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 AMEMBASSY SARAJEVO
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 05 PARIS 19529

E.O. 12356: DECL: 17 AUGUST 05
 TAGS: PREL, MARR, MCAP, BK, CR, SR, FR
 SUBJECT: BOSNIAN FEDERATION: FRENCH CONCEDE SEWALL
 - ACTIVITIES AS LEGITIMATE; NO INDICATIONS OF
 - PLANNING FOR UNPROFOR WITHDRAWAL BEFORE WINTER
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REF: INTELWIRE.com PARIS 18941 (DTG: 081727Z AUG 95)

1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT. BASED ON FOREIGN GOVERNMENT SOURCES.

SUMMARY

2. THE AUGUST 7-8 VISIT TO PARIS BY THE SECRETARY'S BOSNIAN FEDERATION MILITARY AFFAIRS ADVISOR MG SEWALL AND HIS TEAM AFFORDED THE OCCASION TO OPENLY DISCUSS WITH A NUMBER OF SENIOR GOF OFFICIALS USG PERSPECTIVES REGARDING THE FEDERATION AND MEDIA ACCUSATIONS THAT THE U.S. IS ENGAGED IN PROVIDING ARMS/TRAINING TO BOSNIA AND CROATIA. OFFICIALS AT THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE (ELYSEE), MOD AND MFA (QUAI) ALL DEMURRED WHEN ASKED DIRECTLY IF THEY BELIEVED ACCUSATIONS THAT THE U.S. WAS PROVIDING SUCH WEAPONRY. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] CATEGORICALLY STATED NO, BUT THE [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] ALLUDING TO THE MANY "INDIRECT MEASURES" AVAILABLE TO THE U.S., IMPLIED A LINKAGE.

3. ALL OF THE OFFICIALS EXPRESSED UNCERTAINTY AS TO THE MILITARY AND POLITICAL RAMIFICATIONS OF THE CROATIAN MILITARY TAKEOVER IN KRAJINA -- SOME EXPRESSING PUZZLEMENT AT HOW IT WAS ACCOMPLISHED SO EASILY -- AND SOUGHT U.S. PERCEPTIONS. THE GOF IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF A CONDOMINIUM BETWEEN PRESIDENTS TUDJMAN AND MILOSEVIC AND ITS IMPACT
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ON THE PEACE PROCESS, THE FEDERATION, AND THE LONG-TERM VIABILITY OF A BOSNIAN STATE. BOTH SIDES AGREED THAT TUDJMAN'S NEXT MOVES REGARDING EASTERN SLAVONIA WOULD BE AN EARLY INDICATOR.

4. SEVERAL OF THE OFFICIALS MADE CLEAR THAT THE GOF STILL STRONGLY PREFERS NOT TO WITHDRAW FRENCH UNPROFOR TROOPS, IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, AND THEY APPEARED NOT TO BE PARTICULARLY ANXIOUS ABOUT MEETING AN AUGUST DECISION ON WITHDRAWAL. FRENCH OFFICIALS EXPRESSED FRUSTRATION

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WITH CROATIAN/BOSNIAN IMPEDIMENTS TO MOVING RAPID REACTION FORCE (RRF) COMPONENTS FROM PLOCE TO MT. IGMAN AND SOLICITED THE TEAM'S ASSISTANCE IN PRESSING THOSE GOVERNMENTS TO FACILITATE RRF TRANSHIPMENT. END SUMMARY.

5. MG JOHN SEWALL, ADVISOR TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE ON BOSNIAN FEDERATION MILITARY AFFAIRS -- WITH STATE DEPARTMENT FEDERATION COORDINATOR DANIEL SERWER (STATE) AND LTCOL ANTHONY SIMPSON (JCS/J-5) -- MET WITH SENIOR OFFICIALS AT THE ELYSEE, MOD AND QUAI ON AUGUST 7-8 TO EXPLAIN USG VIEWS ON THE BOSNIAN FEDERATION AND TO RESPOND TO SUGGESTIONS THAT THE U.S. IS PROVIDING WEAPONRY/TRAINING TO BOSNIA AND CROATIA. THE TEAM MET WITH JEAN-DAVID LEVITTE, DIPLOMATIC ADVISOR TO PRESIDENT CHIRAC AND HIS DEPUTY FRANCOIS DELATRE AT THE ELYSEE; WITH DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL ALAIN DEJAMMET AT THE QUAI; AND AT THE MOD WITH DIPLOMATIC ADVISOR PHILIPPE GUELLUY, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC AFFAIRS MG ALAIN FAUPIN, CHIEF OF THE MILITARY CABINET JEAN RANNOU (SOON TO BE CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE AIR

