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Media in
The Promotion of Democracy
In Bosnia-Hercegovina

A USAID Contract Study

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Introduction and Executive Summary

The following study was commissioned by USAID Sarajevo and carried out during the months of January through March 2000. Its aim was to assess the role of local media, and the improvement of its use, in the democratization of Bosnia-Herzegovina, five years after the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement ending the 1992-95 war. It includes commentary on the present relationship between Bosnian media and the international community, particularly related to the perception of that relationship by Bosnian media leaders.

To summarize, the study produced the following conclusions and recommendations:

First, that the key to Bosnian democratization is rapid economic change.

Second, that the legacy of Titoite socialism has left Bosnians and Herzegovinians with a profound distrust of private initiative and capitalism in general, complicated by the heritage of Ottoman cultural influence and the situation of "aid dependency" fostered in the aftermath of the 1992-95 war.

Third, that such change cannot be accomplished without rapid and thorough education of the Bosnian public about the principles and realities of a modern, developed economy.

Fourth, that the task of economic education has been neglected by the international community that administers peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Fifth, that the role of media in correcting this oversight is crucial.

Sixth, that media workers themselves need to be educated in the realities of modern economy at the same time as they are engaged in educating the public.

Practical recommendations include:

Project A: Establishment of courses and seminars for the economic education of Bosnian media workers.

Project B: Development of a television series bringing economic education to the widest Bosnian public. The series should be animated and musical to attract wide interest.

Project C: Support for the improvement through “destatization”/privatization of existing labor groups, and trade and professional associations.

I. The Problem:

Harnessing Bosnian Media to Accelerate Change

Pessimism is sweeping the Balkans. A report from the International Crisis Group, issued on the fourth anniversary of the Dayton Agreement, which patched Bosnia-Herzegovina back together, declared, in so many words, that Dayton has failed. Bosnia-Herzegovina could have been a showpiece for the politics of international rescue, as some say Haiti was, but instead it has become stagnant. Furthermore, the Bosnian economy, already at a standstill, will soon encounter a new and more dramatic problem: the reduction and even the possible disappearance of American economic aid. America will inevitably scale back its assistance to Bosnia-Herzegovina, to implement an exit strategy and eventually conclude U.S. engagement in the country.

The new U.S. Ambassador, Tom Miller, has made it clear that the time has come for a shift in priorities and immediate action to accelerate progress in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The “Proposed Focus for the World Bank’s Country Assistance Strategy” for Fiscal Years 2000-2002, issued in mid-March, notes that recent average growth stands at about 30 percent annually, though on a low postwar base, that unemployment has dropped from 70-80 percent to 35-40 percent, and that inflation remains low, at about four percent. However, the WB document also points out delayed privatization and stagnant job creation, and stresses the approaching issues of donor aid cutoff, the need for a reduction of public spending, continued lack of protection for social benefits, and long-term low income levels.

The World Bank has proposed a three-pillar strategy based on effective privatization, reduction in public investment, and improved social benefits to ensure a general sense of common betterment.

Put simply, the country's achievement of economic democracy has been delayed by five years. Bosnia-Herzegovina must move substantially beyond its dysfunctional framework of ostensibly central institutions. Such an accomplishment cannot be purely formal and constitutional, existing only on paper. It must be seen and felt by ordinary Bosnians and Herzegovinans as reality. Citizens of the war-ravaged country must believe that a new era in their history has begun; that rather than dreaming of a return to the old style of common life, they have the opportunity to enter into a new and better one. Only such a conviction will give meaning to the principle enunciated by the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch: that Bosnian and Herzegovinan "ownership" of their country be fully recognized.

The Dilemma of Prior Policy and the Importance of Media

The international community has tended to emphasize ethnic reconciliation and physical reconstruction over investment, so that the latter has even made dependent on a return to interethnic cooperation, when the reverse relationship would be more appropriate. Rather than promising Bosnian hard-liners they will have money in their pockets once they are nice to their neighbors of differing ethnicities, the international community needs to grasp that money in their pockets will more rapidly induce Bosnian hard-liners to be nice to their neighbors of differing ethnicities. This does not mean a policy of bribes, but of real economic growth.

