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12 September 1994

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence  
FROM: Chief, DCI Interagency Balkan Task Force  
SUBJECT: Principals' Committee Meeting on Bosnia  
13 September 1994

1. This Principals' Committee Meeting should bring to a head the issue of whether and how to lift the arms embargo against the Bosnian Muslims and, possibly, the Croatsians. You will not be required to do a formal intelligence update. The Task Force will provide you with talking points at the time of the pre-brief on several issues where you may be asked to comment, including the military situations around Sarajevo and Bihac and the extent of outside military assistance for the Muslims. [ ]

2. The last Bosnia PC--attended by the DDCI and myself on 17 August--revealed a growing unease about the wisdom of lifting the arms embargo. Secretary Perry, Vice JCS Chairman Owens, and Secretary Christopher took the lead in voicing concerns. Madeleine Albright joined in, suggesting that a continuation of the status quo was preferable to the problems that would be caused by lift. The PR experts--Gergen and Stephanopoulos--were clearly aghast at the prospect that the Administration probably would have to cope with the "fall of the eastern enclaves," renewed "strangulation of Sarajevo," and an open-ended air campaign against the Serbs following lift. Tony Lake did not take a stand one way or the other.

-- I had the impression that most participants at the meeting--while acknowledging that preparations for lift should continue--now favor a renewed effort to convince Congress that lift is a bad idea.  
[ ]

3. Don Kerrick (NSC) subsequently tasked the Intelligence Community to prepare "key judgments" of the implications of lift. The resultant NIC Special Assessment--"Ending US Compliance With the Bosnian Arms Embargo"--is located behind the NIC MEMORANDUM TAB. It is the most important single item you should read prior to the meeting. I'll have extra copies if you want to pass them out.

-- In general, the memorandum states that lifting the embargo will increase fighting, reduce chances for a negotiated settlement, put UNPROFOR units at greater risk, increase demands that the US become engaged militarily to help extract UNPROFOR, shut

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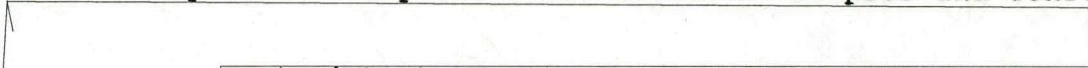
down most humanitarian aid operations, and damage allied confidence in US leadership of NATO. [ ]

4. The JCS paper and annexes--see JCS PAPER TAB--lays out four options for providing arms to the Bosnians:

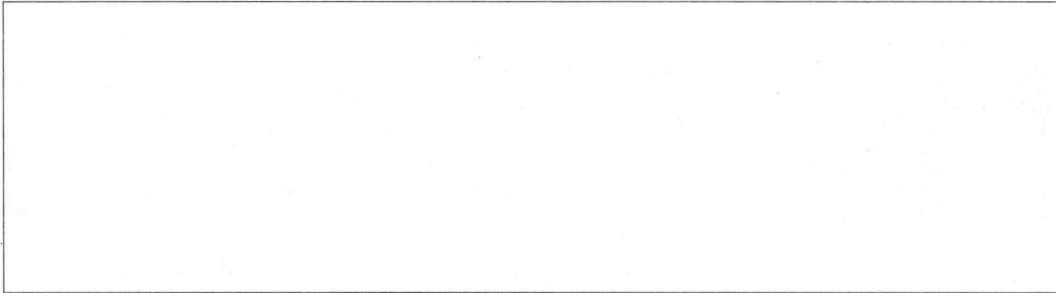


- Overt USG assistance in procurement and delivery of Soviet equipment.
- Overt provision of US gear through FMS or other mechanisms.

The paper does not recommend any of the options and really does not provide a sophisticated treatment of pros and cons.



It might be enough to get the Bosnians and Congress to back away from demands for a formal lift, while at the same time avoiding an UNPROFOR withdrawal and Serb retaliatory action.



5. The Principals may look for options to get out of the current dilemma on lift:

- The easiest development would be if the Muslims themselves concluded that they didn't want the embargo lifted. Although they are speaking strongly in favor of lift in public, [ ]

[ ] that the Bosnians privately are concerned that lift will result in an UNPROFOR withdrawal and loss of the eastern enclaves. The British and French, according to US diplomatic reporting, are picking up similar signs of concern among the Bosnian leadership.

- There was strong sentiment at last week's Bosnia IWG, which I attended, that Congress can be more readily convinced to delay action on lift if the

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US/UN/NATO are more aggressive in the weeks ahead in enforcing existing exclusion zones and establishing new ones. Principals probably will focus in particular on Sarajevo and Bihac.

- If the Administration does have to go ahead with lift, there are some who believe the US will be better able to secure British and French acquiescence if we are prepared to offer concrete assurances of US support in extricating UNPROFOR. As part of this effort, the NSC may ask Principals to reconsider their opposition to use of US ground forces as part of such an effort. [redacted]

6. The Principals also are to consider measures to support the Bosnian Federation, which is experiencing a lot of problems. For background on this issue, see the BOSNIAN FEDERATION TAB. Incidentally, many of the recommendations for action were thought up by a Balkan Task Force analyst, [redacted]

7. The ARMS TRANSFER TAB includes our latest assessment of sources of weapons for the Bosnian combatants this year. This paper was requested by Tony Lake and will be delivered by the PDB staff tomorrow morning. [redacted]

8. I will accompany you to the meeting and serve as notetaker. [redacted]

[redacted]  
A. Norman Schindler

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