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FORCE), AND DEPUTY INTELLIGENCE DIRECTOR LTG JEAN CHRETIEN. THE TEAM ALSO MET WITH SEVERAL PARIS-BASED JOURNALISTS. IN EACH MEETING THE TEAM BEGAN WITH AN EXPLANATION OF THE FEDERATION, U.S. PERCEPTIONS OF IT AND LEGAL LIMITATIONS ON THE TYPES OF ASSISTANCE THE U.S. CAN PROVIDE. MG SEWALL'S ROLE AS ADVISOR TO THE SECRETARY WAS EXPLAINED IN DETAIL, ALONG WITH A CATEGORICAL REFUTATION THAT HE PROVIDES OPERATIONAL MILITARY ADVICE TO FEDERATION PARTNERS. GOF COMMENTS RELATING TO THE PEACE PROCESS SENT REFTTEL.

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REACTIONS TO THE U.S. PRESENTATION

6. GOF REACTIONS TO THE SEWALL TEAM'S PRESENTATIONS WERE FAVORABLE. THE FRENCH DID NOT QUESTION THE MERITS OF THE FEDERATION AND U.S. EFFORTS TO STRENGTHEN IT, ALTHOUGH SOME OFFICIALS ASKED RHETORICALLY WHETHER THE RECENT KRAJINA OFFENSIVE WOULD DIMINISH TUDJMAN'S SUPPORT FOR THE FEDERATION. [] SAID THAT IF A TUDJMAN/MILOSEVIC DEAL EXISTS, THIS COULD SPELL REAL TROUBLE FOR THE FEDERATION, A POINT ACKNOWLEDGED BY U.S. REPS. THE SITUATION COULD CHANGE RAPIDLY, THEY NOTED, BUT THE U.S. SEES NO INDICATION AT THIS POINT THAT CROATIA IS TURNING AWAY FROM ITS COMMITMENT TO THE FEDERATION. "THIS IS NOT THE BEGINNING OF THE END," SAID SERWER, ADDING THE U.S. WILL PUSH TUDJMAN HARD TO CONTINUE SUPPORT FOR THE FEDERATION. HE SPECULATED THAT TUDJMAN WOULD STILL ENDORSE THE FEDERATION, IN LARGE PART TO SUPPORT CROATS LIVING IN BOSNIA.

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7. SERWER ACKNOWLEDGED IT WOULD BE A CHALLENGE TO PRESERVE THE FEDERATION'S IDENTITY IF INDEED THERE IS A CONDOMINIUM BETWEEN THE CROATIAN AND SERBIAN LEADERS. THE U.S. OBJECTIVE REMAINS TO PREVENT A CROAT/SERB PARTITION WITH ONLY A RUMP MUSLIM STATE REMAINING. HE RECALLED, HOWEVER, THAT THE IDEA OF A CROATIAN/SERBIAN PARTITION OF THE REGION IS NOTHING NEW AND U.S. POLICY HAS CONSISTENTLY SOUGHT TO ENSURE THAT NOTHING WOULD JEOPARDIZE THE CONTINUED EXISTENCE OF BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA. THE FEDERATION IS INTENDED TO

ENSURE JUST THAT. FRENCH AND U.S. OFFICIALS AGREED
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THAT THERE WOULD BE FAR-REACHING PROBLEMS IF BOSNIA
WERE EXTINGUISHED. MUSLIMS WORLDWIDE WILL DRAW
UNACCEPTABLE CONCLUSIONS. [] SAID HE FEARS THE
POSSIBILITY OF A FUNDAMENTALIST BOSNIA IN THE LONG
TERM, ESPECIALLY IF THE MUSLIMS THERE PERCEIVE
THEMSELVES AS HAVING BEEN BETRAYED BY THE WEST.