Such growth is impossible without a conclusive dismantling of the economic structure created under Tito, in which local communities as well as the national polity were taught to depend on state-built enterprises for income. This involves more than privatization of such enterprises; it means the creation of new, modern, and fully-entrepreneurial industries, businesses, and services.

Economic progress is an urgent issue for Bosnia-Herzegovina. There is one medium available to accelerate economic development, and that medium is, in fact, media. Bosnians and Herzegovinans have a high rate of literacy and a high level of

engagement with electronic media. The challenge, then, is to harness existing Bosnian and Hercegovinan media institutions to the task of economic education: to use television, radio, and newspapers to offer a crash course in the principles and realities of investment, work, accountability, and general business and labor practices that have proved effective and stabilizing in the developed nations.

To accomplish such a task does not require media reform: rather, it calls for judicious use of present institutions. This study addresses how this task may be efficiently and effectively implemented in the shortest possible time

The political, social, and ethnic crisis that began in Yugoslavia in the late 1980s, and which struck Bosnia-Hercegovina in a devastating fashion, has produced a respectable body of publications, but most of it is reactive rather than anticipatory. However, the present study is not in any sense a recycling of earlier research, either my own or anybody else's. The point is to offer fresh approaches, original observations and insights.

New Goals for Media Policy

The international community operating in Bosnia-Hercegovina, led by United States representatives, should have as their immediate goal using media to break the Bosnian public out of the pattern of passivity with relation to the international community, and to launch it on the road to productive civic and economic enterprise.

The main lever on which the media should operate is the nascent Bosnian middle class. The medium-term objective is to build up the self-awareness of this middle class, and to stimulate a new and active social role for entrepreneurs, investors, small business owners, professionals, technicians, and skilled workers.

The long-term aim is the transformation of Bosnia-Hercegovina into a modern state and society that can function on its in Europe and the world.

Methodology of the Present Study

This study reflects a series of interviews with leading Bosnian media entrepreneurs, officials, and experts, in addition to extended monitoring of media and the economic situation.

II. The Economic Challenge

One does not need to search very far to find Bosnians and Hercegovinans who can identify the economic challenges facing their country. Media commentators, TV watchers and newspaper readers, talk show callers, economists, and ordinary people of every description agree: Bosnia-Hercegovina is at a standstill on its road to economic modernization. Privatization has been delayed, it seems indefinitely, by political and legal obstacles. Political party cadres monopolize the management of the few enterprises that have become fully operational. New investment is slow, or non-existent, and is dominated by former or current “mafia” – i.e. black market operators. Taxes are uncollected, social security is paralyzed, and banks are inefficient, undercapitalized, and uncompetitive.

The Socialist Legacy

Bosnia-Hercegovina has long been known as the “most Titoite” of the former Yugoslav socialist republics. This description is two-edged. On one hand, Bosnia-Hercegovina was a microcosm of the rest of Yugoslavia in its mix of ethnicities and faiths, and in the commitment of its Communist elite to the ideal of “brotherhood and unity.” That ideological identification was historically strengthened by the association of Bosnia with the main battles of the Partisan movement during World War II. Further, Bosnia-Hercegovina, which before 1941 had been an economic backwater, was industrialized and socially transformed under Titoism.

On the other hand, and less benevolently, in the wake of the horrific ordeal of the 1992-95 war many Bosnians retain a deep sense of nostalgia about Titoism. They of course equate it, in the realm of political culture, with peace, civility, and such advantages as a Yugoslav passport which was welcomed throughout the world. In economic terms they also associate it with a long period of “good times,” of solid investment, of economic participation and even leadership in the global economy (e.g. the role of Energoinvest as a contractor in the Third World).

