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Approved for Release CIA Historical Collections Division
AR 70-14 1OCT2013

June 5, 1995

SUBJECT: Disposition of U.S. ICFY Monitors

U.S. personnel serving with the ICFY monitoring mission on the inter-Serb border have been withdrawn to their sector headquarters in response to intelligence reports that Bosnian Serbs (or FRY sympathizers) may attempt to take American hostages. The FRY government has ordered increased police presence at sector headquarters and at crossings, assigned police to accompany ICFY monitors at the busiest crossings, and added police and army patrols on the border. The extent to which these orders will be carried out and the effect on the monitors' actual security remains to be seen.

ICFY Head of Mission Nieminen correctly asserts that ICFY cannot carry out its mission without American personnel. Further, he worries that other countries will pull out if the U.S. monitors do not return to duty. Nieminen proposes changes in his operating procedures that would better protect Americans while still allowing him to use them in the field.

Nieminen says that he will re-deploy U.S. monitors under these conditions unless we object by June 6. (Embassy Belgrade has been instructed to ask him to wait for the outcome of the June 6 PC.) Principals should decide whether the USG should acquiesce in Nieminen's proposal to re-deploy U.S. monitors or continue to keep them away from border crossing points.

This decision requires balancing the risk to U.S. personnel, and the consequences if one or more are taken hostage, against the possibility that keeping U.S. personnel off the border may cause the ICFY mission to collapse and take with it a major component of our diplomatic strategy.

Attachment:

Belgrade 2681

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Declassify on: OADR

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FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

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E.O. 12356:DECL: 06/03/2005

TAGS: PTER, ASEC, BK, SR

SUBJECT: ICFY HEAD OF MISSION INTENDS TO RETURN U.S.
- ICFY MEMBERS TO LIMITED DUTY

REFS: A) SARAJEVO 0208 B) 94BELGRADE 6641 (NOTAL)

1. SECRET - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. ACTION REQUEST, PARA 8.

3. SUMMARY: DAS FRASURE, COM PERINA, ACTING DCM AND RSO MET WITH ICFY HEAD OF MISSION TAUNO NIEMINEN AND DEPUTY HEAD OF MISSION SCARLETT ON JUNE 3 TO DISCUSS THE THREAT REPORTED IN REF A. AFTER NIEMINEN (WHO HAD BEEN OUT OF THE COUNTRY) WAS BRIEFED ON THE THREAT, HE EXPRESSED HIS STRONG CONCERN ABOUT BEING ABLE TO CONTINUE THE MISSION WITHOUT DEPLOYING U.S. PERSONNEL, GIVEN ALREADY DIMINISHED RESOURCES. FURTHER, HE ADVISED US OF ANOTHER CONTRIBUTING NATION WHO WISHED TO WITHDRAW ITS PERSONNEL BASED ON A SIMILAR BUT UNDEFINED THREAT; INDICATED THAT THE WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. PERSONNEL TO REAR AREAS UNDERMINED HIS AUTHORITY; AND PROPOSED THAT MEASURES COULD BE CONSIDERED TO BETTER PROTECT THE AMERICANS WHILE STILL ALLOWING HIM TO UTILIZE THEM. COM REITERATED OUR CONCERNS FOR THE SECURITY OF AMERICAN MEMBERS AND ADVISED NIEMINEN THAT WE WOULD REPORT HIS VIEWS TO WASHINGTON. NIEMINEN REQUESTED THAT WE HAVE AN ANSWER AS TO OUR INTENTIONS BY TUESDAY, JUNE 6. HE INDICATED THAT HE WOULD RE-DEPLOY U.S. MONITORS AT THAT TIME UNLESS WE SPECIFICALLY OBJECT. END SUMMARY

4. DAS FRASURE, COM PERINA, ACTING DCM AND RSO BRIEFED ICFY HEAD OF MISSION TAUNO NIEMINEN AND DEPUTY HEAD OF MISSION SCARLETT ON JUNE 3 ABOUT THE THREAT REPORTED IN REF A (SCARLETT HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN INFORMED IN NIEMINEN'S ABSENCE). NIEMINEN EXPRESSED HIS STRONG CONCERN ABOUT BEING ABLE TO CONTINUE THE MISSION WITHOUT U.S. PERSONNEL, GIVEN ALREADY DIMINISHED RESOURCES. NIEMINEN STATED THAT IN THE PAST WEEK ICFY HAS LOST 31 U.S. MEMBERS AND 11 CANADIAN MEMBERS (NOT RELATED TO THE THREAT). ON JUNE 2 ICFY RECEIVED NOTIFICATION FROM THE FRENCH THAT THEY INSISTED THEIR 14 MEMBERS ALSO BE PULLED FROM DUTY, DUE TO A SIMILAR THREAT (WE HAVE NO FURTHER INFORMATION ON THIS THREAT) WHICH THEY HAD RECEIVED EARLIER. ADDITIONALLY, THE FRENCH CHARGE TOLD

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Robert Homme, Senior Reviewer

