

CHAPTER 7. INTERAGENCY PARALYSIS: STAGNATION IN BOSNIA AND KOSOVO

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Introduction

President George H.W. Bush described his vision for the post-Cold War era as an opportunity to establish a “new world order,”⁷⁸⁹ characterized by peace and security managed by a coalition of free, democratic nations. However, the new world that emerged proved anything but orderly. The 1990s witnessed a flood of geopolitical turmoil that made the Cold War standoff between the superpowers seem an age of relatively stability. In the first half of the decade, Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait, famine gripped Somalia, genocide engulfed Rwanda, and Yugoslavia disintegrated, plunging one corner of Europe into a war that would reach a level of savagery the continent had not experienced since World War I.

America became involved in two of the bitter conflicts resulting from the dissolution of Yugoslavia, wars in Bosnia and Kosovo. The U.S. response in both cases proved flawed from the beginning. The half-century Cold War had inculcated security practices and structures into the U.S. government that would perpetuate ineffectiveness relative to the challenges of intra-state conflict, complex emergencies and ethnic cleansing. By 1995, Balkanization, the division “into contending and usually ineffectual factions,”⁷⁹⁰ came to define not only the breakup of Yugoslavia, but also the U.S. government’s attempts to manage the conflicts generated from this disintegration. Although the U.S. eventually helped end the sweeping hostilities in both locations, it did so imperfectly, unwittingly leaving behind seeds for renewed violence.

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789 President George H. W. Bush, “Out of These Troubled Times ... a New World Order,” Speech to Joint Session of the U.S. Congress, 11 September 1990, *The Washington Post*, 12 September 1990, A34.

790 Definition of balkanization from the Random House Unabridged Dictionary.

An examination of the U.S. government's response to the wars in Bosnia and Kosovo is highly relevant to the Project on National Security Reform (PNSR). The Balkan crises heralded many features of the modern era that the interagency is still adjusting to—the increasing importance of managing intra-state violence, the use of NATO outside its traditional Cold War mission, and the matching of force with diplomacy in a manner that would have been impossible prior to 1991.⁷⁹¹ The schizophrenic nature by which the international community managed these “new wars”⁷⁹² permits a wide range of observations regarding interagency dynamics.

It is clear that many officials within the Clinton administration, including possibly the president himself, wanted to act in Bosnia and Kosovo. However, they found themselves incapable of doing so. In elucidating the relevant reasons, this study addresses four crucial PNSR questions: 1) did the U.S. government generally act in an ad hoc manner or did it develop effective strategies to integrate its national security resources; 2) how well did the agencies/departments work together to implement these ad hoc or integrated strategies; 3) what variables explain the strengths and weaknesses of the response?; and 4) what diplomatic, financial, and other achievements and costs resulted from these successes and failures?

This study reveals that the U.S. government failed to develop a coherent strategy in the first three years of the Bosnian war. The primary reason was the lack of integrated analysis and planning between diplomats and the military. Instead, departments developed policies centered on protecting institutional equities in light of organizational definitions of national security. As a result, the interagency process did not submit policy choices to the president in an effective manner; rather, he received too few options and ones that presented as contradictory. With the weight of the departments

791 The Soviet Union formally dissolved in December 1991.

792 Mary Kaldor emerged as one of the first to use the term “new wars” to describe violence imposed as a mixture of war, crime, and atrocities. See, Mary Kaldor, “Cosmopolitanism and Organised [*vii*] Violence,” prepared for Conference on ‘Conceiving Cosmopolitanism’ (London: Centre for the Study of Global Governance, London School of Economics, 2000), available at <http://www.theglobalsite.ac.uk/press/010kaldor.htm>.

already behind their individual plans, it was almost impossible for him or the NSC to manage the policy integration process. This led to an ad hoc, ever-changing approach best characterized by Morton Halperin as “muddling through.”⁷⁹³ Eventually, the NSC bypassed the interagency process to create a strategy for Balkan intervention. The departments supported the NSC course of action (COA) largely because Clinton’s troop commitment to a possible NATO force to evacuate the UN mission left Washington with few good options. Moreover, once the strategy had been determined, the Departments of Defense and State struggled to cooperate during implementation, a process that required close coordination between force and diplomacy. Absent such integration, effective management and implementation instead resulted from ad hoc organizations and *fait accompli* decisions. Washington’s handling of the Kosovo situation reflected many of these trends as well, demonstrating a void in the application of lessons learned despite the passage of three years since the Bosnia crisis ended.

History books may categorize the interventions known as Operation Deliberate Force and Operation Allied Force as victories, but an interagency assessment exposes a more ambiguous picture. In both Bosnia and Kosovo, the gap between diplomats and warfighters resulted in strategies that failed to link political and military means to their desired ends. This approach could bring about only *war termination* relative to armed violence, not *conflict termination* in the form of sustainable peace.⁷⁹⁴ A contemporary regional map serves as proof⁷⁹⁵—Bosnia remains essentially divided along the Inter Entity (i.e., Ethnic) Boundary Line; Kosovo’s status as a newly independent nation remains destabilizing within the Balkans.

793 CIA Director John Deutch was the first to use this term relative to Bosnia policy. Derek Chollet, *The Road to the Dayton Accords: A Study of American Statecraft* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p. 1. For the original approach to the bureaucratic decision making style, see Graham T. Allison, *The Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 1971).

794 Argument made in Rast, *Interagency Fratricide*, esp. xix–xx.

795 Such a map is available at <http://www.cftech.com/BrainBank/GEOGRAPHY/CentBalkans.html>.

Structure of Study

The bulk of this case study will focus on the U.S. response to the Bosnian civil war. This discussion will also detail interagency process dynamics. Kosovo is presented succinctly to demonstrate the persistence of interagency problems and the failure to apply lessons learned to a somewhat similar conflict.

The paper begins by outlining two common misperceptions of the primary reason the U.S. failed to develop viable policies for Bosnia and Kosovo—weak presidential leadership and the “Somalia Syndrome.” The introduction concludes with a short history of Yugoslavia’s breakup and the escalation of international (namely, UN) involvement.

The ensuing discussion of Bosnia is divided into five sections. The first part describes early attempts by the Clinton administration to develop a Bosnia policy, including the creation of the lift-and-strike strategy. It also discusses the dearth of options presented to the president by his senior advisors. The second section explains how the failure to analyze the Bosnia crisis accurately compelled U.S. government inaction. It then demonstrates how separate departments—lacking both shared analyses and problem conceptions—framed policy options to protect respective organizational equities. A brief interlude then describes the events in Somalia to contextualize the mid-1990s decision-making environment. The third section details the development of the 1995 endgame strategy relative to Bosnia. A discussion of the actions designed to interlace force with diplomacy follows, demonstrating how the U.S. strategy leading to the Dayton Peace Accords halted Bosnia’s civil war. The final section outlines the ways in which problems related to fusing military and diplomatic tools absent cogent policy and viable strategy adversely influenced the post-hostilities environment. The Kosovo discussion re-emphasizes the U.S. government’s inability to achieve synergy across elements of force and diplomacy. The conclusion then highlights the variables that led to failure in both Bosnia and Kosovo.

This case study draws upon interviews with 135 government officials from multiple federal agencies which had a hand in shaping the U.S.

government response to the Bosnia and Kosovo conflicts.⁷⁹⁶ Vicki Rast, co-author of this work, detailed these interviews in *Interagency Fratricide: Policy Failures in the Persian Gulf and Bosnia*. This study also invokes memoirs of high-level officials involved in the Bosnia and Kosovo policy development processes, in particular Richard Holbrooke, Wesley Clark, and Madeleine Albright. Complementing these primary sources are analyses by David Halberstam, Ivo Daalder, and the U.S. State Department (i.e., the study by Derek Chollet and Bennett Freeman).

Common Misanalyses

Despite an abundance of sources examining U.S. policies regarding Bosnia and Kosovo, direct examination of how the interagency process developed these strategies often proves anecdotal: comprehensive analysis of how agency tools leverage one another to form a picture of the interagency response has not been conducted. As a result, many authors tend to attribute flawed responses not to deficient processes and structures, but to weak, risk-averse leaders or the influence of various historical “syndromes” from Vietnam to Somalia.

This case study does not deny the import of effective leadership relative to interagency dynamics. Active leadership, particularly by the President of the United States (POTUS), will usually generate a more viable crisis response. Alternatively, the absence of effective leadership will certainly amplify the burden placed on individual actors within the interagency system, thereby increasing the likelihood of failure. In exploring the cases of Bosnia and Kosovo, this study examines the dynamic relationships between leaders and those charged with facilitating the interagency process. For example, a lack of leadership may exacerbate existing interagency flaws (by allowing the drive for consensus to paralyze the system), but defects in the interagency

796 Unless noted otherwise quotes from government officials are from interviews with the author. See, Rast, *Interagency Fratricide*, Appendix A, for the complete list of 135 research participants and their credentials relevant to this work; signed participant letters are on file. To ensure speaker anonymity, the author identifies quotations/ideas only by an individual’s executive department and/or level within the interagency process.

structure can also seriously damage leadership efforts (by failing to offer comprehensive analyses and feasible options to senior executives responsible for foreign policy). While some authors highlight a leadership vacuum as the reason for failed Balkan policies, they often point to leadership simultaneously as the reason for the eventual creation of effective policy.⁷⁹⁷ Consequently, to implicate leadership as a primary causal factor reveals little, since the same individuals were responsible for failure and success during the same event. The implication is that factors external to the leaders as individuals compelled improvement.

Another common reason offered for the flawed response in the Balkans (Bosnia, in particular) is the burden of history—in this case, the failure of the U.S. Somalia mission (with reference to Vietnam and Lebanon, as well). The dilemma relative to this explanation is that U.S. policies for Somalia and Bosnia emerged nearly simultaneously.

Even prior to the Battle of Mogadishu, Washington officials considered Somalia “doable” while Bosnia was not.⁷⁹⁸ While the loss of 18 U.S. soldiers in Somalia during one battle may have solidified personal opinions regarding the military’s role in the post-Cold War era, it is clear that the problems attendant to designing Balkan intervention policy existed prior to the October 1993 tragedy. Again, this study will not deny the psychological influence of prior failures, especially when perceived “lessons learned” are institutionalized (as happened when the NSC crafted PDD-25 resultant to the Somalia failure). However, a full examination must look deeper since “historical data” may be used selectively to justify policy post facto. The question is, why is “history” used in the way it is by organizations?

797 See, for example, Richard Holbrooke, *To End A War* (New York: Modern Library Paperbacks, 1999), 103; Madeleine Albright, *Madam Secretary: A Memoir* (London: Pan Books, 2004), 189; and, Sébastien Barthe and Charles-Philippe David, *Foreign Policy-Making in the Clinton Administration: Reassessing Bosnia and the “Turning Point” of 1995* (Montréal, Québec: Center for United States Studies, Raoul Dandurand Chair of Strategic and Diplomatic Studies), 5.

798 Jon Western, “Sources of Humanitarian Intervention: Beliefs, Information, and Advocacy in the U.S. Decisions on Somalia and Bosnia,” *International Security* 26:4 (2002): 112–142, available at http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/international_security/v026/26.4western.html.

Abridged View of a Long History

A legacy of sustained conflict characterized Yugoslavia's existence. Ottoman rule, Hapsburg dominance, and Nazi collaboration are "remembered" with obstinate clarity—memories which are invoked to fan the flames of ethnic hatred within peoples who share no direct experience with age-old intercultural enmities. Only after World War II, under the rule of Communist strongman Josip Broz Tito, did these tensions subside. However, after Tito's death in 1980, communists-turned-nationalists exploited ancient rivalries and pre-existing ethnic tensions to build personal power bases. Fearful of the rising nationalism, minority ethnic groups began to consider succession: by 1991, Yugoslavia's disintegration appeared inevitable. With the international community's tacit approval, Slovenia seceded from the Yugoslav Federation; Croatia quickly followed suit, although Zagreb's exit proved more protracted and violent than that of Ljubljana.

Shortly thereafter, Serb nationalists in Bosnia and Herzegovina (hereafter referred to as Bosnia) left the parliament in Sarajevo, declaring their intent to remain part of Yugoslavia, one now dominated by Slobodan Milosevic and the Serbian majority. The government of Bosnia, controlled by Muslims, responded by holding a referendum on independence, one largely boycotted by the Serbs, who were a minority within the province. As a result of the vote, Bosnia declared its independence from Yugoslavia in March 1992. In turn, the Bosnian Serbs declared independence from Bosnia, founding the Republika Srpska. By this time, the civil war had already started. The government in Sarajevo was immediately the underdog. Although the Bosniaks (commonly referred to as Bosnian Muslims) had more infantry, the Yugoslav Army transferred experienced commanders with heavy weapons to the Republika Srpska. The Serb military, often acting on orders from their political leadership, turned these armaments on civilians as well as the opposing Bosniak army. Thus began the Serb campaign of ethnic cleansing. As atrocities increased in intensity, so did calls for international action.

The United Nations deployed peacekeeping forces to Bosnia early on, mandated first to open the Sarajevo Airport, later to protect aid deliveries; and, by 1993, to protect cities declared "safe areas." These missions failed; by 1995, peacekeeper roles were limited to monitoring

ceasefire violations. For much of the conflict the United States and its international partners hesitated to intervene. Once it became clear the UN could not resolve the crisis and that the “hour of Europe” had not dawned,⁷⁹⁹ Washington began considering intervention.

The torturous and protracted decision to intervene slowed international response. The U.S. interagency process, comprised of ranking diplomatic and military professional staffs as well as elected officials, endeavored to generate suitable, acceptable, and feasible options. These decision makers realized any proposed courses of action would have to be supportable by various U.S. government departments, the U.S. Congress, the American public, and myriad international partners. This proved no easy task, resulting in what Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Director John Deutch called the “muddle through” policy,⁸⁰⁰ an approach that continued for three years. By the time NATO took action to end ethnic cleansing in 1995, more than a hundred thousand civilians had died and millions were displaced across the region.⁸⁰¹

Bosnia

Choosing Between Vietnam and Doing Nothing

Clinton’s 1992 electoral platform included a commitment to help end the violence in Bosnia.⁸⁰² His promises prompted Ambassador Richard Holbrooke to write a memo to then-candidate Bill Clinton in August 1992 insisting that action in Bosnia was “not a choice between Vietnam and doing nothing.”⁸⁰³ Yet, as this case study makes clear, those emerged as the only options interagency officials made available.

799 Jacques Poos, European Union President at the time Yugoslavia broke apart, infamously stated, “The hour of Europe has dawned.” Poos was implying a shift in power from Washington DC to Brussels, which could now take responsibly for security in Europe without American help. This proved to be an erroneous assumption. See Ian Ward, *Justice, Humanity, and the New World Order* (London: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2003), 110.

800 Chollet, p. 1.

801 Ivo H. Daalder and Michael E. O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly: NATO’s War to Save Kosovo* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), 1.

802 See, for example, Holbrooke, *To End A War*.

803 *Ibid.*, 42 and 52.

