

**OBITUARY****ZORAN DJINDJIC, Prime Minister of Serbia**

BELGRADE, Serbia-Montenegro - Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic was assassinated Wednesday by gunmen who ambushed him outside the government complex. This followed a suspected assassination attempt only the previous month, when a truck swerved in front of his motorcade on its way to the Belgrade airport.

Since then the government of Serbia has carried out a wide sweep arresting hundreds of people alleged to be connected to the underground criminal groups as well as Serbia's own security forces.

Born in 1952 into the family of a Yugoslav army officer in the town of Bosanski Samac near the Bosnian border, Djindjic was raised and educated in Belgrade.

In the early 1970s he enrolled in the School of Philosophy at Belgrade University, a hotbed of liberal opposition to the Communist regime. In 1977, he left to earn a doctorate in philosophy at Heidelberg, Germany.

Djindjic had taken an active part in all protests against Milosevic's rule since 1991. He became Democratic Party president in 1994 and was active in the anti-government protests of 1996-97. His tireless organization skills were a critical factor when the Democratic Opposition of Serbia reform alliance mobilized millions of people to topple the former dictator, Slobodan Milosevic, in 2000.

He served as Prime Minister of Serbia since that time. Djindjic had many enemies because of his pro-reformist and Western stands. He was key in former Serbia President Slobodan Milosevic's extradition to the U.N. War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague, Netherlands where Milosevic is now standing trial on charges of genocide and crimes against humanity. His administration was dogged for the duration by western pressures tying delivery of promised and desperately needed international aid to the extradition of those indicted for war crimes by the War Crimes Tribunal. Facing resistance from strong reactionary centers (tied to the previous regime), and more moderate politicians within, implementation of reform has been slow and the pace criticized within and outside. Nevertheless Djindjic was highly regarded by the international community.

There is now growing recognition in the international community that tying assistance for reform to the implementation of extradition and other conditions has backfired and has been counterproductive. Stability and progress in Serbia is integral to peace and stability in the region. These conditions are only possibly if the international community gives greater and less restrictive support to Serbia's efforts to implement badly needed economic, political and social reforms.

Zoran Djindjic is survived by his wife Ruzica, a lawyer, and their two children, Jovana and Luka.

**Day to remember:  
March 24th, 1999**



**"Freedom Bridge", Novi Sad, Serbia**

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**BiH: UN Report on Depleted Uranium in BiH**

ARAJEVO -- March 24/03 (MakFax) An expert team of the United Nations Environmental Program is due to present a report on the presence of depleted uranium in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Media in Sarajevo said the report points 6 sites in Bosnia and Herzegovina and 12 sites in Republika Srpska, where the UN experts have traced the presence of depleted uranium. BiH officials said they will take all necessary steps and allocate money to clean the area.

**Four Hundred Charges Laid in Police Dragnet**

BELGRADE - March 23 (B92) - Police investigating the assassination of Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic have laid 395 charges on the basis of evidence discovered so far. Government official Dragan Sutanovic told B92 that charges had been filed against 262 members of various organised crime gangs, adding that some of these included charges over other incidents.

"The criminal charges will be prosecuted regardless of whether these groups were involved in the assassination or not," he said, adding that 1,031 had been remanded in custody since the murder. Sutanovic also added that there were estimated to be about 50,000 rifles and automatic rifles in the possession of Serbian citizens and announced a public appeal for such weapons to be handed over under an amnesty.

**Council of Europe Accession on April**

STRASBOURG - March 23 (Beta) - The ceremonial admission of Serbia-Montenegro to full membership of the Council of Europe should be held in Strasbourg on April 3, a federal Foreign Ministry official said today. The national anthem will be sounded as Serbia-Montenegro's flag is raised on a mast in front of the CoE building in Strasbourg as the 45th member of the oldest European institution. President Svetozar Marovic will lead a state delegation for the occasion.

**Kosovo Serbs Call for Official Anti-Steiner Stance**

ZVECAN - March 23 (FoNet) - Kosovo Serbs today asked the Serbian Government to take an official stance on UNMIK Chief Michael Steiner's decision to transfer powers to Kosovo's temporary institutions. Following a joint meeting of the Serb National Council of Kosovo and the Serb National Council of Northern Kosovo, a statement was issued stating that: "The transfer of powers of the UN Secretary General's special representative to the local community, i.e. to the Albanian community as a community of majority which governs and expresses state sovereignty, is not only an infringement of UN Resolution 1244, but also breaches Serbia's and Serbia-Montenegro's right to their territory".