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ACTING HOM SCARLETT THAT PARIS WAS UNHAPPY THAT U.S. MISSION MEMBERS APPEARED TO BE GETTING PREFERENTIAL SECURITY PROTECTION. NIEMINEN STATED THAT IF THE FRENCH MEMBERS WERE SUBTRACTED, THIS WOULD REDUCE THE ICFY MISSION TO 105, WELL BELOW THE MINIMUM NECESSARY TO CONDUCT THE MISSION. NIEMINEN EXPRESSED HIS VIEW THAT DECISIONS ON THE DEPLOYMENT OF ICFY PERSONNEL SHOULD BE MADE BY ICFY ITSELF, AND THAT IF A NATION DID NOT WISH ITS MEMBERS FULLY TO PARTICIPATE, THEY SHOULD BE REMOVED FROM THE MISSION ALTOGETHER. COM EXPRESSED HIS UNDERSTANDING OF ICFY'S PREDICAMENT BUT EMPHASIZED THE CREDIBILITY OF THIS THREAT AND ITS SPECIFIC TARGETING OF AMERICANS ONLY.

5. NIEMINEN REPLIED THAT HE BELIEVED THAT THE SERBIAN PROTECTION IN RESPONSE TO THE THREAT HAD BEEN GOOD, AND THAT ICFY PROTECTION HAS BEEN INCREASED SUBSTANTIALLY. COM INQUIRED, ASSUMING WASHINGTON CONCURRENCE, AS TO WHETHER U.S. MEMBERS COULD BE REDEPLOYED TO LESS ISOLATED AREAS WHERE THERE IS GREATER VISIBILITY AND POLICE PROTECTION, AS OPPOSED TO DUTY IN ISOLATED AREAS. NIEMINEN REPLIED THAT THIS COULD BE CONSIDERED BUT THAT SUCH ACCOMMODATION COULD ONLY BE ON A TEMPORARY BASIS AND COULD NOT CONTINUE FOR A LONG PERIOD OF TIME. SCARLETT ADDED THAT REPORTS FROM THE FIELD INDICATED A DETERIORATION IN MORALE AMONG NON-U.S. MEMBERS OF THE MISSION, WHO ARE CURRENTLY WORKING DOUBLE THEIR NORMAL HOURS TO COVER THE U.S. PULLBACK.

6. TO CONCLUDE THE MEETING, NIEMINEN GAVE US A DEADLINE OF TUESDAY, JUNE 6, TO AUTHORIZE THE RE-DEPLOYMENT OF U.S. PERSONNEL. IN FIRM TONES, HE INDICATED THAT IF U.S. PERSONNEL WERE NOT UNDER HIS DIRECTION, THEY SHOULD BE WITHDRAWN COMPLETELY FROM THE MISSION. HE REQUESTED THAT WE CONTACT HIM BY OPENING OF BUSINESS (LOCAL TIME) ON TUESDAY SO THAT HE COULD BEGIN TO RE-DEPLOY. COM ADVISED NIEMINEN THAT HE WOULD PASS ON HIS CONCERNS TO WASHINGTON AND REQUEST AN EXPEDITIOUS REPLY.

7. COMMENT: IT IS CLEAR THAT NIEMINEN IS CONCERNED ABOUT LOSS OF OPERATIONAL CONTROL OF THE MEMBERS OF HIS MISSION. WHILE NOT DISMISSING THE SPECIFIC THREAT AGAINST AMERICANS, AND THE NEED TO TAKE SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS, HE IS WORRIED THAT OTHER CAPITALS WILL FOLLOW THE U.S. AND FRENCH LEAD, DIMINISHING HIS AUTHORITY AND LEAVING HIS MISSION IN TATTERS. AS LONG AS THE HOSTAGE CRISIS CONTINUES IN BOSNIA, THE THREAT TO AMERICANS WILL REMAIN. BUT, VEN AFTER THE HOSTAGE CRISIS IS RESOLVED, THERE IS NO GUARANTEE THAT THE THREAT WILL VANISH. HAVING U.S. MONITORS ON THE DRINA

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WILL ALWAYS CARRY A DEGREE OF RISK AS STATED IN REF B. POST SUGGESTS THAT ICFY SHOULD ASSIGN U.S. MEMBERS TO THE MOST POPULATED LOCATIONS, WHERE POLICE PRESENCE IS STRONG, AVOIDING ASSIGNMENTS TO ISOLATED POSTS OR ROVING PATROLS AS A FIRST STEP IN REINTEGRATING THE U.S. COMPONENT IN ICFY ACTIVITIES. WE WOULD EXPECT ICFY HQ TO ENSURE THAT THE SERBS PROVIDE VISIBLE AND CONSTANT SECURITY AND THAT ICFY WATCHES CLOSELY OVER THIS SITUATION, MONITORING THE THREAT TO AMERICANS:

8. ACTION REQUEST: PLEASE ADVISE US HOW WE SHOULD INFORM NIEMINEN AS TO THE AVAILABILITY OF U.S. MISSION MEMBERS BY OOB JUNE 6. ABSENT OUR OBJECTION, WE HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT NIEMINEN WILL BEGIN UTILIZING U.S. MONITORS IN LOW THREAT AREAS. PERINA
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