

# THE KOSOVO@ POST

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## NEWS



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# Gypsy refugees from toxic UNMIK camp face deportation from Germany

**Activists fear they will be sent back to the camp and believe they will die, should that happen**

THE KOSOV@ POST has learned that one of the Gypsy families that was rescued from a toxic UNMIK camp in north Mitrovica by the German newspaper Bild Zeitung in 2005 is facing a deportation hearing in Hamburg.

Bild Zeitung paid for birth certificates, passports, plane fares and medical treatment - including 3,000 euros per child body scans for the eight member family - after running a feature length report on the tragedy that continues in the camp where 77 have died from lead poisoning.

Residents of the camp - most of whom have been living on top of tailings piles from a nearby lead and zinc mine for nine years - have registered extremely dangerous levels of lead in their blood. One child registered the highest levels of lead poisoning ever recorded.

Dr. Rohko Kim, a Harvard trained medical doctor, has been advising the UN on the lead poisoning in their camps in Kosovo. In a speech delivered in 2005 to WHO, UNMIK and the Kosovo Ministry of Health, Dr. Kim said: "The present situation in the Roma community who are now living in the camps is extremely, extremely serious. I have personally researched lead poisoning since 1991 but I have never seen in the literature a population with such a high level of lead in their blood. I believe that the lead poisoning in north Mitrovica is unique, which has never been known before in history. This is one of the biggest catastrophes connected with lead in the world and in history."

After the Mustafas arrived in Germany, Bild Zeitung set them up in an apartment on the outskirts of Hamburg, where they have lived ever since. The total bill paid by the newspaper for its humanitarian efforts was close to, or slightly in excess of, 50,000 euros.

Activists who have been working to save the 500 - 600 Gypsies who remain in the camp fear the family will be returned to the camp should the Mustafas lose their extradition hearing. The family of a girl who was removed from the camp when she was two years old was told by doctors that if she returned to the camp she would die, just like her four year old sister had.



Could the Mustafa family - shown here with Dr. Klaus Runow and Paul Polansky and Diya Gidzic of Society for Threatened Peoples - be returned to the toxic UNMIK camp in north Mitrovica that almost killed them once?

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THE BIG PICTURE



But we can still dance and drink, yeah?

<b>HANDS OF STONE</b>			
Roberto Duran had hands of stone. That's what his fight fans called him, manos de piedra.  I had hands of bone. Every time I hit a guy, I broke my thumbs.  It's hard to go thru life your fists aching for a fight knowing they're always going to break.	I once knew what it was like to have hands of stone.  After a street fight a doctor put a plaster cast on each hand.  For six weeks I punched down doors, smashed glass windows  pounded big holes in walls, hit hundreds of heads, never feeling any pain.	With my mentality I could have been a world champion  if I'd been born with someone else's hands.  <i>Paul Polansky is a poet, author, journalist and human rights activist. This poem was taken from his book STRAY DOG: Poems of a Fighting Freak.</i>	
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## Is the Serbian Knight in north Kosovo?

by Paul Polansky

With the recent arrest of Radovan Karadzic, the former Bosnian Serb leader, in a Belgrade suburb looking very much like an Orthodox priest, all attention has now turned to the whereabouts of his infamous general, Ratko Mladic, also wanted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague for suspected war crimes. Mladic is rumored to be hiding out in many places, even in Russia. But if Serbian paramilitaries now flooding into north Kosovo are to be believed, the so called butcher of Srebrenica will soon lead them on hit and run raids against KFOR/NATO forces in northern Kosovo.

"He's on a suicide mission," one north Mitrovica bridge watcher told me, who refused to give his name. "He knows the net is closing in around him and he wants to go out fighting. He's our Serbian Knight."

Several other bridge watchers agreed. "We haven't had a hero in Kosovo since Lazar," said a paramilitary who called himself Nebosha. He was referring to the Serbian King who led his army against a Turkish invasion force north of Pristina in 1389 and died on the battle field. His death inspired legends and myths and an epic poem recited over the centuries by Serbian students about one day retaking Kosovo from the infidel. Personally, I don't believe Mladic is in Kosovo or is preparing to lead troops in battle. Mladic is 66 years old,

supposedly in bad health with a dicey heart condition. But two years ago I heard something similar from a French intelligence officer who claimed to have been hunting with Mladic near the

There is no doubt that Mladic is popular among the Serbs in Kosovo. His portrait hangs in many public places throughout the enclaves. I have yet to see one of Karadzic.

rumors continue to point towards more violence connected with the past. Most bridge watchers claim Serbia will get back Kosovo even if it takes another 500 years. Maybe that's why some believe Mladic will go down fighting - to be the myth, the legend, that rouses the troops five centuries from now. Arresting Mladic will not be a popular move for the new Serbian government. But letting him commit "suicide" in Kosovo would be an easy way out for them. Then elements in the Serb army and the nationalists wouldn't have to rescue him from a Belgrade prison.

### MINORITY REPORT

Bosnian-Serbian border while Carla del Ponte, the chief investigator for the ICC, insisted the general was hiding out in Belgrade.

The French intel officer told me that Mladic would never be taken alive. "He's planning to kill himself rather than be captured. It is only a question of negotiating a deal with the Serbian government to give the men guarding him handsome pay outs. Then he will do himself in."

Playing the part of the Serbian Knight who goes down fighting rather than committing suicide does fit in more with Mladic's personality. But whatever the truth, there are many in north Mitrovica who have declared to me that they too will die fighting to defend their Kosovo. One Serbian who used to live in south Kosovo but now lives in the north said he has nowhere else to go. "The blood will be ankle deep," he predicted, "especially if KFOR tries to re-establish the customs posts in the north. We won't allow it. I think that's when Mladic will arrive to lead us."

War talk serves no one in these tense times. But in north Kosovo and especially in north Mitrovica, the

## Man arrested for fraudulently raising funds for KLA martyr Jashari's surviving family

A man who has been attempting to fraudulently obtain money from Kosovar citizens and businesses by claiming it was needed for the family of the martyred founder of the Kosovo Liberation Army, Adem Jashari, was arrested by the Kosovo Police Service on July 24.

Agron Qehaja, born 1985, contacted targets by phone and asked them to make donations of between 500 and 5000 euros into a bank account he had set up. At the time of the arrest police report that Qehaja had succeeded in conning at least one individual or company into depositing 500 euros into the account.

Jashari's image can be seen all over Kosovo ten years after Serbian police surrounded the Jashari family farm outside the village of Donji Prekaz and slaughtered 20 members of the family, including Adem and up to as many as 38 more. Two police officers were killed in

the battle which raged for 27 hours. Jashari and other KLA fighters had been attacking police, killing a number of them, for the previous two years before the authorities launched a series of deadly raids on village strongholds of the KLA.

The official report on the March 5, 2008 attack stated that the "terrorists" had prevented women and children from surrendering, further accusing Jashari of shooting his nephew to prevent him from surrendering.

A Human Rights Watch investigation into the incident reported, "Although it appears that some Albanian villagers in Donji Prekaz were armed and defending themselves against the police, the evidence is overwhelming that the police used excessive and indiscriminate force, and that the police executed at least three people after they had been detained or had surrendered."



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## American lawyer praises Kosovo's legal eagles

THE RESIDENT LEGAL advisor at the US Embassy says he is very proud of the work being done by those employed in the Kosovar judiciary. Jonathon Haub, an Assistant US Attorney from Portland, Oregon, told the Kosov@ Post, "I've had a chance to be in the court rooms and to meet with members of the Kosovo public prosecutor's office. I've seen, first hand, the high integrity of the people in the judiciary and I am quit impressed with the skills, talents and most of all the courage of the people working in the judicial system." Haub added, "They should be paid more and be better protected. They do the best they can with what they have and I am very proud of them."

Haub presided over a certification ceremony for eight University of Pristina law students who graduated the first ever 'live client clinic' program on July 24.

The two semester course was established to provide advocacy skills to Kosovo law students in criminal and civil cases and to provide them with the opportunity to provide legal representation to clients under the direct supervision of licensed Kosovo Chamber of Advocates attorneys. Haub said he was, "privileged to be an

instructor at the clinic. I had a chance to work with the students and the faculty advisors who were doing the work." Haub praised the work of instructors and especially the students. "They are to be congratulated because I found them to be extremely competent and very amenable to suggestions and coaching."

Students had a chance to get real life experience with people who have legal problems and gain their trust. Haub said, "They saw, first hand, what it is to get clients to share their confidences and to develop the skills needed to get their clients to share their problems and confide the truth, which is very difficult to do."

One of the tools employed in that effort is the confidentiality agreement and Haub says the ones used by the students were very carefully worded.

Students also got a chance to hone their courtroom skills and Haub is happy to report that they excelled. "They became more persuasive. They made better eye contact, used more hand gestures, employed more body language. They became far more expressive instead of just reading notes and reciting scripted arguments. They were drawing people in



Jonathon Haub, resident legal advisor U.S. Embassy

with their new communication skills." Every trial lawyer must be mentally nimble and orally articulate and the American emphasized that fact to his students, "Oral advocacy skills are very difficult to refine. Speaking in public is the greatest fear in the world. One of the greatest skills lawyers can have is to speak and think on their feet, as these students did during this class."

Haub said the University of Pristina's law program has come a long way since he was last here. "I was here in 2001 when

there were only enough chairs for one classroom, so students had to wait for a class to finish before they could bring the chairs in and start their own class. At that time we had to photocopy chapters of legal text books."

The school has come a long way since then, and Haub is confident it will continue to make great strides in the effort to reform and improve Kosovo's judicial system and advance towards a society that embraces, with confidence, the ideal of the rule of law.

## Highly respected *Kosovo Express* editor fined by ICTY for contempt of court

BATON HAXHIU, editor of Pristina based daily Kosovo Express, was convicted of contempt of court in the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) for publishing the name of a witness who testified against former Kosovo Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj when he was tried for alleged war crimes by the same court.