But Tito nostalgia is so extreme in Bosnia-Hercegovina that we may describe it as a society that not only yearns for the past, but even, in many cases, waits for the return of a regime of the Tito type to “make everything right again.” This disastrous outlook is

complicated by a long ideological training, which inculcated profound distrust of private initiative and capitalism in general. It reinforces the heritage of Ottoman and Habsburg cultural influence, under which Bosnians in general waited for decisions to be made and initiatives to be taken from above and abroad: by the Sultan in Istanbul, by the Habsburg rulers in Vienna and Budapest, and, after 1919, by Belgrade, both in the monarchist and socialist phases of Yugoslav governance. This psychology has been further strengthened by “aid dependency” in the aftermath of the 1992-95 war.

Nevertheless, the irony of the situation is that “under the skin” of Bosnian collective consciousness there rests a deep devotion to private property. This contradiction was stated by various interviewees for this study. The obvious task, then, is to mobilize this “latent” value structure to overcome and surpass the ideological weight of the Communist era.

Private Property and Small Business as Key Values

Dr. Hasan Tahmaz, an economist at Privredna Banka Sarajevo, outlined the economic problems of the country in a document prepared for this study. He wrote, “Bosnian citizens do not presently have enough knowledge and experience to understand the transformation into a modern property system of the great resources held by the state of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Capitalism as a socioeconomic phenomenon functioned very little in the recent history of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Many people have no idea what capitalism is.

“Economic education should be improved and promoted in the middle and high schools as well as in the college and university level institutions (faculties).

“Bosnians must also be educated to understand that management sciences are as necessary for the success of private enterprises as the transfer of property. At the present there is a tendency to view privatization per se, i.e. the transfer of ownership, as a magic solution after which milk and honey will flow.

“The Bosnian public, after decades of Marxist negative conditioning, must be educated anew, in the dignity and legitimacy of private property. Bosnians must learn that private property once again may be utilized cooperatively, but that it is, above all, more efficient to operate than state property. Further, they must be taught that private

property is morally and socially superior, and does not automatically denote the exploitation and oppression of others. We should note that the roots of such a consciousness are very deep in this environment: in the cultural traditions of the pre-Islamic Bosnian Church (the so-called Bogomils) it was held that individuals should live primarily from their own property.

“Bosnia-Hercegovina continues to possess one major cultural asset in the pursuit of privatization, and that is that agricultural land, the main rural asset, is still exclusively personal property. And the main present form of private property in Bosnia-Hercegovina consists of housing. We may anticipate that in Bosnia-Hercegovina individual home ownership could exceed that in, for example, Germany, which presently has an individual home ownership rate of only 39%. This represents a significant psychological element in the promotion of private property.”

The concept of private home ownership as an essential value of Bosnian society, and a basis for social reconstruction, was also articulated for this study by Dr. Muharem Avdispahić, a mathematics professor and vice rector for academic affairs of the University of Sarajevo. Dr. Avdispahić commented, “Eighty percent of housing was privately owned before the war. If, after the war, political leaders had insisted on a respect for private property above all, that alone would have been a powerful impetus of the reintegration of a multiethnic Bosnian society.” However, he stated that, instead of pursuing this ideal, Bosnian political leaders now seek to “establish a state market for housing exchange between displaced persons that institutionalizes the effects of so-called ‘ethnic cleansing.’”

An outsider’s view of the Bosnian economy was put forward in November 1999 by Claude L. Ganz, an American business leader and special presidential envoy to Bosnia-Hercegovina. Mr. Ganz argued that “training in entrepreneurship has been entirely academic in Bosnia-Hercegovina.” He complained that there is no strategic economic plan for the transformation of Bosnian and Hercegovinan society, and warned that privatization alone will not increase per capita gross domestic product.

Mr. Ganz expressed a broader belief in large-scale foreign investment as a key to Bosnian economic transformation. Dr. Milenko Dostić of the Economics Faculty of the University of Sarajevo was critical of this approach, and stressed the greater importance

of small businesses in economic progress. Dr. Dostić stated that small businesses could have been started immediately after Dayton, but he complained that the international community had overlooked small business, small business organizations, and microcredit as bases for economic reform. Mr. Ganz was dismissive of this concept, referring to small business as “café society” and declaring that it would not prevent the continuing large-scale “brain drain” of educated professionals out of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Dr. Robert J. Donia, an American academic and leading expert on Bosnian culture, noted a major weakness in the Bosnian small business sector, in the “survival of small businesses as a form of socialist distribution agency rather than as enterprises.”

