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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN 7/25

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

July 19, 1995 JUL 19 9:38

INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: ANTHONY LAKE

SUBJECT: BOSNIA - NEXT STEPS

*see in guess
agreed w/ y.
analysis of Contact Group
talks - confirm them on
ambiguity*

The Contact Group initiative is entering a decisive phase, and important decisions loom on military measures that could strain our relations with key Allies and the Russians. The Bosnian Serbs' answer will not be known until they meet with the Contact Group Wednesday afternoon in Geneva. But most indicators point to a conditional "yes."

- Some of the Serb conditions may be negotiable (e.g. new territorial trade-offs, provisions that permit them to establish the same links to Serbia as the Muslims and Croats will have with Croatia). These could be the subject of further talks between the parties and with the Contact Group prior to the next Foreign Ministers' meeting on July 30.
- But at least one Serb condition is likely to be a killer amendment: a constitutional provision establishing a right for the Serbs to secede after two years following a referendum. This is a non-starter for us and for the Bosnian Government: it would make the agreement a way-station on the road to the dismemberment of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the establishment of a Greater Serbia. Our goal from the start has been to get a reasonable deal for the Bosnian Government, which means preserving Bosnia as a single union, albeit a loose confederation.

Serb efforts to insert a right of secession will likely be viewed sympathetically by the Russians, and perhaps by the French and British, who have always been inclined to impose a settlement on the Muslims. We will need to hold firm, citing our partners' previous commitment to Bosnia's territorial integrity and the need for the international community not to legitimize the change of borders by force. The Serbs' right to establish practical links with Serbia is the most we can offer.

The Russians may press for a more generous, front-loaded approach to sanctions relief as a sweetener for the Serbs. In recent days, they have backed away from their earlier agreement in the Contact Group that UN sanctions should not be suspended until the Serbs withdraw to the lines on the proposed map. Here too, we will have to hold the line, since it will be hard to reestablish tight enforcement of the sanctions regime once its main elements are suspended.

July 30 Ministerial: Moment of Truth?

If the Serbs have, against all expectations, agreed to the plan by the time of the July 30 Ministerial, we will face the decision on whether to participate in implementation of a settlement.

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Declassify on: OADR



cc: Vice President
Chief of Staff

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Immediate Congressional consultations will be needed to explain the conditions of our deployment and our exit strategy; we will probably need a supplemental to fund it. Urgent decisions will be required at NATO on command and control, and we will need to rapidly engage the Russians and other non-NATO participants in Alliance planning. Most importantly, however, you will need to make a strong case to the American people on why it is in our interest to commit as many as 20,000 U.S. troops to implement this settlement.

The greatest difficulties will come in the more likely scenario in which the Serbs have rejected the plan or refused to drop their unacceptable conditions. At that point, we will want to move decisively to begin implementation of the "disincentives" agreed earlier: tightening of economic sanctions; extension of exclusion zones to the other safe areas; and stricter enforcement of the exclusion zones by NATO aircraft. While tightening sanctions is not likely to be opposed by our Contact Group partners, our Allies are already showing some hesitation about following through on the air strike threats, citing the limited effectiveness of air power and the risks of Serb retaliation against UNPROFOR. They and the Russians may seek to defer decisions and prolong negotiations past July 30.

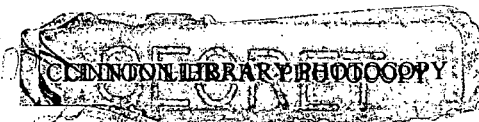
After July 30

Some delay may be acceptable and, in fact, desirable if it keeps the international community united and enables us to arrive at a final settlement. But at some point, we will need to tell the Allies and the Russians that our credibility is on the line and remind them of the irresistible pressures we will face to lift the arms embargo if the Contact Group fails to make good on its previous warnings.

Of course, implementing decisions to extend and more strictly enforce the exclusion zones will, in fact, increase the risks for UNPROFOR and could lead to renewed frictions between NATO and the UN. Nevertheless, without a credible threat of increased military pressure, there is virtually no chance the Serbs will accept the Contact Group plan. Our Allies admit that UNPROFOR's role is becoming increasingly untenable in any event, and thus we should be able to drag them along. The Russians will require even more delicate handling than during the Gorazde decisions in April.

The implementation of the exclusion zones will likely be carried out in stages over a period of 4-6 weeks. If the Serbs have still not relented and agreed to the peace plan, our Contact Group partners have agreed that a UNSC decision to lift the arms embargo "could be unavoidable." Whether they, in fact, agree will likely turn on how seriously they view Congressional pressures on us to lift unilaterally. However the embargo is lifted, we will take on an expanded role in the air in defending the Bosnian Government against expected Serb escalation.

The remainder of the summer, in short, promises to be active on the Bosnia front, even as matters come to a head on Haiti and other crises.

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AM IN GENERAL
AGREEMENT WITH YOUR
ANALYSIS . . . IF EUROPE
& RUSSIA BALK —
CONGRESS WILL MOVE ON
EMBARGO

(cc: vershbow)