The court ruled that the editor had endangered the life of the witness and his family. Haxhiu was fined 7000 euros. The conviction came down on July 24. Maximum penalties for a conviction were seven years in jail and a 100,000 euro fine. Prosecutors had asked the court to impose a 15,000 euro fine.

The witness in question gave testimony at the trials of Ramush Haradinaj, Idriz Balaj and Lahi Brahimag. Haradinaj, the former Prime Minister of Kosovo, was acquitted on April 3 of charges relating to the murder, rape, torture and deportation of Serb civilians during the 1998-99 conflict. The final judgment noted that a "high proportion" of witnesses felt that it was unsafe to give testimony and the acquittal was handed down because of

a lack of evidence.

Presiding judge Alfons Orié stated that Haxhiu's actions, "undermine confidence in the effectiveness of the tribunal's protective measures," and could dissuade witnesses from cooperating with the tribunal.

The witness was supposed to be testifying under the guise of anonymity. Prosecuting attorneys argued that Haxhiu had shown "reckless indifference" by publishing the name.

Haxhiu defended himself by saying that the man's name was already widely known long before he published it.

Haxhiu told the court that he knew the name of the witness four months prior to the trial. "Quite a few people knew his name.... Kosovo is a small country, secrets do not last long, especially when they concern the leaders of an armed struggle against the Serbs during the Kosovo war." Why, then, the editor asked the court, would he have waited until the trial itself to publish the name if his intent was to dissuade the witness and others from testifying?

Lawyers for the defendant contended that the article in

question was principally about the tribunal's investigation into allegations that Kosovo's Minister of Sport and Culture, Astrit Haraqija, along with another individual named Bajrush Morina, pressured the witness. "Given that Mr Haraqija and Morina were under investigation in this matter, I thought that the whole affair had become public, which, in a way, gave me the right to write about it publicly," Haxhiu told the court.

The Associated Press reports that Haxhiu is well respected in the field of journalism, "In 1999, Haxhiu was honored with an International Press Freedom Award by the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists, for his impartial reporting of the crisis in Kosovo and for publishing the independent Pristina daily Koha Ditore, despite harassment and death threats. The paper's offices were torched in 1999 and a guard killed. NATO reported that Haxhiu had been killed, but he had fled to Macedonia. Later he recalled sitting in a basement hideout and watching international news reports of his own death."

# ECONOMY

## Kosova Steel showing positive signs after privatization – but what about other ex-SOEs?



by Ejup Qerimi

Only a few of Kosovo's Socially Owned Enterprises (SOEs) that have been privatized are fully functioning and successfully coping with market conditions and competition. Most ex SOEs are in private hands now, as a result of the privatization process headed by UNMIK Pillar IV, managed by the European Union and implemented by Kosovo Trust Agency (KTA). Privatization efforts have now been taken over by the European Commission.

KTA has managed to privatize more than 60% of Kosovo's SOEs up to now, with another 200 or so to go. As of June 2007, the KTA had tendered around 300 SOEs. KTA sometimes used to split these SOEs into more than one new company and this has created around 500 NewCos. Spin offs from ex SOEs are registered as NewCo's and 100% of shares are sold to private investors. In this way the companies take on new management and new ownership structures. Owing to scrupulous due diligence being conducted by both sides in privatization negotiations, red tape and other difficult transactions of this nature, the KTA has not finalized all contracts. Some NewCo contracts are still pending and I hope they will be signed shortly for the sake of the investors and Kosovo's economy.

The SOEs of Kosovo were not large in number (less than 600) but they played, and continue to play, a critical role in the Kosovar economy. SOEs comprised 90% of Kosovo's industrial assets and prime agricultural real estate - including massive parcels of land suitable for large scale agriculture – as well as 60% of Kosovo's forests.

Are NewCos derived from SOEs able to cope with local and international

competition? Are they going to stick to their core business or are they shifting their activities in other new directions?

Some of the ex SOEs are located in the suburbs of Kosovo's main towns. They were built there some two or three decades ago. Due to the growth of towns, they are now surrounded by residential and commercial areas. What will happen now? Will they be moved to make room for new residential and commercial buildings? Of course, this is up to the owners, the central government and local governments where they are located and licensed. They have to decide based on current legislation and the interests of the owners and society.

Do NewCos need to be restructured? If so, are they able to do that by themselves?

### BUSINESS MATTERS

To whom do they really belong? To the private investors, workers, society, state, municipality? To all of the above? In reality they are owned by private owners but practically they belong to Kosovar society.

Who should be providing support for restructuring, diversification, training and soft loans to finance these businesses? The Central government should be responsible through the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI), or through specialized agencies like the Small and Medium size Enterprises Support Agency or Investment and Export Promotion Agency (IPA).

Kosova Steel - a NewCo in Peja, (ex SOE Zastava - Ramiz Sadiku) – is an example of a successful NewCo.

Established in 1965, the company matured into one of the biggest automotive parts producers in South East Europe. Manufacturing of automotive parts for the Serbian Zastava program of passenger cars and Iveco-Zastava truck chassis was the company's core business. In addition, the factory produced payload long beams for Slovenian FAP-Mercedes vehicles and rear axle housings for Polish passenger cars.

In April 2006 the company was privatized and is now owned by Albanian-American Florin Krasniqi and managed by Mark Culaj.

The company has a 150,000 sqm surface plot in Peja, including a 56,000 sqm covered area with all utilities functioning and in good condition.

Nowadays Kosova Steel is undergoing a total restructuring, headed by Culaj, which strives to revitalize the factory with technological updates while simultaneously overhauling the company's human resources development. The company is in the process of establishing reliable railway contracts for the transportation of the goods it manufactures in Peja for customers in northern Italy.

A large warehouse will be built for the raw materials needed by Kosova Steel. This is going to be a new business utilizing existing facilities that are equipped with a direct railway connection and loading/unloading equipment.

A business incubator for a number of new small enterprises is about to start.

A technology transfer and training center are two other new initiatives which have emerged in Kosova Steel's metamorphosis.

The company has started an ambitious program to become an industry leader in metalworking in Kosovo and the whole neighbouring region. Since the domestic market accounts for but a small share of the company's revenues, Kosova Steel is hungrily eying export markets. Exporting to regional markets and EU member countries is something new for the company and its early success in landing customers in northern Italy bodes well for future forays into the open markets. Opening of a permanent marketing office in Pristina with experienced staff is the next step.

Import of new technologies, such as smart electronic circuits for the revitalization of existing equipment like metal presses, are considered qualitative imports by the management of Kosova steel. They are right because there is no effective and efficient production and export if we do not continually import new technologies, modern equipment and up to date know-how.

No company can grow without well trained workers and Kosova Steel plans to open its own centre where employees and prospective employees will be trained.

If other NewCos can become as successful as Kosova Steel the country will be well on its way to enjoying the fruits of the free markets of Europe and beyond.

*Ejup Qerimi is a former Secretary General of the Kosovo Chamber of Commerce*

## ECLO announces economic privatization and regional development funding

The European Commission Liaison Office (ECLO) announced that it will continue to financially support the privatization of Kosovar enterprises under state control with a 6.5 M euro contribution to the Privatization Agency of Kosovo (PAK). "The purpose of the grant is to provide institutional support to the Privatization Agency in order to support the continuous process of privatization and to start effectively with the liquidation process," ECLO stated in a press release. The announcement was made on July 25.

Up until recently the privatization process was handled by UNMIK Pillar IV, which has now been disbanded.

ECLO Chargé d'Affaires, Kjartan Björnsson, stated, "with this substantial support, the European Commission is hoping that the privatization and liquidation process of Kosovo could be completed within the next few years and thus give a strong impetus to economic growth and employment creation in Kosovo."

The day prior to that announcement ECLO met with regional leaders within Kosovo to discuss economic development priorities. ECLO announced to Kosovar media that it had allocated 6.6 M euros to establish up to five regional economic development agencies.

Björnsson told reporters, "The concept of regional economic development would help foster socio-economic development and reconciliation in the framework of Kosovo's European integration process."

Kosovo authorities were represented by the Minister of Economy and Finance, the Minister of Local Governance Administration, the Minister for Trade and Industry, the Agency for European Integration, the Association of Kosovo Municipalities as well as the mayors of Pristina, Mitrovica, Prizren, and Gjiilan/Gnjilane.

# OPINION

## Arrest of Karadzic takes Serbia towards brighter, more responsible European future

by Richard Cowper



Ratko Mladic and Radovan Karadzic

*International columnist Richard Cowper says Serbia's pragmatic new pro-western government has acted quickly and forcefully to detain one of the world's most wanted war criminal suspects in a bid to propel the country more speedily towards EU candidate status*

The early decision by the new government in Belgrade to arrest Radovan Karadzic, one of the world's most wanted war criminal suspects, means that Serbia is at long last making a fresh attempt to put nearly two decades of bitterness and virulent old-style nationalism behind it and become a good citizen of the "new Europe".

Just two weeks after it was formed the Serbian administration of Boris Tadic and Mirko Cvetkovic has taken an important and decisive step on the path towards eventually joining the European Union, a political change that almost everyone agrees would help bring about a greater degree of stability in the once much-troubled Balkan region.

Countries like Montenegro, Bosnia and Kosovo in particular had until recently demonstrated real concern that a staunchly nationalist Serbia remaining outside the EU and obsessed with dreams of regaining Kosovo might spark a fresh bout of violence in ethnically and strategically sensitive areas such as northern Kosovo and parts of eastern Bosnia.

Karadzic, leader of the ethnic Serbs in Bosnia during the 1992-5 Bosnia war, stands accused of overseeing or inspiring the execution of 8,000 Bosnian Muslims

in Srebrenica - a so-called United Nations "safe haven" for Muslim refugees. Many Western diplomats have long been urging Belgrade to bring him to justice. Not a few Serbs, however, saw and see him as a hero and feel that the trial of their former leader Slobodan Milosevic in The Hague was more than enough to show that the country was willing to pay a real price to put the past behind it.

