is continued by the current president Petru Lucinschi.

In a way the position of Moldovan authorities concerning environmental problems was formulated in P. Lucinschi's message to the participants of the Pan-European Conference which took place in

Chisinau. «We are completely sure that more people are taking part in the adoption of different decisions and practical activities for protection

It is quite remarkable that on the first Saturday of April, citizens of the Republic of Moldova planted hundreds of thousands of trees. «We will do the same every year. Planting trees becomes our national celebration», declared the head of State.

of the environment and the better success of ecological policy».

Families without shelter

The head of state has mentioned that «the end of this century puts in front of us more grave problems» including landslides which again affected our country this spring, «Many families remained without any shelter. The National economy suffered considerable losses».

On the other side, it is quite remarkable that on the first Saturday

of April, citizens of Republic of Moldova planted hundreds of thousands of trees. «We will do the same every year. Planting trees becomes our national celebration», declared the head of State.

An International Centre

The final declaration of the Environment Conference from Chisinau paid special attention to the necessity of creating an International Centre for supervising the fulfillment of the decisions of the Aarhus convention with its Centre, in Bruxelles. In conclusion –some times the grave problems of environment are not in the list of priority problems of Moldavian society.

Some other troubles are the cares of the day at the moment: poverty, health, the negative consequences of the Russian crisis on the economy of Moldova. Most of the population don't get much food to eat, nor the means to eat: 98% of the population is suffering from dental and digestive diseases.

REFERENDUMS in Chisinau

By IGOR GUZUN

The Vote of one man sentenced to death gave birth to a new Government. The most important political event in Moldova at the beginning of 1999 was, for sure, the local elections, programmed on the 23rd of May, –the first elections which will take part in the conditions of the new territorial– administrative divisions. At the same time (on the 23 of April), according to the proposal of the head of State P. Lucinschi, the voters will participate in a consultative referendum. In this way the head of the country tries to change the system in the Republic of

Moldova: from a Parliamentary Republic to a Presidential Republic.

The main problem of referendum is caused by the political evaluation in Chisinau, especially after the crisis when the Parliament of Moldova wasn't able to chose a new Prime Minister between the 1st of February and the 12th of March. Now the Cabinet of the Ministers from Moldova is led by the 39 year-old economist-reformer Ion Sturza, the youngest prime-minister of independent Moldova. Ion Sturza is the fifth prime-minister during the last eight-year history of Moldova, after M. Druc (1990-1991), V. Muravschi (1991-1992),

A. Sangheli (1992-1996), I. Ciubuc (1997-1999). The most interesting thing is that the new Government was approved by the Parliament only after the second vote, after the Constitutional Court declared that, those 51 votes don't represent the majority out of 101 members of the Parliament. While voting for the second time the decisive 52nd vote, was given by a prisoner Illie Illacu, the member of the Parliament, who is still in prison, kept by the illegal authorities of Transnistria.

Romanian resources for environment are 100 times lower than African

By VIOREL CHIFU

The recent floods and landslides in Romania demonstrated the drastic revenge of nature against the recklessness and carelessness shown regarding the entire environment.

The main pollution factors in Bucharest, noxious vapors emitted by the 800.000 cars running currently in Bucharest, dust discharged into the atmosphere by industrial facilities and the miasmas of many tons of garbage which overpower us, are risk factors which may push us to a desperate situation.

Unbreathable air

Notwithstanding this, the Capital of Romania is one of the European cities with an average level of pollution. By chance, Bucharest is situated in a flat region, with strong winds. This is the factor which keeps away the moment when the air will become unbreathable.

The Ministry of Waters, Forest and Environment Protection is currently trying to play its part. The officials of various Ministry Departments, acting in

The percent of 0,1% from the Gross Domestic Product is small enough to be alarming, but we hope that, after the budget correction in June, we will receive supplemental financial resources to continue the works with the view to protect us against flood.

environmental protection matters, needed ten years to understand that the information flow is broken. The Romanian government passed in the

recent past a decision, in force, modifying the rules of management and the procedures of this Ministry, so forgotten in the past: water, air and forest become processed as a unique entity, and not as individual elements.

Lacking resources

The Ministry in charge was connected to the Internet no sooner than the month of December last year. Lacking financial resources, the establishment of the three new Departments –strategy, politics & legislation, orientation, implementation & authorisation, data processing– will not make a rapid improvement in the Ministry activity.

Mr. Vasile Lupu, the head of the General Department for Development and Resources of the Environment Ministry declared: «Our Minister is currently trying to provide us financial resources. We need 186 millions USD but the allotted budget for our Ministry is 44 millions USD, which means four times less than we need.

0,1% percent

The percent of 0,1% from the Gross Domestic Product is small enough to be alarming, but we hope that, after the budget correction in June, we will receive supplemental financial resources to continue the works with the view to protect us against flood. In some countries of Africa, about 8-10% from the Gross Domestic Product are allotted for environmental protection».

In the past two years, the damage caused by floods was five times

higher than the resources allotted this year in environmental protection. It is obvious that these resources will protect us against the unleashed forces of the nature, whose equilibrium we have disturbed.

Water Supply in Danger

Specialists inform us that the troubles

Noxious vapors emitted by the 800.000 cars running currently in Bucharest, dust discharged into the atmosphere by industrial facilities and the miasmas of many tons of garbage which overpower us, are risk factors.

occurring in the past year in the Bucharest water supply could return. Failure to provide financial resources needed to finalize the works started before the Romanian Revolution at the water accumulation of OGREZENI could lead to shutting off of the Bucharest water provider caused by ice.

Mr. Vasile Lupu, Director, told us that the Council of Europe will credit us with 20 million Euro (more than 20 million USD). From this credit line, more than 10 million USD will be directed to the lakes of OGREZENI, SURDUC, RUNCU, MIHAILENI and RASTOLITA, 6.4 million USD will be provided for forest programs and 1.5 million USD will be directed to the environment.

Air pollution

These financial resources will support programs involving purchasing of laboratories designed

for the integral follow up of the environment factors and the pollution control in 10 Romanian Districts, in the polluted cities, where, for sure, Bucharest will be included.