Economic Associations and Civil Progress

Privatization, and understanding of the necessary and constructive role of private property, are not the only economic and social issues requiring rapid education and drastic action in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Another crucial topic is that of worker and professional representation through trade unions and professional associations. Throughout the world, such institutions are a key element in the development and stability of civil society.

Media “Unions”

Leaders in media industries have long decried the legacy of Titoism in the field of labor organization, in which such trade unions as exist perpetuate the politicized and state-controlled model of the past.

Prior to the collapse of the former Yugoslavia, journalists in all of the country’s six republics and two autonomous regions were organized along the typical lines of a Communist labor structure. As a requirement of their employment, they were enlisted in a Journalists’ Union that mainly operated Journalists’ Clubs (with a restaurant, bar, library, and meeting rooms) in the major cities, while also administering vacation programs, pension agreements, and related state services.

Such “unions” seldom addressed issues of professional training and standards, and almost never negotiated employment contracts. Their membership was typically limited to editors, reporters, photographers, and other professionals, whose status was

viewed as more akin to that of an academic or other professional than of a salaried employee or wage worker. These “unions” were rigorously controlled by the state authorities and cadres of the state party, the League of Communists.

However, war and the incipient economic transformation of former Yugoslavia have stimulated the creation of various new organizations. These have sought to distance themselves from the Communist organizational tradition, above all by employing the term “independent” in their names. In this context, “independent” denotes a move toward freedom from the state. However, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, to an extent, a second ideological template exists on top of that derived from the Communist/statist structure, involving ethnic identification.

The Organizational Landscape

As described in the report I prepared in 1999 for IREX ProMedia, “The Future of Media Associations in Bosnia-Herzegovina,” the country presently has six professional associations operating in the area generally ascribed to trade unions and journalists’ societies in the West. None of these is operating with a full program of activity. They are:

1. Independent Union of Professional Journalists of Bosnia-Herzegovina (NUPN), headquartered in Sarajevo. It is opposed to the statist legacy, mainly Muslim in composition.
2. Association of Journalists of Bosnia-Herzegovina (Savez Novinarar), Sarajevo. The former state journalists’ union, mainly Muslim in composition.
3. Union of Journalists of Republika Srpska (UNRS), based in Banja Luka. Mainly composed of employees of state-owned and state-controlled media, which are a much greater factor on the R.S. than in the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Exclusively Serb in membership.
4. Independent Union of Journalists of Republika Srpska (NUN), Banja Luka. Employees of private media in the R.S., committed to multiethnic organization, but barely functioning as an organization. Aligned with NUPN.

5. Association of Croat Journalists of Bosnia-Herzegovina (UHN), based in Western Mostar. Reflecting the situation in western Herzegovina before the recent elections in Croatia, this group is composed exclusively of employees of state controlled media, which, even more than in the R.S., dominated the scene in so-called Herzeg-Bosna. In addition, its membership is exclusively Croat. Nevertheless, the political change in Croatia has made possible changes within it. Some of its leading members had previously indicated serious dissatisfaction with its role as a political, rather than a professional body.
6. Trade Union of Journalists of Bosnia-Herzegovina (Sindikato), Sarajevo. Moribund attempt to form a modern, Western style trade union.

Mehmed Husić, director of the ONASA news agency and a leading figure in the Independent Union of Professional Journalists (NUPN), noted that NUPN continues to function but has never gained the foreign economic aid it was promised by such groups as the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ). In the absence of such help, NUPN's activities are necessarily extremely limited.

Enver Caušević and Alije Lizde, leaders of the Union of Journalists of Bosnia-Herzegovina (Savez Novinarar) have developed an extremely ambitious range of projects in the areas of professional development. These include international symposia on such topics as democracy and media in multiethnic communities, and proposals for a media research center at the university level, an international press club, and a professional journal.