Heavily disguised in a great white beard that made him look like God in a Michelangelo fresco, Karadzic had been in hiding since 1998 and was eventually captured in the country's capital last Monday. Going under the name Dragan David Dabic he had been masquerading as an expert in new age medicine.

As head of Bosnia's Serbs at a time of atrocities by most sides across the region, Karadzic was seen by Serbs as a leader doing his damndest to prevent the break-up of non-sectarian Serb-dominated Yugoslavia. Often on the front page during the 3 1/2-year Bosnian war, which started after Croatia declared independence from the former Yugoslavia in 1992, he frequently met with international negotiators.

By the time the Bosnia war ended in late 1995 with an estimated 250,000 people dead and more than 1.5 M driven from their homes, Karadzic was regarded - by Bosnians, Croats and the West, at least - as part of an extreme and unsavoury Balkan past. He was charged twice by the United Nations war crimes tribunal with genocide against Bosnia's Croats and Muslims.

In over a decade on the run Karadzic is said to have sometimes disguised himself as a priest and hidden in Serbian Orthodox monasteries and eastern Bosnian caves. According to Serbian secret service officials he had lived in Belgrade for much of the last two years. Many believe that some members of the government in Belgrade knew of his whereabouts all along but in a country deeply split over its past the authorities had not wanted to stir up old animosities by ordering his arrest.

This is no longer the case. After a famous political victory in the aftermath of this May's Serbian general election the newly formed coalition government of President Boris Tadic has chosen to go full steam ahead to join the European Union as soon as is practical. One of the key conditions to securing EU candidate status was the arrest of outstanding ex-Yugoslav wanted war criminals.

To show that he meant business, Tadic quickly sacked Rade Bulatovic, the ruthless head of Serbia's secret police, a man loyal to former nationalist Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica - a change that officials say was essential to spur the country's secret service into capturing Karadzic.

Serbia's decision to cast off its hard-fought reputation as one of the more defiant and singular countries in modern Europe was, however, by no means a foregone conclusion.

Even three weeks ago no one could even have predicted with certainty precisely which parties - radical, nationalist, democrat or socialist - would make up the country's new government, let alone whether after more than a decade on the run the government would be willing or able to capture one of the world's most infamous war suspects.

Just five months ago the country still seemed mired in the past when an angry nationalist mob set fire to the American embassy in Belgrade after the former southern Serb province of Kosovo declared its independence on February 17, leading to the death of one of the demonstrators.

The possibility that Kosovo - regarded by many Serbs as the country's religious, cultural and historic heartland - would become a fresh Balkan flashpoint created consternation throughout the region.

The pragmatic and Western oriented Democrat-led ruling coalition government of Tadic, whose decision it was to arrest Karadzic last Monday evening, so very nearly failed to come into being altogether. A right-wing radical nationalist alliance led by Vojislav Kostunica and Tomislav Nicola - a man notoriously sympathetic to Karadzic - came very close to securing a triumph in the post-May 11 2008 election bartering process. Surprisingly only the decision of former dictator Slobodan Milosevic's Socialist Party to join Tadic's pro-Western coalition made a pro-EU governing coalition possible.

The arrest of Karadzic was quickly welcomed by Western countries that had openly campaigned for Tadic's coalition during the election. The EU, particularly Holland - whose incompetent soldiers did so little to prevent the Srebrenica massacre - had made it clear all along that Karadzic's arrest would be an essential and vital step if Belgrade were to win EU candidate status.

The capture is not only good news for Serbia's attempt to join the EU but also for international justice in general and the functioning of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia in The Hague in particular. The attempt to make politicians, military commanders and soldiers legally responsible for

their actions, even in times of war, is undoubtedly a major advance for humanity but attempts to do this have often been undermined.

The government in Belgrade will now hope to be treated with greater respect in European capitals, but it is still likely to come under fresh pressure to engineer the capture and arrest of its other main alleged war criminal, General Mlatko Radic, who was Karadzic's military commander on the ground in Bosnia. In fact the Serbian authorities said they had found Karadzic while searching for Mladic, a far more outspoken and brazen personality who, until a few years ago, was said to have made regular and daring forays into the heart of old Belgrade.

After the arrest Bernard Kouchner, France's Foreign Minister, said, "There's a long way to go. Okay, Karadzic has been arrested. But Ratko Mladic has not."

Since 1995, both men had topped the UN war crime tribunal's most-wanted list and both had a \$5 M US State Department bounty on their heads. Initially they were charged together, accused of genocide and crimes against humanity, for allegedly orchestrating the bloody siege of Sarajevo during Bosnia's 1992-95 war and the slaughter of up to 8,000 Muslim boys and men in Srebrenica. During Bosnia's war, Srebrenica wound up being overrun by Serbian forces loyal to the late strongman Slobodan Milosevic.

According to prosecutors, in a violent rampage that lasted almost a week, Serb paramilitaries separated men and boys, forced them to strip, killed them and bulldozed their bodies into mass graves, leading to what many say was the worst civilian carnage in Europe since the Second World War. Later many of the bodies were said to have been burnt or moved to other hidden graves, which a leading French policeman spent almost a decade tracking down using the latest DNA and other police techniques.

Although the numbers and exact circumstances are contested by some Serb officials more than 3,000 bodies have yet to be found or formally identified. The Dutch are still taking a tough line. Frans Timmermans, Dutch European Affairs Minister, said this week that the "rules of the game" remained "unchanged".

"Our original demand was that Belgrade cooperate fully with the War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague. That means the arrest and extradition of four war crimes suspects. We now have two. We need another two," he said, referring to Ratko Mladic and to Goran Hadzic, former head of the breakaway Serb republic in Croatia.

EU foreign ministers said Serbia could still "accelerate its progress towards the EU." But in a statement they gave no timeframe for winning candidate status, a crucial rung up the EU ladder that Belgrade would very much like to climb by the end of this year.

Many plaudits will rightly go to Tadic for this historic decision. But he cannot be complacent. Neither can the EU.

It must continue to play its part by focusing less on the past and the tricky issue of Kosovo and more on the incentives of accelerating the easing of visa requirements and freeing up trade possibilities for Serbia. Then both sides will be the clear winners.

Richard Cowper is an economist and foreign policy expert who worked for the *Financial Times of London* for 30 years. He can be contacted at richard@richardcowper.com

# REGION

## Bulgaria's future threatened by corruption

**BULGARIA RISKS LOSING** billions of euros in European Union aid to modernize roads, railways and ports as a result of corruption and mismanagement of pre-accession funding under its socialist-led coalition government, The Financial Times reports.

The bloc's poorest member state is already set to lose at least 600 M euros in pre-accession transfers after a strongly critical progress report by the European Commission, which is expected to be passed by EU foreign ministers this week.

Delays are also looming in the release of up to 4.5 B euros from the bloc's structural funds over the next five years intended to upgrade transport links with the west Balkans, Greece and Turkey.

The transfers would help Bulgaria to sustain high annual growth rates and achieve its goal of becoming south east Europe's transport and energy hub by 2015.

## Croatia copes with fuel crisis

**GASOLINE PRICES IN** Croatia have reached 1.30 euros a litre, the highest ever, and threaten to keep rising but the price of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG), or autogas, is holding steady at 0.45 euros a litre.

It therefore comes as no surprise that about 30,000 Croatians are choosing to fill their tanks with autogas and that number is steadily increasing, according to the Croatian Ministry for Environmental Protection, Physical Planning and Construction.

In its Plan for Protection and Improvement of Air Quality, the ministry provided projected estimates stating that by 2010, 150,000 Croatian drivers will have switched to autogas.

Croatians are a part of a worldwide trend as countries as diverse as Pakistan, Australia and Taiwan are reporting an upsurge in interest in LPG systems.

Pushed to the wall by the soaring cost of gasoline, more drivers are converting their cars to be able to run on autogas and the demand for an LPG system is so high that drivers are waiting weeks for installation.

The LPG system costs approximately 1000 euros, which pays off quickly since the price of autogas is a fraction of gasoline. Eventually, the autogas system yields about 60% in fuel savings when compared to a conventional gasoline burning engine.

Motorists using the cost efficient autogas system say the investment pays off after about 20,000km of driving.

There are also significant environmental advantages to autogas. The fuel does not contain lead or sulfur and the carbon monoxide emission is half that of gasoline, with even less carbon dioxide. As well, the engine life of an autogas powered car is generally longer.

Currently, there are 90 stations that sell autogas in Croatia.

-SEE Times

## Romania cracks down on fraud

**ROMANIA LAUNCHED 95** investigations into suspected fraud cases in 2007, more than any other EU member state, according to the annual report by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF), published July 22.

The report revealed that 60% of the 666 cases investigated in Europe in 2007 came from five member states, Romania, Italy, Germany, Bulgaria and Belgium.

The OLAF report covered several areas such as agriculture, customs transit, cigarettes, pre-accession funds and structural funds. A European Commission report on fund management and the judicial system in Romania and Bulgaria is expected on soon.

The report, which was leaked to the press, placed Romania second to Bulgaria in the rankings of most fraud infractions committed per capita.