The Environment Protection Agency of Bucharest is trying hard to stop environment law infringement, starting with the air pollution and ending with the increasing quantities of waste. The Agency possesses only five old devices for air analysis, insufficient in number and of outdated technology.

In 1998, inspectors of the Agency effectuated 981 controls, about 3 each day, and from January 1st this year we received almost 100 claims.

Penalties Exceeding 50.000 USD did not Stop Pollution

Mr. Adrian Corda, chief inspector of the Agency told us: «Some people file claims against companies or private persons who cut down trees, make noise, smoke or generate pollution by burning fires. Frequently we receive claims regarding illegal garages built on green space. Somebody reported her neighbor for developing a sunflower seed roasting industry in the next door apartment. When our inspector

started the investigation the woman canceled her claim being afraid of her neighbor's revenge. We involve ourselves only in horizontal pollution. Generally speaking, noises and hygiene crimes from the residential neighborhoods have to be reported to the Public Health Department».

In the past year, penalties issued by the Environment Protection Agency failed to curb pollution. From the 50.000 USD penalties 32.000 USD were imposed on companies and the balance against private persons. The private companies were penalized with 25.000 USD while the state owned companies were penalized with only 6.500 USD. The over sea based companies become an important challenger of the Romanian based companies in this penalties «race» trying to cancel the maxim «The West was civilized with penalties».

Agency Accuses Justice Exonerates

Right in the penalized companies top in the past year we find ALSTOM GENERAL TURBO SA, with a penalty of about 3.300 USD for air pollution with textolite glass powder. The next company is SNACK BAR

LATINO SRL, who paid a 2.000 USD penalty for the noise generated in the discotheque.

Mr. Adrian Corda, chief inspector with the Agency says: «The court nullify our efforts canceling some of the penalties. For example the Research and Render Profitable Institute for Horticol Plants was penalized with 490 USD for air pollution resulting from waste materials fermentation.

Pollution is going on

We did not know how it was possible for the Civil Court of the 4th Sector of Bucharest to exonerate the Institute from the payment of 390 USD: The Agency lodged an appeal against that decision. Currently the Agency is involved in 15 civil trials. In the past year it has acted in over 30 civil trials, some of this has a duration of 3 years. Meantime, because of inflation, the penalties value becomes irrelevant, and the pollution is going on.

Intensifying social tensions

The political life in Romania during 1999 was marked by the intensifying of the social tensions generated by the wrong way the restructuring of the economy was carried out, as a result of the exigencies of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

The discrepancy of the payment balance and the deadline for payment for foreign debts have obliged Government to accept the parameters imposed by I.M.F., 2% payment balance deficit. To reach this objective a brutal liquidation or shutting down of some units in the extracting sector was made. Over 10.000 miners have lost their jobs adding themselves to some other 10.000 who had lost their jobs at the beginning of 98 as a result of Giorbea Government decision being granted the bonus of 15-20 salaries.

The police tried to stop the march of approximately 5000 miners led by Mirou Cosma their 1991 leader who had been sentenced in 1997 to two years for public order offences, but they did not succeed and

were humiliated by the miners who were well organized. The Vasile Government was obliged to negotiate at Polez, a monastery in Oltenia, with the miners' leaders and to make important concessions. Three weeks later, the decision of the Supreme Court of Justice, which sentenced Cosma to 18 years' imprisonment on appeal for threatening the power, resulted in a spontaneous revolt of the miners who decided to march again to Bucharest with the intention to cancel the decision. During the night of February 17, the police troupes stopped the 3.000 miners, attacking them with force, arresting the leaders, Mirou Cosma included.

Unlike the preceding miner marches whose social claims had had the peoples approval, this last one was isolated, no political force wishing to adhere to it. February 17th, 1999 seems to mark the end of this original kind of demonstration and a strengthening of the authority of the Democratic State Institutions.

Protecting Environment in Turkey

By the directorate of
Environmental Protection and
Control of the
Municipality of Istanbul

The Municipal Leader of Istanbul started a wide campaign to prevent the negative results of air pollution. The Municipality has been working on providing fuel of quality, improvement of fuel, heat insulation in buildings and the control of industrial emissions.

Providing fuel of quality

In Istanbul, coal, which causes air pollution, was used for heating. Upon the Municipality's request, it was decided that the coal used in Istanbul should go through improvement and enrichment plants before it is sold.

Since 1995, coal producing plants have to have «Coal Refinement and Purchase Certificate» and their

Because natural gas is an environmentally-friendly fuel, the Municipality has been trying to endorse its use throughout the city. The most polluted areas were sought out for special attention.

branches have to have a «Coal Purchase Certificate» before they can sell coal.

Seven Control stations along the city borders were established to supervise the coal trucks entering the city. The goal of the supervision of coal in the control stations is to check and see if the coal has a label and the required

certificates. Apart from this, there are also control stations inside the city.

Low amounts of sulphur

The citizens were informed that they should buy coal only from those who can provide them with the proper certificates and manuals.

Part of the coal gathered at the control stations is sent to the Coal Analysis Laboratory to be analyzed. After the establishment of this laboratory, the number of analyses has increased and the results have appeared more quickly. The laboratory has all the equipment needed to analyze efficiently.

The Municipality has been trying to increase the use of fuel oil that contains low amounts of sulphur. It was decided to make the consumption of special heater-fuel (for heaters) and no 6 fuel-oil (by industrial plants) obligatory. Also, the marketing of no 5 fuel-oil was restricted, except in Batman.

Because natural gas is an environmentally-friendly fuel, the Municipality has been trying to endorse its use throughout the city. The most polluted areas were sought out for special attention.

Natural gas not available

As a result of these measures, the number of people using natural gas has increased to 33% of the city's population. However, because the needed gas cannot be provided for the time being, new membership applications are frozen.

In order to prevent the pollution

caused by vehicles, it is necessary that they be produced with Catalytic Convertors (which can decrease the level of emissions by 90%) and

It is now mandatory that heaters are produced according to necessary standards and have «Kind and Emission Certificates».

that they only use leadless fuel. Throughout the countries who are members of the EU, it is mandatory that the cars are produced this way. The Municipality has been trying to endorse the same rule in Istanbul. The Municipality has taken action to improve the quality of heating. It is now mandatory that heaters are produced according to necessary standards and have «Kind and Emission Certificates». Also, reports and brochures have been prepared to inform citizens about the subject.