Vladika Artemije and Milan Ivanovic, respective heads of the two Serb bodies, urged the Serbian Foreign

Ministry to take "energetic steps" and ask the UN Security Council to dismiss Michael Steiner. They also called for the Serbian Parliament to schedule an extraordinary session to debate this matter in an emergency procedure.

**Consular Offices in Pristina May Close**

PRISTINA - March 21 (Tanjug) - Officials are considering closing the US and British representative offices in Pristina, because of the possibility of terrorist attacks, Tanjug reports today. Sources within the offices say the only alternative to closing the offices is the suspension of public services and additional protection by US and British KFOR troops. An Islamic terrorist group is presumed to be behind the bombing of two international police stations in Kosovo overnight as well as a false bomb alert outside university buildings in Pristina. The group had earlier warned of attacks in the event of a US invasion of Iraq.

**China Learns from Belgrade History**

BEIJING - March 24 (B92) -- China has given the United States the address of its embassy in Baghdad in the hope of avoiding a repeat of the deadly 1999 bombing of its mission in Belgrade, diplomatic sources said on Monday. China passed on the details of its Iraq mission, at around the time US-led coalition aircraft started dropping bombs in and around Baghdad, to prevent any repeat of the 1999 bombing Washington said happened because of outdated maps, they said. A US embassy spokesman in Beijing and the Chinese Foreign Ministry declined to comment.

On May 7, 1999, an American B-2 stealth bomber dropped satellite-guided bombs on the Chinese embassy in Belgrade during NATO's Kosovo air campaign, killing three Chinese journalists and wounding more than 20 people. US officials claimed the bombing was a result of old intelligence and NATO apologised.

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**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETS IN WASHINGTON**

The first 2003 Serbian Unity Congress Board meeting took place in Washington, D.C. during the weekend of February 21-23. \*

During the first day the Board visited various government and non-government agencies. The first stop was the Office of External Affairs (OEA) of the Serbian Orthodox Church where they were hosted by OEA Director and SUC Board member Father Irinej Dobrijevic. Visitors were introduced to the OEA staff and programs.

The day's agenda also included a visit to the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) where part of an ongoing "US-Montenegrin Policy Forum" was being held. CSIS is an NGO whose Eastern Europe project, headed by Janusz Bugajski, has a track record of openly championing separatist Albanian and Montenegrin causes. This Forum event was chaired by Bugajski and the guest speaker was Dr. Dragisa Burzan, the Montenegrin Foreign Minister. There were approximately thirty people in attendance representing a cross-section of political viewpoints. Among the attendees was Dr. Ivan Vujacic, Ambassador of Serbia-Montenegro, S-M, and some of his staff members. Dr. Burzan (on the record as a separatist) appeared somewhat disoriented and confused in his attempts to reconcile old beliefs with new realities of having to work within the new Federation's constitutional framework, failing to explain the real mission of his post. SUC members and S-M representatives kept a low profile while participating in some discussion. It was clear however, that for now, interest in topics on Montenegrin independence is waning in D.C..



The Serbian Unity Congress Delegation at the State Department

The Board also had a meeting at the State Department with State representatives responsible for S-M (including Kosovo and Metohija). Five State Department

officers were in attendance, headed by Theresa Grencik, the senior officer for S-M. The discussion was cordial and meaningful. The SUC delegation displayed good focus and teamwork and it appeared that it left a good impression while managing to get some key points across. The key points communicated to the Board by the State Department were: a) House resolutions demanding Kosovo's independence (HR 11/28) are clearly contrary to the Administration's policy and efforts, and State thus "totally opposes" them, though they are of limited practical relevance anyway; b) Congress has much more relevance and importance when it comes to the power of the purse", and thus all the conditions for financial aid to S-M (the Hague, etc.) emanate primarily from them; and c) resolving some of the outstanding issues (particularly the case of General Mladic) will "open the floodgates" in favor of S-M; d) while the situation in Kosmet may not be great, there is improvement (to which UNMIK is committed) and UNMIK supports



President Nenad Vukicevic and His Excellency Ambassador Ivan Vujacic

the "standards before status" policy for which it maintains scorecards. Many questions remain but SUC has expanded a vital line of communication, which must be nurtured in concert with other DC-based efforts.