Still, optimism was high when Clinton defeated incumbent President George H.W. Bush in November. Within days of the election, Department of State staffers began circulating an initiative to lift the arms embargo against Bosnia. By November 16, every relevant bureau in Foggy Bottom had signed onto the policy proposal.⁸⁰⁴ Once Clinton was in office, Holbrooke wrote another memo outlining options for Bosnia, including lifting the arms embargo and direct use of military force against the Serbs. He also articulated U.S. national interests involved, warning that doing nothing in the immediate would prompt more costly involvement later. The NSC, however, did not welcome his opinions since they would, according to National Security Advisor Anthony Lake, “undercut the UN.”⁸⁰⁵ Not surprisingly, Clinton did not appoint Holbrooke special negotiator on Bosnia although the ambassador had expressed interest in the post.⁸⁰⁶

Despite early dismissal of Holbrooke’s ideas, the administration quickly came to the same conclusions as the ambassador. Clinton’s first Presidential Review Directive (PRD) called for an assessment of U.S. policy towards Bosnia. This review generated a draft decision directive in early February 1993 that proposed a “lift-and-strike” strategy (i.e., lifting the arms embargo and using air strikes) for Bosnia.⁸⁰⁷ Further, in unveiling the administration’s Bosnia policy that same month Secretary of State Warren Christopher stated that the United States was “prepared to use our military power” to enforce a peace deal.⁸⁰⁸ Although Christopher did not mention air strikes explicitly on April 16, the president confirmed they were under consideration. On May 1, after a five-hour debate, senior policymakers

804 Western, 134.

805 Holbrooke, 53.

806 Ibid., 42 and 52.

807 David Rothkopf, *Running the World: The Inside Story of the National Security Council and the Architects of American Power* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004), 364.

808 Elaine Sciolino, “Conflict in the Balkans: U.S. Backs Bosnian Peace Plan, Dropping Threats to Use Force,” *The New York Times*, 11 February 1993. Last accessed 21 Aug 2008; available at <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9F0CE2D9163DF932A25751C0A965958260&sec=&spon=&pagewanted=all>.

adopted the lift-and-strike strategy “in principle.”⁸⁰⁹ Immediately afterwards, Christopher flew to Europe to consult with NATO allies.

The above synopsis of Clinton’s initial days in office illustrates an important point: less than four months into the new administration the lift-and-strike strategy, in addition to ground troop commitment in the event of a peace agreement, were on the table. Yet, two years would elapse before the administration linked the same military strategy and its commitments to diplomacy, a linkage that proved necessary to yield a successful end to the war. The question is, why the delay?

Some blame U.S. allies for the demise of the lift-and-strike strategy.⁸¹⁰ France and the United Kingdom opposed lifting the embargo and conducting air strikes, as did Russia. Christopher’s spring 1993 European trip to sell the strategy failed miserably, eliminating all credibility the threat might have had and leading to its de facto dismissal. Yet, the failure to convince the Europeans was not a failure on the part of the allies; rather, it emerged due to weaknesses within Washington. The main reason the United States could not bring Europe on board was that Washington did not have a clear idea what the air strikes were intended to achieve (to compel a ceasefire, to ensure delivery of aid, to punish Serbian aggression, etc.). No linkage existed between the strikes and diplomacy; the strategy, as Lord David Owen points out, “bore no immediate relation to a settlement.”⁸¹¹ The rationale for Owen’s statement is explored below.

Despite being killed only weeks after its “adoption,” over the next two years the lift-and-strike strategy would rise phoenix-like: a number of times the Clinton administration appeared ready to pursue this tougher policy, only to reverse course. As Daalder highlights, until 1995 “each time, the new policy was rejected or shelved, and an incremental, crisis management approach was once again substituted

809 Steven L. Burg and Paul Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1999), 251–252. See also, Thomas L. Friedman, “Any War in Bosnia Would Carry a Domestic Price,” *The New York Times*, May 2, 1993, sec. 4, p. 1, available at <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9F0CEED9133EF931A35756C0A965958260>.

810 Barthe and David, 7.

811 Owen, 169.

for a viable approach to end the war.”⁸¹² Yet, each time lift-and-strike was set aside, the White House insisted it was still on the table. As one official told *The New York Times* upon Christopher’s return from Europe, “Just because we are exploring other options doesn’t mean we are throwing the other option overboard.”⁸¹³

Quasi-formal adoption of lift-and-strike occurred in part because NSC Principals remained divided, arguing differing and sometimes contradictory positions. During meetings at which the lift-and-strike policy emerged, then U.S. Ambassador to the UN Madeleine Albright, Vice President Al Gore, and National Security Advisor Tony Lake argued in favor of air strikes. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Secretary of Defense Les Aspin formed a strange alliance against the air strikes. The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Colin Powell (and after Powell, General John Shalikashvili), also opposed air strikes, arguing that large numbers of ground troops (something they felt sure would not be approved) would be required in order to accomplish anything in Bosnia.⁸¹⁴ Clinton himself questioned the strategy, particularly after reading Robert Kaplan’s *Balkan Ghosts* (reportedly given to the president by Powell).⁸¹⁵

Such disagreements in Washington made decisive NATO leadership in Brussels almost impossible. As Albright would later say, “We couldn’t hope to persuade others if we had not at least persuaded ourselves.”⁸¹⁶ Elaine Sciolino wrote in *The New York Times* that the secretary of state’s mission to convince NATO allies “may have been doomed from the start.”⁸¹⁷ According to Sciolino, “The reason Mr. Christopher had so little room to maneuver, officials said, is that Mr.

812 Ivo Daalder, “Decision to Intervene: How the War in Bosnia Ended,” *Foreign Service Journal*, December 1998, available at http://www.brookings.edu/articles/1998/12balkans_daalder.aspx.

813 Elaine Sciolino, “Clinton Delaying Plan to Aid Bosnia,” *The New York Times*, 13 May 1993. Last accessed 25 August 2008; available at <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9F0CE0DD123BF930A25756C0A965958260>.

814 Barthe and David, 7.

815 David Owen, *Balkan Odyssey* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1995), 171–172.

816 Albright, *Madam Secretary*, 181.

817 Elaine Sciolino, “How United Eluded Clinton on Bosnia,” *The New York Times*, 12 May 1993. Last accessed 16 Jun 2008; available at <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9F0CE0DD143BF931A25756C0A965958260>.

Clinton remained uncertain of his own goals and wanted to keep the maximum flexibility should he decide to amend or abandon his plan.⁸¹⁸ Ironically, maximum strategic flexibility promoted rigidity at operational and tactical levels: no one could say or do anything for fear of making a commitment before the White House announced its policy. Until then, officials hedged all comments with a series of “if” statements, and caveats, such as “in principle,” tempered every mention of support. The status quo persisted as the only course of action anyone could endorse.

The lack of agreement among the principals proved detrimental to moving forward on any strategy. In contrast to President George H.W. Bush’s centralized national security policy-making process, the Clinton administration pursued foreign policy consensus as a goal almost in and of itself.⁸¹⁹ Speaking of the Bosnia policy process a high-ranking official noted, “Bosnia has a consensus-driven system starting from the top. This makes it easy to be obstructionist and encourages hedgehog behaviors. A consensus approach tends to drive people toward the bureaucratic behaviors ... it encourages turf battles.”⁸²⁰ Holbrooke echoed this sentiment, writing:

If a clear consensus was not reached at these meetings, the decision-making process would often come to a temporary halt, which was followed by a slow, laborious process of telephoning and private deal making. People hated to take their disagreements to the President; it was as though a failure to agree somehow reflected badly on each of them,

818 Ibid.

819 A former State Department Deputies Committee official informed the author (Rast, *Interagency Fratricide*) that, “the interagency ran differently for two administrations (Bush and Clinton). The interagency during the Persian Gulf War was ‘textbook’—as well as I have ever seen it since the early 1970s. It ran the best because 1) the president wanted it to run and 2) the president set up the heart of the system as Scowcroft, Baker, and Cheney—people who shared aims and were intensely loyal both to the president and the process, and were capable of being totally cold (i.e., not shrinking from the more unpleasant sides of policy implications) with their analyses.”

820 Rast, *Interagency Fratricide*, 176.

and consensus, rather than clarity, was often the highest goal of the process.⁸²¹

The drive for consensus decisions slowed the policy process and engendered cautious choices that differed only slightly from the status quo. This practice begs the question of why the system could not produce consensus: why did some actors prefer to act as obstructionists? A policy making process that centers on consensus is not necessarily bad; in the case of Bosnia, however, the processes and structures within the national security apparatus made building consensus impractical. Discussed in the ensuing paragraphs, the inability to integrate military and diplomatic analysis with planning presented as the primary flaw to the Clinton administration's approach.

Many people fault leaders for failing to compel consensus. One official claims that the Clinton administration's Principals chose:

consensus over process—it is the way the President wants it. He is not eager to have his Principals delivering [problems] at his door. He is not comfortable with reports of dissent and dissatisfaction from his cabinet and is particularly sensitive to dissent from the Pentagon, and the opposing party—[Secretary of Defense William] Cohen. It means he is trying to manage his own Principals while waiting for consensus to emerge.⁸²²

Clinton's sensitivity to the Pentagon and perceptions of weakness in foreign policy are also often subject to harsh criticism. A State Department NSC Deputies Committee participant described his experience within the administration stating, "people do not want to ask the tough questions—How long will this take? Ten years, no way—8 months ... Part of it is we do not have a strong/focused foreign policy President."⁸²³ However, this blame is partially overemphasized.

821 Holbrooke, 81.

822 Rast, Interview with Deputies Committee member.

823 Rast, *Interagency Fratricide*, 213.

Not having a strong foreign policy president is not a justifiable reason for failure. Presidents with disparate areas of expertise and dissimilar executive goals will continue to serve. This increases dramatically the importance of the interagency structure guiding executive administrations. Thus, Clinton did not fail alone; rather, the strategic integrating process designed to advise and support presidential decision making also faltered. National-level policy makers must be presented multiple policy options based upon a wide range of analytic views—only then can they choose the best course of action, one that considers all relevant information. However, during the Bosnia crisis, the process resulted in one dominant analysis and framed policy options, according to foreign policy analyst Samantha Power, “in terms of doing nothing or unilaterally sending in the marines.”⁸²⁴

On August 11, 1992, senior military planners within the Bush administration told the U.S. Congress that breaking the siege of Sarajevo would require 60,000 to 120,000 ground troops; others suggested numbers as high as 400,000 would be required to guarantee cease-fire.⁸²⁵ Still others, including U.S. Army Lieutenant General Barry McCaffrey, stated publicly “there is no military solution.”⁸²⁶ This trend of presenting only large-scale intervention options continued into the Clinton administration. According to NSC staffer Nancy Soderberg, “I sat through meetings in the White House when Colin Powell would say we can’t do anything in Bosnia with less than 200,000 troops.”⁸²⁷ Powell voiced the most poignant opposition by referencing his Vietnam experience. “The story that [became] a tone-setter early-on,” reported one Defense Deputies Committee member, “was that someone brought GEN[eral Colin] Powell a map [and he remarked], ‘Looks like Dien Bien Phu.’”⁸²⁸ With the nation’s ranking military official drawing a parallel between modern-day Bosnia and

824 Samantha Power, *A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2003), 513.

825 Michael R. Gordon, “Conflict in the Balkans: 60,000 Needed for Bosnia, U.S. General Estimates,” *The New York Times*, 12 August 1992. Last accessed 22 Aug 2008; available at <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9E0CE2DE113AF931A2575BC0A964958260&sec=&spn=&pagewanted=all>.

826 Western, 129–130.

827 Rothkopf, 325.

828 Rast, *Interagency Fratricide*, 219.

what is arguably the U.S. military's greatest failure, decision makers naturally became more conservative in their cost-benefit calculi.

One Defense official noted, "On Bosnia, the [Clinton] administration is committed to maintaining the situation, not solving it—the administration is risk averse . . . the mandate is 'don't solve it, keep it off the front page [media] and out of the front office.'"⁸²⁹ Considering the level of troops the military insisted it needed, and the references to the U.S. failure in Vietnam by advisors, it is not surprising that Clinton proved risk averse. The failure of the interagency to provide adequate advice, proposing only options between "Vietnam and doing nothing," would make it difficult for any administration to move forward.

Albright found the situation frustrating, writing later, "Time and again he [Powell] led us up the hill of possibilities and dropped us off on the other side with the practical equivalent of 'No can do.'"⁸³⁰ This prompted the now infamous discussion in which Albright asked the general what America's "superb military" was for if it could not be used to support diplomacy. Powell responded by explaining the *single* responsibility of the American military was to win America's wars.⁸³¹ In retrospect, national security principals disagreed regarding the U.S. military's roles and missions throughout the 1990s; clearly, Albright (and the State Department in general) proved eager to have it take on new missions.⁸³² She believed unequivocally that the military instrument of power remained an extension of the diplomatic—thus, limited force could be applied to achieve limited objectives. While she understood the desire for clarity and planning, Albright also believed that "the lessons of Vietnam could be learned too well."⁸³³

829 Rast, Interview with Principals Committee member.

830 Secretary Madeleine Albright, quoted in Nigel Hamilton, *Bill Clinton: Mastering the Presidency* (New York: Public Affairs, 2007), 130.

831 Colin L. Powell and Joseph E. Persico, *My American Journey* (New York: Random House, 1995), 576.

832 Whether these types of missions emerged as "new," of course, remained open to debate. See, for example, Max Boot, *The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power* (New York: Basic Books, 2003).

833 Madeleine Albright, Interview: "Meet the Press" with Tim Russert, 21 Sep 2003, National Broadcasting Company. Last accessed 20 Aug 2008; available at <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/3080243/>.

Whether other military options would have proven feasible is debatable. David Halberstam gives the account of Richard Johnson, the State Department desk officer for the Balkans in spring 1992, who participated in an interagency briefing during which satellite pictures were shown of Serbian artillery and anti-aircraft emplacements above Sarajevo. Johnson was told that a day and a half of American air attacks would neutralize those positions.⁸³⁴ Halberstam illustrates that Johnson wrote a one-page memo to report this to a superior but received no reply until he was finally “rapped on the knuckles for daring to send the memo on high, and for venturing into territory that belonged to the military.”⁸³⁵

The Pentagon espoused logical reasons for its reluctance to endorse intervention. The Armed Services were continuing combat force reconstitution in the wake of Operation Desert Storm (1991), the campaign that ended Iraq’s occupation of Kuwait. Simultaneously, in the aftermath of the Cold War the Pentagon grappled with downsizing its end strength and reducing its overseas “footprint.” These two tasks alone strained military capabilities; the 1993 troop commitment to Somalia amplified these challenges. In addition, the White House had not allocated resources to support a Bosnian intervention.

According to one principal, “Nothing happens in Washington unless you’re prepared to assign resources against it. Until you’re sure you will assign resources, nothing happens until the crisis is upon you.”⁸³⁶ In the case of Bosnia, the Pentagon quickly grasped the potential budgetary risks connected with intervention. That realization contributed, in part, to its reluctance to endorse armed intervention. An NSC principal noted, “the cost . . . and getting the force back out again. You are right about military reluctance to get

834 Jane Perlez, “The 90’s Wars,” a review of David Halberstam, *War in a Time of Peace: Bush, Clinton, and the Generals*, in *The New York Times*, 30 September 2001. Last accessed 20 Aug 2008; available at <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9906E0D6103BF933A0575AC0A9679C8B63&sec=&spoon=&pagewanted=print>.

835 Ibid.

836 Rast, Interview with Principals Committee member.

involved.”⁸³⁷ Budgetary concerns emerged as particularly important in this case because Bosnian operations would be funded only through supplemental budget appropriations, which take time to be disbursed. In such situations, the military oftentimes must shift monies from funded programs (e.g., training and/or operations and maintenance) to pay for contingency operations. It then attempts to reimburse these accounts once the Congress approves supplemental appropriations. This shifting disrupts military readiness. Simultaneously, congressional rhetoric made it appear that funding would become a major issue if the United States intervened in Bosnia. While the military would be responsible for mission execution, budgetary control by a skeptical Congress made the Pentagon very nervous.