Branislav Božić, a journalist and leader of UNRS, put it succinctly in an interview: "We have an overwhelming need for new, modern forms of labor representation on the model of Western Europe and the United States. We urgently appeal for help in organizing real unions."

What does the term "real unions" mean? In the minds of interviewees for this study, it means Western-style labor organizations that negotiate pay, conditions of work, and related issues in a competitive and, in the American model, a generally unprotected environment.

But the stagnant character of the media “union” movement reflects the broader problem of labor organization in post-Communist societies, and indeed in post-industrial societies throughout the world. To a considerable extent, labor organization is a phenomenon of the past, not the future. While Bosnia-Hercegovina will certainly benefit from a reform of labor regulations, it is questionable how great a part organizational renewal of the “labor movement,” even the establishment of an American-style model of wage bargaining, might play in such a development. The impasse in which the “unions” find themselves reflects an extremely difficult, if not insuperable problem, and while it might merit attention as an intellectual issue, it is questionable whether it is worth the expenditure of resources, especially foreign assistance funds, to investigate its possible resolution. Nevertheless, a media discussion of the topic would be salutary.

Professional Associations

A similar institutional weakness is found in the area of executive, professional, and entrepreneurial organizations. For example, there is no professional association for accountants and auditors. Nevertheless, professional associations do not face the ideological and historical obstacles with which the “unions” must contend.

Sead Demirović, executive director of the daily newspaper *Večernje Novine*, noted that private media publishers’ association (Društvo Izdavača) exists with members in both the Federation of Bosnia-Hercegovina and the Republika Srpska, but does not function because of the lack of communication among its members. Mr. Demirović ascribed four major goals to this association:

- a. To reform media ownership laws;
- b. To promote an authentic social partnership with the associations and union representing media workers, in the interest of labor peace;
- c. To establish auditing and regulatory practices in such areas as circulation figures and advertising rates;
- d. To free print media from political monopolization by fairly regulating the availability of paper, ink, and other production necessities, as well as distribution.

The Writers' Union (Društvo Pisaca) existed under Communism as an official institution, formalizing the professional status of authors, literary editors, translators, and similar professionals. But although a state agency, it was never characterized by compulsory membership; participation was voluntary. At times this "open membership" reflected political manipulation; at least one prominent author remained outside the Writers' Union for many years during the Tito era, because of political differences with its Communist leadership, but without significant harm to his reputation or status. Such issues continue to affect the organization; some authors have assailed it as a nationalist body now aligned with the Bosnian Muslim political elite, and at least one membership controversy persists in the wake of the Bosnian war.

Zlatko Topčić, its current secretary, strongly affirmed the desire of the Writers' Union membership to transcend its past and become an effective agency for protection of its members. He described a number of economic problems facing literary professionals in Bosnia-Herzegovina, all of which would benefit from the improvement of the Union's activities and status as a "privatized" professional association. These included the primary issue of authors' rights, which has become extremely dramatic for the organization's members, and about which the organization perceives a complete lack of interest on the part of the Bosnian authorities as well as the international community.

In addition, Mr. Topčić noted that cultural activities have never been included in the mandate and programs of the international community in Bosnia-Herzegovina. While extensive and even extravagant assistance has been forthcoming for media institutions and programs, no official help is available to the literary, art, drama, and general book publishing sectors of Bosnian society. Grants for such activities have been small and limited to private groups such as the Soros Open Society Fund.

Kemal Muftić, director of the BHPress News Agency, addressed similar concerns, noting that Bosnia has no structure for the administration of cultural programs, even at the presidential level, and that the book publishing industry is impoverished. He also said the international community should assist in the establishment of a legal framework for protection of authors' rights, and decried the lack of a Bosnian presence in UNESCO cultural programs.

Mr. Demirović emphasized that the improvement of professional associations and their status is indispensable for the economic transformation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, but noted that none of the existing such associations, aside from those considered professional journalists' groups such as NUPN and the Union of Journalists, had ever been contacted or solicited for opinion or cooperation by the international community.