8. [] ASKED IF THE SERBS IN BELGRADE PERCEIVE THE
FEDERATION AS AN IMPEDIMENT TO THEIR EFFORTS TO UNIFY
SERBS. SEWALL ACKNOWLEDGED BELGRADE'S SUSPICIONS OF
THE FEDERATION BUT SAID BELGRADE RECOGNIZES AND ACCEPTS
THE FEDERATION AS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF THE CONTACT
GROUP PLAN. THE ATTITUDE IN PALE IS CLEARLY MUCH MORE
NEGATIVE. [] EMPHASIZED THAT UNLESS
EFFORTS ARE MADE TO DRAW IN THE BOSNIAN SERBS, THE
FEDERATION COULD CONTRIBUTE TO A PARTITION OF BOSNIA.
SERWER ACKNOWLEDGED THE RISK, BUT SAID PALE IS
PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SPLIT. THE U.S., SERWER
REITERATED, SEES THE FEDERATION AS A MEANS TO PROMOTE
BOSNIAN UNITY.

9. [] WAS VERY SUPPORTIVE OF U.S. EFFORTS
TOWARDS "THE LONG-TERM PROCESS" OF MAKING A VIABLE,
MULTI-ETHNIC STATE THROUGH THE FEDERATION PROCESS.
NOTING A RECENT KARADZIC SUGGESTION REGARDING THE
DIVISION OF SARAJEVO, HE ASKED IF THE U.S. BELIEVES A
DIVIDED SARAJEVO IS A VIABLE CONCEPT. SERWER'S ANSWER
THAT SARAJEVO MUST REMAIN A SINGLE, INTEGRATED CITY IS
CONSISTENT WITH FRENCH VIEWS, ACCORDING TO []

10. NOTING AN INCREASING DISPARITY BETWEEN
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DEVELOPMENTS ON THE GROUND AND AT THE NEGOTIATING
TABLE, [REDACTED] ASKED WHAT THE FEDERATION CONCEPT CAN DO
TO HELP DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS. SEWALL EXPLAINED THAT IT,
AT A MINIMUM, KEEPS TWO PARTIES FROM MAKING WAR ON EACH
OTHER. ALSO, SINCE IT REMAINS OPEN TO BOSNIAN SERBS,
IT CAN BE PERCEIVED AS SOMEWHAT OF A CARROT. SERWER
ADDED THAT THE CONTACT GROUP BELIEVES THE STRONGER THE
FEDERATION, THE BETTER.

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 11. [] ASKED ABOUT THE MILITARY CAPABILITY OF
 FEDERATION FORCES. SEWALL DESCRIBED THEM AS MUCH
 IMPROVED, ESPECIALLY THE INFANTRY FORCES. IN RECENT
 ENGAGEMENTS, THE CROATS PROVIDED HEAVY WEAPONRY TO
 COMPLEMENT THE BOSNIAN MUSLIM ADVANTAGE IN MANPOWER.
 THE PROBLEM, AS DEMONSTRATED IN THE BIHAC OFFENSIVE, IS
 THEIR TENDENCY TO GET OVER-EXTENDED. THAT SETBACK WILL
 LIKELY LEAD TO SMALLER, MORE NUMEROUS, LESS AMBITIOUS
 OFFENSIVE ACTIONS. FEDERATION FORCES HAVE NOT BEEN AN

EVEN MATCH FOR SERBIAN FORCES WITH THEIR HEAVY WEAPONS. TO [REDACTED] SUGGESTION THAT SERB FORCES RETREATING FROM KRAJINA COULD INCREASE BOSNIAN SERB MANPOWER, SEWALL SAID THE SERBS' PRIORITY IN THE NEAR TERM WILL BE SIMPLY TO ASSIMILATE THESE REFUGEES.

[REDACTED] ASKED IF THE U.S., LIKE FRANCE, HAD BEEN SURPRISED BY THE SPEED WITH WHICH CROATIA OVERRAN THE KRAJINA SERBS. SEWALL ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE U.S. ALSO HAD BEEN SURPRISED BY THIS. [REDACTED] ASKED IF THE U.S. IS CLEARLY ABLE TO EVALUATE THE LOSSES BY THE PARTIES TO THE CONFLICT. SEWALL EXPLAINED THAT THE U.S. DOES NOT HAVE GOOD DATA, BUT HE POINTED OUT THAT THIS CONFLICT IS (1) NOT A HIGH-CASUALTY WAR IN TERMS OF COMBATANTS AND (2) IT IS A "PART-TIME" WAR FOR MANY OF THEM, WITH SOME BOSNIAC CORPS OFTEN AT ONLY A FIFTY PERCENT INDIVIDUAL WEAPON LEVEL.