Buildings of quality

The year 1997 was declared «heating insulation year» and a wide campaign was initiated; seminars, panels and art competition among students have been conducted. The Municipality is still working hard to build head-insulation laboratories, encourage the use of natural gas and educate citizens.

The control of emissions caused by factories is being carried out. The Municipality is working so that the factories with emission permits get their certificates, and the ones that cause pollution are punished.

Computer based work is carried out to quicken the file research.

Air pollution and emission control studies

The Municipality has provided a total of 10 mobile air pollution detectors. Another appliance was

Dangerous industrial, radioactive and hospital wastes must either be recycled or be disposed of to get rid of their negative effects.

bought to detect factory emissions. As a result, the amount of SO² and particles in Istanbul has decreased. Noise is an environmental pollution which harms our health. The Municipality has ameliorated the quality, accuracy and amount of noise calculation with the new instruments bought. With the help of these instruments, noise maps are going to be obtained and then used in the planning of new settlement areas and buildings.

Solid waste studies

In order to solve Istanbul's waste problem, the Municipality built hygienic storing areas, waste transfer stations, hospital waste burning plants and waste water cleansing systems.

Health Institutions have been educated about the problem to help gather more waste. Also, these institutions have been checked to make sure that they store their wastes properly.

Dangerous industrial, radioactive and hospital wastes must either be recycled or be disposed of to get rid of their negative effects. An

efficient storage area is going to be opened soon.

After the Yakacik waste storage area was closed, it wasn't possible to get building certificates for the constructions nearby. The only solution is the rehabilitation of the area. The Municipality has taken the proper actions, and it will soon be possible to get building certificates for the constructions.

Waste storage closed

After the Ümraniye-Heklinbasi waste storage area was closed, the rehabilitation of the site began. Following the rehabilitation, sports and social buildings and roads were constructed around the area. Trees were also planted all around. The rehabilitation of the Halkalé waste storage area has begun. The wastes in this site are being removed, and buildings are being constructed.

The Kemerburgaz-Hasdal waste storage area was closed because of the danger it caused to the environment. The rehabilitation of the site began. In order to make use of the gasses formed here, a plant which will produce electrical energy from these gasses will be built for the first time in Turkey.

Natural fertilizer

It is a better solution to recycle wastes than to dispose of them. That's why the municipality decided to open the Istanbul Solid Waste Refinement Plant in 1999. The enriched soil that is going to be provided from this site will be used as natural fertilizer, filling and enriched soil.

The Municipality prepared education materials to teach solid waste

producing homes, hospitals, schools, etc. to store their wastes separately, and arranged seminars in schools to teach the students to be environmentally conscious.

Batteries containing mercury and calcium pollute nature and therefore should be stored separately. The Municipality placed special battery storage boxes and posters which warn the citizens about the dangers of such batteries all around the city.

The cleansing of Halih

In order to make Halih useful

It is a better solution to recycle wastes than to dispose of them. That's why the municipality decided to open the Istanbul Solid Waste Refinement Plant in 1999.

through recreation, give it the historical and cultural importance it deserves, the Municipality initiated the Halih Recreation Project.

The mud at the base of the sea has been raked at certain places, and therefore the bad smell has decreased.

Sea pollution control

In order to prevent the pollution caused by sea accidents and discharges made by ships within the borders of the Municipality, sea waste collecting boats, a sea barrier (to prevent oil permeation in case of an accident) and two Oil Skimmers were bought.

The Municipality is carrying out the control of industrial plants which discharge harmful waste waters above limits.

New political order in Turkey

By SELCUK EREZ

Recent Turkish general elections have yielded the following results:

1. Democratic Left Party («DSP», a left of center party guided by Ecevit) – 136 members of the parliament (22.20% of the votes).
2. Nationalist Movement Party – («MHP», a rightist party underlining nationalism) – 128 members of the parliament (18.16% of the votes)
3. Virtue Party («FP», the radical Islamist Party) – 109 members of the parliament (14.85% of the votes)
4. Motherland Party («ANAP», a right of the center party formed by the late president Turgut Özal) – 85 members of the parliament (13.5% of the votes)
5. True Path Party («DYP», a right of the center party lead by Tansu Çiller) – 89 members of the parliament (12.82% of the votes)
6. Republican Peoples' Party («CHP», a socialist party originally formed by Kemal Ataturk and subsequently lead by Ismet İnönü

Ecevit and ministers from his party in recent coalitions have never been accused of misconduct and bribery; most of them appeared as serious and serene looking politicians.

and finally by Deniz Baycal – Below the barrier of 10%, hence 0 members in the parliament (8.4% of the votes)

7. People's Democracy Party («HEA-DEP», a party prevailing in the Southeastern regions of Turkey and claimed to have clandestinely supported PKK, the Kurdish separatists guided by Öcalan-Below the barrier of 10%, hence 0 members in the parliament)

The 1995 Order

The votes obtained by these parties during the previous elections in 1995 would shed light upon and facilitate interpretation of the 1999 results: In 1995 the order of the parties were as follows:

1. Virtue Party: 21.4% of the votes
2. Motherland Party: 19.6% of the votes
3. True Path Party: 19.2% of the votes
4. Democratic Left Party: 14.6% of the votes
5. Republican People's Party: 10.7% of the votes
6. Nationalist Movement Party: 8.2% of the votes
7. People's Democracy Party: 4.2% of the votes.

Hence, a number of significant developments have occurred:

DSP, the Socialist left Party of Bulent Ecevit, an elderly statesman who had formed this party after departing from the classical socialist CHP, the Republican People's Party has increased its votes because Ecevit and ministers from his party in recent coalitions have never been accused of misconduct and bribery; most of them appeared as serious and serene looking politicians.

Also people have rejoiced at and attributed the arrest and incarceration of Ocalan, the PKK leader, to Ecevit's cabinet.

Killing leftists

MHP, the Nationalist Movement Party, once lesser partner of a few right of the center cabinets and known as a party that harboured youth organisations, some members of which had been sentenced for killing leftist students and politicians. More recently a few ex-members of these youth organisations were sentenced for being involved in mafia crimes.

