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Executive Director

DAC 99-03349

2 June 1999

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Delegation to go to Beijing Regarding Chinese Embassy Belgrade Bombing

1. On 2 June at the request of the DDCI, I attended a meeting chaired by Assistant Secretary of State Stan Roth regarding the above subject. Roth stated that the meeting was an outgrowth of a 1 June Principals Committee meeting and that the tasking involved making recommendations for a "rollout strategy" to present the results of the US investigation into the bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade. He noted that "how, when, the level of representation and the content of the explanation all matter." He then tabled an agenda to cover who should lead the delegation; who should support (i.e. who else should go); what conditions should be imposed; should we offer only a briefing or also provide a written report; what should be done regarding an open hearing now scheduled by HPSCI for 10 June; whether or not to use military air transportation; and whether or not to offer compensation to the Chinese.

2. Who. It is Roth's view that the head of the delegation should be below Cabinet rank but be a high ranking official who would go as special envoy from the President. All agreed that Under Secretary of State Pickering was the correct choice.

The group believes this concern could be addressed by negotiating beforehand who would receive Pickering and by extracting agreement that the delegation would be treated well. There were no volunteers from DoD or the IC to accompany Pickering.

When asked if we would send a briefer - State's strong preference - out that we would discuss the issue.

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3. The Trip. There was a good deal of discussion about what Pickering would do in China. It was thought that two briefings would be required: one for the political leadership and one for the military. The issue of whether or not Pickering should discuss broader issues was debated, some seeing this as diluting the impact of the trip, others seeing it as advisable. There was a view that Ken Lieberthal (Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Asian Affairs on the National Security Council Staff) and Susan Shirk (Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs) would stay for an additional day to discuss those "other issues."

4. Some discussions of timing and transport ensued, with 15 June the most likely day for the Pickering meetings. Whether or not to use military aircraft from Washington, from Japan or not at all seemed to be hinged on the amount of preparatory time Pickering would have prior to the trip. The symbolism of a dedicated aircraft was discounted.

5. Congressional Hearing. There was full agreement that an open HPSCI hearing should be rescheduled to occur after -- or simultaneous with -- Pickering's meetings with the Chinese.

6. Compensation. There was full agreement that Pickering should offer compensation for the families of those killed or injured but not offer compensation for property damage.

7. Accountability. Part of the group believes that the process by which accountability is decided should be discussed with the Chinese; others believed this issue should not be addressed.

8. Next Steps. Roth, with Lieberthal, will prepare a report of the areas of agreement and disagreement for the Principal Committee members.



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