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MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Mladic Running True to Form

1. Mladic's decision about withdrawing heavy weapons will be determined by both his perception of military and political "realities" and by his familiar patterns of thinking and behaving. [REDACTED]

2. The facts and tactical considerations, as Mladic has indicated he perceives them in a variety of recent media appearances, press, [REDACTED]

- Negotiations: He wants the "Serb Republic" to be in the strongest position possible when negotiations actually start. Until then, he wants to hold on to all the territory he has, which means keeping the heavy weapons in place.
- Past experience with UN/NATO forces: Mladic's reactions to past NATO strikes suggest he may judge that he can outlast international willingness to pursue military action and that he can manipulate the allies and put them off with token actions.
- Outside support: Based on recent comments by "Yugoslav" Chief of Staff Momcilo Perisic suggesting he remains sympathetic to the Bosnian Serbs, Mladic probably considers that Perisic is willing to keep re-stocking the Bosnian Serb Army and that he probably would try to deter Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic from turning against Mladic for holding out.

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3. Mladic's typical attitudes and behaviors will influence how he processes and reacts to the facts as he perceives them.

- To Mladic, who strongly identifies with the view of Serbs as historical victims of persecution and injustice, the NATO air strikes are no surprise. His public comments suggest he views them as a continuation of the West's misunderstanding of--and wrongful punishment of--the Serbs. In his 4 September letter to UN Protection Force Commander Janvier, Mladic accused the UN and NATO of "brutal aggression against the Serb Republic."
- He is prepared to be attacked. He was schooled in the basic military doctrine of the former Yugoslav Army: defend against any invaders; assume that they would be outgunned and outnumbered; absorb as much punishment as possible; and continue resisting (in the mountains if necessary) for as long as able.
- His recent practices suggest he feels justified in using whatever means are necessary to "protect" his people--including taking hostages, using human shields, and deliberately misleading interlocutors.
- He strives to be in the active, controlling position. He has demonstrated that he resists any efforts to coerce him by either the international community or his fellow Serbs. He would particularly resist submitting to foreign forces that he believes show favoritism towards the Bosnian Muslims or may even be part of a conspiracy to eradicate his people.

4. Mladic will resist giving in to demands to withdraw Serb heavy weapons until he perceives that the facts--the damage done to his forces and the difficulty of rebuilding them--are already so great that continued NATO attacks will

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degrade the BSA to the point that it can no longer defend core Bosnian Serb areas. This will depend on his own battle damage assessment and his perception of Perisic's willingness to resupply and help rebuild the Bosnian Serb Army.

- "Fighting to the last man" may well be within the range of outcomes that he considers acceptable. He told the press on 5 September for example that "the more they [NATO] bombard us the stronger we are" and "they [NATO] can cause destruction and violence but we are on our land and we will win." However, we have seen nothing that would credibly indicate that he would prefer to do so or that he has a "death wish".

5. To consider acceding to an ultimatum, his reported track record and own statements suggest Mladic would be more likely to pay attention to an approach that:

- Recognized him as the Bosnian Serb leader who most conscientiously took care of the troops and knew best what was in the BSA's best interest.
- Cast him as rescuing the Serb nation and assuring its future security.
- Represented his agreement as an active, positive initiative on his part, rather than as a passive submission to foreign ideas or domination.
- Gave him a perceived advantage over Bosnian Serb "President" Radovan Karadzic and Assembly "President" Momcilo Krajisnik.