The Board was joined at the Friday night dinner by several members of the very active local SUC chapter as well as by some members of the Association of Young Serbian Professionals ([www.aysp.org](http://www.aysp.org)). SUC is expanding and focusing cooperation with the local Washington chapter members for more effective work in Washington. Attendance by the representatives of the young Serb professionals represents SUC efforts to coordinate and align work with these capable, bright and caring Serbs -- work started at the last convention in Chicago. Ambassador Vujacic also attended the dinner and joined SUC President, Nenad Vukicevic in short toasts stressing the need for con-

certed work in the US between representatives of the Diaspora and the motherland.

The Board meeting took place Saturday and Sunday covering a broad range of topics including but not limited to our operations in Belgrade, the US , Canada and Europe, the current financial state of SUC, review of membership and membership drives, reviews of all projects, current and future (Blago, St. Sava program, SUC's economic/busi-



Our friends: George and Stella Jatras

ness program, the Kosovo Defense Fund, Anti-Defamation program and future work in Washington).

Saturday evening SUC Board members were joined

by about 40 guests including Ambassadors Igor Davidovic (B&H) and Ivan Vujacic (S-M ) and their spouses, Ms. Grenick from the State Department, proven SUC friends and allies including former Congressman Jim Moody and George and Stella Jatras, prominent local SUC members and others.

The evening was hosted by Nenad Vukicevic, MC-ed by Mike Bozic. Father Irinej set the tone for the evening with a masterful synthesis of the historical trials and tribulations and the current, though difficult, repositioning in the world of nations by the Serbian people. Ambassador Davidovic gave a short and effective address on the prospect and challenges faced by the Serbs and others in the region. Ambassador Vujacic outlined in sober and realistic terms the tasks ahead for his office, as well as the sometimes somber atmosphere in which his government operates. Yet, he conveyed the impression that most of these challenges can be overcome by hard work, and that the Diaspora and the SUC in particular can be important allies in this process. Vecernje Novosti interviewed Nenad Vukicevic on the work of the Serbian Unity Congress for an article published a few days later in Belgrade.

The Board meeting continued and concluded on Sunday.

Radmilo (Rasha) BOZINOVIC, Vice President

\* (Travel, lodging and meal expenses incurred by Board members during Board meetings are paid personally

## IN FOCUS

### ACTION! CALL YOUR REPRESENTATIVE!

As we reported in our previous issue, House Resolutions HR 11 and 28 are still active. Both of them call for the independence of Kosovo and are introduced by Congressman Tom Lantos and Congressman Henry Hyde. Resolutions are dangerous, poorly timed and ill conceived measures that will lead to short and long term problems throughout the Balkans.



They will:

- Encourage political destabilization and geographic fragmentation in the region.
- Fly in the face of UN Resolution 1244.
- Belie the historical significance of Kosovo's relationship to Serbia.
- Ignore the very real progress being made in the democratization of Serbia and Montenegro.

See our web page [www.serbianunity.net](http://www.serbianunity.net) for more information.



**SUC Belgrade Office  
Quarterly Report**

By Slavka Draskovic, Director

**PUBLIC RELATIONS AND INFORMATION**

A main task of the SUC Belgrade Office is public relations. After ten years of operations our public relations efforts have produced an exceptional image in the homeland, many friends (among all Serbs including the most prominent) and important professional and business contacts and relationships throughout the country.

During the last quarter we focused our efforts on expanding the scope of these relations. We participated in numerous important and prominent gatherings and forums where SUC views and policies regarding the Diaspora could be heard and discussed. These activities resulted in many new and important opportunities and contacts through which SUC's Belgrade Office can successfully continue to increase SUC's role and prestige in the country.

**EVENTS AND INSTITUTIONS**

The Slava of H.R.H. Aleksandar II in November gathered public and cultural celebrities. Important contacts were made on this occasion, in particular with the Chief of Cabinet of the Minister of Religions which later led to a proposal by this Ministry that the SUC should propose its representative to chair the Emigration Institute. The other contact, with the Dean of the Faculty of Theology in February resulted in the invitation to attend the event organized by the Christian Cultural Centre and the Conrad Adenauer Foundation. The international event was also attended by President Kostunica and Mr Svilanovic, Federal Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the presence of the SUC was recorded by visual media. Further important contacts were established (with the Conrad Adenauer Foundation, the Jewish Community, the Ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina, etc.).

The Emigration Institute is the oldest institution in Serbia dealing with the diaspora issues. In November it addressed the SUC for assistance in reorganizing and attending the meeting of the Institute's Assembly. The Assembly meeting was postponed, but thanks to our reputation, the Ministry of Religions and the Ministry of International Economic Relations, in December we were still included in decision-making regarding the future of this institution. In January we received a request from the Ministry of Religions to propose a person for the position of the Chairman of the Emigration Institute. The proposal has been prepared for the Board.