## Embassy Row

### ALBANIAN EMBASSY

Address: Hekurudha 1, Qyteza Pejton  
Pristina 10000, Kosovo  
Phone: +381 (0) 38 248 368, 248 208  
Fax: +381 (0) 38 248 209  
E-mail: misioni\_shqiperise@hotmail.com

### AUSTRIAN EMBASSY

Address: Fan S. Noli 2 – Arberia  
Pristina 10000, Kosovo  
Phone: +381 (0) 38 249 284, 249 285  
Fax: +381 (0) 38 549 285  
E-mail: austria@kujtesa.com

### BELGIAN LIAISON OFFICE

Address: Taslixhe 1, 23/A  
Pristina 10000, Kosovo  
Phone: +381(0) 38 734 734  
Fax: +381(0) 38 735 735  
E-mail: pristinadiplomel.fed.be

### BULGARIAN EMBASSY

Address: Ismail Qemali 12 – Arberia  
Pristina 10000, Kosovo  
Phone: +381(0) 38 245 540  
Fax: +381(0) 38 245 543  
E-mail: dbpristina@abv.bg

### CHINESE CONSULATE

Address: Ismail Qemali 47 – Arberia  
Pristina 10000, Kosovo  
Phone: +381 (0) 38 248 508  
Fax: +381(0) 38 249 126

### CROATIAN LIAISON OFFICE

Address: Fehmi Agani 68 – Arberia  
Pristina 10000, Kosovo  
Phone: +381(0) 38 223 978  
Fax: +381(0) 38 223 979  
E-mail: ured.pristina@mvpei.hr

### CZECH REPUBLIC EMBASSY

Address: Ismail Qemali 31 – Arberia  
Pristina 10000, Kosovo  
Phone: +381(0) 38 248 776, 225 860  
Fax: +381(0) 38 248 782  
E-mail: pristinadiplomel.mzv.cz

### EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Address: Rruga e Kosoves 1,  
Pristina 10000, Kosovo  
Phone: +381(0) 38 51 31 321,  
51 31 322, 51 31 323  
Fax: +381(0) 38 51 31 305  
E-mail: ec-liaison-office-kosovo@ec.europa.eu

### EUROPEAN UNION (ICO / EUSR PT)

Address: Ahmet Krasniqi – Arberia  
Pristina 10000, Kosovo  
Phone: +381(0) 38 20 44 201  
Fax: +381(0) 38 20 44 210

### EUROPEAN UNION PLANING TEAM FOR KOSOVO

Address: Mbretresha Teute 21  
Pristina 10000, Kosovo  
Phone: +381(0) 38 51 39 300  
Fax: +381(0) 38 51 39 333  
E-mail: info@eupt-kosovo.eu

### DANISH LIAISON OFFICE

Address: Mother Theresa 2  
Pristina 10000, Kosovo  
Phone: +381(0) 38 248 709

### DUTCH EMBASSY

Address: Ekrem Rexha 17 – Arberia  
Pristina 10000, Kosovo  
Phone: +381(0) 38 224 610, 224 665  
Fax: +381(0) 38 224 665  
E-mail: pri@minbuza.nl

### FINNISH LIAISON OFFICE

Address: Eduard Lir 50 – Arberia  
Pristina 10000, Kosovo  
Phone: +381(0) 38 243 098  
Fax: +381(0) 38 232 863  
E-mail: diplo@fin-kos.org

### FRENCH EMBASSY

Address: Ismail Qemali 67 – Arberia  
Pristina 10000, Kosovo  
Phone: +381(0) 38 224 588  
Fax: +381(0) 38 224 588

### FYR-MACEDONIA LIAISON OFFICE

Address: 24 Maji 121 – Arberia  
Pristina 10000, Kosovo  
Phone: +381(0) 38 247 462  
Fax: +381(0) 38 247 463  
E-mail: macedonialiason@mail.net.mk

### GERMAN EMBASSY

Address: Azem Jashanica 17 – Arberia  
Pristina 10000, Kosovo  
Phone: +381(0) 38 254 500  
Fax: +381(0) 38 254 536  
E-mail: info2pris.auswaertiges-amt.de

### GREECE LIAISON OFFICE

Address: Ismail Qemali 68 – Arberia  
Pristina 10000, Kosovo  
Phone: +381(0) 38 243 013, 247 370  
Fax: +381(0) 38 245 533  
E-mail: grpristina@hotmail.com,  
grpristina@mfa.gr

### HUNGARY EMBASSY

Address: 24 Maji – Arberia  
Pristina 10000, Kosovo  
Phone: +381(0) 38 247 763  
Fax: +381(0) 38 247 764  
E-mail: prs.missions@kum.hu

### ITALY EMBASSY

Address: Abdullah Shabani 3 – Arberia  
Pristina 10000, Kosovo  
Phone: +381(0) 38 244 925  
Fax: +381(0) 38 244 929  
E-mail: segreteria.pristina@esteri.it

### JAPANESE LIAISON OFFICE

Address: Rexhep Mala 43  
Pristina 10000, Kosovo  
Phone: +381(0) 38 245 433, 249 995  
Fax: +381(0) 38 245 434  
E-mail: japankosovo@yahoo.com,  
jlopr@yahoo.com

### LUXEMBOURG LIAISON OFFICE

Address: Metush Krasniqi 14 – Arberia  
Pristina 10000, Kosovo  
Phone: +381(0) 38 226 787  
Fax: +381(0) 38 226 787  
E-mail: lux\_kosovo@ipko.net

### MALAYSIA LIAISON OFFICE

Address: Bedri Shala 48 – Velania  
Pristina 10000, Kosovo  
Phone: +381(0) 38 243 467  
Fax: +381(0) 38 243 464  
E-mail: mwprishtina@mwprishtina.org

### NORWEGIAN EMBASSY

Address: Fidanishtja – Arberia  
Pristina 10000, Kosovo  
Phone: +381(0) 38 248 010  
Fax: +381(0) 38 248 202  
E-mail: norwegianliaisonoffice@ipko.net

### ROMANIAN LIAISON OFFICE

Address: Azem Jashanica 25 – Arberia  
Pristina 10000, Kosovo  
Phone: +381(0) 38 246 272  
Fax: +381(0) 38 246 273  
E-mail: office@romanian-office.ipko.org

### RUSSIAN CHANCERY

Address: Eduard Liri 20 – Arberia  
Pristina 10000, Kosovo  
Phone: +381(0) 38 247 112  
Fax: +381(0) 38 247 113  
E-mail: ruschanemb@kujtesa.com

### SAUDI ARABIAN LIAISON OFFICE

Address: Hotel Grand, Pristina  
Pristina 10000, Kosovo  
Phone: +381(0) 39 249 203

### SLOVAK LIAISON OFFICE

Address: Ismail Qemali 63 – Arberia  
Pristina 10000, Kosovo  
Phone: +381(0) 38 240 140  
Fax: +381(0) 38 249 499

### SLOVENIAN EMBASSY

Address: Anton Ceta 6 – Aktash  
Pristina 10000, Kosovo  
Phone: +381(0) 38 246 255  
Fax: +381(0) 38 246 256  
E-mail: slovenialiason@yahoo.co.uk,  
mpi@gov.si

### SWEDISH LIAISON OFFICE

Address: Ekrem Rexha 6 – Arberia  
Pristina 10000, Kosovo  
Phone: +381(0) 38 245 795  
Fax: +381(0) 38 245 791  
E-mail: SwedishOffice.Pristina@sida.se

### SWISS EMBASSY

Address: Adrian Krasniqi 11  
Pristina 10000, Kosovo  
Phone: +381(0) 38 248 090  
Fax: +381(0) 38 248 078  
E-mail: pri.vertretung@eda.admin.ch

### TURKISH EMBASSY

Address: Imzot Nik Prela – Ulpiana  
Pristina 10000, Kosovo  
Phone: +381(0) 38 548 557  
Fax: +381(0) 38 548 559  
E-mail: tco.pristina@yahoo.com

### UNITED KINGDOM EMBASSY

Address: Ismail Qemali 5 – Arberia  
Pristina 10000, Kosovo  
Phone: +381(0) 38 249 559, 249 801  
Fax: +381(0) 38 549 799  
E-mail: britishoffice.pristina@fco.gov.uk

### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA EMBASSY

Address: Nazim Hikmet 30 – Arberia  
Pristina 10000, Kosovo  
Phone: +381(0) 38 59 59 3000, 549 516  
Fax: +381(0) 38 549 890  
E-mail: ConsularPristina@state.gov

# EYEWITNESS ACCOUNT

## Police attack demonstrators

July 22, 2008

by Stephen Schwartz

**O**n Tuesday, July 22, protests in the south Mitrovica neighborhood of Shupkofc against the placement of a sulfuric acid waste dump there were met by Kosova Police Service action, including 17 arrests. The detentions were carried out without adequate warning, and included brutal manhandling, clubbing and kicking of bystanders as well as protestors.

*I was present at the incident from its beginning at 1:45 pm. This is what I saw:*

At approximately 2 pm the protest began with a handful of people entering the Mitrovica-Pristina roadway. The protest had been organized by the Vetevendosje Self-Determination movement, along with the Miners' Union of Trepca (the large and famous resource extraction complex that dominates Mitrovica), the Ecologist Party, the local Islamic Community, student unions and a few more supporting groups.

The protestors did not have time to assemble a strong line to block the road. A group of French KFOR personnel, including soldiers and Gendarmerie (French national police), identifiable by their uniform insignia and other markings, had gathered on the west side of the road but appeared to serve only as observers. At about 2:03 pm, suddenly, a body of KPS police came marching down the road (in a southward direction). I noticed that once they had arrived they broke from a close formation, half-running and waving their clubs.

Some kind of announcement was audible from the police area but it was impossible for me to tell whether it was an order to disperse. It was brief and was not repeated.

The police moved on the small group of protestors in the roadway and arrested three of them immediately. I was within three meters of the first clash, talking to a French soldier, when it occurred.



Stephen Schwartz

The arrests were brutal; the detained were knocked down with kicks, hit with clubs, their arms pulled behind them and rushed into military trucks parked on the northeast side of the road. The first three were the only people, among the 17 seized by police, who could be seen as obstructing the roadway. The protestors, to repeat, had not had time to form a coherent blockade line when the police showed up.

People with cell phone cameras took pictures of the first arrests and police approached and threatened to arrest them.

