

Bosnia: update and supplementary information

Research Paper 95/69

30 May 1995



The present paper provides additional information to complement Research Paper 95/55 (*Bosnia and Croatia: the conflict continues*) which was issued on 1 May 1995. The contents include a brief survey of Yugoslav history before the present conflict began in 1992, analysis of the existing UNPROFOR mandate and a chronology of major developments since 1 May 1995.

Richard Ware

Fiona M. Watson

Tom Dodd

**International Affairs and Defence Section
House of Commons Library**

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I The Historical Background

Yugoslavia was a product of the First World War, which had begun in the Balkans and ended with the collapse of Austro-Hungarian power in the western Balkans and of the final remnants of the Ottoman Empire.

At its height, the Austro-Hungarian (Habsburg) Empire included Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Each of these territories had populations speaking South Slav (ie Yugoslav, "Yugo" meaning "South") languages and Bosnia-Herzegovina had, and still has, a substantial Muslim population. Bosnia-Herzegovina had been a province in the Turkish empire, but Austria had been awarded the right to administer it by the Treaty of Berlin in 1881 and in 1908 had annexed it unilaterally. Serbia, to the east, had also been part of the Ottoman Empire, but had secured its independence in 1882. Rivalry between the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Serbian Kingdom for control of Bosnia-Herzegovina was one of the major causes of the First World War. It was at Sarajevo, the principal city of Bosnia-Herzegovina, that the Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria was assassinated on 28 June 1914 by a member of the "Young Bosnia" movement who had been trained in Serbia.

The collapse of Austria released Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. In other circumstances they might, perhaps, have been reconstituted as small states, rather as the three Baltic republics were at this time. As it was, the Serbian Kingdom was very willing to take the smaller South Slav nations under its wing and the idea of a South Slav confederation had already taken hold among some political leaders from the smaller nations. Representatives of various nationalist groups and of the Serbian Government had met on Corfu in July 1917 and agreed a Declaration of 14 Points. The chief point was that a new kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes would be established. This was to be a "constitutional, democratic and parliamentary" kingdom headed by the Karadjordjevic dynasty of Serbia. The three principal nations were to form equal components of the kingdom.

The Corfu Declaration represented the high point of the "Yugoslav" idea. When it came to the practical organisation of the new kingdom and the adoption of its first constitution after the war, the contradictions inherent in the idea immediately began to emerge. While the smaller nations were insistent on their right to equality within the kingdom and were determined to have a federal constitution, many Serbs saw the new situation as the realisation of their dream of a "Greater Serbia". The tension between the components of Yugoslavia (as it was renamed in 1929) persisted throughout its existence and has been the cause of a great deal of political violence, especially during the Second World War. Despite efforts to promote a single "Serbo-Croat" language, the new state would be deeply divided on linguistic as well as ethnic grounds. Moreover, the religious divide between the Orthodox Serbs, the Catholic Croats and Slovenes and the significant Muslim population in the southern parts of

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the country was also very deeply felt and would reinforce the separate identities of the various communities.

The Second World War was a traumatic experience for all of the Yugoslav peoples. It is estimated that 1,700,000 people died in the war, or around 11% of the pre-war population. Of the dead, somewhat more than half are believed to have died at the hands of other Yugoslav citizens. The war pitted Serbian nationalists against Croatian nationalists as well as communists against non-communists and patriots of all varieties against the German occupying forces. There was a great deal of killing of innocent civilians, often in reprisal for earlier attacks. Some of the worst atrocities were committed by the *ustasha* followers of Ante Pavelic who, in 1941, was installed by the Axis powers as the puppet leader of the "Independent State of Croatia" and proceeded to apply the Nazi solutions of deportation and extermination to the "problem" of the Serbs in Croatia. Old arguments about who was to blame, or who was more to blame, for the violence between Yugoslavs have been rekindled by the present conflict. As Fred Singleton writes in the preface to his history of the Yugoslav peoples, "there is no consensus amongst Yugoslavs as to the interpretation of the events which have brought them to their present situation".¹

Indeed, the experience of the war, far from promoting the idea of the Yugoslav "nation", reinforced the belief of many of its inhabitants that there was, at root, no such thing as Yugoslav patriotism, despite the common Nazi German enemy and despite the intermingling of the south Slav people over many centuries. In post-war censuses only a tiny percentage of the population were to describe themselves as "Yugoslav" by nationality and these were primarily the children of mixed marriages or else those, like diplomats and army officers, who regarded themselves as professional representatives of the federal identity. In the 1981 census the main national groups were represented in the population of 22.4 million in the following percentages:²

Serbs	36%
Croats	20%
Muslims	9%
Slovenes	8%
Albanians	8%
Macedonians	6%
Yugoslavs	5%
Montenegrins	3%
Hungarians	2%
Others	3%

¹ F. Singleton, *A Short History of the Yugoslav Peoples*, pp.178-181. 1985

² Rounded figures from *Eastern Europe and the CIS 1992*, 302 - a census was held in 1991 in most of Yugoslavia, but the figures for nationality are less reliable.

At the end of the war it was the communist partisans, with some assistance from the western allies, who ended up in control of Yugoslavia. The role of western assistance is still a matter of controversy in itself. The decisive factor, certainly in the mind of Winston Churchill, was that the partisans, led by Tito, had proved most effective at fighting the Germans. The Marxist ideology of the partisans also claimed to transcend national enmities and rivalries. Developments in the Soviet Union, and also in Yugoslavia, now suggest that this was an unsubstantiated claim and that the post-war communist regimes were able to keep nationalist movements in check because they were prepared to use repressive measures for this purpose, storing up resentments for the years ahead. In some cases, such as Romania, communist rulers were to adopt unashamedly the language of nationalism, where this suited their aims.

In Yugoslavia the communist phenomenon resulted in something which would have appeared impossible before the war: it gave Yugoslavia a dictator who was a Croat (though his mother had been a Slovene) and who held power for 35 years.

It is clear now that Tito did not succeed in solving the conflicts built in to the concept of Yugoslavia. Even in his lifetime there were many conflicts close to the surface and there were periodic purges of nationalists in the various branches of the Yugoslav League of Communists, notably in Croatia in 1971; but the centralised power of the communist party backed up by the security apparatus and armed forces held the state of Yugoslavia together and prevented serious outbreaks of violence.