The Inaugural Assembly of Pinet, a NGO for the development of private initiative, in December, was also a place where the importance of the diaspora was empha-

sized, and its role was supported by the participants including Mr Slavenko Grgurevic, Chairman of the League for the Protection of Private Property, Ms Slavica Corbic, the owner and Director of TV5 NIS, Mr Srba Brankovic, Director of Medijum Galup Int., Mr Richard Sinisa Danicic, Executive Director of the American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham) for Yugoslavia, Mr Dragomir Rakic, Chairman of the major trade union in Yugoslavia, and others. This prominent group also held a meeting in January at the AmCham offices where the SUC was promoted and it was agreed that further contacts would follow in March.

The Round Table of the Serbian-American Centre in January was dedicated to Serbian-American relations. Our presence meant establishing the diaspora role as a key factor in those relations. The event was attended by representatives of the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government Advisors Mr Ivan Vojvoda and Mr Sasa Mart, former Ambassadors to the USA Mr Z. Kovacevic and Mr M. Minic, and several political analysts and public figures, Mr D. Ribnikar, Director of Politika, and a number of other members of the press. Our participation at the Round Table was highlighted: The Belgrade Office was given the floor at the beginning of the session. Our focus on the role of the Diaspora as a key factor in those relations set the tone and made that a key topic of discussion addressed by most speakers touching on issues such as the rights of the diaspora and voting rights (e.g. the former Ambassador to the USA, Mr M. Minic).

The Church is an institution with which we maintain regular contacts. There were contacts with the Patriarchate (the Patriarch's Chief of Cabinet, Mr M. Lecic). The contacts were also made with the Zahumlje-Herzegovina Eparchy (Father Grigorije of Trebinje in regard to the scholarships for their proteges).

The Offices of H.R.H. Aleksandar II and Princess Jelisaveta also maintain regular contacts with the SUC Office in Belgrade.

Government relations are part of our regular activities. From November to January we communicated our views on the necessity to standardise the use of Serbian language in information processing exclusively through the Cyrillic alphabet to a wide network of government contacts, including the Cabinet of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Culture, and the Ministry of Science and Technology. We received replies from the Prime Minister's Chief of Cabinet and the Minister of Culture. Our objective is to make such actions in communicating the SUC position standard procedure. Other government representatives with whom the Belgrade Office has communicated and worked during the December to January period are: Ms Ana Trbovic, Assistant Minister, the Ministry for International Economic Relations, Mr Vojislav Milovanovic, Minister, the Ministry of Religions, Mr Sasa Mart, Advisor in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Mr Dusan Rakitic, Chief of Cabinet.

The RS Bureau has also regular communication with the Office.

## EDUCATION: YOUTH PROGRAM "CIKA JOVA ZMAJ"

By Natasa Milovanovic, Vancouver, BC

The British Columbia chapter of the Serbian Unity Congress, has established the "Cika Jova Zmaj" Heritage and Education Youth Program. A fund was set up to finance the activities of the program. This fund will provide awards for exceptional academic achievements, excellence in various fields, such as Arts, Science, Sports, etc., and will also support worthwhile activities which are designed to preserve and promote Serbian heritage.

"We want our young to excel, to be successful not only in school, but also in sports, politics, community involvement - we want them to become outstanding members and leaders of our community, we want them to be proud of their Serbian origin and Serbian national heritage. We would like them to make an extra effort in order to help preserve and promote Serbian heritage in Canada - let's share at least a small part of our heritage with our fellow Canadians" commented one program organizer.



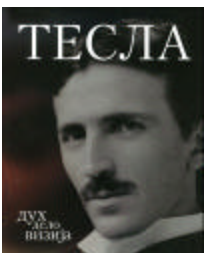
SUC President Nenad Vukicevic with the members of the Vancouver Chapter

This program is named after one of the greatest Serbian poets, Jovan Jovanovic "Zmaj". "Cika Jova", as everybody called him, was known for his boundless love and undying devotion towards children, education and good work ethics. He was also very proud of being Serbian. Through this program, we hope to advance these lasting values which he espoused and practiced throughout his life.



