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12 August 1994

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Principals' Committee Meeting on the Balkans,
10 August 1994 [redacted]

1. National Security Advisor Lake chaired the meeting called to evaluate sanctions strategy, the Krajina issue, stability in Macedonia, and enforcement of exclusion zones. In addition to the DDCI, attendees included Secretary Christopher, Secretary Perry, JCS Chairman Shalikashvili, UN Ambassador Albright, Vice Presidential National Security Ambassador Fuerth, and Ambassador Redman. [redacted]

2. The Principals began by addressing whether some steps should be taken regarding Serb President Milosevic's apparent closing of the border with Bosnia. The DDCI updated participants on actions to date and our ability to monitor with intelligence methods. Participants explored several options for monitoring this border, including deploying new international monitors, redeploying monitors in the frontline states to the Bosnian border, using UNPROFOR as observers, [redacted]

3. Participants agreed stationing international observers is the preferred method of verifying the border closure. However, this assumes the Contact Group members will be amenable to this approach, and monitors and funding can be found. Other options mentioned would be reserved as a fallback position. [redacted]

4. Participants discussed the proposal to draft an omnibus UN resolution that includes language for tightening sanctions, loosening sanctions, and also that would include provisions for easing of sanctions on Serbia in exchange for allowing international monitors on the border. The Principals agreed this initiative would need to begin fairly soon although some suggest the Russians should be informally sounded out before formally submitting the resolution. Some concern was voiced that this would be a complicated resolution to draft and steer quickly through the Security Council. [redacted]

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5. The Principals reviewed our current policy on sanctions on Serbia. Although this week the British have become more forthcoming on tightening financial sanctions in negotiations, the U.S. will make another demarche to the UK to do even more. The Russians continue to oppose any linkage of the relaxation of sanctions to the Krajina; the Principals decided that it is important to maintain this linkage, particularly to avoid sending a negative message to Croatian President Tudjman. []

6. Only the US seems to favor retaining linkage between cooperation on war crimes and the relaxation of sanctions. The Principals agreed to revise the US position and to insist only that there must be some progress on war crimes before Belgrade can receive funds from international financial institutions and similar benefits. While all deplored the war crimes, the Principals generally felt that linkage with sanctions could impede a settlement which was the more important goal. In addition, the tribunal will be issuing indictments this fall which could be interpreted as making progress on war crimes. However, the US will still seek some boilerplate language involving complying with Security Council resolutions which would implicitly mention war crimes. []

7. The Principals agreed that the US needs to prod NATO and the UN to become more aggressive in enforcing cease-fire violations in Sarajevo and Gorazde. They were informed that airstrikes could take place only in the event of the strangulation of Sarajevo, which is not currently the case, and in violations of the heavy weapons exclusion zone. While NATO would be willing to act again as it did August 5, it would be reluctant to do so just for small-arms fire violations. []

8. Some voiced concern over General Rose's warning that even the Muslims could be vulnerable to measures for violations. Although past NATO decisions leaves the Muslims as potentially vulnerable, they have been told any such violation would have to be flagrant. Even then, the US could use the two-key approach to prevent airstrikes. []

9. Others were concerned that the August 5 strike was a mere pinprick and that more strategic targets should be pressed in the future. A command center was mentioned as a possible target for the next strike. This message will be passed to the UN and NATO. []

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10. Planning for the withdrawal of UNPROFOR is being conducted between NATO and the UN at a deliberate pace, and the plans are now awaiting comment by General Rose. The military planners believe they can provide close air support in case the units are attacked and air cover while they withdraw. One problem is some of the smaller UNPROFOR participants lack the means to withdraw their forces by themselves. The Principals advised that planning should also be conducted on redeploying the forces in addition to withdrawing them.

11. There was some discussion of what the official US reaction should be to General Rose's proposal to demilitarize Sarejevo. It would help the Bosnian Serbs because they would regain their weapons from the collection sites, but apparently Bosnian President Izetbegovic is in favor of the agreement. The Principals agreed this is an issue best left to the warring parties.

12. The Principals agreed that it is important for the Administration to speak with one voice on Bosnia. For that reason, officials were advised to seek guidance before handling press queries.

13. With time running short, the Principals adjourned with the intention to schedule another meeting on the Balkans next week. At that time, the group will consider stability in Macedonia (deferred from today) and the impact of lifting the arms embargo.

Ray Converse
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