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SPECIAL INTELLIGENCE REPORT

DCI Interagency Balkan Task Force

21 October 1994

Prospects for Future Bosnian Serb Offensives

The Bosnian Serbs likely will continue to launch major attacks over the next four to six weeks to blunt ongoing Bosnian Government offensives, pre-empt the effects of lifting of the arms embargo, gain greater control over key access routes, and attempt to force Sarajevo to accept changes to the Contact Group peace plan. While the Bosnian Serbs probably can make some gains against the Bosnian Government and worsen the humanitarian situation in Sarajevo, they no longer have the overwhelming superiority needed to threaten government control of central Bosnia.

Regaining the Initiative

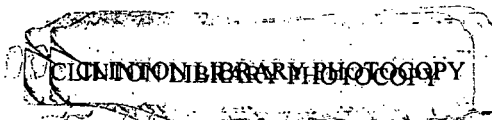
The Bosnian Government has held the military initiative over the last several months.

- Government forces have pushed the Serbs back several kilometers around Teslic in northern Bosnia and they claim to have made substantial gains around Konjic and Mt. Bjelasnica.

The Bosnian Serbs increasingly are worried about government gains, Belgrade's threats to sever supply links, the international community's efforts to isolate them, and Washington's perceived determination to lift the weapons embargo against Bosnia.

- Bosnian Serb "Vice President" Koljevic claimed last month that his government was developing a broad "victory" strategy to achieve changes in the Contact Group plan militarily--compelling the Bosnian Government to negotiate seriously on territorial swaps

In considering a bolder military approach, the Bosnian Serb leadership appears resigned to the prospect of NATO air strikes and a possible UNPROFOR withdrawal.



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[redacted] Bosnian Serb "Vice President" Plavsic has said that Pale expects NATO to intensify the severity and frequency of airstrikes against Bosnian Serb forces.

- Karadzic has indicated that if the military option is chosen, UNPROFOR would be asked to leave immediately. In early October he publicly stated the Bosnian Serbs were "a lot closer" and "even firmer in our belief" that UNPROFOR should leave. [redacted]

Opening Moves

The Bosnian Serb Army has launched a series of local counterattacks throughout Bosnia in recent weeks and continues to make preparations for further large-scale operations in the southeast.

- The Bosnian Serb Army has made significant gains north of Sarajevo near Breza since early October. A successful thrust would allow the Serbs to dominate a key Bosnian Government-held, all-weather supply route from central Bosnia to Tuzla.
- The Bosnian Serbs claim to have advanced to within sight of the road from Mostar to Jablanica. The road was closed twice over the weekend to relief convoys due to Serb shelling. An attack in this area may be intended to exacerbate tensions between the Bosnian Muslims and Croats in the region, undercutting the federation accords. [redacted]

Increased Fighting Likely

The Bosnian Serbs will almost certainly launch additional military operations, particularly near vulnerable roads that are important to the Bosnian Government.

- The Bosnian Serb Army Herzegovina Corps, located in southeastern Bosnia, recently established a new operations group--a battle staff usually organized to control major operations. [redacted]

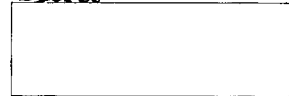
[redacted] This group may have been established to oversee operations around Mostar or a major offensive near Konjic.


- The Bosnian Serb Army Chief of Staff gave the Bosnian Government an ultimatum to withdraw all of its personnel from the Mount Igman demilitarized zone by 20 October or the Serbs would drive them out. [redacted]

Recent attacks around Sarajevo could threaten the delivery of humanitarian supplies to the city. For example, the Serb forces could easily retake Mt. Igman--threatening the land routes into the city.


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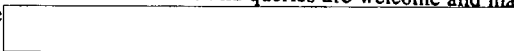
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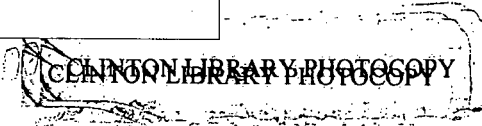
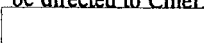


- A cut-off, however, would not cause serious suffering in the short-term, because the city has alternate sources of supply and the population almost certainly was able to build up stockpiles from commercial deliveries this summer. 

Limited NATO airstrikes are not likely to deter future Serb offensives.

- The Serbs are unlikely, however, to launch a large attack on the UN safe areas in eastern Bosnia as long as the UN peacekeepers are there because of concern over provoking a major NATO military response. 

This report was prepared by  analyst with the DCI Interagency Balkan Task Force, in support of US policymaking on Bosnia. Comments and queries are welcome and may be directed to Chief, Balkan Task Force 

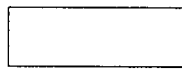
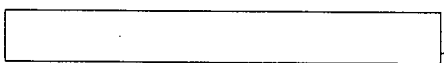


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Areas of Control in Bosnia and Herzegovina



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