



by Adam Garfinkle

A Dayton Relationship

The Bosnian peace accord was signed essentially unread.

If its signatories don't take it seriously, why should we?

The Dayton accord to bring "peace" to Bosnia is a very strange artifact of the diplomatic craft. Administration rhetoric suggests it is a promising pact, but many of its provisions are simply ridiculous, and its basic architecture is deeply flawed. Bosnia's problem remains what it has been since its improbable birth as a state in 1992: the country is not viable as a stand-alone entity. Bosnian sovereignty must devolve into something less than that, and the challenge is to manage that transition with the least damage.

The idea that we can arm and train the Bosnians sufficiently to prop up the state from afar—the "Bosnianization" solution—is ludicrous. "Leveling the playing field" is bandied about as if the Balkans were some kind of pool table that can be adjusted, cleaned, and re-felted at Western will. But under the Dayton accord the Croats and Serbs can get new weapons, too; indeed, they can probably get and absorb them more easily and more quickly than can the Bosnian Muslims.

The Dayton agreement calls for a military build-down before anyone outside the former Yugoslavia aids any party militarily. But the terms are so patently silly that no one expects this to take place. What is expected to come to pass is that a local balance of military power will have been established by the time NATO

forces leave. The means of achieving this balance is a side agreement to the accords wherein the American government has pledged to arm and train Bosnian forces.

The pledge itself was necessary to secure Bosnian acceptance of the agreement, but its absence from the accord itself was necessary to enable Slobodan Milosevic to sell it to the Serbs. Arming the Bosnians is opposed not only by Russia but also by America's closest NATO-European allies, including the two, Britain and France, that are shouldering the main burden of the deployment with us.

Nonetheless, proponents of the Bosnianization solution have pressed on. Since the November 21 climax of the Dayton negotiations, there has been a swirl of debate over who is to do the arming and training. The Pentagon argued that NATO should not be directly involved because that would make the Serbs mad at us and jeopardize our neutrality. Before the December 13 Senate vote approving the U.S. deployment, the Clinton administration favored this view.

But Senators Bob Dole and John McCain toiled to get the administration to shift positions. They and others argued that if the United States were not directly involved, the Muslims would be short-changed, and remain militarily underwhelming. Besides, this argument went, the Serbs are already mad at us—and why shouldn't they be after NATO air forces bombed them for two weeks straight this

past summer? What good could possibly be served by providing a temptation for Iranians and other ne'er-do-wells to fill the gap—something that probably wouldn't work well in military terms but that would be a political and diplomatic calamity for NATO?

For all these reasons—and because the administration could not otherwise secure Senate support for the deployment of U.S. forces—the administration has accepted more direct involvement but may shift back again if problems arise. The dilemma remains: If we don't arm the Bosnians, the job doesn't get done properly, and we jeopardize a credible NATO exit strategy. If we arm and train them directly, we alienate our allies in a mission whose most significant aim is to heal alliance wounds. And we all but destroy any rationale for U.S.-Russian cooperation in the Balkans into the bargain.

This dilemma speaks directly to the broader contradiction inherent in the mission between NATO's twin roles as peacekeeper and nation-builder—and the mission, seen broadly, encompasses elements of both tasks. The former presumes neutrality, the latter commitment to one side. The administration has tried to clear up the confusion by using the word "evenhanded" to describe what NATO is doing, as if the problem were one of vocabulary.

Even more bizarre is the evasive language used to describe just what it is to which NATO is committed. U.S. officials insist that the Dayton agreement insures a unitary Bosnian state. But the accord proclaims that there is to be one Bosnian foreign policy, two Bosnian armies, and three Bosnian administrations (Central, Croat-Muslim Federation, and Serbian). It is clear enough that the Dayton accord amounts to a de facto partition of Bosnia.

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Part of that partition, the Republic Srpska, is obvious, even though it isn't called a partition in the agreement. The other part, pertaining to the Croatian region of Bosnia, isn't as obvious, but is real all the same. Bosnian Croats use Croatian license plates, carry Croatian passports, vote in Croatian elections, and even route their telephone calls through Croatia. The Bosnian Croat area, the so-called Republic of Herzog-Bosna, has its own army, schools, post office, and tax collectors. There is simply no evidence that the Croat-Muslim federation is working on the ground, or even that the Croats want it to work. Recalling Croatian president Franjo Tudjman's now infamous visit to London, during which he drew on a menu his vision of Bosnia ten years hence—a map that had no Bosnia—it is worth asking whether U.S. diplomats have “saved” the Bosnians from the Serbs only to feed them to the Croats. Quite possibly they have.