FRENCH WITHDRAWAL FROM UNPROFOR: NOT ON THE FRONT BURNER ... FOR THE MOMENT

12. [REDACTED] LISTED GOF "TRIGGERS" WHICH WOULD LEAD TO WITHDRAWAL OF THE FRENCH UNPROFOR CONTINGENT: (1)

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UNPROFOR UNABLE TO FULFILL ITS MANDATE (A MANDATE WHICH SHOULD NOT BE CHANGED); (2) THE BOSNIAN GOVERNMENT REQUESTS THE DEPARTURE OF UNPROFOR; AND/OR (3) THE U.S. UNILATERALLY LIFTS THE ARMS EMBARGO. REGARDING THE LATTER, [REDACTED] SAID THE GOF "KNOWS PRESIDENT CLINTON WILL VETO THE BILL AND HOPES THAT THE VETO WILL HOLD, BUT IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE NOT BE FACED WITH THIS CONFRONTATION." HE PREDICTED THAT, IF THE BOSNIANS BELIEVE THE U.S. WILL LIFT THE EMBARGO, THEY WILL CALL FOR UNPROFOR'S WITHDRAWAL. [REDACTED] REITERATED EARLIER GOF STATEMENTS THAT A DECISION WOULD HAVE TO BE MADE BY MID-AUGUST IF FRANCE IS TO PULL OUT THIS FALL. SERWER EXPLAINED THAT CONGRESS WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO TAKE UP A VETOED BILL UNTIL SEPTEMBER, AND IT APPEARS LESS LIKELY THAT THERE ARE SUFFICIENT VOTES IN THE SENATE TO OVERTURN A PRESIDENTIAL VETO. HE WARNED THAT THE SITUATION COULD CHANGE RADICALLY, HOWEVER, DEPENDING UPON DEVELOPMENTS IN THE INTERIM.

13. RESPONDING TO [REDACTED] ASSERTION THAT STABILITY IN CENTRAL BOSNIA WOULD BE PARAMOUNT FOR A PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF THE CONFLICT, SEWALL EXPLAINED THAT HE HAD GAINED A VERY POSITIVE IMPRESSION DURING HIS LAST TRIP TO BOSNIA OF IMPROVEMENTS LARGELY BROUGHT ABOUT BY UNPROFOR IN THAT REGION. IN CONTRAST TO MOSTAR AND SARAJEVO, ECONOMIC ACTIVITY WAS RESUMING AND UNPROFOR -- IN A MORE TRADITIONAL PEACEKEEPING MISSION -- HAD HELPED CONSIDERABLY TO REBUILD INFRASTRUCTURE. HE CONCLUDED "IT WOULD BE A SHAME" IF THESE TROOPS WERE WITHDRAWN, DESCRIBING IT AS "THROWING THE BABY OUT WITH THE BATHWATER." CONTINUED UNPROFOR PRESENCE IS

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ESSENTIAL TO RESTORATION OF CONFIDENCE IN THE REGION
AND TO THE VIABILITY OF THE FEDERATION.

MT IGMAN: "UNACCEPTABLE" BOSNIAN AND CROAT IMPEDIMENTS
TO RRF DEPLOYMENTS

14. [REDACTED] EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE
FRUSTRATION WITH THE CROATS FOR IMPEDING RRF

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11. [] ASKED ABOUT THE MILITARY CAPABILITY OF
TRANSHIPMENTS FROM PLOCE AND THE BOSNIANS FOR OBJECTING
TO RRF MOVEMENT TO/TO THE MT IGMAN AREA. THEY
HIGHLIGHTED THE DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED IN GETTING RRF
FORCES -- INCLUDING THE 155 MM HOWITZERS THAT STILL
REMAINED IN PLOCE -- THROUGH CROATIAN TERRITORY ENROUTE
TO MT. IGMAN. ONE FRENCH OFFICER OBSERVED THAT THE
BOSNIAN REFUSAL TO ALLOW FUEL SHIPMENTS TO THE RRF ON
MT IGMAN IS HINDERING RRF DEPLOYMENTS AND WILL SOON
STOP THE RRF'S ROAD REPAIR WORK BEFORE WINTER WEATHER
SETS IN. THE IGMAN ROUTE, WHILE ACCEPTABLE AS A SUMMER
ROUTE, IS NOT/NOT ACCEPTABLE AS A WINTER ACCESS ROUTE
TO SARAJEVO. ASKED IF THEY THOUGHT BOSNIAN/CROAT
OBSTRUCTIONISM WAS RELATED TO THEIR PREPARATIONS FOR
THE KRAJINA OPERATION AND THUS MIGHT NOW END, []
SAID THE MOD WAS HOPEFUL THIS WAS THE CASE.