Appealed to villagers

However, this party had failed to have any representative in the parliament after 1995 elections and subsequently appealed to the villagers and people living in Central Anatolian towns and those who had relatively recently immigrated from these places to the major towns like Istanbul and Ankara, when Mrs Tansu Ciller, the new leader of DYP (the True Path Party), the party they had traditionally supported previously, was seriously accused of

The Nationalist Movement Party, once lesser partner of a few right of the center cabinets and known as a party that harboured youth organisations, some members of which had been sentenced for killing leftist students and politicians.

misconduct and tax evasion etc. This party's nationalistic slogans chanted both during its earlier years and recently were well received by the families whose sons had been killed in Southeastern Turkey, while fighting against Kurdish separatists guided by Ocalan.

Boycotting Italian products

The members of this party were the ones who had laid black wreaths in front of the Italian Embassy and promoted the idea of boycotting Italian export products when the Italian government appeared lenient to Turkish government's demands for extradition of the PKK leader when he was in Italy.

Radical Islamists

FP, the Virtue Party is the

descendent of and the new sanctuary of the ex-members of Refih Partisi, the radical Islamist party which was closed by the Contributional Court for repeatedly flouting a clause in the Turkish Constitution which states that a party should avoid being the focus of non-secular activities and discriminate because of religious beliefs.

This party had ascended to the number one position in the 1995 elections and opposed the suggestions and warnings coming from the National Security Council the members of which are the President, the Premiere, some ministers and the heads of the armed forces with the Chief of the Joint Staff that they should comply with the standards quoted by the Constitution.

Islamic principles

Some votes given to that party were contributed by citizens dismayed by the poor performance of other centrally inclined parties; some are of the opinion that those who voted in their favour without being strict adherents of Islamic principles, deserted them at the last elections when their pro-islamic and anti nationalistic activities were exposed in the press.

ANAP, the Motherland Party shrunk seriously during the last elections: This party was formed by the late

After the death of Mr. Ozal, Mesut Yélmaz had replaced him and a rather insipid and unimaginate finally resulted in losing a significant number of seats in the parliament.

Turgut Ozal under the last military rule and was victorious during the first elections held by the junta, because this party appeared to be the only party not favoured by the military.

A right of center policy

It included members coming from practically all parties but the party had pursued a right of center policy. After the death of Mr. Ozal, Mesut Yélmaz had replaced him and a rather insipid and unimaginate line, finally resulted in losing a significant number of seats in the parliament.

Tansu Çiller's failure

DYP, the True Path Party was another loser: Besides the remarks made above in MHP section, one must also point out that incongruous and contradicting policies of this party's leader further contributed to its failure: She had first maintained that her mission was to combat anti-secular radicals, but subsequently made a coalition with them and after the collapse of this coalition, she adopted their slogans and started acting as if she represented the most religious in the country.

Baycul's marginalization

CHP, The Republican People's Party suffered because of the ever aggressive behaviour of its leader who had been instrumental in ending a coalition of DSF and ANAP shortly before the elections, with flimsy arguments, at a period when an unstable economy necessitated the presence of a stable government.

HADEP, the People's Democracy Party supported mostly by citizens of Kurdish origin obtained only 4% of votes as it had at the previous elections, hence could not have parliamentary representation.

A coalition of DSP and MHP with participation or support of ANAP is the most likely outcome. The lack of experience of the new MHP members of the government, their past opposition to a number of secular principles written in the constitution and upheld by the army and the National Security Council are potential problems and as the

nationalistic and simplistic promises appealing to the youth of lesser Anatolian towns may not be realised when the facts of actual governing are confronted.

MHP Branch of the new coalition will experience significant discomfort and seek ways of proving that its principles have not been overlooked or neglected: Execution of the sentences passed on PKK members is one of the possibilities.

Where to find "Balkan Horizons"

Albania

"Oxford Centre", Tirana
5, Islam Alla Str., Tel. (042) 39564

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"Soros Media Centre", Sarajevo
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Iletisim Yayincilik A.S., Istanbul Klodfarer
Cad. Iletisim Han Cagaloglou, Tel:(0212) 5162260

Yugoslavia

"Fund for an Open Society", Beograd
5, Tolstojeva Str., Tel. (011) 660937

Impoverishment has cleansed the rivers

By VELIMIR CURGUS KAZIMIR*

It may sound odd, but in fact it is entirely logical; during the past seven years of economic sanctions Yugoslavia has become a poorer but ecologically cleaner country.

Unfortunately, this does not mean that it has also become a healthier country, or that its birth rate or the average life span of its citizens has risen. In today's Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia, according to some estimates, between forty and fifty percent of the labour force is unemployed. The figures for production are similar.

Deep crisis in industry

Apart from electricity, where production levels are comparable to those of ten years ago, all other industrial sectors are in deep crisis. Unfortunately, though, this does not mean that the major polluters of the natural environment –the chemical industry, metallurgy, mining and

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extraction and particularly the thermo-electric generating stations– have stopped polluting.

Moreover, with the perennial lack of good quality fertilisers, pesticides and insecticides obliging farmers to make do as best they can, the

«new» methods being applied are frequently proving to be far more harmful than more traditional ways.

The state of affairs along the country's waterways is somewhat better.

The interruption of shipping on the Sava, Yugoslavia's largest river and a highway linking Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia, has «cleansed» this river of petroleum products: at its confluence with the Danube in Belgrade it is once again attracting swimmers in the summer months.

Drina is much cleaner

The Drina, too, which forms the natural boundary between Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina and which used to be heavily polluted, mainly by chemical and cellulose plants, is now much cleaner.

Today the core of this type of pollution is the city of Sabac, where there is still some production of fertilisers and pharmaceuticals. Even a purely Serbian river like the Morava, which flows through a fairly heavily populated region, has become a place where people can swim in the summer.

In Eastern Serbia, by contrast, and especially in Kosovo the situation has deteriorated acutely. One of Kosovo's biggest problems, –apart from the fact that it is poor and densely populated– has to be the lack of good drinking water.