Still, none of these factors explains the pessimistic analysis: military advisors did not argue overextension or funding shortfalls. Further, assuming an authentic response for the president’s call for options, these factors had little to do with the situation in Bosnia. According to former National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft, the Joint Chiefs “probably inflated the estimates of what it would take to accomplish some of these limited objectives, but once you have the Joint Chiefs making their estimates, it’s pretty hard for armchair strategists to challenge them and say they are wrong.”⁸³⁸ The implication is not necessarily that the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) failed in its responsibility to advise the president, but clearly something had gone awry when the Pentagon presented only politically (and perhaps logistically) infeasible options. Rather, the failure to integrate analysis and planning across diplomats and warfighters jeopardized policy development from the outset of crisis analysis.

Analyzing the “Problem from Hell”

During routine policy making, the NSC staff relies upon the State Department to assess “ground truth” and inform the White House of regional changes that may require security policy decisions. Meanwhile, the Defense Department continues to “train and equip” based upon national security policy promulgated by the executive

837 *Ibid.*, albeit a different Principals Committee member than the individual cited in footnote 48.

838 Western, 121–122.

(e.g., The National Security Strategy). In the early 1990s, geopolitical changes stretched State to the brink while Defense still trained and equipped to defend a Fulda Gap scenario.⁸³⁹

Partly, because of these constraints on State and Defense, the previous Yugoslav experiences of two influential foreign policy experts, Lawrence Eagleburger and Brent Scowcroft, greatly distorted contemporary ground truth.⁸⁴⁰ Their analysis led State and Defense to frame the crisis in Bosnia as a “case of a relatively artificial country breaking apart [in which] we had little interest outside humanitarian.”⁸⁴¹ With regard to potential intervention into the Bosnian war, Secretary of State James Baker famously stated that the United States “[didn’t] have a dog in this fight.”⁸⁴² After touring Bosnia, Christopher described the country as “an intractable ‘problem from hell’ that no one can be expected to solve ... a tribal feud that no outsider could hope to settle.”⁸⁴³ Framed in this manner the military’s assessment that it would take 100,000 troops to effect change in Bosnia seemed realistic. In this environment, the most

839 The Fulda Gap is an area of lowlands on the former border between East and West Germany that are suitable for large-scale armored operations, and thus considered by NATO planners to be a likely avenue for any Soviet attack on the West. Defending the gap was one of the primary missions of the Cold War. For additional information, see 14th Cavalry, “The Fulda Gap.” Last accessed 26 August 2008; available at <http://www.14cav.org/a60b1-gap.html>.

840 Rast, *Interagency Fratricide*, 303. David Gompert, a senior NSC member during the Bush administration, characterized the Bush administration as being “divided and stumped” in its approach to Bosnia. See, David C. Gompert, “The United States and Yugoslavia’s Wars,” in R. H. Ullman (ed.), *The World and Yugoslavia’s Wars* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1996). However, interview data analyzed in Rast, *Interagency Fratricide*, indicate that Scowcroft’s and Eagleburger’s perspectives ensured a status quo policy approach.

841 Ibid.

842 James A. Baker III, *The Politics of Diplomacy: Revolution, War, and Peace, 1989-1992* (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1995). See also Warren Zimmerman, *Origins of a Catastrophe* (New York: Times Books, 1996); Warren Christopher, *In the Stream of History: Shaping Foreign Policy for a New Era* (Stanford, CA, Stanford University Press, 1998); and, Susan L. Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Disintegration after the Cold War* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1995).

843 Susan L. Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Disintegration after the Cold War* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1995), 307.

widely advocated policy regarding Bosnia quickly became “wait and see”—an approach operationalized as “do nothing.”

Lack of analytic clarity and promotion of infeasible policy options emerged as major problems. The result, concluded a State Department representative who served on the NSC Principals Committee, was that “during 1993 to 1995, people in Washington didn’t have a clue as to what to do: They reacted to the crisis of the day ... Washington was so paralyzed and bewildered on what to do about the situation—they were closed to almost any course of action.”⁸⁴⁴

The assessment of the principals, despite not having originated from a proper analysis channel, had a significant impact on how organizations made policy. Holbrooke believes one of the major reasons for the U.S. administration’s inaction was a misreading of Balkan history.⁸⁴⁵ Policy and planning proceeded without proper analysis and information. A Defense Principal engaged in the Bosnia interagency dynamic characterized this problem by saying:

There are immense amounts of ignorance being shared because information is not shared. You go to the PC [Principals Committee] or the DC [Deputies Committee] meetings: the deputy secretary [or] undersecretary (PC)—these folks do not have all the information in their heads because they are the top folks. It is terrible how ignorant the process is because it is top-down in these committees/groups and they do not have time to get, or to know, all the facts and right people are not there with the information.⁸⁴⁶

Unfortunately, such ignorance became contagious. Individuals within organizations, including Defense and State, recognize that their parent organizations reward those who perpetuate organizational paradigms, particularly relative to those of competing agencies.⁸⁴⁷ Therefore, as

844 Rast, Interview with Principals Committee member.

845 Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy*, 21–22.

846 Rast, *Interagency Fratricide*, 275.

847 *Ibid.* See also, Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1962).

a crisis unfolds their tendency is to push hard to adopt the solutions most favored by their own agency, those taken by the principals. In Bosnia, this meant many people endorsed the status quo—doing nothing. With Christopher saying nobody could solve the problem and Powell comparing Bosnia to Vietnam, alternative analyses and dissimilar policy options did not filter up to the Principals Committee. Rather, the interagency process marginalized these ideas (and within the departments and agencies, their authors were likewise undercut).

With lift-and-strike set aside, in the summer of 1993 policy discussions focused on economic sanctions against Belgrade which was supporting the Bosnian Serbs with arms and money. At least a dozen State Department officials protested the weak policy to the secretary of state and several sent memos urging tougher action; these efforts realized little impact. For many, the only course of action remained resignation. The deputy chief of Yugoslav affairs became the first to resign (during the Bush administration), but the largest exodus occurred in August 1993 when State's Bosnia desk officer, Croatia desk officer, and a war crimes analyst resigned. In January 1994, former ambassador to Yugoslavia Warren Zimmerman, became the highest ranking official to depart. As Zimmerman began to support the use of force in Bosnia, by his own admission he "began to feel the White House and State Department had cut him out of policy."⁸⁴⁸ Schism within the State Department is not uncommon since different bureaus often perform missions that are difficult to reconcile. For example, this divergence at times leads those in charge of human rights portfolios to support stronger action in Bosnia, while officials with international organization responsibilities prioritize relations with the UN above taking stronger action.

848 Several officials left government service. In order the most notable were: George D. Kenney, deputy chief of Yugoslav; Marshall Freeman Harris, Bosnia desk officer; Stephen Walker, Croatia desk officer; Jon Western, war crimes analyst; and, Warren Zimmerman, former ambassador to Yugoslavia. See, "3d U.S. Aide Quits Over Bosnia," *The New York Times*, 10 August 1993. Last accessed 22 Aug 2008; available at <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9F0CE5DA1530F933A2575BC0A965958260>; and, Elaine Sciolino, "U.S. Balkan Expert Resigns Over Job and Policy Disputes," *The New York Times*, 07 January 1994. Last accessed 22 Aug 2008; available at <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9C01E6D91F3EF934A35752C0A962958260>.

Even if the opinions of these individuals had formed the critical mass needed to change Christopher's mind, it is unlikely such agreement would have catalyzed an actual policy shift. This is because the primary obstacle to tougher action manifested outside the State Department, in the form of interagency disagreement. Despite the desire of mid-level foreign service officers to use force against the Serbs, State could not compel Defense to provide support. Consequently, the root of the policy development problem was incommensurable analysis and incongruent planning systems between State and Defense.

The greatest obstacle faced by those attempting to synthesize diplomacy and force presented itself in terms of timing: the interagency had grown accustomed to mobilizing diplomatic and military tools at different times and/or stages during a crisis. In a traditional crisis involving military action, clear turning points/handoffs exist relative to agency influence.⁸⁴⁹ State manages international relations and monitors crises during routine policymaking. In the event a situation escalates into a security matter, Defense becomes increasingly involved. As a situation moves from pre-hostilities to hostilities, the relative influence of Defense and State invert. State effectively takes a "back seat" to Defense during the armed phases of conflict. As parties move toward cease-fire, State resumes its position as lead agent for post-hostilities diplomacy. Meanwhile, Defense attempts to extract its forces both physically and intellectually. In the case of Bosnia, however, force and diplomacy needed to be used simultaneously to leverage each other. This meant traditional analysis and planning would prove ineffective.

The roles summarized above (managing relations for State and fighting wars for Defense) are reflected in analysis and planning. Analysis provides a foundational perspective upon which policy makers frame options for responding to an armed crisis. The State Department views crises as part of the continually evolving international landscape.⁸⁵⁰ Diplomats serve "in country" indefinitely; they need not be concerned with "mission creep" or exit strategies.

849 Rast, *Interagency Fratricide*, 266.

850 *Ibid.*

Accordingly, the department's analysis tends to focus on managing relationships with flexibility and negotiation as keys to success. The Defense Department, on the other hand, sees crises as situations with distinct beginning and ending points. Clear milestones and pre-established end-states are essential. The Weinberger/Powell Doctrine, which emphasized the necessity of an exit strategy and clear objectives, represented the articulation of this Defense Department analytical method. A Defense Deputies Committee member reported that:

In Bosnia, the Weinberger Doctrine [prevailed]. Oddly, it's a murkier situation, but the Weinberger Doctrine played a more significant role because in GEN Powell's mind the down-side of not seeing a clearly determined exit strategy, end state, etc., [was] not worth the costs of intervention... There was no effective way to go about it. The Weinberger criteria [were] discussed formally and informally on the Joint Staff.⁸⁵¹

Defense planning relies on clearly articulated end states in order to develop operational plans.⁸⁵² Traditionally, civilian leaders (often within the State Department) establish these goals for intervention and leave the development of operational strategy in the military's hands.⁸⁵³ This said, the crisis in Bosnia (and the ensuing situation in Kosovo) indicate that the definition of an end state does not hold the same significance for the NSC Staff and State Department as it does for Defense, thus highlighting a significant cultural fissure.⁸⁵⁴ In fact, defining an end-state can be perceived as anathema to State's efforts since it could remove flexibility and many believe the end state should remain negotiable (and up to the belligerents to develop and agree upon, as Christopher pointed out was the case in Bosnia). There is little evidence that the NSC Staff and State Department were communicating any desired end state through the interagency process throughout the response to the Balkan crises.⁸⁵⁵ An insider to State's planning function stated that, "DOS/SP [Department of

851 Rast, Interview with Deputies Committee member.

852 Rast, *Interagency Fratricide*, 277.

853 Ibid., 88.

854 Ibid., 277.

855 Ibid.

State, Strategic Planning office] gets into much of the day-to-day stuff more than the long-term vision ... it's not a J-5 [JCS Strategic Planning office]. The successful SPs don't do long-term stuff—they put out fires for the secretary. SP is marginalized if focused on the long term.⁸⁵⁶

Without an end-state defined by State or the NSC, the military planners found themselves in a quandary. Since the beginning of the Bosnian war, military planners generated a plethora of responses to political rhetoric.⁸⁵⁷ However, the lack of a clear strategic direction complicated the task since planners could never be certain as to the actual political objectives. For example, in early 1993 the Vance-Owen Peace Plan⁸⁵⁸ appeared to have a good chance at ending the Bosnia war; consequently, Operation Plan (OPLAN) 40-101 focused on NATO replacing UN troops within a peaceful environment.⁸⁵⁹ In November 1994, as the situation deteriorated, senior military officials concluded that the approach needed to be revamped as an operation to extract the UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) from Bosnia under potentially hostile circumstances (OPLAN 40-104).⁸⁶⁰ Air strikes in the absence of ground forces could not bring peace or extract UNPROFOR effectively; thus, leaders would have to consider a more integrated COA. Yet, while acknowledging air strikes would not be used in isolation, coupling them with diplomatic instruments to achieve specific effects seems to have been overlooked. Given the lack of integration between State and Defense this result is not surprising. The absence of a White House or State Department sanctioned policy and the lack of an end state put the military out in front when it came to determining possible COAs. Defense would base the

856 Ibid., 212.

857 Robert Baumann, George W. Gawrych, and Walter E. Kretchik, *Armed Peacekeepers in Bosnia* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2004), p. 69. Last accessed 23 August 2008; available from http://www-cgsc.army.mil/carl/download/csipubs/baumann_bosnia.pdf.

858 In January 1993, UN Special Envoy Cyrus Vance and European Community representative Lord David Owen started negotiations to bring peace to Bosnia. The plan that eventually emerged proposed dividing Bosnia into ten semi-autonomous regions. Although approved by the UN, the Bosnian Serb government rejected the plan during the Pale meeting.

859 Ibid., 68.

860 Ibid.

options it presented on policy and end states that it understood as supportable. As a result, Powell could present the military options in good faith; yet, they could be considered inaccurate should one frame the situation and goals differently.

Throughout the Bosnia crisis, military planners rebuffed State's attempts to control military planning by requesting air strikes only to support diplomacy and not achieve a particular end. The perception of "the other in the interagency" hindered cooperation. Officials consistently describe "State's view of Defense" and "Defense's view of State," yet *not one* of those interviewed for *Interagency Fratricide* had a perspective contrary to the shared image he or she described. A Defense official remarked, "the perception of this building is that State runs around with their hand in our [DoD's] pocket. State's view is that if Defense has all the toys, why don't they use them."⁸⁶¹ Powell, and later, General John Shalikashvili, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, held similar views. Many in the Defense Department see the State Department as putting troops in harm's way for issues not in the country's "vital national interests."⁸⁶² These perceptions created a poor working relationship. The fact that the definition of national interest proved to be in flux only exacerbated the problem.

The definition of what is in the national interest varies by department. For those who have to manage global international organization issues, Bosnia appeared more clearly a security concern. Thus, it is not surprising that Albright would be an early advocate of intervention in the Balkans. Albright points out that, "It didn't matter what the subject was we were talking about in New York the U.S. position on Bosnia affected it... When U.S. leadership is being questioned in one area, it affects our leadership in others."⁸⁶³ Pentagon officials adopted a more traditional definition of national interest, one determined by hard power (i.e., tangible, scalable, and practical) and realism. For them, Bosnia fell far outside these parameters.

This interaction between State and Defense manifested in the process of preparing policy papers. Within Washington, policy papers compel

861 Rast, Interview with Principals Committee member.

862 Rast, *Interagency Fratricide*, 175.

863 Chollet, 11.

agency representatives to exchange ideas on a particular issue. In addition to arbitrating policy, the staffing process for these “white papers” requires coordinating departments to present their views *officially* to the White House. Designed to generate support, identify options/alternative courses of action, and/or expose flaws in logic/capabilities, white papers reflect issues holistically, usually including recommended actions for the decision maker (often the president). Because of the above-mentioned analytical differences, the papers produced while attempting to develop Bosnia policy were constantly at odds.

