

## Chapter Eight

# Opening Talks and Clearing Away the Underbrush: Dayton, November 1-10

The delegations began to arrive at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base outside Dayton, Ohio on the afternoon of October 31, the day before the opening of what was officially called the "Proximity Peace Talks." Wright-Patterson was one of the major Air Force bases in the U.S. -- partly named for the Dayton-born Wright brothers, the enormous facility housed USAF test pilots in the 1950's and later served as a training center for NASA's Mercury astronauts. While the distance from Washington and the seclusion afforded by the military base were similar to the conditions Camp David provided President Carter 17 years before, the austere, spartan accommodations of Wright-Patterson were in sharp contrast to the cozy, relaxing atmosphere of the presidential retreat. Since early October, Holbrooke had regarded Camp David as the model for these talks. He had read William Quandt's 1986 book on the negotiations, and sought the advice of his former Carter Administration colleagues about how the situation at Camp David shaped their goals and tactics that led to the historic agreement between Israel and Egypt.<sup>1</sup> Shortly before traveling to Dayton, Holbrooke spent an hour on the phone with Carter himself to discuss the comparisons.<sup>2</sup>

Like Camp David, the talks in Dayton were to be conducted with great privacy, allowing the media little access to the proceedings. Under the rules of the conference, the delegates were not allowed to talk to the press; as Christopher had told the President, there would be "radio silence" once the opening ceremony was over. Holbrooke convinced the three presidents that the U.S. alone should speak publicly each day for all the delegations. Thus, State Department Spokesman Nicholas Burns' daily press briefings -- whether in Washington or Dayton -- were the only on-the-record press statements. The delegations went so far as to issue press statements through him. In part,

<sup>1</sup> Quandt, who served at the NSC in the Carter Administration, was part of the U.S. negotiating team at Camp David. See *Camp David: Peacemaking and Politics* (Brookings, 1986).

<sup>2</sup> Holbrooke interview, October 25, 1996 (notes). In an October 18 memorandum to Holbrooke, Associate Director of the State Department's Policy Planning Staff Dan Hamilton summed up the general points from these consultations: first, no media contact had helped the talks, and leaks had been surprisingly minimal; second, the effect of sequestration was less "to build down personal walls than to create an intensity of purpose," and that people started to get edgy after 5-6 days; third, despite Carter's hopes, the cozy Camp David atmosphere did not help the participants relax, and that attempts to create intimacy or informal relationships between the parties did not work (but the U.S. had to get along well with all sides); fourth, the U.S. always made sure that each party had a shared vision of an agreement, choosing to handle the details later; fifth, all sides ate at the same facility, although there was no pressure to mingle; and sixth, in terms of the social setting, activities were offered (such as movies) as a release for the participants, although work often continued late into the night.

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these strict rules were necessary to keep the delegates themselves -- many of whom had already proved adept at using the American press -- away from grandstanding. Complete seclusion would let the negotiations proceed with minimal concern about how victories or concessions might play in the next day's papers. In this way, U.S. negotiators hoped that the talks would be based solely on the basis of the issues, not on outside pressure created by leaks to the press.<sup>3</sup>

In many ways, Dayton was not only radio silent to the public, but to officials back in Washington. As with the negotiations during the Holbrooke team's shuttles that fall, officials in Washington were not always kept informed of the precise substance of discussions. Although Dayton negotiators were in frequent phone contact with Washington, it was almost impossible for Washington officials to keep in step with the fast-paced talks. Information was not systematically shared from Dayton to relevant officials throughout the Washington bureaucracy, and only the most sensitive negotiating decisions were submitted for high-level review. Indeed, as the eleven annexes were developed at Dayton, there was only one known up-to-date draft in all of Washington.<sup>4</sup> Among the entire U.S. negotiating delegation, only General Wes Clark, Don Kerrick and Jim Pardew regularly provided brief written reports for their superiors in Washington, and Holbrooke asked to clear them all.

Like the shuttle efforts, the Dayton talks occurred within clear policy "red lines" that negotiators could not surpass without clearance from Washington (such as sanctions relief for Serbia or specific U.S. military commitments on IFOR). Inside these boundaries, however, Holbrooke and his team were free to use their own tactical judgement on how to proceed. Although such senior officials as Secretary Christopher did "watch the negotiations very closely," receiving daily telephone updates from Holbrooke or others, they rarely intervened from Washington unless asked.<sup>5</sup> When senior Washington officials did visit Dayton, they assumed roles like Admirals of the fleet visiting a ship -- as Dayton's captain, Holbrooke made every tactical decision that determined the course of the negotiations, and they seldom tried to steer him differently.<sup>6</sup>

While Holbrooke and his core team -- Owen, Hill, Pardew, Clark and Kerrick -- would conduct the negotiations, they would be accompanied at Dayton by most of the talented staff that had served as their "backstops" in Washington that fall. In this way, Dayton became a sort of autonomous bureaucracy, capable of making most decisions

<sup>3</sup> As one might expect, many in the press were not satisfied by the limited media access. One prominent example was *New York Times* reporter Elaine Sciolino, who broke the ground-rules and shouted a question at Secretary Christopher on the issue as he walked out of the opening ceremony. Christopher remained unflappable, although he jokingly asked "can't we pull her press pass?" For an example of the press's reaction (and useful historical background on secrecy in negotiations) see Sciolino, "Gag Orders Can Do Wonders for a Peace Talk, *New York Times*, November 5, 1995; and Nicholas Burns interview, July 26, 1996.

<sup>4</sup> This draft was in the hands of John Price of the State Department's European Bureau, who was the EUR/SCE member designated to stay behind and "backstop" the talks from Washington. He would receive periodic updates to the annexes by phone, and annotate the changes on his copy. Once word got out that he was doing so, several senior officials (both within the State Department and from other relevant agencies) would call Price for updates. See Price interview.

<sup>5</sup> See Christopher interview, October 22, 1996.

<sup>6</sup> If Holbrooke was Admiral, Rosemarie Pauli-Gikas served as his chief logistical officer. Assuming the role she had throughout the shuttles, she shadowed the lead negotiator at almost every step, taking on the daunting responsibility of making sure the Holbrooke train ran on time.

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without support from Washington. Indeed, since much of that month was a time of government shutdown due to the fierce budget battle, the "Dayton bureaucracy" was one of the *only* units of government at work. John Kornblum and the *ad hoc* legal working group responsible for drafting the annexes were there, as well as numerous officials from the State Department's European Bureau to assist on specific aspects of the negotiations (such as those who specialized in elections or the Muslim-Croat Federation). The three U.S. ambassadors in the region -- Perina, Menzies, and Galbraith -- were present, and would help negotiate with their respective Balkan counterparts. Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights John Shattuck and Ambassador-at-Large Robert Gallucci also came to assist in their areas of expertise. The Pentagon sent several several staffers to assist with the military aspects of the negotiations, and U.S. intelligence personnel were located on site as well.<sup>7</sup>

The Bosnian, Croat, Serbian and European delegations were of a similar size; in all, nearly 200 officials were present to support the negotiations. In addition, hundreds of U.S. administrative personnel -- from administrative aides and public liason officers to communications specialists and security guards -- were involved in the talks. While many of these people were loaned from Wright-Patterson, a considerable number of them had come from their offices in Washington.

The area around the sprawling, 8000-acre military base was typical of the American midwest -- flat, sparse, and in November, cold and bleak. Ohio itself was far larger than Bosnia (and U.S. negotiators had created a map showing such), and far away from the New York air that Milosevic wanted so badly to smell. Dayton, like many communities in middle America, was a quiet city, large enough to have its own television station but small enough to still have a drive-in movie theatre. Although delegates rarely strayed far from base, the city enthusiastically played host, and it was east to see Dayton Chamber of Commerce members envisioning a revived tourist industry of a new city of "international peace."

The five delegations were housed in Wright-Patterson's Visiting Officer Quarters, or VOQs. The VOQ area -- which was roughly three square blocks -- had been fenced off from the rest of the base, and security checkpoints had been constructed to regulate access. These modest two-story accommodations were very functional, looking a lot like college dorms. They had sleeping quarters for the delegates, as well as offices and conference rooms for negotiations. In the fifteen days since Wright-Patterson had been chosen, Air Force crews worked round-the-clock to spruce-up the suites that would house the heads of delegation -- Tudjman, Milosevic, Izetbegovic, Bildt and Holbrooke. The idea was to make the accommodations more "presidential": while not Versailles, the VOQ's were nicely improved from what was before circa-1970 military housing. Notwithstanding these renovations, the housing struck Bosnian Foreign Minister Sacirbey as "a little like Motel 6."<sup>8</sup>

The VOQ area was to be the primary location of the "proximity" talks; the Croat, Bosnian, Serb and U.S. quarters faced one another in a quadrangle (the Russians and Europeans were housed in a building adjacent to the quadrangle). Here is where

<sup>7</sup> As further evidence of Dayton's autonomy, the State Department arranged for the facility to be able to receive and send classified cables to Washington or embassy posts abroad. A new locator line was created temporarily for such cable traffic -- "U.S. Office Proximity Talks."

<sup>8</sup> For quote, see Michael Dobbs, "Bosnia Talks Open With Warning to Leaders; Failure to Reach Agreement Could Lead Europe to Wider War, Christopher Says," *Washington Post*, November 2, 1995.

negotiators could shuttle back and forth among the delegations. Yet, unlike the lush lawned quadrangles that grace many university campuses, this quad was a parking lot.

About a hundred yards away from the VOQ complex sat the Bob Hope Hotel and Convention Center. A concrete path, known as the "peacewalk," had been constructed by the Air Force for the short stroll between the VOQ and the Hope complex. Like a university campus' student union, the Hope Hotel was the central place where the delegates could meet, eat and occasionally work. The main eating facility for the talks was also in the Hope Hotel, at a sports-bar named Packy's, where CNN played alongside sporting events on its wide-screen TV's. The Officers Club, which was off the official negotiating site but only a short driving distance from Hope Hotel, also served as a place where high-level officials could eat. Office suites for U.S. support staff had been created in the Hope hotel, and the convention center would hold any large group meetings, starting with the opening plenary session.

*Day One: Wednesday, November 1*

"The eyes of the world are on Dayton, Ohio," Secretary Christopher said from the tarmac shortly after arriving at Wright-Patterson that chilly and grey November morning. "We have come to the heartland of America to try to bring peace to the heart of Europe."<sup>9</sup> Holbrooke and the rest of the U.S. team had arrived in Dayton the day before to welcome the visiting delegations and make arrangements for the opening ceremony. Shortly after arriving, Christopher, accompanied only by Holbrooke, met privately with each of the Balkan Presidents and with the Contact Group to insure that each party would respect the groundrules (such as not talking to the press) and, hopefully, establish a serious and positive tone for the negotiations.<sup>10</sup>

These opening meetings gave the Secretary a chance to outline a few key issues that the U.S. hoped each leader would confront — the resolution of which would be critical to an overall agreement. "You will need to make clear to all the parties that they will each be required to make compromises and sacrifices," a State Department strategy paper to Christopher stated. "In bilateral meetings, you will want to underscore the importance of each coming to the table with their own reasonable proposals." Yet, the U.S. understood that the odds weighed against a comprehensive settlement. The challenges facing the conference were daunting. "Bosnian officials, buoyed by their battlefield successes, are ambivalent about any agreement which in their view would rescue the Serb entity from collapse. Meanwhile, the Serb side is deeply distrustful of the process, and Milosevic will have his hands full delivering the Bosnian Serbs into a unitary state with the sort of superstructure which is envisioned in our draft documents." Given the remaining divisions on map and constitutional issues, U.S. intelligence analysts were skeptical that a fully satisfactory agreement could be reached in Dayton — but the stakes were too high for any side to be seen as responsible for failure.<sup>11</sup> "Working out

<sup>9</sup> See "Statement by Secretary Christopher upon arrival at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Dayton, Ohio, November 1, 1995," U.S. Department of State *Dispatch*, December 1995.

<sup>10</sup> This was explained by State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns during a press briefing to review these opening meetings. See State Department transcript, November 1, 1995. See also Nicholas Burns interview.

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agreeable solutions to the numerous contested issues is likely to extend beyond the 1-2 weeks which the parties appear prepared to spend in Dayton," one such memorandum read.<sup>12</sup>

The "piecemeal" negotiating process of shuttle diplomacy had brought the parties within close range of a settlement, but many contentious issues had not yet even been addressed. The Geneva and New York Agreements created a strong political and legal framework for a future Bosnian state, but constitutional details would have to be fleshed out further. Moreover, perhaps the most critical issue -- territory -- had been left entirely for proximity talks. Holbrooke's strategy throughout the shuttles had been to tackle the "easier" issues first. By doing so, he had hoped to facilitate a sense of trust among the parties as well as bolster his own team's credibility as a mediator, both of which would be essential as the parties moved to the "tough" issues at Dayton.<sup>13</sup>

Christopher's first bilateral was with Tudjman. The Croat President's overriding concern going into Dayton was to get Eastern Slavonia back from the Serbs, if necessary by force. During Holbrooke's shuttles, Tudjman was disinterested about almost everything but Eastern Slavonia (the only exception being the Federation military offensive). However, the U.S. believed that since Tudjman desperately wanted Croatia to be accepted as part of Western Europe -- thus being eligible for financial support and participation in defense programs like NATO's "Partnership for Peace" -- he would cooperate on other issues as long as he got a favorable resolution in Eastern Slavonia.

The Secretary told Tudjman that Eastern Slavonia had to be settled in the framework of current negotiations -- he would only get a deal if he cooperated on other issues. For example, Christopher pressed Tudjman to support the Muslim-Croat Federation. Recent tensions in the Federation, coupled with Bosnian concerns about Croatia (as Izetbegovic expressed to the President on October 24 and Sacirbey discussed with Holbrooke on October 27), placed strengthening the Federation at the top of the Dayton agenda.<sup>14</sup> U.S. intelligence reported that while Tudjman was "sitting on the fence," he would likely support the Federation as "the lesser of two evils."<sup>15</sup> The State Department's European Bureau contended that "Zagreb formally supports the Federation but shows little interest in loosening its hold over areas controlled by the Bosnian Croat and regular Croatian forces."<sup>16</sup> Given this attitude, Christopher wanted to reiterate to

<sup>12</sup> See Ibid.; and Memorandum to Christopher from John Kornblum, "Scope Paper: Your Participation in the Opening of Bosnia Proximity Talks," October 31, 1995.