The next arrest I witnessed was that of a well-built young man resembling a boxer or wrestler, who said something inaudible to one of the police.

The policeman spoke roughly to him and told him to get off the road. The young man argued passively with the policeman but still in a low tone of voice, yet the policeman became visibly angrier and more threatening. The young man shrugged and turned away and the policeman continued yelling at him; others pulled the young man away to the roadside. I watched as the 'offended' policeman methodically called a group of others over, pointed out the young man and the squad of about five descended, kicking the young man's feet from under him, striking him repeatedly with clubs and then dragging him away. I had seen that the only conduct to which the police

could object, in the case of this young man, was argument.

That seemed to be a pattern for the day – police action in response to free speech. The way had been cleared and the body of protestors was pushed off into the eastern side of the road, where tussling between police and protestors began and more of the latter were arrested. About 15 minutes had passed since the police had come to the spot.

Suddenly, two or three KFOR vehicles flying Greek flags came down the side road from the hills to the east of the road. They drove through the area and headed north, then stopped. Their role was unclear, although one protestor suggested they would be used as backup for transport of the arrested.

At around 2:30 pm the situation had become static, with the remaining band of protestors crowded off the highway and blocked from approaching it by the police. Local residents and other observers, however, lined the western side of the road. Then another body of police rushed down the road from the eastern hillside, suggesting that they had been transported there by the Greek KFOR vehicles. The two police groups had the protestors in a 'sandwich,' as described by another protestor with whom I spoke and they continued to make arrests.

The next developments came when the police formed up a line on the western side of the road and turned their faces toward the spectators there. I was in the watching group and was able to observe the police at close range. Their demeanor was menacing as they appeared ready to attack the bystanders.

Then, from the western side of the highway, spectators were shocked to see the police grab and rough up three young women in the group across the road. The crowd on the western side of the road began whistling and shouting. "They should not beat up those young girls," one man said to me. The three young women were kicked, knocked down, struck with

clubs, their arms twisted, and rushed off to the trucks. All of this was clearly visible and, indeed, was carried out as if to show the others present what awaited them; the group of police opened up so that all present could watch them beating the girls. The police on the western side began voicing threats against the cat-calling members of the public. One policeman tapped his helmet with his club, indicating they were prepared for the same action against those observing the events.

Throughout the incident the French KFOR at the scene played no direct role. But when it was clear that active protestors had been removed from the area, the French KFOR group crossed the road and met with the KPS commander. The police then marched northward, this time in a disciplined manner. One man who had watched the entire incident told me, "the KPS are afraid to enter the Serbian areas of the Mitrovica municipality but are happy to come down and beat up Albanians." He said the KPS were known to have only three months' training, focused on crowd control.

The location, between the Shupkofc local health clinic (on the eastern side of the road) and a petrol station (on the west, overlooking the chemical dump), was now quiet. But again, it appeared that only the first three protestors had been involved in blocking the roadway. About an hour and a half had passed. At 3:30 pm I left and returned to Pristina.

Residents of Shupkofc were outspoken in support for the demonstration. Before the protest began I had talked with two Shupkofc residents. One was an older man who showed me his garden of plum trees, which were blighted by the chemical residue of the acid dump. A woman came to the gateway of her family compound and said that the smell of the dump is a daily problem, making it impossible for people to sit outside or to open their windows during hot nights.

Stephen Schwartz is an internationally-published journalist and regular contributor to the American magazine *The Weekly Standard*. He is the author *Kosovo: Background to a War* (published in Albanian as *Kosova: Prejardhja e Nji Luftë*). He first came to the Albanian lands in 1991 and returns frequently. He was long involved in the U.S. trade union movement, with several years' experience as a railroad worker and labor activist in Richmond, California, USA, a refinery center known for chemical spills and other workplace disasters, as well as for militant strikes. He is the former secretary of the Northern California Media Workers' Guild, AFL-CIO, and a former member of the San Francisco Labor Council. He was a staff writer at the San Francisco Chronicle from 1989 to 1999, after which he retired and came to work in Bosnia - Herzegovina and Kosovo, where his employers included IREX Pro-Media and the International Crisis Group. He has contributed to Bosnian and Albanian language periodicals. He is now executive director of the Center for Islamic Pluralism, a transnational think-tank - [www.islamicpluralism.org](http://www.islamicpluralism.org).



# Trepça miners: fighting for justice since the Spanish Civil War

In the worldwide history of trade unions, miners are justifiably known for their militancy. This is understandable: mining is the riskiest of any industrial labor. Further, however, miners were also traditionally skilled in the use of explosives, which gave them a strategic edge in confrontations with corporate power. And finally, the location of mines, often in socially-marginalized regions like Appalachia in the U.S., Wales, and Asturias in Spain, has turned miners' unions into movements for broader social progress.

In American history, the United Mine Workers (UMW) has long been known as a special element in a fading labor scene. In Spain, the miners of Asturias are legendary for their radical activism; in 1934 they led an unsuccessful uprising of the united left. Those who desire a quick introduction to this history should watch the 1976 documentary film *Harlan County USA* or the Spanish television miniseries *Los jinetes del alba* (Dawn Riders).

The Miners' Union (Sindikata e Minatorëve) at the Trepça mining and chemical complex in northern Kosovo is equally distinguished, in the Balkan region, as a militant union. Trepça is considered a major economic asset for Kosovo and has been the object of considerable controversy between Serbs and Albanians over its ownership, even though its technology is badly outdated. But even before the Kosovo war of 1998-99, the miners of Trepça were a prominent factor in political and social developments. In addition, the miners' football club, FK Trepça, is one of the most popular in the republic.

Communist organizing of the miners dated back decades and Trepça was known to have mobilized aid for the Spanish Republic during that country's 1936-39 civil war. The miners were also, of course, a major element in the labor system in Communist Yugoslavia. But in the aftermath of the provocative 1987 visit to Kosovo of Slobodan Milosevic, the Trepça miners led a series of dramatic protests in support of the Tito legacy and national equality within Yugoslavia. A 12-kilometer march by 1,000 miners in 1988 gained world attention and it was followed by a 10-day hunger strike in February 1989 by miners inside the pits. Some 5,000 supporters of the miners were arrested. Serbia then abolished the autonomy of Kosovo.

The Los Angeles Times reported on the latter events, on February 25, 1989, "About 40,000 Albanians in the (then) republic of Serbia refused to work on Friday in support of striking miners.... Yugoslav Communist Party leader Stipe Suvar spent three hours 3,000 feet underground in a futile meeting with strikers at the Trepça lead, zinc and silver mine in the autonomous Kosovo province. Although he would not comment on the meeting, sources said he had been told by Aziz Abrasi, the director of the mine, that the strikers said, 'You can have us out only in our coffins.' Throughout the province, schools and most businesses closed.... Serbian leaders have asserted that they must have more control in Kosovo to protect the mainly Christian Slav minority allegedly persecuted by predominantly Muslim ethnic Albanians."

A year later, on February 28, 1990, a new Independent Union of Miners was organized at Trepça, but in August of the same year Serbian authorities locked out the miners. A general strike was called and 170,000 Albanian workers were fired. Consistently, however, the Trepça union has advocated for unity of Serbian and Albanian workers.

Their support for the Shupkofc protests shows that the militant commitment of the Trepça miners has not diminished. Efforts are underway to bring the Shupkofc case to the attention of the U.S. United Mine Workers and the global International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers' Unions (ICEM), headquartered in Brussels.



Darfur: reality is not for the squeamish

## Is international justice the enemy of peace?

By Aryeh Neier

IT IS ONLY a little more than fifteen years ago that the first of the contemporary international courts was created to prosecute those who commit war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide. That court, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, may soon mete out justice to a new defendant, following the arrest in Belgrade of Radovan Karadzic, wartime leader of Bosnia's Serbs.

Yet there is already a persistent theme in criticism of such tribunals: in their effort to do justice, they are obstructing achievement of a more important goal, peace. Such complaints have been expressed most vociferously when sitting heads of state are accused of crimes. The charges filed by the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court against Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir for crimes against humanity and genocide in Darfur are the latest example. Indeed, the denunciations of the justice process this time are more intense and more vehement than in the past.

The complaints were also loud in 1995, when the ICTY's prosecutor indicted Karadzic and his military chief, General Ratko Mladic, and even louder when they were indicted again later in the same year for the massacre at Srebrenica. The timing of that second indictment especially

aroused critics, because it came just before the start of the Dayton peace conference. Because they faced arrest, Karadzic and Mladic did not go to Dayton.

But, as matters turned out, their absence did not hinder the parties from reaching an agreement. Indeed, it may have helped as the leaders of Bosnia, Croatia, and Yugoslavia negotiated an end to the war in Bosnia.

In 1999, the ICTY indicted Slobodan Milosevic, President of Yugoslavia, for crimes committed in Kosovo. Again, there were denunciations that focused on timing. NATO's intervention in Kosovo was underway, and critics claimed that prosecuting Milosevic made the tribunal an arm of NATO and would prevent a settlement. That prediction was wrong. Milosevic capitulated two weeks after he was indicted, and the war ended.

The next sitting head of state to be indicted was Liberian President Charles Taylor. Although the prosecutor for the Special Court for Sierra Leone indicted Taylor in March 2003 for his crimes in the war that had devastated that country, the indictment was not disclosed publicly until three months later. Again, timing was a principal factor in sparking outrage. The indictment was made public in June 2003, while Taylor was attending a peace conference in Ghana that was intended to settle the civil war in his own country.

As hosts of the conference, the

Ghanaians were particularly incensed at being asked to make an arrest under such circumstances, and refused to do so. Though it is possible to sympathize with the Ghanaians, who were placed in a very awkward position, the indictment intensified demands for Taylor's removal. He fled into exile in August, effectively ending the war. Taylor is now being tried in The Hague, and, after two decades of horrendous conflict, Liberia is at peace and rebuilding under a democratic government.