Worse polluters in Kosovo

The great lead mine and foundry at Trepca, near Kosovska Mitrovica, and the thermo-electric generating stations with their extensive shallow deposits of lignite, are indisputably

the worst polluters in Kosovo.

In Eastern Serbia the primary sources of pollution are the copper mines and foundries at Bor and Majdanpek. The neighbouring rivers and their tributaries are permanently polluted with heavy metals. But the main problem in crippled and isolated Yugoslavia is still air pollution. Air pollution problems are

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a permanent headache for all those whose common sense has not been wholly destroyed by day-to-day politics, from Pancevo, a city about ten kilometers from Belgrade where there is a large nitrogen-processing plant and a major petrochemicals facility, to Belgrade itself, with large chemicals complexes nearby, as well as in Sabac, Bor and Pristina. The pollution of the natural environment is not a recent development, of course.

It existed when Yugoslavia was a united and prosperous state. Although the relevant legislation was on a par with that in Western Europe, it was never really applied in practice.

This reflected a mentality characteristic of most Eastern European cities. The siren song of industrialisation and rapid enrichment was so intoxicating that only the accidents –mainly fires– that occurred in various factories alerted public opinion to the degree of carelessness, ignorance and corruption that prevailed.

* This article was written before the 1999 events in Yugoslavia and Kosovo.

Stock-piling of toxics

In the meanwhile, the sanctions have engendered yet another undesirable phenomenon. This is the stock-piling of toxic and hazardous material in Serbia for a variety of shady European enterprises. Of course, deals of this kind are top secret and strictly confidential. Eastern Serbia, already severely polluted by mining and metals processing, is deemed to be a more fitting environment for this sort of thing. And so other people's poisons are added to our stock-piles of home-produced toxins. Deals like these, of course, cannot be concluded without the knowledge and co-operation of the authorities.

From time to time the independent media uncover some such case, but they are easily silenced. By contrast, after the bombing of the Serbian Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1995, there were rumours that uranium-enriched bombs and rockets had repeatedly poisoned the region.

Western Europe's stringent regulations against motor vehicle pollution have forced huge numbers of cars off its roads. So they pollute Yugoslavia instead.

Pollution of the land

These rumours about the pollution of the land, water and air by the Americans and their allies are now part of the new mythology, which is growing day by day. The general poverty and the collapse of Yugoslavia's automotive industry (up until 1989 the annual production of Yugo cars in the city of Kragujevac was 100.000 units) have flung wide the gates to imported used cars from all over Europe. Yugoslavia's roads are now where Europe's old jalopies are put out to pasture. Western Europe's stringent regulations against motor vehicle pollution have forced huge numbers of cars off its roads. So they pollute Yugoslavia instead.

Compounding the problem is the fact that very few petrol stations in Yugoslavia sell unleaded fuel, and those that do are mainly located on the highway from the Hungarian border to the border with FYROM. There is an economic component here as well. Since unleaded fuel costs considerably more, and these cars are old, regular fuel is really better suited to them. Highway traffic in Yugoslavia being relatively limited, the country has not suffered the mass devastation of its forests that we have seen in Germany.

Dramatic situation in summer

This means that pollution is concentrated in the cities. From this point of view, the luckiest cities are those that are favoured by geographical position and climate. Belgrade, for instance, lies in a valley frequently swept by pollution-scattering north-east winds. In the summer, however, the situation is often dramatic. Traffic in the centre of the city –which has no subway system– creates huge problems. The situation in Pancevo and Bor is even worse, and these cities are home to a number of non-governmental organisations which, together with the independent media, are the main champions in the battle against the pollution of the natural environment. During this past decade the problems of protecting the natural environment have been a subject of general interest only when there has been some ecological accident.

«Special applications» plants

Explosions and fires in «special applications» plants, the fire in the nitrogen plant in Pancevo, the overturning of a tractor-trailer loaded with toxic chemicals near Belgrade... All these were local incidents that occupied the attention of the media and public opinion very little. Not one single mainstream political party has taken a serious interest in these problems, nor were they a plank in

any party platform during the election campaign. The one exception was the Yugoslav United Left (JUL) party, whose leader, Dr Mira Markovic, is the wife of Slobodan Milosevic. Even for JUL, however, ecology was merely exploited as a sort of political marketing ploy: ecology is recognised as the spirit of the 21st century, and the post-communist organisation wants to present itself as the party of the future. Verbally, at

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least, the government of Montenegro has gone even farther, with its declaration a few years ago proclaiming Montenegro an «ecological country». This is wholly understandable as a strategy for future development, for Montenegro is a tiny state, with a total population of barely half a million. Its main foundation for economic development lies in tourism. It is hard to imagine this small and geographically very attractive region developing without taking care of its natural environment.

Procrastination and indifference

It is obvious that the problems of environmental protection in the Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia will have to wait a little longer. What is also on hold, however, is the prospect of a natural and decent life. Sooner or later, though, the people living in these areas will have to confront the consequences of years of procrastination and indifference. There is a real danger that the future unlocking of Yugoslavia and investment in its economy will engender more numerous and more serious problems, which could easily become regional in impact. This is something that we should already be thinking about very seriously.

Fighting corruption in developing countries and emerging economies

Remarks by Dr. JOHN BRADEMAS President Emeritus, New York University Chairman, National Endowment for Democracy held at a conference which took place in Washington D.C. on 22nd of February 1999.

I am pleased to have been invited to take part in this conference on «Fighting Corruption in Developing Countries and Emerging Economies». I speak to you from several perspectives.

I was fourteen times a candidate for election to Congress and for 22 years a Member of the United States House of Representatives. There, during the post-Watergate period, I helped write the 1974 laws in the effort to curb corrupt practices in campaign fundraising. Second, I sit or have sat on the boards of several corporations that consider investment in other countries, and I've observed that an issue that from time to time arises in such decisions is «transparency».

NED, an unusual entity

Third, since 1993, I've been Chairman of the Board of the National Endowment for Democracy, an unusual entity in the American political firmament. NED, as we call it, is a non-governmental organization, financed by the Federal government, for the purpose of promoting democracy in countries where it does not exist or is struggling to emerge. NED makes grants to private organizations that are committed to free and fair elections, the rule of law, independent media, vigorous non-governmental organizations,

open markets and the other components of a genuinely democratic society.