<sup>13</sup> The potential of such a "piecemeal" negotiating approach has been described by several leading theorists of strategic interaction. Basic bargaining theory has shown that, even if each side's preferred choice is to take advantage of the other -- which was certainly the case among the three Balkan parties -- mutual cooperation can be achieved when big transactions are broken up into a series of small ones. See, for example, Robert Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation* (Basic Books, 1984); and Thomas Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict* (Harvard University Press, 1960), Chapter 2.

<sup>14</sup> For a press report on the tenuous nature of the Bosnian-Croat Federation, see Raymond Bonner, "Along Bosnia Dividing Line, Federation Is Only On Paper," *New York Times*, November 4, 1995.

<sup>15</sup> See memorandum to Christopher from John Kornblum, "Your Meeting with Croatian President Tudjman at the Proximity Talks, Wright-Patterson AFB, November 1, 1995," October 31, 1995.

Tudjman what President Clinton had told him personally only eight days before -- that the U.S. looked to his country, "as the stronger party" of the Federation, to use its considerable weight to make the alliance work.<sup>17</sup>

The Secretary next met with Milosevic. The Serb leader reportedly understood that the bottom-line was that he could not leave Dayton without a settlement. He recently signaled his own flexibility on such key issues as Eastern Slavonia, and apparently felt that the elements of an agreement were less important than the act of agreeing itself.<sup>18</sup> The State Department's European Bureau described Milosevic as a leader squeezed on all sides. Under pressure from sanctions, military defeats and the international community, he still had to confront a Bosnian Serb leadership "that is trying to walk back commitments contained in the Geneva and New York principles, and the nationalist opposition in Serbia [that] is accusing Milosevic of selling out." The Bosnian Serbs continued to give him problems, and it remained an open question whether he could deliver them on issues they considered vital to their interests. By this view, U.S. officials believed that "Milosevic has already taken a major leap by agreeing to represent the Serb side in Bosnia, and he probably believes that now is the time to cut a deal."<sup>19</sup>

Milosevic started the meeting in his typical way, blunt and a bit crude. Having already tasted the cuisine at Packy's, the Serb leader complained about the "shit food," but commented favorably on a friendly waitress named Vicki (which with his accent, Milosevic pronounced as "Wicki"). Turning to serious issues, Christopher pressed the Serb leader on human rights, reminding him that the U.S. was warning all sides about continued human rights violations. Some had criticized the decision to allow Milosevic, considered by many a war criminal, to come to the U.S.. Throughout the past week, both the *Washington Post* and *New York Times* had run lengthy articles outlining Serb atrocities in Srebrenica during July 1995.<sup>20</sup> Information for these articles was provided in part by the State Department, and their publication caused Milosevic to complain bitterly to Christopher and Holbrooke about a "media conspiracy."<sup>21</sup> Although "conspiracy" is too strong a word, the U.S. did want to use this pressure to their advantage. Their opening strategy was to make clear to the Serb leader that his presence at Dayton was itself an act of goodwill on their part. Further, the negotiators intended to play on Milosevic's well-known desire for bilateral relations with the U.S.. Christopher's points outlined that "a successful conference will be an important first step on the road to normal relations," reminding him that sanctions would be suspended once an agreement was initialed. As he had done with Tudjman, Christopher also pressed Milosevic on

<sup>17</sup> See talking points, "Meeting with Tudjman," Pardew notebook from Dayton, no date.

<sup>18</sup> For intelligence reporting on Milosevic's rather flexible negotiating stance entering Dayton, see "Milosevic's Goal: Get an Agreement," Cable, Belgrade 5408, November 1, 1995.

<sup>19</sup> See memorandum to Christopher from Kornblum, "Your Meeting with Serbian President Milosevic at the Proximity Talks, Wright-Patterson AFB, November 1, 1995," October 31, 1995; see also [redacted]

<sup>20</sup> "Bosnian Serbs Lay Down Markers For Dayton," Cable, Belgrade 5331, October 27, 1995.

<sup>21</sup> See Michael Dobbs and Jeffrey Smith, "New Proof of Serb Atrocities; U.S. Analysts Identify More Mass Graves," *Washington Post*, October 29, 1995; and "Massacre in Bosnia; Srebrenica: The Days of Slaughter," *New York Times*, October 29, 1995. In a press conference before Dayton, Holbrooke welcomed these articles and explained that they had been written with the full cooperation of the State Department.

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Eastern Slavonia, asking that a deal be reached within the timeframe of the Dayton talks.<sup>22</sup>

For the Bosnians, by far the most reluctant and divided of the parties, the U.S. aimed to reassure them that their sacrifices were well understood and would not be forgotten. "They want peace, but not at any price," the U.S. embassy in Sarajevo described, "and they distrust deeply the Serbs and, to a lesser degree, the Croats."<sup>23</sup> As the opening of the conference neared, Izetbegovic was apparently tired, distracted and deeply ambivalent about ending the war just as his side began fighting back successfully; At one point, he even considered not attending. Silajdzic, himself pessimistic that a deal could be reached, had earlier characterized the prospects for success as "somber, unclear, and uncertain."<sup>24</sup> In an attempt to brighten this dour outlook, Christopher and Holbrooke wanted to reiterate that with "good faith negotiations," the Bosnian war could be brought to a just conclusion. Additionally, they wanted to remind the Bosnians about the "carrots" for cooperation -- such as equip-and-train and economic reconstruction -- that had been initially outlined in the Lake plan.<sup>25</sup>

As he had with Tudjman, Christopher also urged Izetbegovic to cooperate to shore up the Federation. Izetbegovic and Silajdzic agreed, but countered that that a new Federation agreement -- one that provided a specific governing structures and an implementation outline -- be reached before most key issues with the Serbs were addressed. This Bosnian demand for an additional set of negotiations was not a part of the initial gameplan, but unless they patched-up the Muslim-Croat alliance, any agreement reached at Dayton had no chance of succeeding. Holbrooke knew, however, that the task would slow down the main issues of the negotiations. In order to assure that he and his team spent most of their energy on the core issues, Holbrooke delegated primary responsibility for the Federation talks to Michael Steiner, the well-trusted and highly capable German representative to the Contact Group.<sup>26</sup>

Finally, Christopher demanded that Izetbegovic curb the support the Bosnian military was receiving from Iranian-backed Mujahadeen fighters. The British had recently raised similar concerns with the Bosnians, stating that if such forces were not withdrawn from Bosnia, they would consider withdrawing aid workers and support for Bosnian reconstruction efforts.<sup>27</sup> For his part, the Secretary explained that the Administration could not justify either to Congress or the American public helping the

<sup>22</sup> See talking points, "Meeting with Milosevic," Pardew notebook from Dayton, no date.

<sup>23</sup> "Bosnia: Peace Agreement Faces Tough Sales Pitch, But IFOR and Economic Aid Are Key Trumps," Cable, Sarajevo 733, November 1, 1995.

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<sup>25</sup> According to a memorandum to Christopher from Kornblum, "assurance of generous reconstruction package will be a strong inducement for [Izetbegovic] to sign on to a peace plan." See "Your Meeting with Bosnian President Izetbegovic at the Proximity Peace Talks, Wright Patterson AFB, November 1, 1995," October 31, 1995; also see Sarajevo 733.

<sup>26</sup> Holbrooke interview with author (notes), December 20, 1996.

<sup>27</sup> Apparently British soldiers and aid workers had recently been subject to Mujahadeen surveillance. Details on these concerns had been conveyed to the State Department by the British embassy on November 1. See memorandum for Chris Hill from Bill Mozdzierz (EUR/SCE), "UK Warning to Bosnia on Mujahedin," November 1, 1995.

Bosnians militarily -- whether by stationing U.S. troops or participating in an equip-and-train program -- under such circumstances. "I must be very clear with you," he said, "one Mudjahadeen is too many."<sup>28</sup>

The Secretary of State's final meeting before the official opening ceremony was a working lunch with Carl Bildt and the Contact Group representatives. Although Bildt and Russian representative Igor Ivanov were, along with Holbrooke, the co-chairs of the conference, they had no clear role in the negotiations. Similar to the shuttle negotiations, almost all of the planning and organizing for Dayton had been done by the U.S.; the Europeans had seen the first drafts of the negotiating texts only the previous weekend. State Department officials expected that the Contact Group would press the Secretary to outline a role for them in the negotiations, to be certain "that they are kept fully in the loop as events develop." Christopher planned to stress the importance of working closely together and delivering a unified message to the parties. He also would try to reassure them that while "some of us" were not happy with the various aspects of negotiating process, "it is a result we are all pursuing together. That result has to be a peace agreement that works. Let us not lose sight of that."<sup>29</sup>

Following these preliminary consultations, Christopher and Holbrooke joined all delegations at 2:30pm in the "B-29 Superfortress" Room of the Hope Convention Center -- all of the conference rooms were named for a U.S. military plane -- for the formal opening ceremony. At the center of the large fluorescent-lit ballroom, Christopher and Holbrooke joined Bildt, Ivanov, French representative Jacques Blot, British representative Pauline Neville-Jones, German representative Wolfgang Ischinger and the three Balkan Presidents around a small circular table. Their respective delegations filled the rest of the room, and the press was isolated in the back. This was the only planned open-press event of the talks.

When everyone was seated, Secretary Christopher rose to motion the three Balkan leaders to shake hands -- without himself getting caught shaking Milosevic's hand. Like the 1993 handshake between Rabin and Arafat on the White House's South Lawn, the image of these three men clasping hands was the photo-op and symbol the U.S. wanted the talks to begin on. The embrace, like Rabin and Arafat's, was equally awkward and dramatic. "We thought it would be a constructive beginning," Secretary Christopher recalled. "It seemed likely there would be a good deal of tension in the room when they first got together, so it would be symbolically important for them to shake hands."<sup>30</sup>

In his carefully drafted opening address, Christopher tried to set the agenda both thematically and substantively. "We have an urgent and important purpose today," he began. "We are here to give Bosnia and Herzegovina a chance to be a country at peace, not a killing field." In order to do so, he stated that four key conditions needed to be met: first, Bosnia was to remain a coherent state with "a single international personality;" second, that a settlement must take into account "the special history and significance" of Sarajevo; third, that human rights must be respected and that those responsible for atrocities be held accountable; and finally, that a solution must be brought to Eastern

<sup>28</sup> See talking points, "Meeting with Izetbegovic," Pardew notebook from Dayton, no date; and Holbrooke interview with author (notes), December 20, 1996.

<sup>29</sup> See memorandum and talking points to Christopher from Kornblum, "Your Meeting with Contact Group Representatives at the Proximity Talks, Wright-Patterson AFB, November 1, 1995," October 31, 1995.

<sup>30</sup> Christopher interview, October 22, 1996. The moment had also been carefully planned and rehearsed by U.S. officials, who wanted to be sure that the opening went off without a hitch.



Slavonia. All of these issues had been raised privately earlier in the day, but now the Secretary had presented them publicly as the necessary ingredients for an "enduring peace."<sup>31</sup>

After this ceremony, Christopher asked Milosevic and Tudjman to join him in an opening discussion on Eastern Slavonia. Meeting in the living room of the "Carriage House," a small military VIP cottage about a mile from the VOQ area, the two Presidents faced each other while Christopher and Holbrooke sat together on a couch. Milosevic arrived late, but seemed very relaxed. He had just come from the Officers Club, and as he sauntered in, it was clear that he had been drinking. He greeted Tudjman and his delegation (including Foreign Minister Granic and Defense Minister Susak) informally by first-name. Already feeling loose, Milosevic ordered a glass of red wine. Christopher and Holbrooke each joined in with a glass of white.

U.S. Ambassador to Croatia Peter Galbraith was asked to open the meeting by describing the state-of-play on Eastern Slavonian negotiations. Galbraith explained that the two Presidents needed to act to overcome their remaining (and, in his view, small) differences. Tudjman responded that these "technical" matters were no problem, the issue was whether the Serbs would accept the reintegration of Eastern Slavonia into Croatia. Milosevic did not see the remaining issues as merely "technical." As the conversation heated up, the two Presidents began to talk to each other in Serbo-Croatian, while the interpreter tried to keep up. Seeing that the interpretation was becoming an impediment to their conversation, Christopher asked the interpreter to stop trying. Although the Americans, with the exception of Chris Hill, couldn't understand what was being said, it didn't matter -- getting the two sides to talk face-to-face was the point of being there. As the Americans looked on, Milosevic tried to bully Tudjman into accepting some of his proposals, such as leaving the territorial decision to a local referendum. The Croat President responded coolly, not giving in to Milosevic's overtures. Holbrooke remembered this as a "wild meeting," characterized by the two Presidents "screaming and yelling each other." To Galbraith, it seemed that the "Tudjman [that] Milosevic encountered at this meeting was not the same one he had last seen years before. Milosevic's style, numbed by alcohol [which apparently was more than a bottle by the end of the meeting], wasn't working."<sup>32</sup>

Although Galbraith -- who had labored for months on Eastern Slavonia -- felt that a deal seemed only days away, others remember the meeting differently. Holbrooke and Chris Hill saw the discussion only as an ice-breaker that left the two sides far apart on Eastern Slavonia. Galbraith's overall assessment about the prospects for an Eastern Slavonian agreement, which Holbrooke and Hill had often disputed over the past few months, seemed too optimistic.<sup>33</sup> The only new development appeared to be that Milosevic was finally willing to accept the fact that Eastern Slavonia had to be included in an overall settlement in Dayton. Up to that point, Milosevic had refused to involve himself with problems in Eastern Slavonia; these were issues, he contended, between

<sup>31</sup> See "Statement by Secretary Christopher at the Opening of the Balkan Proximity Talks," U.S. Department of State *Dispatch*, December 1995. For an example of a press report, see Elaine Sciolino, "Three Balkan Presidents Meet in Ohio to Try to End War," *New York Times*, November 2, 1995.

<sup>32</sup> See Christopher interview, October 22, 1996; Galbraith interview, October 2, 1996; Galbraith Diplomatic Diary, pp77-78; and Holbrooke interview with author (notes), December 20, 1996.

<sup>33</sup> For an example of Holbrooke and Hill's differences with Galbraith, see "Item for Holbrooke," note to Holbrooke from Hill, October 30, 1995, EUR electronic computer files, SEEYUG Library.

Zagreb and the Serbs in Eastern Slavonia.<sup>34</sup> Now, Milosevic agreed to negotiate something in Dayton which he could then "recommend" to the local Serbs to accept. Although a small step, Holbrooke and Hill figured, it was at least something to start with.