We cannot rule out the possibility that doing justice in Darfur will make it more difficult to achieve peace there. Justice and peace are independent values. Each is immensely important in its own right. In the long run, doing justice seems a way to contribute to peace, but one cannot be sure that things will work out that way every time.

On the basis of the record so far, however, some skepticism seems in order over the claim that justice will obstruct peace. After all, the conflict in Darfur has been underway for five and a half years. An estimated 300,000 people have been killed by forces ultimately controlled by al-Bashir, and an estimated 2.7 million have been forcibly displaced. Just a week before the indictment, seven African Union and UN peacekeepers were killed and 22 injured during an ambush by well-armed militiamen. No peace settlement is

under serious consideration. So what basis is there for suggesting that the indictment of al-Bashir is obstructing a settlement? What settlement is there to obstruct?

It should be noted that the Darfur case was referred to the ICC by the UN Security Council. The treaty establishing the ICC empowers the Security Council to delay a prosecution if this is needed to bring about a peace settlement. So critics of the indictment should at least be made to bear the burden of demonstrating to the Security Council that a peace settlement is likely if they wish the Council to act.

The world embarked on the creation of international criminal tribunals a decade and a half ago in order to end the impunity with which heads of state and leaders of guerrilla groups commit atrocious crimes. As the arrest of Karadzic shows, that effort is gradually succeeding. The indictment of al-Bashir, who is as entitled to the presumption of innocence as any other defendant, is another important milestone on the long road that must be traveled to reach the goal that the world set for itself.

Aryeh Neier, the president of the Open Society Institute and a founder of Human Rights Watch, is the author most recently of *Taking Liberties: Four Decades in the Struggle for Rights*.

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# FOOD

## High class (yet affordable) dining on the outskirts

### RRON RESTAURANT

Pellagonia – Veternik

Pristina

044 347 777

rron\_restaurant@yahoo.com

By Shannon Rice

WHEN RRON RESTAURANT opened its doors in June 2003 it set a new standard for high-class dining in Kosovo. The restaurant has a completely unique look both inside and out as a result of being fashioned by local designer Gezim Puka. The rich interior décor features a live fireplace (nice during the cold winter), comfortable padded chairs with matching table linens and an impressive ceiling-high modern bar. Behind a wall of plate glass windows that slides open in the summer is a large outdoor seating area in the adjoining garden along with a small playground for the kiddies.

Rron Restaurant is owned by three friends who split the work into morning and evening shifts. Shpend Selimi works the restaurant floor in the evenings and you'll find him sitting at the end of the bar nearly every night as his other partner works in the kitchen. Shpend has plenty of experience as a restaurateur with Rron Café Bar in Pristina, which opened in 1991 and remains open to this day. Shpend hopes to open another high class restaurant with a unique interior design by Gezim Puka in the future, possibly resetting the standard of high-class dining yet again.

On to the food! The oversized menu is full of appetizers, salads, meat, fish, pasta and even pizza. The steak has frequently been voted as some of the best available around Pristina and the fish arrives fresh twice weekly from Albania. A pleasant dining surprise is finding a baked potato on the side of your steak, however, disappointingly, they aren't always served but when it is enjoy it as Rron is one of the few places where you can find real baked potatoes. The lamb dishes are very popular and the restaurant can run out of the daily supply early in the evening, so if your heart (or a bit lower, stomach) is set on having lamb, best to ask when you make a reservation.

One of the my favourite things comes on the house in the form of "just out of



### SHPEND'S MENU SUGGESTIONS

**Appetizer:** Mixed Mushroom Special – Up to 4 varieties of grilled Kosovar mushrooms

**Main Course:** Pasta with Scampi

**Dessert:** Tiramisu

### SHANNON'S "CAN'T GO WRONG" SUGGESTIONS

**Appetizer:** Fungi Chardonay – Grilled Mushrooms marinated in wine

**Main Course:** Pfeffer Steak – Fillet with a sauce of pepper corn, cream and brandy

**Fish:** Calamari Frutti Di Mare – Stuffed with seafood, served with a tomato & garlic sauce

**Dessert:** Mousse au Chocolat

the oven" brown bread bruschetta and a basket of warm assorted homemade breads with two little cups of ajvar and herbed Philadelphia cream cheese. In fact it's easy to fill up on the warm bread before the meal starts, so work the self-control and save room for the delicious appetizers, main dishes and, if there is still room, dessert!

With a sky-high bar, you will find that Rron stocks plenty of the good stuff. There is a nice selection of red and white wines from Italy, France, Spain and Kosovo, although the upright storage of the bottles above the fireplace does make

a wine buff wonder. A nice gesture on the part of the restaurant is the offer of a complimentary drink at the end of the meal which can range from small chilled glasses of limoncello to martini glasses of flaming Sambuca con Mosca (sambuca with a few coffee beans).

Despite the stylish interior and the excellent food at Rron the prices are quite reasonable. Naturally, being able to dine in a high-class restaurant and not be forced to pay an arm and leg makes Rron an extremely popular choice with local politicians and high-ranking officials of the various international organizations. For that reason, dinner reservations are highly recommended, even for a couple.

We certainly won't blame you for forgetting you're in Kosovo when you step in the door of Rron Restaurant and are magically transported to a high-class restaurant that could easily be found in a European metropolis. At Rron, you can expect a rewarding dining experience with plenty of little gratis extras.



## FOOD & DRINK GUIDE

### PRISTINA RESTAURANTS

**BISTRO ODYSSEA**  
Perandori Justinian – Peyton  
044-556-444

**CANTINA MEXICAN**  
Qamil Hoxha 7/1  
044/ 049/ 038 – 710 710

**COUNTRY HOUSE**  
044-444-710

**DE RADA**  
UCK, No 50  
038-222-622

**GORENJE RESTAURANT**  
Veternik  
038-557-700

**GRESA**  
Fehmi Agani 23  
038-245-841

**HANI I 2 ROBERTEVE**  
Luan Haradinaj – Youth  
Center of Pristina  
044-112 609 / 044- 117 219

**HOME**  
Migjeni 27  
044-336-336

**MOZAİK**  
Sulejman Vokshi, H1  
038-247-63

**MUMTAZ MAHAL**  
Indian Restaurant  
Ahmet Krasniqi – Arberi  
044 114 726

**PANNE VINO'S**  
Fehmi Agani, No 10  
044- 177 899

**PINOCCHIO**  
24 Maj, No115  
044-202 952

**PISHAT**  
Qamil Hoxha 11  
038-245-333

**PJATA**  
Gazmend Zajmi, No1  
038 220 739

**PURO**  
Veternik  
044-658-515

**RINGS 2**  
Luan Haradinaj  
038-244-290

**RRON**  
Veternik  
044-347-777 / 044 141-215

**SELECT BISTRO**  
Fehmi Agani 1/1  
044 694 811

**TIFFANY'S**  
Fehmi Agani  
044-350-550

**TOKYO BAR**  
Bekim Berisha, No2 –  
Arberia  
044 988 578, 044 373 537

**VILLA GERMIA**  
Germia's Park  
044-517-741

**XIX**  
Luan Haradinaj, No2  
044-300-002

### BARS/CAFES

**APARTMENT 195**  
Garibaldi  
044-410-021

**AVENUE BAR**  
Fehmi Agani 48  
04-610-210

**LOUNGE 19**  
Garibaldi 19  
044-208-092

**LEGERE**  
Perandori Justinian 2 –  
Peyton  
044-221-829

**MYC**  
Garibaldi 21  
044-210-325

**PHOENIX**  
Brigada  
044 12 45 84

**PUBLICO**  
Garibaldi 7  
044 62 69 27

**STRIP DEPO**  
Rexhep Luci  
038-222-888

### CLUBS

**FLIRT**  
Youth center of Pristina  
049 646 464

**CUBE**  
Johan Hahn 2  
044-124-584

**DEPO**  
UCK  
044-246-707

**SPRAY**  
Veternik  
044-118-518

### FAST FOOD

**MAXIMUM BURGER**  
Rexhep Luci 20/1

**ROUTE 66**  
Luan Haradinaj  
038-227 225

**METRO SANDWICH SHOP**  
Garibaldi 3/1  
044-113-000

**BOSNA 2**  
Mother Theresa  
044-375-436

**BOSNA 4**  
Perandori Justinian – Peyton  
038-245-919

### BAKERIES

**LUMI**  
Anton Ceta  
044-115 586

**SARANDA**  
Nazim Gafurri

### FERIZAJ RESTAURANTS

**ROMANTIKA**  
290 28 28 3

**LAUSANE**  
044 142 397

**TOPILLA**  
044 287 531

**NATURAL**  
Sojeve – Ferizaj  
044 205 537, 044 323 378

### PEJA RESTAURANTS

**ART DESIGN**  
Center  
039-431496 / 039 144-622

**CALIFORNIA**  
Center  
044-348-467

### PRIZEN RESTAURANTS

**SHEHZADE QEBABTORE**  
Shadervan Square

**TRATTORIA DUE FRATELLI: GREAT ITALIAN FOOD**  
A. Zurnaxhiu 10  
044 198 710

### GJAKOVA RESTAURANTS

**RESTAURANT TE JUPAT**  
Old government  
044-129-389

**HOTEL & RESTAURANT ROMA**  
044-602-009

# The stressed-out brain

by Bruce S. McEwen

NEW YORK – Stress contributes to the onset of cardiovascular disease and depression, among other illnesses. And it is not only major stressful life events that exact a toll on our bodies; the many conflicts and demands of daily life elevate and sometimes disrupt the workings of our response systems for stress, causing wear and tear on the body and brain.

This burden of chronic stress, called “allostatic overload,” reflects not only the impact of life experiences but also our genetic constitution. Moreover, individual habits such as diet, exercise, the quality and quantity of sleep, and substance abuse also play a major role, as do early life experiences that set life-long patterns of behavior and physiological reactivity.