III. Educating the Public: The Role of Media

Issues of Fairness

Some complaints have been voiced about the character of international assistance to and access for Bosnian and Herzegovinan media.

Mr. Muftić of the BHPress news agency said, "Fairness is clearly absent. For example, there are no contacts between the international community and the periodical with the largest circulation in the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which is the Islamic religious weekly *Preporod*. The international community has committed immense resources to the Open Broadcast Network (OBN), which remains outside the local legal framework."

Mr. Muftić, Džemaluddin Latić of Bošnjak Radio-Television (BRT), Adil Kulenović of Independent Television Studio 99, and Mensur Brdar of the weekly *Ljiljan* all decried a perceived lack of fairness in technical and financial assistance as well as access. Messrs. Latić, Kulenović, and Brdar noted with some bitterness that they had never succeeded in gaining interviews with U.S. Ambassadors Richard Kauzlarich and Tom Miller.

Messrs. Muftić and Kulenović both criticized what they alleged to be an OBN policy of only hiring executives who were not present in Sarajevo during the 1992-95 war. This, they said, cut OBN off from a local audience, while also creating cases of apparent support for individuals viewed as anti-Bosnian.

The degree to which the perspectives of the international community are divorced from local Bosnian perceptions and realities may be seen in the comments of Zlatko Dizdarević, an outstanding local author and journalist. In the October 15, 1999 issue of the weekly *Dani* he said "the international community does not know what is happening in the media here, does not care, and has used the funds intended for support to

independent media and democratization in general to feather its own nest. I have thousands of reasons to conclude that as much as 80 percent of funding intended to various democratization projects, including support for independent media, is spent on the (international community's) own personnel. In Bosnia-Herzegovina at this moment, in Sarajevo and Banja Luka alone, there are dozens of individuals in the country in connection with various projects to support independent media. When you add up all their salaries, rent for apartments and offices, Range Rovers, etc., you get at least one million marks per month... This is a huge circus which moves from Croatia to Bosnia, from Bosnia to Kosovo, from Kosovo to East Timor, etc. Unlike (Bosnian media), this circus is 'self-sufficient' and lives and functions primarily for its own financial and political profit, reproducing itself in that way."

The Lag in Education

Virtually all those interviewed for this study agreed that the international community, which they perceive as controlling the destiny of Bosnia-Herzegovina, has neglected the task of educating the public about modern economic realities. Campaigns against corruption, which are vague and moralistic, will not suffice. Bosnia-Herzegovina does not suffer from the kind of long-term, endemic, criminal pattern of business behavior present in, for example, southern Italy or Mexico, where government patronage, violence, large scale criminal enterprises such as prostitution or drugs, and domination of business by the informal sector go hand in hand.

Bosnia-Herzegovina does contend with the legacy of "Asiatic" patterns of political and family patronage, as well as a diminished sense of personal entrepreneurship – both ultimately derived from the Ottoman period of governance, and strengthened by Communism. But real criminal behavior, i.e. hardcore corruption in the Bosnian and Herzegovinan economy, reflects the absence of stable economic institutions and the lack of modern economic education, as well as short-term opportunities represented by political interference on the part of ethnic parties and militias.

Dr. Tahmaz stated succinctly, "Economic ignorance in local government is more harmful than political nationalism. Interviewees for this study characterized Bosnian political leaders as embodying the worst aspects of the anti-capitalist mentality fostered

under Communism, with a hostility to capital, private property, and entrepreneurship fortified by a deep cultural fear of loss of control.

To achieve ethnic reconciliation, economic modernization, stability, and prosperity, Bosnians and Hercegovinans need to be educated quickly and intensively in the basic principles of a modern economy. The main medium for such education should be the electronic media, and above all television.

Guidelines for Economic Education

Such education must be directed to the widest public: it should not be about management theory or marketing. It should begin, as traditionally, very simply, with supply and demand.