That evening, Secretary Christopher returned to Washington. His trip to open the talks was largely a success: the opening ceremony set the desired tone of hope and cooperation and a substantive foundation had been established with all the parties. That night, the U.S. presented the delegations the draft Framework Agreement and annexes on the constitution, elections and IFOR.

*Day Two: Thursday, November 2*

After opening day, negotiations began in earnest. Holbrooke had devised a multi-tiered approach to conduct the talks, in which he and his core team would begin negotiating political and constitutional issues with the parties, deferring the "map talks" -- which he suspected would be the most contentious -- for the very end. Alongside these efforts would be two parallel negotiations, in which the Holbrooke team would participate when necessary: talks to secure agreements on Eastern Slavonia and the Federation. At the outset, Holbrooke's primary objective was to avoid early setbacks and let the talks evolve naturally. As in the game of football, he later recalled, the goal at Dayton was "of course to score touchdowns to win the game. But first, you have to get some first downs."<sup>35</sup>

Work began almost immediately on the Federation. Throughout the morning and afternoon, Holbrooke and Michael Steiner mediated lengthy meetings between Izetbegovic, Tudjman and Federation President Kresimir Zubak to establish broad parameters of a proposal.<sup>36</sup>

During one of these meetings, Holbrooke asked John Shattuck to join the discussion to report on his investigations of human rights violations and stress the importance of his gaining access to key areas of western Bosnia. In addition to ensuring Shattuck access for further investigations, Holbrooke thought that they would also be able to forge a deal to provide the Muslim and Croat refugees the right to return to their homes in four select towns in western Bosnia (Jajce, Bugojno, Travnik and Stolac). Although the refugee numbers would be relatively insignificant, Holbrooke hoped that such a confidence-building measure would help improve Bosniac-Croat relations (since these refugees were a product of the 1993-94 Muslim-Croat war) and smooth the Federation talks along.<sup>37</sup>

Both Izetbegovic and Tudjman put up "incredible resistance" to the refugee proposal. Tudjman claimed that such an agreement would be "absurd" this early in the negotiations. Visibly annoyed and wishing to emphasize that this was a poor start, Holbrooke abruptly got up and told them that if they could not even agree to this minor

<sup>34</sup> For an example of the U.S. trying to convince Milosevic that he should be concerned with Eastern Slavonia, see Belgrade 5122. See also message for Galbraith from Chris Hill, "Official-Informal," State 250182, October 21, 1995.

<sup>35</sup> Holbrooke interview with author (notes), December 20, 1996.

<sup>36</sup> According to Don Kerrick's report that evening to Anthony Lake, the three Presidents agreed to consider the relationship between Bavaria and Germany, wherein Bavaria has quasi-independence, but has responsibilities such as revenue-raising to help the German state. See Kerrick to Lake, "Dayton SITREP #1, November 2, 1995, 9:00pm."

<sup>37</sup> Shattuck interview, July 25, 1996; Holbrooke interview with author (notes), December 20, 1997.

deal, he might as well call in the press to tell them that further negotiations would be fruitless. Putting on his coat as if to leave, Holbrooke said that "I've got this human rights guy (Shattuck) who's willing to risk his life to visit these areas, and you can't even assure us that you can get a few people to relocate." After this outburst, Izetbegovic and Tudjman agreed to the proposal, signing a paper that briefly outlined the relocation arrangement.<sup>38</sup>

Later that day Holbrooke got Milosevic to guarantee access for Shattuck to the main Bosnian Serb city in Bosnia, Banja Luka. Holbrooke and Shattuck also pressed the Serb leader on the whereabouts of David Rohde, an American journalist for the *Christian Science Monitor* who had been missing in Bosnian Serb territory since October 30. Rohde's status had become a major issue for the media, who were camped out at Dayton en masse and starved for stories. Milosevic agreed to work with the Bosnian Serbs on the issue. With the Muslim-Croat agreement and Milosevic's cooperation in pocket, Shattuck left that evening for Bosnia.<sup>39</sup>

The Serbs and Croats met to discuss Eastern Slavonia. For the second consecutive day, Tudjman and Milosevic got together (without U.S. mediators) to discuss this issue over lunch at the Officers Club. According to Croatian debriefings for both Holbrooke and Galbraith, a deal on Eastern Slavonia "was there." It appeared as though an agreement would be centered around elections in Eastern Slavonia within one year, with a UN-sponsored military force (separate from IFOR) to implement an agreement. As Pardew reported to Secretary Perry that day, one proposal -- which had been floated in Perry-Grachev talks earlier that fall -- was that this UN force would consist of a U.S. and Russian battalion, which both Tudjman and Russian representative Ivanov tentatively agreed to. But the duration of the UN implementation phase remained hotly contested. That evening, Tudjman left Dayton (as scheduled) to return to Croatia for their national elections. In order to continue negotiations in the region -- as Milosevic insisted -- Holbrooke asked Galbraith and UN representative Thorvald Stoltenberg to travel with the Croat President back to Zagreb and go on immediately to Eastern Slavonia.<sup>40</sup>

While the Croats and Galbraith were confident that a deal was at hand, Holbrooke and Hill remained skeptical. They had always assumed that the key issue would be the length of time for the return of Eastern Slavonia to Croatia -- Tudjman wanted the process completed in one year, Milosevic insisted on three years -- and neither side seemed ready to compromise. Although Galbraith had been sent back to negotiate with the local parties, Holbrooke knew that the real action would remain in Dayton. He sensed that Milosevic realized he would have to concede Eastern Slavonia, but was looking for a

<sup>38</sup> See Shattuck interview, July 25, 1996; Galbraith Diplomatic Diary, p78. For agreement, see "Displaced Persons Agreement, 2 November 1995, Dayton Ohio."

<sup>39</sup> Shattuck interview, July 25, 1996; and Shattuck's "Weekly Report" to Under Secretary of State for Global Affairs Tim Wirth, November 2, 1995; and Elaine Sciolino, "Rights Issues Complicating Bosnian Talks," *New York Times*, November 4, 1995. On Rohde's situation, see "CSM Correspondent David Rohde," Cable, Belgrade 5431, November 2, 1995.

<sup>40</sup> On the plane that night to Zagreb, Galbraith worked up his draft of an agreement and briefed Tudjman. As he reflected in his diary that day, "My hope is the Serbs will be able to accept it if there is no explicit mention of reintegration and with the access guaranteed to the FRY. Croatia should accept since it will be able to get what it wants on 'time period' [of reintegration] in the subsequent negotiations, especially since the international force will not last more than one year. However, when I read my hand-written notes to Tudjman on the plane, he insisted on one year." See Galbraith Diplomatic Diary, pp78-79; and Galbraith interview, October 2, 1996.

way to do so without aggravating the Serbs in the area. Regardless of what Galbraith could negotiate in the region, a deal would be real only with Milosevic's blessing. Thus, while Galbraith and Stoltenberg worked in the region, Holbrooke and Hill pressed Milosevic and Serb Foreign Minister Milutinovic in Dayton.<sup>41</sup>

On the annexes, initial discussions opened with the parties on the constitution, elections and IFOR annexes, which they had received the previous night. These talks, while preliminary, were characterized as "constructive in nature," with none of the parties "react[ing] strongly" to any particular issue, clarified questions each party had about specifics. "They all simply asked questions," Pardew reported to Perry. "The tough negotiations will come when they have the time to fully evaluate it." The Bosnians did, however, argue that any arms control regime should encompass the entire region (including Serbia and Croatia), not just Bosnia. Further, they wanted the arms embargo lifted no later than economic sanctions against Serbia, and asked for the specifics of the "equip-and-train" initiative to be included in an agreement.<sup>42</sup> For an early assessment of territorial issues, Holbrooke had Pardew begin discussions with the Serbs in their VOQ. Although many variations were discussed, at the end of the day, nothing was accomplished. As Holbrooke expected, no one -- Serb, Croat, or Muslim -- was ready to pursue a serious discussion on the map.<sup>43</sup>

U.S. officials also spent a great deal of time that day consulting with the Europeans on the remaining draft annexes. Before any of the annexes could even be presented to the parties, the U.S. wanted to make sure that the Europeans concurred, in order to maintain the appearance on Contact Group unity. The U.S. had briefed its European partners on the military, constitution, and elections annexes the weekend prior to Dayton, but had not yet given them the remaining documents, some of which were still being finalized within the U.S. team. This was left for the first few days of the negotiations. As Holbrooke later observed, not only was the U.S. negotiating with the three Balkan delegations, but "we were trying to negotiate with and within the Contact Group," obviously slowing the entire negotiating process down. The U.S. set up a daily coordinating session at 9am with the Contact Group representatives in the Hope Hotel, but the meeting was overcrowded, unwieldy and time-consuming, quickly taking on the ponderous air of a UN General Assembly session.<sup>44</sup> The Russian presence further complicated matters. Maintaining Russian approval would remain critical, particularly for such issues as the military annex. In talks with Ivanov that day, it seemed that while he was personally uncomfortable with some aspects of U.S. plans, the Russians at Dayton would not disrupt the negotiations.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Holbrooke interview with author (notes), December 20, 1996; Hill interview with author (notes), December 5, 1996.

<sup>42</sup> For summaries of these initial meetings, see Kerrick SITREP #1, and Pardew November 2 report to Perry.

<sup>43</sup> For details of these talks, see notes, "Serb Map Discussion of November 2, 1995," Pardew Dayton notebook; and Pardew November 2 report to Perry.

<sup>44</sup> Holbrooke comment; Dayton History Seminar.

<sup>45</sup> As Tom Lynch, the head of the State Department's Russia Desk observed from his talk with Ivanov that day: "Ivanov is on good behavior. It's not clear how much fuss he will make about Annex 1 and IFOR as he takes a basically helpful approach to the East Slavonia operation -- obviously, as Yeltsin foreshadowed at Hyde Park, grudging or conditional consent for IFOR is politically sensible in Russia. What guidance Ivanov does have -- I doubt there's much at the moment -- seems to be to engage Russia cautiously, try to secure some oversight for it on IFOR, allow forward movement on Eastern Slavonia but put the military in

The atmospherics throughout this first day of "serious negotiations" were characterized to officials in Washington as "generally positive... even lighthearted." Kerrick reported to Lake that "all sides seem willing to deal -- even anxious to do so." The U.S. considered the Milosevic-Tudjman lunch discussion a welcome development, revealing the two sides could work together, and thus far, no real problems had emerged over the three annexes presented to the parties. Milosevic, for his part, had demonstrated his desire for successful negotiations. As Pardew observed, "Milosevic is maneuvering at every level to move toward an agreement while he keeps the Pale Serbs under control and away from the decision-making process." Overall, the Dayton talks were off to a good start. Yet, as everyone there knew, it would take several days to see if these initial positive steps would lead anywhere.<sup>46</sup>

*Day Three: Friday, November 3*

The day began with a 9am plenary meeting between the U.S. and Contact Group delegations. Sitting in the "B-29 Room" at the Hope Convention Center, the two sides finalized the draft annexes on human rights, refugees, and national monuments, which were now ready to be presented to the parties.<sup>47</sup> Work continued on the civilian implementation and a Bosnian police force annexes, and several issues remained to be worked out with the Europeans until drafts were ready. On the police annex, the Europeans were concerned that international police in Bosnia would have too much responsibility and too little real power. They were particularly interested, though, in the civilian implementation annex, considering the senior civilian official -- which they had already decided would be Carl Bildt -- as their link to implementing any settlement. IFOR would be overseen by the Americans, but the Contact Group wanted to make sure that the civilian process would be under European oversight. This was apparently one of their only "instructions" from the EU Council of Ministers going into the Dayton talks.<sup>48</sup> Robert Gallucci, the lead U.S. diplomat in the 1994 negotiations with North Korea over nuclear fuel and now Secretary Christopher's "Ambassador-at-Large," had arrived in Dayton the day before with John Shattuck, and took the lead in working with the Contact Group on these two annexes.<sup>49</sup>

Immediately after this meeting with the Europeans, Holbrooke and his core team met for four hours with Milosevic in the American VOQ. In contrast to his rather cocky and loose disposition of the past few days, that morning Milosevic was prickly and

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the decision-making role, and limit the cost to Russia in terms of resources." See, memorandum for Holbrooke, Chris Hill, Wes Clark and Jack Zetkovic (EUR), from Tom Lynch, "Talk with Ivanov, 4:15pm November 2," November 2, 1995. This report was also sent from Pardew to Secretary Perry.

<sup>46</sup> See Kerrick SITREP #1; Pardew November 2 report to Perry.

<sup>47</sup> The conference rooms at the Hope Hotel were named after U.S. military planes. Prior to the conference, European delegation head Carl Bildt stated that he objected to having meetings for a "peace conference" held in rooms that commemorated weapons of war. His complaint was rejected. Not only was the request impracticable, Holbrooke felt, if anything, these reminders of U.S. air power would be useful. See Philip Goldberg interview, October 31, 1996; Holbrooke interview with author (notes), December 20, 1996.

<sup>48</sup> As explained in Pauline Neville-Jones, "Dayton, IFOR and Alliance Relations in Bosnia," *Survival* 38 (Winter 1996-97) p50.

<sup>49</sup> See "November 3 Dayton Update," no author, EUR/SCE files; Gallucci interview.

insecure.<sup>50</sup> He began the meeting by griping about the beating he was taking in the U.S. press, claiming that these stories were part of a U.S.-Bosnian coordinated effort to soil the Serbs. Milosevic was particularly angry with an article in that day's *New York Times* about the Hague War Crimes Tribunal's request to link any peace agreement to the surrender of Serbs indicted for war crimes.<sup>51</sup> The article also stated that Milosevic himself remained a suspect for war crimes. He was also bitter about Roger Cohen's recent *New York Times* profile of him, especially the portion concerning his father's suicide. The Serb dictator was clearly not comfortable with the realities of a free press.<sup>52</sup>

Although Holbrooke pressed him on it, he was concerned that Milosevic would be linked to war crimes -- if firm evidence emerged of his involvement during Dayton, continued negotiations with him would be problematic. However, as of that day, the U.S. intelligence community had no reliable evidence connecting Milosevic or his inner circle directly to ethnic cleansing or other war crimes.<sup>53</sup> Holbrooke assured Milosevic that, unlike the articles on Srebrenica and Zepa, these recent stories were not part of any intentional leaks to the press, and that he couldn't control everything the media reported.