One of the four core institutes of NED is CIPE, the Center for International Private Enterprise, which is also an affiliate of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and a co-sponsor of our meeting. I want to salute CIPE's able President, John Sullivan, and new Chairman, John Bohn, even as I am glad to

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acknowledge an outstanding public servant and friend of many years, Brian Atwood, President Clinton's Ambassador-designate to Brazil and the Director of the Agency for International Development, another sponsor of this conference. I am also pleased for the first time to meet Jean Bonvin, the President of the other sponsor of our meeting, the OECD Development Center. Last Thursday I returned from India where, in New Delhi, John Sullivan and I participated in the initial meeting of a new entity, the World Alliance for Democracy, which, under the auspices of the National Endowment for Democracy, the Confederation of Indian Industry and Indian's Center for Policy Research, brought together democratic

activists, scholars of democracy and political leaders from many countries to discuss challenges to democracy in the century ahead and to forge new ways of cooperation to advance the cause of freedom and self-government. In New Delhi I joined Peter Eigen, the dedicated founder and President of Transparency International, to chair a panel on the issue of corruption and what to do about it.

Combating Corruption

Among the others taking part in our session were India's Attorney General, Soli Sorabjee, and Chairman of India's Law Commission, Justice Reddy, as well as both a prominent business leader and the Chairman of TI in India. New Delhi was not my first opportunity to discuss the issue that brings us together in Washington this week. In 1995 and 1998, at Ditchley Park, near Oxford, England, I chaired conferences on combating corruption, and spoke as well in 1997 at the Eighth Annual Anti-Corruption Conference held in Lima, Peru.

For it is my own deeply held view that if democratic forms of government are to flourish, indeed survive, we must take aggressive steps to fight corruption.

The negative impact

Certainly I need not rehearse for this audience the negative impact of corruption in undermining trust in political institutions and public officials, distorting government policy against the best interests of the majority and impeding economic development. And we all know that the effects of corruption are especially pernicious in

emerging democracies, for the abuse of public office subverts popular confidence in the very idea of self-government. What, I think you will all agree, is most striking, is how, in the last few years, the question of corruption has simply exploded into

The use of bribes for winning approval of a city to host the Olympic Games is shedding disgrace not only on the International Olympic Committee but on the communities seeking the Games.

visibility, all over the world. Even this week in Washington, my friend and former colleague in Congress, the distinguished Vice President of the United States, Al Gore, is hosting a conference on «Fighting Corruption and Safeguarding Integrity Among Justice and Security Officials».

The «grand kleptocracy»

But if in recent years corruption has in every country commanded headlines in newspapers and television reports, there has in like fashion been a dramatic change in the tolerance of corruption. This new attitude has in large part been propelled by the increasing awareness of the severe economic ramifications of the impact of corruption in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Russia and elsewhere. No continent has gone unscathed. In New Delhi we heard a leader from Nigeria speak of what she described as the «grand kleptocracy» as the chief motivation for seeking public office.

The use of bribes for winning approval of a city to host the Olympic Games is shedding disgrace not only on the International Olympic Committee but on the communities seeking the Games –Salt Lake City, Nagano, Sydney and now, Atlanta.

Enriching their families

President Suharto of Indonesia was brought down because of swelling protests against his use of the power of government to enrich his family and his refusal to undertake reforms. Corruption charges helped defeat Prime Ministers P.V. Narasimha Rao of India and Benazir Bhutto of Pakistan. While in New Delhi last week I bought a book authored by a prominent editor and entitled, revealingly, *The Corrupt Society: The Criminalization of India from Independence to the 1990s*. Indeed, conversations with a number of Indians I encountered persuade me that in addition to violence and sectarian strife, the major barrier to social and economic advance in the world's largest democracy is corruption.

Enormous bribes from companies

In South Korea, two former Presidents were jailed following disclosures that they had received enormous bribes from Korean companies. In Japan, numerous top-level government and business leaders have resigned in the wake of corruption scandals. In Colombia, President Ernesto Samper lost his bid for re-election in large part because of his identification with the Cali drug cartel.

Later this week I am going to Mexico, a country the politics of which has been dominated in recent years by the related issues of corruption and illegal drug traffic. In Italy, the bribery charges brought by Milanese magistrates led to the overthrow of the entire leadership that ruled that country for more than forty years. Bribery charges also caused the resignation of NATO Secretary-General Willy Claes, a former Belgian Defense Minister and of Czech Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus.

Pressures for reform in USA

In the United States, charges of breaking Federal campaign finance laws have been aimed at both the Democratic and Republican Parties and, as I shall shortly note further, triggered rising pressures for reform. Of course, corruption is so rampant in both the People's Republic of China and Russia, one hardly knows where to start describing it! The list goes on, but one increasingly obvious trend is that intolerance of corruption is growing globally. The post-Cold War era has brought an opening up of governmental processes, freer news coverage and increased independence of prosecutors and judges. Corruption is becoming harder to hide as the wave of scandals involving high-

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level officials in Europe, Asia, and South America demonstrates.

The roster of political leaders who have been caught in scandals involving corruption sends a vivid message to the international business community. Business leaders are becoming increasingly aware of the need for transparency within governments and economic markets, regardless of geographic location, and of the imperative of common, morally defensible rules.

Guidelines of behavior

Indeed, our conference this week focuses on the role of the private sector in fighting corruption. Although most of my own professional life has been in two fields –politics and education– as

I've said, I have also served on a number of corporate boards. Perhaps most relevant today is that, as a Director of Texaco, I chair the Board's Committee on Public Responsibility, which in fact meets later this week. And I must tell you that I have been highly impressed by the commitment of Texaco's leaders

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to insisting that all its employees comply, legally and morally, with a clear and rigorous set of guidelines of behavior. For example –and I quote from Texaco's «Corporate Conduct Guidelines»: ... All employees must comply with all campaign finance and ethics laws. ... The giving or receiving of any bribes, kickbacks, or similar payments of any sort, to or from any entity doing or seeking to do business with the company is strictly prohibited. ... It is absolutely prohibited to give, offer, or promise anything of value in the form of a bribe, gratuity, or a kickback to any public officials...

