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## THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 29, 1995

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ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: ANTHONY LAKE

SUBJECT: Policy for Bosnia -- Use of U.S. Ground Forces to Support NATO Assistance for Redeployment of UNPROFOR Within Bosnia

Purpose

To provide a summary of policy conclusions reached by Principals at their meeting on Bosnia on May 28, and obtain your decision on whether agreement in principle to provide U.S. forces to assist in UNPROFOR withdrawal from Bosnia also extends to assistance in redeployment of UNPROFOR units from the eastern enclaves to more defensible positions elsewhere within Bosnia.

Background

Principals met on May 28 to consider a range of policy options in light of the recent developments in Bosnia. They agreed on the following basic points for U.S. policy:

- **Prospects of additional airstrikes:** The U.S. will not press allies with troops on the ground for further strikes now, but (1) the possibility of further strikes will not be ruled out, (2) should strikes again become necessary, a more robust approach permitting the UN and NATO to respond at the time and place of their own choosing should be followed rather than continuing to limit options on the basis of "strict proportionality," (3) privately we will accept a pause, but make no public statement to that effect, and (4) the Secretary of State will seek allied reactions to planning a substantial contingency strike option if Serb behavior, such as killing hostages, warranted a major attack.
- **Diplomatic efforts at the UN and Contact Group:** We will (1) seek a formula with the French and UK on a sanctions suspension termination mechanism and re-engage Milosevic on that basis to seek to conclude a Bosnian-Serb recognition package, (2) press Milosevic in the context of such an agreement to push the Bosnian Serbs to release the hostages (in order to create the conditions making such an agreement workable), (3) explore the prospects for Russian assistance in control of Bosnian Serb heavy weapons, and (4) renew efforts to gain UN condemnation of Bosnian Serb leadership as the

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cc: Vice President  
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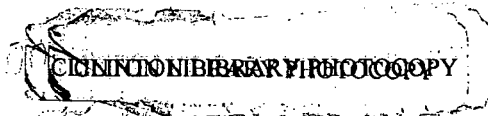
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principal obstacle to peace in the region based on recent events. (Per our conversation last night, Chris will be working with Hurd and others today to support the stronger U.K. position, including a private U.K./French/U.S. message to Karadzic. Shali and I just spoke with Chris and suggested he offer both U.S. airlift and equipment, if requested, to the Brits and French.)

- **Options and prospects for emergency withdrawal:** Principals noted that (1) no one is calling for that now, but that the situation could arise quickly, (2) NATO OPLAN 40104 would cover emergency withdrawal, (3) U.S. participation requires that a serious effort to complete consultations with Congress must begin at once, starting with calls to key members and staff today, and (4) non-NATO withdrawal using UK, French and U.S. assets was a possibility, but raises serious problems for NATO and for command and control of the operation (putting greater stress on the need for Congressional consultations on 40104).
- **The future of UNPROFOR:** It was agreed that UNPROFOR withdrawal from Bosnia under the present circumstances would be seen as capitulation to Bosnian-Serb blackmail and should be avoided. Instead, Principals agreed the U.S. strongly should support French efforts to enhance UNPROFOR's ability to perform its mandate by (1) bolstering its capabilities (short of providing U.S. ground forces, but including provision of U.S. equipment if necessary), (2) application of more robust ROE and (3) "regrouping" UNPROFOR to reduce the risk. (Principals also agreed to a re-evaluation of the roles and missions of UNPROFOR to support future decisions on regrouping.)

Although the French are not at this time calling for UNPROFOR withdrawal from the eastern enclaves as part of their regrouping proposal, it is conceivable that, should the situation on the ground continue to worsen, some of our NATO allies with forces on the ground in the enclaves might make such a request.

OSD and JCS propose that such a request should be treated as a subset of NATO OPLAN 40104 withdrawal efforts, and that the U.S. commitment in principle to provide troops for a withdrawal of UNPROFOR should be extended to apply to assistance in relocation if required to safely extract allied UNPROFOR units. They note that, since redeployment of UNPROFOR to more defensible positions within Bosnia could be seen as more threatening to the Bosnian Serbs than withdrawal *in toto*, there is an increased likelihood that units attempting to redeploy would feel the need for NATO assistance. Should NATO be asked to assist, the United States could find itself facing the choice of temporarily deploying ground forces into Bosnia as part of such a NATO effort or

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telling our allies that, while we are prepared to assist them leave Bosnia altogether, we are unwilling to assist them in moving to safer positions from which UNPROFOR would be more capable of performing its missions. Allies may press the U.S. on this at the Contact Group and NAC Ministerial meetings this week.

We would prefer not to see a withdrawal from the eastern enclaves, with the associated potential for a humanitarian nightmare for the civilians in the safe areas currently under the promise of UN protection. Moreover, Congressional support and approval for U.S. participation in a redeployment operation may be more difficult to obtain than for an UNPROFOR rescue and extraction. As noted above, a redeployment may meet more Serbian resistance. Moreover, many in Congress (e.g. Dole) have linked U.S. participation in UNPROFOR extraction to subsequent lift of the arms embargo; in the context of assisted redeployment we would be compelled to resist lift, which will make Congressional approval harder. A hard sell would be required based on agreement that the redeployment was a precursor to far more aggressive action against the Bosnian Serbs.

Such difficulties notwithstanding, U.S. credibility among NATO Allies would be seriously damaged if we were to turn down a request for assistance in extracting themselves from positions that had become untenable in the eastern enclaves and redeploying to central Bosnia. This would be especially so since such a redeployment would be presented as supporting of two U.S. goals: maintaining an UNPROFOR presence in Bosnia, and making that presence more robust in its ability and willingness to confront Bosnian Serb violations.

RECOMMENDATION

That since it is not in our interests to see the eastern enclaves abandoned, and since we would be hard pressed to turn down a request for assistance if it came to NATO, we should work bilaterally with the French and other troop contributing nations to ensure that adequate forces remain available to sustain a UNPROFOR presence in the enclaves, and discourage them from seeking NATO assistance for redeployment;

But since I agree with Bill and Shali that we should provide such assistance if we can bring Congress along, that briefings to Congress on OPLAN 40104 include the option of using the withdrawal plan to redeploy UNPROFOR to more defensible positions, should such redeployment become inevitable.

Approve

Disapprove

TL POTUS is 5:30 PM  
returning w/new note  
saying: "I agree as  
you have set forth."

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