In as far as the system worked, it was because the concentration of power in the communist party allowed the more superficial structures of government and parliamentary assemblies to be run on strictly federal lines. A fair degree of autonomy was allowed in matters of language and culture and intellectual life was much less strictly regulated than in most other communist countries. Because the Red Army had not played the decisive role in the expulsion of German forces from Yugoslavia, Tito was able to resist Soviet pressure after the war and stayed outside the Warsaw Pact. He conducted an independent foreign policy through the non-aligned movement and convinced the West that communism in Yugoslavia was an altogether more pragmatic and even liberal matter than in the Soviet-dominated states to the north. This stance enabled Yugoslavia to benefit from Western credits and investments and from the tourist industry.

In the 1970s there was much speculation in the West as to whether Yugoslavia would preserve its stability after Tito's death. Tito had devised a complex system of collective leadership for both the federal institutions and the communist party in the hope that the peace could be preserved by allowing the representatives of the various republics to take turns in holding the chairmanships. The main difficulty, as ever, was the problem of reconciling the desire of the smaller nationalities (Croats, Slovenes) for an equal role with the desire of Serbs for a role reflecting their numerical dominance and their sense of history.

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Tito died in 1980 and the system which he had devised survived him for almost a decade. There is no single or simple explanation for its ultimate failure. It may be explained in economic terms: the regional disparities within Yugoslavia were always great. In the 1980s the per capita GNP of Slovenia was more than twice the average for Yugoslavia, while that of Kosovo (historically a Serbian land, but now with a large and restive ethnic Albanian majority) was less than a third of the average. While the standard of living in Slovenia was comparable to that of neighbouring Austria and parts of the European Community, the Yugoslav economy as a whole sank into a crisis of external debt, hyper-inflation and rising unemployment which made its situation not much different from the rest of communist eastern Europe.³

The system also began to break down over the Serbian question. Tito had given autonomous status within the federation to two traditionally Serbian territories, but without granting them the status of full republics. One of these, Vojvodina, borders Hungary and has a significant Hungarian minority; the other, Kosovo, has an ethnic Albanian majority and borders the state of Albania. In the early 1980s there was a rising tide of unrest in Kosovo and pressure for it to be granted full republican status within the federation. This pressure was met by repression and a series of violent incidents took place. The instability in Kosovo and fear of further inter-ethnic violence persuaded some Serbs to leave, but this gave rise to a fear within Serbia that the ancient Serbian province, vital to the Serbian sense of nationhood, would be "lost".

The vacuum in Yugoslav politics left by Tito and the partisan generation of leaders was in any case steadily being filled by a new generation of leaders with power-bases in the separate republics. In Serbia the dominant figure was Slobodan Milosevic who played on traditional Serbian sensitivities and acquired a grip on the communist party machinery in Serbia. He also acquired a following in the federal army, where the officer corps is mostly Serbian, and in other republics where the Serbian influence is strong, especially in Montenegro. The resurgence of Serbian national feeling was matched by the rise of nationalist feeling in the other republics, but particularly in Slovenia and Croatia, where the sense of belonging to Yugoslavia was at its weakest.

A further element was the collapse of communist party rule all across Eastern Europe during 1989. In Yugoslavia communism did not depend on Soviet power as in most of the Warsaw Pact countries, but there was a dramatic loss of confidence in everything linked with communist parties, ideologies and economic management. The communist parties of the Yugoslav republics were, in any case, pulling in different directions. In January 1990 the central apparatus collapsed.

³ C. Samary, 'La Yougoslavie a l'epreuve du liberalisme', *Le Monde Diplomatique*, July 1991.

II Bosnia-Herzegovina Before the Conflict

Bosnia owes its name to the river Bosna which flows north from near Sarajevo towards the Sava. The name is first recorded in 958 at which time Bosnia formed a dependency of the principality of Serbia which was itself then part of the Byzantine Empire. There was a separate and more or less independent Bosnian state from 1180 until the Ottoman conquest in 1463.⁴ Herzegovina is the southern area centred on Mostar which has closer historical connections with the Dalmatian coast than the Bosnian interior. The territory was ruled by a Duke (*Herzeg*) in the Middle Ages, but held out against the Ottoman Turks only a few years after Bosnia. Both territories were then under the Ottoman Empire until they were occupied by the armies of Austria-Hungary in 1878.

Bosnia-Herzegovina was unique among the republics of federal Yugoslavia because of the three way split in the population between Muslims (43.7%), Serbs (31.3%) and Croats (17.3%). All three groups are of predominantly Slavic origin and there are only slight variations in language. The Muslims are descendants of people converted during the long period of Ottoman rule; until the rise of nationalist ideas in the nineteenth century the Serbs and Croats were mainly distinguished by their Orthodoxy or Catholicism respectively.

There was no enthusiasm for secession as long as Yugoslavia remained viable because Bosnia-Herzegovina had little cohesion as a nation-state and its internal politics were always likely to be deadlocked by the quarrels of the three main national groups. In addition to the national groups listed above 7% of the population were registered in the 1991 census as "Yugoslavs" and many more had an interest through ancestry or marriage in preventing the ethnic carve-up of territory which always threatened to engulf Bosnia-Herzegovina should Yugoslavia fail.

The Muslims in particular feared a carve-up of the republic between Serbia and Croatia and their leaders tried hard during the final years of Yugoslavia to avoid a confrontation over the issue of independence and international borders. Many Serbs were equally anxious to avoid the emergence and recognition of Bosnia-Herzegovina as an independent state within its "Yugoslav" borders because this would leave them cut off from Serbia. There is, in any case, a reluctance on the part of Serbian nationalists to recognise that the Muslims do represent a distinctive nationality and a tendency to regard them as Serbs forcibly converted to Islam under the Ottoman Empire. Early in the conflict some Croats in Zagreb did express interest in a carve-up of Bosnia-Herzegovina because it might offer them some compensation for the loss of Serb-populated lands in Slavonia (an idea encouraged by some Serbian politicians in Belgrade), but the Croat party in Bosnia-Herzegovina itself was more ambivalent. The fact

⁴ N Malcolm, *Bosnia: A Short History*, 10-11

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that the communities were so mixed made it difficult to conceive of a tidy partition without forcing many people to leave the towns and villages where they had always lived. Since 1993 the Bosnian Croats have formed an alliance with the Muslims and have consented to the idea of federal Bosnian state which would be separate from Croatia.