Peter I. Bijur, the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Texaco, has made it abundantly clear, not once but repeatedly, that he means business about these guidelines. And when I say, «Peter Bijur means business», I mean in two senses: first, he expects Texaco's employees to comply fully with the guidelines; second, he understands that ethical and legal behavior is indispensable to Texaco's financial success.

Reaction to corruption

Here, I think it essential to observe, that in any organization, it is the leader who sets the tone. It is, accordingly, imperative that a corporate CEO send out the

message that the company's employees are expected to follow the rules and that the rules will be enforced. Let me note also that a major group of American business leaders, the Committee for Economic Development, will before long release a significant report on campaign finance reform. I'm proud to serve on the CED subcommittee that produced the document. It is another sign of the seriousness with which the business community in this country is now linking the free market system with a genuinely open democracy.

Fortunately there has been, as I have said earlier, widespread reaction to corruption, and we have seen a sharp hike in action to combat it.

Outlaw bribery of officials

Leading the anti-corruption drive is Transparency International, and I here pay tribute to Peter Eigen as well as to my friends and colleagues of TI-USA, Fritz Heimann, Chairman of the U.S. chapter, and Nancy Zucker Boswell, who directs the TI office in Washington, D.C. Of course, an immensely encouraging victory is the ratification, completed only last week, of the OECD Convention to outlaw bribery of foreign public officials in international business transactions, and I warmly congratulate Robert Johnston and his colleagues as well, of course, as people like Peter Eigen, Fritz, and Nancy, and other TI leaders throughout the OECD world who worked so hard to win both ratification of the Convention and approval of legislation in their respective countries to implement it. Let me, as an American, also pay tribute to Secretary of Commerce William Daley, Secretary of the Treasury Robert Rubin, Under Secretary of State Stuart Eizenstat and former Secretary of State Warren Christopher for the, I think, really historic roles they all played in

winning this important advance.

Separation of powers

Nor can I fail to add that the leaders of both the World Bank, James Wolfensohn, and the International Monetary Fund, Michel Camdessus, have insisted, in making lending decisions, that these institutions take into account the extent of corruption in the countries seeking loans. Now, in the remainder of my time, I want to speak of just one dimension of the war against corruption in government –the accountability of the executive branch to the legislative. I remind you that I speak as one who served as member of a legislature –the U.S. Congress– and in a constitutional system characterised by separation of powers.

I remind you, too, that the Founding Fathers fashioned a Constitution deliberately designed to prevent concentration of authority.

Checks and balances

The Founders wanted to create checks and balances by giving many groups and interests many points of access. «Ambition counteracting ambition», they believed, would prevent tyrannical concentrations of power. In the last year and more, we Americans have experienced, in the process of

In the last year and more, we Americans have experienced, in the process of impeachment and acquittal of President Clinton, the workings of these checks and balances.

impeachment and acquittal of President Clinton, the workings of these checks and balances. Now although I have been, in respect of that impeachment process, strongly

critical of Congress, especially of the body in which I once served, the House of Representatives, I am nonetheless a champion of a vigorous role for the legislative branch in assuring accountability of the executive. And I've had plenty of opportunity to reach this conclusion. After all, I served in Congress during the Administrations of six Presidents: three Republicans –Eisenhower, Nixon and Ford; and three Democrats –Kennedy, Johnson, and Carter! I don't want to insist that the American Constitutional arrangement provides for the best relationship between legislature and executive. Scholars, practising politicians and working journalists can multiply examples of the deficiencies in our political system –and do!

Lack of adequate staff

On the other hand, by way of contrast to the American separation of powers, a parliamentary democracy is less likely to produce aggressive legislative oversight of the executive because those in control of the executive departments are the allies of the MPs and will discourage criticism. Particularly important is that in a

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parliamentary system, the parliamentarians often lack adequate staff and access to sources of independent information and analysis. For a view I hold strongly is that in the battle against corruption –I do not even cite the other reasons I hold this opinion but refer only to the role of the

legislature in holding the executive accountable– it seems to me imperative that the legislative branch be effectively armed vis-a-vis the executive.

Appropriate legal authority

Fully aware that I reflect the experience of an American Congressman, I still believe it essential –I repeat, at least in curbing corruption by the executive– that the legislature be equipped with appropriate legal authority, sufficient staff resources, effective access to relevant information and intelligence and the political will to challenge, where necessary, the executive.

Reducing prospects of corruption

You and I know that government executives, like executives in the private sector, today have computers, fax machines, e-mail and other telecommunications facilities.

We live in the age of the Internet and World Wide Web. Legislators and legislatures should live there, too! Now, because of my own experience in Congress, I have confined these comments to the accountability of the executive to the legislature. I have not addressed the indispensability of ensuring accountability on the part of the judicial and legislative branches of government as well.

Corruption, I need hardly emphasize, is no monopoly or the executive! Nor have I spoken of the crucial responsibility, in keeping a close eye on the operations of government –and of business, too!– of both the media and non-governmental associations.

If governments, to discourage or eliminate criticism, seek to crush free and independent newspapers, radio and television, or to control

NGOs, the forces of corruption will thereby have been strengthened. To reduce the prospects of corruption, then, a nation needs not only a legislature that refuses to be acquiescent but also an independent judiciary, media free of government control and healthy non-governmental organizations.

A network of institutions

To secure the blessings of freedom and democracy and win the battle against corruption we require a network of institutions, both within and outside government.

Let me conclude. I have spoken of the rising visibility all over the world of the issue of corruption and of the marked increase of efforts to combat it. I have noted the leadership in this respect of Transparency International.

I have asserted that corruption of public officials by business represents a grave threat both to the institutions and practices of democracy and to economic growth and development.

Encouraging integrity

Finally, wearing my hat as a former Member of Congress, I have insisted that to ensure accountability of the executive branch of government, the legislative body must have access to intelligence and information, adequate staff and sufficient independence.

Each country and each culture will have its own way of devising arrangements to combat corruption and to encourage integrity on the part of its political leaders and government officials. But clearly the battle against corruption must be pressed within each of our countries and on an international level as well. We can learn from each other, and that is why we are here.