The broader content of the educational program should extend to property, property registration and law, privatization, entrepreneurship, investment and bond markets, small business proprietorship, "Silicon Valley" concepts (small enterprises with high value and yield), business credit, accountability, taxation, labor law, cooperatives, employee ownership, employment and unemployment, personal credit, savings and banking, monetary policy, domestic and foreign trade, tariffs, trade regulation and protection, business licensing, inspection, oversight, and bureaucracy. This list is not, of course, complete; other appropriate topics would be included.

It should then address how government programs are formulated in these areas, how economic regulations are enforced, state intervention and its limits, the non-political role of the business class in program development, consultation between labor, entrepreneurs, and consumers, private and state financing of social improvements and benefits, and the overall history of economic thought as an intellectual phenomenon. This list is also not exclusive.

Information should be presented comparatively, with an emphasis on the experience of emerging industrial democracies among the former-Yugoslav states, i.e. Slovenia, Croatia, and Macedonia. The aim of the effort should be to pose and answer two fundamental questions for the Bosnian public: What is the middle class and what is its role in a modern society? How can Bosnia-Hercegovina be effectively transformed economically and socially in the shortest possible time?

A second educational cycle should deal with democracy as the rule of law, community initiatives, dialogue and consensus, coalitions, ideology, interest groups, the impact of the information revolution in economic and political action, and decentralization of decision-making. This list is also not limited to the topics mentioned here.

However, such education must, unfortunately, begin with media personnel themselves. Mensur Brdar of *Ljiljan* commented, “most important is the education of Bosnian media employees in technical and computer expertise, management and marketing.” But he further stated, “there is nothing in Bosnian media about money, a stock market, investment, employment, or the environment. Nothing that would help bring Bosnia-Hercegovina into the world. How do you think I feel when I interview prospective journalists who do not know what ‘fiscal policy’ is?”

Existing Resources

Bosnia-Hercegovina enjoys an extremely prolific range of media institutions, indicating an underlying and very favorable attitude toward individual enterprise. More than 200 radio and television broadcasters are registered with the Independent Media Commission. Dr. Kemal Bakaršić of the University of Sarajevo librarianship program notes that of 320 periodicals existing before the 1992-95 war, only 52 survived the conflict, but 530 new periodicals were founded between 1992 and 1998. Of the latter, 100 ceased to publish before 1998, according to Dr. Bakaršić. The disappearance of many periodicals was caused by the almost-total collapse of the printing industry, the reduction of the potential market from a population of 4.5 million to 2.8 million, the decline in disposable income, and the lack of materials for the development of education and science. Scientific and professional journals that ceased to publish during the war have not been revived.

Interviewees for this study indicated that the international community has overlooked the entrepreneurial character of this media “explosion,” concentrating instead on programs for the ostensible “reform” of media in a multiethnic direction. Further, aside from its involvement with the OBN broadcast system, the international community has ignored the utilization of media for economic education and the related promotion of non-ethnic aspects of civil society.

The Credibility Gap

Mr. Kulenović claimed that a leading media spokesperson for the international community had told him that a truly independent media position is “fantasy,” and that “you are either with the international community or with the Bosnian government.” Mr. Kulenović has also protested against policies he considers economically unfavorable for Bosnian media. Among these are the ban on paid political propaganda. He commented, “the international organizations interpret this (policy) as a guarantee of their right to free broadcast of their own publicity, even in prime time.” He said the international community should pay for advertising on Bosnian media, on an equal basis with other customers.

In addition, one must note that an adversarial relationship often seems to exist between representatives of the international community and Bosnian media. This is not a matter of an investigative or “muckraking” attitude on the part of Bosnian journalists, since little or no such reporting is directed toward the international community. Rather, one observes a continual attitude of scolding and didactic lecturing by international community representatives.

This situation cannot be considered productive. An outstanding American scholar of Bosnian history, who was the sole interviewee who requested anonymity in the preparation of this, commented, “the international community representatives just talk too much. They say too much, too often, about too many things. Every day you pick up the newspapers or turn on the television and they have something to say. They should cultivate the attitude of public relations professionals working in American and European businesses. Rather than seizing on every opportunity to express themselves, they should learn to say ‘no comment,’ or ‘I’ll get back to you on that,’ or ‘we are developing a position on this issue.’ Instead, they give the impression of having a ready-made answer at all times, often presented in a belligerent or patronizing fashion.”