According to one Defense official involved in the Bosnia effort, “in theory, papers are produced for the interagency working group (IWG), and then refined for the DC and PC. This was followed much more so in the Bush administration. For the major issues today, the tendency is to make decisions without a vision for what we are doing.”⁸⁶⁴ A high-ranking State official offered a similar critical assessment of the policy paper process:

At the PC meeting, no one in the room is an expert. I worked Bosnia at the senior level for one year—some of us had been to Bosnia. [Policy] Papers are supposed to be good and we’re supposed to read them. What’s the possibility one of them will be constructively creative? Not! Intellectually, some of us know this—the real experts are not in the meetings.⁸⁶⁵

In designing the Bosnia response, both sides became confused by the actions of the other. The diplomats wondered why the military proved unwilling to eliminate Serb weapons around Sarajevo. Simultaneously, the military wondered why the diplomats (at least some of them) wanted to eliminate the weapons around Sarajevo in the first place. The diplomats wanted to force negotiations that could then develop an end-state: the military wanted an end-state up front. Without an articulated end-state, the military could not develop strategy; they could only assume the worst-case scenario (e.g., reminiscent of the Department of Defense [DOD’s] Vietnam, Lebanon, and Somalia

864 Rast, Interview with Deputies Committee member.

865 Rast, Interview with Principals Committee member.

experiences). In short, the State Department's implicit demand for ambiguity and flexibility clashed with Defense's explicit drive for clarity and precision.⁸⁶⁶

Throughout the summer of 1993, debate over lift-and-strike continued. After a meeting with top aides on the last day of July, Clinton again gave "final approval" to a plan to use air strikes to protect Bosnian Muslims. According to *The New York Times*, one official characterized the meeting as "a final review of a plan that had been the subject of high-level interdepartment deliberations. Even before meeting, Washington began alerting its allies that it intended to press its new initiative formally."⁸⁶⁷ However, the administration still lacked an end-state: "The administration believes the threat of air strikes is needed to press the Serbs to negotiate in good faith and to reassure the Bosnian Muslims."⁸⁶⁸ As a result, military plans emerged as vague and noncommittal, prompting the press also to report, "it is not clear whether Washington is prepared to begin attacks to stop any shelling of the Muslim enclaves, as some senior Administration officials have suggested, or is planning some lesser form of protection."⁸⁶⁹ Before this could be resolved, external events caused all those advocating intervention to pause.

Interlude: "Somalia Syndrome"

On October 3, 1993, attention shifted away from Bosnia policy and towards a 17-hour gun battle in the streets of Mogadishu, Somalia. The debacle left 18 Americans dead, 84 wounded, and a nation calling for an end to U.S. involvement in humanitarian operations. Known today as the "Somalia Syndrome," this political-military failure would emerge as an overarching American foreign policy consideration throughout the remainder of the 1990s.⁸⁷⁰

866 Rast, *Interagency Fratricide*, 179.

867 Michael R. Gordon, "Clinton Approves A Plan on Bosnia," *The New York Times*, 1 August 1993. Last accessed 20 August 2008; available at <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9F0CE0DE103CF932A3575BC0A965958260>.

868 Ibid.

869 Ibid.

870 Vicki J. Rast, "Interagency Paralysis: Armed Intervention in Bosnia and Kosovo," in *Mismanaging Mayhem: How Washington Responds to Crisis*, edited by James Jay Carafano and Richard Weitz (Westport, CT: Praeger Security

The Somalia experience elevated risk management to a dominant position as the administration contemplated Bosnian intervention. Caution in such failures is warranted—indeed, time should be taken to reflect and consider applicable lessons learned. Mentioned earlier, however, Bosnia policy was well on its way to nowhere *before* the Battle of Mogadishu. The Somalia failure, however, did prompt the creation of Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 25, an executive decision that set strict limits on U.S. involvement in UN peacekeeping activities. In effect, PDD-25 codified the Weinberger/Powell Doctrine and the military's planning framework, thereby committing the executive to support Defense's style of analysis and planning (i.e., requiring an end-state and clear objectives to support intervention activities). This gave DOD significant leverage not only in determining *how* to employ force, but also *when*. Using force to enable flexible, diplomatic objectives became increasingly difficult. As a result, policy makers invoked the use of force for one purpose in Bosnia—to punish.

Throughout 1994 U.S. policy appeared little more than a series of impromptu responses to Serbian aggression. Former Clinton administration insider Ivo Daalder identifies one of the overarching problems as a tendency for policy to be “largely tactical and reactive.”⁸⁷¹ Balkan expert Susan Woodward contends the absence of a real policy ensured reactive decision-making:

The reluctance to use military force therefore remained a cover for major disagreements among the major powers about their objectives in the Balkan Peninsula and their continuing absence of policy toward the conflict itself. This has been transparently clear when decisions *were* made to use military force, such as air power to defend safe areas, because the use was reactive, crisis-driven, motivated almost by pique at Bosnian Serb defiance.⁸⁷²

Somalia and PDD-25 perpetuated the interagency gridlock for nearly 18 months. During this time, the above analyses and policy options

International, 2008), 151.

871 Ivo H. Daalder, *Getting to Dayton: The Making of America's Bosnia Policy* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), 87.

872 Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy*, 377.

repeatedly clashed but always with the same result—inaction and the maintenance of the status quo. This state of affairs continued until spring 1995 when, under the impetus of National Security Advisor Anthony Lake, Clinton began considering policy options that would truly integrate military force and diplomacy.

Endgame: The NSC Bypasses the Interagency

Lake decided that policy for Bosnia could be crafted only by “turning away from the interagency process.”⁸⁷³ Abandoning the role of “honest broker” he had become known for since taking office in 1993, Lake seized the initiative: he sidelined the departments and his NSC staff began to dominate the field. He began this process in spring 1995 by meeting informally with key individuals on the NSC staff to discuss viable strategies; Sandy Berger, Sandy Vershbow, and Nelson Drew topped his list.⁸⁷⁴

As the outlines of a plan began to emerge, Lake did not attempt to reach consensus with the other principals: instead, he went straight to the president keeping him informed each step of the way. Clinton encouraged Lake’s approach.⁸⁷⁵ On June 2, Lake met with the president and select members of the Principals Committee to discuss the Bosnia problem; Christopher, known for opposing military involvement, was not invited.⁸⁷⁶

Progress ensued, but the urgency for developing a viable strategy was about to get a boost. Once again, the disjuncture between military planning requirements and political policy formulation played a huge role. Yet, instead of hindering action, it would now compel it. On June 14, after a meeting with French President Jacques Chirac, Clinton was apparently surprised to learn from Holbrooke that the U.S. had committed troops to a NATO plan to withdraw UN troops should Bosnia be abandoned.⁸⁷⁷

873 Rothkopf, 367.

874 Daalder, “Decision to Intervene.”

875 Rothkopf, 367.

876 Barthe and David, 15; citing Drew, *Showdown*, 247.

877 Holbrooke, 66–68.

The president had signed a memorandum in December 1994 committing American troops to a NATO operation in the event of a UN withdrawal from Bosnia.⁸⁷⁸ Prompted by this and events on the ground, military planners appeared to have solidified plans for such a mission. By February 1995, staff officers participated in a computer-driven exercise to assist in developing the extraction plan, designated OPLAN 40-104; some NATO units even rehearsed the mission.⁸⁷⁹ In spring 1995, OPLAN 40-104—known as “Determined Effort”—emerged as viable.⁸⁸⁰ Acting under the guise of his NATO authority, the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) approved “Determined Effort” on 21 July 1995; the North Atlantic Council (NAC), however, did not yet authorize its execution.⁸⁸¹ When Holbrooke requested a briefing on “Determined Effort,” the Pentagon resisted, labeling OPLAN 40-404 as a NATO (read, not United States) document. When finally briefed, the ambassador was “stunned” by the commitments the United States had agreed to uphold.⁸⁸²

Holbrooke points out that, “According to complicated Cold War procedures that had never been tested, if the NATO Council gave the order to assist the UN’s withdrawal, the planning document would become an operational order.”⁸⁸³ In the event of a UN withdrawal, some worried the plan’s existence automatically would trigger the deployment of 20,000 US troops, many to dangerous in-country operations. In many ways, the situation within the Balkans resembled the history of WWI, when the automatic nature of mobilization orders greatly contributed to the conflict’s escalation into war. The president would still have the final word on deploying U.S. troops; yet, according to Holbrooke, his options had been drastically narrowed. To renege

878 He informed Congress shortly after. Douglas Jehl, “25,000 U.S. Troops to Aid U.N. Force If It Quits Bosnia,” *The New York Times*, 9 December 1994. Last accessed 21 Aug 2008; available at <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9B0CE2DC1339F93AA35751C1A962958260&sec=&spoon=&pagewanted=print>.

879 Baumann, Gawrych, and Kretchik, 68–69.

880 Although Clinton had promised to deploy troops in support of a UN troop extraction, he did not formally approve the OPLAN. Holbrooke, 66.

881 Bauman, Gawrych, and Kretchik, 69.

882 Daalder, “Decision to Intervene.”

883 Holbrooke,.

on the NATO plan and not assist in extracting allies from Bosnia would have seriously damaged NATO.⁸⁸⁴ Consequently, this realization presented an intellectual turning point for the United States.

Commonality began to emerge regarding American national security interests: NATO's integrity and warfighting capabilities had to be preserved. One State official concluded, "The reason we did Dayton was (1) humanitarian disaster and (2) NATO's credibility—in light of the humanitarian disaster. What good is NATO if Bosnia goes down? ... see light bulbs going on all over town. Now, it's no longer a European civil war, it was our institution, NATO, at stake; and (3) the situation was ripe."⁸⁸⁵ According to Chollet's assessment of the process, "the Principals agreed that the magnitude of problems associated with 40-104 and post-withdrawal planning made UNPROFOR's near-term survival crucial, and that the U.S. government should make a concerted effort to press the Europeans to keep UN forces in the game."⁸⁸⁶

Only by brokering a peace agreement would the United States get out of its commitment to "Determined Effort." Holbrooke claims that, "General Este's briefing (on OPLAN 40-104) convinced me that it would no longer be possible to stay out of Bosnia."⁸⁸⁷ As this realization spread across the interagency, State and Defense focused on "keeping the UN force in place, even if that meant acceding to allied wishes not to conduct any further air strikes to halt Bosnian Serb military advances or to offer further concessions to Milosevic in a piecemeal effort to get Pale to the negotiating table."⁸⁸⁸ This realization generated a new high point in favor of appeasement after Serb forces took UN troops hostage in late May.

At a May 28 meeting, the principals quietly suspended the use of air strikes and openly reaffirmed Washington's commitment to "Determined Effort." In principle, a UN withdrawal only from the eastern enclaves (not all of Bosnia) would also be supported

884 Ibid., 66–68.

885 Rast, Interview with Deputies Committee member.

886 Chollet, 4.

887 Holbrooke, 66–68.

888 Daalder, "Decision to Intervene."

by the United States. In a decision memo to the president, Lake explained this approach would support the main goal of maintaining and strengthening UNPROFOR.⁸⁸⁹ Despite openly declaring U.S. commitment on May 31 to the Air Force Academy's graduation audience, Clinton seemingly did not realize how robust such a commitment would be. In effect, his pronouncement ensured U.S. soldiers would have Bosnian mud on their boots one way or another. If a peace accord emerged, the United States had promised troops; if events escalated beyond UN troop control and a Dunkirk-like evacuation was required, the United States had committed troops (through NATO).

After the quick lesson on NATO's planning process during Chirac's visit, Clinton realized that U.S. military action proved inevitable. This realization energized Lake's policy formation process. With U.S. troops now committed, the interagency agreed not to leave an end-state up to the warring parties—it wanted to control U.S. involvement closely. With State sidelined, Lake and the NSC staff generated such a policy.

On June 21, Albright (still U.S. ambassador to the UN) presented a new strategy, one recognizing that UNPROFOR would leave Bosnia by the end of 1995, thereby forcing the United States to help. She advocated a grim realism and proposed supporting immediate withdrawal, but advocated extraction based “on our schedule rather than somebody else's.” Clinton affirmed the proposal was going in the “right direction” and, so, the interagency followed, though not as an integrated, harmonious body but as separate entities moving in the same general direction.⁸⁹⁰

Two days later, Ambassador Robert Frasure circulated an apocalyptic memo to senior State Department officials. Frasure claimed that prior policies had failed due to lack of discipline, choice making, and prioritizing. Now there were no good options left: UNPROFOR was on the verge of pulling out, something that would inevitably start what Frasure called the 40-104 “‘doomsday machine’—intervention triggered by humiliation.”⁸⁹¹ The only decision that needed to be

889 Chollet, 5.

890 Ibid., 11.

891 Warren Bass, “The Triage of Dayton,” *Foreign Affairs* (September-October 1998):

made, in his opinion, was “which waterfall” the United States wanted to go over.⁸⁹² He, like Albright, advocated pulling UNPROFOR out as quickly and painlessly as possible. The United States could then focus on the more risk-free strategies of lifting the arms embargo, arming the Bosniaks, and containing the problem.

The NSC worked the issue in parallel. On Saturday, June 24, Lake and his NSC team (Berger, Vershbow, Drew, and Peter Bass) held a four-hour discussion in the West Wing. Lake suggested that they think about the kind of Bosnia they hoped to have as an end state, and work backwards from there to determine policy; he also said they needed to consider UNPROFOR’s withdrawal. Within this small group, “a consensus soon emerged on a workable strategy.”⁸⁹³ Lake charged Vershbow with drafting a formal strategy paper based upon their conclusions, formulating a COA to enhance military leverage and diplomatic flexibility.⁸⁹⁴

Lake continued to keep President Clinton informed, while seeking his direction. He specifically asked Clinton whether he should proceed along this path with the knowledge that a significant U.S. military force would have to be committed to some type of action during a presidential election year. According to Daalder, “Clinton told Lake to go ahead, indicating that the status quo was no longer acceptable.”⁸⁹⁵

Meanwhile, a group within the State Department initiated its own informal process in an attempt to reinvigorate the Bosnia policy development process. Meeting at Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott’s house, the group agreed that the United States needed to be more involved. As a result of these consultations, Donald Steinberg, a career Foreign Service Officer and NSC staffer, drafted a proposal calling for an international conference to negotiate peace in Bosnia utilizing a sanctions relief-mutual recognition package, an approach Frasure had discussed with Milosevic that spring.⁸⁹⁶ On June 30, the

95.

892 Chollet, 13.

893 Daalder, “Decision to Intervene.” See also, Chollet, 12.

894 Chollet, 12.

895 Daalder, “Decision to Intervene.”

896 Chollet, 13–14.

group that had been meeting at Talbott's house gathered formally for the first time. The following day, a newly optimistic Frasure submitted another paper based on Steinberg's draft. Changes included dropping Croatia from the mutual recognition deal and placing Milosevic as the representative of the Serbs in Pale. Frasure restated his belief that the administration had to end its *ad hoc* approach toward Balkan policy, writing, "If we decide that the crisis has now come and at all costs we must avoid UNPROFOR departure/40-104 and we need a diplomatic solution, then we must make that choice, impose discipline and stay the course."⁸⁹⁷

The Steinberg-Frasure proposal made it to the president in a "Night Note" from Secretary Christopher on July 6. Derek Chollet calls this note the "documentary culmination of the State Department's policy reformulation effort."⁸⁹⁸ In this memo, Christopher criticized the military planning process, writing, "I think you need a wider variety of options than now provided by NATO Operation Plan 40-104 ... the 'all or nothing' character of 40-104 does not seem to take into account the wide variety of circumstances in which withdrawal may actually take place."⁸⁹⁹ Christopher may have been correct, but military planning without policy direction is difficult and speculative. In a memo promising to facilitate withdrawal, Clinton had directed the military to act. Without a policy to set the terms of engagement, the military assumed the lead and acted according to its doctrine, analytic mindset, and planning approach. It is only prudent that it would prepare for a worst-case scenario, especially in light of the analysis that Bosnia presented as an intractable problem mired in ancient ethnic hatreds. As more information became public regarding the events taking place in Bosnia, worse case scenarios began to seem like the only realistic alternatives.