The issue of independence for Bosnia-Herzegovina was eventually brought to a head because of the independence of Slovenia and Croatia and the emergence of a *de facto* greater Serbia consisting of Serbia itself, Montenegro, the provinces of Vojvodina and Kosovo and, more tenuously, the Serbian enclaves in Croatia. This forced the Bosnia-Herzegovina presidency and government to make a decision on its future status and persuaded the more militant Serbs that the time had come to stake out their territory like their counterparts in Croatia, assisted, unofficially and officially by their neighbours in the Serbian Republic. On 17 December 1991 Dr Radovan Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb leader, reacted angrily to the EC plan to recognise an independent Bosnia-Herzegovina, saying that the EC was encouraging secessionism and the disintegration of Yugoslavia.⁵

At this stage the Muslim President of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Alija Izetbegovic, still opposed a final breakdown of Yugoslavia into national components and supported the balancing act performed by Bogic Bogicevic, the republic's representative on the Yugoslav presidency who, though a Serb, won a vote of confidence in the Sarajevo parliament on 13 December 1991 for his stand in favour of the continued existence of Yugoslavia as a loose federation.

In January 1992 the Badinter Commission, which had been set up by the EC to consider the legal issues surrounding the recognition of the individual republics of Yugoslavia as separate states, decided that "the will of the populations of Bosnia-Herzegovina to constitute the SRBH as a sovereign and independent state, cannot be regarded as conclusively established" and suggested that a referendum might be held to determine the issue. The Bosnia-Herzegovina presidency took up this suggestion and arranged a referendum for 29 February/1 March 1992.

Simultaneously it accepted the suggestion which emanated from the EC peace conference chaired by Lord Carrington, that the EC might sponsor a separate peace negotiation specifically for Bosnia-Herzegovina. Once these talks got under way during February 1992 the Serbian negotiators demanded the loosest possible confederation and a very high degree of autonomy for a "Serbian" region which would occupy two-thirds of the republic and be entitled to its own army and currency. The central government would consist of equal numbers of Serbs, Muslims and Croats and would operate by consensus. In return for a constitution on these lines the Serbs would drop their insistence on the annexation of "their territories" to Serbia.⁶

⁵ *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1259 C1/5

⁶ *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, 2 March, C1/5

One reason for the failure of the EC-sponsored talks was the tension generated by the impending referendum. The Serbian Democratic Party called for a peaceful boycott of the referendum, while the Muslim and Croat parties urged their supporters to vote in favour of independence. The referendum of 29 February/1 March produced a 63.4% turnout and 99.43% of those taking part voted for "a sovereign and independent Bosnia-Herzegovina as a state of equal citizens and nations".⁷ As expected, the great majority of Serbs did not vote. There were violent clashes in the days following the referendum and some setting up of rival barricades in Sarajevo, but the leaders of the communities seemed anxious not to let the violence get out of hand.

There followed a gradual slide into civil war. The Serbian leader, Karadzic, threatened on 2 March to declare an independent republic linked to Yugoslavia (ie the residual "Yugoslavia" composed of Serbia and Montenegro) in the main Serb-populated areas if the presidency took further immediate steps towards independence and recognition for Bosnia-Herzegovina as a whole. He accused President Izetbegovic of representing "a very well-camouflaged and hidden militant Islamic fundamentalism".⁸

As in the case of Croatia, the European Community was faced with a difficult decision as to whether early recognition of an independent Bosnia-Herzegovina would avert or provoke violence. Since the Badinter Commission had implied that only the absence of a referendum vote in favour of independence stood in the way of EC recognition, it was difficult to postpone recognition once the referendum had taken place and on 6 April 1992 recognition was duly granted. The USA followed suit the next day. In the event inter-communal fighting escalated sharply during the rest of April and has continued, with intermittent ceasefires ever since.

⁷ *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, 3 March 1992, i and 4 March 1992 i

⁸ *ibid*, C1/5

III A Guide to the Main UN Security Council Resolutions with Reference to the Conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina

- 713** (25 September 1991): implements a general and complete embargo on all deliveries of weapons and military equipment to the former Yugoslavia. Lifting this arms embargo in favour of recognised government of Bosnia-Herzegovina has been one of the options under discussion.
- 743** (21 February 1992): establishes a UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) under the authority of the Security Council.
- 757** (30 May 1992): imposes economic sanctions on Serbia and Montenegro.
- 770** (3 August 1992): places UNPROFOR mandate in Bosnia-Herzegovina under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, demanding that all parties "..take the necessary measures to ensure the safety of United Nations and other personnel engaged in the delivery of humanitarian assistance." (S/RES 770 (1992), p.2)
- 771** (13 August 1992): reaffirms that all parties to the conflict are bound to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law and in particular with the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and that persons who commit or order the commission of grave breaches of the Conventions are individually responsible in respect of such breaches. 771 goes on to demand that all parties and others concerned in the former Yugoslavia, and all military forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina, immediately cease and desist from all breaches of international humanitarian law.
- 776** (14 September 1992): authorizes the enlargement of the UNPROFOR mandate and strength to carry out additional tasks identified by the UN Secretary-General, including "the protection of convoys of released detainees" if requested by the ICRC. It also decides that the Council will consider "what further steps might be necessary to ensure UNPROFOR's security and to enable it to fulfil its mandate". (S/RES/776 (1992), paragraphs 2 and 4).
- 780** (6 October 1992): requests the Secretary-General of the UN to establish an impartial Commission of Experts to examine and analyse grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions and other violations of international humanitarian law committed in the territory of the former Yugoslavia.