Best selling books in the Balkans



ALBANIA

100 years of Solitude

Recent months have seen an increase of sales of different books in the book shops of Tirana. The best-sellers for this period according to a poll made are as follows: «My Death Comes From Such Eyes» re-edition by Toena publishing house, by the Albanian academician, Rexhep Qosja. Another book which has attracted the readers is «The Guests» by French writer Claude Simon, winner of Nobel Prize for 1985, published by Onufri publishing house. Translated by Edmond Tupja, this is the first book by Simon presented to Albanian reader. The book «Psycho-analysis of love» by Erich Fromm continues to attract the readers for the messages of peace it conveys. The book is published by Dituria Publishing House. Another book on demand is also the novel by Gabriel Garcia Marquez, «One Hundred Years of Solitude», published by «Enciclopedic» publishing house. The novel «Happiness of Women» by Emile Zola continues to be on demand by readers. The book is a publication of «O.M.S.C.» publishing house and costs 600 lek.

BULGARIA

«Bulgarias' concentration camps»

The book of Konstantin Pavlov «A long time ago...» was published by publishing house «Janet-45» – Plovdiv. At the beginning of December 1998 the 120th anniversary of the State Library «Saints Cyril and Methodius» was celebrated. At the scientific session the publications of «Slav-Bulgarian history» and «Hilendar chronicle» –handwritten copies from the 18th century were presented. The book of Zvetan Todorov «Abroad» –translation of Stoyan Atanasov– publishing house «Open society» appeared at the book market. Ivan Elenkov's book «Native and right» \ A contribution to the history of unrealized «right project» in Bulgaria between the two worlds wars \ – publishing house «Lik» provoked the interest of the public.

In February 1999 an impressive promotion of Stefan Bochev's book «A tale of Bulgaria's concentration camps» – a large 1000 page book of the foundation «Bulgarian science and culture», took place in Sofia. Bulgaria is defined to be a country «on focus» during the Leipzig book fair – 25th – 28th March 1999. 150

publishing houses with about 2000 titles are presented there. Exhibitions and museum expositions \»German – Bulgarian cultural relations from Herber till now», «Bulgarian graphics», «Bulgarian placard. The Alphabet» etc. \ are included in the program. The theatrical performance «The dream of Odysseus» – producer Yavor Gardev, as well as the films «Late full moon» – producer Eduard Zahariev, «Talking with birds» – Rumiana Petkova, «Wagner» Andrei Slabakov, «After the End of the World» – Ivan Nichev, «Shock» – Zlatin Radev and others are some of the chosen titles. Bulgarian music is presented by sextet «Polyritmia», jazz trio –Spasov, Yankulov and Vapirov and some others. Writers and poets like Vera Mutafchieva, Blaga Dimitrova, Ivan Teofilov, Kiril Merdjansky and others take part in the literary readings. Discussions, the topics of which are: «East – West Media policy», «Images and cliches in the Balkan Peninsula», «Bulgaria in German media» and «The new cultural publicity in Eastern Europe» are organised.

BOSNIA

Iconography of Bogumils

1. *Mak Dizdar*, «Stone Sleeper» / «Kameni Spavac», luxurius edition of selected poetry of the late Bosnian poet Dizdar, who wrote between early fifties and late sixties, in an archaic language, using the iconography of the Bogumil heresy. Bilingual edition, with English translation by Francis R. Jones. Published in Sarajevo.

2. *Noel Malcolm*, «Bosnia – A short history», historical study by the famous British historian and journalist. Published in London.

3. *Miloã Minic*, «Karadjordjevo agreements on the partition of Bosnia and Herzegovina». M. Minic, a historian and former Foreign Minister of Yugoslavia, one of Tito's partisans, discusses rarely available archive documents about the negotiations between F. Tudjman and S. Miloãevic to divide Bosnia. Published in Sarajevo.

4. *Jasna Èamic*, «The Waltz», short stories, J. Èamic, professor at the faculty of Philosophy in Sarajevo, has been living in Paris for the last ten years, but she publishes occasionally in Bosnia and her plays are performed both here and in French theatres, Published in Sarajevo.

MOLDOVA

Last Days of USSR

1. «Kakistokratia, by Dorin Tudoran, Arc, Chisinau, 1998 In Romanian, 590 pages. («Dorin Tudoran's collection of personal and political essays and interviews, Kakistokratia, is a vibrant portrait of the man and his times»).

2. *Ultimele Zile Ale Urss (The Last Days of USSR)*, by Petru Lucinschi, Evenimentul Romanesc, Bucharest, 1998, In Romanian, 159 pages, («Recently, a book written by the chief of our state Petru Lucinschi, the president of the Republic of Moldova, a personality that dominates the Moldovan policy at the end of the twentieth century, was published».)

ROMANIA

M. V. Liosa and T. Mann

1. The Illustrated Encyclopaedic Dictionary, Casher Publishing House.

2. *Mario Vargas Liosa*, Conversation in the Cathedral, Rao Publishing House.

3. *Titus Popovici*, The Discipline of the Disorder, Marina de Sen P. House.

4. *Nicolae Balot*, The Blue Notebook, the Romanian Cultural Foundation P. House.

5. *Mircea Castarescu*, The Levant, Humanitas P. House.

6. *Thomas Mann*, The Buddenbrok House, Rap P. House.

7. Communicate in English, the Larousse method – Teora P. House.

8. *Allan Wermir*, The Guide of the Immigrant in the USA, – the Elite P. House.

9. *Jorge Luis Borges*, Beauty as Physical Sensation, – Paideia P.H.

YUGOSLAVIA

1. *Radoslav Petkovic*. The man who lived through Dreams, Stubovi Kulture, Belgrade, 1998

2. *Duse Kovacevic*, Five Star Dust Bins, Stubovi Kulture, Belgrade, 1998

3. *Danilo Nikolic*, End of the Evening in Gergeteng, Stubovi Kulture, Belgrade, 1998

4. *José Saramango*, Seven Suns and Seven Moonbeams, Columbus, Belgrade, 1998

5. *Paul Auster*, New York Trilogy, Geopoetica, Belgrade, 1998