We invite those attending High School, University, Post-Graduate studies as well as those who are active in various other fields - all of those who feel that their achievements should be recognized - to apply. If you are planning an activity which will raise awareness of any part of Serbian heritage or Serbian Orthodox Faith - you should apply. All requests should be addressed to the Board of Directors, Serbian Unity Congress, and accompanied by a brief statement of the applicant's accomplishments as well as his/her future plans. The Board will review all requests twice a year, every March and September, at its regularly scheduled Board meetings. The applicants will be informed about the Board decision shortly after. We expect that all recipients and their parents will help us in publicizing and promoting the "Cika Jova Zmaj" program.

Parents, if any potential candidates or activities for awards come to mind, please let us know. If you would like to help us promote and implement the "Cika Jova Zmaj" program - we welcome your involvement. Help us find sponsors for the program to ensure its success - all donations to the fund will be greatly appreciated and are tax deductible. For further information write to the Serbian Unity Congress, B.C. Chapter, or call Mr. Jovan Pavlovic at (604) 222-8452.



### NEW BOOK AVAILABLE

#### TESLA - DUH, DELO, VIZIJA By Branimir Jovanovic

This book, in Serbian language only, can be ordered **on the web: [www.freemental.com](http://www.freemental.com), or by calling 011-381-11-620-070**

THE DIASPORA AND DIPLOMACY

EMIGRANT, CONSUL IN CHICAGO

*Who is Desko Nikitovic, appointed first diplomat in the biggest Serb city in the Diaspora, and how does he plan to work*



Desko Nikitovic

A few days ago, the new state union of Serbia and Montenegro officially obtained its first diplomat in Chicago. Along with the opening of the consulate in the biggest Serb city in the diaspora at the beginning of October last year, the appointment of Desko Nikitovic as the Serb-Montenegrin consul represents more than just a simple appointment to such an important position.

A graduate of the Belgrade Law Faculty, the chapter president of the Serbian Unity Congress in the state of Illinois and an expert in the real estate business in the city on the bank of Lake Michigan, he is practically the first consul - from the diaspora. Apart from our country's ambassadors in Switzerland and Israel, he is the third high-ranking state official from the diaspora in the domestic diplomacy.

Such a choice, along with the fact that, as "Politika" has learned, Nikitovic has also received support from two important people - the governor of Illinois Rod Blagojevic and congressman Denis Kucinic, is assessed by those acquainted with the situation as an encouragement and a signal from the mother country to an important part of our diaspora in the American capital of the Serbs.

**The Polish example**

- I represent a state and I have to interpret its political stands, but I will try to present to the people in the mother country relevant facts on which the future relations between the fatherland and the diaspora crucially depend - "Politika" was told by Nikitovic, who has been part of the Serbian emigrant corpus for over a decade, although, as he himself says, since March 9, 1991, he has been out of Serbia only "physically", while he was constantly helping Depos, the 'Zajedno' Coalition or the Alliance for Changes .

He sees his appointment as consul in Chicago as an attempt to bring the relations with the fatherland to an acceptable and normal level as soon as possible, on the basis of the experiences of others. An important guideline in this sense was the example of the Poles, who, in Chicago, number only - a million.

- Even though Poland had poorer relations with its diaspora than we did, which was even manifested

through

the violent demonstrations in front of the consulate in Chicago, after the political changes they acted pragmatically and for the first two terms-in-office they appointed a consul precisely from Chicago. Thus, they synchronized and polished the relations between the diaspora and the mother country perfectly, and soon afterwards, Poland liberalized its Law on Citizenship, they shortened the deadlines and reduced the fee for obtaining it, and the voting right was accorded to everyone with citizenship. As citizens of Poland in Chicago, they can call their consulate by telephone, send a letter or e-mail, they can also come personally and enter their names in the voters' register until three days before the elections. On election day, they can vote at six polling stations, they vote for the president and the parliament, and they are all one electoral unit - Warsaw - says Nikitovic, adding that this restored confidence in mutual relations among Poles, which was also contributed to by the opening of the Polish Chamber of Commerce in Chicago for which 12 people at the consulate work only on economic issues.

The precondition for the new consul's successful work is trust, so that his four-point concept of work is essentially based on the effort to convince his fellow nationals in Chicago, Illinois, but also in another 24 US states which he is responsible for, that he works - and thinks - differently.

**Emigrants - his right hand**

- Through conversations with our people, many of whom I know personally, we will first overcome the distance, and then we will see what we can do together. For instance, to make a review of the economic possibilities in Illinois, where we have the best contacts through our people; we must timely and constantly inform people of Serbian origin in our district, so that they would be able further to spread the truth about their mother country. My idea is to get our people together once a month at the consulate and, if necessary, to talk to them behind closed doors and discuss everything on a confidential basis, and all this for the sake of achieving better results - says the consul, citing an American saying: "Presuming the biggest source of miscommunication". He promises: "I will presume less, and listen more".