- 781** (9 October 1992): decides to establish a ban on military flights in the airspace of Bosnia and Herzegovina (which does not apply to United Nations Protection Force flights or to other flights in support of United Nations operations, including humanitarian assistance). It also requests UNPROFOR to monitor compliance with the ban, including the placement of observers where necessary at airfields in the territory of the former Yugoslavia.
- 787** (16 November 1992): reaffirms inter alia, that "any taking of territory by force or any practice of "ethnic cleansing" is unlawful and unacceptable, and will not be permitted to affect the outcome of the negotiations on constitutional arrangements for the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and insists that all displaced persons be enabled to return in peace to their former homes;.." (S/RES/787 (1992), pp.2-3). 787 also calls on all parties to consider (Vance and Owen's) draft outline constitution as a basis for negotiating a political settlement of the conflict.
- 808** (22 February 1993): approves the creation of a court for the prosecution of "persons responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law committed in the territory of the former Yugoslavia since 1991" (S/RES/808 (1993), p.2) It gives the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Boutros Boutros-Ghali sixty days to provide the Security Council with options for the statute and rules of procedure for such an international tribunal. Boutros-Ghali is expected to report to the Security Council at the end of April 1993.
- 816** (31 March 1993): enforces the no-fly zone (which was created through UN Security Council Resolution 781 (9 October 1992). 816 authorizes UN members "acting nationally or through regional organisations or arrangements, to take, under the authority of the Security Council and subject to close coordination with the Secretary General and the UN Protection Force, all necessary measures in the airspace of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the event of further violations, to ensure compliance with the ban on flights."(S/RES/816 (1993), p.2)
- 819** (16 April 1993): the Security Council, "Aware that a tragic humanitarian emergency has already developed in Srebrenica and its surrounding areas as a direct consequence of the brutal actions of Bosnian Serb paramilitary units, forcing the large-scale displacement of civilians...Demands that all parties and others concerned treat Srebrenica and its surroundings as a safe area which should be free from any armed attack or any other hostile act;.."(S/RES/819 (1993), p.2) 819 also demanded once again that the Yugoslav Federation cease supporting the Bosnian Serbs and reaffirmed the right to freedom of movement of UN forces in all parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

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820 (17 April 1993): endorses the tightening of economic sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro to include the freezing of Serbian and Montenegrin financial assets overseas, a crack down on embargo violations via the Danube, a ban on the transshipment of goods across former Yugoslavian territory and the closing of many border crossing points. UNSCR was scheduled to come into effect on 26 April 1993 unless Serbia had put requisite pressure on the Bosnian Serbs to stop all aggression and accept the Vance-Owen peace plan. After the Bosnian Serbs voted against signing the plan in an all-night sitting, 26-27 April, the new sanctions came into effect at 5 am on 27 April.

824 (6 May 1993): defines as "safe areas" Sarajevo, Tuzla, Zepa, Gorazde, Bihacs and Srebrenica (which had already been covered by resolution 819). The resolution went on to demand an immediate cessation of armed attacks on the safe areas and called on the Bosnian Serb side to withdraw "to a distance wherefrom they cease to constitute a menace to their security and that of their inhabitants". It also declared the readiness of the Security Council to adopt additional measures if necessary to ensure the implementation of the resolution and to safeguard "respect for the safety of UN personnel".

836 (4 June 1994): decides to ensure full respect for the safe areas created by resolution 824. Paragraph 5 extends the UNPROFOR mandate in order to enable it "to deter attacks against the safe areas, to monitor the ceasefire, to promote the withdrawal of military or paramilitary units other than those of the Government of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and to occupy some key points on the ground, in addition to participating in the delivery of humanitarian relief to the population".

Paragraph 9 authorizes UNPROFOR "in carrying out the mandate defined in paragraph 5 above, acting in self-defence, to take the necessary measures, including the use of force, in reply to bombardments against the safe areas by any of the parties or to armed incursion into them or in the event of any deliberate obstruction in or around those areas to the freedom of movement of UNPROFOR or of protected humanitarian convoys;"

Paragraph 10 states that "...Member States, acting nationally or through regional organisations or arrangements, may take, under the authority of the Security Council and subject to close coordination with the Secretary-General and UNPROFOR, all necessary measures, through the use of air power, in and around the safe areas in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, to support UNPROFOR in the performance of its mandate..."

913 (22 April 1994): demands the conclusion of a ceasefire agreement in Gorazde and throughout Bosnia-Herzegovina. It also calls for an end to all provocative actions in

and around the safe areas and demanded unimpeded freedom of movement for UNPROFOR.

- 981** (31 March 1995): renames the UNPROFOR operation in Croatia as UNCRO and redefines its mandate to include the monitoring of the movement of military personnel, supplies and weapons at certain specified border crossings between the Serb-held areas of Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia.
- 982** (31 March 1995): extends the mandate of UNPROFOR in Bosnia-Herzegovina until 30 November 1995 and reaffirms that all previous resolutions continue to apply in Bosnia-Herzegovina, despite the changes to the mandate in Croatia.

IV Events in Croatia

On 1 May, in the first serious fighting in Croatia since 1993⁹ and biggest recapture of territory since 1991, the Croatian army crossed cease-fire lines in the self-proclaimed Republic of Serbian Krajina (RSK) and moved into western Slavonia, or Sector West as it is known.¹⁰ The Croatian authorities announced that they had launched a "localized and limited" police action against rebel Serbs to prevent attacks on motorists using the main Zagreb-Belgrade (E-70) motorway. Following attacks by armed groups on passengers on a section of the motorway on 28 and 29 April 1995 and a barricading of their section of the motorway by the Serbs. The motorway had been reopened in December 1994 as part of an economic agreement between Zagreb and the Krajina Serbs brokered by the United Nations.¹¹ In a report on Croatian radio, it was stated that "With this action of limited scope...the Republic of Croatia does not wish to jeopardize its policy of peaceful reintegration of the temporarily occupied areas and of normalizing relations", adding that the Croatian authorities would guarantee the Croatian Serbs "their civil rights on the basis of the constitution and laws of the Republic of Croatia."¹² By 2 May the Croatian army had successfully seized all strategic points in western Slavonia and the fall of Okucani restored Croatian control over segments of the economically vital E-70 motorway and parallel railway. Two Croatian warplanes also tried, unsuccessfully, to bomb a bridge across the Sava river to frustrate any attempt by the Bosnian Serbs to reinforce their allies in Croatia. In the past, the Sava bridge has been a major conduit of arms and soldiers between Serb-held areas of Bosnia and Croatia and the Krajina Serbs had indeed

⁹ In January 1993 there was a Croat offensive in Sector South and other United Nations Protected Areas (UNPAs) and a similar flare up of fighting in September 1993.

¹⁰ For the location of Sector West, see the map in Annex II (p. 27) of Research Paper 95/55 *Bosnia and Croatia: the conflict continues*.

¹¹ *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, 2 May 1995

¹² *ibid.*

appealed for intervention from Serb forces in neighbouring Bosnia and Serbia, but this did not materialise.