15. SEWALL UNDERTOOK TO SOUND OUT BOSNIAN AND CROATIAN
OFFICIALS AS TO WHY THEY HAVE IMPEDED RRF DEPLOYMENTS
AND TO EXPLAIN TO THEM THAT RRF EFFORTS ARE IN THE BEST
INTERESTS OF THE FEDERATION. [] CONCLUDED THAT
FRANCE WOULD NOT CONTINUE WITH ITS PEACEKEEPING EFFORTS
IF THE BOSNIANS DO NOT SUPPORT THESE EFFORTS. "IT IS
UNACCEPTABLE," SAID [], "THAT THOSE WE ARE TRYING
TO HELP RESIST OUR MISSION." [] ACKNOWLEDGED THAT
THE RRF WAS CONFUSING TO EVERYONE WHEN IT WAS FIRST
ANNOUNCED -- "INCLUDING US" -- BUT THE GOF HAS
CONSULTED WITH ALL THE PARTIES AND CONFUSION OVER THE
RRF'S ROLE SHOULD NO LONGER BE AN EXCUSE TO IMPEDE THE
MOVEMENT OF RRF UNITS.

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CLANDESTINE ARMS DELIVERIES: SOME SUSPICION OF U.S.
REMAINS, BUT LITTLE CONCERN

16. ASKED POINTEDLY IF THE GOF BELIEVES REPORTS THAT THE U.S. HAS BEEN ENGAGED IN DELIVERING ARMS TO BOSNIA AND CROATIA, [] SAID THE GOF FOUND CERTAIN SITUATIONS "SUSPICIOUS, BUT, IN ANY EVENT, THIS ISSUE IS OF SECONDARY IMPORTANCE." [] RESPONDED THAT MANY "INDIRECT MEASURES" ARE AVAILABLE TO THE U.S., IMPLYING THAT THE U.S. MIGHT BE SOMEHOW INVOLVED. [] ASKED ABOUT U.S. "RETIRED MILITARY ADVISORS IN CROATIA." U.S. REPS EXPLAINED THAT MILITARY PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES INCORPORATED (MPRI) WAS SANCTIONED BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND ITS ACTIVITIES ARE SUCH AS TO AVOID EVEN THE PERCEPTION OF VIOLATING THE SANCTIONS IN UNSCR 713. SERWER DENIED U.S. ARMS DELIVERIES, ADDING THE U.S. WAS NOT ENGAGED INDIRECTLY EITHER. SIMPSON ADDED THAT ANALYSES IN WASHINGTON REINFORCED THE CONCLUSION THAT PROVIDING ARMS WOULD ONLY INCREASE THE LEVEL OF VIOLENCE IN BOSNIA.

COMMENT

17. EMBASSY VIEWS THE PARIS VISIT OF MG SEWALL'S TEAM AS HAVING BEEN HIGHLY PRODUCTIVE. IN THE ABSENCE OF A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF U.S. EFFORTS TO SUPPORT THE FEDERATION, SOME GOF OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN PRONE TO SUSPECT THE WORST, I.E., THAT THE FEDERATION AND GENERAL SEWALL AS ITS "MILITARY ADVISOR" HAVE BEEN ENGAGED IN CIRCUMVENTING THE ARMS EMBARGO. THE TEAM

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VERY CREDIBLY PRESENTED U.S. VIEWS AND RESPONDED TO GOF QUERIES, LEAVING THE FRENCH DECIDEDLY MORE ASSURED THAT THE U.S. IS NOT CIRCUMVENTING ITS INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS. GOF OFFICIALS RARELY TOOK EXCEPTION TO U.S. VIEWS AND SOME EVEN HIGHLIGHTED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FEDERATION IN ACHIEVING AN EVENTUAL SETTLEMENT IN

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BOSNIA. WE WERE STRUCK BY THE RELAXED ATTITUDE OF THE
GOF OFFICIALS ON THE SUBJECT OF WITHDRAWAL, SUGGESTING
TO US THAT THE DECISION PROCESS FOR WITHDRAWAL IS NOT

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11. [] ASKED ABOUT THE MILITARY CAPABILITY OF
ON THE FRONT BURNER FOR THE MOMENT.
 18. THE SEWALL PARTY HAS CLEARED THIS MESSAGE.
 19. SARAJEVO MINIMIZE CONSIDERED.

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