Such an unusual attitude of Desko Nikitovic is not only his obligation towards his fellow nationals, but also the result of his experiences as an emigrant and the fundamental understanding of their drama far away from the fatherland. That is why he believes he has the greatest obligation towards the most elderly Serbs in the distant world, because it would be "a big shame if most of them were to end up at the Libertyville cemetery".

-They have proven their patriotism by offering donations, humanitarian aid, building churches, cherishing the Serbian culture and identity. For them, moral rehabil-

itation is more important than the return of property - says Nikitovic, observing that the best thing people from our nation belonging to the middle and younger generations could do is - to return to the fatherland.

Of course, he is aware of the fact that this is not easy to do, but he believes the crucial thing is that, in fast pace imposed by the American way of living, our people have preserved the Slavic soul and Balkan habits.

- I have the feeling that it would be easy to reintegrate these people, and it would be useful for us if they were to bring their acquired habits to the fatherland. That is why I will do my best, privately even, and appeal to our people to return, buy a company, take part in privatization, only they need to come as often as possible, to prepare their return, because that will change a lot. Even though they live in more comfortable material conditions, our people in the diaspora have mentally suffered with their people and they wish to come home - says Desko Nikitovic.

### Blagojevic and the Serbs

The election of Rod Blagojevic, an American of our descent, as Governor of the state of Illinois is important, according to Nikitovic, because he has proved that, as the child of emigrants, he was able reach to level at which he can participate in the designing of the American policy, something that is considered to be the utmost power in the US.

-The Serbs expected more from him during the bombardment of our fatherland. Personally, I know what and how much he did among influential people. However, he was expected to react more as a Serb, but he is an American who assessed what is realistically possible - stressed Nikitovic and added that bygones should be bygones, all the more so since Blagojevic is ready to assist everything that is done in a wise, planned and sophisticated manner.

Radivoje Petrovic, *Politika* 02/25/03

## BOOK REVIEW

### "AMERIKA" by Sava Jankovic

(Association of Writers of Serbia. Belgrade. 2002. 272 pages)

To most of us, the word "America", the title of Sava Jankovic's extraordinary and evocative novel, resonates with feelings of sadness and happiness: sadness for new emigrants who have realized that they have finally parted from the "old country"; and happiness and excitement for they entered a new and unknown chapter of their life in America.

Through the eyes of the main character, young Nebojsa Vasiljevic, the author takes us on a post-World War II journey from a refugee camp in Eboly, Italy, to Germany and finally to New York. The latter proves a departure point for many Serbs, once persecuted and oppressed, in the land of opportunity, America. From New York, new Serb immigrants left for Pittsburgh, Chicago, Detroit and other places and destinations to find jobs and settle down.

The novel's flawlessly and brilliantly woven narrative focuses on the relationship of Nebojsa, a patriarchal, Serbian-born immigrant, to a young beautiful and intelligent American Serb, Helen Radonjic, who embodies the attitudes of Americanized Serbs while longing for her roots. She finds excitement in a man who represents the different values of the old country. Helen's attachment and attraction to Nebojsa helps the author show not only the power of cultural differences, but also the reasons why some relationships work and others don't. Mutual attraction proves unable to bridge the cultural differences between them.

Helen sees in Nebojsa the other world, the old Europe, conveyed to her by her grandmother and parents. That other world proves sufficiently distant and foreign to her to limit her understanding of Nebojsa and his ways. He senses her ambivalence and ultimately rejects her.

Although the relationship between Nebojsa and Helen represents the main component of Jankovic's mostly autobiographical book, the author proficiently presents characters, events and life of the Serb-American community of Pittsburgh area--churches, clubs, holidays and fascinating old-timers. The reader feels part of this novel, immersed in a fast paced and well-planned and executed plot. The author does not judge, but instead witnesses and tells his story in a griping manner about people and places from more than half a century ago, which have long disappeared. Jankovic has masterfully rescued those people and places from oblivion and we owe him a great debt of gratitude.

Branko Mikasinovich, Washington, D.C.



“BROTHERHOOD AND UNITY” REVISITED

In my personal quest for truth and reconciliation between my motherland (Croatia) and my fatherland (Serbia), I celebrated this past Christmas in Zagreb, and then proceeded to Beograd and then to Kikinda for a medical conference. I met with few politicians, many physicians and of course friends, relatives and neighbors.