It was pointed out by a former Croatian army officer on the first day of the attack that the main danger for Croatia was the possibility of long-range Serb artillery attacks on the main towns in the vicinity of the front lines, namely Zagreb, Karlovac and Adriatic coast communities.¹³ The Croatian Serbs did retaliate by firing missiles armed with cluster bombs on the Croatian capital of Zagreb, the first batch of which killed five and wounded 121.¹⁴ There were further rocket attacks on Zagreb on 3 May, which killed a policeman and caused several injuries. In addition, the Croatian Serbs took over 100 UN peace-keepers in the area hostage to use as human shields against Croat bombardments.

An emergency UN Security Council meeting called on 2 May demanded that Croatia put an immediate end to the military offensive it launched in violation of the cease-fire agreement of 29 March 1994 and called on all combatants to agree to an immediate cease-fire. The statement did not ask for Croatia to withdraw from the territory it had taken and the Croatian envoy to the United Nations, Mario Nobilo, said that Croat troops would not leave western Slavonia because it was Croatian territory.

A cease-fire was agreed on 3 May on the basis of an accord drafted by Yasushi Akashi, under which the Croats remain in effective control of the enclave which guarantees that Serb civilians and soldiers would be allowed to leave Sector West under UN protection for Serb-held territory in Bosnia. The Croatian Serbs have also undertaken not to attack civilian centres such as Zagreb again and the Serb fighters are to hand over their heavy weapons to the UN. Out of a total of around 15,000, it is estimated that 7,500 Croatian Serbs have fled since the Croat attack and it is estimated that a further 5,000 could move under UN escort.¹⁵ The cease-fire was broken on 4 May by an artillery bombardment around the town of Pakrac in western Slavonia that eventually forced the surrender of most of the secessionist Serbs in the area. New movement was also reported overnight on 3-4 May in the south of the RSK, despite a letter from Croatian foreign minister Mate Granic to German foreign minister Klaus Kinkel on 1 May claiming that Croatia 'did not intend to enlarge the scope of the operation or engage in any activities in other sectors'.¹⁶ President Tudjman did, however, threaten retaliation if Zagreb was attacked again and told the rebel Serbs that if they did not give up armed resistance, Croatia would 'know how to establish its authority in all the territory within its internationally recognised borders'.¹⁷

¹³ *Reuters*, 1 May 1995

¹⁴ *Reuters*, 2 May 1995

¹⁵ *Daily Telegraph*, 4 May 1995

¹⁶ *Reuters*, 2 May 1995

¹⁷ *Daily Telegraph*, 4 May 1995

Croatia had promised in March not to use a reduction in UN forces as a signal to take offensive action. President Tudjman has, however, argued that the delay in reaching a political settlement is merely legitimising the Serbs' breakaway republic and several commentators believe that the Croatian assault on Sector West bears the hallmark of an opportunistic grab designed to rally flagging support at home and restore unity in its ruling party.¹⁸ Although western Slavonia was the most thinly defended and vulnerable of all Serb-held areas in Croatia, the successful recapture of the strategic motorway and parallel railroad nonetheless constituted a large step for Croatia in its effort to reunite the northern part of the country. At VE-Day celebrations in London on 7 May, President Tudjman reportedly promised Douglas Hurd that Croatia would abstain from further military action and permit the UN freedom of movement in western Slavonia. On 7 May UNPROFOR also secured agreement from the parties to withdraw their forces from the confrontation line, although by 9 May there had been little sign of that yet happening.

There has been concern about the reaction of President Milosevic of Serbia, who has in the past pledged to defend Serbs everywhere, and that of the Bosnian Serbs. Milosevic has so far sought to distance himself from the latest fighting, since his primary concern at the moment is securing the lifting of sanctions, although he did condemn the Croatian attack. Pressure is reportedly mounting, however, within Serbia's military and political establishment for Milosevic to intervene.¹⁹ Several commentators believe that if Croatia were to move against eastern Slavonia, which adjoins Serbia, Milosevic would have no choice but to intervene.²⁰ The Bosnian Serbs, whose mood was likened to the period before they attacked Bihac in November 1994, reportedly told the United Nations that they would respond to the attack against the Croatian Serbs.²¹ On 4 May, the Bosnian and Croatian Serbs held a meeting of their 'joint defence council' which had been set up in February 1995 and at the end of this meeting issued a threat to regain the territory in western Slavonia by all the means at their disposal. On 5 May, Croatian troops exchanged artillery fire across the border with Bosnian Serbs in what was termed by UN officials as the most serious outbreak since the expiry of the cease-fire on 1 May.

The RSK Serbs and the Bosnian Serbs have been fighting together in the Bihac pocket for the last six months now and several commentators have interpreted the Croatian offensive as triggering a revitalisation of this alliance. If this is the case, such an alliance could present serious problems for political leaders, especially Milosevic, who is coming under increasing pressure to intervene to help the Croatian Serbs. Several Serbian ultra-nationalists have been calling on Serbs to join fighting brigades to go to Croatia and on 6 May, Serbia reportedly moved 27 tanks up to the border with Croatia.

¹⁸ *European*, 4 May 1995

¹⁹ *European*, 4 May 1995

²⁰ *ibid.*

²¹ *Reuters*, 2 May 1995

In response to a PNQ on 3 May, Douglas Hurd stressed that what is happening in Bosnia and Croatia again underlines the urgency of the political process.²² The contact group, which met in London on 3 May and again on 5 May is continuing its efforts to promote mutual recognition between the states of the former Yugoslavia and secure a resumption of negotiations on Bosnia on the basis of the contact group plan.

V Chronology of Recent Events

Research Paper 95/55 (*Bosnia and Croatia: the conflict continues*) was issued on 1 May 1995. The following chronology lists major developments since that date.

30 April: the cease-fire agreement in Bosnia-Herzegovina expired and was not renewed, despite intensive UN mediation.

30 April-2 May: Croatian government forces took control of most of Serb-held Western Slavonia, including the Zagreb-Belgrade highway and the towns of Pakrac and Okucani. Serbian forces retaliated with rocket attacks on Zagreb. The Croatian defence minister announced at the conclusion of the operation that Croatian forces had lost 33 men killed and estimated Krajina Serb losses at 350-450. More than 10,000 Serbs were believed to have fled into Serb-held areas of Bosnia and there were allegations from the Serbian side of atrocities committed by the Croats. President Tudjman said that the operation had demonstrated that Croatia was capable of liberating all of the remaining Serb-held areas, if this could not be achieved by peaceful means.