Holbrooke also pressed the Serb leader to deliver the early, unconditional release of David Rohde. That day, Rohde, imprisoned in a jail in the northwest Bosnian town of Bijeljina, was formally convicted with illegally entering Bosnian Serb territory and falsifying ID papers. While serving a two-week sentence for these crimes, there were reports that Rohde could be charged with espionage, which would carry a sentence of five years. Holbrooke admonished Milosevic about Rohde, firmly explaining to the Serb leader that they could never announce any agreement while an American journalist was imprisoned.<sup>54</sup>

The discussion then turned to the draft Bosnian constitution and other annexes. Milosevic seemed generally supportive of the draft "framework agreement," the broad statement of principles to which the eleven annexes would be attached. However, he argued that Karadzic should be permitted to participate in future elections. Allowing this, he asserted, would avoid making Karadzic a martyr to the Bosnian Serb cause. Since

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<sup>50</sup> [Redacted]

<sup>51</sup> Stephen Engelberg, "Panel Seeks U.S. Pledge on Bosnia War Criminals," *New York Times*, November 3, 1995.

<sup>52</sup> To see how the Serb leader dealt with the free press over a year later, see Jane Perlez, "Journalists Prepare to Take On Serb President," *New York Times*, February 27, 1997.

<sup>53</sup> In a memorandum to State Department Chief of Staff Tom Donilon, Toby Gati (INR) reported that "the intelligence community for three years has looked for definitive evidence of President Milosevic's personal involvement in managing ethnic cleansing and other war crimes, and has come up empty handed." See "War Crimes and Milosevic," November 3, 1995. Attached to this memorandum are two older INR analyses which support this point. See memorandum to Conrad Harper (L) from Philip Wilcox (INR), "Bosnia -- Update on Actions Contributing to Genocide," August 21, 1993; and memorandum to Arnold Kanter (P) from Douglas Mulholland (INR), "Bosnia -- Actions Contributing to Genocide," January 11, 1993. For the most part, these reports describe that while the U.S. did not have evidence linking genocidal actions to Serb leaders, local Bosnian Serbs and militias were actively engaged in a range of activities contributing to genocide.

<sup>54</sup> See Kerrick notes from meeting, November 3, 1995; Holbrooke interview with author (notes), December 20, 1996. On November 3, UNPROFOR officials in Bosnia met with Bosnian Serb officials in Pale to discuss Rohde. See "Rohde in Bijeljina Jail, Convicted of Illegal Entry, Doctored Papers," Cable, Sarajevo 749, November 4, 1995.

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Milosevic did not believe that the Bosnian Serb could win an election, he argued that forcing Karadzic to face the ballot was a way to get rid of him. With all the focus on war crimes, this idea was out of the question for the U.S., and Holbrooke rejected it.<sup>55</sup>

While Holbrooke, Hill, Owen, Clark and Kerrick met with Milosevic, Jim Pardew was with the Bosnian Serbs in their VOQ to continue discussions on the map. Like the day before, these talks went nowhere; it was becoming clear that Milosevic had done very little to facilitate Bosnian Serb support for even the most basic principles of the peace process. They remained suspicious of U.S. intentions.<sup>56</sup> Bosnian Serb delegation head Momcilo Krajisnik tabled a proposal for a divided Sarajevo, and explained that the Sarajevo airport should be moved to provide for a Serb "Sarajevo center." They rejected outright the idea of a joint Administration for the city, as Krajisnik said that the U.S. would "make a very big mistake if you try to force a unified state [in Bosnia]." After five hours of talks, Pardew had not brought Krajisnik and his cohorts any closer to an agreement the Bosnians could accept. Telling them that their proposals were completely unrealistic, Pardew offered to run them by the Bosnians anyway.<sup>57</sup>

Work also continued on an Eastern Slavonia agreement. From Zagreb, Galbraith cabled to Dayton the draft text he put together on the plane the previous day. In it, Eastern Slavonia would be progressively reintegrated into Croatia. A UN "transitional authority" would be created to oversee this process, and both the Croats and Serbs would commit to observe human rights, allow refugees to return, and establish joint commissions. The OSCE would be asked to supervise elections to be held no longer than thirty days after any transitional period, and the agreement would coincide with mutual recognition between Serbia and Croatia. Holbrooke and Hill liked some of Galbraith's ideas, but still believed that the real decisions would have to be made in Dayton.<sup>58</sup>

That evening, the U.S. hosted a dinner for the senior delegation members at Wright-Patterson's Air Force Museum. Holbrooke had wanted to have a formal event during the beginning of the talks, believing it would be a nice way to unwind after three full days in Dayton. The setting for the first formal dinner of this peace conference was ironic; held in the cavernous main room of the Museum, the guests dined in the shadows of an enormous B-29, several Stealth F-117 fighters, and, appropriately to some, a Tomahawk cruise missile that seemed to be pointed right at Milosevic's table. The symbolism was welcome but coincidental -- Holbrooke had simply intended to stage an

<sup>55</sup> For details, see Kerrick notes and "November 3 Dayton Update."

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<sup>57</sup> See "Serb Map Discussion of November 3, 1995," notes drafted by Mark Sawoski (DOD), November 4, 1995.

<sup>58</sup> See "New Draft Eastern Slavonia Agreement," Cable, Zagreb 4401, November 3, 1995; Galbraith Diplomatic Diary, pp78-79; and Galbraith interview, October 2, 1996. That day, an State Department intelligence report for Talbott outlined the following analysis on the prospects for success in Eastern Slavonia. It confirmed much of what Holbrooke and Hill suspected: "The Croats can be deterred from exercising a military option for Sector East solution if good faith negotiations make swift progress. Milosevic holds the key to this effort.. [he] could press the Sector East Serbs to sign on to the 'best possible' deal now being promoted by Embassy Zagreb and ICFY negotiator Stoltenberg. Milosevic may now have decided in Dayton that the local Serbs should sign on to a deal quickly." See Gati to Talbott, "The Sector East Situation," November 3, 1995.

elegant event, not send the parties a message. The Europeans were sure, however, that the setting reflected Holbrooke's deviousness. An Air Force orchestra was on hand to belt out big band music in the style of Glenn Miller. The night apparently produced some interesting face-to-face discussions (for example, between Milosevic and Izetbegovic), as Bosnian, Serb and Croat delegates were intermingled at the tables. As Kerrick reported the next day to Lake, the mood of the evening was one of "laughter and camaraderie amongst both sides."<sup>59</sup>

*Day Four: Saturday, November 4*

On the first Saturday of the talks, some of the participants hoped to get some rest. The U.S. organized a bowling trip for anyone interested, and provided soccer balls and footballs for use. Mo Sacirbey, a former football player at Tulane University in New Orleans, took Izetbegovic to see his alma mater play nearby Louisville. That night, Milosevic hosted the U.S. delegation at the Officers Club for a lobster dinner, with the food shipped in from Maine by Chris Spirou, an American citizen and former New Hampshire Democratic Party leader who was at Dayton as an advisor to the Serb delegation. Although the cold and blustery midwest winter weather was settling in, Don Kerrick reported to Lake that the "parties remain warm and receptive to one another, but [are] showing almost no movement on key issues -- yet."<sup>60</sup>

Despite the perception that this crisp autumn Saturday was a day of recreation, Kerrick pointed out, "serious talks continued on the map, constitution, and the Federation." Before Izetbegovic and Sacirbey departed for the Tulane football game, they met with Holbrooke, Hill, Owen and Kerrick. Holbrooke began with a brief probe on the map; at that point, only Pardew and the Bosnian Serbs had seriously discussed the map. Sacirbey responded that since there "wasn't a better place to start," the talks should stick to the map created for the 1994 Contact Group plan. The rest of the discussion that morning focused on Izetbegovic's views on the structures of a democratic Bosnian state - the presidency, parliament, and national elections. As Kerrick reported, "Milosevic and Izzy retain opposite views on election of national parliament and presidency." Nothing much had changed in their respective positions since the negotiations over the New York principles in late September. The Bosnian President still supported broad powers for a federal presidency and parliament, both of which would be elected directly. Milosevic wanted narrowly defined powers without direct elections. When Holbrooke asked Izetbegovic what the solution should be, the Bosnian President apparently responded honestly: "convince one side [to] compromise to our position." To try to bring some movement on these issues, Holbrooke urged the Bosnian President to meet privately with Milosevic. Izetbegovic seemed willing, and said he would try to Sunday.<sup>61</sup>

Although the Bosnians had tried to prepare substantively for Dayton, even hiring a team of international lawyers to assist them in the negotiations, they struck many U.S. negotiators as ill-prepared and unwilling to compromise. On the bright side, it seemed that the internal divisions that had plagued the Bosnian delegation were waning, at least for the moment. After the talks that day, Don Kerrick observed that the "Bosnians [are]

<sup>59</sup> Kerrick to Lake, "Dayton SITREP #2; November 4, 1994, 10:20pm"; Holbrooke interview with author (notes), December 20, 1996.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid. Kerrick's report that day and notes he took during a morning meeting with the Bosnians are the only substantive items available that review the day's events.

<sup>61</sup> For details of meeting, see Kerrick SITREP #2 and Kerrick notes, November 4, 1995.



making significant progress on developing internal positions, but differences remain evident."<sup>62</sup>

U.S. negotiators also expended considerable effort that Saturday dealing with the David Rohde situation. Holbrooke was worried that if Rohde's status worsened -- if he were held indefinitely or even sentenced for espionage -- the media outrage would seriously sidetrack the negotiations.<sup>63</sup> Ten members of Rohde's family had come to Dayton on Friday to plead for their son's release, and Ambassador Menzies had spent most of his time during the past few days with them. Nikola Koljevic, the Bosnian Serb Vice President, joined Menzies to meet with Rohde's family for several hours. He arranged a phone call with the imprisoned Rohde, and both Menzies and several family members spoke with him. Holbrooke also met with Rohde's family, providing the most recent news and reassuring them that the U.S. was working for his release.<sup>64</sup>

Tragically, the biggest news of the day at Dayton had nothing to do with the Balkans. As these would-be peacemakers worked or rested that Saturday, an accomplished and acclaimed peacemaker, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, was killed in Tel Aviv. Rabin was widely considered a bold, brave leader who accepted considerable risk to compromise and make peace with his neighbors. For all these attributes, he had been gunned down by the hate and violence that his leadership had tried so hard to overcome. The assassination hit close to home for the Balkan leaders at Dayton; it seemed to remind them of the real risk these negotiations presented.

#### *Day Five: Sunday, November 5*

On Sunday, discussions resumed on the map. In particular, Pardew, Kerrick and Sacirbey grappled with possible arrangements for the future status of Sarajevo. Pardew explained the Bosnian Serb map proposal he had received on Friday. As expected, Sacirbey dismissed the plan with little consideration. The Bosnian Foreign Minister explained that the night before, he, Croatian Foreign Minister Granic and Defense Minister Susak agreed that the 1994 Contact Group map should be the baseline for any territorial negotiations. "[The] quality of territory under the Contact Group plan [is] better," Sacirbey said. With this, the Bosnian Foreign Minister outlined his position: Sarajevo would be a unified city, and the Muslims would be compensated fairly for the areas around Srebrenica and Zepa, which were Muslim under the Contact Group map. Sacirbey argued that any trades had to be "adequate" in, for example, vital resources and economic value. The Muslims had to get something in exchange for their territorial losses -- "[one] shouldn't assume [that the] Serbs can enjoy success [in this] peace plan," Sacirbey apparently said.

On Sarajevo, U.S. negotiators raised the idea of keeping the city unified but politically neutral -- like Washington, DC, it could be a separate federal capital. The city could be divided into several semi-autonomous political districts (called Opstinas) and, like the proposed Bosnian presidency, have a three-person mayoral position whose

<sup>62</sup> Menzies interview; Kerrick SITREP #2.

<sup>63</sup> See Menzies interview.

<sup>64</sup> See Kerrick SITREP #2; Menzies interview; and Kit Roane, "U.S. Reporter Held in Bosnia Said to Be Well," *New York Times*, November 6, 1995. That day, U.S. embassy officials in Sarajevo were supposed to have met Pale authorities, but canceled the meeting when they refused to assure that Rohde would be present. See "Pale Rejects U.S. Terms For Attending Meeting Re Journalist David Rohde," Cable, Sarajevo 745, November 4, 1995.

chairman would rotate among the three ethnic groups. The municipal government would be responsible for such city-wide services as transportation, utilities, and sanitation, while the local Opstinas would control education, cultural services, and local health services. The city would be policed by a multiethnic force, which the international community could help train and monitor. Sacirbey agreed to consider the proposal, giving the U.S. approval to draw up a formal plan. As a condition, he said that the Serbs had to announce that non-Serbs would be welcome to live in Serb areas, and that security would be guaranteed for all. In addition, Milosevic had to be told that under no circumstances could Sarajevo be divided -- "[he] must accept a unified city."<sup>65</sup>

Work continued on an Eastern Slavonia agreement, with Chris Hill, assisted by Chris Hoh, shuttling between the Croats and Serbs. Foreign Minister Granic and Defense Minister Susak led the Croatian team, and Serb Foreign Minister Milutinovic was the main Serb interlocutor. Milutinovic participated in these talks provided that the Americans and Croats maintained the fiction that he was not negotiating on the East Slavonia Serbs behalf, but rather only helping them determine what "recommendations" from Belgrade they would likely accept.

Progress was difficult, as the Serb side objected to every implication in the complicated draft that the territory was under Croatian sovereignty, while the Croats sought additional language implying that Belgrade accepted Zagreb's claim on the area. The Croats were willing to be flexible on many details, including Serb rights and an international transitional administration, but they were not prepared to forego the threat of the military option without some kind of recognition.<sup>66</sup> Milutinovic maintained that the local Serbs had good reason to fear Croatian control. Any precipitous move to put Eastern Slavonia under Zagreb would spark another surge of refugees into Serbia and, he suggested, jeopardize Milosevic's ability to play peacemaker.<sup>67</sup>

In a private meeting that day with Susak, Pardew discussed Croatia's views on the role of international troops in implementing an Eastern Slavonian peace. Tadjman was scheduled to return to Dayton on Wednesday, November 8, and Pardew explained to Secretary Perry that "we can expect quick decisions on both the Eastern Slavonia and Federation arrangements." Susak expressed to Pardew his optimism that an agreement would be achieved between Belgrade and Zagreb. He believed that an implementation force for Eastern Slavonia should be simply part of IFOR, and thus framed within an

<sup>65</sup> The only information from this meeting is Kerrick's notes, November 5, 1995. For a first draft of the U.S. proposal for Sarajevo, see "Agreed Principles on Sarajevo," November 6, 1995 draft, Pardew Dayton notebook.