It is hard, then, to take the letter of agreement seriously. This, in fact, seems to be the view of the protagonists, too. One of the small mercies afforded by long and complicated agreements—this one has eleven lengthy appendices—is that few people take the trouble to read them. This seems to include even the Bosnian, Serbian, and Croatian representatives in Dayton. The appendices, all written by lawyers in the pay of the U.S. State Department, were accepted without significant amendment by all three parties. The terms of these appendices could not possibly have been seriously debated among the delegations, or even within them.

This, in addition to the fact that, just hours before final agreement, it looked as though the whole negotiation had collapsed, sheds an eerie light on what the negotiators thought they were doing. Perhaps taking a winter breathing space and hoping to re-arm, collect Western cash, and prepare for the next round? It would not be too surprising if politicians in

Zagreb and Belgrade see the Dayton accord as a convenient charade presaging the double *Anschluss* of Bosnia after all NATO forces have departed.

There remains another, more hopeful possibility. As Harvey Sicherman of the Foreign Policy Research Institute has elucidated, an independent Bosnia can survive in its current borders—at peace without massive numbers of foreign soldiers—only if the political elites in Zagreb and Belgrade come to see the fiction of a unitary Bosnian state as a serviceable buffer between them. The Serbian and Croatian leaderships already have more or less what they want: their own areas to themselves, and a potentially threatening Muslim entity eliminated. Neither side seems to relish the prospect of fighting again so soon, with so little at stake.

But this is a weak reed on which to rely. If either Serbia or Croatia rejects the buffer, then the other cannot have it no matter what. Should that happen, Bosnia would be at war once again, standing at the door of final capitulation unless NATO returns to save it. While the Bosnians can be adequately armed to defend against either the Croats or the Serbs, the state is too small, underpopulated, and poorly endowed to be defensible against a joint Croatian-Serbian determination to destroy it. This is why the Bosnianization solution is not the panacea its proponents claim it to be. It can provide the major part of a NATO exit strategy, but Bosnianization can't save Bosnia anymore than Vietnamization saved

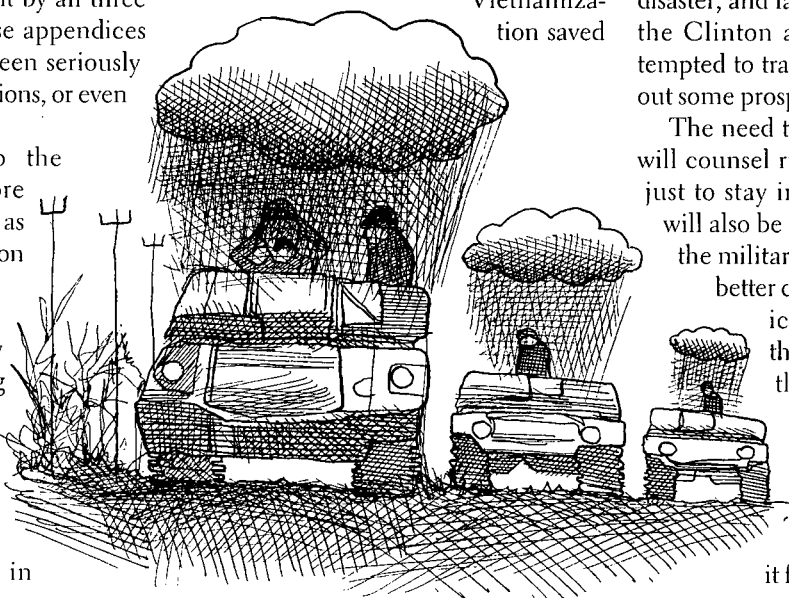
South Vietnam. If Serbia and Croatia decide to carve up Bosnia after NATO has left, the Muslims will be slaughtered again—and the more weapons there are on hand throughout the region, the more efficient that slaughter will be.

While it is surely right in principle to allow a beleaguered community to defend itself, it is irresponsible to conflate principle with true effectiveness. A military balance alone cannot save Bosnia; a wider geopolitical balance is required, and that is unfortunately unavailable.

For the United States, mission success in Bosnia is affected by yet another problem. If the real aim of this mission is, as administration spokesmen have explained in lucid moments, to rescue NATO's credibility and reputation, it is hard to see how that can be accomplished by a narrowly defined mission with a fairly tight departure schedule. Terminating the mission by pointing to broken terms of the Dayton agreement will turn a limited effort into an unlimited political failure. The very attributes of the mission that make it relatively safe and marginally acceptable domestically render it incapable of achieving its real goals.

This mismatch—between the real requirements of the mission and the pratfalls of the Bosnian theater—suggests that the United States will not be able to simply bug out of Bosnia if things get uncomfortable. A bug-out would be diplomatic disaster, and faced with such a prospect, the Clinton administration would be tempted to travel longer paths that hold out some prospect of success.