At the beginning of February 2000, international community representatives outlined a new program for strengthening of independent media in Bosnia-Herzegovina. However, this “six point plan” gave the impression of a lag in attention to issues as well as excessive improvisation. It situated the plan in the “aftermath” of the attack on Željko

Kopanja in Banja Luka even though that appalling incident, which has more to do with the situation in Serbia than in Bosnia-Herzegovina, had happened four months before. It went on to propose establishment of “police guidelines and journalists’ guidelines,” as well as “training both police and journalists” to improve the relationship between these two social sectors, even though such relationships are, in the United States and other Western countries, universally considered a matter of informal custom rather than of an official structure.

A key element of media reform in Bosnia-Herzegovina is the Independent Media Commission, which regulates the activities of radio and television broadcasters. Some broadcast operators, such as Mr. Kulenović of NRTV Studio 99, are extremely critical of what they view as arbitrary supervisory policies verging on censorship.

Another common element in the media and economic contexts that has been overlooked by the international community involves the role of religious communities, which play a larger role in the evolution of Bosnian civil society than elsewhere in Europe. Fra Marko Oršolić of the International Multireligious and Intercultural Center in Sarajevo noted that the Bosnian Franciscans had considered but eventually abandoned a proposal for establishment of a non-religious but church-funded newspaper modeled on *The Christian Science Monitor*, which would offer responsible and objective journalism to a multireligious public.

It should also be noted that both the Catholic and Islamic clergy in Bosnia-Herzegovina are educated in concepts of economic development and social justice that would make them powerful allies in the economic education of the Bosnian public.

IV. Conclusion and Recommendations

Media has been underutilized in the promotion of democracy and prosperity in Bosnia-Herzegovina. To achieve a rapid improvement in such utilization, this study recommends:

Project A

USAID should immediately plan a series of intensive seminars and high quality courses for the education of Bosnian media workers. The first stage of this program would offer entry into the courses for presently-employed journalists. Personal costs for attendance would be reimbursed to the individual employee for courses held off working hours, with employers reimbursed for lost working time in attendance.

As a second stage, courses in economic education should be required for completion of academic training in journalism.

Courses and seminars may be tailored to specific areas of journalistic interest, in addition to basic education in business and economics. Thus, reporters on cultural affairs could be offered a seminar in the economics of cultural funding; sports reporters could attend a seminar on sport as a commercial activity.

An institute for economic education of journalists should be established to facilitate this proposal.

Project B

USAID should fund production of a television series, bringing economic education to the widest Bosnian public. The format for this series would be weekly 10-minute spots to be shown directly before or after primetime news on one or more networks with a large viewing audience.

The spots should be animated and feature musical accompaniment to attract the widest possible interest. They should be as humorous, entertaining, colorful, exciting, and stimulating a manner as possible, primarily aimed at a 20-35 year old audience, but with content of sufficient sophistication and factuality to appeal to older viewers as well. Examples of successful entrepreneurship should mainly be drawn from Slovenia, Croatia,

and Macedonia. Economic principles should be presented along with information on their role and support for them in contemporary Christian and Islamic thought.

Each spot should deal with a single topic. It should begin with a three minute "on the street" quiz asking passersby to define an economic concept. This would be followed by eight minutes of music, collage, comment, historical review, and similar content. A concluding one minute wrapup would present a formal definition of the economic concept dealt with in the spot. A budget of US\$200,000 would be sufficient for production of a first yearlong cycle of 48 spots.

Project C

The international community should establish a crash program, through media, for the "destatization"/privatization and strengthening of existing ^{labor groups, and} trade and professional associations throughout Bosnian society. The program would include training in the role, organization, and operation of such associations in a free-market society. Associations would be encouraged to represent entrepreneurs and professionals in all aspects of business, education, and the arts. Associations with a history of state control, such as the Writers' Union, would gain assistance in removing their activities from the state area, as well as in extending and improving their activities.

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