<sup>66</sup>

<sup>67</sup> Chris Hill interview with author (notes), December 19, 1996; Chris Hoh comments to author, *passim*.

overall settlement. Susak wanted U.S. troops to be part of such a force. "To Susak, the requirement for U.S. troops [in Eastern Slavonia] is tied directly to the Serb demand for the Russian battalion to remain in Eastern Slavonia," Pardew reported to Perry. "His logic is this: If the Russians must be there, the Croats want an equivalent NATO force; Russians will not accept NATO command and control, therefore, a Russian arrangement with the U.S. is required." The Croat Defense Minister struck Pardew as more interested in U.S. command than a large number of U.S. troops, yet, Susak "does believe that some U.S. troops would be required to justify the command position." Holbrooke supported the idea of making an Eastern Slavonia part of IFOR command, but the Pentagon dictated strong opposition to the idea.<sup>68</sup>

That evening, Chris Hill joined U.S. delegation members Jim O'Brien, Tim Ramish and Chris Hoh to continue to work on the text of the Muslim-Croat Federation and Eastern Slavonia agreements. Michael Steiner's critical efforts on the Federation had produced an arrangement for a joint presidency between the Muslims and Croats, and the two mayors of Mostar (a key Federation city and likely capital) were expected to arrive in Dayton to push the negotiations along. Hill and the others made some minor edits to Steiner's draft, but were generally satisfied with its substance. Steiner's accomplishment, Hill explained to the U.S. delegation during a staff meeting later that night, could be a "major breakthrough" for the Federation. By the end of the weekend, Steiner's progress left the U.S. delegation confident that a Federation agreement was near.<sup>69</sup>

#### *Day Six: Monday, November 6*

Holbrooke began this sixth day in Milosevic's suite, where he was joined by Hill, Owen, Kerrick, and Rudy Perina. The main issue on the table was sanctions. Over the weekend, Milosevic had asked Holbrooke that Serbia be allowed to get some sanctions relief in order to deal with an energy crisis plaguing Belgrade. Time was running short, and Milosevic insisted on relief before the harsh Balkan winter set in. Although this directly contradicted with the Administration's policy reaffirmed immediately before Dayton -- lifting sanctions only upon initialing of a final peace agreement -- Holbrooke relayed this request back to Washington. The Principals had decided that sanctions relief could be revisited at Holbrooke's request, and he explained that Milosevic's willingness to bargain on other issues was being affected.

During the morning meeting, Milosevic and Holbrooke rehashed the problem, with both sides merely repeating their standard arguments. Milosevic threatened that it would be hard for him to agree to anything without some immediate sanctions relief. Holbrooke explained that sanctions would not be negotiated as a part of a peace deal, but would be lifted as a result of one. If Milosevic cooperated, the U.S. negotiator explained, he would get all the sanctions relief he needed. The "real point is [to] get real peace," Holbrooke said. Then U.S.-Serbia relationship could be restored with "no restrictions." Dangling the carrot in front of Milosevic, Holbrooke repeated that the "sanctions issue [is] easier to deal with if [there is] real progress."

<sup>68</sup> Details of this discussion from Pardew report to Perry, "Dayton Talks -- Implementation Forces in Croatia/Map," November 5, 1995; Holbrooke interview with author (notes), December 20, 1996.

<sup>69</sup> See Kerrick notes, "Staff Meeting -- November 5," and O'Brien and Hoh comments, interview.

"[We've spent] six days here," Holbrooke said. "[We] can't stay forever. You may want to stay to make Dayton your capital -- I want to go home. [We] can't stay beyond November 15."<sup>70</sup>

From the perspective of the U.S. team in Dayton, the sanctions problem embodied three discrete issues. As Don Kerrick explained in a memo to Strobe Talbott, each required action in Washington to determine the U.S. position.<sup>71</sup> The first issue was the UN Security Council's consideration of humanitarian agencies' emergency request to allow 23,000 tons of heavy heating oil into Belgrade. Officials in Dayton felt that the U.S. should support this proposal, urging Washington to direct New York to make this happen soon. The second issue concerned natural gas supplies for Belgrade. According to the October 5 Bosnian cease-fire agreement which reopened natural gas supplies to Sarajevo, the same access was supposed to have been guaranteed to Belgrade. The Bosnians concurred that this was the arrangement. The problem was that the Russians (who were Belgrade's chief gas supplier) believed that they needed the authorization of the UN sanctions committee to supply Serbia. In their view, the U.S. was blocking a decision. According to Kerrick, Milosevic claimed that he needed "concrete action for people in Belgrade (now in subzero weather) while he is in beautiful, sunny Dayton. [The U.S.] delegation believes that even after discounting exaggeration, this argument has validity." Therefore, negotiators in Dayton pushed to get unrestricted natural gas access approved, "but not communicated to [the] UNSC until negotiating team can use for maximum effect during Tuesday afternoon meeting with Milosevic."<sup>72</sup>

The third and final sanctions issue raised by Milosevic was a proposal to export a limited amount of grain to pay for fuel imports. The Serb leader claimed that he could not pay his main energy supplier, Russia, for fuel he desperately needed for winter heating. He had initially made this "grain-for-oil" request in an October 26 letter to the UN Security Council, but now pressed for immediate action. In Washington, Leon Fuerth produced a detailed assessment of Milosevic's proposal. In his view, Milosevic was being disingenuous. The amount of fuel requested "far exceeds the narrowly defined uses cited and, in fact, meet or exceed overall FRY pre-embargo import requirements," Fuerth explained. He believed that even the grain Milosevic proposed to sell would be worth more than the cost of the fuel he claimed was needed, and that Serbia could profit between \$20-\$80 million on such a deal. Nevertheless, Fuerth concluded that "given the onset of the heating season, increased numbers of refugees, and the continued degradation of Serbia's electric power grid, the FRY government does face a serious problem in providing enough fuel for domestic heating needs this winter." While he thought Milosevic's request was excessive, he agreed that "a tightly controlled [relief] package could be designed to meet the most immediate needs without seriously undermining the overall sanctions regime." The delegation in Dayton concurred, recommending that Washington authorize Serbia to trade a more limited level of grain for less fuel.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>70</sup> Details on meeting from Kerrick notes, "Meeting with Milosevic," November 6, 1995.

<sup>71</sup> Kerrick to Talbott, "Sanctions Issues Checklist," faxed to Washington at 12:22am on November 7, 1995. During his visit to Dayton that day, Talbott had asked that Kerrick prepare this memorandum for him (see below).

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> See "A Grain-for-Oil Swap," memorandum drafted by Leon Fuerth, November 5, 1995 (faxed to Dayton on November 6); and Kerrick to Talbott, November 7, 1995.

For the most part, officials at the NSC supported Fuerth's analysis and recommendations. In a phone call that day with Kerrick, Sandy Vershbow argued that the issue wasn't as "humanitarian" as Milosevic was framing it. Nevertheless, Vershbow said the NSC was reviewing ideas in the context of a larger agreement, and that Lake was "seized" with the issue. Things seemed to lean towards Fuerth's scaled back plan, and apparently he was trying to get the "definitive answer" that day. They were "prepared to do something," Kerrick records Vershbow as saying, "but less than what Milosevic wants. [The] President is taking [a] hard line."<sup>74</sup>

Deputy Secretary of State (and Dayton native) Strobe Talbott also became involved with the issue. That afternoon, he arrived in Dayton as the first of what Holbrooke planned as a series of "drop-by" visits by senior Administration officials. Holbrooke designed these visits to impress upon the parties that the "full weight of the U.S. government was behind the negotiating team" and, to "educate Washington officials on the complexities and realities of these negotiations."<sup>75</sup>

Since the PC planned to discuss the sanctions issue soon, the U.S. delegation in Dayton urged Talbott to press the parties. The Bosnians recognized the importance of Talbott's visit. Over a dinner that Holbrooke hosted that night in Talbott's honor, Izetbegovic and Silajdzic told the two American officials -- in Milosevic's presence -- that the October 5 ceasefire agreement mandated unrestricted gas flows to *both* Serbia and Bosnia and that "millions of people are freezing in both countries." To help guide the decision-making process in Washington, Talbott asked Kerrick to draw up a "checklist" of sanctions issues and what the negotiating team wanted. As Kerrick wrote the next day, "[We] need help to clear decks on sanctions issues today. [The] goal is to have U.S.G position by COB. Position should be sent to Dayton for leverage in negotiations."<sup>76</sup>

Work also progressed on Eastern Slavonia, although fitfully. In Holbrooke's morning meeting with Milosevic, the Serb leader complained that he was confused by the way the negotiations were split between Dayton and the Galbraith-Stoltenberg efforts in the region.<sup>77</sup> Holbrooke and Hill shared this view, realizing that they would have to start acting independently of Galbraith's efforts. Galbraith's negotiations were not going well, and even he realized that the local Serbs would only cooperate if "instructed" by Milosevic. In an effort to move the talks forward, officials at Dayton wrote a new draft agreement. Written mainly by Chris Hill, this new draft reworded and simplified most Galbraith's original text, but was substantively very similar (such as provision for a UN implementation force).<sup>78</sup> The most significant change was the elimination of the provision for mutual recognition between Croatia and Serbia, which Holbrooke and Hill

<sup>74</sup> According to Kerrick's notes from that day, he left the morning meeting with Milosevic to talk with Vershbow about sanctions. See Kerrick notes, November 6, 1995; and "Sanctions Update," paper prepared by Chris Hoh, November 6, 1995, 2:00pm.

<sup>75</sup> Holbrooke interview with author (notes), December 20, 1996.

<sup>76</sup> This is the memorandum that outlined the three sanctions issues for decision. See Kerrick to Talbott, November 7, 1995; Talbott interview; Kerrick interview; and Holbrooke interview with author (notes), December 20, 1996.

<sup>77</sup> Kerrick notes, November 6, 1995.

<sup>78</sup> Galbraith had cabled another version of his draft text on November 4. See "Revised Eastern Slavonia Draft Agreement," Cable, Zagreb 4403, November 4, 1995; Hill interview with author (notes), December 19, 1996.

believed should be negotiated separately from but parallel to an Eastern Slavonia agreement.<sup>79</sup>

Negotiations also proceeded on the future status of Sarajevo. Based on the discussion with Sacirbey the day before, Owen, Pardew and Miriam Sapiro had written a paper outlining ten principles of a "District of Columbia" plan for the Bosnian capital.<sup>80</sup> Their talks with the Bosnians continued throughout the day, resulting in some slight revisions to Owen's draft. This most recent paper maintained the main components of the earlier plan -- such as a city council, rotating mayor, unified police force, and local control of educational, cultural and religious activities -- but added, among other things, that the city had to be demilitarized. Milosevic was still opposed to the idea; over lunch that day, Holbrooke dramatically responded to Milosevic's complaints about the plan by disowning it and tearing the paper up in front of him. Despite the Serb President's resistance, Holbrooke and Owen hoped that at least some variant of the "Washington, DC" plan would work.<sup>81</sup>

Despite these occasional flare-ups, the atmosphere among the delegates in Dayton remained congenial. The Talbott dinner that night seemed to be the pinnacle of goodwill; the evening's aura was later described as "giddy." Milosevic and Izetbegovic spent much of the night sharing jokes in Serbo-Croatian. To Holbrooke, Izetbegovic's comment that Serbia deserved gas supplies was reason for optimism. "That was a dramatic moment," he recalled. "For the first time, it seemed that Milosevic and Izetbegovic had found common ground on an issue." Holbrooke reflected that Talbott "went home [to Washington] completely blown away" by the good cheer found in his hometown. "We often talked [since Dayton] that his visit was the high emotional point."<sup>82</sup>

#### *Day Seven: Tuesday, November 7*

While spirits were high, substantive accomplishments were low. As Kerrick reported to Lake that morning, after a week in Dayton, genuine movement over contentious issues -- such as the constitution and the map -- had not yet occurred. "All going well," Kerrick wrote, "just unclear where all is going."<sup>83</sup> The parties seemed so loose, that Holbrooke and others began to fear that they were enjoying themselves too much. While it was good that the parties were talking to one another, Holbrooke wanted to see more movement toward a settlement. He felt that this "ice-breaking" -- although necessary given the hostility among all three sides -- had gone on long enough. Based on his study of Camp David, Holbrooke assumed that a conference could not last any longer than two weeks. While he knew the first week would be slow, he had planned to end the

<sup>79</sup> See "Eastern Slavonian Talks Deadlock Over Serb Intransigence," Cable, Zagreb 4441, November 6, 1995. For new draft agreement, see "Basic Agreement on the Region of Baranja and Western Sirmium [Eastern Slavonia]," November 6, 1995.

<sup>80</sup> See Holbrooke, Owen and Pardew comments, Dayton History Seminar.

<sup>81</sup> That day, Pardew sent Owen's latest draft back to Secretary Perry in Washington, asking him "not to disseminate further" because "this proposal is very close hold at this point." Pardew added, somewhat cryptically, that the solution for Sarajevo "will be found in a combination of territorial identity and administrative structures." See Pardew report to Perry, "Sarajevo," November 6, 1995.

<sup>82</sup> Holbrooke comment, Dayton History Seminar; Holbrooke interview with author (notes), December 20, 1996.

<sup>83</sup> See Kerrick report to Lake, "Dayton SITREP #3; November 7, 1995, 9:00am," and unidentified notes, no date, attached to Kerrick report to Talbott, November 7, 1995.

conference around November 14, to coincide with Secretary Christopher's travel to Asia. It now seemed, though, that this timetable would not be met.

Negotiations on the annexes had been sidetracked by the Europeans as well as work with the parties on the Federation and Eastern Slavonia. Because the U.S. had to prenegotiate with the Contact Group on each annex even before it went to the parties, the progress on the texts were much slower than anticipated.<sup>84</sup> And, while the Federation and Eastern Slavonia were critical to a final settlement, the parties essentially used them as excuses not to move in other areas. To many in the U.S. delegation, each party, Balkan and European alike, were unwilling to engage tough issues. "[There is] no evidence anyone -- parties or Euros -- want to close a deal," Kerrick reported to Washington that morning. On top of all this, the shuttling process itself was very tedious and time-consuming. Despite their close proximity, the parties rarely agreed to meet together, instead insisting that the U.S. mediators peddle every particular negotiating item to each party individually.<sup>85</sup>

In an attempt to get things rolling, the U.S. team ratcheted up the pressure to come to agreement, starting with Holbrooke's one-on-one meetings Izetbegovic and Milosevic. According to a written report he sent to Washington that night (his first of the negotiations), the American negotiator told both that "after one week of increasingly good vibrations without any significant progress on core issues, it was time to get serious."<sup>86</sup> At Holbrooke's urging, the two Presidents had met privately several times since Sunday. These discussions had yet to produce anything significant. "Although they are both sometimes giddy after their private Izzy-Slobo meetings," Holbrooke explained, "three days of these have done nothing more than create a better atmosphere." As a way to make these talks more productive, Holbrooke got the two Presidents to pledge to continue their private dialogue, but now mediated under "U.S. only" auspices. The first meeting, scheduled for the next day in the Hope Hotel, would focus on the constitution, map and electoral issues. It was agreed that after two hours, the U.S. would allow the Bosnian Serbs to participate. Holbrooke anticipated that the talks would last about seven hours. "If this happens," he reported back to Washington, "it will mark a clear transition to a second phase here."<sup>87</sup>

<sup>84</sup> Holbrooke interview with author (notes), December 20, 1996; Phil Goldberg, Chris Hoh, Jim O'Brien comments, group interview, October 31, 1996.