The need to avoid a clear-cut failure will counsel running faster, if need be, just to stay in the same place. There will also be the temptation to escalate the military commitment in order to better command the overall political environment. Hence the inherent logic built into this Balkan adventure for throwing good money after bad, live bodies after dead ones. It is the logic of incremental entanglement, and we have seen it fail before.





by Grover G. Norquist

The Chase

In mid-December 1994, just one month after Republicans won control of Congress, Speaker-to-be Newt Gingrich met late into the evening with a few key advisers. He expressed some surprise at the intensity of the hostility of the establishment press to the Republican ascendancy and to him personally. One adviser pointed out that in the United States people are killed every week over amounts as small as twenty dollars, and that as Speaker, Gingrich was threatening the Washington establishment's control over a \$1.5 trillion federal budget. In other countries there would be tanks in the streets and snipers on rooftops to prevent such a transfer of power. The stakes were high, and the press attacks were sure to continue.

When he met with those same advisers a year later, it was they who were somewhat shell-shocked after twelve months of unrelenting attacks and worrisome poll numbers showing Gingrich with very high "negatives." Despite the acrimonious budget battle with Bill Clinton and new attacks on his ties to COPAC, however, Gingrich himself was unfazed and confident. "We are exactly where we thought we would be one year ago, if everything went very well," he said. "We passed the Contract With America through the House of Representatives. We passed through the House a budget and a seven-year plan guaranteeing a balanced budget. Working with the Senate and its more difficult rules we have passed a seven-year balanced budget plan with real numbers, honest scoring, and we avoided any major fight within the party or between the House and Senate. We are now locked in a struggle with Clinton at the tactical level about the budget. And we propose," he added, in a para-

phrase of Ulysses S. Grant, "to fight it out on this line all winter if need be." He then went on: "I don't know how we are going to win. But I do know how not to lose. We in the House simply do not pass a budget that doesn't get to balance in seven years."

The Clinton White House and the establishment media were hoping that bad polling numbers for Gingrich would be perceived negatively by other Republicans in the House, and that the unusual level of unity that made it possible to pass the Contract and the budget would begin to unravel. This hope was dealt a severe blow when former congressman Tom Campbell won a landslide victory over Democrat Jerry Estruth in the special election in California's Fifteenth District to replace Democrat Norm Mineta, who retired last year to become a lobbyist for the defense industry.

Democrats and their allies in the press announced that this election would be a referendum on the Republican revolution, a preview of their strategy for 1996 to "morph" each and every Republican into the hated Gingrich. "We had a group of challengers in and I told them I have one piece of advice," said Martin Frost (D-Tex.), chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. "Their opponents' middle name is Gingrich."

Democratic optimism was understandable: Mineta had held the seat for twenty-one years, Democrats had an eight-point edge in party registration, and George Bush had taken only 30 percent of the district's vote in 1992. Winning here would allow Democrats to nationalize the results, and frighten Republicans into treating Gingrich as a campaign liability in 1996. When Campbell won 59-36 on December 12, this strategy was quickly abandoned. Story after story had predicted beforehand that this race would be a referendum on Gingrich. But after the elec-

tion not one mentioned the obvious: Gingrich had won the referendum. CNN, in fact, provided no breaking reports of Campbell's landslide. Instead it chose to broadcast (repeatedly) the "news" that Jesse Jackson's son had won in the predominantly black Second District of Illinois, a seat the Democrats could not possibly have lost.

Press reports to the contrary, Gingrich has lost no support among his caucus. When Gingrich spoke to Republicans in the House and Senate and to Republican governors on December 15, he received three standing ovations. Five days later the 236 members of the House Republican caucus voted overwhelmingly to support Gingrich in not reopening the government until the White House had agreed to a real seven-year budget. His congressional base of support is stronger today than one year ago.

The shower of attacks has not damaged Gingrich in his home district, either. Some reporters have hinted darkly at two close elections Gingrich won in 1990 and 1992, suggesting that bad press nationally might be enough to defeat him at home, just as former Speaker Tom Foley was defeated in 1994. This wishful thinking overlooks the unusual circumstances that led to those two close votes. At the time of the 1990 election, as many as 8,000 Eastern Airlines employees in his district were on strike, and the vote was coming just on the heels of the Bush tax increase, which dropped the average Republican candidate by six percentage points. The national Democratic Party was also making a trumped-up, last-minute complaint with the Federal Election Commission that was designed solely to win press coverage. Gingrich defeated Democrat David Worley by only 974 votes.

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