2 May: Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic told journalists that, following the events in Croatia, he no longer felt any obligation towards UNPROFOR or UN Security Council resolutions, because they had failed to protect the Krajina Serbs.

3 May: New cease-fire agreement reached between Croatian and Krajina Serb forces with UN mediation. There were growing signs of a rift within the Krajina Serb leadership over its failure to defend Western Slavonia.

5 May: Krajina Serb representatives declined to attend peace talks with Croatia in Geneva which had been arranged by the UN/EU mediators. Radovan Karadzic repeated in Banja Luka that the UN had become directly harmful to the Serbian cause and that his side would

²² *HC Deb*, 3 May 1995, c.327

only respect those resolutions, or parts of resolutions which were beneficial. Further attempts to negotiate the reopening of Sarajevo airport for UN operations were postponed.

8 May: Serbian nationalists held a rally in Belgrade at which President Slobodan Milosevic was criticised for leaving the Serbs of Croatia to their fate. The government of Bosnia-Herzegovina claimed that the security situation was rapidly deteriorating with systematic Serb attacks on civilian targets, including Sarajevo.

9 May: British policy towards former Yugoslavia was debated in the House of Commons on (HC Debates, Vol 259 c.582-650). UN envoy Yasushi Akushi met Krajina Serb leaders in Belgrade and assured them that the UN would do everything possible to assist Serbian civilians in Western Slavonia and investigate Serbian allegations of atrocities. He also met the Serbian president, Slobodan Milosevic.

8-9 May: Belgrade newspapers reported an intensive mobilisation of Serb and Croat forces along the cease-fire lines in Eastern Slavonia.

12 May: Croatia claimed that its army had now withdrawn from Western Slavonia and had handed over responsibility to the civilian police. The prime minister of Bosnia-Herzegovina publicly questioned the UN measures to help Serbs from Western Slavonia to resettle in Bosnia, saying that this made the UN party to Serbian attempts to change the demography of Bosnia.

13 May: It was announced in Zagreb that 198 Serb soldiers from Western Slavonia were being detained on suspicion of responsibility for war crimes.

15 May: Vojislav Seselj, leader of the ultra-nationalist Serbian Radical Party, accused Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic of betraying the Croatian Serbs in western Slavonia and warned Radovan Karadzic that Milosevic was similarly planning to betray the Bosnian Serbs.

16 May: Bosnian Serb forces shelled Sarajevo, including the offices of the UN special coordinator for Sarajevo. There were allegations that the Bosnian Serbs were using chemical agents, including phosphorous shells. There were also reported Bosnian Serb attacks against the UN safe areas of Tuzla, Gorazde and Bihac. Speaker of the Bosnian Serb assembly in Pale, Momcilo Krasnik, said that Serbian recognition of Bosnia would be a 'disastrous move' by Milosevic and warned that Bosnian Serbs would never accept Bosnia as a unified state, even if Serbia did extend recognition. In a meeting between Croatian President Franjo

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Tudjman and German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, Tudjman reiterated Croatia's desire to see a peaceful reintegration of the Croatian Serb areas.

17 May: Croatian radio reported that Bosnian Serb forces had launched an artillery attack on villages in eastern Croatia from the Posavina corridor. The leader of the Krajina Serbs, Milan Martić, told UN Special Envoy Yasushi Akashi that the Croatian Serbs have no trust in the UN peacekeeping force and that they would not negotiate with Zagreb until the situation in western Slavonia has 'normalised'.

18 May: President Milosevic held talks with US Ambassador Robert Frasure of the contact group to discuss the possibility of recognising Bosnia. Radovan Karadžić said that any attempt to unite Serbs, Croats and Muslims in one state would result in failure.

20 May: A German news agency reported that Radovan Karadžić had warned in an interview with *Der Spiegel* that if Bosnian Serb positions were attacked by NATO bombers, the Bosnian Serbs would take UN peace-keepers hostage. He also warned that if the UN protected areas were not demilitarised by the Muslims, the Bosnian Serbs would take them, including Sarajevo, by force. The assembly of the self-styled Republic of Serbian Krajina (RSK) voted unanimously to unite with the Bosnian Serbs.

22 May: The Bosnian Serbs seized heavy weapons from a UN depot near Sarajevo. Bosnian radio warned that Bosnian Serb activity south of Sarajevo would probably culminate in a new offensive.

23 May: Bosnian Serb forces again shelled Sarajevo. Radovan Karadžić said that he expected Serbia and Montenegro to join the Bosnian and Croatian Serbs in creating a single Serb state, but that if they do not, the Bosnian and Croatian Serbs can form a Serb state on their own.

24 May: The British commander of UN forces in Bosnia, Lieutenant-General Rupert Smith, issued an ultimatum to both the Bosnian Serbs and the mainly Muslim Bosnian government to cease firing heavy weapons by noon on 25 May. Another ultimatum was issued to the Bosnian Serbs to return the seized heavy weapons by the same deadline and remove all heavy artillery from the 20km exclusion zone surrounding Sarajevo²³ by noon on 26 May.

²³ This was created by an ultimatum issued by NATO in February 1994. See Research Paper 94/33, *Bosnia, the UN and the NATO Ultimatum*.

25 May: The Bosnian Serbs complied with a cease-fire by noon but failed to return the heavy weaponry seized. NATO carried out air strikes on an ammunition dump outside the self-styled Bosnian Serb capital of Pale. In retaliation, Bosnian Serb forces shelled Tuzla (one of the UN-designated safe areas), killing 71 people and took 22 unarmed UN military observers (UNMOs) hostage. Some of these were chained to posts at military sites which could be the target of NATO air strikes.²⁴

26 May: NATO carried out a second round of air strikes on Bosnian Serb bunkers, which prompted the Bosnian Serbs to shell Sarajevo and seize more hostages. By this time, the Bosnian Serbs had disarmed and detained 171 UN personnel as "human shields" at weapons collection sites at 12 different locations around Sarajevo and other unspecified strategic locations.