<sup>85</sup> Kerrick SITREP #3. A somewhat more optimistic assessment was provided by the State Department's European Bureau as part of a weekly update for the Secretary: "Though there are not even the outlines of a deal yet, the level of engagement in the whole range of issues by the parties and Contact group delegations bodes well for future progress...among the important steps forward during the initial stage of talks was the clearing away of 'underbrush' -- primarily Federation and Eastern Slavonia issues, that detracted from the primary issues at hand." See "Current Issues: Balkans Update," drafted by John Price, EUR/SCE computer files, SEEEYYUG Library, November 7, 1995.

<sup>86</sup> During his visit to Dayton the previous day, Talbott had urged Holbrooke to provide Washington with a one-page report each night. Apparently, DOD officials had felt that insufficient information from the head of delegation (Holbrooke) had contributed to the "panic" at the Pentagon. As Talbott wrote in a personal note to Secretary Christopher (which accompanied the first of these daily reports), "I hope you agree it's useful in several respects. I'd like to invoke your name in saying it's appreciated." To Lake, Kerrick's response was that "[it's] not clear an additional report will make issues any easier." See Kerrick SITREP #4; November 4, 1995, 1:00am.

<sup>87</sup> See Holbrooke report to Principals and Deputies, "Dayton Update: Tuesday, November 7, 1995, 11:50pm"; and Kerrick SITREP's #3 and #4.

For the second day, Serbian sanctions were a major topic of conversation; but this time, most of the action was in Washington. That afternoon, the PC met at the White House to discuss the issue.<sup>88</sup> This was the first PC meeting since Dayton began. Holbrooke joined the meeting via video teleconference to provide an update on negotiations and to lobby for some sanctions relief. On the table was Leon Fuerth's limited relief plan, which he had fleshed out more specifically for the meeting.<sup>89</sup> The Principals decided to recommend this plan to the President.<sup>90</sup> Holbrooke later reported both the Bosnians and Serbs were unhappy with the delay. "Slobo was increasingly angry today about the sanctions issue. Silajdzic repeated to me again (after PC) that his government wanted movement on unrestricted natural gas and generous heating oil as a confidence-building measure."<sup>91</sup>

In addition to the sanctions question, the Principals discussed several other issues, including the Bosnian equip-and-train program and options for a combined Russia-U.S. military force to implement an Eastern Slavonian settlement. On equip-and-train, the Principals reviewed the Pentagon's plan, which outlined that the Administration should develop a program utilizing contractors rather than military personnel.<sup>92</sup> Christopher's briefing memorandum from John Kornblum described succinctly the importance the Administration attached to equip-and-train. "We have consistently maintained that the major factor affecting military stability will be the creation of a stable military environment with a roadmap for increasing confidence among the parties," the memorandum read. "We should consider equip-and-train in the context of an overall package that reduces the imagined perception of threat, establishes a sense of stalemate, builds confidence, and spotlights the high cost of military adventurism." To get the project moving, a team of civilian contractors from the Institute of Defense Analysis (IDA) was scheduled to go to Dayton the next day to talk with the Bosnians. Next, the IDA team would travel on to Bosnia to assess the costs of the project.<sup>93</sup>

<sup>88</sup> See memorandum for Secretary Christopher from John Kornblum, "Principals Committee Meeting, November 7, 1995," November 7, 1995. Attached to this document were seven policy papers for consideration: Fuerth's sanctions paper; a State Department paper on economic assistance for the Bosnians; an OMB paper on funding implementation; a Pentagon paper on equip-and-train; a Pentagon paper on "follow-up" issues; a Fuerth paper on Bosnian arms control initiatives; and a Pentagon paper on Eastern Slavonia.

<sup>89</sup> Fuerth had reworked his paper to include various options (rather than recommendations), each more limited than Milosevic's request. See "A Grain for Oil Swap," memorandum for Principals, November 6, 1995.

<sup>90</sup> This was reported the next day during the inter-agency video teleconference (SVTS) on Bosnia. See "Bosnia SVTS, November 8, 1995," State Department computer electronic mail files, Megan E. Driscoll (PM-ISP), November 8, 1995.

<sup>91</sup> Holbrooke report, November 7, 1995.

<sup>92</sup> On November 1, the DC had reviewed an earlier version of this paper, recommending a few changes before it was considered by the PC. See memorandum for Talbott from Richard E. Hecklinger (EUR), "Deputies Committee Meeting on Bosnia, November 1, 1995," November 1, 1995; and "Summary of Conclusions for Deputies Committee Meeting on Bosnia," NSC memorandum, November 8, 1995.

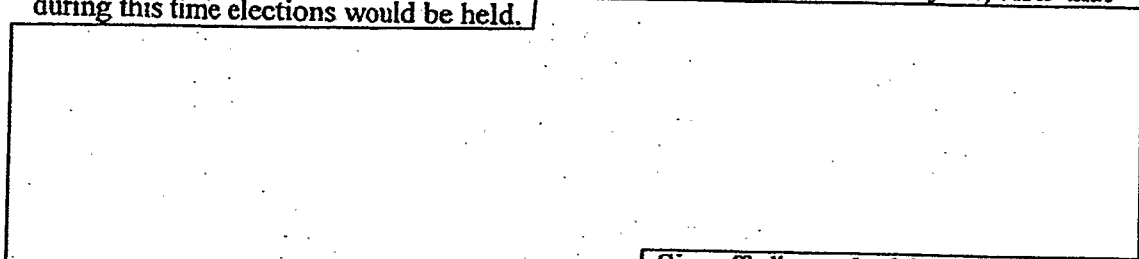
<sup>93</sup> The Pentagon paper outlined that equip-and-train would be an important corollary to a regional arms control initiative. Specifically, the paper summarized its proposal in this way: "The U.S. will lead a modest, low-profile, international effort to equip and train selected elements of the Federation's military forces to enhance their ability to defend Federation territory. The effort will also be designed to improve the internal cohesion of the Federation armed forces and to avoid substantially increasing Federation offensive capabilities, but not to create a viable defense capability against its militarily powerful neighbors,



Turning to Eastern Slavonia, the PC considered a Pentagon proposal which estimated that the conditions were appropriate for an effective and safe U.S. military role in implementation. The Russians were enthusiastic about participating, and Defense Secretary Perry planned to raise the issue with Russian Defense Secretary Grachev. Despite these attributes, Pentagon officials argued that U.S. domestic support for such an effort was lacking. The State Department recommended that the Administration continue developing the concept but hold off on a final decision. "We may want to avoid a premature commitment to this proposal," Christopher's briefing memorandum read, "[But] we should expect problems with the Russians, and perhaps the Serbs, if we walk away from it."<sup>94</sup>

In any event, an Eastern Slavonia agreement still seemed far away. Chris Hill and others had again reworked the draft agreement. It now projected that the transitional period (during which UN forces would occupy the region) would be two years, and that during this time elections would be held.

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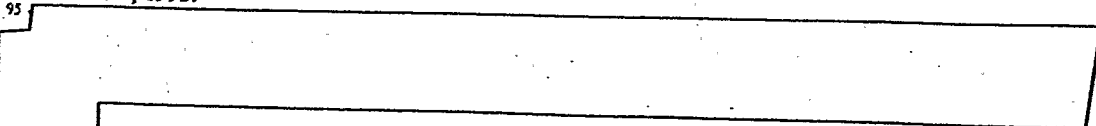
Since Tudjman had left Dayton, the Croats effectively refused to negotiate, claiming that only he could make the decision whether to accept the new draft. Discussion on the issue would wait until the Croat President returned to Dayton on November 8.<sup>95</sup>

On other negotiating fronts, the day brought some progress. Holbrooke reported that the parties were close to solving a Federation agreement. The U.S. continued to press the Bosnians and Croats to assure that their November 2 refugee relocation commitments (referred to as the Jajce-Bugonjno Accord) were implemented. Talks began between the Croats and Muslims on the divided city of Mostar, whose resolution would help the prospects for the Federation's success. The three mayors who administered the city -- Muslim, Croat, and the EU representative -- had been summoned to Dayton.

The U.S. also began discussions about creating a central bank for Bosnia, but with limited success. Bob Gallucci continued to negotiate with the Contact Group on the police annex, which had emerged as the most troublesome as far as allied relations were concerned. The U.S. was pushing for a strong police force; the Europeans, led by the British, objected, arguing that an international police force should only monitor civilian violations but not have enforcement capabilities. Given the Administration's reluctance

Croatia and Serbia. See "Sustaining a Peace Agreement in Bosnia -- Military Stabilization Measures: Equip and Train," attached to memorandum from Kornblum to Christopher, November 7, 1995;

<sup>94</sup> See "Peace Operations in Eastern Slavonia," attached to memorandum from Kornblum to Christopher, November 7, 1995.



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to pledge funding for a robust police force – the bitter budget battle with Congress was then in full fury – Gallucci was playing with a weak hand.<sup>96</sup>

Finally, the David Rohde problem lingered, as the journalist still sat in jail in Bijeljina. He was reportedly in good health, but was still unaware of his exact sentence or charges.<sup>97</sup> Although Holbrooke believed that Milosevic was trying hard to get Rohde's release, he figured that a little more U.S. pressure on the Serb leader might help.<sup>98</sup> Menzies continued to work with the families, and Holbrooke even dispatched his new wife, Kati Marton, a journalist and activist for press freedom, to press Milosevic.<sup>99</sup> During Monday night's dinner, Talbott had raised the issue with the Serb President. Now Holbrooke wanted Secretary Christopher to weigh in. Although Talbott's intervention had "laid down a strong marker over our concern for Rohde's well-being," Holbrooke drafted a tough letter from Christopher to Milosevic.<sup>100</sup> Upon returning to Washington from Yitzhak Rabin's funeral in Israel, the Secretary approved the letter, and Holbrooke presented it to Milosevic that morning.

Addressing Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic's claim that he had no control over Rohde's situation, the Christopher letter to Milosevic stated that "it is clear that Karadzic is attempting to interfere with the peace process now underway in Dayton. We are determined not to allow him to succeed. You can help us in this effort by using your influence with Karadzic and his colleagues in Dayton." In closing, Christopher outlined the stakes for Milosevic plainly. "Let me reiterate what Dick Holbrooke has told you: while it is not our intention to allow this matter to affect the talks in Dayton, so long as Mr. Rohde's detention continues, it will necessarily distract us from our principal purpose and create a negative climate for our continuing work. It is in all our interests to take those steps you consider necessary to effect Mr. Rohde's release."<sup>101</sup> The letter seemed to have an immediate effect on Milosevic. Late that night, he told Holbrooke that Rohde would be released at 6:00am the next morning.<sup>102</sup>

<sup>96</sup> Review from Holbrooke report, November 7, 1995; Holbrooke interview with author (notes), December 20, 1996.

<sup>97</sup> See "Arrest Case of Christian Science Monitor Journalist David Rohde; Consular Visit in Bijeljina," Cable, Sarajevo 751, November 6, 1995.

<sup>98</sup> Holbrooke report, November 7, 1995.

<sup>99</sup> Marton was the chairperson of the Committee to Protect Journalists. According to press accounts, Marton told Milosevic that the "full weight of the American media would come down on the Serbs in general for holding this man." See Michael Dobbs, "For Rohde, the Power of a Well-Placed Writer Paid Off," *Washington Post*, November 9, 1995.

<sup>100</sup> See memorandum to Christopher from Holbrooke, "Draft Letter to President Milosevic Regarding David Rohde," November 7, 1995. Holbrooke explained to the Secretary that since time was of the essence, they would be unable to run the letter through the formal approval system or get a signed copy. Holbrooke intended to give the unsigned letter to Milosevic "at the earliest possible opportunity" the morning of November 7.

<sup>101</sup> See letter from Christopher to Milosevic (unsigned), dated November 6, 1995. In a November 6 letter to Antonio Pedauye, the Chief Civilian Authority of UNPROFOR, Karadzic claimed that "I have no possibility to interfere at this phase of legal proceedings... legally and politically it is not possible for anyone to act arbitrarily and bring decisions prematurely or converse the law. All I can do is to try to quicken the aforementioned proceedings." "David Rohde Case: Karadzic Raises the Ante," Cable, Sarajevo 762, November 6, 1995.

<sup>102</sup> Holbrooke report, November 7, 1995. See also Kit Roane, "Bosnia Serbs Free U.S. Newsmen After 9 Days," *New York Times*, November 9, 1995.

**Day Eight: Wednesday, November 8**

Milosevic delivered as promised. That morning, the delegations awoke to the news that David Rohde had been released by the Bosnian Serbs. His family, still holding a vigil in Dayton, was ecstatic, and asked Holbrooke to pass on their thanks to Milosevic. President Clinton and Secretary Christopher called Rohde and spoke to him just after he arrived at the U.S. embassy in Belgrade. Admirably, Rohde told them that he hoped his situation had not "screwed up" U.S. efforts in Dayton. Holbrooke also talked to Rohde by phone that day, and reported to Washington that the journalist would consider coming to Dayton once he returned to the U.S.<sup>103</sup>

The day began with the U.S.-mediated negotiation between Izetbegovic and Milosevic in the Hope Hotel's B-29 Room. This meeting, the first major one held with the parties in the Hope Hotel rather than the VOQ's, focused almost entirely on the map. The U.S. team wanted this event to mark the beginning of the second phase of the negotiations -- "the period of bringing the parties to closure."<sup>104</sup> But rather than signaling the beginning of the end, these talks revealed how far the parties had to go.

