



Intelligence Report

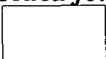
DCI Interagency Balkan Task Force

19 December 1995




Sarajevo: Serbs More Likely to Flee Than Fight



The Dayton Peace Agreement's provisions for transferring the Serb-controlled suburbs of Sarajevo to Federation control will present IFOR with its first major test. Immediately after Dayton, Bosnian Serb leaders began demanding changes to the provisions on Sarajevo and have used bellicose rhetoric, public demonstrations and a referendum to press for a delay, or greater autonomy. If these efforts fail, most Sarajevo Serbs probably would leave rather than submit to control by Muslim authorities, but it is not clear yet whether they would adopt a "scorched" earth retreat. Meanwhile, Bosnian Government leaders have consistently argued that no special protections are needed for the Serbs and that the Agreement must be implemented on schedule. 

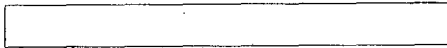



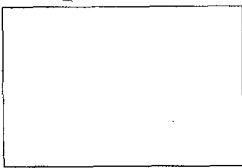
The First Tough Test Case

Implementing the Dayton peace plan's provisions for Sarajevo will be the first and certainly one of the most difficult challenges for the international community and IFOR. It will test the unity of NATO and is likely to help shape attitudes of Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Serbs on implementation of the rest of the plan. It will also have profound implications for the estimated 60,000 to 80,000 ethnic Serbs who live in areas of Sarajevo slated to return to Federation control. 

Bosnian Serbs: Angry but Rudderless

The Bosnian Serb leadership, including its representatives in Dayton, were caught by surprise by the Dayton Agreement's provisions for Sarajevo.

 this latest setback has deepened the disarray in the leadership which was characterized as numb and unable to make any plans for concrete action. 



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The Treaty's Provisions for Sarajevo

The first test of the parties' intentions will be evident in whether and how they comply with the provisions for the withdrawal of their military forces from the Zone of Separation and later from all of the territory that is slated to be transferred to the Federation.

According to Article Four of Annex 1-A, the Bosnian Government and Bosnian Serbs must transfer and vacate "selected positions" (to be determined by the French commander of Sarajevo) along the Agreed Cease-Fire Line (ACFL) within *seven days* of the Transfer of Authority from the UN to NATO (20 December) on instructions from the IFOR Commander.

- Within *30 days* the parties must complete withdrawal from the Agreed Cease-Fire Zone of Separation--one or 2 kilometers on either sides of the ACFL. The IFOR commander may determine the exact width of the ZOS. No one in the ZOS may possess weapons except as authorized by the IFOR commander.
- According to Article IV Section 3(a), the Serbs are required to withdrawal all of their forces from the rest of the Sarajevo suburbs to be transferred to the Bosnian Government within *45 days*. The Bosnian Government is not allowed to occupy these territories until after 90 days, or at the discretion of the IFOR commander.
- IFOR is authorized to use "necessary force" to ensure compliance to these provisions.

- Except for an occasional belligerent statement, neither Bosnian Serb leader Karadzic nor Bosnian Serb Army commander Mladic has taken a strong lead on this issue and Karadzic has become increasingly quiet in recent days, according to press reports. A more strident and powerful lead has been taken by Assembly Chairman Krajisnik, who probably will be a better barometer of Bosnian Serb thinking.
- The Bosnian Serb Assembly on 17 December grudgingly said the government could negotiate an agreement for stationing IFOR troops on its territory that protects the people, property and sovereignty of the Serb Republic. The Assembly, however, disputed the transfer of Serb-controlled suburbs of Sarajevo to the Federation.

This memorandum was prepared by Office of European Analysis and Office of Transnational Security and Technology Issues. Comments and queries are welcome and may be directed to Chief, DCI Interagency Balkan Task Force, at

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Pressing to Reinterpret the Dayton Agreement...

Bosnian Serb leaders began demanding changes to the provisions on Sarajevo almost immediately after the Agreement was initialed; subsequent bellicose rhetoric, public demonstrations, and the 12 December referendum in which an alleged 98 percent rejected integration supported this effort.

Europeans Listening

Serb calls for security guarantees in Sarajevo and demands for confidence building measures have been echoed by some French political and military leaders, whose forces are charged with implementing the agreements in Sarajevo, as well as the recently appointed High Representative Carl Bildt, according to Embassy and press reports.

- Bildt's deputy, Michael Steiner (a German), who was in Sarajevo 15-17 December, tried to reassure both sides, according to press reports. He suggested to the Bosnian Serbs that there might be some changes in implementation of the peace agreement, while he reassured the Bosnian Government that no "deal" had been made.
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Some Bosnian Serb leaders have already declared victory. On 14 December, following the signing of the peace agreement in Paris, Bosnian Serb representatives Koljevic and Buha claimed that their concerns "had been addressed."

- Koljevic said he had received assurances in Paris that housing would be provided by the international community and the FRY for those who wanted to leave. Those who wished to stay will be given international guarantees for their security.
- Foreign Minister Buha publicly said that the problem of Sarajevo had been "officially recognized" and that it was certain that the "handover period" would be postponed at least "6-9 months" and might be as long as "at least a few years." He referred to building a new town to which

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the international community would contribute "enormous funds." For those remaining in Sarajevo, he proposed a "Mostar model" in which the city would be divided into autonomous municipalities patrolled by an international police force. [redacted]

These public statements, which may misrepresent informal conversations in Paris, probably were designed to reassure a jittery population and to buy time. The leaders may hope that they can pressure the international community and Milosevic by claiming that concessions have already been made.