27 May: Bosnian Serbs captured 12 French UN troops at the Vrbanja Bridge in the centre of Sarajevo, which was later retaken by French light tanks and infantry, causing the death of 2 French peace-keepers.²⁵ The United Nations Security Council met in emergency session. There was a meeting of UK, German and US defence ministers at Gatwick airport. NATO ambassadors met in emergency session and promised 'additional means' to protect UNPROFOR in support of its mission and declared that it was 'ready to respond to requests from the United Nations for further action.'. The new French President, Jacques Chirac, threatened the withdrawal of French troops serving in UNPROFOR by 1 July unless its mandate was reinforced. France notified the members of the contact group that it was despatching an aircraft carrier (*Foch*), transport planes and amphibious craft to the Adriatic.

28 May: The Bosnian Serbs captured 33 British soldiers²⁶ in Gorazde and there was further shelling of Tuzla. The UK announced its decision to dispatch additional troops to Bosnia to protect the British contingent already there. The US also decided to send an aircraft carrier to the Adriatic with 2,000 marines, although it maintains its policy of no deployment of ground troops, except in the event of evacuation. It was announced that Bosnia's Foreign Minister, Irfan Ljubijankic, had been killed when the helicopter that was bringing him back from a visit to the Muslim enclave of Bihac was shot down over Croatia²⁷ by a surface-to-air missile.

²⁴ This is not the first time UN personnel have been taken hostage. Following the air strike on the Udbina airstrip in November 1994, for example, 400 UN peace-keepers were taken hostage in an attempt to prevent further air strikes. This is the first time that UN hostages have been paraded on Bosnian Serb television, however.

²⁵ This brings the total of French fatalities to 39.

²⁶ Royal Welch Fusiliers who were manning posts along the front lines of Gorazde, another UN-designated safe area. There are about 325 British peace-keepers in and around Gorazde.

²⁷ Over territory controlled by the Croatian Serbs.

29 May: By this time, the number of UN hostages had risen to over 300. According to a report in *Le Monde* on 30 May 1995, these included 236 UN peace-keepers from the Sarajevo area (of which 172 are French), the 33 British peace-keepers from Gorazde, 8 Canadians in central Bosnia and 30 military observers from the Pale area. The contact group decided on a two-track approach in an attempt to solve the hostage crisis: the military side focused on enhancing and regrouping UNPROFOR to reduce its vulnerability, while the diplomatic front concentrated on securing Serbian recognition of Bosnia in its pre-war borders in exchange for a suspension of sanctions. According to international mediators, Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic is 'quite close' to recognising Bosnia in exchange for the lifting of sanctions, which will not end the fighting in itself, but would serve to isolate the Bosnian Serbs further.

30 May: A further 8 Ukrainian peace-keepers were taken hostage²⁸ from Gorazde.

VI British Forces in Bosnia, Italy and the Adriatic

The overall joint commander of British forces in Bosnia, Italy and the Adriatic is Gen. Sir John Wilsey, Commander UK Land Command, based in Salisbury. 6,500 military personnel are serving in Italy, in the Adriatic and Mediterranean and in Croatia and Bosnia.²⁹

A. In Bosnia

There are approximately 3,500 British, largely Army, personnel serving in Bosnia and at Split, known as BRITFOR.³⁰ They are commanded by Brig. Andrew Pringle who also acts as sector commander for all UN forces in south western Bosnia. After France, Britain continues to deploy the second largest national contingent to UNPROFOR.

HQ BRITFOR, Gornji Vakuf

1st Bn Devon and Dorsets (Warrior AIFV): (with attached units known as BRITBAT1) are based at Vitez and Gornji Vakuf in Central Bosnia. A New Zealand infantry company (250 men) has been attached to BRITBAT1 since September 1994 and is based at Santici.³¹

²⁸ Although the Bosnian Serbs are not calling them hostages, but 'prisoners of war'.

²⁹ see RP 94/62, pp. 18-20 for an earlier, more general account of British forces in Bosnia, Italy and the Adriatic.

³⁰ *HC Deb* 28 March 1995, c.629-629w

³¹ *JDW* 17 September 1994

1st Bn Royal Welch Fusiliers (Saxon APC): (with attached units known as BRITBAT2) is based at Bugojno in central Bosnia, Kiseljak, west of Sarajevo, and Gorazde in south eastern Bosnia.

RHQ 9/12 Lancers, A Sqn, Household Cavalry Regiment and C Sqn, Royal Lancers (Scimitar) are known as BRITCAVBAT. The Lancers units are based at Maglaj and Zepce in northern central Bosnia. The HCR are based at Gornji Vakuf.

4 Lynx helicopters from 664 Sqn. 9 Regiment Army Air Corps are based at South West Sector HQ at Gornji Vakuf.³²

National Support Element (NSE): Large numbers of engineers on road repair and construction duties, signallers, medics, other support troops (BRITLOGBAT), in tail stretching back to Split.

70 Mortar locating troop (five Cymbeline equipments) from the Royal Artillery

19 UN Military Observers

B. In the Adriatic

A Royal Naval task group continues to operate in support of UNPROFOR and also to help police the UN No Fly Zone over Bosnia. The task group currently consists of the aircraft carrier *HMS Illustrious*, the frigate *HMS Coventry* and the RFAs *Fort Austin* and *Olna*. Separately, the frigates *HMS Battleaxe* and *HMS Glasgow* conduct stop and search operations in the Adriatic in support of the UN arms embargo and trade sanctions as part of NATO's Standing Naval Forces Mediterranean and Atlantic, respectively. Four RN Sea King helicopters from 845 Sqn, based at Split, are used for casualty evacuation. *RFA Resource* provides accommodation and stores support in Split. There are 2,260-2,400 RN/RM/RFA personnel on board ships either in or assigned to the Adriatic.³³

C. In Italy

There also remains an RAF contingent based in Italy which offers, on request, close air support to UNPROFOR and assists in patrolling the No Fly Zone and UN sanctions. This

³² *The Soldier* 17 April 1995

³³ HC Deb 8 March 1994, c.200w

includes six Tornado F3 fighters and nine Jaguar ground attack aircraft (with three on standby in the UK) and Tristar tankers. The RAF also deploys E-3 AWACs and, periodically, Nimrod maritime patrol aircraft to the Former Yugoslav theatre. A single RAF Hercules airlifts aid supplies to Sarajevo. There are 650-800 RAF air and ground crew in Italy.³⁴

VII The Military position of British and UN Forces in Bosnia

The majority of British forces are located in Central Bosnia where a ceasefire remains in force between Bosnian Croat and Bosnian Moslem forces. However, these forces, particularly those around Zepce and Maglaj, are vulnerable to long-range artillery fire from the Bosnian Serb Army (BSA). Less secure are the smaller number of British personnel in Sarajevo and some 300 Royal Welch Fusiliers, inclusive of a small party of Royal Engineers, in Gorazde. 33 Royal Welch Fusiliers were captured by BSA forces on 28th May when their observation posts to the north and east of Gorazde were overrun.