Over the course of a few days in mid-July, the Serbian military overran the "safe area" of Srebrenica, killing an estimated 4,000-7,500 men and expelling the women and children.⁹⁰⁰ As survivors and stories

897 Ibid., 15.

898 Ibid.

899 Ibid.

900 United Nations, "The Fall of Srebrenica," Report of the Secretary-General Pursuant to General Assembly Resolution 53/35, 15 November 1999,

of atrocities flooded the press, the international community realized it had done nothing while the largest European massacre since World War II materialized.

After Srebrenica fell, the allies met in London to coordinate a response. Prior to the conference, leaders convened and determined they would advocate a policy committed to a decisive, broad-based air campaign in defense of Gorazde.⁹⁰¹ This operation would target enemy air defenses (a strategic move that previously had been intolerable for European leaders) and would avoid a “dual key” arrangement with the UN (an approach NATO blamed for impeding even tactical air strikes).⁹⁰² Albright advised presenting this as a *fait accompli*; those present agreed. Three days later, compelled by consensus in Washington, the allies adopted the U.S. policy. Some identify the London Resolution as the turning point in international involvement in Bosnia.⁹⁰³ Although NATO nearly reneged on the commitment, by August 1 the NAC had agreed to apply the so-called “Gorazde Rules” to all the other “safe areas.”⁹⁰⁴

Around this time, the U.S. Congress began to pressure the president to intervene in Bosnia—not to deploy troops necessarily, but to do something. On July 25, the U.S. Senate, led by Senator Bob Dole, passed a bill that required Clinton to permit American arms sales to the Bosnian government in the event of UN withdrawal. Administration officials worried the legislation would “almost certainly trigger the pullout of the United Nations force from Bosnia” and Bosnian government officials confirmed these concerns.⁹⁰⁵ In

A/54/549.

901 Allied Forces Southern Europe (AFSOUTH) Fact Sheets, “Operation Deliberate Force,” NATO—Allied Joint Force Command, Headquarters Naples, 16 December 2002. Last accessed 22 Aug 2008; available at <http://www.afsouth.nato.int/factsheets/deliberateforcefactsheet.htm>.

902 Stephen Engelberg, “Conflict in the Balkans: Strategy—Allies Warn Bosnian Serbs of ‘Substantial’ Air Strikes if U.N. Enclave is Attacked; Advancing Bosnian Serb Troops Would Be First Bombing Targets,” *The New York Times*, 22 July 1995. Available at <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=990CE0D71E3AF931A15754C0A963958260&sec=&spon=&pagewanted=all>.

903 Chollet, 20–21.

904 Daalder, *Getting to Dayton*, 79.

905 Stephen Engelberg, “Conflict in the Balkans: Politics; Bosnia and U.S. Politics:

light of the already mentioned commitment to provide a 25,000-troop evacuation force, the Clinton administration was loath to have this happen. Clinton vetoed the bill, but the Congress planned to re-address the arms embargo measure during its September session; key leaders presumed they had the votes to override the presidential veto.⁹⁰⁶

According to EU Special Envoy to the Former Yugoslavia Carl Bildt, the rift between the administration and the Congress threatened to “throw the entire political system into a profound crisis and a bitter constitutional battle over the control of foreign affairs.”⁹⁰⁷ The president’s decision to increase the level of U.S. involvement in Bosnia, said Colonel Nelson Drew, extended from confrontational executive-legislative relations: “[Clinton] was about to lose control of foreign policy on a fundamental issue ... The passage of the Dole bill made the President and others more aware of the political danger, that Congress could do real damage to American foreign policy.”⁹⁰⁸

Meanwhile, Lake and his team completed their endgame strategy. Lake kept Clinton informed regarding the strategy white paper’s approach throughout the first half of July; when completed, Lake personally gave Clinton a copy before pushing it to anyone outside the NSC.⁹⁰⁹ According to Chollet, “These briefings served a certain bureaucratic purpose—they helped assure that the President remained informed on current NSC thinking, allowing Lake to ‘prime’ the President against the views of the other agencies that might run counter to an emerging NSC strategy.”⁹¹⁰

According to some analysts, the “new” NSC strategy proved, “basically a resurrection of ‘lift and strike,’ with the added threat of unilateral action by the U.S. if the allies did not agree to the plan and a more pragmatic, less moralistic approach to achieving a political

High Stakes for Dole,” *The New York Times*, 20 July 1995. Last accessed 21 Aug 2008; available at <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=990CEFD1E3CF933A15754C0A963958260&sec=&spoon=&pagewanted=all>.

906 Chollet, 37.

907 Bildt, 39.

908 Barthe and David, 12; citing Drew, *Showdown*, 252.

909 Ibid., 15; citing Daalder, *Getting to Dayton*, 98.

910 Chollet, 12.

solution: any party that accepted the plan would be rewarded, and any party that resisted it would face negative consequences.”⁹¹¹ The strategy’s keys emerged in the form of carrot and stick measures, especially sticks. Even the Bosniaks had a stick aimed at them: if they rejected the treaty, the U.S. would adopt a “lift and leave” policy, lifting the arms embargo but not aiding Sarajevo at all.⁹¹² The Serbs, of course, had a more imposing stick aimed at them: if they refused to adhere to the plan, the U.S. would lift the arms embargo, equip the Bosniaks, and launch air strikes. The diplomatic endgame called for a single state, but one in which the parties would be separated. The Bosnian-Croatian federation, which controlled 30 percent of the country, would be given 50 percent of the territory and would receive reconstruction aid.⁹¹³ Importantly, U.S. planners also identified the UN as an obstacle.

On July 17, Lake continued his informal meetings, this time gathering Secretary of Defense William Perry, U.S. Ambassador to the UN Albright, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General John Shalikashvili, and Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs Berger in his office. As Lake presented his endgame strategy, Albright seemed supportive while Perry and Shalikashvili appeared “less than enthusiastic”; Lake had also arranged for Clinton to “drop by.”⁹¹⁴ The president told those in attendance he was dissatisfied with the current approach and wanted “new ideas.”⁹¹⁵ Daalder recounts that he went so far as to say, “You know, Tony’s got some good ideas here.”⁹¹⁶

The meeting led to the creation of an interagency group tasked to formulate “real policy options” for the president.⁹¹⁷ Lake requested that each department and Albright produce “endgame” papers. He

911 Barthe and David, footnote, 87.

912 Chollet, 43–44.

913 Stephen Engelberg, “How Events Drew U.S. Into Balkans,” *The New York Times*, 19 August 1995. Last accessed 21 Aug 2008; available at <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=990CEFDB1338F93AA2575BC0A963958260&sec=&spon=&pagewanted=all>.

914 Barthe and David, 16.

915 Ibid.; citing Woodward, *The Choice*, p. 261; and, Halberstam, *War in a Time of Peace*, 317.

916 Rothkopf, 368.

917 Daalder, *Getting to Dayton*, 87.

designed the process, according to David Rothkopf, to ensure his plan “would be supplemented, not replaced.”⁹¹⁸ As each agency worked on its paper, an informal interagency group refined the differences so the president would be presented with clear options, not just four virtually identical middle-of-the-road choices or merely two options that amounted to all or nothing commitments. The president received the white papers on August 5 and discussed them with his advisors on August 7.⁹¹⁹

The papers agreed that the “muddle through” approach needed to end. If no peace deal emerged or if UNPROFOR remained ineffective, the United States should help the UN force withdraw, lift the arms embargo, and start supporting the Bosniaks (with arms, training, economic aid, and, possibly, air coverage). All agreed that a new diplomatic initiative, one potentially backed by force, was in order.⁹²⁰ The papers diverged, however, in the conceptualization of Bosnia’s end state, a political question that would determine the extent and nature of military involvement.

State and Defense supported the status quo partition of Bosnia, minimizing possible U.S. involvement. The only other choice, they thought, was a war of conquest on behalf of the Bosniaks.⁹²¹ In contrast, the NSC and Albright wanted to preserve a single state, with the Muslims getting 51 percent of the territory within a semi-federated structure.⁹²² The choice of end state would have major consequences for the amount of risk the military would have to engage. Risk was not the predominant factor; State and Defense had proven more than willing to take risks. Rather, institutional interests determined their respective preferences.

Foggy Bottom argued that the United States should pursue a limited approach and “keep the UN” engaged at almost all costs, so as not to “risk [America’s] fundamental strategic and political interests.”⁹²³

918 Rothkopf, 368.

919 Chollet, 37–38.

920 Daalder, “Decision to Intervene.”

921 Ibid.

922 Chollet, 38. See also, Daalder, “Decision to Intervene.”

923 Ibid., 39.

Further, Christopher, reflecting State's penchant for flexibility, believed the parties should negotiate the map themselves, not be forced to accept a solution derived externally.⁹²⁴ The Pentagon, meanwhile, wanted to keep the United States out, still seeing little chance that the mission would fit into the Weinberger-Powell Doctrine. It recommended a "realistic" approach under which Washington would accept the reality of Serb military power and seek a cease-fire based on the status quo.⁹²⁵

The president, vice president, and most of the principals debated the NSC strategy over the course of three days. Christopher again did not attend the meeting (although there is no indication of his intentional exclusion this time).⁹²⁶ However, on August 7 he phoned the president from Asia, reiterating that the NSC endgame strategy remained suboptimal. Aware of the call, Lake spoke privately with Clinton before the meeting to discuss the policy papers, again stressing the benefits of the NSC plan.⁹²⁷ Albright also believed the State and Defense Departments' papers did not suggest an alternate strategy to the one that had been pursued by the United States over the past three years. She wrote at least one memo to Clinton urging force be used in support of Lake's endgame strategy.⁹²⁸

On August 8, the president again expressed verbal support for the NSC strategy and the following day it became official policy. This was not unexpected. Lake had been regularly briefing the president since the July 17 meeting, prompting one official to observe that the August 7 meeting was "pre-cooked" to favor the NSC plan.⁹²⁹ However, many of the specifics regarding the diplomatic strategy were adopted from the State Department paper, reflecting the earlier Steinberg-Frasure proposal.

Upon Christopher's return to the U.S., the secretary discovered that unlike two years ago, this time Lake was going to Europe, not to sell

924 Ibid.

925 Albright, *Madam Secretary*, 189.

926 Holbrooke, 73.

927 Barthe and David, 16; citing Daalder, *Getting to Dayton*, 102–107.

928 Burg and Shoup, 353.

929 Chollet, 40.

but to inform the allies of America's new policy—the news came as a surprise to the sidelined principal.⁹³⁰ According to Holbrooke, Lake's trip conveyed that the president now *personally* backed the negotiations, representing a clear departure from the past. Chollet writes, "It was a valuable prelude to our shuttle diplomacy, investing it with far greater credibility than previous American negotiation efforts."⁹³¹

One of the important advances in U.S. policy lay not in specifics, but in the fact that the U.S. had now promulgated actionable policy. The talking points for Lake's trip to Europe were "intended to be used as a 'script' to be read rather than reminders to be referred to."⁹³² In effect, the United States, and the Office of the National Security Advisor in particular, forced discipline into the system. Although strategic flexibility was hampered to some degree, the nature of the strategic policy would enable flexible, tactical diplomatic efforts to take hold during the upcoming months.

When Lake went to Europe and Holbrooke flew to the Balkans, the talking points remained the same. The new U.S. diplomatic effort centered on:

1. A comprehensive peace settlement
2. Three-way mutual recognition, cease fire and end to all military operations
3. Viable borders
4. One state composed of two highly autonomous entities
5. Sanctions relief
6. Agreement on Eastern Slavonia
7. Regional economic reconstruction assistance⁹³³

This final point proved controversial. Chollet contends, "Because of the domestic political implications, neither Lake nor Holbrooke

930 Rothkopf, 368. See also, Chollet, 41.

931 Chollet, 49.

932 Ibid., 42.

933 Ibid., 43–44.

had been authorized to discuss specific financial numbers with the Europeans or Balkan parties.⁹³⁴ For those parties, however, this carrot was crucial and each needed an unambiguous U.S. commitment. To withhold an offer, Holbrooke thought, would decrease the chances of success.⁹³⁵ The U.S. Congress again seemed to be controlling the resources while other parties shouldered the responsibility. Three weeks later, the president requested \$500 million, allowing Holbrooke to offer the carrot just in time.

According to some observers, the Bosnia operation signaled “the triumph of the NSC system over the departments,” which set a precedent for the Clinton administration.⁹³⁶ During his second term, the NSC would dominate policy making. A State Department deputy captured the essence of this transition:

Paradoxically, the NSC [Staff] now dominates the process. Because it is now dominant, it deals with all the issues, but only episodically. It exacerbates the problem by not paying attention except to the ‘crisis of the day.’ That decreases pressure for State and Defense to work together, so they continue to do their own things. The NSC [Staff] does not do a good job of forcing people to work together.⁹³⁷

A Defense Department official agreed, asserting that the NSC Staff had transformed itself into a position wherein the “NSC’s desire to be the State Department, OSD [Office of the Secretary of Defense], etc... their desire to be the ‘prime mover’ rather than the ‘prime shaper’ has created confusion about who’s in charge.” An NSC official echoed this perspective, “For the NSC and State there is friction over leadership in foreign policy issues—it can become institutional or personality driven.”⁹³⁸

In light of the failure of State and Defense to cooperate in policy formation, the rise of the NSC was not a negative trend when measured in terms of results. According to Daalder, “The strategy proposed by Lake for the first time matched force and diplomacy

934 Ibid., 62.

935 Ibid., 62.

936 Barthe and David, 17–18.

937 Rast, *Interagency Fratricide*, 248.

938 Ibid.

in a way that would break the policy impasse that had strangled Washington for so long.”⁹³⁹ However, because the formal interagency players had been sidelined for most of the strategy development process, implementing the endgame would present myriad challenges.

Getting to Yes: Implementing Diplomacy Backed by Force

Ambassador Richard Holbrooke headed the Dayton negotiations. By his own admission, his approach relied upon diplomacy backed by force, a strategy that requires constant communication and cooperation between the Departments of State and Defense. However, such cooperation proved elusive. Bildt states that “Holbrooke’s job [seeking] to reconcile the different views in Washington” might have been more challenging than seeking “solutions to differences in the Balkans.”⁹⁴⁰ To be effective, Holbrooke followed the same path as Lake, skipping many of the standard interagency rules and procedures. In Holbrooke’s own words, “If I were to operate in a routine manner, putting process ahead of substance, I might make fewer enemies but would have less chance of accomplishing [Washington’s] goals.”⁹⁴¹ This said, Holbrooke could not entirely ignore Washington. He was given the same guidance as Lake—to use the talking points as a script. As long as he operated within broad strategic policy guidelines, he exercised considerable tactical flexibility.⁹⁴² The shuttle diplomacy team brokered decisions and, in effect, presented them to DC as *fait accomplis*.⁹⁴³ According to Chollet, “To maximize the team’s bargaining flexibility and ability to make quick decisions, they had to circumvent the typical interagency deliberative process.”⁹⁴⁴

The delegation established a more effective interagency process than that exercised within Washington: “Complete trust and openness ... was essential if we were to avoid energy-consuming internal intrigues

939 Daalder, “Decision to Intervene.”

940 Bildt, 87.

941 Holbrooke, 57.

942 Chollet, 47.

943 Ibid., 93.

944 Ibid., 93–94.

and back channels to Washington.”⁹⁴⁵ Holbrooke encouraged the idea that he was equal to, not above, other team members. He emphasized informality and frankness. The parties discussed everything openly in the group; recommendations were presented as the “consensus view of the negotiating team.”⁹⁴⁶

Even the part of the team resident inside the Beltway steered clear of the interagency. The *ad hoc* working group of legal experts that Holbrooke and John Kornblum created to assist the shuttle team existed outside State and the regular interagency process to avoid bureaucratic “haggling and inertia.”⁹⁴⁷ This group would use basic principles that the belligerents agreed upon to draft terms of a comprehensive settlement. Thus, once proximity talks began, the parties could already refer to documents.

