

[OASD 851]

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Approved for Release CIA Historical Collections Division
AR 70-14 1OCT2013DCI Interagency Balkan Task Force
26 January 1994**Some Implications of an UNPROFOR Withdrawal from Bosnia**

An UNPROFOR withdrawal from Bosnia would have an immediate and negative impact on the well-being of hundreds of thousands of people in Muslim controlled areas. The discipline and cohesion of the Muslim forces also would be affected. Any impact on the level and intensity of fighting and the readiness of the combatants to accept a negotiated settlement, however, would depend on a number of other variables as well.

- The airlifts and relief convoys on which the Muslims depend to meet their food and medical supply needs--some 80 percent of total needs in Sarajevo and virtually everything in the eastern enclaves--will quickly grind to a halt. Without the protection of UNPROFOR forces, both aircraft using the Sarajevo airport and land convoys would face an unacceptable level of risk.
- Air drop operations conceivably could continue, but even expanded airdrops could not replace ground deliveries; the UN estimates that only half of airdropped supplies reach the intended recipients.
- Civilian populations would be most severely impacted. Military units have always taken the first and largest slice of relief deliveries, and this practice is unlikely to change as long as fighting continues.
- One obvious consequence of increasing desperation among the 2.7 million Bosnians in need of assistance would be an increase in incidents of violence--such as yesterday's attack on Bosnian policemen by Muslim rioters and the subsequent looting of a relief convoy.
- We also would see an increase in the number of refugees on the road as hunger took hold. They would fall victim in increasing numbers to hunger, disease, and hardship. Precise forecasts are difficult, but additional deaths in the tens of thousands are very likely (some 5-10 thousand died as a result of war-related shortages last year).

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- In the end, tens of thousands of additional refugees could be added to the army of the displaced in other and equally burdened Bosnian localities or to the pool of unwanted and increasingly resented Balkan refugees in Europe.

The Bosnian military would be less directly impacted, but over time its position and fighting capabilities would be weakened.

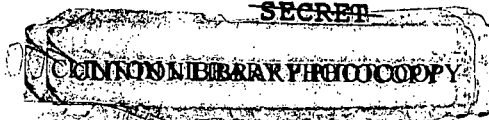
- Military commanders would face a difficult choice between feeding their soldiers at the expense of a starving population or cutting the rations of their troops and risking the discipline and cohesion of their units.
- The net effect would be a significant tightening of the siege the Serbs have imposed on Sarajevo, the eastern enclaves, and other urban areas controlled by the Muslims.
- Both Belgrade and Zagreb would see the disappearance of UNPROFOR as an opportunity to increase military support of their factions in Bosnia, but both would be wary of actions so blatant as to provoke more direct Western involvement.

The prospect of increasing unrest and growing military weakness as a result of an UNPROFOR pullout might make the Muslims more amenable to the idea of a negotiated settlement. Initially, however, it would be more likely to increase Sarajevo's interest in a genuine rapprochement with the Croats and joint military operations against the Serbs. Peace, however, would not be brought any nearer by such a development.

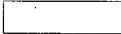
- For their part, the Serbs, who have been willing to accept a settlement leaving the Muslims in control of a third of Bosnia, might be provoked to try for more.
- In this case, an UNPROFOR withdrawal might culminate in a major escalation of the conflict and the scale of human suffering.

The effect of an UNPROFOR withdrawal on the willingness of the Allies to consider other options--such as "lift and strike"--is another variable.

- The risk an expanded conflict would pose to their forces on the ground always been one of the major European objections to lift and strike. Their

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departure might lead at least some governments to drop their reservations.

-- Even if the arms embargo is not lifted, Islamic governments will come under increasing pressure to help the beleaguered Muslims.



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