There are three categories of stress:

\* Positive stress, for which a person feels rewarded by surmounting a challenge.

\* Tolerable stress, which results from serious life events – for example, divorce, death of a loved one, loss of a job – but where the affected person has good support systems.

\* Toxic stress, which involves the same types of serious events, as well as the accumulation of daily struggles, but without good support systems.

The difference between tolerable and toxic stress depends on the perceived degree of control that a person experiences. Moreover, low self-esteem exacerbates a feeling of helplessness and lack of control. Social support by friends and family is vital to ameliorating the effects of tolerable stress and keeping it from becoming toxic.

These are all functions of the brain – the key organ in our response to stress. The brain interprets what is threatening and, therefore, stressful; regulates behavioral and physiological stress responses – the latter through the autonomic, immune, and neuroendocrine systems; and is a target of stress, undergoing structural and functional remodeling of its circuits that affects its performance. This remodeling includes limited replacement of neurons in the hippocampus, a brain region important for spatial memory and memory of events in our daily lives.

The recognition of the brain’s vulnerability and plasticity under stress began with investigations of the hippocampus, and it now includes the

amygdala, a brain region involved in fear, anxiety, and mood, and the prefrontal cortex, which is important in decision making, memory, and top-down control of impulsive behavior, as well as regulation of the autonomic nervous system and stress hormone axis. Repeated stress causes neurons in the hippocampus and the prefrontal cortex to shrink and lose

Hormones associated with stress protect the body and brain in the short run and promote adaptation, but the chronic activity of these same hormones brings about changes in the body that cause allostatic overload, along with its potential follow-on diseases. For example, the immune system is enhanced by acute stress but suppressed by chronic

the rest of our lives – for example, abuse and neglect in childhood increase our vulnerability to physical and mental disorders, including obesity, cardiovascular disease, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse, and antisocial behavior.

Among the most potent causes of stress in adult life are those arising from competitive interactions between animals of the same species, leading to the formation of dominance hierarchies. Psychosocial stress of this type not only alters cognitive function in lower-ranking animals, but it can also promote disease (for example, atherosclerosis) among those vying for the dominant position.

Social ordering in human society is associated with gradients of disease, with an increasing frequency of mortality and morbidity as one descends the scale of socioeconomic status, which reflects both income and education. Although the causes of these gradients of health are very complex, they are likely to reflect, with increasing frequency at the lower end of the scale, the cumulative burden of coping with limited resources and stressors as well as differences in lifestyle, and the resulting allostatic overload that this burden places on the physiological systems involved in adaptation and coping.

The brain’s response to stress does not necessarily constitute “damage” per se and is amenable to reversal as well as prevention by treatments that include drugs, exercise, diet, and social support. And, because the social environment has powerful effects through the brain on the rest of the body, public and private-sector policies can have a positive impact on health, providing a top-down benefit to brain and body function.

This may occur through policies that improve education, provide better housing, improve commuting, regulate working conditions, increase availability of health foods, and provide tax relief for those in the lower and middle classes. Such policies might well prevent disease, thereby saving money, reducing human suffering, and promoting healthier and more meaningful lives.

Bruce S. McEwen is a researcher in the Laboratory of Neuroendocrinology at Rockefeller University, New York.

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## STRESS REDUCTION KIT



**BANG  
HEAD  
HERE**

### DIRECTIONS:

1. PLACE KIT ON FIRM SURFACE.
2. FOLLOW DIRECTIONS IN CIRCLE OF KIT.
3. REPEAT STEP 2 AS NECESSARY, OR UNTIL UNCONSCIOUS.
4. IF UNCONSCIOUS, CEASE STRESS REDUCTION ACTIVITY.

connections with other nerve cells, while it also causes neurons in the amygdala to grow and form new connections.

Because the remodeling of neurons by stress is reversible, researchers now believe that chronic anxiety disorders and depression represent a lack of resilience, or spontaneous recovery, in susceptible individuals. Such a lack of recovery then requires medication, behavioral interventions, or both.

stress. By the same token, the brain shows enhanced activity during acute stress, with improvement in certain types of memory, but undergoes structural changes that increase anxiety and decrease mental flexibility and memory capacity as a result of chronic stress.

Developmental influences involving the quality of parenting and acquisition of attachment have a powerful influence on subsequent stress vulnerability during

# Kosovo's dream football match against Brazil fades to black but coach remains hopeful for the future of the game in the country

**A DREAM FOR KOSOVO** football fans turned into a recurring political nightmare when the national team's efforts to play the Olympic team of Brazil was scuttled last week. The hoped for match was to take place in Geneva on July 25 but what looked like a good bet turned into a losing wager when word leaked out to the media before arrangements could be finalized.

National team coach Edmond Rugova, told the Kosov@ Post that the game was almost a done deal. "A bunch of messages went back and forth between our federation, the agent, FIFA and the Brazilian federation and we thought we had a deal. We had agreed that we would not make an announcement to the media until we had a confirmation." But word, somehow, leaked out to the press and that's when the wheels started to come off.

***"So long as I am here any player with the talent to compete for a place in the side of the national team will have a chance to do so, whether they are of Serb, Turk, or Bosnian ethnicity."***

**Coach Rugova**

Rugova believes, as does everyone, that the Serbian football federation applied pressure on both FIFA and the Brazilian federation. Rugova thinks that the Serbs will also attempt to derail matches against the national teams of Benin and Saudi Arabia that are tentatively scheduled for August 19 and 22, also in Switzerland. "The Serbs are going to do whatever they are going to do but I have to say that it is naive and foolish and a testament to the world of the hatred they hold in their hearts. I am really, really disappointed but we will do what we deem to be right," said Rugova.

Coach Rugova made a point of expressing his gratitude for the kindness Kosovars have found in Switzerland. "We very much appreciate Switzerland's support and with the large number of Kosovars living in Switzerland we are confident the stadium will be filled." If the matches go ahead.

The aborted match against Brazil was being arranged by Marc Biolley of Matchworld Football. Biolley was evasive about how, exactly, the match came to naught, saying only that FIFA did not give its approval in time for all arrangements to be made. The call came from FIFA on July 18, while Rugova was taking care of travel arrangements.

"You can imagine how disappointed our kids were. We were very excited. We are talking about playing a five time champion of the world (Brazil). Considering where



**National team coaching staff, Genc Hoxha, Edmond Rugova and Bahri Berisha**

we are here, in Kosovo and the difficulties we face, it was very exciting news. For at least 20 years now the youth of Kosovo have never had a chance to compete internationally," lamented Rugova.

Rugova said his team will soldier on despite the disappointment. "I love these kids. But they are used to being rejected and they told me not to be disappointed. I told them I will do everything I possibly can to get them to where they deserve to be. All we need is a little bit of understanding and support and the rest we can do."

Should the match against Saudi Arabia come to be it will be a chance for the Saudis to avenge last year's loss to Kosovo in Ankara, Turkey. That match took place mostly because word of it did not leak out. "We got three days notice ourselves, so there was no time for anyone to stop the match, if they wanted to."

Last year's Saudi game came six months prior to Kosovo's February 17 declaration of independence and it was a coup, no matter the result. Rugova recalls, "They sent us there saying 'this is great, just don't embarrass us. Just don't get killed over there.'" Rugova fielded a team of kids anchored by two Kosovars who play club football in Belgium and Switzerland and they did not disappoint the faithful. Rugova smiles as he remembers, "They put their hearts and souls into that game and we pulled off a shocker by winning 1-0."

The coach is confident that Kosovo has a very bright future in international football. Perhaps a little overly confident, in fact, "If we get the opportunity to play on the international stage we will be no less than one of the most advanced teams in Europe and the world, as well."

However, contrary to what most would believe, Kosovo does have a fair deal of football talent. Rugova says of his boast, "I say that with the idea that a bunch of our kids have left Kosovo and that they will return from England, Germany, Holland, Italy, France, Switzerland to play for the

national side, once we are recognized by the UN and FIFA. And they have been declaring that it would be an honour to play for the national side of Kosovo." Furthermore, said the coach, "When you consider that 63% of Kosovo's population is under the age of 30 you can understand that we have a bright future."

Rugova managed to convince Kosovo's football diaspora to return to Pristina to play a match against the Kosovo Selects in June and Rugova liked what he saw,

***Rugova told the Kosov@ Post that Turkey has agreed to play his side in Pristina in the near future.***

"There was a lot of talent on that field."

As can be expected, a shortage of money hinders Rugova's quest. The coach would like to have a big enough budget to travel to Europe to scout Kosovo's diaspora in club matches and bring them home to train with those who have yet to sign contracts abroad.

Ethnic tensions and hostilities may also prevent Rugova from ever fielding the best squad available to him. The coach extended invitations to two Kosovar Serbs – one plays for Lazio in Italy's Serie A, the other for Dynamo in Moscow – but both players declined the invitations. However, Rugova says, "So long as I am here any player with the talent to compete for a place in the side of the national team will have a chance to do so, whether they are of Serb, Turk, or Bosnian ethnicity." And, strange as it may seem at this point in history, that may well, one day, happen. Rugova points to the fact that Kosovar Serbs have competed with and against Kosovar Albanians in basketball.

A lack of sound infrastructure is an impediment to the growth of football in Kosovo but Rugova explained that Kosovars managed to keep playing footie through the worst of times. "We have managed to survive and live under the most brutal conditions here. Our kids went out and played games in the woods because we had no access to proper playing fields. They would have to hide their uniforms or risk being beaten up. But they kept playing and we will survive and move forward with our dream."

Part of that dream are retrofits of Kosovo's two major stadiums in Pristina and Mitrovica. As is, the Pristina stadium does not even have functioning toilets and that's a problem for thirsty football fans. But where there is a will to play there will be found a way to play and Rugova told the Kosov@ Post that Turkey has agreed to play his side in Pristina in the near future. No date has been set for that match and it may take a little longer than Rugova would like because the head of the Turkish football federation died of a heart attack shortly after his national team's remarkable, breath taking run at the recently concluded European Championships in Austria and Switzerland.