UN forces in the other eastern Safe Areas of Srebrenica and Zepa, encircled by BSA forces, are also in a weak military position. There are some 750 Dutch troops in Srebrenica and 80 Ukrainian troops in Zepa. There are also 100 Ukrainians and a small party of Norwegian medical personnel in Gorazde. In Tuzla, in northern central Bosnia close to the land corridor linking BSA controlled areas of western and eastern Bosnia, 1,100 Danish and Swedish troops are also vulnerable.

UN forces positioned between Bosnian government and Bosnian Serb forces in Sarajevo are also exposed. There are some 5,000 UN troops in Sarajevo of which the majority are French. Of the 4,500 French troops in UNPROFOR, three quarters are located in the Bosnian capital. Two French soldiers were killed during the struggle to retake the Vrbanja Bridge in Sarajevo on 27th May. This brings the total of French troops killed in UNPROFOR since 1992 to 39. Of this figure 17 have been killed in the last year although it should be noted that it is believed that three of these deaths were caused by Bosnian government troops.³⁵

There are up to 350 UN military observers and peacekeepers detained or confined to their positions by the BSA, chiefly around Sarajevo. French troops constitute nearly half of this figure and the remainder are mainly Russian and Ukrainian.³⁶ BSA forces have retaken

³⁴ *ibid*

³⁵ *The Independent* 29 May 1995

³⁶ *The Guardian* 30 May 1995 and FCO

some 200 heavy weapons stored in UN collection depots and captured six UN light tanks and 24 armoured personnel carriers.³⁷

There are a total of 23,500 UN troops in Bosnia.

VIII British Reinforcements

The government has announced reinforcements for Bosnia which could amount to a further 6,500 military personnel in the following waves. The deployment of the first and second waves, totalling up to 1,200 men, has been authorized. The third, larger wave remains on standby in the UK.

A. First Wave

A battery of 19 Field Regiment (the Highland Gunners) RA has departed by air to Split. This is equipped with six 105mm guns and is served by 160-200 men. The battery will be ready for use by the middle of the week and is likely to be based initially in central Bosnia as a reserve. A similar battery was deployed to the region in 1993 but remained on board ship and was later withdrawn.

B. Second Wave

A second battery of 19 Field Regiment RA, with up to another 200 men, is to be sent by rail or sea and will arrive within the next two to three weeks. It will be joined by armoured and bridge-laying engineers from 21 and 32 Regiments, Royal Engineers, based in Germany. The engineering contingent will total around 300 men. Also to be deployed are a further two Lynx helicopters from 9 Regiments, Army Air Corps.

C. Third Wave

The 24th Airmobile Brigade, headquartered at Colchester and based in East Anglia, has been warned for service in Bosnia. The brigade consists of two infantry battalions, currently the 1st Battalion, Light Infantry and 1st Battalion Royal Anglian Regiment. These are transported

³⁷ *The Independent* 29 May 1995 and *The Guardian* 30 May 1995

by up to 18 Chinook and 18 Puma helicopters from the RAF and supported by 48 Lynx anti-tank and 24 Gazelle reconnaissance and liaison helicopters from the Army Air Corps. The remainder of 19 Field Regiment, together with supporting services, would also be dispatched. Once deployed, 24th Brigade could total some 5,500 men. It is possible that the 24th Brigade constitutes the additional British contingent of the NATO plan to cover UNPROFOR withdrawal, should Operation Determined Effort be implemented. The Brigade would take two to three weeks to be deployed.³⁸

The reinforcements of the first and second waves do provide British forces with some additional flexibility. The new engineering equipment could facilitate both reinforcement or withdrawal of British forces since it can be used to clear roads and by-pass the positions of hostile forces. The artillery provides the opportunity to return fire in a more immediate and direct fashion than through the use of airstrikes. The 105mm gun has range of up to 17 km. There are a number of counter battery radars already deployed to Bosnia which can be used to locate the sources of any hostile fire.

However, in the short-term the reinforcement does pose a number of questions. Although the first two waves will be placed under UN command, the command of the third wave, should it be dispatched, is unclear.³⁹ In addition, there are currently no UN rules of engagement for the use of artillery. Furthermore, the first two waves do not include the deployment of Chinook helicopters which could be used to transport the guns and their ammunition by air. If being moved by road, their effectiveness may be curtailed. The deployment of artillery also greatly complicates the task of supplying BRITFOR. A single 105mm gun can fire 8 rounds a minute and, in any sustained engagement, the new artillery batteries would require large amounts of ammunition. If all three waves of British reinforcements are sent to Bosnia this could bring the total of British troops there to around 10,000. A contingent of this size might require the dispatch of a divisional headquarters as an intermediate level of command between the two brigades deployed and superior UN Sarajevo or NATO Allied Rapid Reaction Corps headquarters. A British deployment of this size would constitute nearly 10 per cent of the field strength of the British Army.

D. Other Reinforcements

The French government has ordered the French carrier, *Foch*, to sail to the Adriatic. It has been joined by a frigate and two landing ships with an unspecified number of tanks, other vehicles and Marines embarked.⁴⁰ At least 2,000 US Marines are also available in the

³⁸ *The Daily Telegraph* 29 May 1995 and *The Independent* 29 May 1995. See RP 95/55, pp.21-25 for details of the NATO withdrawal plan.

³⁹ *The Times* 30 May 1995

⁴⁰ *Le Monde* 28-29 May 1995

Adriatic as part of the US 6th Fleet's Marine Expeditionary Unit together with the US carrier, the *USS Roosevelt*. Other NATO countries have also agreed to deploy additional forces to Bosnia but their numbers and the contributors are unclear. Substantial NATO reinforcements will take up to a month to arrive in Bosnia. By this stage, it may become clear whether they will act as a covering force for a UN withdrawal or whether they will lead UNPROFOR to take on a more offensive and military personality.

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