My impressions are mixed: both good and bad. I will start first with “the bad.”

Antiserbism in Zagreb continues to persist long after WWII, Operation Lightening and Operation Storm. As a result, the number of Serbs in Croatia has dwindled from about 1,800,00 before Pavelic to about 250,000 since Tudjman. Evidence of antiserbism is everywhere. On Christmas day, the entrance to our church was guarded by police, reminding us that even on our holiest day we are not safe there. On the very same day, “Vecernji List” published results of a survey on religious tolerance which found that 45.3% polled would not like to have an Orthodox relative. (Remember Tudjman saying how happy he was that his wife wasn’t a Serb or a Jew?) Muslims and Jews were also found unacceptable in the survey, with figures of 49.9% and 34.5% respectively.

Judging by our dwindling numbers, we are not only unwanted in the family, but in the country as well. With my American passport in one pocket and greenbacks in the other, I felt immune from hostile statements until I attempted to visit Jasenovac. At the bus station I was told that no bus goes there and at the railroad station I was told the same for the trains. I then asked a close friend to drive me there. He refused with black humor, saying “When we take Serbs to Jasenovac, they do not come back.” This apparently is “Brotherhood and Unity” Croatian-style.

Discord between our politicians in Zagreb and in Belgrade was equally disturbing. They have no respect for each other and behave as if they never heard of coopera-



tion and compromise. Is this due to inat or narcissism? I do not know why, but it certainly contributes to their inefficiency and apathy of the voters.

Poverty was visible in the very center of Beograd, with men searching for food in garbage dumpsters, and stray dogs dying of starvation in front of shops while people passing by looked the other way. The average monthly salary of \$177 and average monthly pension of \$124 explains everything. When people have no food for themselves they certainly cannot feed dogs.

When attending the medical conference in Kikinda, it was very disturbing to see all the young doctors smoking. Instead of campaigning against the use of tobacco, they continue to set a bad example for their patients. As if it is not enough that we have been demonized, sanctioned and bombed by others, but we have to kill ourselves with nicotine!

And now for the good news! Stjepan Mesic proclaimed constitutional law for all minorities in Croatia on December 13, 2002. The new law is worth reading, all 45 paragraphs of it.

The tile factory, Toza Markovic, in Kikinda was a real pleasant surprise: large, clean, automated (even with robots). Worker’s salaries there are by far exceeding the average. They are producing enough tiles to cover the homes destroyed by NATO and to build new homes.

Our brothers and sisters in the Balkans have many problems, but if we help them to regain their pride and hope they will survive as they did so many time in the past. Maybe, one day they will even thrive too.

Mihailo Petrovic, MD, Vice President

OUR PROJECTS: BUSINESS & ECONOMY

**SUC ONLINE: SERBIA Business and Economy**

We are happy to introduce a new feature on the SUC website on business and economy in Serbia. Whether you simply need information to be in step with current developments, or want to know about investment opportunities and economic reforms our website provides helpful information. Simply go to [www.serbianunity.net](http://www.serbianunity.net) and click on the Economy tab on the top. There you will find:

- >> Vibilia - daily news on economic issues
- >> Vocabulary from the Serbian Business Handbook
- >> New economic laws
- >> Helpful links

**VIBILIA** is a clipping service, free of charge to members with daily updates on the most current events in business and the economy.

**THE SERBIAN BUSINESS HADNBOOK** was started when we realized how few business people in Serbia understand or properly used international business terms and concepts. The terms which contain complete definitions change weekly and are a necessity for successful business management, and for Serbian business people interested in becoming competitive in the international marketplace. Doing business in Serbia is our try to help large and small business owners learn more about often confusing, difficult to locate laws. In addition to this, you will find some Links to enhance you knowledge on similar issues.

For more information regarding business contacts and investment laws in Serbia, please contact Edita Kronic, at (908) 412-0044 or [sales@select-intl.com](mailto:sales@select-intl.com).

## HRES 11 1H AND HRES 28 1H (“INDEPENDENCE FOR KOSOVA”)

**This letter signed by the Group of American citizens living in the Washington Metropolitan Area (SUC Chapter), was sent to Honorable Henry Hyde, Chairman of the Committee on International Relations concerning the proposed Resolution on “Independence for Kosova”**

Dear Chairman Hyde:

We undersigned Americana citizens of Serbian descent who live in Washington metropolitan area are deeply troubled that you, together with Representative Tom Lantos, introduced two resolutions, one on January 7, House Resolution 11, and on January 27, 2003 House Resolution 28 calling for the support of Kosovo independence. While the Resolutions contain incorrect and half truths, their main trust is to present to the US Congress and to the American public at large a deceiving picture that the situation in Yugoslav province of Kosovo has been improving from 1999, following the arrival of KFOR and UNMK, to the extent that the US should grant its support to the ethnic Albanians' key objective - to obtain independence for Kosovo to be followed by the creation of greater Albania.