Bosnian Government leaders, on the other hand, have consistently argued that no special protections are needed for the Serbs and that the provisions of the peace agreement must be fulfilled. It is likely to reject any deal that potentially extends the timeline for integration or gives the Serbs significant autonomy.

- President Izetbegovic has indicated publicly that Sarajevo Serbs who participated in the siege of the city would be prosecuted as war criminals.
- Federation Vice President Ganic told Embassy officers that any special guarantees would "bring down the Dayton Accord."
- In discussions with US Embassy officers, Prime Minister Silajdzic demonstrated little concern about the fears of the Sarajevo Serbs and opposed negotiations about Sarajevo fearing that the Serbs only hope to reopen issues the Bosnian Government considers settled. [redacted]

...But Allowing IFOR In...

Despite efforts by Pale authorities to prevent or at least delay the Federation from assuming full sovereignty, they probably will allow IFOR into Serb Sarajevo on schedule. They probably assume that IFOR (and the French contingent in Sarajevo) will focus on its military tasks of separating forces and will not become actively involved in facilitating the actual transfer of political authority to the Federation.

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If the Bosnian Serb leadership fails to obtain a "better deal" for Sarajevo, most Serbs--excluding the elderly--probably would leave the city rather than submit to direct, or even indirect, control by Muslim authorities.

- Ethnic Serbs, reacting to three years of war and goaded on by alarmist statements from Pale, appear genuinely afraid of living under "Muslim" control.

- Population movements have accompanied virtually every territorial shift in the conflict and international security guarantees are not likely to outweigh the deep-seated distrust and fear of revenge by the Muslims.

Although the Bosnian Serb Assembly and its speaker Krajisnik in recent days have urged Serbs to remain in Sarajevo--to lend legitimacy to efforts to revisit the accord and to obtain maximum compensation if they indeed are forced to leave--planning for a major exodus is underway, according to press and diplomatic reporting.

- Krajisnik on 14 December told Pale television that a plan had been drawn up for the rapid evacuation of Serb Sarajevo as a last resort.
- Vice President Koljevic and other Bosnian Serb officials on 15 December told UNPROFOR Chief of Mission Pedauye and other UN officials they would attempt to move whole Serb neighborhoods to Srebrenica, where more than 4,000 displaced Serbs from northern Bosnia have recently been resettled, according to the US Embassy. President Karadzic and other Bosnian Serb officials on 18 December met with urban planners sent by Belgrade to discuss constructing a new town--possibly near Pale--to accommodate Sarajevo Serbs.

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[REDACTED]

Indeed, a limited evacuation has occurred already. Press reports suggest at least some Serbs began leaving by 30 November; [REDACTED] Committee of the Serb-Controlled Mu [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Other people have moved household goods out of the city but have returned to their homes until the final status of their neighborhoods is resolved, according to press reports. Local officials in mid-December reported numerous Sarajevo Serbs attempting to locate housing in Bijeljina.

- Evacuation of economic assets appears to be limited but significant. Hundreds of trucks carrying industrial and military goods have left automobile, aircraft engine, and other factories in Serb-held suburbs since early December, according to press reports. Some of this evacuation, particularly of military equipment, may indicate Bosnian Serb preparations to comply with the Dayton Agreement.
- The outflow of people and economic assets could quickly become a flood, however, if the Bosnian Serbs become convinced that they will be forced to relinquish control permanently. [REDACTED]


Scorched Earth Policy?

If the Serbs evacuate, they will try to remove as many portable economic and military assets as possible. Whether they go beyond this to a "scorched earth policy" involving the destruction of the housing, utility, and transportation infrastructure is as yet unclear. The occasional hostile rhetoric, at a minimum, is an effort to delay enforcement of the transfer of territory, but there almost certainly would be some who, out of sheer hatred, would try to prohibit Federation gains in Serb territory. A few homes have already been burnt in the city and the Bosnian Government and UN have received reports that the Serbs are preparing to destroy major parts of the infrastructure. A move to destroy their parts of the city would almost certainly increase pressure on IFOR to intervene and could lead Federation authorities to take preemptive steps to reassert sovereignty before serious destruction can take place.

- Such efforts could potentially bring IFOR onto a collision course with the Bosnian Government and, in a worst case scenario, cause a breakdown of the cease-fire before IFOR could take up its positions in the ZOS.




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- Departing Serbs are less likely to conduct a scorched earth policy if they perceive a possibility that they will regain the territory at a later date--either through negotiation or through military action--or if the international community pressures them against doing so, in exchange for assistance in building housing and providing jobs for displaced Sarajevo Serbs elsewhere in the Republika Srpska. 

Other Scenarios Less Likely

Active Opposition. Under this scenario, the Bosnian Serbs would take active military measures to prevent IFOR from implementing any aspect of the Dayton accord in Sarajevo. They would launch attacks on IFOR troops and government positions, probably in an attempt to bring about the collapse of the entire peace accord.

-  the BSA was training small groups to resist IFOR, but there is no confirmation that this is a widespread practice. Parliamentary leader Krajisnik,  does not believe the Bosnian Serb Army is capable of defending ethnic Serbs in Sarajevo and is looking to IFOR as a means of guaranteeing their safety. 

Full Integration. Under this scenario the Bosnian Serb population of Sarajevo remains in place and accepts or tolerates integration into Federation territory. All evidence to date indicates there is very little likelihood of this occurring. 