"This six-hour map marathon was one of the great revealing meetings for us," Holbrooke reflected. "Up to that point, these people had been reasonably cordial to each other -- but the sight of the maps drove them nuts." Kerrick described the scene as "reminiscent of *The Godfather*, [with] Don Slogo and outcast Bosnian Serbs, Don Izzy and the Federation." Astonishingly, at one moment the parties would be glaring across the table [at each other], screaming, while, minutes later they could be seen smiling and joking together over refreshments."

Most of this map discussion centered on Sarajevo and the "Washington, DC" plan. "Despite hours of heated, yet civil exchanges," Kerrick reported, "absolutely nothing was solved." The parties stuck to their known positions -- the Serbs wanted a divided Sarajevo and the Bosnians wanted the whole city. The two sides just talked -- or rather yelled -- past each other. For example, Bosnian Serb leader Kraijnsnik gave a long monologue on the benefits of a split city, while Sacirbey explained that the Bosnians would leave Dayton and return to war rather than accept division.<sup>105</sup>

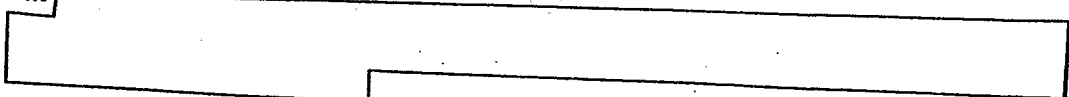
U.S. negotiators planned to submit their own map proposal to serve as the basis for discussions, but were reluctant to do so with the parties still so far apart on basic concepts. As the day wore on, the Serbs eventually came around to accept the "Washington, DC" concept for Sarajevo in principle. With this breakthrough, the U.S. presented its revisions to the 1994 Contact Group map, identifying Sarajevo as a federal city and reflecting changes as a result of the lost Bosnian enclaves (Srebrenica and Zepa) and the gains from the Federation offensive. Milosevic reacted favorably to this plan.<sup>106</sup> Pardew explained that the U.S. "will hold serious map talks with [the parties] tomorrow now that we have an agreement on a concept for a unified Sarajevo." Others were less

<sup>103</sup> For a report on Rohde's release see Holbrooke report to Principals and Deputies, "Dayton Update: Wednesday, November 8, 1995, 10:00pm."

<sup>104</sup> Pardew report to Perry, "Dayton Talks -- Update," November 8, 1995.

<sup>105</sup> Holbrooke interview with author (notes), December 20, 1996; Holbrooke report, November 8, 1995; Kerrick notes, November 8, 1995; and Kerrick report to Lake, "Dayton SITREP #5, November 9, 1995, 2:00am."

<sup>106</sup>



optimistic that an agreement "in principle" on Sarajevo meant that a genuine consensus had been reached. Kerrick reported to Lake that it was "not clear [whether] Sarajevo is solvable," and Holbrooke's report to Washington stated only that on the map, "we have decided to go back to a shuttle."<sup>107</sup>

The "good news" of the day was on the Federation. At long last, Steiner's negotiations produced an agreement on building a stable and fully functioning Muslim-Croat entity in Bosnia. Starting with the premise that "strengthening the Federation and building trust between its constituent peoples has still not produced satisfactory results," the text outlined steps to integrate the entity economically, politically and socially. The agreement created a federalist separation of powers between the Federation and the future central government of the Republic of Bosnia; split customs revenues between the Federation and the Republic; and provided a new governing statute for Mostar, which would be the Federation's capital. Although U.S. negotiators believed that "implementation will require lots of international pressure," achieving a strong Federation was "a must [to] make progress in overall talks." With Tudjman returning to Dayton that night, preliminary initialing was planned for the next day. They hoped to reach final agreement in time for Christopher's second trip to Dayton, scheduled for Friday, November 10.<sup>108</sup>

While the map and Federation dominated the day, progress in other areas was slow. Chris Hill continued to work on the revised text for Eastern Slavonia. Completion of an agreement in Dayton seemed near, but the negotiations were maddeningly up and down. To avoid the problem of U.S. military implementation in the near term, U.S. negotiators decided to avoid defining the implementation force's composition in the agreement. Progress was expected to accelerate with Tudjman in town. On the civilian implementation and police annexes, Gallucci remained mired in battle with the Contact Group, who wanted a bigger role for the UN (particularly for police enforcement) and more oversight power for a senior civilian representative.<sup>109</sup> Talks proceeded on creating a central bank and single currency for Bosnia, with David Lipton, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Treasury for East Europe and the former Soviet Union, coming to Dayton to discuss the issue over dinner with an intrigued Milosevic. The Serb leader loved to talk banking, and he, Lipton and Holbrooke had a series of "intense" discussions on the issue.<sup>110</sup>

Another American luminary who arrived in Dayton that day was Richard Perle, a former aide to Senator Scoop Jackson and Defense Department official in the Reagan

<sup>107</sup> See, respectively, Pardew report to Perry, November 8, 1995; Holbrooke report, November 8, 1995; and Kerrick SITREP #4.

<sup>108</sup> See "Dayton Agreement on Implementing the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina of 9 November 1995"; fax to Kornblum from Daniel Serwer, "Federation Agreement Ready for Signature Tomorrow," November 8, 1995; and Holbrooke report, November 8, 1995. Word of this near-breakthrough had also reached the press. See Michael Dobbs, "Bosnians, Croats Apparently Near Agreement; Sources Say They Expect Signing Today in First Real Breakthrough of Dayton Talks," *Washington Post*, November 9, 1995.

<sup>109</sup> On November 6, Gallucci left Dayton to attend meetings at the UN in New York, where he discussed implementation issues with UN officials. While the Contact Group pushed for more active UN involvement, reports of Gallucci's meetings in New York provide little evidence that the UN wanted such a role. See "Bosnia Implementation: Ambassador At Large Gallucci's Conversations With UN Officials," Cable, U.S.UN 4639, November 18, 1995.

<sup>110</sup> Holbrooke report, November 8, 1995; Pardew report to Perry, November 8, 1995; Holbrooke interview with author (notes), December 20, 1996.

Administration. Perle, referred to by some as the "Prince of Darkness" for his chilly disposition and hawkish views, joined the Bosnian delegation as an advisor on military issues. Before accepting the Bosnian invite, Perle had called Holbrooke to discuss his role. Holbrooke "strongly endorsed" Perle's participation, believing that despite White House concerns about his presence, his advice "would help bring the rigor and discipline to the Bosnian camp."<sup>111</sup>

The Bosnians were unhappy with the draft annex on IFOR that had been discussed among the military experts in Dayton. Their response was characterized as "short of outright rejection," but wanting a more robust IFOR than NATO was willing to provide -- including a mandate to arrest war criminals, commit to elections protection, and guarantee the return of refugees. Some U.S. officials, including Holbrooke, agreed that IFOR's mandate should be tougher, but knew that he would have to overcome fierce resistance from the Pentagon. "We are going to have big problems with them on these issues in the next few days," Pardew reported to Perry, and Kerrick waned Lake that the PC might have to take up the issue soon.<sup>112</sup> That night, Perle told Holbrooke and General Clark -- who had taken charge of the IFOR talks -- that the current draft military annex would be the basis for moving forward, but hinted that he would advise changes.<sup>113</sup>

Sanctions remained a problem, and Holbrooke complained to Washington that the issue continued to hinder U.S. efforts. "While we tried to shift gears today," Holbrooke explained, "we had a difficult time due to the sanctions issue which turned the day into a shambles." Milosevic seemed to be interested in little else. As exemplified in discussions this day, the Serb leader would only engage the few issues he considered critical, such as sanctions, the map and IFOR. In an effort to eliminate any excuse not to move forward in other areas, the U.S. delegation pressed Washington to provide some limited sanctions relief for fuel for Belgrade. Finally, after Tony Lake's critical intervention, Washington agreed to allow a limited supply of natural gas to flow to Belgrade for home heating. However, they rejected the proposed "grain-for-oil" swap. If Milosevic agreed to the former deal, Holbrooke described in his memorandum that night, "we might have more luck." The next day, Milosevic angrily accepted this offer.<sup>114</sup>

As the negotiations in Dayton dragged on, important components of implementation continued to fall into place. That day in Brussels, Secretary of Defense Perry and Russian Minister of Defense Pavel Grachev announced that they had reached

<sup>111</sup> Holbrooke interview with author (notes), December 20, 1996.

<sup>112</sup> See, respectively, Pardew report to Perry, November 8, 1995; and Kerrick SITREP #4.

<sup>113</sup> Perle and the Bosnians also met that day with representatives from the Institute for Defense Analysis, the civilian contracting firm who was to begin managing the Bosnian equip-and-train program. Apparently the Bosnians were "clearly oriented toward Western equipment rather than East European gear. [Also], Perle asked about parallel efforts to determine funding available for equipment and the availability of training facilities in Europe." See Holbrooke report, November 8, 1995; and Pardew report to Perry, "Dayton Talks -- Update," November 7, 1995 (misdated, November 8, 1995).

<sup>114</sup> See Holbrooke report, November 8, 1995; Pardew report to Perry, November 8, 1995; Kerrick SITREP #5; and Michael Dobbs, "U.S. Announces Easing of Fuel Sanctions Against Yugoslavia," *Washington Post*, November 10, 1995. Milosevic accepted the deal only after making what was reported to be an "ugly scene" when presented with the decision. This was discussed in an inter-agency secure video teleconference on November 9. See "Bosnia SVTS 11/9/95," State Department computer electronic mail files, (no author) PM-ISP, November 9, 1995. For status of fuel flow into Belgrade after this decision, see "Gas Pipeline to Serbia and Bosnia: Gas Flowing At Maximum Rate Allowed By UN Security Council," Cable, Budapest 9843, November 9, 1995; and "Gas Reported Flowing Again Across Serbia," Cable, Belgrade 5533, November 10, 1995.

final agreement on Russian participation in IFOR. In what Perry later described as a "truly historic moment," he, Grachev, U.S. General George Joulwan and Russian General Shevstov signed the organizational chart military leaders had created for Russia and IFOR. According to the compromise plan, Russian troops would be under tactical control of the U.S. Division Commander in the region, not NATO.<sup>115</sup>

*Day Nine: Thursday, November 9*

After Wednesday's acrimonious "map marathon" between Izetbegovic and Milosevic, negotiators in Dayton hoped that Tudjman's arrival and a Federation agreement might provide a boost for the talks. "President Tudjman's return to Dayton November 8 begins a critical phase of the proximity talks," Secretary Christopher reported to the White House. "The parties need to move from discussion and engagement on the issues to reaching specific agreements." In the next two days, the U.S. wanted to form an Eastern Slavonia settlement along with finalizing the Federation agreement. Christopher's own return on Friday established a goal-line for such work. "There are still major obstacles ahead," the Secretary wrote, "and we should not assume a successful outcome. I plan to travel to Dayton November 10 to try to give the parties a push."<sup>116</sup>

In an attempt to accomplish as much as possible before Christopher's arrival, Thursday was a day of intense negotiations. Holbrooke decided to resume proximity shuttling between the parties. Milosevic had warned Holbrooke about the potential for trouble in Wednesday's map session in the Hope Hotel, and told him afterwards not "to try this again." Holbrooke agreed. Therefore, while the Balkan parties remained in their VOQ's, U.S. negotiators traveled back and forth, delivering various proposals on such issues as the constitution, Sarajevo, elections and the map. In Kerrick's words to Lake that night, the U.S. team conducted "a full court press." Yet, while both Izetbegovic and Milosevic were "fully engaged," movement in these areas amounted to "some progress, but no agreed decisions."<sup>117</sup>

Once again, the territorial issues dominated many of the negotiations that day, as the Bosnian Serbs presented their counter-proposal to the U.S. map. It seemed that this proposal/counter-proposal process on the map would continue for several days, "with each side likely to hold key concessions until other issues unfold." Sarajevo continued to be one of the issues blocking progress on the map. Reversing his earlier decision, Milosevic told Holbrooke, Owen and Kerrick that while a Serb goal was to "finish maps today," they could still not accept the proposal for the "Washington, DC" plan. Holbrooke pressed the Serb President on this, only to hear that he didn't think his Bosnian Serb colleagues would buy it — they would never agree to share administrative powers as outlined in the plan. The critical issue was who would control the city's local political districts, or Obstinas. Since Milosevic could not come up with a better idea

<sup>115</sup> For press accounts, see "Joint Press Availability at NATO HQ by Secretary of Defense Perry and Russian Minister of Defense Pavel Grachev," November 8, 1995; and Craig Whitney, "Russia Agrees to Put Troops Under U.S., Not NATO," *New York Times*, November 9, 1995. Under Secretary of Defense Slocombe later explained the details of the Perry-Grachev agreement to Belgian officials. See "U.S.D Slocombe Briefs Belgians on IFOR Planning, Croatian Sector East, Bosnia Reconstruction," Cable, Brussels 11552, November 9, 1995; and Perry interview.

<sup>116</sup> See Christopher's Memorandum for Leon Panetta, The White House, "Weekly Report from the State Department," November 9, 1995.

<sup>117</sup> Kerrick report to Lake, "Dayton SITREP #6; November 10, 1995, 1:30am.

(when pressed by Holbrooke to do so), he reluctantly agreed to make another run at convincing the Bosnian Serbs.<sup>118</sup>

With the negotiators now facing the tougher issues, decisions seemed to weigh more heavily on each Balkan leader. Over lunch that day, Milosevic implied that he could pay the ultimate price if he gave away too much. "General Kerrick," the Serb leader said, "while America's professional prestige is on the line, my head and life are at stake -- literally." It was hard to tell whether Milosevic genuinely believed this or was merely posturing to strengthen his bargaining leverage. The Serb President vacillated from being the "Godfather" of the Serbs to the vulnerable martyr for peace. The character he assumed depending upon how badly he wanted a particular deal. Kerrick told Lake that "[Milosevic] wants us to believe that Krajisnik and others are capable and willing to remove him if he goes too far," and Holbrooke dismissed such comments as "theatre." Nevertheless, as Kerrick pointed out, it seemed that for many of those at Dayton, "Rabin remains a fresh memory."<sup>119</sup>

With Tudjman back, the Federation agreement was initialed. A formal signing ceremony was planned for the next day in which Christopher would preside. On Eastern Slavonia, talks continued without resolution. As Kerrick reported, "its impossible to tell whether today's events foreshadow breakthrough when Christopher arrives or are simply SLOBO-DRAMA."<sup>120</sup> Galbraith's efforts in the region had broken down completely. The Ambassador had cabled to Dayton that "Milosevic clearly sees the Eastern Slavonia card as a valuable one, and will play it when it will have maximum impact in the overall negotiations." The Croatians seemed to be ratcheting up the pressure militarily, as reports came in that they were moving forces closer to the Eastern Slavonian border. While CIA analysts did not anticipate violence in the near-term, they predicted that Croatia would "seek a military solution" by the end of the year. Recognizing this, Galbraith noted that while Milosevic "must be mindful of looming Croatian military action, he does not yet appear ready to settle."<sup>121</sup>

Richard Perle continued to work with the Bosnians on the IFOR annex, and the U.S. delegation expected problems. For the most part, the annex had remained unchanged since it was first presented to the Contact Group the weekend before Dayton.<sup>122</sup> But with Perle's presence, Kerrick described, "storm clouds [begin to] thicken over IFOR." General Clark led extensive discussions with Perle and the Bosnians over the annex. The main thrust of Perle's revisions was to raise IFOR's obligations, particularly on securing Bosnia's border and providing security for elections. In its current form, IFOR would be authorized to do almost anything but obligated to do very little. Perle strongly supported IFOR, but believed it had to have a "stronger mandate" -- meaning, more obligations -- to be effective.