No matter what shape the Pristina stadium is in for the hoped for match against the Turks, Rugova says it will, eventually, be refurbished, as will the Mitrovica grounds. Looking onto his crystal ball Rugova envisages the bulldozing of the current Pristina stadium and a new, state of the art facility being built, perhaps on the outskirts of the city.

For the time being, however, Rugova says he has plenty of work to do and he will mostly leave the politicking to his federation's officials. "My job is to build a national team that will be competitive when we finally get a chance to enter international competitions."

Good luck to you, coach.

# DARK SIDE OF THE MOON

## We need a space for books – immediately

by trinity little

*A room without books is like a body without a soul.*

*Cicero*

**THE BEST PLACE** to wait to meet a friend - not that anyone ever wants to wait but sometimes friends can be that way - is at the book tables near the Hotel Grand. The time you will spend while waiting will not be wasted time because you will have an opportunity to check out the new books available at this eclectic little marketplace.

A few days ago, while I was waiting for a friend near that book market, I found some very good, old books that cannot be found in the bookshops. They were published in the 1980s, with splendid translations into Albanian.

I asked the bookseller where he got those books from. Compassionately, he replied, "People have started to sell their personal libraries. They are selling old editions and I'm buying them for a good price."

It made me sad that people are being forced to sell their personal libraries. That feeling of sadness came upon me instantly... viscerally. I *love* books. The idea that people have to sell their cherished books seems... well, *wrong* is the best word. However, my mood lightened quickly when the bookseller informed me that many of those who have been selling their personal libraries have mostly been



Salman Rushdie

trading their books in for newer editions that they cannot afford.

Not surprisingly, when my friend arrived and we found our way to a café we were discussing, you guessed it, books! We pondered who is to blame for the fact that people here don't read much? Is it really necessary to market books like dresses or laundry soap?

The conversation revealed to us many problems. Understanding that books are too expensive, given our living standards, the poor state of Kosovo's economy must be blamed for our country's troubling trend toward illiteracy (no, that is not a spelling mistake or a typo - I mean *all*iteracy, not illiteracy but if you don't know what I mean think of asexuality). Book prices are higher than we can afford due, largely, to

the taxes that every bookshop has to pay for books that are imported from abroad. If you want a country filled with alliterates and illiterates, tax books heavily. I would really like to know where the tax money imposed on and collected from books goes. We are a poor country and need money for many things but should part of it come at the price of discouraging people from reading?

Next, my friend and I concluded that the younger generations do not pay as much attention to books as they do to other things. Another reason for creeping Albanian illiteracy, we decided, is the poor taste of readers. Who can blame people for not wanting to read when what they

Lastly, my friend and I discussed the amount of attention paid to books by our media. No Kosovar media organ reviews books. Not the daily or weekly newspapers and certainly not the TV stations. The least the media should do is make people aware of the new titles and editions that are available. I have never seen a TV program dedicated to our writers and poets and there is no space for readers to debate. This is what is happening! Our media should dedicate air time and page space for books and they should do so **IMMEDIATELY!**

The next day, while I was having my morning café, I was fascinated by the waiter. He is a student of psychology.



Nazi book burning, 1933

read is not worth reading? Then, perhaps in an effort to exonerate them, we decided that a poor selection of quality literature was to blame for people's disinterest in books.

I had asked the bookseller who are the most peddled authors and he mentioned lots of 'nonsense authors' like Danielle Steel, Scot Peak, Paulo Coelho, etc, etc. I was wondering why people read the works of such authors, in which I don't see anything artistic, philosophic, of literary value or anything else worthy. Why don't they read more of Salman Rushdie, Orhan Pamuk, Herman Hesse, or classic authors like Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy, Virginia Wolf, Jane Austen etc.? And don't they risk some sort of brain damage by reading pulp trash the same way a person risks a heart attack and other serious ailments by eating unhealthy food?

I explained to my friend that I am amazed with older editions of books because they were translated better. In old translations the language used was pure; they didn't include foreign slangs like today's translators do.

We were having a discussion about the book *Kite Runner*, by Khaled Hosseini, which has also been made into a movie. We spoke to each other about our private libraries. He told me about his room, so filled with books that he only has space for a bed and nothing more in it. I sadly told him about my father's and brother's library, which was burned during the last war. Telling him that, he cited *Almansor* by Heinrich Heine, "Wherever they burn books they will also, in the end, burn human beings." And, sure enough, they did. According to Heine's quote my whole family was burned. Sad but true.

But this is no reason for us to forget about the books, for in their loss we have gained a greater love and passion for them. But must others try to destroy your dreams in order for you to have greater dreams?

I will end this by quoting Salman Rushdie, "I grew up kissing books and bread." We need to attempt to instill a love of reading in our young people by making them aware of Rushdie's sentiment. Let it be a quote of your morning day.



**Grand Hotel Prishtina**

E-mail: [info@grandhotel-pr.com](mailto:info@grandhotel-pr.com) | [reception@grandhotel-pr.com](mailto:reception@grandhotel-pr.com)  
Address: Mother Theresa, 10000 Prishtina, Kosova  
Tel: +381 38 220-210 / 220-211 / Ext: 359 Fax: +381 38 248-138

# FUN & GAMES

Sudoku 1

			8	9	1	5	2	
		2	3					9
	5	9					6	8
	6		2			9	5	
		1		5		8		
	8	5			9		7	
4	3					1	9	
2					6	4		
9	8	1	4	2				

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Sudoku 2

	5	3		8		9		6
4		7			9	3		
6	9						2	
3			9				6	
7	1		6		5		9	3
	6			2				4
	7						8	5
		5	8			1		2
8		6		2		7	3	

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## Last week's answers

Sudoku

2	7	9	4	8	6	1	5	3
4	8	1	3	7	5	6	2	9
6	3	5	2	1	9	4	8	7
7	6	4	5	2	3	8	9	1
3	1	8	7	9	4	2	6	5
9	5	2	1	6	8	3	7	4
8	9	3	6	4	7	5	1	2
5	2	7	8	3	1	9	4	6
1	4	6	9	5	2	7	3	8

Sudoku

2	6	4	1	7	5	9	8	3
1	9	3	6	4	8	7	5	2
7	5	8	2	3	9	6	4	1
5	4	2	7	8	6	3	1	9
9	3	7	4	5	1	2	6	8
6	8	1	3	9	2	5	7	4
4	2	5	9	1	7	8	3	6
3	7	6	8	2	4	1	9	5
8	1	9	5	6	3	4	2	7

## This week's hints

Sudoku 1

24	25	26						7
27	28			8	29	1	9	
30			36	37	38	2		
10	11		39	40				41
12	13		42		43		14	31
3			32	15		16		17
		18	44	45	46			33
	19	4	34	35			20	21
22						5	6	23

Sudoku 2

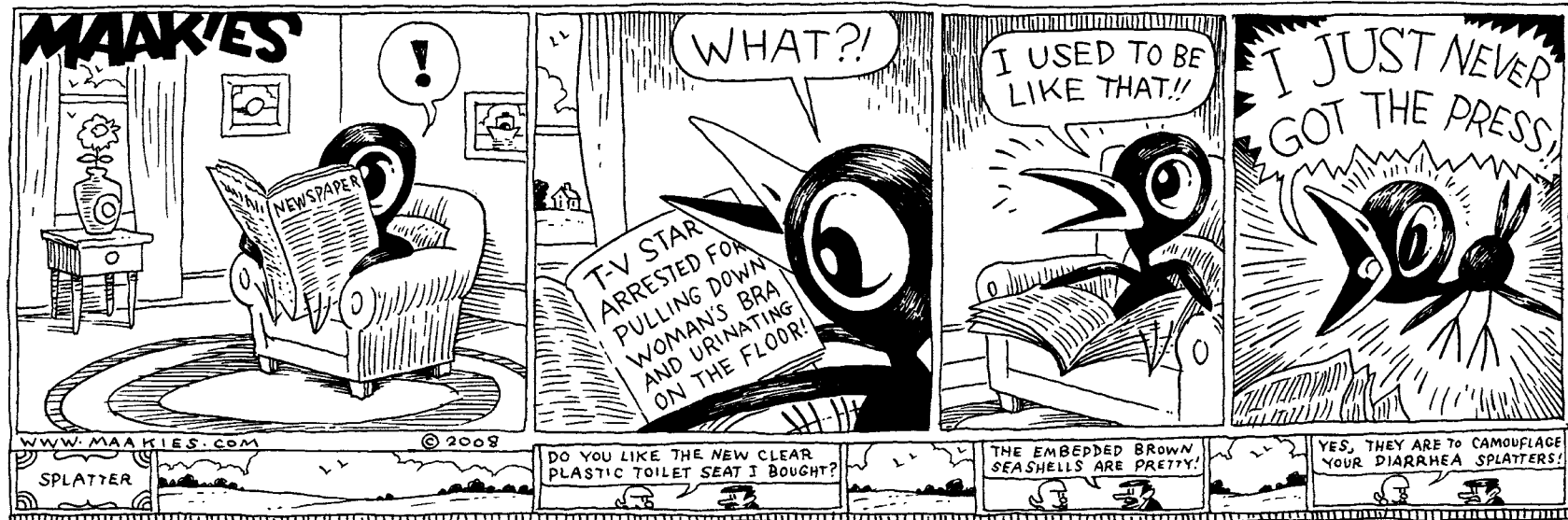
21			38		33		27	
	22		28	34			29	23
		16	43	44	39	17		30
	18	19		31	32	14		24
		15		1		12		
7		13	45	40		8	25	
26		20	41	42	35	9		
2	10			36	37		3	
	4		11		5			6

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