In the field, General Wesley Clark assisted Holbrooke; he proved to be just as concerned about matching diplomacy with force as did the ambassador. Clark relates that early on that no mechanism existed to “build in the military advice as we commenced the negotiations.”⁹⁴⁸ Clark wanted military advice inserted into the policy process early in the development of solutions: while engaged as a member of the negotiating team, he succeeded.⁹⁴⁹ Convincing the politicians in Washington and NATO’s military leaders in Brussels was a different matter.

Bosnia’s conflict dynamics eluded the linear nature of international crisis management. The interagency had grown accustomed to mobilizing diplomatic and military tools at different times, but in Bosnia no hand-off occurred between State and Defense. In combining force and diplomacy, Defense was deprived of its desire to adhere to the Weinberger-Powell doctrinal tenets regarding overwhelming force, establishing clear timelines, and defining tangible exit strategies. Meanwhile, State had to sacrifice some degree of

945 Holbrooke, 111.

946 Chollet, 94-95.

947 Ibid., 63.

948 General Wesley K. Clark, *Waging Modern War: Bosnia, Kosovo, and the Future of Conflict* (New York: Public Affairs, 2002), 38.

949 Ibid.

autonomy, instead needing to leverage agreement through military coercion and, therefore, oftentimes being compelled to rely upon military timelines. The relationship demonstrated the eloquence of a three-legged race.

Early conflict dynamics tested the military-diplomatic effort. On August 28, 1995, Sarajevo's Markale marketplace was shelled, resulting in 37 killed and 90 wounded.⁹⁵⁰ The Serbs were quickly faulted; NATO's Operation Deliberate Force began two days later.⁹⁵¹ Holbrooke observes that, "After all these years of minimal steps, the historic decision to 'hit them hard' had been made suddenly."⁹⁵² The change, according to Holbrooke, occurred partly due to the strong recommendation of the negotiating team that bombing should take place.⁹⁵³

Over the next two weeks, NATO flew 3,515 sorties and dropped 1,026 bombs.⁹⁵⁴ During that same time, U.S. negotiators achieved a breakthrough the Europeans never could. Still, undertaking the military and diplomatic efforts in parallel proved challenging. For example, a mere one hour into the bombing campaign, the U.S. Air Force informed Holbrooke it did not want him to go into Belgrade or fly around within the combat zone since it was too dangerous. Clark convinced them otherwise, but this example revealed just how unaccustomed the interagency was to employing force and diplomacy at the same time and in the same place.⁹⁵⁵

Advocated by Holbrooke, a momentary pause in the bombing occurred early on; however, negotiations stalled as days passed. Still unable to acknowledge a clearly articulated end state, the Defense Department resisted calls to resume military operations. In a September 8 memo to Secretary of Defense William Perry, Walter Slocombe expressed

950 Peace Pledge Union (PPU), "Coercing and Enforcing," *Peace Matters*, Issue 31 (Autumn 2000). Last accessed 21 Aug 2008; available at http://www.ppu.org.uk/peacematters/pm2000/pm2000_91.html.

951 Baumann, Gawrych, and Kretchik.

952 Holbrooke, 103.

953 Ibid.

954 NATO, "Operation Deliberate Force," 6 November 1995 (updated 16 December 2002). Last accessed 21 Aug 2008; available at <http://www.afsouth.nato.int/FACTSHEETS/DeliberateForceFactSheet.htm>.

955 Ibid., 104.

his view that the air campaign's "fundamental problem" remained the absence of a distinguishable policy objective.⁹⁵⁶

Clark repeatedly tried to convince Admiral Leighton Smith (Commander in Chief, U.S. Southern Command [CINCSOUTH]; later, Commander in Theater of the NATO Implementation Force [IFOR]) that bombing was necessary; but, even when Holbrooke pressed for air operations to resume, the admiral demonstrated reluctance. In Holbrooke's view, "Smith was edging into an area of political judgments that should have been reserved for civilian leaders."⁹⁵⁷ Perhaps mixing political and military judgment would prove inevitable in such an operation; clearly, Holbrooke encroached upon areas traditionally held to be reserved for military judgment. British General Rupert Smith attested to the necessity of such political-military encroachment, saying, "If the Serbs perceived that Holbrooke did not 'have his hand on the [bombing] lever' they would refuse to talk."⁹⁵⁸ Holbrooke recognized the dynamic as a "classic dilemma in political-military relations, one we faced but never solved in Vietnam: the relationship between force and diplomacy."⁹⁵⁹ The pause needed to end, said Holbrooke, so that the Serbs knew the West was negotiating from a "position of strength."⁹⁶⁰

Eventually the bombing resumed, but the lack of coordination between the military air strikes and the diplomatic ground effort troubled Holbrooke: "There was no mechanism or structure within the Administration to coordinate such interagency issues."⁹⁶¹ Smith had actually ordered the general in charge of the bombing to have no contact with the negotiating team. Holbrooke wanted to tell the president that this problem required immediate attention but acknowledged "relations among the NSC, State, and Defense were not something an Assistant Secretary of State could fix."⁹⁶² Clinton

956 Chollet, 100.

957 Holbrooke, 118.

958 Chollet, 100.

959 Richard Holbrooke, quoted in Jeffrey Record, a review of *To End A War*, in *Parameters* (Autumn 1999): 151–166.

960 Chollet, 86.

961 Holbrooke, 145.

962 Ibid.

eventually expressed the same thoughts as Holbrooke, conveying he was “frustrated that the air campaign is not better coordinated with the diplomatic effort.”⁹⁶³

Christopher came around in support of the bombing once it started, becoming an advocate for its continuation even as Perry requested a second pause.⁹⁶⁴ This break was needed because the Joint Chiefs claimed it had almost exhausted “Option Two” targets.⁹⁶⁵ Christopher, however, doubted this was the case. Holbrooke argues, “There was no way to question the military within its own area of responsibility—the military controlled the information and independent verification was virtually impossible.”⁹⁶⁶ The problem was that it would be difficult to get approval for additional Option Three targets without already running out of Option Two targets. This meant a bombing halt was inevitable.⁹⁶⁷ Thus, the military implicitly set the timetable for negotiations: Defense possessed the resources, and those responsible for making peace had little option but to play the hand they were dealt. Recognizing this, Holbrooke’s negotiating team left Washington four days ahead of schedule in an attempt to achieve a breakthrough before the military ceased bombing.⁹⁶⁸

Holbrooke and his team soon emerged triumphant: military airpower employed to leverage diplomacy convinced the Serbs to sign the negotiations and terminate all offensive operations, including lifting of the siege of Sarajevo. Despite the tension, the interagency had cleared the first hurdle toward peace.

The second obstacle manifested not as an international challenge, but as one of reaching an interagency consensus on U.S. positions. Lake’s endgame provided only the broad measures necessary to stop the fighting and establish operational, albeit temporal, stability. Presently, the interagency had to determine the details. In the U.S.

963 Ibid.

964 Ibid.

965 Ibid., 146. See also, Jane Boulden, *Peace Enforcement: The United Nations Experience in Congo, Somalia, and Bosnia* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2001), 126.

966 Ibid., 148.

967 Chollet, 106.

968 Holbrooke, 146.

government's eyes, there could be no pause between the signing of the peace accord and the start of implementation: the U.S. negotiators had to plan for success.

A small legal group at the State Department generated all annexes comprising the peace deal, except one: the military annex. To support the drafting, Holbrooke and Kornblum created a Balkan peace "task force" that "would temporarily function outside the bureaucratic structure of the State Department's European Bureau."⁹⁶⁹ This allowed for tight control of the paper flow, but Chollet contends it "was really not a new, independent bureaucratic organ—it was simply a mechanism to keep control of things outside the normal process."⁹⁷⁰ Holbrooke and Kornblum controlled the system entirely. Only a limited number of officials participated in organizational meetings and few outside agencies had an opportunity to coordinate on any of the preliminary annexes, except the one related to IFOR.⁹⁷¹

The most sensitive decision the U.S. government had to make concerned which tasks U.S. forces would be assigned as part of IFOR.⁹⁷² Two high-level White House meetings ensued to answer this question. As expected, the military favored a limited and clearly defined mission, which they could then decide how best to carry out. The JCS completed a draft annex by October 3 and circulated it through the other departments and agencies.⁹⁷³ After the JCS draft was complete, a Pentagon staffer moved to the State Department to assist IFOR annex development. Unlike the others, the deputies and principals vetted this annex extensively. As Walter Slocombe recalls, "anything Holbrooke could get the parties to agree to was OK, but on IFOR, we had a big interest in how this came out. We would write it and the parties would agree to it."⁹⁷⁴

Again, State and Defense strongly disagreed over policy, with State favoring a more active role for military forces and Defense, advocating

969 Chollet, 168.

970 Ibid.

971 Ibid.

972 For an in-depth discussion, see Holbrooke, 216–223.

973 Chollet, 152.

974 Ibid., 167.

a reductionist COA. Maximalists at Foggy Bottom—including Holbrooke—wanted a broad mandate to reform the entire political system and reconstruct the nation.⁹⁷⁵ The military believed taking on these extra tasks would require more troops and endanger its primary mission—to prepare for and fight the nation’s wars. Thus, Defense endeavored to keep IFOR’s role as minimalist as possible, limiting the tasks to separating the belligerents and force protection. Holbrooke believed this would be self-defeating, insisting that “the narrower the military mission, the longer they would have to stay.”⁹⁷⁶

As highlighted by Vershbow, eleven major disagreements split the JCS and State Department: location of the IFOR headquarters, deployment within the Republika Srpska, deployment on international borders, requirement that belligerents withdraw heavy weapons, cantonment of weapons, authority for investigation into past attacks/atrocities, obligation to respond to “over the horizon” attacks on civilian aid workers of gross violations of human rights, securing elections and freedom of movement, police functions, deployment in eastern Slavonia, and a mandate to arrest persons indicted for war crimes.⁹⁷⁷

On October 27, the Principals Committee reached compromises between Defense and State positions on most of the issues. However, the most vexing and most important issue determining what “clear and defensible” end-state IFOR would seek to achieve lingered unresolved.⁹⁷⁸ Additionally, the compromise reached regarding IFOR’s tasks would produce long-term consequences. Shalikhvili proposed that the military “accept the ‘authority’ to do additional tasks... but not the ‘obligation.’”⁹⁷⁹ “The meaning of this finely crafted compromise,” offered Holbrooke, “would not be determined until the commanders on the ground decided how to use their ‘authority.’”⁹⁸⁰

975 Ibid., 194–197.

976 Holbrooke, 219.

977 Ibid.

978 Chollet, 174.

979 Holbrooke, 222; Thijs W. Brocades Zaalberg *Soldiers and Civil Power: Supporting or Substituting Civil Authorities in Modern Peace Operations* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006), 251.

980 Holbrooke, 222.

Holbrooke's concern regarding the Pentagon's reluctance to accept more responsibility persisted. He recommended the one-year time limit be abandoned and a mechanism for investigating suspected war crimes be created. The Deputies Committee rejected these suggestions, though they enacted many of Holbrooke's other recommendations, save, those that altered the scope of IFOR. Diplomacy and force returned to their natural states—separated. The interagency had “succeeded in bringing some specificity to IFOR's mission, but it still essentially remained a force of nearly unlimited authority with few concrete responsibilities.”⁹⁸¹ Regardless, the military did not intend to stay around long.

Defense insisted on establishing an exit timeline for Bosnia because it felt the Clinton administration failed to articulate an end state that would ensure it could eventually bring the troops home. One Defense principal noted, “DoD was forced to go to this because in the interagency there was not much discussion on exit strategy. This forced a little bit of discipline into it.”⁹⁸² Yet, such discipline proved fruitless. As it turned out, authority without obligation proved unworkable. Ignoring interagency disagreement during planning served to exacerbate implementation problems. As Holbrooke predicted, departmental intransigence prompted U.S. troops to remain in Bosnia much longer than the Pentagon's twelve-month estimate.

One last issue arose before the Serbs and Bosnian Muslims met in Dayton to negotiate the peace accord. Two days before peace talks began, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a resolution stating that the United States should not send (or even pledge) troops to function as peacekeepers without the U.S. Congress' permission. In a briefing with reporters, Holbrooke claimed that the resolution “grievously interferes with the negotiating processes of peace ... Any member of the Congress who supports that kind of resolution on the eve of an historic and important negotiation is doing grave damage to the national interests.”⁹⁸³

981 Chollet, 221.

982 Rast, *Interagency Fratricide*, 294.

983 Elaine Sciolino, “House Tells Clinton to Get Approval to Send Troops to Bosnia,” *The New York Times*, 31 October 1995. Last accessed 21 Aug 2008; available at <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9907E4DE1639F9>

In an October 20, 1993, letter to then-majority leader George Mitchell, Clinton mentioned the possibility of sending an unspecified number of troops to “implement” a peace agreement, and said he would “welcome and encourage Congressional authorization of any military involvement in Bosnia.”⁹⁸⁴ Since then, the administration had decided they did not need Congress’s permission to deploy troops, but they still admitted that the Congress’ blessing would be preferred. This prompted the White House to start a coordinated and broad-based outreach campaign, one managed by State’s Public Affairs bureau.⁹⁸⁵ Clinton wrote a nine-page letter to then-Speaker of the House Newton Gingrich explaining the U.S. role; Christopher and Perry testified on Capital Hill; and officials from State, Defense, the White House, and the NSC were assigned as liaisons to congressional members via a “buddy system” strategy.⁹⁸⁶ The public relations campaign worked. On December 13, the U.S. Congress acquiesced, voting to extend funding for the Bosnia mission.

In retrospect, the congressional activities seem to have been little more than posturing. Despite Republican attempts to pass a “Peace Powers Act” and a “National Security Revitalization Act” that would have limited White House ability to sidestep the Hill when deploying U.S. troops, little changed. Even though PDD-25 mandated a congressional role in decisions to employ U.S. troops via peacekeeping missions and Clinton promised to consult the Congress, the president avoided doing so directly. Clinton alone approved Operation Deliberate Force and the commitment of U.S. troops to IFOR; the Congress fell silent afterwards, avoiding rhetoric that the Clinton had overstepped POTUS executive powers.

32A05753C1A963958260&sec=&spon=&pagewanted=all.

984 William Safire, “Essay: Biting Bosnia’s Bullet,” *The New York Times*, 23 November 1995. Last accessed 21 Aug 2008; available at <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9A01E0D81339F930A15752C1A963958260>.

985 Chollet, 254.

986 *Ibid.*, 221.

