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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Deputies' Committee Meeting on 27 April 1995

1. The attendees included: Berger, Vershbow, and Kerrick from NSC; Slocombe and Kruzel from the Department of Defense; Tarnoff, Frasure, and Holbrooke from State; Fuerth from the Office of the Vice President; Scheffer and O'Brien from US/UN; Clarke from JCS; Adams for OMB; Nye for Treasury; and MacEachin and myself for CIA.

Bosnia and the Contact Group

2. The Deputies began discussing US strategy for the next meeting of the Contact Group Political Directors. Ambassador Frasure mentioned that Bosnian Vice President Ganic wanted to keep Contact Group negotiations with Serbian President Milosevic as a means to keep pressure on Karadzic and the Bosnian Serbs. Frasure reported that Sarajevo needs Serbian recognition of Bosnia and a real sealing of the Bosnian Serb border before it can agree to a two-to-four month extension of the cessation of hostilities agreement, thereby meeting the US goal of keeping UNPROFOR in place.

3. According to Frasure, the US should push Milosevic for a strong formulation of recognition of Bosnia in exchange for some sanctions relief. For the border closure, we should seek a UN civilian mandate--consisting of 400-500 people--to get the ICFY monitoring mission away from Lord Owen.

4. After the Contract Group meeting, Frasure intended to rush to Belgrade in advance of the other Contact Group members to be the first to brief Milosevic on the recognition package. The actual recognition language would need to be acceptable to Sarajevo. Both Frasure and Tarnoff believed Sarajevo would be satisfied with a vague recognition of Bosnia within its internationally accepted borders since they were really anxious to negotiate. Christopher would call Silajdzic to request that Bosnia voluntarily extend the cessation of hostilities agreement.

5. Berger and others questioned why Milosevic would want to deal with Frasure. Holbrooke responded that the US had just played a "tough card" in the UN by reducing the next suspension period to 75 days from 100. Also, Milosevic would be interested in a deal that would allow him to recognize Bosnia within its borders rather than as a state. Finally, Milosevic knows that the US can block any deal on sanctions relief.

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6. MacEachin warned that the Deputies could not ignore the Croatia angle. If Tudjman found about these offers to Milosevic for recognition of Bosnia only, he might cause problems in the Krajina. Frasure promised that we could keep the Croats on board by keeping them informed and also retaining enough sanctions on Milosevic to maintain some leverage.

Sanctions

7. Fuerth mentioned that the long-term strategy should be to tighten the back door through the Krajina as well as the Bosnian Serb border with Serbia. He mentioned that Treasury had not yet had an opportunity to react to his proposal to put customs officers in Croatia.

8. Holbrooke mentioned that Milosevic had agreed to allow as many international monitors on the border as they could pay for. Slocombe of OSD expressed skepticism that this plan would work; he also wondered, who would pay for the sanctions monitors? Holbrooke said expanding the US presence from 20 to 50 would create a momentum to expand the total force to 500 monitors. Fuerth doubted that 500 monitors would be attainable and said the US should explore what would be the minimum acceptable number.

9. On sanctions relief, the most the Deputies would agree to was partial sanctions suspension; Frasure would need to seek further guidance to offer more relief than they had approved. However, the British want part of the recognition package to include some lift--at the least, lift of the airport part of Phase 1. Nonetheless, Secretary Christopher reportedly opposes any form of sanctions lift as opposed to suspension, according to Frasure.

10. Frasure noted that Milosevic, upon conceding that no partial lift of sanctions was likely, asked for at least some gesture by the Contact Group. However, Fuerth recommended against suspension of financial transactions and services for now. He said that the Slovenian Minister of Finance had told him this would give Milosevic a windfall because of his purchasing of Slovenian debt.

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Sarajevo and its Airport

11. Holbrooke mentioned that in retaliation for Bosnian offensives, the Bosnian Serbs had intensified pressure on the airport. He considered it outrageous that the US couldn't get its diplomats into Sarajevo; the Administration's opponents might have taken advantage of this had not the media been preoccupied with the news stories on the Oklahoma bombing.

12. Berger mentioned that it appeared the UN was about to apply new rules on the airport to get humanitarian assistance in. MacEachin introduced some intelligence, suggesting the UN had not decided yet. General Clarke mentioned the French said they would consider landing there even without approval. Scheffer mentioned a UN resolution confirming that UNPROFOR has the right to keep it open, but Berger noted it only condemns the action and doesn't really do anything. Someone mentioned rumors Akashi would trade fuel deliveries to UNPROFOR in the eastern enclaves for changed airport procedures.

13. Slocombe assessed that after the Bosnians started this spring's offensives, the Serbs had demonstrated it holds all of the cards. The West would probably "huff and puff" and eventually the airport will reopen under somewhat less favorable circumstances than before. Berger noted that at one time we would have been firmer, but there is no willingness by the British or French to assert themselves vigorously.

14. The Deputies discussed an idea mentioned by the Bosnians of establishing a demilitarized zone around Sarajevo. Clarke noted the UN wanted to do that; Berger noted it would at least have the appearance of being even handed. Tarnoff was to pursue this issue with the Bosnian government.

Policy Questions and Answers

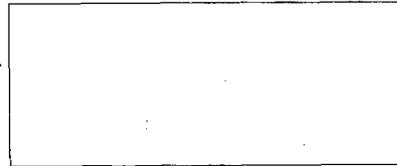
15. Berger said the policy questions and answers related to OPLAN 40104 would require serious consideration. Holbrooke objected to discussing them at all because they deal with the withdrawal of UNPROFOR, something we cannot allow to happen. Rather the US needed to seek ways to keep the UN there. Holbrooke feared events in London and Paris were moving towards a dramatic outcome, but neither ally was willing to take the steps to make UNPROFOR effective. Clarke mentioned as an example that the British refused to render weapons in the collection sites ineffective.

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16. Kerrick noted that UNPROFOR would withdraw in one of two circumstances: if the fighting becomes intense or the US pushes unilateral lift. Fuerth said it was impossible to answer the policy questions and answers until after a mission statement is drafted for the NATO extraction force. Tarnoff predicted extensive wrangling within the government and alliance over these policy issues. Ultimately the Deputies decided to defer on this item until after the Principals were briefed on the OPLAN the next day. 



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