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9 April 1993

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Debrief of Principals Meeting on Bosnia, Friday,
(9 April) (The White House)

The subject meeting was chaired by Tony Lake with Sandy Berger, Leon Feurth, and Jenonne Walker present. Those additionally present included Secretary of Defense Les Aspin, Madeline Albright, Secretary of State Warren Christopher, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell, Reg Bartholomew, and the DDCI. The meeting lasted approximately two and one-half hours and address only the Bosnian situation. The following issues were discussed.

1. Tony Lake asked General Powell if he could clarify the agreement the United States had with the UNPROFOR forces with regard to circumstances under which the U.S. military would come to their aid should UNPROFOR forces find themselves in extreme difficulty. General Powell, reaching back from memory, indicated that he thought there was no agreement with UNPROFOR per se but that there was a tentative understanding which grew from the period that the Canadian deployment that we would provide such assistance on a circumstantial basis when requested by the Canadians. He also believed that there was a similar agreement that was reached bilaterally with the Spanish, the UK, and French for their forces in Bosnia.

2. Considerable time was spent discussing the second issue which had to do with the issue of whether and when the vote would be conducted on further strengthening the sanctions on Serbia. The problem is the Russians. Madeline Albright indicated that Vorontsov told them that the Russians were hoping for a delayed vote and if the vote were forced now, the Russians would not abstain but would, in fact, veto such a resolution. The issue here has to do with Yeltsin's survival versus imposing the sanctions and the Russian requirement to delay any action after the 25 April Referendum. As we were sitting down to meet, a letter arrived for the President from Yeltsin which was cordial but argued about who was most at fault, Serbs or others, and indicated that there was strong optimism that the Bosnian Serbs would join the Vance-Owen Plan with subsequent finalization of the map. The bottom line of Yeltsin's letter was that the UN Security

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Council should not hasten with consideration of the issue regarding the new sanctions. In the letter there was obviously no mention of Yeltsin's political difficulty with regard to the Referendum. ~~The net effect was that, after lengthy discussion,~~ Tony Lake proposed that the vote be delayed until after the 26th and that the delay in implementation be deleted from the provision so that once voted, sanctions could be implemented immediately. SECSTATE wanted to get a commitment in writing from the Russians on this issue. The discussion then centered on what we could do in the intervening period that would make it appear that we were at least busy, and Leon Feurth provided the whole range of sanctions related options which drew upon the already existing sanctions resolution. Madeline Albright argued all kinds of downside concerns that would result from this, however, she grudgingly agreed to go along with the delay.

3. We then moved over to the issue of lifting the arms embargo, and Tony Lake added a subset issue of possibly conducting air strikes. Over the course of the discussion, we finally ended up framing the three macro options as follows: Option 1 - Continue to pursue the Vance-Owen track; Option 2 - Cut a deal with the roughly existing geographic divisions in Bosnia; Option 3 - was referred to as the "fight-it-out option." This latter option leaves the arms embargo against the Muslims so that they could continue to press the Serbs. Intelligence made a significant contribution by identifying a fairly comprehensive list of pros and cons associated with these options. The ensuing discussion proved that all of these issues are fairly intractable. A fourth option was ultimately introduced by Tony Lake which was argued as a unique option, although it may not be. This option had to do with the United States coming in with air power to support Muslim activities while not in lifting the arms embargo. Tony Lake finally closed off the discussion by providing two taskings. The first task asked that designated participants seek to identify the pros and cons of all the options with DoD having been given the task for Option 2, Albright the task for Option 4, State the task for Option 3, and Leon Feurth taking Option 1. Additionally, there was a task, or at least a discussion about a task to determine if we were to pursue any of these options, what courses of action or path of activity/events would we choose to go along in order to have the outcome we desire. Bottom line: No decisions were taken on the future direction of Yugoslavia policy should Vance-Owen fail, and it was my general perception that the individuals in the room found themselves quite far apart from each other. None held high hopes for Vance-Owen; DoD/JCS seemed most

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interested in variations on the "cut-a-deal" option while others were in a more "fighting" spirit.

4. ~~The Chairman then briefed the UN/NATO troop introduction~~ program should the Vance-Owen conditions come to pass. The only discussion on this matter centered on what would be the United State's level of force contribution. General Powell indicated that the United States would have approximately 30,000 troops out of the 70,000 to 75,000 troops that are likely to be committed. SECSTATE suggested the possibility that there should be more. This then led to a lengthy discussion about what troop contributions the European countries could make. The meeting ended after the Chairman's presentation.

5. Tony Lake indicated that there would be another Principals Meeting next Tuesday on Haiti and that the following Monday, Iran or North Korea or both would be discussed.

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[redacted]

William O. Studeman
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