The U.S. delegation now began to worry that the Bosnians would hold an agreement hostage to their demands for a more obligated and responsible IFOR. Realistically, the Bosnians could make such conditions the price for compromise on

<sup>118</sup> For details on Milosevic meeting see Kerrick notes, November 9, 1995; and Kerrick SITREP #6.

<sup>119</sup> Kerrick SITREP #6.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup>

<sup>122</sup> See Kornblum interview, July 26, 1996; Pardew interview, June 27, 1996.

issues like the map, constitution and elections. Kerrick warned Lake that such a trade-off might be looming, and that Washington would need to decide how to respond. While Perle's presence seemed to increase the possibility of a trade-off, gaining his support was seen to have value. With the President and other senior Administration officials currently involved in tough negotiations with Congress over the scope of U.S. involvement in IFOR, Perle's Republican credentials could provide valuable help. "The potential benefit of Perle's involvement," Kerrick wrote to Lake that night, "is his willingness to influence key members on [Capitol] Hill in favor of strong U.S. participation."<sup>123</sup>

While the talks continued that day in Dayton, John Shattuck set out for Banja Luka, the site of the most recent ethnic cleansing, where he aimed to gain access to hundreds of missing persons and detainees. He also monitored the November 2 Jajce-Bugonjo Accord.<sup>124</sup> Milosevic and Bosnian Serb Vice President Koljevic had personally assured Shattuck's safety into Banja Luka, and Shattuck's convoy was escorted by the "Red Guards" of Belgrade's special military forces. To those in Dayton and Washington, Shattuck's trip provided another chance to show that the U.S. would aggressively explore human rights violations. Also, by asking for information on human rights violations and demanding the release of detainees, Shattuck's intervention tested the parties' willingness to "come clean" and implement the human rights elements of an agreement.<sup>125</sup>

#### *Day Ten: Friday, November 10*

Shortly before 9:30am Friday, Secretary Christopher returned to Wright-Patterson. After a forty-five minute briefing with the U.S. delegation in the Hope Hotel,

<sup>123</sup> Details of Perle's involvement from Kerrick SITREP #6. In his November 9 memorandum to Panetta, Christopher explained the consultations with Congress: "I met with the Senate Democratic Policy Committee on November 9. Deputy Secretary Talbott met with House freshmen members November 8. We have launched an inter-agency effort (State, DOD, and NSC) to keep in touch with every Member of Congress. Senior officials at each agency have been assigned lists for meetings and calls; see "Elements For D Remarks to Hill Freshmen," EUR/SCE computer files, SEEEYYUG Library, October 30, 1995. A first round of contacts has taken place, and based on feedback, we are constantly widening the circle of contacts." For further details on the President's consultations with Congress on IFOR, see "Bosnia SVTS 11/9/95."

<sup>124</sup> As was reasonably expected, implementation of the Jajce-Bugonjo accord was slow. Under U.S. pressure, the parties agreed to begin implementation on November 8, with a follow-up report to the U.S. on November 12. See "DP Returns to Jajce and Bugonjo: Non-Implementation of 1 1/2 Dayton Agreement," Cable, Sarajevo 757, November 6, 1995; "DP Returns to Jajce and Bugonjo," Cable, Proximity Talks 000005, November 8, 1995; "DP Returns to Jajce and Bugonjo: Written Commitment," Cable, Proximity Talks 000017, November 10, 1995; and "Jajce-Bugonjo Shuttle Diplomacy," Cable, Sarajevo 778, November 12, 1995.

<sup>125</sup> For Washington reports of Shattuck's trip, see Christopher's November 9 memorandum to Panetta; and State Department memorandum to Under Secretary Tim Wirth (G) from Steve Coffey (DRL), "Weekly Report," November 9, 1995; "Bosnian MFA Hails A/S Shattuck's Travel Aims in Region," Cable, Sarajevo 770, November 9, 1995. For fascinating accounts of Shattuck's visit to Banja Luka, see Shattuck interviews, July 25, 1995, and July 30, 1995; "Visit of DRL A/S Shattuck to Banja Luka," Cable, Sarajevo 760, November 6, 1995; "A/S Shattuck Reaches Banja Luka," Cable, Sarajevo 768, November 13, 1995; and Shattuck's personal report to Secretary Christopher, "From Dayton to Banja Luka in Search of Human Rights and Peace," Cable, Sarajevo 779, November 12, 1995. Around that time, the Administration had come under fire in the press for not sharing sensitive intelligence information with the War Crimes Tribunal. In his November 9 memorandum to Panetta, Christopher wrote that "John's hard work in this area underscores the inaccuracy and unfairness of press reports that the U.S. is not sharing information about war crimes in the former Yugoslavia." For an example of such press coverage, see Elaine Sciolino, "U.S. Says It Is Withholding Data From War Crimes Panel," *New York Times*, November 8, 1995.



Christopher and Holbrooke headed for the VOQ quad to meet with the three Balkan Presidents before that afternoon's Federation signing ceremony. Beginning with Tudjman in the Croatian VOQ, Christopher sought to praise the Federation agreement for sending a "clear message to the Serbs and other groups in the region that two of the three constituent peoples of the former Yugoslavia plan to live together in peace." Unfortunately, Tudjman said, problems with the agreement remained. He complained that in the draft text, there was no guarantee that a Croat would hold one of the top three posts -- President, Prime Minister or Foreign Minister. Christopher had planned to tell Tudjman that he would press Izetbegovic on the issue, offering the idea that a Croat Prime Minister should serve alongside a Bosniac President. But Tudjman upped the ante, explaining that it would be hard for the Croats to sign unless administrative equality was guaranteed.<sup>126</sup>

Given Tudjman's threat to scuttle the agreement, Christopher's meeting with Izetbegovic took on greater importance. Meeting across the quad in Bosnia's VOQ, Christopher and Holbrooke pressed the Bosnian President to compromise and allow a Croat Prime Minister. Izetbegovic demurred, but agreed that the issue could be "delinked" and resolved later. Christopher also encouraged the Bosnian President that with the Federation agreement near completion, he be willing to conclude other key issues, like the map. The Secretary did not let the Bosnians off the hook: "territorial issues are in a deadlock," he said, "in good measure due to your side's failure to make realistic offers." He reminded the Izetbegovic that a fundamental tenet of the American diplomatic initiative was "lift-and-leave" -- the U.S. would not support the Bosnians if they were the source of diplomatic failure. "I know that these issues are difficult," Christopher's talking points read, "but given our original carrots and sticks approach for peace last August, we do not want to get into a position where Sarajevo is responsible for failure to reach agreement."<sup>127</sup>

With Milosevic, Christopher raised the issue of the War Crimes Tribunal, urging that the Serb leader provide his full cooperation. The Secretary warned Milosevic that, as he had recently told the press, the U.S. might not participate in IFOR unless indicted war criminals Karadzic and Mladic go. Milosevic had earlier considered that it would be "crazy" for NATO to send troops to Bosnia while these two were still in power; now he seemed to balk at guaranteeing their ouster.<sup>128</sup> Parrying Milosevic's oft-stated view that the best way to eliminate such leaders was through democratic elections (arguing that they would lose), Christopher and Holbrooke made clear that "quite frankly, we are not going to organize, pay for and supervise elections that allow these kinds of people to participate." They explained that the Serbs had to come up with solutions that bypassed Karadzic and Mladic -- "the same sort that you [Milosevic] worked out with the Patriarch's agreement."<sup>129</sup>

<sup>126</sup> See Christopher's talking points, "Points for Tudjman," Pardew Dayton Notebook; and Kerrick report to Lake, "Dayton SITREP #7; November 11, 1995, 9:10am."

<sup>127</sup> See Christopher's talking points, "Points for Izetbegovic," Pardew Dayton Notebook; Holbrooke interview with author (notes), December 20, 1996.

<sup>128</sup> [REDACTED]

<sup>129</sup> See Christopher's talking points, "Points for Milosevic," Pardew Dayton Notebook. Details also from Nicholas Burns Press Briefing, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, November 10, 1995.

The Croats' warning not to sign the Federation agreement had Christopher and Holbrooke's "blood pressure up" with, they felt, good reason. However, as Kerrick explained to Lake the next day, "[The] Croats have a point. [It's] hard to justify Muslims holding all three [positions]."<sup>130</sup> Prior to the scheduled ceremony at the Hope Conference Center, Christopher met briefly with Kresimir Zubak, a Bosnian Croat who, as the current President of the Muslim-Croat Federation, was the source behind Tudjman's earlier compliants. The Secretary told Zubak that Izetbegovic had offered to "delink" the issue, setting it aside for now but solving it before leaving Dayton. With this pledge, Zubak agreed to sign the document as long as the problem was resolved soon.

Christopher reiterated many of his private comments to the Balkan Presidents in his public remarks at the signing ceremony in the B-29 Room. "As implemented, today's agreement will bring the Federation to life," he said to the delegates and press gathered at the Hope complex. "It will create common political and economic institutions that will unite the two communities. It will be a model for inter-ethnic cooperation and renewed trust in a country that is sorely in need of both." However important the paper signed that day was, Christopher did acknowledge that the "true test" of the agreement lay in the way it was carried out. Izetbegovic echoed this sentiment, saying that history would judge the accord according to "what is done" rather than "what is said."<sup>131</sup>

Following the ceremony, Christopher had lunch with the Contact Group, where he briefed them on his discussions that morning and heard their thoughts about the progress of the negotiations. Then, as he did during his first visit to Dayton, Christopher joined Milosevic and Tudjman to discuss Eastern Slavonia. Since that first meeting, Chris Hill's mediation had brought the Croats and Serbs close to an agreement, but some contentious issues remained.<sup>132</sup> Christopher made it clear to both Presidents that the time for hedging was over: the U.S. wanted these matters settled. Turning to specific problems, they resolved almost every outstanding issue of the mutual recognition and Eastern Slavonia agreements. This included drafting a complicated clause setting aside the issue of Serbia state "continuity" in Eastern Slavonia without prejudice to either side's position. But the Presidents still disagreed over the duration of Eastern Slavonia's reintegration into Croatia (Milosevic now wanted at least two years while Tudjman wanted one) and the timing of regional elections.

Shortly after Christopher made clear that the U.S. was growing impatient with the deadlock, the breakthrough occurred. As the Secretary met with Holbrooke and his core team in the American VOQ, they looked out the window to an "unforgettable scene": across the quad, Milosevic and Tudjman were walking side-by-side toward the American

<sup>130</sup> Kerrick SITREP #7.

<sup>131</sup> For Christopher's remarks at the signing ceremony, see "The Federation: An Essential Building Block of Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina," State Department *Dispatch*, December 1995, p10. In addition to being the first official breakthrough of the talks, it was also the first media event since the opening ceremony. See Michael Dobbs, "Bosnian Muslims, Croats to Establish Administration for Joint Territory; Pact Eliminates Customs Barriers, Other Obstacles to Movement," *Washington Post*, November 12, 1995; and Roger Cohen, "Terms of Muslim-Croat Alliance Are Set at Dayton Talks," *New York Times*, November 12, 1995. For implementation recommendations, see "Bosnian Federation: Dayton Agreement Requires Follow-up," Cable, State 26703, November 15, 1995.

<sup>132</sup> Galbraith was not happy with Hill's text, and expressed unsolicited concerns that some "points in the Dayton draft will make our selling of a document more difficult than it needs to be." His comments were largely ignored by negotiators in Dayton. See "Comments on East Slavonia Draft," Cable, Zagreb 7977, November 10, 1995; and Hill interview with author (notes), December 19, 1996.

VOQ. Entering Holbrooke's conference room, the two Presidents sat next to each other on a couch and said that "we have solved Eastern Slavonia." They would conclude the agreement largely as drafted, and initial a document on mutual recognition to be signed and made public at a later date. Milosevic argued that this staged approach would give the East Slavonia Serbs time to adjust to the new realities. The only hitch was that the leaders needed a "face-saving" solution to the timing of reintegration, which would be overseen by a UN transitional authority. Christopher came up with a lawyerly compromise -- split the difference. The transitional authority would govern the area for one year but its mandate could be extended for another year if requested by either of the parties. Milosevic insisted that the agreement not be announced at Dayton but in the region -- he wanted to maintain the illusion that he was not in control of the Serbs in Eastern Slavonia. The U.S. didn't object to this bit of theatre, but Christopher told Milosevic that by the time he returned to Dayton on November 14, he wanted an agreement completed.<sup>133</sup>

Christopher's visit to Dayton that day was successful in that he helped put the finishing touches on the Federation and brought Milosevic and Tudjman to the doorstep of announcing an Eastern Slavonian deal. Yet, the parties willingness to make decisions on the core issues remained unproved. The overall mood in Dayton was still positive, but it seemed that the talks constantly teetered on collapse. After ten days, Kerrick observed that the parties were "still enjoying each other's company, but [the] more they see of each other, [the] more they seem to be willing to chuck it all and return to war." The chances for success at Dayton seemed to come and go like the tide -- "every twelve hours [we're] sure we will fail only to find real chances for success at next high tide."<sup>134</sup>

<sup>133</sup> See Christopher interview, October 22, 1996; Holbrooke Comment, Dayton History Seminar; Hill interview with author (notes), December 5, 1996; Holbrooke interview with author (notes), December 20, 1996; Chris Hoh comments to author, passim.

<sup>134</sup> Kerrick SITREP #7.