Non-Implementation in the Implementation Force

After the parties signed the Dayton Peace Accords, interagency tensions continued to cause problems. As already mentioned, the endgame strategy developed by Lake ended at reaching a peaceful settlement but the document failed to articulate *how* Bosnia would recover from war. Responsibility for Bosnia's post-war reconstruction fell to the State Department, which, according to form, designed no plans for it. General Clark had directed U.S. military planning for Dayton Accord implementation, but no other department had produced tangible ideas. According to Bruce Pirnie, "It appeared that no one was leading a planning effort in Washington and the State Department was at odds with itself."⁹⁸⁷ The administration failed to produce a political-military plan; consequently, civilian-military coordination remained ineffective. The Dayton Agreement stressed the importance of coordination between the IFOR Commander and the civilian High Representative (former Swedish Prime Minister Carl Bildt), but fell short in establishing a mechanism for such collaboration.⁹⁸⁸

Once on the ground in Bosnia, the U.S. military limited its engagement to those tasks they could master without question, and separated themselves from all else. This included the curtailing of missions that may have expedited implementation of the Dayton Peace Accords (e.g., pursuit of alleged war criminals). While IFOR possessed "silver bullet" authority (meaning its authority was virtually unlimited), agency leaders interpreted their respective obligations narrowly. Although the Dayton process had been intended to produce maximalist COAs, minimalist implementation weakened its effectiveness.⁹⁸⁹ The earlier compromise the JCS had crafted revealed its flaws and the fragile peace suffered. The Stabilization Force (SFOR) that followed IFOR engaged in what Albright termed "reverse mission creep," taking no risks and not helping achieve

987 Bruce R. Pirnie, *Civilians and Soldiers: Achieving Better Coordination*, RAND Monograph Report 1026. (Santa Monica: RAND, 1999), 70. Available from https://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/MR1026/.

988 Ibid., 72.

989 Chollet, 194–197.

civilian-related goals that were required to inoculate the region from future rounds of violence.⁹⁹⁰

In effect, the Dayton Peace Accords produced conflict termination policy in name only—the military and civilian components of that intervention remained separated, again demonstrating that the absence of an integrated planning process encourages agencies to develop courses of action based upon disparate worldviews and the protection of institutional equities. The protection of equities and inflexibility regarding roles and missions—on the part of all agencies—led to the development of two mutually exclusive, serially connected courses of action: those IFOR implemented and others enacted by the civilian implementation missions.⁹⁹¹

Time, coupled with IFOR's transition into SFOR, would correct many of these problems. Still, Albright remained, “convinced that if the State Department had not pushed so hard to reinvigorate the Dayton Accords, the administration would have drifted and the peacekeeping force would have left prematurely... hostilities would have resumed and the nightmares of earlier years might well have been repeated.”⁹⁹²

Yet, in spite of the accomplishments recorded during the ensuing eight years, interagency failure to integrate diplomatic and civilian tasks with military roles and missions would exact a major toll, a cost imposed through failure to build a peaceful Bosnian nation immunized against cultural violence. The interagency stumbled in its attempt to design and deliver an end-state for Bosnia that materialized as different from that envisioned by Serb warlords—the de facto ethnic partition of Bosnia.

Kosovo

Paralysis Perpetuated Over Time

The 1990s Balkan wars are often conflated, leading to faulty perceptions and skewed conclusions. The remainder of this case study

990 Albright, *Madam Secretary*, 265.

991 Rast, *Interagency Fratricide*, 274.

992 Albright, *Madam Secretary*, 271.

attempts to avoid such a course relative to Bosnia and Kosovo, as there is a legion of differences between them, in particular, regarding the decision to intervene. To list but a few: UN troops were not operating within Kosovo, no UN Security Council Resolutions directly authorized third-party use of force, international opinion opposed intervention, the international community did not recognize Kosovo (as they did Bosnia) as a sovereign nation and some consensus emerged that the conflict posed a spill-over risk to neighboring countries (especially those who served as NATO allies). For the purpose of this case study, it is most useful to focus on the major similarity between Bosnia and Kosovo; that is, U.S. efforts to use force and diplomacy simultaneously. Such an examination illustrates failure to learn from the Bosnia experience.

On Christmas Day 1992, U.S. diplomats informed Milosevic that the United States would respond militarily if the Serbs initiated armed conflict within Kosovo; through Christopher, Clinton reaffirmed this posture.⁹⁹³ As time passed, the warnings subsided, growing less frequent and, when proffered, watered-down in terms of its tone. By 1998, when violence within the province escalated and reports of ethnic cleansing dominated media coverage, neither the United States nor its NATO allies committed publicly to a military response.

According to analysts Ivo Daalder and Michael O'Hanlon, Clinton positioned himself in a difficult spot as the conflict loomed. They conclude, "when hostilities began, President Bill Clinton had just survived his impeachment ordeal. He faced a Congress that was not just politically hostile, but also increasingly wary of U.S. military action designed to serve humanitarian goals, including in the Balkans."⁹⁹⁴ Simultaneously, NATO members emerged ill prepared to employ military force. As a result, the United States and its NATO partners adopted a "wait-and-see" approach to the escalating violence.⁹⁹⁵

However, the foreign policy team in the second Clinton administration appeared more prepared to act than that which had managed the Bosnia crisis. According to Sidney Blumenthal, with Albright now

993 Albright, *Madam Secretary*, 379–380.

994 Daalder and O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, 2.

995 *Ibid.*, 2–3.

as secretary of state and Sandy Berger as the new national security advisor, the administration now had a more “coherent and activist tone, that was congruent with [President Clinton’s] personality and perspectives.”⁹⁹⁶ Many within Washington wanted to act, including Albright. In her memoirs she posits, “I concluded that we should not be content to follow the consensus on Kosovo (that it was an internal matter for Belgrade to deal with as it liked); we had to lead it... That would only be possible, however, if I were able to forge a consensus within my own government—not an easy task.”⁹⁹⁷ To compel intervention, the Clinton administration used the “hook” of an impending humanitarian crisis and the imperative of restoring NATO’s credibility.⁹⁹⁸ The United States framed the bloodshed in Kosovo as a test of the alliance’s resolve and its ability to control rogue actors within Europe.

Washington leaders began defining Kosovo as a concrete problem, thereby ensuring Kosovo policy options enjoyed a “marketability” that Bosnia choices had not.⁹⁹⁹ In part, Milosevic guaranteed such an outcome by solidifying international stereotypes of himself as the “bad guy,” painting himself as the sole obstacle to regional stability. Having obtained consensus from the other major regional actors, early in 1999 Clinton pronounced publicly that the Serb president was the lone holdout to peace: “Only Milosevic ‘stands in the way of peace’ now that the Kosovar Albanians have signed a peace accord.”¹⁰⁰⁰ State Department press releases maintained that “Belgrade [had] refused to sign and has to date rejected out of hand all efforts to achieve a peaceful solution. The Contact Group clearly assigned exclusive

996 Sidney Blumenthal, *The Clinton Wars: An Insider’s Account of the White House Years* (London: Viking, 2003), 636.

997 Albright, *Madam Secretary*, 383.

998 Rast, Interview with Principals Committee member.

999 Even in the face of verifiable humanitarian atrocities, writers such as Edward Luttwak argued the United States and European nations should remain indifferent and avoid the impulse to intervene into others’ wars. See Edward N. Luttwak, “Give War a Chance,” in William J. Buckley (ed.), *Kosovo: Contending Voices on the Balkan Intervention* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), 349–355.

1000 Linda D. Kozaryn, “Clinton Says NATO Must Act in Kosovo,” Washington, DC: American Forces Press Service, 22 Mar 1999, available at <http://www.defenselink.mil/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=42682>.

responsibility for failure to reach agreement to Belgrade.”¹⁰⁰¹ It went a step further, rekindling memories of the Great War’s origins: “No one should forget that World War I began in this tinderbox. If actions are not taken to stop this conflict now, it will spread and both the cost and risk will be substantially greater.”¹⁰⁰²

While the hook prompted Washington to act, it proved less useful in forging a long-term strategic vision to address Kosovo’s status following resolution of the immediate crisis. This approach also did little to integrate diplomacy and force, where views regarding “ancient animosities” held by State and Defense again generated conflict. As in the case of Bosnia policy creation and implementation, the dilemma remained end-state development. According to Blumenthal, the Pentagon again resisted military operations “that had no clear exit strategy, one of the stipulations of the Powell doctrine, the military codification of the Vietnam syndrome. Nightmarish visions of Somalia danced in the Generals heads.”¹⁰⁰³

According to a State Department principal, contrary to its support for Slovenian secession, the U.S. government did not favor Kosovo’s independence: “It ends up as a landlocked Albanian country and strips away critical mass from Montenegro. It opens the door for other irredentist issues.”¹⁰⁰⁴ Defining an alternative to independence, however, proved troublesome. In December 1998, a State Deputies Committee participant characterized the problem in this manner:

What I have seen here with respect to Kosovo is an abomination. There are broad-brush strokes on the end state and talks of exit strategy. But my heartburn is with the fact that no one talks about what to do with Milosevic, the Balkans writ large, how our Albania policy fits. I have been told that the pol-mil [political-military] plan is good for only our philosophy (100 pages long) – it is to be put

1001 United States Information Agency (USIA), “U.S. and NATO Objectives and Interests in Kosovo: Fact Sheet released by the U.S. Department of State” (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of State, 26 Mar 1999), available at <http://www.ess.uwe.ac.uk/Kosovo/Kosovo-Documents9.htm>.

1002 Ibid.

1003 Blumenthal, 640.

1004 Rast, Interview with Principals Committee member.

on the shelf and used as a doctrine. Some have told me that it will only sit on the shelf. It is so loose, vague, and disconnected that it will serve no purpose.¹⁰⁰⁵

State left Kosovo's end state undefined, seemingly assuming it could solve the issue once the war ended. This again left Defense in the precarious position of planning a war with no determined end, making a strategic operation difficult. A Defense Principals Committee member explained:

Here is what happens. We get hung up with the tactical and cannot make progress in the interagency forum. We spend 2 hours [talking] and start over at the same point the next day. The leadership is afraid to develop/define policy—at its best, it is containment. How does our policy then relate to Kosovo? You cannot define the policy—that is a real problem, we just work tactically.¹⁰⁰⁶

Early into the Kosovo crisis, talk of air strikes erupted, while at the same time, Holbrooke and Ambassador Christopher Hill endeavored to start negotiations. As of June 1998, however, Clark “had seen no linkage between the military and diplomatic tricks” and so “proposed linking the two options in the way [he] had seen in work in Bosnia—carrot and stick.”¹⁰⁰⁷ In Clark's opinion, NATO options were of limited utility unless used to leverage diplomacy, and diplomacy with Milosevic would only work if the dictator felt military pressure.¹⁰⁰⁸ Nevertheless, the military remained unconvinced that diplomacy and force should be linked.

One Defense Principals Committee member complained the administration did not understand the appropriate use of military force:

Someone has to ask the question – what do you do with the military? You go bomb something to move to policy objectives, but war is different than a three-day—[it is not] TLAM [Tomahawk Land Attack Missile—cruise missile]

1005 Rast, Interview with Deputies Committee member.

1006 Rast, Interview with Principals Committee member.

1007 Clark, 118.

1008 Ibid., 117–118.

diplomacy. I think this administration has developed a policy about the de facto role for the military's use: fighting, launching, and committing lives in a place like Kosovo that you know you cannot bring these people to peace.¹⁰⁰⁹

Because of widely shared institutional views like this, during the Kosovo crisis interagency representatives engaged in fiercely competitive behaviors: members of both State and Defense held steadfastly to their positions. As with Bosnia, funding concerns shaped strategy from the outset of the crisis. In January 1999 a State Department principal complained that the Pentagon put budgeting ahead of strategy:

Every time now—food, northern Iraq, concise bombing in Bosnia—all are missions the military culture deems inappropriate. Their dissent is growing stronger and stronger. It is still the way the Pentagon is organized ... still no budget for contingencies, only readiness and training. It [funding] needs to be taken out of the budget as a whole. The building is still resisting the notion that these are appropriate military functions. The disconnect is greater now than during the Cold War! Look at Kosovo: The answer is “we are not designed to do it, not funded for it.”¹⁰¹⁰

Mirroring this view, Clark states that the deepening split between State and Defense presented as problematic since success in NATO required working with both departments. He points out that the whole purpose of the NATO effort was to empower diplomacy; this required State and Defense to work together.¹⁰¹¹

Yet interagency relationships at this time remained antagonistic, as illustrated during a White House meeting in late 1998 when Albright was discussing using force against Milosevic. Assistant Secretary of State James Rubin recalls that:

1009 Rast, Interview with Principals Committee member.

1010 Rast, Interview with Deputies Committee member.

1011 Clark, 106 and 121.

Midway through her argument, one of her colleagues cut her off and exploded in frustration. “What is it with you people at the State Department, always wanting to threaten force and bombing? It’s not always the solution. What is it with you?” But Albright held her ground. “I remember five years ago when I was U.N. ambassador, Tony Lake cut me off time and time again and he wouldn’t let us really discuss this issue. Well, now I am Secretary of State and we are going to have this discussion.”¹⁰¹²

Finally, nearly a year after Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic began purging Kosovo of ethnic Albanians, the massacre in Račak (January 15, 1999) compelled the United States and NATO to act. To determine a response, the principals received policy papers Albright characterized as “rich in detail and superficially comprehensive” with large sections on “revitalizing negotiations” and “increasing leverage.”¹⁰¹³ According to Albright, it was all rhetoric and the “decisive steps” were muddled. Caveats notwithstanding, the Clinton administration embraced this “new strategy.”¹⁰¹⁴

Shortly after the Račak massacre, Albright convened a meeting with Strobe Talbott, Jamie Rubin, and Morton Halperin to develop an approach linking air strikes to the goal of achieving a political settlement.¹⁰¹⁵ Fearing it would create another peacekeeping force, U.S. Army General Hugh Shelton and Cohen did not support the approach. Rather, they offered only the alternative of retaining the ineffective verification team. If NATO engaged, Shelton and Cohen wanted somebody else to lead, something that had proven impossible in Bosnia.¹⁰¹⁶ Although the Pentagon stressed that a peacekeeping force would only be available in a “permissive environment,” Albright led the interagency team to support her vision.¹⁰¹⁷

1012 Blumenthal, 637.

1013 Albright, *Madam Secretary*, 392.

1014 Ibid.

1015 Ibid., 394.

1016 Ibid., 395.

1017 Ibid.

Once diplomacy and force were linked, collaboration and cooperation remained half-hearted. Again, Clark risked his career in an attempt to integrate State and Defense strategies into a coherent plan. At one point, Clark reports being reprimanded for giving military advice to Holbrooke, who remained outside of Defense (and, thus, his chain of command). Above all, Cohen (especially as the lone Republican cabinet member within a Democratic administration) wanted to preserve his authority: giving military advice to those outside the department remained the legal responsibility of the secretary or the chairman. Ideas generated from within Defense, but not vetted by either him or the chairman, could be used to leverage the interagency process in ways deemed unfavorable to Defense.¹⁰¹⁸ Clark protested this requirement, noting, “as a regional commander in chief I couldn’t very well do my job without sometimes exchanging ideas with other members of the U.S. government traveling in my region.”¹⁰¹⁹ Despite the Goldwater-Nichols Act, regional commanders did not maintain close enough contact with the full decision-making apparatus of the U.S. government, the president in particular. Clark submits that a reluctance to allow regional commanders to engage fully in the political-military spectrum required to perform crucial functions pervaded Washington’s approach. He felt that, at times, he possessed neither the authority nor the resources he needed to accomplish his mission.¹⁰²⁰ Clark abruptly retired from his SACEUR posting, having “put his strategic concerns above politics and above his career” and being considered insubordinate by Cohen and Shelton for doing so.¹⁰²¹

The diplomatic-military link raised a number of important operational issues, the first of which manifest in terms of the air campaign’s timing. The diplomats wanted to strike as soon as possible after the Serbs rejected the final peace deal, feeling it would maximize the bombing’s coercive value. The military, however, hesitated as this meant eliminating the doctrinal element of surprise. Clark recalls,

1018 Clark, 113.

1019 Ibid.

1020 Ibid., 451–460.

1021 Blumenthal, 651–652.

“This was precisely the kind of political-military tradeoff that chafed air planners.”¹⁰²²

In the final analysis, the air campaign surprised few. After the Rambouillet peace talks failed, observers from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) withdrew. On March 23 Belgrade accepted Kosovo’s autonomy in principle, but rejected the military annex that would have stationed NATO troops within the province. Noted airpower historian Benjamin Lambeth wrote, “NATO embarked on a 78-day air war aimed at compelling the government of Yugoslavia and its elected President, Slobodan Milosevic, to halt and reverse the human rights abuses that were being committed by armed Serbs against the ethnic Albanian majority living in Yugoslavia’s Serbian province of Kosovo.”¹⁰²³ While Lambeth phrases the aims of the mission eloquently, the NAC did not ratify the war’s objectives until April 12, more than three weeks into the bombing. At the time of the war, Jack Spencer of the Heritage Foundation compiled an extensive list of quotes illustrating the administration’s confused war aims. He concluded, “Although the Administration is quick to assert the clarity of its aims, the record reveals that its stated objectives are in fact wavering, changing, and ambiguous.”¹⁰²⁴

Conditions never favored the air war. Poor weather and poor targets (small artillery pieces, for example) complicated operations. Ineffective diplomacy likewise limited the campaign’s effectiveness. As in Bosnia, the looming presence of an unsympathetic U.S. Congress altered the executive’s decision calculus. The risks extending from the possibility of widespread casualties—both friendly and enemy—compelled operational changes that hindered military and diplomatic effectiveness. Primarily, this meant flying planes beyond the range of anti-aircraft systems and bombing from 15,000 feet. This

1022 Clark, 174.

1023 Benjamin S. Lambeth, *NATO’s Air War for Kosovo: A Strategic and Operational Assessment* (California: RAND, 2001), v.