**Unfortunately, the facts of real life in Kosovo are showing a deploring and dismal picture of deteriorating situation with regard to elementary human rights.** Instead of getting better, in many respects the situation for non-Albanian population is even worse than a year ago. Today, under the Albanian majority rule, dwindling Serbian and other non-Albanian population in Kosovo live in fear. There is no freedom of movement both in urban areas and in the country; only a couple of hundred have returned out of about 300,000 ethnically cleansed non-Albanian population, Ethnic discrimination is rampant due to dysfunctional quasi state institutions hastily established after the election and absence of a legal system to protect elementary human rights. Over 1,300 Serbs who disappeared from 1999 are still unaccounted for. Albanian extremists are getting the upper hand and their crimes extend even to Albanians that stand in their way. Recently, following murders of activists of Democratic League of Kosovo, a number of Albanian deputies in the Parliament have received anonymous death threats. Furthermore, organized crime has been on the rise and Kosovo became a known European crossroad for drug smugglers and women trafficking.

Since 1999 over 130 Serbian churches have been destroyed or badly damaged, cemeteries are being desecrated and cultural monuments are systematically destroyed. Not a single Albanian has been sentenced for systematic ethnic violence. At the same time, Serbian language and script are being abolished from public life and even from the Parliament itself. Kosovo Serbs continue to

live without basic human rights, free access to health services and educational institutions they live now as second class citizens on the margins of society. Existence of remaining non-Albanian population in Kosovo is only possible due to direct protection of the KFOR forces. The latest report of the UNHCR (Un High Commission for Refugees) of January 31, 2003 points out that the security situation of the minorities “is continuing to be disturbing”.

**Kosovo does not even remotely resample a multi ethnic society; instead, Kosovo became a classic model of institutionalized apartheid and intolerance.** Serbs represented in the Kosovo Parliament decided in 2002 to abandon the seats and not to participate in the future work of the Parliament. Their decision was based on the lack of effective institutional mechanisms and fundamental means to protect vital interests of Serbs from ethnic discrimination and from gradual overstepping of the UN resolution 1244 of 1999, supported by the U.S. Such a policy would ultimately lead to a mono ethnic Albanian society in which there is no place for non-Albanian population and their legitimate rights.

Fully aware of the volatile situation in Kosovo province, the UN Chief Administrator for Kosovo, Michael Steiner, had to block several attempts to Kosovo Albanian deputies to declare unilateral independence. Mr. Steiner has been insisting that it is premature to discuss the province's future status.

This position was reinforced on January 17, 2003 by the US State Department spokesman Richard Boucher who stated: “Our view has been and continues to be that it's not the time at this point to begin talking about the final status question.” The extent of the unstable and grave situation in Kosovo is further attested by the fact that the UN Resolution 1244 can not be fully implemented even after 3-5 years since the UN took control over the province. The proposed Resolution HR 11 and HR 28 are in fact encouraging extremists in the Albanian community to continue with their resistance to change and with repression of the remaining non-Albanian population.

Furthermore, with change of international borders, independence for Kosovo would have destabilizing effects throughout the Balkans. **It would not only reward ethnic cleansing, but it would serve to further fragmentation on an already unstable region** which now needs peace and stability more than ever. The only plausible and just solution in the present environment in the Balkans is to support regional economic integration, return of refugees back to Kosovo and grant wide autonomy to Kosovo without the framework of new democratic state of Serbia and Montenegro.

## YOUR MEMBERSHIP and YOUR HELP

You have seen in this Bulletin the breadth and depth of SUC's work in the homeland and abroad. Due to limited space, the Bulletin reports only some of the good works carried out by the SUC. There are many more. **You have made this possible** with your generous contributions and confidence.

### SUC has and can continue to carry out its mission to:

- nurture and preserve Serbian culture and heritage
- garner talents of Serbs everywhere to promote progress in Serbian lands
- inform public opinion of Serb aspirations and remedy the results of defamation of Serbs and Serbia over the last decade

### OUR GOOD WORKS MUST CONTINUE For the good of the Serb name and Serbia

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