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21 November 1994

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Principals' Committee Meeting on Bosnia
18 November 1994

1. The ADCI attended the meeting, chaired by National Security Advisor Lake, to review options for dealing with the situation around Bihac. Other attendees included Deputy Defense Secretary Deutch, Ambassador Albright, Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs Tarnoff, Vice Presidential National Security Advisor Fuerth, JCS Chairman Shalikashvili, White House Chief of Staff Panetta, and Deputy National Security Advisor Berger. [redacted]

2. The ADCI briefed the Principals on the situation around the Bihac enclave and details of a Krajina Serb airstrike against Bihac city that occurred immediately prior to the meeting. The ADCI described the extent of recent Serb territorial gains, but noted that the southern frontlines appeared to have stabilized and that the Intelligence Community did not think a Serb attack against Bihac city was inevitable. The ADCI also reviewed the status of Serb air defenses around Bihac and the deteriorating humanitarian situation. [redacted]

3. The Principals reviewed efforts at the UN to establish an exclusion zone around Bihac city. Principals concluded that there was insufficient support for such action at this time, with the UK, France, and Russia blaming the Muslims for the fact that they were now in such a difficult position around Bihac. The Principals decided instead to pursue high-level discussions with the British, French, and Russians to establish contingency plans in the event the situation around Bihac deteriorates further.

- The Principals developed a list of possible "triggers" for more robust action, including Serb advances beyond the status quo that existed prior to the 24 October Muslim offensive, Serb attacks on the civilian population of Bihac, Serb attacks on UNPROFOR, or the "strangulation" of Bihac through a cutoff of utilities or humanitarian supplies.
- The Principals also developed a menu of options for more robust action, including establishment of an exclusion zone, use of close air support, airstrikes against radars that "paint" NATO aircraft over Croatia, hot pursuit of aircraft over Krajina Serb territory, and striking Udbina airfield. [redacted]

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4. Principals also engaged in a brief discussion of unilateral and multilateral lift. Several participants voiced concern that US policy remained in favor of multilateral lift and opined that the consequences of either type of lift would be bad. Participants ultimately accepted, however, that the Administration would not change its position at this time. One participant complained that there appeared to be an assumption among some Principals that the US would abandon support for multilateral lift. [REDACTED]

5. The meeting resulted in one tasking for the Intelligence Community--to prepare a short paper on the presence of tactical air controllers in the Bihac pocket. The BTF completed this tasking on 18 November. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

A. Norman Schindler
Chief, DCI Interagency Balkan Task Force

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