1024 Jack Spencer, “Catalogue of Confusion: The Clinton Administration’s War Aims in Kosovo,” *Issues: Europe—Backgrounder #1281* (Washington, DC: The Heritage Foundation, 13 May 1999). Last accessed 22 Aug 2008; available at <http://www.heritage.org/Research/Europe/BG1281.cfm>.

made military operations against fielded Serb forces in Kosovo more difficult. It was much easier for the U.S. military to target and strike larger dual-use facilities (such as power plants). However, this resulted in widespread civilian suffering. In addition, the overuse of airpower from such altitudes resulted in excessive civilian casualties as pilots misidentified targets or bombs went astray. The Serbs made the issue of casualties a matter of significant moral import, in effect, creating a new center of gravity endangering NATO's moral cohesion.¹⁰²⁵

The NATO alliance's cohesion, the very element the war was intended to save, ended up suffering. Albright claims that as the war dragged on diplomacy backed by force transformed into force backed by diplomacy. The United States conducted diplomatic negotiations not with Milosevic, but with its NATO partners. Attempts to expand NATO's target list to include dual use facilities turned into arduous, empty debates; such haggling greatly retarded military operations.¹⁰²⁶

Washington's continued inability to define national interests and promulgate sound policy was not lost on Milosevic. A little over a month into the bombing campaign, Milosevic declared, "the U.S. Congress is beginning to understand that bombing a country into compliance is not a viable policy or strategy."¹⁰²⁷ In fact, such actions served the Serb leader's overarching goal of forcing ethnic Albanians to flee Kosovo. Reports indicate that during the NATO air campaign "approximately 863,000 civilians sought or were forced into refuge outside of Kosovo. An estimated additional 590,000 were internally displaced. Together, these figures imply that over 90% of the Kosovar Albanian population [was] displaced from their homes."¹⁰²⁸ Again, the use of armed force seemed to further undermine, rather than

1025 Patrick Mileham and Willett Lee, *Military Ethics for the Expeditionary Era* (London: London Royal Inst of International Affairs, 2001), 38.

1026 Albright, *Madam Secretary*, 396–397.

1027 Arnaud de Borchgrave, "We are Neither Angels nor Devils: An Interview with Slobodan Milosevic," in William J. Buckley (ed.), *Kosovo: Contending Voices on the Balkan Intervention* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), 275.

1028 The Independent International Commission on Kosovo, *The Kosovo Report: Conflict, International Response, Lessons Learned* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 90.

reinforce, the purpose of the intervention—to restore confidence in NATO’s capacity to maintain order within Europe.

The air war proved ineffective because it failed to engage sufficient numbers and types of military targets due to excessive risk. The air war did nothing to deny the Serb objective of defeating the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and depriving it of the population base required to sustain its operations.¹⁰²⁹ The U.S.-NATO approach—targeting civilian infrastructure instead of the Serb military—allowed the Serbs the “time and space” to continue Kosovo’s ethnic cleansing.¹⁰³⁰ While the air war may have achieved tactical material victory, it failed to achieve its strategic political objectives.

Another major operational impediment in successfully planning and executing the war against Milosevic emerged as interagency disagreement regarding ground force employment. Clinton had stated on March 24, 1999, that he did not intend to put U.S. troops into Kosovo to fight a ground war.¹⁰³¹ This removed the threat of escalation from the diplomatic toolbox and arguably gave Milosevic less incentive to end military operations. As the war stretched on, General Clark requested Apache helicopters be added to his arsenal, “But the Pentagon opposed this suggestion, seeing it as a cloaked effort to commit American troops to a ground war. Its planners told the White House that the Apaches would suffer perhaps a 50 percent loss ratio, an utterly contrived figure intended to destroy the option, as Clark saw it.”¹⁰³²

1029 Nicholas Wheeler, *Saving Strangers: Humanitarian Intervention in International Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 270.

1030 Lawrence Freedman, “Interventionist Strategies and the Changing Use of Force,” in *Turbulent Peace: The Challenges of Managing International Conflict*, edited by Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela R. Aall (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2001), 317.

1031 James H. Anderson, Ph.D., “Ground Troop Scenarios for Yugoslavia: What Would They Take?” (Washington, DC: The Heritage Foundation, 21 April 1999). Last accessed 25 August 2008; available at <http://www.heritage.org/Research/Europe/BG1275.cfm>. See also, Blumenthal.

1032 Blumenthal, p. 640. A symbolic detachment of Apache Helicopters eventually deployed, but never committed to combat and soon withdrew.

Ironically, in the end Milosevic would save NATO. With NATO having turned its firepower upon Serbia's "military-industrial infrastructure, media, and other targets,"¹⁰³³ on June 10 Milosevic agreed to talk. Analysts believe that pressure applied to Serbia's economic base convinced Milosevic's cronies to withdraw support for prolonged military engagement. According to NATO reports, "70% of the electricity production capacity and 80% of the oil refinery capacity was knocked out."¹⁰³⁴

In addition, KLA operational success, combined with the threat of a NATO ground invasion, likely played a role in convincing Milosevic that his ends could not be achieved fully.¹⁰³⁵ This said, the delayed threat of a ground invasion might have lengthened the war. Clinton later expressed regret that the wording of his statements on the first day of the war seemed to rule out the use of ground forces.¹⁰³⁶ However, the president was not alone in his beliefs: apparently, the Joint Chiefs had prepared no plans for a ground invasion. According to Shelton, the time required to draft plans meant that there was no chance of having troops in the field before mid-July.¹⁰³⁷ The absence of a clear end-state and the political risks of preparing a plan for a ground invasion very likely ensured this lack of contingency planning.

Conclusion

The American responses to Bosnia and Kosovo exposed the shortfalls of the interagency policy-making process' ability to respond to armed crises. A final analysis of the cases through the lens of PNSR's guiding questions reveals some important conclusions.

Did the U.S. government generally act in an ad hoc manner or did it develop effective strategies to integrate its national security resources?

1033 Freedman, in Crocker, 93.

1034 Ibid.

1035 Timothy Reese, "Precision Firepower: SMART BOMBS, DUMB STRATEGY," *Military Review*, July-August 1993, available at <http://www.iwar.org.uk/rma/resources/ebo/smart-bombs-dumb-strategy.pdf>.

1036 Albright, *Madam Secretary*, 415.

1037 Ibid.

The U.S. government failed to develop a coherent strategy in the first three years of the war in Bosnia, instead adopting an ad hoc reactive stance that left the belligerents in control of the conflict's tempo. The lift-and-strike strategy, in particular, became nothing more than rhetoric the administration reiterated following each successive atrocity. The response to Kosovo was similar, although Washington did not muddle through for as long as they did in the earlier Balkan war.

In the case of Bosnia, NSC principals eventually bypassed the interagency process to create a strategy that harmonized force and diplomacy, along with economic leverage. The Kosovo strategy developed to a greater extent within the formalized interagency process. Still, Albright, despite her best efforts, proved unable to promulgate policy (and, hence, strategy) that integrated force and diplomacy adequately.

How well did the agencies/ departments work together to implement these ad hoc or integrated strategies?

During the run up to Operations Deliberate Force (Bosnia) and Allied Force (Kosovo), diplomatic and military might remained at total odds. Accustomed to mobilizing diplomacy and force at different times, the U.S. government proved unable to merge the two. Eventually, diplomatic and military power were simultaneously harnessed and coordinated within the Bosnian campaign, but with difficulty and in a halting manner. The president himself expressed frustration that the bombing and shuttle diplomacy appeared stove-piped. Defense, in particular, presented as unenthusiastic about the merger of its sticks with other agencies' carrots. In Kosovo, the use of force and diplomacy likewise confirmed inefficiencies, turning what should have been a quick war into a drawn-out, self-defeating affair.

What explanatory variables explain the strengths and weaknesses of the response?

A primary reason for the weakness of U.S. responses in Bosnia and Kosovo was the lack of integrated analysis and planning between diplomats and warfighters. Both State and Defense proceeded from shallow analyses, ones framed by dissimilar organizational paradigms. Subsequently, each developed policy options centered on protecting departmental equities. The result: the interagency presented the president with policy options too fractionated to integrate. Once

the NSC promulgated policy, State and Defense were still unable to cooperate fully due to these disparate perspectives regarding the intervention's goals.

To illustrate briefly one aspect of this, Defense began its analysis with the perspective that the war in Bosnia erupted due to ancient ethnic hatred, which meant that any action to halt the killing would have to be massive. This, along with Powell Doctrine criteria, led to the large force estimates and perceptions of untenable risk. This, in turn, resulted in sensible risk aversion within the White House and also put off the State Department, which rightly figured that such a large war might do extensive damage to the international system, far outstretching its likely benefits.

A second explanatory variable is the failure to align authority, resources, and responsibility. This led to cautious behaviors by those given responsibility for tasks, since they could not be certain that resources to support them would be forthcoming. This dynamic played out most clearly in the Pentagon's budgetary considerations in light of the Congress' lack of enthusiasm regarding military intervention in Bosnia. Authority without responsibility proved just as unworkable, as made evident when IFOR engaged in "reverse mission creep" after Dayton.

Another cause of weakness in the U.S. strategy emerged as a structural impairment: no one beneath the president could navigate the political-military spectrum with authority and competency. Throughout both the Bosnia and Kosovo affairs, the military meddled improperly in political decisions; diplomats likewise meddled in military matters. Such encroachment strained pre-existing tensions between State and Defense. However, in Balkan-type situations that require the synergistic employment of force and diplomacy, the absence of an official who can effectively direct the efforts of both impedes operational effectiveness; the Bosnia and Kosovo experiences clearly demonstrate this effect. In this case, only when it appeared Holbrooke controlled the bombing did Milosevic yield—and only when Clark wielded sufficient latitude to advise the negotiating team unencumbered by his Washington-based Defense Department chain of command—did peace flourish. Failures in Bosnia and Kosovo clearly expose problems extant to not having a viable interagency

mechanism in place to enable political-military collaboration and cooperation.

Finally, this case illustrates that the current system of developing strategy within and between departments, then within the NSC, can generate abject ineffectiveness. In fact, the case's policy-making dynamics indicate it is more efficient to bypass the interagency entirely. In the cases of both Bosnia and Kosovo, when effective management and implementation existed it often stemmed from the efforts of ad hoc organizations and presidential approval of decisions presented as *fait accomplis*. In those instances wherein the interagency produced policy designed systematically to integrate national instruments of power, the departments failed to cooperate sufficiently toward strategy implementation. Their inability (and, at times, unwillingness) to integrate analyses and planning early seems to have doomed subsequent opportunities for integration. In effect, the interagency did nothing to frame challenge and solution options in ways both Defense and State could adopt and implement. Consequently, those implementing "approved solutions" continually undermined the policy makers' goals.

What diplomatic, financial, and other achievements or costs resulted from these successes and failures?

The failure of the interagency to develop viable strategies for interventions into Bosnia and Kosovo produced long-term costs for the region and the United States. According to Holbrooke, the interagency struggle and bureaucratic system, "eroded much of Washington's capacity for decisive action in foreign affairs and reduced our presence just as our range of interests has increased."¹⁰³⁸ Clark points out that interagency failure to properly plan and prepare military operations reduces the credibility of any threat of force.¹⁰³⁹

This *inability to act decisively, compounded by a lack of credibility*, prolonged both Balkan crises and, very likely, increased costs in terms of both blood (albeit not American blood) and treasure. Additionally,

1038 Holbrooke, 369. Holbrook also blames the struggle between the Executive Branch and the Congress, although this case study questions how large a role it played.

1039 Clark, 421.

collective security as an idea—and NATO as an organization—suffered serious blows from which they have yet to recover.

Interagency failure emasculated U.S. policy option generation. As massacres unfolded in near-real time via the international press, the U.S. realized it would have to send troops into the Balkans no matter which COA it approved. While one might look positively on the eventual American action in Bosnia and Kosovo, the fact that circumstances compelled U.S. action cannot be viewed as positive from an interagency perspective.

Once the United States acted in Bosnia and Kosovo, the gap between diplomats and warfighters produced a policy unable to link political and military means with any articulated ends. Thus, the United States ended the wars, but did not establish a stable end-state.¹⁰⁴⁰ The issues at stake in Bosnia and Kosovo—in particular, self-determination for minority groups—remain unsettled. Bosnia is divided along the Inter Entity (i.e., ethnic) Boundary Line and Kosovo's status remains uncertain. Both could easily plunge into war once again, bringing the West along with them.

Bildt offers an excellent assessment of the failings and successes of the American response: “the so-called inter-agency process in Washington often took on all the characteristics of a civil war, the *chief casualty of which was often the prospect of coherence and consistency in the policies to be pursued*... I was not always greatly impressed by the analytical content or the strategic vision in the policies...”¹⁰⁴¹

Absent policy coherence and consistency, *America could not provide global leadership*. Many in Washington rationalized this failure to lead by saying that Bosnia was Europe's problem and that this was “the hour of Europe.”¹⁰⁴² Nevertheless, in reality America could not lead due to its inability to articulate a strategy that brought together the dominance of its military in support of the strength of its diplomacy. Bildt follows up the above statement by saying, “there has almost

1040 Rast, *Interagency Fratricide*, xix–xx.

1041 Bildt, 387.

1042 John O'Brennan, “Kosovo: The Hour of Europe,” *Open Democracy News Analysis*, 14 January 2008. Last accessed 22 Aug 2008; available at http://www.opendemocracy.net/article/conflicts/kosovo_hour_of_europe.

always been good reason to be impressed by the way in which resources could be concentrated and coordinated to implement the political strategy that has been decided.”¹⁰⁴³ The problem, then, is simply one of *not deciding*.

¹⁰⁴³ Bildt, 387.